Author's response to reviews

Title: A Grounded Theory of Female Adolescents Dating Experiences and Factors Influencing Safety: The Dynamics of the Circle

Authors:

Sharyl Eve E Toscano (sharyl.toscano@uvm.edu)

Version: 2 Date: 3 May 2007

Author's response to reviews: see over
May 3, 2007

Dear Dr. Lolu da-Silva

Based on editorial and reviewers comments the following changes have been made to the manuscript (MS# 1029060536118955).

**Editorial comments**

Informed consent procedures added to page 8. Competing interest, author contributions, & acknowledgements have been added to page26. The paper has been copyedited in an attempt to improve the style of written English. The format has been updated.

**Lutz review**

Each number corresponds to the reviewer’s report.

1. A brief overview of teen dating and developmental theory has been added to both the literature review and the discussion.
2. One of the aims of the study was to capture the teens’ definition of abuse and/or negative dating experiences (what constitutes abuse?). I did not present a definition for them at any point in the interview. Their perceptions of abuse are reported in the study findings.
3. Due to the page length of the article, I have not added any additional quotes, however, I have added three tables. Included in the tables are: the interview guide, examples of coding (axial and thematic).
4. I have added a more comprehensive explanation of Grounded theory and Symbolic Interactionism to the literature review (see page 5) and the discussion (see page 22). Additional definitions for theoretical saturation and microanalysis have been added.
5. I have added the age of the participants in addition to a statement about theoretical sampling for older teens pg 6. Unfortunately the other information that was requested is not available.
6. I have expanded the methods section and have added tables constructed during the analysis of the data.
7. I have tried to add detail when that information was available. However, students were not asked to fill out any survey data about length of relationship, number of relationships, seriousness. In addition students reported on their dating experience and the experiences of their friends. Many of the answers to the reviewer’s questions led back to the norms, rules, and/or values of the circle and varied based on membership in different circles. In an attempt to clarify some of these questions I added more description of the circle, reordered statements and added detail.
8. I added this concept to the discussion on page 25
9. I’ve added a title. The dating stages are depicted in the model (and text) as the wavy line that enters and leaves the circle at random intervals. This depicts the teens as navigate the dating stages.
10. I added more data to the discussion section in an attempt to integrate the findings of the study to other literature.
Ackard Review.
(1) See comments to number 1 and 4 above.
(2) A priori hypotheses are not appropriate in the grounded theory method, however, I did try to clarify the assumptions of the study based on Symbolic Interactionism.
(3) Significant expansion on Grounded Theory and Symbolic Interactionism has been added to the manuscript.
(4) I adhered strictly to the methods of Grounded Theory including reporting measures of trusworthiness in qualitative data. I added information on the pilot data (page 7).
(5) This method depends on inductive knowledge development. The theory evolved from the interviews with the adolescents without any preformed notions of dating or abuse. The students were not asked to confirm an existing theory.
(6) I separated the results and discussions section.
(7) The dating stages were developed during the course of the interviews. The students described dating and the activities of dating. It was through the coding process that the different stages were formed. I’m not able to supply numbers; I didn’t collect this data. This is not consistent with the method and would not add additional reliability or validity given the theoretically sampling procedure.
(8) I’ve added recent literature on dating violence (specifically adolescent populations) to both the review and the discussion.

I would like to thank the reviewers for their time and thoughtful consideration for revision of this manuscript and would like to submit this revised version of the manuscript.

Thank You

Sharyl Eve Toscano