BSc in Psychology

Survivors of Sexual Violence Confronting their Perpetrators

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Foreword

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the BSc Psychology degree, Reykjavík University, this thesis is presented in the style of an article for submission to a peer-reviewed journal.

Abstract

It can be disturbing for survivors of sexual violence to confront their perpetrator about the violence. It may bring back painful memories but some survivors choose to do it. On the other hand, it is important to know what kind of reactions survivors should be expecting from the perpetrators, both for the survivor's safety and healing process. The aim of the study was to examine whether survivors confront perpetrators about the violence, how perpetrators respond to confrontation and what factors are connected with confrontation and perpetrator's reaction. The data were collected from Stígamót, a help center for survivors of sexual violence from the years 2009-2015. Results showed that only 19.3% of perpetrators had been confronted by their victim. The most common reaction was that the perpetrator denied the violence (45.7%). Survivors were more likely to confront if the perpetrator was within the family and, if the severity of violence was greater. If the type of violence was incest, the perpetrator was more likely to admit to the violence and if the perpetrator used presents or bribes the perpetrator was also more likely to admit. However, if the perpetrator used negative approaches to ensure silence from the victim, such as physical violence, threats or blaming the victim when confronted, the perpetrator was less likely to deny the violence and more likely to blame the victim for the violence. Results provide a guide to future research in the field and these results can be used to guide survivors of sexual violence.

Key words: Sexual violence, perpetrator, confrontation, survivor of sexual violence

Útdráttur

Það getur verið erfitt fyrir þolanda kynferðisofbeldis að ræða ofbeldið við ofbeldismanninn. Að öllum líkindinum mun það valda því að sárar minningar koma upp á yfirborðið, en þrátt fyrir það þá eru sumir þolendur sem gera það. Tilgangur rannsóknarinnar var að sjá hvort að þolendur ræða ofbeldið við ofbeldismanninn, hvernig ofbeldismaður bregst við því og hvaða þættir hafa áhrif á þetta tvennt. Fengin voru gögn frá Stígamótum, sem eru hjálparsamtök fyrir þolendur kynferðisofbeldis, frá árunum 2009-2015. Niðurstöður sýndu að einungis 19.3% ofbeldismanna höfðu upplifað það að þolandi ræddi ofbeldið við þá. Ofbeldismenn höfnuðu ofbeldinu í flestum tilvikum (45,7%). Þolendur voru líklegri til þess að ræða ofbeldið við ofbeldismanninn ef hann var innan fjölskyldunnar og því alvarlegra sem ofbeldið var, því meiri líkur voru á að þolendur ræði ofbeldið við ofbeldismanninn. Ef tegund ofbeldisins var sifjaspell voru ofbeldismenn líklegri í að viðurkenna ofbeldið fyrir þolandanum og enn fremur ef ofbeldismaður gaf gjafir eða mútaði þolanda til þess að tryggja þögn þá voru meiri líkur á að ofbeldismaður viðurkenndi ofbeldið. Aftur á móti, ef ofbeldismaður notaði hótanir, líkamsmeiðingar eða kenndi þolanda um ofbeldið til þess að tryggja þögn voru meiri líkur á að ofbeldismaður kenndi þolanda um ofbeldið en minni líkur á að ofbeldismaður hafnaði ofbeldinu. Niðurstöður veita innsýn fyrir komandi rannsóknir á sviðinu og þessar niðurstöður geta verið notaðar til að leiðbeina þolendum kynferðisofbeldis á þessu sviði.

Survivors of Sexual Violence Confronting their Perpetrators

Sexual violence is an alarming health and social concern (Balemba, Beauregard, & Miecskowski, 2016; Donnelly & Ward, 2015). Sexual violence is any kind of sexual coercion and unwanted sexual act by someone towards another person (Donnelly & Ward, 2015). Numbers from USA indicate that one in five women will be raped someday in their lives and one in 71 men (Black et al., 2011), additionally, 25% of women have been sexually abused as children and 16% of men (Dube, Withfield, & Felitti, 2005). Over 24% of women (age 18-80) in Iceland have experienced sexual violence (Karlsdóttir & Arndals, 2010) and child sexual abuse (CSA) is 17% (Ólafsdóttir, 2011). However, sexual violence is very under-reported in general (Donnelly & Ward, 2015) as well as to the police (Bragason, 2011), with rape being the most under-reported crime (Rennison, 2002; Rand, 2009). Moreover, survivors of CSA or incest, do indeed under-report the violence which can cause issues regarding the perpetrator, who can unfortunately continue the offending (Leclerc & Wortley, 2015).

Sexual violence is a serious issue because survivors may experience serious psychological, emotional and physical consequences, such as feelings of dysphoria, guilt, fear, anxiety, depression and difficulties performing intimate relationships (Krug, Dahlberg, Mercy, Zwi, & Lozano, 2002). Furthermore, the largest population in USA dealing with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) are survivors of rape (Campbell & Wasco, 2005). Considering current study, when referring to the survivor from the perpetrator's view the phrase "victim" will be used, otherwise "survivor" will be used.

Those who commit sexual violence are often referred to as perpetrators and they are very individually different (Bragason, 2011; Newton & Hjaltason, 2011). For example, most previous studies regarding perpetrators of sexual violence are conducted with samples of convicted perpetrators (DeLisi et al., 2014; Levenson, 2011; Siddique, 2016) who may be different from non-convicted perpetrators (Burn & Brown, 2006; Gunnlaugsson, 2011; Riser,

Pegram, & Farley, 2013). Convicted perpetrators of sexual violence often have criminal histories (Nicholls, Pritchard, Reeves, & Hilterman, 2013) and therefore, have similar background as other convicted criminals, which mostly involves violence in general (Gunnlaugsson, 2011). Although perpetrators are individually different, the majority of perpetrators are male (Black et al., 2011). Female survivors of rape had a male perpetrator in 98% cases and male survivors had a male perpetrator in 93% cases (Black et al., 2011). Moreover, males who were survivors of CSA had 62% a male perpetrator and 38% a female perpetrator, as with female survivors, 92% of perpetrators were male (Dube et al., 2005). There is no typical age for a perpetrator of sexual violence, they are in all age ranges as well as very young. Almost half of perpetrators (48%) from 2005-2010 in the USA were age 30 or older and 34% were 18-29 years old (Planty, Langton, Berzofsky, & McDonald, 2013). Comparing those numbers to Iceland, prevalence of 18-29 years old perpetrators were around 40% according to annual reports from Stígamót (a help center for survivors of sexual violence in Iceland) and around 35% of perpetrators were age 30 and older (Stígamót, 2011-2015). Highlighting that perpetrators can be very young, 17-22% of perpetrators in Iceland are younger than 18 (Stígamót, 2012-2015) and 31% of CSA perpetrators were younger than 20 years old (Ólafsdóttir, 2011). Perpetrators can therefore be in all ages but are in most cases males who perpetrate both females and other males.

      Most survivors of sexual violence tell someone about the violence sooner or later. Around 75% of survivors disclosed to an informal support (Ahrens et al., 2007). Disclosing rates for girls were 81% and rates for boys were 69%. Survivors often disclose to a person who is close to them, like a peer (Priebe & Svedin, 2008), friend or a family member (Ahrens et al., 2007). On the other hand, possible reason for not disclosing as a child relates to the limited knowledge of what sexual violence is as children (Ólafsdóttir, 2011) and therefore are survivors more likely to disclose when they become older (Leclerc & Wortley, 2015).

Reasons vary for not disclosing, like they were too afraid to (25%), too embarrassed (17%), did not know it was wrong (16%) and thought it was their own fault (12%) (Ólafsdóttir, 2011). However, a small number of survivors go beyond that disclosing line and confront their perpetrator about the violence (Cameron, 1994; Freshwater, Ainscough, & Toon, 2003). Around 25% of survivors confront their perpetrator in Iceland (Magnusardottir & Erlingsdottir, 2007). To confront can be helpful for the survivors' healing process, both to receive forgiveness and to forgive the perpetrator, which can be crucial (Booth, 2013). However, survivors have diverse opinions of whether or not to confront perpetrators (Paige & Thornton, 2015). For many survivors, the main question is why the person did it. However, most survivors want the perpetrator to acknowledge the violence, which is generally more essential to receive rather than perpetrator's forgiveness (Paige & Thornton, 2015). On the other hand, some survivors think it is absurd to confront, claiming that it can be encouraging for perpetrators to proceed the violence, relating to the idea that perpetrators want to feel powerful and may still have control over the survivor (McGlynn, Downes, & Westmarland, 2016; Paige & Thornton, 2015).

On the contrary and with a lot of evidence, most perpetrators deny the violence when confronted (Cameron, 1994; Freshwater et al., 2003; Plummer, 2006), and that is a typical factor for perpetrators of sexual violence (Davids, Londt, & Wilson, 2015). Reasons for denying the violence can differ and it can be a defense mechanism (Levenson, 2011), especially, since sex offenses and those who commit it are judged by the society (Balemda et al., 2015; Burn & Brown, 2006). It can be argued that when a perpetrator has achieved recognition, the perpetrator wants to protect that image and being a "sex offender" is not among the identities they have of themselves (Blagden, Winder, Gregson, & Thorne, 2014).

Not solely denying the violence, another typical factor for perpetrators is to blame the victim of the violence (Beech, Ward, & Fisher, 2006; Ryan, 2011; Hipp et al., 2015) and this

is often seen in perpetrators who have psychopathic features (DeLisi et al., 2014). By blaming

the victim, the perpetrators are deflecting on the responsibility. Fortunately, there is a certain

proportion of perpetrators that admit to the violence (Paige & Thornton, 2015), in fact, child

molesters admit more often (83%) to the police than rapists (61%), but when it comes to

confess in trial the percentage decreases for rapist (31%) but stays the same for child

molesters (Gudjonsson & Sigurdsson, 2000).

From the angle of perpetrator, trying to ensure the victim's silence after the abuse is

widespread. Despite most of them do nothing special to ensure silence (Ólafsdóttir, 2011),

some bribe the victim or give them presents (Proulx, Beauregard, Lussier, & Leclerc, 2014),

others use more negative approaches like threats, physical violence or claim that the violence

was the victim's fault (Edwards et al., 2014). Despite of that, majority of survivors of sexual

violence disclose to someone. Moreover, if the survivor was related to the perpetrator,

chances of disclosing to someone about the violence were greater (Leclerc & Wortley, 2015).

But in most cases the perpetrator is known to the victim (Pagé, Tourigny, & Renaud, 2010)

mainly through the family, intimate partner, friend or acquaintance (Planty et al., 2013;

Siddique, 2016). Perpetrators within the family admitted the violence towards survivors of

CSA in 22% incidents (Cameron, 1994) and from Paige and Thornton's (2015) study, where

48% of the incest-survivors confronted their perpetrator, the majority of perpetrators

acknowledged the violence. Another factor that can influence confrontation by the survivor is

violence severity. Considering that sexual violent acts usually include some type of

aggression (Tharp et al., 2013) during the abuse. However, perpetrators use physical force

(Leclerc & Wortley, 2015) more frequently than weapons which is used in 11% of sexual

offenses (Planty et al., 2013). Furthermore, it is typical for perpetrators who engage in violent

acts, to have a need to gain power over others (Beech et al., 2006). If perpetrator used

physical force, survivors were less likely to disclose the violence of odds of revenge from the

perpetrator (Paine & Hansen, 2002). However, Lam (2014) (cited in Leclerc & Wortley, 2015) found that the more violence severity, the greater chances of disclosure by the survivor.

Wanting to confront the perpetrator is understandable, to at least get the perpetrator to acknowledge what has been done (Paige & Thornton, 2015). To confront can be an important step in the healing process (Freshwater et al., 2003) and studies of what impacts confrontation and survivor's feelings following the confrontation is limited in Iceland. The current study was conducted to see how many survivors confront and what type of reactions are most often displayed by perpetrators. Also, to examine what influences survivor to confront their perpetrator. Based on above literature it was hypothesized that: 1) The more relation between survivors of sexual violence and their perpetrator, the more probability of survivors confronting the perpetrator about the violence; 2) The more violence severity during the abuse, survivors are more likely to confront their perpetrator; 3) Perpetrators are most likely to deny the violence when confronted and the older they get, the more probability of denying the violence; 4) If type of violence was incest there are more chances of perpetrator admitting the violence and 5) If the perpetrator tried to ensure silence from the survivor by giving presents or bribing, the perpetrator would admit the violence when confronted, but if the perpetrator used threats, physical violence or blamed the victim to ensure silence the perpetrator would deny the violence or blame the victim of the violence.

Method

Participants

Participants were survivors of sexual violence who gave information about their perpetrators anonymously. Participants in the study were 1894, males (12%) were 228, females (88%) were 1667 and two did not specify their gender. Age of the participants were from 14-80 years old ($M = 36.29$, $SD = 14.7$). The data for present study were collected from the years 2009-2015 from Stígamót, which is a help center for survivors of sexual violence

and mainly involves individual counseling and group work. Stígamót opened in 1990 and is

funded by the government, companies, social organizations, among their own fund raising.

Stígamót welcomes all individuals and their service is free of charge. All participants in the

current study were survivors of sexual violence. Clients at Stígamót were encouraged by the

staff to answer a questionnaire about the violence and their perpetrator. Their participation

was therefore voluntary. Not all participants had just one perpetrator which leads to more

records of perpetrators than of participants. Perpetrators counted 3215, thereof were 2865

males and 134 females (126 missing), notice that perpetrators can be counted more than once

if the perpetrator had more than one victim. This is a convenience sample and the data was

obtained by Stígamót's staff members through the years which researcher had permission to

access and use in current study.

Measurements

The questionnaire contains 19 multiple choice questions. It was created by the staff of

Stígamót. The questionnaire, which was in Icelandic, has slightly evolved through the years

by making options to certain questions more accurate but the questions themselves have not

changed. Seven questions from the questionnaire were used in the current study.

Age of perpetrator. Participants were asked how old the perpetrator was at the first

incident of violence by answering only one option. Options to the question were age ranged as

following, "under 10," "11-13," "14-17," "18-29," "30-39," "40-49," "50-59," "60-69," "70-

79," "80 and older" and the last option was "not sure". This information was then recoded

into four levels, 1 = age 17 and younger (n = 603), 2 = 18-29 years old (n = 1075), 3 = 30-49

years old (n = 734) and 4 = age 50 and older (n = 199). Those who answered with "not sure"

were recoded to missing and the missing group then counted 514 perpetrators. Another recode

was made to make binary variables. The four groups were coded as 1 = 17 and younger, 2 =

other age, second group was 1 = 18-29 years old, 2 = other age, third age group was 1 = 30-49

years old, 2 = other age and the last group was 1 = age 50 and older, 2 = other age.

Type of violence. Participants were asked what kind of violence they had been

through and were encouraged to answer every option that was relevant. The options were

"incest," "sexual harassment," "rape," "attempted rape," "broker prostitution,"

"pornography," "digital sexual violence," "other" and "not sure". The only option used in

current study was incest. Stígamót defines incest as "every sexual behavior between

individuals who are bound up with trust where one person does not want to engage in such

behavior but is submissive and contingent upon the perpetrator in some way" (Stígamót,

2015). The variable was already binary in the data whereas 0 = no incest (n = 2190) and 1 =

yes (n = 904). Missing data was 31.

Relation to the perpetrator. Participants were asked about the relation to the

perpetrator and were supposed to answer only one option. The options given were "spouse/

former spouse," "father/stepfather," "mother/stepmother," "brother/stepbrother,"

"sister/stepsister," "son/daughter," "male relative," "female relative," "grandfather/step

grandfather," "grandmother/step grandmother," "married in the family," "family friend,"

"friend/acquaintance," "administrator outside the family," "boss," "co-worker," "specialist,"

"another agent" and "stranger". Type of relation was recoded to four groups, 1 = family (n =

1310), which included all options that related to the family as well as spouse, former spouse

and family friend. Group 2 = friend/acquaintance (n = 846), 3 = specialist outside the family

(administrator, boss, co-worker, specialist and another agent were categorized together) were

total of 355 perpetrators and 4 = a stranger (n = 541). This variable was also recoded to make

a binary variable which was recoded with the first group 1 = family, 2 = not family, second

group 1 = friend/acquaintance, 2 = not friend/acquaintance, third group 1 = a specialist, 2 =

not a specialist, and group 4 was 1 = stranger, 2 = not a stranger. Missing data from this variable was 73.

Severity of the violence. Participants were asked if the perpetrators used any of the following in relation to the violence incident and were supposed to check off all relevant options. The options categorized as "threats," "weapons/tools," "physical violence," "stalking," "psychological violence," "none of these" or "other". A severity score was made from this question with 3 as the most serious and 1 as the less serious. Most serious was physical violence as 3 ($n = 584$), weapons/tools as 2 ($n = 47$) and threats as 1 and therefore the least serious, with total of 433 perpetrators. Other options were put in missing data which counted 2061.

Ensuring silence. Participants were asked if the perpetrator did something to ensure their silence and ought to select every option relevant. The options were as following "did nothing special," "gave presents/bribed," "blamed me for the violence," "used threats," "used physical violence," "other" and "not sure". All options stayed the same, apart from "other" and "not sure", which were put in missing data, total of 277. Binary variables were already in the dataset were "no" was coded as 0 and "yes" as 1. In "gave presents/bribed" group were 639, those who blamed the victim for the violence were 179, those who used threats were 379 and in "physical violence" group were 286.

Confronting the perpetrator. Participants were asked if they had discussed the violence with the perpetrator. Options were "no," "yes" and "uncertain". The variable was recoded to 1= no ($n = 2328$), 2 = yes ($n = 556$) and "uncertain" was recoded to missing with total of 241.

Perpetrator's reaction when confronted. Participants were asked following the confrontation question, if yes, how did the perpetrator react. Options were "admitted the violence," "denied the violence," "blamed me for the violence," "none of these," "not sure"

and "other". This information was recoded to 1 = admitted the violence (n = 130), 2 = denied the violence (n = 197) and 3 = blamed me for the violence (n = 104). The options "none of these", "not sure" and "other" were put in missing (n = 2694). Binary variables were made from this, 1 = admitted the violence, 2 = other options, 1 = denied the violence, 2 = other options, 1 = blamed the victim of the violence, 2 = other options.

Procedure

The staff at Stígamót encouraged clients to answer the questionnaires. Participants would voluntarily answer the lists at Stígamót and a staff member wrote the number of the client, the date and number of perpetrators. No participant received any rewards or payment for participating. The data is kept in Stígamót's system, in their computers and is not allowed to leave their system to third party. Working with the data was therefore only possible at their housing and in their computer, that the researcher had access to during the opening hours of Stígamót. Permission was provided from a staff member who supervises all of Stígamót's data with a verbal request of working with the data.

Data Analysis

All statistical data were analyzed by SPSS Statistics, version 15, since that version was in Stígamót's computer. The study's aim was to find out which variables would affect whether the survivor had confronted their perpetrator. Descriptive statistics were calculated to provide information on all variables. Cross-tables were utilized to view difference between age, survivor-perpetrator relation, violence severity, ensuring silence and incest, and whether they had confronted. Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to see connection between independent and dependent variables. Independent variables were age of the perpetrators when the first violence happened, type of violence, survivor-perpetrator relationship, severity of the violence and if the perpetrator did something to ensure silence from the survivor. Dependent variables were, if the survivor had confronted their perpetrator and the reaction to

the confrontation. Ordinal logistic regression was used to access the relationships between

confrontation and survivor-perpetrator relationship, severity of violence and denying the

violence (also regarding age of perpetrator). Ordinal logistic regression was also used to see

both relationships between how perpetrator ensured silence and his reaction to confrontation

and what type of violence was used (incest) and perpetrator's reaction. Outcomes from

Goodness of fit model were not as desired, concerning that there were a lot of missing cells in

the data and Goodness of fit is very sensitive to missing cells (Fagerland & Hosmer, 2016).

Results

Descriptive statistics for all variables are shown in Table 1. The majority of

perpetrators had not been confronted by survivor, or 2328 and in most cases the perpetrator

denied the violence when confronted (45.7%). The most common age for perpetrators was 18-

29 years old (41.2%) with 1075 perpetrators and the least common age was age 50 and older

(7.6%), a total of 199. Relation between survivor and perpetrator was often within the family

(42.9%) and rarely someone the survivors did not know, namely a stranger (17.7%). Among

perpetrators who tried to ensure silence from the survivor, it was rather common to give

presents or bribe (22.4%), but perpetrators also used negative approaches like threatened the

victim (13.3%), blamed the victim (6.3%) or used physical violence (10%). Only 47

perpetrators used weapons (4.4%) during the violence and 904 occurrences were categorized

as incest (29.2%). Perpetrators in the sample were therefore mostly in the family, between 18-

29 years old and majority of them had not been confronted by survivors.

Table 1

Frequency for confrontation, reaction, age, relation, ensuring silence, severity of violence and incest

	n	%
Confronted perpetrator	2884	
Yes	556	19.3
No	2328	80.7
Perpetrator's reaction	431	
Admitted	130	30.16
Denied	197	45.7
Blamed the victim	104	24.13
Age	2611	
≤ 17 years old	603	23.1
18-29 years old	1075	41.2
30-49 years old	734	28.1
≥ 50 years old	199	7.6
Relation	3052	
Family	1310	42.9
Friend/acquaintance	846	27.7
Specialist	355	11.6
Stranger	541	17.7
Ensure silence	2848	
Gave presents/bribed	639	22.4
Blamed the victim	179	6.3
Used threats	379	13.3
Physical violence	286	10
Severity of violence	1064	
Threats	433	40.7
Weapon	47	4.4
Physical violence	584	54.9
Type of violence	3094	
Incest	904	29.2

Correlational analysis

Pearson's correlation was used to see relationships between variables (Table 2).

Twenty-three correlation relationships were significant, although the coefficients are rather

small in most cases. The highest positive correlation was if perpetrator blamed the victim to

ensure silence after the abuse and when confronted, the perpetrators would still blame the

victim ($r = .490$, $p < 0.01$).

Table 2

Correlation representing the relationship of each predictor on confrontation and perpetrator's reaction to confrontation

	Confront perpetrator	Denied[b]	Admitted[b]	Blamed the victim[b]
Confront perpetrator	1	.30	-.051	.019
Incest	-.092**	-.029	.201**	-.182**
Severity of violence	.075**	.059	.059	.020
Family	.223**	-.005	-.033	.042
Friend/acquaintance	.033	.011	.039	-.055
Specialist	-.062**	-.027	-.005	.036
Stranger	-.195**	.029	.002	-.036
≤ 17 years old	.067**	-.026	-.070	.106*
18-29 years old	-.058**	.068	-.046	-.030
30-49 years old	-.006	-.023	.104*	-.085
≥ 50 years old	.010	-.059	.013	.056
Gave presents/bribed[a]	.032	-.112*	.095	.028
Used threats[a]	.165**	-.130**	-.109*	.267**
Physical violence[a]	.118**	-.067	-.125*	.211**
Blamed the victim[a]	.312**	-.143**	-.304**	.490**

Note: [a] To ensure silence, [b] Reaction to confrontation.

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$.*

On the other hand, there was a negative correlation between blaming the victim to ensure

silence and denying the violence ($r = -.143$, $p < 0.01$) when confronted. If the perpetrator tried

to ensure silence from the survivor by using threats there was a negative correlation with denying the violence ($r = -.130$, $p < 0.01$), however there was a positive correlation with blaming the victim of the violence ($r = .267$, $p < 0.01$). The last part of the hypothesis regarding ensured silence was if perpetrator used physical violence to ensure silence it had a positive correlation ($r = .211$, $p < 0.01$) with blaming the victim. Regarding the first hypothesis, the more relation between survivor and perpetrator the more chances of confrontation. If the perpetrator was in the family, there was a positive correlation ($r = .223$, $p < 0.01$) with confronting. If perpetrator was a friend or acquaintance there was a weak positive ($r = .033$) correlation without a significant outcome, and if the perpetrator was a specialist there was a negative correlation ($r = -.062$, $p < 0.01$) between confronting. At last, if it was a stranger there was also a negative correlation ($r = -.195$, $p < 0.01$) of confronting the perpetrator. That is in line with the hypothesis, from family to stranger the correlations went from the most positive correlation (between family and confronting), to the most negative correlation (between stranger and confronting). Severity of the violence had a weak positive correlation with confronting perpetrator ($r = .075$, $p < 0.01$) and it was also a positive correlation between incest and admitting the violence when confronted ($r = .201$, $p < 0.01$).

Ordinal logistic regression analysis

Ordinal logistic regression was used separately to each hypothesis predictor. The first hypothesis, which regarded survivor-perpetrator relation and confrontation was significantly supported (Table 3). If the perpetrator was in the family, the survivor was more likely to confront the perpetrator, $b = 1.145$, Wald $x^2(1) = 133.653$, $p < 0.01$. Family had also a significant main effect on survivor confronting perpetrator $x^2(2) = 140.575$, $p < 0.01$. Goodness of fit did not show a significant outcome since the test is very sensitive to missing cells (Fagerland & Hosmer, 2016). According to Nagelkerke (1991) 7.7% of confronting is explained by family. However, if the perpetrator was a friend or acquaintance it did not

significantly predict confrontation, b = -.195, Wald $x^2(1)$ = 1.388, p = .074, but was

marginally significant. Chances of confronting a friend or acquaintance was lower than if the

perpetrator was a member of the family. Friend/acquaintance had marginally, but not

significant main effect on survivor confronting perpetrator $x^2(2)$ = 3.254, p = .071. Only 0.2%

(Nagelkerke) of confronting is explained by friend or acquaintance.

Table 3

Simple logistic regression models combined into one table

	b	Nagelkerke R^2
Confronted perpetrator		
Family	1.145**	.077
Friend/acquaintance	-.195	.002
Specialist	-.556**	.007
Stranger	-2.298**	.081
Severity of violence	.176*	.008
Denied the violence		
Confronted	.539	.007
Age	.083	.001
Used threats[a]	-.571*	.023
Physical violence[a]	-.376	.006
Blamed the victim[a]	-.619*	.027
Admitted the violence		
Incest	.970**	.053
Gave presents/bribed[a]	.660	.012
Blamed the victim		
Used threats[a]	1.260**	.098
Physical violence[a]	1.169**	.058
Blamed the victim[a]	2.425**	.310

Note: [a] To ensure silence

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01

If the perpetrator was a specialist (outside the family), it significantly predicted less chances

of survivor confronting the perpetrator, b = -.556, Wald $x^2(1)$ = 10.632, p < 0.01. Specialists

also had significant main effect on survivor confronting the perpetrator $x^2(2) = 11.881$, $p <$ 0.01. If the perpetrator was a stranger it significantly predicted less chances of survivor confronting the perpetrator, $b = $ -2.298, Wald $x^2(1) = 74.314$, $p < 0.01$. Stranger had significant main effect on confronting the perpetrator $x^2(2) = 147.796$, $p < 0.01$ and 8.1% (Nagelkerke) of confronting was explained by stranger. Therefore, if the perpetrator was a family member the chances increases of confrontation and if it was a stranger there are less chances of confrontation.

The more severity of violence used during the abuse, the more likely it was for the survivor to confront the perpetrator, $b = .176$, Wald $x^2(1) = 5.665$, $p < 0.05$. There was significant main effect $x^2(2) = 5.741$, $p < 0.05$ between severity of violence and confrontation. Severity of violence explained 0.8% of confronting. Goodness of fit showed significant results, so the data does not fit the model well (Fagerland & Hosmer, 2016). With this results we can support the hypothesis that the more severity of violence, the more likely the survivor will confront the perpetrator.

The third hypothesis was that the perpetrator's reaction to confrontation would be that the perpetrator denied the violence. We cannot support that hypothesis since it was not a significant outcome, $b = .539$, Wald $x^2(1) = .382$, $p = .536$. However, there was a 45.7% denial from the perpetrators. The second part of third hypothesis, that the older the perpetrator was the more chances of denying the violence, was also not significant $b = .083$, Wald $x^2(1) = .455$, $p = .500$.

With hypothesis number four there was a significant outcome, if incest-survivor confronted, the perpetrator would admit the violence $b = .970$, Wald $x^2(1) = 16.744$, $p < 0.01$. There was a significant main effect $x^2(2) = 16.522$, $p < 0.01$ of perpetrator admitting the violence and incest. Nagelkerke showed that 5.3% of admitting the violence was explained by incest.

The last hypothesis was if the perpetrator tried to do something to ensure silence from the survivor. The first part was that if the perpetrator tried to ensure silence by giving presents or bribing, perpetrator's reaction to confrontation would be to admit the violence. The results were marginally significant, $b = .660$, Wald $x^2(1) = 3.723$, $p = .054$. Results also showed marginally significant main effect $x^2(2) = 3.600$, $p = .058$ between giving presents/bribing and admitting the violence. The other part of hypothesis five was if the perpetrator tried to ensure silence by blaming the victim, using threats or physical violence, perpetrator's reaction to confrontation would be denying the violence or blaming the victim of the violence. If perpetrator blamed the victim of the violence the perpetrator was significantly less likely to deny the violence $b = -.619$ Wald $x^2(1) = 8.523$, $p < 0.01$. There was a significant main effect between blaming the victim and denying the violence $x^2(2) = 8.723$, $p < 0.01$. If perpetrator ensured silence by blaming the victim of the violence, perpetrator's reactions were significantly blaming the victim after confrontation, $b = 2.425$ Wald $x^2(1) = 83.366$, $p < 0.01$. There was significant main effect between blaming the victim for their silence and still blaming the victim when perpetrator was confronted $x^2(2) = 98.381$, $p < 0.01$. According to Nagelkerke, 31% of the blaming the victim (ensure silence) is explained by blaming the victim (reaction to confrontation). If the perpetrator used threats to ensure silence the perpetrator was significantly less likely to deny the violence, $b = -.571$ Wald $x^2(1) = 7.025$, $p < 0.01$. There was main effect between using threats and denying the violence $x^2(2) = 7.174$, $p < 0.01$. If perpetrator used threats to ensure silence it significantly predicted that the perpetrator blamed the victim of the violence, $b = 1.260$ Wald $x^2(1) = 28.352$, $p < 0.01$. There was main effect between using threats and blaming the victim when confronted, $x^2(2) = 28.575$, $p < 0.01$ and 9.8% (Nagelkerke) of blaming the victim was explained by using threats to ensure silence. If the perpetrator used physical violence to ensure silence, it was insignificant to predict that the perpetrator denied the violence, $b = -.376$ Wald $x^2(1) = 1.870$,

$p = .171$ and finally, if the perpetrator used physical violence to ensure silence it significantly

predicted that the perpetrator blamed the victim of the violence, $b = 1.169$ Wald $x^2(1) =$

17.444, $p < 0.01$. There was also main effect between the two variables, $x^2(2) = 16.768$, $p <$

0.01. That informs us that perpetrators who give presents or bribe to ensure silence are more

likely to admit the violence when confronted, while perpetrators who use negative approaches

to ensure silence are more likely to blame the victim of the violence and less likely to deny

the violence.

Discussion

With the current study, we have a little more insight into factors connected with

survivors of sexual violence confronting their perpetrator, and the perpetrator's reaction to the

confrontation. From a seven-year period, only 19.3% of survivors at Stígamót had confronted

their perpetrator. Slightly larger proportion (25.5%) had confronted from a study in 2006,

where data was also collected through Stígamót (Magnusardottir & Erlingsdottir, 2007).

Perpetrators' reactions were not surprising whereas 45.7% denied the violence, 24.13%

blamed the victim and 30.16% admitted the violence. Which means that nearly 70% of

perpetrators reflect on the responsibility when confronted, which is similar to previous studies

considering that majority of perpetrators do not acknowledge the violence (Davids et al.,

2015; Beech et al., 2006; Ryan, 2011; Hipp et al., 2015). Based on previous literature, two

hypotheses were made to test the relationship between survivors confronting their

perpetrators, and three hypotheses were constructed to test the relationship regarding

perpetrators' reactions to confrontation. The first hypothesis, which implied that the more

relation between survivor and perpetrator the more chances of confronting was supported, the

highest chances of confronting was if the perpetrator was within the family and the lowest

chances of confronting was if the perpetrator was a stranger. Although that the assumption

was based on previous research (Priebe & Svedin, 2008) it is obvious that there are less

chances of confronting someone you do not know, like a stranger. Despite significant results,

only a small proportion of confronting perpetrator is explained by family relationship, which

signifies that there are other factors that affects confrontation. Moving on to the next

hypothesis, also concerning confrontation; the more severity violence, the more chances of

confronting perpetrator. Similar results as in Lam's (2014) (cited in Leclerc & Wortley, 2015)

study were found in current study, that there are more chances of confronting if the abuse was

more severe. The reason for that could be that the survivors were angrier and experienced

more negative emotions (Dickter & Newton, 2013).

It was also hypothesized that if survivor confronted perpetrator, the perpetrator would

deny the violence in most cases, which was true in relation to that 45.7% of the perpetrators

denied the violence when confronted by survivor, however there were not significant results

with that hypothesis. Still, in most cases the perpetrator denied the violence and that is

consistent with previous findings (Davids et al., 2015; Levenson, 2011). It was also

hypothesized that the older the perpetrator gets, the more probability of denying the violence,

which did not show a significant outcome, but was however hypothesized regarding that there

are more chances of having a certain image in the society when people get older, and

therefore denying the violence (Blagden et al., 2014).

Furthermore, many previous studies revealed that majority of perpetrators who have a

history of CSA deny the offense (Cameron, 1994; Freshwater et al., 2003). Granting that, the

reason for hypothesizing that if an incest-survivor confronted, the perpetrator would admit the

violence even though that is the opposite from previous studies (Plummer, 2006: Davids et al.,

2015), is that, the focus from those studies were about denying the violence to everyone else,

not the survivor. The point is, it is not about perpetrator admitting the violence in general, to

the family, to the police or the society, it is about admitting the violence exclusively to their

victim. A few studies (Cameron, 1994; Freshwater et al., 2003) have the viewpoint of

confronting perpetrators directly, yet with information coming from survivors, like in current

study. Concluding that, perpetrators acknowledged the violence to their victim of incest more frequently than denying it (Paige & Thornton, 2015) and results from the logistic model in current study indicated that if incest-survivor had confronted their perpetrator, it predicted that the perpetrator's reaction would be admitting the violence. Opposite to this, perpetrators try to make sure that the survivor will keep quiet about the violence with various ways (Proulx et al., 2014; Edwards et al., 2014). It was hypothesized that if a perpetrator used negative approaches like threatening, blaming the victim or used physical violence to ensure silence the perpetrator would have negative reactions when confronted, like denying the violence or blame the victim of the violence. With current study, roughly half of the claims regarding that hypothesis were supported. Negative approaches to ensure silence like using threats, physical violence and blaming the victim predicted blaming the victim when confronted and was therefore supported. However, it was significantly less likely for perpetrators to deny the violence when perpetrators used threats, physical violence or blamed the victim to ensure silence. A less negative approach to ensure silence was giving presents or bribing the victim, which was hypothesized that the violence would be admitted by the perpetrator. That was marginally supported with current study. By bribing or giving presents the perpetrator must be acknowledging the violence in some way, otherwise, why would the perpetrator bribe or give presents if there was nothing to hide?

There are certain limitations to the study, it relied on a convenience sample which causes complication for external validity, so it is not possible to generalize the results to the Icelandic population. Additionally, the information is not from the perpetrators themselves, instead from survivors of sexual violence who have sought help from a help center, and although many survivors seek help, there are many out there who do not. There is also a certain limitation regarding that perpetrators who have abused more than one victim are counted multiply in the dataset, which is one of the assumptions for regression. However, the

number of sexual violence linkage between each survivor and perpetrator stands. Another limitation is the problem with Nagelkerke values in the data. The values were very different between various relationships and in most cases extremely low, furthermore, the logistics models did not fit the data as desired. On the other hand, there are some strengths to the study as well. With data from Stígamót we have information about non-convicted perpetrators in Iceland, which is important giving the fact that non-convicted and convicted perpetrators differ (Burn & Brown, 2006; Gunnlaugsson, 2011; Riser et al., 2013), and receiving this kind of information directly from non-convicted perpetrators is deficient and hard to reach. Another strength, the dataset is from a seven-year period and the sample size was large ($n = 3215$). Besides, there are a few studies that include survivors disclosing directly to their perpetrator about the violence like in current study. Most studies who focus on survivor confronting are incest-survivors who confront their perpetrator when they become older and often many years later (Paige & Thornton, 2015).

With those evidence we can see into the perpetrator's mind, although it is not information directly from the perpetrator, we can put forward certain speculations from this study. It is important to be aware of how perpetrators react to confrontation and solely, seeing that they deny or blame the victim of the violence gives us a certain knowledge of how perpetrators think. Many survivors have had the urge to confront in years (Paige & Thornton, 2015). Previous studies have shown that although the perpetrator denied the violence when confronted, the survivors did not regret the confrontation, moreover, it helped them in some way, and even though it was difficult (Cameron, 1994; Paige & Thornton, 2015) in the short-term, confronting had long-term benefits that overpowered the difficulties (Paige & Thornton, 2015). This study is a ground for us to prepare survivors who want to confront, most of all respect their decision to confront and particularly, educate them about expected reactions

from the perpetrators, both for the survivor's safety and healing process, with recommending that the confrontation should be entirely on the survivor's own terms.

It should be considered in future studies to examine the survivors' feelings following confrontation to their perpetrators and with that source it would be more appropriate to guide other survivors to confront or not. Likewise, it is desirable to reach out to both non-convicted and convicted perpetrators in Iceland and gather data directly from them, especially their experience of their victim confronting them. To be aware of this confrontation problem is benefitting for the society and these results demonstrate the importance of giving perpetrators the appropriate help, that they evidently need.

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