

# Sexual Assault at UVU

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# Abstract

- The study will be conducted by sampling a random representative population of UVU students. The research subjects will be gained by using the Institution Research and Information in order to obtain emails of approximately 500 students. In order to collect data, an email will be sent out to the research subjects containing a survey. This survey will be comprised of questions in order to determine the rates of sexual assault victimization of Utah Valley University Students. Additionally, questions will be included that assess the occurrences of reporting these crimes. Then, the proportionality of the incidence of victimization, versus reporting of these crimes will be analyzed to determine how often these crimes are actually reported. In order to complete this project, the permission of the Institutional Review Board of Utah Valley University will be needed. In order to gain this information, an application will be submitted and reviewed by this board. For this project, implied consent will be the main ethical concern. A document presented before the survey will explain the confidentiality and privacy of the survey. Additionally, because of the emotional stress that this survey could possibly cause, a list of resources that will assist victims will be available. This project is beneficial because it assess the incidence of sexual assault on Utah Valley University campus. Furthermore, this research will determine if there needs to be improvement on the reporting of sexual crimes of students attending this campus.

## Lit Review *Why Sexual Assault Survivors Do Not Report to Universities*

- The present study shows an analysis of 220 female survivors who were part of a sexual assault crime within a college campus.
- The study was conducted throughout 27 college campuses in the United States and primarily focused on female undergraduate students
- 23.6% of female undergraduate students had experienced nonconsensual sexual contact while enrolled in the university. This study also focuses on turning the rape culture around to focus on the victim and their emotional, physical and mental state of mind by providing a list of resources that may be useful.
- This study has benefited current and future sexual assault research studies by providing a clear understanding of how common rape and sexual assault cases may be and the reasons behind not reporting the crimes

## Lit Review- The study of Sexual Assault and Current Mental Health: The Role of Help Seeking and Police Response occurred in 2009.

- 1,401 women were subjects in the research.
- The subjects' mental health after sexual assault was a main focus in this study. Women were questioned regarding the type of help they received, such as from family, friends, mental health professionals, and social service agencies.
- this study concluded that police response only reduced depression in victims who did not suffer sexual penetration
- There are significant weaknesses in this study that require more research be conducted on the subject.

# Lit Review: An Assessment of State Level Sexual Assault Prevention Estimates

- multiple surveys regarding sexual assault prevalence rates were conducted and compared with one another.
- Our research demonstrated how many current students at Utah Valley University experienced sexual assault
- This study was important because “determining prevalence accurately is crucial for understanding the magnitude of the problem and seeking ways to engage in prevention and victim services” (Laflamme and Potter, 2010, p.77).
- Of the approximately 2,700 individuals that participated in this survey, about 30% reported being a victim of a sexual assault crime (Laflamme and Potter, 2010, p.83). This study was admittedly limited because it was conducted via telephone. Young adults without a phone or low income individuals that do not own a phone were not able to be included in the study (Laflamme and Potter, 2010, p.84).
- Our survey was sent to 500 students, and we got a 13% response rate with 67 responses. Our survey was also limited (just UVU, only 13%, only UT). This helps us to understand the extent of the problem and what we can do to help

## Lit Review: Costs of Sexual Violence in UT

Studied the prevalence of adult and child sexual assault crimes, and the financial burden of these crimes, were examined.

Understanding how much a sexual assault crime costs victims and the community may encourage the university to increase prevention efforts and available services and resources for victims.

The estimates of some of these costs, per sexual assault incident, include: \$800 for medical expenses, \$130 for property damage, \$700 for STIs, and \$128,000 for suffering and lost quality of life (Cowan, 2015, p.13). These numbers were derived from national and state sources. It is estimated that approximately 80% of all sexual assault costs were from pain and suffering experienced by the victim (Cowan, 2015, p.11).

In 2011, the Utah government spent 92 million dollars on sexual assault offenders, with the majority of the money being spent on incarceration and probationary supervision (Cowan, 2015, p.16).

# Barriers to Reporting Sexual Assault for Women and Men: Perspectives of College Students

- 215 students surveyed
- Survey consisted of 6 section - questions, scenarios, and statements designed to assess perceptions and attitudes about sexual assault
- Provides data that show barriers that began over 30 years ago and which are still present causes on why rape and sexual assault are not being reported, especially within college campuses
- This report was able to list the potential reasons for underreporting of the crimes and include statistics on how common these reasons are
- “it was private matter,” “not clear it was a crime,” “afraid of reprisal from the offender.”
- Results were that men victims are less likely than women to report a rape or sexual assault case.

# Through the Looking Glass: Exploring How College Students' Perception of the Police Influence Sexual Assault Victimization Reporting

- Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 2015
- The survey included questions regarding sexual victimization, why students did/or did not report the incidence to the police, and overall perception of law enforcement.
- Nearly 640 surveys were completed, with non reporting rates at almost 100%.
- The study found that the most common reason for not reporting victimization to the police was that they did not realize what happened was actually a crime
- Another common reasons of non reporting was that the victim did not believe their experience was important enough to report to police
- This study concluded that a negative perception about law enforcement officers did decrease the chance of reporting sexual assault to police

# **Through the Looking Glass: Exploring How College Students' Perception of the Police Influence Sexual Assault Victimization Reporting**

## Weaknesses of Survey

- May have been an overlap in responses
- number of individuals that responded sexual assault had occurred was very low - A significantly larger sample would have produced more reliable results
- study is not generalizable to the larger public because such a small sample was used

# Research Design

- An electronic survey, created through Qualtrics, will be the instrument used in this research project to gather data
- Email addresses will be collected from the UVU Institutional Research and Information department
- Risk to student participants in the research will be minimized because no identifying information will be collected and because the UVU IRI will be asked to send the emails to the sample of students
- 50 questions possible with skip logic included to filter responses
- Survey took approximately 5 minutes to complete
- Issues with anonymity - had to meet with IRI to send out emails

# Response Rate

- Sample Size: 500 individuals
- Response Rate: 68 individuals responses
- IRI hypothesized response rate would be very low if they were to send out the survey
- We met with the IRI in order to emails ourselves, the IRI ensured confidentiality was maintained
- Additionally, a follow up email was sent out three days after the initial email - this increased our responses by about 33%
- Confidence Interval: 95%

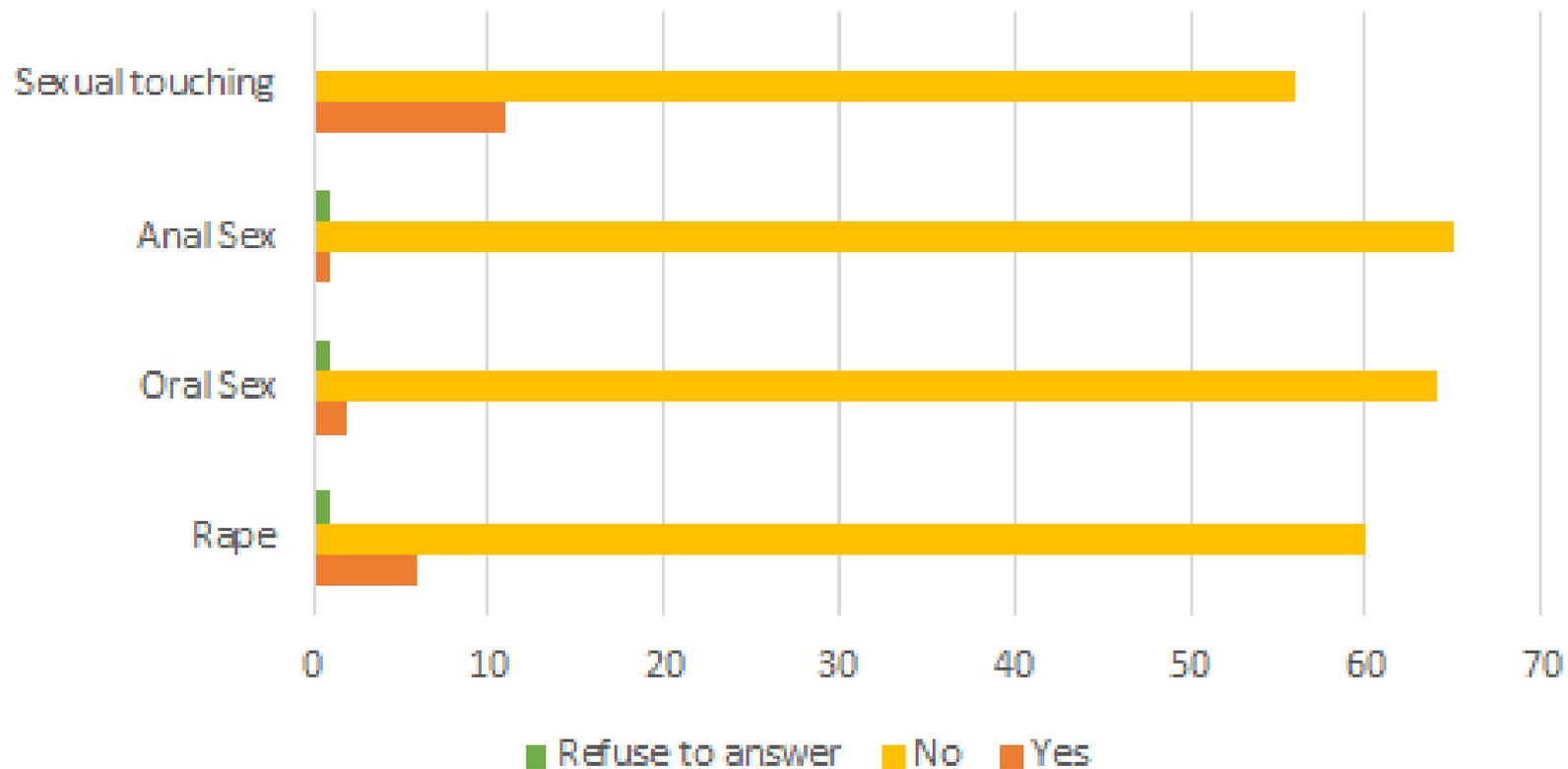
# Key Demographic Information

- 85.07% were between the ages of 18-30
- 89.55% were white
- 74% attend the UVU Orem campus
- 65% attend the Orem campus 4-5 days per week
- Only 10% of respondents were Freshman
- 59% were female

# Survey Questions

- Survey questions addressed the occurrence of rape, unwanted anal sex, unwanted oral sex, and unwanted sexual touching where no sex occurred - definitions included
- If responder answered 'yes' to victimization, more questions were asked which added detail to their victimization
- Information regarding perpetrator, time period in which victimization occurred, reporting, and resources for recovery were all addressed

## Crime Prevalence Comparison



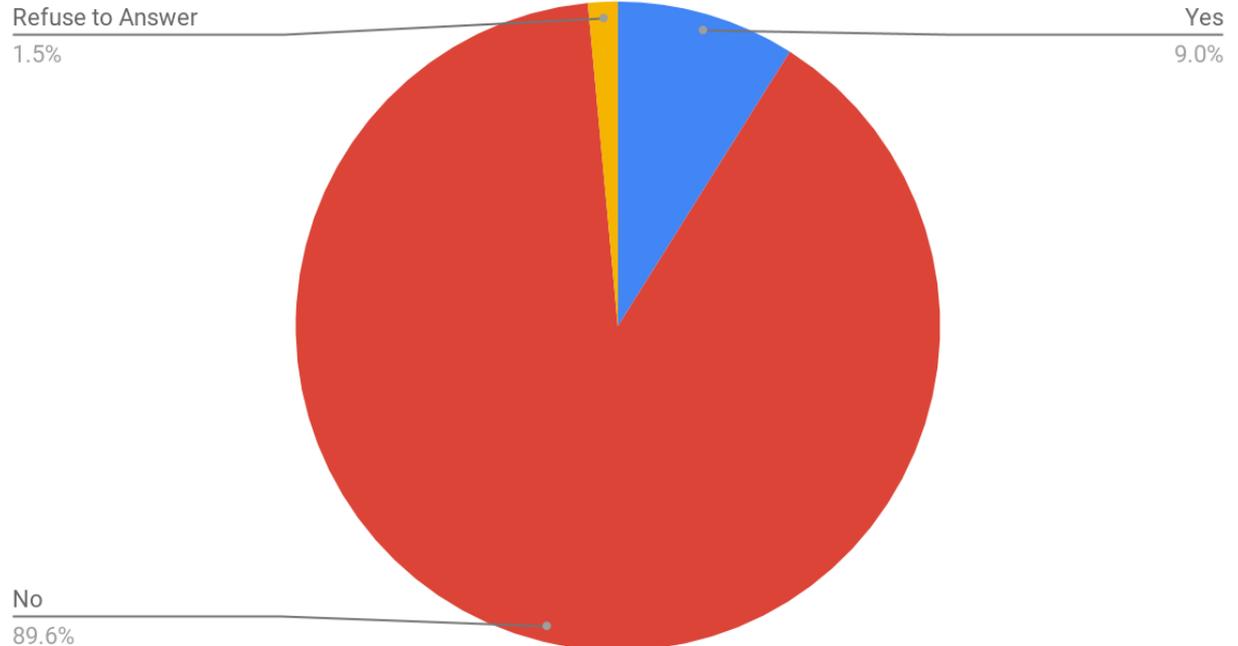
Regardless of how long ago it happened or who did it, ... has a person EVER made you have sex by USING FORCE OR THREATENING TO HARM you or someone close to you? By sex we mean penetration of the vagina by a penis.

### Points scored

Yes - 6

No - 60

Refuse to Answer - 1



# Further Data

- With six responses, two were reported while the remaining four went unreported.
- Only one was reported to law enforcement.
- Most crimes went unreported afraid law enforcement would not do anything about it and finding the crime being embarrassing and shameful.
- It is extremely likely a crime like this would be reported in the future.
- No resources of recovery were provided.

Has anyone EVER made you have oral sex by using force or threat of harm? By oral sex we mean contact with the mouth/tongue to the penis/vagina.

Yes - 2

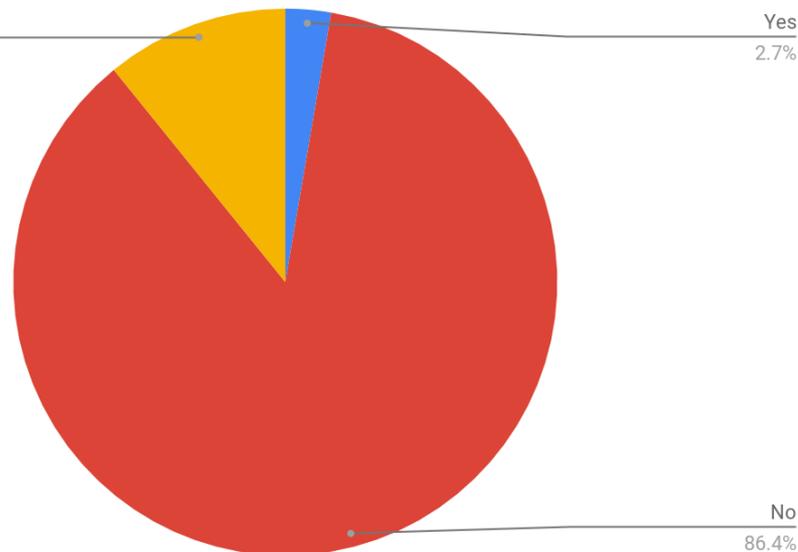
No - 64

Refuse to Answer - 1

Points scored

Refuse to Answer  
10.9%

Yes  
2.7%



## Further Data

- With the two responses, neither one reported the crime to anyone
- The incidences were viewed as embarrassing, or the victim was afraid of the offender
- The victims would likely report this crime in the future
- Resources for recovery were not given for either respondent

Has anyone EVER made you have anal sex by using force or threat of harm? By anal sex we mean penetration of the anus by a penis or object.

Yes - 1

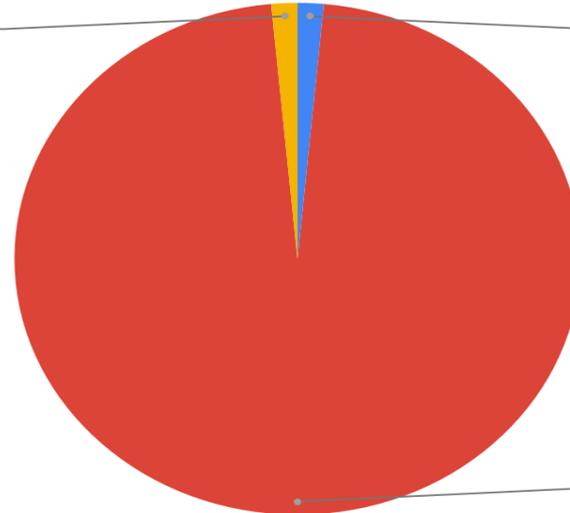
No - 65

Refuse to Answer-1

Points scored

Refuse to Answer  
1.5%

Yes  
1.5%



No  
97.0%

# Further Data - Single Response

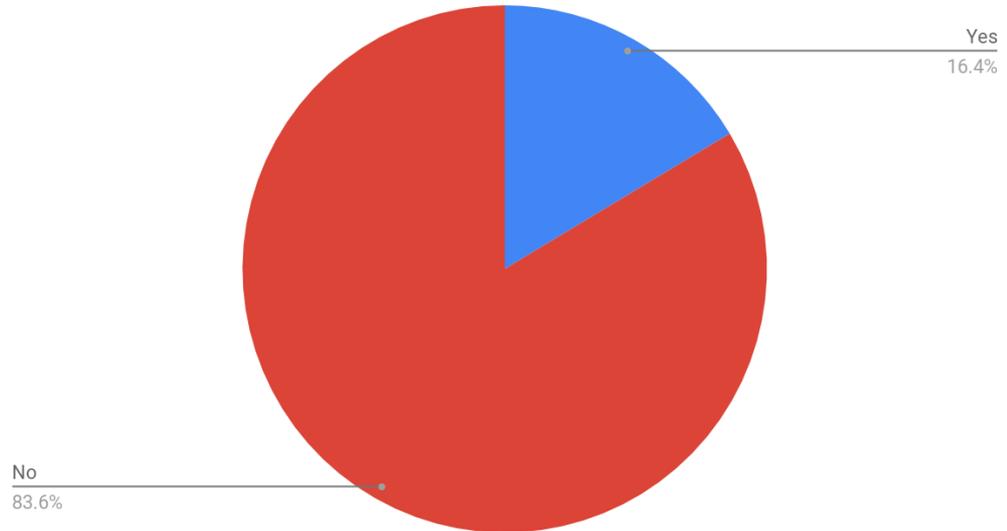
- Crime happened over 5 years ago - perpetrator was a friend
- Crime was not reported to anyone - victim did not understand what had happened until later in time
- If victimization were to happen again, respondent would be extremely likely to report the crime to law enforcement
- Victim was not made aware of any resources to aid with recovery

For this question, do not include instances where wanted or unwanted sexual intercourse occurred. Sexual intercourse includes sex, oral sex, anal sex, or penetration of the anus or vagina with fingers or objects. Has anyone EVER touched you, without consent, on the breast, buttocks or genital area by using force or by threatening to hurt you or someone close to you?

Points scored

Yes - 11

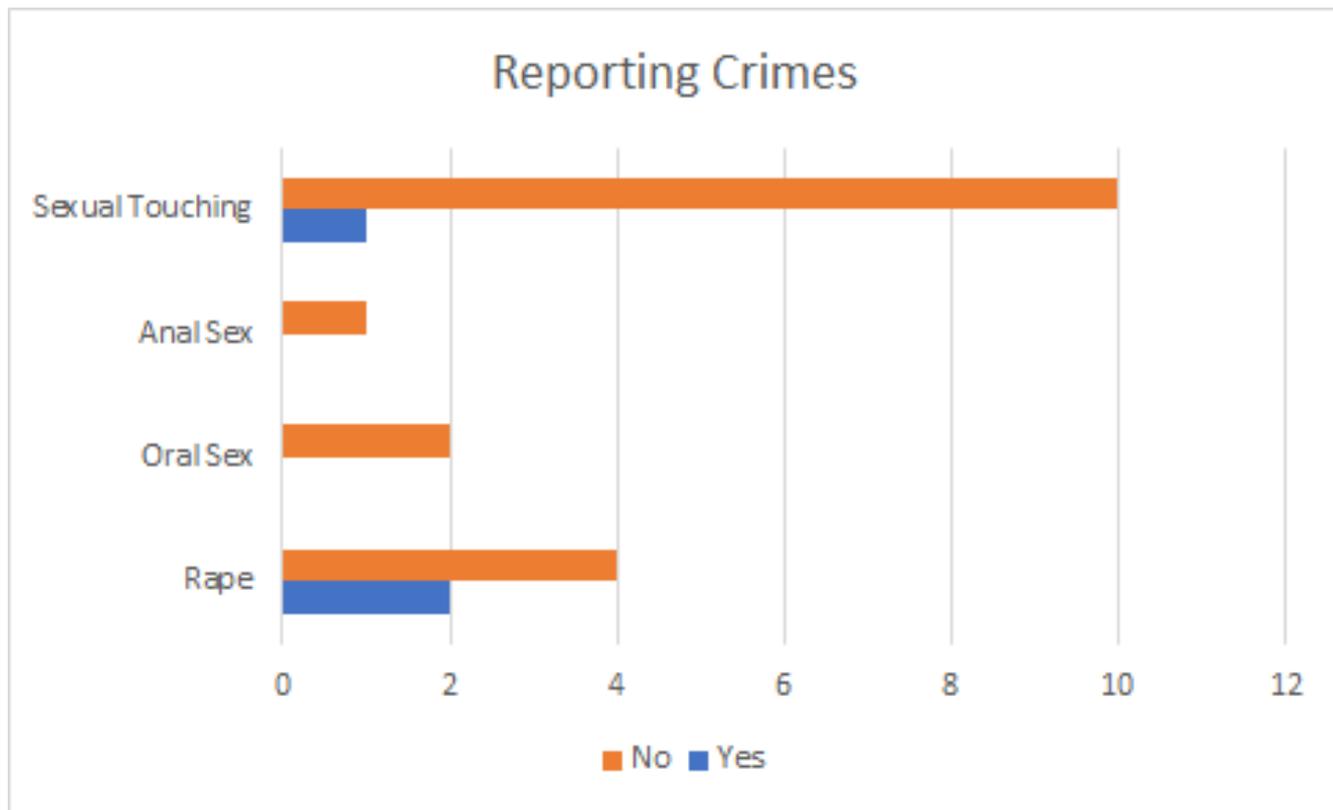
No - 56



# Further Data

- 11 responses indicated that sexual assault victimization had occurred without penetration
- Most crimes happened over 5 years ago
- Many different relationships involved sexual assault - only 2 were strangers
- Only one victimization was reported - not to law enforcement
- There were many reasons for not reporting the crime - but the most common reason was that the incident was too embarrassing and would be viewed as the victim's fault
- 8 of the 11 respondents stated they would be likely to report victimization like this in the future
- Only one individual used resources to aid in recovery

# How often were crimes reported?



## Who was the crime reported to?



# Weaknesses of Study

- Project was limited to UVU and not many responses were received; not generalizable
- Question regarding sexual assault without penetration may not have been understood - may be duplicate responses
- Only a small number of responses indicated sexual assault actually happened - a larger sample with more instances of sexual assault would more reliably indicate why individuals do not report sexual assault

# Final Conclusions

- 6 of 67 total participants have been victims of rape; only 2 reported the crime
- 11 of 67 participants were sexually touched; only 1 reported the crime
- Rape, oral, and anal sex offenders were known to the victim
- 2 of the 11 offenders of inappropriate touching were strangers to the victim
- There were varied reasons as to why victims chose not to report the crime
- People should be educated; many may not believe that sexual touching without permission is a crime. Many may not be aware of resources available to them.