

AN INVESTIGATION OF MULTIPLE PERPETRATOR RAPE

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates sexual assaults committed by multiple perpetrators. Chapter 1 reviews the literature on multiple perpetrator rape and demonstrates that it is an international and heterogeneous phenomenon. Chapter 2 critically examines the existing theories (including the Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending) proposed to explain multiple perpetrator rape. Some empirical evidence was found that supports the factors that these theories suggest contribute to this type of sexual offending. In Chapter 3 lone and multiple perpetrator rapes were compared, and simultaneously the effect the number of perpetrators involved in multiple perpetrator rapes has on offence characteristics was examined. Significant differences were found between lone, duo and 3+ groups for offender and offence characteristics. Chapter 4 examined cross-cultural differences between multiple perpetrator rapes committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands. Few significant differences were found. Chapter 5 analysed the reasons and motivations given by convicted perpetrators of multiple perpetrator rape for participating in the offence. The findings provided support for some of the factors proposed by the Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending as playing a role in multiple perpetrator rape. The results of the thesis are discussed in terms of limitations, future research and theoretical and practical implications.

To my parents and sisters for their unwavering support

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* Chapters 1 and 3 are copies of a published book chapter (Chapter 1) and a published journal article (Chapter 3) which retain their original pagination. Therefore, the indicated page numbers of the tables within these particular chapters refer to the original page numbers of these publications.

INTRODUCTION

In the last few years, rape committed by multiple perpetrators has made media headlines around the world (Kaiman, 2013; London Evening Standard, 2011; The Australian, 2014; Walsh 2009). A well-known, recent example that shocked the world and generated protests about women's rights in India was the brutal rape of a young female student in New Delhi which resulted in her death and the conviction and sentencing to death of four of the perpetrators involved (Burke, 2013). While this media coverage has drawn attention to this topic and contributed to an examination of this lesser known type of sexual offending, in the majority of the cases, it does not portray a complete and representative picture of rape committed by multiple perpetrators (Franklin, 2013; Woodhams & Horvath, 2013). This is due to the fact that usually it is the most extreme cases that are covered, either because of the amount of violence used during the assault, or because of the great number of perpetrators involved (Franklin, 2013; Woodhams & Horvath, 2013). In order to gain an understanding of this type of sexual offending it is logical to look at research on co-offending and research on sexual violence in general.

Co-offending literature

The term co-offending was coined more than 30 years ago by Reiss (1980) and refers to crimes that are committed in the presence of more than one offender. In his review of the co-offending literature, Reiss (1988) concluded that the studies completed at that time suggested that co-offending is associated with youth offending as it tended to decline as young people reached their twenties. Furthermore, the number of co-offenders present in a crime was found to decrease with age.

Over the years, research in the area of co-offending has developed significantly due to the impact that it is thought to have on crime: those that participate in co-offences go on to commit more offences, at a higher frequency and that are more serious; and offenders that start co-offending at an early age are more likely to develop more serious and more violent criminal careers (Andresen & Felson, 2012a). However, Carrington (2002) argued against a correlation between co-offending and offence severity because he found, in line with previous authors (Erickson, 1971; Reiss, 1980; Reis & Farrington, 1991), that the co-offending rates for property offences (which are considered to be less serious than violent offences) are higher than those for violent offences (especially for crimes such as aggravated assault and sexual assault).

Despite this developing interest in co-offending, a great deal of the literature in this area has been critiqued for focusing solely on theoretical perspectives such as examining peer influence on delinquency (McGloin & Nguyen, 2012), while the empirical research analysing patterns and processes of co-offending is insufficient and under-developed. Andresen and Felson also (2012a) considered that there was a need for more empirical studies using large data sets. In order to address this knowledge gap, Andresen and Felson (2012a; 2012b) examined the diversification of lone and co-offences using a large data set that permitted a breakdown of offences by age and crime type. They found that co-offenders committed a greater variety of crime types than lone offenders and therefore, concluded that co-offending is more diversified than lone offending. Furthermore, they found that co-offending participation rates and the mean number of offenders per criminal incident differ significantly across crime types. They reported that violent crime (homicide, aggravated assault and sexual assault) did not conform to what is usually found for property and violent property crime (i.e., a decrease in co-offending as offenders age and a decrease of the mean number of offenders

per criminal incident as offenders age). Andresen and Felson (2012b) highlighted the need to separate out crime types when studying co-offending.

In relation to sexual offending, a further breakdown of the type of offence is argued to be necessary because; for example, it is expected that sexual assaults committed against children have different patterns to those committed against adults (Andresen & Felson, 2012b). There are very few studies in the co-offending literature that focus on a specific crime type and the ones that exist have examined property crimes such as burglary and robbery (Alarid, Burton, & Hochstetler 2009; Hochstetler 2001). There are no studies in the co-offending literature that exclusively analysed sexual assaults committed by multiple perpetrators.

Sexual offending literature

The literature on sexual offending is extensive and continually developing (Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006). However, most of the research conducted has been on lone perpetrator sexual offending and when sexual offences committed by multiple perpetrators have been included in samples, they are rarely separated out from lone offences. Since the late 1950s, there have been a few studies examining what was termed as “gang rape” (Blanchard, 1959; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; O’Sullivan, 1991; Sanday, 2007; Ullman, 2007) and “group rape” (Amir, 1971; Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Brownmiller 1975; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Allison, 2006; Wright & West, 1981). In response to some issues related to both these terms, Horvath and Kelly (2009) proposed the term multiple perpetrator rape (MPR) to describe any sexual assault that involved two or more perpetrators (see Chapter 1 for a detailed discussion). This is the term used throughout the thesis.

There has been a recent surge in interest in MPR which has resulted in the publication of some scientific articles (Alleyne, Gannon, Ó Ciardha, & Wood, 2014; Chambers, Horvath, & Kelly, 2010, 2013; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs, Vermeiren, Jansen, & Doreleijers, 2011; Morgan, Brittain, & Welch, 2012; Woodhams, Cooke, Harkins, & da Silva, 2012) and even the first book dedicated to MPR (Horvath & Woodhams, 2013). However, compared to research conducted on lone rape, MPR still remains an under-researched area with various gaps (Harkins & Dixon, 2010; Horvath & Woodhams, 2013). For example, there are inconsistencies in the findings of the studies that compared lone rape to MPR in relation to some of the offender and offence variables (Harkins & Dixon, 2010). This is problematic because it is not possible to conclude if these differences are due to real differences in the samples studied, or simply reflect the diverse study designs utilised. It is not clear what effect the number of perpetrators involved in a MPR has on the offence characteristics and if that has contributed to some of the inconsistencies in the findings between the studies comparing lone and MPR. While most authors have considered that two people can be considered a group and included them in their multiple perpetrator samples (e.g., Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2004, 2006; Ullman, 2007), others only included groups of three or more perpetrators (e.g., Amir, 1971; Metropolitan Police Authority, 2009; O'Sullivan, 1991). Furthermore, since many of these studies were carried out in different countries, it is not clear if discrepancies in the results of these studies are due to socio-cultural differences or to different study designs as, to date, no cross-cultural comparison has been conducted. Additionally, there are no empirical studies examining the offenders' motivations to participate in a MPR, and the unique processes and dynamics that play a role in this type of sexual offending.

The overall aim of the thesis is to specifically examine sexual assaults committed by multiple perpetrators and address some of the above gaps in the literature in order to provide a more complete understanding of MPR.

Specifically, the thesis will:

- Critically examine the empirical evidence for factors and processes that theories of MPR have proposed as contributing to this type of sexual offending;
- Investigate the differences in offence characteristics and victim and offender socio-demographic characteristics between rapes committed by multiple (duos and groups of three or more perpetrators) and lone offenders;
- Investigate if there are cross-cultural differences in MPR;
- Analyse the reasons and motivations that convicted offenders give for their involvement in a MPR.

Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is divided into three parts. Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) provides an overview of what is known about this type of sexual offence, and examines the existing theories and studies in this area. Part II (Chapters 3 to 5) consists of three empirical studies that: compare lone, duo, and 3+ group offending based on offence and victim and offender socio-demographic characteristics; examine differences in offender and offence characteristics between MPRs committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands; and analyse the reasons given by convicted perpetrators of MPR for their involvement in the assault. Part III (Chapter 6) provides a general discussion of the findings and conclusions.

Part I (Chapters 1 and 2) reviews the literature related to MPR. Chapter 1 examines MPR from an international perspective. It begins with a discussion of the issues related to the definition of this type of sexual offence and why the term MPR was proposed. It then reviews the existing literature on prevalence and incidence rates for MPR internationally in non-industrialised and industrialised societies. Additionally, an overview is provided of six different contexts where MPR can be found, ranging from street gangs to wars, fraternities, sports teams, prisons and anti-gay/lesbian settings. Chapter 2 provides an overview of the theories that have been proposed to explain MPR, including the most recent and comprehensive model which is the Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending (Harkins & Dixon, 2010; 2013). Furthermore, the factors and processes that this model, and earlier theories suggested as contributing to MPR, are critically examined by considering if there is empirical evidence to support their role in this type of sexual offending.

Part II (Chapters 3 to 5) consists of empirical studies conducted to address gaps in the MPR research. Chapter 3 compares MPRs to lone rapes and simultaneously examines the effect the number of perpetrators involved in MPRs has on offence characteristics. It presents a study where rapes committed by multiple (duos and groups of three or more perpetrators) and lone offenders were compared on offence characteristics and victim and offender socio-demographic characteristics. Chapter 4 explores possible cross-cultural differences in MPR. A study is described where differences in offence and offender characteristics between MPRs committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands were examined. Chapter 5 examines reasons and motivations behind MPR. In the study presented here convicted perpetrators of MPR were interviewed and asked about their involvement and reasons for participating in the offence.

Part III (Chapter 6), the concluding chapter, summarises the main results of the thesis, draws together the overall conclusions, discusses the limitations of the current work, and suggests directions for future research, and outlines the theoretical and practical implications of the results of this thesis.

Ethical Approval

The British Psychological Society guidelines for ethical practice were adhered to in the design of the research projects that form this thesis. Ethical approval was obtained from the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Ethics Committee at the University of Birmingham. Approval for research proposals was also obtained from the Serious Crime Analysis Section (National Crime Agency) (Chapter 3), the Portuguese Parole and Prison Services (Direção-Geral de Reinserção e Serviços Prisionais) (Chapters 4 and 5) and the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (Chapter 4).

STATEMENT OF AUTHORSHIP

Chapters 1-5 contain material that has been published¹ or has been submitted² for publication to various academic journals. As a consequence, each chapter has its own introduction and discussion. Repetition of material has been avoided where possible but there may be some overlap in the background content of these articles. The authorship on each chapter indicates collaborative working. To clarify, I obtained and analysed the data in all of the chapters and I am the primary author. My supervisors Jessica Woodhams and Leigh Harkins are also named as authors because they commented and provided feedback on the drafts. Chantal van den Berg and Jan Hendriks are also named authors in one article (Chapter 4) because they provided the data for one of the samples used in that study and they contributed with feedback on the article itself.

¹ Chapter 1- da Silva, T., Harkins, L., & Woodhams, J. (2013). Multiple perpetrator rape as an international phenomenon. In M. Horvath, & J. Woodhams, (Eds.), *Handbook on the study of multiple perpetrator rape: A multidisciplinary response to an international problem* (pp. 10-36). Abingdon: Routledge.

Chapter 3 - da Silva, T., Woodhams, J., & Harkins, L. (2013). Heterogeneity within multiple perpetrator rapes: A national comparison of lone, duo and 3+ perpetrator rapes. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*. Advance online publication. doi:10.1177/1079063213497805

² Chapter 2 - da Silva, T., Woodhams, J., & Harkins, L. (submitted). Multiple perpetrator rape: A critical review of existing explanatory theories. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*.

Chapter 4 - da Silva, T., Woodhams, J., Harkins, L., van den Berg, C., & Hendriks, J. (submitted). Cultural differences in multiple perpetrator rape: A comparison of juvenile Portuguese and Dutch offenses. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*.

Chapter 5 - da Silva, T., Woodhams, J., & Harkins, L. (submitted). "An adventure that went wrong": Reasons given by convicted perpetrators of multiple perpetrator rape for their involvement in the offense. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*.

PART I:
INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1:
MULTIPLE PERPETRATOR RAPE: AN INTERNATIONAL PHENOMENON

The aim of this chapter was to provide an overview of what is known about sexual assaults committed by multiple perpetrators, by reviewing the relevant literature. It begins by examining the issues surrounding the definition of this type of sexual offending and how the term MPR was proposed. Existing prevalence and incidence rates for MPR internationally in non-industrialised and industrialised societies are then analysed. Finally, six different contexts where MPR can be found are examined.

The following chapter was published in the “Handbook on the study of multiple perpetrator rape: A multidisciplinary response to an international problem” in 2013. Permission was granted by Taylor & Francis for its use in this thesis.

2 Multiple perpetrator rape

An international phenomenon

*Teresa da Silva, Leigh Harkins and
Jessica Woodhams*

International variations in definition

For it to be possible to examine multiple perpetrator rape (MPR) as an international phenomenon it is necessary to first clearly define the term, since a range of terminology has been used in the past, often referring to the same or a similar type of assault (Horvath & Kelly, 2009). The terms used tend to vary according to different countries and some can be used to refer to both rape and consensual sexual practice (Horvath & Kelly, 2009). In the United States of America (USA) the terms associated with MPR are ‘gang bang’, ‘party rape’, ‘campus gang rape’, ‘fraternity gang rape’ and ‘running a train’ (Rothman *et al.*, 2008). In South Africa the terms ‘jackrolling’ and ‘streamlining’ have been identified (Wood, 2005). In the United Kingdom (UK), terms such as ‘line up’ and ‘battery chick’ are used by gangs (Firmin, 2010). In Australia the term ‘pack rape’ often appears in the media (Wilson, 2009). This term is believed to originate from a case discussed in the *Daily Mirror* described as ‘a kind of sexual blitzkrieg’ (Woods, 1969, p. 105). The terms used to describe MPR can also differ according to the context; for example, ‘collective rape’ is defined by Green (2004, p. 102) as ‘a pattern of sexual violence perpetrated on civilians by agents of a state, political group, and/or politicized ethnic group’.

In the academic literature, the terms ‘gang rape’ and ‘group rape’ have been utilised, occasionally even interchangeably. However, these terms have certain connotations and different possible definitions. Horvath and Kelly (2009) discuss in some detail the difference between these two terms and how they have been employed. They point out that even though the term ‘gang rape’ is mostly found in the literature in the 1970s and the 1980s, it is still used by some academics—for example, Ullman (1999, 2007).

There is considerable debate about what constitutes a ‘gang’, as the term has many meanings and associations. Alleyne and Wood (2010) state that even after decades of research in the area, there is still a lack of agreement regarding the exact definition of a gang. They go on to explain that in Europe, researchers have reached more of a consensus. The Eurogang network’s definition of ‘a street gang (or troublesome youth group corresponding to a street gang elsewhere) is any durable, street-oriented youth group whose identity includes involvement in illegal

activity' (Weerman *et al.*, 2009, p. 20). However, research in the area of MPR does not confirm that most of these rapes are committed by 'durable street-oriented youth groups'. Therefore, this definition is not representative of the majority of MPRs. Taking into consideration that it is necessary to differentiate between different forms of sexual violence committed by multiple perpetrators, Firmin (see Chapter 6 of this volume) highlights the need to use the term 'gang' more appropriately when referring to MPRs. She utilises the term 'gang-associated rape' to define rapes that are committed within a gang context, with gang-related motives. Furthermore, she states that not all cases of gang-associated rapes are a subset of MPR, as not all cases involve multiple perpetrators.

In an attempt to overcome the constraints of the term 'gang rape', a number of authors in the MPR literature have more recently utilised the terms 'group rape' or 'group sexual offending' (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2006). Bijleveld and Hendriks (2003, p. 237), in an effort to distinguish between 'gang' and 'group rape', define 'group rape' as 'a more or less ad hoc congregation of individuals (with a minimum of two actors), in which no pecking order or power structure is outlined a priori'. However, this definition has a number of limitations, since it does not capture some types of multiple perpetrator sexual offending. Furthermore, in the social psychology literature there is substantial debate about the definition of a group, and many different definitions have been proposed. Baron, Kerr and Miller (1999) state that several definitions emphasise that groups should create a feeling of belonging by having some permanence, structure and psychological meaning for their members. On the other hand, other definitions are more flexible, and for a number of individuals to be considered a group only some type of communication or mutual social influence has to be present. These more flexible definitions range from 'two or more individuals who influence each other through social interaction' (Forsyth, 1983, p. 81) to simply 'two or more people' (Williams, 2010, p. 269).

Horvath and Kelly (2009) suggest that where the term 'group rape' continues to be used in MPR research, Brown's (2000, p. 3) definition of a group should be favoured: 'A group exists when two or more people define themselves as members of it and when its existence is recognised by at least one other.' They note that even though the term 'group rape' has some acceptance in the MPR literature, there still remain some issues as to whether it is the most appropriate term.

First, there is some controversy in the social science literature related to whether 'dyads' or 'duos' should be included in group research and theory. On the one hand, Williams (2010) states that even though dyads have certain unique properties, for the most part they are groups of two and function under the same principles and theories that explain group processes for bigger groups. On the other hand, Moreland (2010) argues that dyads should not be considered groups: according to him some phenomena typical of groups—such as relational demography, socialisation, coalition formation and majority/minority influence—cannot occur in dyads, and those that do may function differently.

Second, even in the MPR literature there are authors who differentiate between duos and groups of three or more people. In her study on MPR on campuses in

the USA, O'Sullivan (1991) included only groups of three or more men, as she considered that the group dynamics applicable to MPR are only activated when there are at least three perpetrators present. Amir (1971) and Groth and Birnbaum (1979), also in the USA, distinguished between rapes committed by pairs and those committed by three or more perpetrators. Taking into consideration that a great number of MPR studies in the UK indicate that duos represent a large category of perpetrators, this concern is relevant (Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2004, 2006; Woodhams, 2008; see Chapter 4 in this volume by Mackenzie Lambine for greater discussion of this issue).

Due to all the issues that have been examined above, Horvath and Kelly (2009, p. 94) define MPR 'as any sexual assault which involves two or more perpetrators'. They suggest that it should be used as an overarching term when referring to sexual assaults perpetrated by multiple assailants. They argue that this concept could facilitate the elaboration of subtypes which can be common transnationally or specific to certain contexts. They propose four subtypes. The first is 'gang rape', which has been used transnationally and is defined by Bijleveld and Hendriks (2003, p. 237) as concerning a 'group of individuals who operate together on the basis of a certain covenant, a certain shared identity and shared norms; in this gang (often strict) pre-set rules operate, membership is not open and transitory but instead fairly select and static'. The second is 'duo rape', which describes a sexual assault committed by two perpetrators. The third is 'fraternal rape', which refers to rapes committed by three or more perpetrators with varying allegiances. The fourth is 'military fraternal rape', describing rapes committed by multiple perpetrators in war. They believe that as research on MPR develops, other subtypes will arise. As will be demonstrated in this chapter, MPR can be found in various contexts. Even though it is possible to identify common characteristics between these different contexts, there are certain aspects that are unique to each. The elaboration of subtypes will allow a better understanding of these unique aspects and a more complete picture of MPR will emerge.

Incidence and prevalence of MPR internationally

MPR in non-industrialised societies

It is believed that MPR is common to many countries and that it has been present throughout history (Brownmiller, 1975; Sanday, 2007). As an example of the long history of MPR, Sanday (2007, p. 47) states that 'venting homoerotic desire in the gang rape of women who are treated as male property is the subject of several biblical stories'. Despite its widespread nature, there are no published cross-cultural studies of MPR. To get an idea of the variation of this form of rape in different cultures, it is necessary to examine existing cross-cultural studies of sexual violence in general.

Rozée (1993) highlights the importance of studying non-industrial societies, as they are characterised by varying economic, political and social structures. According to her, cross-cultural studies of non-industrialised societies control

for acculturation to Western ideas and the effects of industrialisation. When examining sexual violence, she shows that depending on the definition used, cross-cultural studies of rape have found incidence rates ranging from 42 to 90 per cent (Bart, Blumberg, Tombs & Behan, 1975; Broude & Green, 1976; Minturn, Grosse & Haider, 1969; Sanday, 1981).

A conceptual framework was developed by Rozée (1993) to examine rape cross-culturally among non-industrial societies. She defined two different types of rape: non-normative and normative. Non-normative rape is genital contact that is not consensual and violates the social norms of a society. Usually there are punishments and sanctions against this type of rape. On the other hand, while normative rape is not consensual (it is against the wishes of the victim), it is considered acceptable behaviour as it does not violate the social norms of a society. Rozée (1993) divided this type of rape into six different categories: marital rape, exchange rape, punitive rape, theft rape, ceremonial rape and status rape (see Table 2.1). Using Murdock and White's (1969) standard cross-cultural representative sample of societies, Rozée (1993) examined a random sample of 35 non-industrialised societies. These societies were representative of six regions of the world—Sub-Saharan Africa, Circum-Mediterranean, East Eurasia, Insular Pacific, North America and South and Central America—and the time period sampled ranged from 1750 BC to the late 1960s. She found that non-normative rape was present in 63 per cent of the societies, while normative rape was evident in 97 per cent.

From Rozée's (1993) description of the different categories of rape, it can be seen that MPR clearly occurs in at least half of them. In punitive rape it can occur as punishment against a woman for not respecting a man's authority, for rejecting a man who is considered to have rightful access to her, for behaving in a way that is considered to be exclusively the right of males or for her husband's wrongdoings. This type of rape frequently involves multiple assailants and Rozée (1993) gives various examples from several societies. Citing Cook (1909), she describes a particularly violent form of MPR in the Bororo society of South America. If a female is not spoken for or married by the age of 12 or 14 she can be seized by the men of the village and raped by all of them. In the same society, if a husband suspects his wife of adultery or is angered by her, he may choose to send her to the men's house, where she is at their disposal and becomes the village prostitute. A recent example of this type of rape that became well known internationally due to extensive media coverage was the MPR of Mukhtar Mai in Pakistan in 2002 (Karkera, 2006). As punishment for the alleged wrongdoing of her brother, a tribal council ordered the MPR of Mukhtar Mai, which was carried out by four men of the village.

MPR can also be found in theft rape, which generally happens during wars or raids. Rozée (1993) states that these women are often subjected to group rape as they are seen as the common property of their abductors. Theft rape also includes stealing women for wives, which is more often associated with lone rapes.

MPR is also present in the context of various ceremonies (ceremonial rape). Rozée (1993) gives the example of a ceremony in the Arunta society of Australia

Table 2.1 Categories of normative rape defined by Rozée (1993) and percentages found in her cross-cultural sample of societies

<i>Type of rape</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>% of prevalence rates</i>
Marital rape	Unwanted sexual contact occurring within a marriage	40
Exchange rape	The use of female genital contact by males as a bargaining tool or sign of solidarity	71
Punitive rape	Is characterised by any genital contact used to punish or discipline a woman	14
Theft rape	Occurs when women are abducted, in most cases to be used as slaves or prostitutes	63
Ceremonial rape	Can be found in 'defloration' rituals which are initiation rituals aimed at bringing a young girl into womanhood, in virginity tests and in ceremonies which involve sexual intercourse	49
Status rape	Any unwanted genital contact that takes place as a result of acknowledged differences in hierarchy or social classes between the individuals involved	29

where the future husband of a 14- or 15-year-old girl organises with the other men of the tribe for the girl to be taken into the bush, where a designated man performs a 'vulva cut' with a stone, after which she is raped by all of the men except the future husband.

Although exact numbers of the incidence of MPR do not exist, it is possible to conclude that there is evidence of its presence cross-culturally in non-industrialised societies over a long time period.

MPR in current industrialised societies

An examination of the literature in current industrialised societies reveals that MPR continues to be found in several different contexts internationally. Harkins and Dixon (2010) explain that the incidence and prevalence of multiple perpetrator sexual offences are difficult to determine because of methodological issues such as the definition of rape and the different study designs that are utilised. Data can be collected from many different sources, ranging from survey studies, victim allegations to the police and clinical and hospital settings to non-governmental organisations (Swart, Gilchrist, Butchart, Seedat & Martin, 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006; Wright & West, 1981). Additionally, the majority of the official records of crime statistics do not distinguish between lone and multiple perpetrator sexual offending. Even though they supply information about national rates of sexual offending, in most cases it is not possible to identify what percentage of the crimes was committed by multiple offenders (Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2006). To further complicate matters, rape is one of the most under-reported crimes, and

therefore the number of reported rapes is lower than both available incidence and prevalence rates (Walby & Allen, 2004). Andersson, Mhatre, Mqotsi and Penderis' (1998) research in South Africa found that women who had been sexually assaulted by multiple perpetrators were considerably less likely than lone perpetrator rape victims to report the crime to the police, meaning that official statistics for MPR could be even more of an underestimate of the scale of MPR in our communities than those for lone perpetrator rapes.

In spite of the various difficulties in arriving at accurate incidence and prevalence rates, those that have been reported will be briefly examined. This is only possible for countries that have published studies and surveys conducted in this area. Naturally this limits a comparison to just those countries and makes it extremely difficult to gain a clear idea of the rates of MPR internationally.

In the UK, no national random sample study of the incidence and prevalence of rape has been published (Kelly, Lovett & Regan, 2005). Since 1998 the British Crime Survey (BCS) has included a section on rape and sexual assault, but no distinction is made between lone and multiple perpetrator sexual assault. Nevertheless, there have been other studies that have differentiated between lone rape and MPR. Wright and West (1981) studied incidents of attempted and completed rapes reported to the police between 1972 and 1976 in six English counties. They found that 13 per cent of the sexual offences involved multiple perpetrators. More recently, a study in the London borough of Southwark conducted by Curran and Millie (2003) reported that 19 per cent of sexual allegations in that borough for the period of April 2002 to March 2003 involved multiple perpetrators. Kelly, Lovett and Regan (2005) studied a large sample of service users from three sexual assault referral centres in the UK, combining prospective case-tracking across six sites. Their findings revealed that 11 per cent of cases from a sexual assault referral centre in Manchester were perpetrated by multiple assailants.

O'Sullivan (1991) reports that in the USA, rates of MPR range from less than 2 per cent in student populations to up to 26 per cent in police samples. Franklin (2004) estimates that even though the exact rate of MPR in the USA is unknown, it is likely to be between 10 and 33 per cent. She cites various studies, some of which found alarmingly high numbers of rapes involving multiple perpetrators (Amir, 1971; Kanin, 1985). More recently, based on findings from the National Violence Against Women report, Tjaden and Thoennes (2006) found that 13.5 per cent of female rape victims were raped by two perpetrators and 8.3 per cent were raped by three or more perpetrators. Among male rape victims the figures were 12.1 and 4.6 per cent, respectively. However, they note that these victims may have been sexually assaulted by multiple perpetrators during a single incident, by different lone offenders during multiple incidents, or both. There is a need therefore to use caution when interpreting information from general surveys.

In South Africa, known for its high rate of rape (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002), there are several studies with different findings. Whereas the National Victims of Crime Survey reported that 12 per cent of rapes involved two or more perpetrators (Hirschowitz, Worku & Orkin, 2000), a study looking at rapes registered between 1996 and 1998 at several hospitals found 27 per cent to have been committed by

multiple perpetrators (Swart *et al.*, 2000). On the other hand, Vetten and Haffejee (2005) focused on reports of rape and attempted rape made at six central police stations during 1999. They also found that 27 per cent of allegations involved two or more perpetrators. More recently, Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell and Dunkle (2009) conducted a study where they interviewed men across 1,738 households and found that 8.9 per cent revealed they had raped with one or more other perpetrators. These differences in figures are likely due to the different samples that were used, which ranged from community surveys involving women and men to hospital data and police records.

In Australia, the National Crime and Safety Survey (2002) found that 23 per cent of adult victims of sexual assault (male and female) reported that they had been assaulted by two or more assailants (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2004). Also in Australia, the Woman's Safety Survey (McLennan, 1996) found that 12 per cent of women who had experienced sexual violence (sexual assault and/or sexual threat) in the previous 12 months reported more than one perpetrator.

From the studies examined above it is possible to conclude that MPR is present in various industrialised societies. The upper estimates of the prevalence and incidence rates also suggest that this form of sexual violence is a significant problem. Although it is difficult to compare rates between countries because of the diverse samples and study designs utilised, it is possible to conclude that in the UK MPR seems less prevalent, with figures ranging from above 10 per cent to under 20 per cent of all rapes. In the USA, South Africa and Australia in general the lower estimates are similar to those from the UK; however, the upper estimates are over 20 per cent, and in the USA and South Africa they almost reach 30 per cent. That said, taking into consideration that there are so few studies, at this point in time it is premature to attempt to conclude whether MPR is more of a problem in some countries than in others. Further research is required to reach concrete conclusions.

Contexts of MPR

Not only does MPR occur in several diverse contexts throughout the world, it is also perpetrated by different types of groups. These can range from loosely formed groups of men that get together for an evening to tight-knit groups with a clear structure and identity—for example, gangs, fraternities and sports teams (Brownmiller, 1975; Trebon, 2007). In their review of sexual offending in groups, Harkins and Dixon (2010) analyse a number of current contexts in which multiple perpetrator sexual offending is found. They describe several sub-categories of offences, which they divide into two main themes: MPR of 'peers and adults' and 'multiple perpetrator offences against children' (see Table 2.2). They state that the type of offending most commonly recognised is rape of adolescent and adult females by groups of adolescent or adult men. Children can be victims of sexual assault by multiple perpetrators in various different contexts, as can be seen in Table 2.2. Harkins and Dixon (2010) note that for some of these types of offences there is a paucity of academic research and empirical evidence, even though the media has shown a great interest in this area and many cases have been widely publicised.

Table 2.2 Contexts in which multiple perpetrator sexual offending occurs
(Harkins & Dixon, 2010)

<i>Rape of peers/adults</i>	<i>Multiple perpetrator offences against children</i>
Rape in street gangs	Paedophile organisations
Fraternity rape	Child sex rings
Rape in sports settings either by coaches or players	Rape in sports settings either by coaches or players
Rape in war	Day care centres
Prison rapes	Residential care
Group date rape not associated to fraternities	
Rape in countries under corrupt governments	
Human sex trading	

A brief overview follows of six of the different contexts in which MPR of peers and adults can be found. These contexts were chosen due to the amount of research conducted in those areas. For that reason, contexts where children are victims of MPR are not analysed, as there is a significant dearth of research in that area (see Chapter 12 by Miranda Horvath and Jacqueline Gray for more information in relation to these cases in the courtroom).

Street gangs

MPRs in the context of street gangs occur in several diverse countries. As discussed above, the term 'gang rape' is often associated with subtypes of MPR that are not committed by street gangs, which can understandably introduce confusion in trying to understand it in this context. It has already been concluded that it is important to distinguish MPRs committed by organised gangs engaged in a range of other criminal activities from those committed by perpetrators with a transient and loose association with one another, who may not engage in other illegal activities. Thus discussion in this section will focus on MPR committed by organised gangs (see Chapters 6 and 14 for more extensive discussions of MPR in the context of street gangs).

A clear example of MPR committed by a street gang is described by Mokwena (1991) in a paper on 'jackrolling' (Wood, 2005). This term was coined in the 1980s to refer to the abduction and rape of young women in black townships in South Africa. It was originally associated with a gang called the 'Jackrollers', who were initially involved in various criminal activities but over time came to focus mainly on rape (Vetten & Haffejee, 2005). These rapes were consciously committed to put women who were considered unattainable or 'snobbish' in their place (Vetten & Haffejee, 2005). As this practice became fashionable, 'jackroll' became a common word in the township vocabulary and anyone who committed this type of rape could be a 'jackroller' (Sigsworth, 2009). Subsequently, it became associated with gangs of armed youths.

Gang-related rapes do not seem to be restricted to countries with elevated levels of crime, such as South Africa. Kersten (1993), in his article about subculture formation in Japan—a country known for its low crime rate—cites Sato (1991), who describes gang rapes committed by members of youth gangs called ‘yankee’. The victims of these rapes are girls who are already involved in a deviant life style and, because of that, tend not to report the rapes to the police. Kersten (1993) states that it is difficult to obtain accurate information about these rapes and that Sato’s analysis was based principally on hearsay. Therefore, the extent of MPR committed by street gangs in Japan is unknown.

Harkins and Dixon (2010) note that the literature related to MPR committed by street gangs is limited and mainly makes reference to coerced group sex as a form of gang initiation. Knox (2004) describes a practice known as ‘being sexed in’, in which to become members of a gang, some females have sex with multiple male gang members. Other studies report that there are cases in which females peripheral to a gang, who want to become members, have been deceived by male gang members into participating in group sex initiations (Hagedorn & Devitt, 1999; Portillos, 1999).

In the UK, Firmin (2010, 2011, also see Chapter 6 in the current volume), in her work related to the impact of youth and gang violence on women and girls, found evidence of sexual exploitation of girls associated with gangs, including MPR. Additionally, in Chapter 14 of the current volume, Densley, Davis and Mason describe a study carried out in London, with similar conclusions. Firmin was able to identify several reasons why girls and women experienced sexual violence. These could be related to intra-gang punishment and exploitation, to inter-gang punishment or threat and to gang-associated sexual violence against family members. Participants in the study described several situations of multiple perpetrator sexual violence (Firmin, 2010, 2011). These included girls being ‘passed around’ gangs in order to perform ‘sexual favours’. When girls had casual sex with more than one member of a gang over time they lost their right to say no to sexual contact with any member of that group. These girls were referred to as ‘battery chicks’. ‘Line ups’, where a girl performs oral sex on boys in a line, were also reported. Some girls explained how they had initially been protected by the gang in situations where they were in danger, but then found there was an expectation that as ‘gratitude’ they had to have sex with the whole group. Gang rape was also feared as a weapon—for example, in retaliation against the male they associated with, or as a punishment. There were even accounts of girls setting up other girls to be raped, either as a punishment or sometimes to avoid being a victim of an assault themselves. Similar situations were also described by Miller (2001) in her research on girls associated with gangs in the USA. Densley, Davis and Mason (Chapter 14 in this volume) also found most of these situations in the study they describe in the current volume. Furthermore, they state that a few participants suggested some male gang members also raped other male gang members as a form of punishment and to emasculate them.

Rape in war and political sexual violence

It is commonly said that rape in war is as old as war itself (Isikozlu & Millard, 2010). Its widespread and systematic occurrence in the wars in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Rwanda led to the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1820 (June 2008) to prevent its use as a weapon of war. Nonetheless, before that a number of international treaties, from the Hague to the Geneva Conventions, and several UN declarations outlawed rape during war, but were mostly ignored (Aydelatt, 1993).

In countries at war or where there is political conflict it is even more difficult to obtain accurate incidence and prevalence figures for MPR. This is first because of the nature of this form of sexual violence, which makes it difficult to quantify as it involves multiple perpetrators, victims and assaults that can be repeated daily for months (Green, 2004). The other factors that contribute to this situation range from the lack of record keeping caused by the chaos of war to the silence of the victims (Green, 2004). There are various reasons why many victims do not report the crimes. They may choose not to out of fear, there may be no institutions they can report it to, or where such institutions do exist they may have no access to them. Furthermore, many of the victims are either killed after the assault or die from their injuries or as a result of other incidents related to the conflict (Isikozlu & Millard, 2010). Here too most of the statistical data do not differentiate between lone and MPR, and the majority of the numbers presented are related to both. Where there is data available it suggests that a great number of these rapes are committed by multiple perpetrators. For example, the majority of the rapes that occurred in the Kosovo conflict documented by Human Rights Watch (2000) were committed by at least two perpetrators.

Wood (2006) refers to some well-known cases of sexual violence in war where there are estimates of numbers of rape victims. At the end of the Second World War it is estimated that soldiers from the Soviet Army were responsible for between 95,000 and 130,000 rapes. Chang (1997) estimates that from 1937 to 1938 in the Chinese city of Nanjing, 20,000 to 80,000 women and girls were raped and executed by Japanese soldiers. More recently, a European Union investigation reported that around 20,000 girls and women were raped in 1992 in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In some of the current wars and conflicts throughout the world, rape is still widely used as a weapon of war and the numbers of victims vary from hundreds to thousands (Bastick, Grimm & Kunz, 2007). Although it is probable that sexual violence exists in most wars, the extent of its occurrence varies and it is present in different forms (Wood, 2006). It has to be noted that in some conflicts and wars, its use appears very limited. Wood (2006) gives the examples of the conflicts in Israel/Palestine, Sri Lanka and Peru, where low numbers of sexual violence cases were reported.

Isikozlu and Millard (2010) developed a typology of wartime rape which is organised according to three general categories. Category A describes rape perpetrated by members of an armed group toward members of the same armed group or armed force. Category B describes rape perpetrated by an armed group or armed force against a member of the civilian population. Category C

describes rape perpetrated by members of one armed group towards members of another armed group. The authors state that category B is the most well-known and acknowledged category of rape during war, and MPR is very common here. Within this general category they identify eight different sub-types: rape by an ally, sexual slavery, rape as a military strategy, rape by a neighbour, rape camps, rape in detention, opportunistic rape and targeted rape. The rapes are systematic and widespread and are generally committed by a well-organised armed group under an order to attack civilians. In many cases it is unclear if the perpetrators are ordered to rape or not.

Even though there is a substantial amount of literature related to wartime rape, the reasons why men rape during war have been under-researched, with very few empirical studies conducted. While some authors emphasise the role of socio-cultural or situational factors, others propose that individual and psychological factors must also be taken into account. In an attempt to find out why soldiers rape during war, Eriksson Baaz and Stern (2009) interviewed soldiers in the Congo who had been involved in the recent war in that country. They found that the soldiers described two types of rape: one which they said was sexually driven 'lust rape' and another, 'evil rape', motivated by anger and rage. They explained that the 'lust rapes' were related to men being deprived of sex, while the 'evil rapes' arose from frustrations related to the act of warring, poverty and neglect. Eriksson Baaz and Stern (2009, p. 497) concluded that these soldiers 'explicitly linked their rationale for rape with their inabilities (or "failures") to inhabit certain idealized notions of heterosexual manhood'. Miliho (2006) believes that there are various social and psychological factors that contribute to wartime rape, which include rigid cultural norms of gender, social dominance and power within group conflict and a soldier's social identity as a man and a member of a military group. She states that many societies have ideologies of male dominance and that these, along with stereotypes held about the out-group (in this case the perceived enemy) and the need to affirm one's group identity, are all elements that can be found in wartime rape. Henry, Ward and Hirshberg (2004) propose a multifactorial model of wartime rape based on White and Kowalski's (1998) proximal confluence model. They integrate previous theoretical and empirical work and create a model that shows how individual, sociocultural and situational variables play a part in rape found in war contexts. This model attempts to demonstrate how multidimensional and heterogeneous rape and rapists are in war settings.

It is possible to conclude that rape in war and political sexual violence not only has been present throughout history (Brownmiller, 1975), but is also found in many different countries, ranging from countries in Europe to Africa and Asia, as the studies above have shown. See Chapter 8 by Elisabeth Wood for a more comprehensive account of MPR during war.

Fraternities

MPRs occur in various situations on campuses and in universities, ranging from off-campus parties to dormitories, and have even involved athletic teams (Ehrhart

& Sandler, 1985). However, research shows that the majority of these rapes on North American campuses are related to fraternities (Ehrhart & Sandler, 1985; O'Sullivan, 1991; Tash, 1988). As college and university fraternities are more common in the USA, all of the published studies in this area relate to North American fraternities. Nevertheless, Sanday (2007) states that these American campus-style MPRs can also be found in other countries. She gives the example of a high-profile case reported at a university in Tokyo in which members of a university club used alcoholic drinks to incapacitate their victims, after which they were raped by up to a dozen members of the club (see Chapter 3 by Karen Franklin for further discussion of this and other similar cases).

A common scenario of MPR in fraternity houses involves seeking out a vulnerable young woman who wants acceptance or is intoxicated with drugs or alcohol (Sanday, 2007). She is encouraged to drink heavily and her drinks may even have been deliberately spiked. She is led to a room and may or may not consent to have sex with one man. In some cases she loses consciousness and is raped by a number of men in the house. In other cases she is conscious but is too inebriated or frightened to protest.

It is important to note that there are different types of fraternities with varying attitudes and behaviours towards women (Boswell & Spade, 1996; Sanday, 2007). This probably contributes to the mixed results found in studies looking at the relationship between sexual aggression and fraternity membership. While there are some studies that do find an association between the two (Boeringer, 1999; Frintner & Rubinson, 1993; Lackie & de Man, 1997), there are others that do not (Gidycz, Warkentin & Orchowski, 2007). Humphrey and Kahn (2000) suggest that some but not all fraternities create environments favourable for sexual coercion, in part because of the atmosphere that exists within them. Boswell and Spade (1996) found that the party atmosphere in fraternities considered high risk for sexual assault and in those considered low risk was noticeably different. In the low-risk fraternity parties, the atmosphere was friendlier, women were treated respectfully and an equal number of men and women were present. In the high-risk fraternities there were either more women or more men, the behaviour towards women was more demeaning and the setting was less favourable for conversations to be carried out.

Schwartz and DeKeseredy (1997) note that sexual victimisation in college campuses happens both inside and outside fraternities. They highlight that the most significant variables in predicting sexual abuse found by Boeringer, Shehan and Akers (1991) were the number of friends men reported having who had used drugs or alcohol to intoxicate women in order to have sex with them and the number of friends men reported having who had forced or tried to force women to have sex with them when they were unwilling to do so. Schwartz and Nogrady (1996) reached similar conclusions in their study.

DeKeseredy (1988) developed a model of male peer support of sexual assault based on social support theory, which was later expanded (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 1993) because the first model was thought to be too focused on individual factors. These initial individual factors were related to stress and male peer

support. DeKeseredy (1988) believed that the stress factors associated with dating relationships lead men to seek support from their male peers. These peers, under certain conditions, may encourage or justify the abuse of women. DeKeseredy and Schwartz (1993) added a further four factors to the model, which are the ideologies of familial and courtship patriarchy, alcohol consumption, membership of formal social groups and the absence of deterrence. The authors believe that North American men live in a society where patriarchal and pro-rape attitudes are present and the dominance of men is assumed. Furthermore, some men are members of social groups—for example, fraternities, sports teams or friends in the neighbourhood bar—where there is often a narrow concept of masculinity and an emphasis on group loyalty and secrecy. Additionally, alcohol is heavily used in many of these social groups and is frequently utilised to facilitate sexual aggression by rendering the female unable to resist. Finally, there is an absence of deterrence or a general lack of both formal and informal punishment. All these factors are believed to be present in some fraternity and sports settings.

Humphrey and Kahn (2000) separated fraternities and athletic teams into high- and low-risk groups based on student perceptions about the extent to which the fraternity's or team's parties created an atmosphere favourable for sexual offences to occur. Members of these fraternities were asked to complete psychological measures and the results were compared. Their findings revealed that there were significant differences between the two groups in the scores on measures of sexual aggression, hostility toward women and male peer support endorsing sexual aggression. The high-risk group scored significantly higher on these measures than the low-risk group. The researchers propose that sexual aggression is more likely to happen in fraternities that have a solid peer-support system for sexual coercion.

In their analysis of cases of MPR committed by fraternity men, Ehrhart and Sandler (1985) identified several conditions that can facilitate these sexual assaults. These include excessive use of alcohol, the lack of external monitoring by the university, use of pornography by fraternity members, support of violence, exaggerated preoccupation with competition and the treatment of women as prey. Martin and Hummer (1989) argue that fraternities create a sociocultural context where it is acceptable to use coercion in sexual relations with women. The characteristics of these organisations, their members and their practices are argued to create an environment conducive to sexual assaults. These fraternities value a type of masculinity characterised by competition, dominance, athleticism, wealth, capacity to drink alcohol and sexual ability. Therefore they seek and select men who possess these traits.

A number of the characteristics present in these fraternities that contribute to create an environment favourable for MPR are not unique to them and can be found in other contexts; for example, in some athletic teams.

Sports

Over the years the media has given considerable coverage to sexual assaults committed by athletes (FoxNews.com, 2005; MailOnline, 2006; Sport.co.uk, 2012).

Crosset, Ptacek, McDonald and Benedict (1996) reported that this has contributed to divergent opinions. According to these authors, there are those who believe that athletes are not more likely to commit sexual assaults than any other men from the general population, but that they are more likely to receive press coverage (Dershowitz, 1994). Citing previous studies (Crossett, Benedict & McDonald, 1995; Koss & Gaines, 1993), Crosset *et al.* (1996) argue research has shown that even though the mass media have amplified the size of the problem of sexual violence perpetrated by athletes, a connection between sports involvement and violence against women does exist.

However, Humphrey and Kahn (2000) argue that the findings of past research have been inconclusive, as there are other studies that have not shown an association between athletic team membership and sexual violence (Jackson, 1991; Lackie & de Man, 1997). On the other hand, other studies have shown that athletic teams are high-risk groups for sexual violence (Boeringer, 1999; Frintner & Rubinson, 1993; Koss & Gaines, 1993). In their study (described above in the fraternity context), Humphrey and Kahn (2000) conclude that there are athletic teams that can be considered high risk for sexual aggression, while others are low risk. The high-risk teams are characterised by greater levels of hostility towards women and a strong peer-support system that endorses sexual aggression.

Once again it is difficult to obtain exact numbers of MPRs committed by athletes. In her study of group rape on campuses, O'Sullivan (1991) found that the majority of MPRs involved fraternities and athletes, namely football and basketball players. Furthermore, Melnick (1992) states that the majority of sexual offences perpetrated by athletes involve men involved in contact and combative sports. Additionally, Trebon (2007) reports that a great number of athletes who committed MPR played contact team sports, such as football, hockey or lacrosse. She states that this phenomenon is less frequent in individual, non-contact sports. Trebon (2007) notes that some authors (Bohmer & Parrot, 1993; Rozee-Koker & Polk, 1986) reveal that sexual offences committed by athletes are most likely to occur after a game. The athletes could be either commemorating a win or lamenting a loss. The scenario will usually involve women and alcohol.

There are various factors present in some sports contexts that can contribute to MPR. A major factor is the sex-segregated nature of most sports teams (Trebon, 2007). In the USA, it is frequent for athletic teams to live and eat together, which creates groups with strong feelings of exclusivity and camaraderie (Melnick, 1992). Group loyalty is expected and even demanded. It is boosted by encouraging the idea that athletic team members are superior to outsiders. As a result, moral self-scrutiny is limited and some athletes believe that rules are for others (Trebon, 2007). Additionally, in Western societies, successful athletes are seen as possessing prestige and status. They achieve fame and receive special treatment from the public, their fans and the people in their private lives. This can promote a sense of entitlement that can facilitate MPR (Trebon, 2007). Other factors that could play a part in MPR are the encouragement of aggression and toughness on the playing field, sexist language and attitudes in some teams' locker rooms and an expectation in some sports that one's masculinity must be proved (Melnick, 1992).

Trebon (2007) emphasises that as in other contexts of MPR, sexual offences committed by athletes are under-reported and in the few cases that do go to trial, there is an extremely low rate of successful prosecution. She explains that usually the athletes involved agree amongst themselves that consensual group sex occurred. In many cases the women are intoxicated with alcohol and/or drugs, or are being or have previously been paid for sexualised dancing or sex, which leads to prosecutors highlighting the victim's lack of credibility. At the same time, a great number of jurors are unable to believe that talented athletes are capable of a sexual assault and are unwilling to destroy their future.

The majority of the research conducted in this context has been carried out in the USA. Nevertheless, cases of MPR in the sport context have been reported by the press in other countries: for example, in 2011 in the UK, a group of young football players were arrested and found guilty of the MPR of two young girls (*Daily Express*, 2011).

Prisons

There are no studies specifically looking at MPR in prison settings and it is necessary to examine research on general sexual coercion and violence in prisons. Most of the research in this area has been carried out in the USA (Alarid, 2000; Davis, 1968; Hensley, Tewksbury & Castle, 2003; Lockwood, 1980; Nacci & Kane, 1984; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000; Struckman-Johnson, Struckman-Johnson, Rucker, Bumby & Donaldson, 1996; Wooden & Parker 1982). There are a few studies in the UK (Banbury, 2004; Edgar, O'Donnell & Martin, 2003; McGurk, Forde & Barnes, 2000; O'Donnell, 2004; Power *et al.*, 1991; Strang, Heuston, Gossop, Green & Maden, 1998), Australia (Heilpern, 1998; Wodak, 1990) and South Africa (Gear, 2005, 2007a, 2007b).

In the USA, even though there are several studies covering various decades, there are inconsistencies regarding the incidence and prevalence of prison sexual assault (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000). Some studies report a very low occurrence of sexual violence, ranging from 0.3 per cent of prisoners claiming to have been sexually assaulted (Nacci & Kane, 1983) to 3 per cent (Davis, 1982). In contrast, other studies found significantly higher numbers, ranging from 14 per cent of prisoners revealing that they had been coerced into sexual activities against their will (Wooden & Parker, 1982) to 22 per cent (Struckman-Johnson *et al.*, 1996).

There are a number of possible explanations that may account for these inconsistencies. O'Donnell (2004) describes several, including the different definitions used for sexual violence and rape, which have varied over time and across jurisdictions. The methodologies of the studies conducted have also been diverse. Different time periods of incarceration have been studied. Additionally, studies have been carried out in quite diverse institutions, ranging from local jails with dormitories to maximum security prisons with individual cells. O'Donnell (2004) highlights that alongside all these difficulties is the fact that prisoners, much like community victims, under-report rapes (Kelly, Lovett & Regan, 2005). Eigenberg

(1994) states that the low prison rape rates found in some studies may not represent the true numbers, as many prisoners under-report rape to researchers because of the stigma of being raped and not wanting to be considered a 'snitch'.

In their study, Struckman-Johnson *et al.* (1996) asked male and female prisoners who had experienced sexual coercion in prison questions related to the 'worst case' they had experienced. This could be the incident they perceived to be the most harmful (if they had experienced various incidents) or the only one that had occurred. They found that in the descriptions of worst case incidents, at least 50 per cent of the prisoners had been raped (anally, vaginally or orally). Furthermore, one quarter of these rapes could be considered gang rape. The researchers defined gang rape as a rape in which a victim 'was physically overpowered by a sudden attack of his assailants' (Struckman-Johnson *et al.*, 1996, p. 72).

Struckman-Johnson *et al.* (1996) describe a few scenarios of gang rape from American prisons—for example, a prisoner is invited to a cell and, once he gets there, is attacked by three or four perpetrators and raped. He could also be assaulted in his own cell and physically overpowered by the assailants. Usually these rapes are characterised by the use of physical violence and sometimes even weapons, often resulting in injuries. The authors also state that some of the prisoners were coerced into providing sexual services to multiple perpetrators. In these cases the victims tend to succumb to intimidation and verbal threats rather than a physical attack. Davis (1968) also reported that often after prisoners were threatened with or became a victim of a MPR, they entered into a sexual relationship with another male prisoner. Finally, at least two incidents were described by Struckman-Johnson *et al.* (1996) in which staff joined prisoners to force another prisoner to have sexual intercourse. They stated an unexpected finding was that 18 per cent of the male prisoners reported staff working at the prison having been involved in an incident of sexual coercion.

Differences were found in the incident rates of coerced sexual behaviour between males (22 per cent) and females (7 per cent) in prisons in the USA. Struckman-Johnson *et al.* (1996) argue that the lower rate for female prisoners may be due to the more manageable size of the women's establishments and the presence of a greater number of non-violent offenders. Struckman-Johnson (1988) also suggests that women are less likely than men to initiate sexually coercive behaviours.

Supporting and building on the findings of Struckman-Johnson *et al.* (1996), Alarid (2000), in her study with female prisoners in the USA, reported that sexual assault occurred at a low rate. In this study, sexual assault is defined as 'forced sex [which] ranges from unwanted genital touching to oral, vaginal and/or anal sex' (Alarid, 2000, p. 394). She found that other forms of sexual coercion—for example, sexual pressurising and sexual harassment—were more frequent. The sexual assaults that did occur among female prisoners usually involved multiple perpetrators. Alarid (2000, p. 399) suggests that 'gang rape was used as the instrument to express feelings of resentment and anger that other inmates had toward their target'.

In the UK there is considerably less research on sexual violence in prisons, and in the few existing studies, low levels of sexual assaults have been found

(O'Donnell, 2004). McGurk, Forde and Barnes (2000), in their study of young offenders, found that 3 per cent reported non-consensual sexual acts. In their study in Scotland, Power *et al.* (1991) did not find any cases of sexual assault. Strang *et al.* (1998) reported that only 21 male prisoners of a sample of 1,009 said they had experienced unwanted sexual activity in prison. Edgar *et al.* (2003) found that less than 2 per cent of 590 male prisoners claimed to have been sexually assaulted in prison.

O'Donnell (2004) suggests three reasons why there is such a significant difference in the rates and use of sexual violence and rape between prisons in the USA and the UK. These are related to the higher level of general violence found in American society, the difficult race relations present in the USA throughout the country's history and the attitudes of staff working in the prisons. O'Donnell (2004) states that in the UK there is more interaction between staff and prisoners and higher levels of staffing are present, while in the USA there is some evidence of disinterest and even resigned acceptance on the part of prison staff.

In South Africa, the Jali Commission of Inquiry (2006, p. 393) described 'the horrific scourge of sexual violence that plagues our Prisons where appalling abuses and acts of sexual perversion are perpetrated on helpless and unprotected prisoners'. Nevertheless, no official numbers were revealed, since there was no category for rape in the prison records of violence. Consequently, any reported rape would simply be classified as an assault (Gear, 2009). Very little research has been done in this area in South Africa, so it is difficult to pinpoint exact numbers. However, a survey carried out with young offenders at the Boksburg Youth Correctional Centre in South Africa reveals that 7 per cent of the respondents claimed to have been sexually assaulted (Gear, 2007b).

Harvey (2002) states that the most violent type of sexual assault present in South African prisons is gang rape which involves two or more perpetrators. Some prisoners interviewed described gang rapes involving nine to 12 assailants. In these situations, a gang rape was said to have various different motives. It could be a punishment for disobeying gang codes. It could be for leisure, where it is considered 'fun'. It could also be a form of initiation, in that once a man has been raped he is considered a woman and becomes a 'wyfie' (a wife). He is attributed a subservient role which includes being available for sex and responsible for domestic chores. This parallels some of the motivations for MPR outside prisons—for example, MPRs in street gangs can be used as a form of punishment (Firmin, 2010, 2011) or an initiation practice (Knox, 2004). Additionally, in the fraternity and sports contexts described in this chapter MPR is often associated with leisure activities; for example, parties and celebrations.

In relation to the characteristics of the perpetrators and victims of MPR in the prison context, some similarities can be found between countries. A number of North American studies (Davis, 1968; Mariner, 2001; Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 2000; Struckman-Johnson *et al.*, 1996) reveal that perpetrators of prison rape tend to be aged under 35 years old, and are usually bigger or stronger than their victims. They are aggressive and well adapted to the prison environment—often gang members convicted of more violent crimes.

They typically describe themselves as heterosexual and outside the prison engage in heterosexual relationships. Their victims tend to be young, physically small or weak and are frequently first time offenders. These victims are usually unassertive, passive or shy and are unfamiliar with informal rules in the prison setting. Effeminate or gay prisoners and those convicted of sexual crimes against minors are also at greater risk of sexual assault. In South Africa, similar perpetrator and victim characteristics of prison MPR have been found (Harvey, 2002; Jali Commission of Inquiry, 2006).

Anti-gay/lesbian violence

In the community, MPR is not only committed against females; men can also be the target of this type of sexual violence, especially if they are perceived as gay (Franklin, 2004). Consequently, another context in which MPR can be found is anti-gay/lesbian violence (Franklin, 2004). Very little research has been done in this area and it is not possible to estimate how many of the sexual assaults committed against gays and lesbians across countries involve multiple perpetrators. In many of the studies carried out, physical and sexual assaults are grouped together and it is impossible to identify the numbers of rapes, let alone the number of MPRs.

The few studies carried out related to anti-gay/lesbian violence have been conducted in Australia, the USA, the UK and South Africa. These studies suggest that physical and sexual violence against this population occurs at a relatively high rate across different countries. Sitka (1997) cites the results of surveys and questionnaires related to anti-lesbian violence in Australia. In the NSW Police Service survey (unpublished), 8 per cent of the respondents claimed to have been a victim of sexual assault. In Barbeler's (1992) survey, 13.5 per cent of participants reported that they had experienced physical violence or sexual assault.

In a study in the USA, 6 per cent of self-identified lesbian and bisexual women reported having been sexually assaulted (von Schulthess, 1992). Also in the USA, it is estimated that compared with heterosexual people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer people reported rates of sexual violence three times higher (National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, 2010).

In the UK, a survey of lesbian, gay and bisexual men and women reported that 32 per cent of the respondents had experienced homophobic violence (Mason & Palmer, 1996). In Scotland, a survey of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transsexual (LGBT) people found that 23 per cent had been physically assaulted (Beyond Barriers, 2003). In Northern Ireland, a survey of LGB people revealed that 10 per cent of the respondents had been sexually assaulted or raped at some time (Jarmon & Tennant, 2003).

In South Africa the term 'corrective rape' has emerged to describe the rape of women who are known to be or suspected of being lesbian in an attempt to make them heterosexual (Human Rights Watch, 2011). The term 'corrective rape' is also utilised in the 2010 National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs report about hate crimes in the USA. Here this term is used to describe not only the rape of

LGB people to 'cure them' of their homosexuality, but also the rape of transgender people when they disclose their gender identity. There are no official statistics related to this phenomenon but a report by Human Rights Watch (2011) revealed that in South Africa physical and sexual violence against this group is alarmingly frequent and severe. A total of 121 interviews were carried out with self-identified lesbians, bisexual women and transgender men. In this report various examples of MPRs are described, including the case of Eudy Simelane, which contributed to bringing international attention to this form of violence. Eudy was a lesbian LGBT rights activist and played for the South African women's football national team. She was brutally raped and murdered by a group of four men in April 2008.

It is common for anti-gay/lesbian assaults to be carried out in a group context. Franklin (2000) found that three quarters of young people involved in anti-gay assaults acted in a group. While 20 per cent were in pairs, more than half reported being in groups of three or more. Jarmon and Tennant's (2003) study in Northern Ireland revealed that in cases of violence against LGB people, 22 per cent involved pairs and 45 per cent involved three or more perpetrators.

Franklin (2004) argues that group rape of women and anti-gay violence are similar in their functions and environmental conditions. She believes that they are used not only to punish those perceived to be violating gender roles but also to display masculinity to peers. She argues that even though anti-gay violence is non-erotic, it is still a proclamation of heterosexual masculinity which reflects the function of group rape of females. Even though Franklin (2004) did not include violence against lesbians in her paper, she states that it overlaps with both violence against women in general and violence against gay men. Sitka (1997) believes that violence against lesbians is also against women in general and, for that reason, claims it is different to violence against gay men. Like Pharr (1988), Sitka argues that regardless of sexual orientation, any women who do not conform to male dominance and narrow social norms may be punished by certain males.

Sitka (1997) states that general surveys show there are differences between violence against lesbians and violence against gay men. According to her, violence against gay men tends to be more overt, with higher cases of public physical violence, frequently perpetrated by groups of youths; violence against lesbians, on the other hand, is more covert, and studies reveal they are more likely to be attacked by one known perpetrator. Consequently, this would imply that in countries like Australia and the USA, where these surveys were conducted, MPRs are more frequently committed against gay men than against lesbians.

The North American and UK studies suggest that the perpetrators of anti-gay violence tend to be predominantly young males in their late teens to early twenties, who are strangers to the victim and attack in a group (Berk, Boyd & Hamner, 1992; Berrill, 1986; Comstock, 1991; Hamner, 1992; Harry, 1992; Herek & Berrill, 1992; Jarmon & Tennant, 2003). The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs' annual reports reveal that, in general, the perpetrators of violence against LGBT communities in the USA tend to be white, young

males. Their biggest group of victims tend to be gay men, followed by lesbians and transgender women.

The existing research suggests that MPR in the context of anti-gay/lesbian violence is found internationally. However, research is limited in this area, which makes it difficult to gain a clear picture of this phenomenon. Franklin (2004) highlights that anti-gay violence and group rape have usually been studied in different forums. She proposes a focus on the common aspects of these forms of violence, which she believes will encourage overlapping research and prevention strategies.

Conclusions

In this chapter we have seen that in order to examine MPR internationally, it is important to have a clear definition of the term which can be used across studies and countries. This will facilitate comparisons and the interpretation of findings from research that is carried out. As was shown, a great number of studies related to sexual violence do not distinguish between rapes committed by lone perpetrators and those committed by multiple perpetrators. It is necessary to separate out MPRs from lone perpetrator rapes, as this will enable a clear picture of the problem to emerge.

We can also conclude that MPR is a heterogeneous crime. It is present in very different settings and the perpetrators involved are quite diverse, ranging from gang members to students, soldiers, athletes and prisoners and prison staff. Depending on the context, their victims can be children, male and female peers, heterosexual and lesbian women, heterosexual and gay men and transsexual men and women.

It is possible to conclude that although there is a limited amount of research in this area, there is ample evidence that MPR is present in many different societies throughout history and across the globe. Although in this chapter certain countries were more frequently referred to, namely the USA, the UK, South Africa and Australia, this does not imply that MPR is more common in these countries. It is only possible to conclude that more research has been carried out in these countries and is accessible through studies published in English. This highlights the need for more research to be conducted internationally that will contribute to a greater understanding of this phenomenon. Evidence obtained through research and even the media clearly shows that MPR is a significant international problem.

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CHAPTER 2:
MULTIPLE PERPETRATOR RAPE: A CRITICAL REVIEW OF EXISTING
EXPLANATORY THEORIES

The aim of this chapter was to critically examine the existing theories proposed to explain MPR. Firstly, an overview is provided of these theories, including the most recent and comprehensive model which is the Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending (Harkins & Dixon, 2010; 2013). Following this, the factors and processes that these theories and this model have suggested as contributing to MPR are critically examined. This is achieved by considering if there is empirical evidence to support their role in this type of sexual offending.

The following chapter has been submitted to *Aggression and Violent Behavior* for review and is authored by Teresa da Silva, Jessica Woodhams and Leigh Harkins. The format of the manuscript has been altered in places to achieve consistency with other chapters in this thesis.

Chapter 2: Multiple Perpetrator Rape: A Critical Review of Existing Explanatory Theories

Since the appearance of the first academic papers on multiple perpetrator rape (MPR) in the 1950s, a few theories have been proposed to explain this phenomenon. Some of them were based on what was already known at the time about sexual violence in general, whereas, others were tentative, proposing new ideas. These theories were influenced by the dominant psychological and sociological theories of their era. As time progressed they have developed from simple individual or sociological explanations to theories that integrate various factors to explain this complex phenomenon. The most recent and comprehensive explanatory theory of MPR was proposed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013). It is the Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending (MPSO), which states that various factors play a role in MPR and emphasizes the effects of group processes. Some of these proposed factors and processes had previously been identified as relevant in MPR by earlier explanatory theories.

This article critically examines the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO and the factors and processes that this model and earlier theories suggested as contributing to MPR by considering if there is empirical evidence supporting the role of these factors in MPR. It is important to construct, develop and evaluate theories because they help guide research and practice. As Ward, Polaschek and Beech (2006) eloquently stated: “Theories are usefully construed as cognitive tools that provide clinicians and researchers with maps to navigate their way through the complexities of clinical practice.” (p.10)

Overview of early explanatory models of MPR

One of the earliest theories proposed to explain MPR was psychodynamic in nature (Amir, 1971; Blanchard, 1959). In his work regarding groups, Freud (1922) did not directly examine MPR. However, other authors did base their explanations of this type of sexual offending on the psychodynamic theory (Blanchard, 1959; Sanday, 2007). In these explanations, a central factor is the existence of homosexual feelings of the group members for one another. In accordance with this theory, Sperling (1956) described *group perversion* as an attempt to overcome homosexual fears. Sanday (2007) referred to the term *polymorphous sexuality*, used by Freud, to indicate diffuse sexual interest with numerous objects. According to her, this means that some men who engage in such behaviour can experience sexual desire for one another. Nevertheless, the fear of being considered homosexual can produce a tension between polymorphous sexual desire and expected heterosexuality. By taking part in a MPR, men are able to overcome this tension such that: “the brothers vent their interest in one another through the body of a woman.” (Sanday, 2007, p. 42). The psychodynamic theory suggests that through MPR men assure themselves of their heterosexuality and hide the actual object of their desire. They do this in order to maintain their standing in the male hierarchy as superior heterosexual men (Sanday, 2007).

At the time that he carried out his study of lone and MPR Amir (1971) acknowledged that the psychodynamic theory was the main explanation for MPR. According to Amir, this approach was speculative; therefore, he suggested an alternative sociological theory of MPR influenced by various theories of the time from psychoanalysis to social psychology, small group dynamics and juvenile delinquency. He called it a *sociological theory of group rape*. He tried to integrate various factors that he considered essential to understand MPR, which had not been examined in this context before. He associated MPR with adolescents from

lower socio-economic backgrounds, who he believed had a tendency for actual or latent aggressive behaviour, and were at a stage in their development associated with heightened sexual desires and sexual experimentation. The other contributory factors that he proposed were group processes; negative/stereotypical attitudes towards women and sexual identity; a precipitating event (e.g. a crisis in the group structure or available victims); situational factors and a person in the group such as a leader that facilitated the mobilisation of the other members. Amir (1971) was the first author, in the MPR literature to not only write about the important role that group processes and dynamics play in this sort of sexual offending, but also to highlight that it is a combination of various factors that make this type of sexual assault possible. This not only contrasted with the psychodynamic theory but also with other explanatory theories of MPR that began to emerge at that time, which placed a great emphasis, almost exclusively, on socio-cultural factors such as masculine ideology of dominance and power (e.g., the feminist theories).

In the 1970s, sexual aggression became a relevant issue for the feminist movement. From the feminist perspective, rape was seen as a means to dominate and control women, enforcing gender roles and maintaining male dominance (Brownmiller, 1975; Donat & D'Emilio, 1992; Russell, 1975). Feminists saw sexual aggression as an extension of normative male behaviour, the result of over-conforming to traditional male roles where masculinity is associated to power, dominance and virility, and femininity to submissiveness and inferiority (Scully & Marolla, 1985). Brownmiller's (1975) book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*, was crucial for the development of a feminist theory of rape. She was also one of the first feminist authors to examine MPR. As with lone rape, she saw it as an act where men retain power and control over women: "When men rape in pairs or in gangs, the sheer physical advantage of their position is clear-cut and unquestionable. No simple conquest

of man over woman, group rape is the conquest of men over Woman” (Brownmiller, 1975, p.187).

Various authors throughout the years have examined MPR based on the feminist perspective (Franklin, 2004; Lees, 2002; Sanday, 2007). For example, Lees (2002), who analysed cases of MPR in a community survey, viewed this type of sexual assault as an extreme form of normative masculinity, which boosts male dominance and solidarity. She stated that MPR can be found in all male communities which include teenage gangs, American college fraternities, competitive team sports, the army and prisons. She believed that it is more apparent in adolescence, when there are concerns about the development of a “masculine” identity and it is a way by which men try to distance themselves from what they consider feminine. This not only includes women, but also homosexuals or males seen as feminine. These feminist views, and specifically Brownmiller’s (1975) work, led to a great deal of empirical research of feminist ideas and some of these views have been integrated into different theoretical frameworks to understand sexual assault (Donat & D’Emilio, 1992).

Themes of power, control and male bonding were also associated to MPR by other authors (Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; Scully & Marolla, 1985). Groth and Birnbaum (1979) viewed MPR as a multi-determined act where factors such as power, control, camaraderie and validation of masculinity are present. Additionally, they believed that there are also factors involved that are present in lone rape such as power and anger. Groth and Birnbaum (1979) identified different subtypes of rapists in their sample of convicted sex offenders (made up of both lone rapists and perpetrators of MPR) and developed a typology of rapists. In this typology rapists are classified as anger, power or sadistic rapists. Groth and Birnbaum (1979) found that all of the perpetrators of MPR in their sample were power or anger rapists who committed rape as a way of expressing anger and hostility or to feel powerful by having

control over their victims. They believed that, as in lone rape, in MPR sex is an expression of anger and power in order to compensate for feelings such as inadequacy and vulnerability and to retaliate for negative feelings related to humiliation and frustration. Furthermore, these authors highlighted that the experience of rapport, camaraderie and cooperation with co-offenders is one of the unique dynamics in MPR. Not only are they participating in a group activity, they are also validating themselves.

Scully and Marolla (1985) also associated MPR to male camaraderie. In their sample of rapists they found that the perpetrators of MPR were young, in their late teens and early twenties, and regarded rape as an adventure or recreational activity. They saw it as a challenge to be able to “perform” in that situation and it was a source of reward. Themes of power, control and dominance were also identified as being present.

These earlier theories differed from each other in the factors that were proposed to play a crucial role in MPR. For example, while Blanchard (1959) considered that individual factors such as sexual interests were central to MPR, the feminist theories highlighted socio-cultural factors such as negative and stereotypical attitudes towards women. Only Amir’s (1971) theory included an interaction of various factors similar to those proposed by the most recent theory of MPR developed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013).

Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending (MPSO)

Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) proposed a conceptual framework of MPR which was developed from the combination of two theories of human violent behaviour. The first theory arose from Bronfenbrenner’s (1979) work related to the need for etiological models to consider factors at each level of an ecological model, in order to successfully reach a comprehensive explanation. These levels include ontogenic; micro-; exo-; and macro-levels.

The second theory was the Proximal Confluence Model (White & Kowalski, 1998), which considers that violence is due to the interaction of two or more people and the contextual environment.

Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) proposed that it is necessary to consider multiple factors when conceptualizing MPR, which include the interaction of the individual, the sociocultural and situational context where the assault occurred. A multi-factorial model of MPSO was therefore constructed by them which is an adaptation of White and Kowalski's (1998) Proximal Confluence Model. Henry, Ward, and Hirshberg (2004) had previously adapted White and Kowalski's model to develop their multi-factorial model of war time rape. This model of war time rape also influenced the conceptualization of Harkins and Dixon's (2010, 2013) model of MPSO. Essentially, Harkins and Dixon's (2010, 2013) model proposes that various factors (individual, socio-cultural and situational) and the interaction between them play a role in different types of MPR (see Figure 1).

Individual factors

Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) proposed that numerous individual characteristics (e.g., personality traits, developmental factors and sexual preferences) contribute to whether a person takes part in an act of sexual aggression. They highlighted two factors which they believed increase the probability of a person engaging in sexual violence. These are deviant sexual interests and leadership traits. It was suggested by them that in some situations it is likely that deviant sexual interests interacting with other risk factors may increase the probability of a MPR. This could be especially likely for the initiation of MPRs against children (e.g., child sex rings). Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) also considered that some

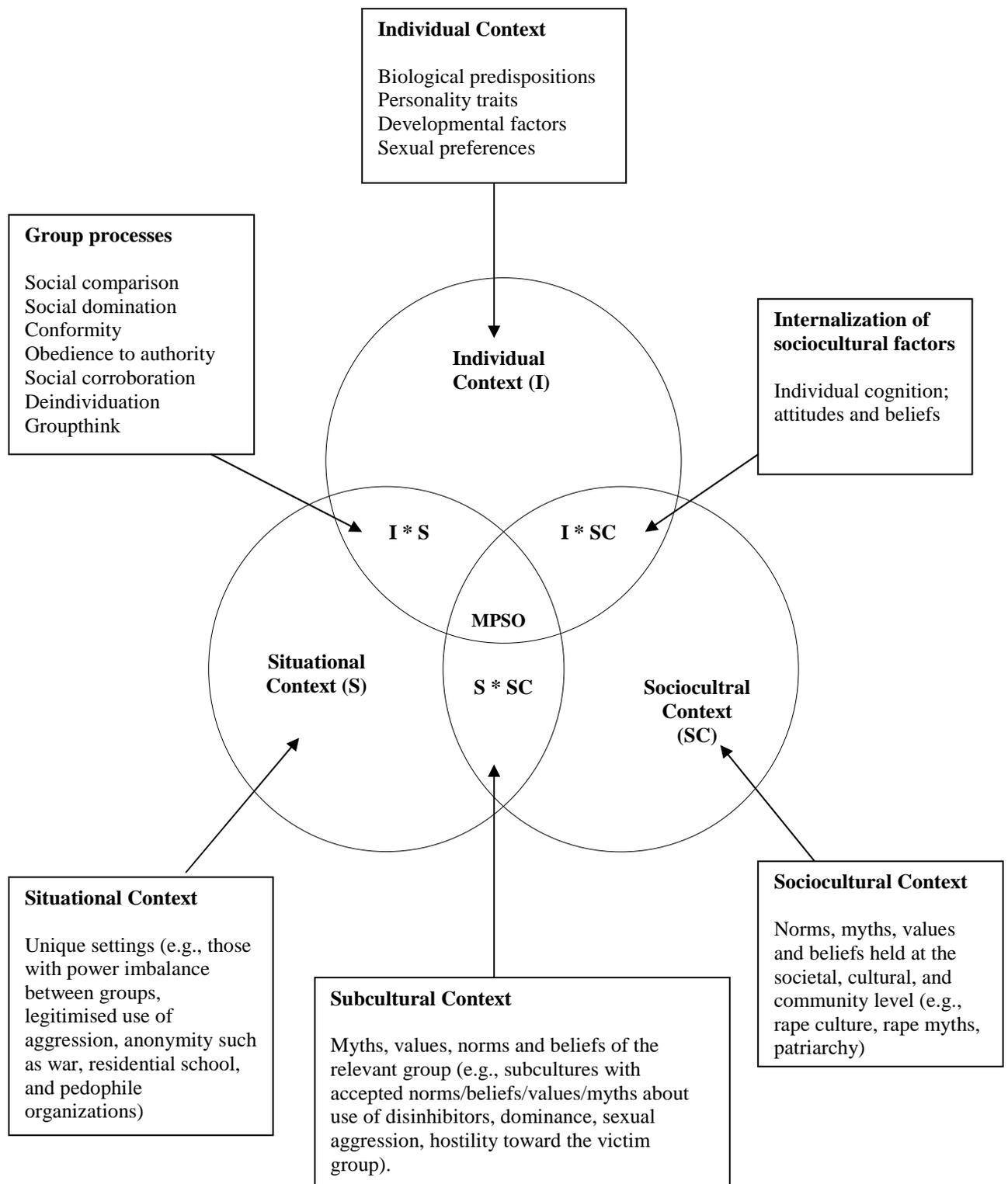


Figure 1: Multi-Factorial Model of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending. Adapted from “A multi-factorial approach to understanding multiple perpetrator sexual offending,” (p. 77) by L. Harkins & L. Dixon, 2013, in J. Wood & T. Gannon (Eds.), *Crime and crime reduction: The importance of group processes* (pp. 75-95). New York: Routledge. Copyright (2014) by Taylor & Francis. Adapted with permission.

MPRs would not take place without the presence of a person in the group with leadership traits who is able to influence the offending behaviour of the group.

Some of the earlier explanatory theories of MPR also considered that individual factors played a role in this type of sexual assault. For example, the psychodynamic theory (Blanchard, 1959; Sanday, 2007) proposed that sexual preferences (i.e., homosexual feelings of the group members for one another) were a central factor. Amir (1971) on the other hand, highlighted other individual factors such as age (adolescence), belonging to a lower socio-economic group, having a tendency for aggressive behaviour and heightened sexual desires related to the adolescent stage of development. Even though the feminist theories considered that MPR can be found in all male communities, some authors (Lees, 2002) stated that it is more evident in adolescence as it coincides with the development of the “masculine” identity. Groth and Birnbaum (1979) whose perspective was related to the theories of power, control and male camaraderie suggested that perpetrators of MPR could have a range of negative feelings such as inadequacy and vulnerability and those related to humiliation and frustration. In relation to leadership traits, most of the earlier theories underlined the importance of a leader in the initiation of a MPR (Amir, 1971; Blanchard, 1959; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979).

In terms of the research evidence for the role of individual factors in MPR, a number of empirical studies have examined socio-demographic characteristics including age and ethnicity (Amir, 1979; da Silva, Woodhams, & Harkins, 2013; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2006; Wright & West, 1981). Perpetrators of MPR are generally younger than lone sex offenders and a great number of them are typically aged between the adolescent years and early twenties. However, it is important to note that most of these studies also found adult perpetrators of MPR. Furthermore, although Jewkes and Sikweyiya (2013) found a high number of young and older perpetrators of MPR in their South

African sample, they highlighted that one-quarter of their sample was older than 26 years. These authors concluded that MPR seems to be frequently committed for the first time in the adolescent years but it is not confined to this developmental stage. Bijleveld and Soudijn (2008) also found that almost one-third of their sample were older than 27 years and highlighted the need for further research examining the characteristics of these older perpetrators of MPR. Etgar (2013) pointed out that in the lone sexual offending literature it has already been established that there are clear differences between child, adolescent and adult sexual offenders (Barbaree & Marshall, 2006; Finkelhor, Ormrod & Chaffin, 2009; Longo & Prescott, 2006; McGrath, Cumming & Burchard, 2003) therefore this should also be taken into consideration when working with perpetrators of MPR. In relation to ethnicity, several studies found that a significant number of perpetrators of MPR were from ethnic minority groups (Aebi, Vogt, Plattner, Steinhausen & Bessler, 2012; Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; da Silva, Woodhams, et al., 2013; De Wree, 2004; 2010 Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Woodhams, 2008), whereas others did not find this (Gidycz & Koss, 1990; Ullman, 2007).

In terms of education and family background, some studies conducted with juvenile perpetrators of MPR found that these young people generally did poorly in school and had low education levels (Bijleveld, Weerman, Looije, & Hendriks, 2007; De Wree, 2004; Hooing, Jonker, & van Berlo, 2010). Furthermore, Bijleveld et al. (2007) and Hooing et al. (2010) found that perpetrators of MPR were often from single parent homes, whose parents had separated. Additionally, not only was it common for their carer(s) to be unemployed (Hooing et al., 2010), they often had a combination of socio-economic problems which led to poor employment prospects (De Wree, 2004). Jewkes and Sikweyiya (2013) on the other hand, found that perpetrators of MPR came from more privileged backgrounds than men who had never raped: they earned higher wages and a higher proportion of their mothers had

completed school. Their study differs from many other studies of MPR in that not only were adult perpetrators included, but their sample was composed of males in the community, while the samples of the other studies consisted of young males who had been convicted of a MPR. Additionally, Franklin (2013) has identified cases of MPR involving boys and men from higher status backgrounds.

A few studies have examined personality traits of perpetrators of MPR (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld et al., 2007; De Wree, 2004; Jewkes & Sikweyiya, 2013). The majority were conducted with juvenile samples and these studies found that the perpetrators had fairly non-deviant and average personality profiles. Nevertheless, a couple of studies reported that perpetrators of MPR had below average intelligence (Bijleveld et al., 2007; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs, Vermeiren, Jansen, & Doreleijers, (2011). Jewkes and Sikweyiya (2013) found that the psychopathic trait of blame externalization was higher among men who had raped but at similar levels for lone and multiple perpetrators. However, Machiavellian egocentricity (a second psychopathic trait) was higher for perpetrators of MPR.

There are no studies that specifically analyse the sexual interests of perpetrators of MPR. Psychodynamic theory proposes that homosexual feelings are central in this type of sexual offending; however, even Blanchard (1959), who concluded that there was some evidence for this theory, found that in one of the two cases he examined the sexual feelings that were stimulated did not appear to be homosexual. Additionally, Brownmiller (1975) stated that even though male bonding arises from contempt for women and is supported by distrust, it is not, in itself, homosexual. Furthermore, Groth and Birnbaum (1979) stated that: "Men do not rape women out of a sexual desire for other men, but they may rape women, in part, as a way to relate to men" (p. 116). They implied that MPR meets a social need rather than a sexual need. Hooing et al. (2010) found that sexual arousal was given as a motive by

fewer perpetrators of MPR compared to lone rapists and non-sexual motives seemed to be more prevalent. Recently Alleyne, Gannon, Ó Ciardha and Wood (2014) developed and conducted a preliminary validation of the Multiple-Perpetrator Rape Interest Scale. They found that a large number of university males in their sample did not emphatically reject an interest in MPR. Moreover, they found that the predictors of sexual interest in MPR were rape-supportive cognitive distortions, violence related cognition and high risk sexual fantasies. Further research conducted with this scale (e.g., with convicted perpetrators of MPR) would make a valuable contribution to the understanding of sexual interests of perpetrators of MPR. Additionally, since MPR is a heterogeneous crime committed by diverse perpetrators from different settings (da Silva, Harkins, & Woodhams, 2013) the development of instruments that measure sexual interest should be tailored for use with different types of perpetrators of MPR, for example, those that commit offences against children vs. those that assault peers or adults.

Several studies have examined leadership in MPR (Amir, 1971; Blanchard, 1959; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Porter & Alison, 2001, 2004; Woodhams, Cooke, Harkins, & da Silva, 2012) and they have concluded that it is generally possible to identify a leader or an instigator in a great number of offences. In order to identify leadership in a group, the Scale of Influence (Porter & Alison, 2001) which measures leadership behaviour through degree of influence has been used. Porter (2013) concluded that in her studies of MPR, leadership was more commonly demonstrated through participative action than through direct order-giving. The Scale of Influence was further tested by Woodhams et al. (2012) and was found to identify leadership behaviour in a significant number of MPRs, however, its validity could be further tested by comparing it to self-reports of leadership in a sample of convicted perpetrators of MPR (Porter, 2013; Woodhams et al., 2012). It is possible

to conclude from research in this area that leadership traits are likely to be an important factor in MPR.

Overall, empirical research does provide some evidence for the role of individual factors in MPR. However, a few differences and inconsistencies have been found in the individual factors that have been examined, namely, in socio-demographic characteristics, personality traits and sexual interests. This could suggest that it is likely that there are different types of perpetrators of MPR. Chambers, Horvath and Kelly (2010) proposed a typology of four types of MPR: violence, criminality, intimacy and sexuality. They suggested that there could be an association between these four types and offender characteristics such as age. It is therefore necessary to conduct more research to further explore and test this typology and to possibly identify different types of perpetrators of MPR. Additionally, more studies conducted in the community would be useful to gain a clearer picture of individual characteristics of perpetrators of MPR since most of the studies have focused on convicted offenders. Moreover, care should be taken to differentiate between juveniles and adults as it is probable that they differ on various factors including individual characteristics.

Socio-cultural factors

Socio-cultural factors such as those promoting negative attitudes towards women, male dominance and hostile masculinity have been integrated in some multi-factorial theories of lone sexual offending (Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Ward & Beech, 2006). Similarly, Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) considered that the socio-cultural context which includes cultural norms, myths, beliefs and values about women, sexuality and violence can play a role in MPR, depending on the individual. They suggested that factors such as rape culture, rape myths and patriarchy can influence the sexual behaviour

of individuals in a group. Rape cultures are characterized by a lack of social constraints that discourage sexual violence (Sanday, 2007), while rape myths are generally false beliefs about sexual violence that are widely held and that help justify sexual assaults against women (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Patriarchy is related to traditional and rigid beliefs about gender roles where masculinity is seen as dominant and femininity is seen as submissive (Henry et al., 2004). This can lead to what Malamuth et al. (1991) termed as *hypermasculinity* which are exaggerated male stereotypical behaviours that can play a role in the initiation of sexual aggression. Harkins and Dixon (2013) identified studies where the males involved in a MPR held patriarchal beliefs and hostile attitudes towards their female victims (Bourgeois, 1996; Hunter, Hazelwood & Slesinger, 2000). They concluded that rape culture, rape myths and patriarchy, in combination with other factors of the model can play a role in increasing the likelihood of MPR.

Most of the earlier explanatory models of MPR identified socio-cultural factors as contributing to this form of sexual assault. Amir (1979) stated that one of the factors present in MPR is related to distinctive tensions (including negative attitudes towards females) which are felt not only by the individuals but by the whole group. Socio-cultural factors such as rape culture, rape myths and patriarchy were central to the feminist theories. For example, Franklin (2004) identified various factors which she believed were present in MPR. These included an exercise of masculine social power and control, punishment of individuals who do not conform to traditional gender norms and an exhibition of aggression which is seen as proving masculinity. She concluded that MPR is used, on the one hand, to prove masculinity to peers and, on the other hand, to punish perceived deviations and violations of gender norms, which can be against women or men who are seen as feminine. Groth and Birnbaum (1979) believed that one of the reasons that the follower takes part in a MPR is to validate his masculinity.

They suggested that the offenders appear to be using the victim as a means of interacting with other men and they conform with what they believe is expected of them.

In a few empirical studies there is evidence of the existence of socio-cultural factors in MPR. For example, Scully and Marolla (1985) interviewed convicted rapists including perpetrators of MPR and identified themes of power, control and dominance over women which are evident in the following quote: “We felt powerful, we were in control. I wanted sex and there was peer pressure. She wasn’t like a person, no personality, just dominance on my part. Just to show I could do it-you know, macho.” (p. 260). O’Sullivan (1991) examined acquaintance MPR on campus and considered that it was normative and an outgrowth of conventional sex roles. She identified various factors that she believed were key in MPR commission which included attitudes towards women and gender roles. She highlighted how studies of college students identified the relationship between traditional sex-role attitudes and tolerance and prevalence of rape (Berger, Searles, Salem, & Pierce 1986; Hall, Howard, & Boezio, 1986). Additionally, Hooing et al. (2010) found that the young perpetrators of MPR in their sample had negative attitudes towards girls. Furthermore, Jewkes and Sikweyiya (2013) reported that men who had raped more often engaged in behaviours that showed dominance over women and tried to emphasize a heterosexual masculinity. The authors believed that this was associated to ideas of male sexual entitlement and gender hierarchy.

It is therefore possible to conclude that research does provide evidence for the importance of socio-cultural factors in MPR. Not only do most of the explanatory theories consider that this factor plays a role in this type of sexual offending, but empirical research provides clear evidence to support this claim.

Situational factors

Situational factors are also seen as playing a role in sexual violence including MPR. These situational factors can be strong enough to overcome any inhibiting socio-cultural factors (Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Zimbardo, 2007). Furthermore, Henry et al. (2004) considered that these situational factors included elements that could act as a trigger or a disinhibitor in a given situation. Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) suggested that some particular settings are more conducive to MPR, for example, settings where exaggerated sexuality is common (e.g., fraternities) or where hostile masculinity is acceptable (e.g., war). Other unique settings that were referred by them were residential schools where issues of power and powerlessness are present and pedophile organizations where individuals seek out others with similar attitudes and belief systems.

In the earlier exploratory theories, situational factors in MPR were also identified. For example Amir's (1971) theory includes situational elements, such as the atmosphere of aggression and sexuality present in the group and the knowledge, planning and availability of victims. These would allow the MPR to progress from a potential situation to a concrete one. In the feminist perspective, O'Sullivan (1991) referred to Sanday's (1981) anthropological study and how some of the correlations that she identified as unique to rape-prone cultures are also applicable to MPR contexts. For example, in the rape-prone societies that Sanday (1981) studied, men and women were not only separated physically, but also by rigid sex-roles, where the male role was more valued. O'Sullivan (1991) pointed out that MPR could therefore be expected to be more common among men who are not only separated from women, but also perform roles exclusive to males, namely, fraternity members and football players.

Several contexts have been identified where MPR occurs against peers and adults and these include: street gangs; war; college fraternities; sports teams; prisons and anti-gay/lesbian violence, or against children which include: pedophile organizations; child sex rings; day care centres and residential care (da Silva, Harkins, et al, 2013; Harkins & Dixon, 2010). In each one of these contexts there are situational factors which are unique to that setting (e.g., fighting in war) or common to most of the settings (e.g., negative attitudes towards women). Literature related to the different contexts where MPR is committed is limited and most of the research does not differentiate between sexual violence committed by lone and multiple perpetrators (da Silva, Harkins, et al, 2013). In this article MPR in fraternities and war are briefly examined (see da Silva, Harkins, et al. (2013) and Harkins and Dixon (2010) for a more in depth description of the different contexts where MPR occurs).

Sexual violence, including MPR, on campus and in fraternity settings has been examined by a few authors (Ehrhart & Sandler, 1985; Humphrey & Kahn, 2000; Martin & Hummer; 1989; Sanday 2007). Most of these authors identified various conditions that they believed could facilitate sexual violence committed by fraternity men. Among these were attitudes supportive of violence, treating women as if they were prey, an obsession with competition, excessive use of alcohol, use of pornography and lack of external monitoring by the college. Furthermore, Humphrey and Kahn (2000) found that in fraternities and sports teams where there was a high risk of sexual aggression (based on student perceptions about the atmosphere in the fraternity's or team's parties) the members scored higher on measures such as sexual aggression, hostility toward women and male peer support endorsing sexual violence, than teams deemed to be low risk.

War is commonly associated with MPR although there are very few studies that have focused exclusively on MPR. Wood (2013) highlighted that there is a great variation in war

time rape, not only across wars but even in the same war across different armed forces. She found that sexual violence in wars can be a strategy of war where it is used by commanders against specific populations (e.g., as sexual torture of political prisoners, the public rape of members of specific groups, a form of collective punishment, or a form of compensation for the combatants). Sexual violence can also emerge as a practice where it is not ordered and occurs even when it does not have strategic benefits. Wood (2013) considered that when commanders tolerate rape that emerged as a practice they do so because they believe that the costs of prohibition and punishing are too elevated. She concluded that MPR is likely to occur in war at a significant level both as a strategy and a practice. When used as a strategy MPR will usually take place as a form of terror directed towards either individuals or members of a group (e.g., ethnic cleansing). When MPR occurs as a practice it may have emerged in contexts where the group forcibly recruits new members (to achieve group cohesion) or it is the result of small group dynamics also present in other contexts of MPR (e.g., street gangs, sports clubs, fraternities).

It can be concluded that there is some evidence of the existence of the role of situational factors in explaining MPR; however, more research is necessary to better understand the role that these factors play in MPR especially in settings where research is practically non-existent. These would include contexts that involve children such as residential schools and pedophile organizations.

Interactions between individual, sociocultural and situational factors

Harkins and Dixon (2013) not only considered that the three factors described above (individual, socio-cultural and situational) played a role in the likelihood of a MPR occurring, but they also proposed that they interacted in various ways that further increased the

likelihood of a MPR. These interactions could be between the individual and the socio-cultural context (internalization of socio-cultural factors), the individual and situational factors (group processes), and the situational context and socio-cultural factors (sub-cultural context) (see Figure 1).

Internalization of sociocultural factors

The internalization of socio-cultural factors is related to the degree to which an individual internalizes socio-cultural norms and beliefs and how these influence his individual attitudes and cognitions (Harkins & Dixon, 2013). If individuals live in a socio-cultural context characterized by male dominance and hypermasculinity, some will internalize these factors (Henry et al., 2004). Harkins and Dixon (2013) considered that distorted attitudes, such as those where men believe that they are entitled to sex with women, could increase the likelihood of MPR. They also highlight the importance of cognitive distortions which are offence-supportive self-statements or beliefs (Gannon, Ward, & Collie, 2007) and implicit theories that are clusters of beliefs that form part of an underlying schema (Gannon & Polaschek, 2006). It was hypothesized by Harkins and Dixon (2013) that individuals who have offence supportive implicit theories are likely to be influenced by their socio-cultural context. Additionally, they suggested that individuals with offence supportive cognitions are not only likely to seek each other out but could also influence others in a group, if relevant group processes are present.

Other authors have also considered the internalization of socio-cultural factors in MPR, for example, DeKeserdy and Schwartz (1993) viewed North American society as characterized by the dominance of men and the existence of patriarchal and pro-rape attitudes. In this society it is common to find male social groups where members possess a narrow

concept of masculinity (e.g., sports teams, fraternities or friends in the neighbourhood bar). In line with what Harkins and Dixon (2013) suggested, these men could be influenced by their socio-cultural context or actively seek out other men with similar attitudes to their own.

Group processes

Group processes are related to the interaction between the individual and the situational context and play an important role in an individual's vulnerability to MPR (Harkins & Dixon, 2010, 2013; Henry et al., 2004). This is because they refer to the ways that individuals interact in a specific situation. Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) identified several theories of group behaviour which they considered were pertinent to MPR. These are social comparison, social dominance, conformity, obedience to authority, social corroboration, deindividuation, and groupthink. These group processes will be examined in more detail below.

Some authors of the earlier explanatory theories also identified group processes in MPR and highlighted their importance (Amir, 1971; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979). Amir (1971) stated that feelings of uncertainty and internal inhibitions may impede an individual from getting involved in deviant behaviour, even though he desires it, or is ready for it. However, he believed that in group situations it is possible for that individual to "deindividualize" himself. This happens because his personal inhibitions are reduced or even neutralized through group processes. Amir (1971) suggested that the principal factors in the group process that contribute to "deindividualization" are: group norms and goals, emotional group dynamics, and leadership phenomena. Additionally, Groth and Birnbaum (1979) stated that in MPR issues such as status, group membership, dependency, affiliation and peer recognition are prominent.

Group processes and dynamics are unique to sexual offending committed by multiple perpetrators and are recognized as a central factor in MPR. However, there is a lack of empirical research in this area and there are very few studies where perpetrators of MPR have been asked about their motives to participate in the offence. In the few studies where this did occur, there does seem to be some evidence of group processes (Blanchard, 1959; Etgar, 2013; Etgar & Ganot-Prager, 2009; Hooing, et al, 2010). Blanchard (1959) pointed out that it was possible to identify group processes in the MPRs committed by the two groups that he examined (i.e., the existence of a leader that not only was stimulated by the presence of the other group members, but was also able to direct those members' attention to sexual matters). Furthermore, he noted that these processes were also evident when he evaluated the two groups using a "Group Process Rorschach" (he administered the Rorschach, a projective psychological test, to each group). Similarly, Etgar (2013) noted that group dynamics play a central role not only in the offence but also in a group therapy setting. She concluded that it is possible to treat members of the same MPR in the same therapeutic group but it is vital that group dynamics must be taken into account and not only identified but also addressed in the group. Additionally, Hooing et al. (2010) found that the reasons given for participating in a MPR by young perpetrators were more frequently associated to group processes such as sociability (e.g., "having fun") and social dominance (e.g., "feeling masculine in the offence") than to sexual motives.

A brief description of each of the group processes identified by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) follows and where possible references are made to studies that either offer evidence to support the group process or are theoretically in accordance with it.

The need for an individual to meet certain interpersonal needs such as inclusion, control and affection is an explanation for the formation of groups (Schultz, 1967). In order to explain

how the needs for inclusion and affection are met in groups, social comparison theory hypothesizes that individuals look to others for support of their beliefs. Harkins and Dixon (2013) suggested that social comparison theory could explain why in some MPRs individuals that do not want to participate in the sexual assault go along with it in an attempt to try to meet other needs from the group, such as inclusion and affection. Etgar and Ganot-Prager (2009) provide a quote from a perpetrator of MPR that clearly demonstrates this need for inclusion: “I did it to become like one of the group” (p. 311). Moreover, Groth and Birnbaum (1979) believed that the follower takes part in this type of assault as a way to be accepted by his co-offenders and maintain membership in the group.

Social dominance theory, on the other hand, is related to the interpersonal need for control described by Schultz (1967). This theory states that “stratification systems” which are perceived social hierarchies (e.g., based on age, gender, ethnicity, social class, religion, and nation) play a central role in intergroup relations (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In accordance with this theory, Harkins and Dixon (2013) suggested that some people may become involved in a MPR in an attempt to exercise or maintain control over others that they perceive as having a lower status on the hierarchy. They considered that these hierarchies could be based on age and would be relevant in MPRs against children, or on gender and be associated with perpetrators of MPR against women committed by fraternities and street gangs, or even on ethnicity and/or religion and be found in MPRs in war. Groth and Birnbaum (1979) associated MPR to control and power and they considered that a leader of a MPR has the need to feel in control, not only of the victim, but also of his co-offenders. Being the leader gives him a sense of power and mastery. Furthermore, Jewkes and Sikweyiya (2013) reported that factors such as dominance over women, gender hierarchy and male sexual entitlement contributed to MPR.

Conformity applies to individuals changing their attitudes, statements, or behaviour in order to be consistent with group norms (Baron & Kerr, 2003). Rewards and punishments controlled by the group influence conformity; for example, conformity is likely to occur when a group has to come to a unanimous agreement and those who disagree are rejected or punished in some way. Harkins and Dixon (2013) stated that some individuals may participate in a MPR that they would not have started on their own so as not to lose rewards they believe they get from the group, or to avoid punishment or rejection if they decide not to participate. They suggested that conformity may be present in, for example, abuse in day care centres, street gangs and fraternities. One of the perpetrators of MPR in Etgar and Ganot-Prager's (2009) study clearly demonstrated his fear of rejection in the following quote: "If I don't join in with everyone, I will be rejected" (p. 311).

Milgram (2005) stated that obedience to authority describes behaviours of individuals when obeying orders from people they see as their superiors or leaders. He highlighted how individuals may, under orders, engage in behaviours that would be inconceivable if acting on their own. In MPRs this could occur if in the group there is a person occupying an authority position, for example, in war where soldiers were ordered to rape by their superiors (Harkins & Dixon, 2013). As noted above there is evidence that in some wars orders are given to commit a MPR (Wood, 2013).

Social corroboration is found in groups whose members offer support for shared attitudes or choices which results in an increase in the confidence of those attitudes or choices (Baron & Kerr, 2003). In MPR contexts, social corroboration could increase confidence in beliefs that support this type of sexual offence if such behaviour were shared by the other members of a group. One example would be the acceptance of the sexual abuse of children amongst those who are members of pedophilic groups (Harkins & Dixon, 2013). There is a

lack of research on MPR in settings with children; however, in some fraternities there is evidence for social corroboration. Martin and Hummer (1989) considered that the characteristics of some fraternities, their members and practices create a sociocultural environment conducive to the use of coercion in sexual relations with women. For example, these fraternities value a certain type of masculinity which is defined by wealth, dominance, competition, sexual ability and capacity to drink alcohol. Men who are seen as possessing these characteristics are sought out and selected to join these fraternities.

Goldstein (2002) considered that deindividuation is the process that takes place when a person loses their sense of individuality and becomes submerged in a group. Moreover, Baron and Kerr (2003) believed that by losing their sense of individuality a person feels less self-conscious, which in turn facilitates their involvement in anti-social behaviour.

Deindividuation also allows them to attribute responsibility to others and in that way absolve themselves of guilt. Additionally, Zimbardo (2007) stated that deindividuation contributes to a person feeling anonymous and therefore permits them to act without self-monitoring, accountability and responsibility. Deindividuation can therefore explain how a perpetrator can lose his sense of individuality and responsibility and go along with the group in a MPR (Harkins & Dixon, 2013).

The process of groupthink is related to poor decision making in groups in which there is pressure to conform. This poor decision making results from an attempt to reduce conflict and a hesitation to critically assess other options and offer alternatives (Janis, 1982). It can be prompted by various factors which includes a directive leader, excessive group cohesion, concordance of ideology, insistence on unanimity, insecure members and group isolation.

Harkins and Dixon (2013) believed that groupthink could be present in some MPRs and could be more relevant to contexts such as street gangs, fraternities, residential homes and war.

O'Sullivan (1991) identified two other group processes in MPR that were not directly examined by Harkins and Dixon (2013): diffusion of responsibility and modelling. Diffusion of responsibility referred to situations where feelings of responsibility for the welfare of the victim are diminished by the presence of others that are acting in a similar way, since they are seen as sharing the blame. By watching peers sexually assault a woman, she described modelling occurring, since not only do observers learn that it is an appropriate behaviour, but also how to do it.

As noted above, some of the earlier explanatory theories proposed that group processes played a role in MPR (Amir, 1971; Blanchard, 1959; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979). Additionally, Harkins and Dixon (2013) not only identified group processes that they considered were present in MPR but they also emphasized their importance in this type of sexual offending. Although there are few empirical studies that examined the role of group processes in MPR, it is possible to conclude that there is some empirical evidence that supports the existence of these processes.

Subcultural context

Finally, the subcultural context is related to the interaction between specific situational contexts and broader sociocultural factors. Harkins and Dixon (2013) considered that the presence of sociocultural and situational factors together may increase the likelihood of a MPR because certain cultural practices can lead men to sexually offend in groups in a situation favourable to this behaviour. Baron and Kerr (2003) propose that groups establish group norms which are approved attitudes, perceptions and behaviours for that group and that these greatly influence the thoughts and behaviours of the group members. Various contexts of MPR have established group norms that permit this type of sexual offending such as

fraternities and war (Harkins & Dixon, 2013). Also, male bonding, whose purpose is to unify men, can be achieved through activities that involve negativity towards females (Curry, 1991). Furthermore, Brownmiller (1975) suggested that sexual activity can facilitate male bonding and group solidarity. Harkins and Dixon (2013) stated that a subcultural context can exist in which group members normalize rape myths and where MPR is acceptable, either because the individuals entered the group with existing beliefs supportive of a rape culture or they adopted those beliefs once they came into the situation. Related to the sub-cultural context, Jewkes and Sikweyiya (2013) stated that MPR in South Africa has cultural roots associated to gendered practices of adolescent males and may be viewed as legitimate by some adolescent sub-cultures. However, there is a lack of empirical research that directly examines the subcultural context and further research is necessary for it to be possible to determine if there is empirical evidence for this level of the model.

Conclusions

The explanations of MPR have ranged from individual to socio-cultural and situational factors and to combinations of these. The Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO proposed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) is the most comprehensive theory to date and not only includes these three factors but also the interaction between them, while emphasizing the effects of group processes. The purpose of this article was to survey the empirical research on MPR to determine what empirical support there is for this model and where the knowledge gaps lie.

There is some evidence for the role of individual factors in MPR. However, the literature is marked by inconsistencies. A great number of the existing studies describe the typical perpetrator of MPR as a young ethnic minority male, from a single parent household, with low education, poor employment prospects, an average non-deviant personality profile,

and whose motives to participate in the assault were predominantly non-sexual (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld et al., 2007; De Wree, 2004; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs, et al., 2011; Hooing et al, 2010). However, there are a few studies that indicate that some of the perpetrators of MPR are from more privileged backgrounds (Franklin, 2013; Jewkes & Sikweyiya, 2013) and psychopathic traits were detected in their psychological characteristics (Jewkes & Sikweyiya, 2013). These inconsistencies could suggest that there are different types of perpetrators of MPR and further research is necessary to identify them.

Distinguishing between adolescent and adult perpetrators is also necessary as it is likely that they possess different characteristics and even motives to participate in a MPR. In addition, more studies conducted with community samples are needed to provide information about unconvicted perpetrators of MPR.

In relation to the socio-cultural and situational factors proposed as contributing to MPR, there is greater consensus in the studies conducted and evidence supports the importance of these factors (Amir , 1981; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; Franklin 2004; Sanday, 2007; Wood, 2013). Nevertheless, further research is required especially in relation to the situational factors, in order to gain a better understanding of the specific mechanisms that contribute to a MPR in different settings.

What appears to be unique to this type of sexual offending is the role played by group processes and dynamics and the possible presence and influence of a leader. There is clear evidence supporting the presence and role of a leader in MPR (Porter & Alison, 2001; Woodhams et al., 2012). In relation to group processes, there is a lack of empirical studies but the few that exist do show some evidence for the existence of these processes (Blanchard, 1959; Etgar, 2013; Etgar & Prager, 2009; Hooing, et al, 2010). For a better understanding of the role of group dynamics and leadership in MPR it would be helpful to gather information

from the perpetrators themselves (e.g., interviews with convicted perpetrators of MPR regarding their role and involvement in the offence).

In conclusion, within the limited research that exists on MPR, some empirical evidence can be found that supports the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO proposed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013); however, there are also clear evidence gaps. As it stands, this theory could be a useful guide to researchers and practitioners in the area of MPR who, in turn, can contribute to its testing and further development.

PART II:
EMPIRICAL STUDIES

CHAPTER 3:
HETEROGENEITY WITHIN MULTIPLE PERPETRATOR RAPES: A NATIONAL
COMPARISON OF LONE, DUO, AND 3+ PERPETRATOR RAPES

Part II of this thesis consists of three empirical studies conducted to address gaps in the MPR research. In the review of the literature (Chapters 1 and 2) it was found that there are inconsistencies in the findings of existing studies comparing lone rape to MPR. Furthermore, there is a lack of studies that analyse the potential effect of differences in group size. Therefore, the aim of Chapter 3 was to compare lone rapes to MPRs, and simultaneously examine the effect the number of perpetrators involved in MPRs has on offence characteristics.

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Heterogeneity Within Multiple Perpetrator Rapes: A National Comparison of Lone, Duo, and 3+ Perpetrator Rapes

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Abstract

The effect of number of perpetrators involved in multiple perpetrator rapes on offense characteristics is underresearched despite beliefs that duos/dyads differ in their interactions and dynamics to groups of 3+ members. We analyzed a national sample of 336 allegations of completed and attempted rape of female victims from the United Kingdom. Rapes committed by multiple (duos and groups of 3+ perpetrators) and lone offenders were compared on offense characteristics (incorporating the approach, maintenance, and closure phases of each rape) and victim and offender sociodemographic characteristics. Significant differences between rapes committed by lone, duo, and 3+ group offenders were found for the age and ethnicity of the offenders; the type of approach used; the locations of the initial contact, assault, and release of the victims; the use of a vehicle; the precautions utilized; the verbal themes present; and the sex acts performed. These results have implications for educational prevention programs and interventions with offenders.

Keywords

multiple perpetrator rape, group rape, gang rape, duos, dyads

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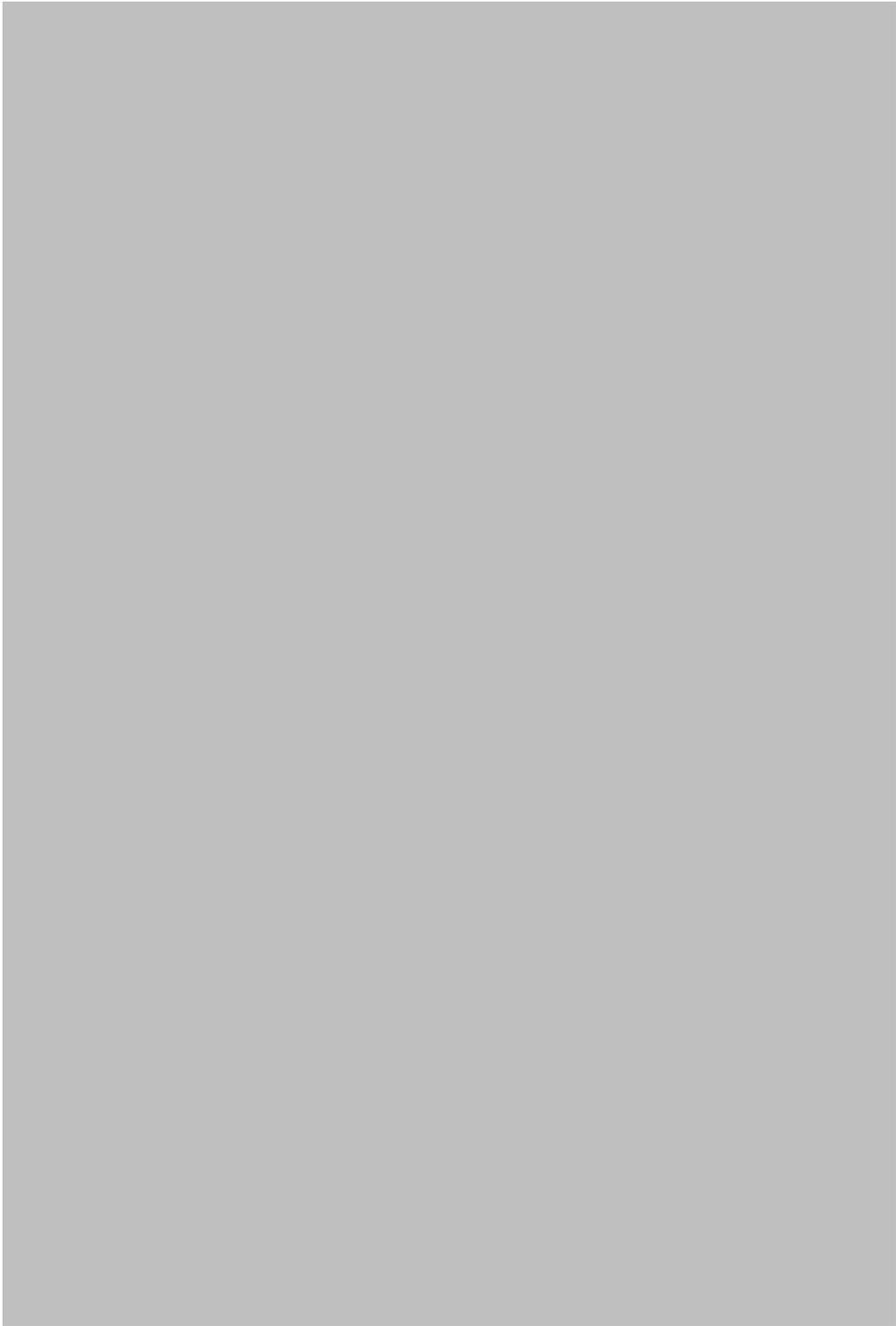
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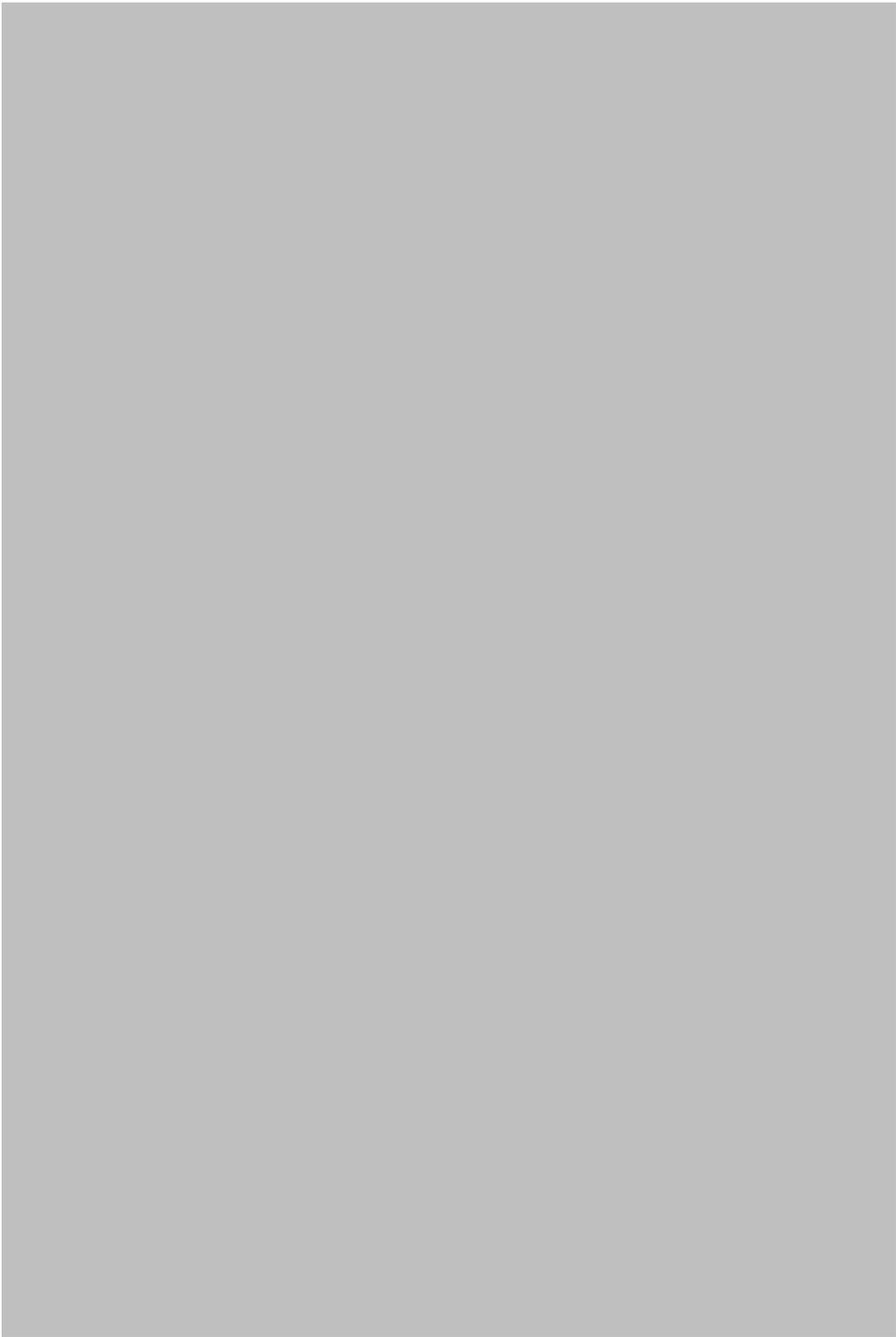






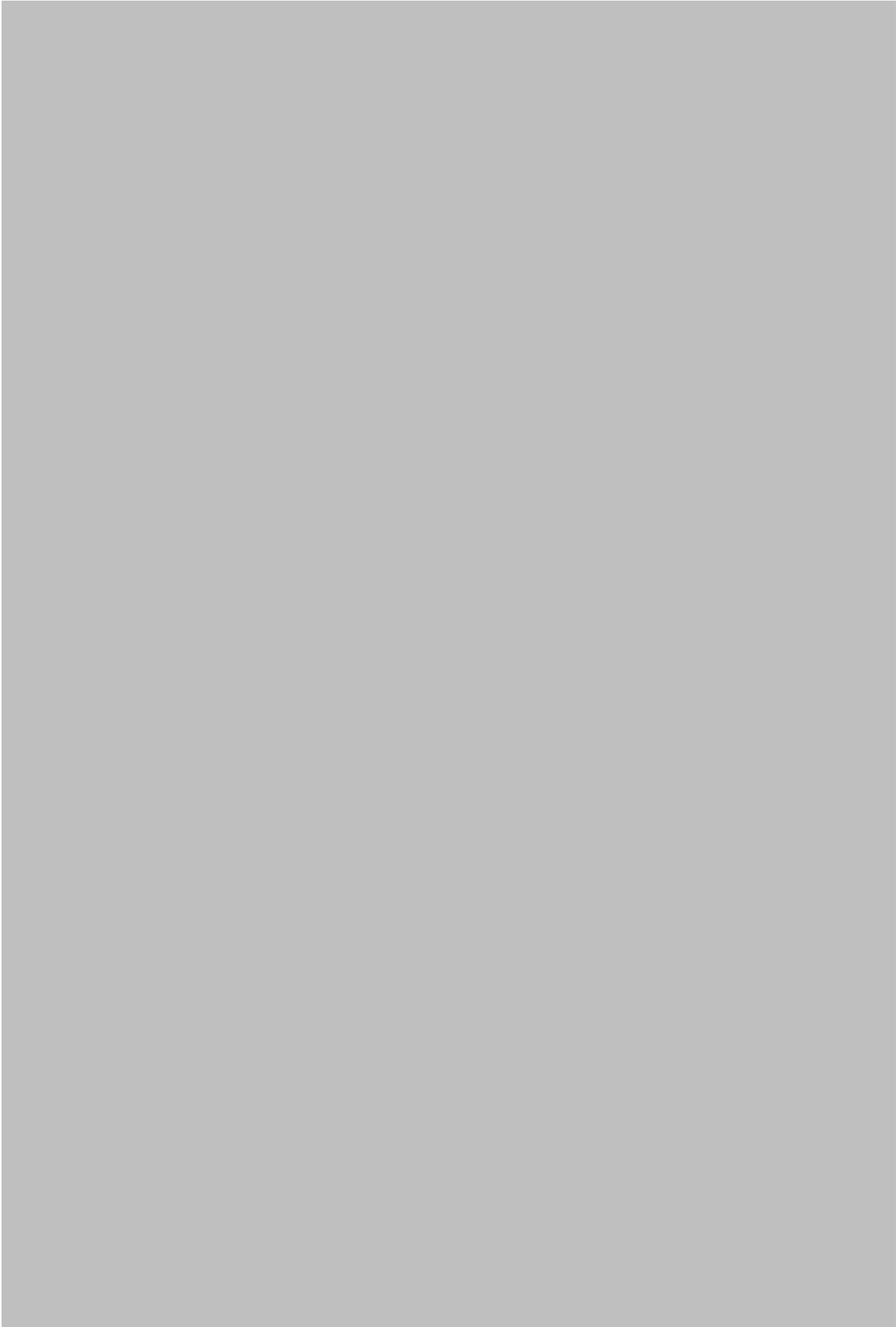


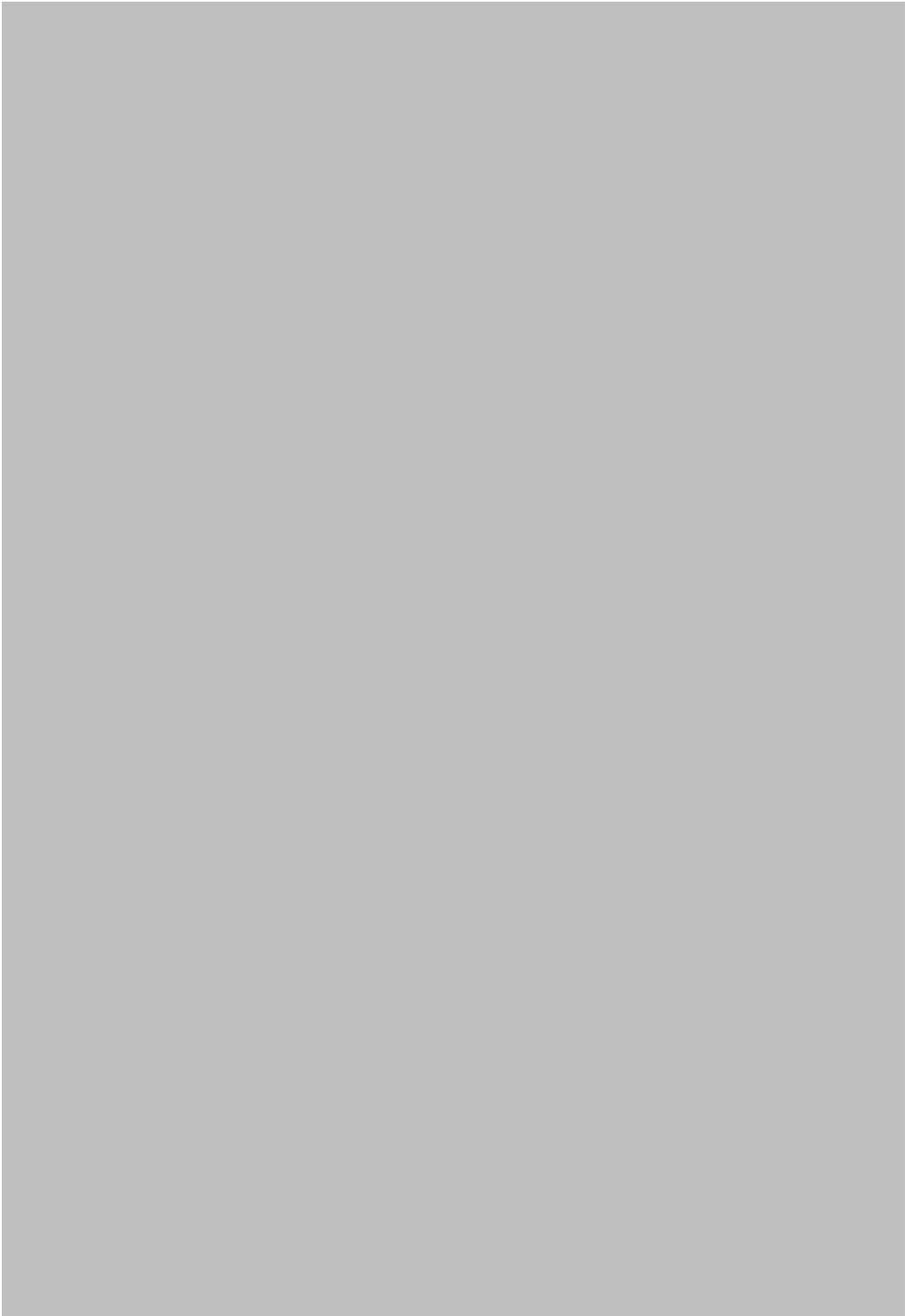






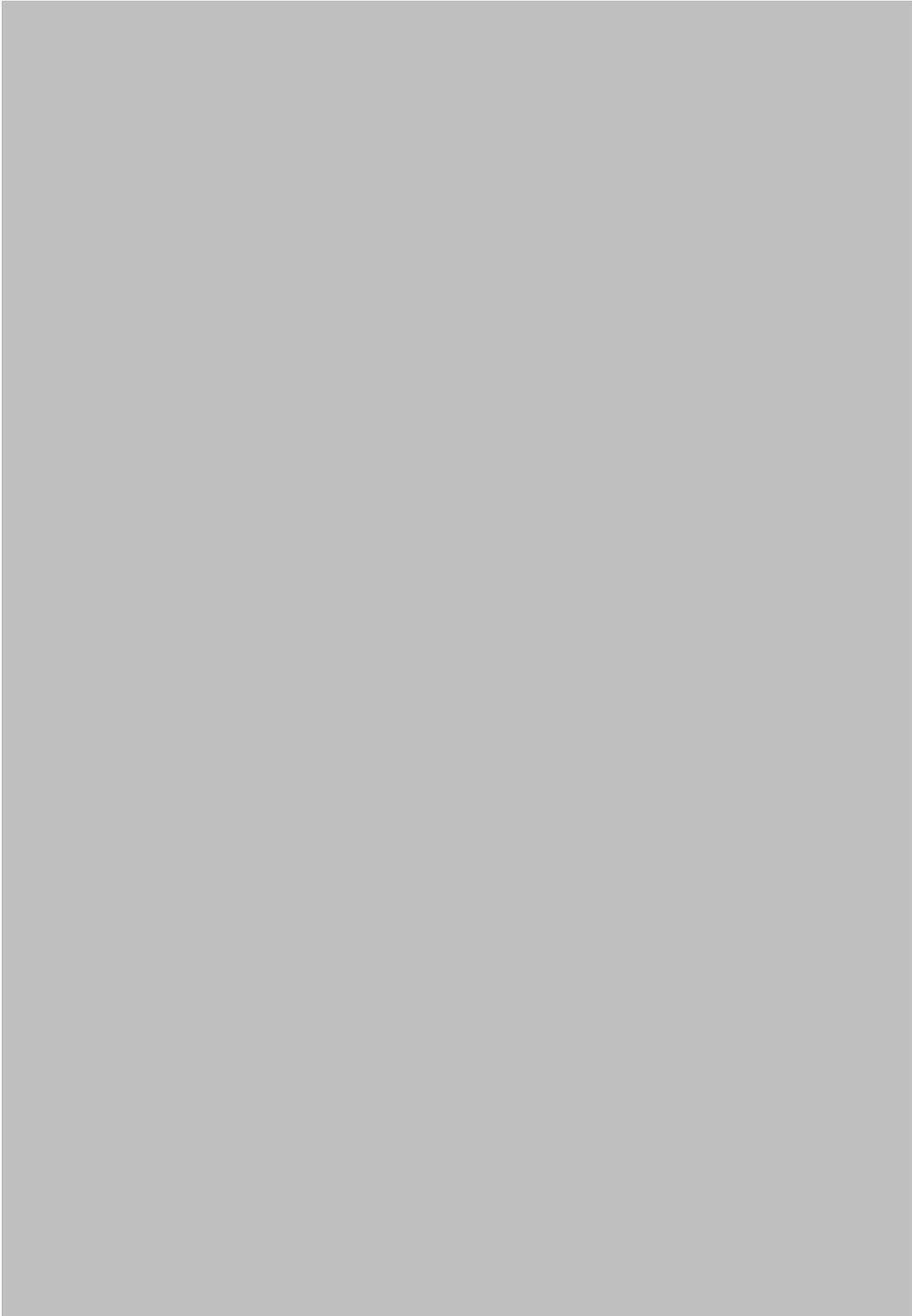






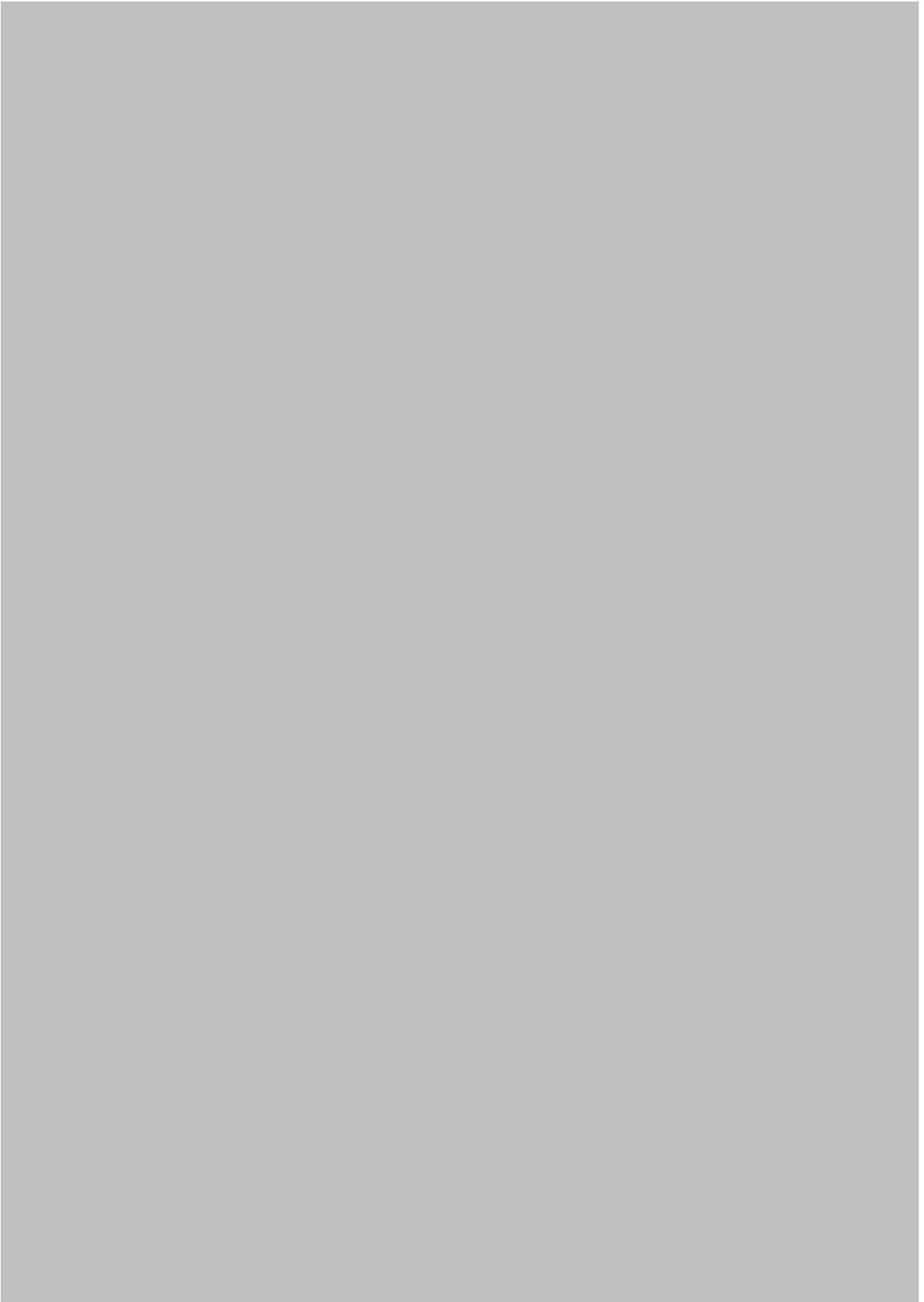
















CHAPTER 4:
CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN MULTIPLE PERPETRATOR RAPE: A COMPARISON
OF JUVENILE PORTUGUESE AND DUTCH OFFENCES

A great number of the studies on MPR were conducted in different countries; therefore, it is not clear if the inconsistencies that were found in the results (Chapters 1 and 2) were related to socio-cultural differences or to diverse study designs. Furthermore, it is believed that socio-cultural factors play an important role in MPR (Chapter 2). However, there are no published cross-cultural studies on MPR. In order to address this gap, the aim of Chapter 4 was to examine possible cross-cultural differences in MPR by analysing the differences in offence and offender characteristics between MPRs committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands, using an identical study design.

The following chapter has been submitted to *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment* for review and is authored by Teresa da Silva, Jessica Woodhams, Leigh Harkins, Chantal van den Berg and Jan Hendriks. This journal requires manuscripts to be submitted with U.S. word spelling. The format of the manuscript has been altered in places to achieve consistency with other chapters in this thesis.

Chapter 4: Cultural Differences in Multiple Perpetrator Rape: A Comparison of Juvenile Portuguese and Dutch Offenses

Multiple Perpetrator Rape (MPR), a sexual assault which involves two or more perpetrators (Horvath & Kelly, 2009), is prevalent internationally, has been present throughout history, and is a significant social problem in many countries (Brownmiller, 1975; da Silva, Harkins, & Woodhams, 2013; Sanday, 2007). Despite the socio-cultural context being implicated in theories of sexual offending and MPR, to date, there has been no cross-cultural study of MPR. This study therefore compared and contrasted MPRs from Portugal and the Netherlands. Since MPRs are committed by significantly younger offenders, compared to lone sexual assaults (Amir, 1971; da Silva, Woodhams, & Harkins, 2013; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Wright & West, 1981), this cross-cultural comparison focused on offenses committed by Portuguese and Dutch juveniles.

Offender and offense characteristics of juvenile MPR

The majority of the studies of MPR have included both young and adult offenders in their samples without differentiating between them (Amir, 1971; da Silva, Woodhams, et al., 2013; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2006; Wright & West, 1981). There are a few studies that have focused exclusively on young perpetrators of MPR (Bijleveld, Weerman, Looije, & Hendriks, 2007 (Netherlands); Blanchard, 1959 (United States); De Wree, 2004 (Belgium); 't Hart-Kerkhoffs, Vermeiren, Jansen, & Doreleijers, 2011 (Netherlands)) and some have compared these young perpetrators to other sub-types of young sex offenders, namely, lone offenders (Aebi, Vogt, Plattner, Steinhausen, & Bessler, 2012 (Switzerland); Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003 (Netherlands); Hooing, Jonker, & van Berlo, 2010

(Netherlands); Kjellgren, Wassberg, Carlberg, Langstrom, & Svedin, 2006 (Sweden); Woodhams, 2008; Woodhams, Gillett, & Grant, 2007 (United Kingdom)). Most of these studies have examined the characteristics of offenders, victims and their offenses.

In all, the majority of the young perpetrators were found to be male and their victims were females who were mostly their peers or adults. Many of these studies found that a great number of MPRs were committed by ethnic minority offenders (Aebi et al., 2012; Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld et al., 2007; De Wree, 2004; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Hooing et al., 2010).

In general, perpetrators of MPR had fairly non-deviant and average personality profiles (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld et al., 2007; De Wree, 2004; Hooing et al., 2010), although, a few studies reported them to be of below average intelligence (Bijleveld et al., 2007; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011). Additionally, they typically did poorly in school (Bijleveld et al., 2007; De Wree, 2004; Hooing et al., 2010). Furthermore, Bijleveld et al. (2007) found that these offenders were often from “broken homes”, where their parents had separated. Moreover, De Wree (2004) reported that they frequently had a combination of socio-economic problems which contributed to poor employment prospects. In general, MPRs reported less sexual victimization as children than lone offenders (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld et al., 2007; Hooing et al., 2010; Kjellgren et al., 2006). They had also committed fewer sexual offences in the past compared to lone sex offenders (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Kjellgren et al., 2006).

Bijleveld et al. (2007) found that the offender groups were loosely formed, composed of friends and acquaintances. The majority of the victims were also known to at least one of the offenders (Bijleveld et al., 2007; De Wree, 2004; Hooing et al., 2010; Kjellgren et al., 2006). While some of the studies found that the multiple perpetrator sexual assaults were more often

completed rapes than the lone sexual assaults (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Woodhams, 2004), Aebi et al. (2012) found the opposite. They reported that the sexual behavior in the MPRs was less intrusive than in the lone perpetrator offenses.

Similarly, inconsistencies in findings between studies have also been found for physical violence. While some studies have found more physical violence in MPRs ('t Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Hooing et al., 2010; Woodhams, 2004), Bijleveld et al., (2007) found that physical violence was rare in their sample and Kjellgren et al., (2006) reported that there were no differences in violence used in MPRs versus lone perpetrator rapes. In relation to motivations, Hooing et al. (2010) found that perpetrators of MPR more often reported non-sexual motives, associated with sociability, group dynamics or peer pressure. They also held more negative attitudes towards girls than lone perpetrators.

It is unclear if the variations that exist in some of the findings from these studies reflect real differences in the characteristics of MPR between countries or are due to the fact that diverse samples and study designs have been used. Similar inconsistencies can also be found in other MPR studies that did not exclusively examine juveniles (da Silva, Woodhams, et al., 2013; Harkins & Dixon, 2010). For example, in terms of the approach and location of the rape, in the United Kingdom (UK) the majority of victims were approached outside and raped indoors (Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Woodhams, 2008; Wright & West, 1981), whereas in South Africa, even though the victims were also mainly approached outdoors, the majority were raped outdoors in open spaces (Vetten & Haffejee, 2005). Differences have also been found in the use of violence; studies from the United States (Gidycz & Koss, 1990; Ullman, 1999, 2007) and the UK (Woodhams, 2004, 2008; Woodhams, Gillett & Grant, 2007; Wright & West, 1981) report more violence in MPRs than studies in the Netherlands and Belgium (Bijleveld, Weerman, Looije, & Hendriks, 2007; Boelrijk, 1997; De Weer, 2004). These

findings could suggest that there are differences in some offense characteristics of MPR in different countries, however, to date, there has been no cross-cultural study of MPR.

The role of socio-cultural factors in MPR

Harkins and Dixon's (2013) multi-factorial model for multiple perpetrator sexual offending (MPSO), suggests that one of the explanatory factors for MPR is the socio-cultural context. The socio-cultural context includes norms, myths, values and beliefs held at the societal, cultural and community level; for example, rape culture, rape myths and patriarchy (Harkins & Dixon, 2013). This model of MPSO is an adaptation of the Proximal Confluence Model of Violence (White & Kowalski, 1998), which was previously adapted by Henry, Ward, and Hirshberg (2004) in their model of war-time rape. Furthermore, other theories of sexual offending in general have integrated socio-cultural factors in their multi-factorial frameworks (Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991; Marshall & Barbaree, 1990; Ward & Beech, 2006). These include factors such as ideology of male dominance, negative attitudes towards women and hostile masculinity.

Although these theories propose that socio-cultural factors play a role in explaining sexual aggression, few studies have examined cultural influences or differences in the expression of sexual violence (Giacopassi & Dull, 1986; Hall, Teten, DeGarmo, Sue, & Stephens, 2005; Koo, Stephens, Lindgren, & George, 2012; Rozée, 1993; Sanday, 1981; Sorenson & Siegel, 1992; Willis, 1992; Woodhams & Labuschagne, 2012; Wyatt 1992). A small number of studies (Rozée, 1993; Sanday, 1981) have analyzed rape across different tribal societies. Some differences in the incidence, meaning and function of rape across these societies were uncovered and rape seemed to be related to a cultural configuration that encompassed interpersonal violence, male dominance and sexual separation (Sanday,

1981). The majority of these studies have investigated attitudes towards rape and rape victims in contemporary societies (Giacopassi & Dull, 1986; Hall et al., 2005; Koo et al., 2012; Willis, 1992; Wyatt, 1992). For example, Koo et al. (2012) studied the relationship between rape-supportive attitudes and misogyny, acculturation and ethnic identity in Asian American men. They concluded that cultural factors were pertinent to understanding the rape-supportive beliefs of Asian American men and may be helpful, not only in gaining a better understanding of cultural influences on sexuality in general, but also to support theoretical models of sexual assault that include cultural constructs. Hall et al. (2005) examined the explanatory power of models of sexual aggression (Malamuth, Linz, Heavey, Barnes, & Acker, 1995; Malamuth, Sockloskie, Koss, & Tanaka, 1991) among mainland Asian American, Hawaiian Asian American and European American men. Malamuth et al.'s (1995) model proposes that hostile masculinity and impersonal sex can be pathways to sexual aggression, which was supported in the study. However, Hall et al. (2005) concluded that existing models may need to be expanded to include more cultural factors, in order to have application to certain ethnic groups.

Woodhams and Labuschagne (2012) examined the characteristics of South African serial rapists, their victims and crime scene behaviors and compared them with samples of serial rapists from the UK, Finland, the US and Canada. Although they found cross-cultural similarities, they also found differences. They suggested that variation in the relative frequency of some crime scene behaviors in different countries could be due to diversity in cultural attitudes and practices, and socioeconomic climates.

One of the aspects that the above models and studies of sexual aggression have in common is reference to the causal role of attitudes and beliefs about women and gender roles (e.g., rape myths, patriarchy, male dominance, sexual separation, hostile masculinity and

misogyny) in the expression of sexual violence. If one follows this line of argument, differences in the characteristics of sexual offending, including MPR, should be found between countries where there are differences in equality between men and women. Feminist models of rape have long argued that there is a relationship between gender equality and rape rates (Brownmiller, 1975; Clark & Lewis, 1977; Griffin, 1979; Peterson & Bailey, 1992; Russell, 1975). While the traditional feminist theories hypothesize that gender inequality increases rape, alternative theories (e.g., the Backlash Hypothesis) state that gender equality may increase rape (Ellis & Beattie, 1983; Russell, 1975; Williams & Holmes, 1981). Either way, differences in gender equality between countries should be associated with differences in sexual offending rates, characteristics and behaviors.

Differences between Portugal and the Netherlands

Portugal and the Netherlands share various similarities, such as both being small countries in terms of population size (European Commission, Eurostat, 2014) and both being part of the European Union. However, there are also some key differences between them. As can be seen in Table 1,¹ they differ in gross domestic product (GDP), in purchasing power standards (PPS), rate of net migration (the difference between number of immigrants and emigrants of an area in a period of time), levels of education and unemployment. Overall, the Netherlands has a significantly better standard of living than Portugal and there are more people entering the country than leaving.

In Portugal there is a higher rate of early leavers from school/training and unemployment is not only higher than in the Netherlands, but also higher than the European Union average. Factors such as poverty, unemployment and family income inequality have

¹ Although the Dutch sample describes offenses committed between 1993 and 2001 while Table 1 describes contextual information from 2010, it is assumed that even though there may have been absolute level changes the differences between the two countries have remained roughly the same.

been linked to higher rates of sexual violence (Jaffe & Straus, 1987; Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002; Martin, Vieratis, & Britto, 2006; Maume, 1989; Sampson, 1993). Furthermore, Martin et al. (2006) found that greater levels of women’s educational attainment, labor market participation, income and occupational status were significantly related to lower rape rates.

Moreover, Woodhams and Labuschagne (2012) demonstrated how differences in unemployment could impact the *modus operandi* of offenders. In South Africa, where there is a high rate of unemployment, one of the most common approaches used by offenders was to pretend that they could secure employment for the victim. The authors suggest that the success of this strategy was likely due to the high unemployment rate.

Table 1: Contextual information regarding Portugal and the Netherlands

Contextual information (2010)	Portugal	Netherlands	European Union-27 Average
GDP per inhabitant (in PPS)	19700	32100	24500
Crude rate of net migration plus statistical adjustment (per 1000 inhabitants)	0.4	2.0	1.9
Early leavers from education and training	28.7%	10%	14.1%
Unemployment rate (% of labor force)	12	4.5	9.7
Long term unemployment (% of active population)	6.3	1.2	3.9

The Gender Equality Index (GEI) is a measurement tool that synthesizes gender equality as a multi-dimensional concept and provides a measure of how close a country is to achieving gender equality where 1 represents total gender inequality and 100 full gender equality. It combines gender indicators (e.g., work, money, knowledge, power, and health) into a single summary measure. In the 2013 Gender Equality Index Report, the country with the lowest GEI was Romania with a score of 35.3, while Sweden had the highest GEI with a score of 74.3. In the same report, Portugal not only has a lower GEI overall in relation to the

Netherlands, but also in relation to the average of the European Union (European Institute for Gender Equality EIGE, 2013). In contrast, the Netherlands has a higher GEI overall than the average of the European Union (see Table 2). If there is a relationship between gender equality and the risk of sexual violence, as models of sexual offending have predicted, differences should exist in sexual violence between Portugal and the Netherlands.

Table 2: Scores of the Gender Equality Index for Portugal and the Netherlands

Domains	Portugal	Netherlands	European Union -27 Average
Work	66.2	73.1	69.0
Money	56.3	82.5	68.9
Knowledge	30.4	65.5	48.9
Time	22.4	71.3	38.8
Power	30.6	52.2	38.0
Health	84.5	94.7	90.1
Overall	41.3	69.7	54.0

MPR in Portugal and the Netherlands

A number of studies have been conducted in the Netherlands on MPR, mostly with juvenile offenders (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld et al., 2007; Boelrijk, 1997; Hooing et al., 2010). These highlight that MPR is a significant problem, especially for young offenders.

Hooing et al. (2010) found that approximately two-thirds of their sample of juvenile sex offenders against peers had committed their offense with co-offenders. In Portugal, there are currently no published studies of MPR; however, Barroso (2012) found that approximately two-thirds of his sample of juvenile sex offenders against peers and adults had committed the offense with co-offenders. This indicates that MPR is a relevant issue in both Portugal and the Netherlands, in particular for offenses perpetrated by juveniles.

Rationale

As noted above, there are no published cross-cultural studies of MPR and there are few related to sexual offending in general. The existing studies and the theoretical explanatory models of sexual offending propose that socio-cultural factors play a role in this type of offending. This suggests that there could be differences in MPR between countries. These differences could be related to characteristics of offenders and crime scene behaviors.

The study reported here examined and compared the offender and offense characteristics of MPRs committed by young offenders in two different countries, using an identical study design. The study sampled juveniles because they represent a large group of offenders in all MPRs. Additionally, as was noted above, a great number of juvenile sexual offenses in Portugal and the Netherlands are committed by multiple perpetrators. The current study addressed the following research question: Are there differences in offender and offense characteristics between MPRs committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands? Taking into consideration that these two countries differ in terms of gender equality and factors such as education levels, employment rates and overall income, it was hypothesized that there would be differences between the two samples. This is due to the fact that the theoretical models and studies, mentioned above, highlight the potential causal role of beliefs and attitudes about women in the perpetration of sexual violence. Furthermore, as noted above, factors such as unemployment and family income inequality have been linked to higher rates of sexual violence. These differences could be associated with, for example, differences in approach strategies, in the locations of the assault, in the sex acts performed, in the level of violence used and in the characteristics of the offenders themselves. If there are differences between countries in the perpetration of MPR, these would need to be taken into consideration in both prevention and treatment programs. For example, in programs where

there are people from different countries and backgrounds, cultural and social differences need to be accommodated. There may be differences between people from different countries in their beliefs and attitudes towards women, or sexuality in general and these should be addressed in treatment. As suggested by Andrews and Bonta's (2007) responsivity principle in their Risk-Need-Responsivity model of assessment, intervention should be tailored to also include the specific bio-social characteristics of the individual (e.g., gender, ethnicity, class-of-origin and social location). Furthermore, differences in the perpetration of MPR between countries could suggest that differences in indicators, such as GDP, unemployment, education and gender equality between these countries could be contributing to the differences in MPR.

Method

Sample

The data were obtained from the Portuguese Parole and Prison Services (Direção-Geral de Reinserção e Serviços Prisionais - DGRSP) and the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR). A research proposal was sent to the DGRSP requesting access to offenders convicted of MPR and their case-files. This proposal was approved and access was permitted to five Educational Centers where young offenders under the age of 16 are held and four prisons with offenders from age 16 upward. Data were collected from a total of 33 offenders who were under the age of 18 years when they committed their crimes. This related to 17 offenses committed between 2000 and 2011, with the majority (70.6%) committed between 2009 and 2011. The data were extracted from the offenders' case-files which contained court information about the offense and socio-demographic and family background details regarding the offender.

A request was also submitted to access data from the NSCR. These data consisted of excerpts from court files of cases of 24 MPRs committed in the Netherlands, between 1993 and 2001. Permission for the collection had earlier been granted by the responsible authorities in the Netherlands (viz. Bijleveld & Hendriks, 1998). Data were extracted from the files related to the offenses committed and offenders themselves. After the removal of cases with a large amount of missing information, the Dutch offender sample comprised 71 offenders, all of whom were aged less than 18 when they committed their offenses.

Victims

The majority of the victims in both the Portuguese (82.4%, $n = 14$) and the Dutch (95.8%, $n = 23$) offenses were female. Similarly, the majority of the offenses involved only one victim (88.2%, $n = 15$ of the Portuguese and 79.2%, $n = 19$ of the Dutch). In the Portuguese sample the victims were aged between 10 and 23 years ($M = 14.33$, $SD = 2.96$). In the Dutch sample, even though, the exact age of the victims was not available it was possible to determine that the majority (91.5%, $n = 65$) of the offenders committed an offense against a peer indicating that both offenders and victims were of similar ages.

Offenders

The offenders in both samples were all male and most knew their victim (81.8%, $n = 27$ of the Portuguese and 86.0%, $n = 43$ of the Dutch). As can be seen in Table 3, their ages ranged from 13 to 17 years ($M = 15.21$, $SD = 1.47$) in the Portuguese sample and from 10 to 17 ($M = 14.29$, $SD = 1.47$) in the Dutch sample. In the Portuguese sample fewer than two-thirds of the offenders were Portuguese nationals and in the Dutch sample almost half were Dutch nationals (see Table 3). In the Portuguese sample, immigrant offenders were mainly Cape

Verdean, followed by Guinean, Angolan and Moldavian. In the Dutch sample, they were mainly Antillean, followed by Moroccan, Surinamese, Turkish and Other.

Table 3: Socio-demographic characteristics of the Portuguese and Dutch offenders

Variable	Portuguese (<i>n</i> = 33)		Dutch (<i>n</i> = 71)		
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
Age (years)	10 - 12	0	0.0	6	8.4
	13 - 15	17	51.5	49	69
	16 - 17	16	48.5	16	22.6
Nationality	Nationals	21	63.6	28	48.3
	Immigrants (Total)	12	36.4	30	51.7
	Cape Verdean	6	18.2	0	0.0
	Guinean	3	9.1	0	0.0
	Angolan	2	6.1	0	0.0
	Moldavian	1	3.0	0	0.0
	Antillean	0	0.0	12	20.7
	Moroccan	0	0.0	6	10.3
	Surinamese	0	0.0	5	8.6
	Turkish	0	0.0	4	6.9
Other	0	0.0	3	5.2	

Procedure

Prior to the collection of the data, a coding checklist was developed by the first author based on existing literature with the variables that were relevant for the current study. This same checklist was used for both the Portuguese and Dutch data. These variables included offender background and offense characteristics. The offender background variables consisted of socio-demographic, educational, family background, mental health and criminal history information. The socio-demographic variables were related to age, gender and ethnicity of

offenders and victims, and to the marital status and occupation of the offenders. The educational variables referred to the level of education that the offender had at the time of the offense, truancy and special educational needs. Besides including if the offender belonged to a complete or a single parent family, the family background variables also incorporated the offender's living situation at the time of the offense and family problems (abuse, domestic violence and addictions). The mental health variables included mental health referrals, history of self-harming/attempted suicide and substance abuse. The criminal history variables applied to past sexual and non-sexual offending.

Variables related to the offense characteristics included behaviors displayed by the offenders in the three phases of a sexual offense. These were the approach phase (how the victim is approached and the offenders gain control), the maintenance phase (how the offenders maintain control of the victim) and the closure phase (what happens after the sexual offense; Dale, Davies, & Wei, 1997). The offense variables incorporated the size of the group; the scene of initial contact, assault and victim release (indoors or outdoors); the approach style; substance use by the offenders and the victims; the sex acts performed; the precautions used (against the victim escaping and the offenders being identified or caught); the verbal themes present; the level and type of violence used; the level and type of injury inflicted on the victim; victim resistance and any property stolen.

The Portuguese data were collected by the first author, who is fluent in Portuguese, from the offenders' individual case-files. To protect offenders' identities, their names were replaced by an ID code during data extraction. Similarly, the first author, who also understands Dutch, collected the Dutch data from the NSCR. Once again, ID codes were used to replace the offenders' names.

The Portuguese offender background variables were likewise collected by the first author from the offenders' case files; whereas, the Dutch offender variables were provided by the NSCR, anonymized, in a SPSS file and analyzed on site. All the data that were collected from the offense accounts, the case files and the SPSS file were inputted into a database that was created for this purpose.

Overall, the offense data were relatively complete except for the variables related to the offenders' and victims' drug and alcohol use and for that reason these variables were excluded from statistical analysis. This is due to the fact that in a great number of cases it was impossible to determine if the offenders and victims were under the influence of drugs or alcohol as this was not clearly mentioned. There was a large amount of missing data for several offender variables in the Dutch dataset; therefore, any variable that had more than 25% missing values was excluded.

Results

The Portuguese and the Dutch samples were compared in terms of offender and offense characteristics. Mann-Whitney U tests were used because Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests revealed that variable distributions were significantly skewed. Categorical data were analyzed with chi-square tests.

Offense characteristics

In general, there were few significant differences between the offense characteristics of the Dutch and the Portuguese samples. In the Portuguese sample, group size ranged from two to 15 ($M = 4.29$, $SD = 1.18$) and in the Dutch sample it ranged from two to six ($M = 3.39$, $SD =$

3.16). However, these differences were not significant ($p = .701$, $\Phi = -.062$). The most common group size in both the samples was three.

In the majority of the cases in both the Portuguese (76.5%, $n = 13$) and Dutch (95.7%, $n = 22$) samples, victims were obtained using a con approach. A con approach is characterized by the offender(s) talking to the victim(s) before the assault and deceit is usually utilized (Dale et al., 1997). In the majority of the cases, the initial contact between the offenders and victims occurred outdoors (70.6%, $n = 12$, of the Portuguese and 75%, $n = 18$, of the Dutch). However, in both the samples (76.5%, $n = 13$ of the Portuguese and 70.8%, $n = 17$, of the Dutch) the majority of the assaults occurred indoors. More than half of the Portuguese (58.8%, $n = 10$) and the Dutch (54.2%, $n = 13$) victims were released indoors. The victims were moved by the offenders in the majority (76.5%, $n = 13$) of the Portuguese cases and more than half (58.3%, $n = 14$) of the Dutch cases, usually from a more public to a more private or secluded location. Even though, in both countries it was common to utilize a room in an offender's house, only in the Dutch sample were individual cubicles in public toilets, changing rooms, and basement storage rooms used.

As can be seen in Table 4, some significant differences were found (with medium effect sizes) between the two samples in the sex acts performed during the offenses. There was significantly more groping (which mainly included feeling the victims' breasts, vagina and buttocks) in the Dutch sample than in the Portuguese sample. There was also significantly more attempted penile vaginal penetration in the Dutch than the Portuguese sample. However, ejaculation by at least one offender occurred significantly more often in the Portuguese than the Dutch sample. Even though multiple sex acts were performed in more than half of the Portuguese cases, their occurrence in the Dutch sample was significantly higher.

Table 4: Significant chi-square results of comparisons between the Portuguese and Dutch offenses

Variable	Portuguese offenses (n = 17)	Dutch offenses (n = 24)	p	Φ
Sex acts performed by offender – Groping	17.6%	54.2%	.025	-.369
Sex acts performed by offender – Attempted penile vaginal penetration	5.9%	39.1%	.026	-.380
Sex acts performed by offender – Ejaculation	85.7%	47.6%	.034	.386
Multiple sexual acts	52.9%	83.3%	.045	-.329
Precautions – locked door	5.9%	45.8%	.013	-.433
Violence – victim punched	25.0%	0.0%	.020	.408
Property stolen	47.1%	4.2%	.002	.511
Offense recorded	20.0%	0.0%	.050	.408

There were no significant differences between the two samples in relation to the other sex acts performed. Only a minority of offenders in both groups kissed the victims (11.8%, $n = 2$, of the Portuguese and 29.2%, $n = 7$, of the Dutch). Digital vaginal penetration was present in only 11.8% ($n = 2$) of the Portuguese cases and in more than one-third (37.5%, $n = 9$) of the Dutch cases; nevertheless, this difference was not significant. Penile vaginal penetration was found in more than half of the Portuguese (64.7%, $n = 11$) and Dutch offenses (59.3%, $n = 16$). On the other hand, penile anal penetration occurred in the minority of the cases in both samples (23.5%, $n = 4$, of the Portuguese and 8.3%, $n = 2$, of the Dutch) as did *attempted* penile anal penetration (5.9%, $n = 1$, of the Portuguese sample and 21.7%, $n = 5$, of the Dutch sample). The victims were forced to perform fellatio in 47.1% ($n = 8$) of the Portuguese cases and 37.5% ($n = 9$) of the Dutch cases.

As regards the precautions utilized by the offenders during the offense, no precautions were taken by offenders in more than half of the Portuguese cases (52.9%, $n = 9$) and in almost one-third of the Dutch cases (29.2%, $n = 7$). These differences were not significant; however, as can be seen in Table 4, in the Dutch group, a door was locked (ensuring that the victim could not escape) significantly more often than in the Portuguese group. Despite a condom being used (by at least one offender) in more than half of the Dutch offenses (54.2%, $n = 13$), it occurred in less than one-quarter of the Portuguese offenses (23.5%, $n = 4$). However, this difference was not statistically significant ($p = .062$, $\Phi = -.306$).

No significant differences were found between the Portuguese and the Dutch groups in terms of the verbal themes present during the assaults. In both samples, the majority of the verbal themes related to sex acts (62.5%, $n = 10$, of the Portuguese and 87.5%, $n = 21$, of the Dutch). Verbal threats were present in 56.2% ($n = 9$) of the Portuguese cases and 37.5% ($n = 9$) of the Dutch cases. In both samples, verbal themes related to victim reporting were uncommon (Portuguese = 12.5%, $n = 2$, and Dutch = 25%, $n = 6$).

In terms of the violence used during the offense there were no significant differences found between the Portuguese and the Dutch samples. Violence occurred in a minority of cases (Portuguese = 43.8%, $n = 7$, and Dutch = 25.0%, $n = 6$). When violence was used, it was utilized upon resistance from the victim (Portuguese = 43.8%, $n = 7$, and Dutch = 16.7%, $n = 4$) and during the sexual assault (Portuguese = 31.2%, $n = 5$, and Dutch = 12.5%, $n = 3$). Violence was threatened, either verbally or physically in 56.2% ($n = 9$) of the Portuguese offenses and 41.7% ($n = 10$) of the Dutch offenses. In both the samples, where physical violence was present, it ranged from slapping to kicking, strangling and throwing on the ground. However, as can be seen in Table 4, punching occurred exclusively in the Portuguese offenses.

In the majority of the Portuguese (93.8%, $n = 15$) and Dutch (87.5%, $n = 21$) offenses the offenders restrained the victim. The restraining behaviors most often utilized were grabbing the victim (Portuguese = 81.2%, $n = 13$, and Dutch = 66.7%, $n = 16$) and forcefully holding the victim down (Portuguese = 93.8%, $n = 15$ and Dutch = 83.3%, $n = 20$). Additionally, in more than one-third of the cases, the victim was forcefully dragged (Portuguese = 31.2%, $n = 5$, and Dutch = 37.5%, $n = 9$).

A significant difference (with a large effect size) between the Portuguese and the Dutch samples was found regarding property stolen (mobile phones, gold jewelry, money, iPods) from the victims by at least one offender. As can be seen in Table 4, while property was stolen in almost half of the Portuguese offenses (47.1%, $n = 8$), this only happened in one Dutch offense.

In relation to the victims' attempts to resist, no significant differences were found between the Portuguese and Dutch groups. The victims attempted to resist in the majority of the Portuguese (87.5%, $n = 14$) and Dutch (91.7%, $n = 22$) offences. This included attempts to resist both verbally (Portuguese = 81.2%, $n = 13$, Dutch = 91.7%, $n = 22$) and physically (Portuguese = 50%, $n = 8$ and Dutch = 66.7%, $n = 16$).

Once again, there were no significant differences between the two samples in relation to what happened when the offense ended. In 53% ($n = 9$) of the Portuguese offenses the offenders either ran or walked away, in 35.3% ($n = 6$) the victim was told to leave, in 17.6% ($n = 3$) the victim was returned to safety and in 5.9% ($n = 1$) the offense was interrupted. In contrast, in 33.4% ($n = 8$) of the Dutch offenses the offenders either ran or walked away, in 16.7% ($n = 4$) the victim was told to leave, in 25.0% ($n = 6$) the victim was returned to safety and in 20.8% ($n = 5$) the offense was interrupted.

As can be seen in Table 4, one-fifth (20.0%, $n = 3$) of the offenses were recorded or photographed in the Portuguese sample but this behavior did not occur in the Dutch sample.

Offender characteristics

The offenders from the Portuguese sample were significantly older ($M = 15.21$, $SD = 1.47$) than the offenders from the Dutch sample ($M = 14.29$, $SD = 1.47$), ($U = 799$, $z = -2.672$, $p = .008$, $r = -.262$).

In terms of national versus immigrant offenders, there were no significant differences between the two groups; 63.6% ($n = 21$) of the Portuguese offenders were of Portuguese nationality, while 48.3% ($n = 28$) of the Dutch offenders were of Dutch nationality. However, in the Portuguese sample it was possible to determine that 66.7% ($n = 22$) of all the offenders' parents were not Portuguese nationals.

In both samples more than half of the offenders were not living with both their parents at the time of the offense (57.6%, ($n = 19$) of the Portuguese and 60% ($n = 27$) of the Dutch). In relation to education, significant differences were found between the two groups. While the majority of the Dutch (65.4%, $n = 34$) offenders were in secondary school at the time of the offense, this was only the case for a minority of the Portuguese (24.2%, $n = 8$) offenders ($p < .001$, $\Phi = -.401$). The majority of the Portuguese (75.8%, $n = 25$) offenders were in primary school at the time of the offense. In both samples truancy was common (Portuguese = 87.1%, $n = 27$ and Dutch = 72.2%, $n = 39$).

No significant differences were found between the two samples in relation to previous non sexual and sexual crimes committed. Approximately one half of offenders from both groups had committed non sexual offenses in the past (51.5%, $n = 17$ of the Portuguese and

51.1%, $n = 23$ of the Dutch), while a minority of offenders (9.1%, $n = 3$ of the Portuguese and 20%, $n = 9$ of the Dutch) had committed a prior sexual offense.

Discussion

This study examined whether there were differences in offense and offender characteristics between MPRs committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands. Despite clear differences existing between the countries on factors that have been associated with sexual violence (e.g., gender equality, unemployment and overall income), in general, there were few significant differences in offense and offender characteristics. Moreover, some of the results were consistent with previous studies on MPR, while others were different.

As regards the similarities, in both Portugal and the Netherlands, groups comprising three perpetrators were the most common. This differs from a number of existing studies where duos are the most common constitution (Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2004, 2006; Woodhams, 2008). This difference may result from the current samples comprising juveniles, because previous studies from the US and UK (Amir, 1971; da Silva, Woodhams et al., 2013) have found larger group sizes to be associated with younger offenders.

The approach style most frequently adopted in both samples was a con-approach which tended to occur outdoors followed by a sexual assault indoors. This was in accordance with previous studies (da Silva, Woodhams et al., 2013; Porter & Alison, 2006; Woodhams, 2008; Wright & West, 1981). In relation to the sex acts performed, completed rape was common in both samples. Once again, this is consistent with many previous studies (da Silva, Woodhams et al., 2013; Gidycz & Koss, 1990; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Alison, 2006; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Woodhams, 2004, 2008; Woodhams et al., 2007; Wright & West,

1981). In general, few precautions were used by offenders in either sample, and in many cases no precautions were taken at all. This mirrors what da Silva, Woodhams et al. (2013) found with their UK study of MPR.

For both countries, physical violence occurred in a minority of cases. This contrasts with the majority of studies, where multiple acts of violence have been found in MPRs (Gidycz & Koss, 1990; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Hooing et al., 2010; Porter & Alison, 2006; 't Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Woodhams, 2004, 2008; Woodhams et al., 2007; Wright & West, 1981), but coincides with a small minority (Boelrijk, 1997; De Wree, 2004). The offenders in these few studies from the Netherlands and Belgium share similarities with the offenders in the current study as they were juveniles or young adults (under 25 years) and were known to the majority of the victims. Additionally, Balemba, Beauregard, and Mieczkowski (2012) reported that victims of sexual aggression older than 16 years were more at risk of encountering physical violence as a reaction to their resistance. On the other hand, restraining behaviors, such as grabbing and holding down the victim, occurred in the majority of the offenses in both samples. It could be argued that, in the current sample, because of the number of offenders present and the young age of the victims, it would be easier to restrain the victim and therefore, less violence would be needed.

Victim resistance (verbal and physical) was common in the offenses from both countries. Physical resistance occurred in half of the Portuguese cases and two-thirds of the Dutch cases. This high rate contrasts with a number of studies that have found less victim resistance in MPRs compared to lone rapes (Amir, 1971; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Woodhams, 2008; Wright & West, 1981). Larger groups are associated with expectations of hostility (Meier & Hinsz, 2004; Woodhams, 2008) which would be one explanation for the higher rates of victim resistance seen here, since the average group size is larger in both samples than

often seen previously. It could also be that the Portuguese and Dutch victims resisted more because the offenders were younger (Woodhams, 2008).

As regards the offender characteristics of both samples, in relation to nationality more than half of the Dutch offenders were immigrants with most originating from developing countries. Even though in the Portuguese sample approximately two thirds of the perpetrators were Portuguese nationals, two-thirds of all the offenders' parents were immigrants (from African countries) meaning that a great number of these offenders were brought up in ethnic minority households. This corresponds with what has been found in some previous studies of MPR where there is an over-representation of ethnic minority offenders (Aebi et al., 2012; da Silva, Woodhams, et al., 2013; De Wree, 2004; Hart-Kerkhoffs et al., 2011; Hooing et al., 2010; Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Woodhams, 2008).

More than half of the Portuguese and Dutch offenders were not living with both parents at the time of the offense. While about half of the offenders in both samples had committed non-sexual crimes in the past, only a small minority had committed sexual crimes. Once again, this is consistent with past research (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Kjellgren, et al., 2006).

As already mentioned, the differences in the offense and offender characteristics between the Portuguese and Dutch samples were far fewer than the similarities. In relation to the offense characteristics, the only differences found were related to sexual acts performed, precautionary behavior, property stolen and the video-recording of offenses.

With regards to the sexual acts performed, in the Dutch sample there were significantly more occasions of multiple sexual acts than in the Portuguese sample. These related to groping victims' breasts and genitals, and more attempted penile vaginal penetration. On the other hand, ejaculation of at least one offender occurred more often in the Portuguese sample.

This may be related to another significant finding regarding the offenders, which is that the Portuguese offenders were significantly older than the Dutch offenders. The younger Dutch offenders may have been less sexually experienced than the older Portuguese offenders. This could explain the higher frequency of groping and attempted penetration and the fewer cases of ejaculation in the Dutch sample. However, there was not a difference in the amount of completed penile vaginal penetration, which was similar for both samples.

In terms of precautions used, victims were locked in a contained space more often in the Dutch sample. However, this does not seem to indicate that in general, the Dutch offenders were more preoccupied with precautions than the Portuguese offenders, as there were no other significant differences between the two samples in precautionary behaviors. It is more likely that this significant difference reflects systematic variation between the two countries in terms of the type of indoor locations that were utilized.

Finally, property including money, jewelry, mobile phones and devices such as iPods were stolen significantly more often in the Portuguese cases. It is not unusual for property to be stolen during a rape, as past research shows that it is common for burglary and robbery to accompany rape (Scully, 1994). The fact that more property was stolen in the Portuguese sample could be related to the fact that the offenses were more recent than the Dutch cases and occurred in an era where it is common for young people to have more valuables on them, including mobile phones and devices such as iPods. Furthermore, the rates for robbery (stealing by using force or threatening force) recorded in police data and victimization surveys are higher in Portugal than in the Netherlands (Harrendorf et al., 2010; van Dijk et al., 2007). Taking into consideration the differences in standards of living between Portugal and the Netherlands (European Commission, Eurostat, 2014), it could also be possible that there were

more thefts in the Portuguese sample because there is more poverty in this country than in the Netherlands.

The only differences found in the offender characteristics between the Dutch and Portuguese samples were related to age, as mentioned above, and to educational level. It is not clear why this difference emerged, as the age of consent was the same in both countries (16 years) until 2007, when it was lowered to 14 years in Portugal (Aggrawal, 2008).

Furthermore, studies indicate that at the time the offenses occurred, the age of sexual initiation was lower in Portugal (16.5 years) than in the Netherlands (17.7 years) (Ferreira, 2010; Rademakers, 1998). However, it is possible that this difference in offender age is not meaningful and is related to the utilization of different sampling and data collection strategies.

In terms of educational levels, the Dutch offenders seem to have progressed further in school than the Portuguese offenders. The majority of the Dutch offenders were in secondary school; however, it should be taken into account that the majority were in “Individueel Voorbereidend Beroepsonderwijs”, which is individual preparatory vocational education for students aged 12–16 years, who require a great amount of support and individual attention (Bijleveld et al., 2007). This could indicate that the Dutch offenders also had difficulties at school. The fact that a great number of Portuguese offenders had not moved on to secondary school, because they were unable to attain the minimum requirements to progress to the next year, clearly indicates that they were struggling. In both the samples, truancy was frequent.

Contrary to what was expected, the Portuguese and Dutch offenders were similar, in that a great number were from ethnic minority households, instead of being ethnic Portuguese or Dutch. This makes a cross-cultural comparison between these two countries more difficult. On the one hand, these offenders came from diverse countries which could be very different

from each other. Although on the other hand, they may have experienced similar problems with integration, acculturation, poverty and living in crime prone neighborhoods in both Portugal and the Netherlands. We suspect this may explain the similarities between the two samples in offense characteristics. However, it could also be possible that there may not be many differences in offense characteristics in MPR despite different cultural influences. For example, Sorenson and Siegal (1992) compared Hispanic and non-Hispanic White men and women in a community study on the probability of experiencing a sexual assault and found that the difference between the two groups related to the frequency of offenses rather than their characteristics, which were similar.

Past studies have shown that ethnic minority and immigrant groups are over-represented in crime statistics in general (Reid, Weis, Adelman, & Jaret, 2005; Stowell & Martinez, 2007), especially in young incarcerated populations (Bauer et al., 2011), which to a certain extent could explain the large number of ethnic minority offenders found in the Portuguese and Dutch samples. However, some studies that have compared lone and MPRs have found no over-representation of ethnic minorities in lone rapes (da Silva, Woodhams et al., 2013).

There are a number of factors that could explain the over-representation of ethnic minority and immigrant offenders in our samples; for example, attitudes and beliefs about women, socio-economic and acculturation issues. The patriarchal aspects of some ethnic minority cultures, where male dominance and gender inequality is acceptable, may justify aggression against women as part of the male role (Hall & Barongan, 1997). In our samples it is possible that some of the ethnic minority offenders may have held values and beliefs related to gender roles and rape myths from their original countries or their parents' countries. On the other hand, some authors believe that if these minority groups are experiencing discrimination, they may shift the negative effects of this discrimination onto women by

becoming abusive towards them (Comas-Diaz, 1995). Other authors link the risk factors for sexual violence that these groups experience to issues such as poverty, unemployment and living in poor housing in crime prone neighborhoods (Maume, 1989). A few authors have specifically examined adolescent ethnic minority and immigrant groups and have found a number of risk factors for criminal behavior which include difficulties in integration and acculturation, discrimination in the host society and the socio-economic gap between immigrants and nationals (Bauer et al., 2011; Mirsky, 2012). Furthermore, Le, Monfared and Stockdale (2005) state that difficulties in integration in the host country may increase the influence of peers, which could lead to the belief that participating in delinquent behavior is a way to gain acceptance. It is likely that a combination of these factors contribute to the over-representation of ethnic minority offenders in these samples. Further studies are needed to fully examine these possible risk factors in MPR.

Limitations

The limitations of this study include the samples being composed exclusively of convicted offenders and the relatively small size of the samples. A great number of sexual offenses are not reported to the police (Walby & Allen, 2004) and some studies indicate that MPR victims may be less likely to report their assault to the police than victims of lone rape (Andersson, Mhatre, Mqotsi, & Penderis, 1998). Furthermore, of the sexual assaults that are reported, only a small percentage of the offenders are convicted (Lea, Lanvers, & Shaw, 2003). This makes it difficult to generalize the results obtained here to MPRs that are not reported to the police. Another limitation is that the offenses in the samples from each country were collected from different time periods. It is possible that offender and offense characteristics might have changed over time.

Conclusions

Contrary to expectations, few differences were found between the Portuguese and Dutch MPRs sampled in terms of offense and offender characteristics. However, it is important to note that a great number of the offenders in both samples were from immigrant and ethnic minority backgrounds, which made a cross-cultural comparison more difficult. This could have also contributed to the offenses from each country being quite similar. The over-representation of immigrants and ethnic minority groups in the samples could be due to a combination of factors described above that have been linked to risk factors for sexual assaults, which range from attitudes and beliefs about women to difficulties in acculturation and integration and socio-economic issues (poverty and unemployment). However, it could also be possible that there may not be many differences in offence characteristics in MPR between different countries. More cross-cultural research examining MPR specifically is necessary to be able to draw more concrete conclusions regarding differences in offender and offense characteristics.

Several differences were found between the findings of the current study and those of existing MPR studies (e.g., group size, violence use and victim resistance). It was proposed that these may be explained by the current samples being composed exclusively of juveniles. Once again, more research examining differences between juvenile and adult multiple perpetrator rapes is needed to clarify this.

The findings of this study have implications for prevention and treatment programs, as well as for risk assessment. In terms of prevention programs, it is important not only to target young adolescents but also immigrant and ethnic minority youngsters who seem to be at greater risk of MPR. These prevention programs need to be tailored to the characteristics and needs of these young people. For example, in relation to ethnic minority youths, it is

necessary to be aware of possible difficulties related to integration and acculturation to a different culture and to address them. This is also true for treatment programs, where there may be people from different countries and backgrounds. It is essential that cultural and social differences are taken into account, as well as differences in beliefs and attitudes towards women or sexuality in general (e.g., Olumoroti, 2008). As regards risk assessment, all of these factors relating to young age, possible difficulties for immigrant and ethnic minority groups and socio-economic issues should be taken into account when assessing an individual. The presence of these factors could indicate a higher risk level for this type of sexual offending and should be considered in order for intervention to be tailored to the needs of the individual.

CHAPTER 5:
“AN ADVENTURE THAT WENT WRONG”: REASONS GIVEN BY CONVICTED
PERPETRATORS OF MULTIPLE PERPETRATOR RAPE FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT
IN THE OFFENCE

In Chapter 2 the existing theories that propose explanations for MPR were examined, and even though empirical evidence was found that supports some of the factors suggested by these theories as playing a role in MPR, there were also some clear evidence gaps. For example, there are no published empirical studies that directly investigate reasons and motivations for MPR. Furthermore, there is only one dated study where perpetrators of MPR were interviewed (Blanchard, 1959). Therefore, the aim of Chapter 5 was to examine the reasons and motivations given by convicted perpetrators of MPR for participating in the offence.

The following chapter has been submitted to Archives of Sexual Behavior for review and is authored by Teresa da Silva, Jessica Woodhams and Leigh Harkins. This journal requires manuscripts to be submitted with U.S. word spelling. The format of the manuscript has been altered in places to achieve consistency with other chapters in this thesis.

Chapter 5: “An Adventure That Went Wrong”: Reasons Given by Convicted Perpetrators of Multiple Perpetrator Rape for Their Involvement in the Offense

The majority of research conducted on multiple perpetrator rape (MPR) has utilized archival data such as police reports and victim statements (Amir, 1971; Chambers, Horvath, & Kelly, 2010; da Silva, Woodhams, & Harkins, 2013; Horvath & Kelly, 2009; Woodhams, 2008; Wright & West, 1981), court files (Bijleveld & Hendriks, 2003; Bijleveld, Weerman, Looije, & Hendriks, 2007) and law reports (Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Porter & Alison 2006). While these studies have been useful in providing information regarding the characteristics of offenders, victims and offenses, they lack details related to certain aspects of the offense such as the reasons and motivations behind the assault. This information can only be more accurately obtained from the perpetrators of MPR themselves; however, studies where data have been gathered directly from the perpetrators are quite rare. There are a few studies where perpetrators were asked about some aspects of their crime but that was not their main focus (Etgar & Ganot-Prager, 2009; Hooing, Jonker, & van Berlo, 2010; Jewkes et al., 2006; Jewkes, Sikweyiya, Morrell, & Dunkle, 2011; Scully & Marolla, 1985). To date there is only one published study that focused exclusively on interviewing perpetrators of MPR and it is now very dated (Blanchard, 1959).

Theories of MPR have suggested that various factors contribute to and play a role in this type of sexual assault, including group processes and dynamics (Harkins & Dixon, 2010, 2013). However, more empirical studies are needed to identify and better understand some of these factors (da Silva, Woodhams, & Harkins, 2014; Harkins & Dixon, 2010, 2013).

Interviewing perpetrators of MPR is a direct way of gaining insight into motivations and dynamics present in this form of sexual violence. Furthermore, this information would be

useful for prevention and treatment purposes. For example, if group processes do play a central role in MPR, as is suggested by various authors (Amir, 1971; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; Harkins & Dixon, 2010, 2013), then these processes should be identified and addressed in prevention and treatment programs. This article reports on a study where offenders convicted of MPR were interviewed regarding their involvement in the offense and described their reasons and motivations for participating.

Theories of MPR

Existing theories of MPR propose a variety of contributory factors that range from individual to socio-cultural and group processes (Amir, 1971; Brownmiller, 1975; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; Sanday 2007; Harkins and Dixon, 2010, 2013). The most recent and comprehensive theory, which includes the factors proposed by earlier theories, is the Multi-Factorial Model of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending (MPSO) developed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013). In this article we will briefly examine how this model explains possible reasons and motivations for taking part in a MPR. For a more in depth description of this model and other earlier explanatory theories of MPR see da Silva, Woodhams, & Harkins (2014) and Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013).

The Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO proposed that various factors (individual, socio-cultural and situational) and the interaction between them contributed to the reasons and motivations for participating in a MPR. Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) considered that individual factors included personality traits, developmental factors and sexual preferences. They suggested that a person with certain personality traits and sexual interests (e.g., leadership traits and deviant sexual interests) could be more likely to take part in this type of sexual offending. However, according to the model, other factors would also play a role.

Socio-cultural factors such as cultural norms, myths, beliefs and values about women, sexuality and violence were also proposed to contribute to a MPR. Here the factors that were highlighted as being able to influence the sexual behavior of individuals in groups were rape culture, rape myths and patriarchy. Therefore, a person with negative or stereotypical attitudes and beliefs about women could be more likely to participate in a MPR. Situational factors that could help overcome any inhibiting factors or act as a trigger were also suggested to be present in MPR. Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) considered that some specific contexts such as fraternities and wars, where exaggerated sexuality is common or hostile masculinity acceptable, could be conducive to MPR. This suggests that, besides certain individual characteristics and beliefs about women and violence, particular contexts can also play a role in a person deciding to take part in a MPR.

The authors also believed that individual, socio-cultural and situational factors interacted in diverse ways which further contributed to the likelihood of a MPR occurring. They identified three possible interactions which they named as: internalization of socio-cultural factors (between the individual and the socio-cultural context); group processes (between the individual and situational factors) and sub-cultural context (between the situational context and socio-cultural factors). Harkins and Dixon (2013) suggested that the internalization of socio-cultural factors is associated to the level to which a person internalizes socio-cultural norms and how these influence his own beliefs and cognitions. The authors emphasized the importance of group processes in MPR, which they considered resulted from the interaction between the individual and the situational context. They identified various theories of group behavior which they believed were applicable to MPR such as social comparison, social dominance, conformity, obedience to authority, social corroboration, deindividuation, and groupthink. Finally, the interaction between specific situational contexts

and broader sociocultural factors was thought to produce the subcultural context. This meant that in a favorable situation certain cultural practices could lead men to commit a sexual offense in a group.

In summary, the Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO proposed that the reasons and motivations for participating in a MPR are likely to have arisen from an interaction of various factors. These factors include individual characteristics such as personality traits and sexual interests, negative or stereotypical beliefs about women and sexuality, and specific situations that could disinhibit the person or act as a trigger. Additionally, these factors could interact in various ways that further contribute to the likelihood of a person engaging in a MPR. Harkins and Dixon (2013) considered that one of these interactions produced group processes which they highlighted as being important to this type of sexual offending.

Past studies with perpetrators of MPR

There are a few studies where perpetrators of MPR were asked about their reasons and motivations for participating in the offense, although that was not their main focus (Etgar & Ganot-Prager, 2009; Hooing, et al., 2010; Jewkes et al., 2006; Jewkes, et al., 2011; Scully & Marolla, 1985). Etgar and Ganot-Prager (2009) examined the advantages of including adolescents who participated together in a MPR in the same therapeutic group. The authors made some references to what these adolescents said in group therapy about their involvement in the assault. They found that these young offenders often reported a need for social acceptance or feelings of social pressure as motives for their involvement in a MPR. Quotes were provided to support this where the adolescents spoke about wanting to belong and become one of the group and fears of rejection if they did not participate.

The characteristics of juvenile sex offenders (including perpetrators of MPR) in a mandatory sex education program were analyzed by Hooing et al. (2010). Motives and feelings regarding the crime given by the young offenders at the beginning of the program and written down by trainers were also examined by the authors. It was found that MPR offenders had more negative attitudes towards girls compared with lone sex offenders against peers. Additionally, a great number of MPR offenders stated that an important motive for offending was group pressure. For these offenders, non-sexual reasons for participating in a MPR, such as those related to sociability and social dominance, were more prevalent than sexual motives, such as sexual arousal.

In South Africa, studies were conducted with men from the community where, among other questions related to health issues, male adolescents and adults were asked about the perpetration of rape including MPR (Jewkes et al., 2006; Jewkes et al., 2011). The motivations that were reported by men who admitted having been involved in a MPR included: a desire to punish girls or women who did not conform to stereotypical gender norms (e.g., they were considered promiscuous or drank alcohol and smoked); feeling bored and participating as a game or for fun; wanting to experiment with sex; wanting to have sex with that particular victim.

Scully and Marolla (1985) interviewed convicted rapists including multiple perpetrator rapists. The most common reasons given by multiple perpetrator rapists for participating in an assault were related to recreation and adventure. Male camaraderie was also highlighted as important, which was achieved by participating together in a dangerous and illicit activity.

The only published study that focused exclusively on interviews carried out with perpetrators of MPR was conducted by Blanchard (1959). In order to further understand the group process in MPR, he interviewed seven teenage boys who had been involved in two

different MPRs (three belonged to one group and four to the other group). At that time, psychologists based their explanations for this type of sexual violence on psychodynamic theory that considered the existence of homosexual factors in MPR. Blanchard (1959) wished to analyze this and he carried out psychological tests including the Rorschach, which he administered individually and then to the group. He presented some results that he claimed suggested the existence of homosexual factors in the cases that were analyzed: the sexual feelings identified in one of the rapes were to a great extent between the perpetrators instead of between any of the perpetrators and the victim. In his final conclusions, Blanchard (1959) identified a clear leader in both the cases and stated that they were sexually stimulated by the presence of the group. However, he thought that in one of the cases, the sexual feelings that were stimulated did not appear to be homosexual. Instead he thought the leader was defending himself against the fear of being weak or not masculine enough. He highlighted the importance of the leader and argued that a central factor in a group rape is the degree to which the leader is able to direct the attention of the other members of the group to sexual issues. Additionally, he pointed out that the group dynamics between the leaders and the rest of the members identified in the group evaluations were similar to the dynamics present during the actual assault.

In conclusion, most of these studies reported that a great number of the reasons given by participants for taking part in the assault were non-sexual. Furthermore, they provide evidence for the existence of group processes and dynamics and suggest that these play an important role in MPR.

Rationale

The Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO proposed that the interaction of various factors (individual, socio-cultural and situational) contribute to the reasons and motivations for participating in a MPR. Additionally, Harkins and Dixon (2013) emphasized the importance of group processes in this type of sexual offending, which result from the interaction of individual and situational factors. One of the most effective ways of gathering information regarding motivations for offending and group dynamics is from the perpetrators of MPR themselves. As noted above, there are few studies where this happened and the main focus of these studies was not on directly interviewing offenders about their motives and reason for participating in the offense. There is only one published study (Blanchard, 1959) where the focus was exclusively on interviewing perpetrators of MPR. However, not only is this study dated, it focused mainly on examining if there were homosexual factors present in MPR and the sample was small.

In an effort to address this gap in the MPR research, the authors of the current study sought to interview convicted perpetrators of MPR and ask them about their involvement, experiences and reasons for participating in the offense. The current study addressed the following research question: What reasons do convicted perpetrators of MPR give for their involvement in the offense? It is important to address this research question because it is pertinent for prevention, assessment and treatment purposes. For example, if empirical studies are able to demonstrate that group processes are a central part of this type of sexual offending (as is suggested by the theories of MPR) then these would be a clear target for prevention and treatment efforts and are relevant to the assessment of offenders. Furthermore, there may be other factors unique to MPR that need to be identified and taken into account.

Method

Sample

A research proposal was sent to the Portuguese Parole and Prison Services (Direção-Geral de Reinserção e Serviços Prisionais – DGRSP) requesting access to interview offenders convicted of MPR and to their case-files. The research proposal had been granted full ethical approval by the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Ethical Review Committee at the University of Birmingham, UK. It was also approved by the DGRSP. The first author, who is fluent in Portuguese, was permitted access to five Educational Centers (where young offenders under the age of 16 are held) and four prisons (with offenders from age 16 upward). Offenders convicted of MPR were approached individually by the first author who provided information about the study including an information sheet. The offenders who agreed to participate signed a consent form.

Participants

A total of 25 offenders convicted of MPR agreed to participate in the study, which is a good size for a qualitative study employing thematic analysis (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). As can be seen in Table 1, the offenders ranged in age from 13 to 45 years ($M = 19.28$, $SD = 8.53$), although the majority (72%, $n = 18$) were juveniles aged from 13 to 17. A little over half (52%, $n = 13$) were of African ethnicity, followed by White (36%, $n = 9$), Romany (8%, $n = 2$) and Mixed Race (4%, $n = 1$). In terms of education, their years of schooling ranged from 0 to 8 years ($M = 5.43$, $SD = 1.64$). More than half (56.5%, $n = 13$) were living with parent/s or were students (54.2%, $n = 13$) at the time of the offense.

Table 1: Participants' characteristics

Participant	Age at the time of the offense	Ethnicity	Years of schooling at the time of the offense	Living with	Employment
P1	14	White	4	Parents	Student
P2	15	African	6	Single parent	Student
P3	16	African	-	-	-
P4	13	Romany	6	Parents	Student
P5	14	White	6	Relatives	Student
P6	15	White	5	Alone	Not in school or employment
P7	14	White	5	Parents	Student
P8	14	White	5	Parents	Student
P9	15	African	7	In an institution	Not in school or employment
P10	13	White	5	Parents	Student
P11	17	African	7	Parents	Student
P12	17	African	6	Parents	Student
P13	17	Mixed race	4	Single parent	Student
P14	16	African	6	On the streets (homeless)	Not in school or employment
P15	13	White	5	In an institution	Student
P16	15	African	6	Parents	Student
P17	17	African	8	Single parent	Not in school or employment
P18	45	African	6	Room mate	Employed
P19	29	White	4	Spouse	Employed
P20	20	African	6	-	Unemployed
P21	17	Romany	6	Relatives	Student
P22	25	African	4	Room mate	Employed
P23	25	African	8	Relatives	Employed
P24	43	White	0	Parents	Employed
P25	23	African	6	Parents	Unemployed

Offense and victims

The interviews conducted were related to 21 different offenses. For four of these offenses, two different offenders that had participated in the same offense were interviewed. The number of offenders present in the offenses ranged from 2 to 8 ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 1.71$). In 16 (76.19%) cases the victims were female; the remaining five (23.81%) were male. In

approximately two-thirds (61.90%, $n = 13$) of the offenses the victims were known to at least one of the offenders.

Procedure

The interviews were semi-structured using an interview schedule (Appendix A) that had questions related to what happened before, during and after the offense and with prompts to elicit more detailed responses. The interviews of 14 participants were audio recorded with their permission. However, 11 participants did not want their interviews to be audio-recorded and instead, hand written notes were made by the interviewer. The interviews were conducted individually in a quiet room or office in the educational centers and prisons where privacy was guaranteed. They lasted between 20 minutes to one hour. The audio recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by the first author and then translated into English. The recordings were deleted after the transcripts were made. Any identifying information was omitted from both the transcripts and the hand written interviews.

Analysis

The study design was qualitative and thematic analysis was used to analyze the interviews. The guidelines for conducting thematic analysis recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013) and Guest, MacQueen and Namey (2012) were followed. An inductive “bottom up” analysis was conducted which was data driven (Patton, 1990). The first author familiarized herself with the data while transcribing and translating the interviews. The translated transcripts were imported into NVivo10, a computer software package that facilitates the organization and analysis of qualitative data. The whole data set was read and re-read and first ideas were noted. Next, initial coding was conducted in a systematic form across the entire

data set. This was achieved by identifying interesting features of the data that were linked to corresponding codes or sub-codes. As new features were identified, additional codes were generated. When reoccurring aspects of the data were identified these were linked to existing codes in the coding scheme. After all the data were coded, these codes and sub-codes were sorted and collated into potential themes. Thematic maps were employed to facilitate the sorting of codes and sub-codes into themes as they enabled the visualization of relationships. The initial themes were then reviewed and refined at the level of the coded extracts and in relation to the whole data set. Lastly each theme was further refined, defined and named. An iterative approach was utilized throughout the analysis where codes, sub-codes, themes and sub-themes were constantly re-examined, and revised when appropriate. For the purpose of this article, only the themes related to the research questions of this study are presented (i.e., what reasons do convicted perpetrators of MPR give for their involvement in the offense?).

Results

Six themes related to reasons given by the participants for being involved in a MPR were identified: (a) Started as something else, (b) Influence of others (direct or indirect), (c) Lack of awareness, (d) Victim blaming, (e) Influence of alcohol and or drugs, and (f) Normalized sexual violence. In most cases, not just one reason was given and it was common for the participants to consider that various factors played a role in the MPR.

a) Started as something else

Most of the participants denied that they had planned to sexually assault the victims beforehand. Only two (8%) of the 25 participants admitted that the group had planned earlier to have sex with the victim. The rest of them ($n = 23$, 92%) stated that the offense had started

out as something else, such as a game or joke, physical bullying or a robbery:

P10: I was having a swimming lesson with those two colleagues and that started off as a joke (pause) and (pause) and I had no intentions of rape or anything. At that time I (pause) didn't know the consequences it could bring and (pause) so we started joking around and all of that but not (pause) not, it wasn't inten...

P8: We didn't plan the sexual thing but we planned to beat him because he had made a complaint.

P20: Yeah, we left, left with the purpose of (pause) of going to rob and and (pause) we went (pause) to (pause) and when I realized what was happening (pause) pfff (pause) it had already happened, I don't know...

Even in one of the cases where the participant admitted that they had planned amongst themselves to have sex with the victim, he stated that they had not discussed using force as they thought that she would be willing. He described a situation that started off as having fun with his friends and expecting that the victim would want to have sex with all of them because she was known to have participated in similar situations in the past. It all changed when the victim said that she was only willing to have sex with one of them.

P9...The three of us were already expecting that there was going to be sex between the four of us, no there were five, one walked away. We were already expecting but we weren't also expecting that she wouldn't, wouldn't want to.

P9: ...I didn't intend to want to force, to want to force her. So this for me, I considered this an adventure that went wrong.

The participants were not able to clearly explain why the situation escalated into a sexual

assault. A few pointed to factors related to loss of control, adrenaline and an impulse but as can be seen in the quotes below they also considered other factors such as influence of others or being drunk. It is possible that a combination of factors was present and played a role in the offenses.

P8: We didn't control ourselves (pause) I don't know.

P19: ...I don't know how to explain why I did it, if it was adrenaline or if I let myself be led...

P22: ...I don't know if it was an impulse or of being drunk.

b) Influence of others

Not surprisingly, since MPR is an offense carried out in the presence of other people almost half ($n = 12$, 48%) of the participants spoke about the influence of others. This influence was either direct, where the participants had been ordered, told or invited to participate in the MPR by a co-offender or indirect, where they were not directly ordered to participate but did so because the others were present or actively involved. Directly telling or ordering a co-offender to participate was only evident in a few cases. In some of these cases it took the form of a direct order:

P7: It was at that time, one of them ordered (pause) he turned to the victim and ordered him to turn around (pause)

Interviewer: Yes and then?

P7: I was ordered to go first.

P15: I ordered him. I said like this: "Do that to him" (pause) and he did it.

In other cases it occurred not as a direct order but as an insistence with the co-offender that he should take part in the offense:

P21: So I got there, the other one was doing it, that's it, get there be faced with that, then they start to influence: "Oh come, come, take, go on, go on" and in that situation, it isn't, it isn't, I don't know, it is things that (pause) the influence is such that you are so into that situation that you go.

This insistence also included taunting and making the co-offender look bad if he did not participate:

P18: We were all drunk and he then didn't give up, he pushed me, incentivized me "If you don't go you are a coward" and I landed up by accepting his invitation.

When participants referred to the indirect influence of others, they stated that the co-offenders had not told them to participate but that they chose to do so themselves. This happened in some cases simply because they were seeing the others participate and either felt aroused or decided that they also wanted to be involved:

Interviewer: Was there someone who said to do that?

P3: No, I think it was because a person seeing someone having relations also becomes motivated.

Not wanting to look bad in front of the co-offenders and participating to avoid being rejected was also mentioned:

P9: Because I was, I was with (pause) how shall I explain (pause) because I didn't (pause) want to appear weak, I didn't want (pause) to, to have hassles. Not to be rejected by them. It was more for that and since I was there in the middle (pause) I also tried to go.

c) Lack of awareness

Almost one quarter ($n = 6$, 24%) of the participants described a lack of awareness of thoughts and feelings at the time that they participated in the MPR. They had difficulty describing the assault or parts of the assault. This difficulty did not seem to be just related to the fact that it is a sensitive and difficult topic to talk about; they described the MPRs as being confusing or happening very fast:

P13: I don't know how to explain very well (pause) hmmm (pause) it was all confusing (pause) it was all a bit confusing (pause) hmmm.

P20: I don't know (pause) pfff (pause) man that (pause) I don't know really that was kind of (pause) pfff (pause) something very fast really (pause).

Furthermore, they were unable to explain why they took part in the assault and were not able to describe what their motivations were at the time.

P22:...even now I ask myself, what came over me I don't know, I don't know what came over me, a thing (pause) man a person doesn't have an explanation to say.

P20:... I don't know what crossed through my mind to do a thing like that, until today I also can't thin...

d) Victim blaming

As in lone sexual offending it was also found that almost half ($n = 12$; 48%) of the offenders blamed the victim for the offense. This was done to different degrees which ranged from attributing all the blame to the victim to insinuating that the victim held some responsibility. A few participants directly stated that it was the victim's fault because she/he had wanted to

participate or came up with the idea:

P1: No, my crime was because she wanted to. She said that she would do that if we let her into the group, and my colleague said “Oh yes? Come on then”

Other participants did not attribute all the blame to the victim but they did suggest that the victim had wanted to participate and then changed her/his mind later on:

P6: ...but that guy that did this, he also did it because he wanted to. He then afterwards (pause) we started, started talking and making fun. So he did something like that and then went to complain to the police.

Additionally, the victim’s behavior at the time of the offense was also seen by some of the participants as contributing to the offense. One of the participants recalled how the victim had said that she only wanted to have sex with one of the members of the group but that she talked about her feelings for the other members of the group and that this led to some confusion:

P9: And also the conversation she was having because she just wanted to have with one, but then she would also say “Oh I like you a little bit, I used to like you more, I like him a little bit” and I don’t know what. We all stayed with that thing in our head. In the end she just wanted to have it with that one, with that one. It was (pause) it was a bit confusing...

Finally, some participants spoke about the victim’s past behavior and her/his reputation of having had sexual relations with various people or having participated in group sex in the past. In one case the participant insinuated that this showed that the victim did not have credibility:

P4: I also have (pause) have witnesses from the people who helped me because they knew how she was. She would go with everybody (pause) from the school.

In other cases the participants suggested that it led them to believe that the victim would be a willing participant:

P9: But us, between ourselves (pause) because of the history that she already had (pause) of, of having relations with various...

This was also the case with one of the male victims who was a vulnerable young adult with a mental disability who had been taken advantage of in the past by other people:

P6: That guy there (pause) we did this, but I know people that also had (pause) or paid or something like that or they would buy him something and he...

e) Influence of alcohol and/or drugs

Overall, almost one quarter ($n = 6$, 24%) of the participants mentioned the influence of alcohol and/or drugs. More than half ($n = 4$, 57%) of the adult participants stated that one of the main reasons that they participated in the assault was because they were either drunk or under the influence of drugs. This was a reason very rarely given by the juvenile participants and only two (11%) young participants who committed their offenses with adult co-offenders said that it was a reason for being involved in the MPR:

P6: I was at a party and so me and my friends had already drank a bit and then we got into some drugs and it was there that caused (pause) nothing else...

In some cases the juvenile participants admitted to having drunk alcohol or smoked drugs but stated that it had not played a role in the offense:

P13: No, I don't think so (pause) yes we had drunk (pause) but I think wine, but it was with 7Up (a fizzy drink), but many hours had passed since that happened.

P14: No, that happened not because because I smoked hash, which I always smoked since a child.

The adult participants that considered that alcohol had contributed to them being involved in the offense saw it as influencing their behavior and decisions:

P23: It was bad influence of the alcohol.

One of the participants was able to describe in more detail how that influence occurred and believed that it made him more susceptible to the influence of others:

P18: Then also with alcohol, I become, I become weak (pause) thinking is weaker. Oh so I go to show that I'm not a coward. That's it, with drink with alcohol that is what I become. "You are a coward you won't do this". "Oh yeah, I won't do it? Do you think that I won't do it? Now I'm going to do it so that you can see".

P18: And (pause) if it wasn't for, if I wasn't drunk I could have not gone because me with behavior of, with alcohol I'm one person, without alcohol another. With alcohol I don't care about many things, without alcohol, but when I'm with alcohol I'm a person that goes. They pull me by the hand, say "Come", say "Let us go walk for a while" I go. I'm like that deci (pause) decide easily.

f) Normalized sexual violence

In a few of the juvenile cases the participants referred to not being aware of the seriousness and consequences of their acts and a couple (8%) of participants mentioned how they had already witnessed similar situations in the past and that is why they did not think that it was serious². One participant spoke quite extensively about how he had seen consensual and non-consensual situations of group sex occurring and therefore he thought that it was something normal:

² It is important to note that these participants came from poor, crime prone neighborhoods where gang culture was common.

P14: I got dressed and (pause) and then her friend appeared and said “Oh you brought her here for this! I thought it was to talk”. And I said “Oh you look like you don’t know, don’t know this (pause) this type of routine”. Routine but I say routine because (pause) I had already heard and seen some of these things, this type of thing and she knows, it had already happened to her but (pause) it was because she wanted to, not because she was forced, yes.

P14: No (pause) because I had already seen (pause) many episodes of those and (pause) and nothing happened and I said this isn’t more than something normal as well, as if I was stealing a mobile phone and that (pause) yes yeah.

P14: Sometimes they wanted to...they agreed and there were other days that I saw that they didn’t agree. I don’t want to say that it was always the same people, no, it was like normal, like I knew...yeah normal.

Another participant also spoke about situations of group sex that he had witnessed and stated that there was even a name for the type of girl that takes part in this activity:

P3: Don’t you know? (pause) Haven’t you ever heard that word “ger”?

Interviewer: What?

P3: “Ger”

Interviewer: No.

P3: It is a girl that goes to someone do you see? And the friend takes someone else and then both of them have relations with the girl do you understand?

Interviewer: So is it that frequent?

P3: Exactly but it is with consent because the girl lets.

Discussion

This study examined the reasons that convicted perpetrators of MPR gave for their involvement in an offense. Six main themes were identified which included: (a) Started as something else, (b) Influence of others (direct or indirect), (c) Lack of awareness, (d) Victim blaming, (e) Influence of alcohol and/or drugs and (f) Normalized sexual violence. However, in most cases the participants did not report just one main reason for being involved and usually described a combination of various factors and motives. The results therefore support the existence of some of the factors proposed by the Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO (Harkins & Dixon, 2010, 2013) and earlier theories.

Clear evidence is provided for the existence of group processes and dynamics in some of the reasons given by the participants for being involved in a MPR. It is possible to identify group processes proposed by Harkins and Dixon (2013) such as social conformity and social comparison in the theme related to the *influence of others*. Harkins and Dixon suggested that social comparison theory is related to an individual's needs for affection and inclusion. It is believed that a possible explanation for the formation of groups is linked to these needs (Schultz, 1967). An individual may go along with a sexual assault even if he did not want to participate, in an attempt to try to meet these needs (Harkins & Dixon, 2013).

Social conformity is associated with an individual trying to be consistent with the group norms by changing his beliefs, statements or behaviors (Baron & Kerr, 2003). This conformity is influenced by rewards and punishments controlled by the group. Harkins and Dixon (2013) considered that some individuals would participate in a MPR to avoid being rejected or even punished by the group and losing rewards they received from the group. When the participants of the current study spoke about the influence of others, some of them directly stated that they did not want to look bad, to have problems with the group or be

rejected by the others, which clearly points to the presence of social comparison and conformity. Others did not report these motives directly, but some did admit that they obeyed an order that was given without questioning it, and others stated that they participated after the co-offenders either insisted they do or taunted them. This is suggestive of either being scared of the other co-offenders and not wanting to be punished by them, or wanting to belong to the group and therefore doing something that would demonstrate that they were part of it. These findings are also consistent with previous studies which reported that the reasons that perpetrators of MPR gave for participating in the assault were related to social comparison and conformity (Etgar & Ganot-Prager, 2009; Hooing, et al., 2010).

Another group process found in the theme related to the influence of others is modelling. O'Sullivan (1991) considered that this group process was relevant to MPR because by watching peers sexually assault a victim, not only do the members of the group learn that it is acceptable, but also how to do it. In the current study, some participants reported how they took part after seeing their co-offenders assault the victim.

In the theme related to *lack of awareness*, the descriptions made by the participants of not being aware of feelings and thoughts and that the events happened quickly and in a confusing manner could indicate the presence of the group process deindividuation. This refers to a process where a person loses his/her sense of individuality, becoming less self-conscious and is submerged into the group (Goldstein, 2002). O'Sullivan (1991) believed that deindividuation could be responsible for a state of reduced self-awareness, including of personal beliefs, attitudes and standards. In the current study some participants stated that they could not understand how they had assaulted the victim; that it was something that they had never thought about before. Harkins and Dixon (2013) considered that in MPR, deindividuation could help to explain how a person can lose his/her sense of identity and

responsibility and go along with the group.

In the theme *victim blaming* it is possible to identify socio-cultural factors related to beliefs and attitudes about women, sexuality, rape myths and gender norms. Some participants in the study spoke about how the female victim was judged by her past behavior and if she had or was believed to have had many sexual partners in the past, or to have participated in group sex, she was seen as someone who would be willing to have sex with all the group members. This was also apparent in a case with a male victim, who was a vulnerable young adult.

The male victims in this study were all vulnerable: in the majority of cases they were younger and weaker than the perpetrators. In the only case that involved an adult male, he had a mental disability and had in the past been abused by other people. A few authors have proposed that men targeted for MPR are perceived by the perpetrators as not fitting into stereotypical gender norms because, for example, they are considered physically or mentally weak, or homosexual (Franklin, 2004; Lees, 2002).

Socio-cultural factors can also be identified in the theme *normalized sexual violence*. More specifically, in this theme socio-cultural factors seem to be interacting with situational factors. Harkins and Dixon (2013) described this interaction as subcultural context. A couple of participants who came from crime prone neighborhoods known for their gang culture explained how they considered what they had done to be normal because it was something that they had already witnessed and was acceptable in their circle of friends and acquaintances. This demonstrates how broader socio-cultural factors (attitudes towards women and sexuality) can interact with situational factors (crime and gang culture) and increase the likelihood of a MPR.

Situational factors can be identified in the theme *influence of alcohol and/or drugs*. The

participants that spoke about this theme considered that they would not have committed the assault if they were not under the influence of alcohol. They considered that the alcohol had a disinhibiting effect or had clouded their judgment. Nevertheless, they did not see it as the only factor and in a quote above a participant explained how alcohol allowed him to become more susceptible to the influence of others and that he had assaulted the victim not only because he was drunk, but by being drunk he was more susceptible to the coercion and taunts of his co-offender.

The theme *started as something else* is suggestive of the existence of various factors in MPR. Here the participants explain how they had not planned a sexual assault but that somehow it had happened. This indicates that it is probable that a combination of individual, socio-cultural and situational factors led to the assault. For example, in the situations where the participants said they were just having fun together, there may have been an interaction between individual traits (which could be related to personality or sexual interests), beliefs about stereotypical masculinity and a situation where co-offenders are present and are drunk, excited and/or aroused, as well as an available victim.

Limitations

While self-reports from offenders make it possible to obtain their own accounts and opinions about their involvement in the offenses, they do have limitations. For example, some offenders may try to minimize or even deny their involvement in the offenses in order to present themselves in a more favorable light which can affect the reliability of these accounts. In order to minimize this, the offenders' case files, which included detailed court accounts of the offenses, were read by the interviewer before the interviews and the offenders were informed of this.

In the main themes identified there is very little reference to individual factors. In the interviews a few offenders did speak about individual factors, such as going through a difficult period at the time the offense occurred because of family problems, or considering that at that time they were very young, immature or irresponsible. Nevertheless, it was not a well-developed theme, and this could be due to the fact that the focus of the interviews was on what happened directly before, during and after the assault, rather than specifically prompting for individual factors. This could be considered a limitation of this study and in future research it would be useful to explore possible individual factors.

Another limitation of this study is that the sample consisted exclusively of convicted offenders of MPR. It is well known that a significant number of sexual assaults are not reported to the police (Walby & Allen, 2004). Furthermore, Andersson, Mhatre, Mqotsi and Penderis (1998) found that victims of MPR were less likely to report the crime to the police than victims of lone sexual violence. This makes it difficult to generalize the findings to unconvicted MPR offenders, as the perpetrators' experiences and motivations could be different. Further research using community samples is needed to overcome this limitation.

Conclusions

As expected, it was found that group processes and dynamics were given as reasons by the perpetrators of MPR for participating in the offense. Additionally, other factors (i.e., socio-cultural and situational) that had been proposed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) and earlier theories (Amir, 1971; Brownmiller, 1975; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979; Sanday 2007) as playing a role in MPR were also identified in the main themes. Furthermore, the participants tended not to talk about the MPR in terms of only one motivator or facilitator. This supports the idea of an interaction of factors explaining the perpetration of MPR. Therefore, it is

possible to conclude that these findings provide some evidence to support the Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO and other theories of MPR that have been proposed (Amir, 1971; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979).

The results of this study have important implications for prevention, assessment and treatment purposes. Firstly, they highlight the importance of group processes in MPR. These should therefore be identified and addressed in prevention and treatment programs. Blanchard (1959) noticed that the group dynamics between the leaders and the rest of the group during the group evaluation he conducted were similar to the dynamics present during the MPRs. Equally, Etgar and Ganot-Prager (2009) found that the dynamics between members of the same group that had committed a MPR and were together in group therapy were similar to those present during the assault. Therefore, as Etgar (2013) suggested, it is important to examine the perpetrator's social role within the group. This will provide more information about the offender and his interactions in a group setting and possible risk factors, which will help with the assessment of the offender. As regards prevention programs with young people, issues such as peer pressure and group processes should be addressed.

Second, the findings support a multi-factorial explanation of MPR which means that, besides group processes, other factors are also present and should be taken into account for prevention, assessment and treatment purposes. Socio-cultural and situational factors were identified that, in interaction with individual factors, likely led to the MPR. Although more research is necessary to gain a better understanding of these factors and how they interact, Harkins and Dixon's (2010, 2013) Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO provides a useful framework for understanding this type of sexual violence.

PART III:

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER 6: THESIS CONCLUSION

Thesis aims

The overall aim of this thesis was to advance our knowledge and understanding of MPR. By addressing some of the gaps in the literature, this thesis contributed empirical research that was used to critically examine existing theories of MPR and that has practical implications for prevention, assessment and treatment.

Summary of findings

Chapter 1 provided an overview of what was currently known about MPR. It concluded that there is a need for a clear definition of the term MPR which can be used across studies and countries. An emphasis was also placed on the need to separate out MPRs from lone rapes in research on sexual violence which will enable a better understanding of the problem. The chapter demonstrated that MPR is an international phenomenon which is present in many different societies and throughout history. By examining different contexts where MPR can be found, ranging from street gangs to wars, fraternities, sports teams, prisons and anti-gay/lesbian settings, it concluded that MPR is a heterogeneous crime with diverse victims and perpetrators with likely varying motivations.

In Chapter 2, existing theories proposed to explain MPR were critically examined by considering if there was empirical evidence to support the factors that they purport contribute to this type of sexual offending. The Multi-Factorial Theory of Multiple Perpetrator Sexual Offending (MPSO) proposed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) was found to be the most comprehensive theory to date. This model not only includes the factors (i.e., individual, socio-cultural and situational) considered by earlier theories to play a role in MPR, but also the

interaction between them while emphasizing the effects of group processes. Evidence was found (to varying degrees) to support the factors proposed by this model and earlier theories. Although some evidence exists for the role of individual factors in MPR, there were inconsistencies in the findings related to socio-demographic and personality characteristics. These inconsistencies could suggest that there are different types of perpetrators of MPR.

There is greater agreement regarding the socio-cultural factors (cultural norms, myths, and beliefs about women, sexuality and violence) and situational factors (settings that can act as a trigger or a disinhibitor) proposed as contributing to MPR and clear evidence was found that supports their role in this type of sexual offending. Nonetheless, particularly in relation to the situational factors, additional research is necessary in order to obtain a more in-depth comprehension of the distinct mechanisms that contribute to a MPR in different contexts.

The Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO and earlier theories highlighted the role of group processes and the possible influence of a leader in MPR. Empirical studies provide evidence supporting the presence and role of a leader in this type of sexual offending (Porter & Alison, 2001; Woodhams et al., 2012). However, there is little research concerning group processes and dynamics. The few studies that do exist provide some evidence that supports the importance of these factors.

It was possible to conclude that, despite some evidence gaps, there is empirical evidence that supports the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO. The most significant evidence gaps were related to the individual and situational factors and to the group processes and dynamics. Nevertheless, even though empirical evidence was found that supports some of the factors that the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO proposes, for it to be considered an adequate working theory other criteria should also be met. Ward et al (2006) suggested seven criteria that they considered important when appraising a theory. These are: predictive accuracy,

empirical adequacy and scope; internal coherence; external consistency; unifying power; fertility or heuristic value; simplicity and explanatory depth.

Predictive accuracy, empirical adequacy and scope refer to whether a theory is able to provide an explanation for actual findings and a variety of phenomena that need clarification. In Chapter 2 it was possible to conclude that the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO was able to account for some existing empirical findings and adequately explain phenomena such as group processes. However, it is important to note that MPR is an under-researched area and more empirical studies are necessary to form concrete conclusions regarding the predictive accuracy and empirical adequacy of this theory.

Internal coherence relates to whether contradictions or gaps exist in the theory. It was found that there were some inconsistencies between the findings of studies regarding individual factors, and that the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO was not able to explain these differences. Furthermore, although empirical evidence was found for the existence of situational factors this theory does not provide detailed information about the specific mechanisms that contribute to a MPR in different contexts. Although this theory identifies clear factors that play a role in a MPR, it lacks in-depth descriptions of how these factors can contribute to a MPR with different perpetrators and across different situations.

External consistency refers to whether a theory is consistent with other recognised background theories. It was found that the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO is consistent with some of the earlier explanatory theories proposed for this type of sexual offending. Furthermore, it is also consistent with other theories of sexual offending which propose that an interaction of various individual, socio-cultural and situational factors result in sexual abuse (Ward & Beech, 2006).

Unifying power is concerned with whether a theory is capable of explaining phenomena from related areas and unify parts of an area of research that were before then seen as separate. The Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO unifies research related to group processes with research on sexual offending. Some earlier explanatory theories of MPR (Amir, 1971; Groth & Birnbaum, 1979) had previously highlighted the importance of group processes and dynamics but not in such a comprehensive way.

Fertility or heuristic value is related to a theory's capacity to generate new predictions and to facilitate new areas of research. The Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO allows for the generation of new predictions in the area of MPR. However, because it is a very recent theory there are no published studies where the hypotheses of the research were based on predictions generated by this theory.

As it stands the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO is a simple theory which meets the criteria of simplicity. Nevertheless, it could be too simple to adequately explain the specific mechanisms involved in different contexts. This also clearly affects its explanatory depth which is concerned with the theory's capacity to report deep underlying mechanisms and processes. As noted above, the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO lacks the ability to describe deep underlying mechanisms and processes in the individual and situational factors.

It is possible to conclude that the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO meets a great number of the criteria proposed by Ward et al (2006). Nonetheless, it does have gaps and lacks explanatory depth in some of its factors and further research is necessary to address this. MPR is a heterogeneous crime which involves different perpetrators and various situational contexts. Therefore, it is necessary to test this theory in various contexts and with different perpetrators in order to further develop it. It may even be found that it is necessary to develop different models for different contexts.

The aim of Chapter 3 was to examine the variation in the number of perpetrators involved in MPRs and simultaneously compare them to lone rapes, because not only are there inconsistencies in the findings of existing studies comparing lone to MPR, but there is a lack of studies that analyse the potential effect of differences in group size. This is despite the belief that there are differences in the interactions and dynamics between duos/dyads and groups made up of three or more members. Rapes committed by multiple (duos and groups of 3+ group offenders) and lone offenders, from a national sample of 336 allegations of completed and attempted rape of female victims, were compared on offence characteristics and victim and offender socio-demographic characteristics. Significant differences were found between lone, duo and 3+ group offences for the age and ethnicity of the offenders; the type of approach used; the locations of the initial contact, assault and release of the victims; the use of a vehicle; the precautions utilized; the verbal themes present; and the sex acts performed. Additionally, based on certain socio-demographic and offence characteristics it was possible to predict the likelihood of a rape being committed by lone, duo or 3+ group offenders. While the biggest differences were found between the lone and 3+ group offences, there were also differences between the lone and duo, and 3+ group and duo, offences. It seems as if the duo offences fall on a continuum between the lone and 3+ group offences. These findings support the idea that it is necessary to differentiate between these different types of rape. This is important because the majority of the studies in MPR have failed to separate out duos and 3+ groups.

This study had some limitations, the first being that the sample consisted of reports of victim allegations of mostly stranger rape made to the police. However, sexual violence is an underreported crime (Walby & Allen, 2004) and studies (Andersson, Mhatre, Mqotsi, & Penderis, 1998) have shown that compared to victims of lone rape, victims of MPR were less

likely to report their assault to the police. As the majority of rapes are not reported to the police it is difficult to generalise the findings of the study. Furthermore, since the sample consisted of mainly stranger rapes, it is also difficult to generalise the results to samples of MPR where the perpetrators were known to the victim. Additionally, the victim accounts could have some omissions and even distortions due to the trauma experienced from the assault and memory loss (Alison, Snook & Stein, 2001). Finally, even though some of the differences found between lone, duo and 3+ group offences suggested that there may be differences in the motivations for the sexual assault, the nature of the sample did not permit the identification of explicit motivations. For that to be possible it is necessary to gather information from perpetrators of MPR themselves.

Chapter 4 investigated possible cross-cultural differences in MPR because even though it is believed that socio-cultural factors play a role in this type of sexual offending, no cross-cultural comparison had previously been conducted. Furthermore, many of the studies on MPR were carried out in different countries and it was not clear if the inconsistencies found in the results were due to socio-cultural differences or to different study designs. Therefore, using an identical study design, differences in offence and offender characteristics between MPRs committed by juveniles in Portugal and the Netherlands were examined. Contrary to what was expected, few differences were found in offence and offender characteristics between the Portuguese and Dutch MPRs sampled. This is despite the fact that there are clear differences between the countries on factors linked to sexual violence such as gender equality, unemployment and overall income.

A great number of the offenders in both countries were from immigrant and ethnic minority backgrounds. This made a cross-cultural comparison more difficult and could also have contributed to the offences from different countries being quite similar. A conjunction of

factors could have contributed to the over-representation of immigrants and ethnic minority groups in both samples. These range from socio-economic issues, such as poverty and unemployment, to difficulties in acculturation and integration to a new country, or negative and stereotypical beliefs and attitudes about women. An alternative possibility for the few differences found in this study could be that there may not be many significant differences in offence characteristics in MPR between different countries. It could be possible that even though socio-cultural factors play an important role in MPR (as was shown in Chapter 2), they do not have an impact on the offence characteristics. Further research between different countries is necessary to draw more concrete conclusions.

Another important point of note is that there were various differences between what was found in Chapter 4 and the findings of existing MPR studies. In Chapter 4, the groups were of a larger size, less violence was used and there was more victim resistance than reported in other studies. It is possible that these differences are due to the fact that the Dutch and Portuguese samples were composed entirely of juveniles, whereas the samples of most of the existing studies consisted of a mixture of juveniles and adults.

That the sample in Chapter 4 was composed of convicted offenders overcame one of the limitations of the study in Chapter 3 as it was possible to gather more accurate information about the offenders and offences from detailed court files. Additionally, it was also found that the majority of the victims were known to the offenders which provided information regarding MPR committed by known perpetrators. However, the limitation regarding the difficulty in generalising the findings to perpetrators that have never been caught or convicted for their crime still remained. It is well known that only a small percentage of the rapes that are reported to the police result in convictions (Lea, Lanvers, & Shaw, 2003). Another important limitation was the relatively small size of the sample from each country.

The focus of Chapter 5 was an investigation of the reasons and motivations given by convicted perpetrators of MPR for being involved in the offence. There are no published empirical studies that specifically examined reasons and motivations for MPR and there is only one dated study where perpetrators of MPR were interviewed (Blanchard, 1959). A total of 25 juvenile and adult convicted perpetrators of MPR from educational centres and prisons in Portugal were interviewed regarding their involvement and reasons for participating in the offence. Six main themes were identified which were related to group processes and dynamics and to other factors (i.e., socio-cultural and situational) that the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO and earlier theories proposed as playing a role in MPR. Furthermore, the idea that an interaction of factors results in MPR was supported by the findings, as the participants tended to talk about more than one motivator or facilitator for the MPR. In conclusion, the findings provide some evidence to support the Multi-Factorial Model of MPSO which not only proposes that individual, socio-cultural and situational factors play a role in MPR but that they interact in diverse ways resulting in, for example, group processes and dynamics conducive to rape.

The fact that the sample was composed of convicted perpetrators of MPR made it possible to obtain the offenders' own accounts and opinions about their involvement in the offence which allowed for the examination of motivations and reasons behind the offence. However, it is difficult to generalise these results to perpetrators that have never been convicted for their crime because, as noted above, only a small percentage of the sexual assaults that are reported to the police result in convictions. Another limitation is that there was a missed opportunity to gather more information about individual factors from the offenders themselves. This was because the focus of the interviews was on what occurred directly before, during and after the offence and when the participant spoke about relevant

individual factors these could not be explored in more detail by the interviewer due to time constraints of the interview.

Each one of the empirical studies (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) set out to address different gaps in the literature on MPR. However, even though they focused on different aspects of MPR, there are findings related to offender and offence characteristics that are common to all three studies and others such as motivations that are shared by some of them.

The first finding common to the three empirical studies is related to age. In line with previous studies in the area of MPR and what was noted in Chapter 2, it is possible to conclude from these studies that not only does MPR seem to be associated with younger people, but also that there appear to be differences between these younger and adult perpetrators. In the first empirical study (Chapter 3) it was found that the groups of three or more offenders consisted of younger offenders while duos were more often older, but nevertheless, younger than lone offenders. Due to this finding and because there was evidence that a large number of juvenile sex offenders in Portugal and the Netherlands were committed by multiple perpetrators, the samples in the second empirical study (Chapter 4) were composed exclusively of juveniles. In this study some of the results related to group size, violence use and victim resistance were different to findings in previous studies in the MPR literature and it was concluded that these differences could be related to the samples being made up exclusively of younger offenders. This implies that it is likely that there are differences in offence and offender characteristics between juvenile and adult perpetrators of MPR. In the third empirical study (Chapter 5) the sample was composed of juvenile and adult offenders and not only was it found that the majority of the offenders were juveniles but that there were differences in one of the themes which is related to the use of alcohol and drugs. While a great number of the adults reported the use of alcohol or drugs as one of the reasons

they committed the offence, only a minority of the juvenile offenders did this. This suggests that it is possible that there may also be differences in motivations between juvenile and adult offenders.

It was also found in all three empirical studies that ethnic minority offenders were over-represented in the multiple perpetrator samples. This is especially significant because three different samples were used from three different countries (UK, Portugal and the Netherlands). It is important to note that the juveniles in the sample in Chapter 5 are some of the offenders of the Portuguese sample in Chapter 4.

Various similarities were also found in the offence characteristics across the different samples of the empirical studies. These included a con approach being used by the majority of multiple perpetrators, the assaults occurring more often indoors than outdoors, few precautions being used, and a high number of sexual acts and completed rapes being committed. These findings suggest that these characteristics may be common in MPRs as they were present in three different samples.

In relation to motivations, although the nature of the sample in the first empirical study (Chapter 3) did not allow for the identification of explicit motivations, the findings did point to the likelihood that the motivations of the perpetrators of MPR were related to group processes. In order to identify reasons and motivations for MPR the third empirical study was carried out and clear evidence was found for the influence of group processes and dynamics in MPR.

Future directions

Regarding the future for research in the area of MPR, this thesis suggests several lines of enquiry that could also contribute to addressing some of the limitations discussed. It was

determined that there are significant differences between lone, duo and 3+ group offences and offenders. However, it is unclear whether duos are more similar to lone or 3+ group offenders or to what extent they fall on a continuum between the two. Further research is necessary to examine this and to analyse if these subtypes differ in terms of intervention and treatment needs.

The lack of cross-cultural differences in Chapter 4 was unexpected. To draw more concrete conclusions regarding possible cross-cultural differences in MPR further research is necessary with larger samples and involving more countries. Furthermore, the differences between the findings in Chapter 4 and existing MPR studies regarding group size, violence use and victim resistance, suggest that there are important differences between juvenile and adult MPRs. Additionally, in Chapter 2 it was found that there is a need to distinguish between juveniles and adults. More research examining these differences is needed because if those differences do exist it is likely that juvenile and adult perpetrators of MPR could also have different motivations, risk levels and treatment needs.

Some inconsistencies were found in relation to individual factors in MPR, with different studies reporting discrepancies in the individual characteristics of perpetrators of MPR. It is likely that there are different types of perpetrators of MPR and Chambers, Horvath and Kelly (2010) have developed a typology of four types of MPR. More research is necessary to further explore this typology and potentially identify different types of perpetrators. Furthermore, there is a need for research conducted with community samples (e.g., Jewkes & Sikweyiya, 2013) as most studies have used police reports of MPR or convicted offenders in their samples. This would provide us with much needed information about unconvicted perpetrators of MPR.

Theoretical and practical implications

The results of this thesis have several theoretical and practical implications. The finding that there were differences between lone, duo and 3+ group offences and offenders has theoretical implications not only for the sexual offending field but also for the social science field. As was discussed in Chapter 3, there exists an ongoing debate within the social science literature about whether dyads/duos should be included in group research and theory. The findings of this thesis support the arguments of social scientists such as Moreland (2010) who consider that dyads/duos and groups (three or more people) are different and that research on groups should take this into account and separate dyads/duos from 3+ groups.

Another theoretical implication is related to the results of this thesis that provide some support for the factors proposed by the Multi-Factorial Theory of MPSO developed by Harkins and Dixon (2010, 2013) as playing a role in MPR. Even though there are still some evidence gaps (as discussed above) and more research is necessary to develop it further, this model can be used by researchers and practitioners to help guide their work in the area of MPR who, subsequently, can contribute to its further development. Researchers could conduct studies that further examine the factors proposed, especially those where there are inconsistencies in past studies or there is little empirical evidence for them (e.g., individual, situational, group dynamics) or they could use this model to generate hypothesis about MPR and test them. Practitioners could use the model to aid them in the assessment of perpetrators of MPR and the planning of interventions that are in accordance with their treatment needs.

There are a number of practical implications for prevention, assessment and treatment purposes. The results of Chapter 3 confirmed what research in the area had previously reported; that a great number of MPRs are committed by young people (Amir, 1971; Hauffe & Porter, 2009; Wright & West, 1981). This means that prevention programmes should be

targeted at young adolescents from school level onward. Some sexual violence prevention programmes recognize that young people are most at risk of perpetrating and experiencing sexual violence and therefore already target this population (Powell, 2014). Additionally, the findings from Chapter 4 suggest that it is also important to target immigrant and ethnic minority youngsters who seem to be at greater risk of MPR and to tailor these programmes to the characteristics and needs of these young people. The need for sexual violence prevention programmes that address specific racial and ethnic minority populations had already been recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Whitaker & Reese, 2007) which led to the funding of programmes which were considered to be culturally competent: “programs and services provided in a style and format respectful of cultural norms, values, and traditions that are endorsed by cultural leaders and accepted by the target population” (Whitaker & Reese, 2007, p. 11).

Chapter 5 provides clear empirical evidence for the role of group processes and dynamics in MPR, therefore, these should be incorporated into prevention programmes and issues such as peer pressure and group behaviours should be addressed. Some efforts have already been made through the “bystander approaches” to encourage individuals to intervene in situations where it is likely that violence is going to occur and in that way disrupts peer cultures that support violence (Powell, 2014; Tabachnick, 2008). These “bystander approaches”, that form the bases of some prevention programmes, try to develop a shared individual and community responsibility for preventing and responding to sexual violence, by encouraging people not directly involved in a violent incident to take action. However, it is also necessary to engage young people in programmes where they learn how to recognise and react appropriately to group processes and dynamics within their own peer group, and challenge their peers that plan or initiate sexual violence.

In relation to risk assessment, when assessing an individual that has committed a MPR the above factors regarding young age, potential difficulties experienced by immigrant and ethnic minority populations and socio-economic conditions should be considered as potential risk factors. If these factors are found to be present, they should be taken into account when planning intervention. Further research investigating factors that predict MPR would be valuable.

Additionally, group processes should also be contemplated, as the risk level of an offender who participates in a sexual assault in a group setting where group processes such as peer pressure are involved, is likely to be different to a lone sexual offender. It is likely that some perpetrators of MPR would not have committed the crime on their own and that group contexts could be a potential risk factor for them. This means that, on their own, these offenders could be less risky than lone sexual offenders, but in certain group contexts their risk levels for re-offending could be higher. It is important to note that some studies (’t Hart-Kerkhoffs, Vermeiren, Jansen, & Doreleijers, 2011; Woodhams, Cooke, Harkins, & da Silva, 2011) have identified the presence of leaders and followers in MPR groups. It is not certain if these leaders have different characteristics to the followers which could influence their risk of re-offending and further research is necessary. The findings of this thesis suggest that MPR is a heterogeneous crime with diverse perpetrators with varying motivations which also suggests that there may be differential risk factors. As mentioned above, further research is necessary to better understand the individual and situational factors that play a role in MPR. In the future when more is known regarding these factors, it could be possible to develop a risk assessment tool for MPR based on them.

Since group processes and dynamics have been identified as being unique to this type of sexual offending they should also be addressed in treatment programmes. Blanchard (1959)

and Etgar and Ganot-Prager (2009) reported that the dynamics that they observed between members they were working with (conducting group psychological evaluation and in group therapy) who were part of the same group that had committed a MPR were similar to the dynamics that were present during the assault. This means it is crucial to analyse the perpetrator's social role within the group and his interactions in a group setting (Etgar, 2013). West and Greenall (2011) highlighted the importance of analysing the index offence in order to understand the crime scene actions, the offender and the offence motivations. By analysing the MPR, the practitioner can gain a better understanding of how the offender interacted with the other perpetrators and what his role was in the offence. This information could help the practitioner plan an intervention tailored to the offender where he could learn how to recognise group dynamics and react to them in more appropriate ways. It is also important to examine the role and importance of the peer group.

Additionally, in treatment programmes where there are people from different countries and backgrounds, it is vital to be aware of cultural and social differences which can include differences in attitudes towards women (Olumoroti, 2008). Furthermore, people from immigrant backgrounds could be experiencing difficulties in integration and acculturation which should be addressed (Bauer et al., 2011; Mirsky, 2012). However, as stated by Thakker (2013) it is important not to place an exaggerated emphasis on an offender's cultural or religious background in order to avoid the risk of generalisations and assumptions based on stereotypes. The offender should be seen as an individual with a unique manifestation of possible cultural and religious affiliations (Thakker, 2013).

Currently treatment programmes for sexual offenders in England and Wales and in Portugal do not distinguish between lone and multiple perpetrator sexual offenders, which means that they undergo the same treatment programmes. However, the findings in this thesis

have demonstrated that there are differences between these types of sexual offenders and that it is likely that they also have different treatment needs. This implies that changes may be needed to existing treatment programmes to meet the needs of MPR offenders, for example, elements such as learning to identify and react to group dynamics and processes may be needed.

The findings of this thesis also provide pertinent information for rape victim support. In Chapter 3, it was reported that besides the MPRs being longer in duration than the lone rapes, the victims were also subjected to multiple sexual acts. This would result in highly negative consequences for the victims and should therefore be taken into account in therapeutic work with victims (Ullman, 2013). Taking into consideration the severe physical and psychological health consequences for victims of MPR, Ullman (2013) underlined the importance of developing distinct policies and protocols to be used by people who come into contact with victims of MPR, such as police and medical providers.

Conclusions

This thesis was successful in advancing our knowledge and understanding of MPR. This was achieved not only by contributing with a comprehensive and critical review of what was known about this type of sexual offending, but also through empirical studies on areas where there were inconsistencies or where there was no existing research. Furthermore, these new studies warrant replication. Finally, a number of theoretical and practical implications and potential areas for further research have been suggested.

APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Background Information:

- How many of you were involved in the offence?
- What were your ages at the time?
- What was the relationship between all of you? (Clarify if they were family members, friends or acquaintances)
- Had you done other activities together in the past (group activities in general)?
 - What sort of activities?

Information related to what led to the offence:

- Could you explain how the offence occurred?
If the information is not offered spontaneously the following prompts will be used:
 - Did someone come up with the idea?
 - Was it planned? If yes, who planned it?
 - Had you in the past spoken about doing something like that?

Information related to the victim:

- Could you tell me who the victim was and how she/he was chosen?
- Were all of you present when the victim was first approached?
If the information is not offered spontaneously the following prompts will be used:
 - Was the victim a stranger or known to one or more members of the group?
 - If the victim was known what sort of relationship existed?

Information related to the assault:

- Could you explain what happened during the assault and what was your role?
If the information is not offered spontaneously the following prompts will be used:
 - Who was the first one to assault the victim?
 - What were the other members doing?
 - How was the mood at the time?
 - Were you and/or the other members joking or laughing?

- Were you and/or the other members nervous tense, serious or aggressive?

Information related to the release of the victim:

- In the end what happened to the victim?

If the information is not offered spontaneously the following prompt will be used:

- Who decided what to do with the victim?

Information related to what happened after the assault:

- What did you do after the assault?
- Did you speak about what had happened with the other members?
- Did you carry on doing other things together (group activities in general)?

Information related to leadership?

- Do you consider yourself to have been a leader, follower or neither? Why?
- In your opinion what characteristics does a leader have?

If the information is not offered spontaneously the following prompts will be used?

- Is a leader older?
- Does he have more experience?

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