



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

National Institute of Justice

Washington, D.C. 20531

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chad Lallemand, OMB

FROM: Carrie Mulford, NIJ

DATE: May 1, 2013

SUBJECT: Response to OMB questions and suggestions regarding *Understanding Abuse in Teen Dating Relationships through Concept Mapping Project*

Below, you will find NIJ's responses to the questions and suggestions raised by OMB in the most recent review of our data collection request for *Understanding Abuse in Teen Dating Relationships through Concept Mapping Project*.

- Please remove the word "require" from the abstract and replace with "ask" or "request" etc.

Response: This change will be made by the DOJ/OMB liaison.

- In SS A question 1, please eliminate references to the collection using a "more generalizable" methodology. It is not a generalizable because it uses a convenience sample, and DOJ acknowledges in other places that it's not generalizable.

Response: We have made the requested change.

- What does NIJ mean specifically by an "item bank?" How specifically would NIJ or others use those items? Perhaps an example or two would help. Is an item bank the only specific use of the information collection to which NIJ is willing to commit?

An "item bank" is a term taken from item response theory, a measurement method used most frequently in education and health fields. The most well-known item banks are those used in standardized testing like questions on the SAT. Concept mapping has been used to develop item banks to measure financial exploitation and psychological elder abuse, for example.

After the concept mapping process is complete, NIJ would envision using the individual points on the map as questions in an item bank for characteristics of adolescent romantic relationships. The item bank can be used for testing and development of measures of healthy and abusive aspects of teen dating relationships. A subsequent step would be to

test the measures for internal and external validity and to validate the measures with different subpopulations of youth.

In addition to the development of the item bank, NIJ is planning to use the results of the concept mapping study in developing research priority areas for our 2014 and/or 2015 solicitations on teen dating violence, particularly related to articulating theories to explain adolescent relationship abuse. A couple of ideas have already been generated by individuals who have seen presentations of the pilot results. For example, one of the youth in our pilot test facilitated discussion raised the issue of how the relationship characteristics on the map might change over the course of a relationship. Similarly, a prominent researcher at a conference presentation indicated that it would be helpful to see how much overlap there is between the positive/healthy relationship characteristics and the abusive characteristics within a relationship. These are theories that could be tested within the framework developed in the concept mapping study. Additional theoretical explanations are likely to emerge from the facilitated discussions at the end stage of the project. NIJ would also consider funding research to expand on the current study to determine the stability of the concept map with specific subpopulations, including LGBTQ and middle school-aged youth.