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Assessing the Treatment Needs of Sexually Aggressive Male Students at University in the UK

Samuel T. Hales
Theresa A. Gannon
University of Kent

University-based sexual violence is a devastating international public health issue. In the UK alone, figures show that over two-thirds of female students experience sexual violence during their studies (The Student Room, 2018). However, despite a secure understanding of its prevalence, little remains known about the profile of sexual violence perpetrators in higher education (HE) settings. It is believed that the current study is the first to assess the treatment needs of sexually aggressive male students – the key perpetrators of university-based sexual violence offences (NUS, 2010) – in the UK. Two hundred and fifty-nine male students recruited from one UK university completed a battery of psychometric measures relevant to sexual offending, including an index of past sexual violence perpetration. In total, 33 participants self-reported 106 sexually violent acts, including 25 incidents of rape or attempted rape. Exploratory analyses using logistic regression modelling showed that the key factors contributing to sexual aggression were a heightened acceptance of rape myths and the possession of aberrant sexual fantasies. This research contributes to an emerging body of psychological literature assessing university-based sexual violence in the UK. It is hoped that the findings can provide impetus for continued empirical investigations and, in turn, provoke positive sector-level change.