

# Frequency of Sexual Crimes that have been Subject to Forensic Psychiatry in Bulgaria

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**Abstract:** *Sexual abuse involves rape, defined as the forced penetration of the vagina or anus using a penis, other part of the body, or an object. Data on the incidence of sexual offenses varies widely, depending on the culture of the country and the laws. The object of the study are 189 persons accused of perpetrators of sexual crimes and became the subject of forensic psychiatric assessment for the period January 2010 to December 2019 in Central Northern Bulgaria. Of those surveyed, 112 (59%) raped their victim and 77 (41%) committed fornication with the victim. Among the studied group, the most common sexual crimes are fornication with a woman / girl - 98 (52%), followed by rape of a woman / girl - 65 (35%). The percentage of sex crimes with a male / male victim is almost the same - 14 (7%) fornication with a male / male and 12 (6%) rape of a male / male. There is no data in the general world literature on the frequency of fornication and rape as separate sexual crimes, in most studies they are studied as a combined group.*

**Keywords:** forensic psychiatric, rape, fornication

## 1. Introduction

Sexual behavior, including sexual violence, occurs as a result of various factors. According to Tackett J. and Krueger R. (2011), there are many pathways leading to the realization of impulses, including aggression [1].

Sexual violence is defined as any unwanted sexual act or attempt to commit one. It also includes unwanted comments or actions of a sexual nature directed against another person and using coercion, regardless of the relationship with the victim, and specific circumstances that are not limited to the home or workplace. Coercion can span the entire spectrum from verbal to physical aggression. In addition to physical aggression, it may include psychological "intimidation", extortion or other threats, such as threats of physical injury, dismissal or refusal to hire a job. Coercion is also observed in cases where the victim is unable to give consent, such as cases in which she is under the influence of alcohol or other psychoactive substances, unconscious or mentally deficient to understand the situation [2].

Gonçalves R. and Vieira S. (2004) note that despite the predominant involvement of women, victims of sexual crimes can be people of both sexes, as well as of all ages [3].

Sexual abuse involves rape, defined as the forced penetration of the vagina or anus using a penis, other part of the body, or an object. Attempting to do so is referred to as attempted rape. Rape of a person by two or more perpetrators is defined in English literature as "gang rape"[3].

There is no single definition of what sexual violence is. Legal definitions of sexual offenses vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. A sexual crime committed in one country may not be classified as such in another. Legislation in different countries also differs on whether rape should involve physical force or threats of physical injury, etc. [4] In fact, sexual crimes are those defined as such by the law in force in a particular country or culture [3].

## 2. Literature Survey

According to S. Bochev (1986) in Bulgaria rape is observed in 63% of forensic psychiatric examinations of sexual crimes. In 26% of these examinations concern fornication performers most frequently with children, and the remaining 11% - for exhibitionist actions [5].

A study by Alpha Research, provided in 2011, shows that 4% of adult Bulgarian women have been raped [6].

If we assume according to the data of the Bulgarian National Statistical Institute that there are about 3 million adult Bulgarian women in our country, this shows that between 100 and 120 thousand compatriots have been the object of sexual violence. Between 8 and 10% is the hidden share of women victims of sexual violence. More than half of the respondents or 54% recognize sexual violence as an extremely serious problem [6].

According to Eurobarometer data - over 90% of European citizens define sexual violence as a very serious problem, which means that its underestimation in Bulgarian conditions is an indirect indicator of lower engagement and familiarity of Bulgarian citizens with the problem. Women in Bulgaria associate sexual violence with forms of physical assault - an act of physical rape or attempted rape (nearly 80%), trafficking in women for sexual exploitation - 67%, and domestic violence - 57% [6]. Voyeurism, exhibitionism, pornography, hints of appearance, however, are extremely poorly recognized by Bulgarian women as a type of sexual aggression, while in the European Union these forms of assault are very precisely defined as violence against the person.

Alpha Research's study also shows that victims have been sexually abused at home - 55%, at work - 48%, public place - 57% [6].

Creating complete and accurate sex crime statistics is a challenge. It should be borne in mind that the figures do not necessarily reflect the actual number of violent sexual acts.

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Rather, they show the extent to which such crimes have been reported and registered by the police [4]. Some of the reasons influencing the incomplete information about this type of crime are: absence of physical injuries; the aggressor is a close relative of the victim; the victim is a child or adolescent; has a mental disorder; fear of the aggressor's reaction; feelings of discomfort, compromise and humiliation [7].

The majority of sexual crimes have not been detected or are unsolved cases [8]. According to Kilpatrick D. et al. (2003), Tjaden P. et al. (2006) and Truman J. et al. (2012) only between 5% and 25% of rapes were reported to law enforcement [9,10,11]. Of those raped over the age of 18, only 19.1% of women and 12.9% of men reported the case to the police [12]. Only 12% of women in higher education who have been raped report a crime [10]. Between 2006 and 2010, about 65% of rapes and sexual assaults remained unregistered [13].

Young victims who know or are in some way acquainted with the perpetrator are the least likely to report the crime [9]. In addition, 46% of sexual assaults committed by a relative or intimate partner were not reported [13].

According to Finkelhor D. et al. (1990) between 10% and 16% of men and between 20% and 27% of women have been victims of childhood sexual abuse [14]. Baltieri DA et al. (2008) conducted a study in England and found that one in ten women had already been a victim of sexual violence by the age of 16 and less than one in five incidents of sexual abuse of women led to a police investigation [15].

Rapists have protective behavior and admit to fewer victims than they actually have. N. Slicner (2007) interviewed 99 men who had been in prison following a rape conviction. In the initial conversation, they admitted a total of 136 victims. After therapy and a second interview with them, the total number of victims they admitted was 959 [16].

### 3. Methodology

The object of the study are 189 persons accused of perpetrators of sexual crimes and became the subject of forensic psychiatric assessment for the period January 2010 to December 2019 in Central Northern Bulgaria.

#### Research methods

The current research uses sociological methods to gather information - interviews, observations, research of forensic and medical documents, where individuals cannot be identified directly or indirectly, or identification would not harm the subject.

None of the procedures in the study poses a risk to the lives and health of patients.

Each of the study participants received detailed oral and written explanations before voluntarily and personally signing and dating Informed Consent to participate in the study. Statistical methods.

A statistician conducts data research analysis, using specialised software statistical packages for STATGRAPHICS; SPSS and EXCEL for Windows.

### 4. Result and Discussion

A total of 189 people accused of committing sexual crimes who were subject to forensic psychiatric evaluation were examined. Of those surveyed, 112 (59%) raped their victim and 77 (41%) committed fornication with the victim.

Among the studied group, the most common sexual crimes are fornication with a woman / girl - 98 (52%), followed by rape of a woman / girl - 65 (35%). The percentage of sex crimes with a male / male victim is almost the same - 14 (7%) fornication with a male / male and 12 (6%) rape of a male / male.

After statistical processing, a correlation was found between the age group 54 - 63 years and fornication with a girl / woman ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2 = 45.302$ ;  $Df = 10$ ), as well as a correlation between the age group 14 - 23 years and rape of a girl / woman ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2 = 35.467$ ;  $Df = 10$ ).

A correlation was observed between the accused for committing sexual crimes without children and fornication with a boy / man ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2 = 16.006$ ;  $Df = 2$ ) and violent sexual intercourse with a boy / man ( $p < 0.05$ ;  $\chi = 10.382$ ;  $Df = 2$ ). A correlation was found between the subjects who started masturbating over 14 years of age and fornication with a girl / woman ( $p < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2 = 14.452$ ;  $Df = 2$ ).

There is a correlation between the bisexual orientation of those accused of committing sexual crimes and fornication with a boy / man ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2 = 80.566$ ;  $Df = 4$ ) and forced anal penetration of a boy / man ( $p < 0.001$ ;  $\chi^2 = 72.088$ ;  $Df = 4$ ).

The analysis of the data shows a correlation between the absence of crimes of a general nature and the commission of rape ( $p < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2 = 7.410$ ;  $Df = 2$ ).

A correlation was found between those accused of committing sexual crimes suffering from somatic diseases and fornication with a girl / woman ( $p < 0.05$ ;  $\chi^2 = 11.268$ ;  $Df = 2$ ).

Of all the 189 sex offenders charged, 2 (1%) killed their rape victims and 2 (1%) killed their victims in fornication with them.

There is no single definition of sexual crime. This is determined by various cultural factors, i.e. from the attitude of a society to this type of crime. The legislation in each country defines the parameters of these encroachments and the respective criminal liability of the perpetrators. However, in some cases there may be differences in society's perception of what sexual violence is and how it violates regulations.

Although nowadays there is access to a large amount of information from various sources on the frequency of sexual crimes, it does not reflect the actual. The reasons for this are

numerous and mainly on the part of the victim - fear of a sexual aggressor, close relationship with him, guilt, shame or humiliation are among the main reasons why victims decide not to report the sexual violence to the police. In turn, this leads to the registration of a much lower percentage of sexual crimes than actually committed. The statistics, although not reflecting all sexual crimes committed, draw public attention to this problem and refute the view that this type of crime is insignificant and is registered with a negligibly low frequency.

There is no data in the general world literature on the frequency of fornication and rape as separate sexual crimes, in most studies they are studied as a combined group. The data from our study show that of the 189 people accused of committing sexual crimes, 59% committed violent sexual intercourse with the victim (this includes anal penetration of men) and 41% committed fornication with the victim. These data confirm the results of a study conducted by S. Bochev (1986) according to which 63% of forensic psychiatric examinations of sexual crimes involve rape, 26% - fornication (most often with children or adolescents), and the remaining 11% are on the occasion of exhibitionist actions [16].

M. DeLisi and Beauregard E. in 2018 published data according to which 13.8% of sexual aggressors killed their victim during or after violent sexual intercourse [229]. The results of our study show that in only 2% of cases was the victim killed during or after sexual violence. In one case, the sexual abuser killed the victim in order to conceal his identity. In the other three cases, the deaths of the victims occurred unforeseen, as a result of violent physical actions of the aggressor in their evasion.

In the group we studied, all those accused of committing sexual crimes are men - 189 (100%), which is not confirmed by most world surveys. In one of the largest studies on the subject conducted by Nally J. et al. (2014) reported that 81.3% of sexual aggressors were men and 18.7% were women [27].

## 5. Conclusion

In our study, all persons accused of committing sexual crimes are men. Of the 189 people accused of committing sexual violence, 59% had sexual intercourse with the victim (this includes anal penetration of men), and 41% committed fornication with the victim. In only 2% of cases did the sexual aggressor kill his victim during or immediately after the sexual violence.

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## Author Profile



**Lyudmil Tumbey** was graduated in medicine in 1998. He became a specialist in psychiatry in 2007 and a specialist in forensic psychiatry in 2018. He is the head of a clinic for patients with psychiatric diseases and a day hospital. He is writing a PhD on the topic of psychopathological profile of persons accused of sexual rape and fornication.