

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

A Study of Demographic Factors Influencing Rape Myth Acceptance Among University
Students

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I humbly dedicate this research to all victims of sexual assault, with the hope that our

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collective efforts will contribute to creating a safer and more just world.

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship between rape myth acceptance and demographic factors such as age, race, and gender among university students. A survey including the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance –Subtle Version Scale (IRMA-S) was administered to 144 students. Independent samples T-tests revealed some significant demographic differences. The findings highlight how rape myth acceptance varies across demographic groups based on gender, race, and age. These findings underscore the need for addressing the prevalence and predictors of rape myth acceptance among university students, which can contribute to the development of more effective interventions and support services for sexual assault victims on college campuses.

Keywords: *Rape myths, rape myth acceptance, university students*

Chapter I - Introduction

Sexual violence is a significant social problem affecting millions of individuals worldwide. This issue is particularly prevalent on college campuses, where students face various forms of assault. According to the National College Women Sexual Victimization (NCWSV) study, funded by the National Institute of Justice, 2.8% of college women will experience a completed rape, an attempted rape, or both during any given academic year (Fischer et al., 2000). Bryant (2024) shares that every year, over 10% of college students experience some form of assault while on campus. Students may face harassment or stalking or unwanted physical contact or sexual violations, including rape (Bryant, 2024).

However, these statistics underestimate the true extent of the problem due to limited reporting. The NCWSV study found that fewer than 5% of completed and attempted rapes were reported to the police (Fischer et al., 2000). This low reporting rate suggests that the actual prevalence of sexual violence on college campuses may be significantly higher than official statistics indicate.

One crucial factor contributing to the underreporting of sexual violence is the prevalence of rape myths. Rape myths were first defined by Burt (1980) as "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (p. 217). Rape myths play a huge role in normalizing sexual assault. (Burt, 1980). These myths can discourage victims from reporting their experiences and maximize the suffering of survivors, making it challenging for them to get the proper care and assistance.

Amir (1967) defined victim-precipitation as "those rape situations in which the victim actually, or so it was deemed, agreed to sexual relations but retracted before the actual act or did

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not react strongly enough when suggestion was made by the offender(s)" (p. 495). He found that 122 cases of forcible rape were victim-precipitated (Amir, 1967). The study inspired this author to investigate rape myth acceptance as a research topic to examine if such victim-blaming attitudes persist today.

This study aims to investigate how demographic factors, specifically age, race, and gender, impact rape myth acceptance (RMA) among college students. Understanding the factors that contribute to rape myth acceptance is crucial for developing effective strategies to combat sexual violence on college campuses. By examining the roles of age, race, and gender, this study aims to uncover societal beliefs that perpetuate rape culture. Raising awareness about this topic will create a safer place for victims of sexual assault to come forward in the future. By focusing on reducing rape myth acceptance, we can potentially improve reporting rates and even prevent future incidents of sexual violence.

This chapter has introduced the problem of rape myth acceptance among college students and outlined the significance of studying this issue. It has also presented research questions exploring the potential effects of demographic factors on rape myth acceptance. The next chapter will provide a comprehensive literature review, detailing previous research done on rape myths and the theoretical frameworks that underpin this study.

Chapter II - Literature Review and Theory

We will now systematically review the literature on three key demographic factors—age, race, and gender—and their relationship to rape myth acceptance. This focused approach allows for an in-depth analysis of these crucial variables while maintaining a manageable scope for our review. It is important to acknowledge that other variables may influence rape myth acceptance. PettyJohn et al. (2023) highlight factors such as religiousness, political beliefs, education level, and victimization history as potential contributors. However, for this review, we will concentrate on age, race, and gender. By examining each factor individually, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these demographic characteristics correlate with rape myth acceptance.

Age and RMA:

The research on the relationship between age and rape myth acceptance has yielded different results. For example, Burt (1980) found that younger individuals tended to have lower levels of sex role stereotyping, adversarial sexual beliefs, acceptance of interpersonal violence, and overall acceptance of rape myths. Sex-role stereotyping refers to the beliefs about the appropriate roles and behavior for men and women (Burt, 1980). Adversarial sexual beliefs are defined as "the expectation that sexual relationships are fundamentally exploitative, that each party to them is manipulative, sly, cheating, opaque to the other's understanding, and not to be trusted" (Burt, 1980, p. 218). Acceptance of interpersonal violence is described as "the notion that force and coercion are legitimate ways to gain compliance and specifically that they are legitimate in intimate and sexual relationships" (Burt, 1980, p. 218).

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Yarmey (1985) found that older individuals tend to have stronger beliefs that blame victims and accept common misconceptions about sexual assault compared to younger adults. Adams-Price (2004) also found that the elderly participants exhibited a stronger tendency to assign blame to the victims compared to the other age groups involved in the study. Similarly, a study done by Kassing et al. (2005) concluded that older participants were more likely to endorse rape myths. The author suggests that the reason for this phenomenon could be the greater exposure to diverse ways of living that individuals experience during their college years and professional careers (Kassing et al., 2005).

Nagel et al. (2005) did a study on the matter and the results suggest that participants from younger age groups exhibited more positive and sympathetic attitudes toward victims of rape compared to older participants. Author states that this could stem from the fact that younger individuals have grown up in a societal environment that places greater emphasis on raising awareness about violence against women (Nagel et al., 2005).

A study done by Chauhan (2022) aimed to identify the impact of age on acceptance of rape myths. The results found that older individuals (adults) were more accepting of rape myths compared to younger individuals (young adults) (Chauhan, 2022). The author states that in India, where societal norms are patriarchal, adults and men hold major influence and authority in both social and legal contexts (Chauhan, 2022). Therefore, educational initiatives and training sessions should be developed to help people recognize and change their inaccurate perceptions about sexual assault (Chauhan, 2022).

Abeid (2015), on the other hand, did a study which indicated that as individuals grow older and attain higher levels of education, they tend to exhibit greater understanding and less

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tolerant views regarding sexual violence. The authors suggest that in this community, sexual violence and other social conflicts are handled by elders, rather than through formal legal channels (Abeid, 2015). This traditional approach to dispute resolution may contribute to the observed differences in attitudes between younger and older generations regarding these issues (Abeid, 2015). The authors emphasize the need to acknowledge this generational gap in attitudes and to tailor future interventions to address the specific concerns and perspectives of different age groups within the community (Abeid, 2015).

A study done by Lee (2019) found that the tendency to blame victims was not notably influenced by the age of the individuals. The author explains that the finding that victim blaming levels were similar across younger and older adult participants on the online platform Mechanical Turk (MTurk) could be because the older adults on MTurk are not representative of the general older adult population (Lee, 2019). Similarly, Şahin and Güner (2023) notes that young women and those over 38 have more readily embraced traditional gender roles, indicating that the study failed to reveal significant differences between younger and older individuals in terms of their adherence to these roles and their relationship with the RMA.

In summary, while some studies link older age to greater rape myth acceptance, due to patriarchal societal norms, other research suggests increased education and exposure to diverse perspectives with age can reduce victim-blaming attitudes. More research is needed to clarify these mixed findings.

Race and RMA:

Research on race and rape myth acceptance frequently uses White attitudes and experiences as a baseline for comparison. This analysis will focus on comparing the Black and

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Hispanic populations with the White population, specifically examining differences in attitudes, experiences, and outcomes related to the acceptance of rape myths. By adopting this approach, the author aims to uncover the unique challenges and patterns that are specific to Black and Hispanic communities within the context of rape myth acceptance.

Research on Black experiences and attitudes towards rape and sexual assault reveals a complex interplay of social factors. Crenshaw (1994) argues that Black women who are raped face intersectional discrimination based on both their race and gender. She states that the rapists of Black women, regardless of the rapist's race, are less likely to be charged and convicted, and receive lighter sentences compared to the rapists of white women (Crenshaw, 1994). This perpetuates harmful rape myths that Black women are more sexually promiscuous and that rape against them is less serious or damaging (Crenshaw, 1994).

Carmody and Washington (2001) studied race and sexual victimization attitudes. Their study examines how race and prior sexual assault victimization affect the acceptance of rape myths using data from a survey of 623 undergraduate college women (Carmody & Washington, 2001). Between Black and White women, there were no obvious distinctions, however, the lack of findings does not diminish the importance of the matter (Carmody & Washington, 2001). The author posits that more recent studies may reflect the increased awareness and education about sexual assault issues, particularly on college campuses. (Carmody & Washington, 2001).

Nagel et al. (2005) found that African American individuals are less likely to view rape victims with greater compassion than White individuals. However, when socioeconomic factors are considered, the racial differences in perceptions seem to diminish (Nagel et al., 2005). The author suggests that this could explain the mixed findings in previous research on the impact of

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race, where studies with less educated and lower-income samples found a significant racial effect on attitudes, while studies with more educated and higher-income participants did not find a significant racial effect (Nagel et al., 2005).

Piatak (2015), however, found that Black individuals were just as likely as White individuals to hold victims responsible for the crimes committed against them. The author suggests a potential shift in how college students perceive and assign responsibility for sexual assaults occurring on campus (Piatak, 2015). Rather than race or gender being the primary factor influencing perceptions of blame, it appears that attitudes towards rape itself have become the more defining variable (Piatak, 2015).

Bowie (2018) found that African American individuals endorsed significantly higher levels of rape myth acceptance compared to White individuals. The author dives into how this observation aligns with a study done by Crenshaw (1994) which proposed that White women's claims of rape are more readily believed than those of African American women.

Coble (2023) concluded that victim race did not directly impact police unfounding and arrest decisions in sexual assault cases. However, the influence of rape myths was more noticeable when the victim was Black (Coble, 2023). This suggests that race indirectly affects decisions through the activation of rape myths (Coble, 2023). The findings indicate that rape myths contribute to gender biases as well as racial biases in the criminal justice system, leading to disparities in outcomes for victims of different races (Coble, 2023).

Research on Hispanic experiences and attitudes towards rape and sexual assault highlights unique cultural factors that influence perceptions and responses to these crimes. Lefley et al. (1993) did a study on a similar topic and the results suggest that Hispanics reported

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the highest levels of perceived community blame towards victims. Similarly, Hispanics also experienced the highest levels of psychological distress among victims (Lefley et al., 1993). The author proposes treatment recommendations based on the findings of the research. The study suggests that cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) techniques may be beneficial for many victims in processing the traumatic experience and mitigating its consequences (Lefley et al., 1993). However, the author emphasizes that Hispanic victims often rely heavily on avoidance as a coping mechanism, and they exhibit a particularly prominent level of psychological distress (Lefley et al., 1993). Therefore, the author advises counselors to be mindful of the pacing of interventions when working with this population (Lefley et al., 1993).

Jimenez and Abreu (2003) also concluded that Latina women may hold more traditional gender role beliefs and values compared to Caucasian women. One way to interpret the interaction effects is that Latina women may hold more traditional gender role beliefs and values compared to European American women (Jimenez & Aberu, 2003). These traditional views could prioritize or favor men over women (Jimenez & Aberu, 2003).

Other relevant studies also highlight the importance of cultural differences. Braun and Dupont (2020) discovered that American and Japanese students were less inclined to doubt rape claims than Indian students, while American students were also less likely to think that rape victims are to blame. Qureshi et al. (2023) stated that students in India accepted rape myths more than their U.S. counterparts.

In summary, the research highlights the discrimination faced by Black women who are raped (Crenshaw, 1994) and the racial differences in perceptions of rape victims (Bowie, 2018; Coble, 2023; Jimenez & Abreu, 2003; Lefley et al., 1993; Nagel et al., 2005). However, some

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studies suggest a potential shift in attitudes among college students (Piatak, 2015), with race becoming less of a defining factor in perceptions of blame (Carmody & Washington, 2001).

Gender and RMA:

The studies conducted on gender in relation to RMA present compelling findings. From a feminist theory perspective, Brownmiller (1975) argued that rape is characterized as an intentional and systematic process of instilling fear, through which men maintain an environment of intimidation and dread among all women. She also stated that rape is not just about physical force, it is also about exercising power over the victim (Brownmiller, 1975). According to Burt (1980), Americans tended to believe in common misconceptions about rape. The acceptance of these rape myths was linked to other problematic attitudes, such as traditional beliefs about gender roles, adversarial views on sexual relationships, and tolerance or acceptance of interpersonal violence in general.

If we look at the studies here within the lens of feminist theory, it makes sense that we come across results like the study conducted by Suarez and Gadalla (2010), which found that men displayed significantly higher endorsement of rape myths than women. The authors stated that this aligns with the feminist perspective that in cultures where males hold disproportionate power and influence, there is a personal stake in belief systems that justify sexual violence against women (Suarez & Gadalla, 2010).

Aronowitz et al. (2012) found that men were found to have a higher RMA compared to women. The author explains that there is a common belief that a woman's choice of clothing can make her more vulnerable to sexual assault. However, this same notion is not applied to men in the same way (Aronowitz et al. 2012). The sexual double standard holds women to a different

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moral standard than men when it comes to sexual activity and its consequences. The same study also found that forty-one percent believed that a woman who was raped while drunk was responsible for what happened (Arnowitz et al. 2012).

Grubb and Turner (2012) concluded that men tend to have a greater acceptance of rape myths compared to women. Men also place more responsibility on victims of sexual assault than women do (Grubb & Turner, 2012). Additionally, women who do not conform to traditional feminine gender norms are blamed more for sexual violence against them than women who adhere to gender stereotypes (Grubb & Turner, 2012). The author explains that from an early age, society shapes and conditions men and women to behave in distinct ways based on their gender. During the socialization process, specific gender roles and expectations are assigned to each sex. These prescribed gender roles then influence our actions, attitudes, and fundamental beliefs about ourselves and others in society (Grubb & Turner, 2012). The study also found that women who were drinking alcohol before being sexually assaulted are blamed more by others than victims who were sober during the attack (Grubb & Turner, 2012). The author explains that societal attitudes and beliefs about sexual assault appear to be connected to outdated, rigid expectations about how men and women should behave, especially when it comes to sexuality and sexual activity (Grubb & Turner, 2012). This perspective aligns with the feminist theories we previously explored, reinforcing the importance of gender equality and challenging patriarchal norms (Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980).

Similarly, Dyehouse (2016) found that men tend to agree with and accept more rape myths, both prior to and following an intervention or educational program. However, the number of rape myths they endorse does show a decrease after going through the intervention

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(Dyehouse, 2016). The author suggests that one consequence of this research is the need for increased efforts in educating and raising awareness among men about sexual assault myths (Dyehouse, 2016).

Şahin and Güner (2023) found that women endorsed more rape myths than men. This study is different from previous research and the authors explain this difference by stating that in the study, a quarter of the participants were over 38 years old. This finding can be attributed to the tendency of both younger women and women in this age group to adhere to conventional gender stereotypes and roles (Şahin & Güner, 2023).

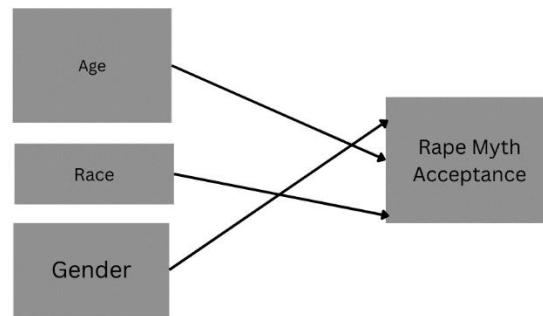
Tokar (2023) found that people desiring power over women were more likely to endorse rape myths. This means that men who more strongly endorsed the idea of having power over women were indeed more likely to accept rape myths (Tokar, 2023).

The integration of these findings suggests that male participants usually have higher levels of rape myth acceptance and victim blaming (Aronowitz et al., 2012; Dyehouse, 2016; Grubb & Turner, 2012; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). However, studies have also shown that women could accept more rape myths than men (Şahin & Güner, 2023). Understanding these complex dynamics is crucial in addressing and challenging the prevalence of rape myth acceptance and victim blaming in society.

Through an extensive review of the relevant literature, this author has synthesized the existing knowledge base to devise an innovative conceptual model. The conceptual model illustrates how demographic factors like age, race, and gender could potentially influence an

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individual's scores on the Rape Myth Acceptance (RMA):



This chapter has presented a review of the relevant literature. Additionally, it outlined the theoretical frameworks that will guide the analysis and interpretation of the data collected. The conceptual framework was also introduced, visually depicting the relationships between the key variables under investigation.

Chapter III - Methodology

Research Question and Hypothesis

Research Question: What demographic factors predict rape myth acceptance among college students?

Proposition: Various demographic factors such as age, race, and gender influence rape myth acceptance.

The Null Hypothesis: There is no significant relationship between age, race, and gender, and rape myth acceptance.

Alternative Hypothesis: There is a significant relationship between age, race, and gender, and rape myth acceptance.

Sample

The research uses a quantitative approach to investigate the demographic factors that influence rape myth acceptance among university students. A survey was conducted among students at a midwestern university using the Google Forms platform. Initially, 162 responses were collected from faculty, students, and staff. However, to align with the study's focus on students, the responses from faculty and staff were excluded. Consequently, 144 student responses were analyzed.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, the survey included an established scale of rape myth acceptance. The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA) developed by Payne et al. (1999) is a widely used measure of attitudes toward sexual violence. Thelan and Meadows (2022) developed the Subtle IRMA as a modernized version of the original scale to better capture contemporary attitudes and beliefs regarding rape myths. The Subtle IRMA includes updated language and phrasing to align with current social and cultural contexts (Thelan

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& Meadows, 2022). This adaptation sets the study apart by ensuring that the measure is relevant to the nuances of contemporary attitudes toward sexual violence (Thelan & Meadows, 2022). This researcher has formally requested and obtained approval from the original authors of the IRMA-S (Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale) to utilize this validated instrument for the purposes of the current study.

Informed consent was obtained from all participants to ensure they understand the purpose of the study and their rights. Participants' responses are kept confidential, their identities are not linked to their answers.

Variables

Dependent Variables:

The IRMA-S is an adapted version of the original Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA), which was designed to measure rape myth acceptance using a more subtle approach (Thelan & Meadows, 2022). The IRMA-S scale focuses on four subscales (Thelan & Meadows, 2022). The questions were grouped into each of these four factors.

SHEASKED (She Asked for It): Ordinal variable. It is a part of the IRMA-S scale.

The questions included in this subscale are:

Q4: If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is not responsible for what happened.

Q29: When women go out wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for sexual advances from men.

Q25: If a woman goes home with a man after a party, it is her own fault if she has sex and doesn't want to.

Q13: If a woman sleeps around eventually something bad is going to happen to her.

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Q23: If a woman starts making out she should not be surprised if a man assumes she wants to have sex.

Q11: When women are raped, it is often because the way they said no was unclear.

HEDIDNTMEAN (He Didn't Mean To): Ordinal variable. It is a part of the IRMA-S scale.

The questions included in this subscale are:

Q31: When men force women to have sex it is usually because they cannot control their desire for sex.

Q10: Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman but sometimes they get too carried away.

Q16: Rape happens when a man's sex drive gets out of control.

Q12: If a man is drunk, he might rape someone accidentally.

Q22: If a man was drunk and didn't realize what he was doing he cannot have committed rape.

Q28: It is not really rape if the rapist didn't use a weapon.

ITWASNTRAPE (It Wasn't Really Rape): Ordinal variable. It is a part of the IRMA-S scale.

The questions included in this subscale are:

Q18: A woman can be raped even if she does not physically resist.

Q32: If a woman doesn't physically fight back, she can't really say she was raped.

Q2: Sexual assault probably did not happen if a woman has no bruises or marks.

Q27: When a woman says "no" during sex and the man doesn't stop, she was raped.

Q28: It is not really rape if the rapist didn't use a weapon.

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SHELIED (She Lied): Ordinal variable. It is a part of the IRMA-S scale.

The questions included in this subscale are:

Q6: Sometimes women who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.

Q19: Rape accusations can be used to get back at men.

Q26: Women who say they were raped sometimes led the man on and then had regrets.

Q8: Women who say they were sexually assaulted sometimes just have emotional problems.

Q15: Women who were caught cheating on their boyfriends or husbands sometimes claim they were raped.

Independent Variables:

AGECOD (Age): Respondents aged 18-24 years old were coded as 0. Respondents aged 25 and above were coded as 1.

RACECOD (Race): White or European American respondents were coded as 0. Other racial minorities (Black or African American, Hispanic or Latinx, Native American, Asian, and Multiracial) were coded as 1.

GENDERCOD (Gender): Female respondents and those who selected 'Other' gender (sexual minorities) were coded as 0. Male respondents were coded as 1.

To ensure the survey items accurately measured the intended constructs and subscales, several questions were reverse-coded during the data analysis process. Specifically, items Q4, Q7, Q18, Q22, and Q27 were reverse-coded to align with the overall scale and subscale structure. This reverse-coding procedure was essential to maintain consistency in the direction of responses and to prevent response bias from affecting the validity of the results.

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Analytic Strategy

Independent samples t-test was conducted on each of the subscales. The independent samples t-test is an appropriate statistical test to compare the mean scores of two independent groups. This analysis provided insights into whether certain groups endorse higher or lower levels of rape myth acceptance, as measured by the subscales.

The analysis was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics version 29.0.0.0 (241).

This chapter outlines the methodology utilized in the study. The next chapter will present the results of the statistical analysis, revealing the findings related to the influence of age, race, and gender on rape myth acceptance among college students.

Chapter IV - Results

Descriptive Statistics:

The sample consisted of 144 participants. Descriptive statistics were calculated for the key study variables.

AGECOD: The descriptive statistics indicated a mean of 0.2292 for AGECOD, suggesting that on average, 22.92% of cases were coded as 1 (25+ years old), while 77.08% were coded as 0 (18-24 years old). The median of 0.0000 revealed that more than half of cases fell into the 18-24 age group. The standard deviation was 0.42176, indicating variability in the age group distribution. With AGECOD being a binary variable coded 0 and 1, the range of 1.00 meant the variable had two distinct values.

RACECOD: The majority (n = 114, 79.2%) identified as White, while 30 participants (20.8%) identified as racial minorities.

GENDERCOD: In terms of gender, 119 participants (82.6%) identified as female or sexual minorities, and 25 participants (17.4%) identified as male.

Independent Samples T-test:

Independent samples T-test was conducted on each of the subscale. The results are as follows:

She Asked for It Subscale:

Age: For Q4, there was no significant difference in scores between the 18-24 age group and the older age group ($t(142) = -1.280, p = .203$). For Q29, there was no significant difference between age groups ($t(142) = -1.823, p = .070$). For Q25, the older age group scored significantly higher than the 18-24 group ($t(142) = -2.131, p = .035$). For Q13, Q23, and Q11, there were no significant differences between age groups ($p > .05$). Overall, there were no

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significant differences in rape myth acceptance between younger (18-24) and older age groups, except for one item (Q25) where the older group scored higher.

Race: There were no significant differences in scores between white participants and minority participants for Q4, Q25, Q13, and Q11 ($p > .05$). For Q23, minority participants scored significantly higher than white participants ($t(142) = -2.712, p = .008$). For most items, there were no significant racial differences in endorsing "she asked for it" myths. However, for one item (Q23), minority participants scored higher than white participants, indicating greater acceptance of that specific rape myth.

Gender: There were no significant differences between females/sexual minorities and males for Q4, Q25, and Q11 ($p > .05$). For Q29, males scored significantly higher than females/sexual minorities ($t(142) = -3.200, p = .002$). For Q13 and Q23, males scored significantly higher than females/sexual minorities; $t(142) = -5.597, p < .001$ and $t(142) = -3.493, p < .001$, respectively.

The results consistently showed that males scored significantly higher than females and sexual minorities on multiple items of the "She Asked for It" subscale, demonstrating greater endorsement of these victim-blaming rape myths among males.

He Did not Mean to Subscale:

Age: No items showed significant differences between the 18-24 age group and older students ($p > .05$).

Gender: No items showed significant differences between females/sexual minorities and males ($p > .05$).

Race: Item Q12 showed a significant difference, with minorities scoring 0.42 points lower on average than whites on this item.

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The lack of significant findings for most items suggests that scores on the "He Didn't Mean to" subscale did not vary based on age or gender in this sample. The one significant racial difference on Q12 indicates minorities tended to score lower on that item related to excusing inappropriate behavior.

It Was not Really Rape Subscale:

Age: For age, there was a significant difference in scores for Q32, $t(142) = -2.985$, $p = .003$, with younger participants ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.97$) scoring higher than older participants ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.62$). There were no significant differences for Q18, Q2, Q27, or Q28 based on age ($p > .05$).

Race and Gender: There were no significant differences in scores on any of the subscale items based on race and gender ($p > .05$).

She Lied Subscale:

Age: There is no significant difference between 18–24-year-olds and older students on the following items: Q6 ($t(142) = 0.237$, $p = 0.813$); Q26 ($t(142) = -1.601$, $p = 0.112$); Q8 ($t(142) = -0.488$, $p = 0.626$). However, there is a significant difference on: Q19 ($t(142) = -2.985$, $p = 0.003$), with older students scoring lower than 18–24-year-olds, Q15 ($t(141) = -1.879$, $p = 0.062$), with older students tending to score lower than 18–24-year-olds.

Race: there is no significant difference between white students and minority students on any of the "She Lied" subscale items: Q6 ($t(141) = 0.202$, $p = 0.840$); Q19 ($t(141) = -0.858$, $p = 0.392$); Q26 ($t(141) = -0.749$, $p = 0.455$); Q8 ($t(141) = -0.551$, $p = 0.582$); Q15 ($t(141) = -1.479$, $p = 0.141$).

Gender: Several items on the "She Lied" subscale showed significant gender differences, with males scoring higher than females and sexual minorities: Q6: $t(141) = -2.979$, $p = 0.003$;

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Q19: $t(141) = -3.112, p = 0.002$; Q8: $t(141) = -2.689, p = 0.008$; Q15: $t(141) = -3.451, p < 0.001$.

However, there is no significant difference on Q26 ($t(141) = -1.529, p = 0.128$).

These results indicate that males tended to endorse higher levels of agreement with the statements in items Q6, Q19, Q8, and Q15 compared to females and sexual minority individuals. The differences were statistically significant and suggested meaningful gender-based disparities in responses to these items.

This chapter presented the results of the statistical analysis conducted to examine the relationship between demographic factors and rape myth acceptance. In the next chapter, an in-depth discussion will delve into the implications of these findings.

Chapter V - Conclusion

Discussion:

The present study examined the relationship between demographic factors (age, race, and gender) and endorsement of various rape myth subscales among a sample of college students. The findings revealed some notable differences and similarities across demographic groups.

Age Differences:

Overall, there were minimal age differences in rape myth acceptance between the younger (18-24 years old) and older (25+ years old) student groups. The only significant difference was found for one item (Q25) on the "She Asked for It" subscale, where older students scored higher, indicating greater endorsement of the myth that a woman's behavior can be interpreted as a sign that she was "asking for" sexual assault. This finding aligns with previous research suggesting that older individuals may hold more traditional gender role attitudes and be more likely to blame victims (Adams-Price, 2004; Burt, 1980; Chauhan, 2022; Kassing et al., 2005; Nagel et al., 2005; Yarmey, 1985).

Interesting results showed that in the It Was not Really Rape Subscale, there was a significant difference in scores for Q32, with younger participants scoring higher than older participants. Similarly, in the She Lied Subscale, there is a significant difference on: Q19, with older students scoring lower than 18–24-year-olds, and Q15, with older students tending to score lower than 18–24-year-olds. This finding aligns with the research by Abeid (2015), which indicated that as people advance in age and attain higher levels of formal education, they tend to demonstrate a more comprehensive understanding and less tolerant attitudes regarding sexual violence.

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To explain the mixed results, it is important to note that the sample consisted of younger students, with only 22.92% coded as 25 years or older. A more balanced age distribution might have revealed clearer age-related patterns in rape myth acceptance.

Racial Differences:

The results revealed few racial differences in rape myth endorsement. The only significant finding was for item Q23 on the "She Asked for It" subscale, where minority students scored higher than white students, indicating greater acceptance of the myth that a woman's behavior or dress can be interpreted as a sign of consent.

This finding is consistent with some previous studies that have found higher levels of rape myth acceptance among certain racial minority groups (Bowie, 2018; Braun & Dupont, 2020; Coble, 2023; Crenshaw, 1994; Jimenez & Abreu, 2003; Lefley et al., 1993; Nagel et al., 2005; Qureshi et al., 2023).

However, in He Did Not Mean to Subscale, Q12 showed a significant difference, with minorities scoring 0.42 points lower on average than Whites on this item. This slight difference is inconsistent with previous studies, but it is important to interpret this result with caution, as the racial composition of the sample was heavily skewed, with 79.2% identifying as white and only 20.8% as racial minorities.

Gender Differences:

The most pronounced differences in rape myth acceptance were found between males and females/sexual minorities. Males consistently scored significantly higher on multiple items of the "She Asked for It" and "She Lied" subscales, demonstrating greater endorsement of victim-blaming myths and beliefs that women falsely accuse men of rape.

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These findings align with a substantial body of literature indicating that males tend to hold higher levels of rape myth acceptance compared to females (Aronowitz et al., 2012; Dyehouse, 2016; Grubb & Turner, 2012; Suarez & Gadalla, 2010). It aligns with the Feminist Theory concepts as well (Brownmiller, 1975; Burt, 1980). The results underscore the need for targeted interventions and education efforts to challenge these harmful beliefs, particularly among male populations.

Interestingly, there were no significant gender differences observed for the "He Did Not Mean To" and "It Was Not Really Rape" subscales. This suggests that while males may be more likely to endorse myths that blame or discredit victims, they may not necessarily differ from females in their tendency to excuse or minimize the perpetrator's behavior.

However, according to the descriptive statistics, 119 participants (82.6%) identified as female or sexual minorities, while only 25 participants (17.4%) identified as male. The overrepresentation of females and sexual minorities in this study could potentially affect the results and their interpretation.

Limitations and Future Recommendations:

The present study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the sample was drawn from a single university, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future research should aim to include more diverse samples from multiple institutions to enhance external validity.

Additionally, the racial composition of the sample was heavily skewed towards white participants, making it difficult to draw robust conclusions about racial differences in rape myth acceptance. Future studies should strive for more balanced and representative racial samples.

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The sample was heavily skewed towards female and sexual minority participants, with 119 participants (82.6%) identifying as female or sexual minorities, compared to only 25 participants (17.4%) identifying as male. This imbalance in gender representation limits the generalizability of the study's findings to the broader population. The overrepresentation of female and sexual minority participants may introduce bias into the results, as their experiences and perspectives may differ from those of male participants or the general population.

Furthermore, the study relied solely on self-report measures, which may be subject to social desirability biases. Incorporating additional methodologies, such as implicit measures or qualitative approaches, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of rape myth endorsement.

Despite these limitations, the present study contributes to the existing literature by examining the interplay between demographic factors and rape myth acceptance in a college student population. The findings highlight the need for continued efforts to challenge harmful myths and stereotypes, particularly among male students and certain demographic groups.

Future research should further explore the underlying mechanisms and contextual factors that contribute to the development of rape myths.

Overall, the present study underscores the importance of addressing rape myths and promoting a culture of respect, consent, and accountability on college campuses and in society at large.

Conclusion:

The absence of major groundbreaking discoveries in this study does not diminish the gravity or relevance of the issue at hand. As extensively discussed throughout this paper, the persistence of rape myths on college campuses remains a concern, indicative of deeply rooted

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societal misconceptions about sexual assault. This study set out to examine the prevalence of rape myth acceptance among college students and to identify potential barriers to reporting sexual assault incidents on campus.

The finding that rape myth acceptance levels were lower among college students compared to previous studies is encouraging and suggests that progress is indeed being made in addressing this critical issue on campuses. This positive trend may be attributed to increased awareness campaigns, educational programs, and a shifting cultural dialogue surrounding sexual assault. However, it is crucial to note that the study also revealed persistent differences in rape myth acceptance across various demographic groups and identified ongoing barriers to reporting sexual assault incidents.

These results underscore the complexity of the issue and highlight the need for continued efforts to combat rape myths and create a safer, more supportive environment for survivors of sexual assault on college campuses. The persistence of certain myths and reporting barriers indicates that there is still significant work to be done in educating students, faculty, and staff about the realities of sexual assault and the importance of supporting survivors.

Moving forward, universities and colleges should consider implementing targeted programs based on these findings. Some suggestions include:

1. Developing tailored educational interventions for specific demographic groups that showed higher levels of rape myth acceptance. These interventions should focus on presenting factual information about sexual assault and debunking common rape myths. By providing accurate statistics and real-world examples, we can effectively demonstrate the prevalence and severity of sexual assault on college campuses. This

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- approach not only raises awareness but also challenges preconceived notions that may contribute to the perpetuation of harmful attitudes.
2. Enhancing existing sexual assault prevention programs to address the most prevalent myths identified in this study.
 3. Implementing comprehensive training for faculty and staff to better support and respond to survivors of sexual assault. For example, training on bystander intervention equips staff with strategies to intervene safely and effectively in situations where sexual assault or harassment may occur. This can help prevent incidents and create a culture of accountability and support.
 4. Establishing peer support networks to provide a safe space for survivors and to help challenge rape myths among student populations. Peer support can take various forms, including face-to-face meetings, online forums, and community or specialist service settings. These can be formal or informal and may be facilitated by trained professionals. The diversity in approaches allows peer support to cater to unique needs, making it a valuable component of a broader support system for survivors.
 5. Creating awareness campaigns that specifically address the identified barriers to reporting, such as fear of not being believed or concerns about confidentiality.

By utilizing these findings to inform and refine their approaches, educational institutions can work towards creating campus environments that are not only safer but also more supportive and empowering for all students. The goal should be to foster a culture that encourages open dialogue, challenges harmful myths, and provides support for survivors of sexual assault.

As we continue to grapple with this issue, it is imperative that we remain committed to ongoing research, education, and action. Only through persistent efforts and a willingness to

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confront uncomfortable truths can we hope to create lasting change and build campuses where every student feels safe, respected, and empowered to speak out against sexual violence.

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Tables

Table 1.

Project Variables

Type of Variable	Variable Name	Variable Label	Level of Measurement
I	AGECOD	AGE	R
I	RACECOD	RACE	O
I	GENDERCOD	GENDER	O
D	SHEASKED	SHE ASKED FOR IT	O
D	HEDIDNTMEAN	HE DIDN'T MEAN TO	O
D	ITWASNTRAPE	IT WASN'T REALLY RAPE	O
D	SHELIED	SHE LIED	O

Table 2.

Descriptive Statistics for Age

	Mean	Median	SD	Range
AGECOD	.2292	.0000	.42176	1.00

Table 3.

Descriptive Statistics for Race and Gender

		RACECOD			
		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	.00	114	79.2	79.2	79.2
	1.00	30	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	144	100.0	100.0	
		GENDERCOD			
Valid	.00	119	82.6	82.6	82.6

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1.00	25	17.4	17.4	100.0
Total	144	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.

Independent Samples T-test Results for She Asked for It Subscale

		Two- Sided P	t	df	Mean Difference	95% CI Lower	95% CI Upper
AGE							
Q4	Eq. var. assum.	.203	-1.280	142	-.45045	-1.14623	.24533
	Eq. var. not assum.	.229	-1.217	48.903	-.45045	-1.19429	.29339
Q29	Eq. var. assum.	.070	-1.823	142	-.35217	-.73408	.02974
	Eq. var. not assum.	.106	-1.647	45.873	-.35217	-.78250	.07815
Q25	Eq. var. assum.	.035	-2.131	142	-.32023	-.61726	-.02320

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	Eq. var.	.116	-1.607	38.488	-.32023	-.72346	.08301
	not						
	assum.						
Q13	Eq. var.	.177	-1.356	142	-.32842	-.80704	.15021
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.205	-1.285	48.635	-.32842	-.84230	.18546
	not						
	assum.						
Q23	Eq. var.	.527	-.634	142	-.13022	-.53641	.27597
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.557	-.592	47.766	-.13022	-.53641	.31219
	not						
	assum.						
Q11	Eq. var.	.185	-1.331	142	-.18837	-.46824	.09150
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.256	-1.152	43.703	-.18837	-.51802	.14128
	not						
	assum.						
RACE							
Q4	Eq. var.	.333	-.971	142	-.35439	-1.07621	.36743
	assum.						

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	Eq. var.	.373	-.901	41.590	-.35439	-1.14864	.43986
	not						
	assum.						
Q29	Eq. var.	.079	-1.771	142	-.35439	-.74988	.04111
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.146	-1.485	37.669	-.35439	-.83767	.12890
	not						
	assum.						
Q25	Eq. var.	.418	-.813	142	-.12807	-.43962	.18348
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.536	-.624	35.178	-.12807	-.54447	.28833
	not						
	assum.						
Q13	Eq. var.	.873	-.160	142	-.04035	-.53884	.45814
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.880	-.151	42.512	-.04035	-.57785	.49715
	not						
	assum.						
Q23	Eq. var.	.008	-2.712	142	-.56316	-.97363	-.15269
	assum.						

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	Eq. var.	.044	-2.086	35.207	-.56316	-1.11110	-.01522
	not						
	assum.						
Q11	Eq. var.	.379	-.883	142	-.12982	-.42047	.16082
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.430	-.797	40.393	-.12982	-.45888	.19923
	not						
	assum.						
GENDER							
Q4	Eq. var.	.285	-1.074	142	-.42017	-1.19352	.35319
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.290	-1.073	34.810	-.42017	-1.21500	.37466
	not						
	assum.						
Q29	Eq. var.	.002	-3.200	142	-.67025	-1.08428	-.25622
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.020	-2.455	28.545	-.67025	-1.22893	-.11157
	not						
	assum.						
Q25	Eq. var.	.194	-1.304	142	-.21950	-.55233	.11334
	assum.						

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	Eq. var.	.289	-1.079	29.864	-.21950	-.63514	.19615
	not						
	assum.						
Q13	Eq. var.	<.001	-5.597	142	-1.36975	-1.85357	-.88593
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	<.001	-4.361	28.792	-1.36975	-2.01239	-.72711
	not						
	assum.						
Q23	Eq. var.	<.001	-3.493	142	-.76538	-1.19850	-.33225
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.018	-2.522	27.666	-.76538	-1.38737	-.14339
	not						
	assum.						
Q11	Eq. var.	.494	-.686	142	-.10824	-.42020	.20373
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.496	-.688	34.953	-.10824	-.42751	.21104
	not						
	assum.						

Table 5.

Independent Samples T-test Results for He Did Not Mean to Subscale

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AGE

		Two-	t	df	Mean	95% CI	95% CI
		Sided P			Difference	Lower	Upper
Q31	Eq. var. assum.	.274	1.097	141	.24545	-.19677	.68768
	Eq. var. not assum.	.273	1.107	53.401	.24545	-.19921	.69012
Q10	Eq. var. assum.	.757	-.309	141	-.06667	-.49254	.35920
	Eq. var. not assum.	.759	-.309	52.553	-.06667	-.49957	.36623
Q16	Eq. var. assum.	.921	.099	141	.02121	-.40355	.44597
	Eq. var. not assum.	.927	.092	48.067	.02121	-.43997	.48240
Q12	Eq. var. assum.	.119	-1.569	142	-.28665	-.64778	.07448

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	Eq. var.	.168	-1.402	45.266	-.28665	-.69838	.12508
	not						
	assum.						
Q22	Eq. var.	.319	.999	142	.13595	-.13294	.40485
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.406	.839	42.306	.13595	-.19118	.46309
	not						
	assum.						
Q28	Eq. var.	.062	-1.879	141	-.12500	-.25652	.00652
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.325	-1.000	31.000	-.12500	-.37994	.12994
	not						
	assum.						
RACE							
Q31	Eq. var.	.750	.319	141	.07404	-.38536	.53344
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.742	.331	48.101	.07404	-.37543	.52351
	not						
	assum.						
Q10	Eq. var.	.656	-.446	141	-.09941	-.53994	.34112
	assum.						

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	Eq. var.	.721	-.360	36.539	-.09941	-.65909	.46027
	not						
	assum.						
Q16	Eq. var.	.940	.076	141	.01681	-.42273	.45636
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.944	.071	42.182	.01681	-.46152	.49514
	not						
	assum.						
Q12	Eq. var.	.025	-2.266	142	-.42456	-.79489	-.05423
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.059	-1.945	38.471	-.42456	-.86619	.01707
	not						
	assum.						
Q22	Eq. var.	.901	.124	142	.01754	-.26170	.29679
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.899	.128	47.325	.01754	-.25824	.29333
	not						
	assum.						
Q28	Eq. var.	.616	.503	141	.03509	-.10281	.17298
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.319	1.000	113.000	.03509	-.03443	.10460
	not						
	assum.						
GENDER							
Q31	Eq. var.	.903	.122	141	.03051	-.46211	.52313
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.897	.131	37.494	.03051	-.44244	.50346
	not						
	assum.						
Q10	Eq. var.	.872	-.162	141	-.03864	-.51117	.43388
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.872	-.163	35.149	-.03864	-.52078	.44349
	not						
	assum.						
Q16	Eq. var.	.866	.169	141	.04034	-.43081	.51149
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.876	.158	32.727	.04034	-.47963	.56031
	not						
	assum.						
Q12	Eq. var.	.160	1.414	142	.28706	-.11430	.68842
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.090	1.735	45.365	.28706	-.04611	.62023
	not						
	assum.						
Q22	Eq. var.	.753	-.315	142	-.04773	-.34705	.25159
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.767	-.298	33.073	-.04773	-.37319	.27773
	not						
	assum.						
Q28	Eq. var.	.647	.459	141	.03390	-.11210	.17990
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.319	1.000	117.000	.03390	-.03324	.10103
	not						
	assum.						

Table 6.

Independent Samples T-test Results for It Was Not Really Rape to Subscale

		AGE					
		Two-	t	df	Mean	95% CI	95% CI
		Sided P			Difference	Lower	Upper
Q18	Eq. var.	.813	.237	142	.05324	-.39020	.49667
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.797	.258	60.206	.05324	-.35969	.46616
	not						
	assum.						
Q32	Eq. var.	.003	-2.985	142	-.28501	-.47377	-.09625
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.107	-1.660	32.352	-.28501	-.63465	.06462
	not						
	assum.						
Q2	Eq. var.	.112	-1.601	142	-.15807	-.35319	.03705
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.307	-1.037	34.789	-.15807	-.46751	.15138
	not						
	assum.						
Q27	Eq. var.	.626	-.488	142	-.07207	-.36397	.21982
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.638	-.473	50.241	-.07207	-.37780	.23366
	not						
	assum.						
Q28	Eq. var.	.062	-1.879	141	-.12500	-.25652	.00652
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.325	-1.000	31.000	-.12500	-.37994	.12994
	not						
	assum.						
RACE							
Q18	Eq. var.	.723	.355	142	.08246	-.37635	.54126
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.707	.378	49.616	.08246	-.35558	.52049
	not						
	assum.						
Q32	Eq. var.	.301	-1.037	142	-.10526	-.30589	.09536
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.462	-.744	33.622	-.10526	-.39296	.18243
	not						
	assum.						
Q2	Eq. var.	.905	-.119	142	-.01228	-.21602	.19146
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.912	-.112	42.019	-.01228	-.23432	.20976
	not						
	assum.						
Q27	Eq. var.	.927	.092	142	.01404	-.28830	.31637
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.938	.079	38.493	.01404	-.34627	.37434
	not						
	assum.						
Q28	Eq. var.	.616	.503	141	.03509	-.10281	.17298
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.319	1.000	113.000	.03509	-.03443	.10460
	not						
	assum.						
GENDER							
Q18	Eq. var.	.751	.317	142	.07899	-.41297	.57096
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.751	.320	35.158	.07899	-.42152	.57950
	not						
	assum.						
Q32	Eq. var.	.632	.480	142	.05244	-.16331	.26818
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.410	.827	103.398	.05244	-.07330	.17818
	not						
	assum.						
Q2	Eq. var.	.229	-1.208	142	-.13277	-.35011	.08457
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.337	-.977	29.435	-.13277	-.41063	.14508
	not						
	assum.						
Q27	Eq. var.	.544	-.608	142	-.09950	-.42324	.22425
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.637	-.477	28.918	-.09950	-.52617	.32718
	not						
	assum.						
Q28	Eq. var.	.647	.459	141	.03390	-.11210	.17990
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.319	1.000	117.000	.03390	-.03324	.10103
	not						
	assum.						

Table 7.

Independent Samples T-test Results for She Lied Subscale

		AGE					
		Two-	t	df	Mean	95% CI	95% CI
		Sided P			Difference	Lower	Upper
Q6	Eq. var.	.813	.237	142	.05324	-.39020	.49667
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.797	.258	60.206	.05324	-.35969	.46616
	not						
	assum.						
Q19	Eq. var.	.003	-2.985	142	-.28501	-.47377	-.09625
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.107	-1.660	32.352	-.28501	-.63465	.06462
	not						
	assum.						
Q26	Eq. var.	.112	-1.601	142	-.15807	-.35319	.03705
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.307	-1.037	34.789	-.15807	-.46751	.15138
	not						
	assum.						
Q8	Eq. var.	.626	-.488	142	-.07207	-.36397	.21982
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.638	-.473	50.241	-.07207	-.37780	.23366
	not						
	assum.						
Q15	Eq. var.	.062	-1.879	141	-.12500	-.25652	.00652
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.325	-1.000	31.000	-.12500	-.37994	.12994
	not						
	assum.						
RACE							
Q6	Eq. var.	.840	.202	141	.04366	-.38333	.47064
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.840	.204	46.033	.04366	-.38806	.47538
	not						
	assum.						
Q19	Eq. var.	.392	-.858	141	-.23274	-.76874	.30325
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.396	-.857	45.539	-.23274	-.77929	.31380
	not						
	assum.						
Q26	Eq. var.	.455	-.749	141	-.15929	-.57966	.26108
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.491	-.694	41.633	-.15929	-.62233	.30375
	not						
	assum.						
Q8	Eq. var.	.582	-.551	141	-.10254	-.47019	.26511
	assum.						

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.597	-.532	41.586	-.10254	-.49127	.28619
	not						
	assum.						
Q15	Eq. var.	.141	-1.479	141	-.36460	-.85186	.12266
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.221	-1.244	37.836	-.36460	-.95779	.22858
	not						
	assum.						
GENDER							
Q6	Eq. var.	.003	-2.979	141	-.66915	-1.11318	-.22513
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.008	-2.805	32.989	-.66915	-1.15457	-.18373
	not						
	assum.						
Q19	Eq. var.	.002	-3.112	141	-.87729	-1.43454	-.32003
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.004	-3.099	34.778	-.87729	-1.45208	-.30250
	not						
	assum.						
Q26	Eq. var.	.128	-1.529	141	-.34644	-.79427	.10138
	assum.						

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

	Eq. var.	.170	-1.405	32.306	-.34644	-.84854	.15566
	not						
	assum.						
Q8	Eq. var.	.008	-2.689	141	-.51695	-.89694	-.13696
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.036	-2.192	29.612	-.51695	-.99882	-.03508
	not						
	assum.						
Q15	Eq. var.	<.001	-3.451	141	-.88237	-1.38783	-.37691
	assum.						
	Eq. var.	.007	-2.902	30.223	-.88237	-1.50319	-.26155
	not						
	assum.						

Appendices

Appendix A – IRB Approval

Sep 21, 2023, 1:43:16 PM EDT

Monica Merrill

Cr Just & Cons Sciences 141212

Re: Exempt - Initial - 2024-34 Rape Myth Acceptance in University Students Likely to Work
with Victims

Dear Dr. Monica Merrill:

Youngstown State University Human Subjects Review Board has rendered the decision below
for Rape Myth Acceptance in University Students Likely to Work with Victims

Decision: Exempt

Selected Category: Category 2. (i). Research that only includes interactions involving
educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview
procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least
one of the following criteria is met:

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
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The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects cannot readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects;

Any changes in your research activity should be promptly reported to the Institutional Review Board and may not be initiated without IRB approval except where necessary to eliminate hazard to human subjects. Any unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects should also be promptly reported to the IRB.

Findings: The protocol research aims to investigate rape myth acceptance in university students likely to work with victims. The requested demographic information includes age, gender, ethnicity, race, major, your role at Youngstown State University, and international student status. Participants will be asked to respond to several scenarios. Counseling services information is provided. The consent is passive, and no identifying information is requested. This protocol meets the criteria of an exempt protocol, category 2(i).

The IRB would like to extend its best wishes to you in the conduct of this study.

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Sincerely,

Youngstown State University Human Subjects Review Board

Appendix B – Survey Items

Attitudes about Rape

We are Dr. Monica Merrill and Nino Shubitidze from Youngstown State University. We are conducting a study to understand attitudes about rape. In this study, you will be asked to fill out a short survey with hypothetical scenarios. We will also need to collect information to describe you such as age, gender, ethnicity, race, your major, your role at Youngstown State University, and whether you are an international student. Your participation should take about 8 minutes.

You may be at risk of harm because of this research. The survey you will complete asks about hypothetical scenarios involving sexual assault and you may have negative emotional feelings when completing the survey. The likelihood that you will be harmed is minimized because we will use hypothetical scenarios with no gender-specific names included. You can contact the Student Counseling Services (330-941-3737). More information about Student Counseling Services be found using the following link:

<https://ysu.edu/international-programs-office/ysu-current-international-students/counseling-resources>

The benefit of this study is to raise awareness about rape myth acceptance and victim blaming to create a safer place or victims to speak up in the future.

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Your privacy is important to us, and we will handle all information collected about you in a confidential manner. We will report the results of the project in a way that will not identify you. We do plan to present the results of the study at American Society of Criminology 78th Annual Meeting, but we will not disclose any information that could be used to identify any participant.

You do not have to be in this study. If you don't want to, you can choose not to complete the survey. If you do agree to complete it, you can stop participating at any time. The changes you make will not be saved until you submit the survey form.

If you have questions about this research project, please contact Monica Merrill at mmmerrill@ysu.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a participant in a research project, you may contact the Office of Research Services at YSU (330-941-2377) or at YSUIRB@ysu.edu

By choosing to complete and submit the survey, you acknowledge that you understand the study described above and have been given an informed consent form. You also acknowledge that you are 18 years of age or older and agree to participate knowingly and voluntarily.

What is your age?

18-24

25-31

32-38

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39-55

56 or above

What gender do you identify as?

Female

Male

Other...

What is your ethnicity?

White or European American

Black or African American

Hispanic or Latinx

Native American

Asian

Multi-racial

Describe your role at YSU?

Faculty

Staff

Student

If student, what is your major?

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Are you an international student?

Yes

No

Rape Myth Acceptance Scale- Subtle Version (IRMA-S)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, where
1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree.

1. Women tend to misinterpret compliments as harassment when men are hitting on them.

1

2

3

4

5

2. Sexual assault probably did not happen if a woman has no bruises or marks.

1

2

3

4

5

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3. Women like to lead men on for attention.

1

2

3

4

5

4. If a woman is raped while she is drunk, she is not responsible for what happened.

1

2

3

4

5

5. Women are too emotional to be in positions of power.

1

2

3

4

5

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6. Sometimes women who say they were raped agreed to have sex and then regret it.

1

2

3

4

5

7. There is no need for women to advocate for equal treatment anymore.

1

2

3

4

5

8. Women who say they were sexually assaulted sometimes just have emotional problems.

1

2

3

4

5

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

9. Women secretly enjoy being catcalled because it boosts their confidence.

1

2

3

4

5

10. Men don't usually intend to force sex on a woman but sometimes they get too carried away.

1

2

3

4

5

11. When women are raped, it is often because the way they said no was unclear.

1

2

3

4

5

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12. If a man is drunk, he might rape someone accidentally.

1

2

3

4

5

13. If a woman sleeps around eventually something bad is going to happen to her.

1

2

3

4

5

14. It is more acceptable for a man to have more sexual partners than a woman.

1

2

3

4

5

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15. Women who were caught cheating on their boyfriends or husbands sometimes claim they were raped.

1

2

3

4

5

16. Rape happens when a man's sex drive gets out of control.

1

2

3

4

5

17. Gender discrimination is no longer a problem in Western society.

1

2

3

4

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

5

18. A woman can be raped even if she does not physically resist.

1

2

3

4

5

19. Rape accusations can be used to get back at men.

1

2

3

4

5

20. If both people are drunk when having sex, rape can't happen.

1

2

3

4

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

5

21. Women want all of the privileges men have but none of the responsibilities.

1

2

3

4

5

22. If a man was drunk and didn't realize what he was doing he cannot have committed rape.

1

2

3

4

5

23. If a woman starts making out she should not be surprised if a man assumes she wants to
have sex.

1

2

3

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
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4

5

24. It is more natural for men than women to want to have multiple sexual partners.

1

2

3

4

5

25. If a woman goes home with a man after a party, it is her own fault if she has sex and doesn't want to.

1

2

3

4

5

26. Women who say they were raped sometimes led the man on and then had regrets.

1

2

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3

4

5

27. When a woman says “no” during sex and the man doesn’t stop, she was raped.

1

2

3

4

5

28. It is not really rape if the rapist didn’t use a weapon.

1

2

3

4

5

29. When women go out wearing slutty clothes, they are asking for sexual advances from men.

1

2

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3

4

5

30. If a woman wants to get ahead in life she should act more like a man would.

1

2

3

4

5

31. When men force women to have sex it is usually because they cannot control their desire for sex.

1

2

3

4

5

32. If a woman doesn't physically fight back, she can't really say she was raped.

1

A STUDY OF DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE AMONG
UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

2

3

4

5

Likelihood of Responsibility Scale

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means Person A should not bear any responsibility and 5 means Person A should bear full responsibility.

On a Friday night, after coming home from a party, Person A and Person B, both drunk, started to get intimate. However, after some time, Person A told Person B to stop, because they weren't feeling well and didn't want to continue. Person B ended up using force to rape Person A.

1

2

3

4

5

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After coming home from drinking with their colleagues, Person B asked Person A to be intimate.

Upon receiving “no” as an answer, Person B proceeded to use force to rape Person A. It was proven by evidence that Person A hadn’t been drinking that day, yet they couldn’t defend themselves against Person B, who was under the influence of alcohol.

1

2

3

4

5

Person B, under no influence of alcohol as revealed by evidence, proceeded to forcefully rape Person A, who had been drinking that day.

1

2

3

4

5

Person B used force to rape Person A. They have been intimate partners for 7 years. It was revealed that Person B had planned on marrying Person A.

1

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2

3

4

5

Person B used force to rape Person A after their first meeting on a date together. It was later revealed that no prior interaction had happened between Person B and Person A.

1

2

3

4

5

Person B used force to rape Person A, a complete stranger they saw on the streets. The investigation showed that it was the first time Person B saw Person A and they didn't know who Person A was.

1

2

3

4

5

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Person B used physical force to rape Person A, who appears to be physically weaker than Person

B.

1

2

3

4

5

Person B used the threat of physical harm to rape Person A.

1

2

3

4

5

Person B used psychological manipulation to rape Person A.

1

2

3

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UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

4

5

Student Counseling Services

You can contact the Student Counseling Services (330-941-3737). More information about

Student Counseling Services be found using the following link:

<https://ysu.edu/international-programs-office/ysu-current-international-students/counseling-resources>