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Revenge Porn Victimization of College Students in the United States: An Exploratory Analysis

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Abstract

Over the past several decades, there has been an increased focus on various forms of sexual violence and sexually aggressive behaviors (e.g., stalking, harassment). Technology has provided new opportunities for sexually aggressive behavior and involvement in sexting and revenge porn. To date, there is limited empirical research that exists on revenge porn- sending or posting sexually suggestive or explicit materials of a former lover, without the subject's consent, in an attempt to humiliate, harass, or punish the victim. In the present exploratory study, we surveyed 470 college freshmen about their practices and perceptions about revenge porn. Findings revealed that approximately 10% of the current sample had a private photo shared beyond the intended recipient and those male students and female students had different experiences. Specifically, victims of revenge porn were predominantly female, freshman, and 18 years of age and the majority of private pictures that were forwarded to others beyond the intended recipient were sent by a current or former boyfriend. Implications of these findings for the college community are discussed.

Keywords: Sexting, Revenge porn, Sexual aggression, College students.

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Introduction

Having someone share a sexually suggestive or explicit photo that was intended to be private not only disrupts the life of the victim but can be even worse because the images can be shared and continue to reappear on the internet in multiple places. Many sites now allow a victim to request that the images be taken down, but once the picture has been posted the damage is often done. Anecdotal accounts of victims' experiences suggest that women are more likely to be victims (Halder & Jaishankar, 2013) and that victims experience social and emotional harm similar to experiences of victims of other forms of sexual aggression (e.g., experiencing trust issues, sexual shaming and body shaming, anxiety, humiliation and fear for personal safety) (Bahadur, 2014; Dupont, 2014).

Who posts this information has been getting recent media attention. Specifically, there has been a growing discussion about sharing or posting sexually explicit or sexually suggestive photos of a former lover without their consent in an attempt to humiliate, harass, or punish the victim. This is often referred to as revenge porn (Halder & Jaishankar, 2013). Also, there are specific websites dedicated to posting this type of information. What is not known is the extent to which posting these pictures is actually revenge porn (done by an ex-lover) or whether these pictures are being posted by others as a form of cyber harassment.

Halder and Jaishankar (2013) define Revenge porn as:

an act whereby the perpetrator satisfies his anger and frustration for a broken relationship through publicizing false, sexually provocative portrayal of his / her victim, by misusing the information that he may have known naturally and that he may have stored in his personal computer, or may have been conveyed to his electronic device by the victim herself, or may have been stored in the device with the consent of the victim herself; and which may essentially have been done to publicly defame the victim. (Halder & Jaishankar, 2013, p. 90)

To date, there is limited empirical research on this topic and as a result there is much we do not know. The purpose of the current study is to explore male and female college student experiences with someone sharing or posting a photo that was intended to be private and their perceptions about this behavior in hopes that increased awareness can provide a foundation for research and the development of programs and policies that identify and address victims' specific needs.

Review of Literature

a. Sharing Sexually Explicit Photos or "Sexting"

Today, most individuals have a handheld device that includes a camera and makes it very easy to upload and share digital images. Estimates suggest that over 75% of teens own a cell phone and over 25% own a smartphone, capable of accessing the Internet (Lenhart, 2012). The proliferation of cell phones and smartphones and access to the Internet has contributed to the development of "sexting," which is commonly defined as sending explicit photos, videos, or messages through electronic means, including cell phones, email, or posts on social media sites (e.g., Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, etc.) (see Halder & Jaishankar, 2014; Hilinski-Rosick & Freiburger, 2012; Jaishankar, 2009;

Marcum, Higgins, & Ricketts, 2014; Martinez-Prather & Vandiver, 2014; Mitchell, Finkelhor, Jones, & Wolak, 2012; Wolfe, Marcum, Higgins, & Ricketts, 2016). Research suggests that a significant proportion of young adults in the United States share nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves or others. Estimates on the number of teens and young adults engaging in sexting vary, ranging anywhere from a low of 5% (Lenhart, 2012) to a high of 40% (Strassberg, McKinnon, Sustaita, & Rullo, 2013).

Overall, women and girls have been shown to engage in more sexting behaviors than boys and men (Freiburger, Hilinski-Rosick, & Headley, 2012; Hilinski-Rosick & Freiburger, 2012; Martinez-Prather & Vandiver, 2014; Mitchell et al., 2012). These messages are predominantly sent to a romantic partner, suggesting that sexting has become a sort of courtship for many young men and women.

One of the earliest studies of teen sexting, conducted by the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy (2008) found that over half of teen girls said that they felt that teens sent sexually suggestive pictures and messages because of pressure from a guy; nearly 18% of the teen boys said they felt pressure from girls to send these types of photos. Ultimately, both teen boys and girls overwhelmingly said that they sent sexually explicit content to be “fun” or “flirtatious.” Further, about half of teen girls said that they sent explicit messages as a “sexy present” for their boyfriend, and about 44% of male and female teens sent sexually explicit messages or pictures in response to sexually explicit content that they received.

More recent research by Martinez-Prather and Vandiver (2014) found similar results, with over half of the students in their study reporting that they had sent a sexually explicit picture to be “flirtatious” and 17% reporting that they sent a photo after being pressured by a boyfriend to do so. Given the pressure and motivation to send these messages identified by teens and young adults, sending and receiving explicit images may be a way for men and women to “do gender.”

b. Doing Gender

As defined by West and Zimmerman (1987), “doing gender” involves a complex series of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micropolitical activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine and feminine ‘natures’. More specifically, doing gender refers to the societal creation of differences between girls and boys and women and men that are not natural, essential, or biological. Once these differences have been socially constructed, they are used to reinforce the necessity of gender in society. Through social interaction, people learn to classify various activities and appearances as representations of gender and are socialized to perceive the behavior of others according to these classifications. Essentially, doing gender becomes the stereotypical portrayal of the culturally constructed correlates of sex (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Kleinman (2007) conceptualizes doing gender as an intrinsic performance through which behavior, appearance, and talk serve as indicators of maleness or femaleness. While it is individuals who do gender, the concept is fundamentally interactional and institutional in character, as are its implications (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

In particular, the societal institutionalization of the media has been a driving force in indicating which behavior is classified as appropriate for each gender (see, e.g., King, 2008; Kimmel, 2009; Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). For example, women in the media “do gender” through sexually suggestive poses in photos and videos (see also Martin & Kazyak,

2009). The sexual objectification of women in the media has become a normative conception of femininity, which encourages such behavior among the rest of the female population (Ezzell, 2008). In order to do gender appropriately, or in other words to put on the appropriate performance to prove that one is feminine, nudity in photos has become a socially accepted phenomenon. The portrayal of men in the media, on the other hand, emphasizes sexual aggressiveness (Schrock & Schwalbe, 2009). For example, in television shows, movies, and music videos, women are depicted as sexual objects who can be controlled by a powerful man (see also Ezzell, 2008). Men's exertion of sexual control over sexually suggestive women is a norm that is all too common in today's mainstream media culture (see also Kimmel, 2009).

The practice of sharing sexually explicit photos has also become an aspect of “doing gender”. The normalization of nudity in photos of famous female celebrities on magazine covers or Instagram posts reinforces the association between nudity and femininity. Women are being taught to do gender through the practice of publicizing their body in sexually explicit ways, while men are taught to do gender through the consumption of such material. In addition, sharing sexually explicit photos of women may be a way to demonstrate exertion of sexual control and “do gender” for men. Doing gender inevitably facilitates the way in which such practices become embedded into the overall structure of our society.

c. Impact of Sharing Images

Many that choose to share a sexually explicit photo believe that their information will not be shared with others. However, recent research has found that this may not always be the case. Rice and colleagues (2012) found that 25% of individuals who received a sext message forwarded this material on to someone else. Only 50% of females and 33% of males who participated in the Rice and colleagues (2012) survey believed it was “always wrong” to forward a private sexual image on to someone else.

Primarily, the current research on negative outcomes associated with using some type of digital media and/or electronic device to harass, control, manipulate or habitually disparage an individual has concentrated on cyber bullying and cyber harassment. It is important to note that these terms are often used interchangeably because of the difficulty in making a clear distinction between what behaviors should be labeled harassment and what behaviors should be labeled stalking/bullying (Sinclair & Frieze, 2000). Research has found that victims of cyber bullying are susceptible to the onset of depression (Gamez-Guadir, Orue, Smith, & Calvete, 2013), substance use problems (Ybarra, Diener-West, & Leaf, 2007), issues involved with their performance in school (Patchin & Hinduja, 2006; Beran & Li, 2005) and suicidality (Hinduja & Patchins, 2010). Sinclair, Bauman, Poteat, Koenig, and Russell (2012) found that student victims of cyber harassment were more likely to experience academic problems, substance use, and school-related problems than their peers who did not experience cyber harassment.

In some cases the effects of cyber bullying and cyber harassment can be worse than physical harassment because the harassing images and messages can continue to reappear on the Internet in multiple places and be shared. In addition, cyber harassment could increase the risk of face-to-face victimization or other forms of sexual aggression like stalking, sexual harassment, or sexual assault if the victim's identifying information is made available. In 2010, a woman from Wyoming was brutally raped after her ex-boyfriend posted an online ad with her address seeking someone to fulfill a rape fantasy. To date,

empirical research on the impact of a former lover sharing or posting sexually explicit or sexually suggestive photos of a former lover without their consent is virtually nonexistent.

The Present Study

The present study was guided in part by existing knowledge of the impact of cyber bullying and cyber harassment. This research builds on the existing literature by examining (1) the experience of male and female college students with a current or former significant other sharing or posting a photo that was intended to be private and (2) their perceptions about this behavior. The present study will promote a better understanding of college students' experiences with what is commonly known as revenge porn and provide a more complete knowledge of the consequences of this behavior. This understanding will provide college campuses with new information to provide better services for victims and thus enhance the healing process.

Methodology

Sample

Participants were recruited through convenience sampling of first-year seminar classes at a private liberal arts university in a southern state of the United States from August 2015 to December 2015. Every incoming freshman student at the university is required to complete the first-year seminar course. As this age and demographic group is often the most likely to engage in sexting behavior, this was an appropriate target population to study. A member of the research team contacted all professors (via their university email) who were scheduled to teach a first year seminar class in the fall of 2015 about administering the survey in their courses. Upon the professors' approval, a research team member administered the survey during regular class time. Participants were informed that the survey was voluntary and that their responses would remain anonymous; no identifying information was collected from participants. All participants were provided a pamphlet/debriefing sheet that provided more information about local resources available to them should they experience any feeling of emotional discomfort while completing the survey. The questionnaire consisted of 18 questions and took an average of 20-25 minutes to complete.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variables assessed in the current study includes a trichotomous measure of whether a student had shared a nude or semi-nude photo of himself or herself, and if he/she had, whether that photo had been forwarded on to others. Thus, three groups were compared: those who had never shared a nude or semi-nude photo of themselves, those who had sent an explicit photo but did not experience that photo being forwarded on to others, and those who sent an explicit photo and had that photo shared beyond the intended recipient. To measure the impact of demographic and the other independent variables described below, multinomial logistic regression was used. This allowed for comparisons across the three groups described above.

Independent Variables

A number of different relevant variables were included in the analysis, including age, race, and gender of the student participants. Due to the lack of variation in race, a

dichotomous measure of white or nonwhite was created, with nonwhite being coded as 1 and white being coded as 0. The nonwhite category included students who identified as black, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and Native American. A measure of relationship status also was used, with those who were in any kind of relationship coded as 1 and those who were not coded as 0. Additionally, students also were asked whether they ever received a picture that was meant to be private and then forwarded it on to someone else, with those who had coded as 1 and those who had not coded as 0. Finally, a scale measure of impulsivity and a scale measure of perceptions of sexting and revenge porn were included.

The impulsivity scale had a Cronbach's Alpha of .796 and included a total of eight items where students were asked to indicate whether they strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree. The items include: "I act on the spur of the moment", "I do what brings me pleasure now", "I am more concerned with the short run," "I test myself by doing something risky every day," "I take risks for fun," "I believe it is exciting to do things that can possibly get me in trouble," "I believe that excitement is more important than security," and "I spend no effort preparing for my future."

The perception scale included seven items that measured how students felt about sexting and sharing explicit photos with others. The scale had a Cronbach's alpha of .670 and items asked students to indicate their agreement with statement such as "sending nude or semi-nude photographs is a good way to increase your popularity," "sending a boyfriend or girlfriend nude or semi-nude pictures is a way to show them how much you care about them," "girls who send nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves are more likely to hook up," "guys who send nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves are more likely to hook up," "if someone sends a friend a nude or semi-nude picture of themselves, the friend who receives the picture should not send it to others," and "sharing nude or semi-nude photos meant to be private is no big deal."

Results

The analysis included an examination of the descriptive statistics. The sample consisted of 470 undergraduate students who were enrolled in a first year seminar in fall of 2015. A total of 496 surveys were collected and due to missing data, 26 surveys were unusable, resulting in a total of 470 surveys to be analyzed. The majority of students were female (62.6%) and freshmen (84.5%), with an average age of 18.95 years. In regards to race/ethnicity, 71.1% of participants reported their race as White, 9.6% reported Hispanic, 8.1% reported African American, and 11.8% reported their race as "other."

Survey participants were asked a series of questions designed to measure their attitudes towards, and participation in, sexting, forwarding private messages and pictures, as well as their experiences as victims of the sharing of private photos and how these experiences impacted them. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics. Overall, approximately half of the study participants (N = 236) had sent a nude photo of themselves to someone else using a cell phone or other technology. The majority of those who had sent these pictures did so five or more times (N = 116), indicating that many students who engage in this type of behavior do so repeatedly. These pictures were most often sent to a current boyfriend or girlfriend, followed by someone they had dated or hooked up with, and friends they know in person (i.e., not someone they know only "online," such as someone met in a chat room, online dating site, etc.).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	%
Sex		
Male	176	37.4
Female	294	62.6
Age (average)	18.95 years	
Race/Ethnicity		
White	334	71.1
Black	38	8.1
Hispanic	45	9.6
Other	53	11.8
Class Standing		
Freshman	397	84.5
Sophomore	33	7.0
Junior	31	6.6
Senior	9	1.9
Relationship Status		
In a relationship	176	37.4
Not in a relationship	294	62.6
Sent explicit messages or pictures of yourself		
0	234	49.8
1	23	4.9
2	39	8.3
3	33	7.0
4	24	5.1
5+	116	24.7
Pictures were sent to:		
Current boyfriend/girlfriend	163	32.7
Ex-boyfriend/girlfriend	123	24.7
Current or former spouse	13	2.6
Someone you had a crush on	59	11.8
Someone you dated or hooked up with	7	1.4
Friend you know in person	71	14.2
Friend you know online	31	6.0
Acquaintance	11	2.2
Classmate	15	3.0
Other	5	1.0
Had someone forward a private picture of you		
Yes	49	10.5
No	420	89.5

Approximately 10% of the sample reported having a private photo shared beyond the intended recipient. These students were predominantly female, freshman, and 18 years of age. The majority of private pictures that were forwarded to others beyond the intended recipient were sent by current or former boyfriends or girlfriends. When students were asked how they felt about these pictures being sent, 53.5% of the students felt angry at the person who forwarded the photo and 33.3% were angry at themselves for initially sending the picture. These results are presented in Table 2.

The survey also included items asking students about their perceptions of sexting and forwarding private pictures. Findings from these items are included in Table 3. 62.1% (N = 283) either agreed or strongly agreed that young people are pressured by their friends to send explicit pictures and nearly 50% (N = 206) either agreed or strongly agreed that young people are pressured by the media to send explicit pictures. However, nearly all of the students (N = 423) either agreed or strongly agreed that if you received an explicit picture of another person, you should not share it with anyone. Only 18% (N = 83) students agreed or strongly agreed that if you send a sexually explicit picture to someone else, that you deserve to have it shared with other people.

Table 2. Feelings of those who had private pictures forwarded to others

Variable	N	%
When I found out that someone had forwarded my nude or semi-nude pictures without my consent...		
I was angry at the person who forwarded my pictures.	14	53.8
Strongly Agree	9	34.6
Agree	2	7.6
Disagree	1	3.8
Strongly Disagree		
I was angry at myself for letting this happen to me.		
Strongly Agree	9	33.3
Agree	8	30.8
Disagree	6	22.2
Strongly Disagree	3	11.1

An examination of students' feelings toward the individuals who send sexually explicit messages and pictures found that 54% (N = 245) of students agreed or strongly agreed that girls who send these types of messages and pictures were more likely to "hook-up" and 52% (N = 235) felt that men who send these types of messages and pictures were more likely to hook-up. Further, students also recognized the potential legal and social consequences of sending explicit photos and pictures, with 47% (N = 220) agreeing or strongly agreeing that if they sent a sexually explicit photo of themselves to someone else they could get into trouble and over 77% (N = 363) agreeing or strongly agreeing that they could get into trouble if they send a sexually explicit photo of someone else. Finally, students generally agreed or strongly agreed that sending explicit pictures was dangerous (N = 388), that it was not exciting (N = 356), and that sending explicit pictures was a big deal (N = 351).

Table 3: Perceptions of Sexting and Forwarding Private Pictures

Variable	N	%
Sending nude or semi-nude pictures is a good way for someone to increase their popularity.		
Strongly Agree	7	1.5
Agree	30	6.5
Disagree	161	35.1
Strongly Disagree	261	56.9
Sending a boyfriend or girlfriend nude or semi-nude pictures is a way to show them how much you care about them.		
Strongly Agree	9	2.0
Agree	84	18.7
Disagree	205	45.6
Strongly Disagree	152	33.8
Young people experience pressure from their friends to send nude or semi-nude pictures.		
Strongly Agree	61	13.4
Agree	222	48.7
Disagree	121	26.5
Strongly Disagree	52	11.4
Young people experience pressure from the media to send nude or semi-nude pictures.		
Strongly Agree	45	14.0
Agree	161	35.2
Disagree	187	40.9
Strongly Disagree	45	9.8
If someone sends a friend a nude or semi-nude picture of themselves, the friend who receives the picture should not send it to others.		
Strongly Agree	346	75.5
Agree	77	16.8
Disagree	21	4.6
Strongly Disagree	14	3.1
People who send nude or semi-nude pictures over the Internet or cell phone deserve it if the pictures get sent to other people.		
Strongly Agree	22	4.8
Agree	61	13.4
Disagree	177	38.8
Strongly Disagree	196	43.0

Variable	N	%
Girls who send nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves are more likely to hook up.		
Strongly Agree	55	12.1
Agree	190	41.9
Disagree	150	33.1
Strongly Disagree	58	12.3
Guys who send nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves are more likely to hook up.		
Strongly Agree	66	14.6
Agree	169	37.5
Disagree	162	35.9
Strongly Disagree	54	12.0
If I send a nude picture of myself I will most likely get into trouble.		
Strongly Agree	90	19.1
Agree	130	27.7
Disagree	185	39.4
Strongly Disagree	48	10.2
If I send a nude picture of someone else I will most likely get into trouble.		
Strongly Agree	182	38.7
Agree	181	38.5
Disagree	82	17.4
Strongly Disagree	13	2.8
Sending nude pictures over the Internet or a cell phone is exciting.		
Strongly Agree	11	2.4
Agree	91	19.9
Disagree	215	46.9
Strongly Disagree	141	30.8
Sending nude pictures over the Internet or a cell phone is dangerous.		
Strongly Agree	178	38.9
Agree	210	45.9
Disagree	59	12.9
Strongly Disagree	11	2.4
Sending nude pictures over the Internet or a cell phone is not a big deal.		
Strongly Agree	5	1.1
Agree	97	21.4
Disagree	204	45.0
Strongly Disagree	147	32.5

Table 4. Victims of Revenge Porn

Variable	Revenge Porn Victims			Never Sent Photos		
	B	Se	Exp(B)	B	Se	Exp(B)
Age	.009	.042	1.009	-.031	.038	.969
Race	.167**	.058	1.182	.031	.250	1.032
Sex	-.791	.432	.453	-.575*	.253	.563
Relationship status	1.423***	.384	.241	-1.013***	.237	.363
Forwarded private picture	-1.437*	.566	.238	-.573	.460	.564
Impulsivity scale	0.96*	0.35	1.101	.096**	.034	1.101
Perception scale	.140*	.065	1.150	.085*	.039	1.089
Constant	-4.461**	1.581		-.989	1.112	
Cox & Snell R ²	.144					
Nagelkerke R ²	.169					

Significance: $p < .05 = *$, $p < .01 = **$, $p < .001 = ***$

The analysis proceeded with a multinomial logistic regression model that estimated the differences between three groups of individuals: those who had never sent nude or semi-nude photos of themselves, those who had sent these photos but did not experience having the photos forwarded to others, and those who had sent these photos and had them forwarded on to individuals other than the intended recipient. These findings are presented in Table 4. The reference category was students who had sent nude or semi-nude photos of themselves but had not experienced having those photos forwarded on to others. Compared to these students, those who had experienced revenge porn were more likely to be nonwhite, more likely to be in a relationship, less likely to have engaged in revenge porn themselves (i.e., forwarding nude or semi-nude photos of others that they had received), were more impulsive, and had a more positive attitudes towards sexting and revenge porn (i.e., felt that sending pictures was a good way to show that you like someone, sexting was no big deal, etc.).

Students who had never sent nude or semi-nude photos were more likely to be male, less likely to be in a relationship, less likely to have shared a private photo with others, more impulsive, and more likely to have positive attitudes toward sexting. Unlike those who had experienced having their photos shared, race was not significant among those who had never sent photos; however, sex was significant, with these individuals more likely to be males. Further, there also was no significant relationship between sending photos of yourself and forwarding on private photos of others.

Discussion and Future Research

Anecdotal reports suggest that having a picture shared that was intended to be private has a significant negative impact on the victim and that women are more likely to be victims of this behavior. As a result, individuals have begun to raise awareness about this issue. Recent efforts have focused on creating and/or changing legislation to allow for criminal penalties for engaging in “revenge porn.” While research on sexting has proliferated, a dearth of empirical literature exists concerning college students’ experience



with former boyfriends or girlfriends sharing pictures that were intended to be private and used for revenge purposes. Using a convenience sample of college students, the present exploratory research examined this behavior.

Approximately 10% of the current sample reported experiencing having a private photo shared beyond the intended recipient. These students were predominantly female, freshman, and 18 years of age and the majority of private pictures that were forwarded to others beyond the intended recipient were sent by a current or former boyfriend. These findings provide empirical support that women are more likely to experience revenge porn than men. This is similar to patterns of sexual assault and harassment in face-to-face contexts (Henry & Powell, 2015; Heenan & Murray, 2007; Megarry, 2014). It is possible that the effects can be worse than face-to-face contexts because the images can be shared and continue to reappear on the Internet in multiple places. Further, in the college community victims and perpetrators may continue to share common space, such as dining halls, dormitories, and even classrooms. For victims of revenge porn, it is not a simple matter of just turning off the computer. Online social and professional networks are a vital part of modern society for connection and social participation and students have to utilize the internet for their coursework. If female students are no longer getting online for fear of victimization or experience with victimization, they are not able to participate online equally to their male counterparts. This is an issue that should concern college campuses nationwide.

When participants were asked about their experiences, many reported they were angry with the person that forwarded the pictures. In addition, many reported being angry with themselves for having taken the picture in the first place. This finding is important given the body of literature that documents victim blaming in other forms of sexual aggression (Campbell & Raja, 2005). Clearly, campus resources must be easily identifiable/accessible so that students who have this happen to them can locate the resources needed and receive help navigating through the process. These resources must address the issue of victim blaming in their education efforts about revenge porn with the entire campus community.

The majority of students (62.1%) reported that they felt individuals are pressured to send pictures from friends. This is a significant finding given that research on college age individuals suggests that friends are an especially important support system fulfilling roles that even family members cannot satisfy (Buote, Pancer, Pratt, Adams, Birnie-Lefcovitch, Polivy, & Wintre, 2007). This finding indicates that students must be educated concerning what to do if a friend becomes a victim of revenge porn and how to appropriately respond. Although, victims should be empowered concerning their post victimization behavior, they may not know how to proceed or be aware of the resources available to them.

Participants also were asked questions concerning whether they thought individuals who send nude or semi-nude pictures were more likely to “hook up.” A little more than half of students agreed or strongly agreed that girls and boys who send nude or semi-nude pictures of themselves are more likely to hook up, which may be an indication of some level of rape myth acceptance among students. Although rape myths typically pertain to females and their attire, promiscuity, sexual behavior, etc., it is possible that in the case of sexting, some myths surround males who engage in it as well. Regardless of gender, sending a picture of yourself wearing little to no clothes should not indicate to anyone that you are more or less likely to engage in a sexual relationship or sexual activities with them. This further highlights the need to continue to focus on dispelling rape myths, stereotypes

about victims of rape and sexual assault, and to emphasize the potential negative outcomes teens and young adults may experience when sending these types of photographs.

Findings also indicate that nonwhite students and those who were in a relationship were more likely to have their private photos shared with others. Hilinski-Rosick and Freiburger (2012) also found that nonwhite students were more likely to send and receive nude or semi-nude photos of themselves and also were more likely to share private photos with others. They also found that students in relationships were more likely to send these photos and in turn, experience someone sharing those photos, similar to the results found here. It is not surprising that students in relationships are more likely to share these photos; there is a strong possibility that the other person in the relationship asks for the photos and condones them, and could also then share them with others as a form of retaliation if the couple's relationship ends.

Findings also indicate that students who also forwarded private pictures to someone beyond their intended recipient were more likely to have their own private pictures shared as well. It is interesting that victims of this behavior are also offenders. Unfortunately, due to the cross-sectional nature of the present study, it is not possible to determine which came first; students may have forwarded private pictures in retaliation for having their own pictures shared, or vice versa. Future research should explore these findings in an effort to further understand the temporal ordering of these variables. Additionally, students who scored high on the impulsivity scale also were more likely to have their private pictures shared. These students responded that they often acted on the spur of the moment, are concerned with what brings them pleasure at the moment, rather than the future, and found risk taking exciting. These findings are logical, as students who are more impulsive are more likely to send these messages in the first place, putting them at a higher risk of having them forwarded to others. More cautious and less impulsive students may be unlikely to send explicit photos at all, making it impossible for them to have pictures shared.

A measure of students' perceptions on sexting and sharing private photos revealed that students who felt that it was no big deal, was a good way to show your boyfriend or girlfriend that you cared about them, and that sending photos was a good way to increase your popularity revealed that students who shared these thoughts were more likely to have had their private photos shared. Students who do not find sending photos of themselves as a big deal are likely not to find sharing others' photos a big deal either, and may be more likely to forward on photos that they receive, despite the intention that they remain private.

Although the present exploratory study adds to the literature concerning college students' experiences with revenge porn, it is not without limitations. Our findings are restricted to a sample of college students from one private liberal arts university in a southern state. Further, the research exclusively focused on students enrolled in first year seminar classes during the fall semester of 2015. Thus, the results may not be generalizable to more senior students. Future studies must attempt to replicate the current study with more representative samples of college students. Despite these limitations, some cautious policy implications can be made based on the findings presented here. Simply educating students about the consequences of sharing pictures that were intended to be private may go a long way in preventing this behavior. If students realize that posting nude or even semi-nude photos of others, or sharing photographs meant to be private, could potentially

have serious legal consequences and psychological consequences perhaps they will be deterred from engaging in these behaviors. Further, by making students aware of the resources to deal with situations like this, students may be able to more effectively address feelings of anger and helplessness if they do find that they have been the victim of revenge porn. Students at this particular university, for example, are required to take a two-semester long first year experience course (the course where this survey was administered). If a component of that course focused on the legal and social ramifications of revenge porn, as well as the potential emotional and psychological consequences, perhaps the incidents of revenge porn would decrease.

Overall, the results presented here indicate that revenge porn is happening on college campuses and that female students are more likely to be victims. Future research should continue to explore this issue using large, nationally representative samples of students. Further, it also may be prudent to study the incidence of revenge porn among younger populations as well, given the high numbers of teenagers still in high school who are engaging in taking and sharing nude and semi-nude photographs of themselves and others. More research is needed to continue to examine the extent of the problem, the consequences, experiences with reporting (or non-reporting) of victimization incidents, strategies for preventing and reducing risk, and effectively responding to victims.

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