

Factsheet:

Sexual Violence in Asian and Pacific Islander Communities

April 2018

Global Data



- ◆ In a multi-country study in Asia and the Pacific, partner rape was more common than rape of a non-partner in all but one site.
- ◆ 49% of men who reported having raped a woman did so for the first time when they were teenagers.
- ◆ The most common motivation (70-80% in most sites) that men reported for rape perpetration was related to sexual entitlement – men’s belief that they have the right to sex, regardless of consent.

[Fulu E, Warner X, Miedema S, Jewkes R, Roselli T, & Lang J. Why Do Some Men Use Violence Against Women and How Can We Prevent It? Quantitative Findings from the United Nations Multi-Country Study on Men and Violence in Asia and the Pacific. Bangkok, Thailand: UNDP, UNFPA, UN Women and UNV. 2013.](#)

- ◆ In Bangladesh, nearly one third of women who had ever been married had experienced sexual violence by their spouse.
- ◆ In Timor-Leste, 14% of women between the ages of 15 and 49 report being raped.
- ◆ In Cambodia, of over 1,000 rape cases, over 70% of victims were under the age of 18.
- ◆ In Myanmar, rape is the second-most commonly reported serious crime after murder.
- ◆ In Pakistan, 66% of women who had ever been married had experienced sexual violence by their husbands at some point during their marriage.
- ◆ In Sri Lanka, 15% of men had committed rape. Of these, 65% had done so on more than one occasion, and 60% had committed intimate-partner rape. Over 95% of men who had committed rape faced no legal consequences.

[The Asia Foundation. The State of Conflict and Violence in Asia. San Francisco, CA: Author. 2017.](#)

U.S. Data

- ◆ Of Asian and Pacific Islander women, 23% experienced some form of contact sexual violence, 10% experienced completed or attempted rape, and 21% had non-contact unwanted sexual experiences¹ during their lifetime.
- ◆ Of Asian and Pacific Islander men, 9% experienced some form of contact sexual violence, and 9% had non-contact unwanted sexual experiences¹ during their lifetime.

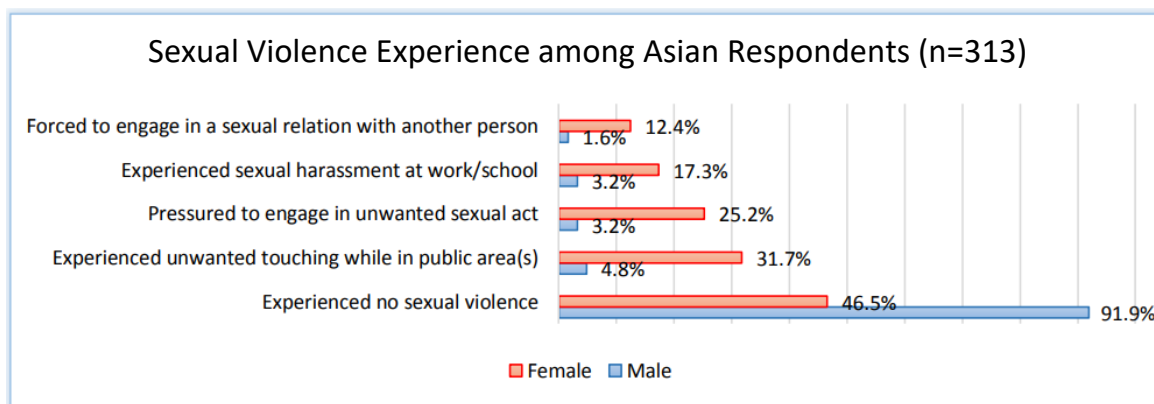
[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010-2012 State Report. Atlanta, GA: Author. 2017.](#)

- ◆ A random telephone survey of 1,745 Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (NHOPI) respondents in Hawai'i found that 2% had been a victim of "any unwanted sexual experience" in the last 12 months, and 9% had ever been the victim of "any unwanted sexual experience."

- ◆ NHOPI respondents most frequently identified perpetrators to be non-relatives/acquaintances (24%)

Office of the Attorney General of Guam. 2015 Annual Report. Tamuning, Guam: Author. 2015.

- ◆ 54% of Asian women (including immigrants) in the greater Chicagoland area reported experiencing some form of sexual violence, compared to 8% of Asian men.



[KAN-WIN. Community Survey Report on Sexual Violence in the Asian American/Immigrant Community. Chicago: Illinois. 2017.](#)

- ◆ 6% of Asian (out of 2,667) and 6% of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander (out of 526) callers to the National Domestic Violence Hotline in 2011 reported having experienced sexual violence, compared with 5% of Hispanic, 5% of African American, 6% of Caucasian, and 7% of Native American/Alaska Native callers.

National Domestic Violence Hotline. Caller Demographics Breakdown by Ethnicity CY 2011. Austin, TX: Author. 2012.

¹ Non-contact unwanted sexual experiences are unwanted experiences that do not involve any touching or penetration, including someone exposing their sexual body parts, flashing, or masturbating in front of the victim, someone making a victim show his or her body parts, someone making a victim look at or participate in sexual photos or movies, or someone harassing the victim in a public place in a way that made the victim feel unsafe.

Community-Specific Abuse Data

- ◆ In a study of 143 domestic violence survivors, 56% of Filipinas and 64% of Indian and Pakistani women had experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner.

[Yoshihama M, Bybee D, Dabby C, & Blazeovski J. Lifecourse Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence and Help-Seeking Among Filipina, Indian, and Pakistani Women: Implications for Justice System Responses. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice; 2010.](#)

- ◆ 30% of Japanese women in Los Angeles county reported having experienced sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner during their lifetime. 35% are estimated to experience sexual violence by an intimate partner by age 49.

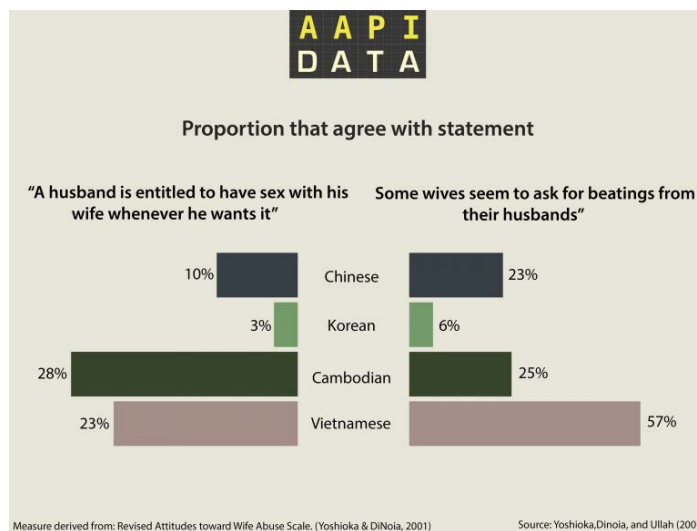
[Yoshihama M & Gillespie B. Age Adjustment and Recall Bias in the Analysis of Domestic Violence Data: Methodological Improvement through the Application of Survival Analysis Methods. *Journal of Family Violence*. 2002; 17:199-221.](#)

- ◆ In a survey of 9 U.S. domestic violence organizations serving nearly 2,000 Muslim women survivors, executive directors reported that 30% of survivors experienced sexual abuse.

[Alkhateeb M. Types of DV among Muslim Survivors. Unpublished raw data. 2010. Retrieved April 2018 from Peaceful Families Project: Domestic Abuse Statistics.](#)

- ◆ In a survey of 186 Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Southeast Asian Americans, 58% perceived strangers as the most likely perpetrators of sexual assault, 39% perceived acquaintances or friends as the most likely perpetrators, and 4% perceived family members as the most likely perpetrators.

[Lee MY & Law PFM. Perception of Sexual Violence Against Women in Asian American Communities. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*. 2001; 10\(2\): 3-25.](#)



Graphic from [aapidata.com](#). Data from Yoshioka MR, DiNoia J, & Ullah K. Attitudes Towards Marital Violence: An Examination of Four Asian Communities. *Violence Against Women*. 7(8). 2001; 900-926.

Child Sexual Abuse

- ◆ In studies on violence against Asian women and girls in Minnesota,² 5-8% of Asian females were touched sexually by any adult as a child, 3-5% were made to touch any adult sexually as a child, and 1-2% were raped by any adult as a child.

[Rainbow Research. A Report on Violence Against Asian Women and Children in Minnesota. Minneapolis, MN: Working Group on Violence Against Asian Women and Children. 2016.](#)

- ◆ In a review of 221 active Chinese case files in Los Angeles, 4% of Chinese immigrant children had experienced sexual abuse, compared to physical abuse (35%), neglect (22%), emotional abuse (21%), substantial risk (11%), and caretaker incapacity (5%).

Rhee S, Chang J, Weaver D & Wong D. Child Maltreatment among Immigrant Chinese Families: Characteristics and Patterns of Placement. *Child Maltreatment*. 2008; 13(3): 269-279.

Sexual Violence among Young Adults

- ◆ 31% of female Asian undergraduates at Duke University in North Carolina reported experiencing a sexual assault incident since enrolling, compared to their White (40%), Black/African American (42%), Hispanic (54%), or other (45%) counterparts.

[Duke University. Duke University Student Experiences Survey. Durham, NC: Author. 2017.](#)

- ◆ In a study of 27 U.S. universities, 13% of Asian females reported experiencing nonconsensual sexual contact involving physical force or incapacitation; compared to 3% of Asian males and 2% of Asian transgender, gender queer, gender non-conforming, questioning, or not identified individuals. 23% of American Indian/Alaska Native women, 18% of Black/African American women, 21% of Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander women, and 21% of White women indicated having experienced this.

[Cantor D, et al. Report on the AAU Campus Climate Survey on Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct. Rockville, Maryland: Westat. 2015.](#)

- ◆ In a study of 143 domestic violence survivors, 10% of Filipina and 9% of Indian or Pakistan women had experienced sexual violence by an intimate partner by age 16.

[Yoshihama M, Bybee D, Dabby C, & Blazeovski J. Lifecourse Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence and Help-Seeking Among Filipina, Indian, and Pakistani Women: Implications for Justice System Responses. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice: 2010.](#)

Help-Seeking and Services

- ◆ Of 160 API-serving domestic violence programs surveyed, 69% reported addressing sexual violence/sexual assault.

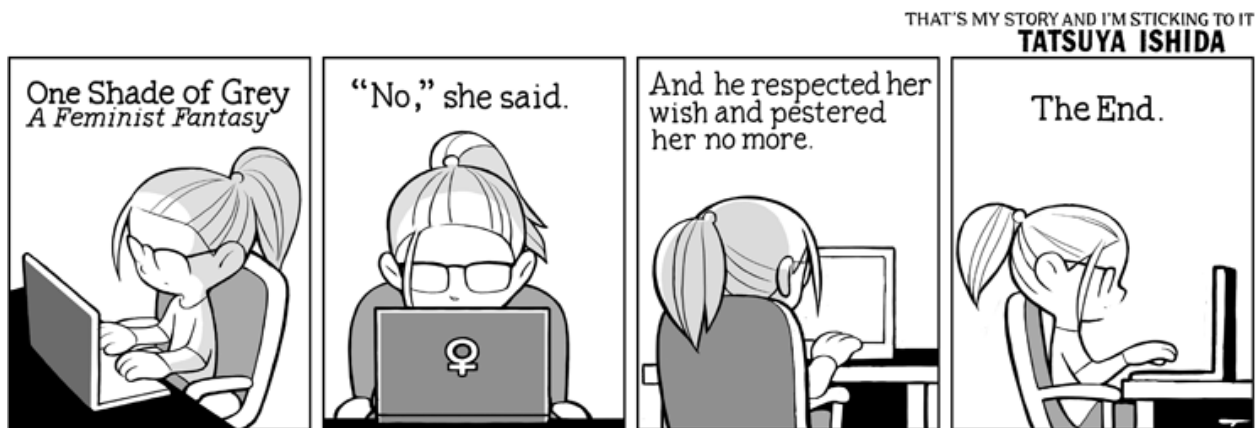
[Dabby C. A to Z Advocacy Model: Asians and Pacific Islanders Build an Inventory of Evidence-Informed Practices. Oakland, CA: Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence. 2017.](#)

² Numbers from three studies: the Minnesota Student Survey (on 8th, 9th, and 11th grade Asian female students), the Boynton College Health Survey, and the Minnesota Asian Women's Health Survey

- ◆ Of 117 Asians (including Asian immigrants) in the greater Chicagoland area who reported experiencing sexual violence, 18% received help from resources or services to address the experience.
- ◆ 60% did not know about the existence of sexual assault crisis lines, 63% did not know about shelters, 70% did not know about court advocacy, 70% did not know about hospital accompaniment, and 47% did not know about counseling help availability.
- ◆ When asked about the main reasons for not disclosing their experience, the most common reasons were that doing so would affect their reputation (67%) and their family's reputation (45%), that they were afraid of potential victim blaming (42%) and isolation from friends and society (37%), and that they were afraid of potential retaliation from the offender (33%).
[KAN-WIN. Community Survey Report on Sexual Violence in the Asian American/Immigrant Community. Chicago, Illinois: Author. 2017.](#)
- ◆ Between 2002 and 2006 in Hawai'i, 37% of rapes/sexual assault victimizations involving Asian victims were reported to the police, compared to rates for White (45%), Black/African American (31%), Hispanic/Latino (53%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (40%) victims.
[Harrell E. Special Report: Asian, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Victims of Crime. Washington, D.C: U.S. Department of Justice Statistics. 2009.](#)
- ◆ Of 186 surveyed Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and Southeast Asian Americans, 33% perceived police as the preferred source of help, followed by family members (28%), friends (23%), professionals (8%), and hotlines (8%).
- ◆ 41% responded that "feeling shameful" was the most major barrier to seeking professional help, followed by "feeling scared" (26%), "negative reactions from others" (23%), and "lacking information" (11%).
Lee MY & Law PFM. Perception of Sexual Violence Against Women in Asian American Communities. *Journal of Ethnic & Cultural Diversity in Social Work*. 2001; 10(2): 3-25.
- ◆ In a survey of 26 participants representing 20 different organizations/institutions that had the capacity to serve sexual violence survivors, 60% reported having received reports of sexual violence from Muslim survivors.
- ◆ The 14 respondents whose organizations had served Muslim³ sexual violence survivors reported that Muslim survivors were most likely to request interpretation/language access and financial support services (36%), access to shelter, transportation, immigration assistance, and legal assistance (29%) and criminal justice advocacy, mental health, and SART/multidisciplinary advocacy services (21%). The least requested service was crisis counseling (14%).
[HEART Women and Girls. Removing Roadblocks: Examining Barriers to Justice & Healing to Build more Victim-Centric Services for Muslim Survivors of Sexual Assault. Chicago, IL: Author. 2017.](#)

³ Respondents indicated that the majority (33%) of their Muslim clients were of Asian/Asian American/South Asian/Pacific Islander ancestry, followed by Black/African American and White, including Arab/Arab American (27% each).

Consent



[Source: Sinfest by Tatsuya Ishida, 2012.](#)

Additional statistics and resources are available on our website at api-gbv.org.
For technical assistance or training requests related to sexual violence or other forms of gender violence affecting API survivors, please contact us at info@api-gbv.org.



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