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Reporting Child Exposure to Domestic Violence: Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes and Behaviours

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Reporting Child Exposure to Domestic Violence:

Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes and Behaviours

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Abstract

The present study examined pre-service teachers' attitudes and behaviours toward reporting child exposure to domestic violence. Domestic violence exposure is defined as being within sight or sound of violence (Edleson et al., 2007). Due to their daily contact, teachers are in a unique position of being able to recognize children who are exposed to domestic violence, as they are amongst the first individuals to recognize warning signs and changes in behaviour including appearance, attitude, and academic performance (Byrne & Taylor, 2007). A sample of 190 University of Western Ontario Bachelor of Education students completed a questionnaire measuring attitudes and beliefs toward domestic violence, as well as intervention intentions in cases of child exposure to domestic violence. The present study evaluated the questionnaire by focusing on four major components: (1) pre-service teachers' underlying attitudes toward violence against women, (2) the behaviours pre-service teachers consider to constitute as domestic violence, and how serious they believe them to be, (3) pre-service teachers' likelihood to intervene in cases of suspected child exposure to domestic violence, and the avenues through which they respond to such cases, and (4) the influence of past experiences on pre-service teachers' reporting behaviours.

Keywords: domestic violence, child exposure, reporting attitudes, reporting behaviour

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Chapter 1

1 Introduction

Over the past 50 years, domestic violence has been recognized as a serious social problem, ultimately affecting individuals worldwide (Cho & Wilke, 2010). Domestic violence is defined as the control of one individual over the other in a relationship, which primarily includes physical assault (hitting, pushing) and sexual abuse (unwanted touching) ("Department of Justice Canada," 2010). According to a report completed by Statistics Canada (Sinha, 2013), in 2011 there were approximately 78 000 females over the age of 15, who were victims of police-reported intimate partner violence. Unfortunately, actual domestic violence rates are often much higher than this, as a significant number of cases fail to be reported to police (Felson, Messner, Hoskin, & Deana, 2006; Spivak et al., 2014). The prevalence of domestic violence and the lack of reporting have become a growing concern in regards to the attitudes that members of society foster. Additionally, there is concern in the role that family, friends, neighbours and the community play in the reporting of domestic violence.

In the United States, it is estimated that 24 individuals per minute are the victims of physical violence, sexual violence, or stalking by an intimate partner (Black et al., 2011). Domestic violence not only has an immediate impact on the victim, but can also be the cause of long-term psychological problems including, but not limited to, depression, low self-esteem, anxiety, and post traumatic stress disorder (Black, 2011; Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 2001; Waldrop & Resick, 2004). Moreover, statistics have shown that domestic violence also results in severe monetary costs for Canada as a whole. In 2009,

the total economic impact of spousal violence in Canada was estimated at 7.4 billion dollars (Zhang, Hoddenbagh, McDonald, & Scrim, 2012). Of the total economic impact, victim costs (such as health care, shelter, etc.) accounted for 80.7%, the justice system bore 7.3%, and third-party costs accounted for 12%. As a result, domestic violence is no longer merely a familial issue in North America, as it was once perceived twenty years ago; it is an issue impacting society on a far greater level.

Beliefs regarding victimization of domestic violence are commonly misconstrued, often only incorporating those individuals who are directly impacted, such as those being physically, sexually or emotional abused. However, in reality victimization encompasses a much larger breadth of individuals, including those who witness domestic violence. An extensive amount of research has been conducted on the prevalence of children witnessing domestic violence, as well as the effects witnessing such violence can have on a child's development. Based on data collected between 1987 and 2005, it is estimated that as many as 275 million children worldwide are exposed to domestic violence during their childhood (UNICEF & The Body Shop, 2006). Despite some controversy, exposure is commonly defined as "being within sight or sound of violence" (Edleson et al., 2007, p 3). Unfortunately, the effects of exposure to domestic violence are not as easily defined. There are a wide variety of potential outcomes for children exposed to domestic violence including: increased emotional and behavioural issues, depression, anxiety, traumatic stress reactions, desensitization to aggressive behaviour, low self-esteem, lack of confidence, bullying and/or aggression toward peers, as well as physical complaints such as headaches and tiredness (Alpert, Cohen, & Sage, 1997; Baker & Jaffe, 2006; Byrne &

Taylor, 2007; Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012; Humphreys, 2001; Wolfe, Crooks, Lee, McIntyre-Smith, & Jaffe, 2003).

Currently, Ontario abides by the Child and Family Services Act (1990) section 72 to define laws on reporting child victimization of domestic violence. "Section 72 of the Act states that the public, including professionals who work with children, must promptly report any suspicions that a child is or may be in need of protection to a children's aid society" (Ministry of Children and Youth Services, 2005, p 2). A child in need of protection is defined as any individual suffering from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect, or at risk of harm. It is the 'risk of harm' and 'emotional abuse' components that incorporate children who witness domestic violence into this statute. A key component of the Act is that it is not necessary for one to be certain that a child is in need of protection to make a report; they must simply have reasonable grounds or suspicion in order for a case to be deemed legally reportable. The Act is applied to all individuals under the age of 16. Cases in which the victim is over the age of 16 can still be reported; however, they are not required under the criteria of this Act. The Act identifies that professionals and officials who work with children are in positions of heightened awareness of recognizing children in need of protection, in comparison to the general public. As a result of this heightened awareness, the Act states that "any professional or official who fails to report a suspicion is liable on conviction to a fine of up to $1 000, if they obtained the information in the course of their professional or legal duties" (Child and Family Services Act s. 72 (4), 6.2, 1990). Within the definition of who constitutes a professional or official with heightened awareness of children in need of protection, teachers fall amongst those in the top rankings.

As previously mentioned, historically child exposure to domestic violence has not typically been considered as a form of victimization. However, under the Child and Family Services Act, section 72 (1990) reports must be made if a child is at risk to any harm, physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect, as well if the child has or is suffering from emotional harm. These two conditions broadly encompass child exposure to domestic violence. That is, children who are exposed to domestic violence are at heightened risk for experiencing harm directly, as well, exposure to domestic violence results in grave emotional harm (Alpert, Cohen, & Sage, 1997; Carlson, 2000; Wolfe et al., 2003). This type of emotional harm primarily manifests in forms of anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, and aggressive behaviour (Alpert, Cohen, & Sage, 1997; Baker & Jaffe, 2006; Brooks, 2011; Byrne & Taylor, 2007; Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2012; Humphreys, 2001; Wolfe et al., 2003). Overall, the prevalence and seriousness of child exposure to domestic violence in today's society has been exemplified. However, despite the present legislation on reporting laws, a large majority of child exposure cases go unreported (Gilligan, 1998; UNICEF & The Body Shop, 2006), as approximately 40% of mandated professionals have failed to report a case of child maltreatment during their careers (Kenny & McEachern, 2002). Overall, it is estimated that for every case of child abuse that is reported, two cases are left unreported (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Therefore, the purpose of the present study was to investigate attitudes and beliefs toward domestic violence, as well as reporting practices, in order to gain a better understanding into the area of child exposure to domestic violence.

1.1 Literature Review

A further investigation into the societal and individual factors involved in domestic violence is required to analyze the act of and beliefs toward reporting child exposure to domestic violence. The literature review will investigate child exposure to domestic violence and reporting behaviours through the following four components: (1) the beliefs individuals hold toward the prevalence of domestic violence, (2) the behaviours and actions that constitute domestic violence, (3) gender differences in reporting behaviour, as well as, (4) perceived severity and past personal experience as factors influencing likelihood to report. These components are crucial to the development of hypotheses pertaining to reporting behaviours of child exposure to domestic violence.

1.2 Societal Conceptualization of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence broadly includes physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse (Spivak et al., 2014). A study completed by Haj-Yahia and Schiff (2007) investigated the attitudes and beliefs toward domestic violence of undergraduate social work students. The sample consisted of 544 students ages 19-47, 93% of which were female. A survey was used to measure acts thought to constitute as wife-based assault, using eight forms of assault. The survey measured participant's perception of whether they considered each form to be major, moderate, or minor assault. The results concluded that participants believed the following actions to be major forms of assault: using a weapon (99.6%), punching (98.9%), kicking (97%), forcing sex (96.1%), banging her against a wall (85.2%), slapping (84.5%), and pushing (78.5%). However, less than 50% of participants believed smashing things was a form of major assault. Overall, these results indicate that undergraduate social work students believe that both physical and sexual abuse are very

severe; however, they lack awareness in regards to the high severity of psychological abuse.

Domestic violence includes physical, emotional, and sexual abuse; however, according to a study conducted by Carlson and Worden (2005), the general public may not be clear as to which behaviours fall into these characterizations. The study was conducted using a telephone survey of a random sample of 200 adults from various areas in New York. The sample consisted of approximately an even amount of males and females, 50% of which were married. The sample was evenly distributed across levels of education; however, the lowest level of education was high school completion. Amongst the sample, 35% of women and 26% of males reported having experienced victimization by an intimate partner, and 17.5% reported having used violence toward an intimate partner. Furthermore, 61.8% of the sample personally knew someone who was a victim to partner violence, and 45.3% had witnessed or overheard partner violence. The results concluded that participants unanimously agreed that "punching, forcing a partner to have sex, and slapping constitute domestic violence" (Carlson & Worden, 2005, p 1205). On the other hand, participants were less sure of whether or not to constitute behaviours such as stalking and insulting as domestic violence (Carlson & Worden, 2005).

Furthermore, the participants were asked about their beliefs regarding the illegality of behaviours. The collected results were similar to the results of beliefs of which behaviours can be characterized by domestic violence. Punching, forcing sex, and slapping were believed to be illegal, whereas the remaining behaviours were not, or the

participants simply did not know the answer (Carlson & Worden, 2005). A common finding amongst both constituting behaviours, as well as their illegality was that participants did not rate such behaviours as significantly constituting domestic violence or as illegal when the perpetrator was a woman (Carlson & Worden, 2005). On the contrary, participants were quite accurate in their estimates regarding the prevalence of domestic violence, such that "two thirds of respondents thought it occurs 'very often' or 'sometimes,' and less than 25% believed it occurs 'rarely' or 'never'" (Carlson & Worden, 2005, p 1205). In sum, the results of this study exemplify that some populations foster distorted views regarding how to conceptualize domestic violence, as well as which behaviours are in fact illegal. However, simultaneously they are quite aware that domestic violence is in fact a prevalent issue in today's society.

1.3 *The White Ribbon Campaign*

The White Ribbon Campaign, a worldwide organization devoted to ending violence against women, conducted a study that investigated men's attitudes and reporting behaviours regarding violence against women. Carolo (2012) was the primary investigator leading this research in which 1 064 Ontario males were surveyed. The survey was administered via a fifteen minute telephone interview where the researchers asked a variety of questions regarding attitudes of violence against women, behaviours that constitute violence against women, seriousness of situations, acceptability of certain behaviours, and reporting behaviours. The results concluded that 96% of men believed that violence against women can happen to anyone regardless of their background, as well 79% disagreed that domestic violence is a private matter that should be dealt with in the home. Although it is clear that a significant number of men in Ontario recognize that

violence against women is a prevalent societal issue, 51% of men still believed that a woman could leave a violent relationship if she really wanted to (Carolo, 2012).

Similarly to the results found in the study conducted by Carlson and Worden (2005), Carolo (2012) found that a significant number of men agreed that physical violence constitutes a serious and unhealthy behaviour. However, the respondents were less certain regarding behaviours such as yelling, withholding money, and verbally putting a partner down, which they believed to be less serious. In regards to when it is acceptable to use physical violence, at least 91% of respondents reported in each case that it is never acceptable. Use of physical violence was justified in a number of ways including: she argues or disobeys him, she doesn't keep up with domestic chores, and she refuses to have sex with him.

Lastly, the survey included questions that addressed witnessing violence against women and reasoning for not reporting it. The results of the survey concluded that 91% of participants would be likely to intervene if they knew someone in a violent relationship. Moreover, 21% of respondents reported having witnessed abusive or harassing behaviour towards women in public (Carolo, 2012). Of those 21% who witnessed violence against women in public, 92% thought to themselves that what the male did was wrong, and 77% acted on those beliefs by either checking with the victim to see if she was okay (69%), saying something to challenge the male's behaviour (54%), or reporting the incident to the police (14%). According to these results, most Ontario males are aware that violence against women is wrong. However, they are reluctant to report known incidents to the

police. Non-reporting of domestic violence incidents may ultimately exacerbate the negative consequences experienced by the victims, as they are not receiving much needed assistance through viable outlets. Therefore, it is evident that further investigation into third party reporting behaviour of domestic violence is of necessity.

In addition to likelihood to respond, Carolo (2012) also examined reasons respondents had for not reporting incidents of violence against women to the police. The reasons included that they felt it was a personal matter (35%), they did not want to get involved (28%), they were concerned about their personal safety (17%), and they thought someone else would intervene (6%). The results of this study demonstrate an interesting contradiction; a significant number of respondents disagreed that domestic violence was a private matter that should be handled in the home, yet the leading reason respondents provided for not reporting known incidents of domestic violence was that they claimed it was a personal matter. This contradiction warrants a need for continued research into factors that influence domestic violence reporting behaviour.

1.4 Attitudes Towards Reporting Domestic Violence

Research and statistics have shown that domestic violence is indeed a major issue, and that society is for the most part very much aware of it. However, as previously mentioned it is believed that the majority of domestic violence cases are failed to be reported (Felson, Messner, Hoskin, & Deana, 2006) This lack of reporting presents a disconnect between experiencing or knowing about domestic violence, and acting on it through reporting. Minimal research has been conducted in regards to the actions family, friends, neighbours, and the community take to help combat domestic violence, although some

research has been conducted on their attitudes and beliefs regarding reporting known cases of violence. A study conducted by Gracia and Herrero (2006) examined public attitudes toward reporting behaviour (positive or negative), and how they influenced actual reporting behaviour. Door-to-door interviews were conducted on random households, providing a total of 2 498 interviews of individuals over the age of 18. Census tracks were used in order to ensure a representative sample. Gracia and Herrero (2006) measured five different correlates to examine their relation to reporting behaviour: public tolerance of partner violence, perceived frequency, public discussion of the issue, trust in authorities, and personal exposure to incidents. The results of the study concluded that the higher the levels of tolerance toward partner violence are, the lower the odds are of having a positive attitude about reporting it. Moreover, higher levels of public discussion were associated with positive attitudes toward reporting. The odds of having a positive attitude were two times as likely for those who perceived a high frequency of partner violence, as well as two times greater for people not personally exposed to domestic violence. The final result regarding exposure to partner violence deems the most interesting as it suggests that personal exposure is associated with a negative attitude toward reporting, which forms a basis for future research into why those individuals are less likely to report.

Overall, the study found that there is a significant association between attitudes toward reporting and the reporting behaviour itself, such that the odds of reporting domestic violence were three times more likely for those with a positive attitude toward reporting (Gracia & Herrero, 2006). This finding also paves the way for future research into

whether or not attitudes toward reporting behaviour are malleable, and if so, what effective methods would be for altering them.

1.5 Factors Influencing Reporting Behaviour

According to the aforementioned study conducted by Gracia and Herrero (2006) it is clear that attitudes toward reporting behaviour can influence actual reporting behaviour. However, it is essential to examine other potential factors that may play a role in one's decision to report or not. Felson and Pare (2005) conducted a study on third party reporting of domestic violence. A telephone survey asking about experiences with violence was carried out on 16 000 individuals from a nationally representative sample, which consisted of 8 000 males and 8 000 females. Out of the sample, 6 026 participants reported experiences with violence, which included 6 291 physical assaults and 1 787 sexual assaults. The results of this study demonstrate that victims are twice as likely as third parties to report incidents of assault. However, on average only one in four incidents are actually reported (Felson & Pare, 2005).

The results from Felson and Pare (2005) in combination with the results from the previous study conducted by Gracia and Herrero (2006) regarding victim's negative attitudes toward reporting, provide an explanation as to why a large number of domestic violence cases fail to be reported. If victims of domestic violence are the individuals who are reporting the majority of the incidents, yet are also the individuals who hold the most negative attitudes toward reporting, it is clear to see why most domestic violence incidents go unreported. However, the larger issue present is that those who hold a positive attitude toward reporting domestic violence, most commonly non-victims,

appear to be the individuals who are not actively making the reports as often as they arguably should (Felson & Pare, 2005; Gracia & Herrero, 2006). Furthermore, the results of the study conducted by Felson and Pare (2005) demonstrate that of the third parties who choose to report domestic violence, there are certain circumstances in which they are more likely to report the assault than others. These circumstances include: if the violence is against a woman (regardless of the gender of the abuser), if the incident involves injuries or weapons, or if the victim is perceived as less educated (Felson & Pare, 2005). On the other hand, results concluded that third parties are less likely to report the violence if the victim had been drinking alcohol or using drugs (Felson & Pare, 2005). This last finding may imply that third parties' attribution of blame varies depending on the situation. This, in turn, generates questions in regards to what other factors impact an individual's attributions of blame in a domestic violence incident.

1.6 Perceived Severity and Responsibility to Intervene

A study conducted by Gracia, Garcia, and Lila (2009) examined responses to intimate partner violence against woman (IPVAW) through the influence of perceived severity and personal responsibility. Gracia and colleagues (2009) recruited 419 participants (174 male and 245 female) through door-to-door canvassing of census tracks in Valencia, Spain neighbourhoods. The participants completed a survey, which used hypothetical scenarios to measure perceived severity and personal responsibility in cases of IPVAW. The results concluded that 22.9% of respondents knew a case of IPVAW; however 71.5% of those respondents chose not to report it. The researchers examined responses to IPVAW through two main lenses: mediating responses, which include actions such as offering help, advising, or talking to the couple, and reporting responses, which are

responses that set the law enforcement motion into action. The results concluded that women rated the scenarios of IPVAW as "more severe, felt more personal responsibility to act, and were more inclined to use mediating responses than men" (Gracia et al., 2009, p 652). These results imply that women may feel more empathy for victims of IPVAW than men, and as a result may be more likely to report known cases of IPVAW.

The results also yielded a significant age difference in responding, such that those in the older age group perceived the scenarios as "less severe and felt less personally responsible than those in the middle age group" (Gracia et al., 2009, p 654). This implies that older generations may view domestic violence as more justifiable than younger generations. Furthermore, the results demonstrated that for the hypothetical scenarios "only those who tend to perceive them as more severe, and feel more personally responsible will be more likely to report to the police incidents of IPVAW" (Gracia et al., 2009, p 654). These results suggest that there are a number of factors that must be present in order for an individual to report a case of IPVAW, however the study does not address which factors may influence someone to refrain from reporting.

1.7 Factors Influencing Non-Reporting

Hess, Allen, and Todd (2011) examined reasons that may influence non-reporting of domestic violence by third parties. The qualitative study was conducted using 20 participants (10 males and 10 females), who were selected from a broad range of political backgrounds. Based on the results, researchers discovered three primary reasons as to why individuals choose not intervene which include, "'this can't be happening': framing a situation in ways that minimize or deny abuse…'is this really a good thing to do?':

questioning the general rightness of intervening,…[and] 'am I really the one to do this?': questioning the personal effectiveness of intervening" (Hess et al., 2011 pp 1103-1111). Within these three main reasons, the researchers reported specific behaviours the respondents had regarding domestic violence including, disbelieving the victim, normalizing violence, emphasizing the potential of breaking apart an intact family, framing abuse as a private matter, assuming accountability requires friendship, and feelings unsure of how exactly to intervene. Overall, the study was able to uncover a number of reasons and excuses that individuals provide for choosing not to report domestic violence. However, due to the qualitative nature of the study it was unable to address the frequency of the use of these reasons on a larger scale, therefore limiting its generalizability.

1.8 Teachers as Primary Identifiers of Child Abuse

Teachers have become integral front-line professionals in the recognition of child abuse (Gilligan, 1998; Goebbels, Nicholson, Walsh, & De Vries, 2008; McDaniel, 2006; Sinanan, 2011). Exposure to domestic violence is one of the forms of abuse that concerns teachers. Teachers have a significant role as identifiers due to their daily contact with students, making them amongst the first individuals to observe changes in child behaviour including appearance, attitude, and performance (King & Scott, 2014; Springer, Sheridan, Kuo, & Carnes, 2007; Thompson & Trice-Black, 2012). As a result of this, teachers are placed in a key position of identifying the early signs of children who are witnessing violence (Gilligan, 1998; Goebbels et al., 2008; King & Scott, 2014; Sinanan, 2011). According to the US Department of Health and Human Services (1999), public schools are the number one leading source for reports to child protective services

nationwide. However, they also have more unreported cases than all other services combined. Specifically, one-third of teachers are found to underreport suspected cases of child abuse (Webster, O'Toole, O'Toole, & Lucal, 2005). These statistics alone exemplify a pressing need for further research into factors influencing teacher reporting of domestic violence, in order to develop intervention or training programs targeted to help children in need.

1.9 Teachers' Attitudes Towards Violence

Due to the nature of their career, teachers are subjected to witnessing or intervening in the various forms of violence of which their students are experiencing. One of the most prevalent forms of violence observed in the school system is bullying. Teachers' beliefs of which behaviours constitute as serious forms of bullying mirror the beliefs that the general population hold toward domestic violence. Such that, overt forms of violence, such as physical violence, are considered serious and teachers are likely to intervene; whereas covert forms of violence such as teasing and social exclusion are considered less severe, decreasing teachers' likelihood to intervene (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Stankiewicz, 2007). Teachers are more confident in reporting overt forms of bullying, as they are more easily identified, and they are able to follow specific polices and standard procedures in these scenarios (Bauman & Del Rio, 2006; Nishina, 2004). Unfortunately, in many cases, teachers may not identify child abuse as easily as they are able to identify bullying.

As previously mentioned, the impacts of child abuse can present in a variety of ways, which can also vary based on the child (Kolar & Davey, 2007). This variability ultimately

makes it difficult for individuals to identify child abuse, due to the lack of consistent warning signs. However, despite these difficulties, teachers are better favoured than those in many other professions to identify potential child abuse due to their constant and long-term contact with their students (King & Scott, 2014). Teachers do believe that child abuse is a grave problem and are aware of its prevalence (Kenny, 2004). However, despite being in a position of heightened exposure to students, teachers report that their ability to identify all forms of child abuse is inadequate (Kenny, 2004).

A study completed by McKee and Dillenburger (2009) found that pre-service teachers had a basic awareness of child abuse and neglect; however, their knowledge base did not meet the minimum requirements for those who work with young children.

Not only do many teachers feel inadequate in their ability to identify child abuse, many teachers also have a lack of awareness in regards to their school's procedures for reporting child abuse (Kenny, 2004). Specifically, newly qualified teachers report feeling unprepared and uninformed as to how to deal with cases of child abuse, primarily due to their lack of pre-service training (Goldman, 2007; McKee & Dillenburger, 2009; Rossato & Brackenridge, 2009). Pre-service teachers' lack of awareness of the signs of child abuse, as well as their lack of knowledge in reporting it pose a serious issue in regards to the identification and intervention of children who witness domestic violence.

Historically, child exposure to domestic violence was not considered to be a form of child maltreatment, as children were considered 'secondary victims' (Cicchetti & Toth, 2005). Due to the lack of overt signs (i.e. physical injury), children who are exposed to domestic violence can be more difficult to identify than children who are the direct victims of child

abuse. Therefore, similarly to teachers' intervention responses to bullying, it is possible that teachers also lack confidence in their ability to accurately identify child exposure to domestic violence.

1.10 Teachers' Reporting Behaviours and Perceived Deterrents

Witnessing domestic violence can have severe and detrimental impacts on children. Byrne and Taylor (2007) conducted a study on child witnesses of domestic violence, in which they performed semi-structured interviews with four education welfare officers, four social works, and four teachers. Results of this study demonstrated that some teachers report that children who witness domestic violence often react in one of two ways; they are either quiet and withdrawn or loud and aggressive. In this study, teachers also reported that the training they received on the topic of domestic violence was sufficient for the type of work they did. However, three out of the four teachers said that they would not ask students directly if they were witnessing domestic violence, which the researchers attributed to lack of appropriate training. Based on the results of this study, it is evident that a contradiction is present between teachers' perceptions of the training they received, their actions in domestic violence disputes, and the researchers' opinion of the appropriateness of the training provided to teachers. In order to accurately investigate this contradiction a larger sample size would be required to validate the responses collected. However, this contradiction does highlight the importance for future research to focus on teachers' attitudes and reporting behaviour toward children witnessing domestic violence. Specifically, in order to determine which factors may be contributing to the possible contradiction, such as a lack of training.

Kenny (2001) conducted a study of perceived deterrents to teachers' reporting of child abuse. The sample consisted of 197 ethnically diverse teachers, 148 females and 36 males, 45% of whom had a Bachelors degree and 38% had a Masters degree. The participants were asked to complete the Teacher and Child Abuse Questionnaire, and then answer a series of questions regarding their reporting behaviour in two different vignettes describing child abuse. The vignettes were both confirmed to constitute as legally reportable incidents of child abuse. The results concluded that 11% of the participants indicated that there was an incident in which they believed abuse to be occurring, yet failed to report it. Of the reasons given for teachers choosing not to report, the most common ones included: "fear of making an inaccurate report, feeling as though child protective services do not help families, and no apparent physical signs of abuse" (Kenny, 2001, p 81). Moreover, 6.5% of respondents reported that a reason for not reporting child abuse was that they believe it was not their job.

Participants' responses to the vignettes showed interesting results; concluding that only 26% of teachers would report in vignette one (step father sexually abuses child) and only 11% would report in vignette two (another teacher sexually abuses a student) (Kenny, 2001). According to these results, Kenny (2001) argued, "it seems that the fear of making a false report outweighs the desire [for a teacher] to follow legal standards in protecting children" (p 89). The results of this study pose major concerns for the safety and well being of students who are being subjected to abuse. Kenny (2001) also examined areas in which teachers felt they were lacking assistance in reporting child abuse, of those, the

three main areas were that “child abuse was not covered in courses, the skills were never practiced in class, and they were not sure of the legal requirements” (p 88). These results demonstrate that some teachers believe there is a need for further training in the area of child abuse in order to increase their confidence in reporting incidents. Although the primary focus of this study was child sexual abuse, the results still provide a solid foundation for the justification of further research into teacher reporting of domestic violence.

1.11 Present Study

The purpose of the current study is to examine the attitudes and beliefs that pre-service teachers hold regarding domestic violence, and to determine factors that influence their decisions of whether or not to report children living with this violence. Domestic violence has become recognized as a prevalent issue in society over the past fifty years (Cho & Wilke, 2010). Over those years, attitudes and beliefs regarding domestic violence have also shifted. Specifically, views have changed from perceiving domestic violence as a familial issue, to perceiving it as a societal issue (“Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers,” 2002). As a result of the heightened awareness of domestic violence, focus has been placed on the effects of witnessing domestic violence on children. A wide range of research has been conducted investigating the effects of witnessing domestic violence on children, and of that research, most results have shown there to be severe psychological, emotional, and physical consequences for children (Alpert, Cohen, & Sage, 1997; Baker & Jaffe, 2006; Byrne & Taylor, 2007; Humphreys, 2001; Wolfe et al., 2003). These results demonstrate a need for further research into the reporting behaviours of teachers, as they are amongst the first individuals to observe changes in children,

which places them in a unique position to report suspected abuse. Specifically, it is beneficial to examine pre-service teachers in order to assess whether or not they are receiving appropriate training prior to entering the classroom.

Based on the extensive literature presented on attitudes and beliefs regarding domestic violence, as well as the reporting behaviours found amongst teachers, the following research questions and hypotheses are put forth:

Part I Research Question

What are pre-service teachers' societal beliefs regarding domestic violence and its prevalence?

Hypothesis Part I

Pre-service teachers will agree that domestic violence can happen to anyone, and that it is not a private family matter. However, variability will be observed in respondents' beliefs that a woman could leave a violent relationship if she really wanted to (Carolo, 2012).

Part II Research Question

What behaviours and actions do pre-service teachers believe constitute as domestic violence?

Hypothesis Part II (i)

Similarly to the results found by Carlson and Worden (2005) pre-service teachers will report that pushing, forcing a partner to have sex, and slapping always constitute as domestic violence. However, they will report that yelling, withholding money, and

verbally putting a partner down sometimes constitute as domestic violence (Carolo, 2012).

Hypothesis Part II (ii)

Similarly to the results found by Carlson and Worden (2005) pre-service teachers will report that pushing, forcing a partner to have sex, and slapping are very serious forms of domestic violence. However, they will report that yelling, withholding money, and verbally putting a partner down are not that serious (Carolo, 2012).

Part III Research Question

Are there gender differences present amongst pre-service teachers and their likelihood to intervene and perceived duty to report child exposure to domestic violence?

Hypothesis Part III (i)

According to the results found by Gracia et al (2009) female pre-service teachers will be more likely to intervene in any way at all if they become aware that a family member or close friend was currently the victim of domestic violence.

Hypothesis Part III (ii)

According to the results found by Gracia et al (2009) female pre-service teachers will be more likely to report incidents of suspected child exposure to domestic violence than male pre-service teachers.

Part IV Research Question

Does past experience with violence influence pre-service teachers' likelihood to report known or suspected cases?

Hypothesis Part IV (i)

In accordance to the results found by Gracia and Herrero (2006) pre-service teachers who report past personal experience with or exposure to domestic violence will be less likely to report cases of domestic violence in children than those who have not personally experienced or been exposed.

Hypothesis Part IV (ii)

In accordance to the results found by Gracia and Herrero (2006) pre-service teachers who report past professional experience with domestic violence will be less likely to report cases of domestic violence in children than those who have not professionally experienced it.

Chapter 2

2 Methods

The current study employed a questionnaire used to measure attitudes toward domestic violence, as well as reporting behaviours in cases of known or suspected domestic violence. The study utilized items from the *White Ribbon Campaign* to measure attitudes toward domestic violence, and utilized vignettes depicting child exposure to domestic violence to measure intentions to intervene.

2.1 Participants

Pre-service teachers enrolled in the Safe Schools course at the University of Western Ontario were recruited to complete the current study. The Safe Schools course aims to help students develop practical knowledge of how to create a safe and caring learning environment for students. An outline for the objectives of the Safe Schools course can be found in Appendix A. Overall, there is not considered to be any special interest in the topic of Safe Schools, as 500 out of 700 Bachelor of Education students take the course as an elective. The sample (N = 190) consisted of 68 males and 122 females, ages 21 to 52 (M_{age}=25.26, SD_{age}=5.6). The participants were recruited in class, on a voluntary basis and offered a five-dollar gift certificate to the campus cafeteria for their participation. The majority of students, 190 out of 220, enrolled in the Safe Schools course volunteered to participate in the study.

2.2 Measures

The current study was based largely on the survey used in the *White Ribbon Campaign* conducted by Carolo (2012). The *White Ribbon Campaign* surveyed a random sample of 1 064 men residing in Ontario, 18 years and older. The *White Ribbon Campaign*

developed the survey instrument, which was inspired by the *Australian National Survey on Community Attitudes to Violence Against Women* (VicHealth, 2009), *New Brunswick Attitudinal Survey on Violence Against Women* (Province of New Brunswick, 2009), and the *Alberta Survey on Men's Attitudes and Behaviours Toward Violence Against Women* (Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, 2012). The questionnaire was designed to measure men's attitudes toward gender-based violence, as well as identify perceptions and attitudes toward sexual violence. Items regarding attitudes toward domestic violence, seriousness of violent actions, and reporting behaviour were taken from the pre-existing survey to enhance the reliability of the data collected in the present study. Examples of items include: violence against women and girls is a concern to me (strongly disagree-strongly agree), and domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the family (strongly disagree-strongly agree). For a list of all 56 items please see the completed survey in Appendix B.

Included in the survey are two vignettes developed by the researcher describing different scenarios of children exposed to domestic violence, which are legally reportable incidents (see Appendix B). The vignettes are specifically tailored to scenarios that teachers may experience due to the nature of their profession. The first vignette describes a grade nine female who writes a detailed poem for her English class regarding life in an angry and violent home. The vignette outlines how the teacher approaches the student and expresses concern; however, the student simply replies that "no family is perfect" before hurriedly leaving the class. The second vignette describes a young boy in grade two who requests to stay after class, constantly wants to 'check up' on his sister, and who drew an alarming and violent family portrait. The vignettes are followed by a series of questions regarding

pre-service teachers' likelihood to intervene and/or report. The questions measure options including: talk to the student, talk to the parents, notify the principal, notify the police, or do nothing. The purpose of the vignettes is to further examine expected reporting behaviour amongst pre-service teachers, and their potential reasoning for choosing not to report.

2.3 Procedure

The pre-service teachers voluntarily participated in the research by completing the survey, which was distributed and completed during the Safe Schools class time. The survey was distributed during the second class of the semester; therefore, none of the topics addressed in the survey had been covered in the class so far. The survey took approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Participants were informed that the purpose of the study was to gather information regarding future teachers, who they are (demographics) and their attitudes concerning violence. A statement was read aloud to the class informing the students of their right to refuse participation, as well as their right to drop out of the study at any time, without any negative consequences. Please see Appendix C for the complete letter of information.

The participants were instructed to keep the letter of information as it provided them with the contact information for the primary researchers if they required further information. It was explained to the participants that informed consent would be assumed based on their willingness to complete and return the survey, which is done in order to ensure their anonymity. Once the participants returned the survey they were given a five-dollar gift certificate to the campus cafeteria for their participation.

The survey began with the participants answering demographic questions, such as age, gender, teaching level, and personal and professional experience with violence. Next were questions regarding their beliefs of what actions and behaviours constitute domestic violence, and then their attitudes toward such behaviours. Lastly, the survey covered questions surrounding reporting behaviour, using the two vignettes. The survey also included items addressing sexual violence, which were used as part of another study.

2.4 Data Analysis Plan

The majority of the identified variables were measured at the individual level using descriptive analysis. Additionally, factors were analyzed at the univariate level using chi-square analyses and univariate analyses of variance.

Chapter 3

3 Results

3.1 Descriptive Data

Summary information about the sample of pre-service teachers can be found in Table 1. Of the 190 pre-service teachers recruited to participate in the study, 26% were enrolled in the primary-junior stream of the Bachelor of Education, 24% were in the junior-intermediate stream, and 48% were in the intermediate-senior stream. Sixty percent of the sample reported their relationship status as single, 14% were married, 10% were common law, 2% were divorced or separated, and 14% reported their relationship status was considered 'other'.

Fifty-three percent of pre-service teachers reported having past personal experience with violence. Specifically, 39% knew someone closely who experience violence, 21% experienced violence as an adult, and 14% grew up with violence in the family. Twenty-three percent reported having past professional experience with violence. Specifically, 13% counselled an individual who experienced violence, 7% were part of a violence prevention program, 6% volunteered at a crisis centre, and 6% were part of a club or activist group.

Table 1. *Frequencies & Total Percentages of the Descriptive Variables*

		Frequency	%
Sex	Male	68	35.8
	Female	122	64.2
Stream of BEd	Primary-Junior	51	26.8
	Junior- Intermediate	46	24.2
	Intermediate- Senior	92	48.3
Relationship Status	Single	114	60
	Married	26	13.7
	Common-Law	20	10.5
	Divorced or Separated	4	2.1
	Other	26	13.7
Past Personal Experience	Grew up with violence in family	26	13.7
	Experienced violence as an adult	40	21.1
	Knew someone closely who experienced violence	75	39.5
	Met someone who experienced violence	98	51.6
	No experience	38	20
	Do not wish to say	3	1.6
Past Professional Experience	Volunteered at a crisis centre	11	5.8
	Part of a club or activist group	11	5.8
	Part of a violence prevention program	13	6.8
	Counselled an individual who experienced violence	24	12.6
	No experience	142	74.7
	Do not wish to say	1	.5

Note: Past personal and professional experience will not add up to 190 (100%), more than one option may apply.

3.2 Underlying Attitudes About Violence Against Women

Summary information about pre-service teachers' attitudes toward violence against women (VAW) can be found in Table 2. To present the results in a meaningful manner, the responses of *strongly agree* and *somewhat agree* were collapsed into one response of *agree*, similarly, *strongly disagree* and *somewhat disagree* were collapsed into *disagree*. In accordance with hypothesis part one, the majority of pre-service teachers held progressive attitudes toward VAW such that 93% agreed that domestic violence can happen to anyone, 93% agree that VAW is a concern to them, 81% agree that VAW affects all women, including women they care about in their lives, 67% agreed that sexist, violent language and the sexualisation of women in the media and pop culture helps normalize VAW, and 88% disagreed that domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the family. However, when asked their beliefs regarding the item 'most women could leave a violent relationship if they really wanted to' only half of the respondents disagreed (54%), 25% agreed, and 21% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Table 2. *Frequencies & Total Percentages of Underlying Attitudes About Violence Against Women*

	Strongly Disagree n (%)	Somewhat Disagree n (%)	Neither n (%)	Somewhat Agree n (%)	Strongly Agree n (%)
DV can happen in any family, regardless of cultural background or economic situation	6 (3.2%)	3 (1.6%)	4 (2.1%)	30 (15.8%)	147 (77.4%)
VAW is a concern to me	6 (3.2%)	0 (0%)	5 (2.6%)	29 (15.3%)	148 (77.9%)
VAW affects all women including women I care about in my life	5 (2.6%)	5 (2.6%)	27 (14.2%)	56 (29.5%)	97 (51.1%)
Sexist, violent language and the sexualization of women in media and pop culture helps normalize VAW	12 (6.3%)	18 (9.5%)	32 (16.8%)	72 (37.9%)	56 (29.5%)
Most women could leave a violent relationship if they really wanted to	23 (12.1%)	80 (42.1%)	40 (21.1%)	33 (17.4%)	14 (7.4%)
DV is a private mater to be handled in the family	115 (60.5%)	53 (27.9%)	12 (6.3%)	4 (2.1%)	5 (2.6%)

Note. Domestic violence (DV) and violence against women (VAW).

Supplementary analyses were conducted using crosstabulations to analyze the difference between genders in regards to their attitudes toward a woman's ability to leave a violent relationship (see Table 3). Differences were not found between males and females in regards to their beliefs of whether or not women could leave a violent relationship if they really wanted to, χ^2 (4, N = 190) = 5.34, p = 0.25.

Table 3. *Gender * Belief that Women Could Leave a Violent Relationship if they Wanted to Crosstabulation*

	Gender		
	Male	Female	χ^2
	n (%)	n (%)	
Strongly Disagree	5 (7.4%)	18 (14.8%)	5.34
Somewhat Disagree	25 (36.8%)	55 (45.1%)	
Neither	17 (25%)	23 (18.9%)	
Somewhat Agree	14 (20.6%)	19 (15.6%)	
Strongly Agree	7 (10.3%)	7 (5.7%)	

3.3 When are Unhealthy Behaviours Domestic Violence?

Summary information about pre-service teachers' views of when unhealthy behaviours constitute as domestic violence can be found in Table 4. In accordance with hypothesis two part one, the majority of pre-service teachers believe the following behaviours are always considered domestic violence: trying to scare or control a partner using threats of harm (96%), forcing a partner to have sex (86%), pushing a partner to cause harm or fear (80%), slapping a child because they did something wrong (74%), and preventing a

partner from seeing friends and family (64%). However, only approximately half of pre-service teachers (56%) believe that controlling a partner by withholding money is always domestic violence, 53% believe that using verbal put downs to make a partner feel bad about themselves is always domestic violence, and only 8% believe that yelling at a partner is always domestic violence.

Table 4. *Frequencies & Total Percentages of Unhealthy Behaviours as Forms of Domestic Violence*

	Always n (%)	Sometimes n (%)	Never n (%)
One partner pushes the other to cause harm or fear	153 (80.5%)	37 (19.5%)	0 (0%)
One partner makes the other have sex with them	163 (85.8%)	25 (13.2)	1 (.5%)
One partner tries to scare or control the other by threatening to hurt them or other family members	182 (95.8%)	6 (3.2%)	2 (1.1%)
A parent slaps their child across the face because the child did something wrong	140 (73.7%)	48 (25.3%)	1 (.5%)
One partner yells at the other	15 (7.9%)	162 (85.3%)	13 (6.8%)
One partner puts the other down and tries to make them feel bad about themselves	100 (52.6%)	85 (44.7%)	5 (2.6%)
One partner prevents another from seeing friends and family	122 (64.2%)	62 (32.6%)	5 (2.6%)
One partner tries to control the other by withholding money	107 (56.3%)	75 (39.5%)	8 (4.2%)

Supplementary analyses were conducted using crosstabulations to analyze the difference between genders in regards to their beliefs of when unhealthy behaviours constitute as domestic violence (see Table 5). Differences were found between males and females beliefs in regards to controlling a partner by withholding money, χ^2 (2, N = 190) = 16.9, p < .001. Post-hoc standardized residuals revealed that males reported withholding money as always constituting domestic violence less than would be expected (std. residual = -2.1). However, differences were not found between males and females in regards to yelling, χ^2 (2, N = 190) = 5.16, p = 0.08. Crosstabulation analyses were unable to be completed by gender for verbal put-downs as the assumption of minimum expected frequencies was violated. The above analyses were interpreted using a significance level of p = .05, as the hypotheses were based on strong literature supporting the notion that women have more progressive views toward domestic violence than men.

Table 5. *Gender * Unhealthy Behaviours as Forms of Domestic Violence Crosstabulation*

	Gender	Forms of DV			
		Always	Sometimes	Never	
		n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	χ^2
Withholding Money	Male	25 (36.8%)	38 (55.9%)	5 (7.4%)	16.9***
	Female	82 (62.7%)	37 (30.3%)	3 (2.5%)	
Partner Yells	Male	2 (2.9%)	59 (86.8%)	7 (10.3%)	5.16
	Female	13 (10.7%)	103 (84.4%)	6 (4.9%)	

Note: Domestic violence (DV); *** = p < .001.

3.4 Seriousness of Unhealthy Behaviours

Summary information about pre-service teachers' views on the seriousness of unhealthy behaviours can be found in Table 6. In accordance with hypothesis two part two, the majority of pre-service teachers believe that the following behaviours are very serious: trying to scare or control a partner using threats of harm (87%), forcing a partner to have sex (77%), pushing a partner to cause harm or fear (58%), preventing a partner from seeing friends and family (58%), and slapping a child because they did something wrong (57%). However, just under half of pre-service teachers (48%) believe that controlling a partner by withholding money is very serious, 25% believe that using put downs to make a partner feel bad about themselves is very serious, and only 4% believe that yelling at a partner is very serious.

Table 6. *Frequencies and Total Percentages of Seriousness of Unhealthy Behaviour*

	Very serious n (%)	Quite serious n (%)	Not that serious n (%)	Not at all serious n (%)
One partner pushes the other to cause harm or fear	110 (57.9%)	72 (37.9%)	8 (4.2%)	0 (0%)
One partner makes the other have sex with them	146 (76.8%)	40 (21.1%)	3 (1.6%)	1 (.5%)
One partner tries to scare or control the other by threatening to hurt them or other family members	166 (87.4%)	23 (12.1%)	1 (.5%)	0 (0%)
A parent slaps their child across the face because the child did something wrong	109 (57.4%)	59 (31.1%)	20 (10.5%)	1 (.5%)
One partner yells at the other	8 (4.2%)	56 (29.5%)	117 (61.6%)	6 (3.2%)
One partner puts the other down and tries to make them feel bad about themselves	47 (24.7%)	102 (53.7%)	40 (21.1%)	1 (.5%)
One partner prevents another from seeing family and friends	111 (58.4%)	57 (30%)	20 (10.5%)	1 (.5%)
One partner tries to control the other by withholding money	91 (47.9%)	66 (34.7%)	27 (14.2%)	5 (2.6%)

Supplementary analyses were conducted using crosstabulations to analyze the difference between genders in regards to their beliefs of the seriousness of unhealthy behaviours (see Table 7). Differences were found between males and females beliefs in regards to the seriousness of controlling a partner by withholding money, χ^2 (3, N = 189) = 13.44, p < .01. Post-hoc standardized residuals revealed that males reported withholding money as very serious less than would be expected (std. residual = -1.9). However, differences were not found between males and females in regards to their beliefs of seriousness of verbal put downs, χ^2 (3, N = 190) = 5.6, p = .13, or in regards to the seriousness of yelling, χ^2 (3, N = 187) = 3.94, p = 0.27.

Table 7. *Gender * Seriousness of Forms of Domestic Violence Crosstabulation*

	Gender	Seriousness of Forms of DV				χ^2
		Very Serious	Quite Serious	Not that Serious	Not at all Serious	
		n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
Withholding Money[1]	Male	22 (32.4%)	31 (35.6%)	11 (16.2%)	4 (5.9%)	13.44**
	Female	69 (57%)	35 (28.9%)	16 (13.2%)	1 (0.8%)	
Verbal Put Downs[2]	Male	13 (19.1%)	35 (51.5%)	19 (27.9%)	1 (1.5%)	5.63
	Female	34 (27.9%)	67 (54.9%)	21 (17.2%)	0 (0%)	
Partner Yells[3]	Male	3 (4.5%)	16 (23.9%)	44 (65.7%)	4 (6%)	3.94
	Female	5 (4.2%)	40 (33.3%)	73 (60.8%)	2 (1.7%)	

Note: Domestic violence (DV); missing data [1](n=1), [3](n=3); ** = $p < .01$

3.5 Likelihood to Intervene

Pre-service teachers were asked their likelihood to intervene in any way at all if they became aware that a family member or close friend was currently a victim of domestic abuse. Approximately half of pre-service teachers (55%) reported that they would be very likely to intervene, 35% would be somewhat likely, 3% would be somewhat unlikely, 1% would be very unlikely, and 5% were neutral. Contrary to hypothesis three part one, using cross-tabulation, differences were not found between males and females in regards to their likelihood to intervene, χ^2 (4, N = 189) = 7.68, p = .1 (see Table 8).

Table 8. *Gender * Likelihood to Intervene*

	Likelihood to Intervene					
	Very Likely n (%)	Somewhat Likely n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat Unlikely n (%)	Very Unlikely n (%)	χ^2
Male	37 (54.4%)	20 (29.4%)	6 (8.8%)	3 (4.4%)	2 (2.9%)	7.68
Female	67 (55.4%)	47 (38.8%)	4 (3.3%)	3 (2.5%)	0 (0%)	

3.6 Duty to Report

Response to vignette one. The large majority of pre-service teachers (88%) believed they, as teachers, had a duty to respond in vignette one. Vignette one depicted a student who wrote a concerning poem in her English class regarding witnessing violence at home. Eighty-one percent of males and 92% of females reported that they believed they had a duty to respond. Contrary to hypothesis three part two, using cross-tabulation, differences were not found between males and females in regards to their believed reporting duty, χ^2 (2, N = 186) = 3.22, p = .22 (see Table 9).

Table 9. *Gender * Duty to Report for Vignette One Crosstabulation*

	Gender			
	Yes	No	Don't know	χ^2
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	
Male	55 (84.6%)	2 (3.1%)	8 (12.3%)	3.22
Female	112 (92.6%)	1 (0.8%)	8 (6.6%)	

Note: missing data (n=4)

Response to vignette two. The large majority (93%) of pre-service teachers believed they, as teachers, had a duty to respond in vignette two. Vignette two depicted a young student who drew a photo of his family detailing potential violence, the student also displayed concerning behaviour over his extensive worry for his sister's well being. Eighty-seven percent of males and 97% of females reported that they believed they had a duty to respond. Further analysis using cross tabulation was unable to be performed due to the small response size to the *no* and *don't know* options of the duty to respond item.

3.7 Positive Intervention Response

In order to interpret the results in a meaningful way, a composite score for intervention response was created using the three primary forms of positive responses to child exposure to domestic violence: notify the principal, call the Children's Aid Society, and make a follow-up appointment with the student. For each of the three items, the responses were collapsed into either *likely to respond* (very likely and somewhat likely) or *unlikely to respond* (somewhat unlikely and very unlikely). The three items were then combined together to create a composite score for positive intervention response, ranging from 3 (unlikely to respond) to 6 (likely to respond). Composite scores were only calculated for the participants who responded to each of the three included items.

Positive response to vignette one. Summary information about pre-service teachers' likelihood to intervene in each individual way can be found in Table 10. In vignette one, 91% of pre-service teachers reported that, yes, they would be likely to report the case to the principal, and 92% were likely to make a follow-up appointment with the student. However, only 40% of pre-service teachers were likely to report the case to the Children's Aid Society. The average positive intervention response score for the 109 included participants, was 5.59 (SD = .56).

Table 10. *Frequencies and Total Percentages of Likelihood to Intervene in Vignette One*

	Very likely n (%)	Somewhat likely n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat unlikely n (%)	Very unlikely n (%)
Talk to Elizabeth's mother	49 (25.8)	55 (28.9%)	39 (20.5%)	29 (15.3%)	14 (7.4%)
Talk to Elizabeth's Father	39 (20%)	51 (26.8%)	48 (25.3%)	31 (16.3%)	17 (8.9%)
Encourage Elizabeth to talk to her parents about her feelings	54 (28.4%)	57 (30%)	37 (19.5%)	29 (15.3%)	10 (5.3%)
Notify the principal	136 (71.6%)	36 (18.9%)	13 (6.8%)	3 (1.6%)	1 (.5%)
Support Elizabeth on an on-going basis	170 (89.5%)	17 (8.9%)	3 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Call the Children's Aid Society	22 (11.6%)	53 (27.9%)	64 (33.7%)	30 (15.8%)	20 (10.5%)
Notify the police	8 (4.2%)	46 (24.2%)	64 (33.7%)	36 (18.9%)	32 (16.8%)
Seek professional development to learn more about children exposed to domestic violence	107 (56.3%)	62 (32.6%)	15 (7.9%)	4 (2.1%)	2 (1.1%)
Make a follow up appointment to talk with Elizabeth	131 (68.9%)	44 (23.2%)	12 (6.3%)	2 (1.1%)	1 (.5%)
Do nothing	0 (0%)	3 (1.6%)	8 (4.2%)	5 (2.6%)	169 (88.9%)

Positive response to vignette two. Summary information about pre-service teachers' likelihood to intervene in each individual way can be found in Table 11. In vignette two, 97% of pre-service teachers reported that, yes, they would be likely to report the case to the principal, 95% were likely to make a follow-up appointment with the student, and 71% were likely to report the case to the Children's Aid Society. For the 143 participants who obtained a composite score, the average positive intervention response score was 5.9 (*SD* = .37).

Table 11. *Frequencies and Total Percentages of Likelihood to Intervene in Vignette Two*

	Very likely n (%)	Somewhat likely n (%)	Neutral n (%)	Somewhat unlikely n (%)	Very unlikely n (%)
Talk to Dean's mother	81 (42.6%)	55 (28.9%)	25 (13.2%)	16 (8.4%)	11 (5.8%)
Talk to Dean's Father	37 (19.5%)	38 (20%)	35 (18.4%)	45 (23.7%)	33 (17.4%)
Encourage Dean to talk to her parents about her feelings	39 (20.5%)	30 (15.8%)	46 (24.2%)	40 (21.1%)	33 (17.4%)
Notify the principal	162 (85.3%)	22 (11.6%)	3 (1.6%)	0 (0%)	3 (1.6%)
Support Dean on an on-going basis	173 (91.1%)	13 (6.8%)	4 (2.1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Call the Children's Aid Society	77 (40.5%)	57 (30%)	43 (22.6%)	10 (5.3%)	3 (1.6%)
Notify the police	41 (21.6%)	46 (24.2%)	66 (34.7%)	18 (9.5%)	15 (7.9%)
Seek professional development to learn more about children exposed to domestic violence	123 (64.7%)	48 (25.3%)	14 (7.4%)	0 (0%)	4 (2.1%)
Make a follow up appointment to talk with Dean	149 (78.4%)	32 (16.8%)	6 (3.2%)	1 (.5%)	2 (1.1%)
Do nothing	0 (0%)	3 (1.6%)	4 (2.1%)	4 (2.1%)	168 (88.4%)

Positive intervention response and gender. Contrary to hypothesis three part two, a one-way between subjects Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) revealed that males (M = 5.49, SD = .61) and females (M = 5.63, SD = .54) did not significantly vary in their composite scores of positive intervention response to vignette one, $F(1, 107) = 1.68$, p = .2. Furthermore, a one-way between subjects ANOVA revealed that males (M = 5.91, SD = .28) and females (M = 5.89, SD = .41) also did not significantly vary in their composite scores of positive intervention response to vignette two, $F(1, 141) = .2$, $p = .66$.

3.8 Past Experience and Case Response

Past personal experience and case response. In order to accurately analyze hypothesis four, part one, an overall *yes* or *no* score was computed for past personal experience. Participants who reported growing up with violence, having experienced violence as an adult, or knew someone closely who experienced violence were assigned a *yes* for having past personal experience. Participants who reported no experience, did not wish to say, or had met someone who experienced violence were assigned a *no* for not having past personal experience with violence. The option of having met someone who experienced violence was not included in the criteria for past personal experience, as the extent to which the participant was potentially impacted is far too variable.

One-way between subjects ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effect of positive intervention response to each vignette on past personal experience with violence. Contrary to hypothesis four part one, for vignette one, the ANOVA revealed that past personal experience with violence (M = 5.56, SD = .61) and no past personal experience with violence (M = 5.62, SD = .49) did not significantly effect the composite score of

positive intervention response, $F(1, 107) = .29$, $p = .56$. For vignette two, the ANOVA revealed that past personal experience with violence ($M = 5.89$, $SD = .32$) and no past personal experience with violence ($M = 5.9$, $SD = .43$) did not significantly effect the composite score of positive intervention response, $F(1, 141) = .05$, $p = .82$.

Past professional experience and case response. Similarly to past personal experience, in order to accurately analyze hypothesis four, part two, an overall *yes* or *no* score was computed for past professional experience. Participants who reported having volunteered at a crisis centre, been part of a club or activist group, been part of a violence prevention program, or counselled an individual who experienced violence were assigned a *yes* for having past professional experience. Participants who reported no experience or did not wish were assigned a *no* for not having past professional experience with violence.

One-way between subjects ANOVAs were conducted to compare the effect of past professional experience with violence on positive intervention response to each vignette. Contrary to hypothesis four part two, for vignette one, the ANOVA revealed that past professional experience with violence ($M = 5.67$, $SD = .56$) and no past professional experience with violence ($M = 5.57$, $SD = .57$) did not significantly effect the composite score of positive intervention response, $F(1, 107) = .61$, $p = .44$. For vignette two, the ANOVA revealed that past professional experience with violence ($M = 5.93$, $SD = .27$) and no past professional experience with violence ($M = 5.88$, $SD = .4$) did not significantly effect the composite score of positive intervention response, $F(1, 141) = .36$, $p = .55$.

Chapter 4

4 Discussion

The overall purpose of this study was to examine the attitudes and beliefs that pre-service teachers foster toward domestic violence, as well as their reporting behaviour in cases of child exposure to domestic violence. A questionnaire was used to measure pre-service teachers' underlying beliefs about violence against women, which unhealthy behaviours constitute as domestic violence, and how serious such unhealthy behaviours are. Additionally, the study measured pre-service teachers' likelihood to intervene in cases of domestic violence, as well as cases of child exposure to domestic violence. Data from 190 University of Western Ontario pre-service teachers were summarized and showed that in general they foster progressive attitudes toward domestic violence and reporting cases of child exposure. The results will be discussed through the following lenses: underlying attitudes toward VAW, forms and seriousness of domestic violence, duty to report and intervention response, and past experience and intervention response.

The individual analyses suggested that pre-service teachers foster very progressive attitudes toward domestic violence. They appear to be aware of when unhealthy behaviours constitute as domestic violence, as well as how serious these behaviours are. Moreover, pre-service teachers also foster very positive intentions toward intervening in known cases of domestic violence. They are also very much aware of their duty to report in cases of child exposure to domestic violence, and foster positive intentions toward responding to such cases. Contrary to both parts of the third hypothesis, gender differences were not observed in regards to reporting and responding behaviours, as the

large majority of pre-service teachers fostered positive intervention intentions. Past experience, both personal as well as professional, were not observed to significantly impact pre-service teachers reporting behaviours in cases of child exposure to domestic violence.

4.1 Underlying Attitudes About Violence Against Women

The majority of pre-service teachers held progressive underlying attitudes toward VAW. They agreed with many statements used to define VAW, including that it can happen to anyone, that it is a concern to them, that it affects all women, and that the use of sexist, violent language and the sexualisation of women in popular media helps normalize violence against women. Pre-service teachers also disagreed that domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the home. Based on the results of Ontario men from the *White Ribbon Campaign* (Carolo, 2012), it was expected that pre-service teachers would also hold progressive underlying attitudes toward VAW, which were undoubtedly displayed. However, the *White Ribbon Campaign* observed variability in the responses of Ontario men in regards to their beliefs of a woman's ability to leave a violent relationship, as 42% disagreed that a woman could leave if she really wanted to and 51% agreed. As predicted, much like the *White Ribbon Campaign*, variability was also observed amongst pre-service teachers, such that only 54% disagreed that a woman could leave a violent relationship if she really wanted to, 28% agreed and 21% neither agreed nor disagreed. Although the results observed in the *White Ribbon Campaign* were more staggering, the trends observed in the present study suggest that pre-service teachers also somewhat foster misconceptions regarding a woman's ability to leave a violent relationship. However, although it is evident that a number of pre-service teachers foster

misconceptions, there are a larger proportion of which are uncertain of a woman's ability to leave a violent relationship. These results imply that if teachers encounter a student in these circumstances, they may not understand the true extent of how difficult it may be for the student's mother to take action and leave the relationship. This demonstrates a need for further training and education for pre-service teachers as to the risk factors and deterrents women experience when deciding to leave a violent relationship.

4.2 Forms and Seriousness of Domestic Violence

When are unhealthy behaviours domestic violence? Pre-service teachers not only hold progressive underlying attitudes toward domestic violence, they hold strong beliefs as to when unhealthy behaviours constitute as domestic violence, and how serious they are. The responses of pre-service teachers were similar to the results found by Carlson and Worden (2005) that persons believe physical violence to be forms of domestic violence, but are uncertain of emotional and psychological violence. Specifically, the large majority pre-service teachers believed that using threats of harm, forcing sex, pushing, and slapping a child always constitute as domestic violence. However, pre-service teachers were less inclined to consider psychological and verbal abuse, such as yelling, using verbal putdowns, and withholding money, as domestic violence.

Generally, pre-service teachers responded similarly to Ontario men (Carolo, 2012) in constituting unhealthy behaviours as forms of domestic violence. Both populations always considered physical violence against women to be forms of domestic violence, and both populations were less certain in regards to verbal and psychological abuse. However, differences between the two populations can be observed for beliefs of

slapping a child, and yelling. A large majority of pre-service teachers (74%) always considered slapping a child a form of child abuse, whereas only 58% of Ontario men did. Due to the nature of their career, pre-service teachers have a vested interest in caring for their students as well as their safety (Teven, 2007). Therefore, the discrepancy between Ontario men and pre-service teachers could be explained by the heightened sensitivity pre-service teachers hold in regards to child well-being, in comparison to the general population. In regards to yelling, 26% of Ontario men believed it always constituted as domestic violence, whereas only 8% of pre-service teachers believed this. This discrepancy is especially interesting, as pre-service teacher generally have very progressive attitudes toward domestic violence. Therefore, due to pre-service teachers' progressive attitudes, it would be expected that more teachers would consider yelling as a significant form of domestic violence than the general population. It is possible that pre-service teachers have a higher tolerance for yelling, if they occasionally utilize it as a behaviour management technique in the classroom. However, this discrepancy warrants further investigation into pre-service teachers' beliefs regarding yelling in general, as well as in specific relation to domestic violence.

Seriousness of unhealthy behaviours. Pre-service teachers provided similar responses to the seriousness of unhealthy behaviours, as they did for how often they consider such behaviours to be domestic violence. The large majority of pre-service teachers believed that physical forms of violence such as threats of harm, forcing sex, pushing, and slapping a child are very serious forms of violence. However, pre-service teachers were less inclined to consider psychological and verbal forms of violence such as withholding money, yelling and using verbal putdowns as serious forms of violence. Generally, both

pre-service teachers and Ontario men (Carolo, 2012) held similar beliefs in regards to the seriousness of unhealthy behaviours. However, similarly to the classification of yelling as a form of domestic violence, pre-service teachers (33%) appeared to be less likely than Ontario men (48%) (Carolo, 2012) to consider yelling as a serious form of violence. It is possible that this discrepancy could also be explained by the high tolerance for yelling that teachers potentially foster.

Attitudes toward psychological and verbal unhealthy behaviours, and their seriousness were further explored based on gender. It was discovered that female pre-service teachers not only always constituted withholding money as a form of domestic violence, but also considered it a serious form, significantly more than men. These gender differences could perhaps be explained by the historic gender differences in salary. Historically, and in some cases, presently, men receive overall higher salaries than women (Crothers et al., 2010; Fawole, 2008; Furnham & Wilson, 2011). As a result of this, it is possible that on average men feel less threatened by a female withholding money, as they are typically the spouses with the higher earnings. On the other hand, with women receiving lower salaries, it is clear to see why they would consider economic abuse as a serious form of domestic violence, as they may suffer more severe consequences than men. To date, minimal empirical data exists on VAW in the form of economic abuse (Fawole, 2008). Therefore, this gender difference warrants further investigation into the specific beliefs pre-service teachers, as well as the general population, hold toward economic abuse.

4.3 Duty to Report and Intervention Response

Likelihood to intervene. Pre-service teachers foster very positive intentions toward intervening in known incidents of domestic violence. Ninety percent of pre-service teachers reported that they would be likely to intervene in any way at all if they became aware that a family member or close friend was a victim of domestic abuse. The positive intentions to intervene that pre-service teachers foster appears to be far more progressive than the general population, as observed by Gracia and colleagues (2009). The results of a study conducted by Gracia and colleagues found that 23% of their participants had known of a case of IPVAW, and 71.5% of those individuals chose not to report it. According to the results of the present study, the large majority of pre-service teachers claim that they would respond to a case of known violence, which is noticeably greater than the results found by Gracia and colleagues.

Positive intervention response. Pre-service teachers not only hold positive intentions toward intervening in cases of domestic violence involving loved ones, the majority are also aware of their duty to report cases of suspected child exposure to domestic violence. Eighty-eight percent of pre-service teachers reported they had a duty to respond to vignette one, and 93% reported their duty to respond in vignette two. Pre-service teachers also fostered very positive intentions for intervening. For both vignette one and two, over 90% of pre-service teachers responded that they would be likely to report the incident to the principal, as well as schedule a follow-up appointment with the student. In terms of reporting the incident to the Children's aid society (CAS), 71% of pre-service teachers responded that they were likely to in vignette two; however, only 40% were likely to report to CAS in vignette one. These results imply that overall, pre-service teachers hold

very positive intentions of intervening, especially through reporting to their principal and talking with the student. However, pre-service teachers may be slightly less inclined to report the incident directly to the CAS.

These results can be explained by the perceived deterrents teachers faced in reporting child abuse found by Kenny (2001). In the study conducted by Kenny (2001), teachers provided reasons for their decision not to report suspected cases of child abuse. The most prevalent reasons given were that they were fearful of making an inaccurate report, they did not believe child protective services actually helps families, and that they did not observe physical signs of abuse. The fear of making an inaccurate report has been observed in a number of studies (Goebbels et al., 2008; Goldman & Padaychi, 2002; Kenny, 2011; Sinanan, 2011), specifically teachers fear of the consequences to themselves as well as to the students if a false report is made. These observations of fear can perhaps explain pre-service teachers' reluctance to report to CAS in the present study. It appears that pre-service teachers would feel more comfortable consulting with their principal prior to reporting a suspected case to CAS. However, it is crucial that teachers are aware that the individual who has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may be in need of protection is the one who is legally obligated to report to CAS, and that they must not delegate this responsibility (Baker & Jaffe, 2006).

Pre-service teachers were given the option to offer additional answers as to how they would personally respond to each vignette. The responses offered for vignette one include: "it must be firmly established there is violence occurring before actions are taken. She perhaps wrote a dark poem and that's all it was." "Ask other teachers if they have noticed anything." "I may notify police, and CAS. But definitely report to principal

and agree on action to take." "Refer Elizabeth to a school counsellor." The responses offered for vignette two include: "Unless I saw evidence I could not bring it up to authorities." "Yes, this would be reported. I would also consult with the kindergarten teacher." "Talk to the younger sister's teacher to see if she feels the same." "Speak to my principal regarding follow up actions." These responses imply that inconsistencies exist amongst pre-service teachers knowledge of reporting protocol and legislation.

There are a number of pre-service teachers who recognize their duty to report to CAS, some who prefer to consult with the principal first, and some who would consult with colleagues. However, very few teachers would opt not to respond to the incident at all. Therefore, the inconsistencies are apparent amongst pre-service teachers' form of response, as opposed to their overall likelihood to respond. These results are encouraging as they imply that pre-service teachers have positive intentions toward intervening, and will make the effort to respond in some way. However, the results also warrant further research into the deterrents pre-service teachers possibly face toward reporting incidents to CAS.

Overall, it is evident that pre-service teachers foster very positive attitudes toward intervening in incidents of domestic violence and child exposure. Specifically, based on the results found by Gracia and colleagues (2009), pre-service teachers appear to foster more positive intervention intentions than the general population. The evident difference between pre-service teachers and the general population can be interpreted in three ways. First of all, it is possible that pre-service teachers do in fact foster more positive intentions of intervening in domestic violence than the general population. This could perhaps be explained, in part, by the overall tendency for teachers to be caring and

empathetic individuals (Teven, 2007). Moreover, it is not surprising that pre-service teachers foster such progressive attitudes, as higher levels of education are found to positively shape attitudes toward violence against women (Bryant, 2003; de Judicibus & McCabe, 2001; Flood & Pease, 2009; Nagel, Matsuo, McIntyre, & Morrison, 2005; Webster et al., 2005). Therefore, it would be expected that pre-service teachers with at least four years of university education would foster more positive attitudes toward violence against women than the general population. Second of all, it is possible that pre-service teachers do in fact foster these positive intentions; however, when actually faced with the real decision to intervene they may choose not to. The results found by Gracia and colleagues (2009) are based on individuals who actually experienced the decision of whether or not to intervene in a case of known domestic violence, of which the majority chose not to. It is possible that the general population, not just pre-service teachers, foster positive intentions toward intervening in cases of domestic violence, yet the actual act of intervening is followed through on by a far smaller portion of the population. Lastly, it is possible that pre-service teachers responded to their likelihood of intervening in a socially desirable manner.

Positive intervention response and gender. Based on the gender differences in reporting found by Gracia and colleagues (2009) it was predicted that female pre-service teachers would be more likely to report incidents of domestic violence than male pre-service teachers. As the large majority of pre-service teachers reported that they would be likely to intervene, gender differences were not observed. The results of the study completed by Gracia and colleagues suggested that females are more empathetic toward victims of IPVAW, as they were more likely than males to perceive the violence as

severe, feel personally responsible, and intervene using mediating responses. However, the results of the present study suggested that both male and female pre-service teachers are empathetic toward domestic violence and child exposure and also have progressive attitudes regarding the severity of violent behaviours. Specifically, it is apparent that male pre-service teachers are not representative of the general male population in terms of their levels of empathy. In the future it would be worthwhile to further investigate gender in relation to reporting behaviours of pre-service teachers. Specifically, examine their perceptions of their personal responsibility to respond, as well as the forms of responding they are more likely to use, mediating or reporting responses.

4.4 Past Experience and Intervention Response

According to an interview study conducted by Gracia and Herrero (2006) with a sample of 2,498, individuals who have past personal exposure to partner violence foster negative attitudes toward reporting incidents of domestic violence. Therefore, based on the results of Gracia and Herrero (2006), it was predicted that pre-service teachers who reported past personal or past professional experience with domestic violence would less likely to report cases of child exposure to domestic violence, than those without past experience. However, the results of the current study did not yield any significant differences in reporting behaviour based on past experience with domestic violence. Based on the overall results of the present study, this is not surprising, as the large majority of pre-service teachers foster very positive reporting intentions. Although, on a larger scale it again poses an interesting result as it appears that pre-service teachers may respond more positively to cases of child exposure to domestic violence than the general population. These results could imply that, as previously mentioned, pre-service teachers are more

empathetic than the general population, regardless of whether or not they have past experience with domestic violence. Or, perhaps more likely, due to their awareness of their legal obligation to intervene as teachers they may feel the pressure to put their past experiences aside in order to fulfill the requirements of their career.

4.5 Limitations

Although the results of the present study portray pre-service teachers in a very positive light, a number of the findings were somewhat surprising. It was expected that pre-service teachers would respond similarly to the general population in terms of reporting incidents of domestic violence. However, in the present study, pre-service teachers fostered very positive intentions toward reporting, which were far higher than expected. It is possible that pre-service teachers were responding in a socially desirable manner, that the vignettes were not difficult enough, or that they do in fact foster these very positive reporting intentions. The questionnaire used did not incorporate a desirability measure; therefore, it is possible that pre-service teachers were simply responding to the vignettes in the 'right' way. This poses the question of whether or not pre-service teachers would actually report cases of suspected child exposure to domestic violence they reported they would. Moreover, it is possible that the vignettes used to depict scenarios of child exposure to domestic violence were too easily identified as reportable cases. If the vignettes were too obvious for the participants, the responses they gave may not be representative of how they would actually intervene in cases of suspected child exposure to domestic violence. Therefore, in the future, in order to accurately assess pre-service teachers' reporting intentions it would be beneficial to use

vignettes that are more subtle in depicting child exposure, as well as incorporate a desirability measure.

Chapter 5

5 Conclusions

Over the past several decades, domestic violence has become legally recognized as a serious legal and societal problem. Accompanying the changes made by the criminal justice system has been a progressive shift in the increased public awareness of the prevalence and impacts of domestic violence (Bala, 2008; Ellsberg & Heise, 2005; Schnieder, 2008; Sinha, 2013). The increase in legal and public awareness of domestic violence has resulted in an expansion of education and training available for the general population, and more specifically, teachers. Learning about domestic violence is now expected of teachers. For example, handbooks for teachers on children's exposure to domestic violence are widely available (e.g. Baker & Jaffe, 2008). Teachers are now provided with specific, step-by-step strategies for responding to known or suspected cases of students experiencing domestic violence. Therefore, it is not surprising that the results of the present study suggest that pre-service teachers foster very progressive attitudes toward domestic violence and reporting.

For the most part, the beliefs that both male and female pre-service teachers hold toward domestic violence and the behaviours that constitute as such are more progressive than those of the Ontario male population. Moreover, pre-service teachers hold very positive intentions toward reporting known incidents of domestic violence, as well as suspected cases of child exposure to violence. The results imply that pre-service teachers are more progressive in their beliefs toward domestic violence and their intentions of reporting incidents, than the general population. Although further investigation is needed to fully

understand the results, the current implications suggest that the pre-service teachers' beliefs toward domestic violence and intentions of reporting need to be harnessed and encouraged in the field of education. By harnessing and encouraging these progressive beliefs and intentions, it is possible that there could be an increase in reports of child exposure to domestic violence. Specifically, pre-service teachers may foster the knowledge and intention to report suspected cases; however, they may require the practice skills of talking to a student or parent in these circumstances in order to truly feel confident in following through on making the report.

It is estimated that as many as 275 million children worldwide are exposed to domestic violence in their childhood (UNICEF & The Body Shop, 2006). However, a large majority of these cases fail to be reported to the police or Children's Aid Society (Felson, Messner, Hoskin, & Deana, 2006; Spivak et al., 2014). Specifically, one-third of teachers are found to underreport suspected cases of child abuse (Webster et al., 2005). This poses a grave concern, such that if pre-service teachers foster very positive attitudes and reporting intentions, what occurs between the time that they are in their Bachelor of Education program to the time that they have a career as a teacher, that deters them from reporting cases of child exposure to domestic violence?

5.1 Future Directions

To build on the present study, it would be beneficial to compare the attitudes and reporting behaviours of teachers at various stages in their careers. For example, comparing pre-service teachers to full time teachers with varying years of experience (5, 10, 20). If differences are observed between the experience levels of teachers it would

provide insight into the stage at which teachers begin to experience deterrents to reporting suspected cases of child exposure to domestic violence.

Future research could also examine the specific deterrents pre-service and full-time teachers experience when faced with the decision to report suspected child exposure to domestic violence. An emerging social construct used to explain unethical decision-making behaviour is moral disengagement. Albert Bandura (1999) described moral disengagement as the process through which people legitimize committing or condoning horrible actions against others without the occurrence of guilt or negative self-evaluation. Moral disengagement is used through a number of processes including, moral justification (e.g., framing the unethical behaviour in a way that makes it socially acceptable by giving it a moral purpose), displacement or diffusion of responsibility (e.g., placing responsibility for consequences on legitimate authority, believing that one's simple actions are harmless allowing them to behave unethically in a group), disregard or distortion of consequences (e.g., minimizing the harm caused to others often by inflating the benefits of the behaviour), and dehumanization (e.g., stripping individuals of human qualities so they become unworthy of concern) (Bandura, 1999). Past research has focused primarily on the use of moral disengagement as a theory for understanding bystander behaviour, specifically in relation to bullying. Presently there has been little to no research conducted using moral disengagement to understand the reporting behaviour of third parties in domestic violence disputes, let alone the use of this by teachers. Due to the high profile nature of child exposure to domestic violence it is possible that teachers fall victim to the use of moral disengagement as a way to avoid facing the difficulty of intervening in suspected cases of child exposure.

Both the potential differences between the experience levels of teachers, as well as their use of moral disengagement are very much worth investigating in order to gain a thorough and accurate understanding of the discrepancy between reporting intentions and behaviours of teachers. Gaining a thorough understanding of such behaviours is a crucial component needed to increase the number of cases of child exposure to domestic violence that are reported. Ultimately, by increasing teachers' comfort and ability in reporting suspected child exposure, the number of victimized children receiving help and intervention will also increase.

Despite the potential of socially desirable responding due to the lack of a desirability measure, the results of the present study contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the fields of domestic violence and education. The results provide an understanding that pre-service teachers' foster progressive attitudes and positive intervention intentions in regards to domestic violence. Furthermore, the results ultimately highlight a gap in knowledge regarding the reporting behaviours of teachers. Specifically, the present study emphasizes the discrepancy between the positive intervention intentions of pre-service teachers and the lack of reporting by working teachers. In order to protect the lives of victimized children, it is imperative that future research be conducted in regards to the factors that influence teacher reporting of child exposure to domestic violence.

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Appendix A

Safe Schools EDU 5434S - A course designed to help students develop the understanding and practical knowledge necessary to develop a safe and caring learning environment for all students, regardless of race, creed, ancestry, ability, colour, gender identification, or sexual orientation. Students in this course will develop an understanding of current trends in school violence and critically examine comprehensive school violence prevention policies & programs in Ontario schools.

Appendix B

VIOLENCE SURVEY

Background

1. **Are you:** ○ Male ○ Female

2. **How old are you?** _____

3. **Which stream are you in?** ○ PJ ○ JI ○ IS

4. **Are you a parent? :** ○ No ○ Yes (if yes, age of oldest child _____)

5. **What is your relationship status?**

○ Single
○ Married
○ Common-law
○ Divorced or separated
○ other

6. **What is your <u>personal</u> experience with violence? (Check all that apply)**

○ Grew up with violence in my family
○ Have experienced violence as an adult (e.g., workplace, intimate relationship, school)
○ Know someone close to me that has experienced violence / abuse
○ Have met someone that has experienced violence / abuse

7. What is your professional experience with violence? (Check all that apply)

- ○ Have volunteered at a crisis centre (e.g., help hotline, victim services, CAS, Kids Help Phone)
- ○ Have been part of a club or activist group that prevented violence and related issues
- ○ Have been part of a violence prevention program
- ○ Have counselled (job or volunteer… don't count family or friends) an individual who has experienced violence

My Views

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.	**strongly disagree**	**somewhat disagree**	**neither agree nor disagree**	**somewhat agree**	**strongly agree**
1. Domestic violence can happen in any family, regardless of cultural background of economic situation	○	○	○	○	○
2. Violence against women and girls is a concern to me	○	○	○	○	○
3. Violence against women and girls affects all women including women I care about in my life	○	○	○	○	○
4. Sexist, violent language and the sexualization of women in media and popular culture helps to normalize violence against women	○	○	○	○	○
5. Most women could leave a violent relationship if they really wanted to	○	○	○	○	○
6. Domestic violence is a private matter to be handled in the family	○	○	○	○	○

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion. ***When would you consider the following to be forms of domestic violence?***	**always**	**sometimes**	**never**
7. One partner pushes the other to cause harm or fear	○	○	○
8. One partner makes the other have sex with them	○	○	○
9. One partner tries to scare or control the other by threatening to hurt them or other family members	○	○	○
10. A parent slaps their child across the face because the child did something wrong	○	○	○
11. One partner yells at the other	○	○	○
12. One partner puts the other down and tries to make them feel bad about themselves	○	○	○
13. One partner prevents another from seeing family and friends	○	○	○
14. One partner tries to control the other by withholding money	○	○	○

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion. ***How serious is each one of these situations?***	**very serious**	**quite serious**	**not that serious**	**not at all serious**
15. One partner pushes the other to cause harm or fear	○	○	○	○
16. One partner makes the other have sex with them	○	○	○	○
17. One partner tries to scare or control the other by threatening to hurt them or other family members	○	○	○	○
18. A parent slaps their child across the face because the child did something wrong	○	○	○	○
19. One partner yells at the other	○	○	○	○
20. One partner puts the other down and tries to make them feel bad about themselves	○	○	○	○
21. One partner prevents another from seeing family and friends	○	○	○	○
22. One partner tries to control the other by withholding money	○	○	○	○

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.

Some people believe that is acceptable under certain circumstances to physically assault their wife, partner or girlfriend. In which of the following circumstances do you think a man has a right to do this to his spouse or partner. If she…

	always acceptable	**sometimes acceptable**	**never acceptable**
23. Argues or refuses to obey him	○	○	○
24. Doesn't keep up with domestic chores	○	○	○
25. Refuses to have sex with him	○	○	○
26. Admits to having sex with another man	○	○	○
27. Makes him look stupid or insults him in front of his friends	○	○	○
28. Does something to make him angry	○	○	○

Imagine that you became aware that a family member or close friend of yours was currently a victim of domestic abuse.	**Very likely**	**Somewhat likely**	**Neutral**	**Somewhat unlikely**	**Very unlikely**
29. How likely are you to intervene in any way at all?	○	○	○	○	○

My Views

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't Know**
30. In the past year, have you ever witnessed a man using abusive or harassing behavior towards a woman in a social environment such as a pub, club or party?	○	○	○
31. Did you act on witnessing this abuse or harassment?	○	○	○
32. If yes you acted, did you do any of the following?	○	○	○
A- Thought to yourself that what the man did was wrong			
B- Said or did something to challenge the man's behavior	○	○	○
33. If you chose not to get involved, what was the main reason?	○	○	○
A- Didn't know how to respond	○	○	○
B- Didn't want to get involved	○	○	○
C- Was concerned about personal safety	○	○	○

F- Felt that it was a personal matter	○	○	○
G- Thought someone else would intervene	○	○	○
H- Don't know	○	○	○
I- If other please specify:			

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.	**strongly disagree**	**somewhat disagree**	**neither agree nor disagree**	**somewhat agree**	**strongly agree**
34. If a woman wears provocative clothing, she's responsible for being raped	○	○	○	○	○
35. Women often say 'no' when they mean 'yes'	○	○	○	○	○
36. A woman could say she was raped if she was pressured to have sex with a man while both were drunk	○	○	○	○	○
37. When women talk and act sexy, they are inviting rape	○	○	○	○	○
38. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away	○	○	○	○	○
39. If a woman doesn't try to stop you, she cant really say it was rape	○	○	○	○	○
40. The use of pornography, strip clubs, and the purchase of sex (prostitution) contribute to harmful attitudes towards women	○	○	○	○	○
41. Many so-called rape victims are actually women who had sex and "changed their minds" afterwards	○	○	○	○	○
42. Sexual assault is less traumatic for a woman who is more sexually experienced	○	○	○	○	○

For each of the following statements, please fill in the bubble that best matches your opinion.	**strongly disagree**	**somewhat disagree**	**neither agree nor disagree**	**somewhat agree**	**strongly agree**
43. Both partners in a relationship have the right to initiate sex equally provided there is consent	○	○	○	○	○
43. Both partners in a relationship are free to say if they don't want sex	○	○	○	○	○
44. It is important that a woman be as happy as a man in a sexual relationship	○	○	○	○	○
45. It's a woman's job to bring up protection before sex	○	○	○	○	○
46. It's possible for a woman to be raped by someone she is in a sexual relationship with	○	○	○	○	○
47. Men should never get their partners drunk to get them to have sex	○	○	○	○	○
48. A man should not touch his partner unless they want to be touched	○	○	○	○	○

Case Examples

1. **You assigned a poetry project in your grade 9 English class where the students were asked to free write an original poem on a topic of their choice. While reading Elizabeth's poem you became quite concerned regarding the content. She wrote a very detailed and dark poem about a young girl living in an angry and violent home. The poem made reference to parents fighting, violence, depressed feelings, and fear. After handing back the assignments you approached Elizabeth at the end of class to ask her about her poem. You tell her that you are concerned about her because of the content of her poem and asked her if there was anything going on at home that she would like to talk about and she replied "no, perfect families do not exist, they all have their problems," and then she hurried out of class.**

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?

Yes	No	Don't Know
○	○	○

How likely are you to do each of the following?	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Somewhat unlikely	Very unlikely
Talk to Elizabeth's mother	○	○	○	○	○
Talk to Elizabeth's father	○	○	○	○	○
Encourage Elizabeth to talk to her parents about her feelings	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the principal	○	○	○	○	○
Support Elizabeth on an ongoing basis	○	○	○	○	○
Call the Children's Aid Society	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the police	○	○	○	○	○
Seek professional development to learn more about children exposed to domestic violence	○	○	○	○	○
Make a follow up appointment to talk with Elizabeth	○	○	○	○	○
Do nothing	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify)					

2. Dean, a grade 2 student of yours, frequently has been asking you if he and his younger sister can stay in your classroom to clean up. He is worried about going home and when you inquire further he gets angry and closes himself off. He will regularly ask you during the day if he can "check up" on his little sister in the kindergarten class. He doesn't have many, if any friends his own age. When you asked the class to draw a family portrait, you were alarmed because he portrayed his father holding a beer and with an angry expression. He portrayed his mother with a sad face and with a dark or perhaps "black" eye. He drew himself and his sister between his two parents with sad faces.

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't Know**
	○	○	○

How likely are you to do each of the following?	**Very likely**	**Somewhat likely**	**Neutral**	**Somewhat unlikely**	**Very unlikely**
Talk to Dean's mother	○	○	○	○	○
Talk to Dean's father	○	○	○	○	○
Encourage Dean to talk to his parents about his feelings	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the principal	○	○	○	○	○
Support Dean on an ongoing basis	○	○	○	○	○
Call the Children's Aid Society	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the police	○	○	○	○	○
Seek professional development to learn more about children exposed to domestic violence	○	○	○	○	○
Make a follow up appointment to talk with Dean	○	○	○	○	○
Do nothing	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify)					

3. Your grade 10 student Dianna always appeared friendly, outgoing and did well in your math class since the start of the year. Lately you notice her grades have begun to drop and she appears anxious and easily agitated. She reacted with a great deal of anger when a male student bumped into her by accident in class. You have been worried about her recent changes and decided to inquire about the reasons for her behaviour. When you asked Dianna to tell you if something has been bothering her, she told you that Ryan, a student she knows from her chemistry class had forced her to have sexual intercourse with him. She disclosed that things got out of hand when he came back to her home after the party they both attended. She kept telling him NO but she had a few drinks and was unable to fight back. Dianna admitted that she did not report the incident because she was embarrassed to tell what happened to her and also because she feared people would not believe her since she was drinking and was seen flirting with Ryan.

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't Know**
	○	○	○

How <u>likely</u> are you to do each of the following?	**Very likely**	**Somewhat likely**	**Neutral**	**Somewhat unlikely**	**Very unlikely**
Talk to Dina's mother	○	○	○	○	○
Talk to Dina's father	○	○	○	○	○
Encourage Dina to talk to her parents about her feelings	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the principal	○	○	○	○	○
Support Dina on an ongoing basis	○	○	○	○	○
Find time within the next day or two to check up with Dianna	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the police	○	○	○	○	○
Seek professional development to learn more about youth exposed to sexual violence	○	○	○	○	○
Do nothing	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify)					

4. Britney, your grade 9 student, told you about her friend Joanna who was recently sexually assaulted by the captain of the football team. Joanna was pressured to take off her clothes and take nude pictures with other members of the football team. She was threatened that the pictures would be uploaded on the internet and the school's website if she reported the incident to the police or other authorities. After the incident, Joanna received numerous emails from unknown senders reminding her of the assault and telling her how they enjoyed seeing her naked.

Do you as a teacher have a duty to respond to this situation?	**Yes**	**No**	**Don't Know**
	○	○	○

How likely are you to do each of the following?	**Very likely**	**Somewhat likely**	**Neutral**	**Somewhat unlikely**	**Very unlikely**
Talk to Joanna's mother	○	○	○	○	○
Talk to Joanna's father	○	○	○	○	○
Encourage Joanna to talk to her parents about her feelings	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the principal	○	○	○	○	○
Find time within the next day or two to check up with Joanna	○	○	○	○	○
Support Joanna on an ongoing basis	○	○	○	○	○
Notify the police	○	○	○	○	○
Seek professional development to learn more about youth exposed to sexual violence	○	○	○	○	○
Do nothing	○	○	○	○	○
Other (please specify)					

Appendix B

Pre-Service Teachers' Beliefs of Domestic Violence

LETTER OF INFORMATION

You are being invited to participate in a study to investigate the factors that influence reporting behaviours of incidents of domestic violence exposure. Approximately 250 B.Ed. students are being asked to participate.

If you agree to participate in this study you will be asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning of the Safe Schools course in class. Adequate time will be given during class to complete the survey. The survey will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions about your views of domestic violence, how you would respond to a few different scenarios, and some background information. The background information includes a few questions on your experiences with domestic violence in order to evaluate how personal experience may affect attitudes and awareness.

Do not write your name on the questionnaire. The information collected will be used for research purposes only, and no identifying information will be used in any publication or presentation of the study results. All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. All of the questionnaires will be secured safely in a locked filing cabinet located at the University of Western Ontario, whereby after five years, the files will be shredded.

If you do experience distress because of any of the questions in the survey please contact the researchers right away and we will provide assistance. There are no known risks to participating in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time with no effect on your academic status. A potential benefit of participating in this study is the opportunity to reflect on your knowledge, attitudes and preparation as a future teacher on domestic violence related issues. In appreciation for your assistance with the study, you will receive a $5.00 gift certificate for use at the Faculty of Education's cafeteria.

Completion and return of the questionnaire indicates your consent to participate in this study.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics at: 519-661-3036 or **ethics@uwo.ca.** If you have any questions about this study, please contact Dr. Peter Jaffe or Katherine Vink. If you wish to be emailed a copy of the results or would like to debrief, please contact Katherine Vink by email. This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Curriculum Vita

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Post-secondary Education and Degrees:

University of Guelph
Guelph, Ontario, Canada
2007-2011 B.A. (Hons)

The University of Western Ontario
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2012-2014 M.A.

Related Work Experience

Student Intern
Thames Valley District School Board
2013-2014

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Teaching Assistant
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Publications:

Jaffe, P., Straatman, A-L., Harris, B., Georges, A., Vink, K., & Reif, K. (2013). Emerging trends in teacher sexual misconduct in Ontario: 2007-12. *Education and Law Journal, 23*, 19-39.