2021

Rape Myth Acceptance and Potential Impacts on Campus Policies and Programs

Jilleian K. Sessions-Stackhouse
Walden University

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Jilleian Sessions-Stackhouse

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Lori Demeter, Committee Chairperson,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Mi Young Lee, Committee Member,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Dr. Meena Clowes, University Reviewer,
Public Policy and Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2021

Abstract

Rape Myth Acceptance and Potential Impacts on Campus Policies and Programs

by

Jilleian Sessions-Stackhouse

MA, Webster University, 2005

BS, South Carolina State University, 2002

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

College of Social and Behavioral Science
Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

January 2021

Abstract

Sexual assault has been a growing concern for many years, and researchers have used rape myth acceptance to understand how blame is assessed as well as to develop effective prevention programs to deter the crime. Rape myths are obstacles to successful program and prevention efforts. The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore potential connections between rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff and the impact this knowledge can have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. The theoretical framework of this study drew from evolution theory. The previously validated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale-Short Form (IRMA-SF) was used for data collection to understand the perceptions of collegiate staff on their awareness of rape myth acceptance. This survey was completed by 126 full-time staff at southeastern private university. Multiple regression analysis was used to predict the relationship of the dependent and independent variables. Findings indicated that the higher the levels of knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff, the higher or more likely they were to agree that their university does an adequate job of making me aware of its sexual assault policy and programs. The potential for positive social change includes increasing insight into rape myth acceptance and how it may impact development of future effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Rape Myth Acceptance and Potential Impacts on Campus Policies and Programs

by

Jilleian Sessions-Stackhouse

MA, Webster University, 2005

BS, South Carolina State University, 2002

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

College of Social and Behavioral Science
Public Policy and Administration

Walden University

January 2021

Dedication

I dedicate this study to my awesome family, thank you for your patience, love and

support through this tedious journey; I want to give a huge thank you to my mother Lilly

Faye. You were my biggest cheerleader and even though God called you home before my

completion, I know you are proud of me. To my husband Franklin, you are my soulmate,

best friend and biggest supporter. Thank you for keeping me encouraged when I wanted

to quit and picking me up every time, I doubted myself. I love you endlessly, YATO. To

my three heat beats, Kaleb, Kelsey, and Kade, I hope my journey inspires you to dream

big and never give up. Know that if you believe in yourself there is nothing you can't do.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Lori Demeter for your patience, support, and sternness when I needed it the most. With you as chair there is no way a student could not succeed. I would also like to thank all the Walden faculty and staff that kept me encouraged and supported. I would also like to thank Dr. Stephanie Helms Pickett; without you I would have not been able to complete this study.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Sexual violence is a profound and growing concern in the United States. Sexual violence affects females and males with lasting mental and physical complications (Anderson, 2016; Beaver, 2017; Romeo, 2004; Tuerkheimer, 2015). The term "sexual violence" is often used to represent many behaviors that fall under the rubric of sexual abuse, sexual assault, and any other sexual violation (Buddie & Miller, 2001; Peterson & Ortiz, 2016; Vandermassen, 2011). Sexual assault occurs when a person commits sexual acts without the other person's consent or when the person is unable to consent either from age, illness or incapacitated (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2014).

Sexual assault is a problem rooted in our society that includes unwanted acts perpetrated mostly by persons known to victims and not by strangers as once believed within society. According to McCormack and Prostran (2012), Romeo (2004), Romero-Sánchez and Megías (2015), and Sable, Danis, Mauzy, and Gallagher (2006), despite the alarming statistics of sexual assault occurrences, many individuals believe that females are the blame for the assault. One of many factors that influence this type of mindset of sexual assault is rape myth acceptance.

Gender, cognitive behaviors, and social norms play a role in the belief of rape myths and therefore guiding personal beliefs of sexual assault and attribution of blame. Rape myths are defined as a specific set of attitudes and beliefs that may contribute the blame of sexual assault on the victim (Aosved & Long, 2006; Burt, 1980; Emmers-

Sommer, 2014; Littleton, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McCormack & Prostran, 2012).

In April 2014, the White House assembled a task force to further the initiatives of sexual assault prevention. The taskforce discussed the reason why there is a need to act on sexual violence and steps to help identify and prevent such acts (The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, 2014). Recommendations included conducting a climate survey to understand the problem and its extent, developing prevention programs, and effective responses once a sexual assault has been reported (The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, 2014). Even though efforts have been made to dispel myths and help increase reporting there seems to still be a substantial amount of underreporting of this violent crime (Smith et al., 2017).

 Feminist theory supports the premise of rape myth acceptance, just deserts theory and theory of evolution which proposes that rape myth acceptance allows men to justify sexual violence against women. The just deserts theory is the belief that for people to believe in a "just world" people believe that what happens to other people must have been deserved (Aosved & Long, 2006; Burt, 1980; Mouilso & Calhoun, 2013).

In the late 1980s feminist standpoint theory was developed to shed light on the fact that women's lives were systematically and structurally different than men (Conaghan & Russell, 2014; Corrigan, 2013; Henderson, 2007; Maxwell & Scott, 2014). This theory highlights the fact that society is structured by power relations, which resulted in unequal social status between men and women. Feminist theory also discussed that dominance of men and how men have an inert need to maintain that

dominance (Henderson, 2007). Feminist theory arose from an unconventional movement that seeks to establish equality in politics, social and economic issues. Evolution theory is a belief that rape is an evolutionary adaptation in the male psyche that allows men to believe women could be viewed as resisting what they needed to reproduce. The concept of this natural selection of male mentality is thought to be because men were seeking to further their genetic makeup and lineage (Apostolou, 2013; Archer & Vaughan, 2001).

These theories help provide more insight to understanding of rape myth acceptance. The objective of this study is to understand if rape myth acceptance of university staff has any effects on campus policy and programs, and this insight may lead to future changes in rape myth acceptance and its related policies and programs.

This chapter contains the introduction to the study with the background and statement of the problem, providing highlights showing the need for this study. These sections are followed by the purpose, theoretical framework, research questions, nature of the study, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations, delimitations and the significance of the study.

Background of the Study

Violence against women is a broad term that includes all forms of violence against women regardless of sexual nature. Violence against women include, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, intimate partner violence and stalking. Sexual violence is a term used to categorize crimes such as rape, sexual assault, incest, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment (Morgan & Kena, 2017; White House Task Force, 2014). The research focus for this study is sexual assault and rape.

Lifetime prevalence estimates from the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) conducted in 2017 indicate that 1 in 2 women (44.6 %) and 1 in 5 men (22.2%) has experienced some form of sexual violence other than rape at some point in their life (Aosved & Long, 2006; Chen, Black, Saltzman & Basile, 2007; Clay-Warner; Tuerkheimer, 2015). Per the NISVS (2017), less than 1% of women and even less men reported an attempted or completed rape within the previous 12 months, which translated to an estimated 302,109 women and 92,748 men were raped annually. Numerous studies consistently indicate that sexual victimization starts very early in life.

The National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS, 2014) found that 54% of sexual assault victims were raped before the age of 18 and 71% of male victims were raped before the age of 18. Findings demonstrate that rape prevalence varied between Hispanic and non-Hispanic women. Hispanic women were less likely than non-Hispanic women to report they were raped.

Per the NISVS:

- One in 5 women and nearly 1 in 59 men have experienced an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime, defined as penetrating a victim by use of force or through alcohol/drug facilitation.

- Approximately 1 in 15 men (6.7%) reported that they were made to penetrate someone else during their lifetime.

- An estimated 12.5% of women and 5.8% of men reported sexual coercion in their lifetime (i.e., unwanted sexual penetration after being pressured in a nonphysical way).

- More than one-quarter of women (27.3%) and approximately 1 in 9 men

  (10.8%) have experienced some form of unwanted sexual contact in their

  lifetime; and Nearly one-third of women (32.1%) and nearly 1 in 8 men

  (13.3%) experienced some type of noncontact unwanted sexual experience in

  their lifetime (2014).

According to Jozkowski, Peterson, Sanders, Dennis, and Reece (2014), incidents

of nonconsensual sexual intercourse are higher for women during the years they spend in

college compared to post college. 'Stranger' rape has taken a back seat to the more

prevalent and ambiguous 'acquaintance' rape. Acquaintance rape is defined as sexual

assault that has been committed by someone known to the victim (Tuerkheimer, 2015).

Sexual offenses accounted for approximately 5% of police reported violence and

less than 1% of all police recorded crime between 2010-2012. Research conducted by the

NVAW (2014) indicated that violence against women should be classified as a major

public health concern as well as a criminal justice concern in the United States. The large

numbers of rape, physical assault, and stalking victimizations committed against women

each year suggests that violence against women is an epidemic (Office of Justice

Programs, 2016).

The impact of sexual of violence has been documented to have residual effects

mentally, physically and academically (McMahon, 2010). Research has shown that

college women in the United States are sexually victimized at higher rates and often by

their known peers (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Romeo,

2004; Vandermassen, 2011). The aftermath of a sexual assault frequently leads to

withdrawal from college. A survey by the Department of Justice (2014) reported that in three-quarters of all rapes and sexual assaults the perpetrator is known. Another alarming fact is that sexual assault victims are often at a much higher risk for subsequent sexual assaults (Jozkowski & Peterson, 2014; Romeo, 2004).

Social reactions to victims of sexual assault appear to play a significant role to recovery. Victims are often on the receiving end of negative social responses from stigmas, victim blame and responsibility (Edwards et al., 2009). Researchers have found that sex role socialization and the engagement of rape myths encourages a sexual assault victim to view herself as a possible contributor to her victimization, which most times decreases the possibility that a crime will be reported. Victims also have concerns of not being believed by the police which can also decrease the number of reported sexual assaults (Aosved & Long, 2006; Burt, 1980; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; Romeo, 2004).

Research has consistently shown that many people perceive sexual assault as the victim's fault (Miller et al., 2011). Victim blaming has been significantly linked to sexual assault on college and university campuses because people have perceptions about how rapes and sexual assaults occur (Anderson, 2011; Gage, 2008; McMahon, 2010; Stahl & Daniel, 2010). Rape myth acceptance have influenced sexual attitudes and beliefs and have been rooted in religion, law, and media stereotypes (Miller, 2011). Victim-blaming and rape myths have been a prevalent obstacle for colleges when trying to establish substantial prevention and programming. This literature examines different programming

and prevention methods that colleges and universities use to reduce the occurrences of sexual assault (Burgess, 2007; Gage, 2008; Lake, 2011; McMahon, 2010).

Research by Anderson and Whiston (2005), Kress et al. (2006), and McMahon (2010) discussed the many prevention programs that have been incorporated in institutions of higher education, however little research has been conducted on the measure of success or non-success of these types of programs. The policy model discussed by McMahon (2008) assists institutions of higher education develop clear and concise expectations.

Despite the most recent call to action by the Department of Education, the need to train and engage all university staff and faculty members consistently has not been required. For all institutions to be proactive and take preventative steps, faculty and staff's rape myth acceptance and knowledge of policies that guide collegiate intuitions are necessary. One of the first steps of addressing each college or university sexual assault policy and enforcement is finding out what is needed for each campus to be success. Evaluation of the entire campus community is essential for effective prevention (The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault, 2014).

Problem Statement

Sexual violence is a concern in institutions of higher education (Borgues et al., 2008; Krebs et al., 2007; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; Peterson & Oritz, 2016). It is estimated that one out of four females in college will be the victims of attempted or completed assault throughout their time in college (Vladutiu et

al., 2011). Federal mandates require universities and colleges that receive federal funds to

not only report but also develop and publish policy that lets campus community know the

procedures and protocol for when there is a report of sexual assault the equitable way

each case will be treated (Ali, 2011; Vladutiu et al., 2011). Colleges and universities

have been trying to find effective prevention programming to dispel the myths and

negative connotation put on victims that could sometimes hinder comprehension of

sexual assault and its effects (Angelone, Mitchell, & Pilafova, 2007; Paul & Gray, 2011;

Vladutiu et al., 2011). University administrators are tasked with making sure they

display certain information within their policies, but we have yet to see how the

perceptions of campus community can help in policy development and effectiveness of

the programs. Faculty and staff play an intricate role in the campus community and well-

being of students as well as the administration.

Currently, there is no federal mandate from the Department of Education

requiring universities to provide recurrent training for already employed faculty and staff.

Colleges and universities are mandated to have a policy and procedure that explains the

process when a sexual assault has occurred (Ali, 2011). However, with such broad

parameters the administration and campus community could be under different

understandings of the role and success they play within the process of student reporting

and prevention, which can be driven by their perception and rape myth acceptance.

Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this quantitative study was to explore potential connections

between rape myth acceptance and collegiate staff at a private research university and the

impact this knowledge could have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Responsibilities differ for everyone involved and with some of the staff having limited training and conversation about policy and expectations can leave students confused, unsupported and ultimately unlikely to report (Krebs et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2003; McMahon, 2008). Policy changes can help reduce the ambiguity of roles of staff within the sexual assault policy (Borgues et al., 2008; Fisher et al., 2000). Making sure policy is understood and roles are determined will assure every university personnel has received adequate training and education set by university standards. Thus, it is the hope that information gained from this proposed study can provide insight as to what types of policies and programs may be effective in reducing sexual assault on college campuses not just for students but the entire campus community.

This research will fill an important gap in literature and practice regarding the rape myth acceptance of staff and their potential role in the effectiveness of campus prevention programming. The results of this study may help collegiate institutions better evaluate the needs of their campus based on the knowledge and role of the entire campus community. As stated in findings from The White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault (2014, p.9), "an evaluation regarding what on each campus is needed to fully understand and equip a campus with what it needs to prevent sexual assault." The results from this study could also assist guiding other campus communities on assessing what type of programming and policies are needed to prevent sexual assault.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

This study sought to explore potential connections between rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff at a private research university and the impact this knowledge can have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Previous studies have evaluated students and their acceptance of rape myths (Anderson, 2016; Burt, 1980; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Romeo, 2004) but none that correlated rape myth acceptance of staff, their knowledge of sexual assault, and the impact it can have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

The overarching research question for this study was:

What are the potential connections between rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff and the impact their perception can have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

The following sub-questions supported the objective of this study:

RQ1: To what extent, if any, does rape myth acceptance influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

> **Ho1**: Rape myth acceptance does not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

> **Ha1**: Rape myth acceptance influences effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does knowledge regarding sexual influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault does not influence effective campus

sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Ha2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault influences effective campus sexual

assault prevention policies and programs.
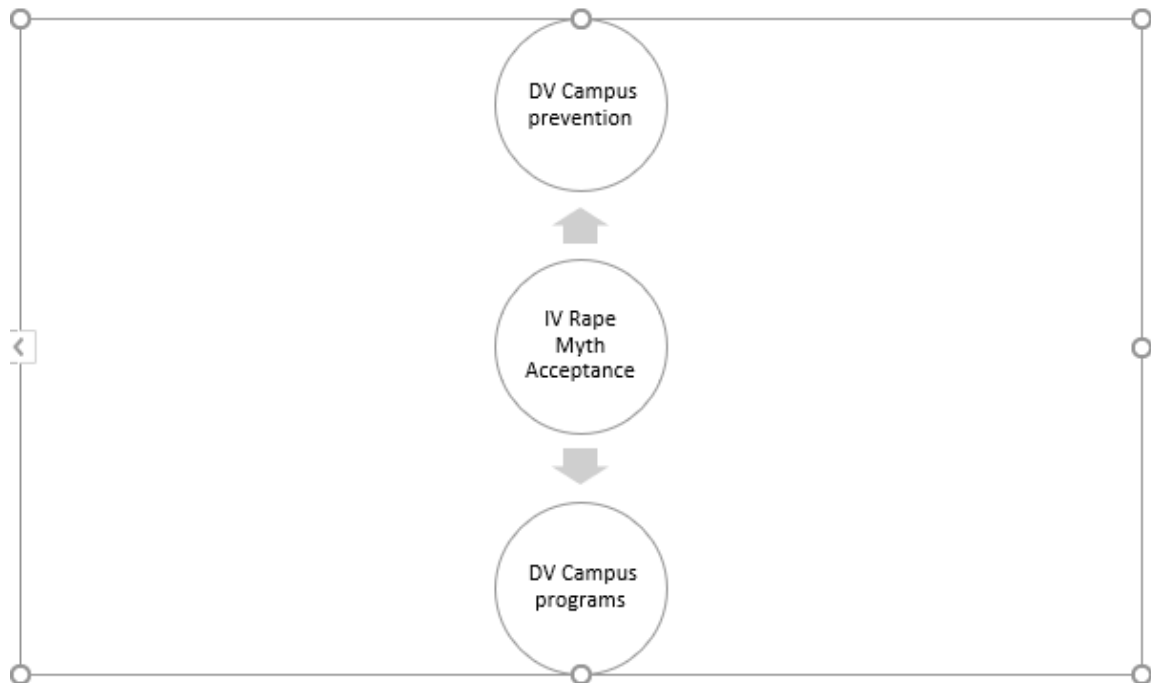
Figure 1 *Relationship between the, IV rape myth acceptance, and DV prevention and programs*

Theoretical Framework of the Study

Quantitative research uses the positivist perspective which suggests that data can

be reduced to empirical indicators that represent truth (Babbie, 2013). A theory is a

statement that may be used to guide inquiry, theories are helpful when trying to expand

understanding into certain phenomena (Babbie, 2013). There is no clear single theory of

rape. From the predominate feminism view, rape can be viewed as some method men

use to dominate and control women to preserve a system of male supremacy

(Vandermassen, 2011).

Evolution Theory

In the late 1970s evolutionists first applied evolution theory with attempts to

understand the way the human mind works. Some theorists argue that due to the

evolution, rape is caused by male and female evolution of sexuality (Conaghan &

Russell, 2014; Ferrão & Gonçalves, 2015; McPhail, 2016). Evolution theory is described

as the difference in how men and women have evolved sexually (Palmer & Thornhill,

2003; Thornhill & Thornhill, 1991; Vandermassen, 2011). According to Archer and

Vaughan (2001), Maxwell and Scott (2014), and Palmer and Thornhill (2003), rape

committed by men is associated with inherited traits that increased the chances of

successful reproduction. In 1979, researchers described males as being less selective of

their sexual partners and thus leading to different desires when seeking sexual

gratification (Lalumière, 2006; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Researchers have linked

evolution theory with male sexual aggression and it was suggested that when men

perceive no risk, they would commit rape (Corrigan, 2013; Maxwell & Scott, 2014;

McPhail, 2016). Emphasis on sexual aggression, sexual desire seemed to lead the

thought process of early researchers and as it was discovered that women have sexual

desires as well, the shift of blame turned to women (Corrigan, 2013; McPhail, 2016;

Palmer & Thornhill, 2003).

Nature of Study

Utilizing the quantitative, cross-sectional survey design was the best approach to examine complex relations such as moderation. Quantitative research looks to understand certain tendencies that may explain certain behaviors and link how those behaviors are linked to certain characteristics (Black, 1999). Quantitative research uses numerical data to explain or predict certain hypotheses (Vogt, 2006). An online survey was distributed to full time staff members from a northeast public university.

The online survey method was utilized because it is the most efficient way to elicit responses from many participants in a short amount of time, and easy to administer and score. There were questions to establish categories and questions to determine perception and use inferential analysis about the campus community population (Black, 1999). There is no sampling technique since all 8,664 full-time staff at this private research university were invited to participate (Please see Appendix B for university approval). A G*Power analysis conducted revealed the minimum sample size of 126 was needed for significance. A statistical t-test of fixed model linear multiple regression was done to determine minimum sample size needed for the study. A two-tailed test was done

with an error probability of .05 and power of .095 (see Figure 2). Figure 2 indicates the

minimum sample needed to minimize representation bias.

t tests – Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, single regression coefficient
Tail(s) = Two, Number of predictors = 2, α err prob = 1e-007, Effect size f^2 = 1
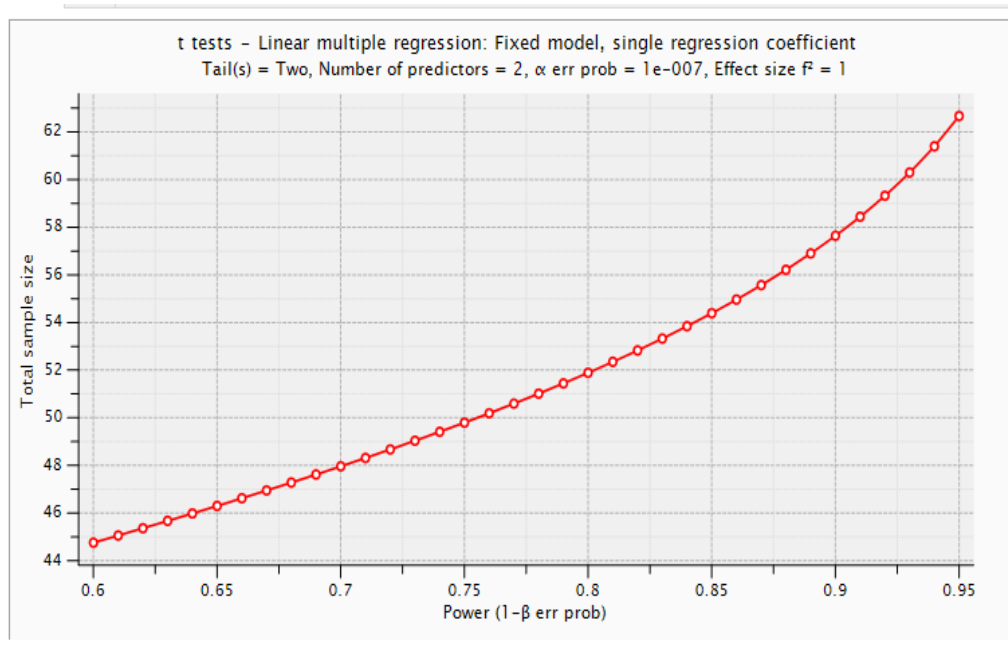
Figure 1 *G* Power analysis of sample size needed*

Using the already validated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale- Short Form

(IRMA-SF), this research evaluated the perceptions of staff regarding sexual assault. The

IRMA-SF Scale is a 20-item question survey with seven subscales that uses certain

language to examine if subtle rape myths and sexism still exist. The scale consists of a

general rape myth construct with subscales that consists of different myths that can lead

to subtle victim blaming.

The study variables were converted to a numerical form through the survey

instrument used for the collection of data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS)

is a software that computes data for statistical analysis. This study was conducted using IBM SPSS version 24 (Bryman & Cramer, 1999). SPSS also provided descriptive statistics of the collected data as well as run statistical tests.

Definitions

The following operational definitions were used for this dissertation:

Acquaintance Rape: Acquaintance rape has been defines as forced sexual intercourse that occurs between individuals who are acquainted or romantically involved (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; Romeo, 2004; Sable, Danis, Mauzy, & Gallagher, 2006).

Perception: Perception prefers to when a person becomes aware of or forms a mental impression of a situation (Franiuk et al., 2008; Klippenstine et al., 2007).

Rape: The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina, or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another without a mental impression of a certain situation the consent of the victim(Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2011).

Rape Myth: False beliefs about rape shaped by sexism and other prejudices that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression towards women (Aosved & Long, 2006; Banwell, 2014; Burt, 1980; Littleton, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; McMahon, 2010).

Sexism: Sexism is defined as an overt hostility against women and according to Hammond et al. (2011), Mouilso and Calhoun (2013), Pedersen and Strömwall (2013), and Yamawaki et al. (2007) it plays a significant role in victim blaming.

Sexual Assault: Any type of sexual contact or behavior that occurs without consent of the recipient of the unwanted activity. Forced sexual intercourse, forcible sodomy, child molestation, incest, fondling, and attempted rape fall under the definition of sexual assault (Banwell, 2014; Hernandez, 2015; Office of Justice Programs, 2000).

Sexual Attitudes: Belief about a person's sexuality shown by a person's behavior are based on cultural views and previous sexual experience (Broach & Petretic, 2006; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McCormack & Prostran, 2012).

Sexual Script: Guides individuals regarding considerations about how one is "supposed" to regard and behave in sexual situations or potential sexual situations (Burt, 1980; Vandermassen, 2011).

Sexual Violence: A sexual act that is committed or attempted by another person without freely given consent or against someone who is unable to consent. Sexual violence is divided into the following types:

- Completed or attempted forced penetration;

  Completed or attempted forced acts of penetration; or

- Non-physically forced penetration, which occur after a person is pressured verbally or intimated or misuse of authority or acquiesce (Banwell, 2014; Basile et al., 2014; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; Office of Justice Programs, 2000; Rege et al., 2014).

Title IX: An amendment under the Office of Civil Rights that protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance (Basile et al., 2014; Wies, 2015; Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2011).

Violence against women: Any act of violence, primarily involving women, that results in or likely to result in harm or suffering women (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015; Smith et al., 2017; White House Task Force, 2014).

Assumptions

I assumed the participants were employed at the university in the capacity of faculty or staff and will be ages 18 and older. I also assumed the survey was the appropriate instrument for measurement the study variables. I assumed all participants will have the capacity to answer the questionnaire and are familiar with the concept of sexual assault. I assumed all participants will be unbiased and ethical in their answers.

Scope and Delimitations

The purpose of this quantitative, non-experimental research was to examine the rape myth acceptance of university staff to identify if their perception of sexual assault could have any impact on better prevention, policy and programming on campus. A delimitation of the study is that rape myth acceptance is primarily discussed among students on a collegiate level and not employees of the university. I excluded students because research already exists that focus on their rape myth acceptance yet none on other essential people within the university community that could have an influence on

prevention. To eliminate additional cultural variables, this study will not include any collegiate institutions outside of the United States.

Limitations

This study had several possible limitations. The first limitation of this study was that research is a survey-based quantitative study which utilizes instruments with closed-ended questions. Utilizing scales to measure respondent's perception did not give me the capability to explore the depth that a qualitative design could provide with open-ended questions or observations. This limitation also prevented the possibility of observing behaviors that could lead to rape myth acceptance of staff. Another possible limitation that could have affect internal validity could be the lack of experience and knowledge of sexual violence by the respondents at the time of them taking the survey.

Lastly, a possible limitation with this study was generalizability of the results and findings as a threat to external validity. The sample may be skewed toward certain demographics, age race and gender based on availability. I collected data through online surveys and because it is self-reported data, it can rarely be verified (Brutus et al., 2013). Accuracy of information reported could also cause limitations to this study.

Significance

This study was significant because it could potentially identify inconsistencies and other issues regarding what is considered sexual assault by college staff and administration. In doing so, insight gained in this study could contribute to the development of improved public policies, training, and programming to prevent future sexual assault and reduce rape myth acceptance. By understanding the extent of rape

myth acceptance of faculty and staff we can understand the campus community and work

towards better policy as well as preventive programs. This research could also help us

understand the gap in the knowledge of perceptions of faculty and staff and their

perceptions of sexual violence.

Federal government requires mandatory training to students and information from

this research could provide better insight to the employees who are likely to be the first

point of contact for students involved with sexual violence. Campus administrators can

also establish policy that help with prevention and programming of sexual violence. The

findings in this could help with overall prevention and programming of sexual assault and

shed light to perceptions of sexual assault and how they may weaken or strengthen a

campus community. This study has the potential to influence positive social change

because sexual violence is a growing concern on college communities, and any increase

of knowledge may serve to reduce the occurrence of or action against future sexual

assault.

Summary and Transition

This chapter included the background of the study, the statement of the problem,

purpose of the study, theoretical foundation, research questions, nature of the study,

overview of methodology, definition of terms, assumptions, limitations delimitations and

the significance of the study. This chapter also presented an overview of essential parts of

the study as well as benefits, possible challenges, and potential for positive social and

policy change. Chapter 2 begins with a discussion of sexual violence, followed by the

delineation of the search strategies used for this research. Moreover, a discussion of the

study's theoretical framework and its relation to the identified variables, which includes,

review of literature of the history of rape, rape, sexual violence, sexism legislation, title

IX to synthesize and support the theoretical framework.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

In 2007, the National Institute of Justice released The Campus Assault Study (CSA). This study concluded that one in five women undergraduate female students were the victims of attempted or completed sexual assault while in college, this study provided recommendations for colleges and universities to try to remedy this growing concern (Krebs et al., 2007). Based off the concerns of this study, the Office of Civil Rights released a "Dear Colleague Letter" (DCL) in 2011 that urged colleges and universities to take proactive measures to combat sexual assault.

The DCL recommended appropriate investigation into allegations of sexual assault as well as timely adjudication for those involved. The DCL mandated that universities were responsible for education and prevention programs for the university to reduce the occurrences of sexual assault. Premise of the DCL stemmed from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, which bans discrimination based on gender (DOE, 2011).

Even though women are primarily the victims of sexual violence, everyone is impacted in some way by sexual violence because sexual violence affects not only the victims but the community and society (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2016). Sexual violence is a broad statement but includes rape, incest, child sexual assault, ritual abuse, non-stranger rape, statutory rape, marital or partner rape or sexual exploitation, sexual contact, sexual harassment, exposure, and voyeurism. Sexual violence is a crime mostly driven by the desire to control, humiliate, and/or harm a

person, sexual violence is not driven by sexual desire as some would believe (Giraldi &

Monk-Turner, 2017; Klippenstine et al., 2007; National Sexual Violence Resource

Center, 2016; Vandermassen, 2011).

Sexual violence violates a person's trust, self-esteem, and safety and can happen

to anyone one no matter the race, gender, age, sexual orientation, background and

professions. Rape is the most under-reported crime; 63% of sex assaults are not reported

to the police. One in five women and one in 71 men will be raped at some point in their

lives. (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015). One in five women and one in

16 men are sexually assaulted while in college, and more than 90% of sexual assault

victims on college campuses do not report the assault. 63.3% of men at one university

through self-reports identified to have admittedly engaged in acts that legally qualify as

rape or attempted rape (Anderson, 2016; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; Romeo, 2004;

White House Task Force, 2014).

An occurrence of sexual assault can impact daily life whether it happened recently

or years ago. Victims of sexual of sexual assault reaction differ in unique ways and the

impact of sexual assault not only impacts the victim but society and community (National

Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2016). Psychological effects of sexual violence have

been linked to long and short-term health risk behaviors of sexual assault victims. About

81% of females and 35% of males have reported suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress

Disorder (PTSD), reports of eating disorders, anxiety and depression have also been

reported.

In 2014, President Obama established a federal task force to help strengthen federal enforcement efforts and provide schools with tools to help combat sexual assault. Through numerous climate surveys, the White House Task Force (WHTF) realized that colleges and universities were doing many things by way of prevention and programming. There were no consistent solutions to the growing issues of sexual assault (National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2015; Tuerkheimer, 2015; White House Task Force, 2014).

Understanding sexual violence and the effects it has on society are essential to helping to create an environment of prevention. The literature review includes pertinent scholarly information about sexual violence and the growing concern across college campuses. Rape myths, acceptance of rape myths, sexual assault as well as programs incorporated to combat this growing problem. The literature review will include the legislation of sexual violence, theoretical framework, historical perspective of rape myths as well as the rise of sexual violence throughout the years. The next sections will consist of the perceptions surrounded around sexual violence as well as gender beliefs and sexual attitudes and gaps in current research. The literature review will conclude with scholarly information of sexism and what has primarily been college campus practices regarding sexual violence and prevention.

Literature Search Strategy

The literature search strategies for this research included several research databases through Walden University, that included Academic Search Complete, SAGE premier, PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, PsycBooks, SOCIndex, EBSCO, ProQuest

Central, and Google Scholar. The search terms used are, *bystander prevention campus,*

evolution theory, assault, feminist theory, rape, rape culture, rape myths, rape myth

acceptance, rape theory, sexual violence, sexism, Title IX, sexual assault, victims, victim

blaming, violence against women.

Theoretical Framework

Research has consistently shown that many people perceive sexual assault as the

victim's fault (Miller et al., 2011). American society has become a " rape culture" that

believes that a victim of sexual violence played some part in the victimization (Burt,

1980; Giraldi & Monk-Turner, 2017; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1995). According to Burt

(1980), Edwards et al. (2011), and Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994), it is believed that

attitudes and beliefs are a part of the ideology that supports or excuses sexual assault.

Victim blaming has been significantly linked to sexual assault on college and

university campuses because people have perceptions about how rapes and sexual

assaults occur (Anderson, 2011; Gage, 2008; McMahon, 2010; Stahl & Daniel, 2010).

Rape myths have influenced sexual attitudes and beliefs and have been deeply rooted in

religion, law, and media stereotypes (Miller, 2011). Victim blaming, and rape myth

acceptance have been a prevalent obstacle for colleges when trying to establish

substantial prevention and programming. The literature will also examine different

programming and prevention methods that colleges and universities use to reduce the

occurrences of sexual assault (Burgess, 2007; Gage, 2008; Lake, 2011; McMahon, 2010).

History of Rape Theories

Historically, rape was considered a property crime against the father because when a female's virginity was considered a prize and when it was stolen it became an economic lost, which lead for fault to be placed on the male perpetrator and considered a criminal act (Corrigan, 2013; Walker, 2010). In the 20th century, rape was conceptualized as an act of sex rather than an act of violence. Early theory by psychologists considered a rapist as mentally unstable (Palmer & Thornhill, 2003; Thornhill & Thornhill, 1991; Vandermassen, 2011).

In the 1970's women began to share their stories of sexual assault, and when they realized that they shared similar fears and oppression, they began to associate rape with a fight for control by men (McPhail, 2016). Soon after, the ideology that sex was about power and not sex began to formulate the feminist theory of rape. The radical/liberal feminist theory described rape as behavior motivated by hostility rather than sex. According to Brownmiller (1975) all rape is an exercise in power and the function of rape was to keep women in fear.

Burt (1980) was one of the first to associate that most people held high levels of rape myth beliefs. Burt (1980) suggested that rape myth acceptance exist because society has an expectation that men are supposed to be dominant, powerful, and sexually aggressive.

Evolution Theory

Sex plays an essential role in evolution. The capability to reproduce is essential in not only revolution but in maintain the cycle of life. The debate in evolution is between notion that the evolution of men and women are adaptive of surroundings or biological. One evolutionary prospective challenges the of dominance and control theory because it has nothing to do with sexual desire past theorists argue that rape is caused by male and female evolved sexuality (Corrigan, 2013; McPhail, 2016; Vandermassen, 2011). Although evolutionary theories of rape have been around for several years, there have been recent discussions due to the growing number of sexual assaults. Researchers have a different rationale for why men commit rape, and some believe its biological or adaptive as opposed to control or dominance. According to Vandermassen (2011), Symons suggested that rape is a result of evolved differences between men and women. He argued that as a natural selection, men typically have a greater desire for sex, so they are less selective, which can lead to rape when the perceived threat of getting caught is low.

Feminist theory suggests that the origins of men raping women stem from the need to exert power and control women. Radical feminist suggested that rape occurred because the historical patriarchal system of gender equality, which oppresses women (Maxwell & Scott, 2014; McPhail, 2016; Vandermassen, 2011; Wood, 2005). Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) observed that men had a hostility toward women and seemed to endorse rape myth acceptance more than women and further substantiates the feminist sex role theories. Other researchers still discount the feminist theory and accuse radical feminist of having "tunnel vision".

Illinois Rape Myth Acceptace Scale (IRMA)

When the IRMA was first established it provided questions that did not coincide with current education and prevention of sexual violence. Utilizing the already validated IRMA Scale, this research will evaluate the perceptions staff regarding sexual assault. The IRMA Scale is a 23-item question survey with subscales that uses certain language to examine if subtle rape myths and sexism still exist. The scale consists of a general rape myth construct with subscales that consists of different myths that can lead to subtle victim blaming. This study has previously been used to evaluate college student perceptions regarding sexual assault (McMahon, 2010). This study was amended to evaluate the perceptions of university staff.

The two measures primarily used to assess rape myth acceptance are Rape Myth Acceptance Scale and the IRMA (Conaghan & Russell, 2014; Edwards, Turchik, Dardis, Reynolds, & Gidycz, 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McMahon, 2010). Both scales assess how people view sex roles, stereotypes, cultural beliefs and ideologies about sexual violence.

The IRMA Scale is arguably the most reliable and psychotically demonstrated rape myth to date. The scale consists of a general rape myth construct as well as seven sub-scale constructs which include:

- She asked for it
- It wasn't really rape
- He didn't mean to
- She wanted it

- She lied

- Rape is a trivial event

- Rape is a deviant act (IRMA, 2010).

IRMA authors conducted a series of studies to demonstrate the scale's construct validity through relationship. After years of using the same scale to evaluate rape myth acceptance, it has also been discovered that one of the major validity problems with rape myths pivot on the language used and if it reflects the generation being studied. The reliability and validity of evaluations depends on the clarity and relevance of the questions being asked. It has been noted that in previous rape myth surveys, the questions were outdated and irrelevant to most college and high school students. The language used years ago reflects today's culture (Lonsway, 1999).

Many of the measures used to assess rape myths fail to capture the subtle and covert rape myths that have evolved over time. Many of colleges and high schools have incorporated some type of education on sexual assault so there is a greater awareness of certain types of rape myths and what is not socially acceptable. It is believed that rape myths still exist but in subtle ways but may not be addressed because of how questions are worded.

Overtime victim blaming, sexist beliefs and attitudes that may have been socially acceptable 40 years ago are no longer considered tolerable. According to Lonsway & Fitzgerald (1995) college students with previous rape education had less adherence to rape myth beliefs. They suggested that this may have occurred because of "obvious" phrasing in the rape myth measurement item.

According to research from McMahon and Farmer (2011), an updated version of the IRMA focused on accountability for rape and victim blaming was condensed to four sub-categories: (1) She asked for it, which reflects belief that the victim's behavior invited the sexual assault; (2) He didn't mean to do it, reflects the belief that the perpetrator didn't intend to rape the victim examples considered were that the perpetrator had such strong desires for sex and sometimes the male would get carried away; (3) She lied, consists of items that would indicate there is a belief that the victim lied about the assault; and (4) It wasn't really rape, consist of items that deny the rape occurred by blaming the victim or excusing the perpetrator.

History of Sexual Violence

Rape and sexual assault laws have changed substantially in the past 40 years. Today this crime can be viewed as gender-neutral and based on consent and force. Reformers played a significant role in getting rid of some required procedurals that made a sexual assault case difficult to prove and unjustly blamed the victim. There was a time when traditional rape law was defined as "carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will" (Anderson, 2016, p. 1946). Under this definition a victim (which was presumed to be female) must resist a sexual attack physically for it to be considered unwanted (Anderson, 2016; Bonnar-Kidd, 2010). Non-consent was considered hard to prove because so much of the behavior was considered implied consent.

Sex Reform

The 1970s were considered the beginning of rape reform because prior to these changes the culpability was on women because of the "blame the victim" mentality, which victims categorize as being victimized all over again (Leahy, 2014; McMahon, 2010; Romeo, 2004; Sable et al., 2006). The credibility of rape allegations was considered less likely to have occurred the more time had passed between the assault and the time it was reported to the police (McCormack & Prostran, 2012; Romeo, 2004; Sable et al., 2006; Tuerkheimer, 2015). It was suggested that the severity of the assault, age, and alcohol consumption and victim relationship could decrease the possibility of being reported, and lack of reporting could lead to sexual assault crimes becoming normalized behavior.

In 1985, there was a study done on dating expectations and the results showed that "traditional" expectations in heterosexual dating, males believed that if they paid for the date than sexual expectations were expected from women. This type of sexual expectation aligns with the traditional sex script, which theoretically suggests that men are conditioned to be more sexually proactive on a date and women are conditioned to be more reactive (Burt, 1980; Droogendyk & Wright, 2014; Emmers-Sommer, 2014; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Sexual script theory provides guidance to individuals regarding considerations about how one is supposed to behave in sexual situations or potential sexual situations. Sex role stereotyping focuses on traditional gender roles where males are viewed as "macho" and women "ladylike" (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

Researchers also found that rape was perceived as more justifiable if the women broke the traditional dating script by asking the man out on a date. Even though we have evolved from what is considered traditional behavior in regards to dating with a significant change in women's education, professions and financial status. It is still expected for men to accept rape myths, interpersonal violence and adversarial sexual beliefs (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McMahon, 2010; Rege et al., 2014). However, there seems to be a difference to how colleges and universities and the community handle sexual assault. Historically, sexual assault victims had to prove force obtained the sexual assault and that they resisted, meanwhile being judged on their sexual past and choice of clothing. The overwhelming lack of having consent in criminal law has left an opening for a lot of perpetrators to go unpunished criminally (Decker & Baroni, 2011; Earnshaw et al., 2011; Rege et al., 2014; Sable et al., 2006; Tuerkheimer, 2015).

This reform has also included campus sexual assault, where sexual violence encompasses a broader range of sexual activity. Colleges and universities are looking at sexual assault through lack of consent which seems to conflict with our legal definition that sexual assault without force does not constitute a crime (Tuerkheimer, 2015). A lot of colleges and universities have incorporated a "affirmative" consent within their policies. Sexual consent is important because of its direct relationship to sexual assault. Sexual assault is considered a nonconsensual activity obtained through force, threats, verbal coercion or intoxication (Aosved & Long, 2006; Earnshaw et al., 2011; Jozkowski et al., 2014; Leahy, 2014).

According to Earnshaw et al. (2011), Edwards et al. (2009), Jozkowski et al. (2014), and McCormack & Prostran (2012), despite numerous research on sexual assault and rape, educators and researchers do not fully understand how college students define consent. There seems to be a misconception about the wants and desires of the sexual partner. When researchers look at traditional sexual scripts it is often understood that men are supposed to be the aggressors because they are expected to want sex and therefore their role to convince women to have sex. Traditional sex-scripts suggest that women primarily express consent and men are supposed to interpret that communication.

Perceptions of Sexual Assault

Acceptance of rape myths predicts how people perceive descriptions of rape cases, as well as perceptions of the victims and perpetrators. Rape myth acceptance is a reliable predictor of various reactions to sexual assault incidents. Researchers have demonstrated that rape myths have generally been used to justify male sexual aggression and to reduce women's feelings of personal vulnerability (Burt, 1980; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994).

Previous research has demonstrated that sexual assault victims are susceptible to secondary victimization and this implies that victims not only suffer from the sexual assault itself but also from society (Chapleau et al., 2007; Earnshaw et al., 2011; Chen et al., 2007; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Social psychologists have examined the proclivity to blame female victims of sexual assault since the 1970's and numerous data has been evaluated throughout the years. They have revealed that men generally blame female sexual assault victims more than women.

Numerous studies have revealed that college men have reported at some point in their college years they have participated in some sexually aggressive behavior (Mouilso & Calhoun, 2013). Sexual violence is associated with physical and mental health difficulties and could have implications for cultural norms and values. Rape myths have influenced sexual attitudes and beliefs and have been deeply rooted in religion, law, and media stereotypes (Miller, 2011; Stahl & Daniel, 2010).

Rape myths date back as far as the 1970s and are defined as attitudes and beliefs that are generally false but more often than not believed (McMahon, 2010; Mouilso et al., 2013). According to Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994), the word "myth" has been examined by researchers from various intellectual disciplines and each has revealed similar definitions which define myths as false apocryphal beliefs that are widely held; they explain a cultural way of thinking and serve to justify behaviors. This definition is limited in this scope and only applies to women.

Media's Influence on Rape Myth

Rape myths can also be described as stereotypes and as with any other stereotype, any incident of sexual assault that may or may not conform to the myth about rape. It could be perceived that if isolated incidents that correlate with rape myths are publicized then they somehow confirm that myth to be fact. Two of the most frequent myths are: 1) Women lie about rape, and 2) Only a certain type of woman is raped (Emmers-Sommer, 2014; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; McMahon, 2010). Rape myths perpetuate sexual violence indirectly by creating distorted beliefs and attitudes about sexual assault and thereby shifting elements of blame onto the victim.

Relationships of attitudes toward women have been explored and according to Burt (1980) sexual conservatism looks to the appropriateness of sexual partners rather than the sexual act to determine culpability. The frequent media coverage of women coming forward with allegations of sexual assault doesn't help minimize rape myth acceptance.

Miller et al. (2011) believe that rape myths may contribute to ongoing sexual violence by shifting the blame to victims rather than perpetrators. Common rape myths that have resurfaced over time include belief that the way a woman dresses or behaves indicate that she wanted it to happen. Dispelling myths have become increasing harder because we now operate at the fast pace of media. Women are more likely than men to report how men have exerted their power and control to take advantage of whatever situation that arose. Media often only reports one side of the situation and because of RMA, women are seen at fault for the assault (Franiuk et al., 2008; Giraldi & Monk-Turner, 2017).

According to Broach and Petretic (2006), Maxwell and Scott (2014), McCormack and Prostran (2012), women were believed to be more credible if they appeared to be visibly upset than a woman who was calm and quiet. Studies show that people believed a female to me less responsible for the rape if she were more upset. Researchers have demonstrated that acceptance of rape myths are not only problematic attitudes, but also an clarifying predictor in the occurrence of sexual violence itself (McMahon & Farmer, 2011). Previous research suggests that men are generally more accepting of rape myths regardless of gender (Kelly & Stermac, 2008; Pedersen & Strömwall, 2013; Yamawaki, Darby, & Queiroz, 2007).

Early theorists have taken a radical feminist approach to explain rape myth acceptance, which focuses on sex-role stereotyping and the premise that people are socialized to develop gender identities and roles (Maxwell & Scott, 2014). The radical feminist explanation of rape myth acceptance demonstrates a societal hatred towards women and that same society being supportive of rape and patriarchal society. Other researchers believed that biology of men and women have resulted in the increase of masculine power and the overall existence of powerless women and violence against them (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013; Maxwell & Scott, 2014; Pedersen & Strömwall, 2013).

Researchers have also considered cognitive schema and the role it plays in rape myths. A schema is considered cognitive framework developed by individuals to help with the organization and interpretation of information. Numerous researchers have found that scheme plays a significant role when considering rape myths. There is continuous search on how rape myths are transmitted from person to person. There have been suggestions that media, movies and family culture are ways that rape myths are spread from person to person (Emmers-Sommer, 2014; Ferrão & Gonçalves, 2015; Maxwell & Scott, 2014). Another theory that can help us understand rape myth acceptance is system justification theory which identifies subordinate group members within a collective culture as less than their counterparts (Corrigan, 2013; Vandermassen, 2011). Sometimes people feel guilty, helpless, and angry when they are treated unfairly or see others treated unfairly, so it is easier for them to assert blame to the lesser subordinate group.

Rape Culture

In the United States (US), rape is legally defined at the state level, which can result in confusion and potential for a person charged with rape to not be convicted. Researchers have often indicated struggle when trying to define rape within their studies (Haugen et al., 2018). The way rape is defined can affect how people understand sexual encounters as "normal", "right" or "wrong". The definition of rape can also potentially influence how a person examines their experiences and whether they perceive rape and other coerced sexual encounters.

Since 1927, the FBI defined rape as the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will, with no regard for any other gender, or having to show force (Haugen et al., 2018). January 2012, the US Department of Justice redefined rape for the Uniform Crime Report (UCR). The UCR collects crime statistics on the number of offenses known to law enforcement, published annually by the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). Rape was now defined as penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person without consent (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2011; Haugen et al., 2018). The shift in understanding sexual interactions may have influenced the change in definition. The change in the definition no longer confined rape to be of biological females. Specifying behaviors and body organs relieves the burden of proof for victims. There is no longer a need to demonstrate the act was performed against their will or consent.

Lay Theories Approach

A lay theories approach can help psychologists understand how people make decisions in ambiguous situations. Lay theories help people create and make sense of things based on their social experiences, regardless of it being accurate or inaccurate, consciously or unconsciously (Haugen et al., 2018; Maxwell & Scott, 2014; Ward & Siegert, 2002). Gender, sexuality, and sexual violence are bound by social culture perspectives. Some theorists believe that rape myths and stereotypes are so intensely rooted that it would be difficult for a person to not base some else's sexual assault on their beliefs and social norms.

Just World Theory

The just world belief (JWB) stems from the just world theory that is a belief that a person's actions will cause them to "get what they deserve" or "deserve what they get". JWB is a concept that refers to the degree in which people feel like we live in a just world, in other words bad things happen to bad people or if something bad happened that person deserved it, thus no "real" victim (Chapleau & Oswald, 2013; Franiuk et al., 2008; Pedersen & Strömwall, 2013). A JWB outlook allows people to feel safe because they feel as though they have control over their behaviors and actions. This type of belief would more likely be involved in victim blaming if they felt as though their worldview was threatened (Burt, 1980b; Hafer & Bègue, 2005; Hammond et al., 2011; Hayes et al., 2013; Lerner, 2013).

Gender Beliefs

Men and women have different socialization processes, and they learn different social roles that are based on social attitudes and expectations. Social structures are considered culturally dependent, whereas biological differences are universal (Burt, 1980; Earnshaw et al., 2011; Ferrão & Gonçalves, 2015; McMahon, 2010). Sociocultural gender roles influence behaviors and beliefs about ourselves and the world. Men are expected to be socially geared towards, dominance, assertiveness, and independence, and women are socially geared towards interpersonal support, dependent, and emotional expressiveness.

Previous studies demonstrate that men and women of various cultures and backgrounds identify with rape myths. General populations as well as sexual assault perpetrators have beliefs that tolerate and even support sexual violence. In a study that examined the influence of cultural affiliation on rape myths acceptance, findings demonstrated that Caucasian women were more sympathetic and blamed the victim of sexual assault less than Hispanic women. Latina women tended to possess a more negative attitude toward rape victims and embrace a higher tolerance of rape myths.

Researchers believed that the reason resulted from Hispanic women may embrace more traditional sex roles favoring men over women (Aosved & Long, 2006; Emmers-Sommer, 2014; Kelly & Stermac, 2008; Office of Justice Programs, 2000). Despite the support for gender differences in the reason for rape myths several studies suggest that age affects rape myth acceptance. According to Chapleau et al. (2007) and Earnshaw et al. (2011), younger men were more likely to support marital rape myths than older men

however the evidence has been unable to conclusively that age influences the belief in rape myths.

The role of gender and sex role stereotyping have been the center of many studies of rape myth acceptance, the focus has primarily been on female victims of sexual assault. This kind of thought process creates complications to rape myths because it is primarily assumed that the sex of the victim is female. Due to the increased awareness within the last decade of male victims, a better understanding of rape myth acceptance should include male victims (Burt, 1980; Turchik & Edwards, 2012).

Male Rape

Men commit the most of male rapes with 6 to 15% of assaults involving a female perpetrator. Rape is not just a heterosexual issue because 13.2% of bisexual men and 11.6% of gay men have reported a history of rape in adulthood (Allroggen et al., 2016; National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2016). Not a lot of information on male rape is known because of the perpetuation of male rape myths, male rape has been largely overlooked. The most recent focus on rape victims and the existence of rape myths which include:

- men cannot be raped
- "real" men can defend themselves against rape
- only gay men are victims/perpetrators of rape
- women cannot sexually assault a man
- rape only happens in prisons
- sexual assault by someone of the same sex causes homosexuality

- homosexual and bisexual individuals deserve to be sexually assaulted because they are immoral and deviant

- If a victim physically responds to an assault, he must have wanted it. It is argued that male rape myths are prevalent because of gender

- stereotypes and social norms regarding masculinity and male sexuality (Ferrão & Gonçalves, 2015; Hammond et al. , 2011; Turchik & Edwards, 2012).

The gender role socialization process has been rooted with social norms that men are expected to be heterosexual masculine and possess traits such as toughness, independence, aggressiveness, and dominance. Rape myths not only perpetuate the occurrence of sexual violence but also serve to minimize male rape (Littleton, 2011; Turchik & Edwards, 2012). Even though there have been strides in male rape prevention and reporting, there are laws that still hinder appropriate prosecution of male rape because male victims are viewed negatively.

Sexual Attitudes

Researchers believe that to understand the development and persistence of rape myths, we need to evaluate Western societal beliefs about men and women's sexuality. In recent times, there has been a greater acceptance of casual sexual relationships between men and women (Littleton, 2011). Despite the progression in sexual freedom, women are still being viewed in a negative light when they engage in casual sex.

Although attitudes regarding sexual expressions have become more fluid, there is still a variation in what people consider acceptable behavior and gender roles. Some

individuals consider themselves liberal and tend to feel that human sexuality should be free and unrestrained. People who consider themselves more conservative tend to feel as though sexual expression should be more constrained (Hammond et al., 2011; Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994; Miller et al., 2011; Mouilso & Calhoun, 2013).

Those that hold a more conservative view tend to view women as subservient to men and tend to be more accepting of rape myths. Sexual attitudes have shown to be associated with perceptions and evaluations of stranger rape, conservative men tend to blame victims for their assault and conservative women tend to find fault with victims that do not resist their attackers.

Social attitudes towards women and their roles are associated with greater myth acceptance and that men have a higher level of rape myth acceptance. It is believed that oppressive beliefs such as sexism, racism, homophobia, classism, and religious intolerance play a part in rape myths (Aosved & Long, 2006; Littleton et al., 2009; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; McMahon, 2010; Rege et al., 2014).

Sexism

Sexism is defined as an overt hostility against women and according to Hammond et al. (2011), Mouilso and Calhoun (2013), Pedersen and Strömwall (2013), and Yamawaki et al. (2007) it plays a significant role in victim blaming. Victim blaming serves the function of a control mechanism, perpetrating gender roles in society. Research on subtle sexism provides the necessary framework to measure subtle rape myths. Three categories have been identified with sexism overt, covert, and subtle sexism.

Ambivalent sexism is defined as a prejudice that comprises positive and negative perspectives toward women. Sexism is conceptualized as a two-dimensional construct that embodies two ideas about women. Benevolent sexism and a paternalistic ideology where individuals have attitudes of protection, idealization, an affection towards women who assume more traditional gender roles and hostile sexism (Burt, 1980; Jozkowski et al., 2014; Kelly & Stermac, 2008).

Hostile sexism is considered traditional sexism involving antipathy toward women because they are regarded as weak and inferior to men. Hostile sexism in contrast, benevolent sexism is a collection of attitudes that view women in stereotypical roles but is subjectively more positive and meant to elicit behaviors that are more prosocial. It was discovered that people scored high on benevolent sexism placed less blame on perpetrators of sexual assault who were known to the victims (Kelly & Stermac, 2008; Edwards et al., 2011; McPhail, 2016; Wood, 2005). Societal change needs to happen to change the adherence to rape myths, prevention programming needs to convey that men and women should be viewed as equal partners in intimate and sexual relationships and acts of sexual violence should not influence any past behaviors of victims. Rape myth acceptance has also been associated with a diverse set of beliefs that uphold systems of oppressions beyond sexism, such as racism, classism, and religious intolerance. Research shows that people who have intolerance for other examples of oppression were more accepting of rape myth acceptance (Aosved & Long, 2006; Chapleau et al., 2007; Earnshaw et al., 2011; Haugen et al., 2018).

Legislation

There are three important pieces of historical legislation essential in understanding college and university responses to sexual violence: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Jeanne Cleary Act of 1990, and the VAW Act of 1994. Each of these three legislative actions will be identified and discussed below.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 (Title IX)

Title IX states that "No person in the United States shall, based on sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (Department of Education, 1972, p. 34. C F R Part 106). Specifically, Title IX requires equal access to educational programs and activities based upon gender. Title IX has primarily been associated with gender equality as it pertains to sports activities and teams organized by educational institutions. In recent years Title IX refers to "any" educational program for men and women (Hernandez, 2015; Wies, 2015). Any collegiate institution that receive federal funds must act in accordance with Title IX. If a college or university is found to be in violation of Title IX, that school could possibly lose federal funding. Title IX informs the policies that guides campus violence policy and practices. Title IX is most often known for equality sports, but due to the high number of sexual assaults on campus, it has gained attention for more than just equality in sports.

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy Act of 1990 (Clery Act)

The Clery Act requires schools to disclose crime statistics and information related to campus safety and security in the form of a "Annual Security Report". This act stems from the death of Jeanne Clery, a student at Lehigh University that was raped and murdered in her campus residence hall in 1986. At that time, no federal mandate existed requiring sexual violence statistics so there was no obligation for the university to make the crime public information. The Clery Act requires schools to report crime-related statistics and missing person reports. The Clery Act also mandates that schools provide timely warnings and emergency notifications to the campus community if there is a safety or security threats. Through the Clery Act, victims of crime has to be provided resources and services (Hernandez, 2015; Wies, 2015). The Department of Education (DOE) mandates the Clery Act and can impose fines upon institutions that do not comply. Since the enactment of the Clery Act, schools across the United States have developed processes for complying with the Annual Security Report.

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

In 1994, the United States Congress passed the VAWA as a part of the federal crime bill. VAWA came into existence after lobbying by more than a thousand organizations. VAWA addresses areas of women's physical and sexual safety, which include clarifications of policies and practices to increase the safety of women. VAWA also funds services for domestic violence as well as training for police and court officers about sexual violence. This act also allows victims the right to sue the perpetrator against

gender-based violence. VAWA seeks to decrease victim blaming and increase support for survivors of domestic violence.

According to Hull et al. (2015), the American Association of University of Professors (AAUP) Committee on Women in the Academic Professors, subcommittee on sexual assault on campus proposes "robust" policies and procedures on college campuses to help reduce sexual violence. Suggestions for policy were operational definitions for the variety of terms used to categorize sexual violence and increased development of sexual violence prevention programs. These suggestions stem from the ambiguity associated with students and how they define sexual violence and what punishment should be a result of such violations.

VAWA's focus are in the areas of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking and dating violence. They coordinate with the community counterparts that include victim advocates, police officers, judges, prosecutors, judges, health care specialists as well as survivors and provide grants. VAWA has been reauthorized in 2000, 2005, and 2013, with each reauthorization, VAWA has become stronger and more inclusive with the LBGT community. Campus Violence Elimination Act also went into effect on March 7, 2014, and they require colleges and universities to observe more rigorous reporting standards, disciplinary sanctions, and educational efforts (Hendrix, 2012; Office of Justice Programs, 2000; Rege et al., 2014).

Rise of Sexual Violence

Because of the rising concerns with sexual violence on college campuses in the

United States, on April 4, 2011, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) sent out a Dear

Colleague Letter (DCL) which defined sexual harassment as unwelcome communication

of a sexual nature, which include unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors

as well as other verbal, nonverbal or any physical conduct of a physical sexual nature

(Yuracko, 2002). Title IX of the Department of Education (DOE) of 1972 prohibits

discrimination on basis of sex. Sexual harassment of students falls into the category of

sexual violence and therefore makes any act of sexual violence a violation of Title IX

(Rammell, 2014). As far as the DOE is concerned a single act of sexual violence is

enough to create a hostile education environment (Buchanan, 2012). The more severe the

conduct, the less there is a need to show a repetitive series of incidents to prove a hostile

environment (Walker, 2010).

The prevalence of sexual assault among college women indicate a need to

examine institutional policies that are designed to protect college students. The DCL

discussed the requirements of universities and colleges that receive federal funds to not

only report but also develop and publish policy that informs the campus community of

the procedures and protocol for when there is a report of sexual assault and the equitable

way each case will be treated (Ali, 2011; Vladutiu et al., 2011).

Prevalence of College Sexual Assaults

Colleges and universities have been blamed for their failure to adequately address the problems on their campuses. The US Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) has released a list of 55 colleges and universities under investigation for possible violations of Title IX regulations because of the alleged mishandling of sexual violence cases (Buhi, 2005; Clay-Warner & McMahon-Howard, 2009; Potera, 2014). OCR guidelines of sexual violence include rape, assault, battery, abuse, and coercion. It is believed that victims do not report sexual violence because they do not consider what happened to them as sexual assault.

Colleges and universities are also tasked to find effective prevention programming to dispel the myths and negative connotation put on victims that could sometimes hinder comprehension of sexual assault and its effects (Angelone et al., 2007; Paul & Gray, 2011; Vladutiu et al., 2011). University administrators are delegated with making sure they display certain information within their policies, but we have yet to see how the perceptions of policy makers play in policy development and effectiveness. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) identified 9 essential parameters to comply with federal law:

- Define sexual assault

- Explain the specifics of the sexual assault policy

- Establish who is trained to respond

- Methods for students to report assaults

- Prevention efforts and victim response

- Review for methods or policies that prevent reporting

- Methods or politics that encourage reporting

- Methods for investigating and discipline for victimizers and

- An area that contains methods to evaluate effectiveness of current policies

  including methods that enhance reporting (McMahon & Farmer, 2011).

Dispelling myths have become increasing harder because we now operate at the fast pace of social media.

Campus Practices

In a college setting sexual assault is viewed differently than in criminal cases; in this setting, review boards consisting of males and females determine who is at fault. Therefore, instead of only using females for prevention it makes more sense to have all genders equally participate in prevention (Bedera & Nordmeyer, 2015). Victim blaming and rape myths, sex roles, stereotypical behaviors have been a prevalent obstacle for colleges when trying to establish substantial prevention and programming. Males as well as females can benefit from exposure to prevention programming to increase awareness and trying to understand the challenges the opposite sex faces regarding sexual assault-related issues.

Challenges to sexual assault programs include short duration and single exposure as well as a measure to assess the effectiveness of the programs and the correlation between programming and reduced reports of sexual assault (Howard et al., 2008; Jozkowski & Peterson, 2013; Jozkowski et al., 2014; Romeo, 2004; Sable et al., 2006). Despite the efforts of college and university programming, reports of sexual assaults have

not declined in 50 years. Typically, incoming new students go through mandatory

training, but not all staff are mandated to go through specific sexual assault training.

Prevention Programming

Ongoing sexual violence has resulted in the implementation of rape prevention

especially in high school and college campuses. The primary focus of rape prevention

programs are often to change an individuals' beliefs in rape myths (Jozkowski &

Peterson, 2013; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; McMahon & Farmer, 2011; Romeo,

2004).   However, specific training for staff is not as consistent because the focus has

always been on students. Researchers have demonstrated that the acceptance of rape

myths indicate problematic attitudes as well as a possible explanatory predictor in the

actual perpetration of sexual violence or proclivity to rape (Barnwell, 2014; Jozkowski &

Peterson, 2014; McMahon & Farmer, 2011).

There are three categories of sexual assault programming aimed to reduce the

occurrences of sexual assault. These programs are based on (1) education, (2) prevention

techniques to women such as self- defense, tips to avoid sexual assault as well as

information on how to decrease the likelihood of being assaulted and (3) reduction or

prevention programs, which seek to change attitudes or beliefs about sexual assault and

awareness programs which provide information about the frequency and different types

of assault.

The primary focus of sexual assault programs is to change the false beliefs about

sexual assault shaped by sexism and other prejudices. Common rape myths cited over

time include the way a woman is dressed or her behavior can indicate whether or not she

was to blame for being assaulted (Aosved & Long, 2006; McCormack & Prostran, 2012; McMahon & Farmer, 2011). Over time other thoughts also included the lack of control of men, evolving into more subtle forms of rape myths.

Bystander Intervention

One method of prevention that has increased across college campuses is the bystander intervention (Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al., 2011; McMahon et al., 2014; Murphy, 2017). In 2011, Langhinrichsen-Rohling et al. (2011) evaluated the bystander prevention program that targets bystander behavior for better efficacy. Confirmed by numerous college campus settings, the interaction between victim and perpetrators start in a social setting and bystander intervention could be essential in helping to prevent a potentially dangerous situation.

Bystander intervention is a program that helps a person intervene in a potential progression of a negative outcome. This type of prevention promotes prosocial behavior in people who are not directly involved in the sexual violence act but may be a witness. This approach is intended to have everyone especially males play a potential role in prevention. Specific programming to involve males as a part of the solution to possibly increase personal responsibility that could lead to increased attention and attitude change (Murphy, 2017).

Bystander intervention does have its short falls because for this program to be successful, an understanding of how students conceptualize risky behavior, role play is needed. For bystanders to intervene in a potential situation they must notice the situation, interpret it as an emergency, feel responsible and possess the necessary skills and

resources to intervene. Researchers also concluded that bystanders are less likely to intervene in at-risk sexual assault situations if they do not believe that sexual activity is occurring, they do not recognize that the sexual situation is a potential assault, or they do not believe they are responsible for stopping the assault or experience social factors that stop them from intervening (Droogendyk & Wright, 2014; Rege et al., 2014; Stewart, 2014).

Criticism in Literature

The prevalence of rape myth acceptance is still a concern when it comes to dispelling beliefs and stereotypes associated with sexual assault. Previous studies have looked at the rape myth acceptance of students and not the staff. Federal mandates require that university staff receive training regarding sexual violence and the protocol when it is reported. There is extraordinarily little research on the rape myth acceptance of the staff that some students may report an incident. Creating an inclusive environment, through policy that requires staff to understand their own biases and therefore building better prevention programs as well as a more concise understanding of the role they play within the campus community. As the WHTF (2014) mentioned, you can't solve the problem if you haven't identified what the problem is. Climate surveys of the entire campus community will show a united front on tackling sexual violence.

The work to find a common connection to help reduce sexual assault is not getting any easier. While there have been great strides, there is still a lack of reporting of sexual assaults as well as a lack of understanding how sexual assault is defined. Many experts have concluded that even though we have made legislative changes to the crime of sexual

assault, attitudes and beliefs of sexual assault have not changed (Beaver, 2017; Buddie & Miller, 2001; Sable et al., 2006).

Until there is significant change in the attribution of blame, then we will not see any change in attitudes and beliefs. Sexual assault is defined in many ways and if a person's perception does not identify with those definitions, those incidents could go unreported. Understanding the perception of everyone potentially involved with a sexual assault on campus can lead to better understanding on finding appropriate prevention measures.

Future of Sexual Assault on College Campuses

In September 2017, the DOE introduced a new Q&A to discuss their expectation on how schools are to handle sexual misconduct allegations. The DOE also withdrew the DCL that was issued in April 2011, citing that it ignored providing notice and basic elements of due process and failing to ensure fundamental fairness to everyone involved. The DOE is seeking to create a new Title IX regulation that better serves students and schools(Department of Education, 2017).

Gaps in Current Literature

Victim blaming have been a long-term hindrance in lowering the occurrences of rape (Apostolou, 2013). Rape myth acceptance has been known to hinder the reporting and appropriate adjudication of sexual violence not only on college campuses but also within society (Abrams et al., 2003; Aronowitz et al., 2012). Colleges and universities have incorporated prevention programs and policy to respond to allegations of sexual violence but there has been no discussion about the already existence of rape myth

acceptance among collegiate staff. There has always been a focus on student populations and their level of rape myth acceptance as well as incorporating programs to combat those rape beliefs. Hopefully, this research can provide some insight into the potential training and policies that could build better campus communities. There has been limited research on collegiate staff and what rape myths they have if any.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide the theoretical framework upon which this study is based, and then a history of sexual assault, rape, and rape myths. The legislation that is the foundation to the most recent mandate for sexual violence is also evaluated. This chapter also discussed the expectations that colleges and universities are mandated to have to ensure equity of treatment. Perceptions about sexual assault beliefs of rape myths date back to the social cultures that are considered the norm.

The research gap identified is that no studies currently exist regarding rape myth acceptance of faculty and staff and how that perception could impact prevention, programming, and policy. The researcher proposes to explore faculty and staff's perceptions of sexual assault because understanding the mindset of people who may encounter students experiencing sexual violence may impact the determination as to whether a sexual assault did occur and what policies and programs can result from those determinations.

Chapter 3 included an overview of the research methods intended for this study. This chapter also outlined the methodology for this study that included research design, data collection, analysis, ethical concerns, and threats to validity.

Chapter 3: Research Method
Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative, non-experimental research was to examine the rape myth acceptance of university staff to identify their perception of sexual assault and to examine the role their perception may have in the process of prevention, policy and programs on campus. Previous research has shown that women are primarily blamed for sexual assaults (Buddie & Miller, 2001; Chapleau & Oswald, 2010).

This research will fill an important gap in literature regarding the rape myth acceptance of university staff and their role in the effectiveness of campus prevention programming. It is my hope that this study may help college campuses better evaluate the needs of their campus based on the knowledge and role of the entire campus community. This section will include an overview of research methods intended for this research, research design and rationale, methodology, intended population, sampling procedure and threats to validity, and expected findings. Lastly, data analysis, threats to validity and ethical concerns.

Research Questions

The overarching research question for this proposed study was:

What are the potential connections between rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff and the impact their perception can have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs at a private research university?

The following sub-questions support the objective of this study:

RQ1: To what extent, if any, does rape myth acceptance influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho1: Rape myth acceptance does not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Ha1: Rape myth acceptance influences effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does knowledge regarding sexual assault influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault does not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Ha2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault influences effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

This chapter begins with discussion of research design deemed to be the most useful for this study. Data collection, methodology as well as population selection and survey instrument utilized. Discussion of statistical techniques used to analyze data, threats to validity, ethical procedures, my role as the researcher and end with a summary of methodology plans.

Research Design and Rationale

Utilizing the quantitative method, 8,664 full-time college staff at a private research university was invited to participate in a survey regarding their level of rape myth acceptance and knowledge of sexual assault. Quantitative research looks to understand certain tendencies that may explain certain behaviors and link how those

behaviors are connected to certain characteristics (Black, 1999). Quantitative research

uses numerical data to explain or predict certain hypothesis (Vogt, 2006). My goal for

this study is to measure the level of rape myth acceptance and seek to understand the

sexual assault knowledge of university staff.

Research Design

The research design I used was quasi-experimental because conducting studies in

questionnaires distributed to a group would be to some degree of a "true" experiment

(Vogt, 2006). Quantitative methodologies are appropriate when the objective is to

measure and analyze variables using statistical analysis to explain phenomena (Babbie,

2013). I utilized regression to determine if a relationship between variables exists. A

cross- sectional design is descriptive in nature because it does not manipulate the

variables, but instead it is used to describe various situations and characteristics that exist

within an environment. Non-random sampling was the best method to minimize

representation bias and estimate the possibility of sampling error (Vogt, 2006).

When the IRMA-SF was first established it provided questions that did not

coincide with current education and prevention of sexual violence. Utilizing the already

validated IRMA Scale, this research evaluated the rape myth acceptance of university

staff. The IRMA-SF is a 20-item question survey with subscales that uses certain

language to examine if subtle rape myths and sexism still exist. The scale consists of a

general rape myth construct with subscales that consists of different myths that can lead

to subtle victim blaming. This study has previously been used to evaluate college

students' perceptions regarding sexual assault (McMahon, 2010). The IRMA is a publicly available tool and an approval from the author is not required (Lonsway, 1999).

Study Variables

The study variables included independent, defendant and moderation. The independent variable in this study was rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff and their knowledge regarding sexual assault. The dependent variable is defined as campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Independent and dependent variables are used to make predictions (Babbie, 2013). The data in this study was based on the perceptions of the participants on rape myth acceptance parameters. For the purposes of this study, perceptions were referred to as any positive or negative belief, feelings, impressions, or ideas of the participants that could have been formed by experience, expectation, or attention. Responses to the survey were assigned a numerical value to determine the statistical outcomes of the research.

Methodology

Population

The target population for this study was all full-time university staff at a private research university. For the purposes of this study the term university staff pertains to anyone employed at least 40 hours per week and classified as full-time for purposes of benefits on their main campus. The unit of analysis consisted of staff from any department within the institution's main campus. This study consisted of employees 18 and older employed full-time at this private research university's main campus. Given a

sample size of at least 126, it is assumed that this large sample will result in participants

with varied socioeconomic backgrounds and ethnicities. An email was sent to all staff at

their work emails with a link to the survey. As per agreement with this university to

protect the identifiable email addresses of its employees, a staff member sent an email to

all employees that included a link to the survey. This staff member resent the email to all

employees two to three weeks at a time until the specific number was reached. The

employee did not collect nor view any data, but only was responsible for the initial and

subsequent email invitations (Please see Appendix B).

Sampling Procedure

All 8,664 full time staff of a private research university were invited to participate

in the proposed study. Thus, I did not use a sampling procedure to recruit a subset of this

population. The online survey method was utilized because it is the most efficient way to

elicit responses from many participants in a short amount of time, and easy to administer

and score. There were questions to establish categories and questions to determine

perception and use inferential analysis about the campus community population (Black,

1999). Utilizing a G*Power analysis, a minimum sample size of 126 was determined to

yield statistically significant results. A statistical, correlation was done to determine

minimum sample size needed for the study. A two-tailed test was done with an error

probability of .05 and power of .095. The utilization of all full-time staff at this university

will allow for the possibility of generalizations (Babbie, 2013).

Data Analysis Plan

In quantitative analysis, data are processed to attempt to present and interpret data in a numerical format. Data gathered from surveys were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 (SPSS) for analysis. Demographic data was summarized, and multiple regression performed.

Threats to Validity

Validity for measurement addresses whether researchers are measuring what they think they are measuring. There are three types of validity for measurement- content validity, which addresses the measuring instrument appropriateness and being a representative of the qualities being measured; empirical validity, which addresses whether the measuring instrument shows a strong correlation between predicted and obtained results; and construct validity, which relates the measuring instrument to a theoretical framework (McNabb, 2015).

Internal threats to validity could be from the inferences made from the population of the sample. I intend to be as broad as possible when seeking participants. Using a broad range of staff could reduce the risk of staff being generated from a specific department. External threats to validity could come from making a generalizability of the results. Making sure the collection of information from participants remains anonymous as well as consistent in the collection process can minimize generalizability. The sample could be skewed toward certain demographics based on availability at the time of survey was administered.

Ethical Concerns

Ethical issues in data collection is a common concern and care by the researcher needs to be utilized to ensure no harm is done to the participants. This study utilized human as participants therefore it was essential to provide anonymity. Using an anonymous quantitative survey greatly minimized potential for personally identifiable information to be gathered or participants to be identified. Informed consent will also be used to ensure that participants know their rights and what information the study will attempt to gather. Information will also be provided to participants should any of the questions become a trigger to any of the participants.

Summary

Chapter 3 discussed study design, rationale; the methodology, which discussed participants, instruments, statistical analysis, validity and ethical concerns. This study involved a quantitative survey methodology that evaluated the relationship between rap myth acceptance and full-time staff employed at this private research university.

Sexual violence has become an ongoing concern among colleges and universities for several years(Anderson, 2016; Potera, 2014). Although numerous programs and preventative measures have been taken there still seems to be a significant amount of reports. Federal mandates require universities and colleges that receive federal funds to not only report but also develop and publish policy that lets campus community know the procedures and protocol for when there is a report of sexual assault the equitable way each case will be treated (Ali, 2011; Vladutiu et al., 2011). Colleges and universities have been trying to find effective prevention programming to dispel the myths and negative

connotation put on victims that could sometimes hinder comprehension of sexual assault and its effects (Angelone et al., 2007; Paul & Gray, 2011; Vladutiu et al., 2011). University administrators are tasked with making sure they display certain information within their policies, but we have yet to see how the perceptions of campus community can help in policy development and effectiveness. University staff play an intricate role in the campus community and well-being of students as well as the administration. Chapter 4 will include research results.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between rape myth acceptance and perception of university staff. The research questions and hypothesis for this study are as follows:

Research Question: What are the potential connections between rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff and the impact this knowledge can have on developing effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs at a private research university?

The following sub-questions support the objective of this study:

 RQ1: To what extent, if any, does rape myth acceptance influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho1: Rape myth acceptance does not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Ha1: Rape myth acceptance influences effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does knowledge regarding sexual assault influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault does not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Ha2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault influences effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. This chapter provides information about

the research findings, including data collection and analysis procedures along with demonstration of results.

Role of the Researcher

I obtained IRB approval (06-26-19-0086792) from Walden University to conduct this research. I then obtained IRB approval from the private university. A quantitative study involving correlational cross-sectional research design was chosen for this study. The variables that were studied using quantitative statistical analysis are perception of rape myth acceptance (independent variable) and campus prevention programs (dependent variable). Data were collected via Survey Monkey over a three-month period. Data collection took longer than expected due to low participation. The target population was 18 years and older, full-time staff at a U. S. based collegiate institution. The participant's responses were completed using the IRMA which is done on a Likert 5-point scale.

Demographic Characteristics

The participants were 126 full-time employees from a private university in the Southeast. Table 1 includes the summary of the participants' age, gender and race/ethnicity. For gender, more than half or approximately 69% of the participants were (n= 87) were female and 31% (n=39) were male. This showed that the sample was predominantly female. Regarding age of respondent, there was some variety as at least 10% of the population came from each age group through age 64. The most represented group of participants were aged between 35 to 44 (n = 47, or 37.3%). For race/ethnicity, the majority (54%; n = 68) of those 126 full-time employees who took part were Black or

African American. The second highest race in the sample was White or Caucasian who accounted for 29.4% (n = 37).

Table 1

Summary of Demographics (n = 126)

Demographic	Category	n	%
Age	18-24	15	11.9
	25-34	20	15.9
	35-44	47	37.3
	45-54	21	16.7
	55-64	18	14.3
	65-74	4	3.2
	75 or older	1	0.8
Gender	Female	87	69.0
	Male	39	31.0
Race/ethnicity	Black or African American	68	54.0
	White or Caucasian	37	29.4
	Asian	5	4.0
	Hispanic or Latino	6	4.8
	Biracial or Multi racial	8	6.3
	No Response	2	1.6

Results

Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Univariate analysis was conducted using the dataset to generate descriptive statistics. Univariate analysis is a standard procedure that typically involves computation of means, medians, standard deviations, and other descriptive data, usually to gain a comprehensive overview of the dataset. Additionally, univariate analysis can be helpful for readers to assess the generalizability of study results. Scores for the variables of interest were computed and the descriptive statistics summaries were computed to

summarize the data of the scores for the independent variables of rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff and their knowledge regarding sexual assault and the dependent variable of effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale. Utilizing the IRMA-SF, university staff was surveyed about their acceptance of rape myth. Table 2 shows the summaries of the responses among the126 full-time employees from a private university regarding rape myth acceptance. For subscale 1 about the acceptance of rape myth on "she asked for it", majority of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to each of the following four statements:

- If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for what happened (83.4%).

- When girls go to parties wearing revealing clothes, they are asking for trouble (73.8%).

- If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped (85.7%)

On the other hand, only half (50%) of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to the one statement on acceptance of rape myth on "she asked for it" of "If a girl hooks up with a lot of guys, eventually she is going to get into trouble"

For subscale 2 about the acceptance of rape myth on "It wasn't really rape", majority of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to each of the following four statements:

- If a girl doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape (90.5%).

- If the accused "rapist" doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it a rape (96%).

- If a girl doesn't say "no," she can't claim rape.

For subscale 3 about the acceptance of rape myth on "she lied", majority of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to each of the following two statements:

- Girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets (72.2%).

- A lot of times, girls who claim they were raped just have emotional problems (80.5%).

On the other hand, only half of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to the following three out of the five statements on acceptance of rape myth on "she lied":

- A lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it (52.4%).

- If a girl doesn't physically resist sex—even if protesting verbally—it really can't be considered rape (84.9%).

- Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys (54%).

- Girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim that it was rape (49.2%).

For subscale 4 about the acceptance of rape myth on "he didn't mean it", more than half of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to each of the following three statements:

- When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex (57.9%).

- Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away (59.6%).

- Rape happens when a guy's sex drive gets out of control (63.5%).

Lastly, for subscale 5 about the acceptance of rape myth on "he didn't mean to - alcohol", majority of the 126 responding full-time employees either strongly disagree or disagree to each of the following three statements:

- If a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally (69.8%).

- If both people are drunk, it can't be rape (79.3%).

- It shouldn't be considered rape if a guy is drunk and didn't realize what he was doing (89.7%).

A global score of the rape myth acceptance among the 126 samples of collegiate level staff were also obtained. The global score was computed by getting the average responses in the 19 question items in the IRMA-SF. The mean global score of rape myth acceptance among the 126 collegiate level staff was 4.00 (SD = 0.58). The mean score indicates that 126 samples of collegiate level staff disagree with higher score on measures of rape myth acceptance, meaning they are more likely to disagree with rape myth statements. The highest score was 5.00 and the lowest was 2.53 among the 126 collegiate level staff.

Table 2

Percentage Summaries of Survey Responses Regarding Rape Myth Acceptance of

Collegiate Level Staff

Survey Question	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
Subscale 1: She asked for it					
If a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for what happened.	2.4%	8.7%	5.6%	27.8%	55.6%
When girls go to parties wearing revealing clothes, they are asking for trouble	1.6%	11.1%	11.9%	23.8%	50.0%
If a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her own fault if she is raped	1.6%	4.8%	7.9%	29.4%	56.3%
If a girl hooks up with a lot of guys, eventually she is going to get into trouble.	4.0%	22.2%	23.8%	23.8%	26.2%
Subscale 2: It wasn't really rape					
If a girl doesn't physically resist sex—even if protesting verbally—it really can't be considered rape	3.2%	4.0%	7.1%	27.8%	57.1%
If a girl doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say it was rape	1.6%	1.6%	6.3%	30.2%	60.3%
If the accused "rapist" doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it a rape.	0.0%	1.6%	2.4%	19.8%	76.2%
If a girl doesn't say "no," she can't claim rape.	2.4%	6.4%	14.3%	37.3%	38.9%
Subscale 3: She lied					
a lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.	3.2%	11.9%	32.5%	26.2%	26.2%
Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys	4.0%	11.9%	29.4%	27.8%	26.2%
Girls who say they were raped often led the guy on and then had regrets	2.4%	6.3%	19.0%	38.9%	33.3%
A lot of times, girls who claim they were raped just have emotional problems.	0.8%	7.1%	11.1%	38.4%	42.1%

Girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim that it was rape.	0.8%	19.0%	31.0%	25.4%	23.8%
Subscale 4: He didn't mean it					
When guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex.	4.8%	17.5%	19.0%	20.6%	37.3%
Guys don't usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away	2.4%	16.7%	21.4%	29.4%	30.2%
Rape happens when a guy's sex drive gets out of control	5.6%	13.5%	15.9%	25.4%	38.1%
Subscale 5: he didn't mean to – alcohol					
If a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally.	0.8%	11.9%	17.5%	37.3%	32.5%
If both people are drunk, it can't be rape	1.6%	5.6%	12.7%	34.9%	44.4%
It shouldn't be considered rape if a guy is drunk and didn't realize what he was doing.	0.0%	3.2%	7.1%	38.9%	50.8%

Key Results/Findings

Knowledge Regarding Sexual Assault. The university staff was surveyed about their knowledge regarding sexual assault. Table 3 shows the summary of the responses among the126 full-time employees from a private university regarding knowledge regarding sexual assault. The highest percentage of responses among the 126 samples were either disagree (38.1%) or strongly disagree (7.1%) to the statement that "I am more informed about sexual assault since being employed here". This means that the 26 full-time employees have lower levels of knowledge regarding sexual assault. The mean score of knowledge regarding sexual assault was 3.23 ($SD = 0.96$). The highest score was 5.00 and the lowest was 1.00 among the 126 collegiate level staff.

Table 3

Percentage Summaries of Survey Response Regarding Knowledge Regarding Sexual

Assault

Survey Question	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
I am more informed about sexual assault since being employed here	0.8%	27.0%	27.0%	38.1%	7.1%

Campus Sexual Assault Prevention Policies and Programs. The university staff

was surveyed about campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Table 4

shows the summary of the responses among the126 full-time employees from a private

university regarding campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. The highest

percentage of responses among the 126 samples were neither agree or disagree (37.3%)

to the statement that "The university does an adequate job of making me aware of its

sexual assault policy and programs". This means that the 26 full-time employees have a

neutral point of view regarding the adequacy of being aware of the university's sexual

assault policy and program. The mean score of campus sexual assault prevention policies

and programs was 3.07 ($SD = 0.96$). The highest score was 5.00 and the lowest was 1.00

among the 126 collegiate level staff.

Table 4

Percentage Summaries of Survey Response Regarding Campus Sexual Assault

Prevention Policies and Programs

Survey Question	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
The university does an adequate job of making me aware of its sexual assault policy and programs	3.2%	26.2%	37.3%	27.0%	6.3%

Data Analysis

RQ1: To what extent, if any, does rape myth acceptance influence effective campus

sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho1: Rape myth acceptance does not influence effective campus sexual assault

prevention policies and programs.

Ha1: Rape myth acceptance influences effective campus sexual assault

prevention policies and programs

A simple linear regression was conducted to address the research question one to

determine whether rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff influence effective

campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Specifically, the result of the

simple linear regression determined whether the global score of rape myth acceptance of

collegiate level staff significantly predict effective campus sexual assault prevention

policies and programs. A level of significance of 0.05 was used in the simple linear

regression. The results of the simple linear regression to address research question one is shown in Table 5.

The results of the simple linear regression showed the regression model had an insignificant model fit (F (1, 124) = 0.27, p = 0.68). This indicated that the regression model with global score of rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff as predictor of effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs did not have an acceptable model fit. This means that rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff did not have a significant influence on the effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. The R^2 value of the regression model was only 0.001, which indicated a very low effect size, meaning that the influence of rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff explained only 0.1% in predicting the score of effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Investigation of the t-statistic to show the significance of the individual influence also showed that the global score of rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff (t(125) = -0.41, p = 0.68) did not significantly influence or did not have a significant predictive relationship with effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. There was insignificant relationship since the p-value is greater than the level of significance value of 0.05. With this result, the null hypothesis of research question one which states that "Rape myth acceptance does not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs" was not rejected by the results of the regression analysis.

Table 5

Regression Results of Significance of Influence of Rape Myth Acceptance on Effective

Campus Sexual Assault Prevention Policies and Program

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p
	B	SE	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.31	0.60		5.57	0.00
Rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff (Global Score)	-0.06	0.15	-0.04	-0.41	0.68

Note. $F(1, 124) = 0.27$, $p = 0.68$; $R^2 = 0.001$, $N = 126$

a. Dependent Variable: Campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs

b. Predictors: (Constant), Rape myth acceptance of collegiate level staff (Global Score)

*Significant at level of significance of 0.05

RQ2: To what extent, if any, does knowledge regarding sexual assault influence

effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs?

Ho2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault does not influence effective campus

sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Ha2: Knowledge regarding sexual assault influences effective campus sexual

assault prevention policies and programs.

A simple linear regression was also conducted to address the research question two

to determine whether knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff

influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Specifically,

the result of the simple linear regression determined whether the score of knowledge

regarding sexual assault significantly predict effective campus sexual assault prevention

policies and programs. A level of significance of 0.05 was also used in the simple linear

regression. The results of the simple linear regression to address research question two is

shown in Table 6.

The results of the simple linear regression showed the regression model have a

significant model fit ($F(1, 124) = 101.34$, $p < 0.001$). This indicated that the regression

model with knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff as predictor of

effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs have an acceptable

model fit. This means that knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff

had significant influence on the effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and

programs. The R^2 value of the regression model was 0.45, which indicated a moderate

effect size, meaning that the influence of knowledge regarding sexual assault explained

45% in predicting the score of effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and

programs.

Investigation of the t-statistic to show the significance of the individual influence

also showed that the knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff ($t(125) =$

10.07, $p < 0.001$) significantly influence or had a significant predictive relationship with

effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. There was significant

relationship since the p-value is less than the level of significance value of 0.05.

Moreover, examination of the unstandardized beta coefficient (β) showed that the

knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff (β = 0.67) had a significant

positive predictive relationship with the score of effective campus sexual assault

prevention policies and programs. The positive predictive relationship or influence means

that the higher the levels of knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff,

the higher will be their score on campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs,

meaning they will be more likely to agree that their university does an adequate job of

making me aware of its sexual assault policy and programs. Specifically, when the score

of knowledge regarding sexual assault increase by one standard deviation, the score of

effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs increases by 0.67

standard deviations. With this result, the null hypothesis of research question two which

states that "Knowledge regarding sexual assault does not influence effective campus

sexual assault prevention policies and programs" was rejected by the results of the

regression analysis. The regression result supported the alternative hypothesis two which

states that "Knowledge regarding sexual assault influences effective campus sexual

assault prevention policies and programs. This chapter provides information about the

research findings, including data collection and analysis procedures along with

demonstration of results".

Table 6

Regression Results of Significance of Influence of Knowledge Regarding Sexual Assault

on Effective Campus Sexual Assault Prevention Policies and Program

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	p
	B	SE	Beta		
1 (Constant)	0.91	0.22		4.03	0.00*
Knowledge regarding sexual assault	0.67	0.07	0.67	10.07	0.00*

Note. $F(1, 124) = 101.34$, $p < 0.001$; $R^2 = 0.45$, $N = 126$

a. Dependent Variable: Campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs
b. Predictors: (Constant), Knowledge regarding sexual assault
*Significant at level of significance of 0.05

Summary

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between rape myth acceptance and perception of university staff. As stated, simple linear regression analysis was conducted to address the objective of the study. For research question one, results of the simple linear regression analysis showed that rape myth acceptance does not significantly influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. For research question two, results of the simple linear regression analysis showed that knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate significantly positively influenced effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. The positive influence means that the higher the levels of knowledge regarding sexual assault of collegiate level staff, the higher or more likely to agree that their university does an adequate job of making me aware of its sexual assault policy and programs

The following chapter, Chapter 5, concludes this study. Implications of the results of the data analysis will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5. Suggestions on how the findings may be applied in an organizational setting, limitations of the study, implications for social change a a summary of recommendations for future research are also discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendation

Introduction

Sexual assault is a critical issue in the United States that impacts both men and women (Anderson, 2016; Beaver, 2017). In higher education facilities, both staff and faculty are ideally guided to recognize erroneous rape myths and be adequately trained for sexual assault prevention policies and programs (Vladutiu et al., 2011). The purpose of this quantitative, non-experimental research was to examine the rape myth acceptance of university staff to identify their perception of sexual assault and to examine the role their perception may have in the process of prevention, policy, and programs on campus.

This study's findings indicated that full-time employees at this private university argued that 83.4% that if a girl is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for what happened. The same survey indicated that 73.8% of respondents felt that when girls go to parties wearing revealing clothes, they ask for trouble. Also, 85.7% noted that if a girl goes to a room alone with a guy at a party, it is her fault if she is raped. However, only 50% of respondents agreed strongly or disagreed strongly on the acceptance of the rape myth regarding "if she asked for it" or "if a girl hooks up with a lot of guys, eventually she is going to get into trouble. A strong majority of the 126 respondents agreed that the rape myth "it wasn't rape" was true. Respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement that if a girl doesn't physically resist sex—if protesting verbally—it really can't be considered rape (89%); if a girl doesn't fight back, you can't say it was rape (90.5%), if the accused rapist doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it rape (96%). If a girl doesn't say "no," she can't claim rape.

Regarding the rape myth, "she lied," the majority strongly disagree or disagreed with the statements that "girls who say they were raped often led the guy and then had bad regrets (72.2%) and a "lot of times, girls who claim they were raped just have emotional problems (80.5%). A lower portion of the sample disagreed or strongly disagreed that "a lot of times, girls who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regretted it (52.4%), "rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at guys (54%), and "girls who are caught cheating on their boyfriends sometimes claim that it was rape (49.2%). In terms of the rape myth "he didn't mean it" half of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed that "when guys rape, it is usually because of their strong desire for sex (57.9%), "guys don't' usually intend to force sex on a girl, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away (59.6%), "rape happens when a guy's sex drive gets out of control (63.5%). The majority also responded that "he didn't' mean to – alcohol" that "if a guy is drunk, he might rape someone unintentionally (69.8%), "if both people are drunk, it can't be rape (79.3%), and "it shouldn't be considered rape if a guy is drunk and didn't realize what he was doing (89.7%)."

The global score for rape myth acceptance was 4.00, which indicated they are most likely to disagree with rape myths. In terms of knowledge regarding sexual assault, the highest percentage of responses was disagreed (38.1%) or strongly disagreed (7.1%) regarding the statement, "I am more informed about sexual assault since being employed here." Thus, indicating a low level of sexual assault knowledge since full-time employment. The mean score for sexual assault was 3.23, and the lowest was 1.00 among the staff. Knowledge of campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs was

rated at 3.07, or neither agree or disagree regarding that "the university does an adequate job of making me aware of its sexual assault policy and programs."

The simple linear regression analysis indicated that rape myth acceptance does not significantly influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs in terms of the research questions. In addressing research question two, the simple linear regression analysis results showed that collegiate employees' sexual assault significantly positively influenced effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. The findings of these research questions indicate that the higher the knowledge of sexual assault among collegiate level staff that the university is performing an adequate job to ensure The positive influence means that the higher the levels of knowledge regarding the sexual assault of collegiate level staff that it is more likely that the university will perform an adequate job in increasing the awareness of sexual assault policies and programs. In the following section, the interpretation of findings is presented in the associated academic literature.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings' analysis indicated that rape myth acceptance does not significantly influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. Also, the knowledge regarding collegiate employees' sexual assault was found to be positively influenced by effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. One explanation as to why the university policies are not influences by myths is due to gender bias. Myths are false apocryphal beliefs widely held; they explain a cultural way of thinking and justify behaviors. However, this definition is limited in this scope and only

applies to women (Emmers-Sommers, 2014). Even though women are many rape victims, men suffer too. As such, basing a policy on existing myths may lead to biased policies that may not achieve the intended objective of preventing sexual assault regardless of the victim. Also, rape myths can be described as stereotypes, and as with any other stereotype, any incident of sexual assault may or may not conform to the myth about rape. It could be perceived that if isolated incidents that correlate with rape myths are publicized, then they somehow confirm that myth to be fact. Two of the most frequent myths are: 1) Women lie about rape, and 2) Only a certain type of woman is raped (Emmers-Sommer, 2014). The university policies are not influenced by myths, given that they are biased. For instance, all women from all backgrounds, ethnicities, and beauty levels have been victims of sexual assault.

As such forming policies based on the myth that only a specific type of woman is raped would be inaccurate. Also, rape myths perpetuate sexual violence indirectly by creating distorted beliefs and attitudes about sexual assault and shifting elements of blame onto the victim. The myth that women lie about rape is also not true, given the number of reported and proven cases—as such, developing policies based on the assumption that women lie about rape would lead to predisposition, which may not help prevent the vice. As such, prevention policies are founded on the supposition that women and men are vulnerable to rape, and there is a need to prevent any form of sexual assault. It should be assumed that when one has been accused of rape, there should be proved as stipulated by the law.

Most of the myths are based on man-woman sexual assault. However, there are relationships between persons of the same gender, which are not included in the myths. As such, policies influenced by the myths may not be comprehensive, given there is rape between persons of the same gender. For instance, there is a myth that homosexual and bisexual individuals deserve to be sexually assaulted because they are immoral and deviant. That only gay men are victims and perpetrators of rape. Also, the myths do not include details when a woman may rape a man. There are myths that men cannot be raped, and that "real" men can defend themselves against rape. The assumption is that men are not victims, but this is not accurate. The policies informed by this myth will not be inclusive of all the potential cases of rape.

Some of the national guidelines informing university policies include the FBI definition, which holds that rape is penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person without consent (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2011; Haugen et al., 2018). The shift in understanding sexual interactions may have influenced the change in definition. The change in the definition no longer confined rape to be of biological females. Specifying behaviors and body organs relieve the burden of proof for victims. There is no longer a need to demonstrate the act was performed against their will or consent. This is not in line with rape myths, mainly based on consent, force, and an act performed on women.

The findings show that rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault do not influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. This is not in line with past studies showing that knowledge and myth about

rapes affect prevention policies. The assumption is that policies should be founded on myths founded on overtime victim-blaming, sexist beliefs, and attitudes that may have been socially acceptable over time. The beliefs and attitudes which form myths change with time. For instance, they change with globalization, mainly social media, where people worldwide share ideas. Over the years, there have been reforms to include campus sexual assault, where sexual violence encompasses a broader range of sexual activity. Colleges and universities are looking at sexual assault through a lack of consent, which seems to conflict with our legal definition that sexual assault without force does not constitute a crime (Tuerkheimer, 2015). Many colleges and universities have incorporated affirmative consent within their policies. Sexual consent is necessary because of its direct relationship to sexual assault. Sexual assault is considered a nonconsensual activity obtained through force, threats, verbal coercion, or intoxication (Jozkowski et al., 2014; Leahy, 2014). In this regard, it is expected that the prevention policies reflect the dynamic policies, but the study found that this was not the case. According to Lonsway & Fitzgerald (1995), college students with previous rape education had less adherence to rape myth beliefs. In this regard, the policies should be geared to educate the students on preventing rape. The education policies should be those that undo the wrong beliefs that aid rape.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study is the sample size, which had 31% male and 69% female. Findings have shown that sociocultural gender roles influence which behaviors and beliefs and how one views the world. Men are expected to be socially geared towards

dominance, assertiveness, and independence, and women are socially geared towards interpersonal support, dependent, and emotional expressiveness. Another limitation of the study is that all campus policies were under one variable. Arguably, policies create awareness of rape, prevent and deal with the ordeal once it occurs. There may be different perceptions of each cluster of policies. Another limitation of the study is it did differentiate policies that target sexual assault between students and between university employees and students. Given the nature of the relationship, the policies have differences.

Recommendations

Key academic recommendations include (1) assessing differing age groups of participants, (2) increasing the sample size for generalizability, (3) increasing research regarding how rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault may, if at all, influence the effectiveness of campus sexual assault prevention and policies and (4) and conducting a qualitative examination regarding the perceptions of staff and faculty in college regarding the effectiveness of intervention policies for sexual assault.

The first recommendation is to examine sample sizes of differing ages in various higher education institutions across the United States. The sample included participants aged between 18 and 77 years. The individuals in this age group are people of different generalizations, hence likely to have different beliefs affected by globalization, the internet, and social media. There is a need for further research on the same generation to explore how rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. By increasing the

sample size for this study, the findings may elucidate details regarding the perpetuation of rape myths and higher education staff and faculty's role to create effective interventions for policies and guidelines to decrease sexual assault.

Research has shown that there are different perceptions of female and male rape. There is a need for further research on how rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs specific to gender. In current times gender is not just identified as male or female, a more in depth understanding of how individuals identify their sexuality and how they define their gender. There is a need for further research on how rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault influence effective campus sexual assault prevention policies between students and university employees and students. The university management and policymakers further evaluate the nexus between the current policies and the existing rape myths and knowledge among students and staff. I would recommend that policy and prevention programs reflect the data gathered on staff and students based on the campus culture. I think policy and programming would benefit best based on the culture of the culture it serves. Prevention programs planned specifically with the campus culture in mind would facilitate change in rape myths as well as understand how others may perceive sexual assault. I also believe that continuous collection of data would be ideal to help combat any myths of sexual assault would be addressed on a consistent basis.

This study's final academic recommendation is to conduct a qualitative examination regarding the perceptions of staff and faculty in college regarding the

effectiveness of intervention policies for sexual assault. The perceptions of employees in this study reflect quantitative findings, which provide a generalized result, but not detailed exploratory data of participants' perceptions and opinions. Future research is recommended to garner faculty and staff perceptions that may indicate the perceptions and opinions towards rape myths and the impact of sexual assault intervention policies and programs.

There are also several recommendations for practice.

Implications

This study's findings indicate that rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault do not directly impact campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. This study's findings hold significant implications that may guide how to impact college sexual assault prevention policies positively. However, if the current policies reflect misogynist and erroneous ideologies regarding rape prevention, then the policies and actions may be ill-founded. In line with this, this study's findings also indicated that the level of sexual assault knowledge since full-time employment at the university was not positively affected.

The most frequent myths regarding rape, when accepted by university employees, can influence critical policies (Emmers-Sommer, 2014). McCormack and Prostran (2012) noted that despite numerous research on sexual assault and rape, educators and researchers do not fully understand how college students define consent. There seems to be a misconception about the wants and desires of the sexual partner. It is expected that the university should have its policies developed in line with the existing

perceptions of consent during rape. The policies should be in with perceptions of consent and how they can be used to prevent rape.

Arguably, the policies to prevent sexual assault are influenced by national and state guidelines and those posited by stakeholders. This is to align the university policies with general guidelines and avoid confusing the students and staff. The university also admits students from all parts of the country; hence, there may be no consensus among them on the myths and levels of knowledge on sexual assault. It is also possible that students from different backgrounds have varied believes; hence having policies informed by the different myths may be a challenge. As such, the university may choose to use national and state protocols that are wider. In most cases, these guidelines are formed after more comprehensive consultations.

The implications of these findings illustrate that the colleges should carefully consider the sexual assault knowledge that is provided to employees. By providing academic and stringent education on sexual assault, rape myths can be reduced. Examples of these academically guided definitions and training are from the FBI (FBI, 2011). By providing explicit definitions of consent and rape, the outcomes of sexual assault prevention programs and employee sexual assault education can be improved, further improving the outcomes of sexual assault of employees, the policies and programs that guide sexual assault prevention policies and programs.

Conclusions

In the United States, sexual assault is a critical issue that impacts men and women (Anderson, 2016; Beaver, 2017). The purpose of this quantitative, non-experimental

research was to examine the rape myth acceptance of university staff to identify their perception of sexual assault and to examine the role their perception may have in the process of prevention, policy, and programs on campus. Higher education facilities are essential in preventing and dispelling sexual assault myths that contribute to decreased effective interventions for sexual assault (Vladutiu et al., 2011).

Despite efforts to decrease sexual assault, there is no recommended training module for employed faculty and staff in college settings. The study findings were that rape myth acceptance and knowledge regarding sexual assault does not directly impact campus sexual assault prevention policies and programs. This study's findings indicate a significant need for examining how rape myth acceptance and knowledge impact sexual assault influence on-campus prevention policies between student universities and programs.

References

Abrams, D., Viki, G. T., Masser, B., & Bohner, G. (2003). Perceptions of stranger and
acquaintance Rape: The role of benevolent and hostile sexism in victim blame and
rape proclivity. *Journal of Personality & Social Psychology*, *84*(1), 111–125.
doi:10.1037/0022-3514.84.1.111

Allroggen, M., Rassenhofer, M., Witt, A., Plener, P. L., Brähler, E., & Fegert, J. M.
(2016). The prevalence of sexual violence. *Deutsches Aerzteblatt International,*
113(7), 107–113. doi:10.3238/arztebl.2016.0107

Anderson, M. J. (2016). Campus sexual assault adjudication and resistance to reform.
Yale Law Journal, 125(7), 1940–2005. Retrieved from
http://www.yalelawjournal.org

Aosved, A. C., & Long, P. J. (2006). Co-occurrence of rape myth acceptance, sexism,
racism, homophobia, ageism, classism, and religious intolerance. *Sex Roles*,
55(7/8), 481–492. doi:10.1007/s11199-006-9101-4

Apostolou, M. (2013). The evolution of rape: The fitness benefits and costs of a forced-
sex mating strategy in an evolutionary context. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*,
18(5), 484–490. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2013.06.006

Archer, J., & Vaughan, A. E. (2001). Evolutionary theories of rape. *Psychology,*
Evolution & Gender, *3*(1), 95–101. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616660110049609

Aronowitz, T., Lambert, C. A., & Davidoff, S. (2012). The role of rape myth acceptance
in the social norms regarding sexual behavior among college students. *Journal of*

Community Health Nursing, *29*(3), 173–182. doi:
10.1080/07370016.2012.697852

Babbie, E., R. (2013). *The basis of social research*. New York: Cengage Learning.

Basile, K. C., Smith, S., Breiding, M., Black, M., & Mahendra, R. (2014). Sexual
violence surveillance: uniform definitions and recommended data elements.
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from
http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sv_surveillance_definitionsl-2009-
a.pdf

Beaver, W. R. (2017). Campus sexual assault: what we know and what we don't.
Independent Review, *22*(2), 257–268. Retrieved from http://www.independent.org

Bedera, N., & Nordmeyer, K. (2015). "Never go out alone": an analysis of college rape
prevention tips. *Sexuality & Culture*, *19*(3), 533–542. doi:10.1007/s12119-015-
9274-5

Bonnar-Kidd, K. K. (2010). Sexual offender laws and prevention of sexual violence or
recidivism. *American Journal of Public Health*, *100*(3), 412–
419.doi:10.2105/AJPH.2008.153254

Broach, J., & Petretic, P. (2006). Beyond traditional definitions of assault: expanding our
focus to include sexually coercive experiences. *Journal of Family Violence*, *21*(8),
477–486. doi: 10.1007/s10896-006-9045-2

Brutus, S., Aguinis, H., & Wassmer, U. (2013). Self-reported limitations and future
directions in scholarly reports: analysis and recommendations. *Journal of
Management*, *39*(1), 48–75. doi:10.1177/0149206312455245

Bryman, A., & Cramer, D. (1999). *Quantitative data analysis with SPSS release 8 for windows: A guide for social scientists*. Abingdon, UK: Taylor & Francis. https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203459621

Buchanan, M. J. P. (2012). Title IX turns 40: a brief history and look forward. *Texas Review of Entertainment & Sports Law*, *14*(1), 91–93. Retrieved from http://www.utexas.edu/law/journals/tres/index.html

Buddie, A. M., & Miller, A. G. (2001). Beyond rape myths: a more complex view of perceptions of rape victims. *Sex Roles*, *45*(3–4), 139–160. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1013575209803

Buhi, E. R. (2005). Reliability reporting practices in rape myth research. *Journal of School Health*, *75*(2), 63–66. https://doi.org/10.111/j.1746-1561.2005.tb00012.x

Burt, M. R. (1980). Cultural myths and supports for rape. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *38*(2), 217–230. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.38.2.217

Burt, M. R. (1980). Rape Myths Acceptance Scale. *PsycTESTS*. https://doi.org/10.1037/t02519-000

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2014). Preventing sexual violence on college campuses. Lessons from research and practice. Retrieved from https://www.notalone.gov/schools/

Chapleau, K., & Oswald, D. (2013). Status, threat, and stereotypes: understanding the function of rape myth acceptance. *Social Justice Research*, *26*(1), 18–41. doi:10.1007/s11211-013-0177-2

Chapleau, K., Oswald, D., & Russell, B. (2007). How ambivalent sexism toward women and men support rape myth acceptance. *Sex Roles*, *57*(1/2), 131–136. doi:10.1007/s11211-013-0177-2

Clay-Warner, J., & McMahon-Howard, J. (2009). Rape reporting: "classic rape" and the behavior of law. *Violence and Victims*, *24*(6), 723–743.doi10.1891/0886-6708.24.6.723

Conaghan, J., & Russell, Y. (2014). Rape myths, law, and feminist research: "myths about myths?" *Feminist Legal Studies*, *22*(1), 25–48. doi:10.1007/s10691-014-9259-2

Corrigan, R. (2013). Building theory and making change: The challenges of studying feminist activism. *Politics & Gender*, *9*(4), 489–493. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1743923X13000354

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approach*. Sage.

Decker, J. F., & Baroni, P. G. (2011). "No" still means "Yes" the failure of the "Non-consent" reform movement in American rape and sexual assault law. *Journal of Criminal Law & Criminology*, *101*(4), 1081–1169. Retrieved from http://law.nwu.edu/jclc/index.htm

Department of Education. (1972). Title IX. Office of Civil Rights. Retrieved from https://www2.ed.gov/policy/rights/reg/ocr/edlite-34cfr106.html

Department of Education. (2017, September 22). Department of education issues new interim guidance on campus sexual misconduct. Retrieved from

https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/department-education-issues-new-interim-guidance-campus-sexual-misconduct

Droogendyk, L., & Wright, S. C. (2014). Perceptions of interpersonal versus intergroup violence: The case of sexual assault. *PLoS ONE*, *9*(11), 1–12. https://doi.org/10.137/journal.pone.012365

Earnshaw, V., Pitpitan, E., & Chaudoir, S. (2011). Intended responses to rape as functions of attitudes, attributions of fault, and emotions. *Sex Roles*, *64*(5/6), 382–393. doi:10.1007/s11199-010-9920-1

Edwards, K. M., Kearns, M. C., Calhoun, K. S., & Gidycz, C. A. (2009). College women's reactions to sexual assault research participation: Is it distressing? *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, *33*(2), 225–234. https://doi.org/10.1111/j/1471-6402.2009.01492.x

Edwards, K., Turchik, J., Dardis, C., Reynolds, N., & Gidycz, C. (2011). Rape myths: history, individual and institutional-level presence, and implications for change. *Sex Roles*, *65*(11–12), 761–773. doi:10.1007/s11199-011-9943-2

Emmers-Sommer, T. (2014). Adversarial sexual attitudes toward women: The relationships with gender and traditionalism. *Sexuality & Culture*, *18*(4), 804–817. doi:10.1007/s12119-014-9222-9

Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2011, December). Uniform crime reporting (UCR) program summary reporting system. FBI. Retrieved from https://ucr.fbi.gov/new-rape-fact-sheet

Ferrão, M. C., & Gonçalves, G. (2015a). Rape crimes reviewed: The role of observer variables in female victim blaming. *Psychological Thought*, *8*(1), 47–67. doi:10.5964/psyct.v8:1.131

Franiuk, R., Seefelt, J., & Vandello, J. (2008). Prevalence of rape myths in headlines and their effects on attitudes toward rape. *Sex Roles*, *58*(11–12), 790–801. doi:10.1007/s11199-007-9372-4

Giraldi, A., & Monk-Turner, E. (2017). Perception of rape culture on a college campus: A look at social media posts. *Women's Studies International Forum*, *62*, 116–124. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2017.05.001

Hafer, C. L., & Bègue, L. (2005). Experimental research on just-world theory: problems, developments, and future challenges. *Psychological Bulletin*, *131*(1), 128–167. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.131.1.128

Hammond, E. M., Berry, M. A., & Rodriguez, D. N. (2011). The influence of rape myth acceptance, sexual attitudes, and belief in a just world on attributions of responsibility in a date rape scenario. *Legal & Criminological Psychology*, *16*(2), 242–252. https://doi.org/10.1348/135532510x499887

Haugen, A. D., Rieck, S. M., Salter, P. S., & Phillips, N. L. (2018). What makes it rape? A lay theories approach to defining rape among college students. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *40*(1), 18–35. https://doi.org/10.1080/01973533.2017.1398091

Hayes, R. M., Lorenz, K., & Bell, K. A. (2013). Victim blaming others: rape myth

    acceptance and the just world belief. *Feminist Criminology*, *8*(3), 202–220.

    https://doi.org/10.1177/1557085113484788

Henderson, H. (2007). Feminism, foucault, and rape: A theory and politics of rape

    prevention. *Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice*, *22*, 225–253. Retrieved

    from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?d

    irect=true&db=a9h&AN=32062145&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Hendrix, B. S. (2012). A feather on one side, a brick on the other: tilting the scale against

    males accused of sexual assault in campus disciplinary proceedings. *Georgia Law

    Review*, *47*(2), 591–621. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=87860653&scope=site

Hernandez, C. D. (2015). Redefining rape: sexual violence in the era of suffrage and

    segregation. *Berkeley Journal of Gender, Law & Justice*, *30*(2), 323–339.

    Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=109194633&scope=site

Howard, D. E., Griffin, M. A., & Boekeloo, B. O. (2008). Prevalence and psychosocial

    correlates of alcohol-related sexual assault among university students-.

    Adolescence, *43*(172), 733–750. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=35757162&scope=site

Hull, D. B., Sheplavy, E., & Hull, J. H. (2015). The role of knowledge of the law in

    perceptions of sexual violence. *North American Journal of Psychology*, *17*(2),

    251–258. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=102886090&scope=site

Jozkowski, K. N., & Peterson, Z. D. (2013). College students and sexual consent: unique

    insights. *Journal of Sex Research*, *50*(6), 517–523. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=88955553&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Jozkowski, K. N., & Peterson, Z. D. (2014). Assessing the validity and reliability of the

    perceptions of the consent to sex scale. *Journal of Sex Research*, *51*(6), 632–645.

    Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=96653712&scope=site

Jozkowski, K. N., Peterson, Z. D., Sanders, S. A., Dennis, B., & Reece, M. (2014).

    Gender differences in heterosexual college students' conceptualizations and

    indicators of sexual consent: implications for contemporary sexual assault

    prevention education. *Journal of Sex Research*, *51*(8), 904–916. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=97227096&scope=site

Kathleen C., Chen J., Black, M. C. & Saltzman, L. E. Basile. (2007). Prevalence and characteristics of sexual violence victimization among U.S. adults, 2001-2003. *Violence and Victims*, *22*(4), 437–448.

Kelly, T. C., & Stermac, L. (2008). Underreporting in sexual assault: A review of explanatory factors. *Baltic Journal of Psychology*, *9*(1/2), 30–45. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=59732961&scope=site

Klippenstine, M. A., Schuller, R. A., & Wall, A.-M. (2007). Perceptions of sexual assault: The expression of gender differences and the impact of target alcohol consumption. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, *37*(11), 2620–2641. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=27092321&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Krebs, C. P., Lindquist, C. H., Warner, T. D., Fisher, B. S., & Martin, S. L. (2007). *The campus sexual assault (CSA) study.* (No. NCJRS Document No. 221153). U S Department of Justice. Retrieved from https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/221153.pdf

Lalumière, M. L. (2006). Review of evolution, gender, and rape. *Archives of sexual behavior*, *35*(1), 99–100. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-006-8998-6

Langhinrichsen-Rohling, J., Foubert, J. D., Brasfield, H. M., Hill, B., & Shelley-

    Tremblay, S. (2011). The men's program: does it impact college men's self-

    reported bystander efficacy and willingness to intervene? *Violence Against*

    Women, *17*(6), 743–759. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?d

    irect=true&db=a9h&AN=62250153&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Leahy, S. (2014). "No means no", but where's the force? Addressing the challenges of

    formally recognizing non-violent sexual coercion as a serious criminal offence.

    Journal of Criminal Law, *78*(4), 309–325. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=98385197&scope=site

Lerner, M. (2013). *The belief in a just world: A fundamental delusion*. Springer Science

    & Business Media.

Littleton, H. (2011). Rape myths and beyond: A commentary on Edwards and colleagues

    (2011). *Sex Roles*, *65*(11/12), 792–797. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=67481427&scope=site

Littleton, H., Axsom, D., & Grills-Taquechel, A. (2009). Sexual assault victims'

    acknowledgment status and revictimization risk. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*,

    33(1), 34–42. Retrieved from

    http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

    rect=true&db=a9h&AN=36269719&scope=site

Lonsway, K. (1999). Illinois rape myth acceptance scale. *PsycTESTS*.

> https://doi.org/10.1037/t05370-000

Lonsway, K. A., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (1994). Rape myths. *Psychology of Women*

> *Quarterly*, *18*(2), 133. Retrieved from

> http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

> rect=true&db=a9h&AN=9407012983&scope=site

Lonsway, K. A., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (1995). Attitudinal antecedents of rape myth

> acceptance: A theoretical and empirical reexamination. *Journal of Personality &*

> *Social Psychology*, *68*(4), 704–711. Retrieved from

> http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?d

> irect=true&db=bth&AN=9504261465&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Maxwell, L., & Scott, G. (2014). A review of the role of radical feminist theories in the

> understanding of rape myth acceptance. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, *20*(1), 40–

> 54. Retrieved from

> http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

> rect=true&db=sih&AN=94773486&site=ehost-live&scope=site

McCormack, C., & Prostran, N. (2012). Asking for it. *International Feminist Journal of*

> *Politics*, *14*(3), 410–414. Retrieved from

> http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

> rect=true&db=poh&AN=80441168&site=ehost-live&scope=site

McMahon, S. (2010). Rape myth beliefs and bystander attitudes among incoming college

> students. *Journal of American College Health*, *59*(1), 3–11. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=52617067&scope=site

McMahon, S., Allen, C. T., Postmus, J. L., McMahon, S. M., Peterson, N. A., & Lowe

Hoffman, M. (2014). Measuring bystander attitudes and behavior to prevent

sexual violence. *Journal of American College Health*, *62*(1), 58–66. Retrieved

from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=92963320&site=ehost-live&scope=site

McMahon, S., & Farmer, G. L. (2011). An updated measure for assessing subtle rape

myths. *Social Work Research*, *35*(2), 71–81. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=62583618&site=ehost-live&scope=site

McNabb, D. E. (2015). *Research methods in public administration nonprofit*

management: Quantitative and qualitative approach (4th ed.). New York:

Routeledge.

McPhail, B. A. (2016). Feminist framework plus: Knitting feminist theories of rape

etiology into a comprehensive model. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, *17*(3), 314–

329. https://doi.org/10.1177/1524838015584367

Miller, A., Amacker, A., & King, A. (2011). Sexual victimization history and perceived

similarity to a sexual assault victim: A path model of perceiver variables

predicting victim culpability attributions. *Sex Roles*, *64*(5/6), 372–381. Retrieved

from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=58508550&scope=site

Morgan, R., & Kena, G. (2017, December). Crime victimization. U S Department of

Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved from

https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv15.pdf

Mouilso, E. R., & Calhoun, K. S. (2013). The role of rape myth acceptance and

psychopathy in sexual assault perpetration. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment*

& Trauma, *22*(2), 159–174. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=85460824&scope=site

Murphy, W. J. (2017). Bystander intervention policies for campus sexual assault should

be framed as civil rights programs and made broadly applicable to all protected

class offenses. *Utah Law Review*, *2017*(4), 801–814. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=124922514&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Napolitano, J. (2015). "Only yes means yes": an essay on university policies regarding

sexual violence and sexual assault. *Yale Law & Policy Review*, *33*(2), 387–402.

Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=109169039&scope=site

National Sexual Violence Resource Center. (2015). Statistics about sexual violence.

National Sexual Violence Resource Center.

National Sexual Violence Resource Center. (2016). The impact of sexual violence. Retrieved from https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/saam_2016_impact-of-sexual-violence.pdf

Office of Justice Programs. (2000). *Full report of the prevalence, incidence and consequences of violence against women: findings from the national violence against women survey* (No. NCJ 183781) (p. 61). Office of Justice Programs: US Department of Justice.

Palmer, C. T., & Thornhill, R. (2003). A posse of good citizens brings outlaw evolutionists to justice. A response to evolution, gender, and rape. *Evolutionary Psychology*, *1*, 10–27. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=psyh&AN=2007-07717-002&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Pedersen, S. H., & Strömwall, L. A. (2013). Victim blame, sexism and just world beliefs: A cross-cultural comparison. *Psychiatry, Psychology & Law*, *20*(6), 932–941. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=92963548&scope=site

Peterson, A., & Ortiz, O. (2016). A better balance: providing survivors of sexual violence with "effective protection" against sex discrimination through Title IX complaints. *Yale Law Journal*, *125*(7), 2132–2155. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=115922657&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Potera, C. (2014). Report highlights U.S. data on intimate partner and sexual violence. *American Journal of Nursing*, *114*(12), 17–17. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=99802709&scope=site

Rammell, N. (2014). Title IX and the dear colleague letter: A ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. *Brigham Young University Education & Law Journal*, (1), 135–149. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ehh&AN=95781768&scope=site

Rege, S., Bhate-Deosthali, P., Reddy, J. N., & Contractor, S. (2014). Responding to sexual violence. *Economic & Political Weekly*, *49*(48), 96–101. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=poh&AN=101543328&scope=site

Romeo, F. F. (2004). Acquaintance rape on college and university campuses. *College Student Journal*, *38*(1), 61–65. Retrieved from http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=12844794&scope=site

Romero-Sánchez, M., & Megías, J. L. (2015). How do college students talk about sexual assault? *Journal of Gender Studies*, *24*(6), 644–659. https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2013.868301

Sable, M. R., Danis, F., Mauzy, D. L., & Gallagher, S. K. (2006). Barriers to reporting sexual assault for women and men: perspectives of college students. *Journal of*

American College Health, *55*(3), 157–162. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=23722403&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Smith, S. G., Chen, J., Basile, K. C., Gilbert, L. K., Merrick, M. T., Patel, N., … Jain, A.

(2017). *The National Intimate Partner Sexual Violence Survey: 2010-2012 State

Report* (State Report) (p. 272). Atlanta, GA: National center for injury prevention

and control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved from

https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf

Stewart, A. L. (2014). The men's project: A sexual assault prevention program targeting

college men. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, *15*(4), 481–485. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=99069544&scope=site

The White House Task force to protect students from sexual assault. (2014). Not alone;

The first report of the White House Task Force to protect students from sexual

assault. White House. Retrieved from https://www.notalone.gov/assets/report.pdf

Thornhill, N. W., & Thornhill, R. (1991). An evolutionary analysis of psychological pain

following human (Homo sapiens) rape: IV. The effect of the nature of the sexual

assault. *Journal of Comparative Psychology*, *105*(3), 243–252.

https://doi.org/10.1037/0735-7036.105.3.243

Tuerkheimer, D. (2015). Rape on and off campus. *Emory Law Journal*, *65*(1), 1–45.

Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=110452574&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Turchik, J. A., & Edwards, K. M. (2012). Myths About Male Rape: A Literature Review.

Psychology of Men & Masculinity, *13*(2), 211–226. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=74712916&scope=site

Vandermassen, G. (2011). Evolution and rape: A feminist Darwinian perspective. *Sex

Roles*, *64*(9–10), 732–747.

Walker, G. S. (2010). The evolution and limits of title IX doctrine on peer sexual assault.

Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review, *45*(1), 95–133. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=poh&AN=48500176&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Ward, T., & Siegert, R. (2002). Rape and evolutionary psychology: A critique of

Thornhill and Palmer's theory. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, *7*(2), 145–168.

https://doi.org/10.1016/S1359-1789(00)00042-2

Wies, J. R. (2015). Title IX and the state of campus sexual violence in the United states:

power, policy, and local bodies. *Human Organization*, *74*(3), 276–286. Retrieved

from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.proquest.com/docview/1712

778650?accountid=14872

Wolitzky-Taylor, K. B., Resnick, H. S., Amstadter, A. B., McCauley, J. L., Ruggiero, K.

J., & Kilpatrick, D. G. (2011). Reporting rape in a national sample of college

women. *Journal of American College Health*, *59*(7), 582–587. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=63968309&scope=site

Wood, J. T. (2005). Feminist standpoint theory and muted group theory: commonalities

and divergences. *Women & Language*, *28*(2), 61–64. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=ufh&AN=19610519&site=ehost-live&scope=site

Yamawaki, N., Darby, R., & Queiroz, A. (2007). The moderating role of ambivalent

sexism: the influence of power status on perception of rape victim and rapist.

Journal of Social Psychology, *147*(1), 41–56. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=24357868&scope=site

Yuracko, K. A. (2002). Title IX and the problem of gender equality in athletics. *Gender

Issues*, *20*(2/3), 65–80. Retrieved from

http://ezp.waldenulibrary.org/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?di

rect=true&db=a9h&AN=10900727&scope=site

Appendix A: Letter of Permission to use survey instruments

PsycTESTS®

Rape Myths Acceptance Scale
Version Attached: Full Test

PsycTESTS Citation:
Burt, M. R. (1980). Rape Myths Acceptance Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi:
http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/t02519-000

Instrument Type:
Rating Scale

Test Format:
The Rape Myths Acceptance Scale (RMA; Burt, 1980) is a self-report instrument consisting of the primary Rape Myth
Acceptance scale that can be used alone or in combination with five companion scales: Sexual Conservatism,
Adversarial Sexual Beliefs, Acceptance of Interpersonal Violence, Sex-Role Stereotyping, and Sex-Role Satisfaction.
The complete instrument contains six scales, with between 7 and 19 items per scale. The scale takes 15-20 minutes
to complete. Most items are rated on a 1-7 Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree". Two
items asking about percentages are rated on a 1-7 scale from "almost none" to "almost all", six items asking about
likelihood of believing statements are rated on a 1-7 scale from "never" to "always", and the Sex Role Satisfaction
items are rated on a 1-7 scale from "very dissatisfied" to "very satisfied".

Source:
Burt, Martha R. (1980). Cultural myths and supports for rape. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Vol
38(2), 217-230. doi: 10.1037/0022-3514.38.2.217

Permissions:
Test content may be reproduced and used for non-commercial research and educational purposes without seeking
written permission. Distribution must be controlled, meaning only to the participants engaged in the research or
enrolled in the educational activity. Any other type of reproduction or distribution of test content is not authorized
without written permission from the author and publisher. Always include a credit line that contains the source citation
and copyright owner when writing about or using any test.

PsycTESTS™ is a database of the American Psychological Association

Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale
IRMA

Label	Number	Item
SA-3*	1	If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is at least somewhat responsible for letting things get out of control.
WI-5*	2	Although most women wouldn't admit it, they generally find being physically forced into sex a real "turn-on."
MT-3	3	When men rape, it is because of their strong desire for sex.
TE-5*	4	If a woman is willing to "make out" with a guy, then it's no big deal if he goes a little further and has sex.
LI-4	5	Women who are caught having an illicit affair sometimes claim that it was rape.
FI-1	6	Newspapers should not release the name of a rape victim to the public.
LI-3	7	Many so-called rape victims are actually women who had sex and "changed their minds" afterwards.
WI-1*	8	Many women secretly desire to be raped.
DE-5	9	Rape mainly occurs on the "bad" side of town.
DE-4	10	Usually, it is only women who do things like hang out in bars and sleep around that are raped.
FI-2*	11	Most rapists are not caught by the police.
NR-1*	12	If a woman doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say that it was rape.
DE-2*	13	Men from nice middle-class homes almost never rape.
TE-1	14	Rape isn't as big a problem as some feminists would like people to think.
SA-2	15	When women go around wearing low-cut tops or short skirts, they're just asking for trouble.
LI-2*	16	Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men.
NR-5	17	A rape probably didn't happen if the woman has no bruises or marks.
WI-4	18	Many women find being forced to have sex very arousing.
SA-4	19	If a woman goes home with a man she doesn't know, it is her own fault if she is raped.
MT-5	20	Rapists are usually sexually frustrated individuals.
FI-3	21	All women should have access to self-defense classes.
DE-3*	22	It is usually only women who dress suggestively that are raped.
WI-2	23	Some women prefer to have sex forced on them so they don't have to feel guilty about it.
NR-3*	24	If the rapist doesn't have a weapon, you really can't call it a rape.
SA-6	25	When a woman is a sexual tease, eventually she is going to get into trouble.
TE-3	26	Being raped isn't as bad as being mugged and beaten.
DE-7*	27	Rape is unlikely to happen in the woman's own familiar neighborhood.
DE-1	28	In reality, women are almost never raped by their boyfriends.
TE-2*	29	Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them.
MT-2	30	When a man is very sexually aroused, he may not even realize that the woman is resisting.
LI-1*	31	A lot of women lead a man on and then they cry rape.
FI-4*	32	It is preferable that a female police officer conduct the questioning when a woman reports a rape.

LI-5	33	A lot of times, women who claim they were raped just have emotional problems.

◢PsycTESTS®

Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale
IRMA

Label	Number	Item
NR-2	34	If a woman doesn't physically resist sex—even when protesting verbally— it really can't be considered rape.
DE-6	35	Rape almost never happens in the woman's own home.
SA-5*	36	A woman who "teases" men deserves anything that might happen.
SA-8*	37	When women are raped, it's often because the way they said "no" was ambiguous.
TE-4	38	If a woman isn't a virgin, then it shouldn't be a big deal if her date forces her to have sex.
MT-1*	39	Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman, but sometimes they get too sexually carried away.
F1-5	40	This society should devote more effort to preventing rape.
SA-1*	41	A woman who dresses in skimpy clothes should not be surprised if a man tries to force her to have sex.
MT-4*	42	Rape happens when a man's sex drive gets out of control.
SA-7	43	A woman who goes to the home or apartment of a man on the first date is implying that she wants to have sex.
WI-3	44	Many women actually enjoy sex after the guy uses a little force.
NR-4	45	If a woman claims to have been raped but has no bruises or scrapes, she probably shouldn't be taken too seriously.

Note. * Indicates IRMA-SF (short-form) items; item label prefix refers to the subscale corresponding to the item: SA, *She asked for it*; NR, *It wasn't really rape*; MT, *He didn't mean to*; WI, *She wanted it*; LI, *She lied*; TE, *Rape is a trivial event*; DE, *Rape is a deviant event*; FI, filler item (not scored).

Appendix B: Letter of Permission to Conduct Study

![women's center logo]

women's center

September 26, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Stephanie Helms Pickett, and I serve as the Director of the Women's Center at Duke University. By way of this communication, I agree to send Jilleian Sessions-Stackhouse's survey to my colleagues in the Women's Center in support of her doctoral research on Rape Myth Acceptance and its Potential Impact on Campus Policy. Should you require additional information or clarity on this matter, please contact me at: stephanie.helms.pickett@duke.edu or 919-681-6883. Thank you.

Stephanie Helms Pickett, EdD
Director

activism
civic engagement
community building
education & outreach
empowerment

studentaffairs.duke.edu/wc | 919-684-3897 | box 90920, durham, nc 27708 | womenctr@duke.edu