

Factors Related to Rape Victims' Decision to File Police Reports

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Master's thesis in Psychology

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Subject: Psychology	
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Title: Factors Related to Rape Victims' Decision to File Police Reports	
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Abstract: Victims of rape must decide whether to file a police report, and research shows that many victims do not report the rape to the police. The literature on the associations between demographic and individual factors and reporting rape to the police is limited. The aim of the present study was to investigate the associations between demographic and individual factors (education, socioeconomic status, age, native country, number of years lived in Finland, gender, sexual orientation, relationship status, close persons, substance use and mental disorder), and police reporting in a Finnish sample of rape victims ($N = 191$) who were clients at the Helsinki Seri Support Center (sexual assault center). We collected data through an online survey. We expected factors related to a lower societal status, fewer close relations, increased use of substances, and diagnosed mental disorders to decrease the likelihood of reporting. The reporting rate was 64.4%. We found a negative association between the level of education and reporting. None of the other factors measured were robustly associated with reporting. It might be that these factors are not associated with the likelihood of reporting in the Finnish sociocultural context. It is also possible that the Seri Support Center successfully mitigates otherwise encountered obstacles to reporting. The present study expands the geographical scope of existing research. The practical implications of these findings are discussed, and the value of support services highlighted.	
Keywords: rape, sexual assault, sexual violence, police reporting, sexual assault center	
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<p>Abstrakt: Offer för våldtäkt behöver fatta ett beslut huruvida en polisanmälan görs. Tidigare forskning visar att en stor andel av offren väljer att inte polisanmäla. Forskningen om demografiska och individuella faktorer inverkan på anmälandet är begränsad. Syftet med denna studie var att undersöka associationerna mellan olika demografiska och individuella faktorer (utbildning, socioekonomisk status, ålder, ursprungsland, antal år levda i Finland, kön, sexuell läggning, civilstånd, närstående människor, substansanvändning och psykisk störning) och polisanmälandet i ett finskt sampel av våldtäktsoffer ($N = 191$) som varit patienter på Helsingfors Seri stödcenter (stödcenter för sexualbrottsoffer). Datainsamlingen utfördes med en nätenkät. Vi förväntade oss att faktorer kopplade med lägre status i samhälle, färre nära relationer, högre substansanvändning samt diagnostiserad psykisk störning skulle minska på anmälningsbenägenheten. Anmälningsprocenten var 64,4 %. Utbildningsnivån visade sig vara negativt associerad med anmälandet. Inga av de övriga undersökta faktorerna var starkt associerade med anmälandet. Detta kunde tyda på att de undersökta faktorerna inte är associerade med anmälandet i den finländska sociokulturella kontexten. Det är även möjligt att Seri stödcentret lyckas dämpa effekten av potentiella hinder för anmälandet. Denna studie utvidgar den geografiska omfattningen av studier inom området. Betydelsen av resultaten diskuteras och nyttan av stödtjänster betonas.</p>	
Nyckelord: våldtäkt, sexuellt övergrepp, sexuellt våld, polisanmälan, stödcenter för sexualbrottsoffer	
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Factors Related to Rape Victims' Decision to File Police Reports

Rape is commonly defined as nonconsensual sexual penetration using violence, threat of violence or otherwise exploiting the individual's ability to deny consent (American Psychological Association, n.d.). Rape is considered the most severe form of sexual violence, and being subjected to rape can affect the victim's health both physically and psychologically (Smith et al., 2018). There are no recent estimates on the prevalence of rape in Finland, but in a national study from 2019, 2.8% of women and 0.3% of men reported experiences of attempted or completed contact sexual violence in the past 12 months (Danielsson & Näsi, 2020). In comparison, in a national study from 2015, these numbers were 4.7% and 3.5% in the United States (Smith et al., 2018).

There is an ongoing discussion about why rape victims are not always receiving justice and why, in many cases, alleged perpetrators are not convicted. In a recent Finnish study, only 15.5% of the rape cases reported to the police during 2011–2017 resulted in a sentence (Alaattinoğlu et al., 2020). Whereas this is concerning, the situation is aggravated by the fact that only a small number of rape cases are reported to the police in the first place. There are no explicit reporting rates of rape reporting in Finland, but it has been estimated that less than 4% of women who experienced sexual violence, including rape, reported (Piha, 2019). To understand the low rates, we need to understand the factors related to the decision regarding whether to file a police report. Therefore, we argue that it is crucial to understand the individual factors behind the reporting decision. By identifying possible barriers to reporting, steps can be taken to counter these.

The underreporting of rape can have effects on both individual and societal levels. Victims risk not receiving the help and support they might need (Fisher et al., 2003), particularly if services require a police report. In a study conducted by Walsh and Bruce (2014), a notable number of both reporters and non-reporters felt the need for counseling

services after the violence occurred, emphasizing the need for support irrespective of the reporting decision. Societies and legal systems, in turn, suffer from the underreporting as it decreases the possibility to mitigate and deter violence (Allen, 2007). The investigative process is often highly dependent on the information provided by the victim, as the victim most often is the only witness beyond the alleged perpetrator (e.g., Allen, 2007). However, reporting might not be experienced as the best solution for all victims. Although reporting can lead to the conviction of the offender, prevent future victimization (Boateng, 2016), and increase the victim's access to medical care (Resnick et al., 2000), reporting comes with the risk of being disbelieved and blamed during legal and medical processes (Campbell, 2013). Even though these processes often help victims (Campbell, 2013), they can also revictimize and decrease the likelihood of future help-seeking (Patterson, 2011). In other words, a risk of secondary victimization, also known as "second rape," exists among reporters (Campbell, 2013; Campbell & Raja, 1999). Additionally, reporting comes with a risk for social stigmatization of the victim (Allen, 2007; Boateng, 2016). Hence, the reporting decision is arguably, about weighing the costs and benefits related to reporting against each other (Bowles et al., 2009; Kahn-Lang, 2008).

The aim with the present study is thus to analyze factors underlying rape victims' decisions on whether to file a police report. We investigated this in a sample of Helsinki Seri Support Center's (sexual assault center) clients. Seri Support Center at Helsinki University Hospital (HUS) has since 2017 functioned as a support unit for people over the age of 16, regardless of gender, who have experienced rape or attempted rape within the past month. Whereas victims visiting the Center are not required to file a report, they are encouraged and assisted to do so by the personnel who closely collaborate with the police.

Factors Related to Reporting Rape

The existing literature on factors related to reporting focuses on reporting rape (e.g., Chen & Ullman, 2010; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011), sexual assault (e.g., Boateng, 2016; Walsh & Bruce, 2014), and sexual victimization (Fisher et al., 2003). Prior research suggests that several demographic factors are associated with reporting, including socioeconomic status (SES), age, gender, ethnicity/race, and marital status (e.g., Boateng, 2016; Chen & Ullman, 2010).

SES has been defined differently across studies on victims' reporting, making it challenging to compare and unite previous findings. Previous studies have measured one or more of the following factors: income, employment, and level of education. A higher income has been associated with a lower reporting likelihood (Chon, 2014; Kahn-Lang, 2008), whereas other researchers have found that income is not associated with reporting (Boateng, 2015; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011). Employment has not been associated with reporting (Boateng, 2015). Finally, the association between education and reporting has been reported as negative (Allen, 2007; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011), positive (Boateng, 2016), and non-existent (Boateng, 2015). However, as the studies were conducted in different cultural contexts, the results may not be directly comparable. In sum, research would benefit from a mutual way of measuring SES.

Age has been found to be associated with reporting in some but not all studies. Whereas some studies have found that older age increases the likelihood to report (Allen, 2007; Chen & Ullman, 2010), others have found younger victims to be more likely to report (Boateng, 2015), and yet other studies have found no differences related to age (Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, Amstadter, et al., 2011; Zijlstra et al., 2017). Hence, no precise predictions can be made based on the extant literature.

Gender is inconsistently associated with reporting. Studies have found that women are more likely to report than men (Allen, 2007; Kahn-Lang, 2008) and vice versa (Chon, 2014). Yet others have found that gender was not associated with the reporting likelihood (Chon, 2014; Zijlstra et al., 2017). Importantly, as most rape victims are women, the small number of men negatively affect the statistical power to detect gender differences. Additionally, to the best of our knowledge, no previous studies have considered non-binary gender identities. An increased risk for sexual victimization among young gender minorities is, however, recognized (Jokela et al., 2020). Therefore, research should also include non-binary individuals.

Ethnicity/race has been measured differently across studies, wherefore, the results are not directly comparable or generalizable to other societies. Being Caucasian has been linked to a higher reporting likelihood compared to other race/ethnicity groups (Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, Amstadter, et al., 2011), and being non-White has been linked to a higher reporting likelihood compared to being White (Chen & Ullman, 2010; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011). Additionally, it has been suggested that victims in Western countries, in general, are more likely to report compared to victims in non-Western countries (Chon, 2014).

Marital status has inconsistently been shown to be associated with reporting. Some authors have reported no associations (Boateng, 2015; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011), whereas others have reported that married victims are more likely to report than unmarried (Boateng, 2016; Kahn-Lang, 2008). As other forms of cohabiting and choosing to live as a single has become increasingly common it is insufficient to only measure whether an individual is married or not. Therefore, research should include various relationship categories.

Other individual factors', such as mental health factors', association with reporting have been investigated sparsely. The available literature suggests that of the postevent posttraumatic stress disorder symptoms re-experiencing and hyperarousal increased, and avoidance decreased the reporting likelihood (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). Other mental health factors have not been found to account for differences in the reporting likelihood (Du Mont et al., 2003; Walsh & Bruce, 2014). To our best knowledge, there is a lack of research considering the association between other demographic and individual factors (such as sexual orientation or general drinking habits), and reporting. Effects of sexual orientation (non-heterosexuals more likely) and lifetime drinking problems (unrelated) on disclosing to mental health professionals have been investigated (Starzynski et al., 2007). However, these results are not necessarily generalizable for police reporting. Concerning the drinking habits of victims, prior research has mainly focused on drinking at the time of the incident (e.g., Fisher et al., 2003), with virtually no studies investigating the effect of general drinking habits on reporting. The same applies to the use of drugs (e.g., Fisher et al., 2003). Therefore, research should investigate whether the aforementioned factors are related to reporting.

Recognizing the factors associated with reporting is important for increasing the possibilities for all rape victims to access justice. Further, it can contribute to identifying possible risk groups and improving the support services offered. Although prior studies have investigated background factors related to reporting rape, there is a clear need for more data. The inconsistent and partly incomplete findings, the need for more updated data, and the fact that many of the prior studies have been conducted in the United States (e.g., Chen & Ullman, 2010; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011), underline the need for the present study.

The Current Study

The aim of the current survey research was to investigate associations between demographic and individual factors and rape victims' decision to report or not to report the rape to the police. To do this, we sampled clients in a Finnish sexual assault center. We also aimed to expand the demographic and individual factors and response options accounted for in this field. First, we developed a theoretical framework for the present study. The present study is based on the assumption that rape victims face a choice whether to report and that the decision-making is affected by several factors, including demographic and individual factors. In line with previous research conducted from a cost-benefit theory perspective, we argue that decision-making implies weighing the costs and benefits against each other (Bowles et al., 2009; Kahn-Lang, 2008). Further, we elaborate on this argument by adding a vulnerability theory aspect. Particularly, we propose that certain demographic and individual factors can place rape victims in a more vulnerable life situation in society (i.e., with higher costs of reporting). This, in turn, reflects on the reporting behavior. Although factors associated with vulnerability have not been widely investigated in the context of reporting rape, previous research has investigated vulnerability factors associated with the risk of becoming a victim in the first place (e.g., Lindqvist, 2020; Ullman & Najdowski, 2010). Additionally, to avoid the risk of stigmatizing rape victims, and in line with the recommendations by Virokannas et al. (2020), we refer to vulnerable life situations caused by certain factors, rather than vulnerable individuals.

Vulnerability has been defined as a lack of resources that occurs in one or more life domains (Spini et al., 2017), emphasizing the impact available resources have on different life areas. In the present study, we focused on examining vulnerability from three perspectives: societal, relational, and substance use and psychological problems perspective. First, from a societal perspective, the life situation of victims can be vulnerable to different

extents, depending on their status in society. This is likely to be manifested in, among other things, the available resources at their disposal and their knowledge of the judicial process. Based on this, we expected the level of education and economic activity, measured as SES and age, to be associated with the reporting likelihood. Filing a report requires knowledge of how to do it and language skills, which we assumed to be associated with being a native and the number of years lived in Finland. As a result, we expected these factors to be associated with the reporting likelihood. Additionally, as gender and sexual minority status per se can come with societal effects and require resources, we expected them to be associated with the reporting likelihood.

Second, from a relational perspective, the life situation of victims is likely to be influenced by their current relations, that is, whether they have close persons to rely on. This might be manifested, for instance, in the opportunity to receive support in general and encouragement and help to report. Encouragement increases the reporting likelihood, and consulting with others often happens with close persons (Paul et al., 2014). Based on this, we expected relationship status and close relations to be associated with the reporting likelihood.

Third, from a substance use and psychological problems perspective, the life situation of victims can be vulnerable to different extents, depending on their substance use and possible mental disorders. We hypothesized this to manifest in potential self-blaming and/or actual or experienced risk of labeling or blaming by others for the rape or the factors per se. Based on this and the recognized fear of victim-blaming (Adolfsson, 2018), we expected substance use and mental disorder to be associated with the reporting likelihood.

More specifically, based on our theory, we hypothesized:

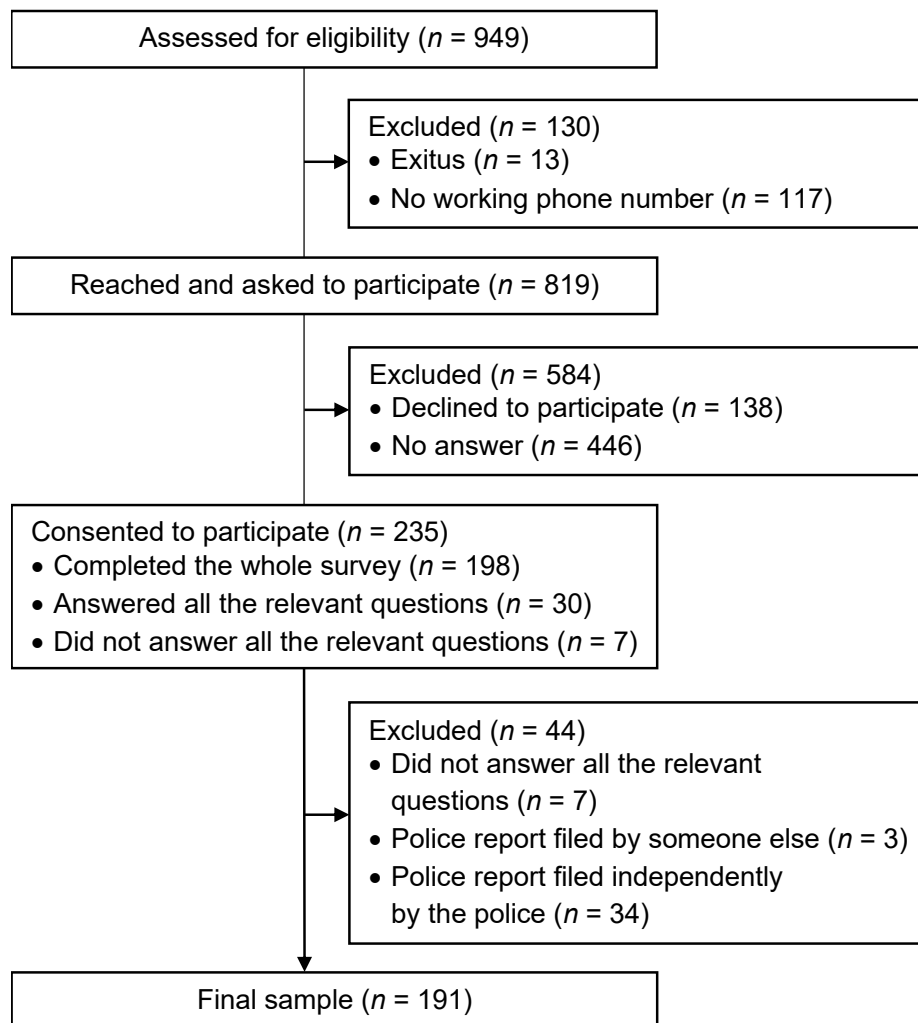
1. Victims with a lower level of education, especially those with a secondary school degree or no degree, to be less likely to report.

2. Victims who are economically inactive, that is, victims with lower SES and/or victims from the oldest and the youngest age groups, to be less likely to report.
3. Victims who are non-native, and non-natives who lived fewer years in Finland, to be less likely to report.
4. Victims who identify as a gender minority (i.e., in the context of rape victims: non-women) and/or as a sexual minority (i.e., non-heterosexuals) to be less likely to report.
5. Victims who are not in a relationship and/or do not have close persons to be less likely to report.
6. Victims who use more alcohol, other intoxicants, and/or are diagnosed with a mental disorder (especially if functioning or quality of life is subjectively affected) to be less likely to report.

Method

Participants

The sample consisted of Seri Support Center's clients who requested support between June 1, 2017, and February 29, 2020. Eligible clients were over the age of 16 at their first visit and had experienced rape or attempted rape within one month prior to the visit. Importantly, all the included cases are alleged rape cases until proved otherwise. Considering our research question, we included respondents who had not filed a police report or had filed it by themselves or with the help of someone (see Figure 1).

Figure 1*Flowchart of Respondents in the Present Study***Materials**

We created an online survey (administered in Finnish, Swedish, and English) based on prior national and international research and surveys. We used the Survey Analytics platform. The present survey was developed to capture both new themes and themes that had emerged in the previous literature on reporting. We gathered information about: (a) demographics and background, (b) the rape, (c) the alleged perpetrator, (d) factors affecting reporting, and (e) the experiences and use of the support services at Seri Support Center. The question about close persons and the formulation of the alcohol use question were derived from previous Finnish national surveys (Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare [THL],

2019; Piispa et al., 2006). In cases where respondents had several experiences of rape, they were instructed to think about the most recent incident for which they had received treatment at the Center. Closed questions were preferred for improving the reliability of the survey and the analyzability of the data. All 13 variables relevant for the current study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Survey Questions and Response Options Relevant for the Present Study

Questions	Response options
Did you report or has the sexual violence in question been reported to the police?	Yes, No
How old are you?	16–71 or more
Your gender?	Female, Male, Other ^a , I'd rather not say
Where were you born?	Finland, I'd rather not say, Dropdown menu of all countries
How long have you lived in Finland?	All my life, Less than twelve months, Approximately one year, 2–71 or more years
Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?	Heterosexual, Homosexual, Bisexual, Other ^a , I'd rather not say
What is your current relationship status?	Married or in a registered partnership, Co-habiting, In a relationship but living apart, Divorced or separated, Widowed, Unmarried/single
What is your education level?	University degree, University of applied sciences degree, Matriculation exam, Vocational qualification, Lower secondary school, None of the above
What is your socioeconomic status?	Senior clerical and management personnel, Lower clerical and management personnel, Worker, Entrepreneur, Student, Pensioner aged 55 or over, Pensioner aged under 55, Other (long-term unemployed, military conscript, etc.), Don't know
How many close persons do you have, to whom you can go for support if you encounter serious personal problems?	None, 1–2, 3–5, 6 or more

Questions	Response options
How often do you drink alcohol to the point that you feel drunk?	Never, Not at all during the last year, A few times a year, Every couple of months, Once or twice a month, Once or twice a week, Three times a week or more, Don't know
Do you use other intoxicants besides alcohol?	I have never tried them, I have tried them, I occasionally use them, I regularly use them
Have you had any mental disorders diagnosed by a physician or other health care professional?	No; I used to, but have since recovered; Yes, but I don't feel that it significantly affects my functional ability or quality of life; Yes, and I feel that it significantly affects my functional ability and quality of life

Note. The first variable presented in the table is the dependent variable, rest of the variables are independent.

We included definitions of socioeconomic statuses, intoxicants, and mental disorder in the survey (see Appendix).

^a Possibility to specify included.

Ethical Permission

The study received ethical permission by the HUS Ethics Committee (30.9.2020, HUS/2162/2020) and an additional permission from the HUS Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology (11.11.2020, HUS/483/2020) preceding the data collection.

Before accessing the online survey, clients read information about the study and gave their consent to participate voluntarily. The consent form was adjusted for minors (clients 16–17 years of age). Parental consent for minors to participate was not required due to nature (survey) and topic (rape) of the study, and with a view to support minors in independent decision-making and right to be heard in matters concerning themselves (following the principles outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child; United Nations, 1989).

Procedure

The present study was part of a research project titled “Backgrounds of Seri Support Center Customers, Use of Support Services and Progress of the Criminal Procedure,” funded by the Government’s analysis, assessment, and research activities. This project was

conducted collaboratively by HUS Seri Support Center, Åbo Akademi University, THL, and initially also with the participation of the Helsinki Police Department.

Prior to the data collection, we piloted the survey twice ($n = 10$, $n = 20$). We modified the survey according to the comments received.

We collected data between November 2020 and February 2021. A research assistant (a midwife working at the Seri Support Center) sent personal links to the online survey as text messages to all eligible clients. For those who did not respond, a reminder text message was sent, and if there was still no response, they were called by the research assistant and offered a possibility to answer by phone.

Statistical Analyses

We conducted all statistical analyses using the *R* platform (R Core Team, 2021). We used the *car* package (Fox & Weisberg, 2019) to recode our dependent variable and to obtain analysis of variance (ANOVA) type tables for regression models. We used the *MASS* package (Venables & Ripley, 2002) to calculate odds ratios and confidence intervals.

We first examined the distribution of reporters and non-reporters for every variable. To test the hypotheses and the associations between the societal, relational, substance use and psychological problems variables, and rape reporting, we conducted a multiple binary logistic regression model with report as the binary outcome variable. We coded age as a continuous predictor, level of education, number of close persons, use of alcohol, use of other intoxicants, and mental disorder as ordered variables, and the rest as factors. We first evaluated the model by inspecting an ANOVA-type II sum of squares table for the main effect of each included variable. After this, we reran the model with a treatment coding to assess the direction of possible associations. In this step, we also calculated odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals. Because some cells had a limited number of observations, we

combined response options with two or fewer observations with other response options (see Table 4).

Results

Our data consisted of 191 observations on 13 variables. In total, 123 (64.4%) respondents had filed a police report. First, we inspected and compared the distribution of the variables for respondents who had filed a police report and who had not filed a police report (see Table 2).

Table 2

Distribution of the Independent Variables Among Reporters, Non-Reporters, and the Full Sample

Vulnerability Perspective	Variable	Police report		No police report		Full sample		
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Societal	Education							
	University degree	14	7.33	13	6.81	27	14.14	
	UAS degree	22	11.52	12	6.28	34	17.80	
	Matriculation exam	33	17.28	25	13.09	58	30.37	
	Vocational qualification	33	17.28	11	5.76	44	23.04	
	Lower secondary school	20	10.47	7	3.66	27	14.13	
	None of the above	1	0.52	0	0.00	1	0.52	
	SES							
	Senior clerical and management	8	4.19	1	0.52	9	4.71	
	Lower clerical and management	6	3.14	6	3.14	12	6.28	
	Worker	43	22.51	26	13.61	69	36.12	
	Entrepreneur	4	2.09	4	2.09	8	4.18	
	Student	38	19.90	24	12.57	62	32.47	
	Pensioner aged 55 or over	0	0.00	1	0.52	1	0.52	
	Pensioner aged under 55	5	2.62	1	0.52	6	3.14	
	Other	10	5.24	3	1.57	13	6.81	
	Don't know	9	4.71	2	1.05	11	5.76	
	Age							
	<i>Mdn</i>		123	27	68	26	191	27
	<i>IQR</i>			10		8	12	9.5
Country								

Vulnerability Perspective	Variable	Police report		No police report		Full sample	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
	Finland	115	60.21	64	33.51	179	93.72
	Other	8	4.17	4	2.08	12	6.25
	Years in Finland						
	All my life	110	57.59	57	29.84	167	87.43
	Other	13	6.79	11	5.73	24	12.52
	Gender						
	Female	120	62.83	64	35.51	184	96.34
	Male	2	1.05	2	1.05	4	2.10
	Other	1	0.52	2	1.05	3	1.57
	Sexual orientation						
	Heterosexual	85	44.50	48	25.13	133	69.63
	Homosexual	3	1.57	3	1.57	6	3.14
	Bisexual	24	12.57	13	6.81	37	19.38
	Other	4	2.09	3	1.57	7	3.66
	I'd rather not say	7	3.66	1	0.52	8	4.18
Relational	Relationship status						
	Married/registered partnership	5	2.62	5	2.62	10	5.24
	Co-habiting	26	13.61	18	9.42	44	23.03
	Relationship but living apart	25	13.09	17	8.90	42	21.99
	Divorced or separated	10	5.24	1	0.52	11	5.76
	Widowed	1	0.52	0	0.00	1	0.52
	Unmarried/single	56	29.32	27	14.14	83	43.46
	Close persons						
	None	3	1.57	3	1.57	6	3.14
	1-2	40	20.94	20	10.47	60	31.41
	3-5	65	34.03	33	17.28	98	51.31
	6 or more	15	7.85	12	6.28	27	14.13
Substance use and psychological problems	Alcohol						
	Never	11	5.76	1	0.52	12	6.28
	Not at all during the last year	7	3.66	7	3.66	14	7.32
	A few times a year	24	12.57	18	9.42	42	21.99
	Every couple of months	27	14.14	18	9.42	45	23.56
	Once or twice a month	40	20.94	17	8.90	57	29.84
	Once or twice a week	12	6.28	5	2.62	17	8.90

Vulnerability Perspective	Variable	Police report		No police report		Full sample	
		<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
	Three times a week or more	2	1.05	0	0.00	2	1.05
	Don't know	0	0.00	2	1.05	2	1.05
	Intoxicants						
	I have never tried them	55	28.80	29	15.18	84	43.98
	I have tried them	57	29.84	28	14.66	85	44.50
	I occasionally use them	8	4.19	9	4.71	17	8.90
	I regularly use them	3	1.57	2	1.05	5	2.62
	Mental disorder						
	No	40	20.94	22	11.51	62	32.45
	Used to, but have recovered	24	12.57	10	5.24	34	17.81
	Yes, but it does not significantly affect the functional ability or quality of life	23	12.04	16	8.38	39	20.42
	Yes, and it does significantly affect functional ability and quality of life	36	18.85	20	10.47	56	29.32

Note. UAS = University of applied sciences

We conducted a multiple binary logistic regression and first evaluated the ANOVA-type II table. We only found a statistically significant association between the level of education and reporting (see Table 3). To follow up the association, we used pairwise contrasts with Tukey adjustments. We found that those with a university degree were significantly less likely than those with vocational qualification to report, $z = 3.00, p = .023$. There were no other statistically significant differences.

Table 3*Effects (ANOVA-Type II) of the Multiple Binary Logistic Regression Model*

Predictor	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Education	12.06	4	.017
SES	11.62	7	.114
Age	0.19	1	.660
Country	0.37	1	.545
Gender	0.51	2	.775
Sexual orientation	3.91	4	.418
Relationship status	8.62	4	.071
Close persons	5.02	3	.170
Alcohol	4.31	5	.505
Intoxicants	2.97	3	.396
Mental disorder	2.44	3	.486

After this, we used a treatment coding to further investigate the associations between the different levels of the categorical predictors and the outcome, while simultaneously including the continuous and ordinal predictors. The associations between ordinal predictors and the outcome were modeled as linear. Similarly, to the ANOVA-type II model, the linear association of education on reporting was negative and statistically significant. Additionally, two other statistically significant associations were found in this model. We found that those with the highest level of SES and those who had either divorced/separated or widowed to be significantly more likely to report relative to those in the reference groups. However, the few observations ($n = 9$, $n = 12$) widens the confidence intervals substantially, decreasing the reliability of the results. Thus, no strong conclusion can be drawn. The odds ratios are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Odds Ratios and Confidence Intervals Calculated from the Predictor Values for all Variables Included in the Multiple Binary Logistic Regression Model

Predictor Level	OR	95% CI	
		LL	UL
Education	0.33	0.11	0.97
SES			
Senior clerical and management	23.46	2.64	560.87
Lower clerical and management	0.88	0.19	3.96
Worker	Reference		
Entrepreneur	0.84	0.14	5.05
Student	1.43	0.56	3.73
Pensioner ^a	2.81	0.31	37.81
Other	3.80	0.68	26.26
Don't know	2.99	0.47	35.33
Age	0.99	0.93	1.05
Country			
Finland	Reference		
Other	1.64	0.34	9.13
Gender			
Female	Reference		
Male	1.02	0.05	17.05
Other	0.26	0.00	11.74
Sexual Orientation			
Heterosexual	Reference		
Homosexual	0.49	0.06	4.52
Bisexual	1.11	0.43	2.98
Other	1.67	0.12	48.62
I'd rather not say	7.35	0.82	184.87
Relationship			
Married/registered partnership	0.33	0.05	2.08
Co-habiting	0.65	0.24	1.73
Relationship but living apart	0.58	0.23	1.45
Divorced/separated/widowed ^a	11.82	1.06	483.98
Unmarried/single	Reference		
Close Persons	4.35	0.68	33.85
Alcohol ^a	1.10	0.29	3.95
Intoxicants	0.43	0.09	2.11

Predictor Level	OR	95% CI	
		LL	UL
Mental disorder	0.90	0.42	1.93

Note: CI = confidence interval; LL = lower limit; UL = upper limit. For the ordinal predictors: education, close persons, alcohol, intoxicants, and mental disorders we modelled effects as linear.

^aTo allow for more precision in the estimations we combined the following categories: “Pensioner aged 55 or over” and “Pensioner aged under 55”; “Divorced or separated” and “Widowed”; and “Never” and “Don’t know”.

To test if the number of years lived in Finland was associated with the reporting likelihood, we conducted a follow-up analysis among non-natives. This variable was not included in the regression model because of multicollinearity with the country variable. We did not find a significant association, $\exp(B) = 0.13$, $SE = 0.07$, $z = 1.80$, $p = .072$, $n = 22$.

Discussion

The aim of the present study was to gain a better understanding of the demographic and individual factors associated with reporting rape. For this purpose, we developed a theoretical framework on which to base our hypotheses. We expected victims in a more vulnerable life situation to be less likely to report. We predicted that the life situation of victims could be vulnerable to different extents, depending on their status in society (societal perspective), available support resources (relational perspective), consumption of substances and psychological problems (substance use and psychological problems perspective). In the present sample, 64.4% had reported the rape to the police. However, we did not find any clear pattern for the reporting behavior. Thus, some of our findings are consistent, whereas others are in contrast with previous research.

Vulnerability From a Societal Perspective

Firstly, we aimed to investigate the association between status in society and reporting. In contrast to our first hypothesis, education was negatively associated with

reporting. Our finding that victims with a university degree were less likely to report than those with a vocational qualification is, however, consistent with Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al.'s (2011) finding. There are several potential explanations for our finding: those with a university degree weigh the cost and benefits differently; they have more knowledge of the judicial process (including the negative aspects); situational factors related to the rape differed. Kahn-Lang (2008) has also proposed that not wanting to jeopardize the earned status would explain the decreased reporting likelihood among victims with a higher level of education. If, as the present study suggests, highly educated victims are less likely to report, then there is a need for research that explores the underlying reasons. To improve the reliability of this finding replications are needed. In conflict with this finding, but in line with our second hypothesis, we found a positive association between SES and reporting. However, our finding that senior clerical and management personnel would be more likely to report than victims in the reference group needs to be considered with great caution. Few victims belonged to this group, decreasing the statistical power and increasing uncertainty in estimations. Thus, no strong conclusions can be drawn, and the potential association remains to be further investigated. If future research replicates this association, one explanation might be that a higher amount of available resources increases the reporting likelihood. Moreover, the present result is contrasting Boateng's (2015) work that found no effect of employment (Boateng, 2015). Age was not related to reporting, in line with a recent study (Zijlstra et al., 2017), but reversing other previous findings (Boateng, 2015; Chen & Ullman, 2010). Compared to many other countries, the variation in social status is relatively small in Finland. This could explain why the reporting likelihood did not clearly decrease among economically inactive victims. As a result, we encourage future studies to consider the sociocultural context.

At odds with our predictions, the native country of the victim was not significantly associated with reporting. Further, we expected the years lived in Finland to be negatively associated with reporting, but the association was non-significant. One interpretation of this finding is that the services and information provided are comprehensible to most victims. As the number of non-native respondents was small (i.e., resulting in low statistical power), no further conclusions can be drawn. The sub-group size could reflect the relatively small non-native population in Finland or indicate we did not reach this population. Therefore, investigating this further is crucial to help decision-makers and sexual assault centers to respond to the services needed, and to see if these associations exist in other sociocultural contexts. Furthermore, we investigated the scarcely examined association between gender and sexual orientation and reporting. Our results suggested that gender was not associated with reporting. This is in line with Zijlstra et al.'s (2017) finding, but in contrast with Kahn-Lang's (2008) finding. However, approximately 10% of Kahn-Lang's (2008) sample consisted of men. The low number of men and non-binary respondents in our sample might have contributed to our result. Strikingly, the number of non-binary respondents in our sample was comparatively large in relation to men (3 vs. 4; 3% of the Finnish youth reported belonging to a gender minority; Jokela et al., 2020). Contrary to our hypothesis, sexual orientation was not associated with reporting. Our finding is in contrast with prior research on disclosing to mental health professionals (Starzynski et al., 2007). However, because of small sub-samples, no further conclusion can be drawn. Interestingly, compared to previous estimates of Finnish youths' sexual orientation, the number of non-heterosexuals in our sample was high (26% cf. 9%; Jokela et al., 2020). As a result, our findings suggest that future research must recognize gender and sexual minorities in this context, as a higher risk for victimization might exist. In fact, a higher risk for sexual victimization among young gender and sexual minorities has been recognized (Jokela et al., 2020).

Vulnerability From a Relational Perspective

Secondly, we aimed to explore whether having close relations was associated with reporting. Past researchers has indicated that being married would be positively (e.g., Kahn-Lang, 2008) or not at all associated with reporting (e.g., Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011). The present study did not reveal any clear association between relationship status and reporting. However, we found that divorced/separated or widowed victims might be more likely to report. Because of few observations, no strong conclusions can be drawn. Thus, we recommend future research to replicate this in larger samples. We also encourage future research to comprehensively investigate relationship status to capture variation and to conclude whether a lack of a relationship places victims in a more vulnerable life situation. Further, research suggests that consulting about the reporting often happens with close persons (Paul et al., 2014). We were the first to examine whether the number of close persons would be associated with reporting. Surprisingly, there was no significant association. However, only a few of our respondents reported having no close persons. It could be that those seeking support at the Seri Support Center already have existing support resources to a greater extent than those not seeking support. Thus, future research needs to address whether victims not seeking support are at risk. It could also be that the support received at the Center is accounting for the need for support and encouragement to report.

Vulnerability From a Substance Use and Psychological Problems Perspective

In the light of our third theoretical perspective, we aimed to investigate the association between substance use and mental disorder and reporting. We expected a higher use of substances and a diagnosed mental disorder to decrease the reporting likelihood. Strikingly, our results suggested that substance use was not a reporting barrier, as it is not one for disclosing to mental health professionals either (Starzynski et al., 2007). However, the reported consumption of substances among the respondents was low, which could partly

explain our results. There is a lack of prior research investigating this, wherefore, our results are directional. Future research needs to target especially those consuming more. Further, in line with prior research (Du Mont et al., 2003), suffering from a mental disorder was not associated with reporting. However, most respondents reported either suffering from a mental disorder in the past or currently. This finding could indicate that mental health issues are overrepresented among rape victims. This pattern is consistent with previous literature (Vik et al., 2019). Importantly, our finding suggests that systematic research is needed for sufficiently acknowledging this victim group.

Implications for Practice

If, as the present study suggests, highly educated victims are less likely to report, future research should explore the underlying reasons and communicate these to decision-makers and sexual assault centers to enable change. Relative equality and small differences in wealth and status among Finns, observed, for instance, as a low poverty rate (OECD, 2021), could explain why SES or age were not robustly associated with reporting. Comprehensive social security, free health care, and comparatively equal treatment in Finland are potential explanations for why support resources were not robustly, and substance use and psychological problems not at all, associated with reporting. This could imply that these factors do not place victims in more vulnerable life situations in the Finnish sociocultural context. However, the studied sample might not be representative for the Finnish victim population. Therefore, it would be beneficial to replicate the present study in the general population. Another interpretation of our findings is that there is an effect of the services offered at the Seri Support Center. For instance, we hypothesized language skills, close relations, and mental disorders to be associated with reporting. However, these factors are cared for at the Center, potentially decreasing or even removing their effect. Likewise, it is crucial to explore how to increase the Center's potential effect. However, reporting is

nevertheless about decision-making, and factors not accounted for in the present study might weigh in.

Notably, our results indicate that the reporting rate in a sexual assault center population is higher than in the general victim population (Piha, 2019). This pattern is consistent with Zijlstra et al.'s (2017) research. Our finding can partly be explained by reporting becoming easier after seeking help (i.e., after weighing the costs and benefits of speaking up about the rape) and after receiving encouragement at the Center (Paul et al., 2014). Although the reporting rate in the present study is not generalizable for the general reporting likelihood, it indicates that the services provided at Seri Support Center remove reporting barriers and increase the reporting likelihood, which, in turn, can benefit both victims and society (Allen, 2007). Hence, the existence of the Center seems to be of great importance, and this needs to be politically recognized. Our findings underline the already recognized need for support among both reporters and non-reporters (Walsh & Bruce, 2014), as approximately one-third of our respondents were non-reporters. Hence, we want to emphasize the need for sexual assault centers that do not require victims to report.

Strengths and Limitations

The present study represents an attempt to expand the factors examined (e.g., substance use) and the response options offered (e.g., for gender) to account for the variation in this field. By investigating a Finnish sample, we have expanded the geographical scope of research on factors related to reporting. Our sample was also comparatively large in proportion to the Finnish population. Notably, we analyzed updated data. The data were collected anonymously with an online survey, increasing the confidentiality and reporting accuracy (Michaud et al., 1999). Nevertheless, there is a possibility for under- and overreporting and as closed questions were preferred, we might not have accounted for every possible response option. Other limitations must be considered as well. As we examined a

sexual assault center sample, likely a more homogenous segment of the whole population of rape victims, the generalizability of our results is limited. Seeking support independently requires some agency and knowledge about the health care system. Thus, we might not have reached victims in the most vulnerable life situations. It could be that our respondents form a specific sub-group of the Center's clientele, as participating requires psychological resources, and a possibility to participate online. However, the reporting rate did not differ significantly among these groups (64% vs. 70%; R., Korjamo, personal communication, June 11, 2021). Further, as all respondents already weighed costs and benefits when deciding to speak about the rape at the Center, and received encouragement to report, the reporting could have been facilitated. However, for some victims disclosing at the Center might be enough, hence, having an opposite effect on reporting. Therefore, the reporting rate is not generalizable. Lastly, the location of the Center automatically limits the clientele regionally. In sum, although not covering the whole population, examining a sexual assault center sample is practical and cost-effective. As Seri Support Center's clientele consists of both reporters and non-reporters, we argue that this is one of the most effective ways to reach this population.

Variables included in the present study differ from those in previous studies, affecting the comparability of the results. We measured victims' native country and years lived in Finland, rather than race/ethnicity, as this gives a more reliable perception of integration and the skills needed for filing a report. We recommend future research to investigate these aspects. However, we could not substantiate previous evidence that the reporting differs depending on race/ethnicity (Chen & Ullman, 2010; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011). We did not account for income, as we thought it was not optimal for measuring SES in a young population, wherefore, we cannot clarify the previous inconsistent results in this aspect (e.g., Boateng, 2015; Chon, 2014). Further, we expanded variables' response options which have inevitably affected the distribution within specific categories, that is,

affected the statistical power of the results. This needs to be accounted for when interpreting our results. However, doing this is valuable as it enables accounting for the variation in the studied population and sheds light on potential risk groups. Furthermore, we recommend future research to expand on our mental disorder question by separating different disorders and by asking for the onset.

Lastly, as this study was part of a research project that aimed at gathering information to a great extent, the survey was long (approx. 25 min). This has undoubtedly affected the sample size and the dropout rate. The completion rate was nevertheless acceptable (24%). Despite these limitations, the present study has enhanced our understanding of rape reporting and contributed with new aspects to consider regarding rape reporting.

Conclusion

The present study is the first to explore the reporting behavior of rape victims in Finland. It offers a valuable addition to prior research concerning the associations between demographic and individual factors and rape reporting. In our sample, as much as 64.4% filed a police report. Contrary to our vulnerability theory, there was no clear pattern of vulnerability explaining reporting behavior. In sum, our findings indicate that neither demographics (SES, age, native country, years spent in Finland, gender, sexual orientation, relationship status), nor individual factors (having close persons, substance use, and mental disorder), were robustly related to reporting. A higher level of education might be associated with reporting and research that tests this in more detail is needed to target support resources. Strikingly, the existence of sexual assault centers seems to be of great value. Our findings underline the need for support among victims, irrespective of reporting, and this needs to be politically recognized. Further, evaluating sexual assault centers' effect is essential in developing their services.

To enable decision-makers and sexual assault centers to conclude how the factors investigated in the current study are associated with victims' decisions in their countries, we encourage researchers to analyze these factors in other samples. Lastly, in terms of future research, it would be useful to extend the current findings by examining other factors possibly affecting reporting, such as the views held by the victim regarding the judicial process and police, and factors linked to the perpetrator and rape per se. This would continue to enhance our understanding of how to encounter rape victims and further develop legal processes and support services.

Swedish Summary – Svensk sammanfattning

Faktorer relaterade till våldtäktsoffers beslut att polisanmäla

Våldtäkt definieras allmänt som penetration utan samtycke där våld eller hot av våld ingår eller där individens oförmåga att samtycka avsiktligt utnyttjas (American Psychological Association, u.å.). Våldtäkt anses vara den grävsta formen av sexuellt våld. Våldtäkt är ett problem runtom i världen, och en aktuell diskussion kring varför offren sällan får rättvisa och förövarna därmed undgår bli dömda pågår. Trots detta är det endast ett fåtal fall som anmäls till polisen. Ett grovt estimat på anmälningsprocenten av sexuellt våld, inklusive våldtäkt, från år 2017 ligger på under 4 % av alla utsatta kvinnor i Finland (Piha, 2019). De låga anmälningssiffrorna påverkar bland annat samhällets möjligheter att upptäcka och juridiskt döma sexuellt våld (Allen, 2007) samt offrets möjligheter till vård och stöd (Fisher et al., 2003), speciellt då om polisanmälan förutsätts. Stödbehovet finns både bland offer som gjort och inte gjort en polisanmälan (Walsh & Bruce, 2014). Dessutom hänger anmälandet ihop med risker som den utsatta behöver beakta då hen överväger sitt anmälningsbeslut. Riskerna berör bland annat social stigmatisering (Allen, 2007; Boateng, 2016) och sekundär viktimisering som kan visa sig till exempel i form av skuldbeläggning (Campbell, 2013). Sammanfattningsvis kan det konstateras att anmälningsbeslutet handlar om att väga för- och nackdelar mot varandra (Bowles et al., 2009; Kahn-Lang, 2008).

För att öka förståelsen för varför så få väljer att polisanmäla våldtäkt är det viktigt att förstå vilka de bakomliggande faktorerna som eventuellt påverkar beslutsfattandet kring anmälandet är. Detta är viktigt av flera orsaker, inte minst för att sänka tröskeln för anmälandet. Vidare kan en ökad förståelse inverka på offrens tillgång till rättvisa.

Ett flertal demografiska och individuella faktorer kan tänkas bidra till anmälningsbeslutet. Beträffande socioekonomisk status indikerar en del studier att offer med en högre inkomst mindre sannolikt anmäler (Chon, 2014; Kahn-Lang, 2008), medan andra

studier inte hittat ett samband mellan inkomst (Boateng, 2015; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011) eller anställning (Boateng, 2015) och anmälandet. Hur utbildningsnivå är associerat med anmälandet har tidigare forskning inte kunnat enas om (Allen, 2007; Boateng, 2015, 2016; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011). Vidare är ålderns (Chen & Ullman, 2010; Zijlstra et al., 2017) och könets inverkan på anmälandet också aspekter som tidigare forskning inte kunnat enas om (Kahn-Lang, 2008; Zijlstra et al., 2017). Skillnader i anmälandet bland olika etniska grupper har även undersökts och resultaten indikerar att icke-vita oftare än vita samt kaukasiska oftare än andra etniska grupper anmäler (Chen & Ullman, 2010; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, Amstadter, et al., 2011; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011). Däremot har en västerländsk bakgrund förknippats med högre anmälningsbenägenhet, jämfört med en icke-västerländsk bakgrund (Chon, 2014).

Ytterligare har forskare undersökt sambandet mellan civilstånd och anmälandet, men resultaten varierar även i denna bemärkelse. En del studier tyder på att ingen signifikant association finns (Boateng, 2015; Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al., 2011), medan andra menar att gifta anmäler oftare än icke-gifta (Boateng, 2016; Kahn-Lang, 2008). Andra potentiella associationer mellan faktorer såsom sexuell läggning, alkoholanvändning och psykisk hälsa och anmälandet är underutforskade. Tillgänglig forskning indikerar att beroende på typ av symtom på posttraumatisk stressyndrom, kan sannolikheten för anmälandet antingen öka eller minska, medan depressiva symtom inte visat ett samband med anmälandet (Walsh & Bruce, 2014).

Sammanfattningsvis finns tidigare studier om demografiska faktorerers inverkan på anmälandet, men resultaten är inkonsekventa (t.ex. Boateng, 2016; Chen & Ullman, 2010). Dessa inkonsekventa och delvis ofullständiga resultat tyder på ett behov av ytterligare forskning inom området.

Studiens syfte

Syftet med denna studie var att undersöka associationerna mellan demografiska och individuella faktorer och valet att aningen polisanmäla eller inte polisanmäla våldtäkt. Vi undersökte detta i ett sampel av offer som vårdats på Helsingfors universitetssjukhus (HUS) Seri stödcenter för sexualbrottsoffer. Den här studien är del av ett bredare forskningsprojekt, ”Seri-stödcentrets patienters bakgrund, stödtjänsters användning och rättsprocessens fortskridande”, som finansieras av statsrådets utrednings- och forskningsverksamhet i syfte att stödja statsrådets beslutsfattande.

Tidigare forskning har utgått från en så kallad lönsamhetsteori som betonar att offer överväger för- och nackdelar då de fattar beslut (Bowles et al., 2009; Kahn-Lang, 2008). Beträffande studiens teoretiska referensram valde vi att bygga vidare på denna teori genom att inkludera en sårbarhetsaspekt. Vi utgår från att våldtäktsoffer behöver överväga sitt anmälningsbeslut, vilket bland annat påverkas av demografiska och individuella faktorer. Dessa bakomliggande faktorer kan placera individen i en mer eller mindre sårbar livssituation i samhället. Att infinna sig i en mer sårbar livssituation gör att kostnaderna av anmälandet stiger i förhållande till fördelarna, vilket kan förväntas inverka negativt på benägenheten att anmäla.

Sårbarhet kan definieras som bristande tillgång till resurser på olika livsområden (Spini et al., 2017). Vi valde att undersöka sårbarheten ur tre olika perspektiv. Sett ur ett samhällsligt perspektiv kan graden av sårbar livssituation variera hos offren beroende på deras ställning i samhället (t.ex. beroende på utbildningsnivå eller minoritetsstatus). Sett ur ett relationellt perspektiv kan offrens situation variera beroende på de tillgängliga relationerna (dvs. beroende på tillgången till stöd i nära relationer). Utgående från substansanvändning och psykisk problematik perspektivet kan graden av sårbar livssituation hos offren variera beroende på substansanvändning och existensen av psykisk störning.

Baserat på vår teori ställde vi upp mer specifika hypoteser och förväntade oss att:

1. De med en lägre utbildningsnivå, specifikt de med en grundskoleexamen eller ingen examen alls, skulle vara mindre sannolika att anmäla.
2. De i en ekonomiskt inaktiv position, det vill säga de med en lägre socioekonomisk status samt de som tillhör de yngsta och äldsta åldersgrupperna, skulle vara mindre sannolika att anmäla.
3. De som inte är födda i Finland och av dem de som levt färre år i Finland skulle vara mindre sannolika att anmäla.
4. De som tillhör en köns- (icke-kvinna) och/eller sexuell minoritet (icke-heterosexuell) skulle vara mindre sannolika att anmäla.
5. De som inte är i ett förhållande och/eller har nära relationer skulle vara mindre sannolika att anmäla.
6. De som använder mer alkohol, andra substanser och/eller har en diagnostiserad psykisk störning (speciellt om störningen subjektivt påverkar funktionsförmågan eller livskvaliteten) skulle vara mindre sannolika att anmäla.

Metod

Denna studie erhöll etiskt tillstånd av HUS etiska kommitté och ett ytterligare tillstånd av avdelningen för kvinnosjukdomar och förlossningar (HUS) innan datainsamlingen sattes igång. Samplet bestod av 191 respondenter (96,34 % kvinnor) i åldrarna 17 till 60 år ($Mdn = 27$, $IQR = 9,5$) som varit patienter på Seri stödcentret mellan den 1 juni 2017 och 29 februari 2020. De allra flesta (93,72 %) var födda i Finland. Respondenterna fick besvara en nätenkät som skapats för detta ändamål (på plattformen Survey Analytics) och den personliga länken till den skickades som ett sms från stödcentret.

De statistiska analyserna gjordes med programmet *R* (R Core Team, 2021). För att koda om den beroende variabeln och för att erhålla ANOVA-tabeller för vår

regressionsmodell använde vi paketet *car* (Fox & Weisberg, 2019). För att beräkna odds ratios och konfidensintervall använde vi paketet *MASS* (Venables & Ripley, 2002). För att testa våra hypoteser och associationerna mellan de olika oberoende variablerna och anmälandet utförde vi en binär multipel logistisk regression där anmälandet var den binära resultatvariabeln.

Resultat

Nästan två tredjedelar av respondenterna hade gjort en anmälan ($n = 123$, 64,4 %). Utbildningsnivån visade sig vara signifikant associerat med anmälandet, så att de med en högskoleexamen mindre sannolikt anmälde än de med en yrkesskoleexamen, $z = 3.00$, $p = .023$. Denna association var i motsatt riktning än förväntat. För att undersöka vidare de olika nivåerna på variablerna beräknade vi odds ratios och konfidensintervall. Utbildningsnivån visade sig vara negativt associerat med anmälandet även i denna modell, $OR = .332$, 95% CI [.106, .970]. Att tillhöra till den högsta socioekonomiska gruppen ($OR = 23.462$, 95% CI [2.639, 560.868]) samt att vara separerad eller änka ($OR = 11.816$, 95% CI [1.064, 483.984]) visade sig vara statistiskt signifikant associerat med en högre anmälningsbenägenhet. Dock, förblev konfidensintervallen för de sistnämnda väldigt breda, vilket sänker resultatens reliabilitet märkvärt. Därmed kan inga starka slutsatser dras. Ytterligare utförde vi en uppföljningsanalys för att undersöka om färre år levda i Finland skulle minska på anmälningsbenägenheten. Associationen var icke-signifikant, $\exp(B) = 0.13$, $SE = 0.07$, $z = 1.80$, $p = .072$, $n = 22$. Våra resultat antyder att inga av de övriga faktorerna verkade inverka på anmälningsbeslutet.

Diskussion

Syftet med studien var att undersöka huruvida demografiska och individuella faktorer inverkar på anmälandet av våldtäkt. Vi förväntade oss att offer som befinner sig i en mer sårbar livssituation skulle vara mindre sannolika att polisanmäla. Vi hittade dock inget tydligt

mönster för anmälningsbenägenheten. Resultaten antydde, i motsatts till våra förväntningar, att utbildningsnivån var negativt associerat med anmälandet. De övriga undersökta faktorerna inverkade inte märkvärt på anmälandet.

Även om våra resultat inte var i linje med vår sårbarhetsteori och endast få signifikanta associationer hittades, har studien i fråga bidragit med värdefull information till ett inte ännu tillräckligt utforskat forskningsfält. I motsatts till vår första hypotes, men i linje med Wolitzky-Taylor, Resnick, McCauley, et al:s (2011) fynd, var de med en högskoleexamen mindre sannolika att anmäla jämfört med de med en yrkesskoleexamen. Detta kan bero på att offer i dessa subgrupper överväger för och nackdelar med anmälandet olika. Alternativt, i linje med Kahn-Langs (2008) argument, att den status som högskoleexamen medför inte vill riskeras. Våra resultat pekar på två ytterligare signifikanta associationer. Högre tjänstepersoner och frånskilda/separerade och änkor verkade ha en högre anmälningsbenägenhet. På grund av att endast ett fåtal respondenter tillhörde dessa grupper förblev den statistiska styrkan för resultaten låg. Därmed kan inga vidare slutsatser dras. Däremot rekommenderar vi att dessa potentiella samband undersöks vidare. Inga av det ytterligare undersökta faktorerna inverkade på anmälandet. Även detta är trots allt värt att undersöka vidare. Det kan följaktligen konstateras att en del av våra resultat är i enlighet med tidigare forskning medan andra inte är det. Ytterligare är det värt att påpeka att våra resultat indikerar att en betydande andel av respondenterna tillhörde en köns- och/eller sexuell minoritet och/eller hade diagnostiserats med psykisk störning, vilket behöver uppmärksammas.

Nästan två tredjedelar av respondenterna hade gjort en polisanmälan antingen själva eller med assistans. Detta pekar på en högre anmälningsbenägenhet i ett sampel av offer som vårdats på ett stödcenter jämfört med hela offer populationen (Piha, 2019). Detta kan dels förklaras av att anmälandet underlättats av att offren redan klarat av att söka hjälp från

stödcentret, dels av att stödcentret aktivt erbjuder assistans i anmälandet (Paul et al., 2014). Ytterligare kan det handla om att tjänsterna som erbjuds på centret minskar eller tar bort potentiella hinder för anmälandet. Detta kan tolkas som en indikation på att stödet som erbjuds på centret sannolikt har en positiv inverkan på antalet polisanmälningar. Trots detta, hade ungefär en tredjedel av respondenterna inte gjort en anmälan, vilket pekar på vikten av existens av centret oavsett anmälandet. Det vill säga, finns det ett behov för stödcenter som erbjuder sina tjänster utan att en polisanmälan förutsätts.

Våra resultat är värdefulla och bidrar med uppdaterad vetenskaplig kunskap samt nya aspekter att beakta i denna kontext. Dessutom är studien såvitt vi vet den första som utförts i Finland. Dock behöver några begränsningar med studien uppmärksammas. Eftersom vårt sampel bestod av Seri stödcentrets patienter är resultatens generaliserbarhet begränsad. Trots allt argumenterar vi för att detta är ett av de bästa sätten att nå den här populationen och det faktum att centret inte förutsätter en polisanmälan av patienterna gör att vi kunnat nå både anmälare och icke-anmälare. Vidare, avviker en del av de i studien inkluderade variablerna och svarsalternativen från de som använts i tidigare studier. Med tanke på resultatens jämförbarhet kan detta anses vara en begränsning. Detta har även lett till färre observationer i enstaka kategorier, vilket sänkt den statistiska styrkan för en del av resultaten. Nätenkäten var också förhållandevis lång, vilket säkerligen inverkat på sampelstorleken. Å andra sidan argumenterar vi för att de förändringar vi gjort i att mäta vissa variabler, de nya aspekterna vi bidragit med och svarsprocenten vi fick (24 %) överväger den potentiella problematiken.

Sammanfattningsvis fanns det inget tydligt mönster av sårbarhet som skulle beskriva anmälandet. Utbildningsnivån verkade vara negativt associerad med anmälningsbenägenheten. Framtida studier behöver undersöka detta vidare för att förstå orsaken bakom en lägre anmälningsbenägenhet och för att kunna stödja dem i anmälandet. Inga av de övriga faktorerna var starkt associerade med anmälandet. Detta tyder på att

anmälningsbeslutet kan ha att göra med andra faktorer. Det bör också påpekas att Finland i jämförelse med många andra länder har jämförelsevis små skillnader i hälsa och status, bland annat tack vare den sociala tryggheten. Befolkningen bemöts även jämförelsevis jämlikt i Finland. Dessa aspekter kan bidra till att de undersökta faktorerna inte har en betydande roll i den finska sociokulturella kontexten. Därmed vore det av värde att framtida studier skulle undersöka vidare dessa potentiella associationer i andra sampel. Ytterligare vore det värdefullt att replikera denna undersökning i ett finskt populationsbaserat sampel, eftersom vårt sampel inte nödvändigtvis är representativt för hela populationen. Vidare bör framtida studier utforska hur andra faktorer eventuellt inverkar på anmälningsbeslutet, såsom offrens syn på rättssystemet eller polisväsendet, samt faktorer kopplade till förövaren eller själva våldtäkten. Detta skulle ge värdefulla insikter i hur vi på bästa sätt kan bemöta denna population och hur de juridiska systemen samt stödtjänsterna kunde vidare utvecklas i denna kontext.

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Appendix

Definitions Used in the Survey

This appendix consists of definitions that we used in the present survey for the following variables: SES, intoxicants, and mental disorders. The definitions were included in the survey to clarify the terms, and to decrease the risk for misunderstandings. For SES, the following explanations were included: "Senior clerical and management personnel are salaried employees who make extensive use of theoretical knowledge in their work. They either are decision-makers, take part in decision-making, or work in supervisory, steering, development or service positions that support decision-making. Their duties are characterized by a relatively high level of independence and responsibility. Leadership roles may form a part of their job description even if they are not their primary job. Senior clerical and management personnel also include those in professions providing social or business services, whose job requirements generally demand specialist tertiary education (e.g., work in religion, law, health care, arts, culture, etc.). The distinction from lower personnel is that senior personnel are at a higher level of the decision-making organization and must have more extensive theoretical knowledge."; "Lower clerical and management personnel are salaried employees who carry out ordinary office or sales jobs or work in professions that have derived from and replaced ordinary office or sales jobs. Their duties are characterized by the processing of symbols, either manually or with machinery and equipment that replace manual work. They include factory supervisors and other such persons holding supervisory roles over clerical personnel. They also include persons holding care, maintenance and security positions, whose duty it is to look after people or to process personal or other data. Their jobs typically include responsibility for completing tasks but no executive responsibility. The distinction from senior personnel is that they are at the concrete task level of the organization and their duties require less theoretical knowledge than those of senior

employees.”; “Workers are salaried employees who carry out production tasks consisting of a) various duties related to the production of goods, b) maintenance, repair or other such tasks directly linked to production, or c) warehouse, distribution or transport duties or such service tasks in which the processing of symbols is not classified as a clerical or management task.”; “Entrepreneurs include those who look after their own businesses, who farm land that they own or lease, or who freelance. They may be one-person businesses or employers of one or more employees.” (OSF, n.d.).

We defined intoxicants as: “By intoxicants, we mean addictive substances such as drugs or intoxicating medications.”, and mental disorders as: “Mental disorders include anxiety disorders, depression, eating disorders, PTSD, personality disorders, schizophrenia, etc.”.

PRESSMEDDELANDE

Faktorer relaterade till våldtäktsoffers beslut att polisanmäla

Pro gradu-avhandling i psykologi

Fakulteten för humaniora, psykologi och teologi, Åbo Akademi

Resultaten från en pro gradu-avhandling i psykologi vid Åbo Akademi tyder på att våldtäktsoffer med en högskoleexamen verkar vara mindre benägna att polisanmäla än offer med en yrkesskoleexamen. Anmälningssannolikheten bland offer som besökt ett stödcenter är högre än bland den allmänna populationen. Studien hade som avsikt att undersöka associationerna mellan demografiska och individuella faktorer och polisanmälandet av våldtäkt. Studien är den första av sitt slag utförd i Finland.

Studien är del av ett bredare forskningsprojekt, ”Seri-stödcentrets patienters bakgrund, stödtjänsters användning och rättsprocessens fortskridande”, som finansieras av statsrådets utrednings- och forskningsverksamhet i syfte att stödja statsrådets beslutsfattande.

Datainsamlingen genomfördes i form av en nätenkät och 191 personer som vårdats på Helsingfors universitetssjukhus Seri stödcenter för sexualbrottsoffer deltog.

För att främja bemötandet av offren och för att utveckla våra juridiska system och stödtjänster kunde framtida studier undersöka om offrens syn på rättssystemet och polisväsendet, samt faktorer kopplade till förövaren och våldtäkten per se, inverkar på polisanmälandet.

Avhandlingen utfördes av Isabella Arponen under handledning av Julia Korkman PsD, Jan Antfolk PsD och Riina Korjamo PhD.

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