

“As I Was Walking Down the Street, Four Strange Guys Came and Took Me Under the Bridge, Where They All Raped Me”: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of the Types of Rape Experienced by Men in South Africa

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Siyabulela Eric Mgozeli (RN, MCur)¹ 
and Sinegugu Evidence Duma (RN, PhD)¹

Abstract

Globally, rape is regarded as the most demoralizing type of trauma, and it has negative implications for victims and their families. Although rape affects the community in general, there is a paucity of literature on rape victimization of men. As a result, the types of rape experienced by them are not understood, and thus it is often difficult to develop contextually relevant interventions to prevent male rape and to support male rape victims. The objective of this study was to first determine and then describe, the types of rape experienced by men. An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) qualitative approach was used to collect and analyze data from a purposive sample of 11 participants, using semistructured individual interviews. The findings of the study reveal six themes and related subthemes as six types and related subtypes of rape experienced by men as follows: acquaintance rape, including familial rape; stranger rape; gang rape, including corrective-gang rape, drug-facilitated gang rape, pack-hunting rape, women retributive rape (or women vengeance) for violence experienced from men; homophobic rape; prison rape, including transactional rape and gang initiation rape; and armed rape. The findings reveal the different contexts or settings where men are vulnerable to rape. This highlights the possibilities for the development of context-specific sexual violence prevention interventions for men, which include self-defense training and awareness campaigns specific to rape victimization of men. Furthermore, future studies are recommended to expose this pandemic. Activism is advocated to stop the silence around this public and social health issue.

Keywords

gang rape, homophobic rape, male rape victimization, men, prevention interventions, rape, prison rape, sexual violence

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South Africa has been dubbed the “rape capital of the world” (Gordon & Collins, 2013; Human Rights Watch, 2010) due to the high prevalence of rape of women, children, and men in the country. According to the South African Criminal Law Amendment Act No. 32 of 2007, rape refers to unlawfully and intentionally act of sexual penetration to a person without his or her consent (Republic of South Africa, 2007). This involves penetration to any extent by the genital organs of one person into or beyond genital organs, anus, or mouth of another

¹Discipline of Nursing, School of Nursing & Public Health, College of Health Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa

Corresponding Author:

Siyabulela Eric Mgozeli, Discipline of Nursing, School of Nursing & Public Health, College of Health Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, First Floor George Campbell Building, King George V Avenue, Durban 4041, KwaZulu-Natal Province, South Africa.
Email: smcanzie@gmail.com



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person; penetration by any other part of the body of one person or any object, including any part of the body of an animal into genital organs, anus, or mouth of another person (Republic of South Africa, 2007). The passing of this Act by the national parliament gave recognition to the rape victimization of men in South Africa which, before the passing of this law, was classified under indecent assault (Artz & Smythe, 2008). Although the law in the country, and in other parts of the world, recognizes rape against men, much attention from academics, politicians, and activists has been paid to women and children as the only victims of rape (Cohen, 2014; Sigsworth, 2009). This has resulted in the development of care and management guidelines and sexual violence prevention interventions specific to these groups (García-Moreno et al., 2015; World Health Organization, 2013). Development of care or management guidelines and prevention interventions for sexual victimization specific to men as victims of rape lags behind in South Africa (Van Niekerk et al., 2015).

In South Africa and in other parts of the world, incidents of rape in general are underreported (Jewkes, Nduna, Shai, & Dunkle, 2012; Jewkes, Sen, & Garcia-Moreno, 2002; Martin, 2002; Palermo, Bleck, & Peterman, 2013), but the incidence of rape where men are the primary victims remains even more underreported in the statistics and in research (McDonald & Tijerino, 2013). This can be attributed to many factors that may include the misconceptions that women are the only victims of rape, that men are always perpetrators, along with cultural and social stereotypes that are associated with rape against men such as the belief that men always want sex, real men don't get raped, and only homosexual men get raped (Cohen, 2014; Gear, 2007; Javaid, 2015; McMahon, 2010; Sleath & Bull, 2010; Smith, 2011). These misconceptions and stereotypes have been identified as driving force behind the continuation of sexual violence (Ryan, 2011; Weiss, 2009). The men who subscribe to these stereotypes choose to remain silent when they get raped due to their fear of being labeled or disbelieved (McDonald & Tijerino, 2013; Sable, Danis, Mauzy, & Gallagher, 2006).

Internationally, few studies that measure the prevalence of male rape in specific settings such as colleges and prisons have emerged in the last two decades (Aosved, Long, & Voller, 2011; Larsen & Hilden, 2016; Robertson, 2003; Turchik, 2012). A recent national study on rape justice in South Africa revealed that only 110 (5.1%) out of 2,152 reported rape cases during 2012 were identified as cases of rape against men (Machisa et al., 2017). Another South African study on rape perpetration amongst men in the provinces of the Eastern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal revealed that 51 (3%) out of 1,686 men self-reported that they had raped other men (Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2010). In yet another South African study on

male rape in prison, 84 (84%) inmates reported that they had personally seen another inmate being raped in prison (Booyens & Bezuidenhout, 2014). These studies report that male rape is a reality in South Africa, thus supporting the need for the development of male-specific sexual violence prevention and care and management guidelines for men who are victims of sexual violence. The objective of this study was to determine and describe the types of rape experienced by men by focusing on the contexts in which these rape incidents occur and on the characteristics of those who perpetrate rape against men in order to highlight the circumstances where men are more vulnerable and at risk of rape. This knowledge will inform the development of specific sexual violence prevention and care and management guidelines for men who are actual and potential victims of sexual violence.

Research Method

Study Setting and Design

The study was conducted in one medico-legal care center and two Thuthuzela Care Centers (TCCs) in the Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality of the Gauteng province in South Africa. The TCCs are one-stop facilities for comprehensive post-rape health-care services for all rape survivors, including men. The Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality is the country's administrative capital and a cosmopolitan city and is thus a fair demographic representation of the country's population.

An interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) research design was used to determine and describe the types of rape experienced by men. The IPA design was identified as the most suitable approach for this study because of its ability to help researchers to discover unique situations and lived experiences, and how people make sense of these experiences (Eatough & Smith, 2008; Flowers, Larkin, & Smith, 2009; Smith, 2004).

Sampling and Recruitment of Participants

Purposive sampling was used to select men who had experienced rape victimization in Tshwane Metropolitan Municipality. The inclusion criteria encompassed men (including those who identify as men such as transgender men) at the age of 18 years or older, having a fresh rape case not older than a week, and presented with no serious physical injuries. Participants under the age of 18, rape cases older than a week, mentally ill or intellectually challenged, those with serious injuries which warranted immediate admission to the hospital, and those who did not identify as men were excluded from participating in this study.

The recruitment of participants in this study commenced after receiving ethical approval from the ethics

Table 1. IPA Six Steps for Data Analysis.

Step 1	Reading and re-reading
Step 2	Initial noting
Step 3	Developing emergent themes
Step 4	Searching for connections across emergent themes
Step 5	Moving to the next case
Step 6	Looking for patterns across cases

committees of both the university and the health district. A brochure containing information about the study and the researchers' contact information was left in each of the participating health-care facilities. In addition, staff members (on duty) were requested to contact the researchers via an SMS or "WhatsApp" message whenever a potential participant arrived at the health-care facility for care. One of the researchers would then drive to the health-care facility for recruitment immediately after receiving a notification message. On arrival at the health-care facility, the researcher would then determine if the participant had already received care. He would then introduce himself and his intention to recruit the potential participant for research purposes once he was certain that the participant had received comprehensive care. Verbal and written information was given to the potential participants to request their participation in the study. Those who voluntarily consented to participate were asked to sign the informed consent form. Arrangements for the interview session were then made by allowing the potential participant to choose a suitable date and time within the first week after the rape incident. A total of 11 men were purposively sampled to participate in the study. This sample, although small, was determined through data saturation, which refers to a point at which no new information is discovered during analysis and thus data collection becomes redundant (Faulkner & Trotter, 2017; Saunders et al., 2018). This sample size was considered adequate and in line with the IPA in its ability to elicit rich, detailed, and first-person accounts of experiences (Flowers et al., 2009).

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted with three participants first, following the same recruitment process as that of the main study. The objectives of the pilot study were to check whether the planned methods for accessing, recruiting, and interviewing the raped men would be feasible for the main study, and to check whether the research questions were clear and could be easily understood by the participants. Data from the pilot study were included in data of the main study for final data analysis. This is a common practice in qualitative research, as it does not cause data contamination as in the case of quantitative research (Duma, Khanyile, & Daniels, 2009).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection and data analysis were conducted concurrently between August and November 2018. The parallel process allowed the researcher to determine data saturation. A semistructured interview guide (Appendix A) was used to conduct in-depth face-to-face interviews with individual participants at selected venues of their choice. Five participants chose to be interviewed at a researcher's office and six participants chose to be interviewed at the post-rape care centers (clinics). Allowing participants to choose the venue for data collection adheres to IPA principles in the context of sexual violence, where the safety of the participant is paramount (Duma et al., 2009; Eatough & Smith, 2008; Flowers et al., 2009). The interviews were conducted in English and were audio-recorded. The interviews lasted between 60 and 90 min, thus allowing each participant adequate time to share their own experiences of the incident of rape in order for the researcher to determine the context and type of rape experienced. The interviews were transcribed verbatim within 24 h to allow the researcher to be immersed in the data, as part of the data analysis, while the information was still easily recalled. Each participant's transcript was saved in an electronic file, using pseudonyms to ensure anonymity.

The following six steps of IPA data analysis (Table 1), as described by Flowers et al. (2009), were used to analyze data using manual data analysis. Firstly, each transcript was read and then reread for the researcher to enter into the participant's world. Notes of significance and meaning were written on the left-hand margin of each transcript. Descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual comments were made on short pieces of the text in the transcript. Following the initial coding, each transcript was rechecked from the beginning and the right-hand margin was used to document emerging themes. The initial notes were then transformed into concise phrases to capture the quality of what was found in the text. Emerging themes were listed according to their connections and similar themes were clustered together, while others were named as possible super-ordinate concepts. Each individual case was analyzed separately in order to keep the IPA's idiographic commitment before analyzing data for similarities across all cases. Thereafter, data units with similar meanings of all cases were grouped together in categories. The patterns across all data sets were searched to outline themes and sub-themes. These were interpreted as the six types and subtypes of the rape experienced by men.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Biomedical Research Ethics Committee (BE334/18), the Gauteng Provincial Department of Health

Table 2. Participants' Demographic Characteristics.

Participant	Age	Race	Sexual orientation	No. of perpetrators	Gender of perpetrators
James	27	Black	Heterosexual	6	Males
Sidwell	63	Black	Heterosexual	1	Male
Siyathemba	65	Black	Heterosexual	3	Females
Fikile	22	Black	Heterosexual	4	Males
Gregory	34	White	Heterosexual	2	Males
Luyanda	18	Black	Heterosexual	1	Male
Edwin	25	Black	Homosexual (gay)	3	Males
Mulalo	23	Black	Homosexual (gay)	2	Males
Tshilidzi	23	Black	Heterosexual	1	Male
Themba	27	Black	Homosexual (gay)	1	Male
David	19	Black	Heterosexual	2	Males

Research Committee, and the Tshwane District Health Research Committee. To ensure adherence to ethical principles and respect for human dignity, the recommendations from the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2014) were followed throughout the study. The information sheet and verbal explanation of the purpose of the study, risks and benefits, participants' rights, and the recruitment procedure were provided to the participants. Participants were reimbursed with ZAR150 for their time and traveling expenses. This is supported in sexual violence research, as participants usually travel using their own money and sacrifice their time for the study (Sullivan & Cain, 2004). Using pseudonyms instead of participants' actual names ensured confidentiality and anonymity. Participants who presented with signs of emotional distress and needing counseling were referred to psychologists in the respective health-care facilities where they had initially received comprehensive post-rape care. Seven participants were identified as needing psychological support and were referred to psychologists at the end of the interviews.

Measures to Ensure Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba's (1985) model of credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability were applied throughout the study to ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings. An independent inter-coder expert in qualitative data analysis and trauma research was employed to analyze data and identify the codes, which were then compared with those of the researcher. At least 80% similarity in the coding was identified. The codes and identified themes were discussed and agreed upon with a senior researcher, the second author, and the supervisor of this research project, who is an experienced qualitative and sexual violence researcher. Member checking was conducted with eight of the eleven participants, for which the researcher returned to the participants with the findings to

verify and confirm that the researcher's interpretation matched the description of the types of rape they had experienced. All eight participants confirmed the researcher's interpretation of their experience. An audit trail of all steps that were taken in reaching decisions during analysis was kept and can be used for transferability purposes.

Findings

As shown in Table 2, the sample comprised of 11 adult men, whose age ranged between 18 and 65 years. Two participants were widowed, two were single, one was married, five reported they were in heterosexual relationships, and one reported being in a gay relationship. Three participants were identified as homosexuals (gay), and eight were identified as heterosexuals. Ten participants were Black and one participant was White.

Analyzed data revealed six themes and subthemes, which represent the six types and subtypes of rape experienced by men in South Africa as the main findings of the study (Table 3).

Acquaintance Rape

The acquaintance rape theme is when the perpetrator of rape is someone known to the participant. This may include trusted friends and trusted people, as depicted in the following extracts:

My friend whispered in my ear that I shouldn't worry. . . He started touching me all over my body and took off all my clothes and I couldn't stop him because I was powerless. . . so I have no doubts that he organized all of this so that I get raped. . . He was behind all of this. . . Yeah, he facilitated all of this. . . Eeh, to rape me. (James, aged 27)

I was raped by my fellow mates whom I trusted so much, but one night they decided to rape me. I spent most of my time with these guys and I trusted them so much as friends,

Table 3. Emergent Themes and Subthemes.

Themes	Subthemes
1. Acquaintance rape	Familial rape
2. Stranger rape	
3. Gang rape	Corrective rape Drug-facilitated rape Pack-hunting rape Women retributive rape (or women vengeance) for violence experienced from men
4. Homophobic rape	
5. Prison rape	Transactional rape Gang-initiation rape
6. Armed rape	

not knowing that they would rape me one day. (Gregory, aged 34)

I used to smoke weed with that guy, so he is my old friend. I know him because we used to be in the same gang, but we lost contact, so it was nice seeing him again. I was very happy to see my old friend. It never clicked in my mind that he would rape me. (Tshilidzi, aged 23)

I was raped by the guys that were my close friends and whom I thought were friendly when they gave me tea and bread because they knew I was very hungry from the court. (David, aged 19)

Another participant reported that he was raped by someone well known to him as a neighbor, as depicted in the following extract:

Yes, I was raped by someone I know. . . Eeh, it's a guy from my neighborhood. . . He stays in the same street as mine, not far from my house. . . He came into my house at night and my dogs did not bark at him because they know him. He knocked and I asked who it was. He replied by mentioning his name. That was fine because I know him. I opened the door for him because I usually give him some cigarettes or sometimes, we smoke together. (Sidwell, aged 63)

The acquaintance rape theme had one subtheme, familial rape, where the perpetrator is a family member of the rape victim.

Familial rape. This subtheme or subtype of acquaintance rape is when the perpetrator of rape was reported to be a family member known, related to, and respected by the participant. This is depicted in the following extract:

The person who raped me was my uncle. . . He came to our house looking for my brother. Unfortunately, my brother was not there, so he asked me to accompany him to his

place. We stayed at his flat just for a short time and I told him to take me back home. He said he did not have petrol, instead, he promised that he would tell my grandmother that I slept at his house. . . I was really not prepared to sleep there, but he insisted that I sleepover at his place. . . Uhhh, because I trusted him as my uncle I agreed. . . Yeah, he said I should take off my pants and when we were asleep he started touching me in my private parts and he smeared something like Vaseline in my anus and he raped me. . . He raped me (*crying*). (Luyanda, aged 18)

Stranger Rape

The theme of stranger rape experienced by men is rape perpetrated by strangers, as evidenced by the following quote:

As I was walking down the street, four strange guys came and took me under the bridge, where they all raped me. Unfortunately, I don't know them, but I can still recall their faces. (Fikile, aged 22)

I met a stranger in the clinic. He befriended me, by just asking me a few questions. We chatted and later he invited me for dagga in his flat. I agreed and went with him. We met two other guys, who were his friend[s], in his flat, but I did not know them. I was just interested in smoking dagga. . . Unfortunately, these three strangers ended up raping me. (Edwin, aged 25)

I was first approached by a guy on the street who said he was selling belts and perfumes. Two other guys came to us and then forced me into the car. The guy who was selling the belts and perfumes took the front seat with the driver and I could see that they all knew each other. They drove out of town with me, and they forced me to suck their penises one after the other. (Mulalo, aged 23)

Gang Rape

The gang rape type of rape is when two or more people were reported to have perpetrated a rape. The number of perpetrators ranged between two and six. Surprisingly, data revealed that both men and women are perpetrators of this type of rape against men, as shown in the following extracts:

They took turns, each after the other on top of me (*crying*). . . Eeeeh, after some time, one decided to make me lie flat by my stomach and they forcefully penetrated me, taking turns on top of me. Eeeh, one guy asked if they have all fucked me, so this means the six of them raped me. (James, aged 27)

I was raped by three women in my house in broad daylight. Those women attacked me very badly and they just wanted sex. They were touching me all over. One got on top and she

was busy on top of me. . . while she was doing that, the other one started putting fingers in my anus and I asked her to stop. . . then they all got angry and then they hit me. . . they took some brooms to beat me and one pushed the broomstick into my anus. (Siyathemba, aged 65)

They were four and they all took turns to rape me. . . they took turns. . . this one finished, the other one went in. I didn't even see whether they were wearing condoms or not because the first guy was done, and the second one got inside me, then I just decided to close my eyes and let them do whatever that they were doing. . . They turned me up and made me lie flat on my back and they pulled up my legs and they went in. . . one by one, penetrating me. All four of them raped me. They took turns. . . while one was busy fucking me, and others were masturbating. Then one would penetrate me and after coming (*ejaculating*) another one gets in just like that until they all finished. . . my anus was very hot. (Fikile, aged 22)

They were three. . . they forced me to the car. . . they told me to sit in the back seat and one was sitting at the front with the driver and the other one came next to me and he forced me to suck his penis. . . I sucked him until he ejaculated in my mouth, and the others wanted the same thing, so they took turns forcing me to suck their dicks. (Mulalo, aged 23)

The theme of gang rape had four subthemes, or subtypes, of rape experienced by men: corrective rape, drug-facilitated gang rape, pack-hunting rape, and women retributive rape (or women vengeance) for violence experienced from men.

Corrective rape. This subtheme or subtype is when the rape incident is perpetrated by a gang with the intention to correct the victim's behavior, which may include dressing and grooming like a girl or walking at night, as supported by the following quotes:

I asked them why they were doing did this to me. The answer I got was, "We get irritated by the way you dress. You dress like a woman." I think that is because I wear expensive clothes and I'm always a neat-freak like a girl, so they wanted to correct me for being a neat-freak and for looking like a girl (*crying*). . . That's the only thing they said, so basically, they were correcting me for looking like a girl and for being too clean. . . I just do not understand that six guys can just rape me to correct me for looking like a girl because I was born like this and my cleanliness is the way I was groomed by my mother. (James, aged 27)

Another participant was gang-raped by four men as a way to teach him a lesson for walking at night, as described in the following quote:

I heard one of them saying, "This chap likes to walk alone at night, let's teach him a lesson to show him what we do to loners at night so that he stops walking alone at night." The

others laughed and they were like, yeah, he needs be taught a big lesson. . . (*crying*). At that time I did not know they were referring to raping me. . . (*crying*). Yeah, the four of them raped me. . . The last guy said: "You should stop walking alone at night." Then they all dressed and then after that, they were all like, "Hey, sonny stop walking alone at night." (Fikile, aged 22)

Drug-facilitated gang rape. This subtheme of rape is when alcohol and drugs are used to intoxicate the victims with the intention to rape them, as supported by the following quotes:

Okay, the only thing I remember well is that immediately after drinking two glasses of beer, I felt very weak and I could feel someone putting me on top of the bed and the only thing I could feel were hands all over my body and someone penetrating my anus. I tried to jump, but I couldn't because one guy was on top of me busy fucking me, while others were holding my hands. . . they did that one by one. (James, aged 27)

I was chilling with two guys in my cell and they gave me a cup of tea and bread. . . Eeeh, later on after drinking their tea, I felt drowsy and I felt high as if I drank alcohol or had taken some drugs. My head was spinning, so I quickly went to bed. . . Yeah, I think they must have put something in that tea because after I drank it, about 10 or 15 minutes later I started to become very drowsy and felt like I was losing my mind. . . Eeeh, after a few minutes some guys came and they forcefully took my pants off, including my underwear. One was like, you go first, I will follow you. . . I could feel them [smearing] applying something in my ass (*anus*) and within a few minutes he was inside me. . . I could feel his penis going deep through my ass. (Gregory, aged 34)

Another participant reported that he was gang-raped after smoking weed and drinking alcohol, after which he passed out. The participant had this to say:

We went inside and we found two other guys. . . We made a joint and smoked weed. After that, I do not know what happened! Joh! Joh! Joh! I was nauseated and they gave me two sweets. They made me smoke weed and I don't know what they mixed it with. And they gave me something to drink and I drank it. I don't know what it was, whether it was vodka or something else. Since I drank that stuff. . . Ay! Ay! Ay! Like I lost my mind immediately after drinking that stuff. It tasted like vodka, but I'm quite sure it had some drugs in it because I just went crazy after drinking it. I only felt pain in my ass and the guy was busy fucking me and others were just holding me down. . . they took turns raping me. (Edwin, aged 25)

Pack-hunting rape. This subtheme of rape is when the perpetrators of rape were reported to have been working or walking in flocks in search of victims to rape. The name of this subtheme/subtype is informed by the participants'

utterances. For example, a participant reported that he was raped by a group of men who he met while walking in the street. He reported that the perpetrators behaved like hunters because immediately after seeing him, they came straight up to him and instructed him to go under a bridge, where they raped him. This is evidenced by the following quote:

I mean, you're walking on the street, then you get four guys who just decide to fuck you out of nowhere. I mean, four guys who just decide to rape you and they literally destroy you. Those guys were like hunters who were just looking for sex with a guy and, unfortunately, I became their prey on that night, because when they saw me, they literally changed their way (*direction*) and came straight to me. They all attacked me and took me under the bridge, where they all raped me. (Fikile, aged 22)

Another participant reported that he was raped by a group of women who entered his home pretending to be looking for a job. However, they were actually "hunting for someone" with whom they could fulfill their sexual desires. This is evidenced by the following quote:

One woman knocked on the door to my house and she said she was looking for a cleaning job. . . Eeeh, she offered to help clean my house and laundry and I told her that I don't have money, I only have one hundred rands. She said it's fine she can help me. I was not comfortable, because I did not know her. A few minutes later, she was joined by two other women, who happened to be her friends, and when I asked they all said they were looking for jobs and they usually work together if one of them gets something. This turned out to be a bad experience because these women sexually assaulted me. I think this was planned because they pretended to be looking for jobs, whereas they were actually hunting for someone they could actually use to fulfill their sexual desires with. . . Unfortunately, my trust and mercy made me their prey. (Siyathemba, aged 65)

Women retributive rape (or women vengeance) for violence experienced from men. This subtype is when the rape incident is reported to be perpetrated by a gang of women with the intention of avenging themselves for past violence experienced at the hands of men, as evidenced by the following quote:

They were making a lot of noise and one woman said she wants to infect me with her illness. They overpowered me and they told me that men like taking advantage of women, so they will make sure that I pay for all the problems they have experienced with other men. They raped me. . . They forced me to lick their breasts while others were putting fingers in my anus. . . and I couldn't do anything. Honestly, in my life, I never saw that side of women. . . Eeeh, I became so unfortunate that they had to seek revenge and take all the anger they have with other men out on me. (Siyathemba, aged 65)

Homophobic Rape

The theme of homophobic rape emerged from data in which the rape incident occurs as a result of perpetrator hatred towards homosexuals. This is sometimes evidenced by hate speech and insults used against gays, as depicted in the following quotes:

The guy that I met at the clinic told me that the South African government must reconsider banishing homosexuals because he does not believe in same-sex relationships. He told me that he gets disgusted when he sees a gay guy. I told him that I'm also gay. He just laughed at me and said I'm lying. He later invited me to his place for weed and I agreed. When we arrived at his place, his friends were there. They started making jokes about gays. While we were still smoking, one guy asked me if I had a girlfriend or not. I just said no, I'm gay. . . Then one guy slapped me on the face, one strangled my neck and they all pushed me to the bed. . . eeh, they took my pants off and they all fucked me one by one. (Edwin, aged 25)

Yes, this guy said he is raping me because I'm gay and that he just wanted to give me what I want because he sees that I love boys. So he thought maybe I will change and be a straight man after he raped me. I don't know, because no matter how many times a person rapes and tries to change me, I won't change. Unfortunately, I was born gay, so what he did to me was very wrong because I'm gay and no one can change that. . . the way he embarrassed me, you could tell that he hates gays. . . He started throwing insults and hate words after he raped me. All I could see from this guy was hatred for homosexuals. . . he just wanted to shame me. (Themba, aged 27)

Another participant reported that perpetrators who raped him were full of hatred for gays. They indicated to him that gay people "do not deserve to live," as they felt "they are a waste." The perpetrators forced the participant to perform oral sex "to get the experience of being 'sucked by another guy.'" They indicated that gays should be "tortured," as demonstrated in the following extract:

They were full of hatred. They even asked me why I'm gay. When I told them that I do not know, they then said that gays do not deserve to live because they are a waste. They forced me to suck their dicks while they laughed and said that they just wanted to get experience of being sucked by another guy. They each forced me to suck their dicks and they all came (*ejaculated*) in my mouth while repeating that gays should be tortured so that they stop having relationships with other men. (Mulalo, aged 23)

Prison Rape

The prison rape theme emerged from data as rape that was reported as perpetrated by fellow inmates in the prison. Participants reported being pounced upon when in

their beds and blankets, or bedsheets being used by perpetrators to cover a victim's face to prevent them from making noise or calling for help and to avoid being identified, as depicted in the following quotes:

I was lying on my prison bed and I just felt a blanket covering my head and someone pulled off my pants and raped me. . . Unfortunately, I couldn't do anything or try to make a noise because my head was covered with that blanket as if someone was strangling me. So when one guy was still fucking my ass, I heard the other one asking him to finish quickly so that he could also get his turn. So they both raped me and left me there covered with the blanket. Eeeh, so when I pulled the blanket off, there was no one, everyone was just in their beds, so I could not ask who did that because we were many in one cell of the prison. We were about a group of twelve, so I couldn't tell who raped me. (Gregory, aged 34)

As I was about to sleep on my prison bed at night around 10 pm, this huge and muscular guy came to me, he covered my face with the bed-sheet. . . he covered my mouth with his hands and he took off my pants and penetrated my ass. The second guy also came to rape me, I tried to reach for the bars so that I could alert the prison warders to come to rescue me, but failed because they strangled me and blocked my mouth to avoid screaming. (David, aged 19)

This theme further yielded two subthemes/subtypes of rape experienced by men in prison: transactional rape and gang initiation rape.

Transactional rape. This type is rape perpetrated in exchange for favors such as food received by the victims in good faith, and their not knowing the implications of receiving favors. This is depicted in the following quotes:

We were chilling in the evening and these guys I share the cell with offered me tea and bread. . . I accepted the offer and I thought they were just being generous. . . Later on, they raped me. One guy later told me that if someone offers you something in prison, they also expect you to give them sex. This was all new to me because none of them explained this to me. I was still new in prison and I did not know that it's their practice. . . so they paid themselves by raping me. (Gregory, aged 34)

I was from the court and unfortunately when I went back to the cell, food was finished and the captain told me that I will only be able to get food in the morning, the following day. Well, I did not know this because this was the first time that I got arrested. Then some guys offered me bread and I ate because I was hungry. I didn't know their real intentions then. So I heard one of the guys in the cell saying to me, "They know what they will take from you," but he did not tell me more. Later those guys came to my bed. One said something like, "it's time for you to return the favor, Bro." I

asked what he was referring to and they started pulling off my trousers. . . I tried to fight, but they strangled my neck and one closed my mouth with his hands and they both raped me, one after the other. (David, aged 19)

Gang initiation rape. Gang initiation rape as reported by participants was when perpetrators rape with the intention of initiating victims into a particular gang in the prison, as evidenced by the following quotes:

While I was waiting for my court date, they initially recruited me to their gang group, and I refused because I already had my own group. So, they kept quiet for weeks until they attacked me after I ate their food. This came while they were busy raping me that one of them told me that they wanted to make sure that I join their group by raping me. . . (*crying*).. another one was like I have to join the group so that I can also rape other people as well in prison. I just did not think these guys would do something like this to me because I trusted them so much. (David, aged 19)

Another participant reported that he was raped by a guy who wanted to initiate him for gang 26 as follows:

It was at night, right after dinner. . . he asked me about a certain gang number and I didn't know the answer. He replied, "I need to initiate you to be part of my gang." I then asked, "What is initiation?" He said, "You need to take off your underwear and put it under the pillow," and he forced me to take it off. . . He insisted that I need to change my tattoo from gang 28 to gang 26 where he belongs and said that he must first have sex with me before other gang members can have sex with me. . . He was busy teaching me the gang language for 26 and he said for me to get full recognition in his gang, he must sleep with me first so that I cannot go back to gang 28. I refused and he forced me. . . he raped me and he said he hates gang 28 members and he told me that he will never stop fighting gang 28 people. (Tshilidzi, aged 23)

In this case, the gang rape was used as a weapon to degrade and initiate the participant from one prison gang (gang 28) to another (gang 26).

Armed Rape

Armed rape is when weapons such as knives, hammers, and daggers are used by perpetrators to threaten and force their victims to succumb to rape, as depicted in the following extracts:

Before the guy raped me, he took a big knife and told me that if I make noise he will make sure that I follow my wife to the grave. I could not make any noise or try to shout because he was threatening to stab me with a big knife. . . Eeh, I allowed him to rape me until he finished. . . he took turns raping me

the whole night and he left during the early hours of the following day. (Sidwell, aged 63)

I told him that I did not like what he was doing to me and it was best I left, that is when he took out the hammer and told me to take off my clothes. I did as instructed. He then smeared something like a gel on his penis and on my anus. Then he penetrated me in the anus with his penis. I cried but I could not make noise because I was afraid of the hammer that he had in his hands. . . Eeeh, he kept saying that if I refuse him or try to make noise, he will kill me with the hammer. (Luyanda, aged 18)

Analyzed data further identified that these weapons were not only used to threaten but were also used to physically assault those victims who refused to follow the perpetrators' instructions, as evidenced by the following quotes:

He took out the knife and pulled down his pants. He then asked me to give him a blowjob (to suck his penis). I refused. He then stabbed me with the knife here (*pointing to the wound on his face*). I was then forced to do as he asked. I ended up doing it. (Mulalo, aged 23)

I refused to take off my pants. He then took out a dagger from his pillow and told me that he will kill me if I do not do what he was telling me to do. I then took off my underwear as instructed. He told me to sleep on my tummy so that he can have sex with me. I did, and then he penetrated me. . . I could not scream because he placed a dagger on my throat as he penetrated me and he threatened to kill me if I made any noise. (Tshilidzi, aged 23)

Discussion

The objective of this study was to determine and describe the types of rape experienced by men by focusing on the contexts in which these rape incidents occur and on the characteristics of those who perpetrate rape against men in South Africa. The findings of the study revealed different types of rape experiences by men in South Africa, including acquaintance rape, stranger rape, gang rape, homophobic rape, prison rape, and armed rape. Acquaintance rape, which refers to a type of rape committed by someone known to the victim (Gravelin, Biernat, & Bucher, 2018), emerged from data and it yielded familial rape (as a subtype), which is usually known as incest rape, referring to a type of rape perpetrated by a family member or close relative of the victim (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN), n.d.-a). Stranger rape also emerged as another type of rape experienced by men in South Africa, where rape is committed by a person or people unknown to the victim (Patscheck & Shears, 2008). Based on the findings, gang rape, which is committed by two or more people (Saranya, Vijaya, & Priyadharshini, 2017), also emerged. Under gang rape, four subtypes emerged,

namely: corrective gang rape, drug-facilitated rape, pack-hunting rape, and women retributive rape. The corrective rape in the context of this study was committed to correct the behavior of the victim such as walking at night and for personal grooming of the victim. Drug-facilitated gang rape emerged as another subtype of gang rape experienced by men. This type of rape occurs when the perpetrator intentionally uses alcohol or drugs to incapacitate or compromise the victim's ability to consent to sexual activity (Kilpatrick, Resnick, Ruggiero, Conoscenti, & McCauley, 2007; RAINN, n.d.-b). The findings identified pack-hunting rape as another subtype of gang rape experienced by men where perpetrators were reported to be in flocks or in packs searching for victims/preys they could attack at any given time. The term "pack hunting" is usually used to refer to predatory animals that hunt their prey by working together as members of the same species (Bshary, Hohner, Ait-el-Djoudi, & Fricke, 2006). In the context of this study, rapists who were either males or females worked together to hunt the victims. Another subtype of gang rape that emerged from the data of this study was "women retributive rape" where women attacked one man to avenge for the violence they experienced from men. In this study, homophobic rape was identified as another type of rape experienced by men. Homophobic rape is a form of hate crime where people are raped because they are or perceived as part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and Asexual (LGBTQIA) community (Chabalala & Roelofse, 2015; Thomas, 2013). Furthermore, prison rape, which refers to the rape of inmates or prisoners by other prisoners or prison officials (Pinkerton, Galletly, & Seal, 2007), emerged as another type of rape experienced by men in South Africa. The prison rape identified in this study was committed by prisoners to other prisoners in the prison and it yielded two subtypes, namely: transactional rape and gang-initiation rape. In the context of this study, transactional rape refers to a type of rape where the offender offers favors to a victim with intention to rape him afterwards. Lastly, armed rape emerged as another type of rape experienced by men where the offender used weapons to force the victim to succumb to rape.

Although men are perpetrators of the majority of rape incidents, for men, women, and children, the findings revealed an incident in which three women were identified as the perpetrators who raped an elderly man in his house. Previous research from the United States has identified that although not much is reported, a fair proportion of rape assaults, sexual coercion, and unwanted sexual contact is perpetrated by women against men (Stemple, Flores, & Meyer, 2017; Stemple & Meyer, 2014). Similar to the findings of this study, some studies have reported that female-perpetrated sexual victimization covers a wide spectrum of sexual abuse, such as forced anal,

vaginal, and oral penetration with a finger or object, which can cause severe damage to the victim (Johansson-Love & Fremouw, 2006; Pflugradt & Allen, 2012; Stemple et al., 2017). The findings of this study revealed that broomsticks and fingers were used for anal penetration of the victim, with an additional threat of infecting a victim with a disease suffered by a perpetrator. This is not only physically traumatizing but could be equated to emotional torture of the rape victim.

The intention is not to underplay the role of men as major perpetrators of rape and other forms of sexual violence against women and children. On the contrary, the findings of this study highlight the negative impact of the chronic violence experienced by women at the hands of men. This is demonstrated by the category of "women retributive rape (or women vengeance) for violence experienced from men" as the subtheme of gang rape. A participant reported that the female perpetrators had said that they were raping him because of "men like taking advantage of women," that they will "make sure that I pay for all the problems they have experienced with other men." This shows their anger against men and their need to avenge themselves. Similar to the findings of this study, literature asserts that female-perpetrated sexual violence is intertwined with the women's previous experiences of sexual victimization (Christopher, Lutz-Zois, & Reinhardt, 2007; Sandler & Freeman, 2009; Vandiver & Teske Jr, 2006). The government's failure to prevent violence against women and the increase in reported cases of serious violence against women in South Africa could be responsible for the anger of the women and their revenge against the participant in this study. More research on women as perpetrators of sexual violence on men may be needed in order to determine whether this case in the study is an isolated one or whether women perpetrating sexual violence is on the rise, along with the *#metoo* or *#menaretrash* campaigns that are driven by women's anger towards the ongoing perpetration of violence against them in this country.

The homophobic rape of lesbian women has been reported in South Africa (Judge & Nel, 2008). The findings of this study reveal similar types of homophobic rape against men identified as gay. Thus, South Africa is seen to be a homophobic country despite its advanced constitution, which respects the human rights of all people. Although homophobic sexual violence is considered as a hate crime against members of the LGBTQIA community in this country, many researchers have singled out only lesbian women as the victims of such crimes. This, on its own, perpetuates homophobic sexual violence and the silencing of men as victims of rape. According to Breen and Nel (2011), the current legislation and policy frameworks in South Africa are insufficient to address hate crimes and homophobic violence in the country. This

then calls for the development of appropriate and all-inclusive legal frameworks to combat homophobic violence against both women and men in South Africa. Homophobic rape against homosexual men should be part of political agenda in this country and elsewhere that addresses the violation of all human rights.

Although prison rape is widely reported globally, the findings reveal the context of transactional and gang initiation rape in South African prisons. Unlike transactional sex in prison, which is reported by Booyens and Bezuidenhout (2014) as a pre-agreement deal in which both the perpetrator and the victim agree to a form of consensual sex in exchange for commodities, the findings revealed that in transactional rape there is no pre-agreement or even an awareness that receiving favors from fellow inmates is consenting to rape. In addition, the two participants who reported transactional rape were still new to prison, and it was, in fact, their first imprisonment, which could explain their ignorance about transactional sex in prisons. Gang initiation rape is a common subtype of rape experienced by men in South African prisons (Booyens & Bezuidenhout, 2014; Gear, 2007; Gear & Ngubeni, 2002). The findings of this study reveal that gang rape initiation is also used as a weapon to intentionally degrade a member from a superior gang (no 28) to a less superior gang (no 26) and to show deep-seated hatred toward the victim's previous gang group. Similar to other studies, the findings of this study reveal that anal penetration is rife and probably the most common type of rape in men, both outside and inside prison (Booyens & Bezuidenhout, 2014; Gear & Ngubeni, 2002). This exposes male victims of rape to Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) infection due to injuries in the anal mucosa. In a country like South Africa, where HIV is highly prevalent outside and inside prisons (Jürgens, Nowak, & Day, 2011), there is an increased need to strengthen the provision of timely postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) to all male rape victims. This requires initiating PEP within 72 h of the rape for up to 28 days (Cresswell et al., 2016; Tan et al., 2017). The time between the initiation of PEP and its continued administration for 28 days is critical (Moorhouse et al., 2015). This is of concern for victims who are raped in prisons, especially over weekends when they may not be able to access the PEP on time (Keehn & Nevin, 2018). This calls for the provision of at least the first dose within the prison health facilities, or, alternatively, ensuring that prisoners are transported to the nearest health-care facility for PEP within the 72 h. It may also mean that those responsible for the health and well-being of prisoners are prudent in supporting and ensuring that prisoners on PEP take their medication as prescribed and are returned to health-care services for follow-up care, monitoring of any side effects and for health education. This is the rightful action, as a measure to prevent

HIV infection and its spread, not only in prisons, but also in the community. Infection with HIV in prison implies a greater possibility of spreading the virus to partners and others once he is released. Strategies to prevent transactional rape and the possibility of HIV transmission in prisons should be developed, in particular, targeting those awaiting trial and the newly imprisoned. These strategies should include awareness campaigns about the pitfalls of accepting favors from other prisoners.

Furthermore, the findings show some similarities between certain types of rape experienced by both men and women, thus indicating that there are important lessons that can be learned from the primary sexual violence prevention interventions for women such as the provision of self-defense training. For instance, the theme “armed rape” in this study revealed that weapons are used to threaten and force victims to succumb to being raped. Similar perpetrator use of harmful objects and weapons to elicit compliance from female victims has previously been reported (Quarshie et al., 2018; Van der Watt & Van Graan, 2013). The development and promotion of self-defense training have been identified as not only an effective sexual violence prevention strategy for women, but it has been reported to provide women with both physical and psychological preparation when confronted with rape (Hollander, 2009; Mendez Ruiz, 2016). It would benefit men too, especially those who are known to be at risk for sexual violence such as young, elderly, and gay men, to undergo self-defense training to physically and psychologically prepare them for any instance when they may be confronted with rape.

The variety of the types of rape incidents experienced by men in South Africa shows that rape victimization of men in the country, and in other parts of the world, is a reality that warrants urgent attention and calls for more research to expose this pandemic. This also calls for activism to break the silence around this social and public health issue, in South Africa and globally. In addition, health-care practitioners, including sexual assault forensic nurses, should receive appropriate training to ensure quality care and support for men who seek post-rape care within the current post-rape health-care services for all rape survivors.

Strengths and Limitations

This study has several strengths that many studies on rape victimization of men lack. Firstly, by using a qualitative approach, the researchers ensured that men’s voices were used to highlight the plight of sexual violence and the types of rape experienced by men in South Africa. The health-care facilities were used to recruit male rape victims as research participants. This was not only for the sake of

convenience, but it also demonstrated that raped men do access health-care facilities. Thus, highlighting the specific need for, and the importance of, the development of health-care guidelines for post-rape care and support for men as victims of rape. As a result of their current lack in this country, health-care practitioners are often at a loss for how best to care for and support male rape victims.

Although the small sample size may be considered as a weakness, the researchers take courage in that the sample size was determined through data saturation and was within the accepted principles of IPA. The sample, though small and thus limiting the generalizability of the findings, had a representation of male rape victims as a range of participants in terms of age, marital status, sexual orientation, and race. This confirms that male rape can affect all, irrespective of these sociodemographic factors.

Appendix A: Interview Guide

Demographic information

Age:

Sexual orientation:

Race:

Date of the rape incident:

Interview questions:

1. Please tell me how you were raped or how did the rape happen?
2. Can you please share with me the incident that occurred before you were raped?
3. Can you please tell me the number of people who raped you?
4. Please tell me about your relationship with the perpetrator(s)
 - ✓ Did you know the perpetrator?
 - ✓ How were you related?
5. Is there anything specific the perpetrator(s) said to you before/ while/ after raping you?

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Ethical Approval

Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of KwaZulu-Natal Biomedical Research Ethics Committee (BE334/18), the Gauteng Provincial Department of Health Research Committee, and the Tshwane District Health Research Committee.

ORCID iD

Siyabulela Eric Mgozoli  <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1271-0021>

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