

The Nature of Sexual Violence: The Criminological Concept of Victimisation

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to determine the conditions for the formation of victimisation and identify the features of the development of sexual perversions of an individual. The theoretical and methodological basis of the study was based on a qualitative combination of methods of structural and functional analysis of the causes of sexual pathologies in the human psyche and an analytical examination of the problem of restoring the mental state of people affected by sexual violence. The data obtained also identify the specific features of countering the consequences of sexual offences, in particular, approaches to supporting victims at the legal, psychological, medical, and socio-economic levels. In the course of the study, a psychological experiment was conducted, which allowed substantiating the relationship between a person's victimisation and their ability to socio-psychological adaptation in society after a trauma.

Keywords: Sexual Integrity; Rape; Psychopathology; Crime Prevention; Emotional Instability.

Introduction

Psychoemotional stability of the individual is an important condition for an effective life in society. Crisis events that occur with a person leave a negative imprint on the psyche. In addition, the consequences of the experienced stress associated with encroachment on the inviolability of the individual slows down all the processes of their social life, in particular, a person experiences a destruction of basic trust in themselves and other people. The combination of these aspects actualises the issues of countering crime and providing comprehensive assistance to affected individuals in restoring their psychological and physical stability. This also determines the relevance of the study on the nature of the occurrence of sexual deviations in humans and their consequences for potential victims.

Understanding the phenomenon of sexual nature, particularly its aggressive manifestation, puts forward requirements for finding effective ways to solve the problem socially and legally. Thus, the study of the essence of abnormal sexual behaviour allows developing ways to counteract it in the legal aspect. However, approaches to investigating this problem are implemented not only from the standpoint of legal regulation but also through the study of psychological

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prerequisites for the occurrence of sexual distortions in the human psyche. Investigating the development of behavioural deviations R.M. Andrusyshyn (2022) notes that in the process of sexual arousal, it is difficult for an individual to distinguish physiology from mental impulses, and their reaction precedes the simultaneous interaction of nerve endings, hormonal background, and emotional component. A similar opinion is held by A.V. Komyaga and V.M. Golovko (2022). Investigating ways to prevent behavioural deviations, the authors emphasise that high personal anxiety, aggression, and frustration substantially impact the formation of sexual pathologies. In particular, researchers note that the abuse experienced in early childhood is reflected in the puberty period by impulsivity and distrust and in adulthood by a violation of self-regulation and social maladaptation of the individual. Therewith, investigating the influence of the family on the development of victim behaviour N. Yatsuk and O. Govorukha (2022) note that the source of victimisation is authoritarian parenting approaches or the overprotection of parents, which eventually form a feeling of instability, anxiety and uncertainty in the child.

Investigating the features of victimisation of minors, I.V. Berdnik and K.A. Berebenets (2021) concluded that this behaviour is a product of the interiorisation of norms and rules defined by society. In addition, the authors note that a person's tendency to victim behaviour is formed in conditions of stereotypical attitudes of sacrifice (parents, environment) through awareness of their own inability to control the situation, which ultimately affects the development or change of personal qualities of an individual. Similar judgments can be traced in the papers of T.I. Titochka (2022), where the author states that the actualisation of victim behaviour occurs under the influence of situational factors. Investigating the problem of determinants of victimisation, the author notes that in certain conditions, a person can be an aggressive, proactive, passive, uncritical, or neutral victim. However, investigating the causes of sexual aggression S.T. Hales and T.A. Gannon (2022) note that the prerequisites for the occurrence of sexual crimes may be the observation of such actions in other people or the result of impunity for such behaviour in their own experience. Therewith, the suppression of sexual needs or the inability to fulfil them can also serve as determinants. Therewith, as noted by I. Marchetti (2023), deviations of sexual behaviour have a polymotivation structure and can be realised in the form of encroachment on the inviolability of another person or certain actions with elements of violence. Investigating the specific features of compulsive sexual behaviour, the author notes that the real motives for sexual aggression are based not so much on the sexual needs of the rapist but on their motives and a positive assessment of the implementation of violence (impunity) (Sinaj et al., 2022).

The main goal of the study is to define the key aspects of the formation of behavioural disorders of an individual, in particular, to identify the determinants of the development of victimisation of the individual. In addition, it was also important to identify ways to provide comprehensive assistance to victims of sexual violence in restoring their psychoemotional stability and adapting to the social environment after a crisis situation. The examination of the theoretical basis of the research problem allowed formulating a hypothesis:

H₀. Victimisation of victims of sexual violence affects their socio-psychological adaptation in society.

Materials and Methods

The empirical study was conducted with the assistance of the “Centre for providing assistance to victims of violence” (Centre for Assistance to Victims of Violence, 2023), which implements its activities under the Department of Social Policy in the city of Kharkiv. This centre provides assistance to citizens who have suffered as a result of sexual or domestic violence. In particular, the centre offers assistance to the population in the context of psychological and legal support and the provision of social services in accordance with state standards. A total of 118 women aged 18 to 47 took part in the study, including 52 women who applied for help in the last six months and 66 women who received support from the centre for more than six months. This led to the distribution of the sample into two subgroups with respondents who were victims of violence (52-VV, 66-VV). Notably, victims of sexual violence are not only women, but also men. However, no adult male representatives were sexually abused in this centre. This also affected the fact that only female adults were considered in the scientific study.

Before starting the study, organisational work was conducted with the administration of the institution and psychological workers. The survey was conducted on a voluntary basis, anonymously and online. The questionnaires “Methodology for investigating the tendency to victim behaviour” by O. Andronnikova (Kryzhanovska, 2020) and “Methods of diagnostics of socio-psychological adaptation” by K. Rogers and R. Diamond (Lemak & Petryshche, 2012) were used to determine the level of victimisation of victims and identify the features of their psyche to adapt to the conditions of society after experiencing sexual violence. In addition, with the assistance of the psychological staff of the centre, respondents were interviewed, which allowed determining their subjective assessment of the assistance received in this institution.

Technical devices (computer, tablet) were used to process and evaluate the results obtained, and the current interview was implemented due to the developed special forms. The hypothesis was tested using the statistical programme “SPSS v.

16.0”, which contributed to the determination of correlations between the results obtained based on the parametric criterion of K. Pearson.

Results

In Ukrainian society, the legal regulation of violent actions against sexual freedom and sexual inviolability of a person is regulated by the Criminal Codex of Ukraine (CCU) (2001). In particular, article 152 of the CCU describes the meaning of rape and provides for its punishment in accordance with the established circumstances (how, by whom, what, and the number of actions performed). Therewith, articles 153-155 of the CCU clarify the concepts of sexual violence, forced acts of sexual intercourse, and sexual acts against a child under the age of sixteen. In addition, these articles define the term of imprisonment of a criminal in accordance with the type of sexual offence committed. In addition, illegal actions, in particular, the commission of domestic violence and gender-based violence, are considered in article 173-2 of the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences (1984), which also defines the types of violence in marital relations and specifies the conditions for serving the offender’s sentence.

At the global level, the issue of regulating sexual crimes plays an important role in ensuring the freedom of citizens. Thus, the main legislative act in the world community is the Istanbul Convention, which states the procedure for determining criminal offences against the sexual integrity of a person and their sexual freedom (Details of Treaty No.210..., 2023). In particular, it provides for the identification of signs of deliberate violent acts against women, promotes the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, and provides for the development of comprehensive measures in the context of protecting and assisting victims of violence.

Modern research criminological features of victims of sexual crimes include a person (or group of people) who has suffered moral, physical, or material harm directly or indirectly (Page et al., 2022; Siria et al., 2020; Sumalla et al., 2023; Yu et al., 2022; Chopin et al., 2022; Mellink et al., 2022). In particular, victims of sexual crimes can be women and men. However, it is women who turn most for help. Certain social stereotypes about the physical superiority of men over women cause this. In addition, in the context of domestic violence, this problem is caused by the reluctance of men to apply for certain psychological or social reasons. Therefore, the concept of sexual violence against men appears contradictory in the perception of society regarding the gender role of men. It also leads to a low level of recognition of the problem when a man becomes a victim of sexual assault. Notably, for sexual crimes, in most cases, the victim is a random woman, the attack on whom is sudden, and after the crime is committed, the attacker tries to escape so that the victim does

not remember them. However, previous studies analysed show that rapists tend to attack women with whom they have previously established contact. This makes it easier for the abuser to commit sexual assault. In addition, sexual violence can also occur on the part of relatives, where the main factor is the helplessness of the victim. Therewith, the motives of sexual crimes are socio-psychological determinants, particularly motivation through interpersonal conflicts or sexual motivation, which appears as an intrapersonal conflict of the criminal (Abudaqa et al., 2021). In general, crimes against the sexual integrity of the individual pose a danger to their physical and mental activity. Therefore, consideration of the nature of sexual violence by victims plays an important role in determining the mechanisms for committing such crimes. Thus, the forensic characterisation of sexual violent acts involves not only the classification of crimes and ensuring punishment but also the disclosure of psychological characteristics of victims of violence, which determines the definition of the specific features of the formation of victimisation of victims.

Analysis of scientific sources on the problem of sexual violence indicates that the formation of victimisation is preceded by psychological trauma that a person experienced in childhood (Persson & Dhingra, 2022; Kazmi et al., 2023). Thus, researchers note that abuse of a child and sexual violence produce a subconscious desire to reproduce the experience gained in adult life. This is due to the lack of knowledge of other behaviours. Thus, the consequences of experiencing violence in childhood are a tendency to imitate deviant and antisocial behaviour. Therewith, neglect and abuse lead to the formation of specific psychological traits in the child, where the ambivalence of their feelings, desires, and thoughts becomes the norm in accordance with the contradictory requirements of parents, and in puberty leads to the rejection of parental authority and the development of expansiveness and despondency in any positive intra-family relationships. The determinants of victimisation formation in conditions of disruption of parent-child relations are shown in more detail in Figure 1.

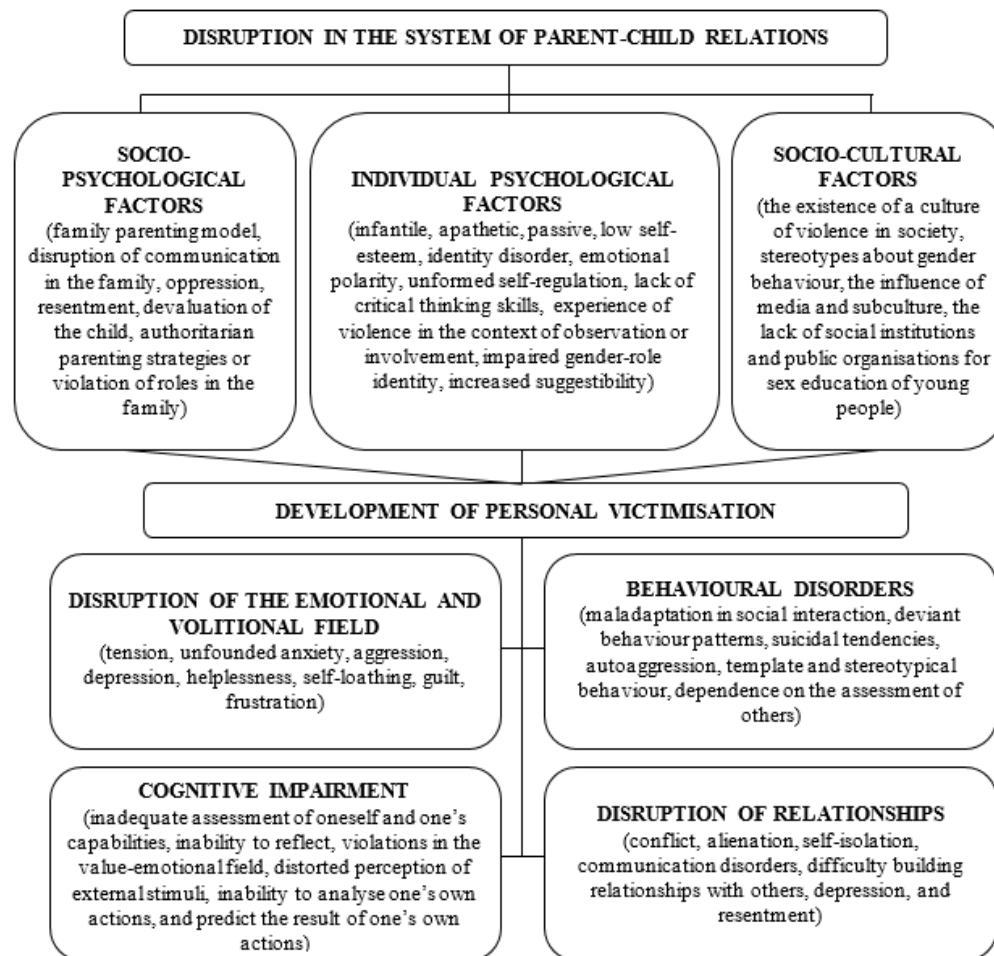


Figure 1 Model of the influence of destructive parent-child relations on the formation of victimisation of the individual

Source: compiled by the author based on (Hwang et al., 2023; Fang et al., 2022; Palacios et al., 2022; Agbaria & Mahamid, 2023)

Thus, the consequences of violence and aggressive attitude towards children in family relationships are a decrease in the ability of a person to control their own emotions and develop social contacts in the future. In addition, destructive relationships with the child affect the formation of a negative experience of interaction in family relationships, which also leads to behavioural disorders in relationships with loved ones.

The implementation of the empirical study was facilitated by the Centre for Assistance to Victims of Violence (2023) in the city of Kharkiv. In particular, the survey participants were women who had experienced sexual violence, including

domestic violence, which for some time was accompanied by physical, psychological, and economic harassment on the part of a partner. In general, the institution provides free psychological and legal assistance, and provides social services for people who find themselves in crisis situations. Involvement in the study was voluntary, and the empirical experiment was conducted based on respect for the dignity and honour of respondents. Organisational work with the administration of the institution contributed to productive interaction with social, psychological, and legal specialists of the institution. In particular, communication with respondents was conducted in the presence of psychological workers, and a preliminary consultation with them was preceded by an effective interview of victims. The study involved 118 women who receive comprehensive care at this Centre. The age of the surveyed women is from 18 to 47 years. The formation and distribution of the sample is determined by the duration of assistance provided to victims of violence. Thus, the first subgroup includes 52 respondents (victims of violence) who are supported by the Centre's specialists for less than six months (52 women), and the second subgroup consists of 66 respondents who visit this institution for more than six months (66 women). This distribution provided for determining the possible influence of the duration of complex (in particular, psychological) support on the indicators of a person's predisposition to victim behaviour and the socio-psychological possibilities of their adaptation to society after trauma.

Diagnosis of the level of victimisation of victims of sexual crimes was conducted using the "Methodology for investigating the propensity to victim behaviour" by O.O. Andronnikova (Kryzhanovska, 2020), which allowed classifying the behavioural reactions of victims after trauma. Notably, the tendency to such behaviour in this context is considered the probability of its implementation in life, and the analysis of research results is based on the level of their severity at the time of the survey in accordance with the author's interpretation. Indicators of respondents' propensity to preferred behaviours are clearly shown in Figures 2, 3.

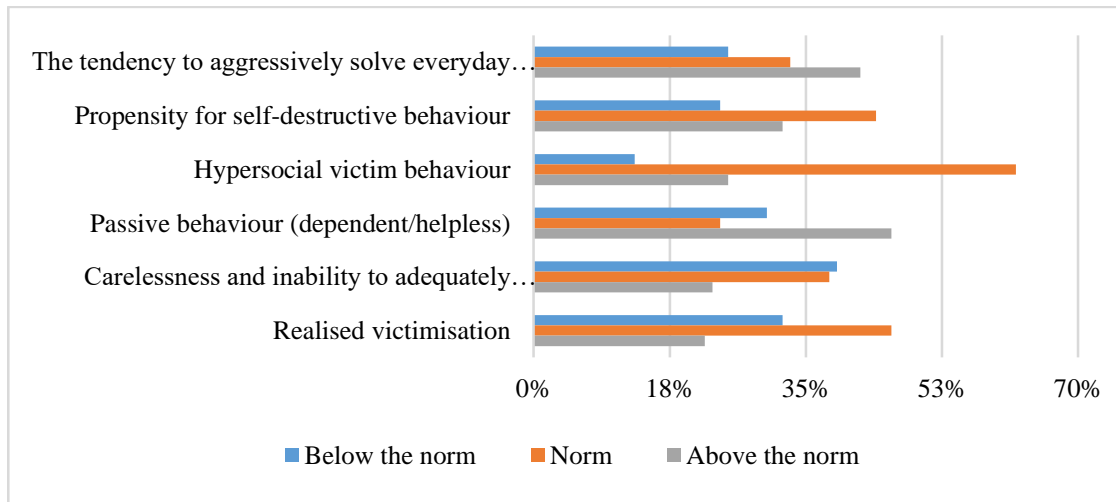


Figure 2 Analysis of the results of respondents' propensity to victim behaviour (52-VV group)

Source: compiled by the author.

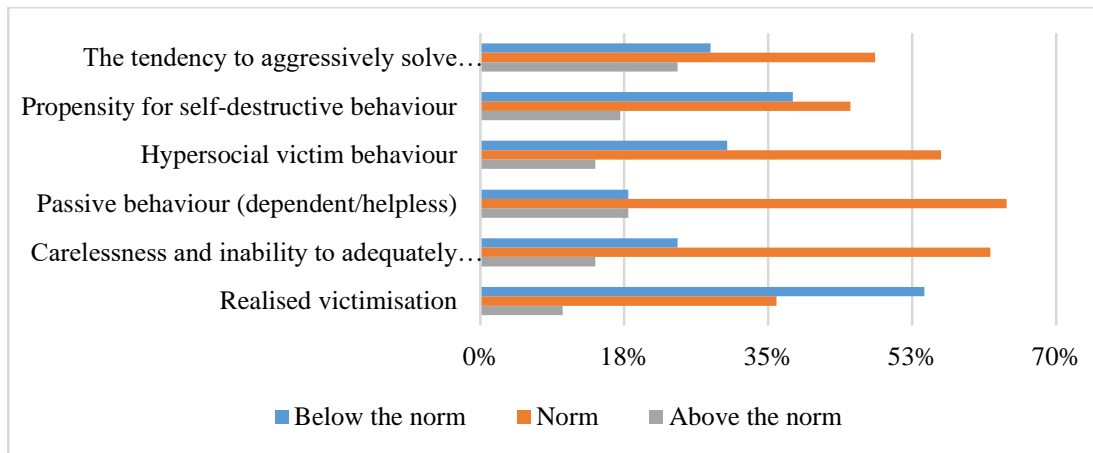


Figure 3 Analysis of the results of respondents' propensity to victim behaviour (66-VV group)

Source: compiled by the author.

As part of the study, it was important to establish the respondents' willingness to return to social activities after a trauma. Thus, the psychological ability of a person to adapt and adapt to changes is based on their internal ability to calculate and realise their own personal potential. Interaction with the environment and the formation of optimal relationships with people involves the processes and activities of an individual based on the satisfaction of social needs and the fulfilment of role

expectations (Serrano-Sánchez et al., 2022; Shebanina et al., 2022). The process of accepting reality is the internal consent of a person to accept their own responsibility, where the key aspect is realism in assessing their own qualities, capabilities, values, motives, and abilities. Thus, internal conflicts generate disagreement with themselves, and external conflicts reflect the rejection of the environment. Therewith, a person's emotional comfort in this context should be supported by confidence, comfort, and calmness, which implies free expression of their feelings, optimism of the person, and their satisfaction (Sinaj and Robert Dumi, 2015). Therewith, discomfort disrupts normal activities, causing the individual to feel anxious, depressed, and insecure. In addition, focusing on the internal locus of control allows a person to feel their worth and responsibility for realising themselves in society and rely on chance on the external one. Notably, a high concentration on the external locus of control precedes apathetic states and despair, where a person gains confidence in the loss of power over their life in general (Schalk et al., 2023).

A person's desire to control events and activities around them (prohibit, influence, command) indicates their desire to dominate. Sometimes this can lead to illusory power over others. However, more often, escapism as a human reaction occurs against the background of continuous stress (violence, oppression, crisis situations) (Gregory et al., 2022). The "methodology for diagnosing social and psychological adaptation" by K. Rogers and R. Diamond (Lemak & Petryshche, 2012) was used to determine the internal ability of respondents to overcome psychological trauma and adapt to new realities after experiencing sexual violence. The analysis of the results using this method is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Analysis of the results of indicators of socio-psychological adaptation of respondents

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Group</i>	Low level, %	Medium level, %	High level, %	Average indicator
<i>Adaptation</i>	52-VV	40	48	12	29.4
	66-VV	20	55	25	25.1
<i>Self-perception</i>	52-VV	70	22	8	30.7
	66-VV	24	50	26	24.8
<i>Accepting others</i>	52-VV	42	50	8	30.7
	66-VV	16	64	20	26.8
	52-VV	56	44	-	33.3

<i>Emotional comfort</i>	66-VV	30	55	15	28.4
<i>Internality</i>	52-VV	46	44	10	30.1
	66-VV	12	55	33	22.5
<i>Domination</i>	52-VV	43	38	19	27.1
	66-VV	23	66	11	29.7
<i>Sincerity scale</i>	52-VV	-	34	32	
	66-VV	-	66	68	

Source: compiled by the author.

The analysed results and the survey of respondents indicate that long-term psychological support contributed to improving the adaptive capabilities of affected women. Thus, for a 66-VV group, it is inherent to perceive their environment more openly, make decisions independently, and bear responsibility for these decisions accordingly. They feel more comfortable (emotionally) and more radical about change. Therewith, a distinctive feature of the 52-VV group is low self-control and reliance on chance, inadequate self-perception, emotional instability, isolation, and excessive conservatism.

As part of the study, it was important to test the formulated hypothesis about the impact of victimisation of victims of sexual violence on their ability to adapt to society after experiencing trauma. To test the hypothesis, a correlation analysis was performed, which was based on the use of the K. Pearson parametric criterion and was calculated in the statistical data processing programme "SPSS v. 16.0". The obtained correlation results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Correlation between the components of victimisation of respondents and their socio-psychological adaptation in society

	52-VV group (n=52, M=26.5, SD=4.6)	66-VV group (n=66, M=29.4, SD=6.6)
	Socio-psychological adaptation (M=26.2, SD=2.4)	Socio-psychological adaptation (M=30.2, SD=3.2)
<i>Aggressive</i>	0.164*	0.144*
<i>Self-destructive</i>	0.164*	0.182*
<i>Hypersocial</i>	0.42	0.34

<i>Dependent (helpless)</i>	0.126*	0.158*
<i>Uncritical</i>	0.14	0.24
<i>Realised victimisation</i>	0.74	0.022

Note: *n* – the number of respondents in the group; zeros in the values are omitted; * – the importance correlation at $p \leq 0.05$, where *p* – the importance level; *M* – mathematical expectation; *SD* – standard deviation.

Source: compiled by the author.

The results indicate a correlation between aggressive, self-destructive, hypersocial, and dependent behaviour of respondents and their socio-psychological adaptation. In particular, the values of aggressive and self-destructive victim behaviour indicate that in everyday life, respondents tend to feel threatened by others. In addition, it also indicates their inability to perceive external realities and interact productively in the social environment. These indicators may also indicate respondents' increased anxiety, concern based on distrust of others, and the fear of experiencing sexual violence again. This is also confirmed by the data of interviews with respondents, where, in addition to certain signs, they indicated insomnia, loss of motivation, lack of understanding in which direction to move, and how to get rid of memories of violence experienced. Correlations are also observed for the value of dependent behaviour, which reflects the inability to take responsibility for their own decisions in life and resist sexual harassment. In particular, respondents showed that the fear of being abandoned (in family relationships) and the fear of being left without a job (in professional relationships) contributed to the fact that they did not resist the sexual harassment of the aggressor. Therewith, victims of violence sought sympathy from their loved ones, but for a long time, they did not take any steps to confront the abuser (the role position of the victim) (Messina et al., 2023).

Notably, no statistically substantial relationships were established in terms of hypersocial and non-critical behaviour and realised victimisation. This may explain that the dominance of these behavioural patterns does not substantially impact the socio-psychological adaptation of the individual in society after trauma. Considering the data obtained, it can be indicated that the degree of victimisation, in particular, its form of manifestation, affects the ability to adapt productively and optimally in society even after long-term psychological assistance. This points to the need to create more effective methods for restoring the mental health of victims of sexual violence, which will be based on the transformation of a person's deep properties and personal qualities (Zamira Sinaj et al., 2012). Thus, to preserve the

social development of the state, attention should be paid to the quality of criminological investigations of sexual crimes, which will produce effective changes in criminal liability for committing offences against sexual freedom and human inviolability (Kussainova et al., 2018). The study allowed determining that sexual crimes are a subgroup of violent acts committed against the will of another person and reflect aggressive criminal punitive behaviour towards the victim. The motives for committing sexual crimes are based on satisfying the sexual passion of the rapist through the use of physical violence, threats, or deception (Vela and Sinaj, 2023). In addition, the motives may be subject to the criminal's ideas about the impunity of their own actions in cases of the victim's helpless state or material or work dependence on the aggressor.

The conducted empirical study correlates with the analysed scientific papers, which indicate the need to establish the forensic circumstances of the crime committed, which has a sexual basis. In particular, the Centre for Assistance to Victims of Violence (2023) in Kharkiv provided legal assistance to respondents who took part in the study. Due to legal specialists, the relevant norms and rules for establishing a criminal offence were observed. This was also facilitated by the help of psychological specialists, in particular, the characteristics they described regarding the victims. In addition, the results obtained correlate with the conclusions of R.L. Cant et al. (2022), noting the need to develop preventive measures to reduce victim behaviour among the younger generation. The obtained results of an empirical study indicate the interdependence of the form and level of victimisation severity on the socio-psychological adaptation of respondents. In addition, interviewing respondents allowed determining that they experienced neglect in childhood, and also felt the aggression of their parents directed not only at each other, but also at them. Therewith, respondents noted that the consequences of childhood violence and aggression affected their perception of human relationships in general. The study also points to the inability of respondents to effectively transform negative behavioural patterns in adulthood, which makes it necessary to create social and social measures to increase the parental competence of modern youth in the context of ensuring adequate formation of children's self-regulation, self-esteem, and life motivation. Thus, a responsible approach to parenting will help reduce the factors of victimisation in childhood.

Discussion

Victimology in the context of the criminal-legal aspect is based on the doctrine of the role of the victim in the criminal activity of the rapist, where the examination of the personal qualities of victims and their behavioural patterns contributes to solving the problem of qualification of the committed crime,

individualisation of punishment, and providing protection to victims within the framework of the law. The analysed studies by S.T. Hales and T.A. Gannon (2022), and J. Page et al. (2022) indicate that any sexual acts committed against a person's will are considered a sexual crime. Sexual crimes are a form of sexual behaviour of a person that violates the sexual integrity of another person or restricts their sexual freedom (Belgibayeva et al., 2022). In addition, investigating the problem of sexual crimes by minors, S. Siria et al. (2020) noted that sexual illegal actions can also be discussed in cases of bestiality, necrophilia, incest, exhibitionism, and when forcing children to observe adult sexual behaviour, abuse of professional relationships (harassment), sexual intimidation or trauma (assault). Modern studies, in particular, those by J.T. Sumalla et al. (2023), R. Yu et al. (2022), J. Chopin et al. (2022), and T. Schalk et al. (2023), indicate that sexual crimes can be conditionally divided into crimes, the source of which is motives for physical violence and those that encourage the perpetrator to violate the sexual integrity of another person in the context of satisfying one's own sexual passion due to sexual deviations. The authors also note that the pathology of sexual actions can be associated with the desire to satisfy sexual needs in unnatural ways, in particular, violent actions against the will of another person with elements of sadism and rape and subsequent murder based on mental abnormalities. Thus, sadism, as a sexual disorder, is a certain dominant passion of a person that controls it during sexual pleasure. This form of behaviour is realised in conditions of arousal and sexual pleasure through the humiliation and suffering of another person (Gusarov and Popov, 2020).

As noted by A. Constantinou (2023), the motives of sexualised deviant behaviour are the internal processes of the individual, which are subject to a certain interdependent system at the psychological, social, socio-cultural, and criminal-law levels. Investigating the issue of the rapist's behaviour, the author notes that the criminal relies on the social matrix to search for ways and means to ensure their own sexual motives. In this aspect, the motives of sexual perversion are considered as a socio-psychological component that implements internal needs in external manifestations, and the socio-legal component allows forming a normative definition of sexual deviations with a subsequent stage of criminal prohibition (Shebanin et al., 2022). Therewith, I.S. Mellink et al. (2022), investigating the problem of determinants of rape, noted that the prerequisites for committing a sexual offence are material aspects, spatial and temporal capabilities of the criminal, socio-psychological environmental conditions, and the nature of relationships with the victim. A similar opinion is shared by I.V. Berdnik and K.A. Berebenets (2021). Investigating the issues of victim behaviour, the authors note that the sexual motivation of the criminal develops under the influence of relationships with the environment and is substantially dependent on the behaviour of potential victims.

The authors also note that sexual offences can be committed against the background of a person's mental disorders (within the limits of sanity). In particular, the source of psychopathic character traits can be the consequences of traumatic brain injury, oligophrenia, or alcoholism (Abudaqa et al., 2019). However, L.V.L. Linhares and A.R. Rosas Torres (2022), investigating the problems of blaming victims of violence, note that sexual abuse in women can also occur under the influence of mental disorders. Therewith, the authors note that sexual violence committed by women is produced by states of alcoholic intoxication or due to the use of narcotic substances. Therewith, a study by J. Page et al. (2022) indicates that the satisfaction of sexual desire is not the only motive for violating the sexual integrity of another person. Thus, investigating the issues of criminological characteristics of rapists, the authors also draw attention to the fact that the motives can be revenge, an attempt at self-affirmation, previous conflict, self-serving motives, curiosity, demonstration of one's own physical superiority.

The specific features of investigations into crimes of sexual violence lie in the specific features of collecting, verifying, and evaluating available evidence. N. Dawney and K. Sheppard (2023) state that clarification of circumstances is a key aspect in building a methodology for investigating sexual crimes. Thus, investigating the problem of criminal offences based on sexual violence, the authors note that the establishment of circumstances contributes to the solution of forensic problems related to the examination of the mechanism of crime, its circumstances, the role of participants, and the direction of investigative versions and tasks in the investigation of a criminal offence. Similar definitions can be traced in the scientific data of K. Skov et al. (2022). Investigating the issues of methods of forensic investigation, the authors emphasise that clarifying the circumstances of a crime determines the type of criminal offence, in particular, it allows identifying the content of the event, giving it a proper legal assessment, establishing psychological external stimuli and behaviour of participants in the crime. The totality of this is subject to the essence of the criminal and criminal procedure laws (Danchuk et al., 2021).

According to R.L. Cant et al. (2022), comprehensive care should combine not only legal and medical care but also psychological and socio-economic aspects because the psychological state of the victim after sexual trauma requires careful examination of the consequences of crime to prevent the development of mental destruction, in particular, thoughts of suicide. Thus, investigating ways to prevent sexual crimes, the authors emphasise that comprehensive assistance to victims of violence is a measure to prevent neuropsychiatric disorders of the human psyche. These results also correlate with the results of an empirical study. In particular, conversations with psychological specialists indicate that the mental state of victims

of sexual violence (at their first meetings) was subject to polar emotions, from the desire for physical violence against the criminal, their conviction for a criminal offence to apathetic states, and thoughts of suicide (Messina and Fogliani, 2010). However, it was the comprehensive assistance of specialists of the Centre for Assistance to Victims of Violence (2023) that contributed to a constructive solution to issues, including psychological recovery after the sexual traumatisation of respondents, which consisted of reducing depressive and anxiety states. In addition, interviewing women allowed determining the features of their subjective attitude to themselves at the time of the study. Thus, respondents indicated that their emotional state became more stable compared to the first weeks of their stay in the crisis centre. All respondents undergo individual and group psychotherapy. The centre also contributed to the employment of some respondents, but the vast majority worked on their own. Respondents also noted that the psychological support programme helps them cope with the triggers and affective states that arise from them. In addition, group classes allow victims of sexual violence to see that they are not alone in their suffering, which also helps them understand how to observe different situations from different perspectives and change their behavioural and emotional responses.

Conclusions

Features of criminological victimology are determined by the analysis of the specific features of criminological aspects that are directly related to the victim of violence and are focused on the determinants of her victim behaviour. The responsible attitude of the state towards its citizens implies granting them the right to protect the freedom and inviolability of their bodies. The current legislation implements a set of criminal law measures in cases of sexual violence. For violation of the sexual integrity of another person, criminal liability is imposed. For Ukraine, it is important to ratify the Istanbul Convention and implement it in the country's activities, which allows applying European legal standards for regulating criminal violations against human sexual freedom. However, the social and psychological problem remains the formed victim behaviour of the individual, which can serve as an impetus for committing sexual violence against them.

The hypothesis formulated at the beginning of the study provided for determining the impact of victimisation of victims of sexual violence on the possibility of their psychological adaptation in the social environment after trauma. In the course of an empirical study, this hypothesis was partially confirmed. In particular, correlations of dominant types of behavioural manifestation of victimisation of victims (aggressive, self-destructive, dependent) were determined. Thus, certain behaviours of affected women substantially affect their social

interaction with other people. In addition, it was established that the experience of sexual violence caused deep personal, cognitive, emotional, and behavioural changes in the victims. Therewith, the comprehensive support provided in the context of social, legal, and psychological assistance helped to reduce feelings of hopelessness and fear, reduce manifestations of autoaggression and restore psychological balance in the social interaction of respondents.

A promising area of further research is the analysis of the problem of violation of sexual integrity and sexual freedom of vulnerable categories of the population. The results of the study are substantial for the legal education and research industry as a basis for investigating the features of victimisation of women and the consequences of sexual violence on the future life of an individual.

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