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Characteristics of male childhood sexual abuse

Teresa Solomon Billings

Judith Gardner Simolke

CHARACTERISTICS OF
MALE CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE

A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

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ABSTRACT

The current study investigated characteristics and case variables of sexually abused male children, and how those variables affect the outcome of cases investigated by Child Protective Services. Data was obtained from the Riverside County Department of Social Services, Child Welfare System/Case Management System. It was found that substantiated cases involved (a) Disclosure by the child (b) Family Structure (c) a report made by a mandated reporter, and who reported the abuse (d) a referral to a forensic interview. It was found that the largest percentages of perpetrators were the siblings of the victims. Sibling support groups should be formed to meet their needs. In the future, more male victims of sexual abuse should be referred for forensic interviews, increasing the likelihood of disclosure. In addition, specific training should be provided to emergency responders who interview male victims.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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DEDICATION

To my husband Robert J. Solomon-Billings, there is a passion in you longing, lingering and sweet. There is strength in you gentle, powerful and deep. There is love in you devoted, giving, and true, and there is joy in me for this life I share with you. Without your passion, strength, love and devotion I would not have made it through this program. Thank You, My love for you goes on to infinity.

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To my Grandmother, Betty Louis Burns, you live within me, Thank you, for always making me feel special. I miss your loving arms.

For the rest of my family and friends, thank you for standing by me in the last two years, and supporting me with your love and friendship.

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Finally, to project partner, Teresa: You have been the very best project partner during these many months. You always kept our eyes focused on the finish line. Most important, you have remained a best friend through it all. Thank You.

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ASSIGNED RESPONSIBLITIES

This was a two-person project where authors Collaborated throughout. However, for each phase of the project, certain authors took primary responsibility.

These responsibilities were assigned in the manner listed below.

1. Data Collection:
   Assigned Leader Judith Gardner Simolke
   Assisted By Teresa Solomon Billings

2. Data Entry and Analysis:
   Assigned Leader Teresa Solomon Billings
   Assisted By Judith Gardner Simolke

3. Writing Report and Presentation of Findings:
   a. Introduction and Literature
      Assigned Leader Teresa Solomon Billings
      Assisted By Judith Gardner Simolke

   b. Methods
      Assigned Leader Judith Gardner Simolke
      Assisted By Teresa Solomon Billings

   c. Results
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   d. Discussion
      Assigned Leader Judith Gardner Simolke
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Although female child sexual abuse has received much attention, male child sexual abuse has been under-represented in both the media and literature. According to the National Center on Child Abuse (1997), males comprise 23% of all sexual abuse victims reported to child protective authorities. Riverside County Department of Social Services received 4,449 reports of sexual abuse from January 1, 2000 to January 1, 2001. Of those, 30% were males.

The current study describes the characteristics of sexually abused male children along with case variables to determine how those characteristics and variables are related to the outcome of cases investigated by Child Protective Services. It is through the identification of these characteristics that training programs for social workers can be enhanced or developed to provide more specific training as it relates to sexually abused boys.

Problem Statement

While childhood sexual abuse of females has been extensively studied, there has been little research conducted on male childhood sexual abuse. In most studies, males are mentioned only as a sideline, and in fact were excluded in many studies. According to the National Center

on Child Abuse and Neglect (1997), males comprised 23% of all sexual abuse cases reported to child protective authorities in 1997. In another report by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2000), 14% of all the juvenile sexual assault victims were males. Males comprised 15% of sexual assault with an object, 20% of forcible fondling, and 59% of forcible sodomy. A male is most at risk of becoming a victim at age four, and by the time he is 17, his risk of victimization is reduced by a factor of five. At his peak age, the male is still 50% less likely to become a victim of sexual assault than a female.

Many researchers postulate that the differences in incidence between male and female sexual abuse victimization are not as great as reported to government agencies. In fact, most of the research done in clinical settings indicates that as many as 61% of the male population in the United States have been sexually abused. Huston, Parra, Prihoda, and Foulds (1995) reviewed the records of 1885 children evaluated for sexual abuse. Of the original records evaluated, 14% of the abuse victims were male. These researchers then looked at the charts of children who presented after a sibling had already been evaluated for sexual abuse. Of those 199 charts reviewed 61, (31%) were males; a significantly higher number of males than in the primary research group. These findings

suggest that male victims are more likely to be discovered after a sibling has been identified as being sexually abused.

A large percentage of the males interviewed who had been molested had never disclosed their experiences to anyone. Males were less likely to report sexual abuse out of fear of retribution and the desire to be self-reliant. The males were also discouraged by society's stigma of homosexual behavior. They fear being viewed as homosexual, or having the traits that would attract a homosexual offender. Generally, children are concrete thinkers and are not able to understand the complexity of offender and of their victimization. Therefore, they often blame themselves or in some way feel they caused the abuse.

In addition, societal influences on males seems to cause them to be less willing to view themselves as victims. Male children are told not to cry, and in many cases they are considered sissy or worse if they do. They are told to be strong and that they are protectors. To admit victimization would be going against what they have been groomed to be. The fear that males have of seeing themselves as victims is mirrored by society, and contributes to their underreporting of sexual abuse.

Mandated reporters may not report the same symptoms in a male child that they see in a female child because

they do not recognize male victimization. A few researchers further postulate that the blame for under reporting is shared by both victims and those in the helping professions.

Research has been conducted on the responsibility for and management strategies in child sexual abuse by Child Protective Services. Kelly (1990) compared child protective workers, nurses, and police officers regarding their attitudes concerning childhood sexual abuse. She found that gender made a difference in substantiating a case even to professionals. All three professions recommended stronger punishment of the perpetrator when the victims were females, which may be consistent with the view that abuse of a female is a more serious offense than the abuse of a male.

In addition, Kelly (1990) feels the attitudes of society and professionals minimize the sexual abuse of males. It is her thought that if professionals have difficulty in seeing males as childhood victims of sexual assault, society and the victims themselves will also have difficulty.

Actions taken to help abused males are limited. In a study of validated interfamilial male sexual abuse cases, 56% of the cases involved police, only 16% resulted in the perpetrator imprisonment, and only 4% resulted in victim

removal from the home (Homes & Slap, 1998). Cases involving females are more likely to involve court action than males.

It is possible that the difficulty in viewing males as victims has resulted in a large discrepancy in the number of male victims reported to and identified by authorities. Furthermore, it appears that our society's lack of ease in identifying male victims of sexual abuse has inadvertently discouraged boys from disclosing their abuse.

There is also evidence that cases involving male childhood sexual abuse are not treated in the same way as those involving females. Research studies of the way Child Protective Services handled reported cases of sexual abuse have been conducted. Researchers looked at the number of contacts with the alleged victim, the reporting source, the hours spent on cases, whether the victim disclosed the abuse, and the weight placed on disclosure. It has been found that with the exception of victim disclosure, cases with male victims are handled in the same manner as are cases involving female victims. From this study, it seems apparent that the problem of substantiating male sexual abuse cases lies not with the way in which the social welfare agencies handle cases, but in the specific characteristics of the children themselves.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to better understand the characteristics that discriminate a substantiated case of male sexual abuse from an unsubstantiated one. Defining those characteristics that are particular to substantiated cases may help to identify future male victims. It is also through the identification of these characteristics that training programs can be enhanced to provide specific training as they relate to male childhood sexual abuse. Thus the goal of this study is to determine the characteristics of both substantiated cases and unsubstantiated cases and to use this information to provide additional tools to child protective workers and police officers to use during their investigations of male victims.

Problem Focus

Researchers have found that male and female sexual abuse cases differ in age, number of victims in a family, gender of perpetrator, ethnicity, who reports the abuse, disclosure by victim, relationship of victim and offender, family structure, and socioeconomic status.

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2000), 33% of all victims of sexual assault reported are between the ages of 12 and 17, 34% were under 12 years of age, and 14% were less than 6 years of age. The probability of males becoming victims of sexual abuse tends to peak by

five years of age. Other Bureau of Justice Statistics data indicate that 71% of male sexual victimization includes more than one victim, as compared to females who 83% of the time were the only victims. Most perpetrators reported to law enforcement are male (96%). Female perpetrators are most common in assaults on victims under six years of age. According to the Administration for Children and Families (1995), 55% of all sexual abuse victims are Caucasian. African American children make up the second largest group at 27%, Hispanic children comprise 10% of the abuse cases. Native American make up 2%, and Asian/Pacific Islanders about 1%. The other 5% are reported as unknown.

The reporter of the abuse situation to authorities plays a crucial role in whether the case is deemed substantiated, inconclusive, or unfounded. Mandated reporters report female victims significantly more often than male victims. In addition, the majority of male childhood sexual abuse cases reported by mandated reporters were substantiated by workers, however, at a significantly lower rate than females reported by mandated reporters (Administration for Children and Families, 1995).

Most abuse cases of girls involve only one victim per perpetrator. However, it has been found that males are often one of several victims being abused by one

perpetrator. Therefore, it is important for investigators, when interviewing female victims who have male siblings, to seriously investigate their possible victimization.

Types of disclosures have also been studied. Researchers have looked at spontaneous disclosure, in which the victim simply tells someone of the abuse as opposed to prompted disclosure, in which a person such as a social worker asks questions which lead to the victims disclosure. It has been found that males rarely engage in disclosure of either type. Instead, male victims were more likely to be discovered unintentionally. They are often discovered in the process of a sibling's investigation. This further confirms the increased likelihood of males being co-victims.

It has been long believed that males are more likely to be abused by strangers than by someone close to them. However, research shows that in many situations, the boy knows the perpetrator. The victim has often had prior contact with the offender, whether as a neighbor, or as a counselor at school etc.

A boy's family structure seems to differ from a females victims. Males appear to be more at risk when they live alone with a mother or with two non-biological parents. Females are at greater risk when they live with

their father alone, two non-biological parents, or a biological parent and a step-parent.

It is the intention of the current study to use the same characteristics that distinguish male from female sexual abuse to examine the difference between substantiated versus inconclusive or unfounded male sexual abuse cases. A comparison of characteristics of substantiated male childhood sexual abuse characteristics with inconclusive or unfounded male childhood sexual abuse cases will be the focus of this study.

The substantiated, inconclusive, and unfounded reports surveyed will be from Riverside County Department of Social Services, Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CMS/CWS), which is statewide. A quantitative approach will be used. The current research will not be able to control for all variables of male childhood sexual abuse, but will examine the following variables Age, Ethnicity, Disclosure, Family Structure, Sex of the Perpetrator, Victim Relationship to the Perpetrator, Number of Victims, Mandated versus Non-Mandated Reporter, Who Reported the Victim, Forensic Interview, and How the Case was Closed.

The current research project hypothesizes that there will be significant differences in characteristics between substantiated and inconclusive or unfounded reports of

male childhood sexual abuse. If this hypothesis is supported by our research, recommendations for training child welfare workers may be made in order to allow a better recognition of the characteristics of male childhood sexual abuse.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Besharov and Laumann (1996) report that in the last 30 years, there has been a steady increase in reports of all forms of child abuse. The increase in the number of reports is partly due to the mandated reporting laws as well as education. However, there are still large numbers of maltreated children that go unreported. Besharov and Laumann cite a study conducted in 1986 that estimates that 56% of abused or neglected, or about 500,000children were not reported to authorities.

According to the Justice Information Center (1997), juveniles are among the most highly victimized population in the United States. In fact, children age 12 and older experienced 11.6 million violent victimization each year. In 1997, the rate of child victims was 14 out of every 1000. In the 41 reporting states, 798,358 children were reported to Child Protective Services. Out of those, 54.7% were neglected, 24.5% were physically abused, 12% were sexually abused, 6.2% suffered psychological abuse, 2.45 medical neglect, and 11% other types of abuse such as abandonment.

When these statistics are broken down by age, children 4-7 years old were the highest proportion of victims (26.2%). Children 0-3 years accounted for the

second largest reported population (24.7%). Children 8-11 years old constituted 21.7%, 12-15 year olds accounted for 18.6%, and those older than 16 years accounted for 6% of all victims.

A large discrepancy in gender was not found, 47.4% were male and 52.3% were female, and gender was not reported for 4% (Justice Information Center, 1997; Rosenthal, 1988). Interesting in these findings is that males are victims of physical abuse and neglect more often than females, however females report a higher incidence of sexual abuse than males: 10.8% and 3.5%, respectively.

Females are clearly more often reported victims of sexual abuse than males (Black & Debase, 1993; Ceramic & Moldier, 1996; Hashima & Finkelhor, 1999; Rosenthal, 1988). The extent of how much more is in question. According to Black and DeBlassie (1993), sexual abuse trauma goes largely unreported due to the secretive nature of the offense, and because of societal denial. These authors further state; The incidence of sexual abuse of male children and adolescents is especially invisible it is the lowest reported form of child abuse in the United States. Researchers of male childhood sexual abuse disagree as to what the actual numbers are, with incidence estimates ranging from 3% to 31%. However, they all agree that it is underreported (Black & DeBlassie, 1993; Cermak,

Molidor, 1996; Hashima & Finkelhor, 1999; Rosenthal, 1988).

In an effort to understand the differences in numbers and why there is such a large discrepancy, Bolen and Scannapieco (1999) conducted a meta-analysis. Their study included research using random sampling, and was representative of the American adult population. Their dependent variable was the stated prevalence of child sexual abuse, and the independent variables were those included in the methodological section of each study. The first independent variable reports the number of male and female response rates. Out of the 22 studies included in the meta-analysis, only 11 reported on the prevalence of male childhood sexual abuse. Additional independent variables were response rate, mode of administration, number of screen questions, region, upper age limit for child sexual abuse, levels of contact (what qualified as sexual contact), age differential between perpetrator and the victim, and age of respondent. Mode of administration, and the number of screening questions affected the predictors of male sexual abuse prevalence. The prevalence of sexual abuse for males increased by the number of screening questions asked. They concluded that this finding gives confirmation to the importance of the screening question in that the more screening questions

offered the respondents, the more opportunity the child have to disclose. They further postulated, that not including screen questions in studies, given their strength in relation to disclosure, would make the findings of that research spurious. They suggest that the more screening questions, the higher accuracy and prevalence of disclosure. One surprising finding was that after controlling for known relationships between variable, the operational definition of child sexual abuse did not contribute to the prevalence rate. However, they also indicated that regardless of what their study showed, the definition of child sexual abuse does have an important relationship with stated prevalence. They further stated that future studies should not only include appropriate number of screening questions, but they should also be specific enough so different definitions of abuse can be operationalized (Bolen & Scannapieco, 1999).

Banning (1989) states that of child sexual abuse is difficult to define at best, and can be very narrow in nature, or broadly based. A meta-analysis conducted by Bolen and Scannapieco (1999) found the more broad the definition of abuse, the higher prevalence of sexual abuse reported by men. When the question was asked if the respondent was forced to have sex against will or raped, the prevalence was 2%. When the respondent was asked if

they had been sexually abused as children by their definition of sexual abuse, the prevalence was reported to be 16%.

Haugarrd and Emery (1989) conducted a study comparing groups of males who had been sexually abused. The first group was based on a broad definition of sexual child abuse, while the second group had a narrow definition of child sexual abuse, qualifying only oral, anal and vaginal intercourse as abuse. Comparing the two groups demonstrated that the definition of child sexual abuse could have an important impact on prevalence rate of sexual abuse. In their research, when a broad definition was used, the prevalence of sexual abuse was 9.3%, when the narrow definition was used, the prevalence of sexual abuse dropped to 1.7%.

The definition of childhood sexual abuse has an especially important role when determining the rate of prevalence of sexual abuse for males. According to the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (1997) abuse of genitalia is the most common form of male childhood sexual abuse; therefore a narrow definition such as oral, anal, and vaginal intercourse would affect the prevalence.

Perception of what abuse is plays a major role in how childhood sexual abuse is defined. In addition, the definition of child sexual abuse also depends on culture,

values and beliefs (Banning, 1989). Cermak and Molidor (1996) suggest that the American culture's failure to recognize and acknowledge male sexual victimization to its fullest extent may hinder victims themselves in recognizing their own victimization. It is thought that males may be more reluctant to report sexual abuse than females (Banning, 1989). This is partly due to a society whose socialization process encourages males to seek multiple sexual experiences, and at an early age. In addition, males have been socialized to hide physical and emotional vulnerabilities, and to reveal having been abused means having to go against how they have been socialized (Cermak & Molidor, 1996).

According to Banning (1989) culturally, women are permitted a much freer range of sexual contact with their children than men, which is appropriate, since women own the primary care taking responsibility. In addition, Banning states that women are perceived as being nurturing and sexual to their children, and therefore cannot be sexually abusive. At worst, their behavior has been labeled as seductive but not harmful, while the same behavior in a father is labeled as child molestation. This researcher also stated that rapists often have been found to have had sexual or sexualized relationships with their mothers, and incestuous fathers are often found to have

had seductive mothers. In conclusion, Banning (1989) found that female perpetrators and male victims are poorly researched and understood. Cermack and Moldidor (1996) further postulate that contemporary American society fails to acknowledge the extent and magnitude of male sexual abuse, therefore the male victims have a difficult time in recognizing their own victimization. Faller (1989) indicates that the reason there is a failure to identify and investigate cases with males victims, as males are unwilling to recognize and report their abuse. The traditional male ethic of self-reliance may cause a male to fear the loss of freedom and independence if he discloses sexual abuse (Cermack and Moldidor, 1996).

In addition to society's perception of male childhood sexual abuse, there also appears to be a bias toward male sexual abuse on the part of professionals. Kelly (1990) conducted research on responsibility and management strategies in child sexual abuse. She compared child protective workers, nurses and police officers regarding their attitudes concerning childhood sexual abuse. She found that the gender of the victim made a difference even to professionals. All three professions recommended stronger punishment when the victims were females, which is consistent with society's views that females are the weaker sex.

Finkelhor (1990) reports that there has been a steady increase in the amount of cases reported to Child Protective Services, yet the number of substantiated cases have not risen in accordance to the increase. Most cases investigated and substantiated by Child Protective Services are severe in nature, and only 16% of the cases are considered low priority. It is reported that in a large percentage of unsubstantiated investigations, the workers were unable to make firm determinations of abuse. In other words, it was not that these children were not being abused, it was that the workers were unable to support substantiation. When child abuse reports are filed with Child Protective Services, 65% of the reports are unsubstantiated. Even when male childhood sexual abuse is reported to authorities, little is done to help male victims. In fact, they report that of validated interfamilial sexual abuse cases reported to protective services, only 56% involved the police, 16% result in perpetrator imprisonment, and 4% resulted in victim removal from the abusive home. In addition, male sexual abuse cases were prosecuted less often than female sexual abuse (Holmes & Slap, 1998).

According to Nicholas-Carnes (1999), when cases were referred for forensic evaluation, both males and females had higher rates of prosecution. It is believed that this

is due to the higher rate of disclosure during the forensic interview. According to Nicholas-Carnes (1999) children have a tendency to disclose over time. The research sample consisted of 51 children and who after the initial investigation by Child Protective Services, the children's statements did not adequately support or refute sexual abuse allegations. The mean age of the sample was 7.5 years of age, 63% were females, and 37% males. Each child was interviewed eight times, each time there was a different goal such as: rapport building session, six fact finding session, and a conclusion session. Of the initial 51 children, 24 of them (47%) resulted in credible disclosures. Out of the credible disclosures, 71% were successfully prosecuted. This author did not separate the credible disclosures by gender. Therefore it is unclear if, during forensic interviewing, females or males disclosed more often.

Dersch and Munsch (1999) indicate that the empirical literature on the effect of gender and substantiation is scant, yet there is evidence that females who have been sexually abused are more likely to have their reports substantiated than are males. These researchers explored three possibilities as to why Child Protective Services workers substantiate female sexual abuse cases more often than males. The first possibility explored was how male

and female cases differ at the point of intake. The second possibility was that Child Protective Service workers handled the cases differently. Lastly, they examined whether the same variables found in both male and female cases hold the same weight in the substantiation decision. They reviewed court action, number of contacts with reporter, number of contacts with alleged victim, number of contacts with others, length of time the case remained open, and individual characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, and mandated reporter versus non-mandated reporter. They found little evidence to support the hypothesis that differences in case attributes at the point of intake accounted for the substantiation rate. In addition, they found little difference in the way the cases were handled by Child Protective Service workers. The only characteristic that significantly differed was the age of the child. Females were significantly older than males at the point of intake. In addition, reports involving females were more likely to be from a mandated reporter, whereas males were most often reported by a non-mandated source. Another difference noted was that cases involving females were more likely to involve court action. These researchers found that the answer is not in the difference between variables, but in the weight each variable carries in the decision to substantiate a case of

alleged sexual abuse. This may be attributed to the number of contacts with the victim of the alleged abuse, indicating that information gathered from the victim carries a heavy weight in substantiation. The overall findings of these authors suggest it is not how the social welfare agency handles the case that matters, but the willingness of the victim to disclose the abuse (Levesque, 1994; Risin & Koss, 1987; Simth, Sullian, & Cohen, 1995).

Knowing the weight placed on the willingness to disclose abuse when substantiating a case of sexual abuse cases, it is no wonder that there is a large discrepancy in the numbers of male childhood sexual abuse reported by government sources versus the clinical numbers. Also, in considering that males have difficulty disclosing their abuse for a number of reasons, social workers must begin where the client is to develop other means of detecting abuse.

In the first national survey of adults concerning a history of childhood sexual abuse conducted in July 1985, the authors found significant differences between males and females and their risk factors. Finkelhor, Hotaoling, Lewis, and Smith (1985) used the Los Angeles Times Poll and an experienced survey research organization and sampled 2,626 American men and women over 18 years old. The sample consisted of 1,145 males and 1,481 women. These

participants were questioned on their attitude towards the problem, their own experience, and their opinions about what needed to be done. In their research, 27% of women disclosed being sexually abused, whereas 16% of males reported being sexually abused. They found that boys were more likely to be abused by younger offenders than females, normally adolescents. Sixty-two percent of the males reported attempted or actual intercourse, whereas only 49% of the females indicated attempted or actual intercourse. Males were somewhat more likely (42% vs. 33%) not to have disclosed. In addition, these researchers found that boys were primarily at risk when they lived with their mother alone or with two non-natural parents. These researchers also found males with English or Scandinavian heritage were at higher risk than any other ethnic background.

Faller (1989) reported similar findings. Faller's research was conducted at the University of Michigan Interdiscliplinary Project on Child Abuse and Neglect. Data were collected from 1979 through 1986. At the time of the study, 27.8% of male childhood sexual abuse cases had been confirmed, 72.2% of female sexual abuse cases had been confirmed. This researcher reviewed eight variables, race; socioeconomic status; age of onset of sexual abuse; whether the sexual abuse was intrafamilar or extrafamilar,

whether there was more than one victim; whether or not there was more than one offender; sex of the offender; and role relationship between offender and victim. This research found male and female victims were more likely to be Caucasian than any other ethnic group. Males were more likely to come from middle class socioeconomic status than were females who were more likely to be from a low socioeconomic status. More than half of the male victims were under the age of six at the onset of the abuse, females were five years and five months of age. This finding contradicts most other research. The overwhelming evidence suggests that males are sexually abused at a significantly younger age than females (American Humane Association, 2000; Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000; Faller, 1989; Giovanneni, 1989; Huston, Parra, Prihoda, & Foulds, 1995; Levesque, 1994).

Haskett, Wayland, Hutcheson, and Tevana (1995) state that determination of the validity of sexual abuse allegations is one of the most important and difficult tasks of professionals. Their study found that the degree of confidence child protective workers had in declaring substantiated sexual abuse cases increased when the abuse involved significantly older children. A study using archival data was conducted by Echenrode, Powers, Doris Munsch and Bolger (1988), and which concluded that reports

involving older children were more likely to be substantiated when investigated by child protective professionals. Similar results were reported in an Australian study undertaken by Winefiled and Bradley (1992).

Faller (1989) reported 63.2% of male victims were interfamilial abused, and 36.8% were extrafamilial abused. For females, the rate of interfamilial sexual abuse 89.1%, was much higher, and 7.4% experienced extrafamilial abuse, and 3.5% experience both interfamilial and extrafamilial abuse. Faller, found that female victims were more likely than males to be abused by male offenders, and both male and female victims were less often abused by women offenders. However, women offenders did victimize males more than they victimized females. Males also appear to be victimized more often by both male and female offenders in collaborative abuse than female victims. This is consistent with Farber, Showers, Johnson, Joseph, and Oshins (1984) who found in their study that 96% of convicted molesters they interviewed preferred boys, while only 4% preferred both boys and girls. In addition, these authors postulate that males who were family members of the victims most often were the perpetrators. Males also tended to be abused by professionals and biological

fathers more than females who tended to be abused by biological fathers and stepfathers.

In a similar study, Spencer and Dunklee (1986) reviewed 160 case files of male children who had been sexually abused. Of the 160 case files, 128 recorded marital status of the parents. Only 36 were living with both natural parents, 44 parents were divorced, 22 were separated, and 22 were living with a single mother, 4 mothers had died. From the data presented it would appear that male children who live with both natural parents are at less risk for sexual abuse.

Faller (1989) found that out of the cases reported, females were abused with multiple victims 66.4% of the time, whereas males were sexually abused with multiple victims 85% of the time. They concluded that males tend to be sexually abused by perpetrators who abuse others as well. Spencer and Dunklee (1986) indicate that over one third of the male victims in their study had siblings who were abused also.

Eckenrode, Munsch, Powers and Doris (1988) conducted similar research using the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Registrar. Their researched focused on four variables: age of victim, gender of victim, ethnicity, and source of report. Their results indicated that 79% of the reports involve female children, with 42% being

substantiated sexual abuse cases. Twenty-one percent of the case were males, and out of those thirty-one were substantiated. Under age ten, the distribution of abuse is very similar for males and females, with the peak victimization occurring at four years of age. However, at age ten, the number of reports of males being sexually abused decreases and female victimization increases. Eckenrode et al. Suggest that these data are consistent with other research that indicated males are abused at a younger age than females. On the average, males and females are more likely to be Caucasian than of any other ethnic background. However, there was no significant difference in the substantiation versus unfounded reports across ethnic boundaries. This study did not break down mandated reporters versus non-mandated reporters as they relates to gender. However, they found that the likelihood of substantiation was significantly related to who made the original report.

There is research in abundance comparing the ways in which the characteristics or traits of male and female victims of sexual abuse differ in substantiating reports. What is not known is why there is a difference between unsubstantiated, unfounded, and substantiated reports in male childhood sexual abuse cases. Examining the difference in case characteristic or traits and the weight

these traits carry in determining whether substantiate or not may in fact be the key to educating mandated reporters, social worker investigators, and police investigators when working with male childhood sexual abuse.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS SECTION

Study Design

The purpose of the current study was to describe the characteristics and case variables of sexually abused male children and to examine how the characteristics of the victim and case variables are related to the outcome of cases investigated by Child Protective Services. The current study employs a post positivist paradigm and a quantitative approach to examine the variables which impact case closure by Child Protective Services investigators.

A post-positivist approach was chosen because the sample size is relatively small (N=200), and the researchers have created the instrument. While a post-positivist approach is less objective than the ideal approach because extraneous variables (such as uniformity in investigative methods used by Child Protective Services workers) cannot be controlled for, the need for research on sexually abused males is great. Thus, a less objective approach is employed in this study. However, every effort was made to keep the study as objective as possible.

The researchers followed stringent rules in data collection, such as randomized sampling of the case files.

It was the intention of the research to examine possible relationships between dependent and independent variables. To achieve this goal, the study used a quasi-experimental design. A quasi-experimental approach is chosen when study designs are not absolutely objective and when it is unethical or impractical to do a more controlled study. In the current study, this approach was necessary as it is not ethical to randomly assign a control group, and the sample population could not be randomly selected. However, within the sample population random sampling was employed.

The researchers hypothesized that there would be a significant difference in case variables and characteristics between substantiated, inconclusive and unfounded reports of male childhood sexual abuse.

Sampling

Data on the type of case closure and the characteristics of male children who have been reported as sexually abused was obtained from the Riverside County Department of Social Services, Child Welfare System/Case Management System [(CWS/CMS) see Appendix A]. In California, all child abuse reports are recorded in this system. Only those cases reported to Riverside County Department of Social Service were used for this study.

Male childhood sexual abuse often goes unreported, and when reported, the substantiation rate is very low

(Black & Debase, 1993; Ceramic & Moldier, 1996; Hashima & Finkelhor, 1999; Rosenthal, 1988). Because of this, the sample used in this study is relatively small (N= 100). A nonprobability convenience sampling was used in the current research. All substantiated male sexual abuse reports from January 4, 2000 through December 22, 2000, were included, and a matching number of inconclusive and unfounded reports were randomly selected from the data base. After an initial random draw, each third inconclusive or unfounded report was selected. A convenience sample allowed the researchers to use all cases that are substantiated cases and compare them to an equal number of reports resulting in inconclusive or unfounded outcomes.

Instrument

The instrument used to collect data was created for this study based on a review of the literature (see Appendix B). The characteristics and variables included in the instrument were those which were found to distinguish between sexually abused male children and sexually abused female children, and were the characteristics and variables that previous research had found to be most important when investigating male childhood sexual abuse. In addition, these characteristics and variables appeared to have an effect on case outcome. The advantage of

creating this instrument was that the researchers were able to collect data about a sensitive topic while avoiding intrusive questions of clients. However, the disadvantage of this instrument is that it has not been tested for reliability and validity.

The dependent variable in this study is case closure. The definition of case closures comes directly from the California Penal Code section 11165.12:

> A report is closed as unfounded when the Child Protective Services investigator determines the report to be false, inherently improbable, to involve an accident, or not to constitute child abuse. Inconclusive reports are those which the investigator finds not to be unfounded and yet there is insufficient evidence to determine whether it is child abuse or neglect. Substantiation reports are those which are determined by the investigator to have some credible evidence to constitute abuse or neglect (California Juvenile Laws and Rules, 2000).

The independent variables in this study were the characteristics of the child and case variables. Case variables are: Family Structure, Gender of Perpetrator, Relationship to Perpetrator, Number of Children in the Report, whether a Mandated Reporter or Non-Mandated Reporter made the report, and if the child was Referred to

Forensic Interview. The child characteristics are: age, ethnicity, and disclosure by child.

Age: was collected in months, or years and months.

Ethnicity: was determined to meet one of five categories: 1) Caucasian, 2) African-American, 3) Hispanic, 4) Asian/Pacific Islander, or 5) Other. The other category will be used for those children who do not meet one of the first four categories.

Disclosure: was counted only if the child admitted to the investigator that he was sexually abused.

Family Structure: The following categories were used: 1) Single Parent Mother, 2) Single Parent Father, 3) Nuclear Family (biological mother and father), 4) Biological Mother and Stepfather, 5) Biological Father and Stepmother, 6) Both Non-Biological Parents, and 6) Other Family. For the purpose of this study, non-married cohabiting partners were included in either the biological parent or step-parent categories.

Sex of Perpetrator(s): 1) Male, 2) Female, or 3) Both Male and female.

The relationship to perpetrator: 1) Stranger, 2) Acquaintance, 3) Professional, 4) Friend, 5) Father, 6) Stepfather, 7) Mother, 8) Stepmother, 9) Sibling, 10) Step-sibling, 11) Uncle, 12) Aunt, 13) Cousin, 14) Grandfather, 15) Grandmother, 16) Other.

Number of Children in the report: multiple victim role was determined if additional children in the report were under investigation for sexual abuse. There were two levels: 1) Solo, and 2) Multiple. If additional children are in the report, but are not being investigated as victims, then a solo ranking will be given.

Mandated Reporter: was determined by a `yes' or `no' response in CWS/CMS. If the abuse was reported by a mandated reporter, the role of the mandated reporter was also identified. The categories of mandated reporter are: 1) Social Services, 2) Teacher, 3) Physician, 4) Mental Health Worker, 5) Law Enforcement, 6) Child Care Provider, 7) Other. If the abuse was reported by a non-mandated reporter, the categories of reporters are: 1) Mother, 2) Father, 3) Step-Parent, 4) Relative, 5) Neighbor, 6) Other Family, 7) Anonymous.

Forensic Interview: Was determined whether or not the child had been referred to Riverside County Assessment Team (RCAT), and had received a forensic interview.

Data Collection

A secondary analysis method was used to collect data for the current study. Because sexual abuse of any type is extremely sensitive in nature, an unobtrusive data collection method was necessary to gain further knowledge in this area.

The data was collected using the Child Welfare System/Case Management System (CWS/CMS) computer database. Because of the sensitive nature of the records, Riverside County Department of Social Services Administration (DPSS) conducted the initial searches for the sample in order to preserve confidentiality. The search included all cases in the computer database of male childhood sexual abuse reported to this agency from January 2000 through December 22, 2000. The first search was for substantiated cases of male sexual abuse. The second search were for cases of male sexual abuse that were inconclusive or unfounded. From the latter case files, a systematic random sample was drawn. Review of these cases in the database continued until there was an equal number of substantiated cases and inconclusive/unfounded cases. The researchers were provided with the results of the database search, with case numbers as the only identifiers. Once the case numbers were obtained, the case files were obtained from DPSS records section. All case files of male sexual abuse which had either substantiated, inconclusive, or unfounded outcomes were individually reviewed for the independent variables indicated on the instrument (Appendix B).

Data collection took two weeks, beginning on January 26, 2001 and ending on February 9, 2001.

Protection of Human Subjects

While individual case files were studied, the names of individuals involved in the case were not needed. Cases are filed by case number, which protects the names from being divulged. Information gathered was general in nature (see Appendix A), and cannot be used to identify the actual individuals named in the case files. In addition, the data collection sheets were shredded once the data was entered into the computer for analysis. Therefore, complete confidentiality and anonymity of the individuals in the abuse reports were preserved. An informed consent and debriefing statement was not needed as individuals were not interviewed.

Data Analysis

The current study conducted a secondary analysis of data, and a non-parametric test was used. A univariate and bivariate non-parametric approach was employed because the variables in the research were nominal, with the exception of age.

The first univariate analysis, which was performed for all nominal and continuous variables, was a frequency distribution. The frequency distribution allowed the researchers to visually examine how many responses there were for each variable. It showed the researchers the absolute frequency, the cumulative frequency, and the

percentage of the variables. An examination of the frequency data let the researchers conclude that the collapsing of several variables was necessary in order to run a Chi-Square.

Because of the levels within each within variable, the relatively small sample size (n=200), and the restrictions placed on Chi-Square, it was necessary to collapse the levels of several variables (Appendix C).

A Chi-Square Test of Association was used to discover whether a relationship between two nominal level variables was present. The Chi-Square test showed whether specific levels of one variable tend to be associated with specific levels of another variable, and was run on the following independent variables: ethnicity, disclosure by the child, number of children in the report, relationship to perpetrator, sex of perpetrator, family structure, mandated reporter, and whether or not a forensic interview was performed. These independent variables were entered separately into the Chi-Square in order to determine whether they were significantly related to the dependent variable of case closure, which has three levels Substantiated, Inconclusive, and Unfounded.

In addition to the univariate analysis frequency for the age variables, a bivariate analysis was needed for the continuous age variable. A one-way ANOVA was used to

analyze the independent variable age characteristics, with the dependent variable of case closure.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

Riverside County received 63,210 allegations of child abuse from January 1, 2000 through December 31, 2000. Of the 63,210 reports social workers investigated, approximately 50% were substantiated. In Riverside County in 2000, there was a total of 3,112 reports of female child sexual abuse and 1,337 reports of male child sexual abuse. Female child sexual abuse reports were substantiated 20% of the time, whereas male sexual abuse was substantiated 12% of the time.

For 1,337 reports of male child sexual abuse, 159 were Substantiated, 612 were Inconclusive, and 214 were Unfounded. There were an additional 352 cases that did not receive a disposition (see Appendix D, Figure 1). No disposition means that the case is being investigated by another agency, or is being investigated as part of another case.

Age: The age variable was collected in years and months, resulting in a mean age of male sexual abuse victim at the time of the report of 8.7 years. However, different mean ages were found for each category of case closure, but were not significantly different from one another. In substantiated cases, the mean age of the victim at the time of the report was 8.7 years.

Inconclusive reports showed a mean age of 9.3 years, and Unfounded cases had a mean age was 8.2 years (see Appendix D, Figure 2). The average age of sexually abused boys in Riverside County is inconsistent with the national statistics reported to the Justice Information Center stating that boys from 4-7 years-old are the highest proportion of abused children, and children 0-3 years old account for the second highest abused population.

The age of the child at the time of report did not appear to be related to how the case was closed. In fact, there was no significance found ($F=.951; p=.597$). This is inconsistent with previous researchers which have found that Child Protective Services workers are more likely to substantiate a case as the age of the child increases (Echenrode, Powers, Doris, Munsch, and Bolger, 1988; Haskett, Wayland, Hutcheson, and Tevana, 1995). It appears that Riverside County Child Protective Services workers give equal consideration to each case, regardless the age of the child.

Ethnicity: The ethnicity of the male sexual abuse victim were 47% Caucasian, 35% Hispanic, 17.5% African American, 0% American Indian and Asian, and .5% Other. This data is consistent with findings in the literature which shows that Caucasian children are victims of sexual abuse more than any other ethnicity (Faller,

1989;Finkelhor, Hotaoling, Lewis, & Smith, 1985). However, according to the Administration for Children and Families, this study differs in that nationally, African American children are the second highest victims of sexual abuse. In the current study, Hispanics made up the second highest.

When computing the Chi-Square test of Association, the variable of ethnicity was collapsed, because the categories American Indian, Asian and Other were below .5% (see Appendix D, Figure 3). The .5% were collapsed into the Hispanic variable, since they were American Indians. In addition, the dependent variable of case closure was collapsed. The distribution of the collapsed independent variable Ethnicity and the dependent variable How the Case was Closed is found in Appendix D, Figure 4. Our findings show that ethnicity did not have an impact on how the case was closed (Chi-Square = 4.110, df = 4, p=.391).

Disclosure: Disclosure was counted only if the child admitted to the investigator that he was sexually abused. Of the male sexual abuse victims, 61.5% disclosed their abuse. However, 38.5% did not disclose abuse (see Appendix D, Figure 5). If a male sexual abuse victim disclosed sexual abuse, there was a high probability that the case would be substantiated. If a child did not disclose, then the case would most likely be closed as inconclusive or

unfounded (see Appendix D, Figure 6). Whether the child disclosed or not was significantly related to how the case was closed (Chi-Square = 30.853, df = 2, p=.000). In comparison to other research, the rate of disclosure for this sample was high (Levesque, 1994; Risin & Koss, 1987; Simth, Sullian, & Cohen, 1995).

Family Structure: Family structure was determined by the family constellation of the child at the time of the abuse. Both the independent variable of Family Structure and the dependent variable of How the Case was Closed was collapsed (see Appendix D, Figure 7). Our results show that the variable of Family Structure, was significantly related to How the Case was Closed [(Chi-Square = 12.974, df = 3, p=.005), see Appendix D, Figure 8]. The majority of the males reported as being sexually abused in this study had a Family Structure consisting of Single Parent homes (49%). Although most males reported abused in Riverside County were from Single Parent homes, a case is more likely to be substantiated if the male is living with one biological parent and a step-parent. According, to Finkelhor et al.(1985), males who lived in Single Parent homes and Non-Biological homes were at more risk of being sexually abused than those living in any other family structure. The current research found that most reports were on males who lived in single parent homes, yet the

case was not substantiated as often as if they were living with a biological parent and a step-parent.

Sex of the Perpetrator: There were too few cases that involved both a male and female perpetrator resulting in the variable of Sex of the Perpetrator being collapsed (see Appendix D, Figure 9). A case review was completed and the category both male and female was collapsed to male or female by who played the primary role in the victimization. Our study showed that the Sex of the Perpetrator was not significantly related to How the Case was Closed [(Chi-Square = 5.051, df = 2, p=.80), see Appendix D, Figure 10]. However, there was a trend towards Unfounded case closure if the perpetrator was female. This trend is consistent with previous research (Banning 1989). For instance, one study found women are permitted a much freer range of sexual contact with their children than are men. In other words, it is socially acceptable for a mother to act in ways toward her children that would be labeled molestation if she were a man (Banning, 1989).

Victim Relationship to the Perpetrator: Due to the large number of levels within this category the variable Victim Relationship to the Perpetrator was collapsed (see Appendix D, Figure 11). From the data collected, it appears that the Victim's Relationship to the Perpetrator did not have a significant relationship to the way in

which the Case was Closed [(Chi-Square = 6.213, df = 8, p=.623), see Appendix D, Figure 12]. However, there were several interesting results. Prior to collapsing the variables, 25.5% of the perpetrators were siblings or step-siblings, and 25% of the perpetrators were fathers or step-fathers. The father and step-father statistics are consistent with prior research, which showed that 42% of perpetrators were fathers or step fathers (Faller, 1989; Haskett, Wayland, Hutcvhenson, Tavana 1995). However, the rate of abuse by siblings appeared to be higher than the rate of 5% reported in pervious literature (Haskett, Wayland, Hutcvhenson, Tavana 1995).

Number of Victims: The number of victims reported at the time of the original report was not significantly related to the way in which the Case Closed [(Chi-Square = .988, df = 2, p =.610), see Appendix D, Figure 13 and 14]. However, our findings show that 52.5% of the cases examined in this study were reported in conjunction with other victims. Because Spencer and Dunklee (1986) reported similar findings, this result was expected.

Mandated Reporter versus Non-Mandated Reporter: Of the two-hundred cases included in this study, one-hundred and forty one cases were reported by a mandated reporter, and fifty-nine cases were reported, by a non-mandated reporter (see Appendix D, Figure 15). Whether the reporter

was mandated or non-mandated was significantly related to the way in which the Case was Closed [(Chi-Square = 12.388, df = 2, p=.002), see Appendix D, Figure 16]. If a non-mandated reporter called in the original report, there was a 66% chance that the case would be closed Inconclusive or Unfounded. Yet if a mandated reporter called in the original report, there was 43% chance a case would be Inconclusive or Unfounded. Therefore, it appears being a mandated reporter in Riverside County does have an impact on how the case was closed, in that there is a higher percent of substantiation (60%) when a mandated reporter call in the original report versus a 44% Substantiation rate by non-mandated reporters. However, this difference is not statistically significant. Echenrode, et al. (1998) found that Substantiation was directly related to whether the reporter was mandated. Echenrode, et al. showed that if a mandated reporter alerted Child Protective Services to the abuse, Child Protective Services workers would substantiate the case more often. However, our study found that being a mandated reporter did not have an impact on how the case was closed.

Who Reported: Who reported the sexual abuse was determined at the time of the original report. This variable and the dependent variable of Case Closure was

collapsed (see Appendix D, Figure 17). As with mandated versus non-mandated reporters, significance was found [(Chi-Square = 18.251, df = 5, p=.003), see Appendix D, Figure 16]. If a social worker or mental health worker reported the abuse, there was a 63% chance the case would be Substantiated. If the report came from a neighbor or anonymous source, there was a 21% chance that the case would be closed as Substantiated.

Forensic Interview: It was not necessary to collapse the variable of Forensic Interview. However, the dependent variable of Case Closure was collapsed (see, Appendix D, Figure 19). If the child was referred to a forensic interview, the case was closed at a substantially higher rate than if no forensic interview was performed [(Chi-Square = 15.376, df = 2, p=.000), see Appendix D, Figure 20). This was an expected result, as other researchers Nicholas-Carnes (1999) found that males who were referred to a forensic interview were more likely to disclose the abuse during the forensic interview, thus leading to a substantiated case closure.

The investigation of the 200 sexually abused boys in Riverside County revealed that substantiated cases had a unique case characteristics and variables which differed from the inconclusive and unfounded cases. These differences can be found in the case characteristic of

Child Disclosure. The child's Age and Ethnicity did not impact the way the case was closed by the worker. The Case variable differences can be found in the case variables of Family Structure, whether the abuse was reported by a Mandated reporter or Non-Mandated reporter, who reported the abuse, and if a Forensic Interview was performed. The Case variables, Sex of the Perpetrator, Victim Relationship to the Perpetrator, and Number of Victims did not have a relationship on the way the case was closed.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

It is difficult to estimate the true number of male sexual abuse victims in the United States. What is clear however, is that male sexual abuse victims are underreported. Even When they are reported, cases of male sexual abuse are often not investigated in the same manner or with the same vigor as cases of female sexual abuse (Haskett, Wayland, Hutcheson, & Tavana, 1995;Homes & Slap 1998; Kelly, 1990).

The goal of this study was to identify characteristics and case variables of sexually abused male children in order to determine how these characteristics and variables are related to the outcome of the cases investigated by Child Protective Services in Riverside County. It was also the goal of this research to identify the differences between Substantiated cases, Inconclusive, and Unfounded cases in order to provide child abuse investigators with training that could help them better recognize the characteristics and case variables of male childhood sexual abuse.

Nationally, Child Protective Services substantiate 45% of all reported abuse cases, while Riverside County has a substantiation rate of over 50%. Riverside County substantiation rate for male sexual abuse is 12%, which is

high for male sexual abuse in comparison to national statistics. Dersch and Munsch (1999) found that as the age of the boy increases, substantiation rates also rise. Riverside County's mean age of male sexual abuse victims reported was 8.7 years. The mean age of sexual abuse victims reported in Riverside County is 1.7 years older than the national mean age. This could account for the higher substantiation rate, or it could be the Child Protective Services workers in Riverside County are more diligent in their investigation of male sexual abuse.

In looking at the data, interesting finding that arises is in the distribution of the ethnic population of males who were sexually abused. In the current study, Caucasian male sexual abuse victims comprise of 47% of the reported cases of male sexual abuse which is consistent with national statistics in that Caucasian males are of the highest risk of sexual abuse. The current data differs from the national ethnic distribution within the Hispanic and African American population. Nationally, African American male children are the second largest group of abuse victims, to their Caucasian counterparts. However, in the current study, African American victims ranked third, comprising only 17.5% of the population abused. Hispanic male children comprise 35% of the total male sexual abuse victims in Riverside County. Nationally,

Hispanic male children make up a just 10% of the reported cases.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau data for 2000 the total Hispanic population is 12.5%. However, in Riverside County the Hispanic population accounts for 36.2% of the population. Given the large percentage of Hispanics in Riverside County, the results of the current study are not surprising. When ethnicity is investigated for its relationship to how a case was closed, no significant relationship was apparent in the data. It appears that in Riverside County, ethnicity is not used as a basis to substantiate or unfound male sexual abuse.

Another outcome we found to be inconsistent with previous studies was the relationship between Family Structure and substantiation of the case. National statistics indicate that male children are most at risk for being sexually abused if they live in a single parent home or with both non-biological parents (Faller, 1989; Finkelhore, Hotalings, Lewis, & Smith 1985). In Riverside County, 49% of the reported cases were of boys who live in a single parent family. However, only 40% of these cases were substantiated. Male sexual abuse victims living with one biological parent and one step-parent made up 17% of the cases reported, yet were substantiated at a rate of 62%. Male sexual abuse victims living in a nuclear family

made up 20% of the cases, yet were substantiated at a rate of 54%. In examining these results, it seems possible that the preconceived notions that fathers and stepfathers account for 46% of the perpetrators of sexual abuse may affect the outcome of the case closure. If a social worker is investigating a case in which a father or step father lives in the home, they may be more likely to close the case as substantiated. This may be due to the popular notion that a father or step-father living in the home has greater accessibility to the child, and may thus be more likely to perpetrate. In a single parent home, it may be that the accessibility of the perpetrator to the child is less likely, or there may be other factors such as pending family law matters that would color the social workers' perception of alleged sexual abuse.

Victim relationship to the perpetrator revealed some startling data. In Riverside County, the majority (25.5%) of the perpetrators were siblings or step-siblings of the victim. In a similar study conducted in the neighboring County of San Diego, 1% of 140 cases of male sexual abuse involved sibling perpetrators. Nationally, sibling abuse accounts for 5% of the reported cases. It is unclear in the current study why the percentage of sibling abuse is so great.

As was expected, our study found that being a non-mandated reporter had a significant relationship to how the case was closed. In fact, 79% of reports called in by a neighbor or an anonymous source were closed inconclusive or unfounded. This may be the result of the social worker not being able to contact the reporting party or being unable to verify the allegation from its original source. Yet, being a mandated reporter did not effect substantiation rates. This leads one to believe that equal weight is given to all cases with the exception of neighbors and anonymous sources.

It is postulated that children have a tendency to disclose over time and with rapport building (Nicholas-Carnes, 1999). However, when the mandated reporter variable was further classified into specific professions, it was fount that if a social worker or mental health workers reported the abuse, there was a trend towards substantiation at a rate of 63% (Eckenrode, Munsch, Powers & Doris, 1988). This finding is consistent with previous research, and would stand to reason that social workers may have expertise regarding identification of sexual abuse that other mandated reporter do not posses. It is also possible that social workers are able to establish a relationship with the victim which provides the victim a safe haven for disclosure, thus leading to substantiation.

This finding is also supported in the literature as, research indicates that disclosure is higher in a therapeutic setting than the numbers nationally reported to Child Protective Services. It was also found in the literature that the more screening questions asked of males who were allegedly abused, the more likely the boy was to disclose the abuse. (Bolen & Scannapieco, 1999; Nicholas-Carnes, 1999).

Perhaps the most useful finding of the current study concerned the variable of forensic interviewing. Of the 200 male sexual abuse cases reviewed for the current project 21 were referred for forensic interviews, leaving 179 cases initially investigated by the emergency responder. If male sexual abuse victims were referred to a forensic interview, the case was substantiated 90% of the time. However, for those who were not referred to a forensic interview, the substantiation rate dropped to 45%. Therefore, a male sexual abuse victim referred to a forensic interview was significantly more likely to have his case substantiated than a victim without a referral. This finding is again consistent with previous research, which indicates that there is a higher rate of disclosure during a forensic interview; the same result that was found in the current study. Additionally, the literature suggests that cases referred for forensic interviews were

more likely to lead to the prosecution of the perpetrator (Nicholas-Carnes, 1999).Both the high rate of disclosure and the high rate of prosecution may be a result of highly trained social workers and mental health workers who conduct the forensic interviews. Given the previous research available on forensic interviewing, and the current research's significant finding of substantiation rate as a result of forensic interview, it is imperative that cases which are inconclusive be referred for a forensic interview.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the current study, several recommendations for future research as well as ways in which to enhance the current assessment of male child sexual abuse will be made.

Perhaps the most outstanding results of this study indicates that the performance of a forensic interview greatly increases the probability that the abuse case will be substantiated. Of the 21 cases referred for forensic interviews 19 were substantiated, while of the 179 not referred for a forensic interview, only 81 were substantiated. Because of the social issues surrounding the disclosure of male sexual abuse discussed above, it seems logical that any measure with the potential to lead to the true disclosure of the abuse should be taken.

Furthermore, in light of these findings and previous research that indicated that disclosure for male sexual abuse victims does not occur as frequently as it does with female victims, we as social workers should be strongly encouraged to reevaluate our investigation process so as to error on the side of caution. For this reasons, it is the recommendation of the researchers that referrals for the forensic interview be utilized at a higher rate. In order to adequately be able to provide forensic interviews to more sexually abused victims the Riverside Child Assessment Team (RCAT) would have to be increased in size. Increasing the RCAT unit is the optimum recommendation, however of the fiscal limits on increasing the scope of the RCAT unit, an alternative solution would be to provide specialized training to emergency responders and court dependency workers as it pertains to male sexual abuse. This training would include such topics as increasing the number of screening questions, relationship building skills, and conducting the interview in a therapeutic environment versus in the field.

Another recommendation for the current practice of assessing male sexual abuse is base on the finding of this study that siblings perpetrate a significant number of the reported abuse cases in Riverside County. Based upon this finding, it appears that a program designed to fit the

special needs and issues of Riverside County would be helpful. Currently, Riverside County runs several programs to address issues of sexual abuse. Programs such as Parents United are developed to provide both a therapeutic environment and an educational platform for both the perpetrator and non-offending parent. In addition, the county provides victims of abuse with support groups such as Daughters and Sons United. However, there are currently no programs designed specifically for perpetrators of sibling abuse or their victims.

In addition, it is recommended that because Riverside County has a Hispanic population that is larger than the national census distribution, the above programs must address the special cultural needs of their particular population. For instance, social workers fluent in Spanish should be available to lead support groups, as well as to discuss the issues of abuse in the most culturally sensitive manner, and to conduct forensic interviews.

Future Study

Since the instrument was created for the current research, a goal of future research in this area is to validate the instrument used. When validated, this instrument could be applied for use in county programs across the nation in order for these programs to gain more

information regarding their own success in describing and substantiating cases of male sexual abuse.

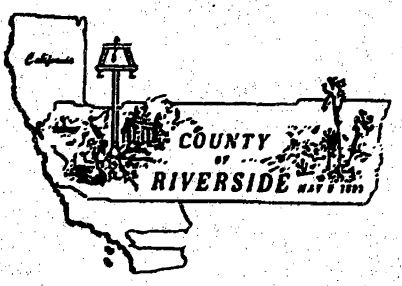
In addition, future studies should evaluate the number and types of questions that emergency responders use when initially investigating male sexual abuse reports, and how these compare to questions asked of female victims. Research has shown that male victims of sexual abuse need to be asked more questions and that those questions need to be formulated differently than those being asked of female victims of sexual abuse. If in fact male victims of sexual abuse are not being asked the appropriate number or type of questions, or if they are being asked the same questions female victims are being asked, knowing this information could help investigators reevaluate their training process.

Lastly, it may be helpful to the different agencies that form the RCAT team to compare the prosecution rate of those cases referred for forensic interviews and those that are not. Having information will give the RCAT team valuable information, in that they will be know if their prosecution rate is equal for both male and female victims of sexual abuse.

APPENDIX A:

LETTER OF APPROVAL

Department of Public Social Services



Dennis J. Boyle, Director

November 28, 2000

Cal State San Bernardino
MSW Program/ Human Subjects Committee
5500 University Parkway
San Bernardino, CA 92407

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This letter is to confirm that permission has been granted to Teresa Solomon-Billings, an MSW intern, to conduct her research study on " Understanding the characteristics and case variables as they pertain to determining the case outcome of male children who have been sexually abused."

We are very supportive of interns conducting research that will ultimately lead to improvements in service delivery and we look forward to Ms. Solomon-Billings sharing her results with us.

Sincerely,

Nancy Lopez

Nancy Lopez, LCSW
Administrative Manager
Child Protective Services

cc: Ms. Solomon-Billings

APPENDIX B:

DATA COLLECTION SHEET

Age	
ETHNICITY	
Caucasian = 1	
African-American = 2	
Hispanic = 3	
Asian/Pacific Islander = 4	
Other = 5	
DISCLOSURE BY VICTIM = Disclosure	
Yes = 1	
No = 2	
FAMILY STRUCTURE = Family	
Single parent mother = 1	
Single parent father = 2	
Nuclear family = 3	
Bio-mother & step father = 4	
Bio-father & step mother = 5	
Both non-biological = 6	
Other relative = 7	
SEX OF PERPETRATOR = Sex of Perp	
Male = 1	
Female = 2	
Both = 3	
RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR = Relat to perp	
Stranger = 1	
Acquaintance = 2	
Professional = 3	
Friend = 4	
Family Member = 5	
Father = 6	
Stepfather = 7	
Mother = 8	
Stepmother = 9	
Sibling = 10	
Step Sibling = 11	
Uncle = 12	

Aunt = 13	
Cousin = 14	
Grandfather = 15	
Grandmother = 16	
NUMBER OF VICTIMS	
Solo = 1	
Multiple = 2	
Sibling = 3	
MANDATED REPORTER = Man/Non Man	
WHO REPORTED = Who Report	
Mandated Reporter = 1	
Social Services = 1	
School Employee = 2	
Medical Staff = 3	
Mental Health Worker = 4	
Law Enforcement = 5	
Child Care Provider = 6	
Non-Mandated Reporter = 2	
Mother = 7	
Father = 8	
Step Parents = 9	
Grandparents = 10	
Neighbor = 11	
Anonymous = 12	
FORENSIC INTERVIEW	
Yes = 1	
No = 2	
CASE CLOSURE	
Substantiated = 1	
Inconclusive = 2	
Unfounded = 3	

APPENDIX C:

COLLAPSED DATA COLLECTION SHEET

Age	
ETHNICITY	
Caucasian = 1	
African-American = 2	
Hispanic = 3	
DISCLOSURE BY VICTIM = Disclosure	
Yes = 1	
No = 2	
FAMILY STRUCTURE = Family	
Single parent mother/father = 1	
Nuclear family = 3	
Bio-parent & step parent = 4	
Both non-biological = 6	
Other relative = 7	
SEX OF PERPETRATOR = Sex of Perp	
Male = 1	
Female = 2	
RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR = Relat to perp	
Stranger/Acquaintance/Professional/ Friend = 1	
Family/Uncle/Aunt/Cousin/Granparent = 5	
Father/Stepfather = 6	
Mother/Stepmother = 8	
Sibling/Stepsibling = 10	
NUMBER OF VICTIMS # of Vict	
Solo = 1	
Multiple = 2	
Sibling = 3	
MANDATED REPORTER = Man/Non Man	
WHO REPORTED = Who Report	
Mandated Reporter = 1	
Social Services/Mental Health	

= 1	
School Employee/Child Care Provider = 2	
Medical Staff = 3	
Law Enforecement = 5	
Non-Mandated Reporter = 2	
Mother/Father/Stepparent/Grandparent/Family = 7	
Neighbor/Anonymous = 11	
FORENSIC INTERVIEW	
Yes = 1	
No = 2	
CASE CLOSURE	
Substantiated = 1	
Inconclusive/Unfounded = 2	

APPENDIX D:

FIGURES

Figure 1. Distribution of How Male Child Sexual Abuse was Closed By Riverside County Department of Social Service.

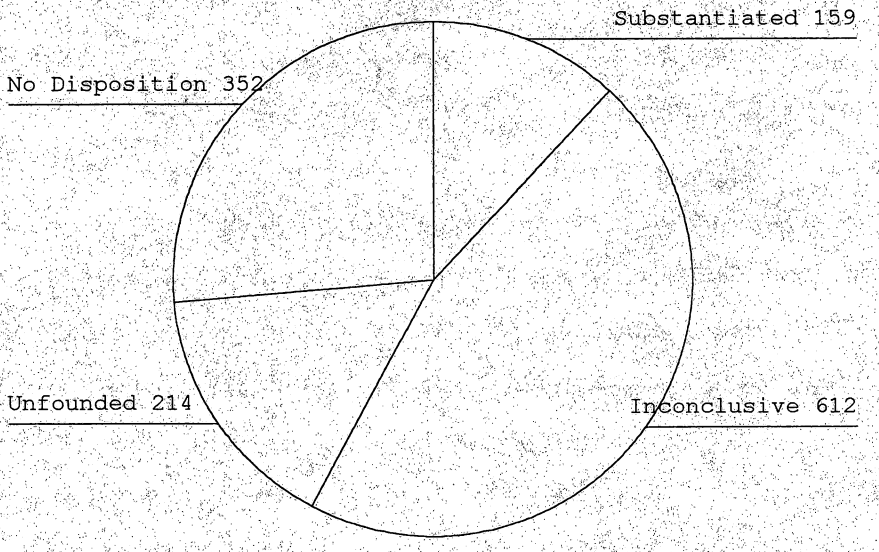


Figure 2. Distribution of age of all male child sexual abuse reports, reported to Riverside County Department of Social Services.

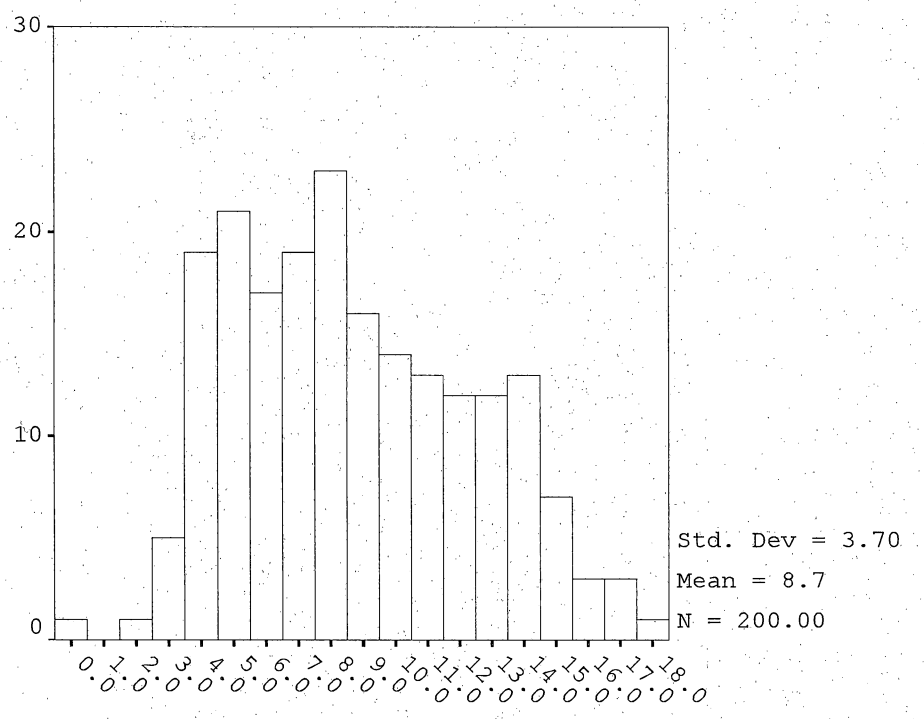
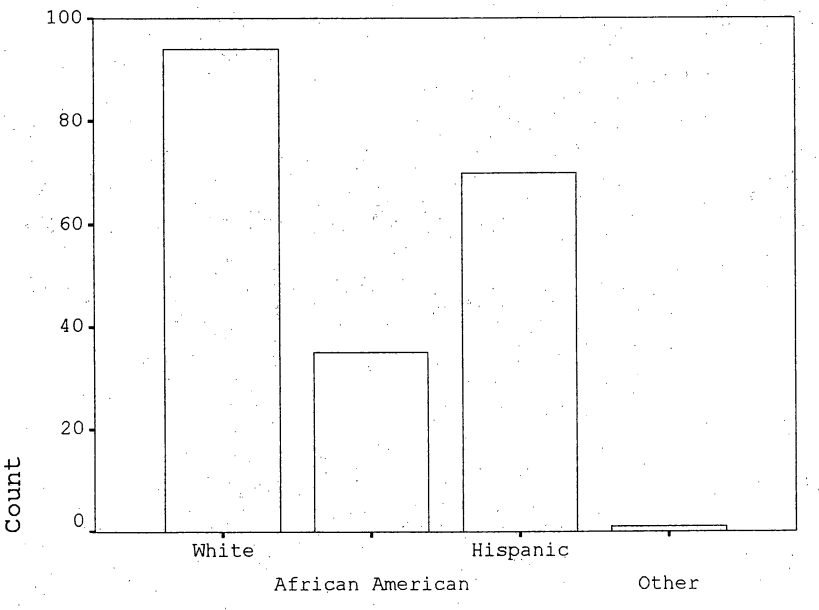


Figure 3. Distribution of Ethnicity prior to Collapsing the data and after the data was collapsed.



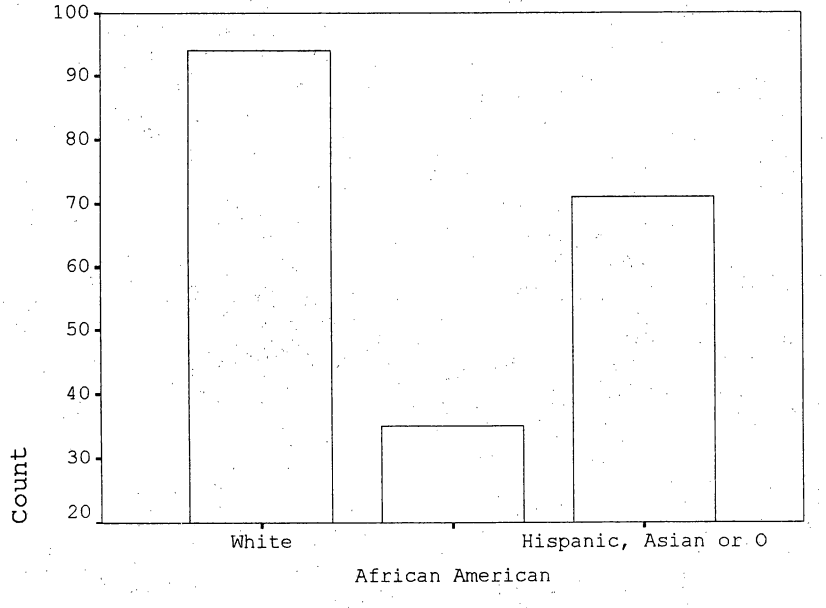


Figure 4. Distribution of the Collapsed Ethnicity and the collapsed How the Case was Closed.

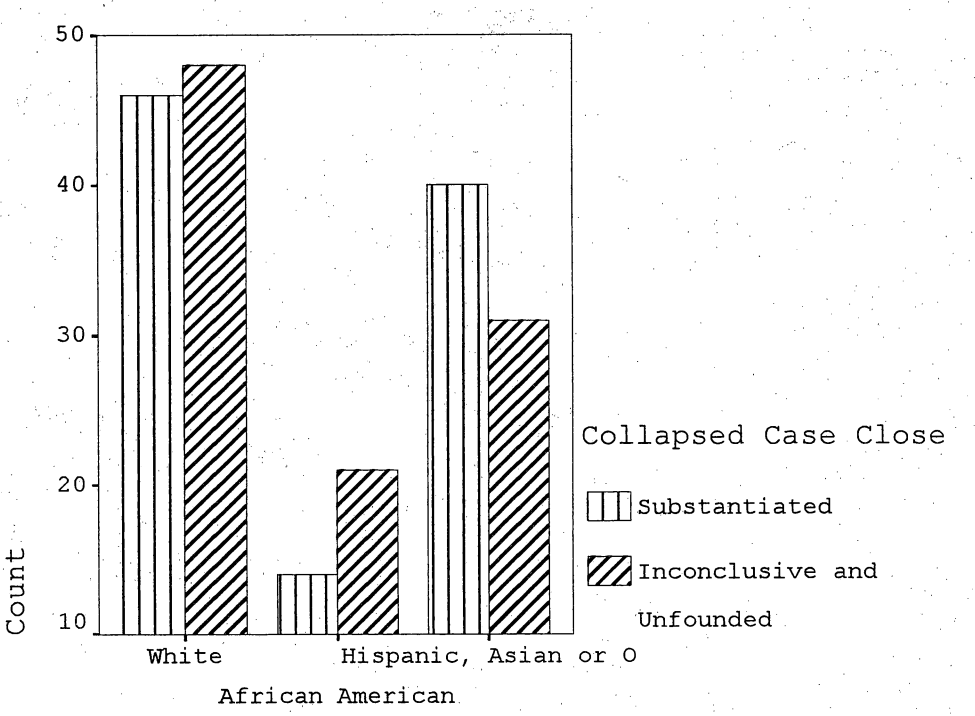


Figure 5. Distribution of Child Disclosure.

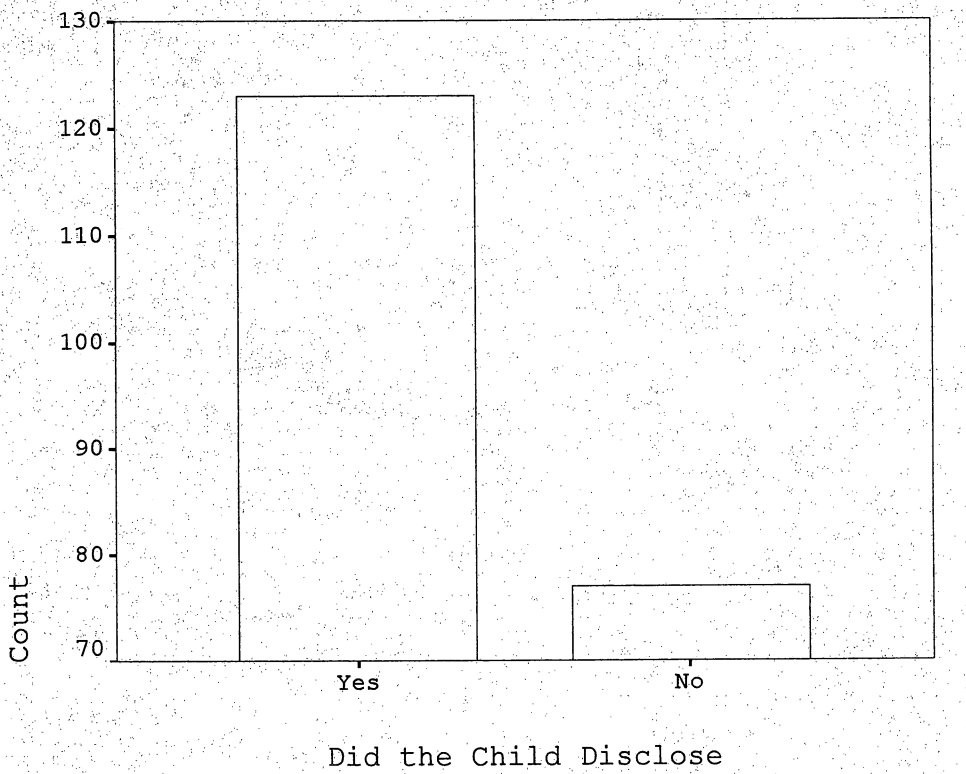


Figure 6. Distribution of Child Disclosure Rate and How the Case was Closed.

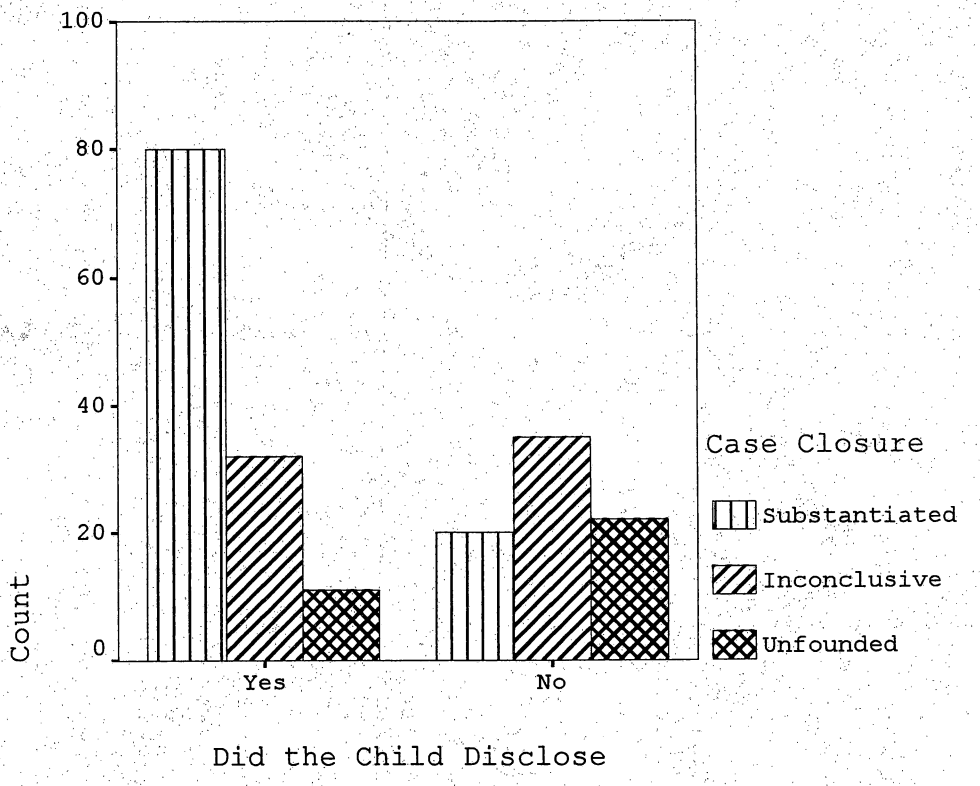
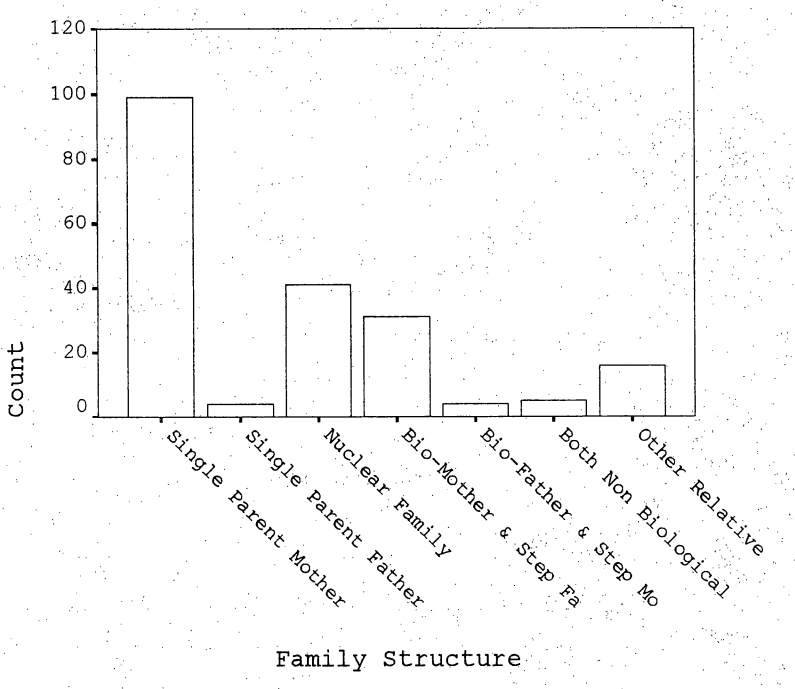


Figure 7. Distribution of Family Structure prior to collapsing the data and after the data was collapsed.



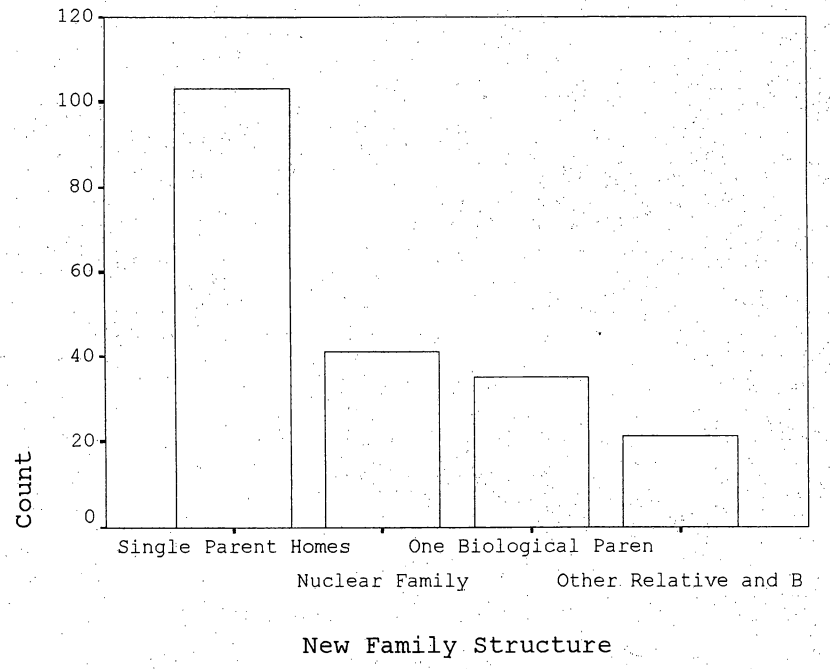


Figure 8: Distribution of New Family Structure and How the Case was Closed.

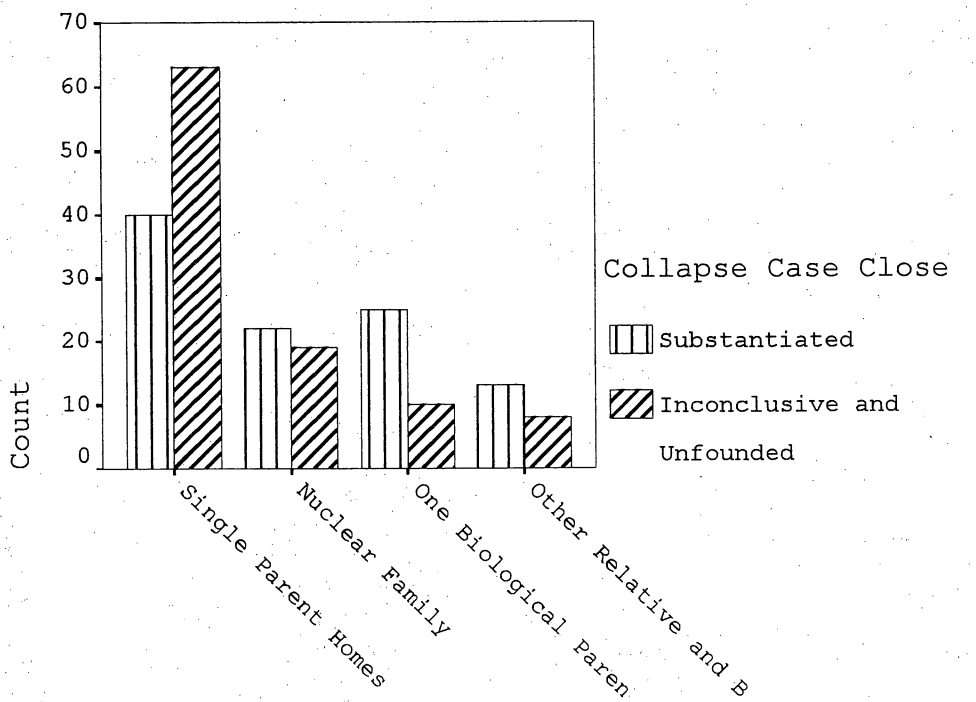
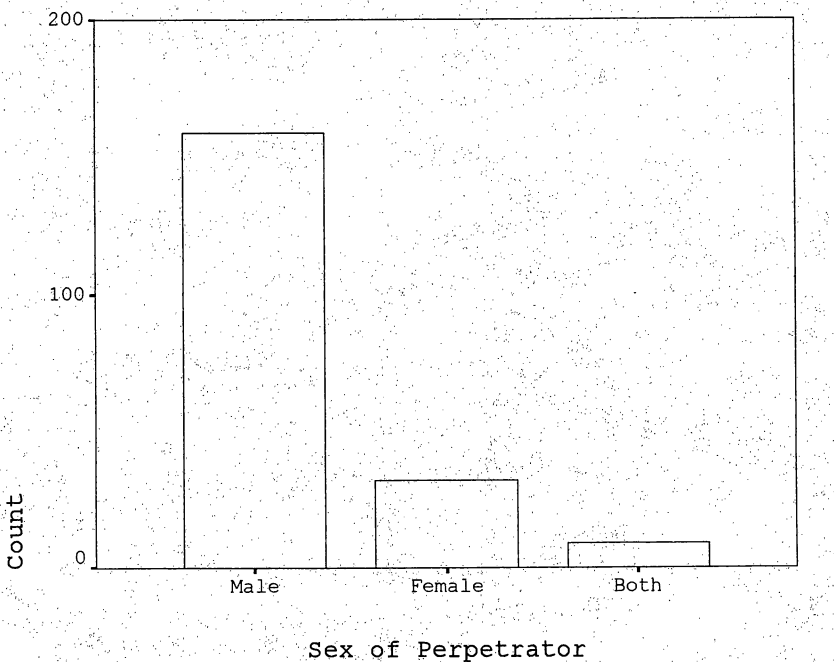


Figure 9. Distribution of Sex of the Perpetrator prior to collapsing the data and after the data was collapsed.



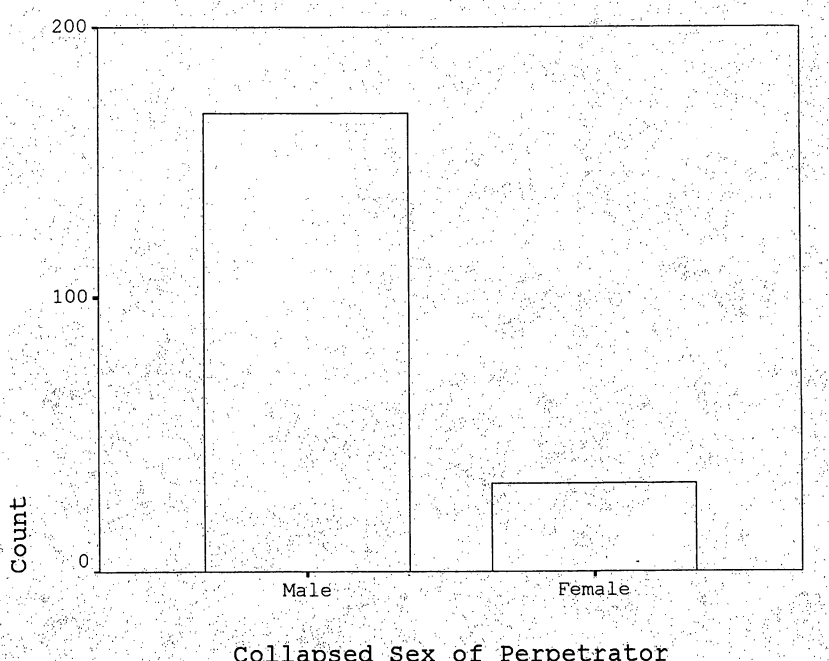


Figure 10. Distribution of Sex of Perpetrator and How the Case was Closed.

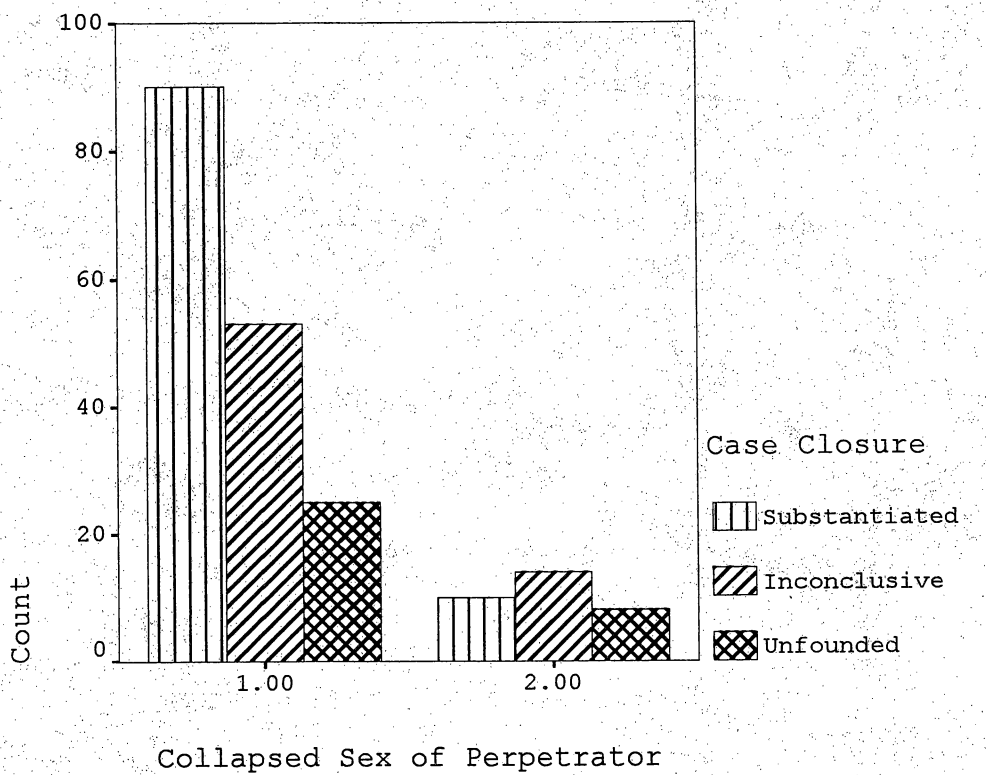
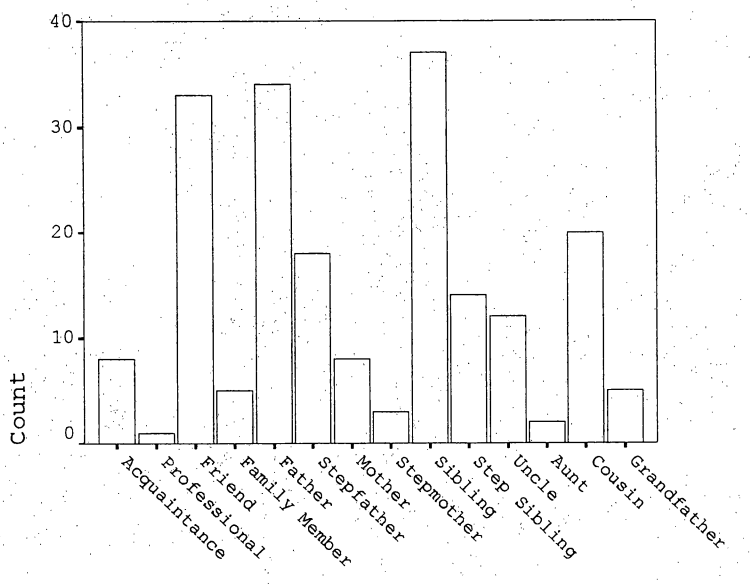


Figure 11. Distribution of Victim Relationship to the Perpetrator prior to collapsing the data and after the data was collapsed.



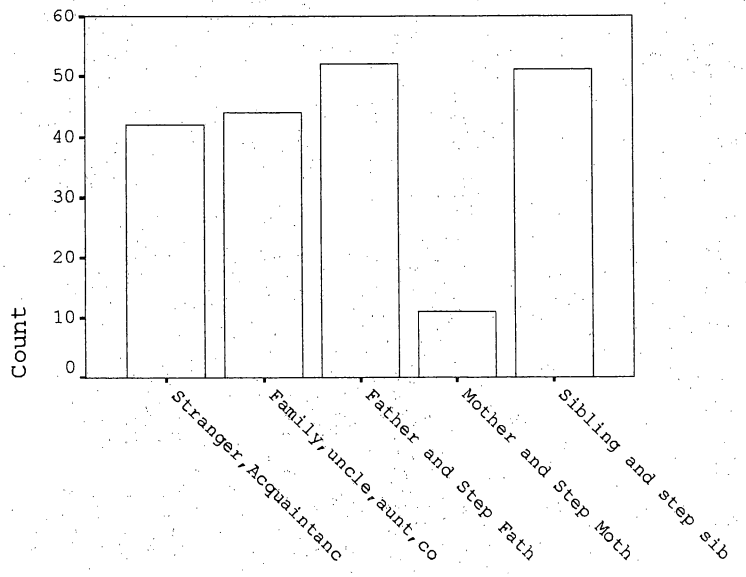


Figure 12. Distribution of the Collapsed Relationship to the Perpetrator and the collapsed Case Closure.

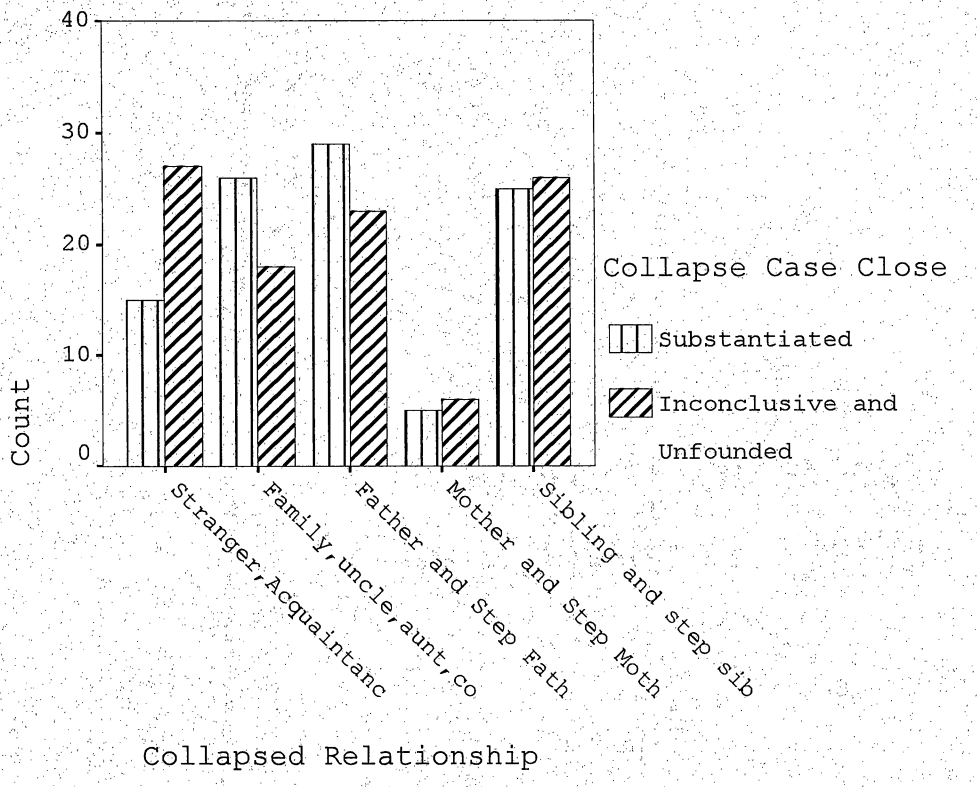


Figure 13. Distribution of Number of Victims.

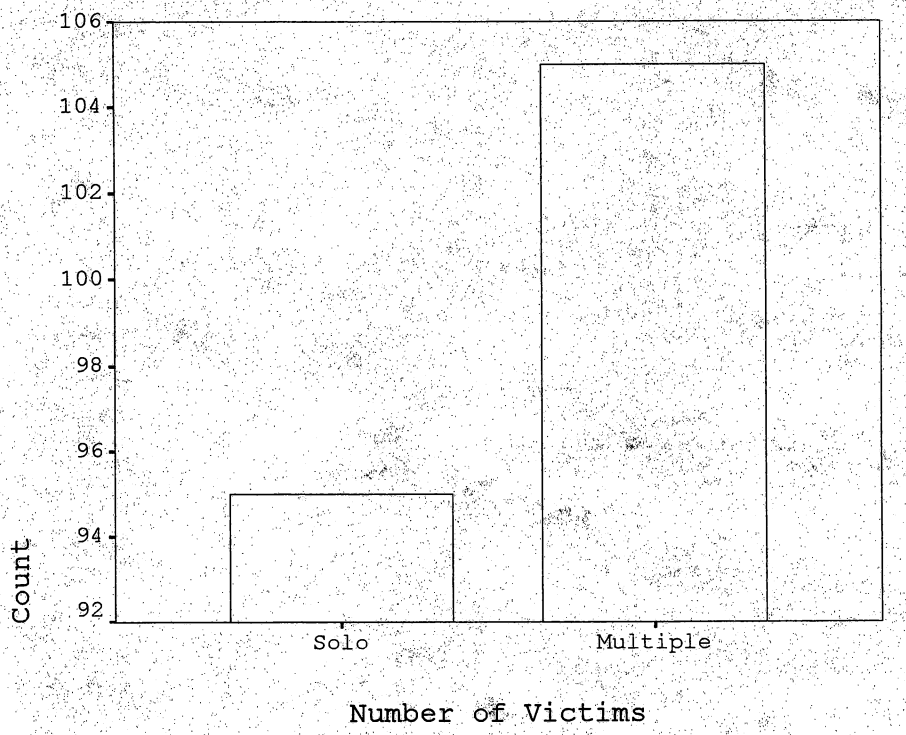


Figure 14. Distribution of Number of Victims and How the Case was Closed.

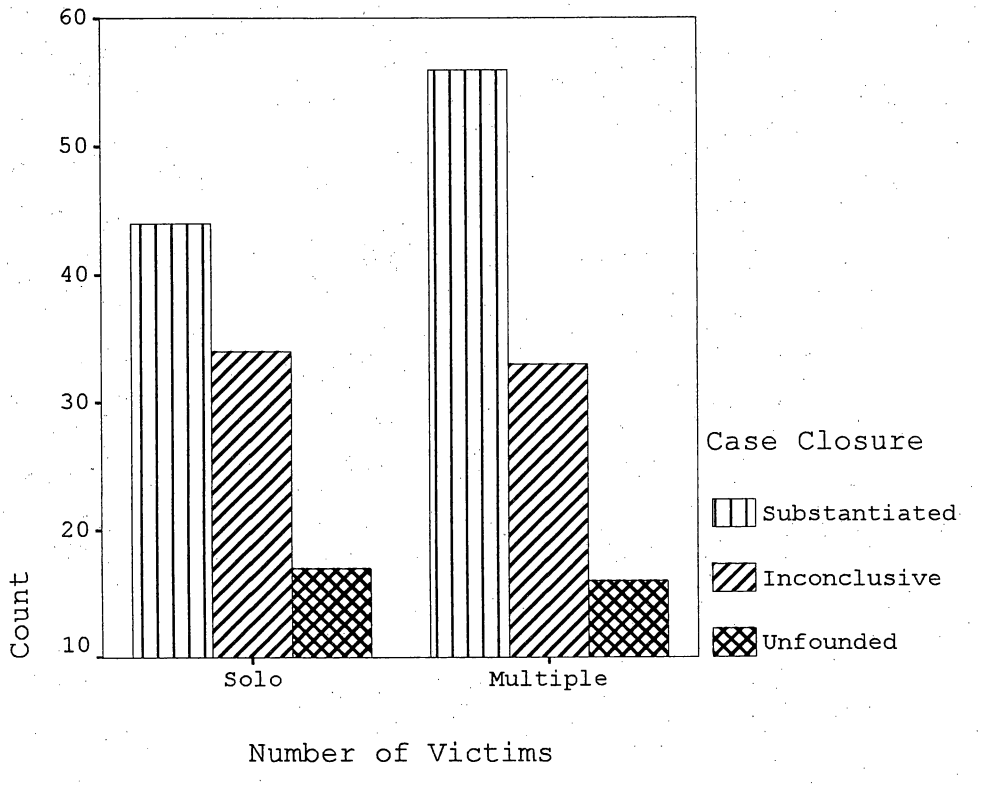


Figure 15. Distribution of Mandated and Non-Mandated Reporter.

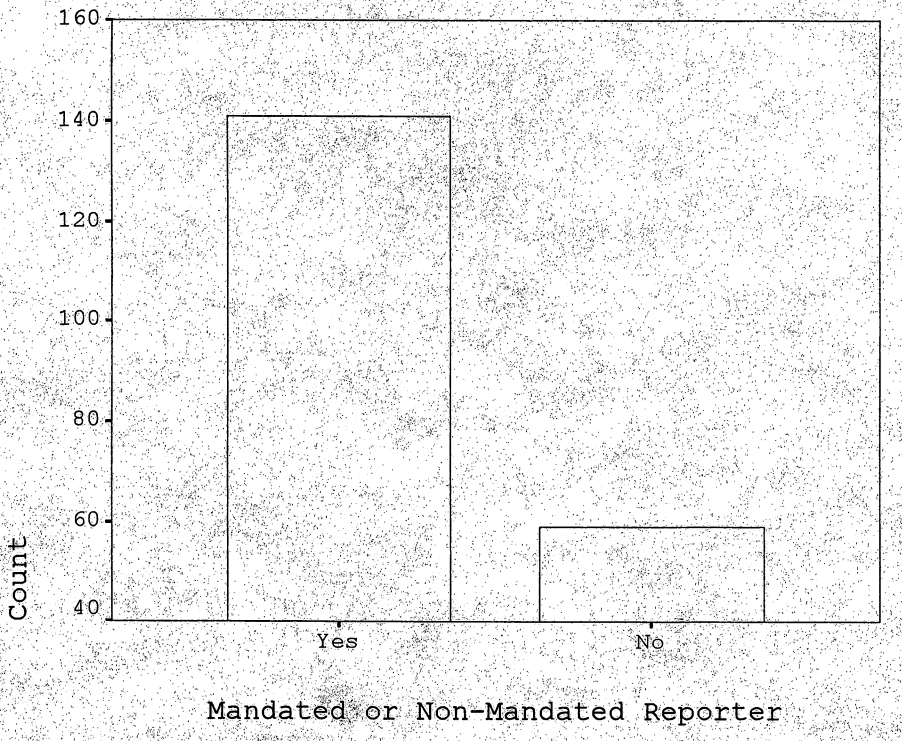


Figure 16. Distribution of Mandated or Non-Mandated Reporter and How the Case was Closed.

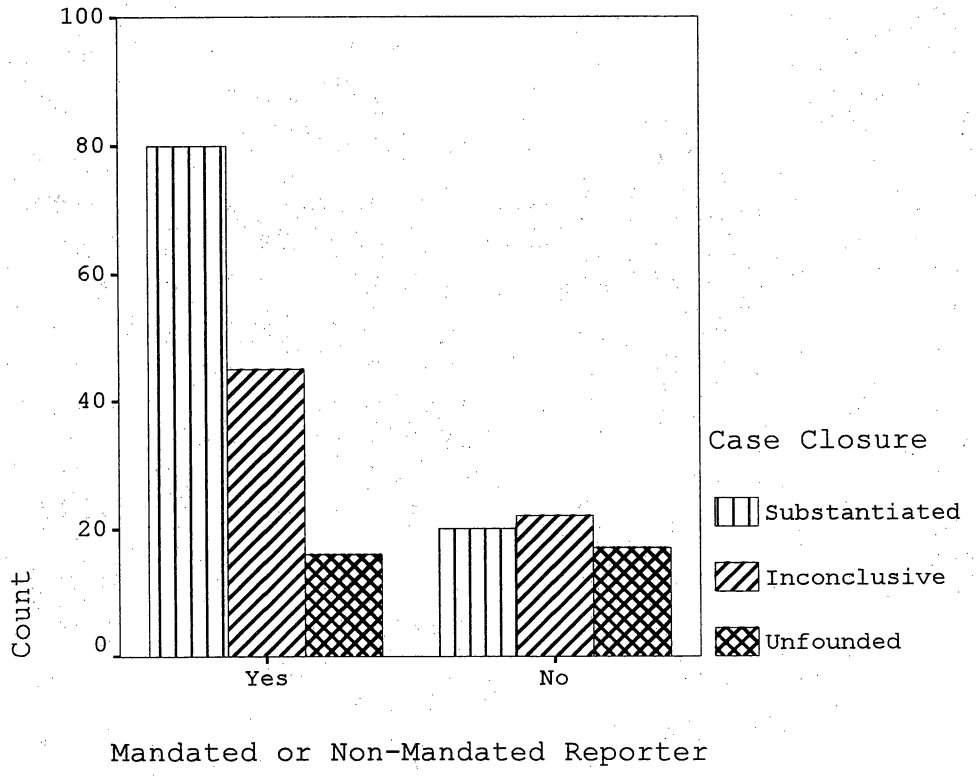
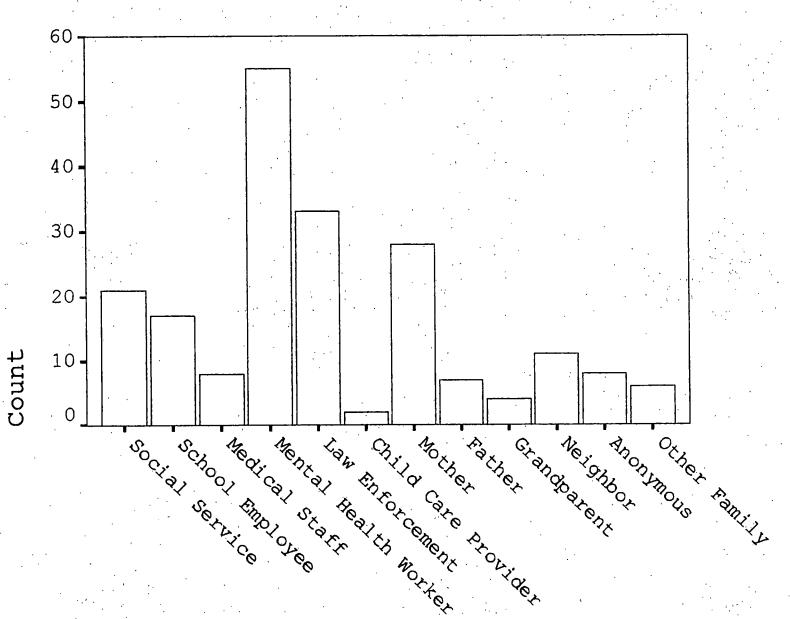


Figure 17. Distribution of Who Reported it prior to collapsing the data and after the data was collapsed.



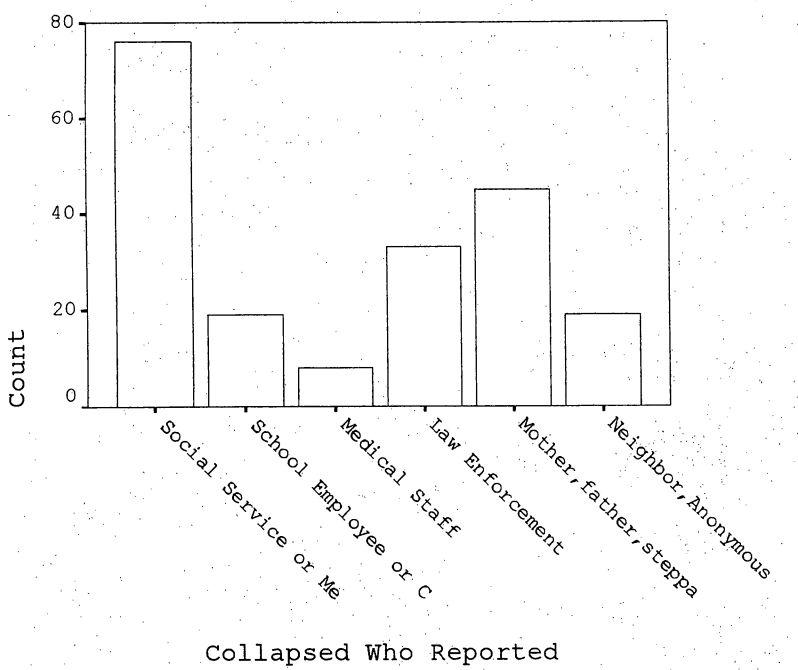


Figure 18. Distribution of collapsed Who Reported it and collapsed Case Closure.

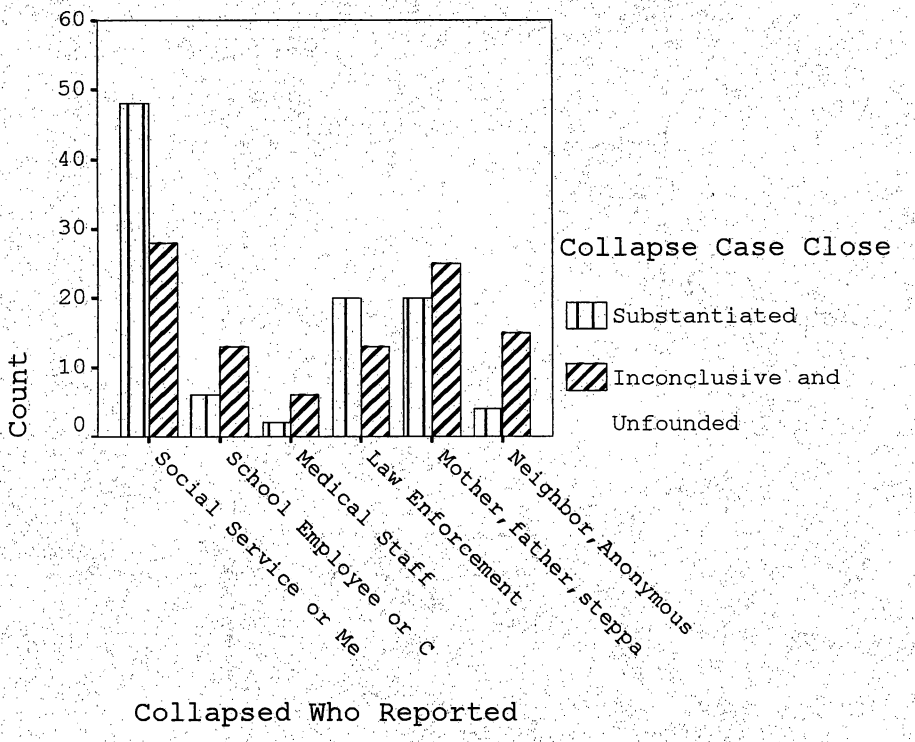


Figure 19. Distribution of Forensic Interview.

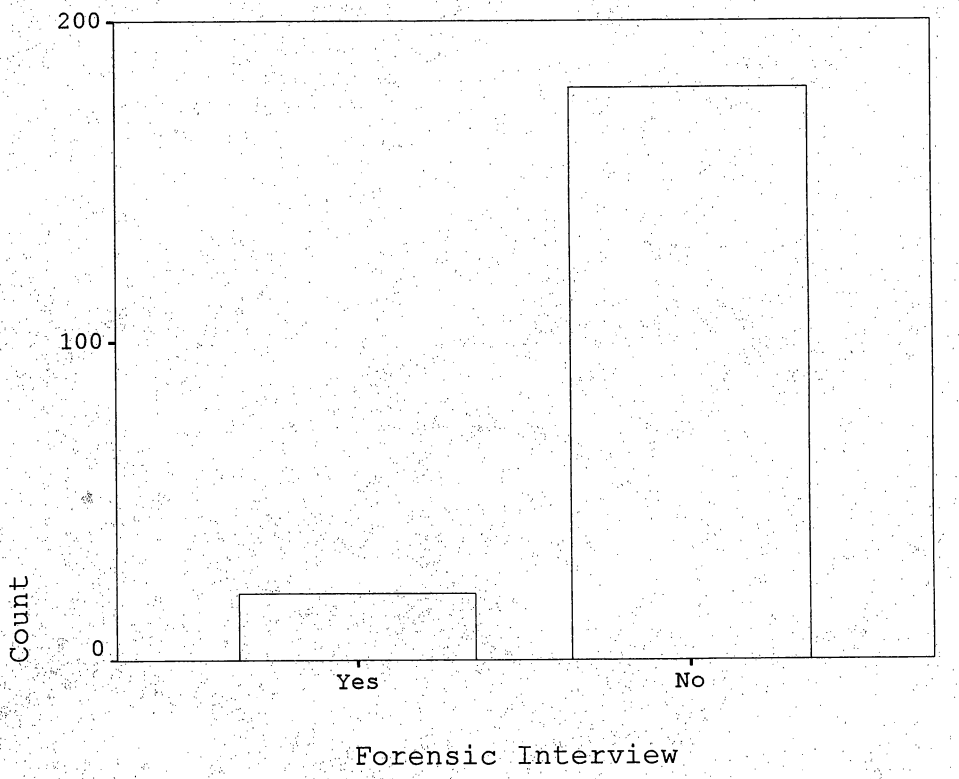
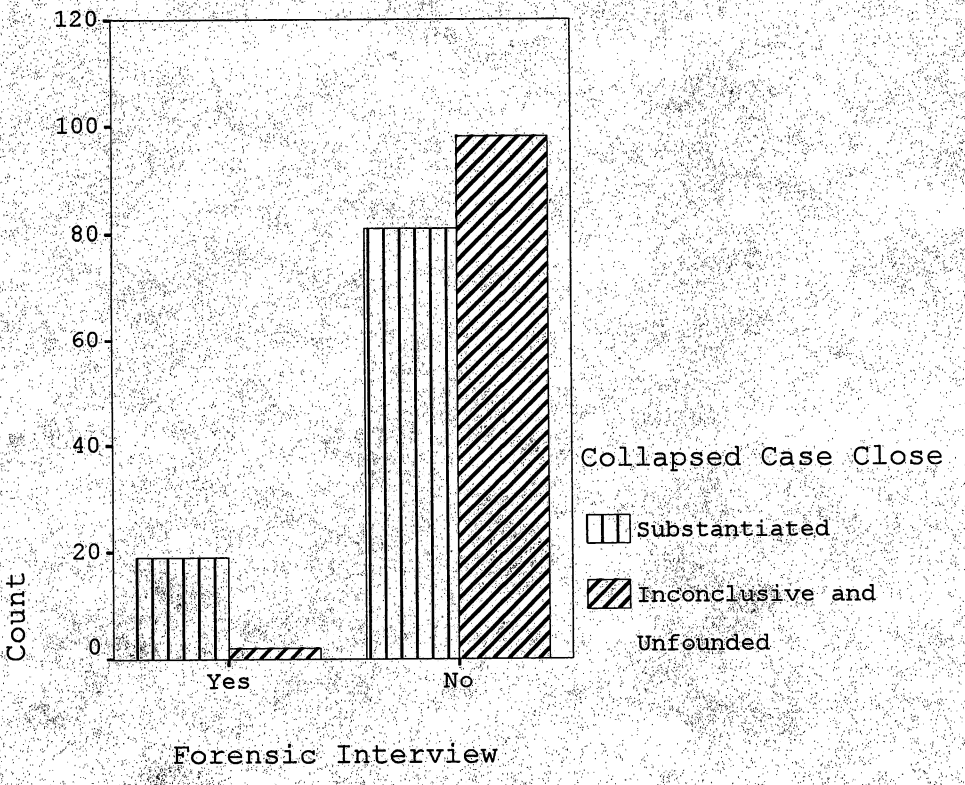


Figure 20. Distribution of Forensic Interview and collapsed Case Closure.



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