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REDUCING SEXUAL AGGRESSION IN MALE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A STUDY OF SELF-HELP INTERVENTIONS

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Introduction
The incident-rate of male-perpetrated sexual offences is alarmingly high on university campuses [1, 2; F1]. However, despite the wealth of knowledge available on the characteristics and treatment needs of sexual offenders [3, 4], to date there have been no established interventions to help lower sexual offence rates amongst male university students. My PhD aims to inform this research gap in the literature through three novel empirical studies assessing campus-based sexual aggression.

Participants
Participants across all studies will comprise male university students who self-report a propensity towards sexual aggression on the Attraction to Sexual Aggression scale [5]; an established measure used to assess individual propensity towards sexually aggressive behaviours against females (e.g., likelihood to rape).

Study One

Aim: To quantitatively assess the treatment needs of sexually aggressive male students within one university.

This study will assess the treatment needs of sexually aggressive male students at the researcher’s university, using a battery of psychological measures administered online. These measures will comprise established self-report instruments that assess various trait behaviours pertinent to sexual offending. Data will be analysed using multiple linear regression, in which battery scores will be entered as predictors and ASA scores will act as the criterion variable. Measures that contribute highly to the regression model will be taken as highlighting treatment needs for participants.

Study Two

Aims: (a) To directly compare the treatment needs of sexually aggressive male students across universities; (b) To explore whether there are subtypes of sexually aggressive male student.

This study will be in two parts. Part One will be a direct replication of Study One and will allow me to reproduce any significant effects. Part Two will then compare these results to those gathered from males at other UK universities who have completed the battery to assess the generalizability of the identified treatment needs.

Study Three

Aim: To develop, implement and evaluate the efficacy of a self-help intervention for sexually aggressive male students.

Data will also be used to establish whether there are subtypes of sexually aggressive male student who possess unique treatment needs. This will be done using a hierarchical cluster analysis, which will identify any homogenous groups similar on a given base-trait.

Implications
It is expected that this PhD will generate valuable academic knowledge and result in a novel evidence-based self-help intervention which, if effective, could be adopted by universities in the UK and US to combat the high rates of sexual assault on their campuses. Moreover, my research will promote the generation of theory in this poorly researched field and provide impetus for continued empirical investigation.

www.kent.ac.uk/psychology/core-fp

References