CRIME AND JUSTICE
Bulletin

Predicting Women's Responses to Violence: The 1996 Women's Safety Survey

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The willingness of Australian women to report violence and to use the services available for victims of violence has remained low despite significant reforms in the last two decades intended primarily to protect women's rights in the area of violence. The present study investigated the predictors of willingness to report violence and use victim services among Australian women victims of violence. Data on 412 victims of physical assault and 139 victims of sexual assault were drawn from the 1996 Women's Safety Survey, a nationally representative sample survey. Logistic regression analyses showed consistently that assault not involving injury and assault perpetrated by a current partner were less likely than other types of assault to be reported and to result in the use of victim services. The analyses also showed that, in some instances, there were relatively lower reporting and service use rates for young, Australian-born and first-time victims. The policy and research implications of the results are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

In 1996, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) conducted the Women's Safety Survey, the first large-scale, nationally representative sample survey which specifically focused on violence against women in Australia. The results of the Survey were published in an ABS report in December 1996.[1]

The present bulletin is the second of a two-part series providing further statistical analyses of the Survey data. The first bulletin in the series, *Predicting violence against women: The 1996 Women's Safety Survey,* examined the predictors of physical violence, sexual violence, emotional abuse and multiple incidents of violence committed against women in Australia. The present bulletin examines the factors which predict whether women victims of violence in Australia (i) report the violence to police and (ii) use the services available for victims.

REPORTING VIOLENCE AND USING VICTIM SERVICES

The ability of any criminal justice system to both deal effectively with violent offenders and to deter potential violent offenders clearly depends on a high rate of reporting violence to police.[2] Violent offenders can only be apprehended and punished if they are reported to police. Potential violent offenders are unlikely to be deterred from offending if there is a low probability of apprehension and punishment.

The availability of high quality services for victims of violence is important not only for humanitarian reasons, but also in encouraging victims to report violence. Without adequate services for victims, victims have little choice beyond ignoring the victimization or finding some way of dealing with it themselves.

In Australia, before the Women's Safety Survey was conducted in 1996, there was only relatively limited information on the extent to which women report violence to police, and even less information on the extent to which women victims of violence use victim services. The limited information available came from sources such as crime victim surveys conducted by the ABS, police and court statistics, and small, non-representative studies undertaken by researchers or service providers in the field. On the basis of such limited information, the rate of reporting violence to police and using victim services appeared to be low. For example, according to the national crime victim surveys conducted by the ABS in 1983 and 1993, only about one-third of all physical assaults against persons aged 15 years or more were reported to police, and only about one-quarter of all sexual assaults against women aged 18 years or more were reported to police.[3] The latest ABS national crime victim survey, conducted in 1998, after the Women's Safety Survey was conducted, similarly found that only 28 per cent of physical assault victims and only 33 per cent of sexual assault victims reported the last incident.[4] Furthermore, similar reporting rates have been found by the annual ABS Crime and Safety surveys conducted in the 1990s in New South Wales.[5]

In the Australian context, there has been very little research on the reasons for the low rates of reporting to police and using victim services. The national crime victim surveys conducted by the ABS in 1983, 1993 and 1998 suggested that the main reasons for not reporting an

incident of physical assault or sexual assault were that the incident was too trivial or unimportant, the incident was a private matter, the police either could or would do nothing about it, and the victim feared reprisal from the offender.[6] The 1998 survey also found that rates of reporting physical assault tended to be lower if the victim was young, the victim was not injured, the perpetrator was a current partner, no weapon was used and there was only one rather than more than one perpetrator.

The reasons for not reporting violence in Australia are largely congruent with the findings of nationally representative victim surveys conducted overseas. For example, the annual crime victimization surveys conducted in the United States between 1992 and 1996 found that the main reasons for not reporting violence were that the victim considered the violence a private or personal matter, the victim was afraid of retaliation from the offender, the victim believed the police would do nothing about it and the victim perceived the incident as not important enough to report.[7] These surveys also found that injury to the victim and relationship to the perpetrator of the violence were related to reporting. Violence was less likely to be reported to police if it did not involve injury. Sexual assault was less likely to be reported if it was perpetrated by an 'intimate' (i.e. a current or former spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend) or by a 'stranger' than if it was perpetrated by an acquaintance or friend.[8]

In Canada, the first large-scale nationally representative survey examining violence against women was conducted in 1993 and involved 12,300 women who were married or living in a common-law relationship. This survey found that the main reasons for not reporting violence to police were that the victim considered that the incident was too minor, wanted to keep the incident private, didn't want or need help, didn't want to get involved with the police or the courts, feared the partner and didn't think the police could do anything about it. The survey also found that women were more likely to report the violence if they were injured, if children witnessed the violence, if a weapon was used and if they were victims of frequent or ongoing abuse.[9]

In Australia, it is noteworthy that the low rates of reporting and service use have persisted despite significant State and national reforms in the last two decades intended, at least in part, to encourage greater reporting. As outlined in the first bulletin of the series, the reform process in Australia involved a growth of political interest in women's issues, changes to the law and to police and court procedures designed to further protect women from violence, improved services for women victims of violence, and community awareness programs aimed at reducing the tolerance of violence against women and educating the public about the availability of victim services.

Within this climate of reform, it became clear that understanding the issue of violence against women in Australia, and evaluating the adequacy of existing responses to such violence, would be aided by comprehensive national data on the issue. The Women's Safety Survey emerged after the National Committee on Violence Against Women recommended that a tool be developed to 'assist in the development and evaluation of policies and programs related to women's experience of violence and to the prevention of violence against women'.[10]

As the first large-scale representative sample survey focusing on violence against women, the Women's Safety Survey provides a rare opportunity to examine the determinants of low reporting and service use by women victims of violence in Australia. Thus, the Survey data are uniquely placed to assist policy makers in the development of strategies for helping Australian women deal with violent victimization.

THE WOMEN'S SAFETY SURVEY

The Women's Safety Survey was cross-sectional in nature, measuring, on the one occasion, different types of violence. It was conducted during February to April 1996 in the form of personal or telephone interview by trained interviewers. The Survey was not compulsory and was conducted in private to ensure confidentiality.

A representative sample of women in private dwellings was selected from both urban and rural areas throughout Australia. Approximately 6,300 women aged 18 years or over were interviewed in total, representing a response rate of 78 per cent.

Types of violence

The Survey focused on the measurement of physical and sexual violence. For both types of violence, *actual* assaults and *attempted/threatened* assaults were measured. 'Physical assault' was defined as the use of physical force with the intent to harm or frighten. 'Sexual assault' was defined as an act of a sexual nature carried out against the woman's will through the use of physical force, intimidation or coercion. Physical and sexual violence were examined both over the 12 months prior to the Survey and from the age of 15 years.

Types of responses to violence

The Survey examined, for both physical and sexual violence, whether the last assault incident had been reported by the victim to police.

The Survey also examined whether the last assault incident had resulted in the victim seeking 'professional help' from a doctor, counsellor or priest. The professional help could include advice and support in the form of listening to the problem, making suggestions, giving information about other appropriate services and offering further help. Professional help for the sole purpose of treating an injury was excluded. A 'priest' could include any member of the clergy.

Whether the last assault incident had resulted in the use of crisis, legal or financial services was also examined. Crisis services included shelters, refuges providing accommodation, telephone crisis lines and rape crisis services. Legal services included legal aid commissions, community legal centres, Clerks of the Court, private solicitors or legal centres which provide special services for Indigenous people, women or migrants. Financial services included the Department of Social Security, and church or community groups that offer financial help or financial counselling such as The Smith Family.

Rate of experiencing violence, reporting to police and using victim services

Appropriate weights were applied to the Survey data to enable estimates of the prevalence of violence against all Australian women aged 18 years or over to be calculated.[11]

During the 12 months prior to the Survey, it was estimated that 7.1 per cent of Australian women aged 18 years or over had experienced an incident of violence, that is, an actual or attempted/ threatened assault of either a physical or sexual nature. During the last 12 months, it was estimated that 5.9 per cent of women experienced physical violence, with 5.0 per cent of women experiencing an actual physical assault. The estimated rate of sexual violence was 1.9 per cent, with 1.5 per cent of women experiencing an actual sexual assault. Furthermore, a substantial proportion of women experienced repeat victimization.[12] Of those women who had experienced either physical or sexual violence since the age of 15 years, it was estimated that over half (51.6%) had experienced more than one incident of violence.

As with its overseas counterparts, the Women's Safety Survey found that a significant proportion of the violence against Australian women was perpetrated by current male partners. The Survey found that an estimated 2.6 per cent of women who were married or in a de facto relationship had experienced an incident of physical or sexual violence by their partner in the last 12 months, while 8.0 per cent had experienced an incident of physical or sexual violence at some time during their current relationship.

The Women's Safety Survey results support earlier findings indicating that the rate of reporting violence to police is low. Only 18.6 per cent of women who were physically assaulted by a man in the last 12 months, and only 14.9 per cent of women who were sexually assaulted by a man in the last 12 months, reported the incident to police.

Similarly, only small proportions of these women victims of violence used professional help services, or crisis, legal or financial services. Of the women who experienced physical assault during the 12 months prior to the Survey, 17.6 per cent sought professional help from a doctor, counsellor or priest, and 14.3 per cent used crisis, legal or financial services. Of the women who experienced sexual assault during the last 12 months, 17.8 per cent sought professional help from a doctor, counsellor or priest and 8.7 per cent used crisis, legal or financial services.

The Survey also supported earlier findings concerning the reasons for not reporting violence to police. The main reasons provided by both physical and sexual assault victims for not reporting an assault by a man that occurred in the last 12 months were that the victim dealt with it herself (42.4% and 54.9%, respectively), did not regard it as a serious offence (26.5% and 16.1%), did not think the police could do anything (8.8% and 8.2%), feared the perpetrator (2.6% and 2.3%) and felt shame or embarrassment (2.2% and 5.7%).

According to the Survey, the two main reasons for not using crisis, legal or financial services following physical or sexual assault by a man in the last 12 months were also that the victim dealt with it herself (54.8% and 60.8%, respectively) and did not think it serious enough to seek help (22.2% and 28.3%). Other reasons included receiving help from family or friends (12.3% and 4.8%) and, in the case of physical assault, not knowing of any services (2.6%). The ABS report does not provide the reasons for not using professional help services.

Predictors of experiencing violence, reporting to police and using victim services

A number of demographic variables were examined in the Survey including the victim's age, birthplace, educational attainment, labour force status, income and marital status. Whether the victim had been physically or sexually abused as a child (before the age of 15 years), and whether the victim had previously experienced violence as an adult (after the age of 15 years) were also examined.

The ABS report suggested that many of these variables showed bivariate relationships with violent victimization: victimization was related to many of these variables *when each variable was considered on its own*. The first bulletin in the current series examined whether these bivariate relationships remained once the effects of other variables were taken into account. The results showed that all of the above-listed variables, except for income and labour force status, were *independent* predictors of either physical violence in the last 12 months, sexual violence in the last 12 months, emotional abuse by current male partner in the last 12 months or multiple incidents of violence since the age of 15 years. In particular,

compared with their counterparts, young women, unmarried women, women who had experienced childhood abuse and women who had previously experienced violence as an adult were more likely to experience physical or sexual violence in the last 12 months.

The ABS report also suggested that whether women victims of violence report the violence to police or use victim services may be related to a number of variables, *when each variable is considered on its own*.

According to the ABS report, a woman's age, birthplace, educational attainment, labour force status, level of injury and relationship to the perpetrator of violence all tended to show bivariate relationships with reporting the last incident of physical or sexual assault to police. For both types of assault, the rate of reporting to police was apparently lower for women who were younger than 25 or older than 34 years, for those with post-school qualifications, for those who were employed and for those who were not physically injured in the last incident. Reporting physical assault was also lower for victims whose last assault was perpetrated by their current partner and for those born in Australia.[13]

In addition, a woman's age, birthplace, educational attainment and labour force status also tended to show bivariate relationships with using crisis, legal or financial services after experiencing a physical or sexual assault. Women who were victims of either physical or sexual assault in the last 12 months were apparently less likely to use such services if they were younger, if they had post-school qualifications, or if they were employed. Physical assault victims were also less likely to use crisis, legal or financial services if they were born in Australia.[14]

For both reporting violence and using crisis, legal and financial services, the ABS report does not present cross-tabulations with marital status, income, experience of childhood abuse or experience of prior violence as an adult. Whereas reporting violence is broken down by injury and by relationship to perpetrator, using crisis, legal and financial services is not. Furthermore, the ABS report does not present any cross-tabulations of professional help services by demographic variables.

THE PRESENT STUDY

AIMS

As outlined in the first bulletin, one of the most significant limitations of the ABS report is that it does not examine whether the relationships of interest are independent of one another. For example, it is not clear whether the relationship of each variable with reporting violence or using victim services can be explained by the relationship of this variable with one or more other variables.

Consider an example. The ABS report suggests that reporting physical assault to police shows bivariate relationships with both injury and relationship to perpetrator, showing lower reporting rates for uninjured victims compared with injured victims, and for victims assaulted by their current partner compared with other victims. Are these two relationships independent of one another? In terms of *determining* the likelihood of reporting assault, these bivariate relationships may reflect any of the following possibilities: (i) *both* these variables are important; (ii) *only one* of these variables is important, and the other variable showed a bivariate relationship with reporting only because of its relationship to the first variable or to one or more other variables; and (iii) *neither* of these variables is important, and the bivariate relationship of each of these variables with reporting is due to its relationship with one or more other variables.

The practical implications of the alternatives presented above are different. If the first alternative is correct, programs aimed at helping women deal with violence would be advised to focus on both uninjured victims and victims assaulted by their current partner. If the second alternative is correct, it would be more important to focus on one of these groups of victims than the other.

Multivariate statistical techniques can be used to test such alternative explanations. Such techniques can determine whether variables which show a bivariate association with reporting continue to predict, in the presence of other variables, whether or not violence is reported. The major aim of the present bulletin is to examine whether

variables showing associations with reporting violence and using victim services in the ABS report continue to show such associations when the influence of other variables is also taken into account. Variables which fail to predict responses to violence in the presence of other variables can be ruled out as likely independent causes of responses to violence.[15]

In addition, the independent effects of a number of variables not presented in the ABS report are also examined, namely, marital status, income, childhood abuse and prior adult violence. These variables are included in the present analyses for two reasons: (i) if they are significant they would be useful in targeting reforms at appropriate groups of victims; and (ii) all of these variables were independent predictors of at least one type of violence examined in the first bulletin.[16]

More specifically, the present bulletin uses multivariate techniques to examine the relationship of reporting violence and using victim services with each of the following potential *predictor variables*, controlling for the remaining variables:

- the victim's age in years,
- the victim's birthplace (i.e. country of birth),
- the victim's educational attainment,
- the victim's labour force status,
- the victim's marital status,
- the victim's main source of income,
- the victim's experience of childhood (physical or sexual) abuse,
- the victim's experience of violence since the age of 15 years,
- the injury suffered by the victim, and
- the victim's relationship to the perpetrator of the violence.

The ability of the above-listed variables to predict each of the following types of *response variables* is considered:

- reporting victimization to police,
- seeking professional advice from a doctor, counsellor or priest following victimization, and
- using crisis, legal or financial services following victimization.

Each type of response variable is examined separately for victims of physical assault and victims of sexual assault.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data from the Survey were obtained from the ABS in the form of a confidentialized unit record file.[17]

Sample selection

The sample used for the present analyses differs from that used in the first bulletin in a number of respects. Firstly, the present sample is necessarily much smaller than that used in the first bulletin of the series. The first bulletin drew upon the entire sample of 6,333 women surveyed, including both victims and non-victims of violence, to determine the predictors of victimization. In examining the predictors of victims' responses to violence, the present bulletin is necessarily restricted to the sub-sample of victims (that is, to 5.9% of the entire sample for physical violence and to 1.9% of the entire sample for sexual violence).

Secondly, whereas the first bulletin included attempted/threatened assaults, the present analyses were restricted to actual assaults. This restriction was decided upon because the predictors of responses to actual assaults may well be different to those for attempted/threatened assaults. As mentioned earlier, the perceived severity of an assault appears to be one factor in determining whether it is reported to police. Furthermore, the number of victims who only experienced an attempted/threatened assault was not large enough to conduct a separate multivariate analysis for such assaults.

Thirdly, whereas the first bulletin included female-perpetrated violence, the present analyses were restricted to male-perpetrated assault. Women's responses to assault may differ depending on whether the assault was perpetrated by a man or a woman, and again, the number of victims of female-perpetrated assault was too small to conduct a separate multivariate analysis for such assault.[18]

Fourthly, whereas the response variables in the first bulletin were generally examined over the 12 months prior to the Survey, those in the present analyses are examined over the two years prior to the Survey. The time period was extended to increase the sample of victims, and hence, to increase the power of the multivariate analyses.

The sample selection process resulted in 412 victims of male-perpetrated physical assault over the two years prior to the Survey and 139 victims of male-perpetrated sexual assault over the two years prior to the Survey.[19]

It is worth noting that, particularly in the case of sexual assault, the small number of victims means that the statistical power of the multivariate analyses to detect actual relationships is not ideal. Generally, the greater the power of a statistical analysis, the weaker the relationship that can be detected by the analysis. As a result, while the analyses for sexual assault should be able to detect strong relationships between predictors and response variables, they may not be powerful enough to detect weak relationships. It is important to point out, however, that reduced statistical power does not mean that there is an increased risk of falsely concluding that a relationship exists when it does not.[20]

Although the number of sexual assault victims is small in the present study, it is noteworthy that these victims were drawn from the largest representative sample survey focusing on violence against women ever conducted in Australia. Without a representatively drawn sample of victims, any variables which predict victims' responses to violence in the *sample* may not predict women's responses to violence in the *population*. Thus, the present analyses for sexual assault are presented as an initial step, within an Australian context, for examining the independent predictors of reporting sexual assault and of using victim services following sexual assault.

Measurement of variables

Because all predictor and response variables used in the present bulletin are described in the ABS report, only brief descriptions of the variables are provided below.

Types of assault

The measurement of 'physical assault' and 'sexual assault' was as described earlier.

Responses to assault

The variables of 'reporting victimization to police', 'using professional help services' and 'using crisis, legal or financial services' were used in their original ABS form, as already described.

Potential predictors of reporting victimization and using victim services

Generally, most of the predictors used in the first bulletin were also used in the present analyses. However, many of the predictors were recategorized into fewer categories than were used in the first bulletin (or were provided by the ABS) in order to further enhance the power for the present multivariate analyses. Furthermore, childhood physical abuse and childhood sexual abuse were combined into a single childhood abuse variable, and only one variable assessing income, namely main source of income, was used.[21]

'Age' was the age in years of the woman at the time of the Survey. The seven age groups provided by the ABS were recategorized into three groups, namely, 18 to 24 years, 25 to 34 years and 35 years or over.[22]

'Birthplace' categorized the country of birth of the woman. The ABS category of 'Australia' was compared with the category of 'overseas', which combined the ABS categories of 'other English speaking country' and 'other non-English speaking country'.[23]

'Educational attainment' measured the highest level of educational qualification completed. The original variable provided by the ABS was collapsed into two categories for the present analyses: 'post-school education' (which included higher degree, undergraduate degree, diploma, associate diploma, skilled vocational training and basic vocational training) and 'no post-school education'.[24]

'Labour force status' compared the ABS category 'employed' with the category of 'not employed', which combined the ABS categories of 'unemployed' (i.e. not working but actively seeking work) and 'not in the labour force' (i.e. not working and not actively seeking work).[25]

'Marital status' involved combining the ABS categories of 'married' and 'in a de facto relationship' into a single category; combining the ABS categories of 'divorced', 'widowed' and 'separated' into a single category; and including the ABS 'never married' category in its original form.[26]

'Main source of income' in the present analysis combined the ABS 'wage', 'salary' and 'own business' categories into a single category; combined 'family payment' and 'other government benefit' into a single 'government benefit' category; and combined 'other source' and 'not applicable' into a single 'other' category.[27]

The ABS variables of 'childhood physical abuse' and 'childhood sexual abuse' referred to abuse experienced before the age of 15 years from any adult (male or female), including a parent. 'Childhood physical abuse' was defined as any deliberate physical injury inflicted by an adult. 'Childhood sexual abuse' was defined as involving a child in sexual processes beyond their understanding or contrary to currently accepted community standards. The present analysis combined these two variables into a single, dichotomous 'childhood abuse' variable which compared having experienced either or both types of abuse as a child with not having experienced either type of abuse as a child.[28]

'Prior adult violence' included both physical and sexual violence (as already described) experienced since the age of 15 years but not in the last two years.[29]

'Injury' examined whether the woman had experienced any physical injury during the last incident of physical or sexual assault. The ABS 'no injury' category was used in its original form, and all the remaining ABS categories were combined into a single 'injury' category (which included scratches; bruises; cuts; fractured or broken bones; broken teeth; penetrative injury/stab/gun shot; miscarriage; and other).[30]

'Relationship to perpetrator' combined the many categories provided by the ABS into four categories: 'current partner' (which included 'partner you are living with now' and 'boyfriend or date'); 'previous partner' (which included 'partner you were living with at the time of the most recent incident' and 'partner you were no longer living with at the time of the most recent incident'); 'other known person' (which included relative, friend, acquaintance, colleague and person in authority); and 'stranger'.[31]

Multivariate technique

The present multivariate analyses involved dichotomous response variables and categorical predictor variables.[32]

Logistic regression was used to describe the relationship of each response variable with the predictor variables.[33]

To fit the regression models, each potential predictor was translated into a number of comparisons. Each comparison contrasted two categories of the predictor. Thus, for each dichotomous predictor, only a single comparison was tested. For the other four predictors, one chosen category of the predictor was compared against each other category.[34] The comparisons used for all significant predictors are listed in the tables presented in the *Results* section.

For each response variable, a logistic regression model was fitted to the data. All of the potential predictors listed earlier were considered for inclusion in each model. The inclusion of predictors in each model was based on the results of a number of preliminary logistic regression analyses. Please note that the results of these preliminary analyses are not reported in the bulletin. Only the results of the *final* logistic regression model for each response variable are reported.[35]

The *Results* section presents all significant comparisons for each final model. For each significant comparison, the odds ratio and its associated confidence interval are presented. The odds ratio is a ratio of two sets of odds. For example, for the association between birthplace and reporting assault, the odds ratio compares the odds of a victim reporting assault for two categories of victims: those born in Australia and those born overseas.[36] An odds ratio that is not significantly different from the value

of one suggests that there is no real difference between these two sets of odds (i.e. that Australian-born and overseas-born victims have similar odds of reporting assault). An odds ratio that is significantly greater than one suggests that the first set of odds (for Australian-born victims) is higher than the second set of odds (for overseas-born victims). Conversely, an odds ratio that is significantly less than one suggests that the first set of odds is lower than the second.

The statistical significance of the odds ratios in the final models was examined at both the 0.05 and 0.10 level.[37] The 90 per cent confidence interval for each odds ratio is also presented. The 90 per cent confidence interval provides, with 90 per cent certainty, the range of values the odds ratio could take. In the *Appendix*, the following statistics are also presented for each comparison in the final models: the parameter estimate (β), the standard error of the estimate (s.e.), the obtained Chi-square statistic for testing the significance of the parameter estimate (χ^2) and the obtained *p* value.

In addition to the multivariate results, the *Results* section below presents the bivariate cross-tabulations of each response variable with each of its significant predictors, so that the percentages of different categories of women who engaged in certain responses can be examined.

Finally, for both physical and sexual assault, the *Results* section presents the estimated probability of reporting the assault to police, using professional help

services, and using crisis, legal or financial services, given different combinations of significant predictors. The probability of each response is simply calculated by substituting the obtained parameter estimates (βs) for the significant predictors back into the appropriate model.

RESULTS

As noted above, in examining the results of the present bulletin it should be remembered that the power for the multivariate models for sexual assault was not ideal. Consequently, these models may not have detected all the actual predictors of responses to sexual assault among the potential predictors tested.

The *Appendix* presents more detailed statistics for each multivariate model than are presented below.

Reporting physical assault

Table 1 presents the odds ratios for the final multivariate model examining the predictors of reporting the last incident of male-perpetrated physical assault which occurred in the two years prior to the Survey. Only the predictors included in the final model are presented in the table.[38] In the presence of all the potential predictors examined, birthplace, labour force status, injury and relationship to perpetrator predicted, at the 0.05 level, whether or not women reported the last incident of physical assault to police. In addition, in the presence of the other variables, age also predicted reporting of physical assault at the 0.10 level.

Table 1: Predictors of reporting to police: physical assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	Odds ratio and significance[a]	90% confidence interval
Age (years)	18 to 24 versus 35 or over	0.5 *	0.3 - 0.9
	25 to 34 versus 35 or over	ns	
Birthplace	Australia versus overseas	0.5 **	0.3 - 0.9
Labour force status	employed versus not employed	0.6 **	0.4 - 0.9
Injury	injury versus no injury	3.1 **	2.0 - 4.8
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	4.1 **	2.3 - 7.2
	other known person versus current partner	3.2 **	1.7 - 6.1
	stranger versus current partner	6.3 **	3.3 - 12.4

a ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level. * indicates significant at the 0.10 level. 'ns' indicates not statistically significant at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.

Table 2a: Cross-tabulation of reporting physical assault in the last two years, by age

| | Age (years) | | | | | |
| | 18 to 24 | | 25 to 34 | | 35 and over | |
Reporting physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	16.9	(21)	36.0	(49)	24.3	(37)
No	83.1	(103)	64.0	(87)	75.7	(115)
Total	100.0	(124)	100.0	(136)	100.0	(152)

When other variables were taken into account, educational attainment, marital status, main source of income, childhood abuse and prior adult violence did not predict reporting physical assault at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.

Table 1 shows that the odds of reporting physical assault for Australian-born women victims were half (0.5) those for overseas-born women victims, and those for employed women victims were 0.6 times those for women victims who were not employed. The odds of reporting physical assault were over three times higher if the woman had sustained a physical injury as a result of the assault than if she had not. Furthermore, the odds of reporting physical assault were higher if the assault was not perpetrated by the woman's current partner. Compared with the odds of reporting physical assault perpetrated by the current partner, those for assault perpetrated by a previous partner were 4.1 times higher, those for assault perpetrated by another known person were 3.2 times higher and those for assault perpetrated by a stranger were 6.3 times higher. Finally, using a 10 per cent decision rule, the odds of 18 to 24 year old women reporting physical assault were half those of women aged 35 years or over.

Tables 2a to 2e present the cross-tabulations of reporting physical assault with each significant predictor in the final model. It should be noted that these cross-tabulations do not take into account the effects of the other significant predictors on reporting physical assault. Nonetheless, it is useful to examine the number and percentage of respondents in each category of each significant predictor who reported physical assault in the last two years.

Table 2b: Cross-tabulation of reporting physical assault in the last two years, by birthplace

| | Birthplace | | | |
| | Australia | | Overseas | |
Reporting physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	24.0	(77)	33.0	(30)
No	76.0	(244)	67.0	(61)
Total	100.0	(321)	100.0	(91)

Table 2c: Cross-tabulation of reporting physical assault in the last two years, by labour force status

| | Labour force status | | | |
| | Employed | | Not employed | |
Reporting physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	21.5	(53)	32.5	(54)
No	78.5	(193)	67.5	(112)
Total	100.0	(246)	100.0	(166)

Table 2d: Cross-tabulation of reporting physical assault in the last two years, by injury

| | Injury | | | |
| | Yes | | No | |
Reporting physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	37.4	(74)	15.4	(33)
No	62.6	(124)	84.6	(181)
Total	100.0	(198)	100.0	(214)

Table 2e: Cross-tabulation of reporting physical assault in the last two years, by relationship to perpetrator

Reporting physical assault in the last two years	Relationship to perpetrator							
	Previous partner		Other known person		Stranger		Current partner	
	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	37.8	(45)	27.2	(22)	37.1	(23)	11.3	(17)
No	62.2	(74)	72.8	(59)	62.9	(39)	88.7	(133)
Total	100.0	(119)	100.0	(81)	100.0	(62)	100.0	(150)

Table 3: Predictors of reporting to police: sexual assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	Odds ratio and significance[a]	90% confidence interval
Birthplace	Australia versus overseas	0.2 **	0.1 - 0.5
Injury	injury versus no injury	14.2 **	5.3 - 43.4
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	ns	
	other known person versus current partner	ns	
	stranger versus current partner	7.5 **	1.7 - 42.1

a ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level. 'ns' indicates not statistically significant at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.

Table 2a shows that 16.9 per cent of 18 to 24 year old women who were physically assaulted reported the last incident of physical assault compared with at least 24.3 per cent of women in the older age groups. Table 2b shows that 24.0 per cent of Australian-born women who were physically assaulted reported the last incident to police compared with 33.0 per cent of overseas-born women. Table 2c shows that 21.5 per cent of employed women who were physically assaulted reported the last incident compared with 32.5 per cent of those who were not employed. Only 15.4 per cent of women who did not sustain an injury during the last physical assault reported the assault to police compared with 37.4 per cent of women who did sustain an injury (see Table 2d). Whereas only 11.3 per cent of women who were physically assaulted by their current partner reported the incident to police, at least 27.2 per cent of women who were physically assaulted by their previous partner, another known person or a stranger reported the incident (see Table 2e).

Table 4a: Cross-tabulation of reporting sexual assault in the last two years, by birthplace

Reporting sexual assault in the last two years	Birthplace			
	Australia		Overseas	
	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	11.8	(13)	34.5	(10)
No	88.2	(97)	65.5	(19)
Total	100.0	(110)	100.0	(29)

Table 4b: Cross-tabulation of reporting sexual assault in the last two years, by injury

Reporting sexual assault in the last two years	Injury			
	Yes		No	
	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	44.7	(17)	5.9	(6)
No	55.3	(21)	94.1	(95)
Total	100.0	(38)	100.0	(101)

Table 4c: Cross-tabulation of reporting sexual assault in the last two years, by relationship to perpetrator

Reporting sexual assault in the last two years	Relationship to perpetrator							
	Previous partner		Other known person		Stranger		Current partner	
	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	25.9	(7)	13.0	(6)	38.1	(8)	4.4	(2)
No	74.1	(20)	87.0	(40)	61.9	(13)	95.6	(43)
Total	100.0	(27)	100.0	(46)	100.0	(21)	100.0	(45)

Reporting sexual assault

Table 3 presents the odds ratios for the final multivariate model examining the predictors of reporting the last incident of male-perpetrated sexual assault which occurred in the two years prior to the Survey. Tables 4a to 4c present the bivariate cross-tabulations of reporting sexual assault with each of its significant predictors.[39]

Table 3 reveals that birthplace, injury and relationship to perpetrator predicted reporting sexual assault, independently of the other variables examined, at the 0.05 level. These three variables were also independent predictors of reporting physical assault. Age, educational attainment, labour force status, marital status, main source of income, childhood abuse and prior adult violence were not multivariate predictors of reporting the last incident of sexual assault to police, at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.

The odds of reporting sexual assault for Australian-born women victims were one-fifth those for victims born overseas. Whereas 34.5 per cent of overseas-born victims of sexual assault reported the last incident, only 11.8 per cent of Australian-born victims did so (see Table 4a). The odds of reporting sexual assault for women who sustained a physical injury as a result of the sexual assault were 14.2 times those for women who did not, with 44.7 per cent of injured women reporting the incident compared with only 5.9 per cent of uninjured women (see Table 4b). The odds of reporting sexual assault were 7.5 times higher if the assault was perpetrated by a stranger rather than by the woman's current partner. Over one-third of women who were sexually assaulted by a stranger reported the incident to police compared with only 4.4 per cent of women who were sexually assaulted by their current partner (see Table 4c).

Using professional help services for physical assault

Table 5 presents the odds ratios for the significant multivariate predictors of using professional help services (i.e. from a doctor, counsellor or priest) following the last incident of male-perpetrated physical assault which occurred in the two years prior to the Survey. Tables 6a to 6d present the corresponding bivariate cross-tabulations.[40]

Table 5 shows that age, educational attainment, main source of income and injury all predicted whether professional help services were used following the last incident of physical assault, when the effects of all the other variables had been taken into account, at the 0.05 level. None of the remaining variables examined predicted use of professional help services following physical assault at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level. The odds of using professional help services following physical assault for women aged 18 to 24 years were about one-third those of women aged 35 years or over. Only 14.5 per cent of 18 to 24 year old physical assault victims used such services compared with 29.6 per cent of victims aged 35 years or over (see Table 6a). The odds of using professional help services following physical assault were almost two times higher for victims who had some sort of post-school education compared with those who did not.

Table 5: Predictors of using professional help services (doctor, counsellor or priest): physical assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	Odds ratio and significance[a]	90% confidence interval
Age (years)	18 to 24 versus 35 or over	0.3 **	0.2 - 0.6
	25 to 34 versus 35 or over	0.5 **	0.3 - 0.8
Educational attainment	post-school education versus school education	1.9 **	1.2 - 2.9
Main source of income	wage/salary/business versus government benefit	0.6 **	0.4 - 0.9
	other versus government benefit	0.3 **	0.1 - 0.7
Injury	injury versus no injury	2.6 **	1.7 - 3.9

a ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level.

Table 6a: Cross-tabulation of using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years, by age

	Age (years)					
	18 to 24		*25 to 34*		*35 and over*	
Using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	14.5	(18)	20.6	(28)	29.6	(45)
No	85.5	(106)	79.4	(108)	70.4	(107)
Total	100.0	(124)	100.0	(136)	100.0	(152)

Table 6b: Cross-tabulation of using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years, by educational attainment

	Educational attainment			
	Post-school education		*School education*	
Using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	26.6	(49)	18.4	(42)
No	73.4	(135)	81.6	(186)
Total	100.0	(184)	100.0	(228)

Table 6c: Cross-tabulation of using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years, by main source of income

	Main source of income					
	Wage/salary/business		*Other*		*Government benefit*	
Using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	20.5	(46)	12.0	(3)	25.8	(42)
No	79.5	(178)	88.0	(22)	74.2	(121)
Total	100.0	(224)	100.0	(25)	100.0	(163)

Table 6d: Cross-tabulation of using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years, by injury

	Injury			
	Yes		*No*	
Using professional help services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	29.3	(58)	15.4	(33)
No	70.7	(140)	84.6	(181)
Total	100.0	(198)	100.0	(214)

Table 7: Predictors of using professional help services (doctor, counsellor or priest): sexual assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	Odds ratio and significance[a]	90% confidence interval
Injury	injury versus no injury	2.2 *	1.0 - 4.6
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	4.0 **	1.4 - 13.3
	other known person versus current partner	5.0 **	1.9 - 15.0
	stranger versus current partner	ns	

*a ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level. * indicates significant at the 0.10 level. 'ns' indicates not statistically significant at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.*

Compared with physical assault victims whose main source of income was a government benefit, those whose main source of income was a wage, a salary, their own business or some other source were less likely to use professional help services. Finally, the odds of using professional help services following physical assault were 2.6 times higher if the woman had sustained a physical injury than if she had not.

Using professional help services for sexual assault

Table 7 presents the multivariate results for the model examining the use of professional help services following the last incident of male-perpetrated sexual assault. Tables 8a and 8b present the corresponding bivariate results.[41]

Of all the potential predictors examined, only injury and relationship to perpetrator predicted use of professional help services following the last sexual assault at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level in the presence of the other variables. The odds of using professional help services following the last incident of sexual assault were over two times higher if the woman had sustained a

Table 8a: Cross-tabulation of using professional help services for sexual assault in the last two years, by injury

	Injury			
	Yes		No	
Using professional help services for sexual assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	36.8	(14)	19.8	(20)
No	63.2	(24)	80.2	(81)
Total	100.0	(38)	100.0	(101)

physical injury as a result of the assault (see Table 7). The odds of using professional help services were four or five times higher if the sexual assault was perpetrated by a previous partner or a known person other than a partner than if it was perpetrated by the victim's current partner. Less than one-tenth of victims who were sexually assaulted by their current partner used professional help services compared with about one-third of victims who were sexually assaulted by a previous partner or another known person (see Table 8b).

Using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault

Table 9 presents the multivariate results for the model examining the use of crisis, legal or financial services following the last incident of male-perpetrated physical assault. Tables 10a to 10c present the corresponding bivariate results.[42] The only multivariate predictors in this model that were significant at the 0.05 level were prior adult violence and relationship to perpetrator. Injury was a significant multivariate predictor at the 0.10 level. Women's odds of using crisis, legal or financial services following the last

Table 8b: Cross-tabulation of using professional help services for sexual assault in the last two years, by relationship to perpetrator

	Relationship to perpetrator							
	Previous partner		Other known person		Stranger		Current partner	
Using professional help services for sexual assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	33.3	(9)	32.6	(15)	28.6	(6)	8.9	(4)
No	66.7	(18)	67.4	(31)	71.4	(15)	91.1	(41)
Total	100.0	(27)	100.0	(46)	100.0	(21)	100.0	(45)

Table 9: Predictors of using crisis, legal or financial services:
physical assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	Odds ratio and significance[a]	90% confidence interval
Prior adult violence	prior adult violence versus no prior adult violence	1.8 **	1.1 - 2.8
Injury	injury versus no injury	1.6 *	1.0 - 2.5
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	5.0 **	3.0 -8.9
	other known person versus current partner	ns	
	stranger versus current partner	ns	

a ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level. * indicates significant at the 0.10 level. 'ns' indicates not statistically significant at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.

incident of physical assault were 1.8 times higher if they had previously experienced violence as an adult than if they had not. Their odds of using such services following the last physical assault were 5.0 times higher if the assault was perpetrated by a previous partner than if it was perpetrated by the current partner, and 1.6 times higher if they had sustained a physical injury during the incident than if they had not.

Using crisis, legal or financial services for sexual assault

Table 11 presents the multivariate results for the model examining the use of crisis, legal or financial services following the last incident of male-perpetrated sexual assault. Tables 12a and 12b present the corresponding bivariate results.[43] Relationship to perpetrator was the only significant multivariate predictor of using crisis, legal or financial services for sexual assault at the 0.05 level. Victims' odds of using such services were 6.2 times higher if they were assaulted by a previous partner rather than by their current partner. Injury was a significant multivariate predictor at the 0.10 level,

Table 10a: Cross-tabulation of using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault in the last two years, by prior adult violence

	Prior adult violence			
	Yes		No	
Using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	22.4	(43)	15.9	(35)
No	77.6	(149)	84.1	(185)
Total	100.0	(192)	100.0	(220)

Table 10b: Cross-tabulation of using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault in the last two years, by injury

	Injury			
	Yes		No	
Using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	24.2	(48)	14.0	(30)
No	75.8	(150)	86.0	(184)
Total	100.0	(198)	100.0	(214)

Table 10c: Cross-tabulation of using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault in the last two years, by relationship to perpetrator

	Relationship to perpetrator							
	Previous partner		Other known person		Stranger		Current partner	
Using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	37.8	(45)	18.5	(15)	3.2	(2)	10.7	(16)
No	62.2	(74)	81.5	(66)	96.8	(60)	89.3	(134)
Total	100.0	(119)	100.0	(81)	100.0	(62)	100.0	(150)

Table 11: Predictors of using crisis, legal or financial services: sexual assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	Odds ratio and significance[a]	90% confidence interval
Injury	injury versus no injury	2.6 *	1.1 - 6.1
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	6.2 **	2.0 - 23.5
	other known person versus current partner	ns	
	stranger versus current partner	ns	

a ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level. * indicates significant at the 0.10 level. 'ns' indicates not statistically significant at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level.

with the odds of using such services for injured victims being 2.6 times higher than those for uninjured victims.

Probability of reporting and using victim services given different characteristics

By substitution back into the multivariate model for each response variable, it is possible to calculate the estimated probability of each response for a woman given her status on each of the significant predictors. Figure 1 presents some estimated probabilities of reporting to police, using professional help services, and using crisis, legal or financial services following physical assault. Figure 2 presents the corresponding probabilities following sexual assault. For a given response, each figure compares the probability of the response for (a) women who have *all* of the characteristics identified in the multivariate model as increasing the likelihood of the response and (b) women who have *none* of these characteristics.

Figure 1 shows that women who have none of the predictors identified in the multivariate models for physical assault have very low estimated probabilities of

both reporting the last physical assault to police and using victim services following the last assault (0.02 to 0.07). For example, an 18 to 24 year old, Australian-born, employed woman who is physically assaulted by her current partner without being injured has a low probability of reporting the assault to police (0.02). An 18 to 24 year old woman without post-school education, who earns a wage, a salary or income from her own business, and who is not injured during a physical assault has a probability of only 0.05 of using professional help services following the assault. A woman who is physically

assaulted by her current partner without being injured and without having previously experienced violence as an adult has a low probability of using crisis, legal or financial services following the assault (0.07).
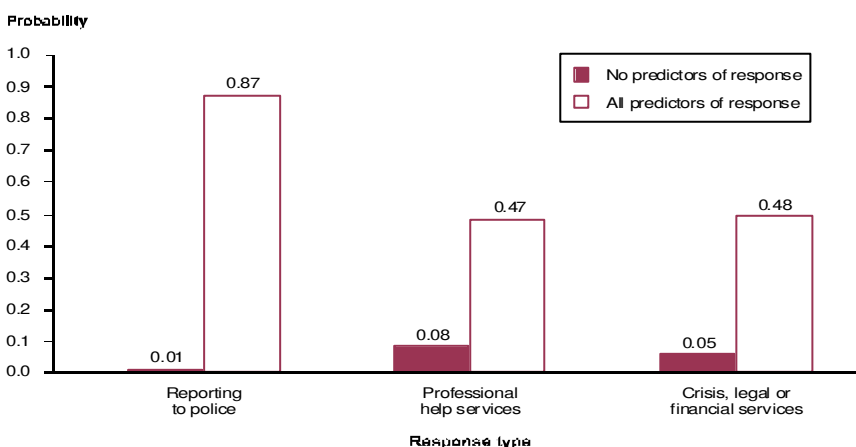
Conversely, women with all of the identified multivariate predictors have much higher probabilities of reporting physical assault to police and using victim services following physical assault (0.50 to 0.74). In particular, women who have all the predictors identified in the model for reporting to police have a very high probability (0.74) of reporting the last physical assault to police.

Table 12a: Cross-tabulation of using crisis, legal or financial services for sexual assault in the last two years, by injury

	Injury			
	Yes		No	
Using crisis, legal or financial services for sexual assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	29.0	(11)	11.9	(12)
No	71.1	(27)	88.1	(89)
Total	100.0	(38)	100.0	(101)

Table 12b: Cross-tabulation of using crisis, legal or financial services for sexual assault in the last two years, by relationship to perpetrator

	Relationship to perpetrator							
	Previous partner		Other known person		Stranger		Current partner	
Using crisis, legal or financial services for sexual assault in the last two years	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)	%	(No.)
Yes	37.0	(10)	17.4	(8)	9.5	(2)	6.7	(3)
No	63.0	(17)	82.6	(38)	90.5	(19)	93.3	(42)
Total	100.0	(27)	100.0	(46)	100.0	(21)	100.0	(45)

Figure 1: Probability of reporting to police and using victim services following physical assault given different characteristics
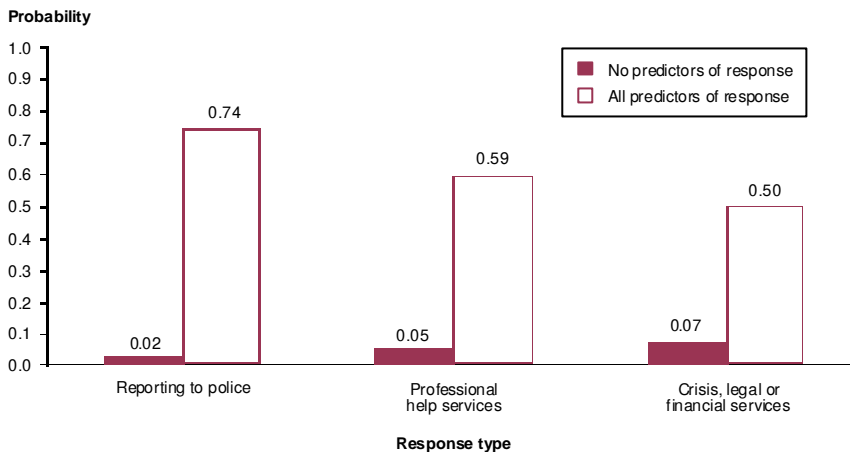
The characteristics for women with *none* of the predictors for each response type were as follows.

Reporting to police:
- 18 to 24 years
- Australian-born
- employed
- not injured
- assaulted by current partner

Professional help services:
- 18 to 24 years
- school education
- wage/salary/own business
- not injured

Crisis, legal or financial services:
- no prior adult violence
- not injured
- assaulted by current partner

The characteristics for women with *all* of the predictors for each response type were as follows.

Reporting to police:
- 35 years or over
- overseas-born
- not employed
- injured
- assaulted by stranger

Professional help services:
- 35 years or over
- post-school education
- government benefit
- injured

Crisis, legal or financial services:
- prior adult violence
- injured
- assaulted by previous partner

Figure 2: Probability of reporting to police and using victim services following sexual assault given different characteristics

The characteristics for women with *none* of the predictors for each response type were as follows.

Reporting to police:
- Australian-born
- not injured
- assaulted by current partner

Professional help services:
- not injured
- assaulted by current partner

Crisis, legal or financial services:
- not injured
- assaulted by current partner

The characteristics for women with *all* of the predictors for each response type were as follows.

Reporting to police:
- overseas-born
- injured
- assaulted by stranger

Professional help services:
- injured
- assaulted by other known person

Crisis, legal or financial services:
- injured
- assaulted by previous partner

Figure 2 shows a similar pattern of estimated probabilities for sexual assault. Again, women who have none of the identified predictors have very low probabilities of both reporting the last sexual assault to police and using victim services following the last assault (0.01 to 0.08). For example, an Australian-born woman who is sexually assaulted by her current partner without being injured is very unlikely to report the assault to police (0.01). Similarly, a woman who is sexually assaulted by her current partner without being injured is unlikely to use professional help services and unlikely to use crisis, legal or financial services.

Conversely, women with all of the identified predictors have much higher probabilities of reporting sexual assault to police and using victim services following sexual assault (0.47 to 0.87). Once again, women who have all the characteristics identified in the model for reporting to police have a very high probability of reporting the last sexual assault to police (0.87).

Summary of multivariate results

A summary of the all the multivariate models is provided in Table 19 in the *Appendix*. With only one exception, injury and relationship to perpetrator were consistent multivariate predictors in all six models examining women victims' responses to assault, controlling for a wide range of variables such as age, birthplace, educational attainment, labour force status, marital status, income, childhood abuse and prior adult violence. For both physical and sexual assault, sustaining a physical injury during the assault was associated with increased rates of reporting to police, using professional help services and using crisis, legal or financial services, at either the 0.05 or 0.10 level. With the exception of using professional help services for physical assault, being physically or sexually assaulted by one's current partner was associated with decreased rates of reporting to police and using victim services (at the 0.05 level).

Birthplace and age emerged as multivariate predictors in two of the six models examined. Birthplace was a multivariate predictor (at the 0.05 level) of both reporting physical assault to police and reporting sexual assault to police, with Australian-born women having lower reporting rates compared

with overseas-born women. Age was a multivariate predictor of both reporting physical assault to police (at the 0.10 level) and using professional help services for physical assault (at the 0.05 level), with younger women having lower rates of reporting and service use compared with older women.

Educational attainment, labour force status, main source of income and prior adult violence were multivariate predictors in one of the six models examined. Women without post-school education had lower rates of using professional help services for physical assault compared with women who had attained some form of post-school education. Employed women were less likely than women who were not employed to report physical assault. Compared with women whose main source of income was a government benefit, other women were less likely to use professional help services for physical assault. Having previously experienced violence as an adult was associated with an increased rate of using crisis, legal or financial services for physical assault.

Finally, marital status and childhood abuse did not emerge as multivariate predictors in any of the six models examined.

DISCUSSION

The most consistent set of findings from the present analyses was that *rates of reporting and service use were particularly low for two types of assault:* assault that does not involve physical injury and assault perpetrated by the victim's current partner.

These findings for injury and relationship to perpetrator confirm the results of the crime victim surveys conducted in Australia and overseas. Firstly, the 1998 Australian crime victim survey, and the United States and Canadian surveys discussed earlier also showed that women are more likely to report assaults involving injury.[44] This result is not surprising given that level of physical injury is one indication of the severity of violence experienced. It is important to note, however, that the relationship between injury and severity is not straightforward. Some assaults, such as rapes, would generally be regarded as 'severe' assaults even in the absence of physical injury.

Secondly, the 1998 Australian crime victim survey and the United States victim surveys also show that women are relatively less likely to report violence perpetrated by a current partner.[45] The present results showed that women assaulted by a *current partner* were less likely to report the assault or to use services than were women assaulted by a *previous partner,* another *known person* or a *stranger*. The most parsimonious explanation for these findings is that a woman may feel she has 'more to lose' if she reports her current partner than if she reports someone else. For example, not only does she risk her relationship with her current partner but complications may also arise if her current partner is the father of her children or if she is financially dependent on her current partner. She may also be afraid of retribution from her current partner.[46]

In addition to showing consistently that reporting and service use were less likely for certain types of assault, the present results also showed that, in some instances, *reporting and service use were less likely for women with certain characteristics or life experiences.*

Firstly, the present results showed that, for physical assault, younger women are less likely to report the assault or use victim services. The 1998 Australian crime victim survey also showed that younger women are less likely than older women to report physical assault. The importance of the present finding for younger women is underlined by the finding in the first bulletin of the series that younger women are more likely than older women to be victims of physical assault.

Secondly, the present results showed that Australian-born women were less likely than overseas-born women to report physical and sexual assault. Prior research has not examined the relationship of birthplace with reporting and service use in Australia.

Thirdly, the present results showed that women who had previously experienced adult violence were more likely than other women to use crisis, legal or financial services after the last physical assault. Similarly, the Canadian survey found that women who were victims of frequent or ongoing violence were more likely to report violence and use victim

services.[47] However, it should be pointed out, that, at face value, the present analyses only provide limited support for the Canadian finding because prior adult violence significantly predicted responses to assault in only one of the six present multivariate models. Also of note was that childhood abuse was not a significant predictor in any of the six present models.

One possible explanation of the limited support for the Canadian finding is that there is a real difference in how women victims respond to violence in Canada and Australia: whereas, in Canada, repeat victims are generally more likely to report violence or use services than are first-time victims, in Australia they are not. A second explanation, however, is that repeat victimization was measured differently in the Canadian study and the present study. In the present study, the prior adult violence variable only differentiated between *no* prior violence and *some* prior violence. It did not differentiate between experiencing prior violence only rarely or only a long time prior to the last incident, and experiencing frequent and ongoing violence immediately prior to the last incident. Indeed, it could be argued that the present finding that the only significant result for prior violence was for crisis, legal or financial services is consistent with this explanation. The use of crisis, legal and financial services, unlike the use of professional help services and reporting to police, probably occurs frequently out of necessity rather than choice. For example, a woman who is being repeatedly assaulted by her current partner might move out of her house, and get legal and financial support independent from her partner, because she fears for her life. Reporting the violence to police and using professional help may well be perceived as less important to her immediate survival. This line of reasoning suggests that Australian women victims are not so different to Canadian women victims after all: they are more inclined to do something about being victimized once the victimization becomes extreme or life threatening.

The present results do not provide much support for the notion that the socioeconomic characteristics of victims predict their responses to violence. Although it is well established in the literature that there is a relationship between indicators of socioeconomic

disadvantage and the commission of crime,[48] there is very little information on whether socioeconomic indicators are related to victims' responses to victimization. Each of the socioeconomic indicators examined in the present study, namely educational attainment, labour force status and main source of income, was a significant multivariate predictor in only one of the six models. Furthermore, the relationship between the socioeconomic indicators and women's responses to violence was not always in the same direction. For educational attainment, the more socioeconomically disadvantaged of the two groups (i.e. school education) was *less* likely to use professional help services. However, for labour force status and income, the more socioeconomically disadvantaged group in each case (i.e. not employed and government benefit) was *more* likely to report assault or to use professional help services.[49]

One possible explanation for these inconsistent findings is that the socioeconomic variables used in the present study were not sensitive enough measures of socioeconomic disadvantage. In the case of labour force status and income, another possible explanation might be that women who are not employed or whose main source of income is a government benefit may have more free time to report violence and use victim services.

Finally, it is worth commenting on the fact that the marital status of the victim was not a significant multivariate predictor of the victim's responses to violence in any of the models. Marital status failed to predict women's responses to violent victimization even though it was a consistent predictor, in the first bulletin, of which women were victimized. A likely explanation for the present result is that the marital status variable was swamped by the relationship to perpetrator variable. (The relationship to perpetrator variable was not used in the first bulletin because it was not appropriate for examining predictors of victimization.) Clearly, there is some overlap between the two variables. It would be expected that the relationship of the victim to the perpetrator would be more directly related to whether the perpetrator is reported than would be the victim's marital status per se, which may or may not directly reflect her relationship to the perpetrator.

In summary, women who experience an assault that does not involve injury, women who are assaulted by their current partner, young victims, Australian-born victims and first-time victims of violence are less likely than their counterparts to report assault or to use victim services.

Implications of the multivariate results

The present multivariate results provide the first useful guide to the groups of Australian women who are particularly unlikely to report violence or to use victim services, once the effect of a number of demographic and life experience factors have been taken into account. It should be noted here that despite the *overall low rates* of reporting and service use,[50] the present analyses estimated that women's responses to violence could vary dramatically according to their characteristics and life experiences. For example, while some types of sexual assault experienced by certain groups of women were hardly ever reported (e.g. one out of 100 times), others were almost certain to be reported (e.g. nine out of 10 times).

What still remains unanswered, however, is *why* some groups of women are substantially less likely than other women to report assault and to use victim services. Women's reasons for not reporting and not using services are critical for shaping appropriate policies and programs which aim to help victims better deal with violence. Unfortunately, both in Australia and overseas, there is little research on victims' reasons for not reporting violence and not using victim services. In Australia, the limited information which exists concerning these reasons largely comes from crime victim surveys, including the Women's Safety Survey. These surveys merely provide the reasons for not reporting and not using services in broad terms. As outlined earlier, according to these surveys, the main reasons are (a) that *the violence was trivial*, unimportant or not serious enough, (b) that *the violence was a private matter* or shameful or embarrassing, or could be dealt with by the woman herself or with the help of family or friends, (c) that *the police could or would do nothing about the violence,* (d) that *the victim feared reprisal from the perpetrator* and (e) that *the victim didn't know of any services*.[51]

Unfortunately, on the basis of such broad reasons, it is generally difficult to shape appropriate programs and policies for helping victims better deal with victimization because the specific motivations and perceptions on which these reasons are based are not obvious. Furthermore, the existing research generally does not examine whether the broad reasons provided tend to differ for different types of violence or for different groups of women.

Improvements in policy and services in the area of violence against women clearly require a more comprehensive understanding of why women are not reporting or not using services. In particular, better information is needed on (i) women's specific reasons and motivations for not reporting violence or not using victim services and (ii) the exact needs of victims of violence and the extent to which these needs can be met through the existing criminal justice system and network of victim services. The present findings suggest that it would be worth examining each of these research objectives not only across all victims, but also separately for each group of victims identified as particularly unlikely to report assault or use victim services. The first research objective could best be achieved by in-depth interviews with women victims of violence while the second would require a survey of both victims of violence and service providers. Each research objective, along with its possible policy implications, is discussed in more detail below.

To illustrate the importance of the first research objective, consider those who do not report an assault because they perceive it as *trivial.* If this perception is based on the belief that some types of violence are acceptable, then an appropriate policy response might be to try to increase public intolerance of violence. Alternatively, if this perception is based on the belief that prosecuting violent offenders is not worth the effort when the harm inflicted was minimal, then an appropriate policy response might be to educate the public that prosecution is not only a means of punishment but also a potential means of deterring future violence.

Given the present findings, it would also seem important to examine whether the precise reasons for not reporting or not using services differ for different types of violence or for different groups of

women. Clearly, it is more cost-effective to implement policies and programs by targeting the relevant victim groups than by targeting all victims indiscriminately. The present results suggest that it would be useful to disaggregate the precise reasons for not reporting and not using services by injury, relationship to perpetrator, age, birthplace and prior violence. For example, it would be useful to determine whether some types of violence are more likely than others to be perceived by victims as private, shameful or embarrassing, and to determine the specific reasons for any such perceptions. Is violence perpetrated by a current partner particularly likely to be perceived as a private matter? It would also be of value to examine whether some groups of women are generally more likely than others to have such perceptions. Are young women, Australian-born women and first-time victims particularly likely to have such perceptions?

The second research objective, namely to identify victims' needs and to determine whether these needs can be met through the current criminal justice system and existing victim services, is also critical. Given the present findings, it would seem important to examine this question not only across all victims, but also separately for each group of victims identified here as particularly unlikely to report violence and use victim services. The fact that low rates of reporting and service use have persisted[52] despite recent reforms suggests that victims continue to deal with victimization primarily through avenues other than the formal criminal justice system or network of victim services. There are a number of possible, non-mutually exclusive reasons which may, at least in part, explain this state of affairs. One possible explanation why some women do not report violence or use victim services is that they believe that violence in general, or certain types of violence in particular, are acceptable and should be tolerated. A second possible explanation for the low rates of reporting and service use is that women believe *incorrectly* that their needs cannot be met by the present criminal justice system and the available victim services. A third possible explanation is that victims' needs cannot, *in reality*, be met through the current criminal justice system or through the existing network of victim services. The implications of each of these explanations is discussed in turn.

If the first explanation has any merit and women do believe that some types of violence are acceptable, then, as already mentioned, education programs may be needed to convince women and perpetrators of violence that *no violence of any type* should be tolerated. Furthermore, given the present findings showing lower rates of reporting and service use for assault not involving injury and assault perpetrated by a current partner, it would seem worth investigating whether these types of assault are more likely than other types of assault to be perceived as acceptable.

The second explanation that women believe incorrectly that their needs cannot be met through the existing justice system and victim services is supported, at least in part, by the finding that some victims, both in Australia and overseas, simply do not know that help is available through formal networks.[53] For example, the ABS report on the Women's Safety Survey shows that a small percentage (2.6%) of physical assault victims claimed that the main reason they did not use crisis, legal and financial services was because they 'did not know of any services'. In addition to not knowing about the existence of services, it is possible that some women are not fully aware of the ways in which the existing criminal justice system and victim services could help them deal with victimization.

The present findings suggest that it would be useful to examine the extent to which different victim groups are correctly informed about the assistance currently available through existing networks. In particular, it may be worth examining whether incorrect beliefs about the assistance currently available are more likely for uninjured victims, victims assaulted by their current partner, young victims, Australian-born victims and first-time victims.

To the extent that this second explanation is correct, it would be beneficial to provide some or all victims with better information on the existing legal remedies to violence, the existing network of victim services for assault and the recent reforms in the area of violence against women. This explanation also suggests that programs which successfully increase the rate of reporting and service use could be beneficial in helping victims deal with violence. In order to develop appropriate

programs for increasing reporting and service use rates it would be necessary, first, for research to identify the impediments to reporting and service use.

The third possible explanation for the low rates of reporting and service use, namely that victims believe correctly that their needs cannot be met through the existing criminal justice system and victim services, has received some support in a number of overseas studies. These studies have involved victims of both violence and theft, and have shown that victim service programs sometimes fail to meet important needs of victims such as immediate security or practical needs, and future crime prevention needs.[54] The extent to which, in Australia, the criminal justice system response and available victim services cater to the needs of assault victims is largely unknown.

Furthermore, given that victims' needs may well vary according to the type of assault they experienced or their own characteristics or life experiences, it would be worth examining, separately, the needs of different victims and the extent to which these needs could currently be met. In particular, the present results suggest that there is value in establishing whether, compared with other assault victims, those who are not injured and those who are assaulted by their current partners are more likely to encounter problems with the existing criminal justice system and victim services. Firstly, in the case of assaults that do not involve injury, it is possible that the current criminal justice system is not particularly geared towards dealing with less serious forms of assault. In the absence of any physical evidence of victimization, police may be less likely to lay charges, and courts may be less likely to convict offenders. Secondly, in the case of assaults perpetrated by a current partner, it is possible that some women will not want to prosecute someone who they still love or once loved or someone who is the father of their children.

To the extent that this third explanation is correct, appropriate changes would be required in how the criminal justice system deals with assault, and in what services are provided through victim programs. For example, a woman assaulted by her partner may sometimes require more than the usual assistance

provided by victim services to recover from the assault: she may also require assistance in working out her problems with her partner or in finding the courage to leave her partner.

Conclusion

The present multivariate results showed that rates of reporting assault and using victim services in Australia are particularly low for two types of assault:

assault not involving injury, and domestic or partner assault. The results also showed that reporting and service use rates are sometimes particularly low for young, Australian-born and first-time victims of assault.

Policies aimed at assisting women in better dealing with violence would benefit from research into (i) the precise reasons for women's reluctance to report violence and use victim services, and

(ii) the extent to which the current criminal justice system response and the existing victim services cater to, and protect the interests of, victims. These two research objectives should be pursued not only across all victims, but also separately for each group of victims identified as particularly unlikely to report assault or to use services, that is, uninjured victims, victims assaulted by their current partner, young victims, Australian-born victims and first-time victims.

APPENDIX

Table 13: Predictors of reporting to police: physical assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	b	s.e.	Odds ratio	90% confidence interval	c^2	p value
Age (years)	18 to 24 versus 35 or over	-0.63	0.34	0.5	0.3 - 0.9	3.55	0.060
	25 to 34 versus 35 or over	0.48	0.29	1.6	1.0 - 2.6	2.69	0.101
Birthplace	Australia versus overseas	-0.65	0.30	0.5	0.3 - 0.9	4.73	0.030
Labour force status	employed versus not employed	-0.55	0.25	0.6	0.4 - 0.9	4.84	0.028
Injury	injury versus no injury	1.13	0.26	3.1	2.0 - 4.8	19.08	<0.001
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	1.40	0.34	4.1	2.3 - 7.2	16.86	<0.001
	other known person versus current partner	1.17	0.38	3.2	1.7 - 6.1	9.62	0.002
	stranger versus current partner	1.85	0.40	6.3	3.3 - 12.4	21.33	<0.001

Table 14: Predictors of reporting to police: sexual assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	b	s.e.	Odds ratio	90% confidence interval	c^2	p value
Birthplace	Australia versus overseas	-1.68	0.63	0.2	0.1 - 0.5	6.98	0.008
Injury	injury versus no injury	2.65	0.63	14.2	5.3 - 43.4	17.65	<0.001
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	1.02	0.96	2.8	0.6 - 15.7	1.15	0.284
	other known person versus current partner	1.30	0.93	3.7	0.9 - 20.4	1.96	0.162
	stranger versus current partner	2.01	0.94	7.5	1.7 - 42.1	4.54	0.033

Table 15: Predictors of using professional help services: physical assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	*b*	*s.e.*	Odds ratio	90% confidence interval	*c²*	*p* value
Age (years)	18 to 24 versus 35 or over	-1.12	0.33	0.3	0.2 - 0.6	11.76	0.001
	25 to 34 versus 35 or over	-0.70	0.29	0.5	0.3 - 0.8	5.60	0.018
Educational attainment	post-school education versus school education	0.62	0.26	1.9	1.2 - 2.9	5.51	0.019
Main source of income	wage/salary/business versus government benefit	-0.53	0.27	0.6	0.4 - 0.9	3.92	0.048
	other versus government benefit	-1.31	0.66	0.3	0.1 - 0.7	3.93	0.047
Injury	injury versus no injury	0.94	0.26	2.6	1.7 - 3.9	13.45	<0.001

Table 16: Predictors of using professional help services: sexual assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	*b*	*s.e.*	Odds ratio	90% confidence interval	*c²*	*p* value
Injury	injury versus no injury	0.77	0.46	2.2	1.0 - 4.6	2.79	0.095
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	1.39	0.68	4.0	1.4 - 13.3	4.16	0.041
	other known person versus current partner	1.61	0.62	5.0	1.9 - 15.0	6.85	0.009
	stranger versus current partner	1.17	0.73	3.2	1.0 - 11.3	2.54	0.111

Table 17: Predictors of using crisis, legal or financial services: physical assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	*b*	*s.e.*	Odds ratio	90% confidence interval	*c²*	*p* value
Prior adult violence	Prior adult violence versus no prior adult violence	0.57	0.27	1.8	1.1 - 2.8	4.34	0.037
Injury	injury versus no injury	0.48	0.27	1.6	1.0 - 2.5	3.02	0.082
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	1.62	0.33	5.0	3.0 - 8.9	23.57	<0.001
	other known person versus current partner	0.64	0.39	1.9	1.0 - 3.6	2.62	0.106
	stranger versus current partner	-1.26	0.77	0.3	0.1 - 0.9	2.67	0.102

Table 18: Predictors of using crisis, legal or financial services: sexual assault in the last two years

Predictor	Comparison	*b*	*s.e.*	Odds ratio	90% confidence interval	*c²*	*p* value
Injury	injury versus no injury	0.95	0.52	2.6	1.1 - 6.1	3.31	0.069
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner versus current partner	1.83	0.74	6.2	2.0 - 23.5	6.13	0.013
	other known person versus current partner	1.08	0.72	2.9	1.0 - 10.8	2.25	0.133
	stranger versus current partner	0.05	0.98	1.1	0.2 - 5.2	0.00	0.957

Table 19: Summary of odds ratios[a] for different response variables

Predictor	Comparison	Reporting		Using professional help services		Using crisis, legal or financial services	
		Physical assault	Sexual assault	Physical assault	Sexual assault	Physical assault	Sexual assault
Age (years)	18 to 24 v. 35 or over	0.5 *		0.3 **			
	25 to 34 v. 35 or over			0.5 **			
Birthplace	Australia v. overseas	0.5 **	0.2 **				
Educational attainment	post-school education v. school education			1.9 **			
Labour force status	employed v. not employed	0.6 **					
Main source of income	wage/salary/business v. government benefit			0.6 **			
	other v. government benefit			0.3 **			
Prior adult violence	prior adult violence v. no prior adult violence					1.8 **	
Injury	injury v. no injury	3.1 **	14.2 **	2.6 **	2.2 *	1.6 *	2.6 *
Relationship to perpetrator	previous partner v. current partner	4.1 **			4.0 **	5.0 **	6.2 **
	other known person v. current partner	3.2 **			5.0 **		
	stranger v. current partner	6.3 **	7.5 **				

a Non-significant odds ratios are omitted from this table. ** indicates significant (i.e. statistically different from 1.0) at the 0.05 level. * indicates significant at the 0.10 level.

NOTES

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 1996, *Women's Safety Australia,* ABS, Canberra, Cat. no. 4128.0.

2 Bachman, R. 1993, 'Predicting the reporting of rape victimization: Have rape reforms made a difference?', *Criminal Justice and Behaviour,* vol. 20, no. 3, pp. 254-270.

3 ABS 1986, *Victims of Crime Australia, 1983,* ABS, Canberra, Cat. no. 4506.0; ABS 1994, *April 1993 Crime and Safety Australia,* ABS, Canberra, Cat. no. 4509.0.

4 ABS 1999, *April 1998 Crime and Safety Australia,* ABS, Canberra, Cat. no. 4509.0.

5 See the publications by the ABS entitled *Crime and Safety New South Wales,* Cat. no. 4509.1.

6 ABS 1986, op. cit.; ABS 1994, op. cit.; ABS 1999, op. cit.

7 Bachman, R. 1994, *Violence Against Women: A National Crime Victimization Survey Report,* Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice, Washington; Greenfeld, L. A., Rand, M. R., Craven, D., Klaus, P., et al. 1998, *Violence by Intimates: An Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends,* Bureau of Justice Statistics, US Department of Justice, Washington.

8 Bachman, R. & Saltzman, L. E. 1995, *Violence Against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey,* Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report, US Department of Justice, Washington.

9 Rodgers, K. 1994, 'Wife assault: The findings of a national survey', *Statistics Canada,* vol. 14, no. 9, pp. 1-22.

10 ABS 1996, op. cit., p. 1.

11 It was necessary to apply weights to the data because some sub-groups of women (e.g. those living in rural and remote areas) had a reduced chance of selection.

12 If there had been no repeat victimization (i) the percentages for physical violence and sexual violence would add to the total percentage for violence; (ii) the percentages for actual physical assault and attempted/threatened physical assault would add to the percentage for physical violence; and (iii) the percentages for actual sexual assault and threatened sexual assault would add to the percentage for sexual violence.

13 According to the ABS report, some of these results are based on high standard errors (e.g. greater than 25% or greater than 50%), and hence, should be treated with caution. Due to high standard errors, the ABS report does not present the percentage of victims sexually assaulted by their current partner who reported the last assault to police or the percentage of sexual assault victims born outside Australia who reported the last assault to police.

14 According to the ABS report, some of these results are based on high standard errors (e.g. greater than 25% or greater than 50%), and hence, should be treated with caution. Due to high standard errors, the ABS report does not present a figure for the percentage of sexual assault victims born outside Australia who used crisis, legal or financial services.

15 However, the causal status of variables that do predict responses to violence in the presence of other variables cannot be determined from the present study due to its cross-sectional nature.

16 Please note that the present analyses could not evaluate whether women's responses to violence depend upon whether or not the violence was motivated by homophobia because the Survey did not examine the issue of violence against lesbian women. For the same reason, the first bulletin in the series could not examine the predictors of violence against lesbian women.

17 The confidentiality of the supplied data was ensured by the exclusion of information such as names and addresses of respondents, and by the categorization of responses to some data items to reduce the level of detail provided.

18 In fact, for none of the sexual assault victims was the last incident of sexual assault in the two years prior to the Survey perpetrated by a female.

19 Whenever a victim experienced more than one incident of physical assault over the two-year period, the last incident was examined. Similarly, whenever a victim experienced more than one incident of sexual assault over the two-year period, the last incident was examined.

20 In other words, insufficient power for statistical analyses increases the chance of a Type II error, that is, failing to detect a significant difference. As power decreases, the chance of a Type II error increases. Insufficient power does not increase the chance of a Type I error, that is, finding a significant difference in the sample when no significant difference exists in the population. Regardless of the level of power, the Type I error rate is equivalent to α, which is conventionally set at 0.05. See, for example, McNeil, D. 1996, *Epidemiological Research Methods*, John Wiley & Sons, Chichester, England.

21 It was decided to drop the level of income variable rather than the main source of income variable from the present analyses for two reasons: (i) the cross-tabulations of level of income with the response variables in the present bulletin revealed that level of income was unlikely to be significant in any of the multivariate models; and (ii) level of income, unlike main source of income, was not significant in any of the multivariate models reported in the first bulletin.

22 In the first bulletin, age was categorized into seven groups for the multivariate analyses: 18 to 24 years, 25 to 29 years, 30 to 34 years, 35 to 44 years, 45 to 54 years, 55 to 59 years, and 60 years or over.

23 In the first bulletin, the three original ABS categories were used.

24 In the first bulletin, four categories were used: 'degree', 'diploma', 'vocational training' and 'no-post-school education'.

25 In the first bulletin, the three original ABS categories were used.

26 In the first bulletin, the following five categories were used: 'married', 'in a de facto relationship', 'separated', 'divorced', 'widowed' and 'never married'.

27 In the first bulletin, the following six categories were used: 'wage or salary', 'own business', 'family payment', 'other government benefit', 'other source' and 'not applicable'.

28 In the first bulletin, childhood physical abuse and childhood sexual abuse were retained as two dichotomous variables.

29 In the first bulletin, prior adult violence constituted violence that had occurred since the age of 15 years but *prior to the last 12 months* because the window for the last incident was the last 12 months rather than the last two years.

30 This variable was not included in the first bulletin because it was not relevant as a predictor of violence.

31 This variable was not included in the first bulletin because it was not relevant as a predictor of violence.

32 In the first bulletin, age was treated as an ordinal rather than a categorical variable in all the multivariate models because the bivariate associations of age with each violence type appeared to be ordinal, that is, there was either a generally increasing or a generally decreasing association with violence as age increased. In the present bulletin, the bivariate associations of age with the response variables appeared to be non-ordinal for four of the six response variables. Given that non-ordinal effects cannot be detected by an ordinal test but ordinal effects can be detected by a non-ordinal test, it was considered appropriate to treat age as a categorical variable in all six of the present multivariate models.

33 See, for example: Agresti, A. 1996, *An Introduction to Categorical Data Analysis*, John Wiley & Sons, New York.

34 For the four non-dichotomous predictors, the choice of category for comparison with all other categories was decided as follows. For age, it was decided to compare the oldest age group (35 years or over) with each of the younger age groups (18 to 24 years and 25 to 34 years). These comparisons allowed testing of the suggestions in the ABS report that (i) the 25 to 34 year age group have the highest rate of reporting, and (ii) there may be an ordinal effect of age for using crisis, legal or financial services. The ABS report did not provide breakdowns of the response variables by either marital status or main source of income. For marital status, 'married or in a de facto' relationship was used as the comparison category in order to be as consistent as possible with the first bulletin (where 'married' was used). Similarly, for main source of income, 'government benefit' was used as the comparison category in order to be as consistent as possible with the first bulletin (where 'other government benefit' was used). Finally, for relationship to perpetrator, the ABS report provided cross-tabulations with reporting violence but not with using victim services. Given that the ABS report indicated that reporting physical assault to police was lowest for violence that was perpetrated by the victim's current partner, 'current partner' was used as the comparison category. (For sexual assault, due to large standard errors, the ABS report did not provide the percentage of victims assaulted by their current partner who reported the assault to police.)

35   The following preliminary logistic regression models were conducted. Firstly, for each response variable, a series of single variable models was conducted. Each single variable model examined the relationship of the response variable with a different potential predictor variable (i.e. each bivariate relationship with the response variable was examined in a separate model). Secondly, for each response variable, a full model was conducted in which the relationships of the response variable with all the potential predictor variables were examined simultaneously.

Each potential predictor's performance in these preliminary models was used to decide whether that predictor was included in the final model. A potential predictor that was significant in both the single variable and full model was included in the final model. A potential predictor that was significant in either the single variable or full model, but not both, was retained in the final model only if its inclusion resulted in a significant change in deviance. Finally, a potential predictor that was not significant in either the single variable or full model was not included in the final model.

The significance level for inclusion in the final models was set at 0.10 rather than at the traditional 0.05. Given the small sample sizes, a more liberal significance level was chosen because it was deemed important, for the purpose of informing policy, to detect as many actual predictors of reporting violence and using victim services as possible.

36   The value for the odds of reporting assault is calculated by dividing the probability of reporting assault by the probability of not reporting assault.

37   The more liberal 0.10 level is presented in addition to the traditional 0.05 level given the relatively small sample size for sexual assault. In the context of informing policy it was deemed important to detect as many significant relationships as possible.

38   Additional statistics for the multivariate model for reporting physical assault are presented in Table 13 in the Appendix.

39   Each of these cross-tabulations examines the bivariate association of each significant predictor with reporting sexual assault and does not take into account the effects of other significant predictors. Additional statistics for the corresponding multivariate model are presented in Table 14 in the Appendix.

40   Each of these cross-tabulations examines the bivariate association of each significant predictor with using professional help services following the last incident of physical assault and does not take into account the effects of other significant predictors. Additional statistics for the corresponding multivariate model are presented in Table 15 in the Appendix.

41   Each of these cross-tabulations examines the bivariate association of each significant predictor with using professional help services following the last incident of sexual assault and does not take into account the effects of other significant predictors. Additional statistics for the corresponding multivariate model are presented in Table 16 in the Appendix.

42   Each of these cross-tabulations examines the bivariate association of each significant predictor with using crisis, legal or financial services following the last incident of physical assault and does not take into account the effects of other significant predictors. Additional statistics for the corresponding multivariate model are presented in Table 17 in the Appendix.

43   Each of these cross-tabulations examines the bivariate association of each significant predictor with using crisis, legal or financial services following the last incident of sexual assault and does not take into account the effects of other significant predictors. Additional statistics for the corresponding multivariate model are presented in Table 18 in the Appendix.

44   ABS 1999, op. cit.; Bachman 1994, op. cit.; Bachman & Saltzman 1995, op. cit.; Greenfeld, Rand, Craven, Klaus et al. 1998, op. cit.; Rodgers 1994, op. cit.

45   ABS 1999, op. cit.; Bachman 1994, op. cit.; Bachman & Saltzman 1995, op. cit.; Greenfeld, Rand, Craven, Klaus et al. 1998, op. cit.

46   Please note that the 'previous partner' and 'current partner' categories refer to the status of the partner at the time of the Survey rather than at the time of the assault. Thus, the 'previous partner' category included not only assaults where (i) the partner was a previous partner at the time of the assault, but also assaults where (ii) the partner was a current partner at the time of the assault but had become a previous partner by the time of the Survey. As a result, the comparisons between the 'current partner' category and the 'previous partner' category were not ideal tests of whether women assaulted by their current partners are less likely to report the assault or use services than are women assaulted by their previous partners.

47   Rodgers 1994, op. cit.

48   See, for example: Braithwaite, J. 1979, Inequality, Crime and Public Disorder, Routledge & Kegan Paul, London; Box, S. 1987, Recession, Crime and Punishment, Macmillan Education, London; Chiricos, T. 1987, 'Rates of crime and unemployment: An analysis of aggregate research evidence', Social Problems, vol. 34, pp. 187-212; Devery, C. 1991, Disadvantage and Crime in New South Wales, NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, Sydney.

49   It is worth noting that most of the 18 bivariate relationships between the (three) socioeconomic indicators and the (six) response variables tended to be in the direction of the more socioeconomically disadvantaged groups being more likely to report assault and use victim services. Only two of these relationships were obviously in the opposite direction. That is, for both physical assault and sexual assault, the less socioeconomically disadvantaged group according to educational attainment (i.e. the post-school education group) was more likely to use professional help services.

50   According to the ABS report, over four-fifths of all the assaults committed against women do not get reported to police and do not result in the use of victim services. Rates of reporting and service use ranged from 8.7 to 18.6 per cent.

51   ABS 1986, op. cit.; ABS 1994, op. cit.; ABS 1996, op. cit.; ABS 1999, op. cit.

52   For example, according to the national crime victim surveys conducted in Australia since 1983, the percentage of persons reporting physical assault and sexual assault to police has remained fairly constant at no more than about one-third. See: ABS 1986, op. cit.; ABS 1994, op. cit.; ABS 1996, op. cit.; ABS 1999, op. cit.

53   See, for example: ABS 1996, op. cit.; Knudten, R. D., Meade, A., Knudten, M. & Doerner, W. 1976, Victims and Witnesses: The Impact of Crime and their Experience with the Criminal Justice System, US Government, Washington DC; Maguire, M. 1985, 'Victims' needs and victim services: Indications from research', Victimology: An International Journal, vol. 10, pp. 539-559.

54   See, for example: Davis, R. C., Lurigio, A. J. & Skogan, W. G. 1999, 'Services for victims: A market research study', International Review of Victimology, vol. 6, pp. 101-115; Maguire 1985, op. cit.; Maguire, M. & Corbett, C. 1987, The Effects of Crime and the Work of Victim Support Schemes, Glower House, Hampshire, England; Roberts, A. 1987, 'National survey of victim services completed', NOVA Newsletter, no. 11, pp. 1-2; Shapland, J., Wilmore, J. & Duff, P. 1985, Victims in the Criminal Justice System, Gower Publishing Company, Aldershot, Great Britain.

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  This report investigates the assault and robbery patterns of Sydney's inner city. Assault and Robbery "Hot Spots" in Sydney Police District are identified, and the characteristics of persons particularly at risk, including the factors which place these persons at risk, are identified. The report includes 21 full-colour, street-level crime maps of Sydney.

- **Social and Economic Stress, Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency** (ISBN: 0 7313 1130 2)   **$25**

  Crime rates are generally higher in areas with high levels of social and economic disadvantage. This report presents an analysis of data for NSW postcode regions to test whether the effects of social and economic stress are mediated by child neglect and abuse.

- **An Evaluation of the NSW Apprehended Violence Order Scheme** (ISBN: 0 7313 1129 9)   **$20**

  This report is based on a follow-up interview study of a sample of women and men who were granted Apprehended Violence Orders by NSW Local Courts. The study's central objective was to determine whether these orders reduce the violence, abuse and harassment experienced by protected persons.

- **Public Housing and Crime in Sydney** (ISBN: 0 7313 0263 X)   **$20**

  This study examines the effect of public housing on crime rates in Sydney postcode areas, controlling for social and economic factors such as family structure, residential stability, income and unemployment. Offences considered include assault, break and enter (dwelling), malicious damage to property, motor vehicle theft and robbery.

- **Key Trends in Crime and Justice 1998** (ISSN: 1321 - 3539)   **$25**

  This report includes tables and graphs of the major trends in Court Processes over the five-year period, 1993/94 to 1997/98. The report details trends in case registrations, disposals, delays and sentencing in Local, District and Supreme Courts, and patterns of Children's Court registrations, disposals and outcomes. The Correctional Processes section includes graphed trends of prisoner populations, receptions and community-based corrections. In addition, trends in recorded crime are presented for the four-year period, 1995 to 1998, as well as a summary of the results of victimisation surveys in NSW for the period 1993 to 1997.

- **New South Wales Criminal Courts Statistics 1998** (ISSN: 1038 - 6998)   **$25**

  This report is the most recent summary of statistical information on criminal court cases finalised in NSW Local, District and Supreme Courts in 1998 and in NSW Children's Courts in 1997/98. The report includes information about charges, outcomes, delays and sentencing in the Local, District and Supreme Courts of New South Wales in 1998. The Children's Courts section includes information about trends in appearances, determined offences and outcomes of charges before the Courts in 1997/98.

- **New South Wales Recorded Crime Statistics 1998** (ISSN: 1035 - 9044)   **$25**

  This report is the most recent summary of statistical information on crimes reported to and recorded by the NSW Police Service in 1996, 1997 and 1998. It includes an overview of major trends in recorded crime and a comparison of the number of incidents and crime rates by Statistical Division in New South Wales and by Statistical Subdivision within the Sydney region. The report also includes information about the time it takes for recorded criminal incidents to be cleared by charge or otherwise.

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