

RAPE OFFENDER PROFILING: THE CHARACTERISTICS OF RAPE OFFENDERS IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Original scientific paper

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Abstract

This article examines the issue of rape offender profiling by describing the characteristics of rape offenders and several typologies of rapists. It provides a brief overview of the research results on rape offenders in Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to understand some of their general characteristics. The data for this research were drawn from several courts in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where 77 rape records were evaluated. The overall findings suggest that the identified characteristics of rape offenders in Bosnia and Herzegovina are both similar and different than ones reported in other rape offender studies. It concludes, however, that most rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina are men in their early adulthood, unmarried and unemployed and that the majority of them are normal in aspects other than their offenses. Although the sample is not necessarily representative, it is illustrative and indicative.

Key words

rape offenders, profiling, characteristics , typologies, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Introduction

The perpetrators of rape come to the special attention of criminal prosecution authorities and scientists of various profiles because of the complex nature of the crime. Although the causes of rape still remain speculative, available typologies of rape offenders that distinguish different types of rapists based on offender and crime characteristics cannot be ignored (Adler, Mueller, and Laufer, 2007; Beauregard, 2010). Despite academic disagreements about the determination of a single typology of rape offenders, the typology of this population itself is of great significance for profiling unknown perpetrators of rape within criminal investigations. Some authors warn that typologies are not mutually exclusive, since sex offenders do not always specialize in a particular type of behavior (Robertiello and Terry, 2007). Nonetheless, profiling rape offenders contributes to the creation of a systematic process for the investigation of rape, by assisting criminal investigators in "reducing or narrowing the range of potential suspects through identification of age, and social and demographic characteristics" (Osterburg and Ward, 2007, p.

468). Therefore, one of the fundamental aspirations that arise is seeking answers about the specific characteristics that are common to all, most, many, or some perpetrators of rape. Despite the existence of numerous typologies of rape perpetrators, however, there is no exclusive profile of rapists and other sexual assailants.

From a criminal justice point of view, a rapist is a person who has been charged with and convicted of the crime of rape, as that crime is proscribed by the criminal law. Rapists come from different age groups, as well as ethnic and socioeconomic groups, and many of them have no prior criminal history or lifestyle. Some authors argue that rapists are psychotic, sociopathic, sadistic persons who show hostile feelings toward their victims and have histories of violence (Rada, 1978; Gebhard, 1965; cit. in Adler, Mueller, and Laufer, 1995). Contrary to this, Singer (1994) states that rapists can be normal, discreet, heterosexual persons, whose overall behavior cannot be classified in any psychologically unique way. According to Singer, rapists intend primarily to exercise power and superiority over not only their victims, but also over other persons as well. They tend to express their hate and contempt towards the victim, especially in situations involving male offenders and female victims. Nevertheless, in everyday life, rapists can seem timid, insecure, and not prone to violence (Singer, 1994).

Within the context of rape offenders, it is also interesting to outline the phenomenon of cognitive distortions within the social-cognitive theories, as it describes certain attitudes and beliefs that encourage a person to commit rape (Hollin, Hatcher, and Palmer, 2010). Cognitive distortions are defined as products of causal theories, which also consider individuals' beliefs about themselves and other people (Ward, 2000; cit. in Hollin et al., 2010, p. 510). Ward (2000) refers to these distortions as "implicit theories," since they are "normally outside conscious awareness" (p. 510), and therefore suggests five implicit justifications employed by rapists to rationalize their behavior: (1) the unknowability of women; (2) that women are sex objects; (3) the inability to control the male sex drive; (4) entitlement; and (5) the dangerousness of the world. Although some empirical support has been provided regarding the presence of these implicit justifications among rapists, there are no detailed explanations for how sexual offense behavior derives from these implicit justifications (Hollin et. al., 2010, p. 511).

Because of the significance of profiling rape offenders within criminal investigations and the consequent importance of understanding qualities that are characteristic of rape offenders, this article examines the main characteristics of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The collected research data are used to determine if the identified characteristics of rape offenders in Bosnia and Herzegovina are consistent with the reported characteristics of these offenders in the rest of the research literature.

Profiling rape offenders

In general, the profiling process uses available information about a crime and crime scene to construct a profile of the unknown perpetrator of a crime, and the profile is composed of characteristics and traits of an unidentified person (Muller, 2000; Hazelwood and Burgess, 1995). As some authors (Alison, Goodwill, Almond, Heuvel, and Winter, 2010) have pointed out, "in order to successfully prioritize possible suspects, it is necessary to predict offender characteristics that are of actual value to police investigations such as prior criminal antecedents or offender age" (p. 121). It is important to stress, however, that profiling does not provide the specific identity of the offender; instead, it can only indicate a type of person who might have committed a certain crime (Douglas, Ressler, Burgess, and Hartman, 1986, p. 402). Although the contents of different offender profiles may be different, according to Ault and Reese (1980), some of the components that could be included in offender profiling are the perpetrator's ethnicity, gender, age, marital status, employment, sexual maturity, reaction to questioning by police, likelihood of reoffense, previous convictions, and the possibility that the perpetrator has committed a similar previous offence (cit. in Newburn, Williamson, and Wright, 2007, p. 493).

The theory underlying the profiling of rape offenders is that a perpetrator displays unique characteristics in personality, crime scene behavior, and modus operandi (Osterburg and Ward, 2007, p. 467). This process allows a systematic investigation of rape and "reduces the possibility of investigative error" (Osterburg and Ward, 2007, p. 468). According to Hazelwood (1983, cit. in Hazelwood and Burgess, 1995), the preparation for profiling a rape offender involves three basic steps:

- (1) to determine from the victim what behavior was exhibited by the rapist,
- (2) to analyze that behavior in an attempt to determine the motivation underlying the assault, and
- (3) to set forth the characteristics and traits of the person who would commit the crime in a manner that explains the motivational factor indicated by that behavior (p. 123).

In order to create a profile of a rapist, profilers use existing typologies and classifications of rapists that attempt to classify the personalities of rapists. Rape offenders, however, do not always fit specific perpetrator profiles, which can be used to dispute the reliability of empirical profiling. Thus, a perpetrator can exhibit elements of multiple profiles at once or may not have the characteristics of any particular profile. In other words, each perpetrator typology is limited by the diversity of manifestations of individual personalities, which defies rigid classification into types. Aware of the impossibility of categorizing human behavior into specific classes, Hazelwood and Burgess (1995, p. 155) still argue in favor of analyzing offender behavior in terms of describing types of individuals who have committed rape. There have been numerous attempts to construct a typology of rape offenders that

enables classification by their personal behavior and characteristics, victims, reasons for violent behavior, and risk of recidivism. These attempts have resulted in the development of various typologies that aim to assist and enhance criminal investigations and prosecutions of rapists, as well as to help with the treatment of such offenders.

Characteristics and typology of rapists

A literature review on the subject of the characteristics and typology of rapists suggests that great attention has been given to analyzing and determining the characteristics and traits of rapists in order to improve criminal investigations of rapes. From a general point of view, approaches directed towards profiling rapists fall into three categories: biological, psychological and sociocultural. Although new empirical standards have been introduced in terms of the conceptualization and testing of offender typologies, the historical roots of such typologies date back to the work of Cesare Lombroso and Enrico Ferri in the 19th century (Byrne and Roberts, 2007). The biological approach assumes that numerous biological factors, such as chromosome mutations and high levels of the male hormone testosterone, motivate people to commit rape (Ledray, 1994). In contrast to this approach, psychological explanations stress that rapists are maladjusted in some way, usually suffering from mental illnesses or personality disorders (Adler et al., 2007). The sociocultural approach emphasizes the role of sociocultural norms in explaining the intentions and motivations of rapists.

Most existing sex offender typologies use motivational, behavioral and cognitive factors to categorize rapists. In 1977, Groth, Burgess and Holmstrom published the results of their study, in which they identified features common to rapists (motivational characteristics and behavioural patterns), which later served as a foundation for Groth's typology of rapists (Crowley, 1999). Groth's (1979) classification of individuals who rape women has had a great deal of influence on the theoretical and empirical approaches to sex offender profiling. Based on his belief that different motivations and characteristics influence individuals to commit rape, Groth identified three different kinds of rapists in his typology: anger rapists¹, power rapists² and sadistic rapists³ (Siegel, 2006). Hazelwood and Burgess (1987) have introduced their own typology consisting of four types of rapists: the power-reassurance rapist, the power-assertive rapist, the anger-retaliatory rapist, and the anger-excitation rapist (Crowley, 1999). The most empirically tested typological classifica-

¹ He describes anger rapists as individuals who express rage and hostility and use a significant amount of physical force to perpetrate rape and hurt their victims as much as possible.

² Power rapists are interested more in having control over their victims than in causing them physical harm. It is not sexual gratification that drives power rapists, but rather, for them, rape is a way of putting personal insecurities to rest (Siegel, 2006, p. 340).

³ Sadistic rapists express both sexuality and aggression, and sadistic rape can be very traumatic for the victim (Siegel, 2006).

tion system of rapists is that developed by Knight and Prentky (1990) and Prentky and Knight (1991). Based upon their research findings, these researchers have constructed the Massachusetts Treatment Center model known as MTC:R3, which is commonly used to characterize rapists. The MTC:R3 is considered to be the most valid classification for rapists, according to which rapists are "assigned to one of five rape types based on primary motivations of opportunism, pervasive anger, sadistic sexuality, non-sadistic sexuality, and vindictiveness" (Canter, Bennel, Alison, and Reddy, 2003, p. 158). The MTC:R3 further classifies rapists into one of nine subtypes: Type 1-Opportunistic, high social competence; Type 2-Opportunistic, low social competence; Type 3-Pervasive anger, Type 4-Overt sadism; Type 5-Muted sadism; Type 6-Sexualized, high social competence; Type 7-Sexualized, low social competence; Type 8-Vindictive, low social competence; and Type 9-Vindictive, high social competence (Knight, 1999). Newer studies, however, have indicated that the MTC:R3 suffers from structural problems, and other commentators have argued for a revision of the typology into a modified dimensional circumplex structure that employs three components to account for the motivational variability among rapists: callousness/lack of empathy, antisociality/impulsivity, and hypersexuality/sexualization (Knight, 2009, ¶ 15).

Some commentators have criticized previous typologies for failing to study "behaviors in an offence from the intentions, motivations and inferred characteristics of offenders" separately (McCabe and Wauchope, 2005, p. 242). In response to this critique, researchers have taken a different approach to rapist profiling. For example, the research-based typology suggested by Canter, Bennel, Alison and Reddy (2003) classifies rapists into one of four thematic styles: (1) hostility, (2) control, (3) theft, and (4) involvement (Goodwill, Alison and Bleach, 2009, p. 509). The value of this approach is that it shifts the focus from the psychological functions that influence the rapist to the rapists actions at the crime scene (Häkkinen, Lindlöf and Santtila, 2004, p. 18).

Distinctions among different types of rapists are made based on characteristics that include age, race, marital status, education, residence, arrest history, military history, employment, mental illness, alcoholism and personality disorders. Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991) has examined some of these factors. Regarding the age of rapists,⁴ Gruzinov-Milovanović found that the largest percentage were relatively young. Gruzinov-Milovanović concluded that the declining age of perpetrators was a function of socio-cultural and socio-psychological factors relating to age, which increase the predisposition toward committing rape. Research has shown that the largest group of perpetrators is those with only an elementary level of education, fewer perpetrators have received secondary education, and almost no perpetrators

⁴ Hazelwood and Burgess (1995, pp. 178) have argued that the age of the offender is the most difficult characteristic to determine because it is based upon a number of factors, including the victim's estimate, the type of items that the perpetrator took from the crime scene, the maturity exhibited in the crime, and the type of rapist believed to have been involved.

have received post-secondary education. Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991) has pointed out that the incidence of recidivism is inversely proportional to the educational level of perpetrators of sexual offenses. The result of this relationship is that a minimal educational background, in conjunction with environmental factors and pre-existing personality traits of aggression, constitutes an important criminogenic factor.

Research into the marital status of rapists has revealed that many offenders are married, minimizing the likelihood that these offenders are motivated by unfulfilled sexual needs. For married offenders, psychological motives are primary, and one characteristic of these offenders is a need for self-affirmation in the social environment in which they live and work (Gruzinov-Milovanović, 1991). Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991) also analyzed the role that alcohol consumption plays in the commission of rape. Research has shown that alcohol is not a dominant catalyst for the perpetrator. Offenders who had consumed alcohol immediately before committing rape had not generally become intoxicated and rarely had blood alcohol concentrations that exceeded 0.5 percent. Based on these data, Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991) has concluded that recidivism is prevalent among rapists.

Osterburg and Ward (2007) have made a convincing case that many rapist are married and employed, are not necessarily misogynists, and that their intelligence levels vary significantly. The majority of them are not psychotic, "but virtually all of them have deeply rooted psychological problems" (p. 467).

The characteristics of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina

This article presents the results of an empirical study of the characteristics of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The aim of this study was to determine whether previously observed characteristics and traits of rapists correspond to those that we identified in our survey. The primary focus of this study was on psychological and socio-economic characteristics of the perpetrators. Thus, the characteristics reviewed included factors related to age, education, marital status, recidivism, alcoholism and personality disorders. We compared the findings of similar studies on rape and sexual offenders to our results.

Methodology

The study sample consisted of 77 rape cases completed by final court judgment. The data were gathered from the Cantonal Court in Sarajevo (7 cases), the Municipal Court in Sarajevo (42 cases), the Municipal Court in Banja Luka (23 cases), and the Municipal Court in Mostar (5 cases) over the time period from 1994 - 2004. The main research project was to determine the characteristics of rapists by applying a factor analysis. With the theoretical insights of previous classifications of rapists in mind, we hypothesized that: (1) perpetrators of rape usually have lower levels of

education than the general population; (2) perpetrators of rape suffer from mental abnormalities; (3) the majority of perpetrators are married; and (4) the use of alcohol and other intoxicants is not a dominant factor in the commission of rape. To test these hypotheses, the study employed descriptive and inferential statistics. However, the resulting empirical insight was limited by the size of the available sample for testing the aforementioned hypotheses.

Results and discussion

The study employed a factor analysis to examine the characteristics of rapists and found that the following four common characteristics of rapists explained a large part of the total variance (65.8%): unemployment, recidivism, dependence on opiates and mental (in)capacity (see table 1). This article also includes collected data on the age of the offender and his employment history. Thus, the findings about the prevalence of the aforementioned characteristics among the rapist population can be used as an indicator of how criminal investigators should focus their investigations in order quickly and efficiently to detect the perpetrators of rapes.

The data shows that all 77 of the convicted offenders in the study sample were men. Regarding their age, 69.4 percent of the offenders were between 21 and 35 years of age (i.e., youthful offenders comprised more than two thirds of the rapists that we studied). Mokros and Alison (2002, p. 31) reported similar results, finding that offenders showed the highest likelihood of committing rape in adolescence and early adulthood, with a steep decline after age 30. Meta-analytic researchers have likewise found an inverse relationship between offender age and the risk of reoffending (Hanson & Bussière, 1998; cit. in Scalora and Garbin, 2003, p. 310).

With regard to the education level of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, offenders who had completed high school (secondary school education) comprised the largest subsection of offenders at 66.7 percent, while those with only a primary school education comprised 20.7 percent. Therefore, a majority of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina have completed their secondary education, with most of the remaining offenders having completed only an elementary education. Offenders with other levels of education comprised a negligible subsection of the rapist population. A more detailed educational breakdown is set forth in table w, which indicates that, out of the sample of 72 rapists, 54 (or 75%) of them had either completed secondary school (66.7%), received some education or training beyond secondary school (4.2%) or had obtained a university degree (4.2%), while 18 (or 25%) had completed less than a secondary school education, having either no education at all, a primary school education, less than a full secondary school education or having an unknown level of education. As table 3 indicates, perpetrators between the ages of 18 and 20 tended to have less education than older offenders, but, because of the sample size and the general relationship between age and education level, this finding is not statistically significant. The findings of this study deviate in significant ways from the research results of Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991), which found

that a majority of rapists had only a primary level of education. With regard to our study, the hypothesis that a low level of education correlates with the commission of rape can be rejected. Taking into account the data of the Bosnian and Herzegovinan Labour Force Survey (2010), which documents that 49 percent of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina has completed secondary school, our findings are not surprising.⁵

Table 1: The results of factor analysis of the characteristics of offenders

VARIABLE CODE	COEFFICIENT OF CORRELATION WITH FACTOR	CONTENT OF THE MANIFEST VARIABLE	TOTAL VARIANCE
Factor 1		SOCIAL FUNCTIONING	26.0%
05	0.7172	Employment (unemployed – working illegally – employed temporarily – employed full time)	
04	0.7044	Education (elementary – incomplete secondary – skilled worker – secondary school – higher education)	
10	-0.5864	Psychological disorders (none – expressed – psychological disorder(s))	
Factor 2		RECIDIVISM	15.2%
06	-0.8023	Marital status (married – cohabitating – unmarried)	
03	0.7796	Recidivism (first offense – one prior offense – two prior offenses – three or more prior offenses)	
Factor 3		IMPACT OF INTOXICANTS	13.1%
09	0.9005	Under the influence of opiates (yes – no)	
08	0.6693	Use of alcohol and drugs (used soft drugs – used hard drugs – alcoholic – dipsomaniac – other forms of drug use – no influence of opiates)	
Factor 4		MENTAL (IN)CAPACITY	11.4%
07	0.7717	Mental capacity at the time of the offense (mentally capable – diminished mental capacity – mentally incompetent)	
02	-0.5457	Age in years (under 18, 18-25, 26-35, 36-50, over 50)	
		Interpretation of total variance	65.8%

⁵ See Labour Force Survey in B&H (2010). Available at http://www.bhas.ba/tematskibilteni/lfs_2010_001_01-bh.pdf

Table 2: Percentages of individual characteristics of offenders

A	Age	N	%	B	Education	N	%
	1. 18 – 20	8	11.1		1. Elementary	15	20.7
	2. 21 – 25	17	23.6		2. Beyond elementary	1	1.4
	3. 26 – 35	33	45.8		3. Secondary school	48	66.7
	4. 36 – 50	11	15.3		4. Beyond secondary	3	4.2
	5. over 50	3	4.2		5. University degree	3	4.2
	Total:	72	100.0		6. Higher education	0	0
					7. no school	1	1.4
					8. unknown	1	1.4
					Total:	72	100.0
C	Marital status	N	%	D	Employment		
	1. married	32	44.4		1. unemployed	35	48.6
	2. cohabitating	1	1.4		2. temporarily employed	4	5.6
	3. unmarried	33	45.8		3. employed full time	30	41.7
	4. divorced	4	5.6		4. retired	3	4.2
	5. unknown	2	2.8		Total	72	100.0
	Total:	72	100.0				
E	Recidivism	N	%	F	Substance use	N	%
	1. no data	5	6.9		1. no data	20	21.8
	2. first offense	58	80.6		2. no influence	33	45.8
	3. second offense	7	9.7		3. soft drugs	3	4.2
	4. third+ offense	2	2.8		4. hard drugs	2	2.8
	Total	72	100.0		5. alcoholic	5	6.9
					6. dipsomaniac	6	8.3
					7. alcohol and drugs	3	4.2
					Total	72	100.0
G	Mental (in)capacity	N	%	H	Mental disorders	N	%
	1. no data	6	8.3		1. psychosis	2	2.8
	2. mentally capable	59	81.9		2. neurosis	1	1.4
	3. diminished mental capacity	2	2.8		3. psychopathy	4	5.6
	4. considerably diminished mental capacity	4	5.6		4. emotional instability/immaturity	6	8.3
	5. mentally incompetent	1	1.4		5. moderate mental confusion	3	4.2
	Total	72	100.0		6. personality disorder	1	1.4
					7. decreased tolerance to frustration	1	1.4
					8. no mental disorder	41	56.9
					9. unknown	13	18.1
					Total:	72	100.0

Table 3: Combined data on the age and education level of offenders

	Age	Illiterate, primary school, two years of high school, and unknown	Secondary school post-secondary educa- tion University degree	Total
a)	18 – 20	5	3	8
b)	21 – 25	6	11	17
c)	26 – 35	4	29	33
d)	36 – 50	2	9	11
e)	over 50	1	2	3
	Total:	18	54	72

(Chi-square test, $\chi^2=20$, 80 is statistically significant)

The findings about the employment of rapists indicate that these individuals can be structured into two main categories in terms of their employment. The first category comprises the 41.7 percent of offenders who were employed and the 4.2 percent of offenders who were retired, for a total of 45.9 percent of survey respondents with some kind of fixed income. However, if one considers the definition of employment in the Bosnian and Herzegovinan Labour Force Survey (2010)⁶, this category should also include the 5.6 percent of respondents who had temporary employment. Using this broader definition, the final proportion of rapists who were employed is 47.3 percent. The second category comprises the remaining 48.6 percent of respondents who were unemployed. Given the slight difference between the percentage of employed and unemployed rapists, our data support Osterburg and Ward's observation (2007) that many rapists are employed. Still, our results documented more unemployed rapists, and a number of studies have found an association between unemployment and employment instability and recidivism for sex offenders (Scalora and Garbin, 2003, p. 310).

With regard to the marital status of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the results reveal that 44.4 percent of offenders were married and 45.8 percent were unmarried. These results suggest a small difference between these two categories of offenders, which is not statistically significant. Even though these results do not support the findings of Gruzinov-Milovanovic (1991) and Osterburg and Ward (2007) that most rapists are married, they are in line with data from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction study (2001, p. 6), which found that 65 percent of the rapists in its survey had never been married. Evidence from many studies suggests that unmarried status in conjunction with an unstable relationship history correlates with recidivism among sex offenders (Abel et al., 1988; Lang, Pugh, and Langevin, 1988; Proulx, Paradis, McKibben, Aubut, and Quimet, 1997; Rice, Quinsey, and Harris, 1991; cit. in Scalora and Garbin, 2003, p. 310).

⁶ The employed are persons of who, during the reference week: (a) worked for at least one hour for a salary or fee, notwithstanding their formal status or b) did not work, but had a job to return to (Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2010, p. 10).

Substance use was another characteristic included in the study for the purpose of determining the influence of alcohol or drug use among rapists. While there were rapists in the study had used drugs and/or alcohol at the time of their offense, they comprised a small proportion compared to the majority of perpetrators (45.8%) who were not under the influence of intoxicants at the time of their crimes. It is not possible to conclude from these data, however, that substance use was not a dominant factor in the commission of rape since, for 21.8 percent of respondents, there were no data related to this factor. Even though these results seem to according with those of Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991) that substance use was not a dominant driver for the commission of rape, several other studies (see e.g. Rada, 1975; Vinogradov, Dishotsky, Doty and Tinklenberg, 1988) have reported a significant correlation between substance use and rape (Rigonatti, Serafim, Caires, Filho, and Florez, 2006).

The study also generated interesting data regarding the mental disorders of rapists, which showed that 56.9 percent of them were characterized as psychologically normal.⁷ This finding is in line with Singer's (1994) observation that rapists are often otherwise normal. This conclusion has been confirmed by several studies that have reported, for example, that the percentage of mental illness among rapists as being between 2 and 20 percent and that less than 5 percent of rapists show psychotic behavior during their attacks (Canter et al. 1989; Abel et al 1980, cit. in Taylor 1993, ¶ 40). Our results showed that 5.6 percent of rapists were psychopaths, 8.3 percent were emotionally immature. Keeping in mind that 18.1 percent of the survey respondents provided no data about their psychological states, our results are nonetheless consistent with the conclusion of Gordon and Grubin (2004) that most sex offenders are not mentally ill. Instead, as they state "many are subject to substance misuse, abnormal personality traits, personality disorder, learning disability or dysphoric mood, and in some organic factors will be involved" (p. 73).

Another characteristic that we examined was recidivism among rapists. Our findings indicated that only 12.5 percent of rapists commit rape again. Once again, these results are inconsistent with the research findings of Gruzinov-Milovanović (1991), who reported a high recidivism rate for rapists, but they are consistent with the findings of Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Study, which included a five- and 10-year follow-up of sex offenders released in Ohio in 1989. After 10 years, the results showed that 17.5 percent of all rapists had committed another sex offense and 56.6 percent had committed another crime of any type. Although empirical research shows that recidivism rates differ dramatically among different types of sex offenders (Office of Criminal Justice Services, 2006, p. 14), our results are nonetheless comparable to the results contained in a review of 61 recid-

⁷ According to Williams (2004), it is impossible to draw an exact line between normality and abnormality because normality is usually described as "the state of mind or personality that cannot be classified as having a mental abnormality" (p. 178). As Williams explained, numerical commonality and normality are not coextensive.

ivism research studies of sex offenders, which found that only 13.4 percent had committed a new sex offense (Hanson and Morton-Burgon 2004, cit. in Office of Criminal Justice Services, 2006, p. 14). Prentky and Burgess (2000) have concluded that the rate of sexual recidivism will naturally increase as time increases. They illustrate this by example: if the base rate for sexual recidivism is 10 percent, then it is most likely that 10 percent of sexual offenders can be expected to reoffend⁸ within one year of discharge (p. 109). This conclusion is supported by the results of a study of 136 rapists, in which the base rate for sexual recidivism increased from 9 percent at Year 1 to 19 percent at Year 5, 31 percent at Year 15, and 52 percent at Year 25 (Prentky, Lee, Knight, and Cerce, 1997, cit. in Prentky and Burgess, 2000, p. 109). Studies have also documented that rapists recidivate within a shorter time following release than other sex offenders, while Proulx et al. (1997) found that recidivists were more likely to be young⁹ and have multiple prior convictions (cit. in Prentky and Burgess, 2000, p. 136). Taking into account our reported results on recidivism, as well as other studies on this issue, it is possible that many of the 87.5 percent of respondents in our study who reported not having committed another sex offense may have reoffended without detection, particularly in light of the low victim-reporting rate for rape in the first instance. Studies indicate that recidivism by rapists may be under-reported. For example, the 1992 study entitled Rape in America found that only 16 percent of rape victims reported their crimes (Office of Criminal Justice Services, 2006, p. 15), while the National Crime Victimization Survey in 2004 documented that only 36 percent of victims over age 12 reported rape or sexual assault to the police (Catalano 2005, cit. in Office of Criminal Justice Services, 2006, p. 14). Hollin et. al. have also made the interesting observation that low rates of recidivism for sex offenses are associated with the success of interventions intended to reduce reoffending (2010, p. 516).

Conclusion

In an attempt to identify some of the characteristics of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina, we found that the psychological state of a majority of these offenders at the time of their crimes would be characterized as normal, except for their commission of the crime. The research results also suggest that a relatively large proportion of rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina have completed secondary education and that most of them are unemployed and unmarried. Therefore, our findings were not consistent with our hypothesis with regard to these factors. On the other hand, our finding that the majority of the perpetrators were not under the influ-

⁸ Prentky and Burgess (2000, p. 139), list the empirical risk factors for predicting recidivism by rapists as follows: impulsiveness, antisocial behaviour; psychopathy; sexual drive strength; the experience of sexual coercion and rape fantasies; the number of prior sexual offenses; offense planning; and attitudes.

⁹ Based upon the study results, Hanson (2001) concluded that rapists, with a mean age of 32.1 years, were younger than extra-familial child molesters (37.1 years) and incest offenders (38.9 years) and that the recidivism risk of rapists decreased as they grew older (cit. in Hollin et. al., 2010, p. 515).

ence of any mind-altering substance use at the time of the crime was consistent with our last hypothesis.

Like most research, ours has its methodological limitations. One was the small size of the evaluated sample, which was drawn from only 77 court judgments. The sample was also not an entirely representative one, since researchers could not include data from the records of the Cantonal Court in Mostar, which refused to participate in the study or to provide access to its records of rape cases. Moreover, the data from 5 rape cases from the Municipal Court in Mostar were of limited use, and, for that reason, were not included in our analysis. Nonetheless, the collected data are illustrative and useful for determining and understanding some of the demographic, socio-economic, psychological and other characteristics of interest regarding rapists in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These empirical results will also contribute to efforts to use profiling in Bosnia and Herzegovina during criminal investigations of rapes.

The factors examined in this research were selected, at least partially, on the basis of availability and the content of court records. Future studies should comprehensively examine police records and include other data-gathering strategies, such as victimization studies, self-reported studies and interviews. Future research should also address the behavioral characteristics of rapists (i.e., offender communication patterns, victim/offender relationships, categories of assault).

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