



UNTREATED MALE SEXUAL ASSAULT AS A POTENTIAL PREDICTOR FOR CRIMINAL BEHAVIOUR: EVIDENCE FROM SOUTH AFRICA



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ABSTRACT

Sexual assault is a problematic human rights violation that has a severely negative impact on survivors thereof. There are many studies about the impact sexual assault has, however very few of them include male survivors. Previous literature has identified that there is a risk of untreated sexual assault resulting in criminal behaviour. Male sexual assault survivors are excluded from research studies and there is a gross underestimation of the prevalence of male sexual assault. This study explored how gender stereotypes influence the way society treats male sexual assault survivors and how it might influence their treatment seeking-behaviour. Male sexual assault survivors rarely receive treatment for the trauma they experienced, and there is a strong correlation between untreated trauma and crime. The qualitative study explored the phenomenon through conducting semi-structured interviews with six expert participants who have over five years' experience in researching and treating the impact of sexual assault. The research explored, from an expert point of view, the way society perceives and treats male survivors of sexual assault in comparison to their female counterparts as well as the potential risk factor for engaging in future criminal behaviour as a symptomatic expression of untreated trauma. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was conducted on the transcribed data as it allowed for an in-depth exploration of the research phenomenon. The findings of the study support that the prevalence of male sexual assault is far more than presumed by society, and that gender stigma surrounding sexual assault have a negative impact on the treatment seeking behaviour of males. Thus, leaving male survivors at a greater risk of developing criminal behaviour because of their untreated trauma. The findings further highlighted the individuality of sexual assault and trauma, indicating that all individuals respond differently towards trauma, providing incentive for future studies to be more gender inclusive. The findings of the study highlights that it is difficult to develop preventative measures for sexual assault if the topic of sexual assault is not fully understood and researched. As a result of the findings, it has been recommended that future studies narrow the gap in research by including male sexual assault survivors as this will improve our understanding of the impact and treatment of all sexual assault survivors. This study recommends that future studies must be gender inclusive as it will allow for a better understanding of how to reduce the negative impact of sexual assault on both male and female survivors.

TEMPLATE 3 – STUDENT DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the research proposal/report/mini-dissertation/dissertation/thesis submitted for the Criminology Master's Degree to IIE MSA is my own work and has not previously been submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for a degree. I also declare that the electronic copy is a true and accurate reflection of the hard copy.

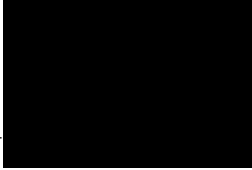
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CHAPTER 1

GENERAL ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Sexual assault is a global health and human rights issue that is constantly being discussed and a wide variety of research has already been conducted on this phenomenon. However, an entire group of survivors is being excluded from these discussions and studies (Davies, 2002; Gartner, 2017; Hammond, Ioannou & Fewster, 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016; Walfield, 2021). The exclusion of male survivors from sexual assault studies is problematic as it results in them being overlooked, in turn resulting in a lack of knowledge and treatment for male survivors (Davies, 2002; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016; Walfield, 2021). Untreated sexual assault can result in a variety of mental health issues that will undoubtedly impact the survivor's behaviour (Dworkin et al., 2017).

There is a strong correlation between untreated trauma and criminal behaviour, indicating the importance of understanding how to treat the trauma experienced by all survivors of sexual assault regardless of their gender (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare, Mallett & Boitel, 2011). Gender stereotypes and stigma surrounding sexual assault have an extremely negative impact on the way society perceives and treat male sexual assault survivors (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). Furthermore, the aforementioned societal misconceptions have a direct link to the lack of disclosure/help-seeking behaviour in male sexual assault survivors and in turn increases their likelihood of developing serious mental disorders (Davies, 2002; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016; Walfield, 2021).

In order to create a better understanding of what exactly is being studied the following concepts have been defined and explained in relation to the study; sexual assault, sexual touching, coercion, rape, survivor, and gender (Fedina, Holmes & Backes, 2018; Gartner, 2017; Ratner et al., 2003; Struckman-Johnson et al., 2003; Voogt & Klettke,

2017). The labelling theory and the general strain theory have been utilized in relation to the study, as they aid in the understanding of the research question (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Cheung & Ng, 1988; Wellford, 1975). A thorough literature review has been formulated in order to provide supporting and opposing arguments about the research phenomenon. The study approach was qualitative with a cross-sectional design (Fossey et al., 2002; Van der Stede, 2014; Spector, 2019). The research was exploratory and inductive reasoning was utilized in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the research topic (Ponelis, 2015; Rasmussen & Eliasmith, 2011; Soylu et al., 2016).

The study explored the way society perceives and treats male sexual assault survivors and the impact thereof from an expert point of view, thus purposive non-probability sampling has been done in order to select participants based on specific criteria (Etikan & Bala, 2017; Etikan et al., 2016). Furthermore, the research paradigm was phenomenological and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was conducted because the study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the risk of criminal behaviour in untreated sexual assault survivors and to encourage future research on sexual assault to be gender inclusive (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

1.2 Rationale

Sexual assault research studies predominately focus on female survivors, which in turn results in the formulation of stigma and stereotypes that are damaging to male survivors of sexual assault (Allen, Ridgeway & Swan, 2015; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). Sexual Assault is a problematic human rights and health violation that has gained more attention in recent years due to the several behavioural and mental health issues that result from it, however, an entire group is excluded from the discussion due to the aforementioned gender stereotypes and stigma (Du Mont et al., 2013). Studies believe that men and boys are more often victims of sexual assault than discussed, thus through placing all of the focus on women and girls an entire group of survivors is being

excluded (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017; Marshall, Laws & Barbaree, 2013). The lack of awareness regarding male sexual assault is problematic as it results in male survivors being overlooked, in turn, this results in male survivors not receiving the necessary treatment for their trauma (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018). Untreated sexual assault survivors can suffer from serious mental health and behavioural issues that have a negative impact on the rest of their lives (Du Mont et al., 2013; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013).

Trauma that is left untreated can increase an individual's risk of engaging in criminal behaviour (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006). A wide variety of mental health/behavioural changes can result from sexual assault trauma (Daray et al., 2016; Soylu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). For example, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, anxiety, eating disorders, self-harm, suicidal ideations, and substance addiction are some of the disorders/behavioural issues that have been linked to sexual assault trauma (Daray et al., 2016; Soylu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). These aforementioned disorders are often co-morbid and influence each individual on a different scale, however, if untreated an individual might not be able to understand or cope with the trauma experienced and this might escalate into criminal behaviour (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Mueser et al., 1998; Spataro et al., 2004). Many studies have linked untreated trauma to various forms of criminal behaviour such as robbery, assault, substance abuse and sexual assault (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006). Thus, the study aimed to explore the link between untreated sexual assault and increased risk of criminal behaviour (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006).

1.3 Research Problem Statement

The stigma and stereotyping of male sexual assault results in a lack of awareness and understanding regarding the appropriate treatment of male sexual assault survivors (Allen et al., 2015; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). When survivors of sexual assault do not receive adequate treatment, they are at higher risk of developing mental health and

behavioural issues (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). Mental health and criminal behaviour have a strong correlation (Ardino, 2012; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011; Maschi, 2006). Thus, it is believed that the exclusion of male sexual assault survivors can be considered a possible predictor for future engagement in criminal activities. If an entire group of survivors continues to be excluded from sexual assault discussion/research, due to gender stereotyping/discrimination, then the problem of adequate treatment will never be fully solved and the risk of survivors engaging in criminal activity might possibly increase (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011).

1.4 Research Purpose Statement

The purpose of the research is to explore the possible “victim-to-offender” cycle with regards to male survivors of sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). The research purpose was fulfilled through exploring gender differences from an expert point of view, with regards to how society perceives/treats male sexual assault survivors in comparison to their female counterparts as well as exploring the link between untreated sexual assault trauma and criminal behaviour (Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011).

1.5 Research Questions

The study is informed by the following research questions:

- What is the difference between society's perception and treatment of male sexual assault survivors in comparison to the perception and treatment of female sexual assault?
- Is there a link between untreated sexual assault trauma and criminal behaviour?
- What interventions can be put in place on how male sexual assault can be treated and researched?

- Does the way society perceive and treat male sexual assault survivors, due to rape myths and gender stereotypes, indirectly increase the survivor's risk of engaging in criminal behaviour?

1.6 Research Aims and Objectives

The aim of the study was to explore (from an expert point of view) whether the way society perceives and treats male survivors of sexual assault might increase a male survivor's risk of engaging in criminal behaviour as a symptomatic expression of their untreated trauma. As objectives, this study:

- Examined the difference between the way society treats female sexual assault survivors in comparison to their male counterparts.
- Determined whether there is a possibility that untreated sexual assault trauma can possibly predict criminal behaviour.
- Investigated interventions that can be put in place on how male sexual assault can be treated and researched.
- Examined the way society perceive and treat male sexual assault survivors, due to rape myths and gender stereotypes.

1.7 Definition of Key Concepts

Sexual Assault is one of the key terms that will be used during the study, the term sexual assault refers to any form of sexual action performed forcefully or without consent (Fedina et al., 2018). The term refers to actions such as, sexual touching, coercion, penetration, attempted rape, and rape (Fedina et al., 2018). Physical contact that has been made to any erogenous zones on an individual without consent is referred to as **sexual touching** (Ratner et al., 2003). When an individual is persuaded into sexual actions through the tactical or compelling use of threats/force, it is termed **coercion** (Struckman-Johnson et al., 2003). When an individual is unwillingly/forcefully penetrated by a body part, sexual organ, or object, it is referred to as **rape** (Fedina et

al., 2018). The term rape encompasses the penetration of an individual's mouth, anus or vagina, no matter how slight or severe, as long as the penetration was done without consent it is considered rape (Fedina et al., 2018).

During the study, the term **survivor** will be used to refer to an individual who has suffered any physical, mental, and/or emotional harm/injury due to being sexually assaulted (Gartner, 2017). The term survivor is used in place of the term **victim**, due to the negative label that can be placed on an individual if they are constantly called a 'victim' (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Dillenburg, Fargas, & Akhonzada, 2006; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975). According to the labelling theory people will begin to act in accordance with labels that have been placed on them, if an individual has suffered from sexual assault and is constantly viewed as a 'victim' they might assume the label and struggle to work through the trauma they experienced (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Dillenburg et al., 2006; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975). The label of 'victim' can negatively influence an individual's self-perception (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Dillenburg et al., 2006; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975). The term 'victim' insinuates that the person is nothing other than what happened to them (it might become their self-identity) however, the term survivor implies that the person has experienced something traumatic, but the trauma does not become their entire identity (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Dillenburg et al., 2006; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975). In the past there has been a tendency to 'victim-blame' within society, thus it is deemed more appropriate to refer to individuals as survivors instead of victims (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Dillenburg et al., 2006; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975).

Within modern society gender is viewed as a spectrum that ranges between masculinity and femininity, however with regards to the study the term **gender** will solely be referring to the biological sex difference between males and females (Voogt & Klettke, 2017; World Health Organisation, 2021).

1.8 Outlay of The Study

Chapter 1: Introduction

An explanation of the background of the research topic, the reason for conducting the study and the importance thereof, along with all the necessary information regarding the research study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A critical evaluation of previous research and literature regarding the research topic in order to demonstrate a clear understanding of the supporting and opposing views regarding male sexual assault, societal perceptions, gender stigma, trauma and risk factors of criminal behaviour. A thorough review of sexual assault research and literature in order to build on the knowledge regarding the research topic along with providing a real-life case study.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

An explanation of the general strain theory and the labelling theory which support the research and how the theories relate to the research study. The theoretical framework supports the study through providing sound evidence that the research topic is relevant and based on established criminological theories. An explanation of the theories done through the utilization of a real-life case study in order to provide further support for the relevance of the study.

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

A thorough explanation of the way the researcher intends to complete the research study. The research methodology consists of the logical systematic explanation of the qualitative approach, cross-sectional design, phenomenological paradigm, research population, purposive non-probability sampling, semi-structured data collection method, interpretative phenomenological analysis, trustworthiness of the data, and the ethical considerations used to resolve the research problem.

Chapter 5: Findings and Interpretation of Findings

A thorough explanation and demonstration of the research findings and how the researcher interpreted the findings in order to draw the relevant conclusions of the study whilst supporting the validity and reliability of the study through providing all relevant information as to how the research was conducted and how the findings were interpreted.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and Recommendations

The conclusion of the research study provides a summary of the research study along with reiterating the importance of the research study and highlighting a great understanding of the research topic. The conclusion includes a summary of the major research findings, a discussion of the limitations of the study, recommendations and suggestions for future research, the value of the study along with a discussion about the achievement of the research aims and objectives. The conclusion highlights the key points in the research study as well as drawing attention to the importance of the research.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter provided background information regarding the topic of the research study and information that supports the understanding of the research study. The rationale of the study was explained, highlighting how damaging gender stigma and stereotypes are for male sexual assault survivors, as well as, explaining the importance of the research study. The research problem statement was discussed in this chapter, highlighting the risk factors of untreated sexual assault trauma, and emphasising the importance of gender inclusive sexual assault studies. Indicating that the exclusion of male sexual assault survivors from research results in a great lack of understanding and increased stigma surrounding the topic which in turn discourages disclosure and help-seeking behaviour amongst males. Furthermore, explaining how the lack of disclosure results in untreated trauma and could increase the risk of criminal behaviour. The chapter included an explanation of the research purpose statement which was to explore the

potential “victim to offender” cycle with regards to male sexual assault and how this was fulfilled through exploring the point of view of expert participants. The research questions, aims and objectives were listed in the chapter in order to provide a clear understanding of what the research study will be focussing on. This chapter included the definition and explanation of the following key concepts that are mentioned throughout the study: sexual assault, sexual touching, coercion, rape, survivor, victim, and gender. Thus, providing clarity and context to what is being discussed. Finally, the chapter concluded with an outline and brief explanation of all the chapters in the research study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The chapter discusses existing research studies and literature regarding male sexual assault in order to formulate a thorough understanding of the supporting and opposing arguments regarding the impact of sexual assault and how gender stereotyping influences society's perception and treatment of male sexual assault survivors. Furthermore, exploring how gender stigma can deter male survivors from disclosing their assault and in turn result in the development of mental health issues. The literature review explores various research studies and articles in order to explore how untreated trauma correlates with an increased risk of criminal behaviour. Through the thorough exploration of various sexual assault research studies, the researcher was able to formulate the following structure for the literature review.

The first section explores research regarding the impact sexual assault has on survivors thereof. The second section discusses commonly held false beliefs about sexual assault within society and how these result in the formulation of societal misconceptions, stereotypes and stigma about male sexual assault and the impact these misconceptions have on male sexual assault survivors according to literature. The third section explores literature in order to determine the gender differences regarding the impact sexual assault has on survivors and why these differences exist. This section indicates the importance of gender inclusivity with regards to sexual assault research. The fourth section of the literature review focuses on the prevalence of male sexual assault in South Africa through exploring various research studies, articles and statistics. The fifth section explains the correlation between mental health disorders and criminal behaviour through utilizing examples from current literature and research. The final section discusses the importance of reducing gender stigma regarding sexual assault through more gender inclusive research and media, in order to improve the societal response towards male sexual assault survivors. Both articles suggesting gender inclusivity as well as the opposing articles stating that male sexual assault is not a common occurrence have been discussed in order to ensure all views

regarding the research topic have been considered and explored. The literature review provides an in depth understanding of existing literature regarding sexual assault and provides more information regarding the impact gender stereotypes and sexual assault trauma can have on survivors thereof.

2.2 The Impact of Sexual Assault

According to Du Mont et al. (2013), sexual assault is a global health issue which is a gross infringement on an individual's human rights, it is more than just a physical assault on the body it is a traumatic act that results in a variety of psychological and behavioural issues. Survivors of sexual assault are not only left with a physically harmed body but also, with a wide range of mental health issues (Du Mont et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2013; Soylu et al., 2016). The adverse effects of sexual assault on survivors can take years to heal from, thus the adequate understanding and treatment of all survivors are crucial in ensuring they are able to recover from the trauma experienced (Du Mont et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2013; Soylu et al., 2016).

Sexual assault has an extreme adverse psychological effect on survivors, both male and female survivors have reported experiencing the following: anxiety, depression, hostility, intrusive thoughts, avoidance, dissociation, sexual dysfunction, hypersexuality, self-mutilation, outbursts of anger, suicidal ideations, negative self-image, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and risk-taking behaviour (Du Mont et al., 2013). It is important to note that many mental disorders are co-morbid meaning it is possible for an individual to have several varying mental disorders at the same time (Du Mont et al., 2013; Lazarov et al., 2020). Mental disorders that result from trauma are often severe and require treatment in order to improve the individual's behaviour and quality of life (Du Mont et al., 2013; Lazarov et al., 2020; Matthews et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2013; Soylu et al., 2016).

2.3 Rape Myths and Societal Misconceptions

There are various rape myths that influence the perception society has of sexual assault, these rape myths are false beliefs that are far too common and believed by most individuals (Allen et al., 2015). Rape myths have an impact on the way society perceives and treats male survivors of sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015). It is believed that there is a great need to conduct gender-inclusive sexual assault studies in order to replace these rape myths with factual information that could improve the detection and treatment of all sexual assaults (Allen et al., 2015). The following are a few examples of rape myths about male sexual assault: “it is impossible to rape a man”, “men are to blame for not escaping/fighting off their assault”, and “men do not need counselling after sexual assault because men enjoy sex” (Allen et al., 2015:104-105).

Awareness about sexual assault grew from the feminist movement which highlighted the prevalence of male violence against women in society, thus male survivors of sexual assault do not fit the typical picture of sexual assault created in society (Allen et al., 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). The feminist movement played a crucial role in the development of women’s rights, however within modern society there is growing evidence of males also being targeted and abused in various forms (Allen et al., 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). Current studies and literature mostly focus on female survivors as there is a false belief that males are rarely assaulted, however the amount of male sexual assault that occurs has been found to be much higher than initially thought (Du Mont et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2013). The problem with detecting and determining the prevalence of male sexual assault is because there is a great number of male survivors that do not report their assault (Du Mont et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2013). The main reason male survivors do not disclose is a fear of negative reactions from peers such as disbelief, victim/survivor blame, shame and accusations of provoking assault (Du Mont et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2013).

Most literature views sexual assault as an attack on women, various studies have found that sexual assault is mostly motivated by power and control (Marshall et al., 2013). To date, there is still a false belief that men crave power and are sexually assertive, whilst women are weak and submissive (Marshall et al., 2013). The aforementioned view of

gender roles is problematic as it results in the formulation of damaging stereotypes and stigma (Gartner, 2017). Furthermore, the stereotype that all men are aggressive and desire power over women allows for the public villainization of men in general, thus shifting the focus from what is truly important (Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). If the phenomenon of sexual assault is to be fully understood then it is crucial for society to stop assuming that “sexual offenders can only be men” and “sexual survivors can only be women and children” (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016:222; Gartner, 2017:54-55; Marshall et al., 2013:55-58). The aforementioned villainization of men is problematic as it creates further isolation for male survivors of sexual assault because in society men are always considered the aggressor and they are believed far less often than women (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). Gartner (2017:54-55) refers to adult male survivors of sexual assault as the “hidden survivors” because they are so often excluded and overlooked, the exclusion of an entire group of survivors based on gender discrimination is very problematic as it strengthens the false notion that male sexual assault is extremely rare.

Rape myths can be metaphorically explained as the blinders placed on racehorses in order to keep their eyes focused solely on what is straight ahead, these horses cannot see the “full picture” of their surroundings, thus they become oblivious to other things that might be around them similar to what rape myths do to society’s perception of sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015). The problem with rape myths is that they can have a great impact on societal responses, and in some cases, result in overlooking an important piece of information due to gender stereotypes and rape myths, resulting in severe consequences (Allen et al., 2015; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). The following case study of Sandra Cantu is just one of many that highlight the importance of deconstructing these rape myths and removing these metaphorical “blinders” in order to see the full picture, as it may greatly influence the lives of people involved (Allen et al., 2015; Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017).

2.3.1 The Case of Sandra Cantu

Sandra Cantu was an eight-year-old girl who went missing on 27 March 2009, she was last seen playing outside of her home on CCTV footage (Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). The normal procedure for finding a missing child is for investigators to interview any individual who has a relationship with the missing child, this includes family, friends, community members, neighbours, teachers, and anyone who know the child and might have gained their trust (Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). The search for Sandra went on for a total of ten days before her body was discovered stuffed in a suitcase and disposed of in a nearby irrigation tank (Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). The problem with the case was that the investigators were wearing the metaphorical “blindness” and did not consider interviewing an individual with a very close relationship with Sandra (Allen et al., 2015; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Goldman, 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Wadsworth, 2017).

Investigators spent ten days interviewing many suspects, Sandra’s grandfather and pastor included, however, they never considered Sandra’s Sunday School teacher as a suspect (Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). Melissa Huckaby was the mother of Sandra’s best friend who lived five doors down from Sandra’s home (Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). When it was discovered that Melissa Huckaby was the individual responsible for the kidnapping, rape, and murder of Sandra the entire community was shocked and outraged (Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). The investigators could have found Sandra long before she was assaulted or even murdered, but the “blindness” kept them from considering the “full picture” (Allen et al., 2015; Goldman, 2010; Wadsworth, 2017). Melissa was a female, a mother, and a Sunday School teacher and these factors led to investigators never considering that she might be responsible for the disappearance of Sandra (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Goldman, 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Wadsworth, 2017).

In this case, the rape myth held by society that a female cannot be a sexual offender prevented investigators from considering Melissa a suspect and this turned out to be a fatal mistake (Allen et al., 2015; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Goldman, 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Wadsworth, 2017). The case of Sandra Cantu

and Melissa Huckaby serves as a stern reminder that rape myths are extremely problematic and need to be deconstructed in order to prevent fatal mistakes like this from occurring in the future (Allen et al., 2015; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Goldman, 2010; Marshall et al., 2013; Wadsworth, 2017).

2.4 Gender Differences

According to Allen et al. (2015), one of the least discussed crimes in society to date is the sexual assault of males, and male survivors are far less likely to disclose about their trauma than their female counterparts. Although there has been a rapid increase in studies about sexual assault, these studies usually do not include male survivors, they only focus on young children and women due to a false belief that men cannot be sexually assaulted (Allen et al., 2015). The exclusion of men from studies results in a lack of knowledge and understanding of male sexual assault and treatment for male survivors (Allen et al., 2015; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018). According to Du Mont et al. (2013), male sexual assault has been found to be a serious issue that requires attention, yet it remains under-researched.

Traditional gender roles and socialization further results in the lack of disclosure of male survivors, males report assault at a significantly lower rate than females, not because the prevalence of male assault is scarce, but rather because gender norms result in a lack of cultural and social support for men (Allen et al., 2015). There are no specific gender differences regarding the physical and mental impact sexual assault has on survivors, both males and females are at risk of developing mental disorders and feelings of shame (Allen et al., 2015). However, research has supported that societal misconceptions about gender are the reason male survivors disclose infrequently and do not receive treatment (Allen et al., 2015). Due to the aforementioned rape myths, there are commonly held false beliefs that males who have been sexually assaulted are 'weak' because they did not defend themselves from the assault (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). These false beliefs also create more shame and confusion for male survivors which lead to self-blame (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). Due to gender roles in society, it is believed

that men are always strong and dominant, whilst females are always vulnerable and passive (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). These gender norms and stereotypes result in a narrow-minded view of what sexual assault is, many in society still believe that only females and children can be sexually assaulted and only males are sexual offenders (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). This is problematic as it results in male survivors not being believed when they disclose about the assault (Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). It has been found that peer responses are crucial for the help-seeking behaviour of male survivors, meaning that if they build up the courage to speak out about the assault and they are met with disbelief, it will discourage them from ever speaking out about it again (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). The shame experienced by male sexual assault survivors is amplified by the response and judgement they receive from society and has a tremendously negative impact on their help-seeking behaviour (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). Therefore, male survivors often suffer in isolation, identifying a great need for gender inclusivity (Allen et al., 2015). Male and female survivors both experience feelings of shame after being sexually assaulted, however, due to gender stereotypes males have a greater fear of scrutiny (Allen et al., 2015).

In recent years there has been an increase in literature acknowledging the sexual assault of males, however, the response to this issue has been considered “functionally non-existent”, some literature has argued that support/treatment services for male survivors are decades behind services for female survivors (Allen et al., 2015).

2.5 The Prevalence of Male Sexual Assault in South Africa

According to Jina et al. (2020) an accurate statistical representation of the prevalence of male sexual assault in South Africa does not yet exist. The reason being that there is a lack of gender inclusive studies regarding sexual assault, most sexual assault studies solely focus on female and child survivors and do not include male survivors (Du Toit, 2022; Jina et al., 2020). There are few research studies that have included males; however, these studies tend to conclude that it is very scarce for males to be sexually

assaulted and they are considered to be more of an outlier (Du Mont et al., 2013; Jina et al., 2020; Kramer & Bowman, 2021; Marshall et al., 2013). Thus, it is believed that the statistical prevalence of male sexual assault is not accurately represented in most research due to the lack of disclosure and reporting amongst male survivors (Du Mont et al., 2013; Jina et al., 2020; Kramer & Bowman, 2021).

Research has found that when it comes to the statistical prevalence of male sexual assault, there are contradictory findings (Jina et al., 2020; Kramer & Bowman, 2021). Previous studies have concluded that male sexual assault is not very common and that females are rarely sexual assault perpetrators (Gouws, 2022; Jina et al., 2020). However, in a survey conducted in 200 South African schools it was found that 2 out of 5 male students have been raped in these schools, and the perpetrators were more commonly women than men in these cases (Kramer & Bowman, 2021). These findings indicate a clear gap in research and lack of knowledge regarding the prevalence of male sexual assault in South Africa (Du Mont et al., 2013; Kramer & Bowman, 2021).

INTERPOL has referred to South Africa as “the rape capital of the world”, with statistics indicating that over 50% of children in South Africa will be sexually assaulted before they turn 18 (Mamabolo, Lekgau & Maluleke, 2022:121-124; Scurry Baehr, 2008:213-230). Statistically it is estimated (based on cases reported to the police between 2019 and 2020) that on average there are 115 rapes that occur daily in South Africa, these numbers are far greater than initially believed and the justice system is overwhelmed with the increase in cases and lack of resources to investigate (Gouws, 2022). Research has indicated that since 2018 the number of rape convictions has rapidly decreased due to the pressure being placed on the justice system and the lack of resources to combat sexual assault (Maliti, 2022). It has been established that in South Africa there are high rates of sexual assault, however, according to Amner (2022) the average rate of rape convictions in South Africa is currently between 4% to 8 %, this is indicative of the strain placed on the South African criminal justice system. Meaning that the numbers that are obtained for research studies cannot be considered an accurate representation of the population as they do not include cases that have not been

reported, or cases that have been lost in the vast number of reports collected (Easton, Saltzman & Willis, 2014; Jina et al., 2020).

With regards to the statistical prevalence of male sexual assault there are many factors that need to be considered (Easton et al., 2014; Jina et al., 2020). For instance, before the 2007 Criminal Law Amendment Act, the definition of rape made it legally 'impossible' for a man to be considered a victim of rape (Singh, 2004; Van der Bijl, 2010). The definition of rape prior to the amendment act was "a male having unlawful and intentional sexual intercourse with a female without her consent" (Singh, 2004:129-130; Van der Bijl, 2010:224). During this time if a man was to report sexual assault or rape it would be considered "indecent assault", meaning that if studies were conducted during this time about sexual assault the reports would not have been able to accurately reflect the number of males who have been sexually assaulted as it was legally not considered sexual assault (Singh, 2004:129-130; Van der Bijl, 2010:224). The previous definition of rape is, not only, a clear example of the impact rape myths have on the treatment and support men receive, but also indicates that research study results at the time might have been impacted as the research sample might not have been a true reflection of the research population (Singh, 2004; Jina et al., 2020; Van der Bijl, 2010).

Another factor to consider is the silencing of male victims due to the culture of masculinity in South Africa, from a young age boys are taught that "real men don't cry", expressing emotions are considered to be a sign of weakness and men are taught to hide their feelings and deal with their trauma in silence (Du Toit, 2022; Graaff & Heineken, 2017:631). Researchers have found that men fear being judged due to the stigma surrounding gender and sexual assault, things such as the physiological reaction a post-pubescent male experiences during sexual assault may lead to further confusion and feelings of guilt and shame (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien, Keith & Shoemaker, 2015). It has been found that sexually developed men who are assaulted may experience erections and ejaculation, these physiological reactions are not indicative of consent, however, perpetrators of the assault often use these natural physiological reactions to manipulate the male victim and convince them that they wanted the assault to occur or that they enjoyed it (Javaid, 2015; O'Brien et al., 2015). This leads to another layer of

confusion and shame being experienced by the victim and further discourages them from reporting their assault (Javaid, 2015; O'Brien et al., 2015). The lack of awareness, understanding, media representation and support systems for male victims along with the shame and stigma surrounding sexual assault all add to the discouragement of men to seek help and disclose about their assault (Allen et al., 2015, Du Toit, 2022; Gartner, 2017; Javaid, 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). Research statistics cannot accurately reflect the statistical prevalence of male sexual assault if men are not encouraged and supported to speak out about their assault (Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013).

The South African criminal justice system is overloaded with many sexual assault cases that occur daily, and there is a lack of resources to combat this growing crisis (Javaid, 2015; Maliti, 2022). The South African prison system is notorious for being overcrowded and infringing on many human rights (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014). Currently the system tends to focus more on punishment and less on the rehabilitation of prisoners, due to lack of structure and control within the prisons there are hierarchies of power that form within the prison system (Lindegaard & Gear, 2014). The media tends to portray the rape of male prisoners in a comedic way; however, the reality of the situation is that many men are brutally sexually assaulted in South African prisons as a form of showing dominance within the prison system (Jina et al., 2020; Lindegaard & Gear, 2014). According to Jina et al. (2020) sexual assault studies in South Africa fail to include these victims in their studies and it creates a further gap in research, it is believed that studies regarding male sexual assault are essential to develop a better understanding of the experiences male victims have in order to develop treatment programmes and provide support systems. It is evident that the criminal justice system is in need of resources and knowledge regarding the treatment of male sexual assault victims, thus indicating a great need for future sexual assault studies to be gender inclusive (Allen et al., 2015; Hammond et al., 2017; Javaid, 2015; Maliti, 2022; Matthews et al., 2018).

2.6 Mental Disorders and Criminal Behaviour

There are links between certain mental disorders and criminal behaviour (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006). One of the most common mental disorders that directly results

from trauma is PTSD, this disorder is characterized by reliving the traumatic experience and is often linked to erratic and possibly violent behaviour as a result (Gillikin et al., 2016). For instance, if an individual suffers from PTSD and they are triggered in a heated moment, they might react violently without control, this could possibly result in the criminal offense of physical assault (Ardino, 2012; Gillikin et al., 2016; Maschi, 2006). Anxiety and depression are co-morbid disorders with PTSD and often result from trauma as well, these disorders have been linked to alcohol and illicit substance abuse (Kelly, Daley & Douaihy, 2012; Lazarov et al., 2020; Price et al., 2019). Some personality disorders have been linked to trauma, for example, borderline personality disorder (BPD) (Luyten, Campbell & Fonagy, 2020; Tate et al., 2022; Vermetten & Spiegel, 2014). BPD is characterized by a fear of abandonment, and impulsive behaviour, along with various other erratic behavioural characteristics (Luyten et al., 2020; Vermetten & Spiegel, 2014). BPD has also been linked to spousal abuse, substance abuse, theft, and other impulsive criminal acts (Luyten et al., 2020; Tate et al., 2022; Vermetten & Spiegel, 2014).

These disorders are simply a few examples of trauma being linked to criminal behaviour, it is important to note that correlation does not equate to causation and each individual will be differently impacted by the trauma caused through being sexually assaulted (Marshall et al., 2013). Meaning that not every single survivor of sexual assault will develop these specific disorders, and not all individuals who have these mental disorders will engage in criminal activity (Du Mont et al., 2013; Marshall et al., 2013). Sexual assault trauma impacts every individual in a unique manner, mental disorders impact each individual's behaviour in a unique manner and criminal activity is motivated by various factors (Ardino, 2012; Du Mont et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Marshall et al., 2013). However, there is a correlation between trauma and mental disorders and there is a correlation between certain mental disorders and criminal behaviour (Ardino, 2012; Du Mont et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Marshall et al., 2013). Thus, it is believed that there is a possibility that male survivors of sexual assault are at a risk of developing mental disorders and/or engaging in criminal activity due to their trauma often being overlooked and untreated (Ardino, 2012; Du Mont et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Marshall et al., 2013).

Previous research has indicated that males are more often criminal offenders than females, however, few studies have considered that there might be an underlying issue of untreated sexual assault trauma that resulted in their criminal behaviour as a coping mechanism (Ardino, 2012; Du Mont et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Marshall et al., 2013). Therefore, identifying a gap in research regarding the possible relationship between male sexual assault trauma and criminal activity (Ardino, 2012; Du Mont et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Marshall et al., 2013).

2.7 Importance of Gender Inclusivity and Awareness

A need for gender-inclusive research and awareness of male sexual assault has been supported by research. According to Allen et al. (2015) survivors are most likely to disclose their assault to friends and relatives. Thus, indicating a need to reduce the stigma surrounding male sexual assault in order to increase the likelihood of appropriate responses from peers and family (Allen et al., 2015). Survivors need to feel support from peers and relatives and their reactions/responses to the disclosure have a great influence on the survivor's help-seeking behaviour (Allen et al., 2015). If a survivor feels judged or ashamed, they will most likely attempt to never speak about the assault and in turn never seek treatment for their trauma (Allen et al., 2015).

As previously determined the adequate treatment of survivors is very important for their mental well-being, thus there is a great need to educate the community about the reality that males can also be sexual assault survivors (Allen et al., 2015). Once the community is empowered with the knowledge on how to adequately respond to and support male survivors, it will most likely result in male survivors feeling safe from judgment and encourage them to seek help instead of attempting to avoid the conversation (Allen et al., 2015). Female survivors receive more support through media and social networks that help them understand the possible issues they might face when seeking help, there is little to no such support for male survivors (Allen et al., 2015). As a result, female survivors are more likely to seek help and have a more positive view towards treatment for trauma (Allen et al., 2015). Another issue is that treatment models for sexual assault are mostly geared toward women, thus female

survivors are more likely to feel comfortable and supported than males (Allen et al., 2015).

With the rise of social media and worldwide access to various forms of media outlets, there has been a rapid increase in discussions about sexual assault, yet these discussions rarely include male survivors (Allen et al., 2015). There is a clear indication of gender inequality with regards to sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015).

The lack of awareness of male sexual assault results in a lack of inclusion and representation of male survivors, meaning that there is a belief that males are not at risk of being assaulted (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017; Matthews et al., 2018). Women and girls are constantly aware of the fact that they are at risk of being sexually assaulted and there are various systems in place to support them. However, men and boys are not aware of the risk of being assaulted and there is little to no support systems in place to help if this should occur (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). When a female shows a clear indication of trauma, mental health professionals, educators, and officers are all trained to pick up on these signs and instructed to take the necessary measure to find out whether sexual assault is a cause of the trauma indicators (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). However, when it comes to males showing the same warning signs it is often overlooked because according to gender stereotypes “boys will be boys” (Allen et al., 2015:103; Gartner, 2017:53-54; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016:416-422). For example, if a man behaves in a sexually promiscuous way, society views him as a “player” and it is considered normal behaviour, however, if a woman does the same society automatically assumes that there must be something wrong (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). Hypersexuality is one of the many possible indicators of sexual assault trauma regardless of gender, but the behaviour will only be considered abnormal if displayed by a woman, indicating that society has a tendency to ignore indicators of sexual trauma within males due to gender discrimination (Gartner, 2017; Larsen, 2019).

2.8 Conclusion

Through the thorough examination of various opposing and supporting literature, articles, case studies, and research findings the chapter provided an in-depth explanation and understanding of the current research study. All aspects of the research topic have been discussed and analysed from various points of view in order to gain as much knowledge as possible regarding male sexual assault, untreated trauma and the impact society has on the treatment of male sexual assault survivors in comparison to their female counterparts. Previous literature indicates that male sexual assault occurs far more often than initially believed, yet there is a problematic stereotypical view of sexual assault based on various rape myths which influence the way society perceives and treats males who speak about the assault they experienced. The literature further supported that there is a need for more gender inclusivity and awareness regarding male sexual assault in order to improve the treatment and support male survivors receive. The literature indicated that due to the outdated views of sexual assault male survivors are not being believed and experience a great amount of shame and guilt regarding their own assault. Previous literature supported that there is a strong correlation between untreated trauma and criminal behaviour because there is a great risk of male sexual assault survivors engaging in criminal behaviour, due to the secondary victimization they experience from society.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains two theories in relation to the research topic, in order to support the study and provide sound evidence that the topic of the research study is formulated and based on established criminology theories. The general strain theory and the labelling theory are both explained and applied to the current research phenomenon being studied. The labelling theory explains what a great impact the views of peers can have in influencing an individual's behaviour. The theory suggests that once an individual is viewed in a certain way, they become labelled and eventually assume that label as their identity. According to the theory once an individual is labelled, they begin to act in accordance with the label. This theory highlights the strong influence the perception of society has on an individual's behavioural development and how the fear of judgment can also serve as an incentive for criminal behaviour in an attempt to pertain a new more socially acceptable label. The general strain theory in essence explains in depth how certain forms of strain can serve as incentive for criminal behaviour. The theory supports that the strain experienced from sexual assault trauma and fear of societal judgement is unjust and of a great magnitude, which increases the incentive of engaging in criminal behaviour as a coping mechanism for trauma expression. Both the labelling and general strain theory, separately and combined, provide a clear understanding of how sexual assault trauma and stigma influences criminal behaviour as is discussed thoroughly throughout this chapter.

3.2 The Labelling Theory

The labelling theory is a criminological theory suggesting that an individual's self-identity may be influenced by the 'label' others have placed on them (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Wellford, 1975). The theory suggests that an individual who is constantly labelled a certain way will assume the label assigned to them as their 'master status', meaning it becomes one of the key elements of their identity and they will start to act in accordance

with their label (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Wellford, 1975). Labelling is strongly related to stigmatization, the theory suggests that once an individual is labelled a certain way they will only be perceived and treated in accordance with that label which can be problematic due to gender roles and stereotypes (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Thomson, 2012; Walfield, 2021).

Society perceives survivors of sexual assault as frail and vulnerable, this stems from gender stereotypes that lead to assumptions such as, sexual assault survivors can only be young children and women (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Walfield, 2021). Stereotypical assumptions about gender are problematic because they may lead to male sexual assault survivors feeling isolated and ashamed (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). There is a misconception that males should be able to defend themselves physically from assault and if they are assaulted, they are considered to be 'weak' or they are not believed because people assume that they wanted the sexual actions to happen since they did not "fight it off" (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). Due to a lack of representation and inclusion of male survivors in sexual assault discussions/advertisements/research, male survivors feel isolated and alone (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021).

Male survivors of sexual assault do not disclose their trauma nearly as often as female survivors, this is due to a combination of the feeling of isolation, guilt, and shame experienced as a result of the aforementioned stereotypes (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). Due to the impact certain labels can have on behaviour and the fear surrounding certain labels, it is important for male survivors to be included in sexual assault discussions and research (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Thomson, 2012; Walfield, 2021; Wellford, 1975). This will reduce the number of stereotypes surrounding the phenomenon and alleviate the negative connotations made with the label of "male sexual assault victim/survivor" (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017). If men become aware that they are not alone, they are not to blame, and they are not 'weak' because they were assaulted, then they will realize that disclosing and

receiving treatment is not a shameful thing, but rather a necessary part of their healing process (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021).

Considering the labelling theory, it is suggested that the negative self-image a man might hold after experiencing sexual assault, as a result of the stigma and stereotypes surrounding male sexual assault, will influence their behaviour (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975). Furthermore, the feelings of guilt, shame, and isolation, in combination with the trauma experienced, might lead to the development of mental disorders that could influence the survivor's behaviour (Matthews et al., 2018; Thomson, 2012; Walfield, 2021).

Studies have found that adolescent males who have experienced sexual assault engage in criminal activity more often than their female counterparts (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). There are a few things that might explain why this occurs, the first being that there is more support and awareness for female sexual assault survivors, and they tend to disclose and receive treatment before male survivors (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). Meaning that while female survivors are being treated for their trauma, male survivors are attempting to deal with it on their own (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). Studies have found that the aforementioned stereotypes and stigma regarding male survivors lead to feelings of emasculation (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). Thus, it is believed that male survivors might attempt to compensate for their feeling of emasculation/shame through acquiring a different label (Ardino, 2012; Cheung & Ng, 1988; Gartner, 2017; Wellford, 1975). When male survivors are coping with trauma on their own and looking to escape their 'weak' label, they might resort to criminal activity as a symptomatic expression of their trauma (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Mueser et al., 1998; Spataro et al., 2004).

According to the labelling theory the perception peers have of an individual can greatly influence said individual's behaviour, thus once an impressionable adolescent realizes the possible notoriety or even 'power' they can experience from being labelled a 'criminal', they might continue to act in accordance with the new label (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Mueser et al., 1998; Spataro et al., 2004). Meaning there is potential for a cycle to form, a cycle where an individual goes from being a survivor to being an

offender (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Mueser et al., 1998; Spataro et al., 2004). Research supports that untreated sexual assault survivors might develop unhealthy ways of self-expression, for instance, violent behaviour, or possibly turn to unhealthy coping mechanisms, for instance, substance abuse (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017).

3.3 The General Strain Theory

The general strain theory is a criminological theory which suggests that strain leads to criminal behaviour, especially if the strain is considered to be “unjust, of a great magnitude, exists with low social control, or creates incentive for crime” (Agnew, 1992:57-65; Ardino, 2012:1-2; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013:837-841; Du Mont et al., 2013:2678; Gartner, 2017:53-63). According to the theory, criminal behaviour can be considered a coping mechanism for the strain experienced (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). The general notion of the theory is that strain results in distress, and distress might lead to criminal activity (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). In essence, the theory suggests that emotions can be a motivation for criminal behaviour (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013).

Sexual assault can be considered strain due to the severely negative physical, mental, and emotional impact it has on survivors (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). The strain caused by sexual assault is unjust, of a great magnitude, and it might create incentive for criminal behaviour as a coping mechanism (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). The strain caused by sexual assault is not just referring to the physical harm caused, but also to the mental harm it causes (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). Sexual assault causes great trauma to survivors, it has been found that sexual assault can cause the development of serious mental health and behavioural issues, and if left untreated survivors thereof are at risk of engaging in criminal activity (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). Male sexual assault survivors experience the aforementioned strain along with the added strain of societal judgement and

isolation; thus it is believed that this might increase their risk of engaging in criminal activity as a coping mechanism (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Gartner, 2017).

According to the theory, there are three main forms of deviance-producing strain; failure to achieve a goal, the removal of positive stimuli, and the presence of negative stimuli (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). Unwanted sexual action is the presence of negative stimuli, in order to cope with this it is possible for an individual to engage in criminal activity as a “cry for help”, they might act out or behave defiantly in an attempt to gain attention and draw focus to the fact that something is not well within their lives (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). A wide variety of criminal activity results from strain, for instance, physical/sexual assault, robbery, substance abuse, and partner/child abuse (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). The general strain theory is effective in explaining the relationship between trauma and criminal activity (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). The following case study of the Menendez brothers is a sound example of how strain can lead to criminal activity (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Menza, 2017).

3.3.1 The Menendez Brothers

The Menendez family was notorious as one of the most affluent families in Los Angeles, however, their family was torn apart by a gruesome crime (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). On 20 August 1989, Lyle (21 years old) and Erik (18 years old) walked into their lavish Beverly Hills home and brutally murdered their parents (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The Menendez brothers used two shotguns to repeatedly shoot their mother (Kitty Menendez) and father (Jose Menendez), which at the time was considered one of the most scandalous crimes due to the status of the family (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). Jose Menendez was a highly influential business executive in the entertainment industry with a large list of celebrity clients, and as a result, the case was considered to be high profile (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). At first, the motive for the murders was considered to be simply that the Menendez brothers were spoiled rich

children who wanted to inherit their family fortune, however, this theory fell through when it became clear that the brothers already had the family fortune at their disposal (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The Menendez brothers had everything they could ever want, or need handed to them, their parents never withheld money from them (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017).

The world was perplexed, they did not understand what could have led to the tragic destruction of the “picture perfect” Menendez family, until Erik and Lyle took the stand and spoke out about their relationship with their parents (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The brothers both gave graphic and emotional testimonies describing how they were sexually assaulted by their father since they could remember (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). Their testimonies were supported with evidence and witness testimonies provided by their family members (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). Erik explained that one day his mother revealed to him and Lyle that she knew about the sexual abuse they experienced at the hand of their father, and she was responsible for covering it up (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). Erik described how at that moment he saw his mother and father as one individual, he viewed them both as one abuser who tormented him and his brother throughout their entire lives (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017).

The strain experienced by the Menendez brothers was **unjust**, because suffering repeated life-long sexual assault is an unlawful violation of their human rights (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The strain experienced was of **great magnitude**, the brothers were sexually assaulted by their father throughout their entire life along with their emotionally abusive mother being accomplice to their trauma (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The strain experienced was of **low social control**, the brothers lived in isolation with their abusers and were dependent on their abusers for everything, they were groomed and manipulated into being sexually assaulted throughout their entire lives and they had no control over what happened to them (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Marcus, 2021; Menza,

2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). Although the brothers had what most people believed to be the perfect life they were tormented and lived in constant fear, when they found out about their mother's betrayal they decided that the only way they could remove the **negative stimuli** of the abuse they endured was by murdering their abusers and that is what they did (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The Menedez brothers do not deny murdering their parents without considering the consequences thereof, clearly indicating how strain can cause incentive for criminal behaviour (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017).

To date the case of the Menedez brothers is cause for great outrage on social media, many believe the life sentences they both received are unjust (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The brothers both provided a great amount of evidence that corroborated their story and provided a clear explanation as to why they murdered their parents, yet the jury had no compassion and their lifelong sexual assault at the hand of their father was not considered to be a mitigating factor for their sentencing (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). After the sentencing, Leslie Abramson (Erik's attorney) addressed the jury and famously stated: "would it make any difference to you if my client's name was Erika?" (Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017). The statement made by Leslie speaks volumes about the gender discrimination when it comes to sexual assault and the clear lack of understanding/compassion when it comes to male sexual assault survivors (Du Mont et al., 2013; Marcus, 2021; Menza, 2017; Pearson & Valiente, 2017).

3.4 Conclusion

Both the labelling theory and the general strain theory serves as sound support for the current research study regarding the perception society has of male sexual assault and how these perceptions influence the behaviour of male survivors.

This chapter explains how the labelling theory suggests that an individual who is constantly labelled a certain way will assume the label assigned to them as their 'master

status' and they will start to act in accordance with their label. It was found that labelling is strongly related to stigmatization which is problematic due to the current gender roles and stereotypes in society. These stereotypes result in the assumption that male sexual assault is extremely rare, resulting in feeling of shame and isolation for male sexual assault survivors. These assumptions along with the lack of representation for male sexual assault survivors result in a lack of support systems being created for male survivors. The lack of support along with the fear of societal judgement serves as incentive for criminal behaviour in an attempt to pertain a more societally acceptable 'masculine' label.

This chapter further explained how the general strain theory states that the strain experienced from untreated sexual assault trauma can serve as an incentive for criminal behaviour. The theory suggest that emotions can be a motivation for criminal behaviour. According to the theory sexual assault can be considered strain due to the severely negative physical, mental, and emotional impact it has on survivors. Male sexual assault survivors experience the aforementioned strain along with the added strain of societal judgement and isolation; thus, it is believed that this might increase their risk of engaging in criminal activity. The theory supports the literature indicating that there is a strong relationship between trauma and criminal activity, especially for males who are discouraged from speaking out about the trauma they experienced yet are attempting to draw attention to themselves as a 'cry for help'.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a thorough understanding of how the research study was conducted through explaining the entire research methodology. This chapter explains the qualitative approach of the research as well as the cross-sectional design of the study. The phenomenological research paradigm is discussed and an explanation of how it relates to the current research is given along with a justification of why it is most applicable for this study. The population, unit of analysis, and sample of the study are explained. There is further explanation provided for the small sample size of six participants and the applicability thereof, along with an explanation of the purposive non-probability sampling method that was used for the study. The chapter further explains the semi-structured interviews that were conducted and the entire data collection process of the study. It thoroughly explains all the steps of Interpretative Phenomenological analysis in order to provide a clear understanding of how exactly the research data was analysed and how themes and findings were formulated in the current study. The trustworthiness and ethical considerations of the research are provided in this chapter in order to provide clear evidence for the reliability of the study.

4.2 Research Approach and Design

The study explored a complex topic about lived human experiences from an expert point of view, due to the complex nature of the research the qualitative approach was the most suitable (Fossey et al., 2002). Human behaviour and development is a complex topic, due to the individuality of each human (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar, Ghazinour & Richter, 2013). Meaning that the impact sexual assault has on one individual does not necessarily reflect in another human, because of this complexity qualitative research was the more appropriate approach as it allowed for a deeper understanding of the topic (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013). Qualitative research involves inductive reasoning, which is applicable to the study of sexual assault and the impact lack of treatment might have on

potential criminal behaviour (Rasmussen & Eliasmith, 2011). Inductive reasoning was utilized through the systematic analysis of the recorded data collected during interviews, as it allows for a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon (Rasmussen & Eliasmith, 2011).

The research participants were selected based on a specific set of criteria; participants were selected based on their field of expertise (experience in working with sexual assault survivors) and their amount of experience in said field (a minimum of five years). Furthermore, the research was conducted and analysed within the same point in time, meaning the research design of the study was cross-sectional (Spector, 2019; Van der Stede, 2014). The study was exploratory, as the research explored whether experts have perceived that the manner in which male sexual assault survivors are perceived/treated within society might have an indirect influence on their potential risk of engaging in criminal activity (Ardino, 2012; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Ponelis, 2015; Soylu et al., 2016). Due to the study being explorative there was no definite conclusion reached, but rather a deeper understanding of the research phenomenon was gained (Ponelis, 2015).

4.3 Research Paradigm

Phenomenology is a qualitative research method focused on the lived experiences of individuals (McNarry, Allen-Collinson & Evans, 2019; Sundler et al., 2019). The Phenomenological paradigm is effective in exploring and studying phenomena within the world (McNarry et al., 2019). The phenomenological research paradigm was the most applicable to the research study as it was effective in exploring/ studying various phenomena that occur (McNarry et al., 2019; Sundler et al., 2019). A phenomenon is a fact or event that is observable, with regards to this study the phenomenon being studied was male sexual assault and the indirect impact it might have on a survivor's potential risk of engaging in criminal behaviour (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). The phenomenological paradigm allowed for the in-depth

exploration of experts and their perception of the research phenomenon (McNarry et al., 2019; Voogt et al., 2020).

4.4 Population and Sampling

The population of the study was individuals with expertise regarding male survivors of sexual assault, this included psychologists, researchers, social workers, and individuals working for non-profit organizations. With regards to the study, the inclusion criteria for participants was a minimum of five years' experience within the required field and participants were required to speak English. English speaking was a requirement for the study due to the cultural and language diversity in South Africa it was determined that the research questions would be formulated in English (as it is a commonly used language amongst South Africans), thus participants were required to be proficient in English to ensure clear communication and understanding between the researcher and participants. Anything that contradicts the inclusion criteria was immediately considered exclusion criteria. The population characteristics of the study were individuals of a diverse background: with a diverse range of ethnicities, educational levels and ages, as long as they possess the inclusion criteria and experience required for the research study.

Purposive non-probability sampling requires the researcher to subjectively select participants based on specific criteria, thus it was the sampling method that was used to select participants that fit the aforementioned inclusion criteria (Etikan & Bala, 2017; Etikan et al., 2016). The unit of analysis in the study was the perception experts have regarding male survivors of sexual assault and their potential risk of engaging in criminal behaviour. Therefore, the research sample consisted of six individuals with a minimum of five years' experience within the required fields. Due to the amount of data that was collected from each participant the sample size was relatively small, however qualitative research tends to consist of smaller sample sizes due to the depth of information that is collected during interviews (Vasileiou et al., 2018). Data saturation was also an important factor considered during the conduction of this qualitative research study, it refers to the point in research where no additional information is being

discovered (Braun & Clarke, 2021). For instance, if a researcher has interviewed six participants and the next three participants do not add any additional information to the results and no new themes can be formulated then data saturation has been reached and there is no need for further interviews to be conducted (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Data saturation can influence the number of participants that end up being interviewed for the study, with regards to this study the researcher interviewed six expert participants before data saturation was reached (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

4.5 Data Collection Method

The purpose of the research study was to explore the possible “victim-to-offender” cycle with regards to male survivors of sexual assault from an expert point of view (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). To fulfil this purpose, semi-structured interviews were conducted which consisted of multiple open-ended questions, this allowed the researcher to ask follow-up questions and encourage participants to elaborate on their answers (Brown & Danaher, 2019). The research problem statement was that the stigma and stereotyping of male sexual assault results in a lack of awareness and understanding regarding the appropriate treatment of male sexual assault survivors (Allen et al., 2015; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). Semi-structured interviews were considered the most applicable qualitative data collection method to determine from an expert point of view how to solve the research problem (Brown & Danaher, 2019). Because, the semi-structured interview schedule aided in the in-depth exploration of the research phenomenon, due to the researcher being able to collect a large amount of data from each expert participant (Brown & Danaher, 2019).

4.5.1 The Application of the Data Collection Method

Participants were sent a formal invitation to participate in the research study via their professional email addresses (Annexure 5). The email addresses used to contact the participants were their professional work-related email addresses (listed on their public websites/work profiles/business advertisements), thus ensuring no ethical violations of the participant's personal contact information occurred. The formal invitation included an explanation of the research topic and that the research was being conducted in completion of the researcher's master's degree in criminology. After agreeing to participate in the study two consent forms were sent to the participants (Annexure 2 and Annexure 3). The consent forms included further information regarding their role within the research study, they were informed that their participation in the study was completely voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time should they wish to do so. The researcher obtained the completed consent forms from the participants as it was a requirement in order to use the interview data for the analysis of the study. After the consent forms were completed, the researcher conducted online interviews with the participants through zoom online meetings. The research was conducted via zoom online meetings as it allowed for more flexibility to arrange appropriate meeting times between the full-time work schedules of both the researcher and participants. The researcher was able to ask in-depth and follow-up questions due to the semi-structured interview schedule (Annexure 4), and as a result was able to collect a large amount of data from the smaller sample size of only six participants (Brown & Danaher, 2019; Vasileiou et al., 2018). Whilst interviews were conducted the researcher took in-depth field notes that contain thick descriptions of participants' behaviour during the interview as well as provided further context to their responses (Brown & Danaher, 2019; Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). In order to ensure no valuable information was lost the researcher used an audio recording device to record the responses of the participants, these recordings were transcribed into word documents for further analysis (Brown & Danaher, 2019; Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013).

4.6 Data Analysis Method

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was conducted after the interview data was transcribed into word documents (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). The qualitative research study explored experts' opinions regarding the way society perceives and treats male sexual assault survivors, as well as the potential of criminal behaviour resulting from lack of understanding and adequate treatment for these survivors (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). Because the study focussed on a complex topic regarding individual lived human experiences, the most applicable data analysis method for the research was IPA (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). IPA allowed the researcher to gain insight into the way participants view the research phenomenon (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). IPA allowed for the thorough exploration of the research problem from an expert point of view, the research was focussed on exploring the influence societal perception have on male survivors of sexual assault and how that might indirectly lead to the development of criminal behaviour due to untreated trauma (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013).

In essence the research aimed to explore the perception of expert participants with regards to the research topic, IPA allowed the researcher to interpret and understand the perceptions of the expert participants thoroughly (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). IPA was conducted on the qualitative data because a large amount of data was collected from a small sample size of only six participants, thus it was the most applicable to the study (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). IPA was the most applicable method for analysing the large amount of data that is collected during semi-structured open-ended interviews, as it consists of several steps that the researcher thoroughly followed whilst interpreting the data, these systematic steps allowed the researcher to become familiar with the data and formulate appropriate themes and conclusions for the study (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). The steps of IPA are as follows:

- **Horizontalization:** during this step the researcher familiarized themselves with the data and wrote down all the key elements they identified within the data, these key elements were divided into preliminary themes referred to as “horizons” (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).
- **Elimination:** during this step horizons were eliminated if they were not considered relevant to the current research study and do not serve an important role in understanding the research phenomenon (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).
- **Clustering:** during this step horizons were organized into main themes and subordinate themes based on similarities and differences between the various horizons (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).
- **Validation:** during this step the researcher utilized statements made by participants to validate the main and sub-ordinate themes identified (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).
- **Individual Textural Descriptions:** during this step the researcher was required to form a textural description of each participant to identify common themes and provide context to what was said by the participants, the researcher included direct quotes from the participants to formulate an idea of the participant's perception of the phenomenon being studied (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).
- **Individual Structural Descriptions:** during this step the researcher was required to provide a description of the participant's perception of the phenomenon being studied by utilizing the in-depth field notes that were meticulously recorded during the interview (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).
- **Interpreting the findings:** during this step the researcher interpreted and presented the findings in the following chapter in order to draw conclusions about the research phenomenon, these conclusions have summarized in the final chapter of the study (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

The researcher constantly remained aware of their potential subjective biases during the data collection and analysis process, through self-reflectivity the researcher ensured they remained objective throughout the study (Pezalla, Pettigrew & Miller-Day, 2012).

Self-reflectivity allowed the researcher to constantly remain aware of their own potential bias and ensure that they considered these biases when data was being interpreted, the researcher ensured that their own bias did not influence the interpretation of what the participants said during interviews (Pezalla et al., 2012).

4.7 Trustworthiness

To ensure no valuable information was lost during data collection, the researcher used a recording device to create audio recordings of the interviews, the interviews were conducted over a Zoom call and the researcher obtained the participants' permission to record these Zoom meetings as a backup to ensure no data was lost (Speer & Hutchby, 2003). Both the Zoom meeting recordings and the audio recordings were saved on a password protected device to ensure the safe keeping thereof. Furthermore, the researcher took in-depth field notes whilst conducting the interviews to provide more context to what was being said (Brown & Danaher, 2019; Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). These field notes included thick descriptions of the participants' responses, including the descriptions of facial expressions & tone of voice allowing the researcher to interpret the participants' responses as accurately as possible (Brown & Danaher, 2019; Denham & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). For instance, if a participant was saying something in a sarcastic tone whilst using "air quotes" or joking body language the researcher had it in the notes to ensure that the statement was not mistakenly analysed as literal but rather as a sarcastic remark. The researcher transcribed the interview data into word documents and saved it on a password protected device along with the field notes in order to ensure they could not be accessed or tampered with in any way.

According to Sinkovics, Penz & Ghauri (2008) there are four aspects of trustworthiness in qualitative data: credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Research

achieves transferability, dependability, and confirmability when the findings of one study are confirmable by another study who applies the same research method. With regards to this study the researcher rigorously followed every step of the data collection and analysis method, ensuring that if similar research was to be conducted in the future whilst following the same methods the finding of said research would be similar to that of the current study.

Credibility refers to the truthfulness of the study, the researcher ensured that all the standard procedures for qualitative data were followed in order to ensure that the data was represented in the most accurate and truthful way, the researcher used the expert perception of the participants in order to determine the findings of the study and through self-reflectivity ensured that their own potential biases were not influencing the findings of the study (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017; Sinkovics et al., 2008). Through self-reflectivity the researcher remained consistently aware of their own potential biases and was able to reflect on them to ensure that the findings of the study are an accurate representation of the participants' perception and not the researcher's possible bias (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017; Pezalla et al., 2012; Sinkovics et al., 2008). Through self-reflectivity and following all the correct procedure in data collection and analysis, the researcher was able to provide credibility to the study (Kalu & Bwalya, 2017:49-51; Pezalla et al, 2012; Sinkovics et al., 2008).

4.8 Ethical Considerations

Due to the sensitive nature of the research phenomenon, it was of the utmost importance that the researcher ensured no one was negatively impacted during the completion of the study, as a result the research participants were professionals and experts in the topic of sexual assault, trauma, and crime. The research was not directly conducted on sexual assault survivors nor offenders, ensuring no one could be harmed during the study. Before the study was conducted the researcher had to present the research proposal to the IIE Ethical Committee for approval. The researcher further had to defend the research in a presentation for IIE Ethical Committee members where they asked various questions and examined whether the researcher was allowed to gain

ethical clearance to conduct the study. The researcher was only allowed to conduct the study once ethical clearance had been granted by the committee members. Participants were provided with consent forms and information sheets, which they were required to read and sign before participating in the research study. These consent forms and documents (Template 2: Research Consent Form One & Template 3: Research Consent Form Two) provided the participants with all the information regarding the purpose of the research study and what their participation in the study would require.

Participants were informed of the following:

- Participants were informed that their participation in the study was on a completely voluntary bases and that they would not receive any incentive for participating.
- Participants were informed that they would remain confidential and no identifying information would be used during the duration of the study (only the researcher and the research supervisor were aware of their identity).
- Participants were informed that should they wish to withdraw from the study at any given point in time they would be allowed to do so without question.
- Participants were required to sign a written consent form granting the researcher permission to conduct and record an interview with them.
- Participants were informed that all recorded data was saved and secured on a password protected device, and that only the researcher and research supervisor were allowed to access these recordings.
- A brief written description of the research study was given to the participants, which informed them of the purpose of the study, their role within the study and any potential risk factors regarding their participation in the study.

- Participants were provided with the contacts information of the researcher and the research supervisor should they wish to ask any additional questions regarding the research study.
- Participants were informed that the research study was being conducted in completion of the researcher's master's degree in criminology.
- Participants were informed that their completion of the consent forms was mandatory in order for the researcher to be allowed to use the interview data collected for the research study.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter thoroughly explains the research methodology and the applicability of the methodology in relation to the current research study. The research approach was qualitative due to it allowing for the in-depth exploration of the perception expert participants have regarding male sexual assault, social stigma, untreated trauma, and criminal behaviour. The chapter discussed the cross-sectional research design of the study, as well as highlighting that the study was explored from an expert point of view. The research phenomenon being studied was the societal perception and treatment of male sexual assault survivors and how it may influence criminal behaviour. The chapter explained how the phenomenological paradigm was the most applicable for the research study as it allowed the researcher to fully explore the research phenomenon from an expert point of view. Because phenomenology is a qualitative research method focused on the lived experiences of individuals.

The population of the study was individuals with expertise regarding male survivors of sexual assault, this included psychologists, researchers, social workers, and individuals working for non-profit organizations. With regards to the study the inclusion criteria for participants were a minimum of five years' experience within the required field and

participants were required to speak English. This chapter explained how purposive non-probability sampling requires the researcher to subjectively select participants based on specific criteria, thus it was the sampling method that was used to select participants that fit the inclusion criteria. This chapter indicated that the research sample consisted of six individuals with a minimum of five years' experience within the required fields because the unit of analysis in the study was the perception experts have regarding male survivors of sexual assault and their potential risk of engaging in criminal behaviour.

The study consisted of semi-structured interviews, the reason being that this data collection method allowed for the in-depth exploration of the research phenomenon, due to the researcher being able to collect a large amount of data from each expert participant. The chapter also provided an explanation for how the data collection method was applied during the study. All the steps of interpretative phenomenological analysis (horizontalization, elimination, clustering, validation, individual structural/textural descriptions and interpretation of findings) were listed and explained in relation to the research study, providing a clear understanding of exactly how the data was analysed. The chapter further included sections on how the researcher ensured trustworthiness through self-reflexivity and meticulous record keeping. The chapter concluded with an explanation of the process the researcher followed to ensure the ethical considerations of the study were met.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings in a detailed and concise manner, with the utilization of tables (Table 1: Horizontalization, Table 2: Clustering, Table 3: Validation, Table 4: Individual Textural & Structural Descriptions of Theme One, Table 5: Individual Textural & Structural Descriptions of Theme Two, Table 6: Individual Textural & Structural Descriptions of Theme Three) in order to visually explain exactly how the data analysis was conducted and interpreted. The chapter includes a table of the demographic details of all six the research participants, indicating the age, gender, years of experience, occupation and field of expertise of the participants. This chapter indicates with detail how all the steps of IPA were conducted on the data collected from the expert participants. The chapter thoroughly explains how the main and subordinate themes were interpreted from the data analysis process. The chapter explores the following three main themes identified during IPA: Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault, Trauma & Criminal Behaviour, and The Complexity of Sexual Assault & Trauma. Furthermore, the chapter expands on the eleven sub-ordinate themes identified during IPA.

5.2 Participants' Demographic Details

Participant 1	
Age	67
Gender	Female
Years of Experience	Over 23 years
Occupation	The director of a non-profit organisation that provides support services for abused children.
Field of Expertise	Trauma support for children who have suffered physical and sexual abuse.

Participant 2	
Age	40
Gender	Male
Years of Experience	Over 10 years
Occupation	Clinical Psychologist and Criminologist
Field of Expertise	Therapy for adult male survivors of childhood sexual abuse, and individual's suffering from trauma and PTSD.

Participant 3	
Age	59
Gender	Male
Years of Experience	Over 13 years
Occupation	Founder of a non-profit organisation that provides support for male sexual assault survivors and relatives.
Field of Expertise	Therapy for male sexual assault survivors and advocacy for the inclusion of male sexual assault survivors in research and media. Mainly focussing on young sexually abused males and the adults they become.

Participant 4	
Age	28
Gender	Female
Years of Experience	Over 5 years
Occupation	Criminology and social sciences researcher.
Field of Expertise	Criminology, criminal justice, commercial crimes, forensic investigation, and psychology.

Participant 5	
Age	34
Gender	Female
Years of Experience	Over 10 years

Occupation	Senior lecturer of criminology and public law.
Field of Expertise	Gender based violence.

Participant 6	
Age	31
Gender	Female
Years of Experience	Over 6 years
Occupation	Working in the department of social development.
Field of Expertise	Gender issues, gender activism, criminology, restorative justice and rehabilitation of victims/offenders, and forensic sciences.

5.3 Data Presentation and Analysis

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) was used to analyse the data collected as it is a research analysis method specifically formulated for and focussed on allowing the researcher to interpret and analyse the research phenomenon being studied (Alase, A. 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). IPA is a phenomenological approach that allows the researcher to make sense of the participants' perception of the research topic (Alase, A. 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). IPA was used to analyse the data as the aim of the research was to gain an in depth understanding of how society's treatment and perception of male sexual assault might possibly impact the survivor's potential future criminal behaviour from an expert point of view (Alase, A. 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

IPA is considered a very effective analysis method for qualitative data that consist of smaller sample sizes, due to the great amount of data being collected it allows for a thorough analysis resulting in detailed findings (Alase, A. 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). The researcher transcribed all the audio recordings of the participant interviews into detailed word documents to apply IPA (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). The transcripts included the thick description of the participants' demeanour, tone and other behavioural observations in order to provide a

full understanding of the context in which answers were given (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008). The researcher then used the seven steps of IPA in order to thoroughly analyse the transcribed data (Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008).

5.3.1 Horizontalization

During the process of transcribing the data, the researcher noted down any statements that stood out, and after reading the transcripts a few times the researcher was able to divide the data that stood out into preliminary themes (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). These preliminary themes are termed “horizons”, they are essentially common themes that emerge from all the participants whilst data is being analysed (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). The following table (*Table 1: Horizontalization*) indicated how the data for the study was horizontalized:

Table 1: Horizontalization

Gender Differences & The Impact of Sexual Assault
Gender Norms & Stereotypes
Mental Health Impact
Behavioural Changes Due to Trauma
Societal Misconception of Sexual Assault Offenders & Survivors
Lack of Awareness of Male Sexual Assault
Need for Information
Media Portrayal, Stereotyping & Stigma
Masculinity vs. Feminism
Supposed to be Pleasurable for Boys
Men Not Seen as Victims (“Men Enjoy Sex”)
Rape Myths
Shame, Guilt, Negative Self-talk
Perceived Weakness in Males (Lack of Self Defence)
“Boys Don’t Cry”

Societal Reaction (Law Enforcement, The Community & Loved Ones)
Trauma & Criminal Behaviour
Body Dysmorphia & Obsession
Self-Deception (Lying to Yourself or Denying)
External vs. Internal Response to Trauma (“Cry for Help”)
Overlooking Warning Signs
Complexity of Sexual Assault
Individuality of Trauma
Lack of Research Regarding Male Survivors
Lack of Understanding How to Treat Males
Need For Education
Lack of Reporting & Statistics
Unexplainable Criminality (Rebellion & Self-destruction)
More Socially Acceptable for Men to Act Out
Trying To Act Out to Prove Masculinity
Not Enough Support for Males
Risk of Criminality
Risk for a Repeat Cycle of Assault
Current Societal Villainization of Men
Substance Abuse & Behavioural Impact
Compensation & Defensiveness
Vulnerability Considered Weakness in Males
Prevalence is Not Less, Just Less Reported Amongst Males
Fear of Judgement
Males’ Physiological Response to Sexual Stimuli
Powerless & Emasculation
Not Recognised as Assault for Post-Pubescent Males (Seen as a Conquest)
Traditional Gender Roles, Culture & Norms
Lack of Treatment/Support Structures for Males (Exclusion & Isolation)
Masculinity & Culture in South Africa

Increased Likelihood to Commit Violent Crimes
False Narratives
Psycho-Somatic Symptoms Develop

5.3.2 Elimination

The second step of IPA required the researcher to analyse the ‘Horizons’ that have been identified during the first step and determine their relevance to the current research study (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Moustakas, 1994; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). If the Horizons identified were found not to be relevant to the understanding of the research phenomenon it was eliminated (Alase, 2017:9-11; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Moustakas, 1994; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). During this step the researcher used the transcribed data as a reference as well as the in-depth field notes taken during interviews to assist in determining which horizons would be eliminated (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Moustakas, 1994; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012).

The following horizons were eliminated from the study; “Masculinity vs. Feminism”, “Body Dysmorphia & Obsession”, “False Narratives”, and “Psycho-Somatic Symptoms Develop”. The reason “**Masculinity vs. Feminism**” was eliminated was because the context in which the theme was being picked up was more focused on gender-based violence and participants mentioning feminism were referring more to how the modern-day movement has resulted in a conflict between men and women. The researcher found that this theme was not suited for the study as it did not pertain to the objectives of the study nor added to the understanding of the potential link between trauma and criminal behaviour. “**Body Dysmorphia & Obsession**” was eliminated because it did not link to the objectives of the study and was only mentioned once by one of the participants. “**False Narratives**” was eliminated as there was little context to support the understanding of the theme as it was solely mentioned by one participant for a brief moment and there was not enough data to support it as a theme for the research study. The reason the researcher eliminated “**Psycho-Somatic Symptoms Develop**” was

because when participants mentioned it, they mentioned that these symptoms could occur in trauma survivors however they get overlooked by healthcare workers. The theme was considered too vague and did not add enough information to allow for a better understanding of how untreated trauma could potentially lead to criminal behaviour, it was eliminated because it was not applicable to the research questions nor the objectives of the study.

5.3.3 Clustering

This step of IPA required the researcher to identify similarities between the remaining horizons, using these similarities the researcher had to organize the data into the main and sub-ordinate themes of the research study (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Harris & Bezuidenhout, 2010). Through thorough analysis the researcher identified three main themes: “Societal Perception of Male Sexual Assault”, “Trauma and Criminal Behaviour”, and “The Complexity of Sexual Assault”.

5.3.3.1 Societal Perception of Male Sexual Assault

The researcher identified the following sub-ordinate themes for the Societal Perception of Male Sexual Assault main theme; “Rape Myths”, “Shame & Guilt”, “Masculinity & Perceived Weakness”, “Media & Stigma”, Gender Norms & Stereotypes”.

The **Rape Myths** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the researcher found similarities between the following horizons and clustered them together: “Societal Misconception of Sexual Assault Offenders & Survivors”; “Supposed to be Pleasurable for Boys”; “Men Not Seen as Victims (“Men Enjoy Sex”)”.

The **Shame & Guilt** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the researcher clustered the following horizons together based on shared similarities: “Self-Deception (Lying to Yourself or Denying)”; “Societal Reaction (Law Enforcement, The Community & Loved Ones)”; “Shame, Guilt, Negative Self-talk”; “Prevalence is Not Less, Just Less Reported Amongst Males”.

The **Masculinity, Gender Norms & Perceived Weakness** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Perceived Weakness in Males (Lack of Self Defence)”; “Vulnerability Considered Weakness in Males”; “Powerless & Emasculation”; “Masculinity & Culture in South Africa”; “Traditional Gender Roles, Culture & Norms”; “Compensation & Defensiveness”.

The **Media & Stigma** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following themes were clustered together: “Media Portrayal, Stereotyping & Stigma”; “Boys Don’t Cry”; “Current Societal Villainization of Men”; “Fear of Judgement”.

5.3.3.2 Trauma & Criminal Behaviour

The researcher identified the following sub-ordinate themes for the Trauma & Criminal Behaviour main theme: “Mental Health Impact”; “Cry for Help”; “Overlooking Warning Signs”; “Cycle of Abuse”; “Male Specific”.

The **Mental Health Impact** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Behavioural Changes Due to Trauma”; “Substance Abuse & Behavioural Impact”.

The **Cry for Help, Overlooking Warning Signs** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Increased Likelihood to Commit Violent Crimes”; “External vs. Internal Response to Trauma”; “Unexplainable Criminality (Rebellion & Self-destruction)”; “More Socially Acceptable for Men to Act Out”; “Trying to Act Out to Prove Masculinity”; “Prevalence is Not Less, Just Less Reported”.

The **Cycle of Abuse** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Risk of Criminality”; “Risk for a Repeat Cycle of Assault”.

The **Male Specific** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Not Recognised as Assault for Post-Pubescent Males (Seen as a Conquest)”; “Lack of Reporting & Statistics”; “Males Physiological Response to Sexual Stimuli”.

5.3.3.3 The Complexity of Sexual Assault & Trauma

The researcher identified the following sub-ordinate themes for the Complexity of Sexual Assault & Trauma main theme; “Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research”; “Individuality of Sexual Assault and Survivors”; “Need for Education”.

The **Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Gender Differences & The Impact of Sexual Assault”; “Lack of Treatment/Support Structures for Males (Exclusion & Isolation)”.

The **Individuality of Sexual Assault & Survivors** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Complexity of Sexual Assault”; “Individuality of Trauma”.

The **Need for Education** sub-ordinate theme was formulated after the following horizons were clustered together: “Lack of Awareness of Male Sexual Assault”; “Need for Information”; “Not Enough Support for Males”; “Lack of Understanding How to Treat Males”.

The following table (*Table 2: Clustering*) indicates the clustering of themes as well as the formation of main themes along with their sub-ordinate themes:

Table 2: Clustering

MAIN THEMES	SUB-ORDINATE THEMES
1) Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault	1.1) Rape Myths 1.2) Shame & Guilt 1.3) Masculinity, Gender Norms & Perceived Weakness 1.4) Media & Stigma
2) Trauma & Criminal Behaviour	2.1) Mental Health Impact 2.2) Cry for Help, Overlooking Warning

	Signs 2.3) Cycle of Abuse 2.4) Male Specific
3) The Complexity of Sexual Assault & Trauma	3.1) Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research 3.2) Individuality of Sexual Assault & Survivors 3.3) Need for Education & Awareness

5.3.4 Validation

During the validation step of IPA, the researcher provides statements made by participants in order to validate the main and sub-ordinate themes identified during the previous step (Alase, 2017; Biggerstaff & Thompson, 2008; Eddles-Hirsch, 2015; Smith & Shinebourne, 2012). The following table (*Table 3: Validation*) indicates the validation of the themes through quotes extracted from the transcribed interview data:

Table 3: Validation

Main Theme: Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault	
Sub-ordinate Themes	Validation From Transcribed Data
1.1) Rape Myths	“a male who is very big, like 6 foot 5, the expectation is, one, they could never have been abused and they’re a big man so they must have been able to protect themselves in some way. And they are male so it is presumed that they would be less likely to be assaulted, which is not the case really, but it is what is presumed.”
1.2) Shame & Guilt	“Men do get sexually abused but they don’t report it because less platforms have been created for men to be able to speak out about being sexually

	assaulted. From a statistics approach more females sexual assault cases are reported and less male sexual assault cases are reported. But to be realistic the difference might not be as much because there are men that get assaulted, but they don't report it, they don't even tell their friends that they've been assaulted."
1.3) Masculinity, Gender Norms & Perceived Weakness	"It depends which society you're in, so if you're in a society that has a particular understanding of what maleness and femaleness is, then that tends to be the biggest influence on the impact on that person. So, if society is saying you as a man are supposed to be powerful, yet at the same time you were powerless it starts to evoke this weird internal contradiction that becomes difficult to merge or integrate because how can society deem me as powerful and powerless at the same time?"
1.4) Media & Stigma	"If you walk into a rape crisis centre, what are the pictures that are going to confront you? It's going to be pictures of women and girls, and that's it! You seldom, very, very, seldom see a picture of a boy as a victim in a rape crisis centre. Research done on 25 rape crisis centres found that of those 25 only 10 treat both boys and girls, and of those 10 only 2 included images of boys in their marketing."

Main Theme: Trauma & Criminal Behaviour	
Sub-ordinate Themes	Validation From Transcribed Data
2.1) Mental Health Impact	"Depression, suicide, PTSD, OCD, substance abuse"; "the difference is women are taught to verbalize and males internalize their trauma"
2.2) Cry for Help, Overlooking Warning Signs	"Females internalize whereas males externalize, so with females you see more attempted suicide, but with males you're going to find their behaviour is more outwardly directed aggression towards others, you know disorderly behaviour that one cannot explain."
2.3) Cycle of Abuse	"Long term trauma, PTSD, could be especially with boys, if they are being sexually victimized as kids they grow up and then there is a possibility of them becoming offenders."
2.4) Male Specific	"Biologically because a man needs, their sexual organs need a particular stimulation in order to work and while women can engage in sexual intercourse without any need for sexual stimulation, so in my opinion yes men can be assaulted, but the perception of the society I belong to is that men cannot be assaulted."

Main Theme: The Complexity of Sexual Assault	
Sub-ordinate Themes	Validation From Transcribed Data
3.1) Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research	“How do you fix an issue if you’re only looking at half the problem? We are never going to sort out sexual crimes if we are not looking at all the victims and all the perpetrators, trying to figure out why the perpetrators are doing what they are doing? and trying to figure out how to stop the victims from becoming victims?”
3.2) Individuality of Sexual Assault & Survivors	“Teachers, neighbours, uncles, water polo coaches, anyone in authority really, police officers, doctors. If you have better weapons, can you pin a man down and rape him, yes you can, but you can also knock someone out and rape them, you can hold a gun to their head and rape them, there are so many ways to actually assault someone and unfortunately human beings have become very, very creative in being able to do that.”
3.3) Need for Education & Awareness	“Even our police system, the police personnel have not been trained adequately to deal with males that come in to report that they have been sexually violated, and this goes for both male to male and even female to male sexual abuse. So, because of the social stigma around it and because of the system not really catering for them it brings about feeling of being rejected, being out of place.”

5.3.5 Individual Textural and Structural Descriptions

During individual textural description the researcher identified common themes by providing direct quotes from each participant in order to provide context and allow for a better understanding of the participants perception of the research phenomenon (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). During individual structural description the researcher utilized the in-depth fields notes in order to determine in which manner and context the participants made their statements, this added to the deeper understanding of what participants truly meant when they were answering the research questions (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015). With regards to this study the researcher combined both textural and structural descriptions into one table to allow for the full understanding of what was said by participants, the following tables are some examples of how these descriptions were analysed (Eddles-Hirsch, 2015).

Table 4: Individual Textural & Structural Descriptions of Theme One

Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault	
The researcher asked participants about their expert opinion regarding the differences in how society treats and perceives male survivors of sexual assault in comparison to their female counterparts. The researcher was able to ask follow-up questions regarding the way society views masculinity and the stigma surrounding males who have experienced sexual assault. The researcher explored their expert opinion on how society has an impact on male sexual assault survivors.	
Rape Myths	
Participant 5:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there are gender differences regarding the impact sexual assault has on survivors the participant stated the following: <i>“In society females are more likely to be perceived as victims because they are perceived t be vulnerable, and weak, and the ideal victim. Whereas boys or males are seen to be more masculine, and dominant, and not really vulnerable to sexual victimization.”</i> <u>Structural:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant was very calm and logical when providing this answer.

Participant 4:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there is a societal belief that males cannot be assaulted the participant stated: <i>"In my opinion males do get sexually assaulted, but the society that I belong to, in the society we have been brought up in, males cannot be sexually assaulted because of the masculinity aspect of it that they are men, they are strong, they can't be assaulted".</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The participant provided a very passionate answer, highlighting the serious impact the masculine culture in South Africa has on the way society views sexual assault. The field notes indicate that the participant placed great emphasis on the words "they are men, they are strong" statement indicating a strong disagreement with this commonly held societal view and highlighting the impact of such gender norms and stereotypes.
Shame & Guilt	
Participant 5:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether they believe males sexual assault survivors receive treatment for the assault they experienced the participant responded with the following: <i>"Not really because there is this whole societal perception of, from the outside society looking at these victims in a different way and it is also the victims themselves seeing it as 'males can't be victims' so they wouldn't seek the help. So, without disclosing, without speaking to anyone they label themselves as well. So, it is not just society labelling them, they label themselves. So, if they label themselves in a 'I am a man I'm not supposed to go through this' they are not going to receive the support. So male sexual victimization just brings in a whole new dynamic, it's not just how society labels them but also how they see themselves."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participants demeanour was calm and collected whilst providing this answer, indicating clear objectivity in the answer.
Participant 4:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether males sexual assault survivors disclose less often than female survivors the participant provided the following response: <i>"Yes, yes, they do disclose less because we have been informed that various factors cause male sexual assault victims not to report crimes such as sexual assault. Some of them would range from shame, the shame of 'how did this happen to me?', 'how could this happen to</i>

	<i>me?'. You know, the masculinity and how society is constructed to view men. So, we have the issues of shame, the issues of guilt, the feeling of embarrassment and also concern for confidentiality."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicated that the participant's tone of voice and facial expression placed great influence on the words 'shame' guilt' and 'embarrassment'. Indicating the importance of how these feelings impact the individual.
Masculinity, Gender Norms & Perceived Weakness	
Participant 1:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there are gender differences regarding the impact sexual assault has on survivors the participant stated the following: <i>"Female victims are, I would say more willing to share, verbalize their pain and trauma. Whereas your male victims, would not find themselves in a position of being comfortable about sharing their pain and trauma. Generally male victims subscribe to the patriarchal norms and values, it's about projecting this macho image of being in a position of power, of dominance, and if they have been subjected to trauma, they're more likely to feel powerless but also feel being emasculated, feel they are weak and so I think those are the big differences between the two."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant placed great emphasis on the patriarchal norms and values though their facial expression and change in the tone of voice whilst discussing it, indicating that the participant believes that these norms play an important role when looking at the impact trauma has on males.
Participant 3:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked about how sexual assault trauma can influence the survivor's behaviour the participant responded with the following: <i>"For men it becomes this thing, especially if they were raped by a man, they suddenly have to conquer all the women in the world to prove how masculine they are, you know, or they become violent to show how manly they are."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicated that the participant placed great emphasis on the words, "masculine" and "manly" with their tone of voice and using air quotation marks. Indicating that these beliefs about masculinity do have a big impact on behaviour.

Media & Stigma	
Participant 2:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there is a societal belief that male sexual assault is a common occurrence the participant answered the following: <i>“Yes, it is a rape myth, a self-deception or somewhat a deception perpetuated by film and television as well. If you look back at the film exploitation or sexploitation era of film, where a whole bunch of rape revenge films came out, trying to speak to the idea of people getting raped and seeking revenge. What is seen throughout is very few films depicting male sexual assault. In the entire decade of sexploitation films and rape revenge films that came out, of which there were tens of thousands across the planet, I can only think of three that involved a male victim. Mostly what was depicted was a female getting raped and a male seeking revenge on her behalf. So that shows you how even in film and media, how scarcely this is depicted which I think is important because that is where we get a lot of our narrative from.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes stated that the participant was clearly very passionate about the portrayal of male sexual assault in media, placing great emphasis on how media plays a crucial role in determining the way society views things.
Participant 3:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there is a societal belief that male sexual assault is a rare occurrence the participant mentioned the following: <i>“If you walk into a rape crisis centre, what are the pictures that are going to confront you? It’s going to be pictures of women and girls, and that’s it! You seldom, very, very, seldom see a picture of a boy as a victim in a rape crisis centre. Research done on 25 rape crisis centres found that of those 25 only 10 treats both boys and girls, and of those 10 only 2 included images of boys in their marketing.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant was passionately expressing their views on media representation and how it deters male sexual assault survivors, indicating the importance of improving awareness and reducing stigma.

Table 5: Individual Textural & Structural Descriptions of Theme Two

Trauma & Criminal Behaviour	
The researcher asked participants about their expert opinion regarding the mental and behavioural impact that sexual assault trauma might have on survivors. The researcher was able to ask follow-up questions regarding the way untreated trauma impacts individuals and how a survivor's gender might come into play. The researcher explored their expert options on how trauma could potentially lead to criminal behaviour if overlooked or untreated.	
Mental Health Impact	
Participant 3:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked what the possible mental health issues are related to sexual assault trauma the participant provided the following response: <i>"Depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder, are all common amongst the survivors that I am working with."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant was quick to respond to this question, indicating that they have seen many of these disorders present in many of the sexual assault survivors they work with. The participant was very clear and confident when discussing this, indicating that they truly agree there is a strong link between this trauma and these mental disorders.
Participant 1:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked about the mental health issues related to untreated sexual assault trauma the participant mentioned the following: <i>"Depression, suicide, PTSD, OCD, substance abuse."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant displayed a neutral facial expression and tone of voice whilst answering, note that the participant is an expert who deals with sexual assault trauma on a daily basis and thus there is a lot of rationality and objectivity when answering questions.
Cry for Help, Overlooking Warning Signs	
Participant 6:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether males respond differently to trauma than females the participant provided the following response: <i>"Yes, if males are keeping it with them it could result in anger, it could result in violent behaviour. If you look at women keeping it in, they, it's more of a self-harm, it is internal"</i>

	<i>whereas males might express it externally and abuse their partners or their children. So, I think the response is different, one is more violent than the other.</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant provided clear and concise answers to the question with little change in their tone of voice, indicating clear reasoning and objectivity whilst providing the answer.
Participant 1:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked about the gender differences with regards to the behavioural impact sexual assault trauma has, the participant responded with the following: <i>"Females internalize whereas males externalize, so with females you see more attempted suicide, but with males you're going to find their behaviour is more outwardly directed aggression towards others, you know disorderly behaviour that one cannot explain."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate the participant used expressive hand gestures whilst answering.
Cycle of Abuse	
Participant 2:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked what they believe are the possible behavioural changes or risks that could develop as a result of untreated trauma the participant's response included the following: <i>"Especially with boys, if they are being sexually victimized as kids they grow up and then there is a possibility of them becoming offender (referring to them potentially becoming sexual offenders)"</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The participant mentioned this with a calm demeanour whilst referring to their many years of treating sexual assault trauma in males especially, the field notes indicate that the participant remained calm in their tone of voice and presented this answer in a factual and professional manner.
Participant 6:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked what the possible mental health and behavioural issues are that can develop from untreated sexual assault trauma the participant mentioned the following: <i>"Long term trauma, PTSD, could be especially with boys, if they are being sexually victimized as kids they grow up and then there is a possibility of them becoming offenders."</i>

	<u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate a clear and calm tone of voice, indicating that the participant provided a well thought out rational answer.
Male Specific	
Participant 1:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked about how sexual assault trauma might definitely impact male survivors in comparison to their female counterparts the participant mentioned the following: <i>“With older males (referring to adolescent males) when they have been subjected to sexual abuse such as, sometimes if they have been in a sexual relationship with an older female (referring to statutory rape) it is seen as more of a conquest, they don’t always recognize it as sexual abuse.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicated that the participant expressed great passion (through their tone of voice becoming a bit louder) when mentioning this, indicating that the participant believes it is an important thing to note when dealing with young males who have been sexually assaulted.
Participant 6:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether or not they think society has a belief that males cannot be sexually assaulted the participant provided the following response: <i>“Biologically because a man needs, their sexual organs need a particular stimulation in order to work (referring to the physiological response of receiving an erection or ejaculating) while woman can engage in sexual intercourse without any need for sexual stimulation, so in my opinion yes men can be assaulted but the perception of the society I belong in (referring to the traditional culture of masculinity in South Africa) believes men cannot be assaulted.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The participant placed great emphasis (with tone of voice and facial expression) on the fact that males can also be assaulted, and as they were discussing it they displayed clear disagreement with the societal belief that men “cannot” be assaulted because their bodies responded physiologically to sexual stimuli.

Table 6: Individual Textural & Structural Descriptions of Theme Three

The Complexity of Sexual Assault	
The researcher asked participants about their expert opinion regarding the impact sexual assault has on survivors and found that sexual assault and trauma is very complex. Throughout the interviews the researcher found that each individual responds differently towards crime and the circumstances of each assault differ. Meaning there is no clear indication as to how sexual assault trauma will exactly influence the survivors. Through follow-up questions the researcher explored the expert opinion of the participants regarding the individuality of sexual assault and trauma.	
Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research	
Participant 5:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether the participant believed that future sexual assault studies should be gender-inclusive the following response was provided: <i>“Yes, gender is important because that determines whether they are going to seek assistance and what type of assistance is available. Because if we don’t know that males are experiencing this there is not going to be education about what is happening and therefore it is going to continue and it is going to be neglected in research.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant responded in a very calm, and factual demeanour. The participants tone of voice place emphasis on the “determines whether they are going to seek assistance” part of the response, indicating that this is a very important thing to include males in research.
Participant 2:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there is an adequate understanding of male sexual assault and trauma the participant provided the following response: <i>“There is an incredibly poor understanding of male trauma, injury, especially sexual trauma and an enate resistance to understand.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant responded with a very serious facial expression, highlighting the seriousness of the matter and the importance of resolving this specific issue.

Individuality of Sexual Assault & Survivors	
Participant 2:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked what the risks of untreated sexual assault trauma is the participant responded with: <i>"I'd say it is one of the most complicated things because we are, again there is always exceptions like A sexual people, which is very few, so sexuality, sexual orientation, sexual confusion, gender, sex, all of those things are complicated on its own but when you are talking about the violation of these things we are now talking about an extra layer of complication to things that are already complicated."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant placed emphasis on this answer through utilizing many hand signals and drawing a lot of attention to how complicated each individual case is.
Participant 4:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether there is a societal belief that males cannot be assaulted the participant mentioned the following in their response: <i>"Teachers, neighbours, uncles, water polo coaches, anyone in authority really, police officers, doctors. If you have better weapons, can you pin a man down and rape him, yes you can, but you can also knock someone out and rape them, you can hold a gun to their head and rape them, there are so many ways to actually assault someone and unfortunately human beings have become very, very creative in being able to do that."</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate great passion and seriousness in the facial expression and tone of voice the participant used.
Need for Education & Awareness	
Participant 4:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked what they believe the true prevalence of male sexual assault is the participant provided the following response: <i>"Men do get sexually assaulted but they don't report it because less platforms have been created for men to be able to speak out about being sexually assaulted. From a statistics approach, yes more females sexual assault cases are reported, but to be realistic the difference might not be that much because there are men that get assaulted, but they don't report it, they don't even tell their friends that they've been assaulted."</i>

	<u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicate that the participant displayed clear frustration when mentioning that males do not have an adequate platform to speak out about sexual assault, emphasising that the participant wanted to emphasize the importance of creating more support structures for males.
Participant 5:	<u>Textural Description:</u> When asked whether the participant believes that males disclose less often than females, the following response was provided: <i>“In terms of literature, yes females disclose more than males and obviously that has to do with being misinformed and the stereotypes behind sexual assault victimization.”</i> <u>Structural Description:</u> The field notes indicated that the participant’s facial expression as serious and along with the answer provided indicated that the participant does not agree with the stereotypes they mentioned surrounding sexual victimization.

5.4 Interpretation of the Main and Sub-ordinate Themes

After interpretative phenomenological analysis was conducted, the researcher was required to interpret the main and sub-ordinate themes that were identified. Both the Labelling and General Strain theories were applied during the interpretation of the findings (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Cheung & Ng, 1988; Wellford, 1975).

5.4.1 Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault

The main theme titled Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault, refers to the perception society has of sexual assault, especially regarding male survivors, and how these perceptions may directly or indirectly influence the treatment males receive for the trauma they experienced.

5.4.1.1 Rape Myths

The sub-ordinate theme titled Rape Myths refers to the commonly held false beliefs of sexual assault which impact the treatment of male sexual assault survivors (Allen et al., 2015). The research participants supported that there are still many problematic rape myths within society, and that these affect the way male survivors are treated which in turn may deter them from seeking help for the trauma they experienced (Allen et al., 2015). Some of the rape myths that were highlighted by the research participants were as follows:

- The false belief that males cannot be assaulted because they are too strong, and if a male was assaulted it is because they were too weak to defend themselves.
- The false belief that males cannot be traumatised by sexual assault because men enjoy sex and always want it.
- The false belief that only women and children can be sexually assaulted and that only men can commit a sexual assault.
- The false belief that male sexual assault is an extremely rare occurrence.

According to the labelling theory the way society labels an individual results in them being treated solely in accordance with said label, with regards to male sexual assault and rape myths the fear of being labelled as “weak” by society often deters males from disclosing and seeking treatment (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Wellford, 1975). The research participants highlighted that it is crucial for more information to be accessible to members of society in order to combat these false beliefs that cloud the judgement of individuals (Allen et al., 2015). Furthermore, it was found that male sexual assault survivors experience a lot of secondary victimization due to these rape myths and how they influence the way society treat male survivors (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017). Due to these rape myths males are often not believed when they disclose about their assault, and the disbelief deters males from disclosing about the trauma they experienced in turn resulting in them not seeking help (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017). The researcher found that all the participants agreed that male sexual assault occurs far more often than initially believed, especially in a country like South Africa

where it is estimated to be similar to the number of female sexual assault, yet there is very little societal awareness of male sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015; Gartner, 2017).

5.4.1.2 Shame & Guilt

The aforementioned rape myths are often also believed by male sexual assault survivors themselves, as a result they experience extreme feeling of shame and guilt regarding their own assault (Allen et al., 2015). There is a great amount of shame experienced by male sexual assault survivors due to the false belief that male sexual assault is an extremely rare occurrence (Allen et al., 2015). Furthermore, male survivors often experience feelings of shame a guilt due to the belief that they were too “weak” to defend themselves (Allen et al., 2015). It has been found that sexual assault is often motivated by power and control, thus it is common for survivors to feel as if they had lost their dignity due to the assault (Allen et al., 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). The feelings of lost dignity along with the added judgement male survivors experience from society leads to isolation (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Gartner, 2017).

According to the research participants, male survivors are greatly impacted by the views of society, after experiencing sexual assault males tend to feel very ashamed and self-blame which contributes to their lack of reporting the assault (Allen et al., 2015; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). These findings are supported by the labelling theory which suggest that once an individual is labelled a certain way, the society they live in will treat then only as that label and this is problematic due to the stigma surrounding gender and sexual assault (Cheung & Ng, 1988; Wellford, 1975). The research participants highlighted that the way members of society react to males disclosing about their sexual assault plays a crucial role in the help-seeking behaviour of the survivors (Allen et al., 2015; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). Participants stated that in South Africa it is common for law enforcement to disbelieve, judge, and humiliate males who report sexual assault due to the culture of masculinity (Allen et al., 2015; Du Toit, 2022; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). The participants have supported previous findings that the prevalence of male sexual

assault is not far less than female sexual assault, however male sexual assault is far less reported due to the shame surrounding it (Du Mont et al., 2013; Jina et al., 2020; Kramer & Bowman, 2021). The research participants further exclaimed the importance of creating awareness about male sexual assault in order to improve the reactions of law enforcement officers, family and community members when they are told that a male has been sexually assaulted (Du Mont et al., 2013; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018). It has been found that when a female discloses sexual assault her loved ones are more likely to react in an empathetic manner, whereas when a male discloses about his sexual assault it is far more common for him to experience judgement or reactions of disbelief which have an extremely negative impact on his treatment seeking behaviour (Allen et al., 2015; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Marshall et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018).

5.4.1.3 Masculinity, Gender Norms & Perceived Weakness

According to the research participants, there is still a strong culture surrounding traditional masculinity in South Africa which deems males as the defenders and females as the defenceless (Allen et al., 2015; Du Toit, 2022; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). These masculine views further support the false belief that a male can only be sexually assaulted because he was too weak to defend himself or he wanted the assault to occur (Allen et al., 2015; Du Toit, 2022; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017). These views can be extremely problematic as they place further shame on the male survivor and results in further isolation (Allen et al., 2015). Within many cultures it is still considered a sign of weakness for a male to be vulnerable, these cultures often teach their boys not to show any signs of physical or emotional vulnerability which teaches them from a young age to deal with things on their own (Allen et al., 2015; Du Toit, 2022; Graaff & Heinecken, 2017).

Sexual assault leaves survivors feeling powerless and for males there are strong feelings of emasculation that have negative impact on them (Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Gartner, 2017; Walfield, 2021). This culture of masculinity results in males hiding

their sexual assault due to the fear of being labelled as weak (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Gartner, 2017). The labelling theory suggest that it is possible for an individual to desire a new label, thus male sexual assault survivors might act out in risky or criminal behaviour in order to combat their feeling of emasculation and assume a new label which provides a more masculine label for themselves (Ardino, 2012; Cheung & Ng, 1988).

The suppression of trauma can lead to severe behavioural changes and the development of certain mental disorders (Daray et al., 2016; Soylu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). Therefore, it has been highlighted by the research participants that awareness about male sexual assault is of the utmost importance to allow for more support structures to be put in place to aid male survivors and to reduce the shame experienced (Allen et al., 2015, Du Toit, 2022).

5.4.1.4 Media & Stigma

The researcher found that the media plays a big role in perpetuating stigma about gender in relation to sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015, Du Toit, 2022; Gartner, 2017; Javaid, 2015; Marshall et al., 2013). The participants mentioned that there are many forms of media which influence society's perception of male sexual assault. Participants mentioned that Hollywood movies often include storylines of sexual assault, however these seldom depict the sexual assault of males, furthermore they solely portray males in the traditional gender roles of either the sexual aggressor or the hero who saves the female from assault. These depictions mould society's perception of sexual assault, and further supports the rape myth that only females can be assaulted and only males commit sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015).

Other forms of media further add to the isolation of male survivors, the participants highlighted that advertisements for sexual assault support organisation do not portray any male survivors seeking help (Allen et al., 2015). The exclusion of male survivors' representation further creates feelings of isolation in male survivors and has been found to deter males from seeking help as they believe they are alone and there is no one

who can relate to their experience (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Gartner, 2017).

Social media plays a crucial role in influencing society, trends on social media have the power to spread across the entire globe and influence the perception of millions who are connected to the internet (Allen et al., 2015). The impact of social media on behaviour has been seen many times with social movements such as the #MeToo movement. The impact of these movements is of a great magnitude, they mostly create positive social change and create awareness for many important social issues, however according to the participants there have been movements that depict men as sexual deviants and further perpetuate the villainization of males with regards to sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015). For instance, the #MenAreTrash movement resulted in a widespread belief that men are sexual deviants and are solely to blame for sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015; Reneses & Bosch, 2023). For male sexual assault survivors these movements create a sense of fear to speak out and further deter them from seeking help for the trauma they experienced (Allen et al., 2015; Reneses & Bosch, 2023). It has been found that media representation for male sexual assault survivors can aid in transforming the way society views sexual assault and allow more males to feel comfortable and supported rather than ashamed and alienated by society (Allen et al., 2015). According to participants the inclusion of male sexual assault survivors in media portrayal and campaigns will greatly improve societal reactions towards them and allow for the deconstruction of many problematic rape myths (Allen et al., 2015).

5.4.2 Trauma & Criminal Behaviour

The main theme titled Trauma & Criminal Behaviour refers to untreated trauma being a risk factor for potential future criminal behaviour, whether the behaviour develops intentionally as a defence mechanism or develops unconsciously as an attempt to ask for help by drawing attention to oneself. According to the general strain theory criminal behaviour can result from an individual experiencing great amounts of strain (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013). The theory suggests that emotions can be considered a motivator for criminal behaviour (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy,

2013). Sexual assault severely impacts survivors physically, mentally, and emotionally which according to the theory creates incentive for criminal behaviour as a coping mechanism for the strain experienced (Agnew, 1992; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). The following sub-ordinate themes have all been developed whilst utilizing the general strain theory:

5.4.2.1 Mental Health Impact

The researcher found that there are various ways in which trauma can influence an individual's behaviour (Du Mont et al., 2013; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). Many mental health issues arise from trauma, especially untreated trauma (Daray et al., 2016; Soylyu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). Participants highlighted that sexual assault survivors are at a high risk of developing mental disorders such as, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, borderline personality disorder, and many more (Daray et al., 2016; Soylyu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). This type of trauma has been found to profoundly impact a survivor's life in a negative way, and without treatment it is difficult for them to develop healthy coping mechanism (Du Mont et al., 2013; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). The research found that many sexual assault trauma survivors develop some form of substance abuse problems attempting to cope with the trauma (Daray et al., 2016; Soylyu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). Substance abuse is linked to many forms of criminal behaviour, ranging from physical assault to drug trafficking or theft to maintain the addiction (Daray et al., 2016; Soylyu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016).

Mental disorders have a great impact on behaviour and may influence individuals to behave in socially unacceptable ways, sometimes even criminal behaviour, for instance gender-based violence or child abuse (Daray et al., 2016; Soylyu et al., 2016; Voogt & Klettke, 2017; Ullman, 2016). The participants highlighted that risky behaviour can also result from this type of trauma (Du Mont et al., 2013; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). It is important to note that every individual deals with trauma in a different way, although the findings of the study have indicated that it is very

common for individuals who experienced this type of trauma to develop several mental disorders, which influence their behaviour in a negative manner, it does not mean that every sexual assault survivor will respond in exactly the same way (Du Mont et al., 2013; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013). However, there is a clear indication that it is very important to treat sexual assault survivors in order to minimize the risk of them developing mental health issues that may influence their behaviour in a negative way (Du Mont et al., 2013; Dworkin et al., 2017; Gartner, 2017; Marshall et al., 2013).

5.4.2.2 Cry for Help, Overlooking Warning Signs

The study found that sexual assault trauma increases the survivor's risk of engaging in violent crimes, especially in male survivors because it is more socially acceptable for males to behave aggressively (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). Participants highlighted that males tend to respond to trauma more externally whilst females respond more internally. The participants mentioned that females are more likely to respond by withdrawing from society and engaging in self-harm activities, whereas males are more likely to act out aggressively towards others. The main reason for this being that it is more socially acceptable for males to be aggressive than females, and it is a way for them to deal with the trauma without having to address it (Ardino, 2012). Due to gender norms regarding masculinity, it has been found that warning signs of sexual assault trauma is more often overlooked in males than in females (Allen et al., 2015; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018). For instance, one of the indications of possible sexual assault trauma is hyper sexuality and promiscuity, if one looks at a teenaged female and she is behaving in a hyper sexual manner it would be noticed by her peers and seen as a sign that something might be wrong because of gender norms suggesting that females do not typically behave like this. However, if a teenaged male behaves in exactly the same way it is seen as normal or even "cool" because society deems males as sexually driven.

Participants have also stated that with males there is a higher likelihood of unexplained criminality developing, rebellious and self-destructive behaviour is more common, it is believed that this is due to males attempting to prove their masculinity and show that they are not weak (Agnew, 1992; Ardino, 2012; Botchkovar & Broidy, 2013; Du Mont et al., 2013; Gartner, 2017). The research found that males tend to act out overly aggressive as a way to ensure they never feel as powerless as they did when they experienced the sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015). Aggressive and often criminal behaviour is in a sense a way for males to compensate for their experience of being assaulted (Allen et al., 2015). The research found that crimes such as physical assault, gang-violence, robbery are all common ways for males to act out when dealing with untreated trauma (Allen et al., 2015).

5.4.2.3 Cycle of Abuse

Participants highlighted that there is a risk of a cycle of abuse occurring, especially if the sexual assault survivors have experienced sexual assault from a young age (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). The participants suggested that the risk is slightly higher in males due to them not disclosing and receiving treatment for their trauma (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). If an individual is raised in an environment where sexual assault is a part of their everyday life, there is a risk of them growing up and continuing this cycle of abuse due to it being a “normal” part of their life (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). These findings however do not suggest that all sexual offenders have been assaulted, nor do they suggest that all sexual assault survivors will develop into offenders (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). The findings solely highlight that untreated childhood sexual assault trauma can be a potential risk factor for sexual offending in the future (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). These findings provide insight into how sexual assault research need to include all survivors regardless of their gender in order to reduce stigma, allow for more

support and potentially decrease the risk of this cycle of abuse continuing (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). In essence if one wants to combat sexual assault one must consider all aspects of sexual assault and gain a deeper understanding of it (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Marshall et al., 2013; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011).

5.4.2.4 Male Specific

The research found that there are a few things that males experience with regards to sexual assault trauma which females do not experience. Participants mentioned that there is a high number of sexual assaults committed by adult women on young adolescent males in South Africa, these are often overlooked due to peers viewing this assault as a sexual conquest on behalf of the young male (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2015). Society assumes that males are primarily driven by sex and always want to have sexual intercourse, however when it comes to adult females using their positions of power to coerce adolescent males in performing sexual acts with them it still has a detrimental impact on the young male's development (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2015). The researcher found that these young males are often manipulated by their assaulters and coerced into believing they wanted the sexual assault to occur (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2015). Due to male sexual organs responding physiologically aroused to sexual stimuli, this is often used to further manipulate and confuse post-pubescent males into believing they enjoyed the assault (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2015). This adds further strain to the males because they might refuse to speak out about the assault because they are ashamed of how their body physiologically responded to the assault (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2015). Therefore, highlighting the importance of including the experiences of male sexual assault survivors in future studies, in order to develop a better understanding of the impact the trauma has on males, how to treat the trauma and create a support structure for other males who have experienced similar issues (Du Toit, 2022; O'Brien et al., 2015).

5.4.3 The Complexity of Sexual Assault & Trauma

The main theme titled The Complexity of Sexual Assault highlights the importance of understanding that sexual assault is not just one specific type of action, each individual who has been assaulted responds differently to the trauma experienced and each assault is committed with unique circumstances surrounding it. Therefore, the theme highlights the importance to end the overall generalisation of sexual assault and realise that anyone is capable of being a sexual offender and anyone is at risk of being a sexual assault survivor, regardless of their age, gender, and any other characteristics.

5.4.3.1 Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research

The research found that there is a belief that male sexual assault is a rare occurrence, thus most research considers it as an outlier (Davies, 2002; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016; Walfield, 2021). The main reason identified by the research study is that in South Africa there is an overwhelming amount of strain on the justice system with a great influx of sexual assault cases being reported daily, and most reports are made by female sexual assault survivors (Easton et al., 2014; Jina et al., 2020). Male sexual assault survivors are discouraged from reporting due to many circumstances, such as, the aforementioned gender stigma, rape myths and stereotype (Allen et al., 2015). Furthermore, there are very few sexual assault cases that are closed, resulting in a feeling of hopelessness and distrust in the justice system (Easton et al., 2014; Jina et al., 2020). The reaction of law enforcement officers often deters males from wanting to pursue justice for their sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015; Du Toit, 2022; Graaff & Heineken, 2017). With the great lack of reporting there is a great under estimation of the true prevalence of male sexual assault in south Africa (Davies, 2002; Gartner, 2017; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016; Walfield, 2021). Participants highlighted that they believed the prevalence of male sexual assault is similar to that of females, however due to the lack of reporting many studies overlook this as their statistical analysis cannot be conducted on the number of cases that are never reported (Easton et al., 2014; Jina et al., 2020).

5.4.3.2 Individuality of Sexual Assault & Survivors

The researcher found that sexual assault is a complex issue, because of the individuality of the sexual assault survivors and the unique circumstances surrounding each sexual assault (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013). Each individual responds to trauma in their own way (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013). Sexual assault is not just one act, it includes many different forms of unwanted sexual action or touching and the manner in which the assault is committed also varies (Du Mont et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2013; Soyulu et al., 2016). Some assaults are committed by strangers and some by close family relatives, this might have a different impact on the way the survivors respond to the trauma (Du Mont et al., 2013; Matthews et al., 2018; Marshall et al., 2013; Soyulu et al., 2016). Some sexual assaults are committed with violence, whilst others might be committed with the use of drugs that make the survivors sleep. Participants highlighted that no one sexual assault is exactly like the next and human beings are unique, thus all survivors are impacted in a different manner (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013). This indicates a clear need to explore all aspects of sexual assault trauma in order to develop a better understanding of how to support survivors in the most adequate manner possible (Davies, 2002; Gartner, 2017). The impact of sexual assault is detrimental to the survivors, and it is of the utmost importance that they receive care and treatment for their trauma (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013). It is important for future sexual assault studies to reduce the amount of generalization regarding sexual assault and take a more individualized approach to understanding the true impact sexual assault might have on survivors and improve our understanding of this extremely complex phenomenon (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013).

5.4.3.3 Need for Education & Awareness

The research found that there is a lack of general knowledge on how to appropriately respond to male sexual assault survivors when they disclose about their assault (Allen et al., 2015; Hammond et al., 2017; Javaid, 2015; Maliti, 2022). Participants highlighted

that there is a need to educate the community, law enforcement officers, peers, teachers, medical professionals, and family members on the prevalence of male sexual assault and the impact their responses can have on these survivors. It has been found that when a female discloses about her sexual assault, she is often met with empathetic reactions and provided with many support systems, yet when a male discloses about his sexual assault he is often met with shocked reactions and cross-questioned with regards to the details of how it was possible for him to be assaulted. There is a need to educate the community, to ensure that sexual assault trauma indicators are not overlooked in males and further ensure that there is representation and organisations that are equipped to support males as well (Allen et al., 2015; Hammond et al., 2017; Javaid, 2015; Maliti, 2022). The research found that by including male sexual assault survivors in future research studies, it will elevate some of the stigma surrounding male sexual assault and allows for a better understanding of how to support and treat all survivors of sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015). Once there is more awareness created about male sexual assault it will also encourage male survivors that they are not alone and to seek treatment and support for the trauma they experienced (Allen et al., 2015).

5.6 Conclusion

The findings of the study were thoroughly analysed and presented step by step in this chapter. The researcher found and explained three main themes and eleven sub-ordinate themes. The first main theme (titled Societal Perceptions of Male Sexual Assault) indicates the perceptions society have of gender in relation to sexual assault and consisted of four sub-ordinate themes that provided further insight into all the factors that influence the perception of male sexual assault and the impact thereof. The sub-ordinate themes for the first main theme were as follows: Rape Myths, Shame & Guilt, Masculinity, Gender Norms & Perceived Weakness, and Media & Stigma. The first main theme supports the previously discussed literature, indicating that gender stigma has a great influence on the way society perceives and treats male sexual assault survivors and that there are gender differences regarding the way male survivors are treated in comparison to their female counterparts. The second main

theme (titled Trauma & Criminal Behaviour) indicated the link that exists between deviant/criminal behaviour and past trauma, especially untreated trauma. This theme consists of the following four sub-ordinate themes: Mental Health Impact, Cry for Help, Overlooking Warning Signs, Cycle of Abuse, and Male Specific. The second theme supports previously discussed literature stating that there is a strong correlation between untreated trauma, mental health issues and criminal behaviour. It was also established that there are male specific factors that might increase an individual's risk of developing severe behavioural issues. The third main theme (titled The Complexity of Sexual Assault & Trauma) indicates how complex sexual assault trauma truly is due to the individuality of each survivor and the circumstances surrounding the sexual assault. This theme consists of the following three sub-ordinate themes: Lack of Male Sexual Assault Research, Individuality of Sexual Assault & Survivors, and Need for Education & Awareness. The third theme supports previous literature stating that there is a great lack of research and understanding regarding male sexual assault, and that misconceptions about sexual assault are problematic as they do not allow for the full exploration of the complexity of sexual assault trauma.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overall summary of the major research findings of the research. The limitations of the qualitative study have been discussed along with an explanation of how these limitations were dealt with throughout the research study. It includes the value of the study, indicating that the study allowed for a deeper understanding of male sexual assault, as well as indicating the importance of gender inclusivity in sexual assault research. The chapter includes recommendations for future sexual assault research to be gender inclusive in order to reduce the evident gap in male sexual assault research and improve the understanding of the impact sexual assault has on survivors. Finally, the chapter will conclude with an explanation of how the research aim and objective have been achieved.

6.2 Summary of Major Findings

The aim of this study was achieved because the research was able to explore (from an expert point of view) whether the way society perceives and treats male survivors of sexual assault might increase a male survivor's risk of engaging in criminal behaviour as a symptomatic expression of their untreated trauma.

All the research questions were answered, the research examined the difference between the way society perceives and treats male survivors of sexual assault in comparison to their female counterparts. Finding that there is still a lot of stigma and rape myths regarding the sexual assault of males which have a great influence on the way society views males who have been sexually assaulted and influences the disclosure and treatment seeking behaviour of males (Davies, 2002; Dworkin et al., 2017).

The research identified a link between untreated trauma and criminal behaviour, highlighting the importance of understanding how each sexual assault survivor responds differently to the trauma experienced and encouraging future studies to further

explore the individuality of sexual assault and the survivors thereof (Fossey et al., 2002; Regehr & Marziali, 1999; Ungar et al., 2013).

The research provided recommendations for future sexual assault studies to include male sexual assault survivors in their studies in order to reduce stigma around the research phenomenon and creating more understanding and support structures for male survivors of sexual assault. Through doing so the research highlighted the importance of fully exploring the phenomenon of sexual assault in order to determine how to treat survivors thereof and determine preventative measure that might reduce sexual assault.

The study determined that there is a high risk of untreated sexual assault trauma resulting in criminal behaviour as a coping mechanism (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). The findings suggest that each individual is different, and it does not suggest that all survivors will become criminal offenders, however if sexual assault trauma is adequately understood and treated it might significantly reduce the risk of an individual turning to criminal behaviour as an outlet for the trauma they experienced (Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011).

The research findings support that the stigma surrounding male sexual assault is due to the gross lack of gender inclusive research about the phenomenon, the study encourages future studies to be inclusive and in turn reduce the stigma surrounding male sexual assault (Davies, 2002; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soyulu et al., 2016; Walfield, 2021).

6.3 Limitations of the Study

Due to the qualitative research method the study was time-consuming and labour intensive (Fossey et al., 2002; McIntosh & Morse, 2015; Sundler et al., 2019). The research analysis was very complex as the results of the study were not statistically representative, the researcher had to thoroughly examine every detail of the data in order to ensure accurate results and findings (Fossey et al., 2002; McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The researcher was required to consistently implement self-reflectivity in order to ensure that their own potential biases do not influence the findings of the research

study because of the qualitative approach having a higher risk of this occurring (Fossey et al., 2002; McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Self-reflectivity refers to the researcher being aware of their own potential biases and ensuring that they consistently reflect on these potential biases and make sure their findings are solely based on the data that was collected and not based on their own biased interpretation of the data (Fossey et al., 2002; McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The conclusions of qualitative research cannot be numerically verified; however, it does allow for an in-depth exploration of the research topic which is more applicable for this research study (Fossey et al., 2002; McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

With regards to the data collection and analysis of phenomenological research the interpretation of the data is considered a tedious and difficult process which required the researcher's full attention and consumes much of their time (McNarry et al., 2019; Sundler et al., 2019). Furthermore, the sample size of the phenomenological paradigm is smaller than that of quantitative research paradigms, as a result many argue that the findings are not generalizable (McNarry et al., 2019; Sundler et al., 2019). Due to the subjective nature of the phenomenological research paradigm, it is difficult to prove the reliability and validity of the research study, as the researcher is required to prove that the finding of the study was not influenced by any possible bias (McNarry et al., 2019; Sundler et al., 2019).

The purposive non-probability sampling method is subjective, thus there was a higher risk of resulting in an error based on the judgement of the researcher, however with regards to this study the researcher had very specific requirements for participants to be considered for the study (Acharya et al., 2013; Barratt, Ferris & Lenton, 2015; Etikan & Bala, 2017; Etikan et al., 2016). The researcher selected participants based on their specific area of expertise and the amount of experience they have in their fields; thus, the researcher was able to obtain substantial proof that the participants were eligible to partake in the research study (Acharya et al., 2013; Barratt et al., 2015; Etikan & Bala, 2017; Etikan et al., 2016). It has been argued that this sampling method lacks reliability if done inadequately, in order to ensure the sampling method was effective with regards to this study the researcher had rigorously sought out participants based of the specific

inclusion criteria for the study (Acharya et al., 2013; Barratt et al., 2015; Etikan & Bala, 2017; Etikan et al., 2016).

Exploratory and cross-sectional research collects data from a smaller sample size at a specific point in time and therefore it is not considered generalizable to the public, however this study is looking at the perception of experts not the perception of the general public (Fossey et al., 2002; Van der Stede, 2014; Spector, 2019). The results of qualitative phenomenological research are not numerically nor statistically representative; thus, the research required a lot of time to interpret and present in a logical manner (Bowen & Wiersema, 1999; Kimonides et al., 2018; Spector, 2019).

Semi-structured interviews consist of open-ended questions, which present a higher risk of participants deviating from the research question being asked (Brown & Danaher, 2019; McIntosh & Morse, 2015). These questions tend to be more difficult to analyse due to the great amount of data being collected from a single participant, thus the researcher was responsible for meticulous record keeping and note taking to ensure no valuable information was lost during any stage of the interviews (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The researcher was also responsible to adequately guiding the interview in a manner that minimizes the deviation from the research topic (McIntosh & Morse, 2015).

6.4 Value of The Study

The value of the study was that the finding of the study allowed for a deeper understanding of male sexual assault, as well as indicated the importance of gender inclusive sexual assault research (Allen et al., 2015; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). Through exploring the negative impact gender stereotypes and stigma can have on male survivors of sexual assault, the study showcased the importance of adequate trauma treatment for all survivors of sexual assault, regardless of their gender, thus highlighting a need for more knowledge about male survivor treatment (Allen et al., 2015; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soylu et al., 2016). Furthermore, the research provided recommendations and

encouragement for future sexual assault research to be more gender inclusive and in turn reduce gender stigma/stereotypes surrounding sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015; Davies, 2002; Gagnier & Collin-Vézina, 2016; Hammond et al., 2017; Matthews et al., 2018; Soyulu et al., 2016).

6.5 Recommendations for Future Studies

The current study indicated that there is a great need for future sexual assault studies to include both male and female survivors, as sexual assault is an extremely complex topic to research and there is little understanding of male survivors (Allen et al., 2015). If something is not fully researched and understood it is difficult to put preventative measures in place, therefore the study was able to highlight a great gap in sexual assault research and indicate the importance of gender inclusivity in order to improve the understanding of the impact sexual assault has on survivors (Allen et al., 2015).

The research encourages future sexual assault studies to narrow the gap in research and include male survivors as it will in turn improve our understanding of the impact and treatment of sexual assault (Allen et al., 2015). The research identified that untreated sexual assault trauma is complex and has a variety of negative impacts on individuals and society, the research was able to highlight the lack of awareness and support for male sexual assault survivors and how this could be a risk factor for potential future criminal behaviour (Allen et al., 2015; Ardino, 2012; Maschi, 2006; Stoddard-Dare et al., 2011). The research highlighted the importance of gender inclusivity in future sexual assault studies as it will allow for a better understanding of how to reduce the negative impact of sexual assault on both male and female survivors (Allen et al., 2015).

6.6 Achievement of Objectives

All four objectives of the study were achieved, the researcher explored and identified the differences between the way society perceives and treats male sexual assault survivors in comparison to female survivors. The researcher further explored expert participants' opinion regarding the research phenomenon and found that according to the experts there is a strong possibility that untreated sexual assault trauma is a potential risk factor for future criminal behaviour, especially amongst males, thus fulfilling the second research objective. The third objective was to investigate interventions that can be put in place on how male sexual assault can be treated and researched, this objective was achieved as the research determined that the best solution is to create more inclusion, awareness and education for male sexual assault within society. Through including male sexual assault survivors in future sexual assault research, advocacy, forums and media the stigma surrounding gender and sexual assault will be greatly reduced and male survivors will feel less judged and more comfortable with seeking help. Finally, the research study was able to thoroughly examine previous literature, research and articles and fully explore the way society perceives and treats male sexual assault survivors. The research identified that to date there are still many problematic gender stereotypes fuelled by the gender norms within society. The study was able to highlight how these stereotypes influence the perception of both society and the self-perception of male sexual assault survivors acts as a barrier between male survivors and the support they require to deal with their trauma, thus, fulfilling the fourth objective.

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ANNEXURE 1 - RESEARCH DEFENSE PANEL APPROVAL LETTER



Our Ref: M. 300922
Enquiries: research@iie.ac.za

20 September 2022



Outcome of Ethics Clearance Application for Master of Philosophy in Arts

Student name: Leigh-Zanne Viviers
Student number: [REDACTED]
Brand and campus: IIE MSA



Dear Leigh-Zanne,



Thank you for submitting the ethics clearance application for the study:

Untreated male sexual assault as a potential predictor for criminal behaviour: evidence from South Africa.



We are pleased to inform you that the Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee considered and granted ethics clearance. This means that you may proceed with data collection. Kindly ensure that all ethical considerations are duly applied whilst collecting, analysing and interpreting the data for the completion of your research. The committee noted and approves the change in title of the study from the initial proposal approval.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your programme team or supervisor directly.

All the best with your research.



Dr WH Engelbrecht
Dean: Research and Postgraduate Studies



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ANNEXURE 2 - RESEARCH CONSENT FORM ONE

Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants
To whom it may concern, My name is Leigh-Zanne Viviers, and I am a student at IIE MSA. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of (Doctor Patrick Murhula) about the impact societal perceptions and treatment may have on male survivors of sexual assault in regard to their treatment-seeking behaviour and possible future criminal behaviour, in order to encourage future sexual assault studies to be more gender inclusive. I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.
What will I be doing if I participate in your study?
I would like to invite you to participate in this research because I require your professional opinion about how sexual assault may differently impact male survivors in comparison to their female counterparts, in order to identify problem areas and encourage future sexual assault studies to be gender inclusive. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to conduct a semi-structure interview with you to gain your expert perception of the impact sexual assault has on both male and female survivors and their potential risk of engaging in criminal behaviour. You can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.
Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?
Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.
Do I have to participate in the study?
• Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary. • If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so. • Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.
Will my identity be protected?
I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out

of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at IIE MSA, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research, but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my IIE master's degree in criminology. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows:

Leigh-Zanne Viviers

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:

Doctor Patrick Murhula

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

ANNEXURE 3 - RESEARCH CONSENT FORM TWO

Consent form for participants	
I, _____, agree to allow Leigh-Zanne Viviers to audio record my interviews as part of the research about the impact societal perceptions and treatment may have on male survivors of sexual assault in regards to their treatment-seeking behaviour and possible future criminal behaviour. This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that: • My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private. • The recordings will be stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer; and • Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.	
Signature	Date

ANNEXURE 4 - RESEARCH INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. My research focuses on how societal perception of sexual assault impacts male survivors of sexual assault with regards to their treatment-seeking behaviour and possible future criminal behaviour. The purpose of this interview is to gain your expert opinion on how society, gender stereotypes and stigma can impact the treatment and behaviour of male sexual assault survivors. With your consent, I would like to record this interview.

Please note that your participation is completely voluntary, and you are within your rights to withdraw at any point. Your participation in this research will remain confidential and no identifying information will be used. Only my Supervisor Dr. Patrick Murhula and I will have access to the recording made of the interview and it will be stored on a password-protected device.

If you don't mind, could you indicate which age category you fall into? I ask the question because it speaks to your experience within the field.

GENDER	AGE CATEGORY

- Could you briefly outline your position in your organization and how long you've been there?
Areas of expertise?
- In your opinion are there gender differences regarding the impact sexual assault has on survivors?
Why do you say so?
- Do you find that male sexual assault survivors disclose less often than female survivors?
Why do you say so?

- Do you believe that the prevalence of male sexual assault is far less than the prevalence of female sexual assault?
Why do you think that is?
- In your opinion is there a societal belief that males cannot be sexually assaulted?
Why do you believe this is?
- In your opinion does society treat male sexual assault survivors differently then they treat female sexual assault survivors?
Please elaborate on your answer.
- Do you believe there is a societal belief that male sexual assault isn't a common or big problem in society?
Why do you say so?
- In your opinion does society believe that male sexual assault is an extremely rare occurrence?
Why do you say so?
- What do you believe is the true prevalence of male sexual assault?
Please elaborate on your answer.
- What do you believe are the possible behavioural changes/risks that can result from sexual assault trauma?
Why do you say so?
- In your opinion, what are the possible mental health issues that can develop as a result of sexual assault trauma?
Why do you say so?

- Do you believe it is important to treat sexual assault trauma?
Why do you say so?
- What do you believe are the risks of untreated sexual assault trauma?
Why do you say so?
- Do you believe that male sexual assault survivors receive treatment for their trauma?
Why do you say so?
- Do you believe there is an adequate understanding of male sexual assault trauma and the treatment thereof?
Why do you say so?
- What do you believe could be possible consequences of untreated male sexual assault trauma?
Why do you say so?
- In your opinion, do males respond differently to trauma than their female counterparts?
Why do you say so?
- Do you believe there are adequate support structure in place for male survivors of sexual assault?
Why do you say so?
- In your opinion, do you believe that criminal behaviour can result from trauma?
Please elaborate on your answer.
- In your opinion, are men more likely to engage in risk taking behaviour than women?

Why do you say so?

- In your opinion, are men more likely to engage in criminal behaviour than women?

Why do you say so?

- In your opinion, what type of crimes are men more likely to commit?

Why do you say so?

- And what type of crimes are women more likely to commit?

Why do you say so?

- In your opinion, is there a lack of understanding regarding the prevalence and treatment of male sexual assault survivors?

Why do you say so?

- Will it be valuable for future sexual assault studies to consider and include both male and female survivors?

Why do you say so?

- Is there a need for a better understanding of how a survivor's gender might influence the impact sexual assault has on them?

Why do you say so?

- In your opinion does the lack of gender inclusive sexual assault research influence the treatment male sexual assault survivors receive after they have been assaulted?

Why do you say so?

- Do gender stereotypes have an influence on the way male survivors of sexual assault are perceived and treated?

Why do you say so?

- In your opinion do gender norms influence the way society perceives sexual assault survivors?

Why do you say so?

- Is there anything specific you believe should be included in future sexual assault studies?

Why do you say so?

- Do you have anything you would like to add that you believe might be helpful in better understanding how sexual assault might differently impact male survivors in comparison to their female counterparts?

ANNEXURE 5 - RESEARCH INVITATION

Good afternoon (insert participant title and name here),

I hope this email finds you well.

My name is Leigh-Zanne Viviers and I am currently completing my master's degree in criminology at IIE MSA, South Africa.

My current research is about the impact societal perceptions and treatment may have on male survivors of sexual assault in regards to their treatment-seeking behaviour and possible future criminal behaviour. The research aims to explore this topic in order to address the lack of awareness and inclusion of male sexual assault survivors in research.

I am aware of the work you do and I believe that your knowledge and expertise will be valuable for my study. As such, I would very much like to conduct a 45-to-50-minute interview with you.

I am more than happy to conduct an interview with you over Zoom at any time suitable to you.

If you have any questions regarding my research or the interview, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor Dr. Patrick Murhula via the contact information that follows:

My email address: (insert email address here)

Dr. Murhula's email address: (insert email address here)

Thank you for your time and I look forward to your positive response.

Kind regards,

Leigh-Zanne Viviers.