

Date Rape Cases Among Young Women and the Development of Good Practices for Support and Prevention

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Coalition for Gender Equality

Country Research Report - LATVIA

Abstract

Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia is participating in a transnational study entitled "Date Rape Cases Among Young Women and the Development of Good Practices for Support and Prevention", funded by the Daphne II Programme, of the European Commission and co-coordinated by the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies, University of Nicosia, Cyprus.

The project involves five countries of the European Union including Cyprus, Greece, Latvia, Lithuania and Malta. Project partners are the Institute of Equality in Greece, Coalition for Gender Equality in Latvia, Women Issues Information Center in Lithuania, the Institute of Forensic Studies in Malta and the Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies in Cyprus who are also the project co-coordinators and lead partners.

The main aim of the project is to investigate the incidence of date rape among female college students (aged 18-24) in the partner countries and assess the attitude, and level of awareness among beneficiaries and target groups. The project aims to promote awareness and make policy recommendations for prevention of date rape and support to victims.

The study adopts both a quantitative and qualitative approach: 359 women currently registered students at the largest universities of Latvia responded to an anonymous questionnaire; there were 2 focus groups with the participation of 16 female students; and, 6 in-depth interviews with relevant institutional representatives: Crisis Centre "Skalbes", Resource Centre for Women "Marta", at the Ministry for Welfare, and the Latvian State Police, and Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and Union of Latvian Psychologists.

The study suggests that date rape it is alive, but is an unknown concept for young girls and women in the age group and among relevant authorities.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Aim

This research study aims to investigate the incidence of date rape among female students (18-24 years old), explore their attitudes and dating experiences; and the level of awareness among stakeholders and the female students.

Objectives

1. To identify the incidence of date rape to female students in each participating country.
2. To explore the attitudes and experiences of female students regarding date rape.
3. To explore and promote awareness to young people and stakeholders about date rape.
4. To develop recommendations, policies and strategies for victim support and the prevention of date rape.

1.2 Definition

Several definitions are found in the literature. However, for this project the following definition was adopted:

Date rape is a type of sexual assault, where the victim and the offender are or have been in, some form of personal social relationship, ranging from a first date to an established relationship (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2000).

2. Literature Review/ Country Situation Analysis

In Latvia the government and other institutions do not have appropriate research or data about violence against woman; consequently there is no general statistics data about date rape, family violence, sexual harassment at work, prostitution and human trafficking. Some of date rape cases has been anonymously reported at the mass media (so called "female press") but they are not evidence-based. Latvia defines rape as "an act of sexual intercourse by means of violence, threats or taking advantage of helplessness of the female victim."

In 2004 there were 447 women who had suffered from violence, 78 of them murdered, 80 women have been grievously bodily harmed, 61 woman and 266 minors (sex has not been shown separately) have been raped and 228 women suffered from hooliganism. This statistical data indicates only the officially registered crimes. Wherewith one can make a conclusion that the real number of women who have suffered from violence is much higher. Statistical data indicates also that approximately half of all crimes committed against women in Latvia do take place on the street and the other half in the family. Sexual harassment of women in the workplace, although illegal, reportedly is common. Cultural factors tend to discourage women from coming forth publicly with complaints of abuse. Victims of abuse often are uninformed about their rights and are reluctant to seek redress through the justice system. Besides, the recurrent violence, isolation and threatening seriously decrease the ability of the victim to ask for assistance and to maintain a claim against the oppressor without a supporting person. In the police and the court system also a tendency to decrease seriousness of this problem can be observed. Ministry of Interior Affairs and State's Police should focus their efforts to implement the preventive actions, improve competence of the policemen and set the coordinating system in place.

Recent studies worrying trends:

- Every fourth Latvian inhabitant (24,7%) has agreed that during the high school has experienced physical, emotional or sexual harassment from the peer side; majority cases were reported by young respondents (age group till 34);
- 28% of adult respondents have faced physical violence till age of 17, 11 % of adults have experienced sexual harassment/ assault and 21% parental violence (threat to kill, to leave, etc.). Women more then men has faced

sexual violence in childhood but men more than women have suffered from physical violence (Bite, 2002).

- 29 % of respondents has faced physical violence by partner and 22 % of men has agreed that they have been violent towards their partners
- Higher anxiety level was experienced by respondents who have faced physical or sexual violence outside family – in school, on the street.
- Violence is highly correlated with alcoholism and unemployment rates which is has strong link to socioeconomic situation of the state. People from depressive regions have higher insecurity feeling.
- The studies of latest decade proves that most of the rape cases are planed, even in cases when women do not know the perpetrator un rapes is outside the premises'
- Over one third of Latvian inhabitants released information that they know at least one woman in their circle of their friends and relatives who suffers or has suffered from violence. More often such answer has been received from the rural areas and respondents with low income.

Lack of informative measures allows continuation of a condemnatory attitude towards the victims of violence and delays victims and violators to turn for assistance. At present there is no united cooperation mechanism between the institutions involved in the problem and the professionals. There is a lack of specialists, who could assist the victims of violence and violators.

The following legislative norms are applied in practice:

- Clause 2353 of The Civil Law stipulates "if someone has raped a woman or copulated with her while she was unconscious, he shall also provide her full compensation also for moral injury." Compensation for non-material loss (moral injury) can be claimed only by natural persons.
- The Criminal Code specifically criminalizes rape but does not recognize spousal rape (The Criminal Code of Latvia, Section 159. Rape). The applicable sentence is deprivation of liberty for terms of not less than five years and not exceeding twenty years. A separate section (161) is on sexual intercourse with a person who has not attained the age of sixteen years.

Within the last decade a slow increase in information among professionals about violence against a woman can be observed. However, both international and local

sources show that in the entire legal system, including courts, there is a tendency not to approve the violence against a woman as a serious problem.

From June 2005 Ministry of Legal Affairs are offering legal help free of charge for the women with low income for civil, administrative and criminal cases (consultations, preparing documents, legal advice and court representation).

There are only three shelters designed specifically for battered or abused women, only one of them is supported by the local municipality. NGOs provide women with consultations and other type of support. But the possibilities of the NGOs to help are limited by the lack of legal protection and financial resources. There is only shelter in the capital city Riga with a population of over one million inhabitants where homeless women with children may reside for up to 2 months. There are no specific rape or assault hot lines; however, NGOs manages two crisis hotlines. There are no specially created shelters for women who are victims of violence.

The issue of violence against women is included in the relevant documents of Ministry of Welfare. Ministry of Welfare is responsible for implementation of gender equality and social protection policy.

Yet, the government still does not have a united system and an approach to combating violence against woman. Among institutions and professionals who work in this area there is a lack of a united mechanism and coordination system. During the last years NGOs have actively organized training for the policemen and other professionals, who contact women – violence victims. In the work with victims NGOs discover that there are cases when policemen try to persuade the woman not to submit a report about the family violence or rape case and are unwilling to carry out arrests in such cases.

A serious obstacle in solving this problem is the lack of supportive legislation: protection of a victim frequently remains the responsibility of the victim herself because the violence against women is not defined as a serious problem in solution of which efforts should be made by government, municipalities and NGOs.

Many activities of NGOs required inclusion of a norm "prohibition to approach" in the draft law of the Criminal procedure law. At present in the Latvian Criminal procedure draft law that is ready for the third reading the above mentioned norm

has not been deleted and in the Latvian Criminal procedure draft law in Chapter 1, Point 2 of Article 244 "Security measures", a means of security like "prohibition to approach a certain place and person" is envisaged. Expression and application of this means of security is described in detail in the Criminal procedure draft law, Article 254 "Prohibition to approach a certain person or place".

Primary education in Latvia envisages health lessons as mandatory for 5th and 8th grade and one year in the secondary school. However the schools can refuse to give these lessons due to insufficient resources. As a study shows frequently the quality of the training is low, the reproductive health subject has not been given satisfactory number of lessons and it cannot provide appropriate information to the young women. It is a mandate of Ministry of Welfare to improve the educational programmers

There was an attempt by Crisis Center "Skalbes" in the recent years to set up the psychological support group for violent/ aggressive men but was cancelled due to the lack of interest.

3. Findings

3.1 Quantitative results - Questionnaire

359 questionnaires were collected and summarized. The questionnaires were distributed and summarized in the largest universities of Latvia, in various regions of Latvia. One university from each region was selected for conducting the research.

Section - 1

Demographic data

Girls aged from 18-27 participated in the research, 48.2% of the girls were in the age group of 18-20 years and 51.8% were in the age group of 21-24 years. In division by nationality, 77.4% were Latvian, 18.9% were Russian, and 3.6% were other. 90.8% of the girls stated their permanent residence to be urban territory, and only 9.2% of the girls resided in the countryside at the time of research. It could be explained with the fact that after graduating from high school, young people make the choice to live in the city in order to continue studying in a university (majority of universities are located in the largest cities of Latvia). Universities are opened to students of both nationalities.

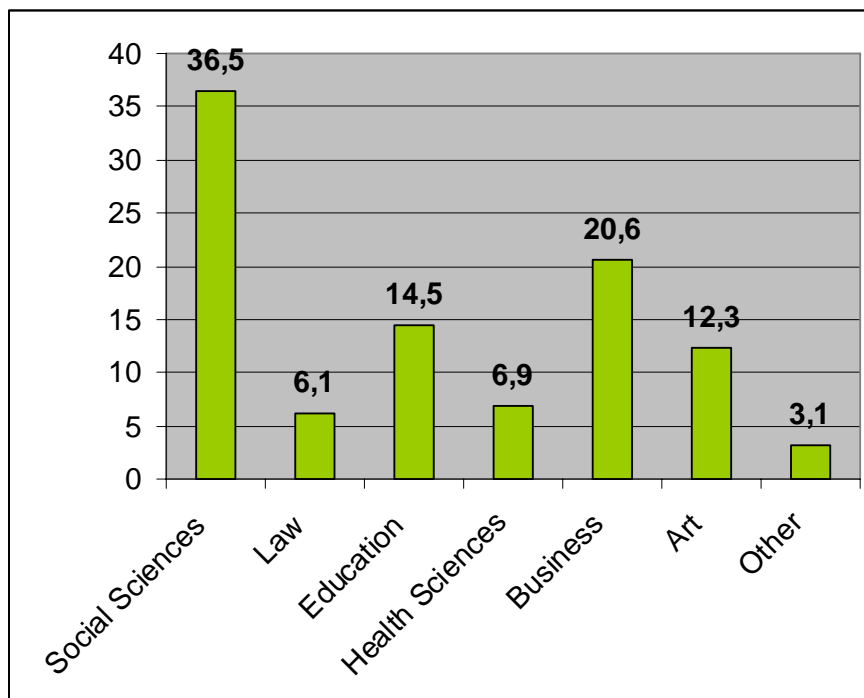


Table 1 Study specialization division of the respondents (%)

Respondents studying technical sciences at the moment did not participate in the research; the questionnaires were distributed also in the faculties, where technical sciences are taught, however there was no response from these faculties. This picture reflects reality of Latvia – gender segregated education system – social sciences are predominantly female. We do not have statistics that could provide information on whether these percentages reflect that pre-existing cultural stereotypes are keeping women and men out of certain fields of study or whether these are free and informed choices on the part of the students.

62.1% of the respondents are not married, 29.5% live independently, 30.1% live together with somebody, and 2.8% are married, as well as 4.2% mentioned that they are engaged to be married.

38.4% of the respondents replied that the educational level of their mothers is secondary professional, however the percentage of the respondents' fathers, whose education level is secondary professional, is 43.5%. Such distribution could be explained with the fact that during Latvia's Soviet history, the secondary professional education was particularly popular.

Basically, the education level of the parents of the respondents was equivalent; 26.7% of the respondents mentioned that their mothers have obtained the higher education, however 20.1% of the respondents mentioned that their fathers have higher education. This discrepancy reflects the structural inequality in the educational system of previous times – women were more educated than men but better education did not seem to put them at any advantage.

In the research, affiliation of the respondents to any particular religious branch was inquired. 37.9% of the respondents stated that they are Lutheran, 20.7% - Catholic, 13.6% - Russian Orthodox, as well as 17.0% of the respondents stated that they do not belong to any religion and are non-believers.

19.7% of the respondents, who are affiliated with the Catholic faith, do not go to church, 8.9% of the Russian Orthodox and 39.0% of the Lutheran-affiliated respondents do not go to church. 38.3% of the Catholics, 20.6% of the Russian Orthodox, and 36.9% of the Lutheran-affiliated respondents go to church.

85.2% of the respondents did not agree with the statement that sexual intimacy with the partner should be only after the wedding, however 13.4% considered that it should be the way it is done. Significant differences could not be observed in age groups, however girls residing in rural areas mentioned much more often that intimacy with the partner should be engaged in only after the wedding, along with the girls, whose mothers' education level is secondary; furthermore, an interesting fact to be mentioned is that a greater number of girls, whose fathers have higher education level, stated that intimacy should be embarked upon only after the wedding. Example highlights cultural stereotypes regarding male and female sexuality. These stereotypes impact people's actual experiences.

Section 2

Dating relationships

At the time of conducting the survey, 57.7% of the respondents had a regular partner, however 37.0% of the respondents did not have a regular partner. 85.0% of the respondents stated it to be the only sexual partner, however 14.5% of the respondents answered that this is not their only sexual partner. Most frequently, such respondents, who mentioned that their regular partner is not the only sexual partner, had previously stated that they do not belong to any religion and are non-believers. 18.4% of the respondents stated that they have been seeing their partner from 6 months to 1 year. 15.3% have been seeing the partner for two years or more.

In the research, the age of the partners that the girls see was inquired. The majority of the respondents stated that they are seeing partners of their age or older. 58.0% of the respondents characterized their relationship with their partner as serious. 21.7% of the respondents, when inquired to characterize their relationship, told that they are seeing each other, and 9.7% of the respondents stated that they are friends, who have romantic bonds.

20.9% of the respondents started dating at the age of 16, 19.8% - at the age of 17, and 14.5% - at the age of 15. 3.3% of the respondents mentioned that they started the dating process at the age of 13. In comparison of the answers given by Russian nationality respondents and Latvian nationality respondents, a greater number of Russian nationality girls started the dating process at an earlier age, already beginning with the age of 13. However, in the remaining age groups - there are no significant differences in the nationality section.

85.3 % of the girls responded that they have had sexual relations; however 12.5% of the girls have not yet had sexual relations. By analyzing the replies of the girls in age groups, it can be observed that 77.0% of the girls aged from 18-20 have had sexual relations, however 19.3% of the respondents have not yet had sexual relations. In the age group from 21-24 – 91.5% of the respondents have started sexual relations, and 7.3% of the girls have not yet engaged in sexual relations. There are no significant differences in the section of nationality, place of residence, or religious affiliation.

23.1% of the girls had their first sexual intercourse at the age of 18, 13.4% - at the age of 19. 0.4% of the respondents had their first sexual intercourse at the age o 12, 0.8% - at the age of 13, 2.3% - at the age of 14, 4.5% - at the age of 15, 14.7% - at the age of 16, as well as 16.5% of the respondents – at the age of 17. Girls of Russian national origin have engaged in sexual relationships at an earlier age than girls of Latvian origin.

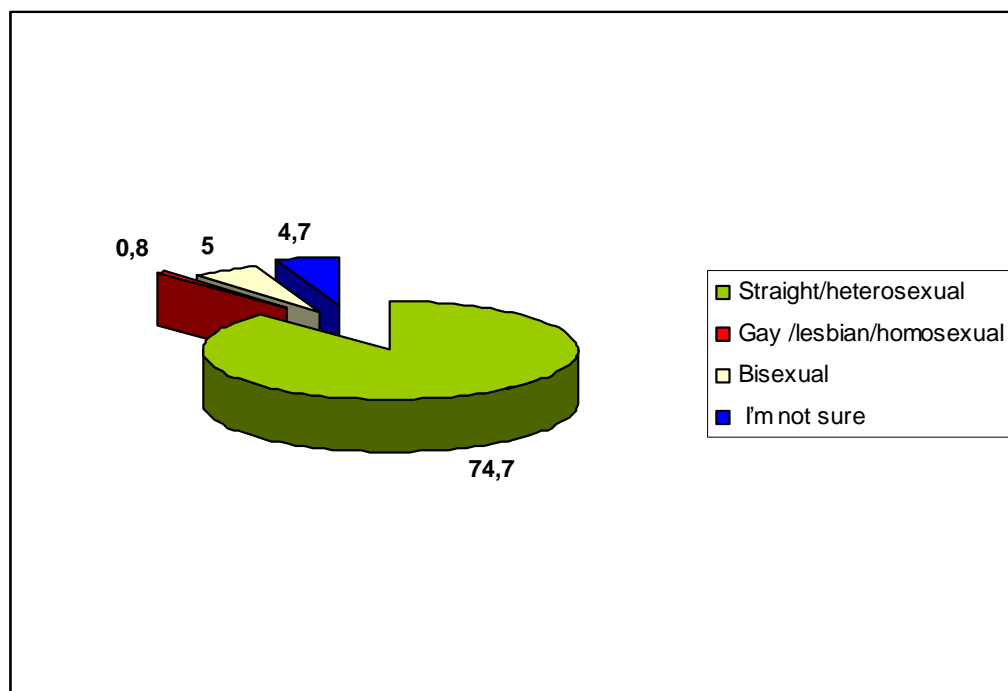


Table 2 Distribution of the respondents according to sexual orientation (%)

74.7% of the respondents stated that they are heterosexual.

The respondents were asked: how many partners have you dated during the last 12 months; 51.9% mentioned that they have been seeing only one partner, 17.3% of the respondents stated that they have been seeing two partners,

12.5% of the respondents – three partners, 7.1% - four partners, and 2.2% of the respondents mentioned that during last 12 months they have been seeing 6 partners.

During the research, it was enquired about the favorite places to go on dates and the habits of dating.

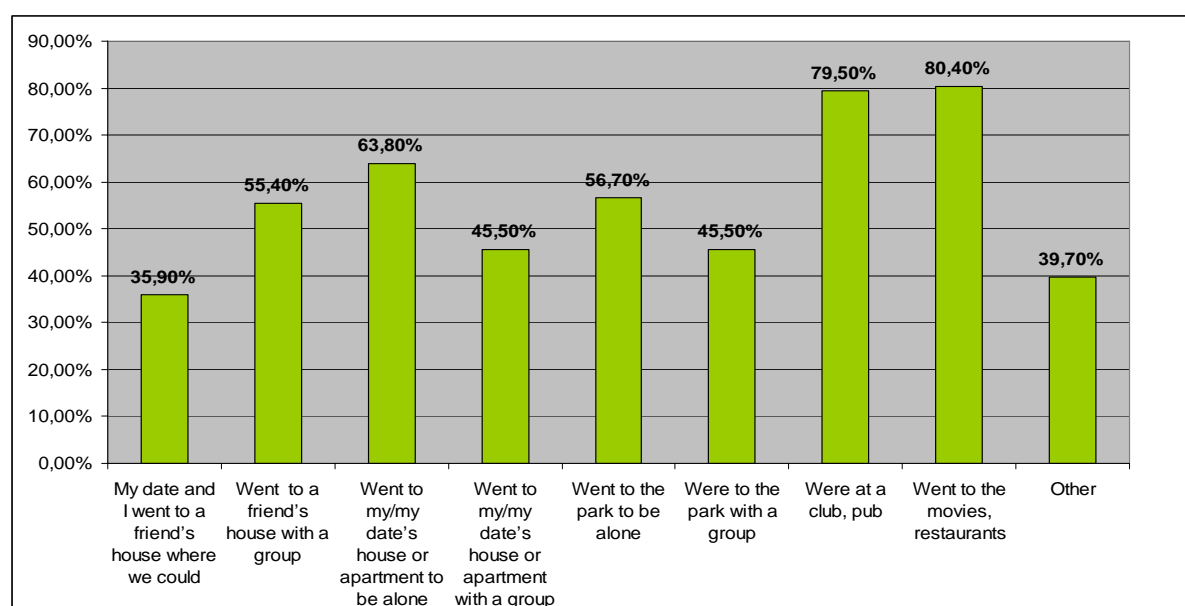


Table 3 Favorite date locations

Most frequently mentioned locations were cinemas, clubs, bars, as well as going together to the partner's apartment. 63.2% of the respondents emphasized that usually the male pays for the expenses of the woman during a date, 27.9% of the respondents answered that usually they would pay their part of the bill during the dates, however 3.8% of the respondents stated that they would pay the whole or most part of the bill.

41.7 % of the respondents would drink 2-3 drinks during a date, 24.7% drink only one drink, however 20.8% of the respondents would not consume alcohol at all during dates. 8.3% of the respondents would have 4-6 alcoholic drinks, and 4.2% would have more than 6 drinks during a date. In comparison by age groups, the girls in the age group of 18-20 would consume less alcohol than girls in the age group of 21-24 years.

72.4% of the respondents would consume light alcoholic beverages (beer, wine, etc.) during the dates, 27.6% of the respondents would drink hard liquor during

the date (e.g., vodka, tequila, whiskey, etc.). Hard liquor drinks are consumed more by the girls in the age group of 21-24 years.

88.5% of the respondents replied that they consume drugs during the dates, furthermore, it can be concluded that girls, who live in urban areas consume drugs more often than those living in the countryside. More Russian origin girls have answered affirmatively in respect to drug use, as well as those who at the moment have a paid employment.

The findings of our study matches the ones of *Reproductive Health of Population: 1997-2003, UNFPA, Papardes zieds*. Young generation earlier than the parents start sexual relationships and more often does that under alcoholic and drug influence. Dating, no use of protection is a risk factor for the reproductive health. Particular attention should be paid to the girls of Russian national origin and solutions to address both Russian and Latvian speaking population.

Respondents were asked to review behaviours that happened during the date. Majority of respondents answered that they did that willingly but it was pointed that some behaviours were done against girls' wishes.

Table 1. Please review each behavior below that may have happened with your date/s since you finished high school

Sexual behavior	Did not happen	I did this willingly	My date TRIED to against my wishes	My date DID this anyway against my wishes
Kissed	20 6.4%	284 91.0%	3 1.0%	2 .6%
Touched/kissed breasts	103 33.0%	188 60.3%	11 3.5%	4 1.3%
Touched buttocks under your clothes	136 43.6%	149 47.8%	17 5.4%	4 1.3%
Touched	153	126	24	3

genitals under your clothes	49.0%	40.4%	7.7%	1.0%
Had oral sex	189 60.6%	107 34.3%	7 2.2%	1 .3%
Had sexual intercourse	130 41.7%	163 52.2%	8 2.6%	3 1.0%

Table 2 shows that almost each respondent has faced some psychological abuse and physical violence. A few respondents have experience severe physical violence such as being threatened with a weapon, punched or were at risk being choked. Act extremely jealous – this is matching the observations of crisis centers and researches.

Half of interviewed men (Ieva Keire, bachelor's thesis „On violence against women in the family“, Latvian Agriculture University) agreed that they have been violent towards women or have faced violence in their own family. Some sources pint that more than 1/3 third of men have been violent towards partner. Only three per cent of Crisis center clients are men (Crisis Center „Skalbes“).

How often since you finished high school did your date/s:							
		Never	Seldom	Often	Always	NA	Total
Ignore you/did not pay any attention to you	Count	200	97	12	1	2	312
	%	64.1%	31.1%	3.8%	.3%	.6%	100.0%
Ignore your feelings	Count	206	80	23	1	2	312
	%	66.0%	25.6%	7.4%	.3%	.6%	100.0%
Criticize you	Count	181	101	26	2	2	312
	%	58.0%	32.4%	8.3%	.6%	.6%	100.0%
Ridicule your ideas	Count	237	55	13	4	3	312
	%	76.0%	17.6%	4.2%	1.3%	1.0%	100.0%
Shout at you	Count	228	56	20	5	3	312

	%	73.1%	17.9%	6.4%	1.6%	1.0%	100.0%
Call you names/insulted you	Count	250	48	7	3	4	312
	%	80.1%	15.4%	2.2%	1.0%	1.3%	100.0%
Insult your family/friends?	Count	268	37	4	1	2	312
	%	85.9%	11.9%	1.3%	.3%	.6%	100.0%
Humiliate you in private or public	Count	276	27	5	2	2	312
	%	88.5%	8.7%	1.6%	.6%	.6%	100.0%
Make decisions for you	Count	188	95	18	9	2	312
	%	60.3%	30.4%	5.8%	2.9%	.6%	100.0%
Act extremely jealous	Count	135	116	39	20	2	312
	%	43.3%	37.2%	12.5%	6.4%	.6%	100.0%
Persistently insist to know where you were	Count	191	84	28	7	2	312
	%	61.2%	26.9%	9.0%	2.2%	.6%	100.0%
Try to restrict you from seeing your friends/family	Count	225	54	22	9	2	312
	%	72.1%	17.3%	7.1%	2.9%	.6%	100.0%
Push or shove you violently	Count	273	29	5	2	3	312
	%	87.5%	9.3%	1.6%	.6%	1.0%	100.0%
Hold you to keep you from leaving	Count	221	73	13	3	2	312
	%	70.8%	23.4%	4.2%	1.0%	.6%	100.0%
Slap or hit you	Count	281	23	3	2	3	312
	%	90.1%	7.4%	1.0%	.6%	1.0%	100.0%
Punch you	Count	302	5	1	2	2	312
	%	96.8%	1.6%	.3%	.6%	.6%	100.0%
Put his arms around your neck to choke you	Count	296	10	1	2	3	312
	%	94.9%	3.2%	.3%	.6%	1.0%	100.0%
Throw objects at you	Count	282	22	3	3	2	312
	%	90.4%	7.1%	1.0%	1.0%	.6%	100.0%

Threaten to hurt you	Count	292	14	3	1	2	312
	%	93.6%	4.5%	1.0%	.3%	.6%	100.0%
Subject you to reckless driving	Count	249	44	13	4	2	312
	%	79.8%	14.1%	4.2%	1.3%	.6%	100.0%
Threaten to hurt you with a weapon/object	Count	301	8		1	2	312
	%	96.5%	2.6%		.3%	.6%	100.0%

Section 3 - Unwanted sexual experiences with your date

Table 3.

<p>Since you finished high school have you given in to sex <i>play/making'</i> out/messing around (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to for any of the following reasons?</p> <p>Did it happen on a date?</p>					
		Yes	No	NA	Total
You were overwhelmed by a person's continual arguments and pressure	Count	23	33	1	57
	%	40.4%	57.9%	1.8%	100.0%
A person threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you	Count	10	26	1	37
	%	27.0%	70.3%	2.7%	100.0%
A person forced you by giving you alcohol or drugs	Count	11	23		34
	%	32.4%	67.6%		100.0%
You were afraid to say no	Count	19	28		47
	%	40.4%	59.6%		100.0%
You were afraid that if you didn't	Count	10	28		38

consent would leave you (break up with you)	%	26.3%	73.7%		100.0%
A person used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to force you	Count	2	21		23
	%	8.7%	91.3%		100.0%
For any other reason (please specify)	Count	1	1		2
	%	50.0%	50.0%		100.0%

<p>Since you finished high school have you given in to sex <i>play/making'</i> out/messing around (fondling, kissing, or petting, but not intercourse) when you didn't want to for any of the following reasons?</p> <p>How often?</p>						
		Never	Seldom	Always	NA	Total
You were overwhelmed by a person's continual arguments and pressure	Count	4	48	3	2	57
	%	7.0%	84.2%	5.3%	3.5%	100.0%
A person threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you	Count		34	2	1	37
	%		91.9%	5.4%	2.7%	100.0%
A person forced you by giving you alcohol or drugs	Count		33	1		34
	%		97.1%	2.9%		100.0%
You were afraid to say no	Count		43	4		47
	%		91.5%	8.5%		100.0%
You were afraid that if you didn't consent would leave	Count		33	5		38
	%		86.8%	13.2%		100.0%

you (break up with you)						
A person used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to force you	Count		22	1		23
	%		95.7%	4.3%		100.0%
For any other reason (please specify))	Count		2			2
	%		100.0%			100.0%

A more direct question as to whether the women in the study have ever experienced unwanted sex, 10.6 per cent answer in the affirmative.

Did you have any unwanted sexual experience?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No			86.5	86.5
	Yes			10.6	97.1
	NA	9	2.5	2.9	100.0
	Total	312	86.9	100.0	
Missing	System	47	13.1		
Total		359	100.0		

The following question asks specifically about unwanted sexual intercourse and other sexual acts. The data proves that still there is need to build self-confidence of young women in Latvia and aggressiveness of young males.

Since you finished high school, have you given in to <i>sexual intercourse/sexual acts</i> when you didn't want to for any of the following reasons?			
	Yes	No	Total

You were overwhelmed by a person's continual arguments and pressure	Count	17	16	33
	%	51.5%	48.5%	100.0%
A person threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you	Count	17	16	33
	%	51.5%	48.5%	100.0%
A person forced you by giving you alcohol or drugs	Count	16	17	33
	%	48.5%	51.5%	100.0%
You were afraid to say no	Count	19	14	33
	%	57.6%	42.4%	100.0%
You were afraid that if you didn't consent would leave you (break up with you)	Count	14	19	33
	%	42.4%	57.6%	100.0%
A person used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to force you	Count	8	25	33
	%	24.2%	75.8%	100.0%

Did it happen on a date?				
		Yes	No	Total
You were overwhelmed by a person's continual arguments and pressure	Count	13	4	17
	%	76.5%	23.5%	100.0%
A person threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you	Count	7	10	17
	%	41.2%	58.8%	100.0%
A person forced you by giving you alcohol or drugs	Count	8	8	16
	%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
You were afraid to say no	Count	11	8	19
	%	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%
You were afraid that if you didn't consent	Count	9	5	14

would leave you (break up with you)	%	64.3%	35.7%	100.0%
A person used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to force you	Count	2	6	8
	%	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%

How often?					
		Somethimes	Always	NA	Total
You were overwhelmed by a person's continual arguments and pressure	Count	13	4		17
	%	76.5%	23.5%		100.0%
A person threatened or used some degree of physical force (twisting your arm, holding you down, etc.) to make you	Count	11	2	4	17
	%	64.7%	11.8%	23.5%	100.0%
A person forced you by giving you alcohol or drugs	Count	11	3	2	16
	%	68.8%	18.8%	12.5%	100.0%
You were afraid to say no	Count	13	6		19
	%	68.4%	31.6%		100.0%
You were afraid that if you didn't consent would leave you (break up with you)	Count	11	2	1	14
	%	78.6%	14.3%	7.1%	100.0%
A person used his position of authority (boss, teacher, camp counselor, supervisor) to force you	Count	4	1	3	8
	%	50.0%	12.5%	37.5%	100.0%

The violator is know bu the girl for a period of few weeks and more and „someone she has spent time a few times. 6 girls – a boyfriend and only 4 girls as sexual partner

How long had you known this person?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	I didn't know this person at all	4	1.1	12.1	12.1
	A few days	4	1.1	12.1	24.2
	Few weeks	8	2.2	24.2	48.5
	Few months	9	2.5	27.3	75.8
	1 or more years	8	2.2	24.2	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

How would you describe your relationship with this person?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Your Boyfriend	6	1.7	18.2	18.2
	Sexual partner	4	1.1	12.1	30.3
	Someone you spend time with few times	18	5.0	54.5	84.8
	A friend	3	.8	9.1	93.9
	Other	2	.6	6.1	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

Have you ever told anyone about this unwanted sexual experience?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	15	4.2	45.5	45.5
	Yes	18	5.0	54.5	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

More than half of girls have told some one – 66% have spokend about this experience to a friend. Only 1 girls has addressed a police and that does not seem a realiable confident for young Latvian women. 4 girls have talked to family members. Only 3 to therapists – it might be related to accesibility.

There is an insufficient understanding in society of what date rape is and thus a failure to recognize it and name it. At the same time there is also an unwillingness to discuss violence by both victims and society as a whole.

This silence stops meaningful dialogue in society that could raise awareness and as well start concrete actions against perpetrators and in support of victims. In Latvia, this silence is complicated by practical matters: for example, due to lack of shelters. While counseling and crises centers are helpful, it is vital that a network of shelters also be developed,

Have you ever told anyone about this unwanted sexual experience?			
		Cases	Col Response %
\$V07_SH	Parent		
	Friend	12	66.7%
	Family member	4	22.2%
	Therapist	3	16.7%
	Priest/religious representative	1	5.6%

	Police	1	5.6%
Total		18	116.7%

How much time passed before you told someone?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1 day	5	1.4	27.8	27.8
	1 week	4	1.1	22.2	50.0
	6 or more months	5	1.4	27.8	77.8
	5.00	3	.8	16.7	94.4
	NA	1	.3	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	5.0	100.0	
Missing	System	341	95.0		
Total		359	100.0		

A rather worrying factor is that professional help is not sought in such traumatic circumstances. 3 women went to a professional person but as the data suggests, friends seem to be the trusted persons.

Did you seek professional help?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	29	8.1	87.9	87.9
	Yes	3	.8	9.1	97.0
	9.00	1	.3	3.0	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	

Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

What was the setting?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Group of friends got together	7	1.9	21.2	21.2
	Single date, just me and him	16	4.5	48.5	69.7
	Several couples went out together	4	1.1	12.1	81.8
	NA	6	1.7	18.2	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

The setting for date rape in most cases were single date, „just me and him” and took place in apartment or house (42%).

Where did you go on this date?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Out to eat	1	.3	3.0	3.0
	Apartment or house	14	3.9	42.4	45.5
	Beach	1	.3	3.0	48.5
	Club/pub	10	2.8	30.3	78.8

	Other	5	1.4	15.2	93.9
	NA	2	.6	6.1	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

Car					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid		355	98.9	98.9	98.9
	Go by car	2	.6	.6	99.4
	Party	1	.3	.3	99.7
	Go to school	1	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	359	100.0	100.0	

In majority cases (69.7 per cent) the date was drunk and only 4 were under influence of drugs when forcing the girl to have the sex.

Was the person drinking?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	9	2.5	27.3	27.3
	Yes	23	6.4	69.7	97.0
	NA	1	.3	3.0	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

Was the person taking drugs?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	28	7.8	84.8	84.8
	yes	4	1.1	12.1	97.0
	NA	1	.3	3.0	100.0
	Total	33	9.2	100.0	
Missing	System	326	90.8		
Total		359	100.0		

3.2 Qualitative results

Focus groups

Two focus groups were organized in Latvia, where girls from different regions of Latvia participated. In the focus groups, it was discovered that the girls do not completely understand the concept of date rape, moreover, a very strong belief persists about how a woman should behave during a date. There is an opinion that the raped girl herself is guilty, however the male is only slightly blamed for the fact of rape.

"Well, you go on a date and think that nothing in particular will happen, but then the other person jumps on you right away. He starts harassing and pawing around." (Maija, 19 y. o.)

"I think that it is sex against one's will." (Inga, 19 y. o.)

Date rape definition / Awareness of date rape

The girls defined the date rape as sex against one's will, furthermore, the so-called "rape" drugs were mentioned, entailing drugging the girls in which case the situation cannot be controlled. As a very important aspect, the girls emphasized also the fact that date rape occurs when plenty of alcohol has been consumed. The girls doubt the stories of other girls declaring that they had been drugged:

"Well, yes, there are many stories about how some kind of a pill is put in there, but actually I have partied in clubs in Riga quite a lot, practically every Friday and Saturday, and I have not encountered something like that and actually I don't know anyone, who has. That is the reason why I think that in fact this is only on a level of rumour. I cannot give the percentage because I do not research it, but most likely many have encountered this matter." (Ilga, 19 y. o.)

"The modern version, which I heard on Saturday, is that date rape is when something is added to the drink or beverage of the girl, and then the girl does not control herself anymore. She gets raped and left somewhere. Something like that, but I cannot imagine that kind of a date, when you go there and then you get raped. Well, I am suggesting the modern version, as it could be referred to in quotation marks." (Aina, 20 y. o.)

Dating relationships / unwanted sexual experiences

Girls consider date rape to be rape, which occurs on the first date, declaring that rape is not possible, when the partners have been dating for a long time. Such situation usually is unacceptable and incomprehensible for girls. If the act of rape has taken place, after the girl has been together with her partner for a longer period of time, then most likely the girl has misunderstood the fact or has unconvincingly refused, or perhaps the male has not understood her refusal, but in this case, if the sexual intercourse has taken place, it cannot be perceived as rape.

"I just don't think so. It would seem bizarre if now, well, I don't know, after having been married for a couple of years and then I refuse to have sex one evening, it would still be sex and I would not consider it to be a rape." (Ilga, 19 y. o.)

Attitudes towards date rape

There is a very strong opinion also about that it is the fault of the girls themselves. If a girl has drunk during the date and if date rape has occurred, it would generally be perceived as the girl's fault, excluding the idea that the male may not force a woman to have sexual intercourse.

"If the girl is drunk and does not understand anything then it is her fault. She should go home. She must be in a bad condition just to consume some drink, which is given to her. I think I, for instance, would never drink something like that. If I saw that at the drink is made at the bar, only then I would drink it." (Aina, 20 y. o.)

Date traditions/ Dating places

In Latvia, the most favorite the choice of dating places depends on the season. In summer, it usually would be the beach, walks in parks, as well as trips to nature trails. As traditional fall and winter time dating spots, mentioned are cinemas, cafes, bars, as well as night clubs. The girls admitted that when on a first date or being with a little-known male, they should not go to remote places, his apartment, or go on long trips. If the girls go to a man's apartment during the first date, then they provoke the man and must expect the consequences.

The girls acknowledged that dating several partners at the same time period is a normal situation. However, mostly, the girls consider that such situation is normal, when they date several boys at the same time, but only up until the moment, when relationship starts forming with somebody. Maintaining several relationships simultaneously is unacceptable.

Depending on age, the girls have different perceptions about what is a nice and interesting date. Girls aged from 18 to 21 years speak more of romantic dates with flowers, courting, and romantic walks, however older girls find the quality content of the date more important. In this case - what location has the man selected for the date (cinema, theatre, nightclub, bowling alley, etc.) and whether it is possible to maintain interesting conversations with the man.

Victim-blaming

Girls aged from 18 to 24 participated in this research; regardless of the fact that all of them have graduated from high school and now have started studying in colleges, it can be concluded that the younger the girl is, the more open her opinions are about relationships. Also, girls, who have recently started studying and are aged from 18 to 20, more often justify the conduct of men and judge women, and blame the women themselves, if date rape has occurred. However, the older the girl is, the stronger her opinions are about what is acceptable and impermissible on male's part, and the conduct of men is not justified.

"Perhaps they do provoke [with clothing], but it does not change the fact of harassment in any way. You can wear whatever you desire, go naked, if you wish, but he does not have any rights to do it, if you refuse it." (Aija, 24 y. o.)

The most surprising fact is that in all statements given by the girls the following opinion was included - the girl's fault, improper behaviour of the girl, provocative clothing, unconsidered action, etc., in this case missing is accountability and guilt of the man for the rape.

Women are blamed for that they behave provocatively and seduce the men, and afterwards want that the men would contain themselves, as well as wear provocative clothing - see-through blouses, short skirts, decoltés, etc.

How to say "no"

It is important to understand that the girl always has an option to say "no", regardless of the situation. However, there is a strong opinion that if a girl's refusal has not been comprehended, then it is her own fault.

"Anyway, I think it is like that: the man makes the first move only after the woman gives some kind of a hint, and I doubt that there are guys, who will just start harassing right away, maybe the woman says that it is not meant that way, if you give him a strong refusal, then he will also perceive it as a refusal. Well, something like that, I don't know." (Jana, 19 y. o.)

If the man has not understood the woman's refusal and the woman has not said it loud enough, then it is considered as mitigating circumstances for the male in case if date rape has occurred, of course, this fact cannot always be defined as a justifying factor. Women have tolerant attitude towards conduct of men and even possible rape and they try to justify the men's behaviour or conduct. But women are far less tolerant towards women; they see their own fault, as well as do not justify their acts or some conduct resulting to rape. Women contradict themselves in saying that no man is entitled to force a woman to do something that she does not want, but at the same time they say that women provoke the men.

Provocative behaviour

Girls consider that the possibility of a date rape taking place depends greatly also from the woman's behaviour. The woman must understand that she cannot coquet provocatively, flirt, as well as behave showy. In this case, the provocative behaviour is referred to loud laughs, and the open demonstration of sexuality - sexy-sounding voice.

"It implies provocation. Open flirt, seductive gaze. Oh, I like you, bunny! Or - you have the shirt and you get up and down, and impose yourself onto somebody. Or - as we laugh with the girls - two lats fall down and then you pick it up." (Anna, 18 y. o.)

In this case, girls particularly emphasize the importance of behaviour of a woman, but again - liability and behaviour of the man is not considered. It is considered that a man cannot dress provocatively and men's behaviour would not

usually be referred to as provocative. Girls admit that sometimes it is improper or impolite, or it could also be referred to as pushy, but not such that would provoke date raping. If the woman refuses strictly enough, she wears well-considered clothing, her behaviour is cautious, the woman does not consume alcohol, and carefully chooses the man and the location for the date, then most likely the date raping would not occur.

To a great extent, the relationships, which we form, largely depend on our previous experience. If the girl's first experience involves forced sexual intercourse, then a situation could be formed that the woman does not understand in future relationships that it in fact is violence towards her.

"Maybe it is more of a habit. She does not want to change anything, whatever happens – happens. If she cannot refuse, then so be it." (Kristīne, 18 y. o.)

Support and prevention

Girls do not have sufficient information in respect to where should she go if date rape has occurred. Amongst the places mentioned were crisis centres, youth support centres, as well as it was mentioned that information should be sought at information services, for instance, 1188, which is the biggest information services in Latvia. The girls mostly would not choose to go to the police, because they do not trust this institution.

"The police usually, at least partially are corrupt. Knowing them, I don't have any trust in policemen, because not too long ago we bribed one." (Anita, 20 y. o.)

The support hotline was also mentioned; however there is a predominant opinion amongst girls that real help cannot be received by calling the support hotline.

Usually the girls, who are victims of such occurrences, do not report it, because they are afraid that everybody will find out and blame her for what has happened, and to a great extent, they are afraid of the society's reaction and attitude towards the matter, it is particularly true in the countryside. Many stories have been told about that a woman reports about the matter but there aren't enough evidences. The rapist has even been found, but due to lack of evidence, he is not prosecuted. The girls are afraid of embarrassment, as well as of attitude by officials, who will be blaming the girl in what has happened. There is a paradox

that the man gets in a way excused for his conduct immediately when the woman reports about the conduct. Resultant – the woman feels like if she is the accused and the criminal, not the other way around.

Information about date rape

Information about date rapes should be necessary, because at this time and in this aspect in Latvia it is not talked about. It is important to educate the youth about such matters both in the family and at school. However, when educating at school, it must be taken into consideration that youth are generally shy in front of their peers and that all serious matters are turned into fun. Very noticeable are social commercials on television, as well as the outdoor advertisements.

"12, 13 years is the right age. They start understanding and they still accept new information. Later, they will have formed their own opinion. In this age, they can still be influenced." (Anita, 20 y. o.)

It would be necessary to publish brochures, where included would be information about institutions and places, which could be addressed in need for help and the type of help that the girls could receive in such situation. Such brochures should be distributed in schools and universities, as well as at places, where the youth spend their leisure time. Movies about the specific topic, where girls share their experiences and tell what has happened to them, have been recognized as an excellent learning material.

3.3 Qualitative results – Institutional interviews

There are no institutions or organizations, whether governmental or NGOs that specifically relate to date rape in Latvia. Date rape is an unknown phenomenon in Latvia.

6 expert interviews were conducted in respect to the topic of date rape. The interviews were held at the Crisis Centre "Skalbes", Resource Centre for Women "Marta", at the Ministry for Welfare, and the Latvian State Police, and Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and Union of Latvian Psychologists.

Problem and definition

The experts consider that such problem exists in Latvia, however they have not encountered such problem in their practice. In order to define date rape, it would be necessary to consider the current definition in the legislation of the Republic of Latvia in respect to rape. Currently, Latvian legislation or policy documents do not specifically differentiate date rape, as well as it must be noted that in Latvia this matter is not particularly considered.

"In our practice, there have been no cases of date rape. And if we talk about legislation, there are no specifically regulated matters. There is criminal liability for date and it relates to all age groups. And there - the criminal liability is effective beginning with the age of 14 years. Moreover, regarding the policy planning documents, as far as I know, neither studies have been conducted, nor initiatives for such studies have been made. Solutions to the problem are not provided also in this sphere." (Lawyer of the Resource Centre "Marta")

On the level of policy planners and politicians, this problem generally is not talked about, but it has been talked about on the national level within framework of general prevention of violence.

The representative from the Ministry for Welfare of the Republic of Latvia has emphasized the following: "The date rape problem strongly resembles violence problems in family. Our ministry is fighting to include in policy planning documents date rape and domestic violence would be considered as serious crime as general violence".

Three ministries should be mentioned when talking about the strategy of violence prevention - Ministry of the Interior of the Republic of Latvia, which deals with the general violence prevention, Ministry for Welfare of the Republic of Latvia, which handles rehabilitation of violence for victims thereof, and Ministry for Children and Family Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, which currently works with prevention of violence in family.

Why women are not reporting?

Date rape usually occurs between well-known or recently acquainted persons, therefore it should be particularly defined as a problem both in the policy documents and in legal enactments. In such case, if the State Police of Latvia is called to arrive at scene, they would have a clear problem situation. At this time, according to the existing legislation of Latvia, it is impossible to identify and punish for the date rape. Police has difficulty identifying this issue as criminal.

Representatives from the non-governmental organizations emphasized the fact that mostly women suffering from violence in their family have addressed NGOs or if rape has occurred on the street, when some stranger has done it. Usually women would not seek help if the rapist is known to them, because they fear of publicity and condemnation.

Representatives from state institutions stressed that possibly women do not report about date rape or violence that has occurred during a date, because it is considered as a standard or even integral part of the date, which the women identify as *"unfortunately I was not lucky"* and such behaviour of the male is considered as "standard".

"Possibly, women do not go to the police and do not report about violence or rape that has occurred during a date because oftentimes such violence is considered as a standard or integral part of the date, or is considered as an expression of masculinity, or it is so widely spread and people do not think that it is not present as much, so as to pay particular attention to it perceiving that I, perhaps, am the only one out of many, who has not been so lucky." (Ministry for Welfare of the Republic of Latvia)

Another reason to be mentioned is that women do not wish to report to the police, because they think that by reporting they would not achieve anything

anyway. However the police officials are guided by the present social stereotypes that due to the disarray in the state policy it is impossible to consider these cases and initiate criminal cases.

Situation in police and police's opinion on date rape

An inspector working for the Latvian State Police emphasized that 80% of the victims seeking help in the police are prostitutes, who try to find their clients, who have failed to pay for the services rendered. These women perfectly know the procedure and know what must be retained and how she must behave in order to prove the fact of rape. These cases never go to court and these women cancel their applications once they have received financial compensation. There are women, who address the police regarding cases of rape, when rape has actually happened, but also these women cancel their applications right before the court. This fact, of course, cannot be proven, but one of the guesses is that women are financially compensated to cancel their petitions.

There have been cases when women address the police with a petition of rape fact, but it occurs on the day following the rape, women have been in shower and have washed their clothing, which in essence means that the act of rape cannot be proven, as the police will not have sufficient amount of material evidence. It is particularly applicable for cases when physical bodily injuries have not been inflicted upon.

"In such case, if the victim cannot recall the attacker, has been to shower and washed clothing, as well as has been under influence of alcohol and does not remember the circumstances of the case, the police in essence cannot do anything and there are not sufficient material evidence to initiate a case."
(Latvian State Police)

When reporting about rape, the woman needs to be prepared that it is a very unpleasant and humiliating process. The woman is interrogated multiple times and also confrontation takes place. The police officials interrogate also friends and acquaintances of the woman, therefore the woman needs to be prepared also for that this information will be public. Oftentimes, after the process of the case investigation is explained to the women, they choose not to report it at all. In cases if the rape has occurred where a minor has been raped, the parents decide

not to submit the report and wish to forget about this occurrence as soon as possible.

Victim-blaming

Generally, there is a prevailing opinion in the society – the victim is to be blamed for what has happened. Also the experts admitted that such opinion does exist. The inspector of the Latvian State Police emphasized that, of course, there is a difference in whether the case is handled by a male or a female. Men are usually less tolerant and wish to close the case as soon as possible, and they have a stronger conviction that the woman herself is to blame.

Informing society and existing barriers

In order to avoid date rape, it is important to inform the society and distribute more information about date rape, because the most important reason for why the date rape occurs is that there are very strong social stereotypes about the role of a man and a woman in the society, as well as about the expression of the femininity and masculinity.

"I think that it is just another strong stereotype about that women can be easily conquered. Furthermore, if the woman has agreed to go out for a dinner or, even more, to go visit, it implies that she must have agreed also to all pertaining issues. That is only the subjective part, because in fact it is not so. But it is what has settled in men strongly. And on their part, there is a true lack of comprehension, because - she said "yes". As if it was the same – to go, for instance, to have a cup of coffee, or to go for a dance and, let's say, to have sex. Like if it was the very same thing." (Crisis Centre "Skalbes")

In this case, regarding date rape, it can be said that this issues is of such character, where definition of the problem has not yet taken place and it is not talked about to sufficient extent. Institutions, which should be working in solving these matters do not yet realize the significance of this problem, as well as women, who have encountered date rape do not recognize this conduct as punishable.

Women are at increased vulnerability in the context of intimate relations as law and protection institutions are hesitant to intrude upon this “private” domain in the case of partner assault, rape and other forms of violence in intimate relations.

Need for information and statistics

Currently in Latvia, there is no information available about date rapes and it is not clear, how topical this problem is in Latvia. In order to start working with this matter and bring attention to it also on political level, information about cases of date rape would be necessary, as well as statistical data, which currently is not available in Latvia in respect to this specific problem matter. It would be necessary to make a research to recognize the situation and these problem matters could be best actualized by non-governmental organizations.

Where and how to distribute information?

It would be helpful to make leaflets and distribute them to non-governmental organizations around Latvia, which work with the target audience of date rape, as well as it would be necessary to organize vast informative campaigns. These issues should also be talked about in schools and universities.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study examined the prevalence and impact of date rape among women in Latvia, their attitude and dating experiences and the level of awareness among students and persons in authority. The study adopted both a quantitative and qualitative approach for data collection. Data for the quantitative study come from 359 female students between the age of 18 and 24 years studying at the Universities of Latvia. Data for the qualitative study draw on another 16 students who participated in focus groups and from representatives of 6 relevant institutions in Latvia that include an NGO, crisis center, government entities and the police.

Among the findings were the following:

- 1) Date rape is an unknown concept for young girls and women in the age group and relevant institutions;
- 2) Results slightly vary in different socio-demographic groups – attention should be paid to Russian and Latvian population and solutions addressed to reach both audiences;
- 3) Cultural stereotypes leaves an impact on male and female behaviour during the date; male's behaviour can be characterized as aggressive and solution should be sought to address this issue;
- 4) Lack of health lessons might be a base for low level of understanding/awareness of issue;
- 5) Lack of training for police, minimal assistance available for young women at universities; no youth-friendly and anonymous services accessible and available;
- 6) Date rape can become a risk factor for sexually transmitted diseases;
- 6) Inadequate funding for NGO hotlines and no municipal and state support services in place;
- 7) No unified approach to violence against women;
- 8) Worrying trends of drug and alcohol use among young women and girls;
- 9) Early start of sexual relationships and more often under alcoholic and drug influence.

The study findings suggest that date rape is alive, but date rape is an unknown concept for young girls and women in the age group and relevant authorities. Latvian policy makers are aware of violence against women but not particularly on date rape as a specific social phenomenon. Date rape has not yet been defined

as a serious problem on the level of legislature. The necessary assistance and support to the victims of violence are not yet offered. Attention should be paid to funding of services of social rehabilitation and establishing of shelters and specialists trained who could assist the victims of violence and violators. Study shows that gender and cultural stereotypes has a strong impact on young female's and male's behaviors and attitudes towards victim in the society. As the study was limited and sample covered only female students in age group between 18 to 24, findings can not be generalized to the whole society of Latvia. Additional research should be performed.

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