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DATING VIOLENCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A REVIEW OF RESEARCH AND PROPOSED SOCIAL WORK SOLUTIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract: **Dating violence among university students is a social issue that requires systematic recognition, particularly as young people's intimate relationships are increasingly shaped by social media, gender norms, emotional pressure, and limited skills in setting personal boundaries. This article employs a systematic narrative review to analyze major research directions on dating violence among university students, with attention to definitions, forms of manifestation, prevalence, risk factors, consequences, help-seeking behaviors, and barriers to service access. The review indicates that dating violence is not limited to physical aggression but also includes psychological violence, sexual violence, controlling and isolating behaviors, and technology-facilitated abuse. International and Vietnamese studies suggest that many abusive behaviors in dating relationships are easily normalized, especially jealousy, phone monitoring, emotional coercion, stalking, and victim-blaming. Based on the review, the article proposes several social work solutions for higher education institutions, including prevention-oriented communication and education; screening and early identification; individual social work; group social work and peer support; and the development of coordinated referral and student protection procedures. The article argues that dating violence should be understood as an issue of student welfare, campus safety, and mental health in higher education.**

Keywords: **dating violence; university students; social work; higher education institutions; student support.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Dating violence refers to a form of violence that occurs within romantic or intimate relationships before marriage. Unlike ordinary conflict in romantic relationships, dating violence is commonly associated with power, control, coercion, and harm. Such behaviors may take multiple forms, including physical violence, psychological violence, sexual violence, controlling and isolating behaviors, stalking, and technology-facilitated abuse. In higher education settings, the issue has particular significance because students are in a transitional stage toward adulthood, begin to develop intimate relationships, and are strongly influenced by peers, social media, dating cultures, and gender norms.

Globally, violence in intimate relationships is recognized as both a public health issue and a human rights concern. The World Health Organization has emphasized that violence against women, particularly intimate partner violence and sexual violence, is a serious problem with long-term consequences for victims' physical health, mental health, and social life (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024). Although global data often focus more broadly on violence against women and intimate partner violence, they nevertheless point to the need to identify early forms of violence in premarital romantic relationships. If dating violence is not recognized and addressed, it may become a precursor to prolonged patterns of violence in later intimate relationships.

For adolescents and young adults, dating violence deserves particular attention because this is the period in which individuals form their understandings of love, gender, consent, boundaries, and responsibility in relationships. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention regards teen dating violence as a preventable public health problem and notes its association with depression, anxiety, substance use, suicidal ideation, and increased risk of subsequent violence in later relationships (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2025). This indicates that dating violence should not be viewed merely as a temporary "romantic conflict," but as a risk that may affect the long-term developmental trajectory of young people.

In Viet Nam, research on gender-based violence and domestic violence has developed to a certain extent. The 2019 National Study on Violence against Women in Viet Nam showed that violence perpetrated by husbands or intimate partners remains an important concern in Vietnamese social life (Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs, General Statistics Office, & United Nations Population Fund in Viet Nam, 2020). However, compared with post-marital domestic violence, dating violence among university students has received less scholarly attention. Some reports and recent studies have begun to address this issue. The report by the Institute for Studies of Society, Economy and Environment showed that victim-blaming discourses in cases of gender-based violence persist in media and everyday social life, which may discourage victims from speaking out or seeking help (iSEE, 2019). A study by Hoang Thi Hai Van and colleagues (2025) at Hanoi Medical University also indicated that dating violence is present among university students, including both perpetration and victimization experiences.

From a social work perspective, dating violence among university students is not merely a problem of an individual victim or a private relationship. It is linked to gender awareness, relationship skills, mental health, the educational environment, support services, help-seeking capacity, and student protection policies. Social work has an advantage in addressing the issue across multiple levels: the individual, family, peer group, university, community, and policy levels. Therefore, research on dating violence among university students should move beyond the descriptive documentation of prevalence and toward the development of prevention, early identification, and support solutions.

This article aims to review research on dating violence among university students and to propose social work solutions for higher education institutions. Three questions guide the article: How has existing research approached dating violence among university students? What are the manifestations, risk factors, and consequences of dating violence among university students? What social work solutions can be proposed in higher education institutions to prevent, identify early, and support students experiencing dating violence?

The article uses a systematic narrative review. The reviewed literature was drawn from international and Vietnamese sources, including peer-reviewed journal articles, systematic reviews, reports by WHO, CDC, UNFPA, iSEE, studies on dating violence among university students, and professional social work literature. Search terms included dating violence, teen dating violence, intimate partner violence, college students, university students, gender-based violence, help-seeking, social work intervention, campus-based support. The literature was analyzed thematically around definitions, forms, prevalence, risk factors, consequences, help-seeking, barriers to service access, and social work solutions.

2. RESEARCH CONTENT

2.1. Review of Research on Dating Violence Among University Students

2.1.1. Definitions and Forms of Dating Violence

Dating violence is commonly understood as harmful or threatening behavior that occurs within a dating or intimate relationship without marital ties. Its core nature does not lie only in acts such as hitting, slapping, pushing, or causing injury, but also in control, coercion, manipulation, humiliation, and the deprivation of the victim's autonomy within the relationship. Therefore, research on dating violence should avoid the narrow assumption that violence exists only when physical injuries occur.

In international research, dating violence is often located within the broader spectrum of intimate partner violence. However, in relation to university students, the concept needs to be situated in a specific context. Students' romantic relationships may be unstable; their emotional and relational experience may still be limited; and the boundary between care and control may be easily confused. In addition, the use of social media, smartphones, text messages, personal images, and online location-sharing makes monitoring, stalking, and reputational harm easier to enact. In other words, dating violence among university students occurs not only in face-to-face settings but also in digital environments.

Dating violence among university students can be classified into five main forms. First, physical violence includes hitting, slapping, pushing, pulling, choking, throwing objects, causing injury, or threatening physical harm. Second, psychological violence includes insults, humiliation, blaming, threats, extreme jealousy, emotional manipulation, and behaviors that make the victim fearful or dependent. Third, sexual violence includes coercing sexual activity, pressuring a partner to send private images, violating consent, and threatening or exerting sexual pressure. Fourth, controlling and isolating behaviors include checking a partner's phone, monitoring social media, demanding reports about daily activities, preventing contact with friends or family, and controlling clothing, finances, or social relationships. Fifth, technology-facilitated abuse includes harassment through messages, threats to distribute private images, location tracking, control of social media accounts, and attacks on reputation in digital spaces.

Table 1. Forms of dating violence among university students

Form of violence	Common manifestations	Key considerations in higher education settings
Physical violence	Hitting, slapping, pushing, pulling, throwing objects, causing injury	More visible than other forms, but victims do not always report it
Psychological violence	Verbal abuse, humiliation, threats, blaming, emotional manipulation	Often minimized because it leaves no visible physical marks
Sexual violence	Coerced sexual activity, pressure to send private images, sexual pressure	Highly sensitive; victims often feel ashamed or fear being blamed
Control and isolation	Phone checking, social media monitoring, demands to report daily schedules, prohibition of peer contact	Often normalized as "care" or "love"
Technology-facilitated abuse	Harassment by text messages, location tracking, image-based threats, online intimidation	Increasingly common due to frequent social media use among students

The common feature of these forms is that they reduce students' sense of safety, autonomy, and ability to participate in academic and social life. In many cases, different forms of violence are intertwined. A student may simultaneously experience phone monitoring, threats of breakup, sexual coercion, and isolation from friends. Therefore, when assessing dating violence, social workers should not ask only whether a student has been physically assaulted, but should also explore control, coercion, threats, fear, consent, and safety.

2.1.2. Prevalence of Dating Violence Among University Students in Existing Research

International research shows that dating violence is a significant concern among adolescents and university students. CDC (2025) reports that a notable proportion of high school students in the United States have experienced physical or sexual dating violence. Although these data refer to high school students, they have implications for higher education because many students enter university with prior romantic experiences. These experiences may continue to shape how they form intimate relationships during university years.

International reviews also show that the reported prevalence of dating violence varies considerably across studies. This variation does not necessarily reflect true differences in violence levels; rather, it may arise from differences in measurement instruments, question wording, reference periods, samples, and definitions of "violence." Studies that focus only on physical violence usually report lower rates. When psychological violence, control, isolation, and technology-facilitated abuse are included, prevalence rates may increase substantially. Thus, when comparing research findings, one should not compare figures alone, but must also consider what was measured, how it was measured, and in which population.

A systematic review by Duval, Lanning, and Patterson (2020) on risk factors for dating violence among undergraduate students found considerable diversity in research methods, measurement tools, and approaches to identifying risk factors. The authors also noted that many studies focused on individual-level factors, whereas environmental, institutional, and community factors received less attention. This suggests that existing approaches may still over-individualize the issue, while dating violence is in fact shaped by multiple ecological layers.

In Viet Nam, studies on dating violence among university students remain limited but have begun to emerge. The iSEE report (2019) cited the 2017 Y-Change study, in which dating violence was identified as a significant concern among young

people. Hoang Thi Hai Van and colleagues (2025), using the CADRI-S instrument with 962 students at Hanoi Medical University, found that 52.9% of students reported having perpetrated and 43.2% reported having experienced at least one act of dating violence. These findings should not be generalized to all Vietnamese university students, but they provide an important warning that dating violence is present in student life and requires more systematic investigation.

Compared with international research, studies in Viet Nam still have several gaps. First, few studies use representative samples or compare regions, fields of study, or types of higher education institutions. Second, measurement tools for dating violence have not been widely standardized for Vietnamese cultural contexts. Third, existing studies tend to describe prevalence rather than evaluate the effectiveness of prevention, counseling, support, or referral models. Fourth, the role of social work in higher education in relation to dating violence has not yet been analyzed in depth.

2.1.3. Risk and Protective Factors

Dating violence among university students should be analyzed through an ecological perspective, which considers individual, relational, family-peer, institutional, and community-level factors simultaneously. If dating violence is viewed only as a "personality problem" of the perpetrator or as a "weakness" of the victim, research risks overlooking the social conditions that sustain violence. The ecological perspective also aligns with social work, which does not focus only on individuals but also on their living environments and support systems.

At the individual level, commonly discussed risk factors include limited knowledge of healthy relationships, acceptance of gender stereotypes, prior exposure to violence in the family, poor emotional regulation skills, emotional dependence, difficulty setting boundaries, alcohol or substance use, and previous traumatic experiences. Duval et al. (2020) found that many individual-level factors are associated with the risk of victimization or perpetration in dating relationships, while also cautioning that most studies are cross-sectional and therefore cannot easily establish causal relationships.

At the relational level, risk increases when relationships involve power imbalance, extreme jealousy, behavioral control, financial or emotional dependence, and limited communication and conflict-resolution skills. In student contexts, some behaviors are romanticized: sharing phone passwords, reporting one's whereabouts, responding immediately to messages, or limiting friendships with people of another gender. These behaviors may initially be interpreted as care, but they may in fact signal control.

At the family and peer level, insufficient social support is an important factor. Students living away from home, those who rarely share with family members, or those whose peer groups normalize violence may find it more difficult to recognize risks and seek help. Conversely, trusted friends, responsive family members, and attentive academic advisors may increase the possibility of leaving violent relationships and accessing support services.

At the institutional and community level, risk arises from the lack of healthy relationship education, confidential counseling and social work services, safe reporting channels, clear procedures for responding to dating violence, and the persistence of victim-blaming attitudes. The iSEE report (2019) showed that media discourses on gender-based violence in Viet Nam often focus on victims' behaviors, thereby contributing to a culture of blame and silence. This is particularly relevant in universities, where students may avoid seeking help if they fear being asked why they did not break up earlier, why they continued seeing the person, or why they allowed the situation to happen.

Protective factors include accurate understanding of consent and healthy relationships; social-emotional skills; the ability to set boundaries; supportive networks of friends, family members, and lecturers; confidential counseling and social work services; and institutional policies on safety, gender equality, and student protection. These factors show that preventing dating violence cannot be reduced to advising students to "be careful in love." Rather, universities need to create environments capable of recognizing, receiving, and supporting students in a professional and non-judgmental manner.

Table 2. Risk and protective factors related to dating violence among university students

Level	Risk factors	Protective factors
Individual	Limited knowledge of healthy relationships, emotional dependence, difficulty setting boundaries, previous trauma	Understanding of consent, social-emotional skills, help-seeking capacity
Relationship	Extreme jealousy, control, threats, financial/emotional dependence	Respectful communication, non-violent conflict resolution, respect for autonomy

Family and peers	Insufficient support, peer normalization of violence, limited family communication about love and sexuality	Trusted friends, responsive family, safe support persons
University and community	Lack of counseling/social work services, unclear confidentiality procedures, victim-blaming attitudes	Confidential support channels, student protection policies, prevention-oriented communication

2.1.4. Consequences of Dating Violence for University Students

Dating violence may have consequences across multiple domains. Physically, victims may experience injuries, chronic pain, sleep disturbances, fatigue, decreased general health, and sexual and reproductive health problems. However, among university students, psychosocial consequences may be more persistent and less visible.

In terms of mental health, dating violence may be associated with anxiety, depression, fear, self-blame, shame, reduced self-esteem, post-traumatic stress symptoms, self-harm ideation, or suicidal thoughts in severe cases. CDC (2025) emphasizes that adolescents who experience dating violence are at increased risk of adverse health and behavioral outcomes, including depression, anxiety, substance use, and suicidal ideation. This is consistent with a social work perspective: the harm caused by violence lies not only in the violent act itself but also in the impairment of the individual's social functioning.

Academically, students experiencing dating violence may have reduced concentration, absenteeism, declining academic performance, avoidance of group activities, reluctance to attend classes, or fear of encountering the abusive partner on campus. If the abusive partner studies at the same institution, class, or social group, the student's sense of insecurity may intensify. In such cases, universities cannot regard the issue as a purely private matter but need mechanisms to protect students.

Socially, dating violence can narrow students' peer relationships, reduce trust in others, make it difficult to share experiences, or increase dependence on the abusive partner. Controlling and isolating behaviors are particularly harmful because they gradually deprive victims of support networks. This creates a dangerous cycle: the more isolated victims become, the harder it is to seek help; the harder it is to seek help, the more likely the abusive relationship is to persist.

In terms of personal development, dating violence may distort students' understandings of love, intimacy, consent, and boundaries. Some students may believe that control is a sign of love, endurance is proof of loyalty, or coercion within a romantic relationship is not violence. If such perceptions are not addressed, the risk of repeated violence in later relationships may increase.

2.1.5. Help-Seeking Behaviors and Barriers to Service Access

Help-seeking is a critical issue because it determines whether victims can be protected and supported in their recovery. Students experiencing dating violence may seek support from friends, family members, academic advisors, lecturers, student affairs offices, counseling centers, social workers, health services, social organizations, or legal agencies. However, not all students seek help, even when violence has caused clear harm.

In a systematic review on barriers to formal help-seeking among adult survivors of intimate partner violence, Robinson, Ravi, and Voth Schrag (2021) identified several groups of barriers, including lack of awareness, service accessibility problems, concerns about the consequences of disclosure, limited material resources, personal barriers, and weaknesses in support systems. These barriers can be applied to student contexts. Many students may not seek help because they do not recognize the behavior as violence; they do not know whom to approach; they fear disclosure; they fear retaliation by the partner; they fear being judged by family, friends, or lecturers; or they do not trust that the university has confidential support mechanisms.

Another difficulty is that students often turn to friends before approaching formal services. This has two sides. On the one hand, friends are accessible sources of support and can reduce victims' feelings of isolation. On the other hand, if friends lack knowledge, they may give inappropriate advice, such as telling the victim to leave immediately, not to make the matter serious, or to solve the romantic issue privately. Therefore, in university settings, peer support should be organized with guidance and connected to professional support channels.

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Table 3. Barriers to help-seeking among university students experiencing dating violence

Type of barrier	Specific manifestations	Consequences for support
Awareness	Does not recognize control, jealousy, or coercion as violence	Delayed recognition and help-seeking
Personal psychology	Shame, self-blame, fear of judgment, fear of reputational harm	Silence and concealment of experiences
Relationship	Emotional dependence, fear of breakup, fear of retaliation	Continuation of the abusive relationship
Services	Does not know where to seek help, distrusts confidentiality, lack of professional staff	Limited access to formal services
Cultural and social factors	Gender stereotypes, victim-blaming, perception of violence as a private matter	Reluctance to disclose or seek support

From a social work perspective, the central barrier is not simply that "victims do not want to talk," but that the surrounding environment may not yet be safe enough for victims to speak. Therefore, solutions should not only urge students to "speak up," but should also build support systems that are trustworthy, confidential, non-judgmental, and capable of timely response.

2.2. Proposed Social Work Solutions in Higher Education Institutions

2.2.1. Prevention-Oriented Communication and Education on Dating Violence Among Students

The first solution is prevention-oriented communication and education. This is a universal level of intervention directed at all students, not only those who have experienced violence. Communication content should help students recognize healthy relationships, understand consent, respect personal boundaries, promote gender equality, ensure digital safety, and know how to seek help.

In practice, communication that relies only on slogans such as "say no to violence" is unlikely to be sufficient. Students need concrete scenarios: Is checking a partner's phone a sign of care? Is demanding continuous location sharing normal? Is pressuring a partner into sex because "we are in love" a form of violence? What kind of behavior is threatening to distribute private images? What should one do when a close friend is being controlled by a partner? Scenario-based communication enables students to recognize violence in real-life contexts.

Activities can be implemented during civic education weeks, academic advising programs, student union activities, student clubs, life-skills seminars, university social media campaigns, and short online courses. CDC developed Dating Matters as a prevention approach to teen dating violence, emphasizing the participation of multiple stakeholders, including schools, families, and communities (CDC, 2024). Vietnamese universities may draw on the logic of this approach while adapting it to university-age students and institutional cultures.

2.2.2. Screening, Early Identification, and Safe Reporting Channels

Communication becomes meaningful only when accompanied by mechanisms for identification and response. Universities need channels through which students can seek help confidentially, voluntarily, and without judgment. Such channels may include a dedicated email address, secure online forms, direct counseling appointments, online consultation, hotlines, or designated focal points in student affairs or counseling centers.

Screening should not be understood as an investigation into students' private lives. Rather, it should be voluntary and confidential, helping students self-identify risks. A short screening tool could ask whether a student is being monitored by a partner, pressured to do things they do not want to do, afraid of a partner's reaction, isolated from friends or family, threatened with disclosure of private information, or in need of professional support.

Academic advisors, homeroom lecturers, student affairs staff, youth union officers, and student peer leaders need training to identify warning signs. However, they should not replace counselors or social workers. Their appropriate role is to listen initially, respond without judgment, make a preliminary assessment of urgency, and refer the student to professional support.

2.2.3. Individual Social Work With Students Experiencing Dating Violence

Individual social work is a central solution for students who have experienced dating violence. The helping process should be grounded in respect, confidentiality, voluntariness, client-centered practice, and safety. When working with a student experiencing violence, the social worker should not begin by advising, "You must break up immediately," because this may make the client defensive, fearful, or unwilling to continue using the service. The first task is to help the student feel listened to, believed, and not blamed.

Support should focus on five key tasks. First, the social worker helps the student recognize violent behaviors and distinguish ordinary conflict from control and coercion. Second, the social worker supports emotional stabilization, reduces self-blame, and helps restore a sense of safety. Third, the social worker develops a safety plan, especially when threats, stalking, physical violence, or sexual violence are present. Fourth, the social worker supports the student in making decisions about the relationship based on a clear understanding of risks and available resources. Fifth, the social worker connects the student with psychological, medical, legal, family, or trusted social support when necessary.

An important principle is that individual social work should not become moral advice. Social workers should avoid victim-blaming questions such as "Why do you still love this person?", "Why didn't you tell someone earlier?", or "Why did you let them know your password?" Instead, they should ask supportive questions: "How safe do you feel now?", "What are you afraid might happen if you say no?", "Who do you trust?", and "What would you like support with first?"

2.2.4. Group Social Work and Peer Support

In addition to individual support, group social work can play an important role in preventing dating violence and supporting students at risk. Groups can be designed in two directions: educational-preventive groups for students in general and support groups for students who have experienced harm in dating relationships.

For educational-preventive groups, the content may include recognizing healthy relationships, non-violent communication skills, emotional regulation, boundary setting, consent, digital safety, and how to support peers. For support groups, content needs to be more carefully designed, focusing on safe sharing, restoring self-esteem, reducing isolation, strengthening coping skills, and building support networks.

Peer support is also highly relevant in universities because students often share with friends before approaching formal services. However, peer support groups must be carefully trained. Peer leaders should not act as therapists or crisis responders. Their appropriate roles are communication, initial listening, providing service information, and helping peers connect with professional support.

A group-based model may include the following components:

Universal group: healthy relationship communication for all students.

At-risk group: skills groups for students showing signs of being controlled, isolated, or emotionally dependent.

Support group: small, confidential groups facilitated by trained professionals for students who have experienced violence.

Peer group: trained student leaders who support communication and service referral.

2.2.5. Developing Coordination and Referral Procedures in Universities

A major difficulty in universities is that many units are connected to students, but coordination procedures are often unclear. When a student experiences dating violence, the information may reach an academic advisor, classmate, student affairs office, youth union, counseling center, or campus security. Without clear procedures, each person may respond based on personal experience, which can lead to breaches of confidentiality, inappropriate advice, delayed support, or loss of trust.

Universities need to develop coordination procedures that include receiving information, assessing risk, providing initial safety support, assigning a case manager, providing counseling or individual social work, referring to services, following up, and securely storing case records. Procedures should clarify which cases require emergency support; when medical support is needed; when legal support is necessary; when families should be contacted; who has access to case records; and how information is protected.

Table 4. Support procedure for university students experiencing dating violence

Step	Main content	Responsible person/unit
1. Intake	Listen, record needs, ensure a non-judgmental response	Social work/counseling focal point/student affairs office
2. Risk assessment	Identify ongoing violence, self-harm risk, retaliation, or threats to disclose private information	Social worker/counselor
3. Initial safety	Develop a safety plan and identify trusted support persons	Social worker, student, support person
4. Professional support	Counseling, individual social work, support groups	Counseling center/social work unit
5. Referral	Medical, legal, specialized psychological, or social organization services	University and external service network
6. Follow-up	Evaluate progress, update risk assessment, provide continuing support	Case manager

This procedure should be guided by three principles: confidentiality, safety, and student self-determination. In cases involving serious risks to life, health, or safety, universities need an emergency response mechanism while still limiting unnecessary disclosure of personal information.

3. DISCUSSION

The review indicates that dating violence among university students should be understood as an issue of student welfare, campus safety, and mental health, rather than merely as a private matter in romantic relationships. This distinction is important. If dating violence is viewed as private, universities may remain outside the issue. If it is viewed as a matter of personal morality, victims may be advised, judged, or blamed. However, if it is framed as a student welfare issue, universities have a responsibility to build safe environments, support services, and procedures to protect learners.

Compared with an individual psychological approach, social work offers a multi-systemic perspective. Social work does not only ask how psychologically injured a student is; it also asks whether the student has a support network, whether the student is safe, whether the student is being isolated, whether the student knows where to seek services, whether the university has protection procedures, and how family and peers can participate in support. This is the distinctive contribution that needs to be emphasized when proposing social work solutions in higher education institutions.

Nevertheless, implementing these solutions in Viet Nam may face several challenges. First, not all universities have dedicated counseling or social work units. Second, students may not trust the confidentiality of services within the university. Third, some lecturers and staff members have not been trained on dating violence and may unintentionally respond in harmful ways, such as blaming the victim or minimizing controlling behaviors in romantic relationships. Fourth, external referral systems, including medical, legal, emergency protection, and social organization services, remain fragmented, making intersectoral support difficult.

Compared with international models, many dating violence prevention programs emphasize healthy relationship education, bystander intervention skills, and coordination among schools, families, and communities. The systematic review and meta-analysis by Wong, Bouchard, and Lee (2023) on college dating violence prevention programs found that such programs may influence knowledge, attitudes, and some behavioral outcomes, but their effectiveness is uneven and depends on program design. This suggests that, in Viet Nam, universities should not rely solely on a few short communication sessions and treat them as full interventions. Programs need structure, clear objectives, materials, assigned staff, and evaluation.

The review also shows the need for further research on dating violence among Vietnamese university students. Priority directions include standardizing culturally appropriate measurement tools; conducting larger-scale studies across diverse types of institutions; studying male students, LGBTQ+ students, and students living away from family; examining help-seeking behaviors; and evaluating prevention programs and university-based social work support models. These directions are scientifically and practically important because domestic evidence remains limited.

4. CONCLUSION

Dating violence among university students is an important issue in higher education. It manifests not only through physical violence but also through psychological violence, sexual violence, controlling and isolating behaviors, and technology-facilitated abuse. Many abusive behaviors in dating relationships may be normalized, especially when students lack knowledge about consent, personal boundaries, and healthy relationships. The consequences of dating violence go beyond individual injury and may affect mental health, academic performance, social relationships, and long-term personal development.

From a social work perspective, universities need to develop student support systems for dating violence that combine prevention, early identification, individual support, group support, service referral, and coordinated procedures. Individual social work plays an important role in risk assessment, safety planning, counseling, recovery support, and resource connection. Group social work and peer support can help reduce isolation, strengthen healthy relationship skills, and encourage students to seek help.

In the coming years, universities should recognize dating violence as part of student welfare and campus safety policy. More experimental studies, support model evaluations, and culturally appropriate intervention programs are needed in Viet Nam. Building a safe university environment is not only about preventing violence on campus; it is also about helping students develop the capacity to recognize, refuse, and seek support when facing violence in intimate relationships.

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