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A Rape Culture or Rape Crisis: The Impact on First Year College Students Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors after Participating in a Mandatory Sexual Violence Prevention Program

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Abstract

Sexual violence has become a national crisis for higher education institutions. The Department of Education charged institutions with providing sexual violence prevention programming to all incoming first year students. Given the serious of this matter, this research study sought to explore the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of first year college students concerning sexual assault from a socio-ecological perspective as a way to gain information on how to build comprehensive and successful prevention programs. The study utilized a qualitative content analysis methodology to interpret participant responses from gender specific focus groups. Participants consisted of two female groups and two male groups with a total of 19 participants who were all 18 years of age and first semester college students. The questions asked used the socio-ecological model as a framework and focused on the participant knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of sexual assault after watching a mandatory sexual violence prevention program facilitated during the first weekend of school. The outcome of the study resulted in participants sharing the information gained from the mandatory prevention program, the factors and actions that contribute to sexual violence on campus and the barriers they believe contribute to students not reporting incidences of sexual violence. The study also includes suggestions for a comprehensive prevention program based on the literature review conducted as well as the analysis of participant responses.

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Dedication

My St. John Fisher Family said "Trust the Process"; words that every professor and every classmate reiterated when a shred of doubt was felt by any one of us. It is a mantra that has been etched in my memory since the start of this doctoral program and continues to be the motivation and hope for all my future endeavors.

To my cohort, who the professors labeled as the "Late Eight" for a reason that does not need to be mentioned, thank you for the many times that we broke bread together, shared stories, and provided perspective to one another. Thank you for all the walks around the building that provided a sense of clarity when the life balance was off kilt. To my group Beyond the Bell, thank you for the continuous laughter, banter, the tears, and support that made late night Friday's and all day Saturday's easier to be present for. I could not have gone through the journey that I did without all of you. You created a sense of purpose and direction when there was none. You reminded me of what a true executive leader was and the doors that we would continue to knock down and walk through no matter how difficult the journey became. You all hold a special place in my heart.

To Mr. Lopez, thank you for encouraging me from the very start and staying by my side even during the difficult times; things really did come full circle. To my beautiful, smart, and kind daughter Anissa, thank you for keeping the light shining with your positive reinforcement and for being my motivation. And to my son Isaiah for

Biographical Sketch

Sandra S. Vazquez is currently an Assistant Director for The Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at the College at Brockport. Ms. Vazquez attended The College at Brockport graduating in 2003 with her Bachelors of Science in Psychology and in 2008 with her Masters of Education degree in College Counseling, bridging her degree with a license in Mental Health Counseling. In addition, she received her Trauma Certification with a focus in sexual assault from the University of Buffalo in 2012. She began her doctoral studies in May of 2013 at St. John Fisher College in the Ed.D program in Executive Leadership. Ms. Vazquez's research explored the impact of a mandatory sexual assault prevention program on the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of first year college students concerning sexual assault.

Abstract

Sexual violence has become a national crisis for higher education institutions. The Department of Education charged institutions with providing sexual violence prevention programming to all incoming first year students. Given the serious of this matter, this research study sought to explore the knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of first year college students concerning sexual assault from a socio-ecological perspective as a way to gain information on how to build comprehensive and successful prevention programs. The study utilized a qualitative content analysis methodology to interpret participant responses from gender specific focus groups. Participants consisted of two female groups and two male groups with a total of 19 participants who were all 18 years of age and first semester college students. The questions asked used the socio-ecological model as a framework and focused on the participant knowledge, attitudes and behaviors of sexual assault after watching a mandatory sexual violence prevention program facilitated during the first weekend of school. The outcome of the study resulted in participants sharing the information gained from the mandatory prevention program, the factors and actions that contribute to sexual violence on campus and the barriers they believe contribute to students not reporting incidences of sexual violence. The study also includes suggestions for a comprehensive prevention program based on the literature review conducted as well as the analysis of participant responses.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVCR) reported rape as the most under-reported crime with 90% of sexual assault crimes that occur on college campuses not reported (2012, 2013, 2015). Additionally, the NSVCR (2016) identified that college freshmen and sophomores are at greater risk for sexual victimization than juniors and seniors. The high rate of sexual violence along with the associated psychological and physical trauma for victims, its negative impact on academic achievement, and the various personal and institutional costs of sexual victimization outline the wide ranging impact of this pervasive issue and the likelihood that it will influence personal experiences, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of college students (Baynard, 2011; Carmody, 2009; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Foubert, Newberry, & Tatum, 2007; Moynihan, Baynard, Arnold, Echstein, & Stapleton, 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; Shen-Miller, Isacco, Davies, St. Jean, & Phan, 2013; Stokols, 1994). Based on these disturbing statistics, it is easy to understand how important it is to conduct research focused on student perceptions and social norms as they relate to sexual violence (Baynard, 2011; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Carmody, 2009; Darling, 2007; Foubert et al., 2007; Moynihan et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; Shen-Miller et al, 2013; Stokols, 1994; Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the individual and socialized perceptions of college students related to sexual violence after participating in a prevention program mandated for first-year college students.

Sexual Violence on a Societal Level

Sexual violence is a problem that transcends geographic regions, socio-economic status, and race. The World Health Organization (2013) reported that of women 15 years and older, 45.6% in Africa, 36.1% in America, 40.2% in Southeast Asia, 36.4% in East Mediterranean, and 27.2% in Europe described experiencing intimate partner violence and sexually violent experiences. This global issue has not only been highlighted by research but by well-publicized cases. For example, the 1997 arrest and conviction of Polish man Andrezej Kunowski for strangling and killing a 12-year-old female after breaking into her home became an international incident (Cheston & Davenport, 2004). In Egypt, the *New York Times* reported a mass sexual assault on a nearly naked woman in the crowd gathered at President Adel Fattah el-Sisi's inauguration that later apologized to all woman of Egypt for the incident and called for enforcing the laws and developing a strategy to address the problem (Kirkpatrick, 2014). In the United States, a 2013 case left many within the athletic, academic, and general community devastated and received national attention when four football players from a university in Tennessee sexually assaulted a fellow student (Luther, 2015). In a more recent case, a student athlete from a well-known university in the United States was sentenced to 6 months in jail after being found guilty on three felony counts related to sexual assault (Sanchez, 2016).

These cases, among many more that have been reported, demonstrate a permissive sense of socialized norms that has allowed sexual violence to persist. Although there are laws in place to punish perpetrators, the leniency of some criminal sentences demonstrates a sense of societal acceptance. The increased number of publicized cases involving sexual misconduct by college students in particular was

referred to as a *crisis in higher education* by *TIME* magazine (Gray, 2014) and has caused federal officials to focus on prevention efforts, particularly for first-year students who appear the most vulnerable (NSVCR, 2016). The U.S. Department of Education and state education agencies have charged colleges to make a "good faith effort" to enhance the prevention of sexual violence (American Psychological Association [APA], 2013; Carr, 2005; Henrick, 2013; McMahon, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

Research has suggested that the examination of the relationship between individual, relational, and institutional risk factors could provide a comprehensive picture of the problem of sexual violence on college campuses (Carmody, 2009; Casey & Linhorst, 2009; Exner & Cummings, 2011; Paul & Gray, 2011; Shen-Miller et al., 2012). Such an understanding of how various systems contribute to the high rate of sexual assaults in academia and what the influencing factors are across the social ecology, from a micro to a macro level, could strengthen prevention efforts.

Sexual Violence on a Policy Level

The emergence of sexual violence cases has generated great momentum towards changing on-campus regulations (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). The outcry by student victims have led state and federal officials to mandate sexual violence prevention programs on all college campuses (McMahon, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2011, 2014). Some of the policies intended to decrease sexual violence on campuses included the following.

Dear Colleague letter. In April 2011, the introduction of the "Dear Colleague" letter, written by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, pressed colleges to alter their Title IX sexual misconduct policies and to focus on cases brought

forth by student victims and perpetrators of sexual violence. Under this policy, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) enforced the law and obligated any school that receives federal funding for educational programs and activities to mediate a legal investigation on sexual violence complaints (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights (OCR), 2015).

The Clery Act, VAWA, and SaVe Act. The Clery Act, a mandated yearly Title IX regulation crime report, calls for a detailed statistical report of information that coincides with various criminal offenses that occur on college campuses. Reporting categories includes forcible and non-forcible sex offenses and aggravated assaults. Additionally, on March 7, 2014, President Barack Obama signed into law The Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act (VAWA). One provision of VAWA, called the Campus Sexual Violence Act (SaVe Act), called on colleges to add domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking as new Clery Act reporting categories (U.S. Department of Education, 2014).

The law has levied new obligations for college and university administrations in the hopes that reforming institutional policy, practice, and compliance would confront the complexity of sexual violence on campuses (McMahon, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2011, 2014). The legally mandated implementation of more effective programming and accurate reporting suggested the strong connection between sexual violence on campuses and national concerns. It is imperative for colleges to not only understand how to affect change but also how to meet mandated federal requirements.

Sexual Violence on a Relational Level

Previous literature regarding sexual violence on campuses, although limited has begun to focus on interventions. The expansion of prevention efforts directed at understanding how relationships impact societal and individual beliefs and responses to sexual violence has been an increasingly popular topic for research (Baynard, 2011; Paul & Gray, 2011; Shen-Miller et al., 2013; Stokols, 1994). Academic institutions have been trying to understand the magnitude of the problem by examining different perspectives such as its impact on society as a whole, and specifically on the individual construction of attitudes and behaviors of sexual victimization (Baynard, 2011; Carmody, 2009; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Darling, 2007; Foubert et al., 2007; Moynihan et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; Shen-Miller et al., 2013; Stokols, 1994; Tudge et al., 2009). Relational factors associated with culture, social, and economic status, familial relational influences, and community connections have been noted to have an effect on attitudes and behaviors around sexual assault and victimization.

One theory that explained this interrelationship is Bronfenbrenner's ecological model of human development, which described the association of relational factors and individual beliefs (Baynard, 2011; Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994; Christensen, 2013; DeGue, Simon, Basile, Yee, Lang, & Spivak, 2012). Although in their infancy, comprehensive prevention efforts that consider ecological factors started to be a focus for colleges. Because socialized norms stem from a collective context, understanding how individuals are influenced through socialization is important to the development of prevention programs (Baynard, 2011; Carmody, 2009; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Darling, 2007; Foubert et al., 2007; Moynihan et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; Tudge et al., 2009).

Theoretical Rationale

     Sexual violence through a social-ecological lens. The socio-ecological model

displays the interplay between various ecological factors. The model has been associated

with prevention programs and has aided in addressing different relational influences from

a comprehensive viewpoint. The model has been used to decrease and change

determinants of health concerns (American College Health Association, 2010). For

example, the Center for Disease Control (CDC, 2013) utilized this model to address

concerns related to cancer and violence. Because substantial research validating sexual

assault as a pervasive and complex social problem exists, this study used the model to

understand individual and society perspectives in relation to sexual violence. The model

speaks to different levels nested within various social ecological levels.
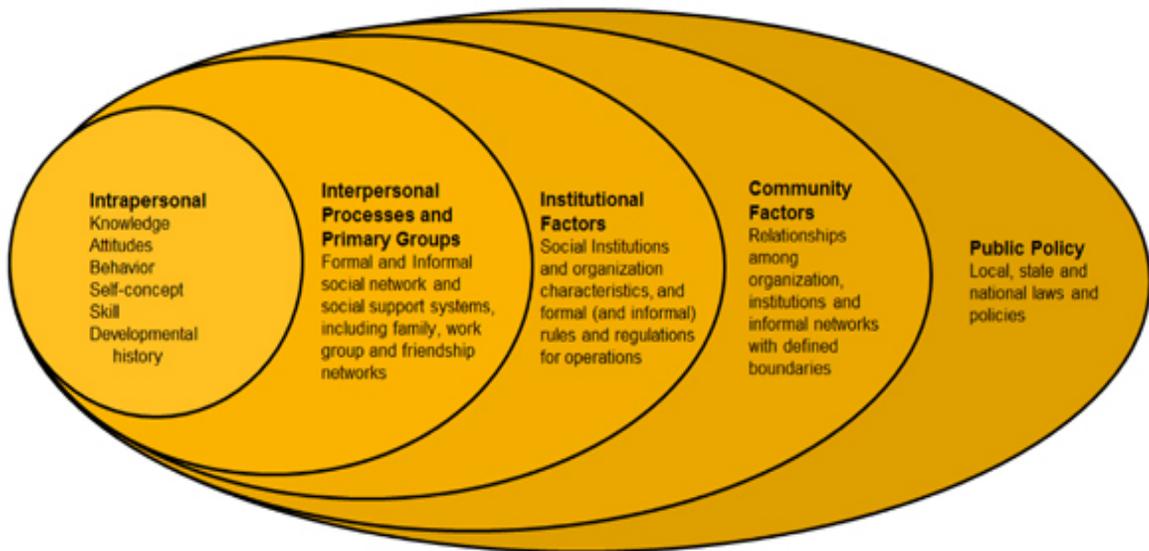
Figure 1.1. The social-ecological model of prevention. Adapted from "An Action Model

to Achieve a Healthy Campus" by the American College Health Association, 2010.

The levels of the socio-ecological model suggest that one's developmental history, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors contribute to individual belief systems and thus influence decision-making abilities (Bronfenbrenner, 1976, 1986, 1999; Paul & Gray, 2011). In understanding the best way to deliver critical and sensitive information to college students, creating an effective method to convey pertinent information about the construction of beliefs could be effective in triggering change related to sexual violence (Paul & Gray, 2011). According to Bronfenbrenner (1977), the theorist behind the foundation of this model,

> "The ecology of human development is the scientific study of the progressive, mutual accommodations, throughout the life span, between a growing human organism and the changing immediate environment in which it lives, as this process is affected by relations obtaining within and between these immediate settings, as well as the larger social contexts, both formal and informal, in which the settings are embedded" (p. 514).

Adopting this theoretical framework serves as a basis through which to understand the developments of beliefs concerning sexual violence and builds a comprehensive prevention program.

The socio-ecological model provides a framework for understanding individual, relational, and institutional related perspectives on sexual misconduct. It is also an effective model to understand sexual violence on an individual and societal level.

Sexual Violence on an Individual Level

Colleges that address in their prevention programming the development of individual beliefs related to sexual victimization presumably have a greater chance of

changing harmful socialized beliefs. Past studies noted that social ecological factors have

multilevel relationships that impact an individual's belief system (Baynard, 2011;

Bronfenbrenner, 1977, 1994; Carmody, 2009; Casey & Lindhorst, 2009; Darling, 2007;

Foubert et al., 2007; Kress, Sherpard, Anderson, Petuch, Nolan, & Thiemeke, 2006;

Moynihan et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011; 2009; Shen-Miller et al., 2013; Stokols, 1994;

Tudge et al., 2009). The challenge for colleges is addressing the interconnecting factors

in a way that impact individual attitudes and behaviors while creating a climate of

collective change (Jordan, Campbell, & Follingstad, 2009). Finding ways to change

personal beliefs related to sexual victimization could result in a wave of societal

reformation. Understanding the relationship between personal beliefs and socialized

beliefs as they relate to sexual victimization has appeared to be critically important.

Personal beliefs. According to Sathyanarayana, Asha, Jagannatha Rao, and

Vasudevaraju (2009), personal beliefs are constructed by the things we hear and

experience within the "environment, events, knowledge, past experiences, visualization,

etc." (p. 2). Similarly, research associated with the socio-ecological model explained how

the constructions of beliefs are developed from multilevel relationships throughout a

person's ecology (Bronfenbrenner, 1994). If colleges understood what students have

come to think and believe related to sexual violence based on their own ecology, this

understanding could help promote a collective movement toward changing harmful

attitudes and behaviors associated with sexual victimization.

Societal beliefs and gender roles. Gender roles constructed at the societal level

have impacted individual beliefs and behaviors associated with male and female

characteristics (Johnson & Johnson, 2013; Moynihan et al., 2010; Paul & Gray, 2011;

Pomeroy, Parrish, Best, Cowlagi, Cook, & Stepura, 2011). When discussing sexual victimization, individual beliefs on how men and women should act based on socially identified gender characteristics has played a significant role. As a result of socially acquired gender norms, women have been deemed more vulnerable and needy and frequently are more susceptible to being sexualized. Men are viewed as macho, sexually aggressive, and non-emotional (Iverson, 2006). The drive to perpetrate has been identified as a need for power and control, rather than that of sexual gratification and, more often than not, associated with males. Societal beliefs and attitudes related to male characteristics justify a socially constructed sense of entitlement with sexual misconduct (Carmody, 2009; Casey, 2009; Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2009). On the other hand, women have historically been oppressed and depicted as sexual objects, leading to victim-blaming behavior as the cause for sexually violent situations (Iverson, 2006; Rowe, Jouriles, McDonald, Platt, & Gomez, 2012). A change in beliefs, knowledge, and attitudes toward sexual violence could be achieved by educating students on how socially constructed norms may negatively impact individual beliefs and behaviors.

Sexual Violence Prevention Programs

According the U.S. Department of Education (2014) colleges were instructed to provide all new students with programming on preventing sexual violence. As colleges work to develop and offer programs that are effective and comply with mandates, preventative programming has taken on many forms. Interventions ranging from non-credit courses and awareness workshops to self-defense and on-line prevention programming have been utilized by most colleges (Iverson, 2006). However, interactive

types of programming such as bystander training and peer theater have become more popular (Foubert et al., 2010; Iverson, 2006; McMahon, 2010; McMahon, Postmus & Koenick, 2011).

Bystander training. Bystander training is a prevention strategy that was developed to include communities in the fight against sexual violence and other campus crimes (Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia & Hegge, 2011; McMahon et al., 2011). This strategy suggests that individuals who receive this training act more responsibly by reacting to an emergency situation either before, during, or after an incident has occurred while maintaining their own safety through the use of newly learned skills provided by the training (McMahon et al., 2011). These types of programs promote student engagement and buy in with the goal of promoting campus safety and increasing ally behavior (Ahrens, Rich, & Ulman, 2011; Coker et al., 2011; Foubert, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Brasdfield, Hill, & Sherry, 2010; McMahon et al., 2011).

Peer theater. Another strategy that appears to be promising in the prevention of sexual violence is that of peer theater (Black, Weisz, Coats, & Patterson, 2000; Christensen, 2013; Iverson, 2006; LaFrance, Loe & Brown, 2012). Peer theater performance creates an opportunity for a theatrically based exploratory process (Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2011), which allows difficult subject matters to be discussed through performance and acts as a vehicle for awareness, education, and empowerment. The use of peer theater performance allows students to empathize with the characters through a purposeful discourse that speaks to the issues in an indirect manner (Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2011; Rich, 2010). Programs that involve dramatic play allow students to engage with the problem and provide an opportunity to be part of the solution,

which enhances their sense of accountability. These experiences increase the likelihood that students would intervene and respond to a risky situation in a more confident manner and provide students an opportunity to relate with others and rehearse solutions for difficult situations (Foubert et al., 2007; Kress et al., 2006; Rich, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

Problem Statement

The impact of sexual violence on the progress and success of college students has been noted through media sources, academic reports, and statistical information based on self-reported surveys, as well as general research. Federal mandates placed great importance on how college prevention programs are developed and what information is delivered to students (APA, 2013; U.S. Department of Education, 2014). As college administrators continue to improve sexual misconduct prevention programming in efforts to curtail the number of students affected by sexual violence, acquiring an individual and a collective understanding of students' perceptions of sexual violence could benefit the development of such programs by providing information on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors associated with sexual victimization. Although it has been established that individual knowledge and attitudes about sexual violence are impacted by social relationships and experiences, remarkably, only marginal amounts of qualitative research on this topic has been guided by a social-ecological lens. Using a social-ecological lens, such as the socio-ecological model, to assess individual and peer group perceptions could help college administrators tailor programming to address the multiple relational components that lead to sexual violence on campus and address the essential elements needed to change this disturbing aspect of American college campus environments.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand first-year college freshman's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward sexual violence on campus after participating in a peer theater prevention program. Because of the federal and state mandated changes in policy, colleges have focused heavily on providing all incoming students with sexual violence awareness programming and training regarding the sexual conduct policy. The focus of this study was to assess individual and group perspectives of sexual violence after participating in the same prevention program. The information gathered from individual student accounts helped assist in the suggestion of more directed programming to decrease sexual violence and raise awareness on college campuses (Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2013; Iverson, 2006; LaFrance et al., 2012).

Research Questions

Several significant studies demonstrated how collective societal perspectives determined an individual's perception about sexual violence among college students (Carmody, 2009; Casey, 2009; Exner & Cummings, 2011; Shen-Miller et al., 2012; Whitney, 2010). Misperceptions have also been identified as contributing risk factors to sexual violence (Carmody, 2009; Casey & Linhorst, 2009; Exner & Cummings, 2011; Shen-Miller et al., 2012; Whitney, 2010). In addition to the individual perspective and misperceptions, relational and institutional influences also impact individual/group perceptions of sexual violence on campus.

This research study focused on gaining understanding by answering the question: How are first-year college students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors impacted by participating in a mandatory sexual violence prevention program? The common themes

identified from the content analysis of the gender specific focus group responses demonstrated understanding of the individual, relational, and institutional perspectives that may lead to sexual violence. The study also attempted to prompt its participants to think about why sexual violence occurs on college campuses, what behaviors might be linked with sexual violence, and how well they thought their college was doing in its prevention efforts. The ultimate goal of the study was to qualitatively understand how to better address sexual violence on campuses.

Significance of the Study

Because one in five women and one in 16 men are sexually assaulted during their college career (APA, 2013; Johnson & Johnson, 2013; NSVRC, 2012, 2013, 2015), it is critically important to understand the perspectives of college students regarding the epidemic of sexual assaults on campuses in order to develop effective programs that reduce sexual violence. The responses from the respondents who participated in the study provided previously uncollected insight into the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of college students that are associated with sexual violence. For the first time, students also provided evaluative data on the peer theater program and its impact on them. This data was useful for program evaluation and suggestions for modifying learning objectives.

Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this study the following definitions were used:

Attitudes – a settled way of thinking or feeling about sexual violence (Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; McMahon, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

Behaviors – the way in which a person acts in response to a particular situation or stimulus related to sexual violence (Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; McMahon, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

First Year College Student – a male or female fulltime student enrolled in a four-year institution of higher education leading to a degree of BS or BA (McMahon, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

Knowledge – information gained that is related to sexual violence (Hayes-Smith & Levett, 2010; McMahon, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

Mandatory Sexual Violence Prevention Program – a required event that must promote the awareness of rape, acquaintance rape, and other sex offenses by way of role play, information relating to offense statistics, and discussion about healthy relationships and trigger factors (Whitney, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007).

Peer Theater – a performance that creates an opportunity for a theatrically based exploratory process, which allows difficult subject matters to be discussed through performance and acts as a vehicle for awareness, education, and empowerment (Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2011).

Perpetrator – a person who inflicted a sexual violence act on another (CDC, 2014).

Sexual Violence – any sexual act that is perpetrated against someone's will. It encompasses a range of offenses including a completed nonconsensual sex act, an attempted nonconsensual contact, and non-contact sexual abuse (Carr, 2005; Whitney, 2010).

Survivor – a victim of a sexually violent act who is not deceased (CDC, 2014).

Victim – a person who experienced a sexual violent act without given consent (CDC, 2014).

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the significance of the pervasive problem of sexual violence on American college campuses as seen in the increasing number of highly publicized cases of sexual assault. The development of individual and peer group knowledge and the attitudes and beliefs concerning sexual violence through the lens of the socio-ecological model was described. The background on different intervention and prevention programs for college students was reviewed. In addition, the potentially positive contribution of an interactive experience such as peer theater to increasing empathy and accountability to combat sexual violence among college students was proposed.

A review of the literature on sexual violence and first year college students, the cost of sexual violence, sexual violence programming, and theories is presented in Chapter 2. The research design, methodology, and analysis are discussed in Chapter 3. Chapter 4 presents an in-depth analysis of the results and findings, and Chapter 5 discusses the findings, implications, and recommendations for future research and practice.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction and Purpose

Sexual assault is a pervasive and complex problem that has impacted colleges and universities throughout the country. The increase in sexual violence cases across college campuses prompted the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (2014) to mandate campus officials to comply with Title IX federal regulations and "to take immediate and effective steps to end sexual harassment and sexual violence" (p. 2). In response to this mandate, colleges have adopted sexual assault prevention programs in an effort to educate and increase awareness regarding sexual violence and related topics (Christensen, 2013; Iverson, 2006; LaFrance et al., 2012). The following literature review reveals a framework by which to study the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of first-year students after viewing a mandatory sexual violence prevention program. An overview of what is known about sexual violence is addressed. The contributing factors to sexual violence and the costs related to sexual violence are explored. In addition, the benefits and drawbacks to prevention approaches and a suggested theoretical foundation to address this complex issue are reviewed and used to determine how to best ground this research study. Chapter 2 concludes with a synopsis of research methodologies and suggested gaps for further research.

Methods

The inclusion criteria for this literature review included first-year college students and studies related to sexual assault prevention facilitated by college administration. The majority of the data reviewed comes from studies performed in the United States, though some international studies were included that fit the inclusion criteria and added value to

understanding concerns associated with sexual violence. All studies were published between 2004 and 2014, with the exception of the analysis related to the theory that was proposed for this research study.

Sexual Violence and Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors

Sexual violence risk factors are defined as attitudes and behaviors, stereotypes, and prejudices that contribute to an individual's perception of sexual violence (Foubert et al., 2007; McMahon, 2010). Risk factors associated with sexual violence not only forecast problematic attitudes that contribute to sexual victimization, but also serve as indicators for sexual perpetration (Foubert et al., 2007; McMahon, 2010). Individuals who fall victim to the risk factors and experience sexual victimization, whether from the perspective of the victim or that of the perpetrator, have to deal with a number of related costs in the aftermath of such a situation. The contributing factors and costs as they relate to sexual violence are noted below.

Sexual violence and contributing factors. Contributing factors related to sexual violence are vital in understanding this complex issue. An individual's knowledge about the subject and his/her attitude and beliefs can impact decisions made about sexual violence. When considering the risk factors associated with sexual violence and individual attitudes, acceptance and belief of rape myths can contribute to the socially constructed stereotypes and prejudices associated with victimization. From these socially constructed norms, victim blaming is also an issue that needs to be addressed. The following reviews of studies align with these contributing factors.

In a study by Foubert, Newberry, and Tatum (2007) the attitudes and beliefs and sexual experiences of first-year male students in fraternities ($N = 565$) was studied. The

research was focused on understanding the likelihood of first-year college men in fraternities to commit more acts of sexual coercive behavior compared to those who had not joined fraternities. In addition, the study measured the acceptance level of rape myths using the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMAS) (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999) and the Sexual Experience Survey (SES) (Koss & Gidycz, 1985). The study suggested that students who showed less acceptance of and did not believe sexual violence was a social norm were significantly less likely ($F(1,55) = 4.32$, $p <.05$) to commit sexual violence acts. Deconstructing socially constructed norms with students through prevention programming proved to be successful even when long-term change was examined. Using beliefs and attitudes as a change agent seemed to have an impact on decreasing the number of sexual assaults.

Similar to Foubert et al.'s (2007) research outcomes, McMahon (2010) also found that incoming students' beliefs and knowledge regarding sexual violence negatively impact a student's perception. In an exploratory study focused on how beliefs of college students relate to sexual assault. McMahon utilized IRMAS (Payne et al., 1999) and the Bystander Attitude Scale (Baynard, Moynihan, & Plante, 2005) to assess the relationship between bystander attitudes and rape myths among college students. The study indicated that of the $N = 2,338$ college students who returned completed surveys, four factors— gender, knowing someone who was assaulted, having athlete status, and individual level of rape myth acceptance—were predictors ($F(6,2071) = 81.67$, $p < .001$) of sexual violence. In addition, the analysis showed bystander intervention was negatively influenced by the acceptance of certain rape myths. Myths such as *She asked for it* (adjusted $R^2 = .17$, $F[6,2071] = 72.40$, $p < .001$), *She lied* (adjusted $R^2 = .17$, $F[6, 2069] =$

72.240, $p < .001$), *He didn't mean to* (adjusted $R^2 = .16$, $F[6, 2071] = 66.82$, $p < .001$), and *Alcohol* (adjusted $R^2 = .17$, $F[6, 2071] = 72.25$, $p > .001$) were identified as variables with significant results. *It wasn't really rape* accounted for 20% of the variability in bystander attitudes (adjusted $R^2 = .17$, $F(6, 2071) = 86.95$, $p < .001$). In addition, the study demonstrated that regardless of the new generation of students entering college with previous exposer to prevention programs, political efforts to combat sexual violence and knowledge about victim blaming remain challenging due to over 50% of the students reporting they would blame the victim if the victim were to act in a promiscuous way.

The contributing factors associated with sexual violence vary. Acceptance of rape myths and attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge of sexual violence serve as risk factors and should be addressed with first-year students. The ability to deconstruct rape myths and socially constructed norms seems to be a promising prevention strategy, especially for those individuals who are athletes.

Sexual Violence and Related Costs

Sexual victimization has been demonstrated to have costs that impact the individual, his or her relationships, academic institutions, and society as a whole. When considering the effect on students, colleges must take all these levels of costs into consideration. Research has suggested that one in five women and one in 16 men will experience an attempted or completed rape in their lifetime (National Crime Victimization Survey NSVRS, 2012, 2013, 2015). Considering the overwhelming number of people affected and the many incidences not reported, the costs related to responding to this issue, including providing effective prevention measures, are significant. The following review of literature details the emotional, psychological,

physical, relational, and institutional costs associated with sexual victimization. Most of the literature focuses on women, as statistically they are at greater risk (NCVS, 2015).

Psychological and emotional costs. In a literature review, Jordan et al. (2009) analyzed information associated with sexual violence and women's mental health by outlining the links between psychological aggression and various personal costs. The review also illustrated the impact of costs to mental health systems that respond to the complexity of needs associated with sexual violence.

The researchers described sexual violence as a major health problem that affects almost exclusively the quality of life for women between the ages of 16 and 24. The psychological cost of sexual violence identified by this review included increased rates of depression and anxiety and reported feelings of shock, fear, agitation, confusion, and social withdrawal immediately after being assaulted. The review found that 13–51% of victims meet the criteria for depression and 73–82% meet the criteria for anxiety associated with fear. Twelve percent to 40% of victims experiencing general anxiety reporting feelings of shock, fear, agitation, confusion, and social withdrawal immediately after an assault. The reaction to victimization can also lead to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which includes symptoms associated with problems sleeping, flashbacks, nightmares, and emotional detachment defined as dissociation. Women who had a history of repeated sexual trauma were more likely to be affected by lack of self-esteem, which led to a decreased ability to cope with the assault, leaving them more vulnerable and, subsequently, more at risk for future victimization.

Since there are concerning psychological and emotional side effects for many student victims, there are also resultant costs for the education sectors that serve them.

Education programs must work with their students who experience sexual trauma not only to help them maintain their grades, but also to maintain their emotional health. In addition, when coping with psychological and emotional trauma, students who attempt to self-medicate the pain may have additional concerns to attend to. Factors such as substance abuse (specifically alcohol), obsession with sexual activity, and an inability to sustain healthy relationships are potential sequelae for victims (Johnson & Johnson, 2013) and provide additional responsibilities in care for the college health centers were they may seek services.

Johnson and Johnson (2013) conducted a study focused on factors that influence risky sexual behavior (RSB) and the relation of these factors to incidences of sexual trauma. Using an anonymous online survey—the Sexual Experience Survey (SES) Short Form, which originated from Koss and Oros (1982)—275 female undergraduates ages 18–25 from a large university in the Midwest with and without a history of sexual trauma responded. Results of the online survey denote a positive correlation between sexual trauma and RSB ($M = .40$, $SD = .83$) and non-sexual trauma history ($M = .20$, $SD = .67$). Results from a regression analysis indicated that the more severe the sexual trauma experienced, the more at risk for RSB an individual is ($B = .12$, $t(273) = 4.81$, $p<.001$). Knowing the psychological and emotional impact that sexual violence has on students, campuses have to ensure that they can provide the various services needed to assists students.

Institutional costs. In the study by Johnson and Johnson (2013), the researchers outline the factors that increase medical costs associated with RSB. The study speaks to how hypersexual behavior places victims at risk for concerns related to unwanted

pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases (including HIV), increased number of sexual partners, prostitution, as well as the increase use of alcohol as a means to cope with the result of sexual victimization. In relation to the mental health systems that respond to victimization, there is great difficulty in outlining the best treatment or services for victims. John, Campbell, and Follingstad (2009) state that the severity and complexity of each individual's response to sexual victimization makes it difficult to tailor services. In addition, multiple layers of costs associated with victimization, cultural diversity, and access to services affect the quality to services as well.

Approaches to Prevention

Multiple prevention programs have been developed in response to the increased incidence of sexual violence on college campuses. Some of the approaches used in prevention programs include bystander training, informational groups, video-based strategies, online educational programs, exploratory surveys, dramatized presentations, and a combination of these approaches. All have been felt to be effective on some level (Foubert et al., 2007; Kress et al., 2006; McMahon, 2010; Moynihan et al., 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007). Programs that involved dramatic play are based on the notion that students have the ability to empathize with the characters, thus deepening their understanding of victimization (Kress et al., 2006; Rothman & Silverman, 2007). Allowing students to engage with the "problem" of sexual assault provides an opportunity for students to be part of the solution, which invites a greater sense of accountability and engagement. It also increases the likelihood of intervening and responding to a risky situation in a more confident manner (Foubert et al., 2007; Kress et al., 2006; Rich, 2010; Rothman & Silverman, 2007). In this section, the most common

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forms of sexual violence prevention programs are reviewed, including peer theater

programming and bystander training.

      Sexual violence and bystander approach to prevention programming. The

bystander approach has been highlighted as a promising program approach to counter the

high number of cases associated with sexual violence on campuses (CDC, 2015;

McMahon et al., 2011). The approach has been widely used to train individuals to

properly respond when witnessing crimes and emergencies. Using this approach to

prevent sexual violence is a newer application, but it is quickly gaining approval for use

as a primary prevention tactic. Bystander training is a well-researched international

intervention utilized for preventative programs since the mid-1900s. The training re-

surfaced because of the need to include campus communities in the fight against sexual

violence and in other types of emergency situations (Coker et al., 2011; McMahon et al.,

2011). The training helps individuals to know how to react responsibly to an emergency

situation before, during, or after an incident has occurred (McMahon et al., 2011). The

ultimate goal is to teach students how to recognize emergency situations and respond

with the appropriate skills (Coker et al., 2011). Sexual violence prevention using the

bystander approach showed promising results by encouraging students to hold

perpetrators accountable and create a climate where any rape on campuses is inexcusable

(McMahon et al., 2011).

      Foubert, Langhinrichsen-Rohling, Brasfield, and Hill (2010) examined the

effectiveness of a sexual violence prevention program on learning effective bystander

techniques. The sexual violence prevention program taught participants how to recognize

the personal and behavioral characteristics of a male perpetrator and instructed them in

effective bystander training techniques. Participants, all female ($N = 189$) were a mix of first-year students, sophomores, juniors, and seniors and attended a moderately sized university in the southeastern United States. The Bystander Efficacy Scale (Baynard et al., 2005) was used to measure willingness to intervene. The Bystander Willingness to Help Scale (Baynard et al., 2005) was used to measure the likelihood of the sample to engage in bystander behaviors, and the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale Short Form (IRMA-SF, Payne, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald, 1999) was included to determine the acceptance of rape myths among the students in the sample.

Participants were divided into two groups, one of which received training in bystander techniques and one of which, the control group, received no training. The program resulted in both groups (treatment group: A=.38, $F(2, 156) = 125.45$, $p < .001$, partial $n2 = .62$; control group: A= .38, $F(2,82) = 18.40$, $p < .001$, partial $n2 = .31$) benefitting from the program resulting in more of a willingness to participate in bystander behavior as well as an increase in bystander attitudes.

Results from the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale, which were gathered from the two groups via survey, noted the treatment group had a decrease in rape myths ($F(1,213) = 2.618$, $p = .107$). Those in the control group did not show a significant decrease ($F(1, 213) = .101$, $p = .751$).

The study findings suggested that a program that includes education for women about the characteristics of a perpetrator, background on how to help a friend who has been sexually victimized, and guidance on intervening lead to decreased acceptance of rape myths and an increase in bystander behaviors. As suggested by McMahon, Postmus,

and Koenick (2011), bystander intervention empowers individuals to act responsibly in situations where they have to confront peers and social norms.

Burn (2008) conducted a study on the role that gender plays in situational bystander prevention model to prevent sexual assault. The research participants included 378 females and 210 male undergraduate students. The Burn study identified five factors such as distractions, ignorance and ambiguity, failure to take responsibility, skill deficits, and audience inhibition as barriers to bystander intervention originally identified by the Latane and Darley study (1970). Burn found that using scenario-based models seemed to be effective in helping individuals recognize what a sexual assault is, how to take responsibility for preventing sexual assault, and safe actions to take when intervening in a sexual violent situation. Items that measured the participant's relation to a potential perpetrator, a potential victim's worthiness, and a participant's bystander intervention behavior regarding a friend or a family were also calculated.   The researcher's first of four hypotheses (H1) predicted that the five intervention barriers would be negatively correlated with the bystander intervention behavior of both males and females. Results showed a significant correlation with an alpha at .01 or greater with two exceptions of .05. Hypothesis two (H2) looked at proving men's scores on the bystander interventions barriers would be significantly higher than women's scores, with the exception of the *failure to intervene due to a skills deficit* measure. Results for using a pairwise comparison (*LSD*, *p*<.01; mean difference .37) confirmed that barriers for men were greater (*M* = 4.22, *SD* = .97) than barriers for women (*M* = 3.84, *SD* = .06), except for, as hypothesized, the barrier of failing to intervene due to a skills deficit. Hypothesis three (H3) predicted that knowing the potential victim would influence bystander intervention

behavior and was supported by the results of the study. In Hypothesis 4 (H4) the researcher predicted both men and women would agree that when the potential victim made choices that increased her sexual assault risk, they would be less inclined to intervene on her behalf. A pairwise comparison (*LSD*, *p* <.001; mean difference .76) resulted in the finding that men more strongly agreed (*M* = 3.86, *SD* = 1.26) than women (*M*=3.10, *SD* 1.26) that a victim's worthiness affected the likelihood of them intervening if presented with someone in a sexual violence situation.

Multiple other studies confirm Burn's conclusion that a bystander approach is an effective strategy to prevent sexual assault (Ahrens et al., 2011; Burn, 2008, Christensen, 2013; Coker et al., 2011; Exner & Cummings, 2011; Foubert et al., 2010; McMahon et al., 2011).

Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear, Garcia, and Hegge (2011) conducted a cross-sectional survey study. The sample included 2,504 female and male undergraduate students 18 to 26 years old ranging from freshman to senior status who completed an initial survey on attitudes and behaviors. The goals of the study were to see if a two-part program, which included a 50-minute motivational speech and bystander training, changed social norms and increased sexual violence bystander behavior. Based on the responses from the survey, students who had a past experience of sexual violence or knew someone who had were asked to participate in the two-part program. Measures in this study included the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMAS) Short Form (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999) to measure attitude and beliefs that coincide with rape myths, the Acceptance of General Dating Violence Scale (Foshee et al., 1996) to measure social norms that supported sexual violence, and a self-reported observed and

actual active bystander behaviors using the revised Bystander Behaviors Scale (Baynard et al., 2005).

Results indicated that students who received no intervention, or who only received bystander training ($F = 5.29$, $p = .01$) or the speech alone ($F = 4.85$, $p < .02$) had lower attitudes and beliefs concerning rape myths. Results for the self-reported active bystander behavior were significantly higher for those who received the bystander training ($F = 146.11$, $p < .001$) as well as for those participants who heard the motivational speech ($F = 38.80$, $p < .001$) compared to those who did not receive any intervention.

As evidenced by existing research studies, bystander behavior training shows promise as a mode of sexual violence prevention program. Allowing students to gain the skills necessary to intervene in a risky situation is not only helpful in decreasing sexual violence situations, but can also prove to be a life skill useful outside of college. Practicing the skills associated with bystander training will increase student's confidence and provide a sense of empowerment.

Peer theater as an approach to sexual violence prevention programming.
Peer theater performance, another form of prevention growing in popularity, has been used as a prevention program to create an opportunity for a theatrically based exploratory process (Black et al. 2000; Christensen, 2011). Peer theater acts as a vehicle for awareness, education, and empowerment. In addition to practicing skills like bystander training, the use of peer theater performance provides an opportunity to empathize with the character through a purposeful discourse that speaks to sensitive, difficult issues (Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2011; Rich, 2010). Peer theater seems to be a promising

education and prevention method attracting interest not only for its creative, interactive, and transformational effects, but also because of the ability to engage students and offer a participatory experience (Fredland, 2010; Lieberman, Berlin, Palen, & Ashley, 2012). Peer theater has the ability to engage students through seeing, hearing, and discussing scenarios that may encourage the development of empathy and lead to increased knowledge and a promotion of awareness regarding societal beliefs related to sexual violence (Rich, 2010).

Although the effectiveness of peer theater as a tool to combat sexual violence has been studied (Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2013; Iverson, 2006; LaFrance et al., 2012), assessing increased knowledge and changes in attitude and beliefs have not been extensively measured. Black, Weisz, Coats, and Patterson (2000) used a theatrical performance program to evaluate peer theater's influence on attitudinal changes toward sexual violence. A quasi-experimental pretest, posttest, and follow-up design was used on a sample of 100 participants and a comparison group of 64 participants. Participants were introduced to a one-hour program that addressed myths and facts associated with sexual violence, effects of myths on victims and potential perpetrators, the destructive effects of victim blaming responses on survivors who reveal the assault, sensitive and helpful responses to rape survivors, and the influence of media on gender socialization and rape myths. After the theatrical performance, focus groups were held as a means of debriefing and led by sexual violence peer educator experts in the sexual violence field.

The revised version of the Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Newman & Colon, 1994) was provided to half of the first evenings show participants, the control group, and all of the second shows participants at the start of the program. A follow up occurred 2

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months after the play to those participants who had agreed to do receive it. Sixty-one percent of the participants were representative of students at the university. Of that 61%, 22% were graduate students and 78% were undergraduate students. The rest of the participants included faculty, parents, and community residents.

On the four subscales of the Revised Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, the paired t test reported significantly lower ($p < .001$, $R^2 = .72$) posttest scores on subscale 1 ("Rape only happens to women who provoke it") than pretest scores. Audience attendees also scored significantly lower ($p = .046$, $R^2 = .73$) at follow up than at pretest on subscale 1. Subscale 2 ("Disbelief of rape claims") significantly differed ($p = .013$, $R^2 = .56$) from the pretest to posttest. Subscale 3 ("Victim is responsible for rape") showed significant differences from pretest to posttest ($p = .008$, $R^2 = .16$) and from pretest to follow up ($p = .018$, $R^2 = .62$). Lastly, although no significant changes were found from pretest to follow up, subscale 4 ("Rape reports as manipulation") did show a significant difference ($p = .005$, $R^2 = .74$ from pretest to posttest).

Engaging emotionally with participants regarding topics related to sexual assault seems to be an effective way to engage participants in the seriousness of the topic. However, more studies need to be conducted to establish the effectiveness of peer theater as a deterrent to sexual violence.

Kress, Shepard, Anderson, Petuch, Nolan, and Thiemeke (2006) conducted a similar study at a small Midwestern private Methodist college. Two hundred thirty-four freshman students, 97% of which were between the ages of 17 and 19, were targeted for the intervention program. All freshmen at the university were required to attend the program during the first week of the semester. The program included the presentation of

information about resources as well as 45-minute peer theater program engaging skits that involved sexual violence. After the skits, students who viewed the program spent 30 minutes discussing the questions related to who is to blame for the sexual assault, what constitutes a sexual assault, and what should be done to prevent a sexual assault. Students were then separated into gender-segregated groups with two peer facilitators to process their reactions to the program and to help identify what behaviors could be adopted to help decrease a sexual violence situation from occurring. The students anonymously completed the IRMA-SF prior to the program beginning and immediately after the program was completed.

Results indicate a significant difference between gender and IRMA-SF scores. The analysis of variance pre and post program exposure revealed the effect on males versus females was statistically different significant effect for gender ($F(1,172) = 35.39$, $p < .001$, $n2 = .17$) and a significant effect for intervention ($F(1,172) = 142.28$, $p < .001$, $n2 = .45$). Results did not indicate a strong correlation between gender and intervention ($F(1,172) = .22$, $p > .50$). Among post intervention results, women scored significantly higher ($M = 106.0$, $SD = 9.7$), indicating the acceptance of less rape myths than men ($M = 95.8$, $SD = 15.7$), $t(df = 89.4) = 10.17$, $p < .001$. Although measures between genders varied, both groups had a significant decrease in rape myth acceptance (pre-intervention: 93.6 ($SD = .11.5$); post-intervention: 102.3 ($SD = 13.1$)).

Results of this study indicated students were inspired to engage in an "ethic of care" with one another and to construct solutions to communal problems that helped deconstruct social norms related to sexual violence. The study also suggested that participants believed the program was helpful in discussing secondary and tertiary

problems of sexual assault and the influence on societal norms. In addition, using a scenario-based intervention provided participants an opportunity to role play problem solving and identify helpful solutions in a non-oppressive environment.

Kress et al.'s study (2006) highlighted the positive effect of the program in decreasing acceptance of rape myths, which is a result consistent with similarly multi-prong interventions on sexual violence prevention (Black et al., 2000; Coker et al., 2011; Foubert et al., 2007; Foubert et al., 2010). The study adds to previous research that supports prevention programming constructed of multiple components and includes theatrical performance.

In a similar study, Rothman and Silverman (2007) studied first-year students from a college in the northeast ($N = 1,982$) who participated in a sexual violence prevention program and the effects of program participation on reducing the numbers of reported of sexual assaults on campus. The program included a 90-minute dramatic presentation and discussion called "Sex Signals" during students' orientation week. The show used humor and audience participation to educate males and females about gender role stereotypes, communication styles, and acquaintance rape. A month later, students were required to participate in a 2-hour sexual assault education workshop in small groups led by staff members of the college sexual assault prevention office. This workshop included the topics of sexual assault, criminal and college specific consequences per perpetrations, personal risk reduction, peer interventions, improving communication in dating relationships, and basic statistics about sexual violence.

The revised Sexual Experience Survey (SES) was used to measure unwanted sexual contact such as touching and kissing obtained through force, threat, or coercion.

Sexual orientation was assessed for the purpose of classifying the data. Alcohol use was measured by using one item from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) assessing the last time consumption of alcohol took place. After controlling for difference in gender and alcohol consumption, the result of the study indicated a lower percentage of sexual violence incidences (12%) compared to the control group (17%). Factors associated with gender, alcohol and binge drinking, between the two groups, using a two-sample test of proportions (H0: p1 = p2) indicated a 1.74 times odd of reporting sexual violence during their first year of college than the intervention group. Exposure to the prevention program was associated with a reduction in the reported prevalence of sexual assault victimization.

Peer theater and supporting research is in its infancy, and as more research is conducted using this mode of intervention, the skits used must be considered. Iverson (2006) conducted a discourse analysis of five peer-theater scripts used in sexual violence prevention programs. The depiction of gender roles and the images associated with men and women on a college campus were considered in the analysis. Results from the discourse analysis revealed strong associations involving masculinity and femininity in relation to images of men and women. Ideas of morality and violence were related to male gender roles and were interpreted as male as hero and male as abuser. Furthermore, the role of a male was centered in individualism, self-control, and self-reliance. Iverson (2006) stated that Western society's view of masculinity symbolizes "men's bodies as weapons and tools of violence and women's bodies as objects of violence." He related expressions such as "boys will be boys" as support for socialized violence and the acceptance of aggression and dominance as male characteristics.

In the discourse related to femininity, ideas of dependence and distress were related to women's gender roles and depicted female characters as vulnerable, charming, confused, anxious, and bewildered. The social construction of the female portrayed how a woman "should behave." The results of Iverson's study (2006) further represented feminine characteristics as lacking the ability to clearly communicate, needing protection and rescue, and relying on others to recover from negative experiences. This idea of the vulnerable woman leads to the notion of the woman as a victim and emphasizes the need for a woman to protect herself from being raped.

The findings of the discourse analysis urged academic institutions to use theatrical skits as a point of discussion regarding the social construction of gender, how dominant constructions of gender roles associated with femininity and masculinity play a role in societal constructs, and the costs of adhering to and "playing out" these roles. Iverson (2006) encouraged theatrically based programs to allow audience members to engage with the characters during the performance rather than after it has played out. Iverson (2006) suggested a variation of the *Men Can Stop Rape* campaign, a model influenced by the ecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 1977) that merges the individual, relational, and societal levels of a person's life.

The Social Ecological Model as a Theoretical Basis for Sexual Violence Prevention

Research has examined the application of the socio-ecological model, which is based in Bronfenbrenner's work (Exner & Cummings, 2011; Iverson, 2006) to sexual violence prevention strategies. The model addresses individual, relational, and societal constructs and policy and their impacts on an individual. Utilizing a theory fostered by

social constructs to provide a framework for research promotes studies that allows the researcher to address sexual violence from a multifaceted perspective.

The importance of addressing sexual violence is correlated with changing an individual's attitudes, beliefs and knowledge (Johnson & Johnson, 2013; Jordan et al., 2009). The levels of the ecological model have a bidirectional relationship with the individual who is represented as the center of the model. This is important in working with changing knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs as the model stresses how indirect and direct systems that surround an individual influence their thought process and emotionality. Because sexual violence can impact other individuals and entities that surround a victim, using a theory that outlines a method to address an entire system could prove promising.

Chapter Summary

This review sets a supportive foundation and shows the need for the current research study that focused on the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of first-year college students toward sexual violence. The review provided analysis in three areas: a backdrop of the existing literature that measured what students think and feel about sexual violence; a study of the most used measurement tools and research designs for prevention programming; and a short justification for the use of theory to frame prevention programs. The purpose of the current study was to understand, using focus group methodology, how students' perceptions of sexual assault on campuses were impacted by participating in a mandatory sexual assault prevention program at the start of their first semester of college. The information gleaned from this analysis added to the existing

research and provided a more comprehensive picture of successful sexual assault prevention programming.

Some researchers suggested that there is a lack of research studies in the area of sexual assault prevention that use theory to frame the research studies (Jordan et al., 2009; Rothman & Silverman, 2007). Since theory provides a sound foundation for research, studies that incorporate theoretical models such as the socio-ecological model have the potential to be more comprehensive and have the potential to more readily accepted and useful to program development. The literature on the socio-ecological model looks at the various levels that construct the theory and claim how an individual's developmental history and both direct and indirect relationships developed throughout life impact the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of an individual (Johnson & Johnson, 2013; Jordan et al., 2009). In this case, the research related how an individual's social ecological experiences influence decision making in relation to sexual violence. It is imperative to understand the contributing factors associated with decision making abilities.

The research in this review made note of the concerns with victim blaming, rape myths, and gender-constructed stereotypes and how these factors promote an individual's understanding, beliefs, and actions related to sexual assault. The contributing risk factors identified in the literature provide direction on the specific content that should be included in sexual assault prevention programs. The literature explains how the various costs of sexual victimization impact not only the victim but those who have relationships with the victim. The victim's emotional, psychological, and physical self is compromised after a sexual assault, which creates changes in relationships at times causing the victim

to socially withdraw because of the sense of fear, shock, vulnerability, and lack of self-esteem associated with victimization. These changes in the person can influence the risk of developing depression and anxiety and in some cases post-traumatic stress disorder causing further distress (Jordan et al, 2009). The likelihood of academic success is also negatively affected, calling into question the coping skills or lack thereof after experiencing sexual victimization. This type of impact can also influence the retention rate of the college and the costs associated with providing the appropriate level of mental health and medical care needed to remedy the aftermath of those victimized (Johnson & Johnson, 2013). All of these factors provide discussion points on how to combat the personal costs associated with the student and the costs placed on a college. The information from the literature creates a platform for discussion and leaves room on how to move forward with prevention strategies and appropriate care for victims.

It is important to understand from a fundamental level how sexual violence impacts students and institutions, but also how the contributing factors that lead to sexual victimization can be combated. The literature supports a framework for prevention and specific content areas to focus on. Prevention methods such as peer theater and bystander training are effective because they allows students to be part of the solution by practicing the skills to deal with either experiencing or intervening in a sexual assault situation (Black et al., 2000; Coker et al., 2011; Foubert et al., 2010; Kress et al., 2006; Rothman and Silverman, 2007). If a college institution can understand the levels of impact, best modes of delivery, and the educational material, they can address the concerns more effectively and be more intrusive and intentional in their efforts to reduce sexual victimization incidences on campuses.

The literature provided essential information through the findings in the research studies on theoretical foundations, contributing factors to sexual victimization, and the costs associated for victim and institutions. There is still a lack of research on the impact of programming on sexual assault prevention knowledge, behaviors, and beliefs of traditionally male groups such as fraternities (Exner & Cummings, 2011; Kress et al., 2006) or in groups where different ethnic or cultural beliefs and practices exist (Christensen, 2013). In increasingly diverse academic settings, cultural and ethnic perspectives on sexual victimization are vital areas to address. The limited amount of research on gender specific studies and specific culturally constructed views of sexual victimization, gender norms, and prevention identify gaps in the existing research and a priority focus for future research.

Comparisons of outcomes. In most of the studies reviewed, males' attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual violence and bystander intervention were negatively influenced by the acceptance of rape myths and unwillingness to intervene. Some findings from the literature review suggested a correlation between sexual assault acts and males' intention to join fraternities (Foubert et al., 2007). Other studies identified an increased level of rape myth acceptance among young men involved with fraternities (Kress et al., 2006; McMahon, 2010). In regards to bystander intervention, Burn (2008) noted that males agreed that there are more barriers associated with bystander intervention and strongly agreed that a judgement made concerning victim's worthiness affects the likelihood that someone would intervene in a sexually violent situation. Studies that analyzed peer theater scripts (Iverson, 2006) support the notion of a socially constructed male role and its impact on rape myths. With national statistics indicating that one out of five women

will fall victim to sexual assault and statistics from one college noting that 63.3% of males reported committing a sexual violence act, the literature review validates the importance of focusing on a gender specific research on sexual violence (NSVRC, 2012, 2013, 2015).

Comparisons of research designs and measurement tools. The research studies examined in this literature review used various types of measurement and design components. The components included multi-pronged approaches and single construct designs. Sexual experience, rape myth acceptance, and bystander attitude and behavior scales were the tools used most in the studies in this review (Coker et al. 2011; Foubert et al., 2010; Foubert et al. 2007; McMahon, 2010; McMahon et al., 2011). The remainder of the studies used qualitative measures, such as Christensen (2013), who did a qualitative analysis on a peer facilitated discussion, and Baynard (2011), Iverson (2006), Jordan et al. (2009), who conducted reviews on societal norms, the construct of gender norms, and the cost of sexual victimization on sexual violence prevention programs. Some studies used focus group methodology to assess student knowledge and attitudes toward sexual assault and bystander intervention (Black et al., 2000; Kress et al., 2006; Rothman & Silverman, 2007). Some studies recommended using theory to develop the framework of research studies related to sexual violence and to add credibility to research findings (Christensen, 2013; Jordan et al., 2009; McMahon et al., 2011). For example, Foubert, Newberry and Tatum (2007) used a combination of video presentation, discussion, guided imagery, and debrief framed by the Belief Systems Theory to measure the likelihood that first-year male college students in fraternities would commit acts of sexual coercive behavior. Several studies were interested in simulating occasions of sexual

assault to convey knowledge, inform or change attitudes, confront stereotypes, or provide opportunities to create empathy for victims while attempting to encourage bystander intervention (Black et al., 2000; Coker et al., 2011; Foubert et al., 2010; Kress et al., 2006; Rothman and Silverman, 2007).

Future directions and limitations. In addition to information that will benefit future sexual violence prevention programming, the studies in the review also highlighted opportunities for further research in the field. Future research should produce findings that are generalizable across settings and populations, and analyze the different and similar outcomes of studies to create further understanding. Longitudinal studies need to be conducted that search for evidence of lasting change leading to a decrease in the incidence of sexual assault. Studies need to be done to test the effectiveness of program components on reducing sexual violence on college campuses and the impact of culture and gender norms on prevention program acceptance and effectiveness. The use of theory as the basis to frame prevention programs is an additional area where gaps exist.

This literature review provided a basis for the current study and the gaps in the research that it intended to address. The review used a theoretical basis from an ecological standpoint and applied a focus group methodology to assess the impact of a sexual assault prevention program on first-year students' thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors about sexual violence. It assessed the impact of peer theater in delivering the information on sexual assault prevention. It asked for student feedback on the services and programs they believe need to be instituted to better serve the college population and identified what students think needs to be done differently or maintained to prevent sexual violence. In addition, conducting gender-specific groups was identified as a gap in

the research that this study addressed through the use of gender-specific focus groups that provided insight into what male and female students perceived to be contributing factors to sexual violence from an individual and collective perspective. Lastly, gender-specific groups were identified as a promising avenue to collect data on socially constructed gender norms, myths, and stereotypes that feed into this national dilemma.

Chapter 3: Methodology

In April 2011 the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights issued the "Dear Colleague" letter to all colleges and universities across the nation referencing Title IX policy, a federal mandate that called for the regulation of due process in sexual misconduct cases (American Psychological Association, 2013; The United States Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2011). Due to the noted increase in sexual violence across college campuses, the provision also urged campus officials to "take immediate action to eliminate the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects" (American Psychological Association, 2013, p. 4).

In recognition of the need to address increased sexual violence on campus, this study employed a qualitative content analysis of gender-specific focus group data to explore the impact of a mandatory sexual violence prevention program on first-year college students' knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) the goal of this type of research method is to gain "powerful interpretive insight" (p. 902) into how a sexual violence prevention program impacts students. The study added to the existing body of research on the topic of prevention programs and helped inform the content and process used in sexual violence prevention programming on college campuses. The content analysis of the group data was meant to unveil information that would benefit several aspects of sexual violence prevention programming, including (a) revealing trends in participant responses; (b) allowing the researcher to gain a mutual understanding of common themes related to students'

perceptions of sexual violence on campus (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009); (c) giving voice to the attitudes and knowledge regarding the complexity of sexual violence (Creswell, 2013); and (d) providing an avenue to gain insight on the representation of socialized norms among college students. Additionally, the hope was to narrow the distance between the researcher and the researched in order for researchers to create more effective programming (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

This study was guided by one research question: *How are first-year college students' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors impacted by participating in a mandatory sexual violence prevention program?* To gather the data for the content analysis, students were interviewed using open-ended interview questions for the focus groups derived and structured around this research question main question (Appendix A). The use of gender-specific focus groups for this study allowed the researcher to explore the experiences of first-year students through individual accounts and perceptions and through the interactions these participants had with other peer group members (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Facilitating gender-specific groups creates a safer space to voice opinions, thoughts, and perspectives from a shared experience. In addition, when discussing a sensitive topic, using gender-specific groups can reduce conformity as well as remove the culturally constructed social power that men have over women (Stewart, Shamadasani & Rook, 2007).

The socio-ecological model (2004) guided the research and was used as a theoretical framework for the study. This model provided a theoretical framework of social ecological levels with which the essence of participant responses were aligned, allowing an organized comparison of information provided by the analysis (Creswell,

2013). The socio-ecological model, which is a derivative of the work from the theorist Bronfenbrenner, emphasizes the social ecological influences on individual perspectives (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Campbell, Dworkin, & Cabral, 2009). An understanding of the individual student's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward sexual assault were shaped within the social framework provided by this theory.

Research Context

The study was conducted at a public, 4-year liberal arts institution located on the northeastern side of the United States. Over 8,000 undergraduate students and over 1,100 graduate students attended the university. An average of 1,200 students comprised the incoming freshman class. First-year freshmen were required to participate in a sexual assault prevention program. The freshmen gathered at the university's prevention and outreach conference room, which is located in the same facility as the counseling and health center, which created a direct line to psychological services should a participant have felt triggered by the topic of sexual violence. The location was ideal as it was convenient for students and provided a private comfortable environment away from the main campus for the focus group meetings accessibility.

The program began with the students watching a 45-minute peer-led theatrical performance depicting a sexual violence scene that occurred at a party. The skit was followed by a discussion about the various parts of the scene and outlined resources available on campus for students if they or someone they knew was victimized. Campus officials, including from administration, university police, the student conduct office, residential life, and the health and counseling department, conducted debriefing sessions about audience reactions, thoughts, and perceptions about what could have been done

differently to prevent the sexual violence situation. The debriefing was implemented to engage students in healthy conversations regarding sexual behavior, institutional policy, the prevalence of assaults and risk and protective factors.

The college implemented this programming in response to the Title IX federal mandate and in an effort to better understand the attitudes and behaviors surrounding sexual violence on campus. However, despite the interest in and commitment to the program, the college had not evaluated the program's impact on students, which was the focal point of this study.

Protection of Human Rights

To comply with the ethical standards for human research, the researcher received approval from the Institutional Review Boards (IRB) of the university where the study took place, as well as where the researcher was obtaining her doctoral degree. Potential participants were provided with a disclosure statement that included the purpose of the study, study procedure, risk benefits, method for protection, and protection of privacy and confidentiality, as well as participant rights.

Research Participants

Participants in this study were first-year, full-time residential undergraduate students who were in their first semester of study and had participated in the mandatory sexual violence prevention during their freshmen orientation. Of the 19 participants, six were males and 13 were females, all 18 years of age; 57.89% of the group were Black; 26.3%, Hispanic; and 15.79%, White. The participants formed two male focus groups with three participants in each group and two female focus groups with six in one group and seven in the other.

Potential participants for the study were identified by the institution's retention office, a department on campus that supports the academic retention of freshman and sophomore students. The retention office provided the researcher with a list of first-year college students who attended the sexual assault prevention program using a college-wide database. An email invitation to participate in the study was sent to potential participants (Appendix B), which was written by the researcher and forwarded to students by the retention office. Students who agreed to participate and met the inclusion criteria (first year student, attended the sexual violence prevention program, and were over the age of 18 at the time of the focus group), could access information on the study through email (Appendix C) that included a disclosure statement summarizing the purpose of the study, the format of the focus groups, a request for permission to be audio recorded, the incentive to participate in the study, a list of resources and potential risk factors associated with the study, a confidentiality agreement (Appendix D), and the consent to voluntarily participate (Appendix E). Lastly, the email included an agreement for the researcher to share findings (Appendix F) with participants, to ensure accuracy of interpretation through triangulation, and permission to share findings with interested stakeholders through presentations and/or publications.

The researcher had worked in the field of counseling for the last 7½ years and provided therapy to college students who experienced sexual victimization. The researcher, a licensed mental health counselor, specialized in trauma counseling. The researcher's positionality in relation to the participants was utilized as a tool for the protection of participants when sexual violence was discussed in the focus groups. The researcher also had direct access to the counseling center as a resource for referring any

participant that presented with the need for emotional support and professional resources. The formal training the researcher had as a counselor ensured the research remained ethical and impartial and gave credibility to the cause.

Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis

A qualitative content analysis using a focus-group design was used in this study (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). The data collected from focus groups consisted of responses provided through in-depth interview questions. Open-ended questions facilitated by the researcher were used to facilitate a comprehensive discussion in the focus–group. First-year students who attended the mandatory sexual violence prevention program during the first weekend of college participated in the focus groups. Introductory questions, follow-up questions, probing questions, specifying questions and direct questions, indirect questions, structured questions, silence, and interpreting questions framed the conversation with the participants in each focus group. The goal was to elicit spontaneous responses instead of overly reflected answers (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The researcher focused on active listening during the focus groups (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009).

Procedures for Data Collection

The transcription of data was completed using a professional transcriber. The researcher reviewed the audio recordings and transcriptions once transcribed. Open coding, a form of data analysis which is used to saturate the data in order to label, define, and develop categories, identified themes, and subscales and were used to attribute meaning to what was said and key phrases that were frequently identified. The information gathered from the study was aggregated into smaller categories of

information, evidence for the code using all information gathered in the study was sought, and then the assignment of a label to the code was completed. Multiple levels of coding were completed to ensure accuracy of interpretation (Creswell, 2013, Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). A thematic analysis allowed for a comprehensive account of the knowledge, belief, and behaviors participants had related to sexual violence and the impact the prevention program had on the individual student and as a collective group (Creswell, 2013).

Data Storage and Management

A master list of all documents gathered was recorded and a visual collection matrix was used for the means of locating and identifying information for the study (Creswell, 2013). All data used was de-identified. No names were used; the confidentiality of participants was protected by using the last four digits of the university's academic identification numbers and initials in the transcribed texts. All data including audio recordings and transcriptions were kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's personal work office.

Credibility

The researcher sought to strengthen the credibility of the study and data by the use of bracketing (Creswell, 2013). Bracketing assisted the researcher with gaining insight into personal assumptions and perceptions that might influence the outcomes of the data analysis. The study's credibility was also strengthened by member checking ensuring what was reported by the participants and what was transcribed was accurate. A copy of the transcription was provided to participants for accuracy. After review of the transcripts, participants agreed that the transcripts were accurate. Using bracketing

showed the preciseness of attitudes and knowledge represented by the participants regarding sexual violence. It also created an opportunity for the researcher to have a deeper reflection, allowing for a more insightful analysis of the results.

Summary of Methodology

The design of this study, which involved a qualitative content analysis of focus-group interviews of college freshmen after their participation in a peer-led theater performance on sexual assault. The information gathered contributed to the general body of knowledge regarding students' knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes toward sexual violence on campus. The socio-ecological model (2004) was used as the theoretical framework, constructing a basis for open-ended questions and allowing for the extrapolation of general themes regarding the various levels associated with the model. The data analysis was conducted using open coding to develop the themes and bracketing was used to ensure the accuracy of the data transcribed. The framework used provided guidance for gaining information on how personal perspectives are influenced and molded by various sociological influences.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of the gender-specific focus groups was to gain insight on the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of incoming first-year college students before and after they watched a mandatory peer theater prevention program related to sexual violence. Of the 19 participants, six were males and 13 were females, all 18 years of age; 57.89% of the groups were Black; 26.3%, Hispanic; and 15.79%, White. The participants formed two male focus groups with three participants in each group and two female focus groups with six in one group and seven in the other. Chapter 4 presents the results of this study, which is grounded in five major themes that represent the data collected from the focus groups. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Data Findings and Analysis

The following discussion represents the responses of participants to focus group questions and to the comments and reflections of the other participants within their respective focus group. The three research questions asked in each focus group were as follows: What knowledge did you as a student gain after viewing the sexual violence prevention program? What behaviors and/or beliefs do you believe contribute to sexual violence on college campuses? What beliefs and/or attitudes do you think impact students from getting help for sexual violence? Five major themes were identified across the gender specific focus groups: (a) understanding victimization: factors that contribute to risk; (b) powering over: social and cultural practices, attitudes, and beliefs that lead to

sexual assault; (c) no longer a bystander: making a personal decision to intervene; (d) confronting barriers: confronting personal attitudes that interfere with reporting and curtailing occurrences; and (e) reacting to being sexually victimized (self or others' experience of victimization). The fifth theme was identified across only two of the focus groups.

Themes

Focus Group Question #1: What knowledge did you as a student gain after viewing the sexual violence prevention program? The responses prompted by this question noted their attitudes about the seriousness of the skit and the knowledge about the factors that influence sexual victimization.

Theme 1. Understanding victimization: Beliefs that contribute to risk. The response's that were identified with the first theme included "failing to take it seriously," "mixed messages," "blaming," "being impaired" which included the influence of alcohol, and "stress." In the discussion, participants identified that a failure to take sexual victimization seriously exist and may lead to victimization. Additional factors playing a role in sexual victimization of college students were talked about as well. The following participant compared the seriousness of the skit to one she attended previously at her high school that portrayed the effects of drunk driving:

> A.B.: Well at my school they do this skit and it's actually with a crashed car and they have like people actually looking dead like it's not a joke and nobody's laughing. I feel like they should take it more serious. (G1-F, p.8)

The participant felt as if the rest of the students who were viewing the skit did not take the content of the skit seriously. She insinuated that students were laughing. Her comparison to drunk driving and deaths conveyed the seriousness of sexual violence.

> Agreeing with A.B., M.Y., another participant from the same group, said:
>
> M.Y.: And here they are with laughter trying to make it funny and it's not a joke.
>
> (G1-F, p. 8)

When two male participants reflected on the skit, they concurred with the other participants noting the lack of seriousness the skit conveyed from the perspective of the actual context of the skit to that of the reaction of their peers.

> T.R.: Something that really bugged me about the skit in the beginning is that they brought comedy into it which like distracts people because they don't get the full message and it's not a laughing matter.
>
> I.D.: They think it's a joke and it's not a joke.
>
> T.R.: These conversations cannot be a light conversation. They have to be taken seriously. (G2-M, p.6)

Victim blaming. Participants referenced additional influences that could lead to victimization. More obvious factors such as choice in clothing highlighted attitudes towards attention seeking behavior and victim blaming. The first two participants referenced the possibility that the cause of victimization could be the victims fault:

> C.J.: Well there are certain girls that would like; they would show off their skin for boys to notice. Or there's some people that don't do it, but I mean they do that, but not for the intention to get boys attention. But some will. (G3-F, p.2)

C.R.: Girls like attention sometimes, like they wear things that like could cause a

guy to think different of you. But like it could be both the guy's and girl's fault.

Like girls get blamed a lot. (G1-F, p.1)

A female participant from the same group responded:

H.R: Sometimes you could, like you could blame us [females] but it's not us all

the time. (G1-F, p.1)

Interestingly, J.F. offered a perspective which was not shared amongst any other male in

either focus group:

J.F.: We can umm, stop blaming only woman for rapes and stuff like that. It's not

always their fault. It's both genders, and the majorities are like the men.

Statistically, yes. It keeps saying, like even this conversation, we keep saying like,

oh girls do that, girls do that, girls do this. We didn't say nothing about, what we

as men have to do. (G4-M, p. 8)

S.Y. noted a sense of "defeat," among women noting the portrayal of woman casts a

skewed perception of the role of a woman.

S.Y.: And it's like they are portrayed in the media, and [in] society period, it's

like a negative light. It's like if they are gonna show their bodies, it's like we can

only praise you for your body not your brain. And if you have brains then it's like

what is your body like? You know? It's like no matter how you try, like defeat, it

just comes back to that when you're a woman. There are these lines that you have

to follow. (G3-F, p.2)

A male participant spoke to attention-seeking behavior in which he mentioned hearing

the words consistently from his father, suggesting a learned perspective.

J.F.: I know for a fact that woman might wear something to catch some attention. Like let's just say my dad use to say all the time, girls know when their butt looks big in jeans, like when they put them on, what's the first question they ask? "Does my butt look big?" (G4-M, p. 7)

Another participant believed there was no factor that justified victimization:

B.B.: I think at the end of the day, people shouldn't be putting their hands on you. It doesn't matter what you wear. (G3-F, p.1)

Mixed messages. Along with the concept of attention seeking and victim blaming, participants mentioned the idea of mixed messages as a contributing factor to sexual victimization. The following participants indicate that there is room for error in intimate situations.

T.R.: Maybe they [males] might be upset too. Like at first you wanted to have sex with me and now you don't. (G2-M, p.5)

H.R: Or like when she physically she's tempting him as she's touching him she's kissing him but kissing and touching is different than sex. Those things might lead up to it but it doesn't mean she wants it right then and there. And guys take it as, *Oh, well, she started it so I'm gonna finish it*. (G1-F. p. 10)

M.Y.: It's not fair to lead a man on. (G-1F, p.10)

S.C.: Yeah, if she is half naked the dude be like, *Oh, she wanted it*. (G4-M, p.7).

Most of the conversations with the participants circled around victim blaming and miscommunication.

Causes for perpetration. Additional factors were mentioned as contributors to sexual victimization. The following two males from different groups spoke to the influences a perpetrator might have that could create the desire to engage in sexual victimization: T.R. stated that "sexual violence goes hand and hand with mental and physical abuse" (G-2M, p.1).

> S.C.: Could be a bad mental issue or past history of their lives, maybe they seen it. So it would be okay for them to actually think that way so . . . that's how they might see it. (G4-M, p.5)
>
> A female participant agreed:
>
> M.Y.: Yeah, you know I mean something has to not be clicking up there for you to do like that or there's something from you're past, has made you like this of person . . . Well, obviously you have to be some type of, like, you know, messed up in the head or maybe not, but then I don't know. (G1-F, p. 12)

Two individuals suggested the idea that stress could cause sexual aggression. Their comments suggested the inability for students to regulate their emotions. The following phrases were noted by the participants, one a female and one a male.

> A.A.: Like a stressful environment. 'Cause college is stressful. So maybe they don't have an outlet or someone to talk to and they build up all this anger and just like project it in a negative way. (G3-F. p.3)
>
> B.S.: Like any type of stress or frustration within the couple and stuff. Like any type of stress, like, when you're stressed out, you're stressed out. And something like, like a girlfriend, like annoying you, and doing whatever she is doing, it builds up, it, it, like you get more frustrated. (G4-M, p.5)

I.D., a male participant, contemplated the role of learned behavior in an individual's upbringing as a factor:

> I.D.: Maybe the perp has witnessed that throughout their life and someone in their house is constantly being abused, it's like a norm, they would be more liked to act on what they seen. (G2-M, p. 2)

Another member considered fury as an influence while mentioning alcohol and mental illness:

> Y.S.: Umm, maybe it's like a lot of built up anger. Umm how they get when they drink or maybe they are just like a psychopath. (G3-F, p.3)

Alcohol. The role of alcohol as well as lack of consent was talked about more specifically by several students.

> Y.S.: I feel like a lot of time when people are drunk they say things and do things that they typically would have if they weren't drunk. It has a big effect on people sometimes. I mean some people know how to hold their liquor but those who can't sometimes do things that they normally wouldn't do. (G3-F, p.4)
>
> A.A.: I feel like alcohol, like, it is portrayed like a culture thing, like college, a lot of kids do it and some people react differently when they are like under the influence of like drugs or alcohol. So I think that's like that could be a factor. (G3-F, p.4)
>
> T.R.: Alcohol plays a factor too. People don't know how to handle it. They get to that point where they get violent. (G2-M, p.3)
>
> H.R.: Yes, it could be like, Oh, she or he raped me, I was drunk, she was drunk or I was drunk. (G1-F, p.15).

S.C.: Unless you are passed out, like completely drunk, you can still consent, you are still in your right state of mind. (G4-M, p.5)

M.Y.: But kissing doesn't mean all of a sudden you like trying to force me to take me somewhere and I'm just like stop or this or that, or us kissing and all of sudden take off my pants. I didn't give you permission to take off my pants; we're just kissing right now. (G1-F, p.10)

Theme 2. Powering over: Social and cultural practices, attitudes, and beliefs that lead to sexual assault. The second theme that emerged identified a set of factors that indicated the influence that the media, gender roles, stereotypes, and society have on sexual victimization experiences.

Social and cultural norms. One male participant supported the opinion that sexual victimization on females is a socialized norm.

I.D.: It's almost like cultural norms for a girl to be violated . . . Like the man is supposed to wear the pants in the relationship. You have to control it to be in charge. (G2-M, p. 3)

A male participant within the same group stated,

T.R.: That's how it's been throughout history. The man is the one in charge. He makes the rules, that's how it's been. (G2-M, p. 3)

A female participant reported pressure derived from the party culture was a culprit:

S.Y.: I think like the party culture, it's like "do it, do it, do it" but if you understood after that day how life has changed you would think more before what you do. (G3-F, p. 7)

Societal influences. Participants shared their belief that there are different societal

attitudes towards perpetrators of sexual violence when that perpetrator enjoys a

privileged status in society.

> A.A.: I think in college, um, sometimes like when the woman is like attacked by
>
> like a popular figure, they blame the woman because they want to like protect the
>
> popular figure. And like they don't want anything to happen to them or like have
>
> consequences for their actions. (G3-F, p. 2)
>
> H.R.: I think everyone's paying attention to what's on TV, they think about it but
>
> don't form their own idea . . . It's kind of like, oh well. Society, like, paints it as
>
> this. So that's what it is. (G1-F, p. 21)
>
> L.J.: It could also be like social media, like what they see, or online or on TV,
>
> like, Oh I want to do that, like I want to control someone. Like have them
>
> whipped. (G3-F, p. 3)

Focus Group Question #2: What behaviors and/or beliefs do you believe

contribute to sexual violence on college campuses? In discussing the factors that

contributed to sexual victimization on college campuses, students answered the second

research question with phrases that aligned more with what the actions individuals could

take when faced with sexual victimization.

Theme 3. No longer a bystander: Making a personal decision to intervene

Speaking up. The participants below began with speaking up if there was someone at

risk:

S.M.: Just open your mouth . . . Be like, Yeah what are you doing? Like, umm, I think I should pull her away, I'm pretty sure she don't want you touching her. (G1-F, p. 7)

I.D.: Like talk to friends. If you see a friend just ask, "Listen do you need help? Are you okay with the situation you are in?" Notice the situation. (G2-M, p. 6)

This participant had the same sentiments:

A.A.: I feel like you should call for help if you see someone who is not in their right state of mind. And if you see they are struggling maybe you should help them. Or like call UP [university police] to try and assist them. G3-F, p. 4)

H.R. mentioned a college prevention program that highlighted bystander action:

H.R.: I'm like yeah, you *wylin'*, you need some help, let me *Eagle Check* you. (G1-F, p. 8)

C.J. and S.C. mentioned the idea of basic safety as a prevention method:

C.J.: Like just go out with a group of friends when it's late at night. (G3-F, p. 4)

S.C.: Put drunk girls off limits. (G4-M, p. 9)

Prevention programs. Some participants offered additional ways to provide students with the information that they need in order to be knowledgeable about sexual victimization. They also discussed some thoughts as to why the current programs are not effective.

S.Y.: I think when freshman come there should be like a separate workshop for them with someone who really cares. If you have a workshop and there are men in a room and we are talking about rape, some people find it funny. So it's like if I take it seriously, and some men don't, it's hard to come together in the same group

with that topic. So like even like a workshop this serious for females should happen again. (G3-F, p. 5)

J.M.: I also think they should have like a speaker who like is willing to share their story, with especially males. So they can understand a woman's perspective. Like how they felt and how it affected them. (G3-F, p. 7)

C.S. discussed the importance of a prevention program being tailored to both men and woman. The other participants suggested program changes that included sharing the facts about sexual victimization, their interest in continuing the prevention skit, and providing student with the processes and vocabulary to handle these types of intense situations.

C.S.: Also, it's not just for women, we need to, like, we say a lot to guys too, but I feel like what we do is not enough. They [men] need help too. We are all one. (G1-F, p. 4)

A.B.: Or actually show the real facts, like okay, this many rapes have happened on our campus, which let people know like wow, I need to be aware, or wow, let me think about drinking, maybe not drinking too much tonight. (G1-F, p. 17)

B.S.: Continue to do the skits. (G4-M, p. 10)

T.R.: Or guiding people on what to do in those situations. (G2-M, p. 5)

Timing of prevention programs. During welcome weekend at this university, students received all the orientation programs and information that was vital to staying safe on campus and programs that highlighted the issues students could face. The following participants had reactions about the problems associated with the program timing:

H.R.: They got to force everything into the first weekend. I'm just, like, I'm tired.
(G1-F, p. 8)

C.R.: But nobody wanna go to like an orientation first week of school and get on task in the first place they, they are not interested . . . They still be out of it. (G1-F, p. 8)

A.B.: Maybe if they drag it [prevention program] along throughout the year it would be better. (G1-F, p. 9)

H.R.: Yeah, everything at one time. It's a two-day weekend and everything from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. (G1-F, p. 9)

Emphasis on consent. Other participants mentioned consent and provided a suggestion for a prevention tactic:

S.C.: You have to increase the emphasis on consent. Make sure that's the most important thing in that situation. People tend to forget about that all the time. (G4-M, p. 8)

S.M.: We should do the same, like, t-shirts even though they are cliché—the one that's like "don't get raped" and then they like cross out the "get" and then they say "don't rape." (G1-F, p. 17)

Focus Group Question #3. What beliefs and/or attitudes do you think impact students from getting help for sexual violence?

Theme 4. Confronting barriers: Confronting personal attitudes that interfere with reporting and curtailing occurrences. Participants provided insight on their attitudes regarding the barriers to reporting sexual victimization. Shame was discussed as the type of emotion that impedes reporting:

I.D.: Maybe when the girl feels isolated. Even partners feel isolated. They feel they don't have no one to turn to. Or feeling like even talking to someone isn't going to change something. (G2-M, p. 1)

I.D.: It goes back to shame—I don't want to be *that* person. (G2-M, p. 7)

Vulnerability in disclosing. Participants noted the difficulty in being vulnerable when counseling services are considered. The reference to comfort was interpreted as students not feeling safe to disclose:

M.Y.: You just don't wanna show your face. (G1-F. p. 5)

H.R.: Yeah, you just can't tell the counselor, "Oh, this happened" or "I did that." (G1-F, p. 5)

A.A.: Sometimes it's kinda hard to talk to a male counselor. (G1-F, p. 18)

C.R.: It's hard to say, like, I'm not comfortable to a counselor. (G1-F, p. 18)

A.A.: It's hard to just walk in to the counseling center and, like, get that help. (G3-F, p. 8)

B.B: Especially if you are that person who keeps things bottled up. (G3-F, p. 8)

Gender roles and disclosing. When discussing gender roles and stereotypes, specifically related to societal perspectives and expectations of males, male participants responded to the sense of weakness men feel when considering disclosing sexual victimization:

B.S.: Maybe like just, they look kinda like, I don't know, like a wimp or something if they report. (G4-M, p. 5)

S.C.: Embarrassed. (G4-M, p. 6)

B.S.: Yeah, like, embarrassed, like, it's like, I don't know, like a guy is typically stronger, like tougher than a girl, they're bigger, and you're just like looked down upon, I guess. (G4-M, p. 6)

B.S.: I don't know, you see like a big NFL football player and if like that happened to him, like he'd be made fun of, like he would be embarrassed. That would definitely be like a negative outlook from society. (G4-M, p. 4)

S.O.: Yeah, because what we were saying about stereotypes and stuff. If a lady abuses a man, he don't want to say it because, men are supposed to be control and stuff like that. I am gonna be looked down as weak, he doesn't want to feel like that. (G2-M, p. 3)

B.B. reflected on myths related to masculinity:

I think that if a man like gets raped by a female, people are not going to take it seriously, they are gonna take it as a joke, like oh, man you act like you couldn't fight her off. It probably happens a lot more than it is recorded or like talked about, they probably feel like they are gonna be judged. (G3-F, p. 6)

Campus services. Participants discussed campus services as an additional barrier to reporting. Changes in counseling services are highlighted the most. The first participant feedback responded to campus bus services.

B.B: I don't like the fact that the safety bus doesn't take you off campus. It's only if you live on campus. I mean, when they see someone like slumped on the sidewalk while they are on campus, they don't stop. (G3-F, p. 5)

The next participants talked about the counseling center and changes they would like to see in order to better assist students.

I.D.: Maybe they can have like a hotline so people don't have to go in person. Like Snapchat so it's convenient and available all the time. (G2-M, p. 7)

A.A.: Counseling can help . . . but it takes a big step to actually go to the counseling center and like get help. (G3-F, p. 8) S.M.: If something happens, talk to a counselor. It's easier said than done. (G1-F, p. 7)

S.M.: There is a suicide hotline but we need something on campus or talk anonymously to a counselor. (G1-F, p. 4)

H.R.: Anonymously is really probably helpful too, but the counseling center needs to be open a lot more. (G1-F, p. 5)

Theme 5. Reacting to being sexually victimized (self or others' experience of victimization). This theme presented itself in two of the four groups (G1-F and G2-M) during the discussion about research question three. Fear of perpetrator physical reaction and victim response to being sexually violated were noted by a few participants. One of the participants from the female group questioned if an individual was just supposed to go along with a rape that was occurring to protect herself form further harm. Part of the conversation from the female group participants was as follows:

C.R.: Fight or flight . . . yeah, I heard of flight . . . like you literally fight or run.

C.S.: But a lot of people force.

M.Y.: Yeah, but I heard that if you comply with it, the rapist or like the person that's doing it kinda gets like the wrong idea because it's all about like temptation.

H.R.: What if he, like, threatens to punch you or something? (G1-F, p. 11)

One participant shared fear as a factor for not reporting:

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C.S.: Nobody's gonna wanna talk if you're in an abusive relationship or has some

abuse or something like that, nobody's gonna wanna step up to it because there

might be fear that he might do something or something like that. (G1-F, p. 3)

When participants from the male group mentioned the emotional response to

being sexually victimized, their conversation introduced the concept of self-blame.

S.O.: Uhhh, they gonna need help, but don't have anyone to turn to so their only

option is to move forward with it.

I.D.: So they get nervous and freeze up.

T.R.: I don't want to say like it's their fault, they have to be able to stand up for

themselves and say no, I don't want to have sex with you. Who's to say if that

person actually says no, that they still won't actually get raped?

I.D.: You can come to your senses. (G2-M, p. 4–5)

Summary of Data

This chapter presented the focus group findings related to the knowledge,

attitudes, and behaviors of incoming first-year college students on sexual violence on

college campuses after they watched a mandatory peer theater prevention program related

to sexual violence. The three research questions asked in each focus group were as

follows: What knowledge did you as a student gain after viewing the sexual violence

prevention program? What behaviors and/or beliefs do you believe contribute to sexual

violence on college campuses? What beliefs and/or attitudes do you think impact students

from getting help for sexual violence? The focus group participants shared their thoughts,

feelings, and behaviors about sexual victimization which resulted in the five major

themes which included: (a) understanding victimization: factors that contribute to risk;

(b) powering over: social and cultural practices, attitudes, and beliefs that lead to sexual assault; (c) no longer a bystander: making a personal decision to intervene; (d) confronting barriers: confronting personal attitudes that interfere with reporting and curtailing occurrences; and (e) reacting to being sexually victimized (self or others' experience of victimization).

The concluding chapter of this research study, Chapter 5, offers a summary of the findings. In addition, theory in practice, implications, and recommendation for future study are discussed.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

This research study examined the knowledge, behaviors and attitudes of first-year college students regarding sexual violence after participating in a mandatory peer theater prevention program. The goal of the study was to utilize the information gathered through the analysis of the focus group discourse to examine the impact a prevention program had on students' thoughts and feelings regarding sexual violence. In addition, the focus was to support or disconfirm the efficacy of the existing program. Because focus groups often create a type of cooperation among group members, the study design allowed the researcher to search for personal meanings and themes and acquire an understanding of a collective perspective on sexual victimization (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). As sexual victimization continues to be prevalent on college campuses across the nation, the need for prioritizing prevention programming in higher education continues to be a focus (Degue et al., 2012). Continued research and understanding on sexual violence and college students is imperative in developing comprehensive and effective prevention programs.

This chapter focuses on the following content areas as they relate to this study: (a) discussion and general implications of the findings, (b) implications of the findings as they relate to executive leaders in higher education, student education, theory, and practice, (c) limitations of the study, (d) recommendations for future research, and (e) conclusion of study.

Discussion and General Implications of Findings

   The content analysis of this study revealed five main themes in response to the focus group questions. The three major questions used were (a) What information did you as a student gain after viewing a sexual violence prevention program? (b) What factors and actions do you believe contribute to sexual violence on college campuses? and (c) What barriers do you think impact students from getting help for sexual violence? The themes from the data analysis included: (a) factors that contribute to victimization; (b) social and cultural practices, attitudes and beliefs that lead to sexual assault; (c) bystander intervention: making a personal decision to intervene; (d) confronting organizational and interpersonal barriers to reporting; and (e) effects of victimization. The following is a discussion of the findings from the content analysis in detail.

   Understanding victimization: Factors that contribute to risk. The group discussions in this study noted victim blaming, mixed messages between partners, being impaired by the use of alcohol, and the association between perpetrating and victimization. Rape myths and misconceptions associated with these factors suggest the lack of understanding students have about the impact of sexual victimization and the seriousness of the issue. Studies like the one conducted by Christensen (2013) identified the usefulness of adopting a "holistic approach" to sexual victimization prevention programming in efforts to change unhealthy beliefs and attitudes students have regarding sexual victimization. The findings of this study, like Christensen's (2013), suggest that the peer theater program helped students empathize with victimization and provided them with an opportunity to use their social/emotional intelligence to analyze a moral and ethical dilemma and practice sound skills.

Victim blaming was a common theme in the focus group discussions. Participants noted that at times females could be blamed for sexual victimization because they like to showcase their bodies for attention from males. One participant suggested that females like the attention and wear clothes that could make a male view them as interested in a sexual encounter. A male participant shared the same thought saying that he knows a woman might wear provocative dress to evoke attention. All of these beliefs shift the blame to the victim rather than the perpetrator.

Mixed messages amongst sexual partners were additional factors identified that evoke confusion and misinterpretations and anger that result in sexual violence. One male participant expressed that males might be upset because they might look at a female and think, "Like at first you want to have sex with me and now you don't." Relatedly, another participant stated that if a girl is half naked he might interpret this as her "wanting it." A peer theater approach that allows situational problem solving and a discussion regarding the danger of miscommunication can suggest an effective method for highlighting the importance of consent.

In noting the importance of communication, the impact that alcohol can have on sexual consent also should be discussed. This study confirmed the findings in other studies (Burn, 2009; Carr, 2005; Johnson & Johnson, 2013; Krebs et al., 2009; Rothman & Silverman, 2007) that highlighted alcohol as a factor associated with sexual victimization. Several participants of this study suggested that alcohol plays a factor because "people don't know how to handle it . . . they get to the point where they get violent."

This study and others (Black et al., 2000; Foubert et al., 2007; Foubert et al., 2010; Kress, 2006) emphasized that a well-rounded approach to prevention programming would provide an opportunity to address students' perceptions of victimization and the statistics and concerns linked with alcohol, sexual violence, and victim blaming.

Social and cultural practices, attitudes, and beliefs that lead to sexual assault. Participants from this study noted the reason sexual violence occurs on college campuses: college students do not understand the seriousness of victimization. Participants referred to the laughter and reaction to sexual violence amongst their peers while watching the peer theater prevention program. Interestingly, a male participant noted that "it's almost like a cultural norm for a girl to be violated." Another participant from the same group suggested sexual violence is a historical norm: "The man is the one in charge. He makes the rules, that's how it's been."

These findings confirm existing research. Iverson's (2006) study also supports the perspective of these male participants, stating that males are culturally represented as dominant, abusers, controlling, and there is a "norm" of men being permitted and even expected to assert power over women. Christensen (2013) suggested that engaging students in programming that encompasses "ethic of care" can help to deconstruct cultural norms and gender roles. An article in a *Time* March 2014 article about sexual violence suggested that America needs to change the "culture of passivity and tolerance in this country." The same article reports 97% of perpetrators never seeing a day in jail, it would appear that sexual violence has become culturally acceptable.

Another socialized norm that was discussed by the participants was the unwillingness for society to hold popular figures and athletes accountable for sexual

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violence. The consensus among many individuals in the study was that popular figures are protected, and colleges do not want them to bear any consequences for their actions. In an article in the *Huffington Post*, O'Connor and Kingkade (2016) reported that college officials are often accused of dismissing or underreporting sexual assault cases linked with athletes, or protecting important athletes when they have been reported. Some university policies allow athletic departments to conduct their own investigation of accusations of sexual assault, which can further contribute to lack of accountability and increasing incidents on campus (O'Connor and Kingkade, 2016). The protection of athletes is not only a problem in educational institutions but also in society at large, and it emphasizes the norm of sexual assault.

Participants in the current study commented on the impact of social media in relation to societal influences, constructs, and the norms of sexual victimization. This study, along with the study of Black et al. (2000), found focus groups to be an opportunity to deconstruct myths regarding gender socialization and its impact of attitudes and beliefs regarding sexual victimization. By engaging the participants in informational conversation in the focus groups, it appears that participants agree to how various media sources can influence the personal attitudes and beliefs of an individual. Participants discussed how the media portrays women as sexual objects either through music or television shows and how this influences how men view and treat women. The focus groups allowed participants to talk about how social constructs and culture influences individuals. The participants also noted how discussing a sensitive subject allowed them understand the consequences sexual victimization and increase their level of knowledge and sensitivity. The idea of engaging students in focus group discussions

presents an opportunity to convey the seriousness of the matter, create empathy, and decrease rape myth acceptance.

Bystander intervention: making a personal decision to intervene. Participants talked about the importance of speaking up if someone is at risk. One participant stated, "Just open your mouth"; another noted, "Just talk to friends. If you see a friend just ask, Listen do you need help?" Similarly, another participant said, "I feel like you should call for help if you see someone who is not in their right state of mind . . . Or like call UP [university police] to try and assist them." The same participant referenced a bystander program that their current institution mandates, stating when students need assistance, bystanders need to "Eagle Check" a situation, referring to an individual intervening in a situation where another individual might be at risk for victimization. Additional participants agreed noting the importance of bystander action.

In a cross-sectional study, Foubert et al. (2010) noted the same thing and reported an increase in bystander awareness behavior when programs incorporate intervention skills coupled with a discussion. McMahon et al. (2011) proposed that the willingness of students to intervene as a bystander in risky situations can be increased with training, such as practicing specific intervention skills and creating a sense of empathy for victims of sexual violence. Therefore, any college interested in bystander intervention should incorporate this training in their sexual violence prevention program.

Confronting organizational and interpersonal barriers to reporting: Participants identified that campus services may create barriers that increase risk and/or prevent the reporting of sexual assaults. Student participants spoke about the limited access to shuttle services and to counseling services offered on campus. One participant

noted the need for the shuttle to extend its route to the outskirts of the college. She noted her experience of being on the shuttle and driving past a student who was slumped on the sidewalk and the driver not doing anything about it. Other group members concurred and agreed with the fact that bus drivers should also be trained on bystander intervention.

Black et al. (2000) reported that their holistic approach to prevention proved to be helpful to their audience, 39% of which was made up of faculty and staff of the college and the remaining 61%, students. If the expectation is to change culture, it would seem reasonable that any individual working with students on a campus would benefit from bystander training and sexual victimization prevention programming. Similarly, as Baynard (2011) stated, using a micro and macro lens to identify the relationship of factors influencing sexual violence could help universities better understand how to address not only the individual but the community as well.

Other participants identified the barriers associated with the counseling center, including hours of operation, modes of counseling, the vulnerability of disclosing, and the stigma associated with seeing a counselor. One student referenced, "Maybe they can have like a college hotline so people don't have to go in person. Like Snapchat so it's convenient and available all the time." Another participant mentioned how "counseling can help, but it takes a big step to actually go to [a counseling center] and like get help." Another student said going to counseling is "easier said than done." One participant noted that students usually think about what they are going through at night when they are lying in bed and not from eight in the morning to five in the evening when in class and the center is open.

Many of the student observations and suggestions found in this study have been noted by other studies. The National Survey of College Centers (2014) noted that many colleges have increased staff training, hired part-time counselors, and expanded referral networks to support students. However, the barriers of hours of operation of counseling centers and the use of technology (to create a hotline, for example, like those used to combat suicide) have not been addressed by college campuses, and should be implemented or further researched.

Another barrier in reporting sexual assault noted by participants was the effects of victimization on mental health. Jordan et al. (2009) discussed the cost of mental health concerns for students who have experienced sexual victimization. Their findings highlighted the intrapersonal turmoil; changes in personality, maladaptive behaviors, lack of self-esteem, and the shame and guilt associated with a negative self-concept and how these factors complicate the ability obtain services. These findings support the emotional intricacy of victimization and how the impact on an individual creates difficulty with reporting, students in the current study referenced that shame could impede the need to get help: "It goes back to shame; I don't want to be *that* person." Another student noted, "You just don't want to show your face." Based on these findings and perspectives from participants, consideration of other types of access to counseling services on campus continues to be reasonable. The psychological impact of trauma and its effects on academic success justifies listening to students' feedback and making appropriate changes to policy and programming.

Prevention programs. In addition to altering counseling access, students also provided insight on the timing of programming and additional information they viewed as

imperative to increasing knowledge on sexual victimization. Students suggested colleges

not schedule all prevention programming during the welcome weekend. One student

noted, "They got to force everything into the first weekend. I'm just like I'm tired."

Another student suggested, "Maybe if they drag it [prevention programs] along

throughout the year it would be better." The timing of the programs seems to impact the

ability for students to retain the information, as they noted feeling overwhelmed with all

the information being provided during one weekend.

The pressure to provide students with programming is led by the high rate of

campus sexual victimization (Paul & Gray, 2011) that caused the government to issue

several mandates to handle the growing problem (U.S. Department of Education of Civil

Rights, 2011). Colleges are working overtime to provide the information during the high-

risk time for incoming freshmen, which the National Institute of Justice identifies as the

first 2 weeks students are in school. However, the need to provide this information during

a period of time when students are experiencing information overload may decrease its

effectiveness.

Students also felt a more varied-information type of program would be more

beneficial, including programming surrounding statistical data on sexual victimization,

gender-specific workshops, personal stories from survivors, and practice on how to

handle these situations. The notion of understanding consent more was also discussed.

Kress (2006) discussed the importance of programming components mentioned by the

students in the current study as a promising way to gain information and decrease rape

myths. Rothman and Silverman (2007) also agreed, noting that the results of their study,

which included a presentation and a follow-up psycho educational group, resulted in both

a decrease in sexual assault incidences and an increase in the likelihood for students to report. Evoking empathy and using improvisation through peer theater allows students to practice problem-solving skills and has proven to be effective (Ahrens et al., 2011; Black, et al., 2000; Christensen, 2013; Kress et al., 2006; Rothman and Silverman, 2007).

Outside the specific purview of prevention programs, a couple of the participants noted the value of advertising statistical information on poster boards in resident halls, and another discussed promoting catchy slogans around campus to fight against sexual victimization. There is value in colleges considering multiple and varied modes to inform student about the pertinent information needed to decrease sexual victimization on campus.

Effects of victimization (self or others experience of victimization).
Participants from one male group and one female group expressed reactions to sexual victimization. The participants voiced concerns about how female victims could be afraid to stand up to a male perpetrator because of his stature or their perceived inability to protect themselves. In Iverson's (2006) discourse analysis of transcripts, he found a strong association between the accepted social norm of male dominance over women and the ability for males to assert power and control in a sexual violent situation. The gender roles and images of women and men as constructed by society are emphasized in the peer theater prevention programs offered by educational institutions. Although colleges recognize sexual victimization as problematic, socialized norms that support males as aggressors and woman as disempowered are supported by the discourse in theatrical skits meant to confront them and educate students in the scripts of peer theater it will continue to support the roles, perceptions and environments that lead to victimization.

Theory in Practice

The socio-ecological model was used to understand how direct and indirect ecological influences impact student knowledge, attitudes and beliefs towards sexual assault. The socio-ecological model, a derivative of Bronfenbrenner's work in human development and ecological systems (1977), acted in this study as a theoretical framework to help achieve a comprehensive understanding of student knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward sexual violence. In order to gain an in-depth understanding, the researcher aligned participant responses with the sociological systems/levels outlined in the model. Participant viewpoints were outlined using the ecological systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1999) to direct the content analysis, which in turn uncovered the main themes and results of the study (Creswell, 2013).

Iverson (2006) discussed the need to ground sexual victimization programming with theory. In his study and the current study, the socio-ecological model is valuable in its ability to address the concerns of society and the relation to individual knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs from a micro to a macro level of influences. Similarly, Exner and Cummings (2011) voiced the importance of bridging and understanding factors such as bystander efficacy, readiness to change, and barriers to intervention through the lens of a societal and individualistic framework. Baynard (2011) agrees on the effectiveness of using the socio-ecological model to create a basis for prevention programs that encompass an individual's thought process and beliefs and the behaviors prescribed by relationships, experiences, personality traits, and emotions influenced by societal norms and expectations. Participant comments from this current research confirmed the relational or societal norms influences on rape myths and stereotypes by noting beliefs

and attitudes taught to them by parents, peers, culture, and media. Participants also identified the impact of college structures and policies and processes on risk and prevention. Bridging theory, practice, and research, as done in the current research, will result in more viable and effective programs.

   Recommendations through a social ecological systems lens. Given student views regarding sexual victimization in college, utilizing theory grounded in social constructs to build a comprehensive prevention program has proven promising. The socio-ecological model provides a framework to do just this. The ecological levels in this model have a bidirectional relationship with the individual who is represented as the center of the system. The four levels of this system (micro, meso, exo, macro) can serve as a framework for addressing the themes found in this study. A description of the four ecological systems is presented first, followed by a brief discussion of the implications of using social ecological theory in program development.

   Microsystem. The microsystem represents activities, social roles, and the relationships in interactive settings. The family, school, workplace, and peer groups are all examples of microsystems. Participants from this study referenced beliefs and behaviors that were modeled for them as a child by either parents, family or friends.

   Mesosystem. The mesosystem is representative of linkages and processes that take place between two or more settings, or a system of microsystems that impacts the development of an individual. The mesosystem is characteristic of interactions such as that of parents and teachers and how they affect an individual's decision-making process. Participants made references to situations that they saw happen to friends or messages

given to them in school and this influenced what they believed in regards to sexual victimization.

Exosystem. The exosystem demonstrates the processes that take place between two or more environments where in at least one of the environments the individual is indirectly impacted. An example of this is a parent's workplace and how various events within this environment can affect the family. Participants from this study noted how friends or situations from their neighborhoods impacted what they thought about sexual victimization. Participants noted their desire for colleges to be more explicit about what type of victimization is impacting the campus as a way for students to be informed.

Macrosystem. The macrosystem demonstrates the central themes of the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem. The central themes encompass sub cultures, customs, bodies of knowledge, and patterns in life within different societal groups. The macrosystem entails the characteristics of specific social and psychological qualities that impact the microsystems. The impact of the macrosystem on what participants believed about sexual victimization was referenced the most. Participants discussed how media, cultural norms, and gender impacts individual beliefs and behaviors as it pertains to concerns of sexual victimization.

Implications for successful programs. The analysis of this study contributes to research on the knowledge, beliefs and attitudes of incoming freshman students. Continued research on this topic will be vital to developing a promising prevention program that is successful in decreasing sexual victimization. After reviewing the literature and conducting this study, an example of a comprehensive program framed with theory can be provided.

As suggested in the literature (Jordan et al., 2009; Rothman & Silverman, 2007) using a theory, such as the socio-ecological model, to frame a program would ensure that ecological factors (as they relate to self-concept, socialized norms, and the relationships amongst the various ecological systems) would be addressed in a comprehensive manner. Creating activities or educational sessions that provide students the opportunity to understand how their personal attitudes and thoughts impact their behavior is essential in creating a holistic approach to programming. Such a program would give students a chance to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their views on sexual victimization.

In addition to self-awareness, educating students on how direct and indirect ecological relational influences connect to sexual violence provides a lens for programming content. Influences that were identified as a result of the research study conducted include deconstructing socialized norms, rape myths, and predictors of sexual violence. Considerations for addressing these influences within program content include information on socialized identities and gender norms for males viewed as dominant and abusers and females as vulnerable and weak, the effects of alcohol on sexual consent, the effect of victim blaming on a survivor, sexual assault statistics, the influence of media, bystander intervention strategies, personal stories from victim/survivors, cultural associations with sexual violence, and the most noted predictor of sexual violence, males who are going to pledge or have pledged in fraternities.

Strategies by way of a poster campaign, advertised slogans, and the use of media such as SnapChat and Instagram to deliver statistics and information were also recommended. Using measurement scales such as the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance

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(IRMA), Bystander Behavior Scale, and Sexual Experience Survey (SES) to gauge changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in addition to content analysis of focus groups would offer credible outcomes. It was also suggested that prevention programs be during the second year of college as well as the first. Few programs are geared toward second year students, and increasing their use would provide additional data to assess longitudinal changes and potentially uncover additional factors that impact students during their second year. Providing an intentional program geared toward more college-experienced second-year student adds an additional layer of prevention and education. In addition to this program suggestion, offering college administration recommendations from participants related to counseling services, university police, and campus-wide bystander training is vital to engaging individuals at a macro level and would create a sense of community.

The most effective mode of content delivery needs to be considered. The use of peer theater is outlined as a successful mode of programming (Ahrens, Rich, & Ulman, 2011; Black et al., 2000; Christensen, 2013; Kress et al., 2006; Roth & Silverman, 2007). Using peer theater skits as the mode of delivery allows the participant to interact in an empathetic manner and practice problem solving skills by applying bystander skills, which can empower students to intervene. In practicing bystander intervention skills, individuals become more confident if presented with a sexual violence situation and can further understand how a potential victim would feel if bystanders decided not to intervene. Even if participants choose not to participate in peer theater skits, there is evidence that they benefit from being in the audience. Students would engage in empathy

by being in the audience and observing other students practice bystander and decision-making skills (Ahrens et al., 2011).

In addition to peer theater and bystander intervention, utilizing gender-stratified focus groups or educational groups to debrief allows for a safer and more intimate way of discussing sexual violence concerns. Participants from all groups in this current research suggested that the groups continue throughout the year because the concerns with sexual violence are not just an issue for the first weekend of the fall semester. Scheduling educational sessions throughout the academic year is one way to continue the conversation with students. The need for additional programming through the year was voiced as an overarching concern amongst participants

Implications

Colleges and universities as well as community members can benefit from the data collected from this research study. As students enter college, move through their college career, and become integrated in the college community, understanding the knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs related to sexual victimization could help decrease the number of incidences occurring amongst college students. The following subsections discuss the main themes and their implications for student education, general implications for executive leaders, and theory and practice alignment with the results of this study.

Student education. The first theme of this study, *understanding victimization: factors that contribute to risk,* is represented through the individual, the central focus of the socio-ecological model. Intrapersonal factors, such as characteristics of the individual, knowledge, attitudes and behavior, skills, and developmental history, impact how a person views sexual assault and the factors that contribute to victimization. Current

analysis revealed discussions related to victim blaming. Participants from this study demonstrated beliefs that shift the focus to the victim rather than the perpetrator, such as when they noted that females could be blamed for sexual victimization because they like to showcase their bodies for attention from males and might wear something to evoke attention. The importance of communication between sexual partners and the impact that alcohol can have on sexual consent also should be discussed as these factors contribute to risk of sexual violence. Developing a program that encompasses how individuals come to understand and develop their thoughts and opinions of sexual victimization will help to deconstruct social norms. Students can be educated on the facts with the goal of reframing their understanding of the various components of sexual victimization.

The second theme, *social and cultural practices, attitudes and beliefs that lead to sexual assault*, is parallel to the interpersonal relationship, or as represented by the ecological model, the microsystem. Involving students in a discussion or developing an activity within a program could display how interactions and relationships with various environments such as the families, schools, peer groups, and workplaces impact what an individual thinks and believes about sexual violence. Participants from this study noted several interactions they found concerning and that could lead to sexual violence, such as the lack of seriousness during the prevention program, peer pressure, party culture, females' lack of self-esteem, the need for females to be more assertive, alcohol and drugs, female risky attire, past history, media, mental illness, stress, victim blaming, and maturity level. The relationship between media and college students and its impact on gender roles and lack of accountability in sexual violence was also concerning to participants. Beneficial and efficient programs that change social and cultural practices

will help students understand, identify, a change these concerning relationships and interactions. Christensen (2013) further suggested that engaging in programming that encompasses "ethic of care" can help to deconstruct social norms related to gender roles.

The third and fifth theme, *no longer a bystander: making a personal decision to intervene* and *reacting to being sexually victimized (self or others' experience of victimization)* can both be represented under the meso- and exo-systems. With both of these themes, creating the motivation and detailing the importance of being a bystander through a victim's experience helps promote communication and participation in situational decision making. Participants from the current study talked about the importance of speaking up if someone is at risk and of being trained on how to intervene when someone needs help. This aspect of a program—bystander training—could be exhibited through a peer theater skit evoking a sense of understanding for sexual assault victims and the practice of how to intervene in risky situations. In a cross-sectional study, Foubert et al. (2010) found bystander intervention increased when programs incorporated intervention skills coupled with a discussion that was emotionally based. Similarly, McMahon et al. (2011) proposed that the willingness of students to engage in primary and secondary sexual violence situations can be increased with proper skills training.

The fourth theme, *confronting organizational and interpersonal attitudes that interfere with reporting and curtailing occurrences*, coincides with the macrosystem of the ecological model. Creating an opportunity to talk with college officials and law enforcement about procedures and policies could eliminate any misconceptions that create barriers to reporting. Barriers that participants spoke of were the lack of utilizing media to advertise and teach students about sexual victimization and the importance of

consent, making students aware of sexual assault statistics as they pertained to their campus, the need for counseling center hours and the use of media to be expanded, and introducing small group discussions and speakers who would share personal survivor stories as a means to break down the barriers to reporting. Often, students are not aware of the resources at their disposal and how the lack of reporting is a detriment to the individual and the community (their institution and surrounding area) in which they live. Universities and colleges need to ensure that the student body is aware of available help. It is equally vital for college officials to understand how demonstrating their investment in student safety creates a positive environment for reporting. Developing set times through the school year to have informational and open sessions to talk about the barriers would be helpful in dismantling reporting barriers.

Developing educational curriculums that encompass data from this research as it coincides with the socio-ecological model provides a context for a comprehensive prevention program. This complex issue involves understanding student's thoughts and opinions as well as the relationship, interactions, and processes occurring among the various ecological levels. The many studies discussed describe the need for a multifaceted program that involves not only presenting facts about sexual victimization (Foubert et al., 2007; Foubert et al., 2010; Kress et al., 2006; Rothman & Silverman, 2007), but also a mode of delivery that allows empathy to be provoked and an opportunity for students to practice bystander actions (Ahrens et al., 2011; Coker et al., 2011; Foubert et al., 2007; Kress et al., 2006). In addition, including components that include gender specific and special cultural programming could help address some of the limitations to the research study discussed in the Limitations section of this dissertation.

Implications for executive leaders. The results of this study can assist an executive leader in higher education to develop a well-rounded and holistic approach to a prevention program as discussed in the subsection entitled "Implications of Successful Programs." Understanding the needs, perspectives, and beliefs of students regarding sexual victimization will assist in successful programming. Kouzes and Posner (2012) discuss the five practices of an effective leader: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. Taking these practices and infusing them into higher education practices along with promising prevention practices would enable a strong collaborative program that addresses the many limitations described in the general body of research. For instance, understanding how to better serve student athletes, increase female self-esteem and teach empowerment, or deal with groups of students who might require a different avenue of programming because of culture or gender could each be addressed from a leadership and policy standpoint. Suggesting curriculum changes or special workshops would also be in order. Considering student feedback and engaging students in program development is always important.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study include the low sample sizes which could be attributed to the nature of the study or the need for additional advertisement. The research study was conducted in one college setting which is not representative of all college environments or student populations. Increasing gender representation that includes self-identifying groups could also be considered a limitation. Lastly, the data was collected at one time instead of over time which potentially limits the credibility of the findings.

Recommendations for Future Research

Replicating the study with a larger sample size would provide a better representation of first-year-student experience. Conducting focus groups with the same participants prior to and after the peer theater and then at 6 months to assess how knowledge attitudes and beliefs are impacted over time and by the training is recommended. Conducting similar research in other settings—a large urban university, for example—would allow for a comparison of outcomes across settings to provide a more substantive content analysis. Lastly, replicating the study with and maintaining heterogeneous focus groups allowing a sense of cohesiveness and safety when discussing such a sensitive subject is also suggested.

Recommendations for Program Development

As mentioned in the study conducted by Black et al. (2000), developing a program that encompasses myths versus facts is effective. Addressing the effects of myths on victims and perpetrators, the destructive effect of victim blaming, and the influences of the media and gender socialization, help increase understanding of the seriousness of sexual victimization. Programs also need to teach students how they can support and be sensitive to the needs and potential post traumatic responses to sexual assault survivors. Developing a program that encompasses these aspects could prove to be a promising way to engage college students, particularly those groups that have proven to be more difficult to reach such as athletes and fraternity members (Foubert et al., 2007; Kress et al., 2006; McMahon, 2010)

The outcome from the current study suggested many factors that are associated with first-year students and what they think and believe are the factors to victimization on

campuses. The types and modes of programming such as peer theater, bystander training, and focus groups and debriefs appear to be parts of an effective program. Developing prevention programs that use theory as a foundation to the curriculum could be the answer to confronting a nationwide dilemma. Incorporating components of a program that address self-awareness and individual development of attitudes and beliefs of sexual victimization is critical. Statistical information, education on the policies and resources available at the institutional level and as well as information on socially developed norms and stereotypes also seem to be important to addressing change. Lastly, addressing the possible barriers to reporting, such as that of operational hours of counseling center services, and expanding safety shuttle routes, as well as addressing ways to create a more bystander action oriented college and community, is vital to understanding the issues from a front-line perspective.

Conclusion

Sexual victimization is a widespread concern among college campuses. The pressure of the Department of Education Office of Civil Rights determined in 2011 that academic institutions needed to institute prevention programs geared to creating a knowledge base for incoming freshman students on sexual victimization. Colleges across the nation were even more pressured to produce effective programming due to the scrutiny that some colleges have been put under because of how they handled sexual assault allegations. Although programs are being produced, understanding their effectiveness is in its infancy.

In conducting focus groups geared toward understanding various aspects of what students know, believe, and think as it relates to sexual victimization assists in the

modification and effectiveness of future prevention programming. Studies by Iverson (2006), Baynard (2011), and Exner and Cummings (2011) relay the effectiveness of using models grounded in theory, specifically the socio-ecological model, as a foundation to build a holistic and comprehensive program geared toward decreasing incidences.

This study provided descriptions of the attitudes and beliefs of first-year college students and sexual victimization. More research is needed to gain insight and awareness of the implications and limitation of sexual violence prevention programming. Developing a comprehensive program that encompasses the necessary prongs of success gives promise to decreasing, if not eliminating, this socially constructed rape culture that has nationally college campuses nationally.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Questions

Main Question:

➢ What is the Impact of Participating in a Mandatory Peer Theater Sexual Violence Prevention Program on Incoming College Freshman's Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors?

Focus Group Questions, Open-ended:

➢ What information did you as student gain after viewing a sexual violence prevention program?

➢ What factors and actions do you believe contribute to sexual violence on college campuses?

➢ What barriers do you think impact students from getting help for sexual violence?

Appendix B

Letter of Invite to Participants

Dear College at Brockport Student,

You are among 1,200 incoming Freshman College at Brockport students who have been invited to participate in the Sexual Violence Prevention Program discussion focus groups. Your participation is very valuable in assessing campus sexual violence at The College at Brockport. The focus groups are designed to gain insights into the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of college students related to sexual violence. The focus groups will be scheduled during the week of September 28th, 2015 and should take about 60-90 minutes to complete. At the conclusion of each focus group you will receive instruction on how to enter into a drawing for a $150.00 Barnes and Noble College Bookstore gift card. All participants will receive a college t-shirt. Pizza will be provided during the focus group session.

Results from the survey will also be used in a dissertation study exploring college student knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors of college students related to sexual violence being completed by a Doctorate of Executive Leadership candidate at St. John Fisher College. This study has been approved by both the Institutional Review Board at St. John Fisher College and The College at Brockport.

If agreed to participate, complete the demographic information and if the criteria for participation is met, the informed consent information. After reading and electronically agreeing to the consent form, a follow up confirmation email with the details of the research study will be provided. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study.

Thank you for considering participating in this focus group study. If you choose to participate, email kbuckley@brockport.edu at the First Year Experience Office for additional information.

Sandra S. Vazquez
Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Hazen for Integrated Care Counseling Center
The College at Brockport, State University of New York
Doctoral Candidate in Executive Leadership, St. John Fisher College

Appendix C

Demographic Information

Student who self-select into this study will be asked to provide the following information:

- *Race*
- *Gender*
- *Year of birth*

Disclosure/ Privacy Statement

Title of Study
How are First Year College Students Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors Impacted by a Mandatory First Semester Sexual Violence Prevention Program?

Name of Researcher
Sandra S. Vazquez

Faculty Supervisor
Dr. Dianne Cooney-Miner
Dean, Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Nursing

Phone Number for Further Information
Sandra S. Vazquez
585-395-2828 (office)

Purpose of Study
The Sound Off Theater Sexual Violence Prevention Program is designed to provide first year universities students information pertaining to: (a) risk factors associated with sexual violence; (b) outlines bystander intervention techniques (c) knowledge of campus sexual violence victim resources; (d) negative consequences experienced; and (e) perceptions of peer attitudes and behaviors pertaining to sexual violence.

This mandated sexual violence prevention program will be used understand the impact it had on first year, second semester, student knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors using focus groups. In addition, the researcher will use data collected for the purpose of a dissertation study exploring the perceptions college students hold sexual violence program.

Study Procedures
The focus groups will be scheduled between April 27, 2015 and May 1, 2015 and should take between 50-60 minutes to complete. Focus group participants will consist of 28 self-selected students, identified by the Office of Student Retention. Students must be 18 or older to participate.

Participants in this study will access a secure website to complete demographic information once they agree to participate and which will then link to a login invite information with consent form, risk factors associated with the study, resources available to participants during and after the study, consent to be audio recorded, confidentiality agreement and agreement for researcher to share findings. The link does not associate participant responses to individual identities. The login simply ensures participants are first year second semester students over the age of 18.

At the conclusion of the focus group study, participants will be provided instructions to enter the drawing for a $75.00 (x2) Bookstore gift card.

Approval of Study
This study will need to be reviewed and approved by the St. John Fisher College Institutional Review Board and The College at Brockport, SUNY Institutional Review Board.

Place of Study
Hazen Hall Conference room, Hazen for Integrated Care, Prevention and Outreach Office, on The College at Brockport campus.

Length of Participation
The Focus Groups will be scheduled between April 27, 2015 and March 1, 2015 and should take between 50-60 minutes to complete.

Risks and Benefits
This focus group will ask questions regarding impact on knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors in relation to the sexual violence prevention program seen at the start of their first semester of college. If in answering these questions participants would like to speak with a counselor at The College at Brockport Counseling Center, they can call 395-2207 or walk to the connecting building for a walk-in appointment.

Method for Protecting Confidentiality and Privacy
Confidentiality and privacy will be maintained by having all participants sign a confidentiality and consent statement prior to the study being conducted. Student will be provided information on the storage of data linked to the focus groups and explained that researcher will be the only one to have access to the data. Audio recording will be destroyed after one year.

Your Rights
As a research participant, you have the right to:
- Have the purpose of the study, and the expected risks and benefits, fully explained to you before you to choose to participate.
- Withdraw from participation at any time without penalty.
- Refuse to answer a particular question without penalty.
- Be informed of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to you.
- Be informed of the outcome of the study.

If you have further questions regarding this study, please contact Sandra S. Vazquez at (585) 395-2728.

More directions follow when you email your interest. By self-selecting to research study you are acknowledging that you are 18 years of age or older, and you are agreeing to self-select into the focus group.

Appendix E

Consent Form

Participant:

I have read this consent form. I have had the opportunity to discuss this research study with the investigator of the research study team. I have had my questions answered by them in the language I understand. The risk and benefits have been explained to me. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form after signing it. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may choose to withdraw at any time. I freely agree to participate in this research study. I understand that information regarding my personal identity will be kept confidential, but that confidentiality is not guaranteed.

Date: _____   Participant's Initials: _____

I (check) ☐ consent to participate in the research study "How are First Year College Students Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors Impacted by a Mandatory First Semester Sexual Violence Prevention Program?"

I (check) ☐ consent to participate in a focus group

I (check) ☐ consent to have the analysis of the content from the focus groups be shared with

various stakeholders of the college and community. I understand no identifying information will

be shared.

By signing this consent form, I have not waived any legal rights that I have as a participant in a

research study.

Date: _____   Participant Signature:

_____

Participant Printed Name:

_____

Research Staff

The participant has understood their rights and has knowingly given their consent to participate.

Date: _____

Signature:_____

Printed Name_____

Role in the Study: _____

"How are First Year College Students Knowledge, Attitudes, and Behaviors Impacted by a

Mandatory First Semester Sexual Violence Prevention Program?"

September 2015   Participant's Initials:

_____

Appendix F

Agreement to Share Finding

In agreeing to participate in this study, you are also providing the researcher permission to share the results of study at local and national conferences, by means of journal articles, and at any professional venue where the information could be deemed valuable. The anonymity of participants will be kept.

By signing this consent form, I have not waived any legal rights that I have as a participant in a

research study.

Date: _____   Participant Signature:

_____

                                         Participant Printed Name:

_____

Appendix G

Participant Group Identifiers and Demographics

Focus Group Number	Gender	Age	Participant Initials
Group 1	Female	18	M.Y.
		18	C.S.
		18	A.B.
		18	S.M.
		18	H.R.
		18	C.R.
Group 2	Male	18	I.D.
		18	T.R.
		18	S.O.
Group 3	Female	18	J.M.
		18	L.J.
		18	C.J.
		18	B.B.
		18	Y.S.
		18	S.Y.
		18	A.A.

Group 4	Male	18	S.C
		18	B.S
		18	J.F.

Appendix H

Levels of Coding

Group 1: Females	Group 2: Males

Recall of info, SV Prevention Program
      1) Redundancy of Info
      2) "Don't remember a lot"
      3) Guy violent towards girlfriend
      4) Skits Needs to be More Serious
      5) "It's not a joke"
   Timing of Prevention Programs
      1) Too many events
      2) "I got the whole semester"
      3) Not all student received PPSV
Factors of SV
      1) "Mental abuse"
      2) "Physical Abuse"
      3) "Emotional Abuse"
Stereotypes
      1) Women at fault too
Bystander Reaction
Victim Perspective
Increase types SV Prevention Program
discussion groups
Presenter
Campus Safety
      Public Reports
      Awareness of Campus SV Incidences
 	
Reason for Inability to assist Victims
   -Lack of Empathy
   -Lack of Relatedness to SV Victims
   How to Support a Friend
      -Understanding Symptoms of Rape
      -Skills Needed to Help
      -How to Deal with a Disclosure
      -How to Support
   Risk of Reporting
      - "Fear"
      -"embarrassment"
      -safe place to self-disclose
   Counselor Led Group Discussion in Res. Halls
      -Counselor Assist with Identifying Victims
   Self-Disclosure
      -Risks of Self-Disclosure
	Recall of skit
	      1. Eagle check
	      2. Speak up if you see suspicious behavior
	      3. Girls were drunk
	      4 .Party scene
	      5. Sexual violence goes hand and hand with
	mental illness and physical abuse
	      6. Boyfriend was controlling
	         -"he hit her"
	      7. Girl was suicidal
	      8. Skit not helpful
	      9. Came across as a joke
	Contributing factors to not getting help for SV
	      1. Females feelings of isolation
	      2. No support
	      3. Hopeless
	      4. Isolation prolongs getting help
	      5. Vulnerability
	      6. Shame
	      7. Victim label
	Contributing Factors to SV
	      1. Alcohol
	      2. Past history
	      3. Experience of SV
	      4. Feelings of hurt
	      5. Man is in charge, need for power
	      6. Gender roles
	      7. Media influence
	      8. Stereotypes
	      9. Men are supposed to be in control
	      10. Looked at as weak
	      11. "Cultural norms for girls to be violated"
	Contributing Factors to SV on Campus
	      1. Party
	      2. Jumping the gun
	      3. Alcohol
	      4. Women get taken advantage of
	      5. Can't handle
	      6. Alcohol causes violence
	      7. Freshman first taste of freedom
	      8. Experiment
	      9. Miscommunication

Group 1: Females	Group 2: Males
-"Fear"	10. More communication
-"Embarrassment"	11. Clear communication
-Need for Safe Place to Disclose	12. Coercion
Prevention Programs	13. manipulation
- increase frequency	**Victim reaction to SV**
-involve males	1. Freeze up during intimacy
- Mixed sex Discussion Groups	2. Get nervous but don't speak up
-Talk about the facts of sex	3. Need to be more assertiveness
-Give permission to talk about sex	4. Might think they still will be raped if fights
-Normalize	5. Changes mind
-Use of groups, "Empower and Uplift"	6. Come to senses, right to stop
-Use Media	7. Right to say no
-"yik yak"	**Victim Blaming**
Accessibility to Support	1. Girls attire
-Increase Counseling Center hours	2. Blame on the victim only
- Anonymous Avenues of Support	**Ways to reduce SV on campus**
-"24 hour Counselors"	1. Teach students how to communicate about consent
-Anonymous Hotline	
-decrease appointment wait times	2. Talking about feeling while in a risky situation
-hours of operation need to change	3. Don't leave your cup alone at a party
-not open/accessible during student high risk time	4. How to be assertive when you don't want to have sex
-Support Male Perpetrators	5. Normalizing communication
-More accessibility to Mental Health Services	6. Helpful tips if in a SV situation
Barriers to SSS	7. Talk to friends about SV
-Shame	8. Intervene if the situation is risky
-"Don't want to show your face"	9. Watch each other back at parties
Campus Safety Systems	**Additional PP by college**
-No trust	1. More conversations
-Equipment doesn't work	2. Group conversation on SV
Bystander Involvement	3. Explanation at the start of skit
-"If you see something happening then it is kind of your duty…"	4. More frequent conversations
Campus Safety	5. Remind people of resources and supports on campus
-"crap"	
Safety Systems Not Working	6. Hotline
Lack of Trust in Campus Safety Systems	7. Use of "snap Chat" to provide support
High Risk Situations, No help	**Recall of Resources on Campus**
Contributing Factors to SV	1. Hazen
-Girls should not lead guys on	2. Counseling Center
-Mixed Messages	3. Where to get condoms
-Need to understand Consent	
-"Don't force"	
-Miscommunication	

Group 1: Females	Group 2: Males

-Confusion about Consent
Reactions during SV
       -risk of physical violence
       -physical strength
       -"just go along with it"
      -Flight/Freeze/Fight Reaction
Factors that Cause Perpetration
       -Media Influences
       -"Power"
       -Mental Health Issues
       -Past Experiences
       -Alcohol and Drugs
       -Societal Norms
       -Control in relationships
      - Media that Depict SV/DV
Athletic Teams/High Risk for SV
Definition of Rape Unclear
SV in DV relationships
Characteristics of a Perp
       -"obsessed"
       -Harassing behavior
       -Stalking
Definition of Stalking
       -"Random pop ups"
       -Stalking in Res Halls
Res life Building Safety
     -Students don't follow res life rule
     -"let them slide in real quick"
     -Have best Intention
     -"trust people"
     -"honesty"
     -Timing of day decides if rules are
followed
Conduct Cases
     -Alcohol makes it a hard case to resolve
Effects of Alcohol
   -Alcohol, hard to give consent
   -Alcohol, skews decision making
   -Alcohol, different levels of drunkenness
   -Alcohol, uncertainty of rape
 	
Attributes of Intoxication
   -"can't walk"
   -"can't drive"
Ways to bring Awareness of SV
       -media	

Group 1: Females	Group 2: Males

-PSA's
Protective measures
    -Nail Polish
    -hear stories from other colleges
    -Parents Information of Violence in Colleges
Campus Resources
    -"Hazen"
Prevention of SV, use of messages
    -"T-shirts"
    -"Use campus statistics"
    -actual incidences
    -"advertise"
    -"advertising in the dorms"
    -Student mentors, "Seniors"
Lack of relatedness at Counseling Center
    -"guy counselors"
    -not comfortable
Hard to discuss sex
    -"Taboo"
    -"shame"
Accountability of Actions
Involve Males in Conversation
Gender differences in groups
Hard to talk
Victim Blaming
Societal standards
    -gender roles
Stigma attached to woman and SV
Need for personal ownership
Sex and maturity level of Freshman
Domestic Violence Awareness
"Hard to change Societal Views"	

Group 3: Females	Group 4: Males
1) Prevention Program- SV skit take away 　1. -Girl/guys Intoxicated 　2. -Controlling Boyfriend 　3. -Controlling woman appearance 　4. -Verbal abuse 　5. -Physical abuse 2) Dynamics of a controlling relationship 　1. -"Red flags" 　2. -"Control" 　3. -Dominance" 3) Victim blaming 　1. -No excuse 　2. -Sexual violence not justified 　3. -Attention seeking behavior 4) Societal Views 　1. -"Consent" 　2. -Victim blaming 　3. -Societal Views 　4. -Gender roles 　5. -"Defeat" 　6. -Minority woman inferior 　7. -Media portrayal of women 　8. -Lack of equity 　9. -"Popular figures" not held accountable 　10. -Colleges protect certain groups 　11. -No consequences 5) Contributing Factors to SV on campus 　1. -Peer pressure 　2. -"Party culture" 　3. -New environment 　4. -Being dependent on a man 　5. -Needing protection 　6. -"Fatherly figure" 　7. -"Brotherly figure" 　8. -Sense of obligation to men for protection 　9. -"Men are an outlet" 　10. -"Source of self-protection" 　11. -Woman lacking self esteem 　12. -Need to be more "assertive" 6) Reason for perpetration 　1. -"parents" 　2. -"modeled behavior" 　3. -"Built up anger"	Learnings from of the skit 　1. Speak up for Domestic violence 　2. Always find a support person 　3. Get involved, be a bystander 　4. Don't be scared to get involved Consequences to being an bystander 　1. Relational conflict 　2. Fear of making the wrong assumption 　3. Risk of looking "dumb" 　4. Fear of wrongly accusing 　5. Uncertainty of situation Characteristics of Controlling Relationships 　1. Female scared 　2. "things get out of hand" Rape is being chosen more Campus Resources 　1. Hazen 　2. Title IX Coordinator 　3. Policies like "Zero Tolerance" Reasons SV on campus 　1. Alcohol 　2. Drugs 　3. Media 　4. Girls risky attire 　5. Attention Seeking Behavior 　6. Female intentionality 　7. Lack of common sense Reasons males do not report 　1. Gender roles 　2. Stereotypes 　3. Embarrassment 　4. Status "football player" 　5. Vulnerability 　6. Fear of looking like a "wimp" 　7. Embarrassed 　8. Perception of self 　9. How others perceive them 　10. Desire to fight Victim Blaming 　1. Women's behavior 　2. Women's attire Reasons for Raping 　1. Mental health issues 　2. Past experiences 　3. Build up "girlfriend frustrating" 　4. Manipulation

Group 3: Females	Group 4: Males

4. -Mental Illness
5. -"Psychopath"
6. -"Stressful environment"
7. -Stress at college
8. -"Television"
9. -"Social media"
10. -Need to control a person
11. -Need to have someone "whipped"
 	
7) Effects of Alcohol
   1. -Alcohol impairs decision making
   2. -Individual effects of alcohol
   3. -Drinking "portrayed" as campus culture
   4. -Unknown reaction to drugs and alcohol
 	
8) Student involvement
   1. -Be an bystander
   2. -Contact UP
   3. -Assist when someone is struggling
   4. -Basic safety
   5. -Freshman workshops
   6. -Gender Specific groups
   7. -Topic specific group
 	
9) More campus support
   1. -Expand safe bus routes
   2. -Safe bus Employees not bystanders
 	
10) UP
   1. -Increase UP presence
   2. -Increase response time
   3. -increase UP presence of the weekend
   4. -personal interaction with students
 	
11) Student intervention
   1. -be an bystander
   2. -Awareness of "red flags"
 	
12) Relatedness to victims
   1. -use statistics
   2. -personal stories
   3. -local situations
 	
13) Male Relatedness to victims (mostly women)
	Inability to Consent
	   1. Alcohol
	   2. Intoxication
	Ways men can be victimized
	   1. Drugged by girlfriend
	   2. Use of object
	Ways for students to help decrease SV
	   1. Stop blaming only women "Like we have been doing this entire conversation"
	   2. Increase emphasis on consent
	   3. Hold friend accountable for actions
	   4. Drunk girls off limits
	Difficulties deciding conduct cases
	   1. What happens when both people are drunk
	   2. Your word against theirs
	   3. Flaw in system, guy gets "blamed"
	   4. Need to investigate fully
	   5. Can ruin someone's life
	Additional Prevention Methods by college
	   1. Talk to high school students
	   2. Continue to do skits
	   3. Continue to do online program "Think About It"

Group 3: Females	Group 4: Males

1. -Use family as examples
    2. -Personalizing the sexual violence
    3. -woman speaker to create empathy
    4.
14) Mindset of a perpetrator
    1. -taking a sense of self
    2. -feeling "powerless"
    3. -need to violate
    4. -taking power from others
    5. -make victims feel weak
15) Lack of male Reporting SV
    1. -"feelings of judgement if report being raped by a female"
    2. -report perceived as a joke
16) Campus Resources
    1. -"Counseling Center"
    2. -"Hazen"
17) Barriers to seeking help
    1. -Sense of vulnerability	

Original Themes (1st Draft)	Combined Themes (2nd Draft)	Final Themes/Subcategories (3rd Draft)
1. Programmatic Information Gained *Personal Attitudes*: Skit was a joke Redundant information No recall of information *Knowledge:* DV characteristics/flags Characteristics of a perpetrator Definition of rape (Resources)Hazen, Counseling, Title IX Coordinator Alcohol effects Supporting Friend Bystander **2. Bystander Action:** Safety Rules Talk to Friends Contact UP Stop Victim Blaming Abide by consent Accountability **3. Contributing Factors to SV** *Personal/Societal:* Mental/Physical/Emotional Abuse Stereotypes Media Past Experiences Gender Roles Lack of accountability Hurt feelings Power in men Inferiority in women Manipulation *Campus/Policy:* Athletes Res life safety Alcohol Mixed messages Lack of consent Forced sex Maturity level Coercion/manipulation Protection of athletes Stress	*Attitudes: SV* **(Combined 1&3 from 1st draft)** Skit was a joke Redundant information No recall of information DV characteristics/red flags Characteristics of a perpetrator Definition of rape (Resources)Hazen, Counseling, Title IX Coordinator Alcohol effects Supporting Friend Bystander Mental/Physical/Emotional Abuse Stereotypes Media Past Experiences Gender Roles Lack of accountability Hurt feelings Power in men Inferiority in women Manipulation Athletes Res life safety Alcohol Mixed messages Lack of consent Forced sex Maturity level Coercion/manipulation Protection of athletes Stress Media Women seeking attention **Behavior: Ways to Decrease SV** **(Combined 2&4 from 1st draft)** Safety Rules Talk to Friends Contact UP Stop Victim Blaming Abide by consent Accountability Personal stories Presenters Res hall programs Media/PSA's Poster info Increase consent talks Teach assertiveness Increase counseling center hours	**1&2. Knowledge, Beliefs, Attitudes:** *Factors Contributing to Becoming a Victim/Social/Cultural* SV not taken seriously Newest research is needed Definition of consent/rape important Alcohol coincides with rape Stereotypes, media, gender roles, impact on SV Mental/Physical/Emotional Abuse cause SV Manipulation contributes to SV Stress of a girlfriend Attention Seeking Behavior Maturity Level **3. Behavior: Prevention/Interceding to Prevent** Increase bystander action Utilize UP more Understand how to ask for consent Utilize different modes of programs: • Presenters/media/res hall • Advertise stats/poster campaign/media • Teach assertiveness • Create on campus anonymous hotline • Teach accountability **4. Attitudes: Barriers to Reporting SV** Emotional vulnerability • Shame • Fear, embarrassment • Judgment • Others' perception Lack of safe place to disclose Lack of relatedness/counselors Taboo Victim Blaming Perpetrator Status/Power Fear of ruining life of perpetrator Insufficient resources **5. Reactions to SV (*Outlier, only discussed in two focus groups)** Fear of perpetrator reaction (physical) Fight/Flight/Freeze: victim responses

Media Women seeking attention	Anonymous hotline Increase campus safety Advertise in dorms/SV/DV Use of "snap chat"/media	Perpetrator feels powerful
4. Ways to Decrease SV *Programmatic:* Personal stories Presenters Res hall programs Media/PSA's Poster info Increase consent talks Teach assertiveness *Campus/Policy:* Increase counseling center hours Anonymous hotline Increase campus safety Advertise in dorms/SV/DV Use of "snap chat"/media	**5. Barriers to Reporting:** Lack of empathy Risk Shame/Embarrassment Fear Lack of safe place to disclose Lack of relatedness to counselors Taboo Vulnerability Victim blaming Judgement Perception of victim Status Ruin life of perpetrator Athletes protected	

5. Barriers to Reporting:
 	
Lack of empathy
Risk
Shame/Embarrassment
Fear
Lack of safe place to disclose
Lack of relatedness to counselors
Taboo
Vulnerability
Victim blaming
Judgement
Perception of victim
Status
Ruin life of perpetrator
Athletes protected
	6. Emotional Response to SV
	    Risk of physical violence
	    Just go along with it
	    Fight/Flight/Freeze	

6. Emotional Response to SV Risk of physical violence Just go along with it Fight/flight/freeze		