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# About the Journal

## JOURNAL PURPOSE

The purpose of the *Ngenani - Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Journal of Community Engagement and Societal Transformation Review and Advancement*, is to provide a forum for community engagement and outreach.

## CONTRIBUTION AND READERSHIP

Sociologists, demographers, psychologists, development experts, planners, social workers, social engineers and economists, among others whose focus is on community development.

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## SCOPE AND FOCUS

The journal is a forum for the discussion of ideas, scholarly opinions and case studies of community outreach and engagement. Communities are both defined in terms of people found in a given locale and defined cohorts, like the children, the youth, the elderly and those living with a disability. The strongest view is that getting to know each community or sub-community is a function of their deliberate participation in matters affecting them by the community itself. The journal is produced bi-annually.

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Articles must be original contributions, not previously published and should not be under consideration for publishing elsewhere.

**Manuscript Submission:** Articles submitted to the *Ngenani - Zimbabwe Ezekiel Guti University Journal of Community Engagement and Societal Transformation* are reviewed using the double-blind peer review system. The author's name(s) must not be included in the main text or running heads and footers.

**A total number of words:** 5000-7000 words and set in 12-point font size width with 1.5 line spacing.

**Language:** British/UK English

**Title:** must capture the gist and scope of the article

**Names of scholars:** beginning with the first name and ending with the surname

**Affiliation of scholars:** must be footnoted, showing the department and institution or organisation.

**Abstract:** must be 200 words

**Keywords:** must be five or six containing words that are not in the title

**Body:** Where the scholars are more than three, use *et al.*,

Italicise *et al.*, *ibid.*, words that are not English, not names of people or organisations, etc. When you use several scholars confirming the same point, state the point and bracket them in one bracket and ascending order of dates and alphabetically separated by semi-colon e.g. (Falkenmark, 1989, 1990; Reddy, 2002; Dagdeviren and Robertson, 2011; Jacobsen *et al.*, 2012).

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# A CRITICAL REVIEW OF MEN'S EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL ASSAULTS: THEIR PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS PERPETRATORS AND COPING STRATEGIES

NGONIDZASHE MUTANANA<sup>1</sup>, MQEMANE TSHABABA<sup>2</sup> AND PATRICK SENDERAYI<sup>3</sup>

## Abstract

*The article critically reviews empirical findings and assesses the state of the literature canon on sexual assaults on men, their perceptions towards the perpetrators and coping strategies. The study is premised against the background of male sexual abuse. These male victims need psychological help to help them move on. Based on these conclusions, the study recommends that organisations that deal with male sexual violence must work together to raise awareness campaigns on the different types of sexual assaults that are currently happening among men. These organisations must also educate men to report their offenders to police and other institutions within the criminal justice system in time. Organisations that help male survivors must be reinforced with qualified psychotherapists to ensure male survivors are assisted and these male survivors must be educated on the different recommended methods that can be used to deal with trauma that is associated with sexual assault.*

**Keywords:** *coping strategy, men, perception, perpetration, sexual assault, survivorship, policy*

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## INTRODUCTION

There is a knowledge lacuna on male sexual abuse particularly in developing countries such as Zimbabwe. Conclusions drawn from the reviewed literature show that several men are facing various types of sexual assault. Forcible sodomy, forced object penetration, unwanted sexual touching and unwanted or coerced sexual contact are some of the types of sexual assault men face. It was also gathered that these abused male survivors can deal with the trauma in multiple ways. These include: opening up about what happened to the victim, coping up with feelings of guilt and shame, preparing for flashbacks and upsetting memories, reconnecting with the body and feelings and staying connected and nurturing oneself. These abused male survivors have some negative perceptions towards their abusers. They continue to blame the attacker for their body weight and psychological problems. Research and understanding of male survivors of sexual assault is forty years behind than that of female survivors (McDonald and Tijerino, 2013). As such, the study of this issue is crucial. Sexual victimisation is often thought of as a women's issue, yet, as is demonstrated in this review of literature, there are indeed, many males who also suffer from sexual victimisation. In the limited amount of literature that does exist, there is no real consensus on what constitutes sexual assault against men.

Definitions range from verbal persuasion to violent physical force (Peterson *et al.*, 2011). The research and the subsequent data that exists is dependent upon the definition of what constitutes assault, the lack of which results in inconsistent data on the prevalence of this issue. For example, the percentage of men among community samples in the United States when sexual assault was narrowly defined as "anal penetration obtained through physical force perpetrated by a female partner" was 0.2% (Tjaden and Thoennes, 2000). When the definition included "any sexual contact obtained by a woman using verbal pressure, exploitation of intoxication, or physical force," the

percentage was 30% (Kerbs and Jolly, 2007). Yet, 80% of male sexual assaults is committed by other males (Foster, 2011), while it is also has observed that as many as 1 in 6 men experience sexual assault before the age of 18 (The 1 in 6 Statistic, 2013).

A universally accepted definition of what constitutes male sexual assault is needed. To complicate the issue of getting a true sense of the prevalence of male sexual assault, "...men who are sexually assaulted are highly unlikely to report their victimisation or to seek medical or mental health services" (Tewksbury, 2007: 31). Many crisis centres either explicitly refuse to serve male victims, or are highly insensitive to their needs (Zeng *et al.*, 2006). One study of service availability reports that only five percent of programmes that serve male victims have any programmes or services specifically designed for men (Derek, 2019). As such, it is not hard to understand why so few men seek support - this represents an area in need of improvement that may be addressed through further research and education that would be of benefit for both survivors and service providers alike. Family Services of Peel is the lead service provider for male survivors in the Central region of Ontario, with eleven other agencies also providing services for male survivors; with online and telephone counselling also available (McDonald and Tijerino, 2013).

There are many myths that exist that make it difficult for males to disclose instances of sexual assault and that perpetuate the stigmatisation attached to the topic. For example, due to stereotypical gender constructions, men are expected to be 'strong' at all times. Therefore, they should not be in a situation where they are taken advantage of, with Kerbs and Jolly (2007) reasoning that men may be less likely to report negative consequences because of sexual assault due to male gender role expectations.



In this study, the researchers carried out a review of literature related to coping strategies adopted by male survivors of sexual assault. The following areas will be covered in this study; types of sexual assault experienced by men, methods that are used by male survivors to deal with trauma of sexual assault, perceptions of survivors towards the perpetrators of sexual assault and various dimensions of coping mechanisms that can be used by male survivors of sexual assault.

Sexual assault can happen to anyone and this includes boys and men (Rainn, 2021). What it means is that it does not matter your age, sexual orientation or gender identity, one can be sexually abused. These men and boys who have been sexually abused may have the same feelings as that of girls and women who have suffered the same consequences. However, these boys and men and boys who have been sexually abused may have additional challenges as compared to girls and women (Rainn, 2021). As such, the research decided to begin with an exposition of the different types of sexual assault that are experienced by men. These include but are not limited to forcible sodomy, forcible object penetration, unwanted sexual touching, unwanted or coerced sexual contact.

Forcible sodomy is anal or oral sex against a person's will (Marshal, 2021). A legal organisation in the United States of America describes forcible sodomy as sexual interaction that involves genitals of one person and the anus and the mouth another person against one's will, regardless of the gender (US Legal, 2021). Sodomy also includes any penetration, no matter how slight of the anus of the affected person by the penis of another (ibid.). This is accomplished by force against the person's will. In some countries, sodomy is regarded as an offence that could attract a life in prison sentence. In Virginia, for instance, sodomy is regarded under Virginia Code Section 18.2-67.1 as an engagement in sexual acts that include oral stimulation by the penis, stimulation of female genitals with tongue or lips, stimulation of the

anus with the tongue or lips or anal intercourse (Shapiro, 2021). In this Zimbabwe, the crime of forcible sodomy carries a punishment similar to the crime of rape.

In Zimbabwe, sodomy is described as a situation where a male person, with the consent another person knowingly performs with that other person anal sexual intercourse or any act involving physical contact other than sexual contact that would be regarded by a reasonable person to be an indecent act (CLCR Act, 2012). From the Zimbabwean perspective, sodomy is regarded as a crime even if there is consent between two males, whereas in some other countries like Virginia and the United States of America, sodomy is only regarded as an offence if there is forced participation in the act by another part. Thus, sodomy involves penetration of the mouth or the anus of another person. Men are the ones who are mostly affected with this type of sexual assault, particularly boys who cannot consent.

Forced object penetration implies forced sexual penetration using a foreign object (Law Office of NIC COCIS, 2021). In some countries, this act must be committed with another person without the consent of the victim using duress, violence or threats of bodily injury. A law in Virginia clearly defines this crime, as object sexual penetration. This is an act that involves penetration of another person's anus or labia majora (Leary, 2016). The object that is used can either be animate or inanimate. The crime suffices even if the victim is the assailant's spouse. In several countries including Zimbabwe, forced sexual penetration is regarded as a crime unless this is done for medical purposes. In summary, it can be observed how this crime is committed against men if an object is forced on his anus. Several men have experienced this form of abuse but have not bothered to report.

Unwanted sexual touching is any sexual touching that occurs upon an individual of an opposite sex without the explicit consent of the

recipient (Balfour, 2020). In other words, no one has the right to touch another person's body without his or her consent. As such, if a female person makes these unwanted sexual advances towards a male person, it becomes a sexual assault. As shown by Balfour (2020), these sexual touching can happen to anyone and anywhere. Unwanted touching ranges from offensive shoulder patting to outright sexual assault (Derek, 2019) and to be considered as illegal sexual harassment, the contact must be offensive and should as well be unwelcome (Derek, 2019). In essence, the behaviour by the offender must be regarded as undesirable or offensive.

Unwanted or coerced sexual contact is an offence that can be committed by either a female (upon a man) or a male person (upon a female person). Sexual coercion is considered as any sexual activity that happens after being pressured in non-physical ways (Kathleen, 2019). Sexual contacts include being worn down by someone who reputedly ask for sex (Kathleen, 2019) and being promised things that are not true into having sex (Kathryn, 2019). The victim may also be threatened with irrelevant rumours so that he or she may be coerced into sex. Authority figures have also been identified as some potential figures that may coerce victims into unwanted sex (Kathryn, 2019). These include bosses at work, professors, property managers etc. Put simply, an individual is coerced into a sexual relationship that he or she does not want because he or she will be under threat.

Researchers have discovered that at least 1 in 6 men have experienced sexual abuse or sexual assault. This could be during their early childhood or during their adulthood stage. A study that was carried out by the U.S Centre for Disease Control has observed that about 16% of males were sexually abused by the age of 18 (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). Another national study in the United States of America reflects that about 14.2% of men in the country reported to have been sexually abused before they reached the age of 18 years (Briere and Elliot, 2003).

Another study in the Boston area has observed that about 18% of men were sexually abused before they reached the age of 16 years (Lisak, Hopper and Song, 1996). A 1990 study showed that U.S adults sexually assaulted were about 16% before the age of 18 years (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1990). A study that was conducted in 1998 on male childhood sexual abuse observe how these problems of sexual assault were common, but they were under reported, under recognised and under treated (Holmes and Slap, 1998).

Studies have also revealed that men who have experienced these sexual assaults are at greater risk than those that have not because of serious mental health challenges. These challenges include: symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and depression (Wildom, 1999), alcoholism and drug abuse (Felitti and Nordenberg, Williamson and Spitz, 1998), suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts (Felitti and Nordenberg, Williamson and Spitz, 1998), problems with intimate relationships (Lisak and Luster, 1994) and underachievement both at work and at school. From the foregoing discussion, it has been observed how men, just like women, experience sexual violence in the community. The biggest challenge, as indicated by some researchers, is that sexual assault on men is under-reported, under-estimated and under-treated. Male survivors of sexual assault do not normally report their experiences to the police or organisations that assist sexual victims like the Adult Rape Clinic. Perhaps it is because of their perceived notions of masculinity in the community and it would appear some are embarrassed to make these reports. Nevertheless, some male survivors have reported the sexual assault experiences.

As highlighted in the previous section, several men who have experienced sexual assault, suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and they end up being involved in self-destructive behaviours. In this section, the researcher reviews various methods that have been recommended to assist male victims to recover from the sexual

trauma. These include opening up about what happened, coping up with feelings of guilt and shame, preparing for flashbacks and upsetting memories, reconnecting with your body and feelings, staying connected and nurturing oneself.

It can be a mammoth task for a male survivor to admit that he was sexually assaulted (Derek, 2019). What it shows is that there is some stigma that is attached to these experiences that makes the male survivor feel weak. The male survivor may also be wondering how other people will react towards his report (Wildom, 1999). There are several questions that come to the mind of the affected person and Wildom (*ibid.*) highlights some of these questions that may affect male. Will the community judge me? Will the community look at me differently? As such, some of these male survivors will downplay what could have happened to them and keep it as a secret. But all the same, researchers such as Derek (2019) and Wildom (1999) have argue that keeping the sexual assault as a secret will result in one denying himself help that is necessary and reinforcing victimhood.

The male survivor should reach out to some he trusts (Leary, 2016). Some male victims will think that failing to talk about the sexual assault will imply it did not really happen and that is not true. Healing does not occur when one is avoiding the truth and hiding also adds feelings of shame (*ibid.*). As scary as it might be to open up, opening up may set the male survivor of sexual assault free. However, some researchers such as Kathleen (2019) have recommended that one should be careful when selecting an individual to talk to about his challenges. It thus recommended to select someone who is supportive, an empathetic person and someone who is calm. If the male survivor thinks he does not have such an ideal person, he or she can make use of organisations, such as Adult Rape Clinic in Zimbabwe and talk to a therapist.

The male survivor is also encouraged to challenge his sense of helplessness and isolation (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). This is necessary because, as shown by Dube *et al.* (2005), trauma can leave someone with feelings of powerlessness and vulnerability. As such, it becomes important to remind oneself that he has the strengths and coping skills that can pool him through the difficult times. One way of reclaiming one's sense is to help other men who have been sexually assaulted or reaching out to a friend that is in need.

Male survivors of sexual assault may also consider joining support groups of sexual abuse (Kathleen, 2019). These support groups will help one to feel less isolated and alone. These support groups will also help the male survivors to provide valuable information on how to cope up with the symptoms and plan towards recovery. If one is unable to find a support group, then he can look for an online group. In summary, opening help an individual to accept his condition. The male survivor will quickly recover from his condition that may affect for the rest of his life if he decides to keep the sexual assault as secret. As such male survivors are encouraged to come out as a coping strategy after the sexual assault.

Even when the male survivor intellectually understand that he is not to blame for the sexual assault, he may still struggle with the sense of guilt and shame (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1990). These feelings of shame or guilt normally arise soon after the sexual assault or years after the sexual assault. However, if the male survivor acknowledges that he was not responsible for the sexual assault, it becomes easier to accept that he is not responsible. The male survivor simply needs to acknowledge that he did not bring the sexual assault upon himself and that he has nothing to be ashamed about (Felitti *et al.*, 1998).

These feelings of guilt and shame normally stem the following misconceptions. The male survivor might feel guilt from the fact that

he did not stop the assault from happening (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). Many male survivors have argued that they felt frozen during the attack. These male survivors need to be encouraged to judge themselves about the sexual attacks. They should understand that they tried their best to stop the sexual assault in the circumstances and that if they were able, they would have stopped the assault.

These feelings of guilt emanate from the fact the male survivor trusted the person he was not supposed to trust (Briere and Elliot, 2003). This violation of trust is one of the biggest challenges that can be handled by anyone affected. One may begin to start questioning himself about missing warning signs before the sexual attack. The male survivor therefore needs to be reminded that the attacker is the only one to blame. As such, the attacker is the one who should have these feelings of guilt and shame, not the male survivor. Some feelings of guilt may emanate from the fact that the male victim may begin to blame himself that he was drunk and not cautious enough (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). Regardless of the circumstances, the male survivor needs to realise that the perpetrator is the only one to blame. The male survivor should realise that he did not ask for the sexual attack and did not deserve it. As such, the responsibility should be assigned where it belongs; that is on the attacker.

When the male survivor goes through an event that is stressful, his body may temporarily go into a fight or flight mode (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). When this threat is gone, the body may begin to calm down. However, traumatic experiences such as sexual assault can result in some nervous system that may result in the male survivor to become stuck in a state of high alert. The male survivor, like any other rape survivor becomes hypersensitive to the smallest stimuli. Male survivors may be affected with flashbacks, nightmares and intrusive memories that are extremely common particularly within the few months after the assault. If these nervous systems remain stuck for a

long time and one develops a post-traumatic stress disorder, they last for a very long time (Dube *et al.*, 2005).

To reduce these stress flashbacks and upsetting memories, the male survivor should try to anticipate and prepare triggers (Holmes and Slap, 1998). These common triggers may include anniversary dates and people or places that are associated with cases of sexual assault. The male survivor can as well try common triggers such as smells, sounds and sights that are associated with sexual assaults. If one is in a position to understand triggers that may cause an upsetting reaction, this will help to understand what is happening and to take steps that calm the situation down.

The male survivor may also pay attention to the body's danger signals (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). The body and the emotions may give the male survivor clues when he starts to feel stressed and unsafe. These clues may include feelings of tenseness, holding one's breath and racing thoughts, shortness of breath, dizziness and nausea. The male survivor may also take immediate steps to self-soothe (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). If he notices any of the symptoms, it becomes important to clearly act to calm himself down before they spiral out of control. One of the quickest ways and most effective to calm anxiety and panic is to slow down breathing.

Since the nervous system is in a hypersensitive state following the sexual assault, one may start to try numbing himself or avoiding associations with the trauma that he is experiencing. However, as shown by Holmes and Slap (1998), one cannot selectively numb these feelings. When an individual shut down these unpleasant sensations, he will also shut down self-awareness and capacity for his happiness. Eventually, Briere and Elliot (2003) observe how the individual ends up being disconnected both physically and emotionally.



Dube and Whitefield (2005) posit that signs that an individual is avoiding numbing include but are not limited to feeling physically shut down, feelings of separation of the body or surroundings, having some troubles in concentrating and remembering things, use of stimulants, risky activities or physical pain to feel alive or to counteract empty feelings inside the body, compulsively taking drug, escaping through fantasies and daydreams and feeling detached. For one to recover from the sexual assault, he definitely needs reconnect his body with the feelings (Dube and Whitefield, 2005). This can be achieved through rhythmic movement, mindfulness meditation and messaging (*ibid.*).

It is very common for one to feel isolated or disconnected from other people in the community following this sexual assault (Finkelhor *et al.*, 1990). Some men are tempted to withdraw from social activities or from their loved ones. However, Finkelhor, Hotaling, Lewis and Smith (1990) encourage these individuals to stay connected to life and towards people who care about them. What it means is that support that is provided by fellow individuals is vital towards the recovery of the victim and here, these survivors need to be reminded that they do not have to keep on talking about what could have happened. Simply put, having fun times and laughing with people who care about you can be a healing process.

To this end, male survivors are encouraged to participate in social activities, to reconnect with old friends and to also make new friends (Cameron *et al.*, 2011). Even if the affected individual does not like the event, he is encouraged to feel like the events. These survivors should as well reconnect with friends they used to have fun with at school, workplace etc. Reconnecting with old friends does not necessarily mean they are unable to make new friends. These new friends are an asset in their lives.

Healing from sexual trauma is an ongoing process that may be gradual (Bisson *et al.*, 2015). What it shows is that the healing process is not an overnight event. The memories of sexual assault may also fail to disappear completely. As such, life can be very difficult for men who have suffered from these sexual assaults.. These men may benefit from relaxation techniques if they are having trouble relaxing and letting down the guard. To this end, these men are encouraged to be smart about media consumption, to take care of themselves physically and to avoid alcohol and drugs consumption (Campell *et al.*, 2005). What it means is that such individuals should avoid watching programmes that can trigger their bad flashbacks and bad memories. It becomes important to exercise regularly, to eat the right food and to get plenty of sleep. These individuals should also avoid taking alcohol and drugs because this can contribute towards their problems.

Some researchers suggest that sexual assault should be considered as a contributing factor towards the body weight of the victim (Shelagh and Gotovac, 2009). These scholars are suggesting a correlation between sexual history of an individual and his or her body weight. What this implies is that an individual can be affected psychologically with his or her sexual history, particularly he or she has been sexually abused. In their findings Shelagh and Gotovac (2009) contend that there is an intersection between the body of the sexually assaulted individual and sexual history. The victim will continuously blame the perpetrator and such, these victims continue to show attitudes that are correlated with the victim blaming attitudes. However, in this study, male participants held the perpetrator less responsible than did the female participants. Be that as it may, body weight has to be considered as a contributing factor towards rape survivors. What it shows is that these victims need psychological help in the aftermath of the sexual assault.

In another study, Damon *et al.* (2009) investigated the effects of offender motivation, victim gender and participant gender on

perceptions of rape victims and offenders. These scholars examined if knowledge of motivation of the offender actually influenced the perceptions of the victims and the responsibility of the perpetrator towards the sexual assault. In their findings, Damon *et al.* (2009) show that stimulus described a sexual assault and victims recommended longer prison sentence on these perpetrators. The study also concluded that an offender's motivation for sexual assault can as well influence the perceptions of victim towards the responsibility of the sexual assault upon the offender. In brief, victims blame the offender towards the sexual assault and it is against this background that these victims were suggesting longer sentences towards the accused persons.

Appleboom and Rentoul (1997) also investigated the psychological impact of sexual assault and rape on men. The researchers observed that very little attention is paid to male victims of sexual assault during their adulthood. The scholars also take note of the fact that recent laws have acknowledged the existence of rape and sexual assault on men. As such, it becomes necessary for governments to clearly identify the number of male victims of sexual assault to allow those who have been sexually abused and are failing to come out to make their reports. However, the two researchers argue that there is little empirical research on the psychological impact of sexual assault upon these male victims.

The study by Appleboom and Rentoul (1997) discovered that male victims are less likely to report than their female counterparts are. The most pervasive theme arising from this study is that these male victims are likely to reconcile their masculine identity with their experience of being a sexual victim. There are also issues that concern the treatment of the male victims once they report their case to the police. Be that as it may, these male victims are most likely to be affected psychologically by these sexual assaults and this increases their hatred towards the perpetrators if the matter is not reported to the police. As

compared to women who find it easy to come out, these male victims are most likely to be psychologically affected and continuously hate these perpetrators.

Studies also reveal that help-seeking behaviours of sexually assaulted men contribute towards the perceptions of these male victims towards the offender. Sexual assault of men is considered as a serious public health issue that is underreported and not recognised (Alavanzo and Masho, 2010). Despite the serious deleterious effects of sexual assault, most male victims are most likely not to seek professional help, for a problem that affects them psychologically. These men may end up seeking justice quietly and some cases even murdering the offender. The study clearly shows that most of these male victims are failing to seek professional help. However, those victims with physical injuries or under threat are most likely to seek help (*ibid.*). The question that this study now seeks to answer is: Does this poor help-seeking behaviour by these sexually assaulted men have some contributions towards the perceptions of the male victims towards the perpetrator? As highlighted earlier on, if these victims are not assisted psychologically this can contribute towards their behaviours. Studies are now focusing on the perceptions of male victims towards sexual assaults. As highlighted by Rodgers and Davies (2006), sexually assaulted men have a negative attitude towards the attackers. The scholars also consider the perceptions of both male and female victims and observe that their attitudes are almost similar. Male victims strongly blame the attackers for their challenges in life.

In some cases, these victims would have been sexually abused at a tender age. These victims continuously blame the attackers for their livelihood challenges that are considered to have been caused especially during their formative years. In another study Davies and Rodgers (2007) critically analyse perceptions of victims and perpetrators in a depicted child sexual abuse case. In their findings,

these scholars discover a correlation between sexual abuse, gender and age factors. This study concludes that sexual assault and age are correlated, even though the women are the most affected. In the adulthood stage, the victim is continuously affected with the sexual assault that happened when he was young.

There is also a controversy towards the recovered memory after the abuse (Colangelo, 2009). From his observations, Colangelo (2009) argues that the recovered memory controversy among these sexually affected victims has been ongoing for a long time. There are some disagreements over the veracity of the forgotten memories of the childhood sexual abuse and whether can be addressed during psychological help. This clearly shows that these sexually abused male victims will continuously blame the attacker for their condition. As such, psychological therapy becomes a need, but all the same the researcher will try to find out whether these childhood sexual abuse memories recover on their own or after psychological help.

In summary, it can be clearly seen that just like the female victims, these male victims continuously blame the attackers for their challenges. This may affect the victims physically and psychologically. They continue to blame the attacker for their body weight and psychological problems. Eventually, these male victims need psychological help to help them to move on.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on these empirical findings, the researchers conclude that; there are different types of sexual assaults currently being experienced by several men. These include forcible sodomy, forced object penetration, unwanted sexual touching and unwanted or coerced sexual contact. These abused male survivors are encouraged to deal with the trauma of sexual assault in various ways. This include opening up about what happened to the victim, coping up with feelings of guilt and shame,

preparing for flashbacks and upsetting memories, reconnecting with the body and feelings, staying connected and nurturing oneself. These abused have some negative perceptions towards their abusers. They continue to blame the attacker for their body weight and psychological problems. Eventually, these male victims need psychological help to help them to move on. Based on these conclusions, the researchers recommend that:

- Organisations that deal with male sexual violence must work together to raise awareness campaigns on the different types of sexual assaults that are currently happening among men. These organisations must also educate men to make reports against their offenders in time.
- Organisations that help male survivors must be enhance with qualified psychotherapists to ensure male survivors are assisted.
- Male survivors must be educated on the different recommended methods that can be used to deal with trauma that is associated with sexual assault.
- Male survivors must as well be encouraged to make their reports in time and to avoid seeking justice secretly.

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