

**A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST EXPLORATION OF MALE
LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS
MALE RAPE**

By

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to Richard Bloom.

Your loving kindness, constant support and belief in me are entirely treasured.

You have taught me I can only keep what I have by giving it away.

Thank you for your guidance.

Thank you for your love.

Acknowledgements

I looked to all of you for inspiration and direction. You all gave me something unique and wonderful of yourselves. I remain forever grateful. Thank you for the meaning you have given me, I treasure every one of you, dearly.

To my parents, I love you. Thank you for never giving up on me and for always believing in me more so than I could. Your love is unconditional.

To my family, thank you for all your love and respect for me in my process.

To my friend, Julie, I am blessed to have you in my life. You are always a pillar of light and source of joy and peace in my life.

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To those whom I interviewed in this study, without your honesty and sharing in your experiences there could have been no research.

**To all male rape victims, you need never keep silent again.
Your souls are special and your destiny is blessed.**

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Abstract

Rape is a serious highly prevalent crime committed every day around the world, and affects both men and women. Rape victims must report the incidence to the police, and often the police they report to are male law enforcement officers. Yet many people in South Africa, including male law enforcement officers, do not fully accept that males can be and are victims of rape. So far there has been significantly little research into the reporting of male rape.

Thus a qualitative research study on the attitudes of male law enforcement officers towards male rape victims was conducted. Social constructionism was taken as a theoretical starting point to the formal literature. The formal literature itself deals with male rape, how it is perceived, understood and misunderstood by society at large and specifically, by male law enforcement officers. The myths and truths, as

well as stigmas associated with male rape are also explored. The impact of gender issues such as gender identity, gender roles and gender stereotypes are explored in-depth as they contribute to attitudes held by male law enforcement officers.

Six male law enforcement officers from a Johannesburg police station participated in this study. Every one of them had had a certain amount of experience in the SAPS dealing with rape and rape victims. The researcher identified themes dealing with male rape victims from the literature, and interviewed the participants according to these themes using a semi-structured and structured format. The interviews were coded and analysed in a manner that allowed the themes, which were informed by the literature, to surface from the interview data itself. This is consistent with the qualitative tradition of psychological research.

It was found that, male law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims influence the way they think about and perceive these victims. It is very likely that this influence has a negative impact on the psychological well being of the male rape victim. It was also found that many male rape victims do not report their victimisation to the police as they fear they will not be taken seriously, they will be laughed at or even ridiculed. The law enforcement officers confirm that the stigma and shame of male rape victims compound their experience, making it traumatic and nearly impossible for them to process.

The researcher believes that a change in these attitudes can lead to a change in the way male rape victims are perceived and treated by law enforcement officers, as well as by society as a whole. Further study into the role of cultural beliefs concerning masculinity and gender roles in the South African context can contribute to a better

understanding of the phenomenon of male rape, and can be integrated into the current intervention models used to treat these victims.

Keywords:

Male law enforcement officers; SAPS (South African Police Service); Male rape victims; Social constructs; Gender stereotypes; Gender identity; Stigma and shame; Social constructionism; Violence against men.

Samevatting

Voorvalle van verkragting vind daaglik regoor die wêreld plaas, en affekteer beide mans en vrouens. Slagoffers van verkragting moet die voorvalle aan die polisie rapporteer, en meestal word hulle sake deur manlike polisiebeamptes hanteer. Tog glo baie mense in Suid-Afrika (insluitende manlike polisiebeamptes) dat mans nie slagoffers van verkragting kan wees nie. Daarom is daar ook tot nou toe geringe navorsing oor die onderwerp gedoen.

Hierdie navorser het dus besluit om die ingesteldheid van manlike polisiebeamptes teenoor manlike slagoffers van verkragting kwalitatief te ondersoek. Die studie vind sy grondslag in Sosiale Konstruksionisme, en kyk onder andere na hoe die verkragting van mans deur die samelewing (en spesifiek deur manlike polisiebeamptes) waargeneem, verstaan of verkeerd geïnterpreteer word. Die mites en waarhede, sowel as die stigma geassosieer met manlike slagoffers van verkragting, word ook ondersoek. Daar word in diepte gekyk na die impak van geslagsidentiteit, geslagstereotipes en die verwagte rol en funksie wat mans en vrouens in die samelewing vervul, omdat dit bydra tot die oorhoofse perspektief van manlike polisiebeamptes.

Bogenoemde temas, soos geïdentifiseer uit die relevante literatuur, is deur middel van oop sowel as gestruktureerde vrae tydens onderhoude ondersoek. Ses manlike SAPD beamptes van 'n Johannesburgse polisiestasie het aan die studie deelgeneem, en elkeen van hulle het reeds voorvalle van verkragting ondervind en hanteer. Om konsekwentheid met die kwalitatiewe tradisie van navorsing in die sielkunde te verseker, is die onderhoude daarna op so 'n wyse gekodeer en geanaliseer dat die temas uit die data na vore getree het.

Die onderhoude het duidelik aangedui dat die ingesteldheid van manlike polisiebeamptes teenoor manlike slagoffers van verkragting wel die manier wat hulle die slagoffers hanteer, beïnvloed. Gevolglik is daar ook 'n moontlikheid dat dit ook 'n negatiewe impak op die psigiese gesondheid van die slagoffers het. Daar is ook vasgestel dat manlike slagoffers huiwer om die voorvalle van verkragting aan te meld uit vrees dat hulle saak nie ernstig opgeneem sal word nie, en dat daar met hulle gespot sal word. Die polisiebeamptes wat deelgeneem het aan die studie het ook bevestig dat die stigma en skaamte wat manlike slagoffers ondervind, die verkragting tot so 'n mate vererger, dat die slagoffers dit byna onmoontlik vind om die traumatiese voorval te verwerk.

Die navorser glo dat 'n verandering in die samelewing (en polisiebeamptes) se perspektief op die verkragting van mans sal lei tot 'n aanpassing in die manier waarop slagoffers hanteer word. Verdere studies wat die rol van kultuurspesifieke oortuigings oor manlikheid en geslag stereotipes in die Suid-Afrikaanse konteks ondersoek, sal bydra tot 'n beter insig in die veld, en sodoende kan kontemporêre modelle aangevul word om die slagoffers meer effektief te ondersteun.

Sleutelwoorde

Manlike polisiebeamptes; SAPD (Suid-Afrikaanse Polisie Diens); Manlike slagoffers van verkragting; Sosiale konstrukte; Geslagstereotipes; Geslagsidentiteit; Stigma en skaamte; Sosiale konstruksionisme; Geweld teen mans.

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Prologue

The following article, *Men who suffer in silence*, was taken from the *Mail and Guardian* (1999, pp.1-4), (<http://www.q.co.za/news/1999/9907/990723-malerape.htm>)

Allan Stewart was on his way to visit a friend who'd moved to a new home. While travelling out of Johannesburg, his car broke down in a remote area. A red Ford pulled up and two men offered to help. Stewart thought his troubles were over. But instead of taking him to the nearest garage, they took him into the bushes where they raped and robbed him. The experience left him psychologically scarred by his secret 'shame'. So great was Stewart's trauma that he became an alcoholic, storming and raging until his wife left him, taking their two small children with her.

Male rape is far more common than most people imagine. Last year, at least one man was sexually assaulted each week, and those are only the reported cases. Many consider it a joke, others consider it a sacrilege. South African law doesn't even recognise the existence of male rape. Victims continue to suffer in silence, believing people will laugh at them because 'real men' don't get raped.

Western Cape police Captain Andre Traut explains that by law only a woman can be raped. If a man is penetrated by another man then it is sodomy. If he is sexually attacked by a woman, then it is sexual assault. South African law requires that rape has to be between a man and a woman and it must involve penetration. If the man is forced by the woman to penetrate her, he is not being raped because he is not being penetrated. The violation of men is downplayed by the public and the media. "People are so overwhelmed by the amount of women who are raped by men that they can't accept that men get raped too," comments Dr. Paul, the radio sex therapist and director of Holistic Health Centres. "Most cases of sexual assault and sodomy go unreported in my opinion because men tend to feel their masculinity has been taken from them. I've dealt with

a few cases where men have been raped and the trauma they suffer is as bad as anything a woman experiences, they just don't talk about it. "Men can be raped by women as well as sodomised by other men. The specific idea of rape may vary, but the woman could stimulate herself on her victim without penetration. If something is inserted into the rectum, it could induce an unwanted erection because the anus is a very delicate area and where the prostate gland is found."

Traut believes many men would not report rapes because they would not be taken seriously. "It would be even worse for a man who reported being attacked by a woman because in my opinion, men feel that no other man would refuse a woman's advances, least of all have to fight her off. Instead the victim's friends would think he was a fool for not leaping at the opportunity and giving his attacker what she wants."

"I believe sexual attacks on men should be dealt with in the same way as they are for women. It is equally humiliating for all victims of sexual violence."

Surprisingly, most male rapists and male rape victims are heterosexual, and gang rape of men tends to be more common. According to Wayne Dynes, author of the Encyclopedia of Homosexuality, rape is a crime of power and extremely traumatic because it involves the total loss of control of one's body. "The psychological devastation is difficult to imagine for a male who hasn't been through such an experience," he says.

Dyne explains that the trauma is so extreme for men because it usually involves an inversion of sexual roles which is hard for the heterosexual man to deal with. Confusion regarding issues of masculinity and homosexuality result. "While rape is common in the community, it's most common, even accepted, as a way of life in all-male residential settings, prisons, mental institutions, boarding schools and the military."

Stewart was 27 years old when he was raped. He was happily married with two small children whom he adored. Five years later he is still struggling to come to terms with his ordeal.

“They pulled a knife on me,” he recalled, bursting into tears as he relived the experience. “I tried to escape, but they were too strong. They beat me half senseless and pulled down my pants. I won’t even repeat half of the things they said. They raped me and there was nothing I could do to stop them.”

When they were finished they took Stewart’s wallet and beat him unconscious.

“When I woke up, I couldn’t believe it, it felt like a bad dream. I hurt everywhere. I felt and still feel so dirty, ashamed and violated. The hate and rage I feel are unimaginable. I barely remember how I got home. I was too embarrassed to tell the police and too ashamed to tell my wife.”

“All I knew was that I could not bear to be touched. I didn’t want to make love to my wife anymore. I would get angry with my family over nothing. I would scream if the toast got burnt and almost go hysterical if the milk went sour. I became unbearable to live with.”

Stewart’s wife never understood his mood changes because he could never bring himself to tell her what had happened to him. When he became an alcoholic she left him. Stewart says: “At the time I felt it was best for them to leave. I was supposed to look after them, but how can I do that when I can’t even look after myself? Whatever happens though, I don’t want anybody to know who I am. I don’t want them pointing a finger at me and saying, ‘there goes the faggot who got raped’, I think I have suffered enough.”

Chapter One

Introduction to the study

1.1) Introduction

This chapter begins with a definition of rape. Following this there is a discussion of the research problem, and the justification and aim of this mini-dissertation. Following this, salient aspects concerning male rape are identified. The chapter concludes with a preview of the mini-dissertation.

1.2) Definition of male rape

The following definition of rape has been taken from *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (1996, p. 1196): **1.** *The act of forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse against her will.* **2.** *Forcible sodomy.* **3.** *Violent assault, forcible interference, violation.* **4.** *Carrying off (especially of a woman) by force* **5.** *Violate, assault, pillage.* **6.** *Carry off by force.* This definition emphasises women as the victims of rape and, with the exception of reference to sodomy, there is no direct reference to males as being victims of rape.

Scarce (1997, p. 7) defines rape as “any penetration of a person’s mouth, anus, or vagina by a penis or any other object, without the person’s consent.” This definition potentially includes all rape victims and is broad in scope as it recognises potential victims of both genders and all relevant areas of bodily penetration. Yet, South African law does not recognise the possibility of male on male rape (it can only be prosecuted as indecent assault) (Oersen, 2001). The legal definition of rape in South Africa is where a man has “intentional, unlawful sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent” (Hunt & Milton, 1990, p. 435), which does not allow

for the victim to be male. The South African Law Commission has, however, made a recommendation that rape be redefined to include rape as a crime against a man as well as a woman (Pantazis, 1999).

A related issue is that “when the forced penetration is not by the penis but by a hand or other object the offence is not one of rape but the lesser charge of indecent assault, just as it is for anal penetration and forced genital-mouth contact” (Katz, 2001, p. 11). Such a lesser charge is not as serious as rape, implying that the sexual autonomy of men is seen as less important than that of women (Hull, 2002). The legal definition of rape may impact on societal perceptions about rape, as well as contribute to underreporting (Katz, 2001).

For the purpose of this study, an adapted version of Scarce’s (1997) definition of rape is used to define male rape, namely that it involves any penetration of a male’s mouth or anus by a penis or any other object by another male, without the victim’s consent.

1.3) Research problem

Both females and males are victims of rape. There have been many previous studies which have explored and explained the concept of female rape (see for example, Diedericks, 2003). Law enforcement officers, as a result, have a good understanding of what rape means and what it implies for the female victims who have endured rape. This is, however, not true of male rape victims. According to research such as that done by Mitchell and Hirshman (1999) and Davies (2000), for various reasons there are many law enforcement officers who doubt that male rape could occur and thus they do not take male rape victims seriously. Pino (1999)

suggests that male law enforcement officers may have attitudes and gender role stereotypes that do not allow for the possibility and acceptance of male rape, resulting in male law enforcement officers denying that male rape is possible. Such beliefs could play a significant role in their treatment of male rape victims, and could have negative psychological consequences for male rape victims.

One of the possible outcomes of attitudes such as those described in the previous paragraph, is that male victims of rape do not report their victimisation to law enforcement officers. They could be too ashamed and too scared to go the police, for reasons such as a fear of hostility and fear of being treated unfairly (Davies & McCartney, 2003; Hodge & Canter, 1998), as if they were responsible for the rape. Gender role stereotypes also contribute to reluctance by male rape victims to report incidents of rape, resulting in an underreporting of male rape, a dearth in the literature and inadequate treatment for male rape victims (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996). Furthermore, as will be indicated below, society at large has many false beliefs concerning male victims of rape and these beliefs could serve to perpetuate the vicious cycle of the hidden toll of stigma and shame male rape victims suffer.

1.4) Justification and aim of the study

This dissertation aims to explore law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male victims of rape. In so doing, windows could be generated which are open to the invisibility and silence surrounding the rape of males currently found in our society. This insight might lead to a future change in the way law enforcement officers perceive male rape victims, and it may effect a change in their attitudes towards these victims.

Pantazis (1999) found that male law enforcement officers are very aware of current rape myths, as well as how societal perceptions and attitudes have informed their own attitudes towards male rape victims. Socially constructed views about gender roles, gender identity and gender stereotypes can become incorporated in the attitudes held by law enforcement officers towards male rape victims. Pantazis suggests that law enforcement officers' attitudes in general seem to be more negative than positive towards male rape victims. Accordingly, male rape victims are still treated very differently and with less sensitivity than they should be by law enforcement officers, even though the latter are aware of certain of the attitudes, gender stereotypes and myths surrounding male rape.

According to Scarce (1997), many male rape survivors feel as if some action on their part provoked the rape, or that they did not effectively resist or avoid the rape altogether. Usually the shame and stigma felt by male rape victims stem from some form of guilt and self-blame, and all too often, family, friends and service providers such as law enforcement officers judge them in terms of a social discourse that holds the victim responsible for the rape. This then forces male rape victims into a world of shame, where they are treated as if the rape was their fault.

Myths concerning male rape have a significant influence on how law enforcement officers' perceive and understand the meaning of male rape. Thus they need to be explored in an attempt to dispel some of the false beliefs and meanings so as to create a clearer understanding of the concept of male rape. Chapter two of this mini-dissertation examines some of the myths surrounding male rape and male rape victims.

This dissertation could lead to a better understanding of male law enforcement officers' attitudes to male rape, and could contribute to the current knowledge surrounding this issue. In the process, it is hoped that the occurrence of this violent and abusive act of power over another human being will be demystified and its incidence will be diminished.

1.5) Realities about male rape

Male rape has been recognised as a widespread occurrence in prisons, but there has been a growing number of reports on male rape among non-incarcerated adults (Mitchell, Hirshman & Hall, 1999). Listed below are some of the realities concerning male rape. They have been adapted, for the purpose of the current study, from the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (2001):

- Men can be and are frequently sexually assaulted. It happens to a broad spectrum of men, regardless of physical strength or fighting powers. It occurs much more often in society at large than is realized, however, the victims rarely tell anyone.
- Rape is not about sexual preference or desire; it is an act of power and control. The motivation of the rapist is to humiliate and brutalize another person. The rape of men in prisons is a classic example of men using rape as a means of experiencing themselves as powerful and in control. Hodge and Canter (1998) also state that male rape is primarily an expression of power and control. Rape is a reflection of a 'macho' society, which encourages men to strive to dominate and control others and to avoid the open expression and acknowledgement of feelings.

- Both straight and gay men can be raped. Most studies such as that by Vearnals and Campbell (2001), report that at least half of victims are heterosexual. Mitchell, Hirshman and Hall (1999) also report that both homosexual and heterosexual assailants assault men of either sexual orientation.

Scarce (1997) provides examples of incidents of male rape in the USA, Russia and the UK, that were reported in major American newspapers. These examples illustrate that male rape can occur amongst acquaintances, but it can also occur amongst strangers, such as when a man is raped by a gang in a subway restroom, or abducted and raped whilst walking in the street in his neighbourhood. Such incidents of rape may or may not be accompanied by threats of physical harm to the victim. Male rape occurs in military settings, such as when soldiers of an invading force sexually assault soldiers of the enemy forces. It could also occur in a multi-ethnic military force, when ethnic tensions exist between soldiers. Male rape has also been reported amongst prison inmates. People in vulnerable or subordinate positions could become the targets of rape, such as immigrants being raped by police officers, illegal immigrants being raped by the smugglers, or a person being raped by a security guard.

Male rape has also been reported as hate crimes against gays, or as gay bashing where the sexual assault was an expression of heterosexual anger and power against homosexual victims (Scarce, 1997; Hodge & Canter, 1998).

As demonstrated in the preceding paragraphs, the practice of men raping men occurs around the world in various environments, from prisons and military

organisations to small town neighbourhoods. These examples are just a small taste of the severity and widespread occurrence of male rape.

Male rape is a serious crime and the consequences for the victim are likely to be catastrophic. Why then has so little attention been paid to this form of sexual violence?

1.6) Preview of the study

The paradigm from which this study departs is social constructionism. This approach states that individuals creatively shape reality through their social interactions. The researcher has chosen this theory as he believes the attitudes held by law enforcement officers with regards to male rape victims are largely a culmination of their social interactions in general. The way they think and feel about male rape victims is a reflection of the way their attitudes have been socially constructed and thus of their existence in a socially influenced world.

Law enforcement officers' efforts to make sense of their world and attribute meaning to it, are constantly influenced by the beliefs and ideas held by society at large. They are therefore inclined to have attitudes towards male rape victims that serve to protect them psychologically as well as to preserve the nature of masculinity and what that nature holds true for them. Law enforcement officers, according to Pantazis (1999), like most members of society, are highly impressionable people who react to the environment around them according to the ways in which they are able to make sense and meaning of that particular world.

The foregoing views, and theoretical concepts related to it, are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2 of this study. Chapter 3 deals with the method of research. Male law enforcement officers were interviewed, using a semi-structured and structured questionnaire designed by the researcher. The data collected in this study through the interviews was analysed by means of thematic content analysis. The results of the study are reported and discussed in Chapter 4. This is followed by a concluding chapter (chapter 5), which provides a critical evaluation of the study and recommendations based on the findings of the study.

Chapter Two

Literature review

2.1) Introduction

The current chapter looks at the literature concerning the research topic. The discussion begins with a look at the epistemology of social constructionism. Rape as social discourse is explored and attention is given to male rape in the context of gender, masculinity and homosexuality. This is then related to law enforcement. Thereafter, the belief in a just world, myths, attitudes and gender stereotypes are highlighted. The focus then shifts to male sexual assault, reporting of male rape, the psychological experiences of male rape victims, and the treatment of male rape victims.

2.2) Social constructionism

Social constructionism has been used as a point of departure as the researcher believes law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims are largely shaped realities formed through their social interaction. Therefore the influence of social interaction is a key point in the development of law enforcement officers' attitudes.

2.2.1) People and groups

Every day people have to make decisions which will influence themselves as well as many others such as family members and society at large. Therefore people constantly need to evaluate their options and make different choices. These choices

are influenced by various factors, many of which are shared social views and pressures to conform to dominant social discourses. An important reason why people adopt shared views about reality and conform to shared social views, is their desire to be accepted and to fit in with a group (Miller, 2005).

Some of the things that people do are related to social constructions propagated by the larger society and other behaviours may be attributable to people's social identity which is derived from identification with particular groups. For example, many young adult males physically develop their bodies to look and feel masculine, while many females concentrate on looking attractive and desirable so that men, or in the case of gay women, women will want to be with them. The point of such observations is that people generally do things as a part of a group and this phenomenon is observed in the context of a variety of social and psychological theories. Two of these theories are social constructionism and social identity theory, which are discussed in the following paragraphs..

2.2.2) The development of social constructionism

Jackson (1999) argues that social constructionism originated in the early twentieth century, even though the term itself was not coined until the 1960s when Berger and Luckmann (1967) formulated its conceptual underpinnings in a more definitive way in the social construction of reality.

According to Owen (1992), social constructionism is a development of an early branch of sociology, which was initiated by Marx and Mannheim, and is also called the sociology of knowledge. In a document, written by Marx, which was published after his death in 1972, he wrote about the effect social existence has in respect to

consciousness, and this became the basis of social constructionism. Later on, according to Owen, social constructionism became known as the relationship between ideology and social structure as it exists within society.

According to Lynch (1997) social constructionism has its roots in both linguistic philosophy and social sciences. The theory puts an emphasis on the fact that all human knowledge is something that is constructed from the linguistic and cultural resources of particular social contexts. Social constructionist theory suggests that there does not exist an objective form of knowledge, but only local knowledge and this represents the particular resources and commitments of particular cultures.

In the realm of social science this is related to cultural relativism or the idea that some things are acceptable in certain cultures, but not in others. An example of this is that in South Africa certain skimpy beach attire is socially acceptable, but nudity is restricted to certain beaches. However, in some nations around the world, topless bathing is the norm. Still, when one goes to Muslim countries women are not allowed to even show their ankles. Although the norm is different in respect to dress, one cannot say that the norms are natural or unnatural in any nation. Rather, they are social constructions located in particular socio-cultural contexts.

Social constructionism has been used in the realm of psychology as well as in other disciplines (Lynch, 1997) and has been embraced in discussing a variety of topics. Some have equated social constructionism with postmodernism (Neimeyer, 1998), since both approaches postulate that there is no such thing as universal knowledge.

2.2.3) Social identity theory

According to DeCremer (2001), people identify themselves as members of a variety of social groups. Often, individuals compare and contrast their in-group with other groups in order to determine where they stand in terms of a social hierarchy. Group members try to maintain or enhance their social identity by positively differentiating the in-group from relevant out-groups. In such a scenario, a positive image of their group is necessary for the development of positive collective self-esteem. To maintain such a positive view of themselves individuals will as a rule give preference to members of their own group and show prejudice or discriminatory behaviour against other groups. This is for example accomplished through stereotyping other groups and viewing them as inferior or as having poorer characteristics that are deemed important to the in-group. This situation occurs every day, for example in sports teams where each team believes it is the best team and deserves to win. This also happens within families. While family members may fight amongst themselves, if an outsider tries to disrupt the family system, family members are likely to react defensively, and offer protection to its members.

2.2.4) Comparison of social constructionism and social identity theory

Although social constructionism and social identity theory are similar in that both of them are associated with normative behaviour defined by an immediate social group, there are some important differences. Social constructionism involves larger societal values that emerge as a result of social interaction. With social identity theory, one is more likely to hone in on individual groups and dynamics between groups. For example, if one were to explore bigoted behaviour, an explanation related to social identity could be used. The person is a bigot because he identifies

with a group that puts the other group down with the view to elevate their own collective self-esteem.

Social constructionists, on the other hand, would agree that perhaps the person is a member of a notoriously prejudicial group, but that is not the sole reason for bigotry. Certainly, racism is a social construction, but it is deep-seated in social behaviour, and occurs in a variety of historical and social events. In conclusion, both theories have a place in examining and explaining social trends, as well as individual behaviour.

2.3) Rape as discourse and social construction

According to Lea and Auburn (2001, p. 13) “a ‘discursive approach’ seeks to understand human action in terms of the language used to account for that action.” Rape can thus be constructed through discourse: it exists not in the actual event but in the descriptions of that event such that “human subjectivity and the broader ideological context are inextricably interrelated” (Lea & Auburn, 2001, p. 13). The discursive approach does not view language as revealing the ‘real’ contents of the mind; rather it constructs social action and, thereby, creates things.

People from the same language group draw on the same linguistic resources from which they can describe events in order to give understanding to their social action (Lea & Auburn, 2001). This can be conceptualised as a socially approved vocabulary, or a socially and culturally shared interpretative repertoire. Although these repertoires may be shared by many members of a social or cultural group, not all social repertoires are available to all social groups and to all members of a particular social group (Doherty & Anderson, 2004). As such, it must be

emphasised that the meanings embedded in socio-cultural resources discussed in this study, are available to a particular group, namely law enforcement officers in an urban setting, and may not be relevant to other groups. In the multi-cultural South African context, it is possible that the victim, perpetrator and law enforcement officer recording a rape case, may interpret the decision as to whether the incident was a rape or mutual consent to intercourse, as well as the meanings they attach to the event, may differ.

According to Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988, p. 455), “constructionism asserts that we do not discover reality, we invent it.” Furthermore, a person’s experience does not directly reflect external ‘reality’, but attempts to order and organise it. They also state that “representations of reality are shared meanings that derive from language, history and culture” (p. 455). The social constructionist approach views ‘reality’ as “a consensus worldview that develops through social interaction” (Herek, 1986).

Thus, rape could be perceived as a ‘reality’ for a female, but not for a male if the dominant discourse is constructed that way. Men may have difficulty accepting their experience of rape as real, not only because it happened to them, but also because it happened to a man at all.

2.4) Male rape in the context of the constructs gender, masculinity and homosexuality

2.4.1) Gender

In order to assess the way in which male rape victims are perceived by male law enforcement officers, it is useful to first consider the social construct of gender, particularly masculinity, since this has an important impact on male attitudes towards other males. Given below are some of the major definitions, to date, of gender and gender identity.

According to *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (1996, p. 578), gender is defined as the grammatical classification of nouns and related words, roughly corresponding to the two sexes and sexlessness. Each of the classes of nouns, masculine and feminine, have properties which belong to a particular class as expressed by social or cultural distinctions. Therefore gender is understood to be a mental representation for the particular person of what he or she understands the meaning of masculinity or femininity to be.

Kaplan and Sadock (2003) define to gender identity as a psychological state that reflects a person's sense of being male or female. According to the authors, gender identity develops in most people by the age of 2 or 3 years-old and usually corresponds to one's biological sex. "Gender identity develops from an innumerable series of cues received from parents and the culture at large that are themselves reactions to the infant's genitalia" (Kaplan and Sadock, 2003, p.730).

This definition is psychodynamically oriented, therefore the influence of society on the development of gender and gender identity is not emphasized as much as it is by other authors such as Bee.

According to Bee (2000), gender refers to the culturally defined meanings and responsibilities for females and males that are learned, which may change over time and often vary among societies. For the purpose of this research gender is defined as the socially constructed roles ascribed to males and females and the resulting socially determined relations. These roles are learned, change over time, and vary widely within and across cultures. Gender roles form part of the broader construct of gender identity, and in the following paragraphs gender roles and gender identity are further discussed.

According to Wenar and Kerig (2000) who's theoretical approach to sexuality is from a learning cognitive point of view and from an effective point of view, infants, lacking innate knowledge must learn to classify themselves as boys or girls. They describe this process of classification as gender identity. They add: "Society prescribes which behaviours and feelings are appropriate for boys and which are appropriate for girls" (Wenar and Kerig, 2000, p. 42). Therefore the influence of society on development of gender identity is acknowledged.

Gender roles are expressions of cultural views about behaviours and attitudes that are accepted as being appropriate for males and females of a particular culture (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 1998). All societies have such beliefs and these expectations are learned at an early age. De la Rey, Duncan, Shefer and Van Niekerk (1997) state that gender is a social construction that impacts on an individual's development from the time he/she is identified as male or female based on a

perceived notion of sexual difference. They also state that almost all development is gendered, and all aspects of our development occur within the context of gender.

It can also be said that gender roles “describe what men and women actually do in a given culture in a given historical period” (Bee, 2000, p. 162). An illustration of the influence of gender roles in society is the view that “heterosexual men are forced to conform to societal ‘macho’ gender roles” (Davies, 2000, p. 207).

Gender identity is the awareness of a person’s gender and all that it implies, and is an important part of a person’s concept of self; it can have an impact on how people feel about themselves and how they act, and is impacted by socialisation within a given culture (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 1998). The development of gender identity is inherently social (De la Rey et al., 1997).

Hamilton (1998) reports that men may be less certain of their gender identity than women due to men having to give up their initial identification with their mothers in order to be able to identify with their fathers. Although this is a psychodynamic view, it is relevant to social constructionism as it stresses the importance of the relationship between the child and its mother. This relationship has multiple meanings and realities for many people. It influences the way in which men think about their maleness and what it means to be a man. Hamilton further reports that this greater difficulty to attain gender identity can be one of the causes of men’s greater emotional fragility and their need for power, and that the need for men to assert power makes it more difficult for them to express vulnerability.

A male law enforcement officer, when confronted with the prospect of a male rape victim, could feel the need to ignore or minimise the possibility of male rape as this

would place severe demands on his emotional resources, as well as challenge his concept of men as being powerful and assertive. According to Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) in many instances law enforcement officers' way of dealing with male vulnerability is to deny that men could be rape victims, thereby protecting their own views on men and masculinity rather than dealing with the rape at hand.

2.4.2) Masculinity and homosexuality

According to Jackson (1999), the idea of the social construction of sexuality was first advocated in the second half of the 20th Century. This was shortly followed by the feminist perspective that masculinity and femininity are social constructs that could be distinguished from the biology of sexual differences. In considering perceptions of masculinity, we also have to take into account the homosexual/heterosexual dichotomy.

Spencer (1995) maintains that from the point of view of social constructions, we see a clear awareness of homosexuality from the start of the medieval period. It was at this point, he argues, that heterosexuality came to be regarded as representing the Self, in the sense of normality, that which is publicly accepted, and that which is to be encouraged. Homosexuality, on the other hand, was marginalized as secret, unacceptable and against the status quo: hetero- and homosexuality became mutually exclusive.

Views about masculinity, with their strong adherence to heterosexuality and specific behaviours identified as male, do not work in favour of men who are victims of sexual violence, and promote negative responses from law enforcement, both in terms of institutions and individuals (Pino, 1999). Kimmel (1994), for example,

points out that not only are the accepted parameters of what constitutes heterosexual masculinity narrow and clearly defined, it is also a matter of continuous fear and stress for men to ensure that they are seen to stay within these parameters if they are to be accepted by the group. Homosexuality, he asserts, is equated with 'sissyness', which in turn is linked to physical and moral weakness or inferiority. To be identified as homosexual within a social group where heterosexuality is prized is to be ostracized; however, it is not even necessary to actually be homosexual, but merely to appear so, for such ostracism and rejection to take place. Kimmel implies that one of the ways in which such a situation can be avoided is if the individual concerned makes it clear from the outset, by his attitudes and behaviour, that he is conforming fully to stereotypes of masculinity: demonstrating physical strength and domination over others, especially women, rejecting aesthetic or artistic pursuits for sporting ones, and so on.

However, as Kimmel points out, in the real world there are very few men who can actually fit the mould of the masculine construct, and therefore those who do not are by definition disempowered. Masculinity is a social construct which is defined in an extremely narrow way, and is in many ways impossible for the majority of men to live up to. Consequently, they deliberately reconstruct their attitudes and behaviour in order to conform as closely as possible and in doing so, demonstrate the underlying insecurity regarding 'sissyness' and effeminacy which are associated with homosexuality.

Are all male victims of rape, or indeed, their attackers, homosexual? Research tends to show that this is not the case. Asika (1997) maintains that while the majority of victims are gay, the majority of rapists are heterosexual. According to the findings of Groth and Burgess (1980) and others, victims' sexual orientation is not

significant. Groth and Burgess found that both rapists and their victims might be either hetero- or homosexual, and that in general, the choice of victim tends to be mediated by accessibility rather than gender or sexual orientation. The latter authors also state that the rapists' motivation seems in many cases to be linked to power and control rather than sexuality per se. The significance masculine power could also explain Porter's (1986) finding that in the United States the level of violence which was displayed, the severity of injuries, and the incidence of gang rape was higher for male victims than for females. Heterosexual perpetrators are more likely to be motivated by power and a desire to dominate other men than homosexual perpetrators, who are more likely to be motivated by sex (Vearnals & Campbell, 2001).

2.5) Masculinity in the context of law enforcement

A situation has developed where masculinity tends to be very clearly defined, where the social institutions relating to the criminal justice and law enforcement systems may tend to trivialize or minimize the importance of male rape, and where the social construct of gender works to the disadvantage of the rape victim on a number of different levels. For example, as observed from Kimmel's (1994) analysis of the social construct of masculinity, there are not only specific attitudes and behaviours which "real men" are expected to demonstrate, there are also particular occupations and professions which are considered to be acceptable for men. Certainly, there are many women in law enforcement; but for the most part, they are expected to demonstrate a lot of the attitudes and behaviours which society associates with masculinity. Being a police officer is seen as a male job, and as such, reinforces the divide which Kimmel (1994) describes between the masculine men and the purported 'sissies'.

It is important to consider the social pressures which law enforcement officers themselves, often have to face. In a workplace environment where gender stereotyping may readily occur, it could happen that a police officer who shows a high degree of sympathy for a male rape victim might come under uncomfortable scrutiny from his colleagues. As Kimmel (1994) points out, it is very difficult for a single individual to challenge a whole range of cultural attitudes, especially when to do so would lead to their own alienation or ostracism.

2.6) Belief in a just world

The idea of a “belief in a just world” concept hold serious implications for male rape victims as well as for how male law enforcement officers view these victims and how they assign blame for the rape. According to Davies and McCartney (2003), male victims tend to be blamed more than female victims in both stranger and acquaintance rape situations. They add, male victims are judged more harshly than females when they are perceived as being able to escape from the scene of fight off the attacker. This belief that in a just world men should be stronger than their attacker can leave a male rape victim feeling responsible for his having been raped.

Davies and McCartney (2003), also stated men tend to be more negative towards male victims than women are. Men are more likely to blame the victim, consider the assault less severe, have less sympathy with the victim, and endorse more myths pertaining to male rape than women are. Therefore, male rape victims are treated differently because of a negative belief system held by males, such as male law

enforcement officers, concerning who is responsible and who is to blame for the rape having had happened.

According to the literature (Doherty and Anderson, 2004), there are several powerful ‘report defense elements’ that prohibit the reporting of a male rape experience, most of which have to do with actual or perceived societal responses. According to the above-mentioned authors, survivor’s accounts indicate that normative expectations about masculinity discourage men from reporting sexual victimization for fear of being ridiculed as weak or inadequate. They add, some survivors remain silent rather than risk being labelled as a ‘closet homosexual’, bisexual, or as promiscuous and thus somehow deserving of the rape. This suggests male rape victims remain silent about their ordeal in order to protect themselves from being held responsible or having their sexuality questioned as a result of having been a rape victim. The ‘belief in a just world concept’ is crucial here as male rape victims are victims, they did not deserve to be raped and their sexuality is not what should be questioned.

In addition, it is important to note that society often regards men as capable of taking care of themselves (Scarce, 1997). Male victims of sexual assault are seen, therefore, as being weak. Since weakness, whether physical or moral, is not regarded as a positive trait, this leads to the victim being seen as somehow deserving of the crime. It is true that a similar perception is often levelled at women. According to Groth and Burgess (1980) there have been numerous court cases in both the US and the UK where the victim’s behaviour or style of dress, or simply a fact such as that she was walking home alone after dark, have been taken as contributory negligence of such a magnitude that the perpetrator has been acquitted.

It appears that this perception is now being transferred to male rape victims, with the added proviso that, being men, they should by definition be able to defend themselves against attack in situations where women, perhaps, could not.

According to Doherty and Anderson (2004), closer investigation of societal responses to male rape is a pressing concern. It appears likely that societal responses include an unjust belief that male rape victims get what they deserve.

According to Hamilton (1998), it is important to note that society often regards men as capable of taking care of themselves. Male victims of sexual assault are seen, therefore, as being weak. Since weakness, whether physical or moral, is not regarded as a positive trait, this leads to the victim being seen as somehow deserving of the crime. It is true that a similar perception is often levelled at women. According to Groth and Burgess (1980) there have been numerous court cases in both the US and the UK where the victim's behaviour or style of dress, or simply a fact such as that she was walking home alone after dark, have been taken as contributory negligence of such a magnitude that the perpetrator has been acquitted.

It appears that this perception is now being transferred to male rape victims, with the added proviso that, being men, they should by definition be able to defend themselves against attack in situations where women, perhaps, could not.

2.7) Myths

According to the Oxford English Reference Dictionary (1996, p. 957) the word myth is defined as follows: "A traditional narrative involving supernatural or imaginary persons and often embodying popular ideas on natural or social

phenomena. Such narratives are collectively a widely held but false notion of a fictitious person thing or idea.”

According to Gergen (1973), a myth is often thought to be a lesson in a story which has deeper explanatory or symbolic resonance for preliterate cultures, which preserve and cherish the wisdom of the elders through oral traditions by the use of skilled story tellers. In common place parlance and in the context of this research, a myth is a mere story, that is, a story that holds meaning for people, but the narrative of which is untrue. In psychology a myth may be historical or fictional without altering its nature as a myth, because the power of myth lies in the meaning and broader truth it conveys rather than the historicity of the story.

Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988, p. 461) state that “certain meanings are privileged because they conform to the explanatory systems of the dominant culture.” This could be a contributing factor to the myth that males can’t be raped. According to Lea and Auburn (2001), myths surrounding rape maintain gender relations of power, meaning that ‘males cannot be raped’, as they should be strong enough to resist attack. This belief is at the very root of our cultural discourse surrounding male rape victims, and many of the myths surrounding male rape are only an extension of this.

Myths thus serve the function of making sense of the world so that people are able to live in it with a degree of comfort, when in reality the comfort is false. Many of the myths surrounding male rape are not true, however, the element of masculinity they convey, may serve to protect the beliefs systems and understandings held by male law enforcement officers concerning male rape victims. Male law enforcement officers may hold onto these myths in an attempt to provide meaning

for themselves and to define their own heterosexual identity. Davies and McCartney (2003) found a proclivity amongst heterosexual men to endorse rape myths, to consider the assault less severe, to blame the victim, and to have less sympathy with the victim. The point here is that law enforcement officers may *need* to preserve these myths for their own survival, however, these myths have a negative impact on the way they feel about and think about male rape victims.

Ford (1998) reports that reactions to rape are based mainly on myths about rape, and that men blame the rape victim more than women do, even if the victim was male. Male rape myths lessen the impact of sexual assault on a male, since they can allow both for the victim to be blamed for the assault by others, and for him to blame himself through the creation of these kinds of understandings (Davies, 2000).

The following myths, which could have an impact on law enforcement officers' views on male rape, have been adapted from an article titled *Myths About Male Rape* (2001), from the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault:

- Only women can be raped.
- Men who rape other men are gay.
- Victims of male rape must be gay.
- Men who rape other men are psychotic.
- Rape is something that does not happen to 'real men'.
- Male rape only happens in prison, and is due to the lack of sexually available women.

In addition to myths, attitudes also play a major role in the way law enforcement officers perceive male rape and this is discussed next.

2.8) Attitudes

Some authors writing in social constructionism, such as Myers (1996), define attitudes as a favourable or unfavourable evaluation reaction toward something or someone, exhibited in one's beliefs, feelings or intended behaviour. Attitudes inform social thought (as well as the way we reach conclusions and inferences) and often function as cognitive frameworks (schemas) for interpreting social events, and they may be expressed in behaviour. Attitudes are learned through social interaction and social comparison (Baron & Byrne, 1997). Such learned attitudes may become shared by members of a social group, thus giving rise to consensually validated ways of interpreting reality.

Negative attitudes imply that male rape is perceived in a negative way. Donnelly and Kenyon (1996, p. 444) report the following two common stereotypical attitudes about male rape: "that men couldn't be raped and that men were raped only because they wanted to be."

The occurrence of male rape is thus easy to deny and the proper treatment of male rape victims is not adequately addressed simply because our socially constructed views impede recognition of the reality of male rape. Oersen (2001, p. 27) reports that: "the South African public find it hard to believe that men can be raped." According to Vearnals and Campbell (2001) societal attitudes about male sexual assault and rape will take longer to change than the law, so deeply entrenched are cultural discourses in the minds of its people. These social constructions may take the form of stigma towards male rape victims in the minds of many people. Erving Goffman (1963) explained the term stigma to mean differentness about an individual which is given a negative evaluation by others and thus distorts and

discredits the public identity of the person. For example, physical disabilities, facial disfigurement, stuttering, a prison record, being obese, or not being able to read, may become stigmatized attributes. The stigma may contribute to the adoption of a self-identity that incorporates the negative social evaluation.

2.9) Gender stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are exaggerated generalisations that refer to sets of (sometimes rigid) common beliefs about what men and women ought to do, how they should behave and what traits they all have, according to their gender (Bee, 2000). In many ways, a culture's gender stereotypes are learnt cognitions (Baron & Byrne, 1997).

According to Thomas and Nelson (2001), stereotypes are a term which originated from the printing process and it refers to a plate made by taking a cast or a mould of a surface. A stereotype, in social psychology, is anything which lacks individual marks or identifiers, and in stead appears as though made from a cast. From a social constructionist perspective a stereotype is always a social construction which may have some basis in reality but is a gross generalization. Therefore, to stereotype is to apply these casts, or gross generalizations to people or situations rather than seeing the individual variation. An example of this is to view a male rape victim as weak or defenceless as he was not able to fight off his rapist rather than to view his rapist as having been stronger than him.

Hamilton (1998) reports that male and female behaviour stereotypes are pervasive in Western culture (men are typically described as, inter alia, dominant, rational, independent, decisive and competitive) and that socio-environmental forces are strong and pervasive contributors to differences in behaviour amongst men and

women. A man is not expected to express emotion (Pino, 1999). According to Oersen (2001), “most male victims [of rape] don’t want to report their case to the police because they feel it’s their fault for not being strong enough to fight the attacker off. And most are too embarrassed and humiliated to share their story with anybody. Instead they choose to deal with their trauma alone.”

As gender role stereotypes powerfully influence law enforcement officers’ perceptions of male sexual assault victims, as well as the actual services offered by them (Donnelly & Kenyon, 1996), the shock and surprise shown by many law enforcement officers when faced with a report of male rape quickly changes into “reactions grounded in the many stereotypes about same-sex rape” (Scarce, 1997, p. 217).

According to Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) law enforcement officers who identify strongly with the masculine stereotype equate male rape victims with women and view them as weak, passive and defenceless. They also state that traditional stereotypes of men as always being in control sexually may result in service providers’ feeling that males can’t be raped and they may thus see the problem of male rape as insignificant.

2.10) Male rape

2.10.1) Reporting of male rape

Vearnals and Campbell (2001, p. 279) report that “the sexual assault of males by males has received little attention in the psychological literature,” and that male sexual assault is one of “the most under addressed issues in our society.” They

suggest that part of the reason for underreporting such assault in the UK had been due to the narrowness of the legal definition of rape (the raping of males was only recognised by the law in the UK in November 1994). According to Davies (2000), male victims of sexual assault have been isolated partly due to the publicity around rape being a female issue, i.e., in the media it is mostly women who are written about as rape victims, not men. She reports that “research, help, and support for male victims are more than 20 years behind that for females” (p. 204).

Male rape is currently a largely invisible problem in society (Garnets, Herek & Levy, 1990). According to Pino (1999, p. 1) this is due to “relevant data about this statistically rare crime being scarce.” Only a few male sexual assaults are recorded in police files or other official records, although the incidence is unexpectedly common in the community (Davies, 2000). Mezey and King (1992) advocate that the dearth of male sexual assault statistics encourages disbelief in the occurrence of male rape.

Hull (2002) reports that the number of males who are sexually assaulted is not known but, according to international research, estimates range from five to ten percent of all sexual assault cases. Locally, the Johannesburg police handled only one case of male rape in the period 1997 to 2001 (Oersen, 2001).

A significant deterrent to reporting crimes against males is the stigma of homosexuality connected to the belief systems concerning such crimes (Scarce, 1997). According to the South African constitution, there should be equality for all people irrespective of their sexual orientation. However, homosexual rape victims may receive a less favourable response than heterosexual victims, as well as being held more responsible for the assault and experiencing greater pleasure and less

trauma, according to Mitchell and Hirschman (1999). Mitchell and Hirschman say that many homosexual men do not report their rape due to their belief that “the police would be unsympathetic and perceive them as ‘asking for it’”(p. 370). Heterosexual men may also refrain from reporting a rape because of feelings of shame and feared suspicions regarding their sexuality (Hodge & Canter, 1998). In addition, possible police mistreatment of male rape victims may be linked to a “culture of masculinity within law enforcement professions” (Scarce, 1997, p. 218). No wonder the occurrence of male rape is seldom reported. Huckle (1995) supports this view by arguing that the reporting of male rape is incorrectly perceived as a surrendering of masculinity. According to Pino (1999, p. 2) “there may be a substantial risk to the male rape victim’s self-concept in reporting [the] crime.” He also states that, while it is at least as stressful for men as for women to report a rape to the police, men may experience rape as more humiliating than women.

Other research also indicates that few male rapes are reported, and because they are not openly discussed and has become a taboo subject there are many misconceptions about them (McMullen, 1990). As Pino (1999, p. 2) says “Male rapes are the least discussed crimes in our society.”

According to Davies (2000) homophobia, disbelief and blame from the police or medical personnel may prevent many victims from reporting the rape, whereas men who do report their sexual assault to the police tend not to be taken seriously. Pino (1999) suggests that male rape victims who can show serious physical bodily harm (thus demonstrating that they were overpowered) are much more likely to report their experience as police and others are unlikely to question their sexual orientation or courage. In addition, male rape victims are more likely to report the incident to

the police when they can prove they are heterosexual or, if they are homosexual or bisexual, when they might be able to hide their true sexual orientation.

Scarce (1997) reports that all except one male rape victim that he interviewed for his book *Male on male rape: The hidden toll of stigma and shame* had an extremely bad experience when they reported the rape to the authorities. He adds that the most common reactions by police officers were disbelief, mockery, homophobia, or a combination of all three. “Many male victims report that the treatment they receive by the police and in the courts is worse than the offence itself” (Scarce, 1997, p. 218) which is an indication of the enormous impact that attitudes of law enforcement officers and legal professionals can have on male rape victims. Negative attitudes can lead to behaviour that can be understood as being insensitive.

2.10.2) The psychological experiences of male rape victims

On the whole, rape victims experience severe physical and psychological trauma (Mitchell & Hirschman, 1999). They tend to feel shame that the sexual assault or rape happened at all, embarrassed and angry due to their not being able to stop it, they experience a heightened sense of vulnerability, loss of self-esteem, self-blame, depression and fear, and also feel that their sense of their masculinity and sexual identity was threatened (Archer & Davies, 2005; Vearnals & Campbell, 2001).

2.10.3) Treatment of male rape victims

Mitchell and Hirschman (1999) suggest that the sexual orientation of the victim is potentially important in understanding law enforcement officers’ reactions to male

rape victims. They argue that a homosexual victim is seen to be more responsible for being assaulted than a heterosexual victim due to “socially constructed and shared views towards homosexuals, stereotypes about homosexual males (e.g. homosexual males are promiscuous) and the nature of male rape” (p. 373). (The difference between homosexual sex and homosexual rape is one of consent).

According to a South African Police Services (SAPS) article called *Business Against Crime* (2004), a victim is anyone who has suffered harm or loss as the result of a crime (*Business Against Crime*, Gauteng and the Department of Welfare, 2004, pp.3-7). When the crime is a violent one, such as rape, injuries to the victim are evidence of the crime. It is thus essential that evidence is collected and managed in the most effective way possible. Victims of violent crimes sometimes need to go directly to clinics or hospitals; the police are expected to refer these victims appropriately. The researcher, through his experience with law enforcement officers and male rape victims, as well as his understanding of the literature, believes that this is often not the case when a male rape victim reports his crime; much of the necessary evidence that is needed to prosecute the criminal at a later point is lost.

The perpetrator’s gender can also influence the reaction received by the victim. Davies (2000) reports that male rape myths are more influential when the perpetrator is female (e.g. a man can’t be forced by a woman to have sex). She also reports research findings that female victims get more sympathy than male victims, and that female victims are expected to be less capable of either fighting off the attacker or escaping from the scene than male victims.

According to Meezey and King (1992) there are three principal reasons for law enforcement officers, as well as society, to not recognise the vulnerability of men to

become victims of rape. First, the male sexual stereotype emphasises their superior strength, physical size, and their role as initiator of sexual activity. Second, there is a failure to appreciate the nature of sexual assault as primarily an aggressive act, rather than one which is motivated by sexual need. Third, rape was narrowly defined in British law (similar to long standing South African law) as non-consensual vaginal penetration by a penis. Thus, the gender of both perpetrator and victim is predetermined, the perpetrator must be male as he must have a penis and the victim must be female as she must have a vagina.

2.11) Conclusion

Social constructionism, the way people find meaning and attribute meaning to their world, play a major role in the attitudes of law enforcement officers' towards male rape. Myths, attitudes, gender issues and male rape victims all form an integral and interrelated part of exploring male law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape. These themes as well as others have been investigated in the research conducted in the current study.

In the following chapter the method of the current study is discussed. The selection of participants, the methods of data collection and data analysis, are explained.

Chapter Three

Method

3.1) Introduction:

This chapter explores the method used in the current study. The chapter begins by describing core characteristics of qualitative research and the reasons why this design was chosen in the present study. The focus of the chapter then shifts to the selection of participants, the method of data collection, how the data was analysed, and ethical issues of this study.

3.2) Qualitative research

A qualitative method was used in the current study. In qualitative research, there is a shift from the goal to obtain objective, quantitative descriptions of static and measurable realities that exist independently from the observer, to subjective, qualitative descriptions of constantly changing realities and truths, which are co-constructed by the researcher. Since the meaning of social action or an event depends on the context in which it occurs, descriptions are regarded as relative to a certain context from which they cannot be separated. Thus the context within which observed phenomena are embedded need to be acknowledged during the interpretation of data and in the creation of knowledge (Hanson, 1995; Neuman, 2000).

The context of qualitative research includes the researcher, and the latter's role in the generation of meaning must be taken into consideration. The influence of the researcher, and his/her frame of reference, on what is being observed must be

accounted for and acknowledged in the descriptions of the phenomena that are investigated (Hanson, 1995). This contrasts with modernist research approaches that accept the existence of an objectively knowable and rationally decipherable world, where the observer is regarded as positioned outside the field of study, objectively observing without influencing the phenomenon (Gergen, 2001; Hoffman, 1990).

To the extent that knowledge is context bound and co-created by people in interaction with each other, qualitative research in a social constructionist framework does not attempt to provide one 'truth', but rather to explore many truths in the exploration of different realities.

According to Punch (1998) qualitative research concentrates on the study of social life in natural settings. The aim of this study is to explore law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape, and a qualitative research method is thus particularly relevant for studying the lived, everyday realities of law enforcement officers' beliefs and perceptions of male rape.

An important reason why a qualitative research design has been selected is because it allows the researcher the vantage point of seeing the phenomena being studied through the eyes and experiences of the participants, and thus provides an opportunity for the individual meanings ascribed by interviewees to emerge (Neuman, 2000). In other words, qualitative research allowed the researcher to understand the attitudes of the law enforcement officers regarding male rape from their own perspective and in their natural work and lived environment. This assisted in providing a clearer understanding of the meanings the law enforcement officers give to their understanding and experiences of dealing with male rape victims (two

of the law enforcement officers who were interviewed did not have direct dealing with male rape victims).

Another feature of qualitative data is their richness and holism, which provide thick descriptions that are vivid and nested in a real context (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Neuman, 2000). This research studied law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape as a unitary phenomenon, rather than concentrating on narrow components of attitudes that are encapsulated from the shared meanings in the social context in which they occur.

3.3) Participants

The research was conducted at a local Johannesburg police station in an upper to middle class suburb. Research participants who possessed sufficient knowledge of the research topic as a result of their life experiences, and who were also willing to talk about their experiences and articulate their views and attitudes, were chosen.

The participants were selected based on their gender, being male, as well as an initial criterion that they should have had at least 10 years experience in the police. No female law enforcement officers were included in the study as this would have resulted in a need to conduct a comparison study. A comparison study was not the goal of the current research. The reason for the selection criterion of 10 years working experience, was to try and ensure that all participants had had a sufficient number of years of experience which would allow them to offer an informed opinion. (All the participants had over ten years of experience except for one participant who had 9 years experience. He was included in the study for practical reasons).

The researcher approached the captain of the police station for permission to conduct the research. The captain as well as all the participants were briefed about the research and were asked to give formal consent to participate in the study (refer to Appendix C).

The researcher interviewed a sample of six law enforcement officers. This sample size proved to be sufficient to gain adequate information about the relevant themes and to reach a satisfactory point of saturation in the data.

3.4) Data collection

The researcher acquired data through individual interviews with the participants, which involved face-to-face verbal interchange. Qualitative research interviews enable the researcher to tap into the experiential world of the participants and to obtain subjective descriptions of the interpretations and meanings they attach to the phenomenon under investigation (Kvale, 1996).

During the interviews the researcher briefly explained the research to the participants, as well as what their rights were. To obtain a greater breadth of data, the interviews contained both structured and semi-structured questions. The structured questions were used for biographical data collection. The rest of the questions were semi-structured, using an interview guide (in the format of questions) which related to the participants' attitudes towards male rape victims, their contact and experiences with them, as well as their beliefs and attitudes towards gender roles and gender stereotypes (refer to Appendix A). The rationale for using semi-structured interviews was to avoid imposing any moral, ideological,

or theoretical frame of reference onto the participants' experience, thereby compromising its uniqueness or inclining it towards any implicit researcher hypothesis (Giorgi, 1995). The participants were encouraged to provide as much detail as possible and to avoid censoring their responses. Interview interventions focused on requests for clarification or for more elaboration on the information conveyed.

In addition to the interview guide that was used, the interviewees were also read three direct quotes from a South African magazine, and were asked to comment on to what extent they agreed with the statements made in the quotes and why.

The interviews were conducted privately in an informal manner, which allowed the participants to freely express their experiences, ideas and beliefs. All interviews were audio taped, and subsequently transcribed verbatim (refer to Appendix B)

3.5) Data analysis

Thematic content analysis was used in this dissertation to analyse the set of texts, i.e., the transcribed interviews. Thematic content analysis is a process of systematically analysing and interpreting data. It starts with immersion in the data, which means getting familiar with the texts by reading and re-reading it a number of times. Following this, themes are identified, which can then be grouped into categories which provide a coherent understanding and interpretation of the themes that emerged. In the course of this process, themes and categories that do not fit into the aim of the study, are discarded. Following this, more general headings are generated through the merging of related categories. Throughout this process, the themes and categories are repeatedly tested against the data and revised where

necessary. This is followed by searching for relationships between categories, and linking the categories to generate a holistic picture of the phenomenon being investigated (Aronson in Bain, 2004).

In the following paragraphs the overview of thematic content analysis provided above, is discussed in greater detail. This discussion is adapted from Addison (1992), Terreblance and Kelly (1999), Wilson and Hutchinson (1991), and Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999). Where applicable, additional sources will also be cited.

In qualitative research, analysis and interpretation cannot be clearly distinguished and commence from the outset of the research process. Analysis and the creation of meanings already occur when relevant literature is consulted, and continue during the interviews themselves and during the transcription of the interviews (Kvale, 1996). Thus, the steps described below overlap and may not necessarily be carried out in the specific order in which they are discussed.

Step 1: Familiarisation and immersion

After the taped interviews were transcribed, the interview protocols were read through several times. This enabled the researcher to become familiar with the information, and to immerse himself in the world created by the data, so that he could make sense of the information provided by the participants.

Step 2: Thematising

In the course of reading through the interview transcriptions, themes related to the aim of the study emerged. These themes were contained in phrases or in a number of sentences strung together.

Step 3: Categorisation of themes

After having inferred the themes, the researcher grouped similar themes together to form categories, with appropriate headings. By clearly defining each category, it becomes possible to decide whether a meaning unit belonged in the category or not. These categories can then be combined to form a set of broader categories that provide a comprehensive picture of the participants' views and attitudes. This involves a process of induction, in that concepts are inductively developed from the data and then raised to higher levels of abstraction which portray the inter-relationships between concepts (Bain, 2004).

Step 4: Elaboration, stability and credibility

- **Elaboration**

In this stage, the researcher explored the generated themes, as well as the separate and combined categories into which the themes were grouped, more closely. It involved a process of refinement, during which themes and categories that did not belong together were regrouped, and sub-issues were explored in greater depth. This enabled the researcher to gain a fresh view and a deeper meaning than was

possible from the original analysis, and necessitated certain changes in the way in which data had been combined.

During this stage, dialogue occurred between what the researcher read in the transcribed interviews and the social contexts in which the participants lived and worked; between the researcher, his supervisor and other colleagues; between the account that was developed from the data and the researcher himself, his own values, assumptions, interpretations and understandings; and between the data and the insights gained from the literature.

The researcher maintained a constantly questioning attitude, looking for misunderstandings, incomplete understandings, deeper meanings, alternative meanings, and changes over time, as he moved “back and forth between individual elements of the text and the whole text (of the interviews) in many cycles, called the ‘hermeneutic spiral’” (Tesch, 1990, p.68.). According to Addison (1992, p.113), analysis is “a circular progression between parts and whole, foreground and background, understanding and interpretation, and researcher and narrative account.”

- **Stability and credibility (“reliability” and “validity”)**

The researcher, when performing the data analysis, was aware of the challenges of stability and credibility which are essential to conducting “reliable” and “valid” qualitative research. In quantitative research the concept reliability refers to the consistency of measurements. Stability is the equivalent of this concept in qualitative research (Bain, 2004). Stability was achieved by the researcher through a process of repeatedly selecting themes and grouping them. This involved a circular

progression through data segments until the themes and categories achieved stability.

In quantitative research, internal validity refers to the extent to which a study indeed studies what it set out to. The equivalent concept in qualitative research is credibility, which refers to the correspondence between the way in which the participants perceive certain issues and the way in which the latter is portrayed in the study (Bain, 2004). According to Gottschalk (1995), the credibility (“validity”) of a content analysis refers to the correspondence of the categories to the conclusions of a study, and the generalizability of results to a theory.

The researcher tried to ensure credibility by:

- **Going through the research cycle several times**

By repeatedly interpreting and re-interpreting the data, concepts and categories were progressively extended and refined, differentiated and integrated, reaching towards a theoretical saturation (Mojapelo-Batka, 2000). This enabled the researcher to select data and compile an account that had relevance to the aim of the study.

- **Systematic use of contradiction**

According to Reason and Rowan (cited in Mojapelo-Batka, 2000), it is important to invite colleagues, peers or mentors to assume the role of devil’s advocate so as to ensure that through challenging, confronting, and disagreeing, new ideas are built into the inquiry process. In the present study, this was achieved by the researcher discussing his interpretations with colleagues and his supervisor.

Step 5: Interpretation and checking

This refers to the researcher's final written account of his interpretations of the law enforcement officers' experiences with male rape victims, as well as their ideas, beliefs and attitudes with regard to male rape. To substantiate the findings, excerpts from the interviews are provided, and links are made between the themes and categories generated by the interviews, and themes identified in the literature. This involved a process of comparison, looking for similarities and differences between ideas generated by the data and theoretical knowledge.

3.6) Ethics

Permission to conduct the research at the police station was obtained from the captain of the particular police station. The relevant research and ethics committees at the University of Pretoria approved the research design and overall ethics of the study. Signed informed consent was obtained from each of the six participants in the research project.

The researcher defined his relationship with the participants continuously as a participant-researcher relationship. He clarified his role to the participants as that of a researcher and the participants were informed that they would be able to receive debriefing counselling after the interview should any sensitive issues develop during the course of the interview.

3.7) Conclusion

The research process consisted of six main steps, which are listed below. These steps were developed according to general qualitative research guidelines described by Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999). These steps entailed a logical and circular process, which ultimately lead to the results of the current research, which are reported and discussed in the next chapter.

Step 1: A literature study was conducted on concepts related to the aim of the study.

Step 2: The literature search guided the development of the research question used in the current study and the refinement of the aim of the study.

Step 3: The interviews were conducted.

Step 4: The interviews were transcribed and fully analyzed by means of thematic content analysis.

Step 5: The analyzed interviews were discussed in terms of the literature study.

Step 6: Conclusions and recommendations were made based on the analysis.

Chapter Four

Discussion and results

4.1) Introduction

In this chapter the researcher describes and discusses the research results. The chapter begins with a focus on the researcher's impressions of each of the six interviewees. This was included in the dissertation as the researcher feels it is essential to the understanding of the themes which emerged during the analysis of the interviews. Since knowledge is co-created by the interviewer and the interviewee, the relationship between them is essential to the understanding of the data. The themes which arose in the interviews, the discussion of those themes and the integration of the results with the literature review are provided in this chapter.

4.2) The researcher's impressions of each interviewee

In the following paragraphs the researcher provides a description of his impression of each interviewee, as well as an overall impression of the interviewees as a group.

4.2.1) Interviewee 1: Mr. A

Mr. A was open, friendly and seemingly honest from the onset of the interview. He was co-operative and answered the questions asked willingly. The researcher-interviewee relationship was comfortable. He was interested in the research topic and showed a keen desire to be of help to the research process. Mr. A had many years of experience in the police force and as a result his answers were seemingly well-informed. Although becoming a law enforcement officer was not his

childhood dream, he is happy with his career choice and he enjoys his work. Mr. A displayed a heightened sensitivity to the research topic, his comments and answers frequently illustrated his understanding of the severity of male rape and crime in general. Mr. A appears to be passionate about his job.

4.2.2) Interviewee 2: Mr. B

Mr. B was a little guarded in the interview. The researcher-interviewee relationship was difficult, although the researcher was able to establish rapport with him. Mr. B was sceptical of the research topic and thus the research process. He answered the interview questions with some hesitation. Mr. B has had many years of experience with the police. It might be that he has become quite tough and somewhat hardened by what he has experienced. Mr. B enjoys his job, however, he finds it very emotionally demanding and physically challenging.

4.2.3) Interviewee 3: Mr. C

Mr. C was open, friendly and appeared open to talk freely from the onset of the interview. He was highly willing to disclose information and assist in the research process. He expressed to the researcher his approval of the research being done and said that the current topic is very valid and much research needs to be done in this area. Mr. C comes across as an emotionally sensitive man. The researcher-interviewee relationship was strong and congruent throughout the interview process. Mr. C is passionate about his work and feels it was his destiny to become a law enforcement officer.

4.2.4) Interviewee 4: Mr. D

Mr. D was friendly throughout the interview. He was guarded and his answers were restricted. He displayed a keen, but cynical, interest in the research topic, but remained protective over the anonymity and good standing of himself as well as other law enforcement officers. Mr. D's answers showed a wealth of experience in the police force. The researcher-interviewee relationship was not as strong as the previous ones. Mr. D displayed a reluctance to divulge any socially unacceptable information and he became visibly uncomfortable at certain points in the interview. He attempted to protect his image as well as the image of law enforcement officers in general. Mr. D considers his job a way to make ends meet, he is not particularly happy with his choice of career.

4.2.5) Interviewee 5: Mr. E

Mr. E was open, friendly and appeared honest from the onset of the interview. He displayed a willingness to co-operate and to answer the questions he was asked to the best of his knowledge. The researcher-interviewee relationship was satisfactory. He was interested in the research topic and felt it is an important topic to explore. Mr. E says he is happy with his career choice and enjoys his work with the police force. He has a vast knowledge of the law and thus gave informed answers to the questions. He appears to be passionate about his job.

4.2.6) Interviewee 6: Mr. F

Mr. F was open, friendly and appeared honest from the onset of the interview. He was co-operative and answered the questions with a willingness to be of help to the

research process. The researcher-interviewee relationship was good. He displayed sensitivity to the research topic and was determined to speak his mind about the research focus. Mr. F's answers were well-informed indicating his wealth of experience in the police force in general. Mr. F appears to be passionate about his job, he is also passionate about equal rights and ensuring victims of crime are treated fairly. Mr. F was willing to disclose whatever information he felt would be helpful to the research process.

4.2.7) Overall impression of interviewees

As a whole the interviewees were seemingly open and appeared honest. Some interviewees were at times defensive; however, they were willing to help with the research process. All the interviewees expressed their genuine concern for the victims of male rape and showed a clear understanding and appreciation for the fact that this research topic is a sensitive and emotionally charged one. All the interviewees were keen to help in any way they could. The researcher-interviewee relationship had a strong rapport; there was a clear degree of mutual respect between the researcher and the interviewees in general.

4.3) Biographical data of interviewees

Table 1 contains a summary of the biographical background of the participants:

Table 1: Biographical data

<u>INT</u>	<u>AGE</u>	<u>ACA</u>	<u>YOS</u>	<u>RANK</u>	<u>DWR</u>	<u>MALE</u>	<u>FEMALE</u>
<u>1</u>	39	Matric PD	11	Inspector	Yes	No	Yes
<u>2</u>	36	Matric PD	15	Inspector	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>3</u>	32	Matric NDPA	14	Inspector	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>4</u>	31	Matric PD	9	Sergeant	Yes	No	Yes
<u>5</u>	42	Std 9 PD	20	Inspector	Yes	Yes	Yes
<u>6</u>	32	Matric PD	13	Sergeant	Yes	Yes	Yes

Key
INT: Interview number
AGE: Age of interviewee
ACA: Academic level
YOS: Years of service in police force
DWR: Dealt with rape victims
MALE: Dealt with male victims
FEMALE: Dealt with female victims
PD: Policing Diploma
NDPA: National Diploma in Police Administration

Table 1 reflects that all the participants were in their middle-adulthood years. All of them had substantial experience in the police, ranging between nine and 20 years. All of them had dealt with female rape cases, and two of them had never dealt with male rape cases.

4.4) Themes of content analysis and discussion of results

There were eight main categories of meaning that arose during the analysis of the interviews. These themes were further developed through the literature review, and were also impacted on by the researcher's personal experience with law enforcement officers and the way they deal with male rape victims. The interaction between these influences lead to the results which are described in the following paragraphs. By reducing the text of the interviews to themes consisting of words, sets of words or phrases, the researcher was able to focus on specific information

that was related to the research aim. After the themes were identified, the themes that were related were grouped into categories. Each category was then interpreted with reference to the literature review.

The first category deals with responsibility for the occurrence of male rape. This is followed by the participants' awareness of male rape myths and what these myths mean to them. Their reactions are described and discussed in Category 2. This is followed by a discussion of societal perceptions about male rape, and the influence this has on law enforcement officers. The interviewees' attitudes toward male rape and male rape victims are discussed in Category 4. Category 5 deals with aspects regarding the reporting of male rape to the police and this is followed by a discussion on whether male and female rape victims are treated in the same manner by the police (Category 6). Category 7 deals with the law enforcement officers' views about whether the South African legal system recognises male rape. Gender issues, including gender roles, gender identity and gender stereotypes were considered to be related to law enforcement officers' attitudes about masculinity and male rape, and are discussed in Category 8.

4.4.1) Category 1

Blaming the victim: Law enforcement officer's views about the responsibility of being raped

In response to the interview question "What attitudes do you feel South African society holds towards male rape victims?" the participants included themes of

ascribing responsibility for the rape to the rape victim. The following themes emerged from the data:

- Views about the ability of the victim to become sexually aroused and to have an erection.
- The belief that a man should be able to ward off an assault and corresponding rape by another man or a woman.
- Views about physical evidence in cases of female-on-male rape.
- Shared belief system in the law enforcement environment that the victim is responsible for a rape.
- If a male does not report being raped, then it is assumed that he is responsible for the rape.

The data analysis also identified the following consequences to ascribing the responsibility of the rape to the victim:

- Inadequate service provision by law enforcement officers.
- Negative psychological experiences by the victim of male rape.
- Underreporting of male rape

In the following paragraphs, the above themes are discussed:

4.4.1.1) Ascribing the responsibility for a rape to the victim

- **Views about the ability of the victim to become sexually aroused and to have an erection**

Interviewee A said with regard to female-on-male rape: “According to the definition of rape, rape is only when there is penetration, so I don’t think with a male there

can be penetration”. Implicit in this statement is the view that males cannot be sexually aroused if they do not have the desire to engage in penetration. However, according to Scarce (1997), as seen in chapter 2, men can become erect either by stimulation of the penis by someone else even though they may not have the desire to engage in sex, or by means of stimulating their prostate gland. Thus sexual desire is not a requirement for becoming sexually aroused. Therefore it is a misconception held by the participants that if a man had an erection he was not raped. In addition to this a man can be forced to engage in sexual activity with another man or woman without him having an erection. This belief, that an erection is a prerequisite for rape, is furthermore narrow-minded as men can be penetrated with other objects such as bottles and hands.

According to Katz (2001), it is important to consider that when the forced penetration is not by a penis but it is by a hand or other object the offence is not one of rape but will be the lesser charge of indecent assault. Thus males who are raped with objects other than a penis may feel reluctant to report their rape to the police. It is important to note here a person can be raped without an erect penis, a hand or other object can be used.

Interviewee A appeared to have contradictory views. As described above, he said that men cannot be raped, because of the absence of penetration, but in the same interview he also said: “...anybody can be raped. Even I can be walking in the street and get raped and I am not a gay”.

- **The belief that a man should be able to ward off an assault and corresponding rape by another man or a woman**

The view was expressed that a male should be able to ward off a rapist. In response to the question: How should a male rape victim deal with his rape? Interviewee B said: “I think a man will be afraid to report it (the rape).” The reason why the officer said this is according to him: “I think that most people do not believe it, because they do not think that a man can be raped as men are supposed to be stronger than females so I don’t think they believe men who say they have been raped.”

Interviewee D said: “If the guy can just come out now and say you know that I have been raped the police will say, no, no, no this can’t have happened.” He added: “The man will say I have been beaten up and the police will probably think that this man might be stupid. How could he have let someone beat him?”

Interviewee E said: “If I come to the police and say that I have been raped some of the other policemen might say to me that I am a strong man, how could I have been raped. They will not believe it.” Thus, officers will be suspicious of the validity of the charge and they will not believe that it is possible. Interviewee E also said: “I don’t know whether a male like me says that he has been raped, I don’t know what he should do. I can ask him questions but I don’t know how I can prove that this man has been raped.” This statement indicates the law enforcement officer is aware he will face difficulty proving to others (most likely other law enforcement officers) that a man has been raped.

The law enforcement officers’ predetermined belief system regarding the possibility of male rape governs their thinking around rape and male rape victims. Even if a man says he has been raped, he is supposed to be stronger than females, in other words he should have been able to protect himself. The same would apply to male-

on-male rape. This indicates that the responsibility for the rape lies with the man; he should have been able to fight his attacker off. The projection of blame for the crime thus lands onto the victim. How could he have let the crime happen? This belief isolates the responsibility to the victim, who should have, in some way, been able to do something to prevent it from happening.

It is noteworthy that so many of the participants in this study emphasised the stereotype that a male should be able to ward off an assault. This raises the question why this is so important for them. A possible reason is that emphasising masculinity serves an ego-defensive function in the sense that it is necessary to protect the image of masculinity that prevails in the police force. Interviewee D said that the following about a law enforcement officer taking a male rape victim seriously: “The colleagues will say he is wasting your time, he is in fact lying about what has really happened.” The officer is aware that if he does not place the blame on the victim, other officers will react negatively to him.

If male rape victims are told by society and by law enforcement officers that they are essentially weak because they were not able to prevent the rape from happening, they may start accepting the responsibility for the rape.

- **Views about physical evidence in cases of female-on-male rape**

Interviewee E referred to the absence of physical evidence to lay charges against a woman for raping a man : “If a male like me came in with a charge that a female raped them or something I don’t think that he will get help.” He added: “What proof does he have that he has been raped?” The researcher asked the interviewee directly if he thinks a male can be raped. He answered: “No, I don’t think so. It

does happen though in the prisons or when someone is in custody.” Thus he admits to rape occurring, however, he denies the possibility of a male being raped by a female.

- **Shared belief system in the law enforcement environment that the victim is responsible for a rape**

Interviewee F said: “We see it (male rape) as a joke. If someone comes to you and says I have been raped by a woman or by a guy, you will think he was looking for it and all that. Some people will even start laughing about it. They will go behind the person’s back and mock them, like sure he said he was raped. People just start laughing about it and it becomes an absolute joke.” This response clearly illustrates how a complaint of male rape is not taken seriously, and the victim is held responsible.

However, interviewee F then added: “We do not all have the same physical capability to fight other people off. It is not so easy, some people can deal with it and certain others can’t.” This admission that some males can be victims is, however, still not convincing enough for the law enforcement officer to believe that the male is a victim. The blaming/forcing of responsibility still lies, in the officers’ mind, on the victim. This officer also said: “I don’t think that within the police, within the organization itself, I don’t think we have accepted that there are males who are raped.” The responsibility for the rape thus cannot be ascribed to the rapist as there is inherently, in this belief, no victim to speak of. The alternative to this would be to hold the victim responsible for the crime.

- **If a male does not report being raped, then it is assumed that he is responsible for the rape**

Interviewee C was passionate about his belief in male rape. He feels it is definitely possible and he confirms that it does occur. However, he is very aware of the projection of responsibility made by the law enforcement officers onto the male victims. He indicates a clear understanding of false beliefs held by the officers as well as the legal system which make it easier for officers to blame the victims, thus ascribing the responsibility for the rape to them.

In addition, he emphasised that if a male victim of rape feels ashamed, and is hesitant to report the rape, it could indicate that he accepts responsibility for the rape: When asked if a male can be raped Interviewee C said: “They (rape victims) have to deal with all the frustrations, and what can I say, they believe that possibly they brought it onto them. It is very difficult to tell other people that as a male you have been raped.”

4.4.1.2) Consequences of ascribing the responsibility of the rape to the victim

There are various consequences if the responsibility of a rape is ascribed to the victim. The following emerged from the data analysis:

- **Inadequate service provision by law enforcement officers**

In the verbatim quotations from the interviewees given above, it is evident that there is a possibility that male victims of rape may not receive adequate assistance

from law enforcement officers. The latter may not believe the complainant, may laugh at him, or regard his complaint as a lie.

- **Negative psychological experiences by the victim of male rape**

Interviewee A stated that if a male has been raped he should report the rape to the police, since as if he does not the repercussions of the rape experience can lead to severe consequences such as suicide, and the victim should not have to face the traumatic experience alone. (Also refer to paragraph 4.4.5.2 for further elaboration of this theme).

- **Underreporting of male rape**

Implicit in what has been discussed so far, and in view of the discussion that is to follow, the interviewees indicated that a male may feel too embarrassed to report his rape experience, because law enforcement officers may regard it as his fault. This statement is also reported by Scarce (1997).

As seen in chapter 2 the idea of a “belief in a just world” concept can hold serious implications for male rape victims as well as for how law enforcement officers as well as society view these victims as well as how they assign blame.

According to Davies and McCartney (2003), male victims tend to be blamed more than female victims, the blaming of the male victim is higher when the rapist was known as well as when the rapist was not known. They add male victims are judged more harshly than female victims when they are perceived as being able to have escaped from the scene or fight off the attacker. In other words male victims are

seen as having gotten what they deserved in terms of a “just world concept” as they should have been able to fight off the attacker. Other authors, such as Doherty and Anderson (2004), indicate that normative expectations about masculinity discourage men from reporting sexual victimization for fear of being judged as having gotten what they deserved as they are weak or inadequate. According to Scarce (1997), society often regards males as being capable of taking care themselves. Thus male victims are seen as having gotten what they deserved because they were not able to take care of themselves.

4.4.2) Category 2

Law enforcement officers’ awareness of myths concerning male rape

This theme refers to the male law enforcement officers’ awareness of the myths surrounding male rape. All six interviews provided evidence of an implicit or explicit awareness of male rape myths. It does not mean that they actually endorsed the myths, but merely that they were aware of them. Some of them implied that these myths are accepted on a broader level within the police force and also within society.

The following myths were alluded to:

- Males cannot be raped; this includes the reasons given by the participants as to why males cannot be raped.
- Only gays are raped

4.4.2.1) Males cannot be raped

As indicated in paragraph 4.4.1, interviewee A said that “According to the definition of rape, rape is only when there is penetration so I don’t think with a male there can be penetration.” In this statement he thus denies the possibility that a male can be raped by a female.

Scarce (1997) defines rape as “any penetration of a person’s mouth, anus, or vagina by a penis or any other object , without the person’s consent”. According to this statement a female can rape a male using an object such as her hand and forcing entry into him. The statement indicates a male can be raped by a female.

Interviewee E is outspoken in his belief that men cannot be raped: “I don’t think so (think that a male can be raped).” The reason he gives for his belief is as follows: “If I come here to the police and say that I have been raped some of the other policemen might say to me that I am strong, how could I have been raped?”

Interviewee F also explicitly endorsed the view that “straight” males cannot be raped, and added: “This guy (rape victim) must be crazy or that he is a joke.” His reference to *crazy* might imply a reference to the myth that a male who claims he has been raped is possibly suffering from a mental problem.

In contrast to Interviewees A, Interviewee B said: “I don’t think it is only males who are raping males; a man can also be raped by a woman.” He also indicated he is aware some females are stronger than males and are capable of raping them. This law enforcement officer is thus aware of the myth that women cannot rape males, but he consciously rejects the myth.

However, apart from his personal view, he alludes to the possibility that police officers in general may endorse the myth: “I don’t know if policemen believe them (male victims).” This statement indicates that the law enforcement officer is aware of the possibility that other officers could accept the view that males cannot be raped.

Similarly, Interviewee C said: “I do think you would get a few policemen who would probably not take it seriously.” He thus holds the view that there are some policemen who do not believe men can be raped. He too, as is the case with Interviewee B, personally believes that males can be raped: “Why must it be just the vagina? If a person is sodomised or male on male, it is rape.” This statement indicates that he is aware that penetration by the victim is not a requirement for male rape to occur.

Interviewee D also refers to the broader endorsement in the police force of the myth that males cannot be raped: “If the guy just comes out now and says I have been raped the police will say, no, no this can’t have happened.”

Similar to the foregoing, Interviewee F also gives his views about the myth within the police community that males cannot be raped: “I don’t think that within the police, within the organization itself, we have accepted that there are males who are raped.” He indicates here that as a whole, the police force has not yet come to accept male rape as a reality. He indicates this is not only his own understanding but it is the understanding of the police force in general.

Interviewee F also regards the view that men cannot be raped as a broader belief system in the police: “We (law enforcement officers) see it (male victims) as a joke.”

The interviewees also provided **reasons for the belief that men cannot be raped**. One of these reasons relates to the physical strength of males. It is noteworthy that the participants, in their responses described below, often refer to views about masculinity that are held in the police force in general:

Interviewee B said: “Men are supposed to be stronger than females, so I don’t think they (law enforcement officers) believe men who say they have been raped.” He admits to the gender stereotype that men should be stronger than females, thus they should not be rape victims. This statement, however, disregards the possibility that some men are weaker than some females. In addition, it disregards the reality that some men are raped by other men who are as strong if not stronger than they are.

Interviewee D also refers to men’s expected physical strength as a likely reason why people believe that men cannot be raped: “The man will say I have been beaten up and the police will probably think that this man might be stupid. How could he have let someone beat him?” It should also be noted that he does not merely refer to his personal views, but to that of law enforcement officers in a broader context. He thus holds the view that law enforcement officers generally may support the view that men should be strong enough to fight off their attacker.

As indicated above, Interviewee E, who supports the view that men cannot be raped, also believes in the myth that men must be stronger than their attacker and should be able to defend themselves from becoming victims of rape. He said: “How can you (a male) be beaten by a wife, it is not possible.” He added: “They (law enforcement officers) will not believe it (that a male can be raped).” He also stated: “They will call him (male victim) a liar and say that a woman can’t beat a

man.” It must be noted that this law enforcement officer has not taken into account the reality that men can be raped by other men.

Apart from the physical strength of men, Interviewee F refers to broader social constructions about male rape as a basis for the myth that males cannot be raped: “Society does not accept it (male rape) first of all.” He also says: “The media makes it (male rape) out to be a joke.” He thus confirms the myth that society holds onto to protect itself from the reality, i.e., that men cannot be raped when in reality they can be raped. He also indicates that the general media portray the reality to be that men cannot be raped.

According Hamilton (1998), a male law enforcement officer, when confronted with the prospect of a male rape victim could feel the need to ignore or minimise the possibility of male rape as this would place severe demands on his emotional resources, as well as challenge his concept of men as being and assertive. Thus, the belief that men are supposed to be strong enough to defend themselves poses a threat to men who were not able to do so.

4.4.2.2) Only gays are raped

All the law enforcement officers interviewed, except Interviewee F who contradicted himself, do not believe the myth only gay men get raped. They believe anyone can become a victim of rape, the rape victim does not need to be a gay man. Their comments concerning this myth were as follows:

Interviewee A said: “It is not only the gay male because anybody can be raped.” Similarly, Interviewee C said: “I think anyone can be raped not just a gay man.”

Interviewee D said: “Rape can happen to anyone, not only gay males.” In other words these law enforcement officers are aware of the myth, however, they reject it, and believe that heterosexual men as well as homosexual men can be rape victims.

Interviewee F is clear about his belief in the myth that only gay men are raped: “...Only females can be raped and that males who are raped are actually gay guys.” He thus indicates a belief in the myth that only gay men can be raped. However, later in the interview he contradicted himself and said it is not only gays who are raped.

Whereas the previous paragraphs reflect the views of the individual participants in the study about the myth that only gays are raped, Interviewee D said that on a broader level, policemen may endorse this myth: “They (policemen) will think that the person must be a ‘moffie’ (gay man) or someone who has had something to do with it.”

As was seen in the literature according to Pino (1999), males who can show bodily harm as evidence they were overpowered are more likely to report their rape to the police. In a case where the victim’s sexuality may come into question as a result of not showing signs of bodily harm, these victims often do not report their experience to the police.

According to Scarce (1997), many law enforcement officers display shock and surprise when they are faced with a report of male rape as they have been strongly influenced by powerful gender role stereotypes. Their reaction to a report of male rape is often grounded in the many stereotypes about same-sex rape, such as, the rape could have been an act of homosexual sex and not forced penetration.

4.3.3) Category 3

The role of societal attitudes in informing male law enforcement officers' own attitudes towards male rape victims

What members of society believe about male rape victims plays a key role in shaping the law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims. These shared attitudes in society are influential in the thinking processes and decision making of the law enforcement officers.

According to Lea and Auburn (2001) a discursive approach seeks to understand human action in terms of the language used to account for that action. Therefore male rape exists not in the actual event but in the descriptions of that event.

This research suggests that the social discourses about rape needs to be rethought so that there can be more of a flow between victims reporting the action, and law enforcement officers understanding it and taking it seriously. The issue is one of communication. The channels of communication at present between victims and officers is insufficient, however, with further research and education these communication lines can become more effective in conveying a message that is understood and respected by law enforcement officers, victims, and society. Clearer communication may lead to the male victims receiving the assistance they need from law enforcement officers.

According to Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1998) social constructionism asserts that we do not discover reality, we create it. This research supports this idea by saying the question is not if male rape occurs in our society, the question is what male rape

communicates to society. The law enforcement officers interviewed showed an awareness that male rape occurs. What is important in this research is what does male rape imply or not imply. Not only is it difficult to be a rape victim, but to be a male and experience a rape is even more difficult.

There is much evidence of the impact that society's shared attitudes have on male law enforcement officers' own attitudes. The following themes emerged from the data:

- The law enforcements officers describe the broader social views on male rape as negative, and that there is a general belief that such rape cannot occur.

These social constructions become, to a greater or lesser extent, part of the personal views of the law enforcement officers.

- The underlying motive for society's negative views relate to stereotypes about masculinity, and a lack of knowledge about the occurrence of male rape.

These socially shared stereotypes also become, to a greater or lesser extent, part of the personal views of the law enforcement officers.

- There are changes taking place in the social discourses about male rape.

4.3.3.1) Society's negative views about male rape

Interviewee A said: “I think that the attitude (of South African society) is negative if a male said he was raped, the attitude will be negative.” The same law enforcement officer indicated in his interview that he holds a similar negative attitude towards males who say they have been raped.

Interviewee F said: “People just start laughing about it and it becomes an absolute joke. Yes, I think the general public sees it like that.” He added: “Society does not accept it first of all, that is just the attitude of people. We see it as a joke.” The law enforcement officer recognizes that society does not take male rape victims seriously. Society views males who claim they have been raped as being jokers. He also implies that this has informed the police community's views about male rape, and later in his interview he indicated he is influenced by this same belief, and he seems to use society's views to justify his own.

Whilst the above participants recognised that societal views inform their own views about male rape, Interviewee E did not clearly indicate any views about society's beliefs regarding male rape. Therefore he cannot be said to have been influenced by these views and beliefs.

Interviewee D said that although there is currently greater acceptance about male rape in society, “Most are not accepting of it (male rape)...happening.” He added: “It is happening and what I can say is that most of the people are not realizing this.” He also said: “I can say that only half maybe a quarter percent (of society) is trying to see that these things are really happening.” This law enforcement officer acknowledges that some people in society see the rape of men as possible, but that

most people still do not accept men as being rape victims even though he personally understands males can be and are raped.

4.3.3.2) Stereotypes about masculinity

Interviewee B suggested that society's negative views about male rape could be based on stereotypes about masculinity. He said: "I think that most people do not believe it (male rape) because they do not think that a man can be raped as men are supposed to be stronger than females, so I don't think they believe men who say they have been raped." This law enforcement officer shows an awareness of the stereotype that society will not believe a male who says he has been raped as society feels men should be strong enough to fight off an attacker and defend themselves. He indicates later in his interview that he shares this belief even though he is aware some men are weaker than others and he is aware that men can be raped by other men.

Another reason why society may not regard male rape as possible was already referred to above. Interviewee D said that *most the people do not realize that male rape occurs*. The low publicity given to male rape in the media, for example, could contribute to society's views about male rape. This is corroborated by the remarks made by Interviewee C, given in the next paragraph.

4.3.3.3) Changes in the social discourse about male rape

Interviewee C said: "I think that presently with education and exposure a lot of people are taking or having a closer understanding and being more sympathetic or empathic towards male victims of rape." He added: "From my experience there has been a positive change in the mindset (of society). And I think that more and more

people are growing to understand the seriousness of the crime.” This law enforcement officer indicates society’s beliefs and views towards male rape victims are changing over time. He feels society is becoming more aware of male rape as well as becoming somewhat sympathetic and understanding towards these victims. He suggests that the changes that are occurring are positive and necessary changes.

He also stated that similar to the changes in society, he and other law enforcement officers are also becoming more aware, and as a result are also becoming more understanding and sympathetic, towards the victims.

As was indicated above, Interviewee D also alluded to changes in society’s views about male rape; however, he also said that the majority of people, in his view, still do not accept that males can be raped.

4.4.4) Category 4

Attitudes towards male rape victims

According to Baron and Byrne (1997) attitudes are lasting evaluations of various aspects of the social world. This research has shown how the law enforcement officers’ attitudes towards male rape and male rape victims have been informed by shared social attitudes, and this impacts on their perception of these victims, and the way they reach conclusions and inferences about male rape.

The law enforcement officers admitted it is difficult for them to take a male rape victim seriously as they have the attitude that men are supposed to be strong and able to protect and defend themselves from harm. Interviewee B referred to “most

people” in society and said: “I think that most people do not believe it, because they do not think that a man can be raped, as men are supposed to stronger than females, so I don’t think they believe men who say they have been raped.”

Interviewee D said: “I can say that most are not accepting of it happening. We have not got much of it here (Johannesburg middle class suburb) in our area of it happening, but outside there is a lot of it.” He is distancing himself from the problem by saying it does not happen where he is but it does occur elsewhere. This belief protects the law enforcement officer from facing the reality about male rape. The researcher believes the idea of a male being raped challenges the belief in masculine strength and power. If law enforcement officers were to accept that a male has been raped it would weaken the strength of their own construct of what it means to be a male. This attitude is harmful to the process of upholding the law in a society where males are raped and are often not believed when they report the rape.

According to Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) there are two main negative attitudes held by society and law enforcement officers, which lead to negative perceptions about male rape. The first of these attitudes is that men cannot be raped because a male cannot be forced to get an erection. This research reviewed the current critical literature on male rape (see Chapter two) and it showed that although this belief that men cannot be forced to have an erection occurs in society, it is false. Some law enforcement officers who have dealt with male rape victims still persist in saying that males cannot be raped. Interviewee A, for example, said: “I think the attitude will be negative if a male said he was raped. Because normally a male, according to the definition of rape, rape is only when there is penetration so I don’t think with a male there can be penetration.” Such views are evidence of the resistance of attitudes to change.

The second negative attitude is that males who are raped actually wanted to be raped. This attitude suggests that with regard to rape by females, the victim was not really raped, as he wanted the sexual experience. The law enforcement officers interviewed justify this attitude by saying that men always want to have sex with women; therefore a female can not force a male to have sex. Furthermore, men who say they have been raped by other men must be gay, therefore also having had a desire to have sexual relations, thus they were essentially not raped.

Male rape is currently a largely invisible problem in society. According to Overseen (2001) the Johannesburg police handled only one case of male rape in the period 1997 to 2001. According to Davies (2000) hardly any male sexual assaults are recorded in police files or other official records, although the incidence is unexpectedly common in the community. The current research confirms that rape is not often reported. One possible reason for the underreporting of male rape according to the law enforcement officers is that male rape victims are sometimes not taken seriously, and the victims are not always believed. This leads according to Scarce (1997) to a significant deterrent to reporting this kind of crime against males. In addition the stigma of homosexuality connected to the belief systems concerning such crimes could serve as a further deterrent. The very reality that the law does not allow for these crimes to be regarded as rape makes them almost impossible to report.

According to the law enforcement officers interviewed in the current study the victims feel because the law does not view male rape as a crime, the victims will not achieve anything by admitting to having experienced rape. The victims, according to the law enforcement officers, also fear that policemen will label them as being

homosexual if they come forward with such a charge. The research suggests that victims often choose to suffer alone before asking for help which they suspect, and often rightfully so, they will not get.

Scarce (1997) also suggests the possible lack of adequate treatment of male rape victims by the police may be linked to a “macho” culture within law enforcement professions. The law enforcement officers’ construction of their masculinity makes it very difficult for them to accept male rape. This contributes significantly to the underreporting of male rape. Scarce (1997) also suggests and this research confirms that because few male rapes are reported and because they are not openly discussed male rape has become a taboo subject which has led to the development of many misconceptions surrounding it. This research showed that the law enforcement officers interviewed hold the opinion that the fear of homophobic reactions, disbelief and blame from the police, prevent male victims from reporting the rape.

4.4.5) Category 5

Reporting of male rape

The interviewees often referred to the reporting of male rape. In the category, two themes emerged:

- Law enforcement officer’s views on reporting rape.
- Law enforcement officers’ views on how male victims regard reporting a case of rape to the police

These themes are discussed in the following paragraphs:

4.4.5.1) Law enforcement officer's views on reporting rape

All the law enforcement officers interviewed believe male victims should come forward and report their case to the police. They recognised that whenever a crime has been committed, the victim of that crime should report it to the police, no matter what the crime was. The law enforcement officers interviewed provided reasons for reporting male rape to the police which can be broken down into the following four areas:

- The participants interviewed indicate an understanding that it is difficult for male rape victims to come forward and admit they are victims of rape, but felt that reporting it would help the victim deal with the trauma and hurt he has experienced.
- All people should stand up for their rights.
- To help create more awareness in the police force as well as society of the crime.
- Male rape is a crime; all crime should be reported to the police.

The quotations listed below taken from the interviews provide evidence of the above:

- “He should report it as if he stays with it, it will cause a lot of harm.”
(Interviewee A)
- “He should report it...basically.” (Interviewee B)
- “He should talk about it; he must not feel scared to talk about it he must feel free to talk about it.” (Interviewee B)
- “Policemen are supposed to be there to protect them” (Interviewee B)

- “It (male rape) is a crime and everybody should feel free to report any crime that has happened to them.” (Interviewee B)
- “It depends on what he wants to do, there are channels that are available but obviously it will be his prerogative.” (Interviewee C)
- “I think the issue of being a male or a female is not an important issue. If you are feeling hurt you have to speak up.” (Interviewee D)
- “He can come to the police station and explain how this thing happened.” (Interviewee E)
- “The person should tell the police, they should report it.” (Interviewee F)
- “The person should definitely stand up for his rights.” (Interviewee F)
- “He should come forward.” (Interviewee F)
- “If he has been raped, sexually abused, whatever it was the guy needs to come forward.” (Interviewee F)
- “People need to come forward to make others more aware.” (Interviewee F)

It is noteworthy that the police officers, although they think it should be reported, also reflected negative views about male rape victims, as has been indicated elsewhere in this Chapter. Why this discrepancy? They probably responded from the framework of their role as people whose role is to enforce the law, and this perhaps did not always correspond to their personal views.

4.4.5.2) Law enforcement officers’ views on how male victims regard reporting a case of rape to the police

As was indicated above, the law enforcement officers interviewed were of the opinion that male rape victims should come forward and report their case to the police. They said the police are supposed to offer protection to victims of crime,

this they indicated includes all victims of all kinds of crimes. They also indicated dealing with the trauma of rape alone can become a harmful situation for the victim to face. These views are illustrated in the following extracts from the interviews:

- “They should come forward and talk so that they can get help rather than keep things inside.” (Interviewee A).
- “It is not their fault if they have been raped” (the participant implies that the victim may blame himself) (Interviewee A)
- “Deciding to deal with the trauma you may lead to a lot of things that are not pleasant.” (Interviewee D)
- “I think the issue of being male or female is not an important issue, if you are feeling hurt you have to speak up. It is not something you need to say like oh, what boys don’t cry.” He indicates his understanding in this statement that it is not important what sex a person is, if they have been hurt or attacked they should report it. (Interviewee D)

Although the law enforcement officers recognised the need to report the crime, they also realise that it might be difficult for the victims to do so (also see Category 1 in this regard). They recognize the male victims may be too afraid to report the case to the police for various reasons.

In the view of the interviewees it seems to be understood that male rape victims experience a form of trauma. They also tend to feel shame that the sexual assault or rape happened at all. They may feel embarrassed due to their not being able to stop the rape, as illustrated in the prologue to this dissertation. They may feel that their sense of masculinity and sexual identity was threatened by the rape and could be

further threatened by reporting it to the police. The law enforcement officers confirm these fears.

The following quotations taken from the interviews provide evidence of the above discussion:

- “I think a man will be afraid to report it (a rape)” (Interviewee B)
- “I think if a male gets raped he will be afraid to talk to another man.” (Interviewee B)
- Interviewee D, who said that anyone can be a victim of rape, not only gay men, also said: “They (male victims) feel ashamed.” The law enforcement officer understands some men will feel ashamed they are a victim, possibly because of the homosexual connotations attached to it, and might not report the case to the police.
- “They (policemen) will not believe it.” (Interviewee E)
- “I agree with it to a certain extent” (Interviewee F) - the interviewee was responding to the statement that most male rape victims are too embarrassed and humiliated to share their story with anybody.

Davies (2000) suggested although law enforcement officers are aware males can be raped, when a male reports a rape, homophobia, disbelief and blame from the police may prevent many victims from reporting the rape. Davies also suggested men who do report their rape/sexual assault to the police tend not to be taken seriously.

One law enforcement officer indicated the situation is changing in the way that policemen are starting to take male rape victims seriously, however, this process of

change is a difficult and often slow process: “Things are changing, but it is very difficult to open up especially a male victim.” (Interviewee C)

4.4.6) Category 6

Differential treatment of male and female rape victims

According to Davies (2000), as discussed in Chapter 2, female rape victims get more sympathy than male rape victims. Mitchell and Hirschman (1999) suggested that the sexual orientation of the victim is potentially important in understanding law enforcement officers’ reactions to male rape victims. This indicates male rape victims are treated differently to female victims because of their gender.

The law enforcement officers interviewed recognize the need to treat male rape victims in the same way they treat female rape victims. However, some of the law enforcement officers interviewed admit their attitude towards the male victims is different and that they do not treat them in the same way they treat female rape victims. The following quotations from the interviews illustrate the views of the law enforcement officers regarding the treatment of male rape victims:

Interviewee A was not aware of differences in the treatment of victims of rape. He said they are both victims thus they should be treated the same. He said “If they have been raped they would be treated the same because all of them would be victims, so they would be treated in the same manner.”

Interviewee B said in theory male and female victims should be treated the same because they are victims of the same crime. He said: “They are treated the same

because they are victims of the same crime.” He also said: “The same crisis is the same trauma.” In practice, however, he suspects they are treated differently. He says he is not sure if the policemen believe the men who say they have been raped, however, personally he would treat them the same way as they are victims of the same crime.

In contrast to the above view that all victims, whether male or female, should be treated the same, Interviewee C said “I do think you would get a few policemen that would probably, you know..., would not take it (male rape) that seriously.”

According to Interviewee D male and female rape victims are treated differently. He said: “If the guy can just come out now and say you know that I have been raped the police will say no, no this can’t have happened.” He also said “...The police will probably think that this man might be stupid.” He added that if a law enforcement officer does take a male victim seriously, his colleagues will say he is wasting his time., and that “The colleagues will say he is wasting your time, he is in fact lying about what really has happened.”

Interviewee E said if a male reported he had been raped he would not receive the same help a female victim would receive. The male will have to show in some way that he has been raped before he is taken seriously.

This research has shown that the male law enforcement officers interviewed for the current study, for many reasons, are to a greater or lesser extent uncertain how to approach and deal with male rape victims in such a way that would make them feel safe to report their experience. The participants admit to needing more training in this area and express a need for the language of the law to change so that societies

and their perceptions about male rape can become more empathic. Evidence of this is shown in the following quotations taken from the interviews:

“I think it would be different because if a female came in here with a charge of rape we will have to call a female policeman to come in and ask her questions, she will take the lady to the doctor to confirm that she has been raped. But I don’t know whether if a male like me says he has been raped, I do not know what he should do.” (Interviewee E)

Referring to the police community in general, Interviewee F said “I don’t think that within the police, within the organization itself, I don’t think we have accepted that there are males who are raped.” Following from this view, he added: “We have all actually stereotyped that only females can be raped and that males who are raped are actually gay guys”, and “The police have not accepted that males can be raped and I would have to say yes, they do treat people differently.” With regard to the different treatment of female rape victims compared to male rape victims, he said: “They use more sensibility with a female because they believe them.” According to him, this differential treatment of male and female rape victims, could be based on socially shared views about the possibility of male rape occurring: “There is a negative mind frame or stereotype (that male rape does not occur), not necessarily with just the police but also with the society at large.”

Interviewee F appeared to have distanced himself from this general approach in the police, by saying: “For me as a person and a policeman, seeing a person like that (having had been raped) I have sensitivity and an understanding and I try to treat everybody the same.”

4.4.7) Category 7

Uncertainty about the recognition of male rape by the South African justice system

It must be noted that the South African justice system still does not recognize male rape. The definition of rape has been provided in chapter 1, however, a further definition of rape in South Africa is provided here for the purpose of clarity. Rape is a man having unlawful and intentional sexual intercourse with a woman, without her consent (Brogden, 1991). The definition of rape in South Africa has not changed. This definition clearly discriminates against the raping of a man. In South African law a man can not be raped. There is evidence in the responses given by the law enforcement officers that there is a certain degree of uncertainty about what the law states. Some of the officers agree that male rape is not part of the current legal system in South Africa. What is clear here is that the uncertainty about the law has created a sense of confusion in the law enforcement officer's beliefs and understanding concerning the legal system. This is evident from their responses to the following statement, which they were asked to comment on: "Our justice system previously did not legally recognize male rape":

- "I do not have any idea." (Interviewee A)
- "I do not know." (Interviewee B)
- "I am not sure what the law says about it." (Interviewee B)
- "Yes I definitely agree with that statement." (Interviewee C)
- "Yes, I think so because it was reported very scarcely." (Interviewee D)
- "Yes." (Interviewee E)

- “This was true but the law and the constitution are changing.” (Interviewee F)
- “The constitution does not differentiate between people; it does not say that males should be treated this way and that females should be treated in a different way.” (Interviewee F)

4.4.8) Category 8

Gender identity, gender roles and gender stereotypes

Views on gender identity, gender roles and gender stereotypes play a role law enforcement officers approach the male rape. In the following paragraphs, a general overview is first given of the nature of these concepts, and this is followed by illustrations from the interviews on how they played a role in the participants’ own background.

All societies have beliefs about what they regard as appropriate behaviour for females and males. The literature review (see Chapter 2) has illustrated that in the South African society, men are still predominantly perceived as being powerful and assertive. These constructs or beliefs are learned at an early age and strongly influence people’s perceptions of the world around them and their roles as males or females in that world. Some of the law enforcement officers who were interviewed were taught by their parents what it means to be a boy and what it means to be a girl while they were growing up. There were often different expectations and requirements for the different sexes. In this study the boys were expected to go out and do the work of the family, and to provide protection for the female members. The girls were expected to stay at home and prepare the home for the males. Later

in life the law enforcement officers compound this same reality in the police force. Women, according to the law enforcement officers who were interviewed, generally remain in the police station and do the work there while the males go out into the field and protect the world from criminals. One law enforcement officer added when this expectation is defied or rejected and a female takes on a male role by going out into the field to fight criminals the male counterparts become uncomfortable and feel unsafe and uneasy.

Gender identity is the awareness of a person's gender and all that it implies, and is an important part of a person's concept of self (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 1998); it seems to affect how people feel and think about themselves and how they act, and it is influenced by socialization within a given culture. Almost all development is gendered and almost all aspects of our development occur within the context of gender. Therefore this theme investigated the gender identity strength of the law enforcement officers interviewed, i.e. how strongly they identify with their maleness.

The law enforcement officers have a strong sense of their identity, who they are, which is largely based on their male gender. They believe because they are male they should be stronger than females therefore they should be able to defend themselves from females and other males.

Because of the social construction of masculinity men face a tough battle or difficulty to attain their gender identity. This leads to a battle between men's emotionality and fragility on the one hand, and their need for power on the other hand, as the need for men to assert power makes it more difficult for them to express vulnerability, i.e., to accept that men can be raped.

This research suggests a male law enforcement officer, when confronted with the prospect of a male rape victim, may feel the need to ignore or minimize the possibility of male rape as this would place severe demands on his emotional resources, as well as challenge his concept of men as being powerful and assertive.

Gender roles are culturally determined behaviours and attitudes that are regarded as appropriate for males and females (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 1998). Law enforcement officers are impacted by gender roles, thus their gender role identification strongly impacts on their beliefs about male rape victims. This theme accordingly deals with whether the male law enforcement officers interviewed believe men are supposed to conform to societal ‘macho’ gender roles. This research has shown repeatedly that males are expected to be stronger than females and able to protect themselves. The inability to do this reflects upon the weakness of the male in particular and does not allow for the possibility that there are stronger than usual females or less physically strong males.

Gender stereotypes are exaggerated generalizations which may not be true for all individuals. They refer to the sets of common beliefs about what men ought to do, how they should behave and what traits they have (Bee, 2000). This rigid construction of gender stereotypes could cause confusion when exceptions occur and are presented to our society’s law enforcement officers. By challenging these stereotypes to allow for the possibility of male rape, law enforcement officers may have to challenge their beliefs and concepts about themselves, a challenge which could admittedly be daunting for most people.

According to Donnelly and Kenyon (1996) as gender stereotypes powerfully influence law enforcement officers' perceptions of male sexual assault victims, as well as the actual services offered by them. According to these authors, the shock and surprise shown by law enforcement officers when faced with a report of male rape quickly changes into reactions grounded in the many stereotypes about same-sex rape. If law enforcement officers endorse the stereotype that men should be strong enough to fight off their attackers, they may react with little sympathy to a man who was not able to do so. The result could be that in the end the male rape victim suffers a further rape, a rape by the law enforcement system.

According to Davies (2000) male rape myths, which are based on gender stereotypes lessen the impact of sexual assault on a male and allow for both the victim to be blamed for the assault by others and for him to blame himself. This vicious cycle based on the construction of gender stereotypes perpetuates the cycle of criminals staying free and victims feeling like perpetrators as society does not acknowledge certain of its beliefs are narrow minded and sometimes simply false. Victims of criminal acts may be plunged into psychological turmoil if they feel they have no outlet by which to receive help and support. The more a male victim asks for help the more weak he may begin to feel. Thus he could become in essence a victim of society's rigid belief systems. Some of the law enforcement officers in this study admitted that if they take a male rape victim seriously other law enforcement officers might laugh at them and accuse them of having had been fooled and had their time wasted.

Specific questions were asked to elicit the above listed themes from each law enforcement officer. In the following paragraphs an overall analysis is given for each interviewee according to what he said.

The relevant questions that were asked, are:

- Question 1: Was it important in your family for boys/men to behave in a certain way and for girls/women to behave in a certain way?
- Question 2: Are there different expectations in the police force for male and female law enforcement officers?

The following is an integration of the law enforcement officer interviewed response to the question and the meaning those responses suggested. Each response is integrated according to the question asked by the question number.

Interviewee A

Question 1: He said there were differences in his family for boys and for girls. These differences were due to the limited funds they had available. He said, however, they were all treated the same as far as what was required of them. The law enforcement officer therefore indicates in his upbringing girls were treated in a similar way to how boys were treated. He does, however, indicate there were some differences, for example, in the way the funds available to his family were used. He said the limited funds which his family had were used for his education as he is a man, his parents felt education for men was more of a priority than education for women.

Question 2: In the police force, he said, men and women are treated the same. He suggests that the requirements of males are the same requirements made on females. His understanding is that men and women are treated the same.

Interviewee B

Question 1: He denied any differences between what was required from the boys and what was required from the girls in his family. He added that he was the oldest, thus he was expected to protect his younger sister when she needed protection, however, the general expectations were the same. In other words this law enforcement officer said boys and girls were treated in the same way, however, he also says he was expected to protect his sisters. This suggests an understanding in his family of origin that boys are stronger than girls and that boys should protect girls and should be able to protect girls.

Question 2: He said there are differences in the police force for men and women. The differences mostly surround the way the law enforcement officers were trained. He also stated the women were trained separately from the men thus he was not present to see what the differences were, but he thinks there were differences.

Interviewee C

Question 1: The interviewee did not grow up with sisters; however, he thinks females and males were/are expected, by their families, to behave in different ways. He added that parents often had a tighter hold on their daughters. The parents were more vigilant with girls, harder on them as far as rules and curfews are concerned. He said that girls were pressured to always carry themselves with dignity; boys could behave almost as they wanted to as long as they respected other people.

Question 2: He said there are the same requirements, they are supposed to be on the same platform and there are equal opportunities, however, there are problems with regard to certain female duties. They work for equal opportunities, such as ranks; however, there is still a disparity between the male tasks and with the female tasks.

Interviewee D

Question 1: He said there are differences in the requirements. Boys were required to work in the garden and girls were required to do other things. He added there are certain jobs for men and there are certain manners for them to behave that are different to the ones required for girls.

Question 2: He said there are different requirements for men and women. According to him, there is still a big gap because of the belief that because you are a woman you can't do certain things and because you are a male there are certain things you should be able to do. As women are less likely to help protect their partner than a male would be, males are not happy when they are partnered with females. He stated there are definitely different expectations for males than there are for females.

Interviewee E

Question 1: He said they are treated differently. Boys were required to go out and work, girls were required to stay in the home and do traditional home chores.

Question 2: He said when it comes to the work done there were different requirements. Females, he said, are not fit enough to go out and fight crime therefore they stay inside and do the work done in the office; the males must go outside and fight crime.

Interviewee F

Question 1: He said there were differences. His father was specific about what men should do and what women should do. The men were required to work, it was different for the women. However, his father was strict with all of them as he knew boys and girls could easily get into trouble.

Question 2: He said there are different expectations with regard to men and women, depending on the kind of work involved. The women typically work inside the stations and the men typically work outside the stations. He added, at the level of selection there are differences, they are harder on the men than on the women. He says the reason for this is that theoretically, males can endure more than females thus they can be used in more dangerous situations.

4.5) Conclusion

The male law enforcement officers interviewed in the current study are aware that male rape occurs. They are aware that the victims of male rape face many harsh realities similar if not the same as females. Some of the participants have encountered male rape and have dealt with male rape victims. However, the attitudes held by some of the law enforcement officers interviewed in this study, towards male rape victims are different to the way they treat female rape victims.

The findings of this research provide further evidence to support the idea that until societies' perceptions around male rape change the perceptions, it will be unlikely that the attitudes and beliefs of the male law enforcement officers who deal with these victims, will change. The law also needs to be amended so that both victims as well as male law enforcement officers know what and where they stand so they can deal with male rape in a way that is effective and expected by society and for society to function fairly and equally.

Male rape is not currently recognized in South African law. As a result law enforcement officers do not know how to handle such an incidents. According to the interviewees they are not given any training with regards to how to handle male rape victims. According to them if male rape becomes a formal crime in the eyes of the law and if male rape victim treatment becomes a focus of general law enforcement officers' training, a positive change may result in how these victims are handled and thought about.

In the following chapter an evaluation is made of this research. Suggestions for further research in this field are also made.

Chapter Five

Evaluation and recommendations

5.1) Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with an evaluation of the present study. The strengths and weaknesses are identified and discussed. In conclusion, recommendations for future research are proposed.

5.2) Evaluation

This study set out to explore male law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims. To a large extent, the researcher feels that this study has attained its aforementioned goal. The researcher has evaluated the current study according to two major principles of qualitative research, namely reliability and validity.

5.2.1) Reliability: consistency

Reliability means consistency or dependability. In this research the interview was used consistently as a technique to elicit information. By consistent the researcher means not erratic and vacillating. The difficulty with consistency in this research is that the study has studied a process that is not always stable over time. Therefore observations made currently may not be true in the future, or may change in some or other way. The researcher feels due to this changing cycle the relationship between the researcher and the subject matter of this study should also grow and evolve over time. The researcher accepts that in a future study the relationship between the researcher and the male law enforcement officers may change, which

could result in findings that differ from those of the present study. The researcher accepts that different researchers using alternative measures to study the phenomenon of male law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims will get different results. The researcher accepts and views data collection in the research as an interactive process in which particular researchers operate in an evolving setting and the setting's context will dictate unique results using a unique mix of measures that can be evaluated.

The method of data collection used, the interview, is not a fixed standard measure to be used to study the subject matter, it is simply the research tool used by this researcher in the current study. The qualitative research process has as one of its governing principles an understanding that research is not a linear process, but rather, it is an evolving circular process.

5.2.2) Validity: authenticity

Validity, in qualitative research, means truthfulness, credibility or authenticity. It refers here to the link between a construct and the data. The researcher was more concerned with the concept of authenticity in this study rather than validity. According to Neuman (2000) authenticity means giving a fair, honest, and balanced account of social life from the viewpoint of someone who lives it everyday. The researcher was less concerned with trying to match an abstract concept to empirical data and was more concerned with giving a truthful description of social life that was true to the experiences of the law enforcement officers who were studied. The researcher held true to this principle by allowing law enforcement officers to describe their opinion and experience as they see it and to work with that

description to create data based on personal experiences rather than upon preconceived research conclusions about their experiences.

The researcher adhered to the core principle of authenticity, to be truthful by avoiding inaccurate or distorted accounts. The interviews were analyzed based on the exact accounts of the officers who were interviewed. The researcher made a concerted effort to create a tight fit between his understanding of the ideas and statements of the law enforcement officers' worlds and what they actually conveyed to him about what is occurring in their worlds.

In addition to ensuring authenticity and continuity the researcher feels the current research has three other major areas of strength. These three strengths are based on an article published by Putney and Green (1999), and as they apply to this research are integrated in the following paragraphs:

- The first strength is the current research approach has provided a way of transcribing and analyzing the discursive construction of everyday events of a particular facet of law enforcement officers' work.
- Secondly, the current research has provided insights into the insider knowledge needed by members of a group, in this case the academic community, to participate in a specific group they do not know in a socially and academically appropriate manner.
- Lastly, this research and the theories which have guided it have made the reader aware that there are many different voices and opinions. There is a need to consider whose voice is being represented, how, and in what ways. Through taking into account different voices qualitative research has provided ways for understanding the local and situated nature of everyday life. How this life is consequential for those who are members, as well as those seeking membership;

and for exploring how equity of access to academic knowledge and societal resources are locally constructed in and through the actions of people in local settings (in this case the law enforcement officers who were interviewed).

5.3) Critique of qualitative research

The current research was qualitative. There were two main disadvantages identified during the research process. These disadvantages have been adapted from Neuman (2000):

- The current technique of data collection involves semi-structured interviews that can place considerable demands on participants' time, making it difficult to recruit participants for whom time is often at a premium.
- Qualitative research is a time-consuming exercise, not only in relation to the data collection process but also because the process of analysis involves continual movement between the data and emerging themes to adapt and verify the analytical framework being developed.

5.4) Recommendations for future research

Based on the results of the current research, the researcher feels the following areas emerge which might benefit from the further study of male law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims

- 1) The myths and truths surrounding male rape victims formed an important part of this research study. Future research in this field should focus on the myths and truths about male rape with regard to the belief systems of law enforcement officers. Although the current research study did not directly

investigate myths and truths surrounding male rape victims in the interview questions used, in future research a researcher can directly ask male law enforcement officers what they believe to be the myths and truths about male rape victims.

- 2) The current research did not emphasize cultural differences in social beliefs towards male law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims. In the South African context different social cultural belief constructs play an important role in determining attitudes. Future research can explore the differences in attitudes and beliefs as they pertain to differences in cultural and social constructs.
- 3) The belief system that men need to take responsibility for themselves as well as men's need to be protectors are important issues relating to this field of research. They can both be focused on in different ways in future research in this field.
- 4) The current research was not a comparative research study between female law enforcement officers and male law enforcement officers' attitudes. Such a focus would have been too broad for the current research. However, future research in this field can incorporate and study the differences between males and females and how these differences contribute to their attitudes towards male rape victims.
- 5) The current research did not explore the attitudes of homosexual law enforcement officers' attitudes towards male rape victims. The researcher believes homosexual law enforcement officers' attitudes will differ to heterosexual law enforcement officers' attitudes. This can be an interesting theme to explore as it pertains to understanding attitudes towards male rape victims.

- 6) Lastly, male rape victims themselves were not interviewed. Further research in this field can explore the experiences, opinions, beliefs and attitudes of the male rape victims themselves and how they perceive the treatment they received from male law enforcement officers. Again exploring the male rape victims themselves would have made the current research too broad for a mini-dissertation.

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Appendix A
Interview Questions

1. What is your age?
2. Where were you born?
3. What is your highest academic qualification?
4. How long have you been in the police force?
5. What is your current rank within the police force?
6. Have you been exposed to rape cases?
7. If yes, how many were female and how many were male?
8. Please think for a moment about your upbringing. How would you describe this time in your life? Was it a happy time, difficult time or a sad time?
9. At which stage of your life did you decide to become a law enforcement officer and why?
10. Was it important in your family for boys/men to behave in a certain way and for girls/women to behave in a certain way?

11. Are there different expectations in the police force for male and female law enforcement officers?

12. Do you think male and female victims of rape are treated differently?

13. What attitudes do you feel South African society holds towards male rape victims?

14. How should a male rape victim deal with his rape?

15. Could you please comment on the following quotes (Fairlady, August 29, 2001, p. 27):

15.1. “Most male victims [of rape] don’t want to report their case to the police because they feel it’s their fault for not being strong enough to fight the attacker off. And most are too embarrassed and humiliated to share their story with anybody. Instead they choose to deal with their trauma alone.”

15.2. “Only gay men get raped.”

15.3. “Our justice system previously did not legally recognise male rape”

Are there any other comments you would like to add (additional comments)?

Appendix B

Interviews

Note: Any comments made by the researcher are placed in {} brackets. All the standard questions are the same as is listed in the first interview. From the second interview the questions are numbered accordingly.

Interview 1: Mr. A

Q 1: What is your age?

A: 39

Q 2: Where were you born?

A: Pietersburg

Q 3: What is your highest academic qualification?

A: Standard 10

Q 4: How long have you been in the police force for?

A: 11 years

Q 5: What is your current rank within the police force?

A: Inspector

Q 6: Have you been exposed to rape cases?

A: Yes

Q 7: If yes, how many were female and how many were male?

A: 1 Female, no males

Q 8: Please think for a moment about your upbringing. How would you describe this time in your life? Was it a happy time, difficult time or a sad time?

A: *It was a difficult time. {Howcome} Because I did not reach my goal from the start because my career was not to be a policeman it was to be a preacher. Because of the lack of funds I came to be a policeman. I still want to be a priest I just need some advice about how I can go. {Are you happy that you are a policeman?} Yes I am enjoying it here at the police.*

Q 9: At which stage of your life did you decide to become a law enforcement officer and why?

A: *After I passed my matric I failed to continue with the studies, the short way out was to become a policeman. I joined the police force in 1993.*

Q 10: Was it important in your family for boys/men to behave in a certain way and for girls/women to behave in a certain way?

A: *In my family now or when I grew up? {When you grew up} Yes there were differences, mainly because of the funds. {Were you treated differently?} No we were treated the same.*

Q 11: Are there different expectations in the police force for male and female law enforcement officers?

A: *No. The expectation, I think is the same. {So women are expected to do the same as the men} Yes.*

Q 12: Do you think male and female victims of rape are treated differently?

A: *I can't say if it is different as I have not met a male who has said he has been raped. {If you had do you think they would have been treated differently} If they have been raped they would be treated the same because all of them would be victims, so they would be treated in the same manner.*

Q 13: What attitudes do you feel South African society holds towards male rape victims?

A: *I think the attitude will be negative if a male said he was raped, the attitude will be negative.*

{Why do you think the attitude will be negative?} *Because normally a male, according to the definition of rape, rape is only when there is penetration so I don't think with a male there can be penetration.*

Q 14: How should a male rape victim deal with his rape?

A: *If a male comes to me and tells me he has been raped I will take him to the doctor. He should report it as if he stays with it it will cause a lot of bad things.*

Q 15: Could you please comment on the following quotes?

“Most male victims [of rape] don't want to report their case to the police because they feel it's their fault for not being strong enough to fight the attacker off. And most are too embarrassed and humiliated to share their story with anybody.”

15.1: *They should not do that they should come forward and talk so that they can get help rather than to keep that thing inside. Otherwise they will end up being stressed or even committing suicide. It is not their fault if they have been raped.*

“Only gay men get raped.”

15.2: *No, It is not only the gay male because anybody can be raped. Even I can be walking in the street and get raped and I am not a gay.*

“Our justice system did not legally recognise male rape.”

15.3: *There I do not have any idea. But if the rape was there it should be recognized. {if a male comes in and says he was raped what will you fill in on the report form} We will interview him and question him about how this thing happened and when. If there is penetration then it is rape.*

Additional comments:

A: What I want to say is that males who maybe have been raped and are afraid and embarrassed that is wrong they should come forward and open a case, the police will investigate.

Interview 2: Mr. B

Q 1: 36

Q 2: Johannesburg

Q 3: Matric

Q 4: 15 years

Q 5: Inspector

Q 6: Yes

Q 7: Two

Q 8: *Sometimes it was difficult because I did not grow up with a mother the whole time, first lived with my mother and then I lived with grandmother and then I came back to my grandmother {so you were chopping and changing} yes from school to school. {Why did you go and stay with your grandmother} because my mother was busy working as a sister at that time. She did not have enough time to look after me so I went to stay with my grandmother.*

Q 9: *When I was in Standard I was thinking about what I should do it was not a calling as such it was just a way too assist people through their problems in terms of crime I wanted to see if I could try and make it better for them.*

Q 10: *No my sister and I grew up the same way. {Sometimes parents have different requirements for boys than they have for girls} I was the oldest in the house so I always had to protect my sister. If anything happened to her I was the one who was always there for her, we were very close and I always tried to help her as much as I could.*

Q 11: *Basically yes. {So you would not say that women are treated differently or are they} I don't think so although although in the training maybe they do different things than*

*we do. But here it does not work like that. **{What is different in the training?}** I do not know because we were not present. They probably did the same training as we did such as shooting and things but I am not sure.*

Q 12: *No I think they are treated the same. Because they are the victims of the same crime.*

{That is how you think that they should be treated but how are they treated}

*If something like that happened to me I would like to be treated the same. The same crisis is the same trauma. **{Do you think they are treated the same}** No they are treated differently. I have not been exposed to male rape before so I do not know but I don't think they are treated the same basically. I do not know if the policemen believe them. I would because I believe they are the victims of the same crime as women are.*

Q 13: *I think that most people do not believe it, because they do not think that a man can be raped as men are supposed to be stronger than females so I don't think they believe men who say they have been raped. **{And if the male is raped by a male}** I do not know...*

Q 14: *He should report is...basically. He should talk about it; he must not feel scared to talk about it he must feel free to talk about it. He must not be afraid and he must not be neglected in any way.*

Q 15.1: *I think that that is what most of them think. I agree with that because I think that they will be afraid because if a male gets raped I think he will be afraid to talk to another man. **{Do you think he would be afraid to talk to policemen?}** No because policeman are supposed to be there to protect them. It is a crime and everybody should feel free to report any crime that happened to them. But I think a man will be afraid to report it.*

Q 15.2: *I don't believe that. I don't think that it is only males who are raping males; a man can also be raped by a women. I have not seen it before but I suppose it can happen.*

Q 15.3: *I have not been in situations where males were raped so I do not know but I hope that justice will prevail for them. You always hear about female rape but you never hear about male rape...so I am not sure what the law says about it.*

Additional comments:

I should say that male rape victims should feel free to, they must not be afraid of somebody else. If they are raped they must report it. It is a thing that happens that must be reported and then recorded so that we can see where society is going.

Interview 3: Mr. C

Q 1: 32

Q 2: *Durban*

Q 3: *National Diploma in Police Administration*

Q 4: *14 years*

Q 5: *Inspector*

Q 6: *Yes. I worked for four years in the child protection unit in Durban, there were many cases.*

There were males and females. {Were they children} Yes most were children. {Were there more male or female}

Q 7: *There were more female. {Were the females raped by males?} Yes {and the males} they were raped by females and males.*

Q 8: *I am sure it was a happy childhood.*

Q 9: *Ever since I was a child I was interested in the work, the action basically. It was not a calling as such. But once I joined I did find a deeper meaning. Helping people and helping the community...which sounds funny at times, but the more you work for the police the more you feels that your services are something you are doing for mankind. You feel that you are making a real difference in society.*

Q 10: *I have no sisters but the general attitude was yes. Females behave in a different way and males behave in a different way. {Can you please describe some of the differences}*

I think that the parents had a tighter hold on the females. The parents were more vigilant, should I say, with the females in as much as coming home from school on time and when going out at night. They were always harder on the females, they had to be home at a certain time, they had to

dress appropriate, yes, more or less those kind of things. They were not allowed to go to the clubs, makeup was an issue. A girl must always carry herself with dignity and things like that.

Q 11: *I think yes, I think you know we say that we are on the same platform and you know that there are equal opportunities, but there are problems with regard to certain female duties. This is a fact, I am not being discriminative. There are females who go out and do should I say a man's job, the physical aspect of it. There are females who want the ranks and want the status but who would rather want to do administrative work. So even though they are working for equal rights and status and stuff there is still a disparity with male tasks and female tasks.*

Q 12: *I have no knowledge of that but I think they would be treated differently; which they should not be. {How do you mean differently} The police have come a long way but in certain areas things have not really changed at all. This is a guess as I am not really dealing many rape cases now, in the past in the child protection unit a child was treated like a child whether male or female. But I do think you would get a few policemen that would probably, you know....., would not take it that seriously (male rape victims). It is a possibility. I am not saying it does not happen but yes I think with the education and things things are changing.*

Q 13: *I think presently with education and with exposure a lot of people are taking or having a closer understanding and being more sympathetic or empathic towards male victims of rape. There has been a problem with the definition of rape for many years. In the past it used to be called indecent assault. We refer to child abuse or sexual assault but the crime itself is indecent assault.*

{Do you think that South Africans are negative?} *No...from my experience there has*

been a positive change in the mindset. And I think that more and more people are growing to understand the seriousness of the crime.

Q 14: *Well it depends on what he wants to do, there are channels that are available but obviously it will be his prerogative. If he wants to report the case or if he chooses the legal way in terms of the criminal aspect he should report it at a police station. We have a victim support center, most of us have a victim support/trauma center, where the person/case will be treated confidentially the respective unit will be contacted they will take the person for a medical examination, if not, if they can't be here on time, we will do it. And we have the facilities that are needed to do that. There is always a victim support officer that will give them support and explain the justice system to him and his rights also the rights of the accused. He will take him through the process. That is not being done everywhere but, in most stations yes. **{You mean it is being done here but it is not being done at all the stations}** I have heard of cases or I have heard of incidences where a case not necessarily male victims but also female where cases were not handled properly. A lot of victims whether male or female want a one stop center. Can you imagine being in the predicament and not wanting to go from place to place? You want a place where you get your information and service providers counseling, can be HIV counseling as well. You need to know about your anti retro virals, stuff like that that can be brought to you. So that you know that you have options. This makes it much easier on the person. Basically the person can be referred for counseling, they can go to the hospital and then they can come back and we can show them that this is the process.*

Q 15.1: *I agree with that. I think it is hard being a female, but coming from a male because our society has been very stereotyped for many years. But like I said things are changing, but yes it is*

very difficult to open up especially a male victim. They have to deal with all of the frustrations and, what can I say, they believe that possibly they brought it onto them. It is very difficult to tell other people that as a male you have been raped. Females have always been considered the weaker sex, but yes I can imagine for a male it must be very difficult. I have not been in the situation but it would be difficult for me.

Q 15.2: *I don't agree with that...I think anyone can be raped not just a gay man. I personally don't agree with that. I have never come across a case where a gay man was not raped and that he actually wanted it. It is similar to date rape, the person may report the case for other reasons but why would he do such a thing. There can be other agendas, however, I don't agree with that statement.*

Q 15.3: *Yes, I definitely agree with that statement. I think working in the child protection unit as well it was always a concern and a debate. I do not know what has transpired now with the law, but the definition of rape was basically the penetration of the vagina, which was not consensual. And I mean why it must be just the vagina, I mean if a person is sodomized or male on male, it is rape, but the definition did not say that.*

Additional comments:

I think we need more education around this, definitely. You very rarely have anything published around this. I think from the government we need more material. More exposure to these sorts of things. I think the justice system needs to make its case.

Interview 4: Mr. D

Q 1: 31

Q 2: Orange Free State

Q 3: Matric and police diploma.

Q 4: 9 Years

Q 5: Sergeant

Q 6: Yes, but with females.

Q 7: No I can't count how many but it is not that much.

Q 8: I think that I had a normal childhood, it was not that much happy financially. The situation at home and all that. My father was/is a heavy drinker.

Q 9: While I was still growing I thought about it, but while I was still at school I definitely thought about it. I went to the computer college but my sister knew I needed to do something else. The police forms were out there and I knew it was an option for me. I just decided to try there was no guarantee that I would be able to get in. Then I applied for the police services and I got in.

Q 10: Yes!! In my family there are more girls than there are boys. Yes in the community you see that thing that the boy has to work in the garden. There are certain jobs for men and there are certain manners for them to have that are different to the ones required for girls. Girls are required to do other things.

Q 11: Yes there is still a lot of differences between males and females, there is still a lot of way to go before there can be reel equal treatment from the males and the females. There is still a big gap because there is still that thing that because you are a woman, you cannot do this or this has to be done by the males. Even though they are at the same level or rank or whatever. There is still a

difference especially in the police. Even when they can post if they are potholing outside, when they post someone with a girl they tell her that she is not feeling comfortable as the woman is less likely to be able to protect the male partner. Even though it is just the same when we look at other ladies there are different expectations for the males than there are for the females, definitely!!!

Q 12: *I really do believe so, you know, I have not got one {a male rape victim}. If the guy can just come out now and say you know that I have been raped the police will say no, no, no this can't have happened. They will think that that person must be a "moffie" or someone who has had something to do with it. It is still not that much acceptable although I can say that yes I can understand you know I have seen a lot of televisions to see how other victims behave. Because even themselves when they come I don't think that they come really, thinking that it will be acceptable. Because really when they do come the experience like the assault may be a domestic violence. The man will say I have been beaten up and the police will probably think that this man might be stupid. How could he have let someone beat him. The colleagues will say he is wasting your time he is in fact lying about what has really happened.*

Q 13: *I can say not that half maybe a quarter percent is trying to see that these things are really happening. They are there and that is the way that things are. But I can say that most are not really accepting of it...happening. We have not got much here in our area of it happening, but outside there is a lot of it. It is happening and what I can say is that most of the people are not realizing this.*

Q 14: *I think the issue of being a male or a female is not an important issue if you are feeling hurt you have to speak up. It is not something you need to say like oh, what boys don't cry. If you*

are hurt you just need to say something so that you will receive some kind of help. Much violence out there is not caused by people who are trying to act in a civil way. There is always something behind it especially with boys, you know. Boys think that they need to show others that they tried to defend themselves and that others have got the power now.

Q 15.1: *I can say that I truly believe that because, if you are a male who does get hurt, so in most cases I have said that boys don't cry and that is the thing that makes most males think things like what will say if I confess I have been hurt? What kind of a guy am I how can I have been assaulted? That is why I am saying that deciding to deal with the trauma yourself may lead to a lot of things that are not pleasant.*

Q 15.2: *No this is not true it is just a stigma that they believe that gay men. I don't think so because, like, gay men, if you are a good looking man than that particular male, feels like doing that to you. Rape can happen to anyone not only gay males.*

Q 15.3: *Yes, I think so because it was reported vary scarcely. Most of the people decided to keep quiet. They feel ashamed and think well where can I start. Our justice system was very stereotyped, what can I say? It thought that only woman can report such things and it was expected that others couldn't report such things such as males.*

Additional comments: NA

Interview 5: Mr. E

Q 1: 42

Q 2: *Polekwane*

Q 3: *Standard 9*

Q 4: *20 years*

Q 5: *Inspector*

Q 6: *What do you mean exposed to? {Have you ever dealt with a rape case} Yes, there used to be some people who would come into the station and report that.*

Q 7: *Actually I think that there were only females who reported cases of rape.*

Q 8: *When somebody has been raped? {Interviewer repeats question explaining it to the policeman}. I was happy! Growing up we did not have any problems. My parents did not have a lot of money that is why I had to drop out of school in Standard 9; they did not have enough money to take me further.*

Q 9: *I was still at school in Standard 8, and that is when I decided I want to become a police officer. In our area there was a lot of crime. People were attacking each other, people were stealing from each other. Around our area all of our relatives and so on there was a lot of crime. I thought that maybe if I can be a police officer I might be able to reduce, in some way, the crime. But unfortunately I did not get the post there. I was posted here in Gauteng province. But even now I would like to go and work there as I can see that there is still a lot of crime there. I do not know what power or who is operating that side, you see.*

Q 10: *Yes. In our tradition boys are doing certain things and girls are used to working at home, washing dishes and everything. Boys needed to go out and look after the cattle, sheep and everything.*

Q 11: {is what is expected of the male policemen the same as what is expected from the female policemen} *There is a difference when it comes to work.*

Females are not fit enough to go out and chase the suspects and things like that. So the females must work inside, the males, however, must go out and prevent crime. The males must chase the suspects, as they are fit to do so.

Q 12: *The problem is that I have not come across the problem of a male being raped. I don't know but I think it is different. The females that are raped they come here and get this and that and they go here and there. They {policemen} try to catch the suspect and everything. If a male like me came in with a charge that a female or someone raped him, I think that he will not get.*

But I have not come across that. {do you think that if a male did come in and say that he was raped do you think that he would be treated differently?} *Yes I think it would be different because if a female came in here with a charge of rape we will have to call a female policeman to come in and ask her questions, she will take the lady to the doctor to confirm that she has been raped. But I don't know weather if a male like me says that he has been raped I do not know what he should do. I can ask him questions but I do not know how I can prove that this man has been raped. I don't know!*

Q 13: {what do you think the society thinks about male rape} *I don't know I am not sure. If a male at home comes in and says that he has been raped I will ask how. What proof does he have that he has been raped. {Do you think that a male can be raped}* *No I don't think so. It does happen though in the prisons or when someone is in custody. I have heard*

people who come from the prisons say that there they do things like that but I have not seen it myself.

Q 14: *He can come to the police station and explain how this thing happened. For example he can say that the lady forced me to do something. I don't know. I know that there are some people who call themselves homosexual, there can be rape occurring there. But I don't know how it happens you see.*

Q 15.1: *That is true. That is true. If I come here to the police and say that I have been raped some of the other policemen might say to me that I am a strong man how could I have been raped. They will not believe it. If there are a lot of females and you are alone what can you do, they can be stronger. Even three females can over power a male.*

Q 15.2: *That one no I do not agree. Gays and lesbians do their own business I do not know how.*

Q 15.3: *Yes. Even if you come here to other policemen and you report it they will say that you have been assaulted. If you come and say something like my wife beat me some other policemen will laugh at you. How can you be beaten by a wife, no its not possible. But if a female comes in and says she has been beaten they can understand that. A man can beat a female but when a man comes in and says he was beaten some policemen like in Alexandra will say no and not believe him. They will call him a liar and they will say that a woman can't beat a man.*

Additional comments: NA

Interview 6: Mr. F

Q 1: 32

Q 2: *Cape Town*

Q 3: *Matric & Police Services Training*

Q 4: *13 Years*

Q 5: *Sergeant*

Q 6: *Yes*

Q 7: *I will not be able to tell you that directly, no. {Did you have any male rape cases}*

They were all female; there were no males at all.

Q 8: *It was happy definitely not sad, yes I can say that my upbringing was a happy one. It was difficult because we did not have a lot of money but it was still a happy one. It was not so bad but it was not always happy, it was difficult to grow up in Cape Town.*

Q 9: *I was studying a different degree and after about a year I decided that I did not want to carry on with that. I did not want to carry on with studying in that field. At that time in my life {you were 18?} yes, there was a great deal of crime going on.*

Q 10: *I would say yes, yes. My dad was always very specific about what men should do and what women should do. Men, like me, were required to work. It was different for women.*

{Have you got sisters} *Yes I have got sisters. My dad was strict with all of us. He knew that boys could get into trouble easily but he also knew that girls could get into trouble; he was strict with all of us.*

Q 11: *I would say yes... especially when it comes to what work you actually do while you work here. The women typically go into working inside the stations and the men typically go into working outside. Even at the level of selection of female and female officers they are much harder on the males. The concept is, I think, that males can endure more and can be used therefore in more dangerous situations. Especially in the older police force way there were certain requirements for males that were different for females. Now I am not so sure about how it is and how it works.*

Q 12: *Again I will say yes. I don't think that within the police, within the organization itself, I don't think we have accepted that there are males who are raped. You know we have all actually stereotyped that only females can be raped and that males who are raped are actually gay guys. The police have not accepted that males can be raped and I would have to say yes, they do treat the people differently. They use more sensibility with a female because they believe them. They do not believe the males especially because of the sodomy part of it all. There is a negative mind frame or stereotype, not necessarily with just the police but also with the society at large. Males are also afraid they know that people will in a way laugh at them if they say they have been raped, they know the policeman all talk amongst themselves. That is just how it is essentially. For me as a person and a policeman, seeing a person like that I have a sensitivity and an understanding and I try to treat everybody in the same way. I can't sit here with the mindset of saying this guy must be crazy or that he is a joke. I look at the person's character and I know that I have to report it. You have to notice how the person is and get an idea of his character.*

Q 13: *Society does not accept it first of all, that is just the attitude of people. We see it as a joke. If someone comes to you and says I have been raped by a woman or by a guy, you will think you*

were looking for it and all that. Some people will even start laughing about it. They will go behind the persons back and mock them like, sure he said he was raped. People just start laughing about it and it becomes an absolute joke. Yes, I think the general public sees it like that.

Q 14: *Well there are certain things that need to be looked at when a person says they have been raped. First of all, the person should tell the police, they should report it. Every situation should be reported to the police. Everything should be reported to the police so that they can start to look at the facts surrounding it. The person should definitely stand up for his rights. He should come forward. If he has been raped, sexually abused, whatever it was the guys need to come forward.*

We as a society urge women to come forward and we need to urge men to do the same. No matter what their lifestyle. I think that as long as people are exposed to it they will become sensitive to it. People need to come forward to make others more aware.

Q 15.1: *I agree with it to a certain extent. We do not all have the physical capability to fight other people off. It's not so easy some people can deal with it and certain others can't.*

Q 15.2: *I do not agree with that. I have heard of a few instances where a group of women have attacked a man. But the media makes it out to be a joke. There was one instance where a guy said he was raped and the news made it sound like he was lying. So it is not only gay men that get raped, all people can and do get raped. The media needs to understand that.*

Q 15.3: *This was true but the law and the constitution are changing. We are an open society. The constitution does not differentiate between people it does not say that males should be treated this way and females should be treated in a different way. All people should be treated in the same*

way. So I think that the justice system needs to re-write the statute. We are all the same and we should all be seen as the same and treated in the same way by the law.

Additional comments: NA

Appendix C
Consent Form

Date: _____
Researcher: Bryan D. Hellmann (Intern Clinical Psychologist)
Location: _____
L.E. Officer: _____
Interview #: _____ Tape #: _____

Dear Law Enforcement Officer

The research I am conducting is part of my training requirements for the degree of Masters in Clinical Psychology at the University of Pretoria. The intention of this research is to better understand how law enforcement officers think about male victims of rape. The purpose is to provide a clearer understanding of this phenomenon, as the incidence of male rape as well as reporting of male rape offences, is on the rise. The researcher (Bryan Hellmann) will ask you some open-ended questions.

It is essential for you to understand the following:

You have the right to refuse to be interviewed.
Everything you say is confidential.

