

Hensley, Christopher, Koscheski, Mary, and Tewksbury, Richard. 2003. "The Impact of Institutional Factors on Officially Reported Sexual Assaults in Prisons." *Sexuality & Culture*, 7, (4), 16-26.

This study draws on survey data collected from a sample of 226 state prison wardens in 2001. Surveys asked wardens to report the number of officially reported sexual assaults in their facility in the past year, the current number of inmates, whether the facility was overcrowded (housed more than their operational capacity), whether male or female inmates were housed there, the security level of the institution, the ratio of inmates to staff and whether the facility had a conjugal visitation program. Due to the low numbers of facilities reporting an officially reported sexual assault (n=63, 28% of sample; 11% of the entire sample of facilities report one reported sexual assault and 17% report between 2 and 19 reports), the dependent variable is dichotomized (1+ assault reported vs. no sexual assault reported). Results of correlational analysis show that three variables are statistically significantly related to having a report of a sexual assault. Institutions with larger populations, higher than minimum level facilities, and facilities with a conjugal visitation program are more likely to have at least one officially reported sexual assault. Furthermore, logistic regression analysis shows that 23% of the variance in whether a facility had an officially reported sexual assault is explained by two variables: size of facility population (larger are more likely to have reported assaults) and security level (minimum level facilities are less likely). Measures of whether a facility is overcrowded, and the inmate-to-staff ratio are not statistically significantly related to official reports of sexual assaults.

The present study was designed to evaluate the effectiveness of a community-based intervention for women who have been sexually assaulted. The study was a randomized controlled trial involving 300 women who had been sexually assaulted in the past year. The women were randomly assigned to either the intervention group or the control group. The intervention group received a 12-week program of group-based cognitive-behavioral therapy, and the control group received a 12-week program of individual counseling. The primary outcome measure was the women's self-reported level of psychological distress, and the secondary outcome measures were the women's self-reported level of self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-blame. The results of the study showed that the intervention group had significantly lower levels of psychological distress, significantly higher levels of self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-blame, and significantly higher rates of participation in the intervention program. The findings of this study suggest that a community-based intervention can be effective in reducing the psychological distress of women who have been sexually assaulted and in increasing their self-efficacy, self-esteem, and self-blame.

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GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

THE IMPACT OF INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS ON OFFICIALLY REPORTED SEXUAL ASSAULTS IN PRISONS

Christopher Hensley
Morehead State University

Mary Koscheski
Morehead State University

Richard Tewksbury
University of Louisville

Not only has research on prison sexual assault been rather scarce the past four decades, but few of these studies have ascertained the number of officially reported inmate-on-inmate sexual assaults. In addition, no study exists which has rigorously examined which, if any, institutional factors impact the number of officially reported inmate-on-inmate sexual assaults in prisons. Using data from a national sample of 226 prison warden, this study examines the impact of institutional factors on officially reported sexual assaults. The most salient variables in the study were current number of inmates and wardens' perceptions of inmate fear of sexual assault. Wardens overseeing institutions with higher numbers of inmates were more likely to report that inmates had been sexually assaulted and those who ran minimum-security prisons were less likely to report sexual assaults within their facilities.

Introduction

Due to the efforts of the Stop Prison Rape Organization (2001), Amnesty International (1999, 2001), Human Rights Watch (1996, 2001), and numerous researchers who have been permitted to enter various correctional systems in the United States (Davis, 1968; Fuller and Orsagh, 1977; Bowker, 1980; Lockwood, 1980; Wooden and Parker, 1982; Nacci and Kane, 1983, 1984a, 1984b; Saum,

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Surratt, Inciardi, and Bennett, 1995; Struckman-Johnson, Struckman-Johnson, Rucker, Bumby, and Donaldson, 1996; Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2002; Hensley, 2002; Hensley, Castle, and Tewksbury, 2003; Hensley, Tewksbury, and Castle, 2003), the once "forbidden" topic of prison sexual assault is becoming a matter of public attention. The Senate Committee on the Judiciary has held hearings on a Prison Rape Reduction Act. If enacted, it would create a commission to study prison rape and devote \$60 million to research, data collection, and the development of national standards for prevention (Lehrer, 2002). Although sexual assault in correctional facilities has been brought to the attention of the Senate, recent publicity alleges that the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) ignores male rape victims (both in society and prison) in their annual Uniform Crime Reports (Stemple, 2002). Stemple (2002) also called for the F.B.I. to revise its crime categories to include the rape of men as a violent crime.

Rates of sexual assaults within prisons have fluctuated over the past forty years depending on the type of study conducted, the reluctance of inmates to disclose their assaults, and the terminology used within the studies to define sexual assault (i.e., sexual aggression, sexual coercion). Davis (1968), for example, defined sexual assault as "solicitations accompanied by physical assaults or threats, and other coercive solicitations" (2). Lockwood's (1980) definition of sexual aggression, on the other hand, ranged from imagined sexual overtones by the target to actual incidents of completed rapes. Researchers have also described sexual victimization as a by-product of forced sex and violence (Wooden and Parker, 1982; Saum, et al., 1995). More recent studies concerning sexual victimization have broadened the spectrum of behaviors to include such behaviors as attempted touching of genitals or sexual parts, fondling of genitals, and unsuccessful efforts of sexual intercourse in a threatening manner (Struckman-Johnson et al., 1996; Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2002).

Most data concerning inmate-on-inmate sexual assaults have been obtained through surveys and/or interviews with inmates. Unfortunately, few studies have addressed the number of offi-

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cially reported inmate-on-inmate sexual assaults within prisons. In fact, no study exists which gathers such information on a national scale. Furthermore, no prison sexual assault study has rigorously examined which, if any, institutional factors impact whether inmates who have been sexually assaulted reported their victimization. Therefore, using data from a national sample of prison wardens, the purpose of this study is to examine the effect of these institutional factors on officially reported inmate sexual assaults (attempted or completed inmate-on-inmate rapes).

Literature Review

Although sexual assaults have probably occurred within prisons since their formal development, it was not until the summer of 1966 that the first study was undertaken to measure the rates of sexual assault among inmates. Davis (1968) conducted interviews with 500 staff members and 3,304 male inmates over a 26-month period within the Philadelphia jail system. He found that 97 (or 4.7%) of the inmates reported being sexually assaulted either while incarcerated or while being transported to and from court in the sheriffs' vans. These incidents were not only substantiated through the facility's records, but also through polygraph examinations of the reporting inmates.

Lockwood's (1980) extensive study conducted between 1974-1975 within New York state male prisons focused on the targets of sexual coercion. Results of the study revealed that among the 107 inmate respondents, 28% reported being targets of sexual aggression. Only one inmate, however, reported being raped while in prison.

Fuller and Orsagh's (1977) study included a sample of 400 male inmates in six separate North Carolina state prisons. Interviews with inmates and a review of disciplinary records were used to ascertain the rate of sexual assault. The average reported rate of sexual assault per year was 2.4% within the six correctional institutions.

By examining the broader scope of violence within prisons, Bowker (1980) found that male inmates were more prone to re-

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port physically violent assaults than those encounters that included sexual victimization. In 1982, Wooden and Parker conducted their study of prison sexuality by administering a comprehensive survey to 200 male inmates in a medium security California prison. Nearly 14% of the sample reported that they had been sexually victimized.

Nacci and Kane (1983, 1984a, 1984b) led an investigation into the relationship between sexual aggression and violence in 17 male federal prisons. In their two-part study of 330 inmates and 500 correctional officers, it was found that 2% of the sample had been sexual targets, 0.6% had performed an undesired sex act, and 0.3% had been raped while incarcerated in a federal institution.

Saun et al. (1995) focused their one-year study of a Delaware medium security prison on responses of inmates concerning prison sexual experiences and sexual activities that had either been observed, heard about, or experienced by the inmates themselves. The results of the 101 male inmate interviews revealed that 40% admitted to knowing that sexual assaults occurred. Three percent reported that they had witnessed a rape within the past year. One percent reported that they had witnessed two rapes within the past year. Although two inmates disclosed that another inmate had attempted to rape them, only one inmate reported that he had been raped.

Struckman-Johnson et al.'s (1996) study was conducted in the Nebraska prison system in 1994. This study disclosed the highest rate of sexual victimization found in prison sex studies. Twenty-two percent of the 474 male inmates and approximately 1% of the 42 female inmates reported being pressured or forced to have sex against their will. In 1998, Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson extended their previous research by conducting a more comprehensive study of sexual coercion in seven Midwestern male prisons and three female prisons. Twenty-one percent of the 1,788 male inmates and 11% of the female inmates reported that they had experienced unwanted sexual contact (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman-Johnson, 2000, 2002).

The most recent study of male inmate sexual victimization was conducted in three (one minimum, medium, and maximum secu-

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ity) Oklahoma prisons. Approximately 14% of the 174 male inmates reported being sexual targets and 1.1% disclosed being victims of completed sexual assaults during their incarceration (Hensley, Tewksbury, and Castle, 2003). Finally, in the most recent study of sexual coercion in a female southern prison, Hensley, Castle, and Tewksbury (2003) found that approximately 4.5% of the 245 respondents had been victims of sexual coercion (i.e., attempted and completed rapes).

The majority of these studies have relied on obtaining the rate of sexual assaults in prison through questionnaires and interviews. Rarely have researchers been afforded the opportunity to rely on the official number of inmates who report sexual assaults in order to examine possible factors for explaining such disclosure. The purpose of the current study is to address which, if any, institutional factors effect these reports.

Methodology

Subjects

Data for the present study come from surveys distributed in August 2001 to 441 state prison wardens. One half of the male facilities in each state were randomly selected to be included in the sample. Furthermore, because of the low number of female prisons, all wardens of women's prisons were surveyed (62 wardens). Wardens located at federal correctional facilities, privately operated correctional facilities, pre-release centers, juvenile detention facilities, and jails were excluded from the study. The sample was drawn from the American Correctional Association's *2000 Juvenile and Adult Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies, and Paroling Authorities Directory* (2000) which listed the addresses and contact persons for each institution. Five state department of corrections (Delaware, Illinois, Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania) refused to participate in the study due to time and management constraints.

Each warden received a questionnaire specifically written for the study, along with a cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed

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return envelope. The cover letter described the research project as well as provided important instructions and information to the respondent. The respondent was not required to sign an informed consent as all data collected concerned the study of public officials. This allowed for enhanced confidentiality. Additional steps to increase the response rate included mailing of a reminder card and a duplicate survey to each of the respondents. Of the 441 wardens in the sample, a total of 226 participated in the study, yielding a response rate of 52.4%.

According to the American Correctional Association's 2000 *Juvenile and Adult Correctional Departments, Institutions, Agencies, and Paroling Authorities Directory* (2000), approximately 80% of all state adult facilities were managed by male wardens. Eighty-three percent of the sample respondents were male. In addition, 76.8% of the sample respondents were white, 17.9% were African American, and 5.3% classified themselves as other. In comparison, approximately 73% of all state wardens were white, 21% were African American, and 6% were classified as other.

According to Camp and Camp (1998), approximately 11% of prisons are maximum security, 5% high/close security, 28% medium security, 13% minimum security, 35% multi-level security, and 8% either intake or community. Sixteen percent of the sample respondents oversaw maximum security prisons, 7% high/close security, 25% medium security, 20% minimum security, and 32% multi-level security. Thus, the sample appears to be fairly representative of the population in terms of gender, race, and security level.

Measures

Wardens were asked how many inmates had officially reported being sexually assaulted within their institutions during the past twelve months. Because of the diverse range of responses, the categories were dichotomized so that 0 equals no officially reported sexual assaults and 1 equals one or more officially reported sexual assaults. This item served as the dependent variable.

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TABLE 1
Descriptive Statistics of the Independent Variables

Number of Current Inmates	<i>M</i> = 1101.59 inmates	
Overcrowded Facility		
Yes	114	50.4%
No	112	49.6
Gender of Institution		
All Male	176	77.9%
Other	50	22.1
Security Level		
Minimum	45	20%
Other	180	80
Inmate to Staff Ratio	<i>M</i> = 28.1 inmates per one security staff	
Conjugal Visitation Program		
Yes	201	91%
No	20	9

Data were also collected on the current number of inmates in each institution, overcrowding (if the capacity of the institution was larger than the current number of inmates, no overcrowding existed), sex of institution (male v. other), security level of institution (minimum v. other), ratio of inmates to correctional staff (number of current inmates divided by the number of security staff), and whether the facility had a conjugal visitation. Table 1 provides the descriptive statistics for each of the independent variables.

Results

Of the 226 wardens who responded to the questionnaire, 72% reported that no inmate had officially reported being sexually assaulted within their institution during the past twelve months. Almost 11% of the wardens revealed one officially reported sexual assault within their institution. The remaining 17% of wardens reported between two and 19 officially reported sexual assaults within their institutions. Table 2 presents the zero-order relationships between the independent and dependent variables. According to correlational analysis which examined the relationships

TABLE 2
Zero-Order Correlation Matrix

	X ₁	X ₂	X ₃	X ₄	X ₅	X ₆	Y ₁
X ₁ Current Number of Inmates							
X ₂ Overcrowded Facility	.0						
X ₃ Sex of Institution	-.17	.03					
X ₄ Security Level	.37*	.09	.22				
X ₅ Inmate to Staff Ratio	.11	-.14*	.12	-.13			
X ₆ Conjugal Visitation Program	.57*	-.12	.09	.03	-.05		
Y ₁ Sexual Assault	.31*	.06	-.07	.24*	-.05	.16*	

* Denotes statistical significance at the .05 level.

Coding: Current Number of Inmates (range = 30 — 6600); Overcrowded Facility (If Capacity of Institution is Smaller than the Current Number of Inmates 0 = No, 1 = Yes); Sex of Institution (0 = Male, 1 = Other); Security Level (0 = Minimum Security, 1 = Other); Ratio of Inmates to Staff (Number of Current Inmates Divided by the Number of Security Staff in the Institution); Conjugal Visitation Program (0 = No, 1 = Yes).

between the independent variables, prisons with higher populations of inmates were more likely to have conjugal visitation programs but less likely to be minimum security prisons. Interestingly, overcrowded facilities were more likely to have lower ratios of inmates to staff. No multicollinearity was found between the independent variables.

When examining the correlational relationship between the independent and dependent variables, the most salient variables were current number of inmates, security level, and whether the institution had a conjugal visitation program. Prisons with higher numbers of inmates were more likely to have official reports of inmate sexual assaults. Minimum-security prisons were less likely to have reports of inmate sexual assaults. Finally, institutions with a conjugal visitation program were more likely to have reports of inmate sexual assaults.

Because the dependent variable is dichotomous, a logistic regression analysis was performed to test if the predictor variables had an effect on the dependent variable. The most salient variables were current number of inmates and security level. Prisons with higher populations of inmates were more likely to have official reports of inmate sexual assaults within those facilities. Additionally, minimum security prisons were less likely to have

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TABLE 3
Summary of Logistic Regression Beta Weights (n = 206)

	B	Odds Ratio	S.E.	Wald
Current Number of Inmates	.01*	1.00	.00	12.20
Overcrowded Facility	-.00	.99	.35	.00
Sex of Institution	-.24	.79	.45	.29
Security Level	1.28*	3.60	.66	3.77
Inmate to Staff Ratio	-.01	.99	.01	1.06
Conjugal Visitation Program	-.51	.60	.76	.45
Constant	-2.50*	.08	.74	11.39
Pseudo R ²	.23			

* Denotes statistical significance at the .05 level.

Coding: Current Number of Inmates; Overcrowded Facility (If Capacity of Institution is Smaller than the Current Number of Inmates 0 = No, 1 = Yes); Sex of Institution (0 = Male, 1 = Other); Security Level (0 = Minimum Security, 1 = Other); Ratio of Inmates to Staff (Number of Current Inmates Divided by the Number of Security Staff in the Institution); Conjugal Visitation Program (0 = No, 1 = Yes).

reports of inmate sexual assaults. As shown in Table 3, 23% of the total variance in the analysis was explained by the predictor variables.

Discussion

The research reported here is unique and differs significantly from the existing literature on prison sexual assaults. Previous research has focused on identifying factors associated with individual victimization and perpetration of assaults. This research, instead, looks at institutional factors of prisons, assessing whether or not environmental and staffing variables are related to the officially reported number of sexual assaults. Therefore, the present research presents a more macro-level analysis than currently exists in the literature.

Results show that sexual assaults are more likely to be reported to correctional officials in institutions with larger populations and those with higher security levels. More interesting, and perhaps more important for policy and practice purposes, are the findings regarding variables that are not significant predictors.

Whereas anecdotal evidence and for some, "common sense," has long suggested that institutional overcrowding and a higher

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SE	Wald
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11	1.06
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inmate-staff ratio are threats to inmate personal security, these variables do not show a statistically significant relationship to the number of officially reported sexual assaults in prisons. Whether an institution is overcrowded, the ratio of inmates to staff is an issue that can be—albeit sometimes at significant financial expense—managed by day-to-day practices. Correctional administrators that seek to establish a community of inmates where sexual violence is minimized may find that directing their efforts at these factors fail to achieve their desired goals. This fact raises the question of whether policies, procedures, and manipulation of institutional variables can effectively address inmate sexual assaults. Where it does appear that efforts may be productive is in the area of controlling the size of the inmate population. Reducing the size of individual institutions' populations may lead to a reduction in inmate sexual assaults.

The present research is a first step in attempting to address prison sexual assaults on a macro-level of analysis. Future research should continue to explore a wider range of institutional variables both specifically and in conjunction with individual level variables previously identified as related to increased risks of victimization and sexual assault perpetration.

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IMPRISON

Kate Seymour
Department J
P.O. Box 145
Australia

Prisons are chaotic. The procedures, such as compliance with contracts, harassment, act of "order" in which violence (Hearn, 1996: 5 reproduce the v 185). Thus a few officers and prisoners do not know: that counterproductive

In this article within the context of implications for In particular prison, this reorganization: broader cultural norms and generate an analysis of sexualized and gendered criminality and offense commonly pe