The rape and sexual assault of men – a review of the literature

By Dr Nina Burrowes and Tessa Horvath

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www.nb-research.co.uk

Special thanks to Tessa Horvath who also donated a great deal of her time to this project.

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1. Introduction

1.1 What is this document for?
This report provides a brief overview of all the literature on male rape and sexual assault that was published between 1990 and 2012. The report illustrates which topics are being researched and what the latest evidence-based practice is. The amount of information provided on each piece of literature is necessarily brief. This report is therefore a catalogue of the research and should be used to browse the published work and identify articles or chapters to read in full.

1.2 Which bits should I read?
The report has been designed for you to pick and choose sections to read based on the topics that you are interested in. Below you will find information on how to find copies of the articles.

1.3 What do I need to know before I start reading this report?
There are a few things to bear in mind when reading this report:

- This report is designed to be a starting place for further research. The report will point you in the right direction but you will need to track down the original article and read it in full before using it in your work.
- The databases searched are ones that focus on psychology and criminology. Research that has a more sociological, political or anthropological focus is not likely to be included in this review.
- It has not been possible to summarise every piece of literature (257 articles in total). Instead all of the studies that used 'empirically robust' methods (see the section below) are summarised, all of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed, and a bibliography of all relevant papers is included.
- The language used throughout the report reflects the language used by the different authors of the various studies. Different researchers have used different terminology to discuss male rape and sexual assault.
- This report covers the literature to male rape and sexual assault only – the literature on childhood sexual abuse is not included in this review.

1.4 How do I know if the research is any good?
Throughout this review each piece of published work has been given a score out of 5 for its 'empirical robustness'. Studies that have high scores will have used research methods that result in a more solid evidence base. These studies are likely to have used larger sample sizes and tested their hypotheses using stronger research designs. If your question is 'Should we change our practice based on this research?' the answer is a more confident 'Yes' as the empirical score goes up. Every paper that scored 5 out of 5 for empirical robustness is summarised in this report.

Whilst empirical robustness is important if you want to answer the question 'Does this work?' empirically robust research is not the only type of useful research. Sometimes we need research to answer other types of questions such as 'Why does this happen?' or 'What is it like to experience this?' In these cases less empirically robust methods such as qualitative research are much more useful. So whilst the research in this review has been scored based on empirical robustness I would not dismiss the lower-scoring studies as 'bad research'. If you are interested in a particular topic area I would recommend checking out all of the papers that are listed in the relevant bibliography.
1.5 Will this review have missed anything?

Yes. Whilst we have done everything we can to do a thorough review in a short amount of time it is inevitable that this review will have missed some research on male rape and sexual assault. We are most likely to have missed anything with a sociological or political focus (rather than a psychological focus); anything that has not been published in the academic literature (for example, any in-house research that agencies may have conducted themselves); and any research conducted in non-English language speaking countries. We have also not had time to systematically search government department websites, or conduct similar non-academic searching of the literature (such as a Google search). So please do not read this review and think you have read everything. However, the review should have captured the main research conducted in this area. If you are aware of any research that we have missed please feel free to contact us so that we can add it to our database for any future reviews.

1.6 If I see a piece of research that I’m interested in how do I find out more about it?

The best thing to do is to read the original article in full. There are lots of ways to get copies of the articles and chapters that are mentioned in this report. One of the best options is to try an internet search using the article or chapter title as your search terms. Occasionally you will find links to free copies of the articles online. When free copies are not available you will find links to buy the articles online. Prices tend to range from around £8 to £30 per article.

An alternative source for all publications is the British Library. You can access everything for free through the library provided you are a member, you have ordered the article, and you can visit the library in person. You can also buy many copies of articles online through the British Library website. For more information about joining the library and ordering books or articles visit their website (http://www.bl.uk).

Finally, one of the best ways to find out more about an article is to contact the author directly. This not only gives you a chance to ask the author about their research but sometimes authors are able to provide you with a free copy of their research. Researchers get many requests for help. My advice is to keep your email brief, be very clear about which article you are interested in and what it is that you want. Most researchers are more than happy to talk about their work but are often very busy with other projects. You can track down an email address for most authors by entering their name and the title of their paper in a search engine.
2. Methodology for this review

What type of search did we do? Our process of searching for this review has been systematic. In that sense if someone else was to repeat the methodology below they should come up with very similar results as the ones presented in this report. This method of searching reduces the level of bias in a review as the researcher is required to be transparent about where they searched, how they decided to include studies into their review, and how they assessed the quality of the research.

Databases: For this review we have searched two databases: Psychinfo and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS). These databases were chosen both because they are the most relevant databases to use for the topic area and because they are databases that organisations could get easy access to as they are either available freely online (in the case of NCJRS) or you can access them by paying a low-cost daily fee (Psychinfo).

Search terms: The search terms used for searching were: "men or man or mascul*" and "rape or sexual violation or sexual assault". These terms could appear in the abstract, title, or keyword for any article.

Time period: The time period for the searching was 1st January 1990 to 5th December 2012.

Exclusion criteria: Articles were excluded if they exclusively focused on the following: perpetrators, prevention programmes, childhood sexual abuse, adolescents, school based sexual assault, child soldiers, gender differences between people who hold rape myths. Types of articles that were excluded included book reviews, corrections, anything not written in the English language and undergraduate dissertations.

Inclusion criteria: Reports from any country were included. Reports on domestic violence were included as long as they referred to sexual violence, sexual coercion, sexual assault or rape.

In order to give each article a score out of 5 for empirical robustness I used the following criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Randomised control trial or closely matched comparison group</th>
<th>Experiment comparing pre and post scores</th>
<th>Survey or correlational study</th>
<th>Systematic review or meta-analysis</th>
<th>Qualitative study</th>
<th>Narrative literature review, essay, opinion piece</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sample size above 200</td>
<td>Sample size above 750</td>
<td>Sample size above 1000</td>
<td>All were scored 5*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sample size 0-199</td>
<td>Sample size 500-749</td>
<td>Sample size 500-999</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sample size 0-199</td>
<td>Sample size 100-499</td>
<td>Sample size 200-499</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sample size 0-99</td>
<td>Sample size 0-199</td>
<td></td>
<td>All were scored 2*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>All were scored 1*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Description of the literature

Before looking at the specific topics relating to male rape and sexual assault this section provides information on the literature as a whole. This review found 257 articles, chapters, and reports that were published between 1990 and 2012 on male rape and sexual assault. The tables below present an overview of the type of research that was conducted. Looking at Table 1 we can see that most research is conducted in the USA (62% of the total) with the UK being the second largest publisher of research in this field (19%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Where was the research conducted?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Croatia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
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<tr>
<td>France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information not provided</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table above shows which countries the research was carried out in. This is based on the information provided in the abstract of the article, or where this is missing, the country the article was published in. Some countries will be under-represented because the search was conducted using papers published in the English language or because the authors have chosen to publish their work in an American or British journal rather than one from their own country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2: What topics were researched?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Topic area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of rape and sexual assault on men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective factors and risk factors for male rape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic work with male survivors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards male victims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The disclosure of male rape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and sexual orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and university students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male rape in prisons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male rape in the military</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of male rape in war</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 gives an overview of the topics that were researched and how many studies were conducted on each topic. Some studies fall into more than one topic area, for example, a study that explored therapeutic work with male prisoners would be included in the ‘Therapeutic work with male survivors’ section and the ‘Male rape in prisons’ section. The most widely researched topics were ‘Male rape in prisons’, ‘The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault’, ‘Attitudes towards male victims of rape and sexual assault’, and ‘The Impact of rape
and sexual assault on men’. Research topics that received less attention were ‘The use of male rape in war’, ‘Rape and disability’, and ‘Rape and ethnicity’.

Table 3 illustrates the sample sizes and quality of the research undertaken for each topic area. Studies conducted on ‘The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault’ and ‘Male rape in the military’ tend to use very large sample sizes whereas research on ‘The use of male rape in war’, ‘Rape and disability’, and ‘Attitudes towards male victims of rape and sexual assault’ tend to use small sample sizes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic area</th>
<th>Total studies</th>
<th>Average sample size*</th>
<th>Number of 5* studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>13165</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of rape and sexual assault on men</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6956</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective factors and risk factors for male rape</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1750</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic work with male survivors</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2126</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards male victims</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The disclosure of male rape</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1624</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and disability</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and ethnicity</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6389</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and sexual orientation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and university students</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>808</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male rape in prisons</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>2613</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male rape in the military</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10068</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of male rape in war</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*average sample size for studies that reported this number in the abstract

In general Table 3 illustrates that the research on ‘The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault’, ‘The impact of rape and sexual assault on men’, ‘Male rape in the military’, and ‘Male rape in prisons’ have a relatively solid evidence base with large sample sizes and a moderately large number of 5* studies. In comparison, relatively little good quality research has been conducted on the rape and sexual assault of men from minority groups (gay and bisexual men, men with disabilities, and men from ethnic minorities). Perhaps the most concerning statistic in Table 3 relates to ‘Therapeutic work with male survivors’. Whilst a relatively large number of studies have been conducted in this area the number of 5* studies is small considering how important it is to evidence the impact of services that are provided to survivors. This emphasises the need for services to collaborate with one another in order to generate sample sizes sufficient enough to provide empirical evidence that this type of work is effective.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic area</th>
<th>Total studies</th>
<th>5*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The impact of rape and sexual assault on men</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protective factors and risk factors for male rape</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic work with male survivors</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes towards male victims</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The disclosure of male rape</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and disability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and ethnicity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and sexual orientation</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rape and university students</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male rape in prisons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male rape in the military</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The use of male rape in war</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4 illustrates the nature of the research that has been conducted on male rape within the UK. As we can see from the table, whilst a relatively large amount of research has been conducted this work is disproportionately focused on studies assessing the prevalence of male rape and attitudes towards male victims. In contrast the review found no studies that explored rape amongst disabled or ethnic minority men; rape amongst male university students, or rape within the British military.

The following sections will address each topic area in turn, reporting on the size and quality of the research evidence and summarising the main findings.
4. The prevalence of male rape and sexual assault

Forty four papers explored the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault. Included amongst these papers are studies exploring the prevalence of domestic violence, general policy documents, and narrative reviews of the area.

Where was the research on prevalence conducted?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Africa</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United States of America</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16 studies were rated as 5* studies (36% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 13165. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

4.1 5 star studies


Prevalence and nature of male rape and sexual assault in the USA

This study explores the prevalence of male sexual assault using four years’ worth of data from a national criminological database in the USA. The results suggest that approximately 90% of sexual assaults are experienced by males under the age of 19. Forcible fondling and sodomy were the most prevalent forms of sexual assault. Information is also provided on age, race, severity of injury, time of day and location of incidents.


Prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault in the USA

This report gives a summary from the American 2010 National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey. The report has information on the prevalence and impact of sexual violence for men and women across the USA.
Systematic review of studies reporting the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault

A comprehensive literature review exploring the literature on male victims of sexual assault and rape. The paper reviews the myths surrounding male rape, the quality of the literature available, and the gaps in our knowledge. The review finds that the rate of reported male rape varies depending on how the information is collected. The number of reported male rape appears to be higher amongst military personnel, prison inmates, and the gay and bisexual community.

Prevalence and impact of male sexual assault in the USA

This study explores health outcomes and risk behaviours amongst men who have experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault. 59,551 men provided data for the study. Men who experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault were more likely to report mental ill health, poor life satisfaction, activity limitations, and lower emotional and social support.

Study comparing the differences in characteristics and service use and between survivors of childhood sexual abuse and adult sexual assault.

This study explores the characteristics, referral sources, and use of services of adult sexual assault survivors. 13381 survivors provided data for this study alongside information provided by 32 crisis centres. The majority of survivors of sexual assault were white females. The study found that adult survivors of abuse received less service time and contact than survivors of child abuse. Survivors of adult abuse were more likely to access services if they reported to police or hospitals.

The nature and prevalence of domestic violence experienced by men

This study explores the nature of domestic violence in couples who attended divorce mediation. It identified which types of domestic violence were experienced by men and women, which cases were removed from mediation and whether custody of children was related to domestic violence. Men who had experienced domestic violence most frequently reported psychological abuse (97%), followed by physical abuse (54%), escalated physical abuse (50%), sexual coercion and rape (29%).

Prevalence of sexual victimisation of men in Denmark

This study explores the prevalence of sexual victimisation and correlations between poor health and sexual victimisation in Denmark. 5,829 adolescents and 3,932 adults provided data for the study. Poor health was associated with sexual victimisation for both men and women.
Prevalence of male rape and sexual assault in the USA

This study explores the prevalence of sexual violence in the U.S.A. The survey found that 2.7 million women and 978,000 men experienced sexual assault in the 12 months preceding the study. 11.7 million women and 2.1 million men experienced rape in their lifetime.

Prevalence and nature of domestic violence and sexual assault among men in the UK

This report presents findings on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking from the 2004/05 British Crime Survey. 24,498 men and women aged 16 to 59 provided data for the survey. The survey found that half of women and one third of men experienced more than one form of violence in a relationship. Partner abuse was experienced by 28% of women and 18% of men. 9% of women and 9% of men had experienced stalking in the last year. Offenders of serious sexual assault against men and women were more likely to have been known to their victims than offenders of less serious sexual assaults.

Prevalence of male rape and sexual assault in Hawaii.

This report presents an analysis of 5,095 sexual assault victims who received treatment or services through a sexual abuse treatment centre in Hawaii. 10% of the clients were male. The average age for male victims using the service was 10 years old. Females were more likely than males to have been assaulted by an intimate partner. Males were more likely than females to have been assaulted by a relative. The two most common places for the assault were in the victim’s or perpetrator’s home. Generally victims sought emergency treatment less than 1 day after the assault and sought counselling on average 20 days afterwards, however male victims and younger victims waited longer to seek treatment. Various factors influenced the likelihood of different groups of victims reporting the assault. Male victims were more likely to report if the assailant used physical force or if the victim was widowed.

Prevalence and nature of domestic violence and sexual assault in the UK

This report presents findings from the 2001 British Crime Survey on domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. 22,463 women and men aged 16-59 provided data for the survey. 45% of women and 26% of men reported experiencing domestic violence, sexual victimization, or stalking at least once in their lives. In cases of stalking and violence experienced by men, 8% were committed by a partner, 70% by other known persons, and 30% by strangers. Men living in a household with an income of £10,000 were one and half times more likely to suffer domestic violence than men living in a household with an income of over £20,000. The report also provides information on victims’ seeking help from the police and other agencies.


Prevalence of domestic violence experienced by men in the USA

This report presents trends in domestic violence in the U.S.A using data from a national survey and FBI homicide reports. Amongst other findings the data revealed that 1,247 women and 440 men were killed by an intimate partner in 2000.


Prevalence and nature of domestic violence experienced by men in the USA

This report explores the extent, nature and consequences of domestic violence in the U.S.A using data from a national survey. 8,000 men and 8,000 women provided data for the study. 25% of women and 7.6% of men reported that they were raped and/or physically assaulted by an intimate partner in their lifetime. 1.5% of women and 0.9% of men reported being raped and/or physically assaulted in the previous 12 months. Based on these estimates 1.5 million women and 834,732 men are raped and/or physically assaulted by an intimate partner annually in the United States.


Systematic review of studies reporting the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault

This article collates and analyses data from 120 studies on the prevalence of sexual aggression victimisation and perpetration. Data from over 100,000 participants was collated and analysed. The analysis found that 13% of women and more than 3% of men had experienced rape. Approximately 25% of women and men reported being sexually coerced.


Prevalence of male rape and sexual assault in the USA

This study attempts to estimate the prevalence of male sexual assault in the USA using data from victim agencies. 172 agencies reported contact with 3635 men who had been sexual assaulted during adulthood. Most men had been assaulted between the ages of 16 and 30. Most victims experienced symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.
4.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Eleven studies were conducted in the UK. Two of these studies were 5* studies. All of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


A narrative review of female perpetrators of sexual offences and their male victims (Rated 1*)

A study exploring the prevalence of rape amongst male sex workers (Rated 2*)

A narrative review of international prevalence data (Rated 1*)

A study mapping services for survivors in GU clinics (Rated 3*)

A narrative review on male rape and sexual assault (Rated 1*)

A survey on the prevalence of sexual assault and domestic violence in the UK (Rated 5* see the section 3.1 for more details)

A survey on the prevalence of sexual assault and domestic violence in the UK (Rated 5* see the section 3.1 for more details)

A narrative review of male rape in the UK (Rated 1*)

A narrative review of male rape in the UK (Rated 1*)

Survey exploring the prevalence of oral sex in sexual assault (Rated 2*)

Book on male sexual assault (Rated 1*)
### Summary

- There is a relatively large volume of up to date, good quality research, using large sample sizes that assess the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault in the USA.
- A key paper on international data is Peterson, Voller, Polusny, and Murdoch (2011) who provide a synthesis of prevalence data along with a critique of how data is collected.
- The research conducted in the UK tends to focus on the prevalence of domestic violence, or is of poorer quality.

### 4.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


**Choudhary, E., Coben, J., & Bossarte, R. M. (2010).** Adverse health outcomes, perpetrator characteristics, and sexual violence victimization among U.S. adult males. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 25(8), 1523-1541


5. The impact of rape and sexual assault on men

Forty papers explored the impact of rape and sexual assault on men. These papers tended to focus on the physical and mental health impact of rape and sexual assault.

Where was the research on impact conducted?

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8 studies were rated as 5* studies (20% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 6956. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

5.1 5 star studies


The impact of rape and sexual assault on physical health

A large scale study exploring the relationship between rape and health. 115000 people provided data for this study. The study found that people who had experienced rape were more likely to have higher cholesterol, stroke, heart disease, problems with their immune system, and report that they smoked or drank excessively in comparison to people who had not been raped. Whilst this study cannot conclude that rape causes these health problems it highlights the health problems that people who have been raped are at higher risk of experiencing.


The impact of rape and sexual assault on physical and mental health

This study explores health outcomes and risk behaviours among men who have experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault. 59,551 men provided data for the study. Men who experienced sexual assault or attempted sexual assault were more likely to report mental ill health, poor life satisfaction, activity limitations, and lower emotional and social support.

The relationship between sexual assault and suicide attempts amongst military personnel

This study explores whether there is an association between traumatic events, including rape and sexual assault, and suicide attempts within the Canadian military. 8,441 men and women, active in the Canadian military, provided data for this study. Sexual and other interpersonal traumas (for example, rape, sexual assault, spousal abuse, child abuse) were significantly associated with suicide attempts in both men and women. The greater the number of traumatic events experienced the more likely a suicide attempt was reported.


The impact of rape and sexual assault on wellbeing

This study explores correlations between poor health and sexual victimisation. 5,829 adolescents and 3,932 adults provided data for the study. Poor health was associated with sexual victimisation for both men and women.


The relationship between rape and post-traumatic stress disorder

This study explores the prevalence and possible causes of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in Australia. 10,641 men and women provided data for the study. The results suggest that women are at greater risk of experiencing trauma than men, but the difference was not large. For both men and women rape and sexual assault were the traumatic events most likely to be associated with PTSD.


The impact of sexual assault on physical health for older men

This study explores whether there is a relationship between having a history of sexual assault and physical health conditions in older men and women. 1,359 white, middle to upper class, older men and women provided data for the study. In men the only significant association identified was between sexual assault and thyroid disease.


The relationship between sexual assault and post-traumatic stress disorder

This study attempts to estimate the prevalence of male sexual assault in the USA using data from victim agencies. 172 agencies reported contact with 3635 men who had been sexual assaulted during adulthood. Most men had been assaulted between the ages of 16 and 30. Most victims experienced symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder.
The impact of rape and sexual assault on mental and physical health

This study explores whether gender or ethnicity had an impact on the probability of being sexually assaulted, or the impact of being assaulted. 3000 members of the public provided data for the study. Gender: The rate of sexual assault was lower for men in comparison to women. Amongst people who had been sexually assaulted men were just as likely to be re-assaulted as women. Male victims were just as likely to have a mental disorder as female victims. Both men and women who have been assaulted report greater use of mental and physical health services than individuals who have not been assaulted. Race: The rate of sexual assault was lower for Hispanics in comparison to non-Hispanics. Amongst people who had been sexually assaulted ethnicity had no impact on the likelihood of being re-assaulted, the likelihood of having a mental health disorder, or the use of mental and physical health services.

5.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Seven studies were conducted in the UK. None of these studies were 5* studies. All of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


A study comparing the impact of stranger versus acquaintance rape and the impact on gay versus heterosexual victims (Rated 3*)


A study exploring the impact of rape and sexual assault on asylum seekers (Rated 2*)


A qualitative study exploring the impact of rape on male survivors (Rated 2*)


A qualitative study exploring the impact of rape on male survivors (Rated 2*)


A narrative review on the impact and treatment of male sexual assault (Rated 1*)


A book chapter exploring the impact of male rape (Rated 1*)


A narrative review of male rape and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (Rated 1*)
Summary

- There is a relatively large volume of up to date, good quality research, using large sample sizes that assess the impact of male rape and sexual assault in the USA.
- A key paper on international data is Choudhary, Coben, and Bossarte, (2010), who specifically assess the impact on physical and mental health for male survivors using a large sample size.
- The evidence suggests that male victims of rape and sexual assault are likely to experience physical and mental health problems including post-traumatic stress disorder and increased risk of suicide.
- Research has been conducted in the UK but these studies tend to use less empirically robust methodology.
- This review did not find any papers that documented the non-health related impact of male rape and sexual assault such as social impact, employment, and income.

5.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


Hart-Johnson, T., & Green, C. R. (2012). The impact of sexual or physical abuse history on pain-related outcomes among blacks and whites with chronic pain: Gender influence. Pain Medicine, 13(2), 229-242.


6. Protective factors and risk factors for male rape

Twenty papers explored protective and risk factors for male rape. These papers examine the characteristics that are associated with a reduced or increased risk of experiencing male rape or sexual assault. The information from these studies is useful for identifying individuals who may be at increased risk of experiencing male rape, or contexts in which sexual assault may be more prevalent.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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Five studies were rated as 5* studies (25% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 1750. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

6.1 5 star studies


Are men who are abused as boys more likely to be abused again in adulthood?

A study exploring re-victimisation (experiencing sexual abuse in childhood and also sexual assault in adulthood) for male victims of sexual abuse. Using data from 1002 male university students the research found that men who were sexually abused in childhood were more likely to be sexually assaulted in adulthood. Individuals who had been re-victimised were more likely to have problems with post-traumatic stress, hostility, depression and distress.


Demographic factors and other contextual factors associated with male rape and sexual assault

This report presents an analysis of 5,095 sexual assault victims who received treatment or services through a sexual abuse treatment centre in Hawaii. 10% of the clients were male. The average age for male victims using the service was 10 years old. Females were more likely than males to have been assaulted by an intimate partner. Males were more likely than females to have been assaulted by a relative. The two most common places for the assault were in the victim’s or perpetrator’s home. Generally victims sought emergency treatment less than 1 day after the assault and sought counselling on average 20 days afterwards, however male victims and younger victims waited longer to seek treatment. Various factors influenced the likelihood of different groups of victims reporting the assault. Male victims were more likely to report if the assailant used physical force or if the victim was widowed.
The relationship between alcohol consumption and risk of experiencing sexual assault

This study explores the effect of alcohol consumption on the risk of victimisation for physical and sexual assault. 8,000 women and 8,000 men provided data for the study. Results suggested that frequent and heavy drinkers are at a significantly higher risk of assault when they are drinking, but that drinking is not related to their victimization risk while sober. The study also found that males who were assaulted by female partners were also more likely to have been drinking.

The relationship between lifestyle and demographic factors and sexual assault

This study explores the relationship between various lifestyle and routine activities and sexual assault. 1,215 male students aged 17 - 21 provided data for the study. The results suggest that certain demographic characteristics, drug use, high school experience, and athletic participation in college are associated with risk of serious sexual assault victimisation.

The relationship between gender, ethnicity, history of abuse, health and sexual assault

This study explored whether gender or ethnicity had an impact on the probability of being sexually assaulted, or the impact of being assaulted. 3000 members of the public provided data for the study. Gender: The rate of sexual assault was lower for men in comparison to women. Amongst people who had been sexually assaulted men were just as likely to be re-assaulted as women. Male victims were just as likely to have a mental disorder as women victims. Both men and women who have been assaulted report greater use of mental and physical health services than individuals who have not been assaulted. Race: The rate of sexual assault was lower for Hispanics in comparison to non-Hispanics. Amongst people who had been sexually assaulted ethnicity had no impact on the likelihood of being re-assaulted, the likelihood of having a mental health disorder, and the use of mental and physical health services.

6.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Two studies were conducted in the UK. None of these studies were 5* studies. Both of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


A study exploring the incidence of rape amongst male sex workers (Rated 2*)


A survey about the nature of sexual offences in the UK (Rated 2*)
Summary

- The evidence base for the protective and risk factors associated with male rape and sexual assault is of moderate size and quality.
- The evidence suggests that younger men, men who have experienced abuse before, men with mental or physical health problems, and men who abuse drugs or alcohol are at a greater risk of experiencing rape or sexual assault.
- A very small body of research has been conducted in the UK but more work is needed to identify the specific risk factors within the UK.

6.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


Therapeutic work with male survivors

Twenty eight papers explored therapeutic work with male survivors. Included amongst these papers were free downloadable self-help guides.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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Three studies were rated as 5* studies (10% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 2126. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

7.1 5 star studies


The use of support services by university students who have experienced rape or sexual assault

This study explores the extent to which survivors of sexual assault report using college campus support services. 1230 students completed a questionnaire for this study. The study found that in general students were reluctant to use services. Comparison of men’s and women’s experiences found that men were significantly less likely to know where the sexual assault centre was located, to report that they would use the centre, and to report that sexual assault was a problem on campus.


Study comparing the differences in service use between survivors of childhood sexual abuse and adult sexual assault.

This study explores the characteristics, referral sources, and use of services of adult sexual assault. 13381 survivors provided data for this study alongside information provided by 32 crisis centres. The majority of survivors of sexual assault were white females. The study found that adult survivors of abuse received less service time and contact than survivors of child abuse. Survivors of adult abuse were more likely to access services if they reported to police or hospitals.


The use of hospital-based services by male victims of sexual assault

This study explores the characteristics of a hospital based service used by sexually assaulted men and women in Canada. The study found that services given to men and women were similar, forensic kits were used at a similar rate for men and women, and clients did not differ by gender in terms of the treatment received for sexually transmitted infections.
7.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Eight studies were conducted in the UK. None of these studies were 5* studies. All of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


A study mapping services for survivors in GU clinics (Rated 3*)


A study comparing the impact of stranger versus acquaintance rape and the impact on gay versus heterosexual victims (Rated 3*)


An evaluation of service delivered at male survivor centre (Rated 2*)

Craig, D. (2010). Virtually Helping? An exploration of the use of the Internet and online resources by adult male survivors of childhood sexual abuse. A dissertation submitted to The University of Manchester for the degree of MA in Counselling Studies in the Faculty of Humanities

An evaluation of using online services to support survivors (Rated 2*)


An evaluation of service delivered at male survivor centre (Rated 2*)


Narrative review of the treatment of male survivors (Rated 1*)


Guidance on working with male clients in a GUM clinic (Rated 1*)


A book on working with male survivors of sexual assault (Rated 1*)

Summary

- The evidence base for therapeutic work with survivors of male rape and sexual assault is small and generally uses small sample sizes and less empirically robust methods.
- The majority of the empirically robust evidence focuses on service-uptake rather than service quality.
- A small body of research has been conducted in the UK. This research includes studies that evaluate services provided to survivors but the sample sizes and methods used are not robust enough to provide empirical evidence for the effectiveness of therapeutic treatments.
A list of all studies found for this topic area


Forty one papers explored attitudes towards male victims of rape and sexual assault. Most of these papers explored the impact of ‘rape myth’ on attitudes. A ‘rape myth’ is an inaccurate assumption about rape. For example, a commonly held rape myth about male victims is that most male rapes are perpetrated by homosexual men on homosexual men, whereas in reality we know that both victims and perpetrators tend to be heterosexual.

Where was the research on attitudes towards male victims conducted?

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None of the studies were rated as 5* studies. Of those studies that reported a sample size the average sample size was 244.

8.1 5 star studies

None of the studies were rated as 5* studies.

8.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Nineteen studies were conducted in the UK. None of these studies were 5* studies. All of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


Explored differences in attitude based on the gender and sexual orientation of the victim (Rated 3*)


Explored differences in attitude based on the sexual orientation of the victim (Rated 2*)


Narrative review of rape myths relating to the perpetration of sexual assault by females (Rated 1*)


Explores the impact of male rape myths (not rated as sample size not provided)


Narrative review on attitudes to gay male victims of rape (Rated 1*)

**Explores medical students’ attitudes to male rape victims (Rated 3*)**

**Explores attitudes to gay male victims (Rated 2*)**

**Study exploring the impact of male rape myths (not rated as sample size not provided)**

**Explores the impact of perpetrator gender and victim sexual orientation on attitudes towards victims (Rated 2*)**

**Narrative review on male rape myths (Rated 1*)**

**Explores the impact of perceived social support on attitudes towards victims (Rated 2*)**

**Explores the relationship between homophobia and attitudes towards victims of male rape (not rated as sample size not provided)**

**Qualitative study on attitudes towards male rape victims (Rated 2*)**

**Study exploring the impact of victim gender and sexual orientation on attitudes towards victims of male rape (not rated as sample size not provided)**

**Study exploring the impact of victim gender and sexual orientation on attitudes towards victims of male rape (Rated 2*)**

**Study exploring attitudes towards male victims of rape (Rated 2*)**

**Qualitative study exploring the impact of gender on victim blame (Rated 2*)**

**Book chapter on male rape myths (Rated 1*)**

Study exploring the impact of victim gender and sexual orientation on attitudes towards victims of male rape (Rated 2*)

**Summary**

- Whilst the evidence base exploring attitudes towards male victims of rape and sexual assault is large in size the studies tend to use relatively small sample sizes and less robust methodology.
- A relatively large body of research has been conducted in the UK, however this also suffers from the same empirical weaknesses.
- More research is needed that uses larger sample sizes, robust empirical design, and non-student populations. A systematic review or meta-analysis of previous research may be able to provide empirical evidence by combining the data from all of the previous studies.

8.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


9. The disclosure of male rape

Nineteen papers explored the disclosure of male rape and sexual assault. Included amongst these papers were disclosures to a therapist, a friend or family member, or the police. Also included were any papers on the legal context of reporting, investigating or prosecuting male rape.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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<th>Country</th>
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Four studies were rated as 5* studies (21% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 1624. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

9.1 5 star studies


Disclosure and use of university-based support services

This study explores the extent to which survivors of sexual assault report using college campus support services. 1230 students completed a questionnaire for this study. The study found that in general students were reluctant to use services. Comparison of men’s and women’s experiences found that men were significantly less likely to know where the sexual assault centre was located, to report that they would use the centre, and to report that sexual assault was a problem on campus.


Are men less likely to report sexual assault or domestic violence to the police?

This study explores whether the gender of victims and perpetrators of physical and sexual assaults affects reporting rates to the police. 1,787 cases of sexual assault were analysed for the study. The study found that male victims were particularly reluctant to report assault by an intimate partner. For both men and women, sexual assaults were less likely to be reported than physical assaults.
Factors that affect likelihood of reporting male rape or sexual assault to the specialist treatment services in Honolulu

This report presents an analysis of 5,095 sexual assault victims who received treatment or services through a sexual abuse treatment centre in Hawaii. 10% of the clients were male. The average age for male victims using the service was 10 years old. Females were more likely than males to have been assaulted by an intimate partner. Males were more likely than females to have been assaulted by a relative. The two most common places for the assault were in the victim’s or perpetrator’s home. Generally victims sought emergency treatment less than 1 day after the assault and sought counselling on average 20 days afterwards, however male victims and younger victims waited longer to seek treatment. Various factors influenced the likelihood of different groups of victims reporting the assault. Male victims were more likely to report if the assailant used physical force or if the victim was widowed.

Factors that influence the likelihood of men reporting rape or sexual abuse

This study explores the differences between reporting rape by male and female victims. The study found that the situations in which rape takes place and the factors that influence a rape reporting decision differ for men and women. In general, men decided not to report where it jeopardised their masculine self-identity and women decided not to report if the rape did not fit with stereotypical rape scenarios.

9.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Six studies were conducted in the UK. None of these studies were 5* studies. All of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


An essay on attitudes to gay male victims of rape and law enforcement (Rated 1*)

Exploration of specialist police services for male victims of rape (Rated 3*)

Qualitative study on the police and male rape (Rated 2*)

Study on the attrition of rape cases in the UK (Rated 3*)

Book chapter on the legal issues surrounding male rape (Rated 1*)

Essay on good practice when working with male victims in a GUM clinic (Rated 1*)
Summary

- The evidence base regarding the disclosure of male rape and sexual assault is moderate in size and quality.
- The evidence suggests that male survivors of rape and sexual assault may be less likely to tell anyone about the offence if they are attacked by a person known to them or if there was limited physical force.
- A small number of studies have been conducted in the UK, however these studies tend to have smaller sample sizes and use less empirically robust methodology.

9.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


10. Male rape and disability

Six papers explored the rape and sexual assault of men with a physical or mental disability.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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Two studies were rated as 5* studies (33% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 71. Both of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order.

10.1 5 star studies


The prevalence of rape and sexual assault against people with disabilities in the USA

This report presents findings from the National Crime Victimisation Survey which explored various forms of victimization, including rape and sexual assault, against people with disabilities. The study found that people with disabilities were victims of approximately 47,000 rapes over a one year period.


The prevalence of rape and sexual assault against people with severe mental illness in the USA

This study explores the prevalence of sexual assault amongst individuals with severe mental illness in the USA. The results found a high prevalence of victimisation, with women experiencing more sexual abuse than men. Information is given on demographic factors, living circumstances, history of abuse, substance use and severity of psychiatric illness.

10.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

No studies were found that explored the rape or sexual assault of men with a physical or mental disability in the UK.
Summary

- The evidence base regarding the rape and sexual assault of men with a disability is very small. The most empirically robust studies report on the prevalence of abuse amongst men with disabilities.
- The evidence suggests that men with disabilities (physical or mental) experience high levels of rape and sexual assault.
- No studies were found exploring this issue in the UK.
- Given the risk of rape and sexual assault amongst this population, more research is needed to establish the prevalence in the UK and to evaluate ways of providing effective support services for these groups.

10.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


Six papers explored the relationship between male rape and ethnicity.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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Three studies were rated as 5* studies (50% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 6389. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order.

### 5 star studies


**Differences between survivors of child sexual abuse and adult rape based on ethnicity**

This study explores the characteristics, referral sources, and use of services of adult sexual assault. 13381 survivors provided data for this study alongside information provided by 32 crisis centres. The results indicated that there were differences between the two groups based on ethnicity. The majority of survivors of sexual assault were white females. Male survivors of adult sexual assault were slightly more likely to be from an ethnic minority than male survivors of childhood sexual abuse.


**The prevalence of sexual assault amongst Native American men.**

This study explores prevalence and factors which may predict sexual assault amongst Native American communities. 1,368 men and women from 6 Native American tribes provided data for the study. 2% of men had experienced sexual assault since age 18. For men, childhood maltreatment and lifetime alcohol dependence were associated with experiencing sexual assault.


**The relationship between ethnicity, prevalence and impact of male rape**

This study explores whether gender or ethnicity had an impact on the probability of being sexually assaulted, or the impact of being assaulted. 3000 members of the public provided data for the study. The rate of sexual assault was lower for Hispanics in comparison to non-Hispanics. Amongst people who had been sexually assaulted ethnicity had no impact on the likelihood of being re-assaulted, the likelihood of having a mental health disorder, or the use of mental and physical health services.
11.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

No studies were found that explored the relationship between male rape and ethnicity in the United Kingdom.

Summary

- The evidence base regarding the relationship between male rape and ethnicity is very small. The most empirically robust studies report on the prevalence of abuse amongst men of different ethnicities.
- No studies were found exploring this issue in the UK.
- Given the small size and low robustness of the research no firm conclusions can be drawn.

11.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


12. Male rape and sexual orientation

Twenty seven papers explored the rape and sexual assault of gay and bisexual men.

Where was the research on the rape and sexual assault of gay and bisexual men conducted?

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Two studies were rated as 5* study (7% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 343. The 5* studies are presented below, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

12.1 5 star studies


The prevalence of sexual violence amongst minority groups of university students

A study exploring the prevalence of sexual violence and physical or psychological abuse amongst minority groups within an American university. 1028 students provided data for this study. Students who were from ethnic minorities or were gay, lesbian, or bisexual were more likely to have experienced sexual abuse than other students. Students who were most likely to have experienced rape were either gay, from an ethnic minority, or were female. Students who were most likely to have experienced attempted rape were heterosexual females.


Are gay or bisexual men more likely to experience sexual violation than heterosexual men?

This study explored the difference in prevalence of lifetime victimisation amongst people with different sexual orientation. 1245 people provided data for the study. Lesbian, gay and bisexual participants reported more partner psychological and physical victimisation, and more sexual assault experiences in adulthood than heterosexual participants.

12.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Six studies were conducted in the UK. None of these studies were 5* studies. All of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


A study comparing the impact of stranger versus acquaintance rape and the impact on gay versus heterosexual victims (Rated 3*)
A narrative review on male rape in the UK (Rated 1*)


A study exploring attitudes towards gay victims of sexual assault (Rated 2*)


A study exploring attitudes towards victims based on gender and sexuality (Rated 2*)


A study exploring the prevalence of non-consensual sex amongst gay men (Rated 4*)


A study exploring attitudes towards victims based on gender and sexuality (Rated 2*)

Summary

- The evidence base regarding the relationship between sexual orientation and male rape is too small to draw any firm conclusions.
- The available evidence tentatively suggests that gay and bisexual men may be more likely to experience rape or sexual assault than heterosexual men.

12.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


13. Male rape and university students

Twenty five papers explored the issue of rape and sexual assault amongst university students. Some of these papers specifically explored the issue of sexual assault in university settings; others explored the issue of sexual assault using university students as participants. Studies that explored attitudes towards survivors of sexual violation using university students as participants were not included in this section.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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Six studies were rated as 5* studies (24% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 808. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

13.1 5 star studies


The prevalence of sexual violence amongst minority groups of university students

A study exploring the prevalence of sexual violence and physical or psychological abuse amongst minority groups within an American university. 1028 students provided data for this study. Students who were from ethnic minorities or were gay, lesbian, or bisexual were more likely to have experienced sexual abuse than other students. Students who were most likely to have experienced rape were either gay, from an ethnic minority, or were female. Students who were most likely to have experienced attempted rape were heterosexual females.


The use of sexual assault support services by university students

This study explores the extent to which survivors of sexual assault report using college campus support services. 1230 students completed a questionnaire for this study. The study found that in general students were reluctant to use services. Comparison of men’s and women’s experiences found that men were significantly less likely to know where the sexual assault centre was located, to report that they would use the centre, and to report that sexual assault was a problem on campus.

Does participation in sports reduce the likelihood of experiencing rape or sexual assault at university?

This study explores whether participation in sports can protect male athletes from sexual victimisation through mechanisms such as team membership, physical strength, and self-confidence. 2903 undergraduate students provided data for the study. In general females reported more sexual victimisation than males but no significant gender gap was found amongst athletes.


The relationship between alcohol and male sexual assault

This study explores the relationship between drinking alcohol and risky and unwanted sexual experiences. 1,564 students provided data on their experiences over the preceding 3 months for the study. 15% of the male students reported having unprotected sex. 7% reported experiencing sex that they were not happy with at the time. 25% reported experiencing an unwanted sexual advance as a result of others drinking alcohol. 0.5% reported sexual assault in the past 4 weeks.


Identifying male students who may be at increased risk of sexual assault

This study explores the relationship between various lifestyle and routine activities and sexual assault. 1,215 male students aged 17 - 21 provided data for the study. The results suggest that certain demographic characteristics, drug use, high school experience, and athletic participation in college are associated with risk of serious sexual assault victimisation.


The impact of sexual coercion on the wellbeing of male students

This study explores the relationship between sexual coercion and well-being for men and women. 872 women and 527 men, aged 19 – 22, provided data for the study. Three types of sexual coercion were explored: no coercion, pressure, and violent coercion. Women who were pressured had lower levels of well-being than women who were not coerced or who were violently coerced. In contrast, men who were violently coerced had lower levels of well-being compared with men who were either pressured or men who were not coerced.

13.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

None of the studies exploring the issue of rape and sexual assault within universities were conducted in the United Kingdom.

Summary

- The evidence base regarding rape and sexual assault amongst male university students is moderate in size and empirical robustness.
- The evidence suggests that male students from minority groups and the consumption of alcohol may increase the risk of experiencing sexual assault. The evidence also tentatively suggests that male victims may be less willing to disclose the assault and use support services than female victims.
- This review did not find any studies that explored this issue in British universities.
A list of all studies found for this topic area


Fifty seven papers explored male rape within prison. These studies included rape and sexual assault amongst prisoners and between staff and prisoners.

Where was the research on rape within prison conducted?

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Six studies were rated as 5* studies (11% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 2613. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

14.1 5 star studies


The prevalence of sexual coercion in Australian prisons

This study explores the prevalence of sexual coercion in Australian male prisons. Over 2000 inmates provided data for the study. 13.5% of participants reported sexual contact with males in their lifetime, 2.7% reported sexual contact only inside prison. In follow up interviews with 144 men most reported having sexual contact for pleasure, but some for protection. 6.9% reported being sexually threatened in prison and 2.6% sexually coerced.


The nature and impact of rape and sexual assault in male prisons

This study explores the circumstances and impacts of physical and sexual assault experienced by men in prison. Data from 2200 physical and 200 sexual assaults reported by 6964 male inmates were used in this study. Physical injury occurred in 40% of physical assaults; 70% of sexual assaults were between inmates; 50% of assaults were perpetrated by staff. Emotional reactions to assaults were experienced by virtually all victims. The study concluded that information on the circumstances and impacts of sexual assault is essential for the development and implementation of prevention and therapeutic interventions.


The prevalence of male sexual victimisation in American prisons

This study explores the rate of sexual abuse and victimisation between inmates and between staff and inmates in prisons in the USA. 40419 inmates and 282 local jails provided data for this study. 2.9% of male inmates reported one or more incidents of sexual victimisation. 1.6% of inmates reported an incident involving another inmate, and 2% reported an incident involving staff.
Identifying prisoners who are most at risk from sexual assault and good practice at reducing prison rape

This article provides an overview of three U.S. research studies on prison rape. The first study explores what types of prisoners are at increased risk of being a victim of prison rape. The study found that victims were most likely to be white and younger than their assailant. Mentally ill inmates were especially at risk. The second study explores behaviour and attitudes in relation to sexual violence and found that inmates form protective relationships with each other to protect themselves from sexual violence. The third study examines good practice at tackling prison rape including staff training and inmate education initiatives.


Identifying prisoners who are most at risk from sexual assault and good practice at reducing prison rape.

This study explores the common characteristics of victims and perpetrators of prison rape and factors that may influence the prevalence of sexual violence in prisons. 10 prisons that reported high rates of sexual violence and 6 that reported low rates took part in the study. Inmates who were more vulnerable to sexual assault included inmates of small stature, young inmates, non-violent offenders, mentally ill or physically impaired inmates, gay inmates, inmates not connected to a gang, inmates with a history of assault and inmates with low self-confidence. Prisons with low rates of sexual violence were fully staffed, had low staff turnover rates, prohibited pornography and tracked sexual assault complaints. Prisons that did not have these characteristics had higher prevalence rates.


The prevalence and nature of prison rape

This study explores the extent of different types of sexual violence in prisons. 2,730 prisons provided data for the study. The study found that 0.315% of inmates reported experiencing sexual assault. 90% of victims and perpetrators of inmate-on-inmate sexual assault were male. 69% of victims of staff sexual misconduct were male and 67% of perpetrators were female.

14.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

Two studies were conducted in the UK. Neither of these studies were 5* studies. Both of the studies that were conducted in the UK are listed below (in chronological order).


Explores the prevalence of rape in UK prison (Rated 3*)


An essay on prison rape (Rated 1*)
Summary

- The evidence base regarding male rape and sexual assault in prisons is relatively large and of good quality.
- The vast majority of studies have been conducted in the USA. Most studies focus on establishing the prevalence of prison rape. A few papers discuss the prevention of prison rape.
- Only 2 studies were found that reported on prison rape in the UK.

### 14.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


Robertson, J. E. (2003). Rape among incarcerated men: Sex, coercion and STDs. AIDS Patient Care and STDs, 17(8), 423-430.


15. Male rape in the military

Eighteen papers were published that discussed the issue of rape or sexual assault amongst military personnel. Many of these papers covered the issue of ‘Military Sexual Trauma’ (MST) which is defined by the Department of Veterans Affairs as "sexual harassment that is threatening in character or physical assault of a sexual nature that occurred while the victim was in the military, regardless of geographic location of the trauma, gender of victim, or the relationship to the perpetrator."

Where was the research on rape within the military conducted?

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Six studies were rated as 5* studies (33% of the total studies). Of those studies that reported a sample size the average was 10068. All of the 5* studies are presented below in chronological order, followed by all of the studies that were conducted in the UK.

15.1 5 star studies


What is the prevalence of rape related trauma for men in the military?

This review of the literature uses 29 previous research studies to estimate the prevalence of military sexual trauma (MST) amongst men serving in the American military. On average 0.09% of male military personnel report MST each year. This figure ranges from 0.02-6% across different studies. Looking at the prevalence of MST across the course of a military career the average prevalence is 1.1% with a range from 0.03-12.4% reported across the different studies. The authors of the paper identify a number of methodological problems in collating this data and make recommendations for future studies in this area.


The relationship between rape and suicide for military service personnel.

This study explores whether there is an association between traumatic events, including rape and sexual assault, and suicide attempts within the Canadian military. 8441 men and women, active in the Canadian military, provided data for this study. Sexual and other interpersonal traumas (for example, rape, sexual assault, spousal abuse, child abuse) were significantly associated with suicide attempts in both men and women. The greater the number of traumatic events experienced the more likely a suicide attempt was reported.

The prevalence of sexual assault amongst military veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder

This study explores the extent of sexual assault among both combat and noncombat military veterans who seek disability benefits for post-traumatic stress disorder. 3,337 veterans provided data for the study. Among men, 6.5% of combat veterans and 16.5% of noncombat veterans reported experiencing sexual assault either during military service or after service. For both men and women, reported rates of sexual assault were considerably higher than reported rates for the general population.


The impact of sexual assault on military personnel.

This study explores the relationship between sexual assault, religion and mental health among male military veterans. 2,427 male veterans provided data for the study. 4% of the participants reported experiencing sexual assault. These men had significantly lower levels of mental health and higher levels of depression. Men who experienced sexual assault but attended religious services had better mental health than those who did not.


The prevalence of sexual harassment within the American military.

This study explores the attitudes, opinions and experiences of Army, Navy, Air Force and Coast Guard personnel towards sexual harassment, drawing comparisons with a survey undertaken 10 years previously. Over 90,000 men and women provided data for the study, 28,296 responses are analysed for this paper. 78% of women and 38% of men reported experiencing one of more incident of sexual harassment. This most commonly took the form of crude and offensive behaviours such as jokes, remarks or gestures. 6% of women and less than 1% of men reported experiencing rape or attempted rape.


The prevalence of sexual assault within the American military.

This study explores the experience of sexual assault for men and women serving in the US military. 555 men and 573 women provided data for the study. 50.9% of females and 6.7% of males reported sexual assault. The majority of assaults happened before the soldiers entered the military. 25% of women and 1% of men reported child sexual abuse. The study concludes that health care assessments should include details of a soldier’s sexual assault history.

15.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

No studies were found that explored the issue of rape or sexual assault within the British military.
Summary

- The evidence base regarding male rape and sexual assault within the military is relatively large and of good quality.
- Nearly all of the studies have been conducted in the USA. Most studies focus on establishing the prevalence of rape within the military. One of the best papers for establishing the prevalence of rape within the military is Hoyt et al. (2011) who systematically review previous studies on prevalence rates.
- There is a lack of studies that explore the impact of support services for men who have experienced MST.
- No studies were found that explored the issue of rape or sexual assault within the British military.

15.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


Sandberg, A. A., Murdoch, M., Polusny, M. A., & Grill, J. (2012). Reactions to a survey among those who were and were not sexually assaulted while serving in the military. Psychological Reports, 110(2), 461-468.

16. The use of male rape in war

Four papers explored the use of male rape in war. This low number is likely to reflect the nature of the literature databases used for this review. Databases for sociological research may identify many more research studies.

Where was the research on therapeutic work conducted?

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None of the studies were rated as 5* studies. Of those studies that reported a sample size the average sample size was 60.

16.1 5 star studies

None of the studies were rated as 5*

16.2 Studies from the United Kingdom

None of the studies were conducted in the UK

16.3 A list of all studies found for this topic area


17. Summary and conclusions

17.1 Summary of findings

- There is a large and robust evidence base establishing the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault in the USA. This review found much less data relating to prevalence rates in the UK with the best studies focusing on sexual violation by an intimate partner. More research is needed to establish the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault in the UK.

- There is a good level of research documenting the psychological and physical impact of male rape and sexual assault. The research suggests that survivors experience many complex psychological impacts including post-traumatic stress disorder and greater levels of drug and alcohol abuse. Less research has been conducted on the social impact of male rape including impact on relationships, family, work, and income.

- This review found a good level of research documenting which groups are at increased risk of experiencing male rape and sexual assault. Research suggests that younger men, men who have experienced sexual abuse in the past, men with a physical or mental disability, and men who are abusing drugs or alcohol are at increased risk of being raped or sexually assaulted. This information can help agencies who work with survivors to target their work both in terms of prevention and supporting survivors.

- This review found a lack of good quality research evaluating the effectiveness of therapeutic work with survivors. Most studies that evaluated services used small sample sizes and less empirically strong methodology.

- There is a large evidence base exploring attitudes towards male survivors of rape and sexual assault but studies in this area tend to use relatively small sample sizes. Larger scale studies, or studies that combine data from a number of sources (e.g. a meta-analysis) are needed to firmly establish the impact of different attitudes.

- This review found that more research is needed to help us understand how and why men may choose to disclose the sexual violation that they have experienced. This research will help both statutory and non-statutory agencies ensure that they are doing everything that they can to facilitate this process.

- Whilst research demonstrates that men with a physical or mental disability are at greater risk of experiencing rape or sexual assault this review found a lack of research in this area, especially from within the UK. Research is needed to establishing the prevalence, effective methods for prevention, and effective delivery of support services to these men.

- This review found a lack of studies that explored the relationship between ethnicity and male rape and sexual assault. More research is needed to help agencies who work with survivors appropriately target men from minority groups and tailor their services to meet their needs.

- Research found during this review suggests that gay and bisexual men may be at increased risk of experiencing rape or sexual assault, however, the evidence base is not currently sufficient to draw any firm conclusions. More research is needed to establish the prevalence and needs of gay or bisexual survivors of male rape or sexual assault.

- This review found a lack of research that explored the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault within British universities. Data from the USA suggests that some male students (for example, students from minority groups) may be at increased risk of rape or sexual assault. More research is needed to establish the prevalence of male rape and sexual assault within British universities and to explore good practice in terms of education, prevention and support services.
• There is a large and robust evidence base exploring the prevalence of rape within American prisons. In contrast this review found very little research exploring the prevalence within prisons in the UK. There is an urgent need to work with HM Prison Service to establish whether male (and female) rape and sexual assault is prevalent within prisons in England and Wales.

• There is a large and robust evidence base exploring the prevalent of rape within the American military. In contrast this review found no research evidence regarding the prevalence within the British military. There is an urgent need to work with the British military to establish whether male (and female) rape and sexual assault is prevalent with the British armed forces.

17.2 Recommendations

The research evidence in the UK contains a lot to make us proud. However, there are of course many areas for improvement and many challenges ahead if we are to improve the good work that has already been done. The main challenges appear to be:

• To supplement this review with a review that focuses on childhood sexual abuse.
• To establish the impact of therapeutic work with survivors
• To work with HM Prison Service and the British Military to establish the prevalence of male rape within these services.
• To better meet the needs of those individuals who are at increased risk of male rape and sexual assault including: younger men, those with a history of sexual abuse, those who abuse drugs or alcohol, and men with a physical or mental disability.

None of these are small challenges and no male-survivor agency within the UK is big enough, or sufficiently resourced to undertake any one of these challenges on their own. It is therefore our recommendation that agencies with an interest in male rape and sexual abuse (whether they be statutory agencies, third-sector support agencies, or academic departments) work together to improve the evidence base within the UK. Collaboration on projects will bring independent academic rigour to our research (as the research will be supervised by university academics), increase the sample size of studies (as studies across multiple agencies will be able to pool their data), and is more likely to be effective in both attracting research funding and ensuring government agency (such as the Home Office, Ministry of Justice, and Ministry of Defence) support.

17.3 An invitation

Survivors UK would like to play its part in making this collaboration happen. If you have any interest in the area of male rape and sexual assault – we would like to invite you to collaborate with us in shaping future research projects.

Please contact us via info@survivorsuk.org

Thank you