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REDUCING SEXUAL AGGRESSION IN MALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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OVERVIEW

- Background
- Rationale
- Ph.D. Studies
- Implications



BACKGROUND

Where are we & how did we get here?



Context Setting

- Campus sexual assault is a widespread issue



Context Setting

- Campus sexual assault is a widespread issue

70%



of female students & recent graduates report having experienced sexual violence at university.

The Student Room (2018)

(Sample. 4,491 students across 153 UK HEIs)

Context Setting

- Campus sexual assault is a widespread issue

8%



of female students & recent graduates report having been raped.

The Student Room (2018)

(Sample. 4,491 students across 153 UK HEIs)

Context Setting

- Campus sexual assault is a widespread issue
 - Largely student-on-student

72%



of respondents report the perpetrator being a student
at their institution.

NUS (2010): "Hidden Marks"
(Sample. 2,058 women students from UK HEIs)

Context Setting

- Campus sexual assault is a widespread issue
 - Largely student-on-student
 - Mostly male perpetrated

97%



of university-based sexual offences are committed by males

U.S. Department of Justice (2014): "*Special Report*"
(Sample. 19,951 women graduate students from the U.S.)

Context Setting

- Campus sexual assault is a widespread issue
 - Largely student-on-student
 - Mostly male perpetrated
- Large body of academic literature
 - Heavily US-based (see Fisher, Daigle, & Cullen, 2009)
 - Victim over perpetrator focused
- No standardization in prevention approaches (EROG UK, 2016; Towl & Walker, 2019)

RATIONALE

Why study what you're studying?



Rationale

- UK universities not exempt from sexual violence
- Lots of climate surveys; few (practical) studies
 - Why do individuals offend?
 - What responses are effective?
- Current public interest

“*Psychologists are particularly well placed to contribute to policies and practices in the area, given our knowledge and understanding of [...] sexual offending, and with a number of us working with victims/survivors of sexual violence.*”

Towl (2018)

Ph.D. STUDIES

What are you studying?



General Overview

Phase One

- What are the treatment needs of sexually aggressive male students in the UK?
- Are there sub-types of sexually aggressive male student?

Phase Two

- How effective is a tailored, easy-to-access clinical intervention in reducing sexual aggression amongst male students?



Phase One (a)


- Male students at UKC (N=250)
- Battery of psychometrics administered online
- Offence history compared to national statistics
- SA vs. Non-SA males
- Logistic regression model
 - ROC analysis – Predictive accuracy
 - AUC – Discriminative ability



- IV Sexual aggression
- DV Aggression
 - Alcohol consumption
 - Assertiveness
 - Athletic involvement
 - Emotion regulation
 - Hostility toward women
 - Loneliness
 - Rape myth acceptance
 - Self-efficacy
 - Self-esteem
 - Sexual fantasies
- CV Impression management
 - Demographic variables

Phase One (b)

- Direct replication of previous study
- Male students at UK HEIs (N=300)
- Do significant effects replicate?
 - Potential treatment needs, if so
- Secondary analysis of all data
 - Hierarchical cluster analysis with significant predictors
 - Average linking method
 - Euclidean distance for standardized data (z-scores)



Are there “clusters” (sub-types) of sexual aggressive male student?

Phase Two

- Evidence-based self-help intervention
 - Tailored to identified treatment needs
- Male students (N = TBC)
- Treatment vs. Waitlist
- Intention-to-treat ANOVA
 - 3 (time) x 2 (group) design
 - Pre-post shifts in psychometrics
 - Confidence intervals – Clinical significance



INTERVENTION

- Informed by pertinent clinical literature
- Easy-to-access (online-based)
- Self-led course
 - Tasks no longer than 15-30 mins in duration
- Grounded in principles of CBT

IMPLICATIONS

What are you contributing?



Contribution

- Better understanding of male student perpetrators
 - › Tailored and more standardized prevention interventions
- Introduction of clinical ideas to the field
 - › Broader evidence-base for interventions
- Provide impetus for continued empirical investigation
 - e.g., the generation of theory

“Academics are well-placed to leverage sexual assault data and empirically evaluate the success (or failure) of [...] university policies. By doing [more research], we may see a rise in reporting figures and a drastic decline in sexual violence incidents happening on our campuses.”

Klein et al. (2018)

ANY QUESTIONS?

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NB: References for the materials used in my studies are available upon request.

