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A Conceptual Framework for Measuring Criminal Justice Success in Responding to Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) Crimes:

Literature Review



VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN ACT

MEASURING
EFFECTIVENESS
INITIATIVE

JRSA
Justice Research and Statistics Association

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This Literature Review supports the final Conceptual Framework. Throughout this document we reference two additional accompanying reports: the Research Agenda and Dataset Inventory.

Literature Review: Measuring the Law Enforcement Response

The *Measuring Success in the Criminal Justice System's Response to Domestic/Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking* pilot project was commissioned by the U.S. Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) to research, pilot, evaluate, and recommend outcome measures that OVW grantees can use to measure the success of law enforcement's (LE) response to domestic/dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking (VAWA crimes).¹ A full description of that project, including the conceptual model that guides the work, can be found in the accompanying Conceptual Framework report. In the first phase of the project, the research team conducted a review of peer-reviewed literature and practitioner resources to compile a list of measures that have been used to gauge the impact of law enforcement to VAWA crimes. The purpose of the review was to learn which measures have been used previously and to assess their strengths and weaknesses to inform discussions of the measures' feasibility for grantee use. This review may also help identify gaps in how researchers and practitioners have measured pertinent outcomes. The results of the literature review contributed to the development of and provided the evidence base for a theory of change and logic model, including early identification and refinement of outcomes and measures for OVW.

The review of the literature revealed four overarching and overlapping outcome concepts:

- Law enforcement knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs;
- Coordination and cooperation among multidisciplinary teams;
- Case outcomes and recidivism; and
- Victim-focused outcomes.

The sections below delve into each of these outcome concepts, the measures and indicators used in their operationalization, and the data sources used in each relevant study. Each section also explores data collection concerns, when applicable, as well as strengths and weaknesses of the measures. At the end of each section a Summary Table provides an at-a-glance view of the outcomes and their operationalization.

¹In particular, this project focuses on identifying appropriate outcomes for Improving Criminal Justice Responses to Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking Grant Program (ICJR); the Rural Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking Program (Rural); and the Tribal Governments Program (TG).

Methods

The research team conducted database searches using broad search terms and inclusion/ exclusion criteria. The team included sources that:

- Were published since 2010, as well as seminal studies prior to this date;
- Were published in English;
- Pertained to U.S. populations (with some exceptions for highly relevant non-U.S. data);
- Used rigorous qualitative and/or quantitative methods;
- Demonstrated the use of measures; and
- Measured law enforcement activities or adjacent activities that interface with law enforcement.

Databases and clearinghouses used included PsycINFO, Criminal Justice Abstracts, Academic Search Complete, the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS), the Center for Victim Research (CVR) Library, and Google/ Google Scholar. Snowballing was used from key sources. Sources reviewed included peer-reviewed, scholarly journal articles; research conducted by federal agencies and research clearinghouses; research conducted by established research/policy organizations; and practitioner-researcher collaborations.² Three researchers reviewed initial search results, extracted articles that fit the above criteria, and discarded those that did not. This preliminary review yielded 434 unique articles. Due to the limited timeframe, and since this was not a systematic review, the team further prioritized articles to those that represented an area of measurement, rather than reviewing all articles that measured the same outcomes. The final review included 134 articles, some of which were relevant to multiple outcome concepts.

² One doctoral dissertation and one master's thesis were included in the review because they made unique contributions to the literature (Whitmire, 2020; Wyma-Bradley, 2019).

Law Enforcement Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs

Law enforcement officers' knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs can influence their interactions with victims and survivors and subsequently, victim/survivor outcomes (Garza and Franklin 2020; Franklin et al. 2019b; Garza et al. 2020; Sleath & Bull, 2017; Stewart and Maddren 1997; Venema, 2019). They can also affect case outcomes by influencing decision-making in case processing from investigation, to arrest, and referrals for prosecution. Thus, law enforcement has been described as the “gateways to justice” (Kerstetter, 1990, p. 282). **Insight into officers' attitudes and beliefs** can enhance accurate law enforcement knowledge, as well as programming design to improve police responses to sexual and domestic violence.

This section of the literature review **focuses specifically the measurement instruments and procedures** that are used to capture **law enforcement knowledge and attitudes**. Studies have measured police knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs through various methods, including records-based analyses, experimental vignettes, and surveys administered as part of pre- and post-tests. The studies examined the concepts in relation to specific knowledge gained from specialized training programs, or the degree to which certain attitudes and perceptions predict a given outcome (e.g., arrest decisions). The latter predictive studies can be grouped into three concept areas: (1) misperceptions about victims/survivors (e.g., crime victim behavior and trauma responses), (2) cultural sensitivity, and (3) rape myths.

Specialized training programs

One line of research has examined police knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs in relation to various law enforcement training programs. This includes trauma-informed training (Franklin et al., 2020; Lathan et al., 2019), specialist training on SA investigation (Darwinkel et al., 2013), DV prevention training (Mennicke et al., 2014), sexual and family violence response training (Fleming, 2019; Sleath & Bull, 2012; Smith et al., 2016), training on gender-based violence (Baldry & Pagliaro, 2014), and cultural competency training (Engelman & Deardorff, 2016; O’Neal et al., 2016; Russell, 2018; Russell & Sturgeon, 2019). Programming typically contains elements that are aimed at improving awareness and changing officers’ attitudes and beliefs about rape and SA, as well as increasing sensitivity to victims/survivors. Although there is some evidence that training has a positive impact on case dispositions (see for example Darwinkel et al., 2013 and Lonsway et al., 2001), little empirical research has examined precisely how and to what extent shifts in officers’ knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence and victimization have resulted in observable or documented behavior changes among those same officers, especially in the longer term, as studies have primarily been cross-sectional in design.

Knowledge and attitudes as predictors of certain outcomes

A second line of research has examined police officers’ knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs as predictors of certain case outcomes, including responses to calls for service by DV and SA victims/survivors (Garza & Franklin, 2020; Johnson & Dai, 2016), willingness to arrest suspects (Johnson & Dai, 2016; Pattavina et al., 2016; Venema, 2019), decisions to charge (Lynch & Logan, 2015), and judgements about the complainant’s credibility (O’Neal, 2019; Venema, 2019). These studies have either incorporated attitudinal and other measures in surveys, or utilized vignettes based on real or simulated cases to examine these outcomes. A few studies have also employed records-based analyses and thematic analyses of interview data in the development of predictors.

While the successful charging of stalking may be dependent on police officer knowledge and attitudes toward this type of crime, this section focuses on SA and DV since, to date, there is limited research on law enforcement officers’ responses to stalking, which is defined as “an unwanted and repeated course of conduct directed toward a specific individual that induces fear or concern for safety” (Lynch & Logan, 2015, p. 1037). One exception to this is Lynch and Logan’s (2015) survey study which examined police officers’ attitudes and perceived barriers related to charging stalking. The study involved a sample of 164 police officers (patrol, detectives and sergeants) from both urban and rural areas in a single U.S. state. Officers’ attitudes were measured using 3-point Likert-type scales to observe their perceptions of: how dangerous they believed stalking is for the victim/survivor; the helpfulness of a victim’s/survivor’s log of stalking

incidents for charging stalking; being able to differentiate between ongoing domestic violence and stalking; and the rate at which officers do not take a report when they are called for stalking. Regarding police officers' perceptions of charging stalking, they were asked to indicate their agreement with five statements on 3-point Likert-type scales: "Stalking behavior would unlikely be charged without property damage or assault charges;" "Most officers know how to document a course of conduct for a stalking charge;" "Officers usually have time to investigate whether or not stalking is involved;" "Officers usually interview perpetrators;" and "Even if elements of stalking are involved, the perpetrator would most likely be charged with the violation of a protective order."

Misperceptions about victims/survivors

When victims and survivors feel invalidated, judged, or blamed, they are subject to secondary victimization which can exacerbate their trauma symptoms (Campbell et al., 2001; Patterson, 2011; Ullman & Filipas, 2001). In turn, they may be more likely to avoid or discontinue their participation in the criminal justice process. An understanding of law enforcement officers' misperceptions about trauma (e.g., how victims/survivors should look, think, and behave) can inform the development of training programs to improve attitudes, decision-making, and interviewing practice of police officers, as well as case attrition rates.

In relation to officer training, Darwinkel et al. (2013) recruited 77 Australian police officers from the Victoria Police Service to participate in their study. The officers completed a questionnaire before and after they completed an intensive four-week training course on sexual offending. The training covered topics such as victim empathy and responses to trauma, offending relationships, and grooming processes. To measure police investigators' attributions of victim/survivor

responsibility and confidence in case decisions, they were asked to read 12 scenarios based on actual cases of victims who were either age six to 17 years old, or adults (18 years or over), then answer four standard questions for each scenario using 10-point Likert-type scales (e.g., "How confident are you that the case will be authorized (proceed) for prosecution?" and "How much responsibility should be attributed to the victim in this scenario?"). They were then asked to list up to five factors that they considered in their decision-making. The qualitative responses were codified during the analysis process (as opposed to directly measured during data collection) into four key themes: evidentiary factors, victim-related factors (e.g., victim behavior and credibility), suspect-related factors (e.g., suspect's admission/denial), and offense-related factors (e.g., consent and victim-offender relationship).

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Franklin et al. (2020) employed an adapted version of Ask's (2010) Beliefs About Crime Victim Behaviors index in a survey study involving police officers from a large urban police department in the U.S. The measure comprised seven items rated on 6-point Likert-type scales to examine misperceptions about trauma based on victim self-presentation (e.g., "A crime victim's display of emotions when recalling the crime is an indicator of the accuracy of his or her statements."), which was administered before and after the police officers received trauma-informed training. Fleming (2019) also utilized Ask's instrument to examine police officers' trauma expectations such as hysteria, behavioral responsiveness, and emotionality as signs of victims'/survivors' truth-telling. Other measures that have been implemented to examine misperceptions about victims/survivors include: perceptions of false reporting (measured as a percentage of false reports of rape by Lathan et al., 2019) and complainants' credibility (measured dichotomously by O'Neal, 2019 and using a Likert-type scale by Venema, 2019).

Cultural sensitivity

Whereas other fields of research (e.g., victim services) have studied sexual violence among typically marginalized, vulnerable, and underserved populations such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people (LGBT; Ford et al., 2013) and undocumented immigrants (Murshid & Bowen, 2018), there is a dearth of research that has examined law enforcement attitudes about such groups and how police perceptions might impact their investigative and case processing decisions. Four exceptions are summarized below.

Engelman and Deardorff (2016) utilized pre- and post-test survey instruments that incorporated several validated measures of peace officer trainees' attitudes toward Deaf/hard-of-hearing individuals who were survivors of domestic violence, and their knowledge in working with this population. First, officers' attitudes toward Deaf persons were measured using a 16-item Likert-type scale which was divided into two subscales: perceived capabilities of Deaf people (e.g., "Deaf people can make their own life decisions.") and perceived self-efficacy when working with deaf/hard-of-hearing persons (e.g., "I feel confident I could figure out a way to communicate with Deaf people in an emergency."). Second, a 3-item dichotomous (true/false) response format was used to assess officers' endorsement of myths about communicating with Deaf people (e.g., use of children as interpreters).

In Russell's (2018) study, 273 police officers from 27 U.S. states participated in a scenario-based experiment in which perpetrator and victim gender and sexual orientation were manipulated to examine police officers' perceptions of intimate partner violence (IPV). Similarly, Russell and Sturgeon (2019) recruited 309 law enforcement officers to participate in a scenario-based study that examined the effects of officers' perceptions of heterosexual and same-sex disputants on likelihood of perpetrator and victim arrest, perceived fairness of non-arrest options, willingness to provide referrals for the perpetrator and victim, and severity of victim injury. Together, these studies suggest that extra-legal factors may influence law enforcement decision making.

Rape myths

Rape myth refers to “widely held beliefs about rape that are used to justify or minimize sexual violence” (O’Neal, 2019, p. 129). These myths perpetuate certain attitudes and beliefs about sexual attacks and victims/survivors, which subsequently influence law enforcement responses to complaints and treatment of complainants. Part of understanding rape myth acceptance includes understanding perceptions of trauma as well as attributions of victim/survivor and suspect blame and responsibility. This is relevant because agreement with stereotypical attitudes/beliefs about SA and its victims can subsequently impact law enforcement responses to the investigation and processing of the crime.

Lathan et al. (2019) recruited 331 police officers in a police department in Alabama for their study in which they sought to understand pre-training rape myth acceptance and awareness of community and nationwide SA movements, to determine the need for specialized victim-centered/trauma-informed interviewing training in SA investigations. This study was rooted in Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) ‘Four R’s’ of trauma-informed assumptions: Realize, Recognize, Respond, and Resist Traumatization.

Using Likert-type scales, the researchers developed measures to tap into officers’ understanding of:

- *trauma-informed care*
 - “I have a good understanding of trauma-informed care with adult sexual assault victims.”
 - “I have a good understanding of the neurobiology of adult sexual trauma.”
 - “Trauma-informed response training in adult sexual assault cases has helped me in working with adult sexual assault victims and investigating sexual assault cases.”
- *personal investment in improving their response to SA victims*
 - “I am dedicated to increasing my awareness and understanding of sexual assault.”
- *interest in adopting the police department’s trauma-sensitive policies and procedures for rape survivors*
 - “Addressing the needs of rape victims should be a key part of the mission of the police department.”
 - “Mobile Police Department has policies and procedures in place to respond appropriately to rape victims.”
 - “I believe the Mobile Police Department is working to improve policy around sexual assault investigation.”
 - “In my opinion, sexual assault cases are handled very differently now than 5 years ago.”)
- and lastly, *officers’ familiarity with and perceptions about the legitimacy of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements*
 - “To what extent are you familiar with the #MeToo movement?”
 - “Do you believe #MeToo is a legitimate endeavor?”
 - “To what extent are you familiar with the #TimesUp movement?”
 - “Do you believe #TimesUp is a legitimate endeavor?”

In addition, the standardized Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (UIRMA; McMahon & Farmer, 2011) was administered to assess the officers' general rape myth acceptance.

Smith et al. (2016) also collected baseline (pre-training) data on the prevalence of rape myth acceptance in their study of campus law enforcement officers. Their survey incorporated three subscales from Payne, Lonsway, and Fitzgerald's (1999) widely used standardized instrument, the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA). The first subscale ('She Lied') comprised five items measured using 5-point Likert-type scales to gauge attitudes about the truthfulness of rape victims/survivors (e.g., "Rape accusations are often used as a way of getting back at men."). The second subscale ('It Wasn't Really Rape') explored beliefs about definitions of rape (e.g., "If a woman doesn't physically fight back, you can't really say that it was rape."). The third subscale ('Rape Is a Trivial Event') measured perceptions about the severity of rape (e.g., "Women tend to exaggerate how much rape affects them."). The measures were combined to form an overall score representing rape myth acceptance.

In addition, Smith et al. developed the 'Blameworthiness Scale.' This measure comprised three items that were rated on Likert-type scales: "In some circumstances of sexual assault, the victim is partially to blame;" "If the victim is intoxicated at the time of the assault, their testimony is less valid;" and "If the victim is intoxicated at the time of the assault, the offense should be taken less seriously." Then, to examine officers' perceptions of how certain factors might influence successful clearance of sexual assault cases, they were asked to rate an additional 10 items, also using Likert-type scales: degree of victim cooperation with the case; witness testimony/statements; DNA test results; suspect criminal history; severity of injuries to the victim; victim blameworthiness; victim intoxication during the offense; victim inconsistency; victim criminal history; and victim-offender relationship.

Venema (2019) recruited 174 police officers from a mid-sized police department in the Great Lakes area to participate in a vignette study that examined officers' rape myth attitudes, blame attributions, peer perceptions, and judgments about case characteristics. First, 25 items were adapted from two different scales (Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale–Short Form, IRMA-SF and the Subtle Rape Myth Acceptance Scale) and combined to form a global measure of rape myth attitude. Second, the officers completed the Attribution of Blame Scale (Bieneck & Krahe, 2011) which comprised eight items that assessed victim and suspect responsibility and blameworthiness. An example of an item measuring victim blame is: "Do you think the victim is to blame for the incident?" An example of an item measuring suspect blame is: "Do you think the suspect should be held criminally liable for a sexual assault?" Third, officers' peer perceptions were measured using two items: "Most police officers I know would classify as a sexual assault" and "Most police officers I know would consider this a legitimate sexual assault." Lastly, two dummy-coded variables were used to examine case characteristics in terms of victim alcohol use and prior relationship with the suspect. These four independent variables were subsequently used to predict the officers' behavioral intentions, measured by support for recommending an immediate response by a detective, and support for recommending arrest of the suspect.

O'Neal (2019) conducted a study that involved an analysis of 400 case files of actual sexual assault complaints by females that were reported to the Los Angeles Police Department in 2008. Although no measures were directly implemented, the researcher developed coding schemes ad hoc via an analysis of case information and identifying contextual themes related to victim and suspect characteristics, assault characteristics, complainant-suspect relationship, victims' experiences with the criminal justice system, and the combined influences of characteristics that result in activation of a law enforcement response. Using these broad themes, the researcher developed indicators to measure (dichotomously) whether factors such as the victim's mental health status, the suspect's race, and whether the suspect was a stranger, predicted officers' perceptions about the complainant's credibility.

Strengths/Weaknesses

There were strengths and weaknesses pertaining to the research design, sampling, and methods of the studies reviewed herein. In terms of strengths, the use of randomized groups and samples of actual police officers increased internal and external validity (e.g., Baldry & Pagliaro, 2014). In contrast, the use of a cross-sectional design precludes determinations of causality and changes in attitudes over time, which suggests that a longitudinal approach may be more fruitful.

The studies in this review are further limited by the use of non-probability sampling (e.g., convenience and purposive samples), decreased generalizability of research findings due to reduced representativeness, and potential selection bias. Moreover, most studies sampled police officers from a single police department and in one jurisdiction (e.g., Franklin et al., 2010). Future research should recruit officers from different police agencies and jurisdictions (e.g., rural and suburban) to increase sample heterogeneity and generalizability. Many studies utilized surveys but lacked control groups. In addition, the method of survey administration (e.g., pencil-paper vs online) may have affected participants' response rates and motivation. More generally, social desirability may also be an issue in research of this nature: police cynicism, distrust of researchers, and hesitancy to report undesirable beliefs have been cited as potential influencers of officers' participation (Franklin et al., 2010; Garza & Franklin, 2020). Emphasizing participants' anonymity during consent procedures may help to counteract this problem. Finally, few have utilized qualitative methods (e.g., interviews) which would facilitate a more nuanced and in-depth understanding of officers' knowledge and attitudes.

Some studies utilized standardized measurement instruments to measure police attitudes and beliefs (Engelman & Deardorff, 2016; Fleming, 2019; Franklin et al., 2020; Lathan et al., 2019; Smith et al., 2016; Venema, 2019). The strengths of these studies are that they employed concepts and scales that were adapted from well-documented measures, often reviewed by experts, and/or pilot-tested with the target population (Engelman & Deardorff, 2016). However, some measures of police attitudes and perceptions of sexual violence (e.g., IRMA) have been criticized as being too female-focused (Garza & Franklin, 2020; O'Neal, 2019), which calls for a more gender-responsive approach to also account for male, transgender, and gender non-normative victims/survivors of sexual assault. Furthermore, few have explored police attitudes and perceptions of culturally diverse populations, which are worthy of further exploration.

Other studies incorporated their own specially developed attitudinal measures (Darwinkel et al., 2013; Engelman & Deardorff, 2016; Lynch & Logan, 2015). Although Baldry and Pagliaro's manipulation of groups' norms lacked a manipulation check, a strength of this study is that it was modeled on a widely used and validated procedure in the literature on social identity theory. Moreover, Engelman and Deardorff (2016) developed measures in collaboration with practitioners and professionals who specialize in working with the target population, which maximized the strength of a culturally-based approach. In some studies, Principle Component Analysis (PCA) testing and internal reliability demonstrated strong internal consistency of the scale items.

In contrast, although surveys were a common method of data collection to assess law enforcement attitudes, the measures in these studies sometimes lacked theoretical and psychometric precision. For instance, Smith et al.'s (2016) blameworthiness scale had low internal consistency (based on the widely accepted standard for Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .70). Additional issues to consider are that multivariate analyses were often limited to a small set of control variables, which means that other factors that were not included may have influenced officers' attitudes and beliefs.

SUMMARY TABLE: LAW ENFORCEMENT KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, AND BELIEFS

Sub-concepts	Measures	Indicators	Data Sources
Misperceptions about victims	Victim response to trauma	Affective Response	Beliefs About Crime Victim Behaviors Index
		Compliance with offender	Survey
		Delayed/inaccurate reporting	Beliefs About Crime Victim Behaviors Index
	Victim credibility	Victim responsibility	Survey Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance-Short Form (IRMA-SF)
		Perceptions about false reporting	Survey
		Suspect's admission/denial	Survey
Strength of evidence		Vignette experiment	
Cultural sensitivity	Knowledge about target population	Perceived capabilities in working with target population	Survey
		Perceived self-efficacy in working with target population	Survey
	Attitudes toward target population	Perceived danger to victims	Survey
		Likelihood of past/future harm to victims	Survey
		Victim credibility	Survey
Rape myths	Rape myth acceptance	Beliefs about definitions of rape	Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA)
		Perceived severity of rape	Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA)
		Victim-offender relationship	Document analysis/case files Survey
		Victim's experiences with CJS	Document analysis/case files
		Victim truthfulness, blameworthiness and responsibility	Attribution of Blame Scale
			Blameworthiness Scale
			Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA) Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (UIRMA)
		Suspect blameworthiness and responsibility	Attribution of Blame Scale
		Peer perceptions	Survey
		Awareness of SA movements	Survey
	Legitimacy of SA movements	Survey	
	Trauma-informed care	Understanding of trauma-informed care	Subset of questions from the West Valley City Police Department Survey
		Personal investment in improving SA response to victims	Survey
Interest in adopting department's trauma-sensitive policies/procedures		Survey	

Coordination and Cooperation Among Multidisciplinary Teams

A significant portion of the literature on the law enforcement response to sexual and domestic violence describes and attempts to measure law enforcement coordination and cooperation with different disciplines such as victim advocacy, medical service providers (e.g., Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners/Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners), and prosecution. This coordination often takes the form of formalized partnerships such as Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs), Coordinated Community Response (CCR) teams, Domestic Violence Coordinating Councils (DVCCs), etc. Coordination and cooperation can have an impact on the effectiveness of law enforcement activities, particularly related to criminal justice outcomes and victim safety and empowerment. While the concepts of “coordination,” “collaboration,” and “cooperation” arguably have subtly different meanings, this review uses them interchangeably here, except when referring to a particular study, in which case the direct terms are used.

Outcomes were operationalized in the literature under three broad concepts:

- Multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration,
- Effectiveness of coordination on criminal justice outcomes, and
- Effectiveness of coordination on victim/survivor safety and empowerment.

While the last two areas – criminal justice outcomes and victim/survivor safety/empowerment – cannot be fully separated from one another, for the purpose of identifying effective measures of impact, this paper attempts to differentiate these areas.

Multidisciplinary Cooperation

Multidisciplinary cooperation is the most widely studied outcome in the literature related to this concept. The effectiveness of multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration has been measured broadly by examining improved relationships among multidisciplinary team members such as between police and domestic violence advocates (Greene, 2012) and between Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) and law enforcement, prosecutors, advocates, and doctors (Maier, 2012) indicated by self-report relationship characteristics gathered from interviews.

Several studies have looked more closely at specific attributes of “improved relationships” such as density, or the proportion of relationships that exist in a network out of the total number of possible relationships (Greeson et al., 2019). Greeson et al. (2019) measured network density, a mathematical calculation in social network analysis, by conducting interviews with members of Sexual Assault Response Teams and asking about their perceived levels of connectedness. The authors asked whether members felt their role was valued by other team members, to what degree they felt that other members were resources in their own work, and how they perceived the quality of interorganizational communication. Rich and Seffrin (2013) examined connectedness using the following indicators: personal contact at the local Crime Victim Advocacy (CVA) agency; law enforcement officers’ enthusiasm about using CVAs; use of CVAs during rape victim interviews; inclusion of CVAs during the initial interview; providing CVA contact information to the victim; emphasis of the value of the service (CVA); making the initial call to the CVA on behalf of the victim; and inviting the advocate to attend the interview of the victim. Rich and Seffrin (2013) utilized the CVA Index, which is a survey conducted with law enforcement officers, which includes a yes/no response option for each of the above indicators (e.g., “I have a personal contact at the local CVA agency”).

Beyond connectedness, Greeson et al.’s (2019) social network analysis examined several other aspects of the relationships within SARTs, as described in interviews with Sexual Assault Response Team membership organizations, including: reciprocity indicated by both actors endorsing the relationship (note this is not based on agreement about quality of relationship); network centralization indicated by the extent to which relationships are dependent on one key organization; and core-periphery structure indicated by the extent that relationships are dependent on a core group of members.

Respect for and trust of team members is another key measure that has been used to gauge the effectiveness of multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration. Moylan et al. (2017) measured team members’ trust in the credibility, expertise, and authority of other SART members through interviews with representatives of the participating disciplines. The authors analyzed interview data, coding it for language that fit within these themes. For example, a member mentioning “turf” indicated a concern with authority. Cole (2018) also measured the perception of mutual respect and trust in an earlier study of SARTs, but instead utilized survey questions such as “professionals trust one another to do what they say they will do” (utilizing a Likert-type scale). Acceptance of the existence of a SART in general is another broad measure that has been indicated through interview findings (Moylan & Lindhorst, 2015).

The aforementioned measures all speak to forming the base of the relationships. Moving beyond the sense of connectedness and respect, measures dive deeper into how multidisciplinary teams interact in the relationship. A key measure of effective multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration is inter-professional collaboration. Cole (2018) utilized the Index of Interdisciplinary Collaboration as the indicator of inter-professional collaboration among SART coordinators and members. This tool measures interdependence, flexibility, collective ownership of goals, group innovation/newly created professional activities, and reflection on process. In this same study, the commitment to collaboration was also measured through survey questions. One question, for example, asked about members' level of motivation to work with other professional groups (Cole, 2018). Collective ownership of goals was an indicator observed by Moylan et al. (2017) in a later study on SARTs. In this study, as mentioned above, the authors looked at "authority," or who had the right to name the goals of the team and to define appropriate roles and behavior for each of the fields represented on SARTs. Unlike Cole (2018), however, Moylan utilized interviews with SART team members and did not use a formal scale such as the Index of Interdisciplinary Collaboration.

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Greeson et al. (2016) measured the use of collaborative processes in SARTs indicated by the use of case review, multidisciplinary cross-trainings, adoption and/or review of policies/protocols, and program evaluation. The authors state that “[f]or each process, participants were asked whether their SART engaged in that process (yes/no), and if so, whether the process was utilized regularly or on an as-needed basis. Participants were asked whether they engage in program evaluation, and if so, to describe their evaluation activities” (Greeson et al., 2016, p. 283). These indicators were informed by the literature on domestic violence coordinating councils (DVCCs), as well as practitioner recommendations for SART best practices (Greeson et al., 2016). An earlier study from these authors measured the same indicators of the use of collaborative processes with the addition of frequency of cross-system coordination (Greeson & Campbell, 2015).

As is true with any partnership, effective communication among multidisciplinary team members is key to their success. Cole (2018) measured communication skills in SARTs through surveys that included Likert-type scale items that covered conflict resolution and group decision-making. For example, one item asked participants to respond to the statement “some disagreements or problems are not addressed by the team in the hopes that they will be resolved naturally,” while another item stated “discussion between members tends to be limited to discussion of specific issues after they have arisen” (Cole, 2018). Responses were scored and ranked such that a higher score indicated greater communication. Carter & Grommon (2016) measured improved communication indicated by interview findings with probation officers, victim advocates, and an intake officer in a study on pretrial GPS supervision of domestic violence defendants. Importantly, this study also included the perspective of three victims.

Several studies have focused less on relationships and collaboration and more on the structure of multidisciplinary teams. Greeson et al. (2016) measured membership breadth indicated by the number of stakeholder groups endorsed, collected through structured interviews with SART leaders. Greeson and colleagues later built on this work by measuring the variation in the number of other organizations to which respondents' organizations are connected (2019). Another aspect of structure is formalization. Formalization has been indicated by the use and number of formal structures and resources in place such as subcommittees and formal leaders (Greeson & Campbell, 2015; Greeson et al., 2016). While none of these studies measured differences between partnerships that utilized formal memoranda of understanding (MOU) and those whose partnerships were more informal or formalized in different manners, Cole (2018) explicitly chose a sample comprised of the only SARTs in the state under study which had formal MOUs.

Effective cooperation and collaboration can also be measured by changes in knowledge, awareness, and understanding of key concepts among team members. For example, improved police understanding of victims and domestic violence issues (Greene, 2012), and more specifically, officer understanding of rape myths and awareness of trauma-informed practices (Lathan et al., 2019), have been used as measures of success. Lathan and colleagues' (2019) measurement of rape myths and trauma-informed practices was discussed in more detail in the Law Enforcement Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs section. Greeson et al. (2018), on the other hand, measured the perceptions of SART leaders regarding the sociocultural contexts of their broader communities, which they believed impacted their work. These factors included norms, beliefs, values, and attitudes such as rape myths/victim blaming and denial of the occurrence of sexual assault locally. Their study did not include research in the broader community, but was limited to the views of the SART leaders. While Greeson and colleagues' study, which utilized structured quantitative interviews and semi-structured qualitative interviews, did not measure the impact of collaboration on these broader contexts, it does reveal potentially useful measures, as well as the importance of measuring factors external to the SARTs themselves.

Behavior change, such as improved victim/survivor treatment or demonstrations of respect for members of other disciplines, has also been examined as a measure of effective multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration; however, it is often difficult to measure changes in practice as opposed to just measuring changes in knowledge, awareness, and understanding, as noted above. Moylan and Lindhorst (2015) attempted to measure behavior change by conducting interviews wherein they asked how SART professionals saw the behavior of those in other participating disciplines change following the creation of a SARTs. Multiple respondents underscored that there can be a gap between the approaches, policies, and protocols that active SART representatives may endorse, and how service provision is carried out in the field. In an earlier 2012 study, Maier attempted to elucidate this on-the-ground picture by interviewing SANEs and asking how they would describe their relationships with other practitioners, including law enforcement. Maier coded responses as positive, negative, mixed, or positive now but negative in the past, with this last option potentially indicating behavior change over time, or merely a change in perception based on familiarity.

Effectiveness of coordination on criminal justice outcomes

The previous section focused on effective multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration, measuring indicators related to relationship quality, the ability to collaborate and communicate effectively, the structure and makeup of the teams themselves, and changes in knowledge and behavior among team members. This section and the following move from indicators of quality implementation and process to examining the effectiveness of coordination on outcomes for offenders and victims. Improving case outcomes and the victim/survivor experience is arguably the ultimate goal of multidisciplinary teams. However, given the complex nature of measuring these outcomes, and tracing their results back to multidisciplinary team coordination, few studies have measured these indicators of success.

The effectiveness of coordination on criminal justice outcomes has been measured by case disposition; whether or not victims were asked to go and ultimately went to court; and women's ratings of their engagement with prosecution (DePrince et al., 2011). In DePrince and colleagues' study, indicators for case disposition included: no charges filed, refused charges, dismissed, all charges not guilty, at least one charge guilty, total number of charges for which the offender was found guilty, and the severity of the case disposition (2011). A second study examined perceived effectiveness of SARTs, and more specifically, the extent to which SARTs' leaders believed their efforts led to various improvements in their communities (Greeson et al., 2016). The authors conducted interviews and analyzed leaders' responses pertaining to the SARTs' impact on victim/survivor experiences, legal effectiveness, victim/survivor participation in the criminal justice system, police processing, and improvements in prosecution (Greeson et al., 2016). For example, the "improvements in police processing of sexual assault cases" subscale was made up of six items, including the extent to which SARTs' efforts led to "police being more likely to refer cases to the prosecutor's office" and "improvements in police utilization of medical/forensic evidence" (Greeson et al., 2016).

Effectiveness of coordination on victim/survivor safety and well-being

The previous section included some indicators related to victim/survivor participation in and experiences with the criminal justice system. This sub-concept focuses more on outcomes for victims regarding their safety and well-being (which will be explored more fully in the last section of this review). One measure that has been used to gauge the impact of coordination on these areas is victims' psychological responses to intimate partner violence (IPV), as indicated by the Posttraumatic Stress Diagnostic Scale/Beck Depression Inventory – 2 (DePrince et al., 2011). DePrince and colleagues also looked at the occurrence of additional IPV incidents during the study period as an indicator of victim/survivor safety; women's readiness to leave the relationships with the offenders (measured through survey responses); and service utilization and social support, as indicated by the Interpersonal Support Evaluation List (2011).

Stover et al. (2010) measured the impact of the Domestic Violence Home Visit Intervention (DVHVI), a collaboration between advocates and law enforcement, using a number of measures similar to those used by DePrince et al. They used victim/survivor interview data to measure victim/survivor satisfaction with police and the Brief Symptom Inventory (BSI; Derogatis, 1975) and the Posttraumatic Checklist-Civilian Version (PCL-C; Blanchard, Jones-Alexander, Buckley, & Forneris, 1996) to measure victim/survivor psychiatric symptoms post-DV incident. Like DePrince et al., Stover et al. measured the occurrence of additional IPV incidents (indicated by additional calls to police), and examined victim service utilization, but used a different tool than DePrince et al., the Resource Utilization Questionnaire (RUQ; Swan & Gill, 1998). For this study, the authors developed four variables based on the RUQ in order to summarize how frequently victims and their children accessed services: Family Mental Health, Child Mental Health, Adult Mental Health, and Court Services. Critically, Stover et al. also measured outcomes pertaining to children impacted by DV, as indicated by their symptoms and behavioral challenges. In order to gather this information, mothers were asked to complete multiple screening tools. Another study of a New York-based DV home visiting intervention measured victim/survivor safety, but did not incorporate victim/survivor perspective; rather it relied exclusively on a small sample of law enforcement officers and victim advocates to self-report (Greene, 2012). Using this same data source, Greene also examined victim/survivor perceptions of and relationship with law enforcement. An additional small qualitative study undertaken in the context of pretrial supervision of DV offenders measured victims' and victim advocates' perspectives on justice personnel in the context of a coordinated interdisciplinary program (Carter & Grommon, 2016).

Strengths/Weaknesses

Interviews were the most common data collection method utilized in the literature to measure the various aspects of coordination and cooperation among multidisciplinary teams. Importantly, interview themes were often identified during the data analysis process and not formally measured at the time of the interviews (e.g., Moylan et al., 2017) and occasionally did not utilize inter-coder reliability checks (e.g., Maier, 2012). This work can help pave the way for more formal measurement and data collection.

For example, interviews conducted as part of social network analyses are a more formal method of measurement although more labor-intensive (Greeson et al., 2019). Researchers commonly used surveys with several formal tools available including the Index of Interdisciplinary Collaboration (Cole, 2018) and Posttraumatic Stress Diagnostic Scale/Beck Depression Inventory – 2 (DePrince et al., 2011). When collecting data from multidisciplinary team members, it may be difficult to gather opinions that represent the entire team. For example, one of the aforementioned studies had difficulty recruiting law enforcement officers (Moylan & Lindhorst, 2015). Studies often utilize large national samples to ensure representativeness (e.g., Greeson & Campbell, 2015), an unrealistic method to evaluate a single program. One study utilized official administrative data to examine case outcomes in the form of publicly available court records (DePrince et al., 2011). While using publicly available records allows for easy access, manual coding of data may be needed (DePrince et al., 2011), which is time consuming and requires proper training.

The challenges of measuring effective collaboration have been noted by some of the authors cited here (Moylan & Lindhorst, 2015), and have been highlighted by researchers in other fields as well (Dedrick & Greenbaum, 2011). Most measures of collaboration rely on self-reported qualitative data and therefore are vulnerable to potential weaknesses. For instance, survey and interview data may be skewed by social desirability, small sample sizes, and/or selection bias (e.g., those most satisfied with collaboration may be most likely to respond, or leaders may have different views than other members) (Greeson & Campbell, 2015; Greeson et al., 2016; Greeson et al., 2019; Lathan et al., 2019; Rich & Seffrin, 2013). In addition, most studies of coordination and collaboration are missing victims' voices, so cannot fully capture the impact of law enforcement's cooperation with other disciplines (Greene, 2012).

Another factor that compromises the strength of many measures of collaboration is the inability to make strong claims of causality between structural aspects of interventions (e.g., different kinds of relationship structures within SARTs) and the effectiveness of those interventions (Greeson et al., 2019). Relatedly, in some studies, metrics are not analyzed as dependent variables after an intervention; for instance, participants' beliefs are measured, but not as an outcome of a particular activity (Lathan et al., 2019). It may also be inaccurate to assume that adoption of the rhetoric of collaboration by multidisciplinary partners actually indicates true collaboration in practice (Moylan & Lindhorst, 2015), or that teams that utilize multidisciplinary evaluation processes, for instance, put the results of those evaluations into practice (Greeson et al., 2016). Measures of collaboration are also limited by their inability to account for contextual factors and the associated difficulty of generalizing beyond a particular environment. On the other hand, the qualitative measures that are generally used to assess outcomes related to multidisciplinary collaboration may have the ability to capture the nuances of particular teams/councils that would be missed by broader, standardized measures.

SUMMARY TABLE: COORDINATION AND COOPERATION AMONG MULTIDISCIPLINARY TEAMS

Sub-concepts	Measures	Indicators	Data Sources
Effective multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration	Density/Connectedness	Personal contact at the local Crime Victim Advocacy (CVA) agency	Interviews/CVA Index Survey
		Enthusiasm about using CVAs	
		Use of CVAs during rape victim interviews	
		Inclusion of CVAs during the initial interview	
		Provide CVA contact information to the victim	
		Emphasis of the value of the service (CVA)	
		Making the initial call to the CVA on behalf of the victim	
		Inviting the advocate to attend interview of the victim	
	Reciprocity	Both actors endorsing the relationship	Interviews
	Network Centralization	Extent to which relationships are dependent on one key organization	Interviews
	Core-Periphery Structure	Extent that relationships are dependent on a core group of members	Interviews
	Trust	Trust in the competency and credibility of other team members	Interviews/Surveys
		Mutual respect for other team members	Surveys
		Acceptance of the existence of the team	Interviews
	Interprofessional Collaboration	Interdependence	Index of Interdisciplinary Collaboration
		Flexibility	
		Group innovation/newly created professional activities	
		Reflection on process	
		Collective ownership of goals	Index of Interdisciplinary Collaboration/Interviews
		Commitment to collaboration	Surveys
		Use of case review	Interviews
Multidisciplinary cross-trainings			
Adoption and/or review of policies/protocols			
Program evaluation			
Frequency of cross-system coordination			
Effective Communication	Communication Skills	Surveys	
	Improved communication	Interviews	
Membership Breadth	Number of stakeholder groups endorsed	Interviews	
	Variation in number of other organizations respondents' organizations are connected to	Freeman degree centrality scores	

Sub-concepts	Measures	Indicators	Data Sources
Effective multidisciplinary cooperation and collaboration	Formalization	Use and number of formal structures and resources in place	Interviews
	Changes in Knowledge, Awareness, and Understanding of Key Concepts	Improved police understanding of victims	Surveys
		Improved police understanding of domestic violence issues	
		Officer understanding of rape myths	
Changes in Behavior	How professionals saw the behavior of other responders change	Interviews	
Effectiveness of coordination on criminal justice outcomes	Case Disposition	No charges filed	Publicly Available Court Data
		Refused charges	
		Dismissed	
		All charges not guilty	
		At least one charge guilty	
		Total number of charges for which the offender was found guilty	
	Victim/Survivor Participation in Criminal Justice Process	Whether or not women were asked to go and ultimately went to court	Interviews
		Women's ratings of their engagement with prosecution	
	Improvements in the Community	Victim/survivor experiences	Interviews
		Legal effectiveness	
Police processing			
Improvements in prosecution			
Effectiveness of coordination on victim safety and empowerment	Enhanced Victim/Survivor Safety/Well-being/Empowerment	Occurrence of additional intimate partner violence incidents	Interviews
		Women's readiness to leave the relationships with the offender	
		Psychological responses to intimate partner violence	Posttraumatic Stress Diagnostic Scale/ Beck Depression Inventory – 2
		Victim/survivor psychiatric symptoms post-domestic violence incident	Brief Symptom Inventory/Posttraumatic Checklist-Civilian Version
		Social support	Interpersonal Support Evaluation List
	Enhanced Service Knowledge/Utilization/ Perception	Service utilization	Interviews/Resource Utilization Questionnaire
		Likelihood of calling police again for less serious incidents	Interviews
		Increased victim/survivor knowledge	
		Improved community awareness of domestic violence resources	
		Improved victim/survivor perception of and relationship with police	
		Victims'/survivors' and victim advocates' perspectives on justice personnel	
		Victim/survivor satisfaction with police	

Case Outcomes and Recidivism

The third focus of this literature review is case-related outcomes and recidivism. While cases are arguably out of the hands of law enforcement once the case is turned over to the prosecutor, many studies examine how the law enforcement responses may impact case progression through these later stages and the dispositions of these cases.

Case outcomes were operationalized in the literature for two broad sub-concepts:

- Case clearance, and
- Recidivism.

Many studies examine case progression comprehensively while others focus on the specific steps involved in case clearance or attrition including investigation, arrest, prosecution, and case disposition. Recidivism is examined in the literature under the categories of revictimization and reoffending.

Case Clearance

Case clearance refers to when a case is closed through one of two ways: by arrest or by exceptional means (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2020). Case attrition, a component of case clearance occurs when a case drops out of the criminal justice process (i.e., for each crime reported, only some result in investigations, and only some of those result in arrests, and only some of those result in prosecutions that result in convictions) (Morabito et al., 2019b). A significant portion of the literature described below examines both case clearance and case attrition. There are numerous decision-making points and associated outcome measures along the progression of cases in the criminal justice system. This section of the literature review is organized by these various decision-points, from investigation, to arrest, to prosecution, to case disposition.

Investigation

Once an official police report has been completed, one of the first decision-making points in case progression is whether a case is founded. Alderden & Ullman (2012) measured whether a sexual assault case was founded by reviewing case files in a police department database. In this study, “case founding refers to the initial determination by police officers that the reported incident actually constituted a criminal sexual assault as defined by state statute” (Alderden & Ullman, 2012, p. 6). A subsequent study utilized police agency data to look specifically at the impact of forensic evidence on the odds that a case would be founded in sexual assault cases (Cross et al., 2014).

An important aspect of the investigation process for sexual assaults is the submission of sexual assault kits (SAKs) by law enforcement. Often SAKs go unsubmitted, a troubling trend considering how valuable this evidence can be for cases. In recent years, researchers have sought to understand the causes of the backlogs of SAKs which have resulted from lack of submission, and to measure their effects on investigations and case progression. A recent study measured the rates of SAK submissions by law enforcement by time of submission (less than 1 month after assault, 1-12 months after the assault, and over 12 months from the assault) using case files and information in the crime lab database (Valentine et al., 2019). An earlier study also utilized crime lab data to measure rates of SAK submissions by law enforcement, but focused on adolescent victims (Shaw & Campbell, 2013). Wells and colleagues (2019) examined the backlog further by measuring investigative results (e.g., expired statute of limitations, arrest confirmation, charges filed in case, etc.) following a Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) hit indicated by responses to interviews with investigators and prosecutors. Studies on how forensic evidence such as SAKs affects subsequent stages of case progression beyond investigation are included in later sections of this review.

Arrest

A large body of literature examines the outcome of an arrest occurring in cases of VAWA crimes and researchers have given particular attention to sexual assault cases. Several studies in recent years have looked broadly at potential factors contributing to whether a suspect is arrested in a sexual assault case. These studies measured if a suspect was identified and arrested in sexual assault cases indicated by police case files (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Morabito et al., 2019b; Spohn & Tellis, 2012; Spohn & Tellis, 2019; Tasca et al., 2013; Wentz, 2020). Other recent studies have focused on specific potential contributing factors to an arrest outcome. For example, Mustaine et al. (2012) measured the effects of case and community characteristics on sexual assault cases solved (cleared) where solved indicates police have identified a suspect and the suspect has been arrested, or the case has been cleared through exceptional means, through an analysis of police reports. Another study examined the effect of perceived victim/survivor credibility, based on victim/survivor characteristics and behaviors, on police decision to arrest in

sexual assault cases (Morabito et al., 2019a). As mentioned in the Investigation section above, the impact of forensic evidence such as sexual assault kits on case progression has been a focus of much research in recent years. Police agency data has also been analyzed to measure the influence of forensic evidence (Sommers & Baskin, 2011; Cross et al., 2014) and the timing of crime lab analysis (Cross et al., 2020) on the arrest of a suspect in rape or sexual assault cases.

The aforementioned studies all used official case files from police departments to examine sexual assault arrests. Many researchers have also utilized publicly available National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data to examine sexual assault arrests. NIBRS data are a component part of the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR), a nationwide view of crime administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), based on the submission of crime information by participating law enforcement agencies. Similar to the studies that relied upon data directly from police agencies, studies using NIBRS data have also generally examined factors related to an arrest occurring in rape or sexual assault cases (Pattavina et al., 2016; Richards et al., 2019; Stacey et al., 2016; Walfield, 2016; Wyma-Bradley, 2019). One recent study examined the effect of female representation among the rank and file of the police agency on the likelihood that sexual assault complaints ended in arrest, as compared with the case remaining open or cleared by exceptional means (Morabito et al., 2017).

NIBRS data have also recently been leveraged to measure the decision to arrest in intimate partner violence cases (Durfee & Fetzer, 2016; Lantz, 2020), as have police case files, which have been used to measure this decision in relation to previous stalking behaviors (Garza et al., 2020). Further, Whitmire (2020) utilized Notices to Appear from the State Attorney's Office in addition to law enforcement reports to measure if an arrest was made in stalking cases.

According to the FBI, "in certain situations, elements beyond law enforcement's control prevent the agency from arresting and formally charging the offender. When this occurs, the agency can clear the offense exceptionally" (2020). Law enforcement agencies must meet certain conditions, such as identification of the offender, in order to exceptionally clear a case (FBI, 2020). A victim's refusal to cooperate³ is just one of several categories of exceptional clearance which has been the focus of recent literature, in addition to exceptional clearance based on prosecutorial declination to prosecute, which is discussed below in the Prosecution section.⁴ Many recent studies measuring exceptional clearance based on victim/survivor refusal to cooperate in sexual assault cases have done so with NIBRS data (Pattavina et al., 2016; Richards et al., 2019; Walfield, 2016).

One study looked more closely at sexual assault case clearance by exceptional means based on victim/survivor non-cooperation by measuring the effects of the relationship between victim/survivor and offender race on case dispositions using NIBRS data (Stacey et al., 2016). Rather than utilizing NIBRS data, Kelley & Campbell (2013) instead used police reports collected directly from law enforcement agencies to

³ Note "victim refusal to cooperate" is the terminology used in this section to mirror the language in NIBRS data.

⁴ NIBRS data include the following categories of exceptional clearances: Death of offender, Prosecution declined, In custody of other jurisdiction (includes extradition denied), Victim refused coop, and Juvenile/no custody.

measure where police did not refer the case to prosecution due to victim/survivor withdrawal in sexual assault cases. Further, using administrative data and case files, Browne and colleagues (2016) examined sexual assault cases against persons with disabilities which were closed without charges due to the victim's/survivor's or their family's preference not to continue, not being able to locate or re-contact the victim/survivor (e.g., in cases where the victim/survivor was hospitalized or moved), and/or the victim's/their family's non-response to contacts.

While sexual assault has been the focus of research on exceptional clearances due to victim/survivor refusal to cooperate, one recent study examined this phenomenon in intimate partner violence cases. Lantz (2020) measured victim/survivor cooperation with a dichotomous measure of whether a case was exceptionally cleared because a victim/survivor would not cooperate with law enforcement officers. This study was conducted with NIBRS data (Lantz, 2020).

Prosecution

The next step in case progression is referral for prosecution. The decision whether to refer or present a case to the prosecution is often at the discretion of law enforcement. To understand how often such reviews occur, Spohn & Tellis (2019) measured whether the investigating detective presented the case to an Assistant District Attorney for pre-arrest charge evaluation in sexual assault cases using data from case files, similarly to three earlier studies (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Kelley & Campbell, 2013; Spohn & Tellis, 2012) and a later replication study (Morabito et al., 2019b). Wood et al. (2011) looked at the same outcome using prosecutor records. Another study specifically looked at the influence of forensic evidence on rape incident referrals to the District Attorney as indicated by case files (Sommers & Baskin, 2011). Two additional studies looked at the effects of Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) programs on the referral of sexual assault cases to prosecution by police, as indicated by SANE program records (Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2014).

The aforementioned studies focused on sexual assault; however, one study conducted in Alaska examined sexual abuse of a minor and domestic violence incidents as well. This study measured referral to prosecution using detailed case record reviews of sexual assault, sexual abuse of a minor, and domestic violence incidents investigated, as indicated by three closure codes in Alaska State Troopers' data (Myrstol, 2018). An earlier study conducted in Alaska examined referral for prosecution in stalking cases utilizing the same data source (Rosay et al., 2010).

It is well-documented that sexual and domestic violence cases referred to prosecution often do not end up being prosecuted. A case may get cleared by exceptional means if the prosecution declines to move forward. To gain a better understanding on prevalence and associated factors, numerous studies of sexual assault cases have leveraged NIBRS data to measure exceptional clearance on the basis of prosecutorial declination to prosecute (Browne et al., 2016; Pattavina et al., 2016; Richards et al., 2019; Walfield, 2016). As mentioned above, Stacey et al. (2016) examined the use of this type of exceptional clearance as it relates to victim/survivor and offender race. Spohn & Tellis (2019) utilized case file data rather than NIBRS data

for their examination of the use of exceptional clearance when the District Attorney had not filed felony charges in sexual assault cases (see also Morabito et al., 2019b; Spohn & Tellis, 2012). NIBRS data have also recently been used to examine exceptional clearance by means of the prosecution declining to proceed in intimate partner violence cases (Lantz, 2020).

If a case is not exceptionally cleared by prosecutorial declination, it is accepted for prosecution. In an effort to understand factors affecting case acceptance, Spohn & Tellis (2019) measured District Attorney acceptance of a case for prosecution in sexual assault cases that resulted in the arrest of a suspect compared to all sexual assault cases that were presented to the DA for a charge evaluation, regardless of whether the suspect had been arrested—the authors argued the latter was a more accurate and valid measure of prosecutors’ charging decisions (see also Morabito et al., 2019b; Spohn & Tellis, 2012). Alderden & Ullman (2012) measured sexual assault cases accepted for prosecution as a felony criminal sexual assault with data from case files in a police department database. A later study of police reports and court records examined the agreement between police classification/charges and prosecutor charging decisions in adult sexual assault cases (Wentz, 2020). The Alaska studies utilized case records to measure acceptance for prosecution, irrespective of whether or not charges were amended upon acceptance (Myrstol, 2018; Rosay et al., 2010).

Several recent studies investigated contextual factors that might affect case acceptance by the prosecution. A separate study in Alaska from those previously described explored the impact of geographic isolation (whether Troopers can reach a village by automobile) and local police presence on whether sexual assault cases were accepted for prosecution (Wood et al., 2011). Two additional studies examined the impact of forensic evidence on the odds of criminal charges being filed in sexual assault cases with case file data (Sommers & Baskin, 2011) and police agency data (Cross et al., 2014).

Case Disposition

The disposition of a case, for which there are numerous options, is the next stage of the criminal justice process examined in the literature. Browne and colleagues (2016) took an extensive look at case dispositions in sexual assault against persons with disabilities cases, using administrative and case file data. The categories included: 1) referred to another unit, 2) referred to lower court, 3) nolle prossed (a dismissal of charges by the prosecution), 4) heard by grand jury, and 5) convicted (Browne et al., 2016). The Alaska studies referenced above were more expansive in terms of crime-type and examined sexual assault, sexual abuse of a minor, and domestic violence (Myrstol, 2018; Rosay et al., 2010), and stalking convictions (Rosay et al., 2010) using detailed case record reviews. Cases were coded “convicted” if any charges resulted in a final disposition of conviction (Myrstol, 2018; Rosay et al., 2010). Another recent study relied on case files to examine the forensic evidence influence on rape convictions (Sommers & Baskin, 2011).

Case dispositions have been studied in stalking cases by examining cases in which a judge or jury determined the final verdict, and cases that resulted in a guilty verdict, by reviewing law enforcement case data (Whitmire, 2020). Strangulation case dispositions have also recently been examined, particularly

focused on the impact of officer training and the requirement that officers complete a supplemental strangulation form in all family violence cases where symptoms of strangulation were present (Zedaker et al., 2018). Outcomes examined included charges dismissed, conviction, and jail time as indicated in prosecutor case files.

Two recent studies took a deep dive into Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) program effects on prosecution rates for adult sexual assault (Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2014). These studies measured the following case dispositions: case charged by prosecutors, but later dropped; case plea bargained; case went to trial and ended in an acquittal; or case went to trial and ended in a conviction. Each of these dispositions were measured through an analysis of SANE program records (Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2014).

Recidivism

This section examines the concept of recidivism, both in terms of revictimization experienced by victims and reoffending by offenders. It is important to note that there are many ways to operationalize both revictimization⁵ and reoffending. These variations are highlighted in the discussion below.

Revictimization

Numerous recent studies utilized the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), an annual and nationally representative survey, to examine the effects of various factors on revictimization, or whether the victim/survivor reported a second victimization (this may include multiple offenders). Cho & Wilke (2010)⁶ studied the effects of perpetrator arrest on self-reported revictimization in intimate partner violence cases, as did Xie & Lynch (2016), who also looked at the effects of police notification and the utilization of victim/survivor services. Importantly, Cho & Wilke (2010) examined revictimization that occurred within one year following the initial incident, while Xie & Lynch (2016) examined revictimization as many as three years after the initial incident. Cho & Wilke also controlled for factors such as age, race, educational attainment, marital status, injury, and when respondents were surveyed. Of note, they did not control for whether the subsequent violence was committed by the same person; Xie & Lynch used demographic data and victim/survivor

⁵ Revictimization is also examined in the Victim-Focused Outcomes section below as a measure of Victim safety and well-being, illustrating the ways that the same measures can be used to examine different outcomes, depending on how they are operationalized.

⁶ This study used the National Crime Survey (NCS) from 1987 to 1992 combined with the NCVS from 1993 to 2003. The NCS collected crime victimization information since 1973 and was replaced with the redesigned NCVS in 1992.

reports of whether the offender had attacked them before to determine if the second victimization was committed by the same person (although there remained room for error). Further, Cho & Wilke (2010) only included physical violence and could not account for differences in police response from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, whereas Xie & Lynch (2016) used area-identified NCVS data and were therefore able to include neighborhood characteristics in their analysis, in addition to individual and incident characteristics.

While the aforementioned studies examined revictimization in general, another recent study specifically examined the efficacy of protection orders on reducing assault and injury-related outcomes in cases of intimate partner violence. This study measured subsequent victim/survivor injury indicated by emergency department (ED) visits, an objective safety measure outside the criminal justice system (Kothari et al., 2012). The authors report that “ED data were collected from all eight emergency departments in the county, two Level I Trauma Centers and six tertiary care EDs. ED visits were counted if they had an ICD-9 (International Classification of Diseases) code indicating injury or assault, regardless of the mechanism of injury or the lack of identification of the assailant” (Kothari et al., 2012, p. 5). Brame and colleagues (2015) also measured the impact of a specific protective remedy on revictimization: the proactive enforcement of no-contact orders in domestic violence cases. This study looked at new abuse reported by victims in interviews. This source will be discussed in more depth under Reoffending, below, and in the Victim-focused Outcomes section.

Reoffending

Reoffending as a measure of recidivism focuses on offenders and is more commonly studied than revictimization. One way to examine reoffending is by measuring subsequent police incidents. In the same study mentioned above, Kothari and colleagues (2012) measured subsequent police incidents indicated by official reports to the police to examine the efficacy of protection orders in preventing future intimate partner violence cases. This study focused on assault, including homicide, and thus categorized subsequent police incidents as either assault or non-assault (Kothari et al., 2012). A later study used a similar approach to examine the impact of arrests on recidivism by measuring intimate partner violence reported to the police in the 12 months following the initial report (Lyons et al., 2019). Importantly, Lyons and colleagues (2019) focused specifically on recurrent events between the same couple as the initial event, not broadly on any reoffending involving any victim. They looked separately at the risk of physical and psychological intimate partner violence recidivism using the police department database. This study also examined time to offense indicated by time between the initial incident and the next call to police, and at the number of revictimizations as indicated by number of subsequent calls to the police (Lyons et al., 2019).

Exum and colleagues (2014) also analyzed subsequent incident reports as the measure of recidivism in their examination of the odds of reoffending for cases handled by a domestic violence unit in a police department. This study utilized incident reports in a police department database (Exum et al., 2014). Similarly, Stover and colleagues (2010) studied intimate partner violence recidivism following Domestic

Violence Home Visit Intervention indicated by additional reports to police captured in police records (Stover et al., 2010). Another study examined recidivism post-removal of a firearm at the scene of intimate partner violence, indicated by subsequent intimate partner violence incidents reported to the police (Small et al., 2019).

Broidy and colleagues (2016) also measured recidivism as subsequent police contact for any domestic violence incident; however, their study compared the odds of reoffending in three post-intervention scenarios: arrest, civil protection order, and both. It should be noted that the subsequent incidents could have involved a different victim. This study utilized arrest data from a law enforcement database and civil protection order data from court records (Broidy et al., 2016). As discussed under Revictimization, Brame and colleagues (2015) examined the impact of proactive enforcement of no-contact orders in domestic violence cases on reducing offender recidivism. Along with victim-reported revictimization, this study measured offender recidivism with an average follow-up period of 1.5 years indicated by rearrest in administrative criminal history records (Brame et al., 2015).

Furthermore, a recently published systematic review and meta-analysis examined 25 studies on the effectiveness of protection orders in reducing recidivism in domestic violence. Definitions of recidivism observed included a violation of a protection order, rearrest, subsequent police contact, committing a new crime, violations involving physical violence, and violations involving either physical or psychological abuse or victimization (Cordier et al., 2019). Data sources observed include victim/survivor sources, police report data, and combined data (protection order and police report data). Notably, this study concluded that there is a lack of agreement on how to best measure the effectiveness of protection orders (Cordier et al., 2019).

Strengths/Weaknesses

There are important elements of data collection to consider for the studies described in this section. Most of the studies described in the Investigation and Arrest sections utilized official administrative data readily available to law enforcement. However, the level of detail in law enforcement administrative data may vary across agencies. For example, while NIBRS data reported to the FBI offers more information on context for crimes, NIBRS has not been fully implemented in all jurisdictions. Crime lab data was occasionally used to examine aspects of an investigation (Valentine et al., 2019; Shaw & Campbell, 2013), requiring detailed data requests to be submitted to the crime lab to obtain relevant data. One study utilized interviews to examine investigative outcomes where “investigators and prosecutors read case files and provided information” to the research team on the status of each case (Wells et al., 2019, p. 130), which could be time-consuming and limit the amount of information received.

Data collected in the latter stages of case progression often came from prosecution case files. For Campbell and colleagues' study (2014), SANE programs had to send data collection forms to prosecutors' offices to obtain case disposition data. Additionally, prosecution case files may need to be matched or linked to other data sources such as law enforcement data to provide a complete picture (Broidy et al., 2016; Myrstol, 2018; Wood et al., 2011). The NCVS was utilized to examine revictimization in several studies, however, collecting victimization data on a more local level would be necessary to generate data relevant to local programs. Interviews such as those conducted in the Brame and colleagues' study (2015) could serve to fill this gap, while collecting data from emergency departments, as was done in Kothari and colleagues (2012), would be more challenging for a program to implement.

Strengths and weaknesses in the measures themselves are also important to consider. Utilizing official police records, including NIBRS data, limits data to offenses known to police and not all crime is reported to law enforcement. For example, sexual assaults are widely considered to be underreported crimes (see Myrstol, 2018, p. 13). Similarly, prosecution data also only contain crimes known and reported. Furthermore, any information not contained in the administrative data cannot be examined. Utilization of the NCVS, interviews with victims, and ED visits can help fill the gaps in measures from law enforcement and prosecution data, however, there are limitations with those data as well. For example, regarding the NCVS, "revictimization rates may be higher than recidivism rates because the former includes victimization from a new violent partner as well as the previous one. This possibility could not be tested with the NCVS because it did not distinguish the new partner from the previous one" (Cho & Wilke, 2010, p. 293). ED visits for injury "may over count IPV events, especially since the medical records usually lacked information on the mechanism of injury" (Kothari et al., 2012, p. 11). A surface-level examination may miss important context for measures of interest. For example, case referrals and case acceptance should be examined carefully given that these decisions are carried out by "different criminal justice system actors with differing perspectives and focal concerns" (Myrstol, 2018, p. 42). Recidivism measures are again limited to events known or reported and could miss events due to offender or victim/survivor migration if using a geographically-limited data source (e.g., Lyons et al., 2019). Finally, prosecution, revictimization, and reoffending are more challenging to link back to law enforcement activities, as there are numerous other factors involved in these outcomes.

SUMMARY TABLE: CASE OUTCOMES AND RECIDIVISM

Sub-concepts	Measures	Indicators	Data Sources			
Case clearance/attrition	Investigation	Sexual assault kit submission	Case Files Crime Lab Data			
		Case founded	Case Files			
		Suspect(s) identified	Case Files			
		Expired statute of limitations	Interviews			
		Suspect(s) charged	Surveys			
	Arrest	Suspect(s) arrested		Case Files National Incident-Based Reporting System Data Notice to Appear Data Interviews		
			Victim/survivor refusal to cooperate	Case Files National Incident-Based Reporting System Data Interviews		
				Prosecution	Referral for prosecution	Case Files SANE Program Records
					Suspect(s) charged	Case Files
		Prosecutorial declination to prosecute	National Incident-Based Reporting System Data Case Files Interviews SANE Program Records			
			Case accepted for prosecution		Case Files Interviews	
	Guilty verdict				Case Files SANE Program Records	
		Charges dismissed	Case Files SANE Program Records			
	Acquittal		Case Files SANE Program Records			
		Jail time				
	Revictimization	Subsequent violence for victims			National Crime Victimization Survey Data Interviews	
			Subsequent victim/survivor injury	Emergency Department Visits		
		Reoffending	Subsequent police incidents		Case Files Civil Protection Order Data Calls to Police	
				Subsequent arrest	Criminal History Records	

Victim/Survivor-Focused Outcomes

A number of studies in this review attempted to measure the impact of law enforcement responses to sexual and domestic violence on victims/survivors. Some have also used measures to capture how victims' beliefs about and experiences with law enforcement affected reporting and participation in the overall criminal justice process or could affect these behaviors and actions in the future.

Victim/survivor outcomes were conceptualized in three overlapping categories:

- Victim/survivor trust in and satisfaction with their experiences with law enforcement;
- Victim/survivor reporting and participation in the criminal justice process; and
- Victim/survivor safety and well-being.

As in other areas of this review, these concepts are often not mutually exclusive and are difficult to separate out at times.

Victim/survivor satisfaction with experience and trust in law enforcement

While the criminal justice response to VAWA crimes has conventionally been assessed using measures such as arrest rates and prosecution outcomes, procedural justice is an increasingly recognized goal of the criminal justice response to sexual and domestic violence. Procedural justice is defined as a perception of fairness and equity in the criminal justice and judicial processes for both the victim/survivor and the defendant, regardless of case outcome (Jonathan-Zamir et al., 2015; Tyler, 1988, 1989, 2003). Some research has shown that experiencing procedural justice can reduce victims' emotional distress following contact with the criminal justice system (Barkworth & Murphy, 2016).

Another study showed that procedural justice may be even more important to victims than case outcomes (Anderson, 2015). For their study, Barkworth and Murphy (2016) developed a scale to measure procedural justice as indicated by victims' perceptions regarding their treatment by police, their emotional responses to this treatment, their quality of life in relation to fear, and their experiences of social inclusion (this study was not specific to survivors of SA/DV). Another study utilized a similar scale that measured police treatment and psychological responses, but also included measures of "voice" operationalized in the questions "to what extent were you able to express your feelings to legal personnel during the process?" and "to what extent were your views considered during the process?" (Laxminarayan, 2012). Other research has attempted to measure the impact of law enforcement involvement on victims'/survivors' experiences but have not necessarily deployed the concept of procedural justice to do so. These studies are described below.

While capturing the experiences of victims presents logistical challenges and raises concerns about safety and confidentiality, one direct way to measure victim/survivor satisfaction with law enforcement is to ask victims about their experiences. For example, the Sexual Assault Services Evaluation Survey-Survivor (SASES-S) tool was developed to gather victims' views on various service providers, including patrol officers and detectives. The tool includes measures of four dimensions of treatment: respectful treatment ("treated me with respect"), explanation of procedures ("clearly explained what they were doing"), belief in account ("believed what I said about the assault"), and cultural sensitivity ("sensitive to my cultural background"). It also captures differences based on race, although the sample used in the study for which the tool was developed skewed heavily White, and all non-White groups were aggregated (Henninger et al., 2019).

In another study that attempted to measure variation in the experiences of different groups of victims when they sought help from the police, Ammar and colleagues (2013) surveyed Muslim and non-Muslim women who had experienced intimate partner violence. Their survey included questions pertaining to the level of control victims felt in their interaction with law enforcement, whether they encountered barriers such as lack of interpretation, and whether the police asked the batterer to leave.

In another study, which analyzed data from the 2017 Survey of Police–Public Encounters II, Fedina et al. (2019) measured perceived police legitimacy and trust using seven items adapted from prior research.

Using a Likert scale, respondents provided their perspectives on the following statements:

- “I have confidence in the police”;
- “Police do their job well”;
- “I have great respect for the police”;
- “Calling the police will make a situation better rather than worse”;
- “Police officers will treat me fairly if I need to report a crime”;
- “I trust the good intentions of police officers working in my neighborhood”; and
- “I can report crimes to the police without putting myself in danger of arrest or police harassment.”

Participants were also asked specifically about their perceptions of police responses to IPV, ranking police behavior/actions on timeliness, feeling heard, experiencing empathy and support versus dismissiveness, experiencing verbal or physical aggressiveness, and experiencing blame or respect. The authors tested internal consistency and reliability and found them to be excellent in the first set of measures and acceptable in the measures pertaining to IPV response. They also included important control variables such as age, gender (male or female), race/ethnicity (non-Hispanic/Latino white, non-Hispanic/Latino black or African–American, Hispanic/Latino and non-Hispanic/Latino other (i.e. Asian–American, American–Indian/Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian), sexual orientation (lesbian/gay/bisexual or heterosexual), annual household income, and education level.

The National Domestic Violence Hotline survey also measured satisfaction with police response by asking survivors questions regarding whether they felt safer after they called law enforcement. This survey also queried survivors on whether they were likely to call the police in the future. Importantly, the survey sample included those who had never called the police and collected data on what barriers existed for these survivors in seeking help from law enforcement (Logan & Valente, 2015). Carbone-Lopez (2016) surveyed another group of often-hidden survivors, incarcerated women, to examine their level of satisfaction post-reporting. Satisfaction was measured on a Likert scale (“not at all satisfied” to “very

satisfied”) and analyzed in relation to the survivors’ own criminal history as well as other contextual factors. Respondents were asked an open-ended follow-up question that allowed them to explain why they were or were not satisfied. Another study measured the perceived helpfulness of a police response to intimate partner violence for a gay/bisexual male victim/survivor using a hypothetical scenario presented in a survey. The survey collected data on age, race/ethnicity, education, sexual orientation, employment status, recent experiences of physical, emotional, and sexual IPV, internalized homophobia, and experiences of homophobic discrimination (Finneran & Stephenson, 2013).

More in-depth qualitative data on victim/survivor satisfaction can be gathered using interviews, rather than surveys. Stover and colleagues (2010) conducted baseline interviews and two follow-up interviews with intervention and non-intervention samples in their study. Interview data were coded for measures of victim/survivor satisfaction, including victims’/survivors’ perceptions of police helpfulness and respect, positive interaction, feelings of safety, and the likelihood that the victim/survivor would call the police in the future. Several other studies similarly measured victim/survivor satisfaction using interview data, and included questions regarding the victims’/survivors’ subsequent decisions to participate in the criminal justice process and case outcomes. Two of these studies used samples of victims/survivors who had presented to SANE programs; one with adolescent sexual assault victims/survivors (Greeson et al., 2014) and the other with adult victims/survivors who had received SANE exams in one county during a specific time period (Patterson, 2011). Another analyzed interview data from women who had been court-mandated to attend IPV education groups at a DV shelter (Li et al., 2015). While in this study, the authors used grounded theory to analyze the qualitative data and did not start with measures, themes arose pertaining to future use of police and lack of trust in law enforcement. A similar study utilized in-depth interviews with a sample of primarily Black women who attended an IPV support group, which included questions regarding whether they called the police, filed charges, and sought a temporary protection order. The authors also asked about barriers; whether the experience was satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or neutral; the negative consequences of help-seeking (arrest); and would the victim/survivor call police again in a similar situation (Burgess-Proctor, 2012).

A less direct method for measuring victim/survivor satisfaction with law enforcement, but one that can afford a larger sample and perhaps use fewer resources, involves the use of official administrative records. For example, Cerulli and colleagues (2015) attempted to measure each victim’s/survivor’s satisfaction with her police interaction by whether she sought help from the criminal justice system a second time, according to court records. The authors analyzed the results in relation to whether the prosecutor adhered to the victims’/survivors’ wishes after the first violence intervention.

Campbell et al. (2018) used investigator notes to assess the level of trust victims/survivors had in law enforcement, as indicated by whether they re-engaged with the criminal justice system following notification using a victim-centered, trauma-informed sexual assault kit testing notification protocol. The authors also used investigator notes (from the investigator who made the notification) regarding the victims’/survivors’ emotional reactions to supplement their assessment. Similarly, Greene (2012) relied on the perceptions of DV advocates and police officers gathered through interviews regarding victims’/survivors’ relationship with the police, following a domestic violence home visiting program.

Victim/survivor reporting and participation in the criminal justice process

Despite the high prevalence of sexual and domestic violence, reporting rates remain low for these crimes and victim/survivor participation in full criminal justice processes is inconsistent at best, particularly for sexual assault (Lonsway & Archambault, 2012). For this reason, many studies have attempted to measure the law enforcement related factors that impact reporting and participation in criminal justice processes. Measures of victim/survivor reporting to police and participation in the criminal justice process often take on meaning based on the independent and control variables that are measured alongside them. For example, research has shown that reporting varies based on race, ethnicity, immigration status, disability status, and age of the victim/survivor (Bridges et al., 2018; Crowe, 2017; Zadnik et al., 2016).

Whether victim/survivor reported

Researchers have largely used qualitative data to understand not just whether, but why victims choose to report or not report. As discussed above, Ammar and colleagues (2013) sought to understand reasons for not calling the police in their survey of Muslim and non-Muslim women. Using data from the NCVS Supplemental Victimization Survey (Stalking Supplement), Reyns and Englebrect (2010) measured whether stalking victims reported their victimization in relation to offense seriousness, relationship to offender, and prior criminal record of the offender, controlling for age, gender, race (white/non-white), fear (how the behavior made the victim/survivor feel), and whether the victim/survivor considered the behavior stalking. Cho et al. (2020) also used survey data (NISVS) to assess formal help-seeking with the criminal justice system or the medical system depending on victim/survivor characteristics, patterns of victimization, and demographic factors, including immigration status. The NISVS asked respondents to indicate whether they had sought help and to describe what form of help they sought. Cho and colleagues analyzed this data to distinguish between two types of help-seeking: formal (police and medical) and informal (friend, family, and romantic/sexual partner other than the perpetrator). Of note, the authors dichotomized the dependent variable into those seeking formal and informal help, and those seeking informal help only, since “survivors who sought formal help almost always used informal help as well” (Cho et al., 2020).

Given the high prevalence of sexual assault on college campuses, several studies have looked at factors that influence reporting in the college and university context. Using national survey data, Spohn, Bjornsen, and Wright (2017) compared the likelihood of reporting sexual assault for college and non-college women. The survey collected data on age, ethnicity, race (white/non-white), marriage status, education level, and household income (or parents’ or primary guardians’ income, if in college). Perception of the incident (coded as rape or not a rape/unsure) was also measured in this study. Similarly, in a large survey of historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), a population not frequently studied, Lindquist et al.

(2016) measured reporting behaviors of women who had experienced sexual assault. The students were asked about whether they reported to the incident to police, the reasons for the actions they took, and whether they were satisfied with the response.

Other studies have measured reporting behaviors in relation to perceived police legitimacy and trust (for example, using the 2017 Survey of Police–Public Encounters II; Fedina et al., 2019); responses received from informal and community supports (using a social reactions questionnaire at multiple points across time; DePrince et al., 2020); the number of law enforcement officers per 1000 residents (using census and NCVS data; Augustyn & Willyard, 2020); the ratio of female police officers, number of intimate partner homicides per population, and whether an affirmative action policy is in place in the law enforcement agency (using NCVS, UCR, and LEOKA data; Miller & Segal, 2019). The likelihood that a victim/survivor will report to police in the future has also been measured using victim/survivor surveys (Logan & Valente, 2015) and interviews (Burgess-Proctor, 2012; Stover et al., 2010). As described above, likelihood of reporting in the future has also been used as a proxy measure for victim/survivor satisfaction.

Participation with the criminal justice system

Other forms of participation with the criminal justice system have also been measured. For example, one study looked at the decision to apply for an order of protection, and whether victims/survivors found them helpful or unhelpful, as indicated in a survey of African American women (Weisz & Schell, 2019). Using interviews with victims/survivors, Patterson and Campbell (2010) analyzed not only factors influencing victims'/survivors' decisions to report, but also their decisions to stay engaged with the criminal justice process in the context of other kinds of support they may have received from SANEs and advocates, for instance. Further, Patterson (2011) used grounded theory to analyze data from interviews conducted with victims/survivors who had reported sexual assaults to law enforcement and who received SANE exams. The author specifically examined variations in victims'/survivors' participation in prosecution between victims/survivors who reported experiencing secondary victimization by detectives and victims/survivors who reported experiencing compassionate treatment. In addition, as mentioned above, Campbell and colleagues (2018) analyzed victims'/survivors' willingness to pursue prosecution after being notified of the results of sexual assault kit testing, as indicated in investigators' notes.

Three other studies in this review also examined victims'/survivors' decisions to participate in the criminal justice process by relying on the perspective of law enforcement via case files. Using both quantitative and qualitative data from the Los Angeles Police Department and Sheriff's Department, O'Neal (2017) examined how law enforcement perceptions and practices influenced victims'/survivors' decisions to stop participating in the investigation of their cases. The measurement of contextual factors in these cases, such as suspect-victim relationship, were particularly important given that this study analyzed cases of intimate partner sexual assault (IPSA), which may be treated differently by police than sexual assault involving other victim-suspect relationships.

Another study supplemented the LA case file data with detective interview data using focal concerns analysis to analyze victims'/survivors' decisions to participate at the reporting, investigation, and arrest phases (Kaiser et al., 2017). Kaiser and colleagues included multiple categories of independent variables: “suspect dangerousness/seriousness of offense,” “costs of cooperation,” and “likelihood of conviction”; and used victim/suspect demographics as control variables in their analysis. Each of the independent variable categories was captured using multiple measures. The category the authors called suspect dangerousness/seriousness of offense was intentionally measured from the victim’s perspective, since decisions to participate are shaped by victims’ viewpoints. Measures used included type of assault, victim injuries, number of different types of injuries (since a comparison of severity is not possible when the measure only captures the type and not the diversity of types in each victim), weapon used, threat made, whether there was more than one victim, and whether there was more than one suspect. The costs of cooperation category was conceptualized as both tangible costs (with number of victim interviews used as a proxy measure for time cost to victim and the trauma of retelling multiple times) and intangible costs.

The authors attempted to capture the intangible costs via a number of measures including:

- “victim credibility questioned,” indicated by evidence in case files that the investigating officer explicitly questioned the credibility of the victim,
- “victim risk-taking” at the time of the assault,
- “victim character issues” (including victim past pattern of drug use, victim past pattern of alcohol use, victim is a prostitute, victim has mental health issues, and victim had motive to lie), and
- victim-suspect relationship (since a victim’s financial dependence on her abuser may impact the likelihood that she would participate in an investigation) (Kaiser et al., 2017).

Finally, “likelihood of conviction” was indicated in this study by four variables: evidence strength, number of witnesses, whether the crime was reported by the victim or someone else, and victim physically or verbally resisted during the assault.

In a different vein, Murphy et al. (2014) conducted a content analysis of law enforcement incident reports where the officer reported that the victim/survivor chose to drop the case. These cases were analyzed to determine the reasons victims gave for choosing not to pursue charges. Importantly, this study measured law enforcement decision-making regarding what and how to record details of a case as much as it measured victims' decision-making about participation in the process.

An area of criminal justice system engagement that warrants further research and development of measures is the utilization of remedies tailored for immigrant and refugee victims. One recent study measured the impact of changing policies and practices regarding interior immigration enforcement on the filing of VAWA self-petitions by using United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) data on VAWA self-petitions over the 2000 to 2016 period (Amuedo-Dorantes & Arenas-Arroyo, 2020). While the VAWA self-petition does not require cooperation with law enforcement for eligibility, other remedies for victims of sexual and domestic violence do, such as the U Visa and T Visa. Further, the development of measures for assessing the utilization of these remedies has implications for law enforcement outcomes since, increasingly, local law enforcement has been asked to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement.

Victim/survivor safety and well-being

Most research on victim/survivor safety and well-being in the context of law enforcement interventions pertains to domestic violence or, more infrequently, stalking. This review only revealed one study that attempted to measure victim/survivor safety and/or well-being in the aftermath of sexual violence outside of intimate relationships in relation to law enforcement responses (Greeson et al., 2014).

This study was mentioned above in the discussion on Victim/survivor satisfaction since it relied on interview questions such as:

- “What was your experience with police like?”
- “What did the police do that was helpful?”
- “What do you wish had been different with the police?”

The authors coded responses and analyzed themes that arose pertaining to the impact of these experiences on the well-being of the adolescent victim-survivors. While other studies may also indicate impacts on sexual assault victim/survivor safety and well-being, this review did not find examples that utilized specific measures of these sub-concepts. The remaining studies in this section will examine measures of victim/survivor safety and well-being in the context of domestic violence.

Effectiveness of protection orders (POs) as measures of victim/survivor safety

In the context of DV, measures of victim safety and well-being post-law enforcement intervention have most frequently relied on measures such as revictimization, additional calls/reports to police, and additional arrests of offenders after the initial incident. For instance, two studies mentioned in the above section on Case Outcomes and Recidivism measured the effect of arrest on safety, as indicated by the likelihood that victims whose partners were arrested would be revictimized within a year of the first IPV incident (Cho & Wilke, 2010), or within three years of the initial violence (Xie & Lynch, 2016), in comparison with those whose partners were not arrested.

As mentioned in the section above on Coordination and Cooperation, in a randomized, longitudinal study of a coordinated response to IPV, DePrince et al. (2011) also measured victim safety by capturing the occurrence of further violence in the year following the initial incident, as indicated by victim interview data. Like Xie and Lynch (2016), DePrince et al. were able to distinguish between continued violence by the same partner and violence committed by a new partner. The authors also measured PTSD and depression symptom severity, as well as fear, pointing toward the broader concept of well-being, as opposed to simply the absence of violence. Critically, in this study, DePrince et al. considered how socioeconomic status, perceptions of dependence on the offender, and ethnicity impacted the outcomes they measured.

Revictimization and additional reports and arrests have been used to measure the effectiveness of protection orders, as have case outcomes, all gathered from administrative data (Kothari et al., 2012). As mentioned above, there has also been some research using survey data on victims' perceptions of PO effectiveness and their likelihood to seek them out as a remedy in order to seek safety from intimate partner violence (Weisz & Schell, 2019). Brame et al. (2015) notes that some earlier studies on PO effectiveness neglected to account for variations in enforcement and other contextual issues, largely relied on non-experimental designs, and revealed mixed findings. While the experimental design used by Brame et al. may offer improvements on earlier, less rigorous measures of PO/NCO effectiveness, as mentioned above, a recent systematic review and meta-analysis concluded that there is no consensus on the best methodology for measuring the effectiveness of protection orders (Cordier et al., 2019).

Perceptions of safety and well-being & effectiveness of risk assessment tools

A fundamental indicator of the success of police intervention in intimate partner violence is victims'/survivors' perception of their own safety and well-being. Several studies which have used various methods to measure these perceptions are outlined below. Further, in order to assist law enforcement and other service providers in preventing future violence, victims have been asked to assess the risk that they will be harmed or killed by the same offender in the future. Some research has shown that, for various important contextual reasons, such as substance abuse, PTSD, depression, and fear, victims/survivors may be unable to accurately predict future violence in many cases (Kebbell, 2019). In addition, law enforcement officers have historically relied on their own individual judgment to assess risk in intimate partner violence situations, and have determined responses based on that assessment. Research has shown that such judgments are often inaccurate and may be skewed by bias; therefore, numerous risk assessment tools that rely on standardized scales, rather than the victim's/survivor's or police officer's perceptions of risk, have been developed, some of which will be discussed below (Spivak, 2020).

Using interviews and surveys, some studies have directly asked victims whether they felt safe in relation to their partner or former partner after law enforcement had been notified. For instance, a 2012 study by Dichter and Gelles asked women who had experienced IPV to indicate their responses, using a Likert scale, to the questions: "How safe do you feel currently?" "How safe do you feel around your partner/former partner?" "How likely do you think you are to be victimized again?" It is worth noting that this study also measured various forms of social support available to the victim/survivor. These questions target respondents' subjective perceptions of safety and risk, which may differ from their actual risk exposure. As well, the authors used an existing scale, the Women's Experience with Battering Scale (WEBS), to measure entrapment and battering, and used the Danger Assessment (described below) to measure safety (Dichter & Gelles, 2012).

Scales such as the post-traumatic stress diagnostic scale and the Beck depression inventory have also been utilized by researchers to measure victims'/survivors' psychological responses after calling the police for assistance (DePrince et al., 2011; Messing et al., 2016). DePrince and colleagues (2011) measured psychological outcomes, as well as the victims'/survivors' readiness to leave their abusive partner. Victims/survivors were asked questions such as: "Are you currently in a relationship with the offender?" "If not, have you been out of the relationship for over 6 months?" "Are you thinking about leaving the relationship sometime in the next 6 months?" "Are you planning to leave the relationship in the next 30 days?" "Have you left the relationship or tried to leave sometime in the past year?" (DePrince et al., 2011).

Several of the studies mentioned in previous sections of this review, which measure victim/survivor satisfaction with police and/or likelihood to report to the police again, also consider victims'/survivors' sense of safety post-intervention as indicated by victims/survivors themselves and by service providers (Greene, 2012; Logan & Lynch, 2015; Stover et al., 2010; Weisz & Schell, 2019). In addition, Lynch and Logan (2020) measured victim/survivor safety as indicated by victim service and criminal justice professionals' perceptions of risk of homicide and perceived barriers to gun confiscation.

In recent decades, evidence-based risk and lethality assessments have increasingly been recommended as best practice, and used (and even mandated) in law enforcement agencies across the country and globally. As these tools have proliferated, researchers have attempted to measure multiple aspects of their effectiveness in various settings. To this end, Graham et al. (2019) performed a systematic review of studies which assessed the validity and reliability of 18 different intimate partner homicide (IPH) and intimate partner violence (IPV) reassault risk assessment tools, including the Lethality Screen, Danger Assessment, Ontario Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (ODARA), and Brief Spousal Assault Form for the Evaluation of Risk (B-SAFER), among others (not all of which are intended to be used by law enforcement). The location and administration of the tools were also considered since the review was international in scope and the studies varied as to who administered the instruments: researchers, law enforcement, social workers, or health/mental health professionals (Graham et al., 2019). Some research has focused specifically on risk assessment tools used by law enforcement, namely ODARA and B-SAFER (Kebbell, 2019), and the Danger Assessment for Law Enforcement (DA-LE) (Messing et al., 2020). While these studies offer mixed results regarding the reliability and validity of the various risk assessment tools, Graham and colleagues conclude that ultimately practitioners who wish to use one of them in the field must consider a range of factors which “can broadly be understood as the fit between the context in which the instrument has been developed and tested and the context in which the practitioner wishes to use the instrument” (2019, p. 19). To this end, the authors note the need for more research across diverse samples and settings to more effectively assess the validity and reliability, as well as the feasibility of these tools in practice (Graham et al., 2019).

Multiple studies have attempted to measure the broad effectiveness of the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), a widely used collaborative risk assessment tool developed by the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence (Messing et al., 2014; Koppa, 2018). Some research has also explored differences in the tool's impact based on how it was implemented by law enforcement and other factors. For instance, Messing et al. (2016) measured the differential use of the screen by law enforcement officers depending on individual, jurisdictional, and incident characteristics, as indicated in interviews with victims. Koppa (2018) explored the variation when jurisdictions adopted the LAP to determine the effects of the tool on domestic violence homicide reduction. More recently, Richards and colleagues (2019) sought to assess the impact of the LAP on victims' self-protective actions, service utilization, and empowerment using a survey that incorporated various existing scales, such as the Revised Conflict Tactics Scale and the Personal Progress Scale-Revised, which have been shown to have high levels of reliability and validity (Johnson et al., 2005; Straus et al., 1996).

Strengths/Weaknesses

Some of the challenges of measuring victim-related outcomes arise due to the difficulty of collecting data on victims/survivors and have been outlined above. Generally, concerns about confidentiality and safety present challenges for the collection of data directly from victims/survivors. In addition, a bias toward those who reported may skew the measure of outcomes since it is difficult to capture those who encounter barriers to engagement with the criminal justice system. Furthermore, as mentioned above, a bias toward those who report may equate to an over-representation in the data of white, non-immigrant, English-speaking victims/survivors. Finally, collecting data from survivors in the midst of traumatic experiences, particularly if this collection is done by law enforcement rather than other service providers, is inherently challenging, especially when the victim/survivor does not trust the police and/or has had previous negative experiences with law enforcement and the broader criminal justice system (Brame et al., 2015; Messing et al., 2011).

For the reasons cited above, measures that rely on law enforcement perceptions of victim satisfaction, safety, and trust may be inaccurate based on the biases of those practitioners, as well as desires to present their intervention as effective. This may also be a shortcoming of measures that rely on advocates' perceptions. These concerns may be mitigated by measures based on the perspectives of victims/survivors themselves; however, since so many of these measures take on their most important meanings when explored in relation to independent and control variables (e.g., race of the victim/suspect), the fact that these variables are not measured well or consistently weakens the conclusions that can be drawn from these data. For instance, race is often captured as white or non-white due to small sample sizes and lack of effort to study populations of color. This lack of specificity dilutes the accuracy of outcome measures.

Measures of victim safety and well-being that rely on proxies such as re-victimization, re-arrest, and further calls to police often have weaknesses in terms of their inability to capture important contextual factors (e.g., was further violence committed by the same person or a different person?). In addition, causality is generally difficult to determine when attempting to measure the impacts of law enforcement interventions on sexual and domestic violence victims'/survivors' satisfaction, participation, and safety due to the many interlinked factors that contribute to these outcomes. That said, some promising tools have recently been developed that measure trust/legitimacy and satisfaction, and if tested widely, they could be reliable instruments for assessing law enforcement-related outcomes (Fedina et al., 2019; Henninger et al., 2019). Additional replicable instruments may be available, but not all researchers choose to include them in their published results, which may make it more challenging for others in the field to consider their

feasibility. This literature review compiles a set of measures that have previously been used to assess outcomes pertaining to law enforcement responses to sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking. The review also weighs the strengths and weaknesses of these measures and considerations for data collection methods. Reviewing measures related to law enforcement knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs; coordination and cooperation among multidisciplinary teams; case outcomes and recidivism; and victim-focused outcomes is an important first step towards identifying and refining outcomes and measures for OVW and toward determining the feasibility of grantees collecting such measures.

Based on this review alone, and not within the context of the other considerations and efforts of the project, it is clear that measures that rely on either administrative data or qualitative, self-report data alone have considerable weaknesses. Examples of these weaknesses include the lack of standardization of data systems across agencies and jurisdictions, and the presence of bias in police reports and self-report survey data from both victims/survivors and service providers. Measuring the outcomes of police responses to SA, DV, and stalking using a diversity of measures would allow OVW and grantees to more accurately evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions. Furthermore, funding for additional efforts to standardize and validate measurement tools should be made available to researchers and practitioners, with particular vigilance paid to blind-spots pertaining to gender (e.g., surveys catering solely to heterosexual women) and cultural specificity (e.g., instruments in languages other than English). Finally, while the collection of data from victims/survivors themselves is challenging, it is critical to the effective measurement of law enforcement responses, to SA, DV, and stalking. For this reason, further collaboration between researchers and practitioners – including law enforcement, SANEs, advocates, and others in the field – should be harnessed to continue developing creative, respectful, and confidential ways of registering victims'/survivors' experiences.

SUMMARY TABLE: VICTIM/SURVIVOR-FOCUSED OUTCOMES

Sub-concepts	Measures	Indicators	Data Sources
Safety and well-being	Victim safety	Calls to police	Survey (victims)
		Perceived safety	Interviews/surveys
		Perceived effectiveness of gun confiscation	Interviews
	Revictimization	Rearrest of offender	NCS/NCVS
		Victim report of further violence	NCS/NCVS
		Time to repeat IPV victimization	NCVS (area-identified)
	Effects of risk assessment tools (LAPs, etc.)	Did LE complete screen?	Semi-structured interviews with victims
		Responses to Women’s Experience with Battering Scale (WEBS)	Survey/scale
		Use of Danger Assessment	Survey/scale
		LE use of LAP (in relation to individual/jurisdictional/incident characteristics)	Interviews w/ victims/survivors
		Victims’ use of self-protective actions, service utilization, and empowerment (post-LAP use)	Survey
	Effectiveness of POs	Violation rates/recidivism	Administrative data
		Victim perceptions of effectiveness/safety	Interviews/surveys
		Subsequent reporting	Administrative data
		Violence-related arrests	Administrative data
		Violence occurring before and after PO	Interviews/surveys
		Case outcomes	Administrative data
		Victim IPV-related injury post-PO	Interviews/surveys
		Knowledge of PO	Interviews/surveys
Victim/survivor contact with offender		Interviews/surveys	
Psychological responses to IPV/PTSD	Post-traumatic stress diagnostic scale, Beck depression inventory	Survey/scale, interview	
Victims’/survivors’ readiness to leave abusive partner	Victim responses to questions pertaining to thoughts about and plans for leaving	Interview	
Satisfaction with experiences & Trust in law enforcement	Victim satisfaction	Victim called police second time	Court records
		Victim perceived that they were treated with respect	Sexual Assault Services Evaluation Survey - Survivor (SASES-S); interviews
		Victim perceived that their account of SA was believed	Sexual Assault Services Evaluation Survey - Survivor (SASES-S)
		Cultural sensitivity	Sexual Assault Services Evaluation Survey - Survivor (SASES-S)
		Victim perceived that procedures were explained clearly	Sexual Assault Services Evaluation Survey - Survivor (SASES-S)

Sub-concepts	Measures	Indicators	Data Sources
Satisfaction with experiences & Trust in law enforcement	Victim satisfaction	Victim perception of safety after calling LE	Survey; interviews
		Likelihood to call police again in the future	Survey, interview
		Level of control victims felt in police interaction	Survey
		Perceived helpfulness of police	Survey (hypothetical scenario responses)
	Presence of procedural justice	Victims' perception of treatment by police and emotional/psychological responses to this treatment	Survey
	Trust in police	Would report in the future	Victim interviews
		Victim responses to questions pertaining to confidence and trust in police	2017 Survey of Police-Public Encounters II
	Relationships to LE	Victim appraisal of relationships to police	Victim interviews
		LE & advocate appraisal of victims' relationship to LE	LE & advocate interviews
	Victim re-engagement with CJ system post-SAK testing result notification (victim-centered, trauma-informed)	Whether prosecution pursued by victim/survivor	Investigator notes
Victim reporting to LE & Participation in CJ process	Whether reported	By victim or third party	Survey data
		Impacted by support for mandatory arrest laws; presence of children in the home; drug use by perpetrator; seriousness of violence; prior record of offender; relationship to offender;	Interviews
	Willingness to pursue prosecution at time of notification re SAK (victim-centered, trauma-informed)	Whether prosecution pursued by victim/survivor	Investigator notes
	Likelihood to report to police	Responses to survey (college students)	Survey with 4 scenarios
	Victim participation	Participation at various stages of process (time of reporting, during initial investigation, at time of arrest (analyzed in relation to suspect dangerousness/seriousness of offense, costs of cooperation, likelihood of conviction, and victim/suspect demos)	Police records/interviews
		Exceptionally cleared due to victim refused to cooperate (controls: victim/offender demos, relationship, case characteristics)	Case files
		Police reporting practices - how often LEO reported that victim chose not to pursue case; reasons included or not	Police reports
		Reasons given for not pursuing charges	Police reports
		Decision to pursue PO	Survey
		Use of VAWA self-petition (as related to changing immigration policies and enforcement practices)	USCIS data

Conclusion

- This literature review compiles a set of measures that have previously been used to assess outcomes pertaining to law enforcement responses to sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking. The review also weighs the strengths and weaknesses of these measures and considerations for data collection methods. Reviewing measures related to law enforcement knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs; coordination and cooperation among multidisciplinary teams; case outcomes and recidivism; and victim-focused outcomes is an important first step towards identifying and refining outcomes and measures for OVW and toward determining the feasibility of grantees collecting such measures.
- Based on this review alone, and not within the context of the other considerations and efforts of the project, it is clear that measures that rely on either administrative data or qualitative, self-report data alone have considerable weaknesses. Examples of these weaknesses include the lack of standardization of data systems across agencies and jurisdictions, and the presence of bias in police reports and self-report survey data from both victims/survivors and service providers.
- Measuring the outcomes of police responses to SA, DV, and stalking using a diversity of measures would allow OVW and grantees to more accurately evaluate the effectiveness of those interventions. Furthermore, funding for additional efforts to standardize and validate measurement tools should be made available to researchers and practitioners, with particular vigilance paid to blind-spots pertaining to gender (e.g., surveys catering solely to heterosexual women) and cultural specificity (e.g., instruments in languages other than English).
- Finally, while the collection of data from victims/survivors themselves is challenging, it is critical to the effective measurement of law enforcement responses, to SA, DV, and stalking. For this reason, further collaboration between researchers and practitioners – including law enforcement, SANEs, advocates, and others in the field – should be harnessed to continue developing creative, respectful, and confidential ways of registering victims’/survivors’ experiences.

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