

## *Exploring Attitudes Towards Teenage Relationship Abuse: A Q-Methodology Study*

Deanne Christie Lockington, University of Teesside, United Kingdom

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### **Abstract**

Teenagers are most at risk of relationship abuse in the UK, yet least likely to report it (Home Office, 2014). It is not only a proliferating crime, but a complex health, social and psychological epidemic (Rakovec, 2014). The issue is significantly misunderstood and unrecognised (Crown Prosecution Service, 2014). Previous research into attitudes towards adult relationship abuse in the UK, and teenage abuse in the US, shows negative attitudes are erroneously influenced by myths and stereotypes. Attitudes are a result of individual's values, and these values dictate behaviours. Such attitudes precipitate and perpetuate the 'shadowing' of the problem and exacerbate victims' suffering (Yamawaki et al., 2012). Research proposes similar cause and effects of attitudes towards teenage abuse in the UK, however, no research to date has investigated this. This study aimed to address a gap in the literature by exploring attitudes towards teenage relationship abuse to identify if common myths and stereotypes were present. A q-methodology was used to explore perceptions and findings interpreted using thematic analysis. Findings showed gender differences in perceptions, and that myths and stereotypes were prevalent in views. This may explain why the severity of the issue is shadowed and overlooked. It is hoped the findings can be incorporated into campaigns to successfully increase awareness of teenage relationship abuse as well as aid in eradicating fallacies. As a result, this may increase the likeliness of reporting and support for those affected by the issue, reduce victimisation rates and ultimately aid in ending teenage relationship abuse.

Keywords: teenage relationship abuse, attitudes, gender-stereotypes, myths, social construct theory, social representation theory

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## **Introduction**

### *Definition and Background Information*

Teenage relationship abuse is not only a crime, but a serious health, social and psychological issue (Morley & Mullender, 1992). It is crucial relationship abuse is studied as a psychological issue in order to aid comprehension of underpinning cognitive, emotional and behavioural causes and effects, as well as the study of attitudes towards the issue which has many severe implications (Nicolson, 2010).

The term 'teenage relationship abuse' relates to those affected by relationship abuse between the ages of 16 and 18 (National Health Service, 2014). In 2013, the definition of relationship abuse was reformed to place greater emphasises on teenage victims. The definition was amended to: "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to the following types: psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional" (The Home Office, 2013).

The previous definition of relationship abuse limited legal protection solely to adults and did not provide support or legal protection, or acknowledge teenage victims of abuse; instead, it was deemed child abuse (Home Office 2013a). Since recognition of teenage relationship abuse in the UK, legislation protects victims aged 16 to 18 years. Previously referred to as 'relationship violence', the term deemed more appropriate to use is 'relationship abuse', as the previous term inaccurately depicts that only acts of physical violence constitute abuse. A wider range of abusive behaviours are now accounted for in the definition. Each type of abuse listed, accounts for a number of different behaviours within each category with both physical and psychological abuse recognised as equally debilitating (Itzin, Bailey & Bentoyim, 2008; Tzin, Bailey & Bentoyim, 2008).

The lack of support services specifically for teenagers is recognised and included in the Governments action plan of 'ending violence against women and girls', introduced in line with amending the definition of abuse. In 2014, a large amount of funding was issued towards increasing support services and help for teenage victims and perpetrators (Home Office, 2014). The action plan also included re-launching the 'This is Abuse' campaign, focusing on young male perpetrators and completion of Clare's Law, which allows the police to disclose information of a previous partner's abusive history. There was also a planned review of the police response to relationship abuse in the UK (Home Office, 2014). The Governments focus on teenage relationship abuse highlights the severity of the issue in the UK and the importance of implementing prevention strategies to aid in decreasing and ultimately ending abuse. Although the Government have introduced this action plan, it is titled 'ending violence against women and girls', evidentially ignoring the victimisation of males, despite equal victimisation of both sexes (Barter, McCarry, Berridge & Evans, 2009). Another key aspect central to this research is the Governments action plan review, which focuses on the recognition that challenging attitudes is central to the main aim of ending relationship abuse, supporting the rationale behind this study (Home Office, 2014).

### *Prevalence Rates*

In the US, 1 in 3 teenagers are victims of abuse and there is gender symmetry in rates of perpetration and victimisation of many forms of abuse (American Psychological Association, 2013; William et al., 2008). In the UK, the British Crime Survey 2009/10 found that 16-20 year olds are most at risk of relationship abuse. According to National Health Service (2014), approximately 40% of teenagers are subject to relationship abuse, with males and females equally victimised (Barter, McCarry, Berridge & Evans, 2009; Cook, 2009).

### *Reporting Issues*

Relationship abuse is deemed the most underreported crime, often 'hidden behind closed doors' (Home Office, 2014). Existing statistics are based on a small proportion of cases and only reveal the seriousness of the issue to an extent. This can be explained by the iceberg theory of crime, which suggests that in crimes such as domestic and sexual abuse, the majority of cases are underreported and unknown, which shadows its true extent and scope (Gracia, 2004).

There are a number of reasons why relationship abuse remains a highly under reported, under recorded and under prosecuted crime and why there are variances in prevalence rates; many teenagers are unaware of the issue and often do not recognise the abuse they are subject to is a crime. Many victims are also unaware of how, who or when to report the crime. According to Love is respect (2013), a high proportion of teenagers and parents are confused about the law surrounding teenage relationship abuse, which massively decreases the likelihood of reporting. A fundamental reason is fear of negative attitudes and victim blame as a result of common stereotypes and myths which are associated with relationship abuse (Home Office, 2014). According to the CPS, (2012) young people, in particular males, are least likely to report. They underestimate abuse, fear being disbelieved, judged and laughed at for being less 'manly' if they are victims (Kimmel, 2002; This is abuse, 2014). This may explain why research suggests that teenage relationship abuse is more widespread than realised and why statistics show a higher victimisation rates for females. It may also underpin the reason the Governments action plan focuses specifically on ending violence towards 'women and girls', instead of relationship abuse overall (Home Office, 2014).

US research strongly emphasises the importance of recognising misconceptions of teenage relationship abuse to increase reporting rates. It is proposed that all intervention and awareness programmes should aim to correct attitudes about relationship abuse and aim programmes at those who hold such misperceptions (Edelen, et al, 2009; Whitaker, 2006). This recommendation has been further supported by the CPS (2012), whom stated that negative attitudes and misconceptions need to be eliminated to increase awareness, influence positive attitudes and increase reporting.

### *Attitudes*

The social constructions of attitudes are a crucial factor in the psychological element of relationship abuse (Nicolson, 2010). Attitudes are central to increasing awareness (Flood & Pease, 2009). They are strongly influenced by stereotypes and myths which are seen as the underlying cause of misconceptions surrounding the issue (Clark, 2007). According to Nicolson (2010), it is the 'hidden' side of relationship abuse,

such as victim's fear of negative attitudes from others, which psychological research needs to investigate in order to increase reporting rates and ultimately cease abuse. Negative attitudes significantly impact upon the victim's psychological state and cognitions, inducing feelings of self-blame, guilt, fear and low self-esteem, which reduces the likeliness of reporting and increases the likeliness of psychological problems (Nicolson, 2010). Findings from US research has identified that attitudes towards relationship abuse are negatively influenced by relationship abuse myths (The Avon Foundation, 2013; Yamawaki et al., 2009). Although findings were significant, US research cannot be cross culturally generalised to the UK, and UK research is yet to explore such attitudes.

#### *Traditional Model of Attitudes*

An attitude is a positive or negative, general evaluation and/or opinion held by an individual, or group, on social issues (Fabrigar & Wegener, 2010). The meaning behind the term 'attitude' has changed significantly since first introduced. According to Allport (1935), the traditional definition of an attitude was: 'a mental or neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related'. It was believed they are fixed and stable regardless of time and context and does not support the holistic idea that attitudes can be shared perspectives as a result of social influences, and instead believes attitudes are formed without social influence (Hogg & Vaughan, 2002).

#### *Social Construct & Social Representation Theories*

Recent social theories such as the social construct and social representation have developed the concept of attitudes to refer to a range of multiple, shared, and socially influenced perceptions of social issues, such as relationship abuse, which account for social influences (Howarth, 2006). Social representation theory believes 'attitudes are a combination of previous experiences and social influences, which can be shared by individuals, not solely in agreement but also in disagreement and contradiction' (Orfali, 2002).

Social construct theory believes in the investigation of perceptions which are a conflicting, complex and contradictory set of constructs. This theory is particularly relevant in explaining perceptions of relationship abuse, as it is an issue which factors surrounding it are ever changing. Traditional views differ from those held nowadays as a result of factors including recognition of the many forms of abuse as opposed to solely physical as well as male and teenage victims. Although society has changed, along with the issue of relationship abuse, public perceptions need to be explored to assess whether they have developed, or remain traditional (Muelenhard & Kimes, 1999). As stated by Muelenhard & Kimes (1999), there is not one sole, universal definition or view towards a concept, such as relationship abuse, and therefore multiple perceptions should be investigated.

Where the term 'attitudes' is referred to throughout this research, it represents social construct and representation theories. Both allow for the exploration of shared perceptions and opinions, which can be most appropriately, investigated using Q-methodology. This method allows multiple, often complex and conflicting perceptions to be gained, which is more accurate of what an attitude is, as opposed to what the traditional definitions suggests. Q-methodology involves participants sorting

a number of statements onto a structured grid in relation to how the participant agrees or disagrees with the view. The shared views are represented by factors which are displayed as a typical grid of statements, produced from those who share a similar view and have sorted and ranked the statements in a similar way (Watts & Stenner, 2005). These factors can then be interpreted using thematic analysis to aid understanding and identify perceptions among factors. Participants can be distinguished by age and sex, allowing for these differences to be assessed in relation to gender or age differences in perceptions on teenage relationship abuse. Previous research has highlighted gender as a powerful influence on perceptions of relationship abuse internationally (Berkel, Vandiver & Bahner, 2004; Flood & Pease, 2009). Nicolson & Wilson (2004), proposed that future research should assess whether there are gender differences in attitudes towards teenage relationship abuse.

### *Stereotypes*

Stereotypes are crucial in shaping attitudes and beliefs and are socially influenced by live and symbolic models (Sechrist & Stangor, 2001; Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001). Stereotypes are defined as generalised beliefs about certain groups, events or situations (Cardwell, 1996). They are deemed a crucial cognitive tool in processing information (Kunda, 2000; Sherman & Frost, 2000). They allow individuals to promptly interpret and comprehend a situation, event and/or group based on previous, traditional knowledge and information, and are a social influence which can alter perceptions towards a topic. The more consistent information is, the more strengthened the stereotype becomes and is unconsciously used to judge situations. New, inconsistent information therefore such as teenage relationship abuse, tends to be dismissed as traditional stereotypes often override new information (Carnaghi & Yzerbyt, 2006).

Gender role stereotypes are shared expectations and perceived attributions of females and males' behaviour, characteristics and roles, based on their socially identified gender (Cook & Cusack, 2010). They underpin attitudes and are deemed most influential (Seelau, Seelau & Poorman, 2003). According to social psychology, through gender role stereotyping, females are perceived as kind, empathetic, loving and nurturing, (Bem 1974), weak (Gerber, 1991) and vulnerable (Seelau & Seelau 2005). Males are deemed aggressive (Berke, Sloan, Parrott & Zeichner, 2012), assertive, controlling (Bem, 1974) and dominant (Gerber, 1991). These perceived gender characteristics and traits appear to be linked to many relationship abuse attitudes. They influence a stereotypical depiction of relationship abuse scenarios, with males as abusers, and females victims. Anything in conflict with gender role stereotypes and gender norms tends to be dismissed, for example, male victims of relationship abuse, or females inflicting emotional abuse (Archer, 2000; Kimmel, 2002; Sears et al, 2007). Seelau (2005) found that male to female abuse was judged more serious than any other scenario, showing that the strong stereotypical image is the most powerful. This can explain why there is much scepticism to believe anything other than stereotypical norms such as female abusers or teenage victims, as such information is in opposition to common stereotypes and tends to be ignored (Carnaghi & Yzerbyt, 2006).

### *Myths*

There are also countless existing myths which have been found to be highly influential in attitudes towards adult relationship abuse (Poorman, Seelau & Seelau,

2003). Relationship abuse myths are extensively held, incorrect stereotypical beliefs which justify or minimise abuse (Peters, 2008). Gender stereotypes and abuse myths may aid in understanding why the issue of teenage relationship abuse is also overlooked (Sanders, 2003).

Myths are deeply rooted from traditional views. Historically, males were legally able to use physical force to control their wives (Hutchings, 1988). This traditional view seems to underpin many prevalent attitudes that are still held nowadays and combined with gender role stereotypes, leads to the assumption that; relationship abuse occurs only in marriages, adult females are the victims and the perpetrators are controlling, aggressive and dominant husbands (Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Shlien-Dellinger, Huss & Kramer, 2004). It appears to be ignored and/or unknown that males, teenagers and those in non-heterosexual relationships are also victimised (Banks & Fedewa, 2012). A number of other traditional myths are also incorporated into common attitudes towards abuse, for example, it is believed that it is solely physical harm, causing evident injuries, that constitutes abuse (Straus, 1999). However, as mentioned in the definition, there are many forms of abuse. In teenage relationship abuse especially, victims are more likely to be victimised by isolation, control and jealousy. Many abuse myths tend to shift responsibility and blame away from the abuser, and again, depict women as the victims. For example, a commonly held myth is that if the abuse was so bad 'she' would leave (Anderson et al 2003), and 'some women want or deserve to be beaten' (Saul, 1972). The causes of relationship abuse are also subject to false beliefs. It is widely believed that substance misuse, such as the use of drugs and/or alcohol are the underlying causes of abuse. However, attributing the cause of relationship abuse to this somewhat excuses and justifies abuse on the perpetrators part (Gelles & Cavanaugh, 1993). Many charities, support organisations, as well as the UK Government, highlight the issue of misconceptions surrounding abuse and aim to challenge deep rooted myths of abuse by contrasting them with facts through media campaigns, in hope to increase awareness and increase reporting rates, however no research has explored if have been successful (This is not an excuse to abuse me, 2014).

### **Research Aim**

This research aimed to explore attitudes towards teenage relationship abuse and assess if common myths and gender stereotypes or factual knowledge, were identifiable and prevalent among perceptions, and if so, by whom.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a mixed method design using Q-Methodology. 60 participants, of a wide age range were recruited from Teesside University, using opportunity sampling. A comprehensive list of statements was developed and a pilot study carried out to ascertain legibility. Participants were asked to rank order 60 statements in the Q-grid, along a continuum of preference from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

## **Method of Analysis**

PCQ, specialist Q-Methodology analysis software, was used to run a by-person factor analysis on the entered data and produced a number of factors, all of which were significant and had an Eigen value of over 1.00. Factors represented groupings of participants, whom had sorted the statements in similar ways, therefore, had shared, common viewpoints (Watts & Stenner, 2005). An average Q-sort was produced for each factor and then interpreted using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

## **Findings**

Overall, 9 factors were produced. The top two factors had significant loadings, factor A =12, and factor B =8, the remaining 7 factors had less than 3 loadings. Analysis focused upon the factors with the most loadings as they represent the belief system and the most common way of thinking among the sample of participants.

### **Factor A – The Informed Female**

Factor A reflects the typical beliefs of a young female. Twelve people loaded strongly onto this factor, with loadings between 0.40 and 0.75. Participants who loaded onto this factor were females, aged between nineteen and twenty-three, with the exception of one male.

#### *Theme 1 – Awareness of Teenage Relationship Abuse*

Participants in this factor show awareness and understanding of the issue, acknowledging both genders are equally victimised. Most importantly, they strongly recognised that whilst teenage relationship abuse is a rising issue, it has a lack of awareness surrounding it.

#### *Theme 2 - Forms of Abuse*

Participants identified various forms of abuse, as highlighted in the reformed government definition. They strongly rejected the widely endorsed and traditional myth that relationship abuse is only physical abuse. Instead, they recognised relatively newly acknowledged forms of abuse such as emotional abuse, which includes threats and manipulation as well as controlling and jealous behaviour. This gives the idea that young females generally are aware of the many forms of abuse and do not attribute relationship abuse to be the widely held traditional view of solely physical harm.

#### *Theme 3 – Causes of Teenage Relationship Abuse*

Unlike the previous two themes which show that female participants have an informed understanding of abuse, this theme is essentially the exception to the rule. It shows that even in mostly accurate perceptions of abuse, stereotypes and myths are still influential.

The participants in this factor seem to have beliefs which are influenced by common myths and misconceptions over the causes of abuse. The strongest attributed cause was substance use. However, despite being a common myth as a cause of abuse, this particular gender and age range are specifically targeted by substance abuse awareness campaigns which aim to highlight the dangers of such substances, and therefore may associate the risk of relationship abuse as one of the dangers, hence

rating it highly as a main cause. There is also evidence that the misconceptions held towards the causes of relationship abuse may somewhat be influenced by gender stereotypes. Although the statements were not as strongly loaded onto as other themes such as victims and forms of abuse, statements relating to the causes of relationship abuse were still ranked important. They believed that males hit females as males are more aggressive. This is a strong stereotypical statement which relates to the gender stereotype that males are more aggressive. The females in this factor seem to have inferred this is the reason behind physical abuse, which, like the influence of substances, justifies the abuse. They also believe that exposure to relationship abuse increases the likeliness of becoming a perpetrator, which is also a common myth. Despite the holistic view of this theme representing that female's beliefs around the causes of relationship abuse are influenced by common stereotypes and myths, they rejected the widely endorsed myth that mental illness is a cause.

#### *Theme 4 - Victims of Relationship Abuse*

Many of the statements in relation to victimisation of relationship abuse were inputted into the extremes of the q-grid, suggesting young females believe the victims of relationship abuse to be one of the most important factors. It was acknowledged that anyone can be a potential victim despite homosexuality, relationship status, gender, and age and females loaded strongly onto the statement that abusers cannot be identified based on physical appearance. However, there was also contradiction and endorsement of traditional views that relationship abuse only occurs in marriage.

#### *Theme 5 - Legal Stance*

There seems to be significant confusion over the legal protection for teenage victims between the participants in this factor. Opposite statements concerning legal protection of teenage victims were both strongly loaded onto, with some participants refuting teenage victims are not protected by relationship abuse legislation as it is child abuse, but others positively agreeing that teenage victims are protected by the law. This shows the recently reformed definition of relationship abuse may not have enough awareness surrounding it, and if improved, may lead to further studies finding that females are aware of the legality surrounding relationship abuse.

#### Factor A Summary

There is evidence of some misconceptions surrounding the causes stemming from gender stereotypes and myths, as well as some contradiction over legislation protection. The overall belief system of females represents an informed, knowledgeable understanding of teenage relationship abuse. They are aware that anyone can be a potential victim regardless of gender, sexuality and age, acknowledge the many forms of abuse, as well as the fact the both males and females are equally victimised and that it is a rising issue.

#### Factor B – The Stereotypical Male

Factor B represents the typical belief system of a wide age range of male participants. This factor was generated from 8 participants, predominantly male participants between the ages of 19 and 51 who strongly loaded onto this factor, loadings between 0.47 and 0.83 for male participants. There was an exception of one female participant, aged 18, who negatively loaded onto this factor (loading -0.39) whose beliefs about teenage relationship abuse are in opposition to the males.



### *Theme 1 – Awareness of Teenage Relationship Abuse*

Males generally are unaware of relationship abuse, and lack understanding and knowledge of the issue. Findings showed that they believe there is no such thing as relationship abuse and that it doesn't happen often, or there would be greater awareness. This is one of the key findings from this research, as it shows that without awareness of the issue, it is assumed there is no issue of teenage relationship abuse. This has many implications in trying to increase awareness of the issue and also for victims who don't report it. Males also believed that relationship abuse is not as serious as relationship abuse which affects adults and that young boys are rarely affected.

### *Theme 2 - Forms of Abuse*

Male participants also seem to generally lack awareness of the many forms of relationship abuse. They strongly disagreed that emotional abuse includes threats and manipulation and that controlling and jealous behaviour is not a form of domestic abuse. These forms of relationship abuse have been recently added to the Government definition of relationship abuse in the hope to increase awareness that domestic abuse is not solely physical harm, which it may be inferred males in this factor believe. Therefore greater awareness needs to be raised of forms of abuse for campaigns specifically targeted at males.

### *Theme 3 - Causes of Teenage Relationship Abuse*

The strongest loaded statement in relation to the causes of abuse was that males disagreed that perpetrators do not have a mental illness. As they did not rank any of the other statements linked to causes of abuse highly, this suggests that those who loaded onto this factor are unaware of the causes, and/or do not think that it is an important factor.

### *Theme 4 – Victims of Relationship Abuse*

Males strongly hold traditional views that relationship abuse only affects adult females. They refuted the fact that 16-20 year olds are most at risk and instead believe that the most at risk of victimisation are middle aged women whom have been married for years. There was no reflection for teenage victims in this theme suggesting no consideration for younger victims was taken into account, thus further increasing the need for awareness.

### *Theme 5 – Legal Stance*

The majority of males in this factor remain under the highly traditional assumption that relationship abuse legislation only protects adults and in particular, women. They believe that legislation does not protect teenagers, and teenage victims are protected under child abuse laws.

## Factor B Summary

Male participants were unaware that teenage relationship abuse as an issue and believed that the most common victims are married females, with teenage boy's least likely victims. There was no evidence from this study that males were aware of any forms of abuse other than physical harm or the causes. Male participant's belief system surrounding teenage relationship abuse strongly endorsed traditional myths

and gender stereotypes in their perceptions towards the majority of aspects of the issue.

## **Conclusion**

This study aimed to explore attitudes towards teenage relationship abuse and assess if common myths and gender stereotypes or factual knowledge, were identifiable and prevalent among perceptions, and if so, by whom. Findings showed that common relationship abuse myths and gender stereotypes are prevalent in perceptions. One of the key findings was that there was distinct gender differences found between males and females attitudes towards teenage relationship abuse. Females have a different belief system than males towards this issue, with young female participants showing an increased awareness of teenage relationship abuse compared to male participants whom lacked the most awareness. This supports previous research in relation to the gender differences found towards adult relationship abuse (Berkel, Vandiver & Bahner, 2004; Flood & Pease, 2009; Yamawaki 2011). Furthermore, analysis of the factors and themes supports the notion of social construct and social representation theories; that there is not one single, universal, common belief system towards teenage relationship abuse, perceptions were conflicting, complex and constructed from a range of facts, myths and stereotypes between individuals and between genders.

Overall, females had an accurate understanding that teenage relationship abuse is a serious, rising issue which generally, has a lack of awareness. However, common myths and stereotypes were still prevalent in perceptions around the causes of relationship abuse, most common victims of abuse as well as the legal protection surrounding teenage relationship abuse. This shows that even with awareness and the incorporation of factual knowledge, females perceptions towards teenage relationship abuse are still influenced by relationship abuse myths and stereotypes to an extent. Male participants of a wide age range highly endorsed traditional relationship abuse myths and gender stereotypes in their views towards victims, causes, forms, legislation and teenage relationship abuse overall, showing that between males and females, they lack the most awareness of teenage relationship abuse.

Sources such as the media and education are regarded as a powerful influence in raising awareness of social issues and challenging and overcoming misconceptions and are hugely influential in attitude formation (Berns, 2004; Katz, 1995; Shaw, 2001). According to social psychologists, stereotypes and myths are best challenged when new information, such as teenage relationship abuse is consistent and constant. This causes the original traditional beliefs to be altered and replaced by new factual information as it overrides previous beliefs (Archer, 2000; Carnaghi & Yzerbyt, 2006; Kimmel, 2002; Sears et al, 2007). The following areas are recommended to be targeted following this research:

1. Existence of the issue, with a focus on targeting male audiences, in order for the issue to be recognised more equally by both genders.

2. Prevalence and impact of psychological abuse and the debilitating effects it can have on victims, so that all forms of abuse are recognised and reported.
3. Legislative protection for teenagers, if teenage victims become aware that they are protected and supported by the law, this could aid in increasing reporting rates.

Research in this area would benefit from replicating this study on a larger scale, in order for it to be generalised nationally. One of the main recommendations for future research is to assess the source of information perceptions towards teenage relationship abuse have been constituted from. This may provide insight as to why there are gender differences towards the issue and could also be linked to issues with reporting between males and females.

Ultimately, this study provides the evidence needed to support and rationalise recent government efforts and charity campaigns in the call for urgent action to be taken to eradicate misconceptions of teenage domestic abuse, to ultimately aid in ending the teenage relationship abuse altogether, and the many implications and debilitating effects it causes victims.

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**Contact email:** [dlockington@hotmail.com](mailto:dlockington@hotmail.com)