



SCHOOL of  
GRADUATE STUDIES  
EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

East Tennessee State University  
**Digital Commons @ East  
Tennessee State University**

---

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Student Works

---

12-2018

# The Effects of Sexual Victimization on College Women

Bailie Light

*East Tennessee State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://dc.etsu.edu/etd>



Part of the [Criminology and Criminal Justice Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Light, Bailie, "The Effects of Sexual Victimization on College Women" (2018). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 3513.  
<https://dc.etsu.edu/etd/3513>

This Thesis - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Works at Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ East Tennessee State University. For more information, please contact [digilib@etsu.edu](mailto:digilib@etsu.edu).

The Effects of Sexual Victimization on College Women

---

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Criminology

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

---

by

Bailie Light

December 2018

---

Chris Rush, Chair

Brad Edwards

Dustin Osborne

Keywords: Sexual Victimization, Academic Performance

## ABSTRACT

The Effects of Sexual Victimization on College Women

by

Bailie Light

This thesis analyzed the effects of sexual victimization among college women. Previous research has found that victimization has several negative effects. This thesis was designed to add to this literature by addressing how sexual victimization effects both behavior and academic performance. Results indicated that there was a significant relationship between sexual victimization and behavior changes, the type of victimization experienced had a different impact on the victim based on the type of victimization they experienced, and that academic performance was significantly affected by sexual victimization.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	3
LIST OF TABLES.....	6
1. INTRODUCTION .....	7
2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE .....	10
General Sexual Assault .....	10
Reporting Patterns .....	13
College Sexual Assault.....	15
Variables Associated with College Sexual Assault.....	16
Previous Sexual Victimization .....	17
Greek-affiliation .....	17
Alcohol Use .....	18
Drug Use.....	20
College Sexual Assault Reporting Patterns.....	20
College Male Perpetrator Reports .....	21
College Female Victimization Reports.....	21
Types of Victimization and Effects.....	22
Effects of General Victimization.....	22

Effects of Sexual Victimization .....	23
Behavioral and Emotional Effects of Sexual Assault.....	24
Physical Effects of Sexual Assault .....	26
Effects of College Sexual Victimization.....	27
Behavioral and Emotional Changes .....	28
Physical Changes.....	29
Social Changes .....	32
Educational Changes .....	33
The Impact of Sexual Assault on Academic Performance.....	34
Problem Statement and Research Statement.....	36
<b>3. METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Primary Research Question.....	38
Secondary Research Questions .....	39
Methodology .....	41
WSU Original Sample.....	41
Thesis Study Sample .....	42
Methods and Analysis .....	43
Variables .....	43
Analysis.....	45
<b>4. RESULTS .....</b>	<b>48</b>

Research Question 1 .....	49
Research Question 2.....	50
Research Question 3.....	52
Conclusion.....	55
5. DISCUSSION.....	57
Discussion of Findings .....	60
Future Research.....	65
Physical Health and Academic Performance.....	66
Type of Sexual Assault and Behavior Changes.....	67
Policy Implications.....	67
Prevention Tactics and Protection .....	68
Reporting Methods and Victim Assistance .....	69
Conclusion.....	70
REFERENCES .....	73
VITA.....	82

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Frequencies of Female Sexually Victimized Undergraduates.....	45
2. Frequencies of Behavior Changes.....	51
3 t Test of Behavior Changes between Attempted and Completed Victims .....	51
4. Behavior Scale Frequencies Based on Attempted or Completed Sexual Victimization .....	52
5. ANOVA between Attempted and Completed Victims and Non-Victims.....	53
6. Descriptive Statistics on Completed Penetration or Unwanted Touching.....	54
7. Descriptive Statistics on Attempted Penetration or Unwanted Touching.....	54

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

Sexual victimization has been an important topic of discussion within the criminal justice system and society for many decades. Research has indicated that women who attend academic institutions across the nation are at substantial risk of sexual victimization (Jordan, Combs, & Smith, 2014; Walter, 2009). On the whole, it has been found that up to 86 percent of women will experience unwanted sexual touching, sexual coercion, sexual assault, and/or rape while enrolled in college (Walter, 2009). Though this topic has received a significant amount of research attention, sexual assault is still prevalent among college women. For example, researchers have found that 25% to 33% of women report an experience that meets the legal definition of rape or attempted rape during their college years (Abbey, Parkhill, BeShears, Clinton-Sherrod, & Zawacki, 2006; Humphrey & White, 2000; Jordan et al., 2014; White & Koss, 1991).

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime defines a sex crime as, "forcible rape, attempted rape, statutory rape, sexual harassment, prostitution, or other unlawful sexual contact and other unlawful behavior intended to result in sexual gratification or profit from sexual activity" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2018). For the purposes of this thesis, the terms sexual victimization and sexual assault were used interchangeably to define sex crimes that involve oral, anal, and vaginal intercourse as well as coercion and sexual harassment. The term was used as the principal expression for attempted penetration, unwanted touching, fondling, kissing, groping, continual pestering, verbal abuse, emotional manipulation to attain sex, promise of rewards, and threats of punishment. However, it should be noted that such an interpretation may not match the exact definition of rape or sexual assault as defined by the law (U.S.

Department of Justice, 2018). However, it is imperative to contemplate these unwarranted sexual advances in order to prevent them, assist victims, and to inform those at risk for victimization.

Broadening the scope of the definition for the purposes of this research allowed for an assessment of different types of victimization. Many studies have used a narrow view and definition for what constitutes a sexual victimization or a sex crime (Abbey, Ross, McDuffie, & McAuslan, 1996; Jordan et al., 2014). Thus, one of the goals of this study was to extend our knowledge by including additional forms, including unwanted touching, attempted penetration and emotional manipulation (in addition to completed penetration).

Previous research has focused on the emotional, behavioral, physical, and academic effects of sexual victimization among college women (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018; Walter, 2009). Taken as a whole, it has revealed that victimization has a detrimental effect on the behavioral, physical, social, and mental state of college women (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey, McAuslan, & Ross, 1998; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). However, this research has been limited due to the fact that it has not explored all potential impacts.

For example, it has avoided addressing certain behavioral changes, including academic performance (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1998; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). This thesis was developed to fill this gap in the literature. Specifically, it sought to determine the influence of victimization in terms of change in grade point average, academic performance and other behavioral changes, and how each type of sexual victimization influenced these changes.

The primary focus of this thesis was *how sexual victimization affects college women*. To answer this primary question, three sub-categorical questions needed to be assessed: (1) *Does sexual victimization significantly affect the college female victim's behavior?* (2) *Does the impact of victimization vary by the type of sexual assault?* and (3) *Does sexual victimization affect the female student victims' academic performance?*

Answering these questions was made possible via secondary data provided by researchers from Washington State University. The data had been previously used in a published report (Walter, 2009), though several survey questions were not included within the researcher's analyses. This study utilizes those questions in order to build upon that work.

The next chapter presents a review of previous literature pertaining to the topic of sexual victimization among college women. It will review applicable points of concentration and concerns within the topic of collegiate sexual victimization. Chapter 3 will discuss the research questions and hypotheses associated with the current study, in addition to providing an overview of the data source and the methods used to test the study hypotheses. Chapter 4 will discuss the findings outlined by each research question within this thesis. The final chapter will provide policy implications related to the study's findings, in addition to covering limitations and directions for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review of previous literature on the topic of sexual victimization among college women. The prevalence of sexual assault within society and more specifically on college campuses has led to a significant amount of research attention (Walter, 2009). As noted previously, sexual assault is an issue many college women face, and thus worthy of this attention (Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). It is important to study and address this issue further in order to increase awareness, prevention, and therapeutic remedies for victims. Doing so first requires a review of the work (on the topic) that has been conducted to date.

#### **General Sexual Assault**

Individuals from all backgrounds and walks of life are victimized by sexual assault (Brener et al., 1999). In addition, victimization is not limited to women, as men too are at risk of being sexually victimized (Brener et al., 1999; Perilloux et al., 2011). Put differently, it is not a gender-biased occurrence. With that said, forms of victimization and the likelihood that one will be victimized has been found to depend on characteristics such as age, race, sex, location, education level, income, and marital status (Brener et al., 1999; Perilloux et al., 2011).

A report from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) found that nearly 18 million women and 3 million men within the United States have been raped. According to this data, 1 in every 6 women currently residing in the U.S. have been a rape victim. In a single year, it has been estimated that 300,000 women and almost 93,000 men will become victims (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006).

When addressing age and sexual victimization, the NIJ (2006) found that half of all female victims and close to three-quarters of all male victims were raped before the age of 18 (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). A more recent study by the National Sexual Victimization Resource Center's (2018) found that one in four girls and one in six boys were sexually abused before they turned 18 years of age. The NSVRC reported that 30 percent of women were between the ages of 11 and 17 when they experienced completed rape for the first time. The report also stated that 27.8 percent of men and 12.3 percent of women were 10 years old or younger when they experienced their first victimization (National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018).

The rate of male sexual victimization was determined to be between 0.6 percent and 7.2 percent within the U.S. population; however, other studies have suggested a higher rate (Elliott, Mok, & Briere, 2004; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). One study found that slightly over 8% of college males will be victimized while enrolled (Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). While men are at a lower risk for sexual victimization than females, they are at a higher risk for general victimization. In addition, they are more likely to be the perpetrators of sexual assault (with women being more likely to be victims) (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). This is supported by NSVRC data, as 91% of rape and sexual assault victims included within their sample were female, while only 9% were male (National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018).

Two nationally representative studies conducted by the National Victims Research and Treatment Center and the Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center at the Medical University of South Carolina were summarized in a national report on rape in 1992 (Kilpatrick, Edmunds, & Seymour, 1992). Findings revealed that 13% of women surveyed reported being victims of completed rape in their lifetimes. According to the same research, 12.1 million American women or one out of every eight adult women had experienced completed forcible

rape (Kilpatrick et al., 1992). An examination of multiple studies on sexual victimization within the United States found that 13% to 25% of women experience general sexual assault at some point in their lives (Elliott et al., 2004). More recent data suggests an even higher prevalence, as the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (2018) indicated that 44 percent of women and 23 percent of men experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime.

In addition, research has shown that sexual victimization is not limited to one race (Abbey et al., 2006; Jordan et al., 2014). For example, it has been found that rates of sexual victimization are similar between Black, Asian, Hispanic, and White college females (Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014). However, it should be noted that there are some variances between specific racial and ethnic groups. For example, individuals within the Pacific Islander or Native American populations experience higher levels of sexual victimization than the previously stated racial or ethnic groups (Brener et al., 1999; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006).

A study conducted by the Center for Disease Control (2010) found that almost half of multiracial women have experienced sexual assault. This is supported by data collected as part of the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, which found that 49.5 percent of multiracial women have experienced some kind of sexual assault and over 45 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native women experienced some form of sexual victimization in their lifetime (Black et al., 2011; National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018). Black et al. (2011) found that 22% of Black women in the United States have experienced rape. A slightly smaller rate was found for White non-Hispanic women, with approximately 19% reporting victimization. The rate is slightly lower for Hispanic women (14.6%), though much higher for American Indian or Alaskan Natives (26.9%). Finally, of the women who identified as multiracial non-Hispanic, 33.5 percent reported rape victimization (Black et al., 2011).

It should be noted that the previously discussed data relied primarily upon official reports (Abbey et al., 1996; Black et al., 2011; Brener et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). This brings into question the validity and reliability of the data, as it may be affected by reporting patterns (Abbey et al., 1996; Black et al., 2011; Brener et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; NSVRC, 2018; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). For this reason, it is important to focus on the reporting patterns of sexual assault victims (NSVRC, 2018).

### **Reporting Patterns**

The NSVRC (2018) stated that rape is likely the most underreported crime. Researchers found that 63 percent of sexual assaults are not reported to police. This may be due to the fact that females are more likely to be raped by an intimate partner than a stranger (Black et al., 2011; National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018). From the National Sexual Victimization Resource Center and the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey collected data, 51.1 percent of female rape victims reported being raped by an intimate partner and 40.8 percent reported being raped by an acquaintance.

Similar results have been observed for male victims of sexual violence (National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018). For men, 52.4 percent of victims reported being raped by an acquaintance and 15.1 percent reported being raped by a stranger (National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018). On the whole, 80 percent of the victims knew their perpetrator (Black et al., 2011; National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018). Victim and perpetrator relationships were not the only variables that had an effect on reporting patterns (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006).

According to the NIJ (2006), females under the age of 18 who reported their rape were twice as likely to report being raped as an adult (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). Data from the NSVRC report in 2018 indicated that one third of women who report being raped before the age of 18 also experience rape as an adult (National Sexual Victimization Resource Center, 2018). With that said, young females have been found more likely to report being raped than their older counterparts (Tjaden & Theonnes, 2006).

The NIJ (1992) collected data on the amount of times the women in their sample had experienced completed rape. The results found that 56 percent of the women only experienced rape once. An additional 39 percent of the sample had experienced rape more than once. Then, 5 percent of the women were unsure of how many times they had been raped (Kilpatrick et al., 1992).

Though reporting rates as a whole are low, a relationship has been found between the interracial nature of incidents and reporting behavior (Lizotte, 1985). For example, Lizotte (1985) reported that when offenders were Black, and victims were White, victims were more likely to report the assault or rape to the police. Additional research stated that minority women as a whole were less likely to report sexual victimization to police (Feldman-Summers & Ashworth, 1981).

Women have been found to not report sexual assault for several reasons (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006). For example, the victim may experience shame, guilt, and embarrassment from the assault (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006). These circumstances make it hard for the victim to talk about the experience and thus much less able to report it (Jordan et al., 2014). In addition, it has been found that some victims did not want their

friends and family to know about the victimization (Sable, Danis, Mauzy, & Gallagher, 2006), as these traumatizing events can be difficult to explain to parents and friends.

Several studies revealed that victims showed great concern over confidentiality and the fear of not being believed (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006). For example, Sable et al. (2006) found that victims reported that they wanted to know that their report was private, confidential, and believed by the authorities. Additionally, some women do not understand the legal definition of forcible rape and were not sure whether to report the incident (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006). Victims have also stated that the fear of labeling the person who sexually assaulted them as a rapist kept them from reporting the incident to the police (Sable et al., 2006). Finally, sexual assault victims have reported experiencing fear, anxiety, guilt, and embarrassment during the reporting process (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006).

Developing an understanding of victimization and reporting has been a significant concern for numerous researchers. This is especially true as it relates to victimization on college campuses (if not more so) since prevalence has been found to be much higher among this age group than seen within the general population (Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Sinozich & Langston, 2014).

### **College Sexual Assault**

The prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses has required special attention from law enforcement, the judicial system, campus administration, and various advocacy groups. In addition, it has required researchers to explore various questions related to it. Kirkpatrick and Kanin (1957) conducted one of the first studies on sexual victimization on college campuses. In their study, sexual victimization was defined as forced kissing, fondling, attempted sexual intercourse, and completed sexual intercourse. A total of 291 women were interviewed; of those,

162 reported being victimized. In addition, they collectively reported over 1,000 incidents that met the criteria for victimization. In further breaking down the data, about the researchers indicated that 21 percent had experienced attempted sexual assault, and over 6 percent had been forced to have sexual intercourse (Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957). This study raised awareness of sexual assault on college campuses and sparked interest in further research (Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Walter, 2009).

Additional studies on sexual victimization revealed that women within academic institutions were at a higher risk to be sexually assaulted than women within the general population (Belknap, Cullen & Fisher, 1999; Carr & VanDeusen, 2004; Jordan et al., 2014). According to Fisher and colleagues (2000), an estimated 350 rapes occurred per 10,000 women enrolled in colleges and universities. More recently, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention conducted a study involving surveys of 2,800 women, with 22% being enrolled in college and between the ages of 19 and 24 (Carr & VanDeusen, 2004; Jordan et al., 2014). The number of women who had been sexually assaulted while enrolled in college was especially high. During the first semester of college study, 24 percent of women experienced sexual assault (Jordan et al., 2014). By the second semester, an additional 20 percent of females had been victimized (Jordan et al., 2014). Attention is now turned to a discussion of the variables found to be associated with this victimization.

### **Variables Associated with College Sexual Assault**

According to multiple studies, there were certain variables and characteristics that increase the likelihood that women enrolled in a college setting will be the victim of sexual assault (Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, & Wechsler, 2004; Smith, White, and Holland, 2003; Walter, 2009). These

include previous sexual victimization, Greek-affiliation, alcohol use, substance abuse, race, and gender. (Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). Because of their individual and combined influence, further discussion is merited.

### **Previous Sexual Victimization**

According to past research, previous victimization is found to increase the risk of sexual victimization among college women (Fisher, Cullen, & Turner, 2000; Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003). Women with a history of physical victimization during adolescence or childhood were most likely to be physically or sexually victimized in college (Smith et al., 2003). In addition, females with a past of victimization or trauma were more likely to internalize and accept abuse (Smith et al., 2003). Finally, women who were sexually assaulted before the start of the current school year were reported to be at a higher risk of re-victimization than others (Fisher et al., 2000; Jordan et al., 2014).

The researchers rationalized this finding by suggesting that previous victims were more likely to internalize said abuse, accept that it occurred, blame themselves, develop guilt, become fearful, and be more likely to accept additional sexual abuse (Fisher et al., 2000; Jordan et al., 2014). Women who have endured previous sexual abuse were more likely to become desensitized and less likely to react or attempt to stop the abuse.

### **Greek-affiliation**

Similar to the higher risk level associated with previous victimization, Greek-affiliation has also been found to play a role in risk of sexual victimization. For example, Mohler-Kuo, Dowdall, Koss, and Wechsler (2004) reported that women who were members of a sorority or

lived in sorority housing were more likely to be sexually assaulted than their counterparts. Slightly over half of women in sororities reported being sexually victimized (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). In addition, both sorority women and non-Greek affiliated women who attended fraternity parties were more likely to be sexually assaulted. Multiple studies have found that at least half of college rapes occur in fraternity houses and over 50 percent of rape occurs by fraternity members or at fraternity functions (Jordan et al., 2014; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004).

Mohler-Kuo and colleagues (2004) noted that sorority and fraternity members often had more tolerant attitudes toward rape. In addition, they often believed that the consumption of alcohol justified unusual actions that were outside of a person's perceived morals and character (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Finally, members of these groups often accepted sexual harassment or victimization while under the influence of alcohol (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004).

### **Alcohol Use**

The increased risk of sexual victimization while (and after) consuming alcohol is by no means limited to students within fraternities and sororities (Abbey et al., 1996; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Alcohol use has been found to increase the risk of sexual victimization within the general college population as well (Abbey et al., 1996; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). According to several studies, the majority of sexual assaults occurred on campus after the female voluntarily consumed alcohol (Jordan et al., 2014; Krebs, Lindquist, Warner, Fisher, & Martin, 2009). In addition, 50 percent of sexual assaults involving college students were associated with the use of alcohol.

According to data collected by Koss (1988), 74 percent of perpetrators and 55 percent of victims reported drinking alcohol at the time of the assault. When both parties have consumed alcohol, the risk of rape has been found to be significantly higher (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). For

example, Mohler-Kuo and colleagues (2004) found that drinking alcohol increased the chance of being sexually assaulted by 72 percent. Over 50 percent of the sample used by Mohler-Kuo et al. (2004) reported heavy episodic alcohol consumption. Out of the 119 colleges analyzed in Mohler-Kuo's (2004) study, over half of the colleges' student populations were part-taking in heavy alcohol consumption (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Because over half of the 119 colleges' student populations were consuming large amounts of alcohol, the rape statistics were higher in those colleges' student populations (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004).

With that said, research regarding sexual assault and alcohol use has suggested that the relationship may be dependent on several factors. Jordan, Combs, and Smith (2014) found that race may play a key role. Comparing data for White and Black students suggested that sexual assault involving alcohol was higher among White college students (Jordan et al., 2014).

On the contrary, a four-year longitudinal study conducted by Smith, White, and Holland (2003) found no significant difference in sexual assault between White and Black college women. Data indicated that 74.8 percent of White women and 81.5 percent of Black women reported being sexual victimized by the end of their fourth year in college. There was a slight discrepancy between the two populations, but the relationship was not considered significant (Smith et al., 2003).

Alcohol consumption has been found to have a large effect on the average college male and the attitudes they hold about rape. Research states that college men who had reported committing a sexual assault when they were under the influence of alcohol had higher expectations of sexual relations with their victim than did college men who were not under the influence of alcohol and reported a similar assault (Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Many college men believe the consumption of alcohol by both parties leads to an increased likelihood of sexual

relations (Abbey et al., 1996). Abbey et al. (1996) have suggested that alcohol encourages the behavior associated with sexual assault.

## **Drug Use**

The prevalence of drug use on college campuses has been associated with higher rates of sexual victimization as well (Abbey et al., 1996; Krebs et al., 2009; Mohler-Kuo et al., 2004). Researchers have noted that the use of drugs places women at a higher risk of being sexually assaulted than those who do not use drugs (Jordan et al., 2014; Krebs et al., 2009). In addition, many college women reported being fearful of being drugged without consent and being sexually assaulted (Jordan et al., 2014; Krebs et al., 2009). Yet, studies have revealed that very few sexual assaults occur after women had been given a drug without their knowledge or consent (Jordan et al., 2014; Krebs et al., 2009). Of the drug-related reported rapes, most women consented to drug use.

Additionally, each of the previously addressed factors are significantly associated with the reporting patterns of victims. Victims with previous sexual abuse, victims under the influence of drugs or alcohol, and those who are minorities have been found to be less likely to report their victimization (Cullen et al., 2000; Department of Justice, 2014; Lisak et al., 2010; Sampson, 2003; Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2011).

## **College Sexual Assault Reporting Patterns**

According to Wolitzky-Taylor and colleagues (2011), less than 5 percent of rapes (included in their analysis) on college campuses were reported to the police. Cullen et al. (2000) reached similar concluding, finding that over 90 percent of sexual assault victims on college campuses did not report their sexual victimization According to the Department of Justice

(2014), only 20 percent of college female sexual assault victims (ages 18-24) reported their victimization to law enforcement (Department of Justice, 2014). When analyzing college sexual assault reporting patterns, it was important to analyze both college female victim reports and college male perpetrator reports.

### **College Male Perpetrator Reports**

Research by Lisak et al. (2010) stated that slightly over 63 percent of males at one university self-reported acts that qualified as rape or attempted rape. Some also admitted to committing repeat rapes/attempted rapes (Lisak et al., 2010). According to the National Center for Campus Public Safety (2013), close to one-third of college males reported that they would rape a woman if they knew they would not get caught (Sampson, 2003). A review of the studies conducted in the 1980's and 1990's by the National Center for Campus Public Safety (2013) attributed college sexual assault to four main viewpoints of male perpetrators. They were that the males held a stereotypical view of women's sexual behavior, held sexist attitudes and sought-after sexual conquests, viewed alcohol as a tool in their sexual conquest, and/or received peer support for their sexually abusive behavior (Sampson, 2003).

### **College Female Victimization Reports**

Several factors have been found to influence non-reporting among college females. Issues such as the victims' memory of the rape, fear, injuries sustained during the rape, lack of evidence of physical injury, alcohol/drug use before the assault, self-blame, and the relationship with the perpetrator keep victims of sexual assault from reporting their rape (Paul et al. 2013; Sampson, 2003). In addition, some college women do not report their rape or sexual victimization because they are unable to decide if the act qualifies as a sexual assault/rape (Cullen et al., 2000;

Sampson, 2003). According to some studies, many college women were unsure of how to report their assault (Cullen et al., 2000; Sampson, 2003; Wolitzky-Taylor et al., 2011). Several of the women in these studies reported that there was a lack of information and resources provided by the campus community. Many of the female victims feared that the incident was not serious enough for police attention and did not want to bother the police (Cullen et al., 2000).

Women have been found more likely to report their sexual assault to a friend rather than family members or college officials (Fisher et al., 2000). In addition, a significant relationship between reporting patterns and type of assault has emerged (Fisher et al., 2000). The seriousness of assault has been suggested to determine whether or not the victim reported their assault (Sampson, 2003). If the individual knew the perpetrator, they were more likely to report the assault. They were also more likely to report if they received medical attention (Fisher et al., 2000).

### **Types of Victimization and Effects**

Having discussed the prevalence of sexual victimization on college campuses, issues regarding reporting, and the factors that make victimization more likely, attention is now turned to understanding the effects of assault. This section begins by discussing the effects of general victimization prior to discussing those witnessed for sexual assault victims.

#### **Effects of General Victimization**

General victimization has been found to result in multiple psychological, emotional, physical, and social elements (Hochstetler et al., 2014; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). One of the most detrimental consequences of criminal victimization is determined to be psychological

trauma. Victims often face many negative emotional or psychological effects after their assault or victimization (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006) including depression (Hochstetler et al., 2014).

Research has indicated that victimization is a traumatic event that has long lasting effects on the affected individual. The traumatic event has the ability to trigger temporary or life-long distress. Though these vary in intensity, symptoms have been found to include depression, anxiety, PTSD, suicidal thoughts and behavior, substance abuse, avoidant behavior, self-blame, guilt, fear of crime, poor quality of life, social isolation, withdrawal, and reduced socio-economic status (Hochstetler et al., 2014). These effects may be observed for many years after the victimization (Kessler & Magee, 1993).

A recent FBI (2018) report indicated that the effects fall into three categories: physical, emotional, and mental. The physical effects of criminal victimization included “nausea, tremors, chills or sweating, lack of coordination, heart palpitations or chest pains, high blood pressure, headaches, sleep disturbances, stomach upset, dizziness, loss of appetite, startled responses”. The emotional effects included “anxiety, fear, guilt, grief, depression, sadness, anger, irritability, numbness, feeling lost, abandoned, and isolated, wanting to withdraw or hide”. Finally, mental effects included “slowed thinking, confusion, disorientation, memory problems, intrusive memories or flashbacks, nightmares, inability to concentrate, difficulty in making decisions” (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018).

### **Effects of Sexual Victimization**

Victims of sexual assault or rape experience similar negative effects as those who experienced other types of criminal victimization. With that said, sexual assault victims have been found to experience higher levels of these negative effects (Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli, Guigni, Salvatori, & Ricci, 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Najdowski & Ullman,

2009; Ratican, 1992; Walter, 2009). Victims of sexual assault experience many different physical, emotional, social, and psychological effects after their victimization (Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Walter, 2009). These effects are seen in the victims' behavior, physical health and stature, social skills, mental health, and emotions (CRCVC, 2005; Ratican, 1992; Wilson, 2016).

### **Behavioral and Emotional Effects of Sexual Assault**

Many victims of sexual assault experienced high levels of fear, anxiety, depression, posttraumatic stress, decreased self-esteem, social difficulties, and sexual dysfunction after their assault (Elliott, Mok, & Briere, 2004; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009;). Victims also experienced drastic emotional and behavioral changes (Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Walter, 2009). These changes triggered stress, anxiety, depression, social withdrawal, fear, post-traumatic stress disorder, agitation, and the need to cope with the trauma from their assault (Campbell, Cabral, & Dworkin, 2009; Herman, 1992; Walter, 2009). In addition, victims of sexual assault suffered from higher rates of depression and anxiety than victims of non-sexual crimes (Faravelli et al., 2004; Walter, 2009). Unfortunately, it has been found that victims who did not have the appropriate support or coping mechanisms the changes in their emotions, behavior, and chemistry led to unhealthy coping skills such as alcoholism, substance abuse, self-harm, eating disorders, or suicide (Elliott, Mok, & Briere, 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Warshaw, 1994).

Schechter, Schwartz, and Greenfeld (1987) found that victims of sexual assault often experienced feelings of guilt, inadequacy, loss of control, and distortion of body image. These characteristics were associated with anorexia nervosa and sexual assault syndrome. Some victims

experienced a lack of appetite due to the trauma while others experienced emotional comfort from eating. Victims who felt insecure and out of control tended to reduce and strictly control the amount of food that they took in through methods of anorexia or bulimia. The feeling of complete control over what food left and entered the victims' body allowed them to feel a type of security (Ratican; 1992; Schechter et al., 1987).

Over 50 percent of female victims believed that if they gained weight or were overweight it would decrease the likelihood of them being assaulted again (Cloutier, Martin, & Pool, 2002). Drastic changes in weight were used as a way of coping and protection (Cloutier et al., 2002; Ratican; 1992; Schechter et al., 1987). Ratican (1992) related the victims' body image issues to them feeling dirty, ugly, and dissatisfaction with their body and appearance. In addition, it was found that assault affected the self-esteem of the victims. The negative effect of sexual assault on the victim's body image and self-esteem was related to eating disorders, emotional eating disorders, and obesity (Ratican, 1992).

According to a 2009 study by Najdowski and Ullman, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and binge drinking were common among victims of sexual assault. Alcohol was used by the victims as a coping mechanism for the trauma they had experienced. Drugs and other illegal substances have also been found to serve as coping mechanisms (Gilmore et al., 2018; Najavits, Weiss, & Shaw, 1997). Victims who only experienced one type of negative coping skill were more likely to seek professional help to cope with their trauma. Victims who had negative co-occurring coping skills were less likely to seek professional help. Victims with PTSD and binge drinking were the least likely of victims with negative co-occurring coping skills to seek professional help (Kirkner, Relyea, & Ullman, 2018). The effects of sexual victimization on the

victims' behavioral and emotional state can also lead to negative effects in the female victims' physical health (Gilmore et al., 2018; Najavits et al., 1997; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002).

### **Physical Effects of Sexual Assault**

Researchers have also examined the physical effects of sexual victimization (CRCVC, 2005; Cunningham, Pearce, & Pearce, 1988; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002). These effects have been found to include insomnia, appetite disturbance, lethargy, headaches, muscle tension, pelvic pain, nausea, lowered immune system, and decreased libido, among others (CRCVC, 2005; Cunningham et al., 1988; Groer et al., 2006; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002; Wilson, 2016).

A study by Sickel and colleagues (2002) found that irritable bowel syndrome, chronic abdominal pain, non-ulcer dyspepsia, rheumatoid arthritis, and chronic pelvic pain were often associated with sexual abuse. In addition, they reported that patients who were sexually abused had greater fatigue, more headaches, increased back pain, respiratory issues, shortness of breath, and decreased sleep.

Other studies have found a correlation between sexual victimization, muscle tension, and back pain (Arizmendi, 2008; Linton, 2002; Wilson, 2016). For example, Arizmendi (2008) found that sexual victimization significantly affected body posture, facial expressions, and speech of the victims. Trauma was also found to significantly affect the neural plasticity, growth, and recognition of his subjects. The neural sensitivity state change decreased the neural recognition and reflexivity of each individual. He related the posture changes of his patients to the psychological distress they were experiencing and posited that the body communicates the pain experienced in the mind (Arizmendi, 2008).

A study by Wilson (2016) on the physical and psychological effects of sexual assault suggested that there are many physical and chemical changes within the body after sexual victimization. Wilson found that victims of sexual assault developed muscle tension, chiropractic issues, scoliosis, and kyphosis after the incident. His research also looked at the chemical changes within the brain after sexual assault. The changes in the victims' brain chemistry after the sexual victimization allowed for toxins to remain present in the body as a result of the trauma experienced. The toxins that remained in the body were found to significantly affect the brain. The changes found in the brain chemistry were confirmed to be what causes the victims' poor elimination pattern and brain fog after the sexual assault (Wilson, 2016).

In spite of our current knowledge regarding the effects of sexual victimization, work remains to be done, much of the previously discussed research has focused on the population as a whole (Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Walter, 2009). Because college-aged women are the most likely to be victimized, it is important to analyze the impacts that are potentially unique to this age group (Jordan et al., 2014; Kirkpatrick & Kanin, 1957; Sinozich & Langston, 2014; Walter, 2009).

### **Effects of College Sexual Victimization**

As is the case for all victims, sexual victimization can have a significant impact on the college females' behavior, emotions, physical state, health, social skills, and education (Abbey et al., 2006; Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Jordan et al., 2014; Schechter et al., 1987; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; White & Koss, 1991). These impacts are addressed in the proceeding section.

## **Behavioral and Emotional Changes**

Documented behavioral and emotional effects of sexual victimization on women, including fear, shock, confusion, depression, anxiety and social withdrawal, have been found to be similarly experienced by college-aged victims (Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Walter, 2009). Behavioral changes among college women were associated with the type of sexual victimization they experienced. Many women who experienced completed or attempted sexual victimization developed avoidant behaviors, social anxiety, fear, and embarrassment (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; Zinzow et al., 2010).

When researching the effects of sexual victimization on the college female victims' behavior, Walter (2009) researched the avoidant behaviors among the victims of different types of sexual victimization. Walter (2009) found that of the women who experienced unwanted kissing or touching above the waist: 37% avoided their perpetrator, 33% reported the incident to their peers, 20% kept the incident to themselves, 7% reported the incident to authorities, and 3% engaged in further dialogue with their perpetrator. For women who had been sexual victimized by fondling below the waist: 46% kept the incident a secret, 24% avoided their perpetrator, 21% told their peers, 5% reported it to the authorities, and 4% engaged in further dialogue with their perpetrator (Walter, 2009). Of the women who had experienced attempted or completed forced sexual intercourse: 49% kept the incident a secret, 31% avoided their perpetrator, 16% told their peers, 4% engaged in further dialogue with the perpetrator. In this group of women, none of them reported the incident to the authorities (Walter, 2009).

According to Jordan, Combs, and Smith (2014), rape negatively impacted the self-esteem of the college female victim. It changed the way she viewed herself and how she believed the world viewed her (Jordan et al., 2014). The victims' psychological and somatic equilibrium

became off balance after their sexual assault, which led to eating disorders, anxiety, chronic pain, negatively altered self-perception, severe depression, drug and alcohol use, self-harm, suicidality, sleep disturbances, post-traumatic stress disorder, and withdraw or impairment in social and family relations (Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Jordan et al., 2014; Schechter et al., 1987; Warshaw, 1994).

Warshaw (1994) found that 20 percent of college females considered suicide after a completed rape. Also, college women who experienced physical injury during the sexual assault were positively associated with depression (Zinzow, Resnick, McCauley, Amstadter, Ruggiero, & Kilpatrick, 2010). However, research suggests higher levels of depression and anxiety among college female victims who experienced completed sexual assault (as compared to other forms of victimization) (Faravelli et al., 2004; Foa et al., 1991; Mirowsky & Ross, 1995; Walter, 2009). According to Zinzow and colleagues (2010), forcible rape, incapacitated rape, and drug/alcohol intoxication during rape were all associated with increased risk of PTSD and depression among college women. Other observed behavior changes among sexual assault victims are risky behaviors, sexual promiscuity, binge drinking, substance abuse, increase in sexual partners, changes in the way they dress, and changes in routine (Faravelli et al., 2004; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994).

### **Physical Changes**

The physical changes experienced by female college sexual assault victims were the same as those experienced by women within the general sexual assault population. These changes included insomnia, appetite disturbance, lethargy, concentration, headaches, muscle tension, pelvic pain, nausea, lowered immune system, decreased libido gastrointestinal problems, brain fog, scoliosis, fibromyalgia, eating disorders, decreased immune system function, brain fog, and

difficulty swallowing (Calam & Slade, 1989; Cunningham, Pearce, & Pearce, 1988; CRCVC, 2005; Faravelli et al., 2004; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002; Walter, 2009; Wilson, 2016).

The prevalence of eating disorders among female college rape victims has been significant within research (Calam & Slade, 1989; Harned & Fitzgerald, 2002; Jordan et al., 2014; Schechter et al., 1987; Walter, 2009). College female sexual assault victims often develop an eating disorder as a coping mechanism for the sexual victimization they experienced (Calam & Slade, 1989; Schechter et al., 1987). The International Journal of Eating Disorders found that there was a significant relationship among sexual assault, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder (Calam & Slade, 1989). A sample of 3,006 undergraduate college women were selected and interviewed. The nationally representative sample of undergraduate females were questioned to determine if sexual assault effected the eating patterns and mind processes of these individuals (Calam & Slade, 1989). The research concluded that several types of disordered eating and compensatory behaviors were associated with sexual victimization. Specifically, a compensatory eating behavior, bulimia nervosa was associated with higher rates of victimization. The research found that college women who were sexually assaulted made up a higher percentage of the women who reported having an eating disorder (Calam & Slade, 1989).

Eating disorders have significant negative effects on the college female (Zioncheck, 2000). The physical and psychological consequences of eating disorders among college women include gastrointestinal and electrolyte abnormalities, osteoporosis, cardiovascular risks, brain function, brain fog, and negative social integration (Zioncheck, 2000). Research has shown that eating disorders significantly affect concentration and brain function (Calam & Slade, 1989; Schechter et al., 1987; Zioncheck, 2000). Furthermore, research has also shown that the inability

to concentrate has been one of main setbacks for college female sexual assault victims (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009); yet, researchers have failed to determine if eating disorders influence the rate of college female sexual assault victims who report having concentration issues after their victimization.

Other physical effects of sexual assault have been related to the college females' ability within academic institutions (Jordan et al., 2014). Research has shown that the physical changes experienced after the sexual assault significantly affect the victims' ability to focus, complete tasks, attend class, and appear in social settings (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). There have been many studies that show sexual victimization negatively effects an individual's overall health (Calam & Slade, 1989; CRCVC, 2005; Cunningham et al., 1988; Faravelli et al., 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002; Walter, 2009; Wilson, 2016). Many of the health issues related to sexual assault required assistance from professional health care providers and medical doctors (Calam & Slade, 1989; Cunningham et al., 1988; Faravelli et al., 2004; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002).

Additionally, Groer and colleagues (2016) found that the immune system was significantly affected after sexual assault. Sexual assault was associated with a decrease in the victim's immune system (Groer et al., 2016). According to Walter (2009), many of the victims within his sample reported that they were seen by a hospital, doctor's office, health department, or WSU counseling services after the assault. Health issues and multiple doctor visits could potentially affect the attendance of college female sexual assault victims. Walter's (2009) sample reported multiple visits to health care providers during the semester their assault occurred. Walter's research did not specify if these health care visits affected the class attendance of the

victim. This thesis examined if the healthcare visits affected the college female's class attendance and was tested through the variable *Behavior Change*.

## **Social Changes**

The social changes exhibited by college female sexual assault victims were associated with the fear, shock, confusion, guilt, stress, depression, agitation, and anxiety they face after their victimization (Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Walter, 2009). Sexual victimization effected the ability of the female college student to resume normal daily activities (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). After a sexual victimization, it was common for the female to seclude herself from her usual social groups and settings (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994).

The victim's social relationships such as those with their family and friends were negatively impacted by the sexual victimization (Hochstetler et al., 2014; Jordan et al., 2014). The guilt and shame experienced by the victim was one of the main reasons they avoided family members and friends after their assault. The romantic relationships of college female sexual assault victims were significantly affected as well (Belknap, Fisher, & Cullen, 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). Female victims reported that their personal relationships were significantly affected by their low libido and fear of intimacy after their assault (CRCVC, 2005). The lack of support from the victims' friends, family, and romantic partner led to increased levels of depression and social withdrawal (Belknap et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009).

In addition, many victims refrained from carrying out their normal routines due to the trauma of the assault. Research found that victims became very avoidant of social places after their sexual victimization (Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994).

College females were less likely to part take in campus social events or attend class after their victimization (Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009).

Each of these social issues influenced the ability of the female to perform within the academic institution and educational realm. Female sexual assault victims required a certain level of support and care to feel secure within their surroundings on campus. The lack of comfort and ability to carry out their daily routine hindered their ability to reintegrate into the campus social environment (Belknap et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009; Smith et al., 2003).

### **Educational Changes**

Sexual victimization has many effects on the education of college females (Amar & Gennaro, 2005; Belknap et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). The changes in the female student's routines and behaviors after their sexual victimization have been related to decreased class attendance and college failure (Amar & Gennaro, 2005; Jordan et al., 2014). Women who were sexually assaulted by an individual in their class or by their professor reported decreased school attendance (Jordan et al., 2014; Roosmalen & McDaniel, 1999; Walter, 2009) Women who were sexually assaulted by a professor reported decreased quality of work, decreased completed assignments, and dropping grades (Jordan et al., 2014; Roosmalen & McDaniel, 1999).

College women who were sexually assaulted reported a general inability to focus. Sexual assault was found to affect the ability of the victim to concentrate (Warshaw, 1994). College females reported that they were unable to complete simple tasks or concentrate on tasks after their sexual assault. The victims reported that their focus was on a certain thought which enabled them to complete the task at hand (Jordan et al., 2014; Warshaw, 1994).

Smith and Colleagues (2003) conducted a longitudinal study on the effects of sexual assault among college females. They found that college females who were sexually assaulted experienced higher levels of distress than college females who were not sexually assaulted. College females who experienced sexual assault were reported to be more likely to drop out of college (Smith et al., 2003).

Furthermore, Amar and Gennaro (2005) found that female victims who reported their assault felt as though their university's administration and the university did not believe them when they reported the incident. The females also reported that they felt abandoned by their university due to the lack of support after their victimization (Amar & Gennaro, 2005). The relationship between victimization and trauma significantly affected the females' college success (Amar & Gennaro, 2005; Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Warshaw, 1994).

### **The Impact of Sexual Assault on Academic Performance**

The effects of sexual victimization were recognized by researchers and administration, which led them to question how these changes in the victim's mentality affected their performance in academics. The studies reported on sexual victimization explored the physical and psychological effects of sexual assault. Those two factors played a key role in the success or failure of the collegiate female. College females who struggled with a mental disorder, self-esteem issues, or certain physical effects after their sexual assault experienced strain in their academic performance (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The effects of sexual assault on the victim's psyche directly affected the amount of effort they were able to give to their studies (Walter, 2009). There was a limited amount of studies available on the effects of sexual assault on academic performance.

A longitudinal study by Smith, White, and Holland (2003), reported higher levels of psychological distress among female victims of sexual assault. The female victims of sexual assault were more likely to drop out of college and had poor class attendance (Smith, White, & Holland, 2003). Women who were sexually assaulted experienced depression and loss of motivation (Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009).

The victims of sexual victimization reported decreased participation in social environments and activities (Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). These reports were associated with the decrease in the victims' class attendance and participation in class (Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). Motivation to maintain good grades and attendance were affected by loss of self-esteem and depression (Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). Both of these factors had a significant effect on academic performance. Research showed that female rape victims felt unable to concentrate in class, felt less able to organize a set of facts, and found it hard to remember certain details about the course of study she was in (Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). There is evidence that shows that female rape victims may turn to substance abuse to cope with the trauma they experienced which can negatively affect their grades (Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003).

Jordan, Combs, and Smith (2014) conducted a study on the effects that sexual assault had on the college female's GPA. They found in the first semester of college that 3 percent of females who had not been sexually victimized in college had a GPA below 2.5; whereas, 10.6 percent of females who had been sexually victimized had a GPA lower than 2.5 (Jordan et al., 2014). There was significant evidence to show that women who had experienced sexual assault before or during college had their academic performance significantly impacted (Jordan et al., 2014). There was evidence that women assaulted within their first semester of college versus the women who were not sexually assaulted had significantly lower GPAs (Jordan et al., 2014). Data

concluded that women who had been sexually assaulted earned significantly lower grades than women who had not (Jordan et al., 2014). The data also found that the GPAs of women who had experienced sexual assault were affected by physical safety which directly related to their grades (Jordan et al., 2014).

### **Problem Statement and Research Statement**

Research on sexual victimization has been limited to violence and sexual abuse among primary school children, general sexual victimization within the United States, and sexual victimization among women within the general population. The previous literature on sexual victimization does not provide adequate information on how sexual victimization affects the female college student; specifically, in the areas of behavioral changes, effects of certain type of sexual victimization, or the effect sexual victimization may have on GPA. This study examined the impact of sexual victimization on the college female and each of the variables previously stated. Existing research indicated that the conceptual relationship exists between victimization and academic performance; unfortunately, there has not been a significant amount of research on this relationship (Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994).

This thesis postulated that victimized women experienced significant levels of psychological trauma from sexual victimization. Therefore, the behavioral, psychological, and emotional state of these women were negatively affected by sexual victimization. Their academic performance and grade point average were also negatively impacted by their sexual victimization. Before Jon D. Walter's (2009) research, the available data on the established relationship between sexual victimization and college women by a comparison of mean attained GPA was scarce. This thesis examined the data collected by Walter (2009) and several other

studies pertaining to sexual victimization to further the existing research and to create new areas of focus within the topic of sexual victimization.

The research questions and hypotheses presented were the foundation for this study.

***PQ: How does sexual victimization affect college women?***

*R1: Does sexual victimization significantly affect the college female victim's behavior?*

*R2: Does the impact of victimization vary by the type of sexual assault?*

*R3: Does sexual victimization affect the female student victims' academic performance?*

The primary purpose of this study was to examine how sexual victimization affected college women. Victimization types such as attempted touching, unwanted physical contact, and forced penetration were compared with location (residence halls, fraternity/sorority, off campus home, etc.). The personal characteristics of the victim such as class standing and previous victimization were examined for commonalties to pinpoint the populations at risk and to make speculations for future studies (Walter, 2009).

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this thesis was to analyze the effects of sexual victimization on college females. As discussed, a number of studies have researched the multiple effects of sexual victimization in terms of behavioral, psychological and emotional changes (Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994). While beneficial, there remains several gaps in the research literature. This study attempts to fill those gaps by addressing changes in academic performance, the degree of behavioral changes experienced by those victimized, and the impact of several forms of victimization on these changes. It does so via secondary data collected by researchers at Washington State University.

#### **Primary Research Question**

The primary research question for this thesis was: *How does sexual victimization affect college women?* As discussed, there are numerous effects of sexual victimization. These effects negatively impact the female college student physically, emotionally, behaviorally, socially, and academically (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Sickel et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; Wilson, 2016). Answering this question required a categorized scale of sexual assault. This scale was based on four main types of sexual victimization, which included emotional manipulation, unwanted touching, attempted penetration, and completed penetration. Emotional manipulation was defined as overwhelming pestering and verbal pressure; promised rewards; or threats of non-physical punishment to engage in oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse. Unwanted touching encompassed

unwanted attempted or completed touching such as kissing, fondling, and grabbing. The third category, attempted penetration, was defined as attempted oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse. Lastly, respondents who experienced completed oral, anal, or vaginal penetration were classified as "completed penetration". Classifying assault in this way expanded upon traditional definitions of sexual assault in order to better understand the impact of various forms of sexual victimization.

### **Secondary Research Questions**

In order to answer the primary research question, three secondary research questions were established. The first secondary research question was: *Does sexual victimization significantly affect the college female victim's behavior?* The goal of this research question was to examine various forms of behavior change following sexual victimization. According to previous research, college women experience many different effects after they are sexually victimized (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Sickel et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; Wilson, 2016). The hypothesis for this research question was that *sexual victimization significantly affects the behavior of college female victims*. A range of behavior changes were assessed in order to determine the degree to which victimization impacted individuals who reported being the victim of the various forms of assault.

*Behavior* was operationalized by measuring the changes in the participants' ordinary actions, perceptions, emotions, socialization, and academic performance after the sexual victimization. The victims' reports of residency change, dropping the class the perpetrator taught, dropping the class that the perpetrator was in, quitting their job, changing their major,

getting caller ID, improving security in their residence, buying a weapon, taking self-defense classes, and seeking counseling were accounted for as part of this question.

The second research question addressed the impact of victimization by the type of sexual assault experienced, as it is important to determine whether the degree of behavior change is dependent upon type. The new concepts associated with this research question were impact and type of sexual assault. *Impact* was operationalized by determining if the type of sexual assault experienced determined if the participant reported more than one type of behavior change. Higher scores represented higher rates of impact from the sexual victimization. As previously discussed, *type of sexual assault* was operationalized by creating categories for completed penetration, attempted penetration, unwanted touching and emotional manipulation.

The third research question examined in this thesis was: *Does sexual victimization affect the female student victims' academic performance?* As stated previously, research has shown that the academic performance of college females is significantly affected after a sexual victimization (BeShears, Clinton-Sherrod, & Zawacki, 2006; Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Jordan et al., 2014; Schechter et al., 1987; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; White & Koss, 1991). The hypothesis associated with this research question was: *Sexual victimization will negatively affect the female student victims' academic performance.* This hypothesis was tested by using the victims' GPA from their first semester at WSU and then their GPA following their sexual assault. In addition, it assessed their responses to a question assessing whether they believed that victimization impacted their overall academic success.

## **Methodology**

As previously discussed, this thesis relied upon data collected by researchers at Washington State University in 2008 as part of the University's Safety Survey (Walter, 2009). The data consisted of characteristics and experiences associated with many different forms of sexual victimization. Participants were randomly selected from WSU's enrollment database (Walter, 2009) and included both undergraduate and graduate students enrolled at WSU at the time. In order to ensure equal representation in the study, freshmen were sampled at a higher rate (Walter, 2009).

Participants were asked to answer questions associated with perceptions of personal safety, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse among their student body. Language specific to certain behaviors was utilized to retrieve the most accurate data possible. Additional questions related to experience of sexual victimization, behavior changes and personal characteristics. It is important to note that the language "sexual assault" or "rape" was not used in the survey because of the many differences in the definition of these terms (Walter, 2009). Put differently, it was avoided to ensure that respondents were able to give accurate responses.

### **WSU Original Sample**

There were 7,000 students enrolled at WSU at the time the survey was administered. Of these, 3,774 students were selected to participate in the study, with 2,014 students responding and 1,760 students completing all questions. Approximately 74 percent of individuals identified as White/Caucasian, 10 percent as Asian/Pacific Islander, five percent as Latino or Hispanic, and two percent as Black. In terms of sexual orientation, approximately 96 percent reported being heterosexual, two percent homosexual and two percent bisexual.

## **Thesis Study Sample**

The sample used for this thesis included 1,294 undergraduate college women; 1,213 of the college women within this sample experienced sexual victimization, stalking, obsessive behavior from an individual on campus, and fear for their safety while enrolled at WSU. Of the 1,294 undergraduate females in the sample, there were 492 undergraduate females that met the criteria of attempted or completed sexual victimization for this thesis. The females who experienced stalking, obsessive behavior, fear of safety, or verbal victimization were not included in the thesis study sample. The completed sexual victimization group was composed of the females who experienced either completed unwanted touching or completed oral, anal, or vaginal penetration. The attempted sexual victimization group was composed of females who experienced either attempted unwanted touching or attempted oral, anal, or vaginal penetration.

The sample contained 369 freshmen, 332 sophomores, 312 juniors, and 280 seniors (Table 1). White/Caucasian college women made up 61.6 percent of the sample. The female Asian/Pacific Islander students made up 16.7 percent of the sample. Additionally, Latino(a)/Chicano(a)/Hispanic female students made up 9.5 percent of the sample. The female American Indian/Alaska Native students made up 6.3 percent of the sample. The African American/Black college women made up 4.6 percent of the sample. The female Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students made up 1.3 percent of the sample.

Table 1

*Frequencies of Female Sexually Victimized Undergraduates*

Class Standing	<i>n</i> =1,294
Freshmen	369
Sophomores	332
Juniors	312
Seniors	280

## Methods and Analysis

### Variables

The variable *Behavior* was created by the participants' responses to the following survey question: "After the incident, did you do any of the following?" The participant was allowed to select from a list of circumstances that applied to them, including: residency change, dropping class perpetrator taught, dropping class that perpetrator was in, quit job, changed major, got caller ID, improved security in residence, bought weapon, took self-defense classes, and sought counseling. Each of these were coded as "yes"=1 and "no"=0.

The variable *College Women* or *College Female Victims* were used interchangeably. This variable represents the college females/women who were attending WSU at the time of the data collection. These individuals indicated in the survey that they experienced sexual victimization. These individuals made up the sample drawn from the population at WSU.

The variable *Impact* was measured by the creation of the *Impact* scale. The scale was composed of the nine behavior changes previously listed. If the participant indicated more than

one type of behavior change the impact score increased. For example, an individual answering yes to four of the behavior changes noted above would be assigned a score of four (4) on the measure.

The variable *Academic Performance* was measured by asking the female victim participants what their GPA was during the time of the survey. *Academic Performance* was also measured by the victims' *Perception* on how the sexual victimization affected their academic performance.

The variable *Sexual Victimization* was split into four categories for measurement which were later recoded into the victim groups *Attempted* and *Completed*. Each type of victimization was measured by the experience of the victim. The participants were asked to answer if they had experienced each of the four types of victimization previously discussed by answering "yes" or "no". *Emotional Manipulation* included the respondents who reported experiencing overwhelming harassment, verbal pressure, promised rewards, or were threatened with non-physical punishment to engage in oral, vaginal, or anal intercourse (n=252). *Unwanted Touching* included the respondents who reported experiencing unwanted attempted or completed touching. This included unwanted kissing, fondling, and grabbing (n=705). *Attempted Penetration* through anal, oral, or vaginal penetration were categorized as attempted penetration (n=125). *Completed Penetration* through oral, anal, or vaginal penetration were categorized as completed penetration (n=131). If a participant identified with more than one type of sexual victimization, they were placed in the category that was deemed most severe. For this study, emotional manipulation was considered to be the least severe and completed penetration was considered to be the most severe.

## Analysis

Previous research on college female sexual victimization usually focused on the reporting patterns, short term psychological effects, and prevention of future sexual victimization (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). To add to the previous research, the concepts used in this thesis were behavior change, impact score, and academic performance. The examination of these variables helped to further determine the overall effects of sexual victimization among college women.

To answer the first research question, *Does sexual victimization significantly affect the college female victim's behavior*, it was necessary to examine the recorded behavior changes from the WSU Safety Survey. The victims' behavior changes were analyzed through frequencies to determine how many of the victims made changes in their behavior after the sexual victimization they experienced. To further analyze the behavior changes made by the female college victims, an independent samples *t* Test was ran to determine if those who experienced completed sexual victimization were more likely to experience behavioral changes.

The observed frequencies revealed that the female undergraduate victims experienced behavior changes after their sexual victimization. There were 9 types of behavior changes the participants could select. In order to measure the change in the female undergraduate victims' behavior, there were nine variables created: change in residence, dropped class, quit job, changed major, improved security in residence, bought a weapon, took self-defense classes, sought counseling, and got caller ID. Each of these were coded "yes"=1 and "no"=0.

To answer the second research question, *does the impact of victimization vary by the type of sexual assault*, The Behavior Scale was created. In order to measure the change in the female undergraduate victims' behavior, there were nine variables created: change in residence, dropped class, quit job, changed majors, improved security in residence, bought a weapon, took self-

defense classes, sought counseling, and got caller ID (Table 2). Each of these were coded “yes”=1 and “no”=0. Victims could range in score from 0 to 9.

The score 0 meant the lowest impact score and 9 meant the highest impact score. The scale was used to determine the victims overall impact score. When the participants who had experienced one of the four categories of sexual victimization selected more than one behavior change it increased the impact score of that type of sexual victimization.

The victims from the four types of sexual victimization categories were dichotomized into two sexual victimization categories, *Completed* and *Attempted* to examine impact scores. The answer “yes” to the following questions was recoded into the variable *Completed*. “Has anyone, by force or threat of harm, made you have ORAL SEX? Oral sex means that someone’s mouth or tongue made contact with your vagina or anus, or your mouth or tongue made contact with someone else’s genitals or anus.” “Has anyone, by force or threat of harm, made you have VAGINAL SEX? Vaginal sex means that your vagina was penetrated by a finger, penis or foreign object.” Has anyone, by force or threat of harm, made you have ANAL SEX? Anal sex means your anus or rectum was penetrated by a finger, penis or foreign object.

The answer “yes” to the following questions was recoded into the variable *Attempted*. Has anyone, by force or threat of harm, ATTEMPTED, but NOT SUCCEEDED in making you have ORAL, VAGINAL or ANAL SEX? By this we mean, has anyone attempted to penetrate your mouth, vagina or anus with a finger, penis or foreign object? Has anyone, by force or threat of harm, touched you in an UNWANTED or UNINVITED sexual manner? This includes forced kissing, touching of private parts, grabbing, fondling, and rubbing up against you in a sexual way, even if it is over your clothes. Has anyone, by force or threat of harm, ATTEMPTED, but NOT SUCCEEDED in touching you in an UNWANTED OR UNINVITED sexual manner? Has

anyone made threats of NONPHYSICAL PUNISHMENT to make or try to make you have ORAL, VAGINAL or ANAL SEX or SEXUAL CONTACT when you did not want to? Has anyone used PROMISES OF REWARDS to make or try to make you have ORAL, VAGINAL OR ANAL SEX or SEXUAL CONTACT when you did not want to? Has anyone simply OVERWHELMED you with CONTINUAL PESTERING and VERBAL PRESSURE to make or try to make you have ORAL, VAGINAL or ANAL SEX or SEXUAL CONTACT when you did not want to?

The question, “Has anyone repeatedly followed you, watched you, phoned, written, e-mailed, or attempted to communicate with you in a way that seemed obsessive and made you afraid or concerned for your safety?” was left out of the new computed variables because it did not fit the criteria of the term sexual victimization used in this thesis.

To answer the final research question: *Does sexual victimization affect the female student victims' academic performance*, an ANOVA was used. For this question, the victims within the attempted or completed victimization groups were compared to non-victims. The mean GPA scores between the attempted and completed victimization groups were compared to the non-victims determine the effect that sexual victimization had on their academic performance.

The question, “Do you think that the incident affected your academic performance?” was used to determine if the sexual victimization was the cause of the changes in the students' academic performance. The attempted and completed victimization groups were used to answer this question. The mean score from each of the groups were compared to determine if sexual victimization was the perceived variable affecting the victims' academic performance.

## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS

This chapter serves to discuss the results of the analyses for each of the established research questions. The purpose of this study was to examine how sexual victimization affects college women. To examine this primary question, three secondary research questions were established: *Does sexual victimization significantly affect the college female victim's behavior; Does the impact of victimization vary by the type of sexual assault; Does sexual victimization affect the female student victims' academic performance?*

Answering these questions relied upon data from the Washington State University 2008 Safety Survey. The original data was recoded to include a behavior scale to measure the changes in behavior among the victims in the sample. The sample was made up of 1,294 female undergraduates, 1,213 experienced some type of sexual victimization, stalking, or fear of personal safety, and 492 experienced completed or attempted sexual victimization. The 492 females who experienced attempted or completed victimization were recoded within the data for accurate analysis.

Analyses were performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies from the sample were utilized to analyze the change in behavior after sexual victimization. A behavior impact scale was created in SPSS to measure the number of behavior changes experienced by victims (intensity/impact). The frequencies between the groups of the attempted and completed sexual victimization groups were ran using the behavior scale. An ANOVA was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference between the victims' GPA and the non-victims' GPA during the time they completed the WSU Safety Survey.

ANOVA was utilized again to determine if the victims believed the sexual victimization affected their academic performance. The following section provides a discussion of the results.

### Research Question 1

The first research question was *Does sexual victimization significantly affect the college female victim's behavior?* The frequencies of the sample were analyzed through SPSS to determine the changes in the behavior of the female undergraduate students who experienced sexual victimization. This analysis provided the number of female undergraduate victims who changed their behavior after their sexual victimization ( $n=123$ ). The frequencies are displayed in Table 2.

Table 2

*Frequencies of Behavior Changes (n=492)*

	Frequency	Percent
Changed Residency	19	1.5
Dropped Classes	6	.5
Quit Job	5	.4
Changed Major	3	.2
Improved Security	25	1.9
Bought Weapon	12	.9
Self Defense Class	16	1.2
Sought Counseling	26	2.0
Caller ID	11	.9

The frequencies showed that there were 123 females who selected “yes”, that they did change their behavior after their sexual victimization. The behavior change that occurred the

most after the sexual victimization was “sought counseling”. There were 26 females that sought counseling after their sexual victimization. Other behavior changes that had a high frequency within the sample were improved security (n= 25), changed residence (n=19), and took self-defense classes (n=16).

To further analyze the effects of sexual victimization on undergraduate victim behavior, an Independent Samples *t* Test was used to determine if victims of completed sexual victimization were more likely to experience behavior changes than those who experienced attempted sexual victimization. The p-value results were measures of statistical significance that determined whether or not to reject the null hypothesis in the normal distribution. If the p-value is less than .05, there is a significance in the data. The results are in Table 3.

Table 3

*t* Test of Behavior Changes between Attempted and Completed Victims

<i>n</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	Mean Difference
1,294	414.32	1292	.000	-.244

## Research Question 2

To answer the second research question for this thesis: *Does the impact of victimization vary by the type of sexual assault?* The behavior impact scale was created through the nine variables previously discussed and provided in table 2. Then, the four undergraduate victim categories were recoded into the groups: *Attempted* or *Completed*. The *Attempted* group was made up of the individuals who had experienced attempted penetration through oral, anal, or vaginal penetration as well as attempted unwanted touching. The *Completed* group was made up

of the individuals who had experienced completed penetration through oral, anal, or vaginal penetration as well as completed unwanted touching. After creating the scale and recoding the variables, the frequencies were analyzed to determine if victimization type affected the behavior impact score of the victims. The results are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4

*Behavior Scale Frequencies Based on Attempted or Completed Sexual Victimization (n=492)*

Frequency	Valid	.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	6.00
Attempted	120	110	10	0	0	0	0	0
Completed	372	305	45	16	3	2	0	1

The frequencies in table 4 showed that the victims who experienced completed sexual victimization experienced more behavior changes (n=67) than those who experienced attempted sexual victimization (n=10). The behavior scale measures how many behavior changes the victim made after their victimization. There were 45 women who experienced completed sexual victimization that received a score of 1. This means that they experienced only one behavior change. There were 10 women who experienced attempted sexual victimization who received a score of 1. This means that they also experienced only one behavior change after their sexual victimization.

There were 67 victims who experienced completed sexual victimization that reported a behavior change. There were 22 victims of completed sexual victimization that reported more than one behavior change. There were 10 victims of attempted sexual victimization that only made one behavior change after the attempted sexual assault. The results showed that the college

women who experienced completed sexual victimization were more likely to have behavior changes and were more likely to have more than one behavior change. The frequencies indicated that the type of sexual victimization had an impact on the behavior changes of the female undergraduate victims.

### Research Question 3

To answer the final research question for this thesis: *Does sexual victimization affect the female student victims' academic performance?* One-Way ANOVA was conducted to determine the effect that sexual victimization had on the academic performances of the female victims. The *Completed* and *Attempted* sexual victimization groups were analyzed individually to determine the differences in the effects on their GPAs'. The results are in Table 5.

Table 5

*ANOVA between Attempted and Completed Victims and Non-Victims*

Current GPA	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
Between Groups	2.926	1	2.926	13.381	.000
Total	265.997	1204			

The results from table 5 showed that completed sexual victimization had a significant effect on the college females' academic performance ( $p < .05$ ). The One-Way ANOVA found a significant difference between the victims' GPA and the non-victims GPA during the WSU 2008 Safety Survey. To further examine the individual descriptive data on the attempted and completed sexual victimization groups' GPAs refer to Table 6 and Table 7.

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics on Completed Penetration or Unwanted Touching*

Dependent Variable	Completed	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
What is your current	No	3.298	.024	3.251	3.344
GPA?	Yes	3.208 <sup>a</sup>	.025	3.159	3.258

a. Based on modified population marginal mean.

The results from Table 6 showed that the female undergraduate victims of completed sexual assault had an average GPA of 3.208 and the control group reported an average of 3.298. There was a difference between the average GPAs of the victims and the control group. The female undergraduate victims of completed sexual victimization had lower GPAs than the female undergraduates who reported no sexual victimization.

Table 7

*Descriptive Statistics on Attempted Penetration or Unwanted Touching*

Dependent Variable	Attempted	Mean	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval	
				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
What is your current	No	3.267	.015	3.237	3.297
GPA?	Yes	3.270 <sup>a</sup>	.044	3.183	3.356

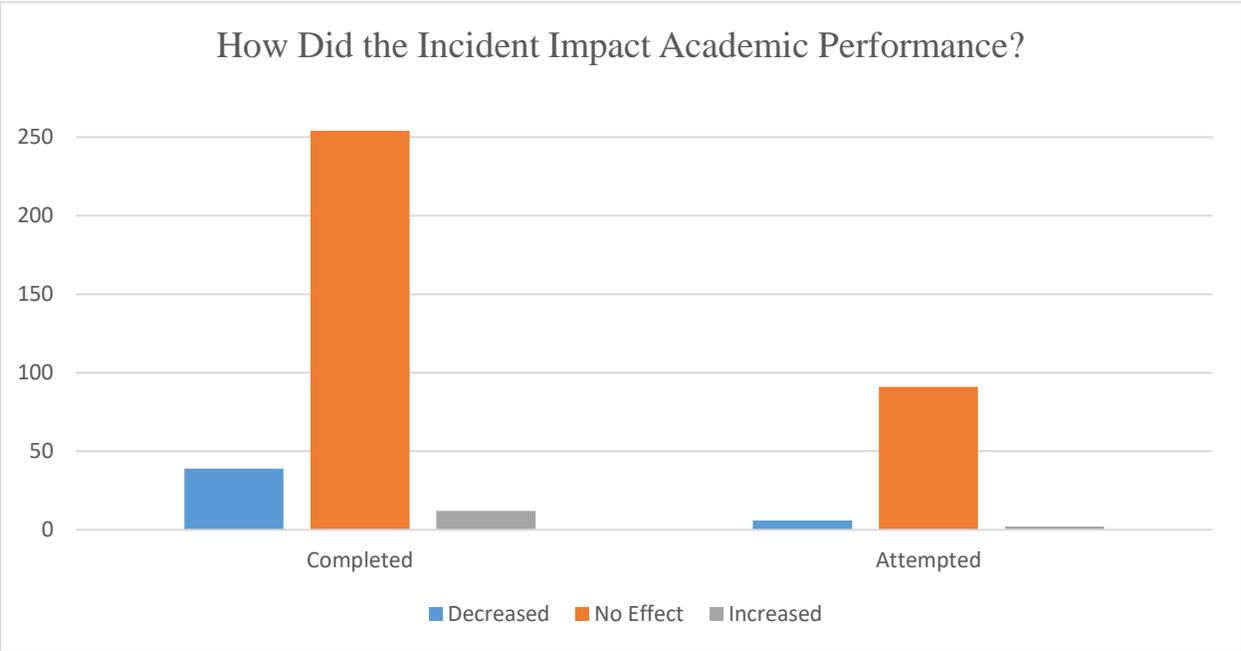
a. Based on modified population marginal mean.

The results from Table 7 showed that the female undergraduate victims of attempted sexual assault had an average GPA 3.270 and the control group reported an average of 3.267.

There was a difference between the average GPAs of the victims and the control group. The control group had lower GPAs than the victims of attempted sexual victimization.

The results in Table 5 showed that sexual victimization had a significant effect on academic performance. Tables 6 and 7 showed the difference in the GPAs between the completed and attempted victimization groups. Completed sexual victimization had the largest effect on academic performance according to the average GPAs of the sample from WSU.

Previous studies determined that sexual victimization negatively impacted the academic performance of college women (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). In previous studies there were no measures created to determine if the sexual victimization was the main cause of the negative effects on the victims' academic performances. The question, "Has the incident affected your academic performances (GPA)?" was included to determine if the victims believed that their sexual victimization had affected their academic performance. The Attempted and Completed sexual victimization groups were analyzed through a comparison of means. The results of how many undergraduate female victims believed that their academic performance was affected by their sexual victimization is in the graph below.



*Figure 1.* Victims Perceptions on How Sexual Victimization Affected their Academic Performance.

The graph showed that both completed and attempted sexual victimizations had an effect on the academic performances of the undergraduate females. The perceptions of the undergraduate female victims were used to determine if there were other influences that could have affected their academic performances after their victimization. Previous studies have not included the opinions of the female victims when measuring the effects of sexual victimization on academic performance. The graph showed that the majority of the victims of completed sexual victimization reported that their academic performance decreased after the incident.

**Conclusion**

This chapter discussed the findings in this thesis. The results indicated a change in the behavior and academic performance of college women who experienced a completed or

attempted sexual victimization. Specifically, there was a significant change in the behaviors of the women who experienced completed sexual victimization. These changed behaviors included changes in their residency, buying a weapon, taking self-defense classes, changing their major, dropping classes that their perpetrator was in or taught, seeking counseling, quitting their job, and getting caller ID. Additionally, the academic performances of the female undergraduate victims were significantly affected by sexual victimization. The academic performances of women who had experienced completed sexual victimization were most likely to be affected. The next chapter provides a discussion of these findings, future research, and policy implications.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The purpose of this thesis was to determine the effects of sexual victimization on college women. Previous research on sexual victimization has focused on the effects that sexual victimization among women (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018; Walter, 2009). The majority of these studies have focused on the sexual victimization among the general female population. These previous studies have failed to recognize that the majority of the sexual assaults occurred among females within the college population (Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018).

The previous research on this topic primarily focused on the psychological effects (Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Walter, 2009) and behavior changes of sexual victimization (Calam & Slade, 1989; Faravelli et al., 2004; Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Ratican, 1992; Walter, 2009). The psychological effects and behavioral changes were examined among females within the general population. There was very little research on these specific changes in the population of college women.

There were several studies that had focused on sexual victimization and how it affected college women (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018; Walter, 2009). These studies analyzed the behavioral, psychological, physical, academic, and social effects of sexual victimization among college females through specific measures such as anxiety, depression, fear, avoidant behaviors, inability to focus, decreased involvement in school, social isolation, and disturbed bodily functions (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018; Walter, 2009). The majority of the research found that sexual victimization had a negative impact on college females

(Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018; Walter, 2009).

The previous research on the effects of sexual victimization among college women had narrow views of sexual victimization. The studies conducted by Abbey et al. (2006), Abbey et al. (1996), Jordan et al. (2014), and the U.S. Department of Justice (2018) stuck to a specific kind of questioning pertaining to either behavioral, emotional, psychological, academic, or physical changes individually (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The data and literature on the effects sexual victimization among college women did not provide research that showed all of these variables integrated into one study. The effects on the victims' behavior at college, their behavior changes outside of college, changes in their academic performance, the impact by type of sexual assault they experienced, and the perception of the victims after the incident need to be researched for a thorough analysis. This thesis used data that utilized a broad definition of sexual victimization which allowed for the analysis of these topics (Walter, 2009).

This thesis attempted to understand how sexual victimization affected college women by concentrating on three main research questions. First, the effect of sexual victimization on the college female victim's behavior was examined. The frequencies of the sample helped to determine the changes in the behavior of the female undergraduate students who experienced sexual victimization. Second, the impact of the victimization was analyzed based on the type of sexual assault the victim experienced. Previous research did not determine how different types of sexual assault or sexual victimization effect the behaviors of college women. Previous research was used a narrow view of what constituted as a sexual victimization and they did not try to see if the different types of sexual victimization had certain effects on one group and not on the other (Abbey et al., 2006; Jordan et al., 2014). The behavior impact scale was created to analyze the

frequencies to determine if the type of sexual victimization had more of an impact on the victims' behavior. Third, the academic performance of the female student victims were analyzed to determine if the sexual victimization had an effect on them. The academic performances were measured through GPA and the perceptions of the female victims.

To answer the research questions, SPSS and the WSU 2008 Safety Survey data was utilized. This allowed for the analyses of the college women of WSU, the changes in their behavior and academic performance after sexual victimization. The research design utilized quantitative data which allowed for the assessments needed to determine the effects of sexual victimization on college women. The analyses within this thesis determined whether there was a statistical significance between sexual victimization of college women and changes in their behavior through frequencies and an independent samples *t*-Test.

Next, the behavior impact scale was utilized to determine if the type of sexual assault experienced caused a difference in the type of behavior changes the victim made. Last, a One-Way ANOVA was used to determine the differences in the GPA's of the victims their first semester at WSU and then during the time that the WSU Safety Survey was distributed. There was a control group of female undergraduates who experienced no sexual victimization to compare the study sample to. In addition to these analyses, the victims were asked about their perception on how the sexual victimization affected their academic performance. This question was added to determine if the victim believed that sexual victimization was the reason that their GPA decreased or increased.

The results of this thesis confirmed several of the previous findings in respect to the effects of sexual victimization among college women (Abbey et al., 2006; Abbey et al., 1996; Jordan et al., 2014; U.S. Department of Justice, 2018; Walter, 2009). In addition, it also filled in

the gaps in the research on sexual victimization by examining and connecting the effects of sexual victimization, college women, related behavior changes, academics, and impact of victimization. This chapter provides a discussion of the findings, ideas for future research, and policy implications associated with the effects of sexual victimization on college women.

### **Discussion of Findings**

Research question one examined whether there was a significant relationship between sexual victimization and behavior changes in college women. To analyze this question, the frequencies were ran and a *t* Test analysis was conducted. The results of the frequencies showed there were behavior changes made by the victims of sexual victimization. The *t* Test revealed that college females who experienced completed sexual victimization were more likely to experience behavior changes than the attempted victimization group. According to the *t* Test, there was a significant relationship between college women who had experienced completed sexual victimization and the reported changes in their behavior. Behavior changes such as improving security, seeking counseling, and taking defense classes were the highest frequencies of the behavior changes reported by the female undergraduate victims.

According to the data, the changes in the behaviors of the college women could be the result of the sexual victimization they experienced. First, sexual victimization has been found to have negative effects on the emotional and behavioral state of females (Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The results from the analysis confirm this finding from previous research. The participants within this study displayed several behavior changes after sexual victimization. Additionally, previous research associated behavior changes and social changes with increased fear in the victims of sexual assault (Belknap et al., 1999; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009).

The participants in this study were asked how their behavior changed after the incident and the survey allowed the participant to report if they feared for their safety after the event. The behavior changes made by the victims were associated with fear and their uncertainty of their own personal safety after the incident. Both of these findings support previous research that stated the victims' behavior changes were related to the fear of their safety after their sexual victimization (Belknap et al., 1999; Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). Many college female victims of sexual victimization suffer from PTSD and anxiety after the incident (Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Zinzow, 2010). PTSD was seen to cause the college female victims to have increased fear and anxiety (Jordan et al., 2014; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Zinzow, 2010). PTSD, fear, and anxiety was shown to lead to many of the changes in the college females' normal behaviors such as daily routines, social involvement, attending classes, completing tasks, and ability to focus (Jordan et al., 2014; Najdowski & Ullman, 2009; Zinzow, 2010). PTSD, fear, and anxiety have led many female college students to protective measures and coping such as counseling, seclusion, not attending class, dropping classes offender was in or taught, changing their major, buying a weapon, and taking self-defense classes (Jordan et al., 2014). These findings were confirmed in this study.

The second research question in this thesis examined whether the type of sexual victimization experienced determined if the female would experience a behavior change or if the type of sexual victimization experienced would increase the number of behavior changes made (impact). To answer this question, the frequencies and behavior scale were used to measure the amount of behavior changes experienced by the undergraduate females within the attempted category and completed category. The frequencies showed that the victims who experienced completed sexual victimization experienced more behavior changes than those who experienced

attempted sexual victimization. There were 45 women who reported completed sexual victimization who received a behavior change score of 1. There were 10 women who experienced attempted sexual victimization who received a score of 1. This means that they also experienced one behavior change after their sexual victimization. The results indicate that the type of sexual victimization had an impact on the behavior changes of the female undergraduate victims.

By conducting this analysis, the victims of completed sexual victimization and attempted sexual victimization were able to be compared. The victims of completed sexual victimization experienced behavioral changes in a higher frequency than the victims of attempted sexual assault. Additionally, the behavior scale scores of the victims of completed sexual victimization were higher than those of the attempted sexual victimization victims. The overall results of this analysis established that the type of sexual victimization experienced by the college female determined how many behavior changes the female made. The victims of completed sexual victimization had more behavior changes which may indicate that completed sexual victimization has a larger impact on the college female.

The findings matched previous research that stated that sexual victimization significantly affected the behavior of the college female (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The findings also add to the previous research by noting that females who experienced completed victimization experienced more behavior changes than the females who experienced attempted victimization. The study related the changes in college female victims' behavior such as depression, anxiety, and the fear of their physical safety to their decreased academic performance (Jordan et al., 2014). This association was analyzed in the final research question.

For the third and final research question, the academic performances of the undergraduate females were analyzed through One-Way ANOVA. The GPA's of the undergraduate victims who experienced sexual victimization were compared to the control group of undergraduate females who indicated no sexual victimization. The female undergraduates' current GPAs during the time of the survey were compared to determine if their academic performances were affected by sexual victimization.

Female undergraduate victims of completed sexual assault had lower GPAs than the control group during the completion of the WSU Safety Survey. The female undergraduate victims of completed sexual victimization had lower GPAs than the female undergraduates who reported no sexual victimization. This result matches the previous research on the academic performances of college women declining after sexual victimization (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The previous research stated that the female's academic performance was affected by the victim's inability to focus, organize facts, or remember details in their study courses after their victimization. The females' energy and ability to engage with others was also affected after the incident due to shame, anxiety, fear, and embarrassment (Jordan et al., 2014).

Additionally, the victims of attempted sexual victimization reported a higher current GPA than the control group. This result was different from most of the previous literature which showed that victims of attempted sexual victimization had decreased academic performances after the incident (Belknap et al., 1999; Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009).

The increase in the GPA of the attempted sexual victimization group could be attributed to lack of social activity after the event. Research stated that the victims of attempted sexual victimization experience a lack of social activity, seclusion, fear, and social anxiety after the

attempted sexual victimization (Belknap et al., 1999; Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The lack of social activity and the victims staying indoors after the attempt could lead to the victims increased GPA. The other possibilities of the increase in the GPA's of the attempted victimization group in this study compared to the previous studies could be the differences in the definitions of attempted sexual victimization (Belknap et al., 1999; Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). Many of the previous studies measured attempted victimization as attempted penetration which did not include sub categories of sexual victimization like unwanted touching, kissing, fondling, or oral sex.

To further analyze how sexual victimization affects the female undergraduate academic performance, the victims of completed and attempted sexual assault were asked their opinions on how the incident affected their GPAs. The victims of both attempted and completed sexual victimization reported that their GPAs decreased due to the sexual victimization they experienced. The personal beliefs of the victims were important to include in this analysis because there are many outside factors that could have influenced the victims' GPA and overall academic performance besides the sexual victimization they experienced. There were many environmental factors that could have affected the academic performances of the victims outside of their sexual victimization such as illness, physical disability, course load, family issues, and financial issues (Jordan, Combs, Smith, 2014). A previous study stated that it was important to establish the college female's perception of the sexual victimization and how it affected her academic performance (Jordan et al., 2014). By including the females' perspective, it allows for a better understanding of how the sexual victimization actually affected the females' academic performance.

The results of this thesis provided new information and analyses on the effects of sexual victimization on college women. Previous literature has stated the many negative effects that sexual victimization has on the college woman. This thesis confirmed many of the previous findings (Belknap et al., 1999; Campbell et al., 2009; Herman, 1992; Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009). The effects of sexual victimization among college women were analyzed in this thesis. This thesis extended the previous research by analyzing the victims' behavior changes, the behavior changes of the victims based on the specific type of sexual victimization experienced, the changes in their academic performance, and females' perceptions of how the incident affected their academic performance; however, the impact of sexual victimization on college women needs further research.

This thesis was based upon the WSU 2008 Safety Survey, more current research is needed. There is a number of questions that research has yet to address. The issue of sexual victimization among college women needs further examination. The following section addresses the direction and focus that future research should refer to in the study of sexual victimization among college women.

### **Future Research**

For this study, the sexual victimization of college women had an effect on the behavior and academic performance of female undergraduate victims; despite the previous research and the results of this study, the study of this topic must be continued in order to understand its prevalence, occurrence, and effects. The topics previously discussed in this thesis only cover a few subjects under this overall topic. There are many other relationships and associations that need to be analyzed within this area of research such as the effects of physical health on

academic performance and behavior changes that occur among the different types of sexual assault.

### **Physical Health and Academic Performance**

Future research should examine the physical health of the victims of sexual victimization after the assault to determine if it has an effect on their academic performance. The data used for this thesis asks the victim if they went to see a medical professional after their victimization. The available data does not provide information about how the physical health of the female students affected their academic performance after the sexual victimization. The victims' visits to health care providers after the assault could interfere with their academics and attendance in class. Physical health conditions suffered after the sexual victimization may have interfered with the students' classes, abilities, participation and involvement.

Previous research on the physical effects of sexual victimization among college women stated that the college female experienced many different physical changes that affected their ability to operate normally (CRCVC, 2005; Cunningham et al., 1988; Groer et al., 2006; Ratican, 1992; Sickel et al., 2002; Wilson, 2016). Research showed a connection between increased confusion, inability to think or process information, decreased attention span, "brain fog", decreased ability to speak, and decreased neuroplasticity after sexual victimization (Arizmendi, 2008; Linton, 2002; Sickel et al., 2002; Wilson, 2016). Future research should examine how sexual victimization effects the physical health of college women. It should also determine the physical effects of sexual victimization effect the essential abilities of college women to learn and process information in class. Further, research should analyze how the specific types of sexual victimization effect those essential learning abilities.

## **Type of Sexual Assault and Behavior Changes**

The different types of sexual assault affected the victims differently according to the findings in this study. This study was only able to look at certain types of sexual victimization and how it affected the behavior of the victims due to the data available. The study on the behaviors were limited because of the questions asked in the survey. This thesis was one of the few studies that tried to determine how types of sexual victimization impacted the specific behaviors of the victims (Jordan et al., 2014; Walter, 2009).

Future studies should look at more specific behavior changes such as depression, acts of seclusion, feelings of loneliness, reduction in social activity, changes in physical activity, change in eating habits, increased hours spent asleep, avoidant behaviors of certain people or places, impaired attention, changed study habits, and inability to focus. This thesis looked at behavior changes that were reactions due to the sexual assault. The data in this thesis suggested that the females who experienced attempted sexual victimization had an increase in their GPA. The future studies could attempt to determine if this result had to do with less social activity, seclusion, and increased studying due to the lack of interaction after the assault. In addition to these topics, future research should create appropriate policy implications as a remedy to their findings.

## **Policy Implications**

This study's policy implications focus on the importance of campus safety and sexual victimization awareness. Campus professionals and University representatives should collaborate with campus police, student affairs, counseling programs, and women's programs on campus to create a safer environment for college women as well as create an effective program for college

female victims. The policy implications associated with this thesis are based on two primary focal points. First, there is a need for effective prevention tactics and protection. Next, there is a need for appropriate reporting methods and victim assistance. If these two focal points are addressed, there could be drastic change in the frequency of sexual assault and how the assaults are reported and handled.

### **Prevention Tactics and Protection**

College campuses need to implement seminars and short lectures on sexual victimization. Interactive seminars or lectures could get the students to actively engage in the conversation and further their knowledge on how to prevent sexual victimization. These seminars could also inform the students of actions that may put them at risk for being sexually victimized. The seminars and lectures could include basic safety instructions and provide the students with essential information in case they are put in a potentially threatening situation. Information on personal protection and campus protection resources could also be discussed during these meetings.

In addition, these meetings could provide the students with examples of what constitutes as sexual victimization and how they could report the victimization to the authorities. According to previous research, these were some of the issues previous victims ran into in the reporting process. They were unsure if what they experienced was qualified as a sexual victimization and were not sure if they should report it (Cullen et al., 2000; Sampson, 2003).

If the process is explained and the students understand what sexual victimization is and how to report it, it could increase the number of victims who come forward, and potentially prevent future sexual assaults. The meetings should also give out flyers and pamphlets on victim assistance and resources to contact if they need counseling after the incident. During the

interactive lectures or seminars, the flyers could be given to each student and made sure that they were aware of what the flyer was addressing. If the students are given the information and knowledge on how to identify and report sexual victimization it could increase the likelihood that they will report the incident.

### **Reporting Methods and Victim Assistance**

Additionally, once the students are made known of their ability to report the sexual assault, there needs to be a team of professionals ready to handle the incident. The campus needs a team of trained professionals ready to handle the report of the sexual assault, gather information, calm the victim, and address the perpetrator. Updated reporting methods and victim assistance are essential in the attempt to accurately assess sexual victimization on campus and appropriately help the victims of sexual victimization.

Reporting sexual victimization has been an issue on college campuses for decades (Cullen et al., 2000; Hochstetler et al., 2014; Sampson, 2003). The process the victim has to go through to report the victimization is traumatizing because the victim is made to relive the situation, tell every detail, and experience the event again in their mind (Hochstetler et al., 2014). The reporting process needs to be updated and made more efficient. Reporting a sexual victimization will never be easy for the victim, but it should not leave them feeling scared, guilty, or embarrassed (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006). Some of the main concerns reported by victims were if they would be believed, if the event was important enough to report, or if the police would think they were wasting their time (Gartner & Macmillan, 1995; Sable et al., 2006). Campuses need to provide the victims of sexual assault an atmosphere where they feel safe, believed, respected, and protected when they report their sexual victimization.

Furthermore, the victims of sexual assault require special attention after the incident. Previous studies have discussed the numerous negative effects of sexual victimization (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Sickel et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; Wilson, 2016). These negative effects require attention and healing in order to be resolved. Campuses need to provide adequate counseling and treatment for the victims of sexual assault.

The Dean of Students should be required to do a check up on the student victims' well-being and academic performance following the report. Many campuses provide programs, therapy, and counselors to treat victims of sexual assault; however, not every victim will know about these programs or will seek out these available programs. That is why it is important for the campus to take a more active role in the treatment of the victim and the awareness of sexual assault on campus. In many cases, the victims of sexual assault will act as research has observed. They will reduce their interaction, develop negative coping skills, become depressed, experience mental/behavioral changes, and many other negative effects (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Sickel et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; Wilson, 2016). In these circumstances, having the college actively involved in the victims treatment could potentially help them overcome these negative effects or at least help the victim receive some sort of treatment to help them cope.

### **Conclusion**

The findings in this thesis were an important addition to the previous research on sexual victimization and how it effects college women. This thesis added to the previous research by including the factors of behavior changes, the number of behavior changes made based on the type of sexual victimization the victim experienced, the impact of the sexual victimization on the

academic performance of the college woman, and the female students' perceptions on how the sexual victimization affected their academic performance. This thesis expanded the literature and research available on sexual victimization among college women. It incorporated all of the previously stated factors into one study to determine the effects of sexual victimization on college women.

The findings in this thesis showed that sexual victimization had a significant effect on the behavior of college women. These women experienced behavioral, emotional, physical, and academic changes. The findings in this thesis confirmed some of the findings from the previous research on the effects of sexual victimization among college women such as fear (buying a weapon, improved security, or taking a self-defense class), seclusion (quit job), and avoidant behaviors (dropping classes, changing major or changing residence) (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2018; Groer et al., 2016; Jordan et al., 2014; Sickel et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009; Warshaw, 1994; Wilson, 2016).

When looking at behavior in this study, the behavior changes were made as a reaction to the sexual victimization they experienced. Women who experienced completed sexual victimization were more likely to change more than one behavior after their sexual victimization. The college women who experienced completed sexual victimization were also more likely to have at least one behavior change.

Similar to previous research, this study found that women who experienced completed sexual victimization were more likely to experience a decrease in their GPA's (Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). This thesis added to the previous research by including the perceptions of how the sexual victimization affected the females' academic performance. The results showed that college women who experienced completed sexual assault were more likely

to report that the sexual victimization was the reason that their GPA decreased. Unlike the previous research, this thesis found a different relationship between attempted sexual victimization and GPA (Jordan et al., 2014; Smith et al., 2003; Walter, 2009). The results showed that the women who experienced attempted sexual victimization experienced an increase in their GPA; however, they also associated any decrease in their GPA to the attempted sexual victimization.

This study expanded the literature available on sexual victimization among college women as well as provided the base for future research on this topic. Future research should use a broad definition of sexual victimization when studying this topic further. All types of sexual victimization were seen to effect the college women, so future research should include the many different types of sexual victimization in their study. The prevalence of sexual victimization among college women must continuously be studied in order to understand it and provide appropriate remedies or policy implications.

## REFERENCES

- Abbey, A., McAuslan, P., & Ross, L. T. (1998). Sexual assault perpetration by college men: The role of alcohol, misperception of sexual intent, and sexual beliefs and experiences. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 17*(2), 167-195.
- Abbey, A., Parkhill, M. R., BeShears, R., Clinton-Sherrod, A. M., & Zawacki, T. (2006). Cross-sectional predictors of sexual assault perpetration in a community sample of single African American and Caucasian men. *Aggressive Behavior: Official Journal of the International Society for Research on Aggression, 32*(1), 54-67.
- Abbey, A., Ross, L. T., McDuffie, D., & McAuslan, P. (1996). Alcohol and dating risk factors for sexual assault among college women. *Psychology of women quarterly, 20*(1), 147-169.
- Agnew, R. (1992). Foundation for a general strain theory of crime and delinquency. *Criminology, 30*(1), 47-88.
- Amar, A. F., & Gennaro, S. (2005). Dating violence in college women: Associated physical injury, healthcare usage, and mental health symptoms. *Nursing research, 54*(4), 235-242.
- Anderson, L. A., Stoelb, M. P., Duggan, P., & Hieger, B. (1998). The effectiveness of two types of rape prevention programs in changing the rape-supportive attitudes of college students. *Journal of College Student Development, 39*(2), 131.
- Arizmendi, T. G. (2008). Nonverbal communication in the context of dissociative processes. *Psychoanalytic Psychology, 25*(3), 443-457. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0736-9735.25.3.443>
- Belknap, J., Fisher, B. S., & Cullen, F. T. (1999). The development of a comprehensive measure of the sexual victimization of college women. *Violence Against Women, 5*(2), 185-214.

- Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., Walters, M. L., Merrick, M. T., & Stevens, M. R. (2011). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 summary report. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS\\_Report2010-a.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf)
- Brener, N. D., McMahon, P. M., Warren, C. W., & Douglas, K. A. (1999). Forced sexual intercourse and associated health-risk behaviors among female college students in the United States. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology* 67 (2), 252.
- Broidy, L., & Agnew, R. (1997). Gender and crime: A general strain theory perspective. *Journal of research in crime and delinquency*, 34(3), 275-306.
- Bryant, R. A., Harvey, A. G., Dang, S. T., Sackville, T., & Basten, C. (1998). Treatment of acute stress disorder: A comparison of cognitive-behavioral therapy and supportive counseling. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 66(5), 862.
- Calam, R. M., & Slade, P. D. (1989). Sexual experience and eating problems in female undergraduates. *International Journal of Eating Disorders*, 8(4), 391-397.
- Campbell, R., Dworkin, E., & Cabral, G. (2009). An ecological model of the impact of sexual assault on women's mental health. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*.
- Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (2005). The impact of victimization. Retrieved from <https://www.crcvc.ca/docs/victimization.pdf>.
- Carr, J. L., & VanDeusen, K. M. (2004). Risk factors for male sexual aggression on college campuses. *Journal of Family Violence*, 19(5), 279-289.
- Carson, D. C. (2007). Using Agnew's General Strain Theory to explain the relationship between early victimization and deviant behavior.

- Cullen, F., Fisher, B., & Turner, M., The sexual victimization of college women (NCJ 182369). (2000). Retrieved from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice: <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/182369.pdf>
- Cunningham, J., Pearce, T., & Pearce, P. (1988). Childhood sexual abuse and medical complaints in adult women. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 3, 131-144.
- Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics (2014). Rape and Sexual Victimization Among College-Aged Females, 1995-2003).
- Elliott, D. M., Mok, D. S., & Briere, J. (2004). Adult sexual assault: Prevalence, symptomatology, and sex differences in the general population. *Journal of traumatic stress*, 17(3), 203-211.
- Faravelli, C., Giugni, A., Salvatori, S., & Ricca, V. (2004). Psychopathology after rape. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 161(8), 1483-1485.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (2018). Coping with crime victimization. Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/resources/victim-services/coping-with-victimization>
- Feldman-Summers, S., & Ashworth, C. D. (1981). Factors related to intentions to report a rape. *Journal of Social issues*, 37(4), 53-70.
- Fisher, B. S., Cullen, F. T., & Turner, M. G. (2000). The Sexual Victimization of College Women. Research Report.
- Foa, E. B., Rothbaum, B. O., Riggs, D. S., & Murdock, T. B. (1991). Treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder in rape victims: a comparison between cognitive-behavioral procedures and counseling. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 59(5), 715.
- Foa, E. B., Davidson, J. R., & Frances, A. (1999). Treatment of posttraumatic stress disorder. *The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, 66(Supplement 16), 1-76.

- Foa, E. B., & Rothbaum, B. O. (1998). Treatment manuals for practitioners.
- Frazier, P. A., & Burnett, J. W. (1994). Immediate coping strategies among rape victims. *Journal of Counseling and Development: JCD*, 72(6), 633.
- Gartner, R., & Macmillan, R. (1995). The effect of victim-offender relationship on reporting crimes of violence against women. *Canadian J. Criminology*, 37, 393.
- Gilmore, A. K., Walsh, K., Badour, C. L., Ruggiero, K. J., Kilpatrick, D. G., & Resnick, H. S. (2018). Suicidal Ideation, Posttraumatic Stress, and Substance Abuse Based on Forcible and Drug-or Alcohol-Facilitated/Incapacitated Rape Histories in a National Sample of Women. *Suicide and Life-Threatening Behavior*, 48(2), 183-192.
- Golding, J., Cooper, M., George, L., & Krantz, David S. (1997). Sexual Assault History and Health Perceptions: Seven General Population Studies. *Health Psychology*, 16(5), 417-425.
- Groer, M.W., Thomas, S.P., Evans, G.W., & Helton, S. (2006). Inflammatory and immune system correlates of rape. *Violence and Victims*, 21, 796-808.
- Harned, M. S., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (2002). Understanding a link between sexual harassment and eating disorder symptoms: A mediational analysis. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 70(5), 1170.
- Herman, J. L. (1992). Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma. *Journal of traumatic stress*, 5(3), 377-391.
- Hochstetler, A., DeLisi, M., Jones-Johnson, G., & Johnson, W. R. (2014). The Criminal Victimization–Depression Sequela: Examining the Effects of Violent Victimization on Depression With a Longitudinal Propensity Score Design. *Crime & Delinquency*, 60(5), 785-806.

- Humphrey, J. A., & White, J. W. (2000). Women's vulnerability to sexual assault from adolescence to young adulthood. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 27*(6), 419-424.
- Jordan, C. E., Combs, J. L., & Smith, G. T. (2014). An exploration of sexual victimization and academic performance among college women. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 15*(3), 191-200.
- Kessler, R. C., & Magee, W. (1993). Childhood adversities and adult depression: Basic patterns of association in a U.S. national survey. *Psychological Medicine, 23*, 679-690.
- Kilpatrick, D.G., Edmunds, C.N., & Seymour, A. K. (1992). *Rape in America: A report to the nation*. Arlington, VA: National Victim Center.
- Kirkner, A., Relyea, M., & Ullman, S. E. (2018). PTSD and problem drinking in relation to seeking mental health and substance use treatment among sexual assault survivors. *Traumatology, 24*(1), 1.
- Kirkpatrick, C., & Kanin, E. (1957). Male sex aggression on a university campus. *American Sociological Review, 22*(1), 52-58.
- Koss, M. P., & Dinero, T. E. (1988). Predictors of sexual aggression among a national sample of male college students. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences, 528*(1), 133-147.
- Koss, M. P., & Harvey, M. R. (1987). *The rape victim: Clinical and community approaches to treatment*. Stephen Greene Press.
- Krebs, C. P., Lindquist, C. H., Warner, T. D., Fisher, B. S., & Martin, S. L. (2009). College women's experiences with physically forced, alcohol-or other drug-enabled, and drug-facilitated sexual assault before and since entering college. *Journal of American College Health, 57*(6), 639-649.

- Krees, V. E. W., Trippany, R. L., & Nolan, J. M. (2003). Responding to sexual assault victims: Considerations for college counselors. *Journal of College Counseling, 6*(2), 124-134.
- Linton, S. J. (2002). A prospective study of the effects of sexual or physical abuse on back pain. *Pain, 96*(3), 347-351.
- Lisak, D., Gardinier, L., Nicksa, S. C., & Cote, A. M. (2010). False allegations of sexual assault: An analysis of ten years of reported cases. *Violence Against Women, 16*, 1318-1334.  
doi:10.1177/1077801210387747
- Lizotte, A. J. (1985). The uniqueness of rape: Reporting assaultive violence to the police. *Crime & Delinquency, 31*(2), 169-190.
- Marotta, S. A. (2000). Best practices for counselors who treat posttraumatic stress disorder. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 78*, 492-495.
- Mason, B., & Smithey, M. (2012). The effects of academic and interpersonal stress on dating violence among college students: A test of classical strain theory. *Journal of interpersonal violence, 27*(5), 974-986.
- Merton, R. K. (1938). Social structure and anomie. *American sociological review, 3*(5), 672-682.
- Mirowsky, J., & Ross, C. E. (1995). Sex differences in distress: Real or artifact?. *American Sociological Review, 44*, 449-468.
- Mohler-Kuo, M., Dowdall, G. W., Koss, M. P., & Wechsler, H. (2004). Correlates of rape while intoxicated in a national sample of college women. *Journal of studies on alcohol, 65*(1), 37-45.
- Najavits, L. M., Weiss, R. D., & Shaw, S. R. (1997). The link between substance abuse and posttraumatic stress disorder in women: A research review. *The American journal on addictions, 6*(4), 273-283.

- Najdowski, C. J., & Ullman, S. E. (2009). Prospective effects of sexual victimization on PTSD and problem drinking. *Addictive behaviors, 34*(11), 965-968.
- National Center for Campus Public Safety, Sampson, R. (2013). Acquaintance rape of college students. Retrieved from [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service. (2018). Sexual violence. Retrieved from [https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/info\\_8.5x11\\_final508.pdf](https://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/info_8.5x11_final508.pdf)
- Paul, L. A., Walsh, K., McCauley, J. L., Ruggiero, K. J., Resnick, H. S., & Kilpatrick, D. G. (2013). College women's experiences with rape disclosure: A national study. *Violence against women, 19*(4), 486-502.
- Perilloux, C., Duntley, J. D., & Buss, D. M. (2011). Susceptibility to sexual victimization and women's mating strategies. *Personality and Individual Differences, 51*(6), 783-786.
- Roosmalen, E. V., & McDaniel, S. A. (1999). Sexual harassment in academia: A hazard to women's health. *Women & health, 28*(2), 33-54.
- Sable, M. R., Danis, F., Mauzy, D. L., & Gallagher, S. K. (2006). Barriers to reporting sexual assault for women and men: Perspectives of college students. *Journal of American College Health, 55*(3), 157-162.
- Sampson, R. (2003). Acquaintance rape of college students. *Public Health Resources, 92*.
- Schechter, J. O., Schwartz, H. P., & Greenfeld, D. G. (1987). Sexual assault and anorexia nervosa. *International Journal of Eating Disorders, 6*(2), 313-316.
- Sinozich, S., & Langton, L. (2014). Rape and sexual assault victimization among college-age females, 1995-2013. Washington (DC): US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

- Smith, P. H., White, J. W., & Holland, L. J. (2003). A longitudinal perspective on dating violence among adolescent and college-age women. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(7), 1104-1109.
- Tjaden, P. G., & Thoennes, N. (2006). Extent, nature, and consequences of rape victimization: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey.
- United States. Department of Justice. Office for Victims of Crime. (2018). Crime victimization glossary. Retrieved from <https://www.ovc.gov/library/glossary.html>
- Walter, J. D. (2009). *The Effect of Sexual Victimization on the Academic Performance of College Women* (Doctoral dissertation, Washington State University).
- Warshaw, R. (1988). *I never called it rape: The "Ms." report on recognizing, fighting, and surviving date and acquaintance rape*. Harper & Row Publishers.
- Warshaw, R. (1994). *I never called it rape: The Ms. report on recognizing, fighting, and surviving date and acquaintance rape*. New York: HarperCollins.
- White, J. W., & Koss, M. P. (1991). Courtship violence: Incidence in a national sample of higher education students. *Violence and victims, 6*(4), 247.
- Wilson, L. (2016). Sexual molestation. <https://drlwilson.com/Articles/MOLESTATION.htm>
- Wolitzky-Taylor, K. B., Resnick, H. S., Amstadter, A. B., McCauley, J. L., Ruggiero, K. J., & Kilpatrick, D. G. (2011). Reporting rape in a national sample of college women. *Journal of American College Health, 59*(7), 582-587.
- Zinzow, H. M., Resnick, H. S., McCauley, J. L., Amstadter, A. B., Ruggiero, K. J., & Kilpatrick, D. G. (2010). The role of rape tactics in risk for posttraumatic stress disorder and major depression: Results from a national sample of college women. *Depression and Anxiety, 27*(8), 708-715.

Zioncheck, J. A. (2000). Eating Disorders and College Women.

VITA

BAILIE LIGHT

Education: Gate City High School, Gate City, Virginia 2014  
B.A. Criminal Justice, East Tennessee State University, Johnson  
City, Tennessee 2016  
M.A. Criminal Justice, East Tennessee State University, Johnson  
City, Tennessee 2018

Professional Experience: Graduate Assistant, East Tennessee State University Center for  
Academic Achievement, 2017-2018

Honors and Awards: Dean's List, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City,  
Tennessee.