

Emotional/Psychological Health Effects

Psychological impacts of sexual violence can include shame, fear, anxiety, depression, traumatic stress reactions, and suicidal behaviours. Research shows that survivors experience significant psychological distress and concerns for their safety and well-being as a result of cyber-sexual harassment,¹ sexual harassment in the workplace,² sexual assault,^{3, 4, 5} stalking,⁶ and trafficking for sexual exploitation.⁷

Campbell and her colleagues reviewed 22 studies examining the impact of sexual assault on women's mental health. They found that 73 to 82% of survivors experienced fear and/or anxiety, 17 to 65% experienced PTSD, 13 to 15% experienced depression, 23 to 44% experienced suicidal ideation, and 2 to 19% attempted suicide.⁸ Studies have found the consequences of sexual harassment in the workplace to include emotional exhaustion and burnout,⁹ depression and anxiety,^{10, 11} and post-traumatic stress symptoms.^{12, 13} Survivors of trafficking situations involving sexual exploitation also may experience high levels of anxiety, depression and PTSD.¹⁴

¹ Schenk, S. (2008) "Cyber-sexual harassment: The development of the cyber-sexual experiences questionnaire," *McNair Scholars Journal*, 12(1), Article 8. Retrieved January 20, 2012 from: <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/mcnair/vol12/iss1/8>.

² Willness, C.R., Steel, P. & Lee, K. (2007). A meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of workplace sexual harassment. *Personnel Psychology*, 60(1), 127-162.

³ Brennan, S. & Taylor-Butts, A. (2008). *Sexual Assault in Canada, 2004 and 2007*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, Minister of Industry. Retrieved January 20, 2012 from: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85f0033m/85f0033m2008019-eng.pdf>.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011). *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control.

⁵ Campbell, R., Dworkin, E. & Cabral, G. (2009). An ecological model of the impact of sexual assault on women's mental health. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 10(3), 225-246.

⁶ Logan, T.K. & Cole, J. (2011). Exploring the intersection of partner stalking and sexual abuse. *Violence Against Women*, 17(7), 904-924.

⁷ Hossain, M., Zimmerman, C., Abas, M., Light, M. & Watts, C. (2010). The relationship of trauma to mental disorders among trafficked and sexually exploited girls and women. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(12), 2442-2449.

⁸ Campbell, R., Dworkin, E. & Cabral, G. (2009). An ecological model of the impact of sexual assault on women's mental health. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 10(3), 225-246.

⁹ de Haas, S., Timmerman, G. & Höing, M. (2009). Sexual harassment and health among male and female police officers. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, 14(4), 390-401.

¹⁰ Fitzgerald, L.F., Drasgow, F., Hulin, C.L., Gelfand, M.J. & Magley, V.J. (1997). Antecedents and consequences of sexual harassment in organizations: a test of an integrated model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82(4), 578-589.

¹¹ Nielsen, M.B., Bjørkelo, B., Notelaers, G. & Einarsen, S. (2010). Sexual harassment: Prevalence, outcomes, and gender differences assessed by three different estimation methods. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 19, 252-274.

¹² Willness, C.R., Steel, P. & Lee, K. (2007). A meta-analysis of the antecedents and consequences of workplace sexual harassment. *Personnel Psychology*, 60(1), 127-162.

¹³ Avina, C. & O'Donohue, W. (2002). Sexual harassment and PTSD: Is sexual harassment diagnosable trauma? *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 15(1), 69-75.

¹⁴ Hossain, M., Zimmerman, C., Abas, M., Light, M. & Watts, C. (2010). The relationship of trauma to mental disorders among trafficked and sexually exploited girls and women. *American Journal of Public Health*, 100(12), 2442-2449.