

DO THE PRINT MEDIA PROVIDE A GENDER-BIASED REPRESENTATION OF MALE RAPE VICTIMS?

By Dr. Joanna Jamel.¹

Abstract

The current qualitative study focuses on the print media and its representation of male rape. Male rape victim-focused newspaper articles were identified using the Lexis Nexis Executive database. The content of these English language newspaper articles were analysed regarding the gender of victims and journalists. Discourse analysis was used to identify the narrative style (judgmental, sympathetic or myth-laden). The newspaper articles were from regional and national newspapers from countries such as Ireland, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the United States and South Africa. The period covered by these articles was from 1986 to 2004, thus pre and post the introduction of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 in England and Wales which was the legal definition of rape used in this study. The key findings are (i) that male rape victims are treated more sympathetically than female rape victims who have historically been described using a myth-laden and judgemental narrative style by the press) at a parallel time frame regarding the level of social and academic awareness of the phenomenon of male rape (thirty years ago), (ii) that the term “rape victim” is treated as inherently female and (iii) the gender of the reporter did not influence the narrative style of the article. It is suggested that this may be due to lessons learned as a result of feminist criticisms of past misrepresentations and stereotypical portrayals of female rape victim in the press hence a more sensitive approach is now being taken by print journalists.

Key words: Print media representation, male rape, discourse analysis, narrative style, rape myths.

¹ Correspondence details: Dr. Joanna Jamel, Department of Psychology, Criminology & Sociology, Faculty of Arts & Sciences, Kingston University, Penrhyn Road, Kingston upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 2JS, England. E-mail: j.jamel@kingston.ac.uk
www.internetjournalofcriminology.com

Introduction

The research on the print media representation of sex crime has either focused on broadsheet or tabloid publications or both (Greer, 2003; Peelo et al., 2004; Soothill, 1991, 2004; Soothill, & Jack, 1975; Soothill, & Walby, 1991). Detailed accounts of rape victims' behaviour in newspaper articles have enabled the reader to discern the narrative style or emotive type of article (Nichols & Chase, 2005) and consequently determine the culpability of the victims in their own sexual victimisation (Marhia, 2008). However, the print media portrayal of sexual offences has received limited attention and has predominantly focused on female victims (Benedict, 1992; Greer, 2003; McEvoy, 1996; Soothill, 1991, 2004; Soothill & Jack, 1975; Roshier, 1981; Young, 1998) with the exception of Soothill and Walby's (1991) research on the portrayal of male child victims of sex crimes.

It is argued that the portrayal of male rape victims (Scarce, 1997) in the press could have an impact on the reporting of such crimes to the police (Soothill & Walby, 1991) and on victims' conception of self (Frewin, Pond & Tuffin, 2009). This is due to the selection of stories reported in newspaper which tend to reinforce myths as to what constitutes a *genuine* rape (Korn & Efrat, 2004). Thus in reported articles, stranger rape attacks may use a 'blitz' approach where the assailant attacks without warning and uses verbal threats and or violence from the outset (Burgess & Homstrom, 1974; LeBeau, 1987; Schwendiger & Schwendiger, 1983; see also Kahn & Andreolie Mathie, 2000). Such attacks may still be perceived as more credible compared with acquaintance rape incidents which may not be considered to constitute a *'real rape'* (Estrich, 1987). Franiuk, Seefelt, Cephess and Vandello's (2008) findings suggest that the print media play an active part in maintaining rape myths. Male rape myths include (i) men cannot be raped (Stermac, del Bove, & Addison, 2004); (ii) males should be able to protect their sexual regions (Groth & Burgess, 1980); (iii) Only gay men get raped (Stermac et al., 2004; Davies et al, 2005; McMullen, 1990); (iv) Men cannot sexually perform unless sexually aroused (Smith, Pine, & Hawley, 1988); (v) men are sexually available at all times to take advantage of opportunities for sex (Clements-Sreiber & Rempel, 1995), and (vi) the impact of rape on men is less severe than on female rape victims (Stermac et al., 2004). Male rape myths may be referred to in newspaper articles concerning male rape by highlighting particular features of the story such as, it occurred outside a gay nightclub or bar.

Research on crime scene characteristics and relationship to the perpetrator can also vary by gender. Thus, acquaintance male rape indicates it is perpetrated indoors (Hickson, et al., 1997; Hillman, O'Mara, Robinson-Taylor, Harris, 1990; Mezey & King, 1989; Walker, Archer, & Davies, 2005), with outdoor and public locations implying a stranger rapist (see Groth, 1979; Hodge & Canter, 1998; Hickson, Henderson & Davies, 1997 (majority of stranger rapes perpetrated outside); Huckle, 1995 (most offenders were strangers and the commonest location was outside); Stermac, del Bove & Addison, 2004 (stranger rapes more common outside than acquaintance rapes) (see also Stermac, Sheridan, Davidson & Dunn, 1996). A study on the print media representation of female rape found over half of the cases reported in newspapers were stranger rapes committed in public places such as enclosed spaces, toilets, perpetrators' cars, whereas 37% of rapes were committed by acquaintances at more private locations such as the victim or perpetrator's home (Marhia, 2008). It should also be noted here that stranger rapes represent only 13% of rapes reported to the police. Furthermore, Marhia stated the context was often reported to enable readers to infer the culpability of the victim, this was one of the key factors, which included an unknown attacker and the perpetration of excessive violence; in the social construction of the *'innocent'* female rape victim by the press. If newspapers persistently frame news stories

about female victims using gender-biased narratives this may preserve gender stereotypes and inequality in an understated but potent manner (Anastasio & Costa, 2004).

Print journalism: Gender and the narrative style of reporters

A central issue to the reporting of rape experience is the extent to which it is fact-based versus more emotionally presented and this may be gender related. Objective (fact-based) writing styles (Tuchman, 1972) prized by male journalists may be adopted by their female colleagues in order to conform to this perceived form of professional news reporting (see Gill, 2007). This practice obscures the possible impact of increasing numbers of female journalists entering the media industry. Thus, despite the influx of female journalists in the Netherlands print media industry, van Zoonen (1988) found no apparent qualitative or quantitative changes were identified in the news production processes based on authors' gender. In addition, regardless of their shared gender, female journalists may not routinely present female rape victims in a more sympathetic manner and instead may mirror their male colleagues' acceptance of rape myths (Benedict, 1992). Nonetheless, conversational styles differ according to gender (males engaging in officious "*report talk*" and females tending towards the more supportive and interactive "*rapport talk*") (Tannen, 1996) these may leak into their narrative styles of reporting.

The type of publication (e.g., tabloid or broadsheet) has also previously been found to inform the content of print newspaper articles (Soothill, 1991, Greer, 2003), in that, the more salacious reporting of sex crimes tends to be by the tabloids.

The research proposition, inspired by Robinson (1996) as cited by Goddard, De Bortoli, Saunders, & Tucci stated:

"Is any account apparently neutral or are evaluative terms used to discredit some of the actors?" (2005, p. 279).

Research Proposition tested: The representation of male rape victim news stories will differ according to the gender of the reporter and their narrative style in predicted ways.

This was an exploratory study which was unique in its nature, as there have been no qualitative analyses of print newspaper articles regarding the influence of journalists' gender or the gender of victims on narrative style in the available literature.

Method

Sample

The sample size in the current study for 285 articles was 39 categories and was therefore insufficient for computerised content analysis as 50 to 60 categories are required (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). A category is ... like a concept, class or even a system" (Reber, 1995). Categories are grounded in the data and derived inductively (Denzin, 1978; Glaser & Strauss 1967). A manual content analysis was conducted as recommended by Viney (as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2003, p. 285) who stated that computerised content analysis dictionaries are continually evolving and still cannot "*parse certain subtleties of meaning reflected in context*". Younger child victims (aged 16 and under) were excluded due to child abuse constituting a very different phenomenon from adult rape regarding the lack of consideration of culpability and the likelihood of a *sympathetic* or *non-judgmental* narrative style being more common as opposed to a *myth-laden* narrative style.

Procedure

Lexis Nexis Executive database was used and 285 electronic copies of newspaper articles were identified by using the search term '*male rape victim*', of these 267 were rejected due to duplicated content (where a news story was printed in one newspaper sourced from the Press Association and replicated in several more newspapers with little or no additional detail provided by other journalists, thus no differentiation between narrative styles or tone could be identified. In addition, newspaper articles were rejected if they included vague terminology such as there was a '*sexual element*' rather than using the term '*rape*'. While it is recognised that there may be different definitions of rape across these international publications, the description of events were also used to determine the nature of the acts where feasible to ensure that the cases were consistent with the legal definition of rape being used. Other newspaper articles were rejected due to insufficient content regarding individual cases. Thus, the final sample suitable for detailed analysis was 18.

The publications identified were regional and national papers from countries including Ireland, the United Kingdom, the United States, South Africa and Australia and the time period covered was from 1986 to 2004. Quantitative analyses such as frequency and descriptive statistics were used to complement the qualitative analysis.

Analysis

A qualitative methodology was used in the main to analyse the latent content of the newspaper articles. This requires a more interpretative framework as opposed to a reductionist approach which is more suited to the analysis of manifest data. Classic content analysis in its various manifestations is routinely used in print media studies (Greer, 2003; Hay et al., 1980; Rowe, Tillbury, Rapley, & O'Ferrall, 2003; Soothill & Jack, 1975; Soothill, Francis, Pearson & Ackerley, 2002). In this study the discourses used by journalists were analysed to deconstruct the representations of male rape within the texts. Macdonald (2003, p.1) described discourse as being "...a system of communicative practices that are integrally related to wider social and cultural practices...[which] help to construct specific frameworks of thinking". The importance of analysing the discourses used within the print media lies in the use of such discursive practices as heuristics for self references (as potential rape victims) and informs how we understand others in the same role is crucial in relation to understanding the phenomenon of male rape (see Foucault, 1977, 1981; Parker, 1992). Potter (1997, p. 148). stated that studies in discourse analysis have examined how gender inequalities are constituted in talk through the production of facts and reinforced in conversation, "...and they have also considered the resources ('interpretative repertoires', identities, category systems) that are used to manufacture coherent and persuasive justifications that work to sustain those inequalities"

The current study employed a combination of methods to critically analyse the *narrative style* of the newspaper articles as identified through '*discourse markers*', which are linguistic items that function in cognitive (illustration of ideation through language), expressive (language used in portrayal of social characteristics indicating the perspective), and social (the manoeuvring of inter-relationships between the individual and their audience) domain (Schiffrin, 2003). Halliday and Hasan's (1976) analysis of cohesion (differentiating text from a random collation of sentences), cohesive devices include "...*reference and repetition*..." (Schiffrin, 2003, p. 55) used in these articles were also examined. The discourse markers used for the purposes of this study were emotional descriptors, such as, '*ordeal*', and '*brutal*', and cohesive phrases, for example, '*It hadn't occurred to him that he could be vulnerable to a sexual assault*', were analysed in order to identify the narrative style of the newspaper article. By analysing the discourse evident within the newspaper articles the aim was to identify the socially constructed identities of rape victims that were considered reflective of reality (Macnaughten, 1993, p. 54).

The narrative style was defined by analysing the text manually and identifying the following narrative styles: *sympathetic* (empathetic emotional phrasing) (Benedict, 1992), *myth-laden* (rape myth reinforcement – culpability inferred language) (Benedict, 1992), or *non-judgmental* (fact-based narrative) (Tuchman, 1972).

The next section outlines the results of the qualitative analysis and provides illustrate examples of newspaper articles which evidence the narrative styles discussed above.

Results

A full list of the 7 categories utilised is provided in Table 1 which includes the *gender of the journalist*, the *gender of the victim* and the crime scene characteristics of *location, approach, threat of a weapon, weapon use*, for their contextual value (see Marhia, 2008). The narrative style of the article is reported in Table 2. The crime scene and demographic characteristics were included due to their possible influence on the perceived behavioural culpability of the male rape victim (Daughterty & Esper, 1998). The percentage of such characteristics recorded in the articles are also stated in Table 1.

A latent and manifest content analysis of newspaper articles focused on male rape victims. These content analyses were conducted in order to investigate (a) the journalist's narrative style (e.g., *sympathetic, myth-laden or non-judgmental*) regarding the rape victim, as identified through latent analysis; (b) whether the gender of the journalist informed the narrative style of the article informed by the rape victim's gender ascertained through manifest analysis and (c) identification of the crime scene location of the rape incidents (for example, whether the location (indoors/outdoors) influenced the inferred culpability of the victim) (see Table 1).

Male rape victim newspaper articles

Crime scene characteristics

Crime scene characteristics were included to contextualise their effect on the victim's behaviour preceding or during the event and with the victim's gender can influence how the story is reported (see Marhia, 2008).

<i>Crime Scene Characteristics</i>	
<i>Code</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Location</i>	Of the rapes reported by the newspapers, 50% were perpetrated indoors and 44 % took place outdoors (for one article the location was not mentioned).
<i>Victim-offender relationship</i>	The victim-offender relationship was predominantly stranger (89%) rather than acquaintance (11%).
<i>Demographics</i>	
<i>Gender of the assailant</i>	The gender of the assailants in all of the cases analysed was reported as being male.
<i>Sexual orientation and sexual history of victims and offenders</i>	The sexual orientation of the victim was not always explicitly mentioned. The victims' sexual orientation when identified was 33% heterosexual and 11% homosexual (the remainder (56%) of the data were omitted). In comparison, the only details provided regarding assailants was their sexual orientation as identified in 6% of the cases (i.e., one article) where he was reported as being homosexual. It was noteworthy that of the total sample, none of the cases included the sexual history of the victims.
<i>Approach employed by the assailant</i>	The approaches used to execute the rape of male victims were blitz (39%), and surprise attacks (39%), confidence method (documented in one article) and finally, drugs were used to incapacitate the victim in one article (the approach was not described in two of the articles).
<i>Coerced sexual acts</i>	As required for this analysis, the reports all mentioned that the male victim was raped. As a result of the different geographical jurisdictions covered by the publications, the definitions of rape are likely to have varied. In 50% of the newspaper reports, the male victim was described as being raped but the actual sex acts were not specified. Whereas, in 39% of cases, it was implied through the details of the rape provided (gay or prison context, or an AIDS test was required) that the coerced sexual act was anal rape and in 11% of the articles both forced oral and anal penetration were documented.
<i>Motivation for the rape</i>	The motive for rape was difficult to discern from the newspaper articles. However, in one article it was explicitly stated that homophobia was the motive; in contrast 22% of articles suggested that this was not the motive for the attack. The remainder (72%) did not specify this.

Table 1: Results of the manifest content analysis.

Gender pervasiveness

A further interesting finding was that the term '*rape victim*' was perceived as being gendered in that it was unusual for the term '*female*' to precede this phrase

Sources for newspaper articles

The source for the majority of news stories was police reports, in that, 67% of the cases had been reported to the police (as the investigating officers were quoted in the article). But, one of the articles stated why the victim had not gone to the police, less than a

fifth of the articles stated these cases were not reported to the police (17%). In the remaining three articles the source of the information was not provided.

The next section considers the results of the latent content or discourse analysis of the newspaper articles.

Narrative Styles

The gender of the journalists was analysed using manifest content analysis whereas the narrative style of the newspaper articles was identified through latent content analysis/discourse analysis of the discourse markers and cohesive devices such as the repetition of words or cohesive phrases which are illustrated below by the use of italics.

Eleven of the 18 male rape articles evidenced a *sympathetic* tone. The genders of the journalists who adopted a sympathetic tone were almost equally females (5) and males (6). Five of the newspaper articles were found to be of the *non-judgmental* narrative style (four male journalists and one female journalist were identified). Two of the articles were identified as being *myth-laden* (the journalists' gender was one male and one female). See Table 2 for a summary of the above results.

Narrative Style	Victim Gender	Journalist Gender
Sympathetic (N=11)	Male	Male (6)
		Female (5)
Non-Judgmental (N=5)	Male	Male (4)
		Female (1)
Myth-laden (n-2)	Male	Male (1)
		Female (1)

Table 2: Narrative style of male rape victim newspaper articles.

Sympathetic (N=11)

A *sympathetic* tone was identified as a result of the analysis of expressive discourse markers such as the use of emotive phrasing and adjectives (highlighted in italics) in the exemplar article extracts below.

In article [MRSNA086] by a male journalist, the first sentence established the *sympathetic* tone “*Men have been victims of sex crimes for as long as women, but do not get the support women do ...*” When the victim reported the crime to the police, “*... he was made to feel weak ... [and] ... as if he had brought it on himself*”. It was also emphasised that “*quite often*” when a man reports being raped “*his sexuality is called into question*”, echoing the treatment of “*female rape victims ... 30 years ago [that is] as if they asked for it in some way*”. In [MRSNA101] by a female journalist the *sympathetic* tone was evidenced regarding the gender neutral tone describing the vulnerability to rape. The article stated that case was that of a man who was raped after 10 pm on a “*public street*”, “*downtown*”, “*before midnight*”. “*Male rape victims are just as frightened, just as shamed, just as traumatised as their female counterparts*”. The female journalist sympathised with the male rape victim’s traumatic experience through her use of emotional phrasing and the explicitness of her gender neutral approach to this phenomenon. However, it was highlighted that men are less prepared for this experience as opposed to women who have been socialised to be hypervigilant of their susceptibility to sexual victimisation.

In article [MRSNA258] the male journalist used a *sympathetic* tone when discussing the rape of a male victim. The victim's profile was illustrated by the victim's age and he was described as a "*professional*" walking home from a "*West End discotheque*" in the early hours. A male then approached, started chatting to him and, then "*...without warning the stranger lashed out, bundled him into an alley and raped him*". It was also stated that the anonymity provided by the courts was not gender blind as men who were raped were not given the same protection as their female counterparts. In addition, it was highlighted that "*men who telephone rape crisis centres are devastated by the reception they receive*" (as they are perceived as '*hoaxers*'). This male journalist emphasised the gender-based inequalities in the protection of, and accessibility of service provisions to, male rape victims.

Non-Judgmental (N=5)

The following phrases were identified through analysis of the discourse markers as denoting a *non-judgmental* tone. Case examples of newspaper articles illustrating this non-judgmental approach by journalists are provided below. Objective phrases used by a male journalist included "*...the jury had been told...*", "*...later the youth told the jury...*", "*He is alleged to have made a sexual approach to the youth but was rebuffed*", and "*He claimed he was raped on the bed after the defendant put the couch under the door so nobody could come in*" [MRSNA059]. The *non-judgmental* tone of article [MRSNA213] took a factual and legislative perspective regarding male rape. The male journalist discussed law reforms originating from the needs-based evidence of "*police and counselling agencies [which] believe ...many cases of male rape...[are] unreported*". A case of male rape in prison is featured, "*his [the victim]cellmate...raped him and threatened to beat him if he shouted out*". Statistics were provided, the aim of the article being to raise public awareness regarding male rape.

Myth-laden (N=2)

These examples of newspaper article extracts provide evidence through the use of discourse markers which illustrate an overt *myth-laden* journalistic tone towards male rape victims by drawing on misconceptions such as '*only gay males get raped*' (Davies et al. 2005; McMullen, 1990, Stermac et al., 2004). In this article [MRSNA103] the tone of the female journalist is evident from the outset as being *myth-laden*. The man was described as having been "*raped*" at a location which is "*one of Edinburgh's most notorious gay haunts*". At least two people attacked the victim, and it was the "*second gay rape*" recently. The sexual nature (as opposed to control or power elements) of the incident was emphasised by stating it took place at "*an area exposed as being a popular hang-out for gay lovers*" as suggested by the apparent "*used condoms*" and "*hypodermic syringes*". It was also stated that the victim had been "*drinking*" at the local gay bar and was attacked when he was walking home. The female journalist heavily implied that male rape as being a solely gay crime which was linked to the alleged promiscuity of gay men through the references made to the '*used condoms*' and the use of recreational drugs within the gay sub-culture. The journalistic tone of this article therefore reinforces male rape myths and the construct that male rape only happens to gay men.

The key findings are (i) that male rape victims are treated more sympathetically than female rape victims who have historically been treated in a myth-laden and judgemental manner by the press) at a parallel time frame regarding the level of social and academic awareness of the phenomenon of male rape (thirty years ago), (ii) that the term "*rape victim*" is treated as inherently female and (iii) the gender of the reporter did not influence the journalistic tone of the article.

Discussion

This was an exploratory study which was unique in its nature, as there does not appear to have been a qualitative analysis of print newspaper articles regarding the influence of journalists' gender or the gender of victims on narrative style of the cases reported. No evidence was found to support this. The examination was contextualised by an analysis of the crime scene characteristics, as the rape event does not take place within a social vacuum and the situational variables may influence the narrative style regarding journalists' construction of rape victims' behaviour and hence their co-responsibility (Schneider, 2001).

Male rape survivor newspaper articles

It was found that the narrative style was not influenced by the gender of the reporter. However, there were three journalistic tones identified as being used by the journalists, (i) sympathetic, (ii) non-judgmental and (iii) myth-laden. The majority (61%) of the articles were *sympathetic* irrespective of the gender of the journalist. The *sympathetic* narrative style in the articles could reflect that male rape is still considered an anomaly by the public. Thus, the aim of the *sympathetic* narrative style of the male rape newspaper articles may be to raise awareness in order to encourage more males to come forward and report their criminal victimisation and seek help.

The *myth-laden* articles both involved gay male rape victims and the salacious detail provided did not construct them as '*socially legitimate victims*', which supports previous research findings (Richardson & May, 1999). Thus, it is tentatively suggested that the *narrative style* of the majority of the newspaper articles about male rape in the current study differ considerably from that of historically documented print articles regarding female rape victims at a parallel time frame (similar stage of public awareness and academic interest) such as the 1980s. This time frame was chosen to compensate for the dearth of research on this phenomenon; for example, this early research noted that newspaper articles regarding female rape victims tended to be *myth-laden* and *victim-blaming* (Benedict, 1992; Walkowitz, 1982). This strongly contrasts with the current more sympathetic description of male rape victims. Possible explanations are (i) that adult male sexual victimisation is still predominantly considered a challenge to perceptions of male invulnerability to this type of criminal victimisation; (ii) that as a result of the feminist critique of the historical portrayal of female rape victims, a more sensitive or sympathetic approach is taken; (iii) that male rape is even less likely to be reported due to the stigma attached, and possibility of the victim's sexual orientation being questioned (Hodge & Canter, 1998), so increased efforts are made to encourage reporting of this crime to the police.

Most of the newspaper articles that focused on male rape took a holistic approach, focusing on its prevalence, the possible motivations, deconstructing myths, and identifying the lack of suitable resources. These articles suggested that male rape is being perceived as an anomaly and that society is ill-prepared to address the needs of male victims.

The analysis of the crime scene characteristics found that the majority of rapes covered in the newspaper articles were those committed by strangers (using a blitz or surprise attack) which supports previous research by Soothill (2004). The element of surprise worked quite effectively, as men were ill-prepared to protect themselves against this type of assault, as they are not taught to attune their senses to such risky situations; unlike females who are schooled from a young age to be aware of their surroundings and be alert to potentially dangerous situations (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996). However, this focus on stranger rape does not reflect the reality of male rape where the offender is most likely to be an acquaintance (see Hickson et al., 1994; Hodge & Canter, 1998; Walker et al., 2005). The current study also contradicts assertions that stranger-danger focused articles were declining (Greer, 2003). However, this emphasis may explain why the majority of the newspaper

articles were of a sympathetic tone as these cases fitted the popular conception of 'real rape' (committed by a stranger and carried out as a blitz attack) as defined by Estrich (1987). The sexual orientation of male rape victims was predominantly identified as heterosexual often this was implied through references being made to a girlfriend or wife reducing the victim's contributory negligence (Radford & Jeffreys, 1987) and hence their role in their own criminal victimisation.

Finally, it was noted that the term '*rape*' was so synonymous with the female gender that journalists considered there was no apparent need to state '*female rape victim*' in its entirety. Instead, there was the inherent assumption that '*rape victim*' automatically denotes a 'female rape victim'; resulting in the possible gendering of the term '*rape victim*' a consequence of which is the marginalisation of male victims and maintains their invisibility within society.

Limitations of the present study

The findings of the current study were restricted by the replication of content across articles with no change in the narrative style from the original journalistic source. Thus, individual journalists' linguistic styles could not be identified and thus these articles were excluded. In addition, generalised rape feature stories predominated throughout the corpus of *male rape* newspaper articles rather than a detailed discussion of specific cases being provided.

Conclusions

This research on the gender representation of male rape victims in the print media and its impact on the narrative style of newspaper articles has produced interesting results as described above. Despite, the sample sizes being small, the findings of the current study provide a worthwhile contribution to the languishing research attention given to the news print medium. The findings also adhere to the trustworthiness criteria of credibility; transferability and dependability (see Graneheim & Lundman, 2004).

The power of print news publications should not be overlooked, especially, as the current trends in research appear to be focusing on the faster developing medium of cyber technology, such as the Internet and, to a lesser extent visual media, such as film and television. This study aims to encourage critical attention to be re-directed at the print media and its production processes which inform the newspaper article as it remains a powerful medium of communication.

Furthermore, the fact that the current study has identified the common perception that the term '*rape victim*' appears to be considered inherently gendered as being female is of great import. Particularly when considering the impact that this may have on the self-identity of male rape victims, their likelihood of reporting the crime to the police, their help-seeking behaviour and the availability of needs-directed services.

The current study has raised some important questions which can direct future research in the area, such as the examination of whether the print media is less judgmental in its representation of rape than historically has been the case. If this is the situation, has it made any impact on the reporting practices of rape victims? Further research is therefore required regarding gender and the representation of rape in the print media. However, a final caveat is that simple generalisations should not be drawn from the findings of the current study as these findings are only transferable to similar contexts. Nonetheless, these findings may be replicated with a much larger corpus of print media articles should it meet the criteria for the qualitative analysis carried out here.

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