

**A VICTIMOLOGICAL STUDY OF SEXUAL ASSAULT OF MALE  
INMATES IN THE THOHOYANDOU CORRECTIONAL CENTRE**

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## SUMMARY

In this study the topic of sexual assault, within the Thohoyandou Correctional Centre was investigated. The reasons for inmates' reluctance to report sexual assault to the correctional authorities, the involvement of prison gangs in sexual assault and the prevention of sexual assault strategies in correctional centres were discussed.

The victimological and criminological theories of crime were used as the frameworks explaining sexual assault in the Thohoyandou Correctional Centre. The theories were discussed for the purpose of understanding victimisation and fear of crime because no single theory dominates any explanation in this regard. The lifestyle/exposure model as outlined in the theories supports the current study since in correctional centres; offenders of all ages are engaged in routine activities as they go about their daily tasks and pleasure-seeking activities. The opportunity model also maintains that victimisation is the result of exposure and inadequate guardianship. Victims of sexual assault in correctional centres are further exposed to victimisation by finding themselves in place where they are, with potential offenders. The general theory of crime indicates that low self-control is a risk factor for victimisation and also that it remains significant even after lifestyles of victimisation were controlled. The social exchange theory indicates that individuals interact appropriately as long as both sides receive something in the exchange and each party feels that the other is treating him/her fairly.

After the analysis and interpretation of the data, it became evident that male-on-male sexual assaults do occur in Thohoyandou Correctional Centre. From the research participants it was confirmed that victims of sexual assault are manipulated by their assailants and that sexual assault occurs at any time or place during the day. The study supports the statement that some victims fear retaliation from their assailants and other victims fear to report their victimisation due to fear of being sent for testing for HIV/AIDS. The fear of stigmatisation hinders openness from the victims, especially when the reporting of sexual assault to the correctional authorities has to be considered. The investigation processes by the correctional authorities also promote doubt among the victims as to whether or not to report this kind of deviant behaviour hence promises of physical protection from the gang may influence the rate of male sexual assault. Offenders, who are not affiliated to any gang in the

centre, may easily become victims of male sexual assault. The research participants indicated that training in the handling victims of sexual assault is necessary for the correctional officials. Victims of sexual assault should receive some treatment such as counselling. All research participants supported the sentiment that male-sexual assault offenders should be prosecuted and punished.

The aim and objectives of the study were reached and recommendations for further research were also made.