A systematic review of Campus Climate Surveys about sexual assault


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INTRODUCTION

• 2014: President Obama convened White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault.
• Task force recommended that colleges and universities use a public health approach to prevent campus sexual assault.
• Task Force encouraged schools to conduct Campus Climate Surveys to measure the prevalence of sexual assault, along with knowledge and attitudes.

Task Force provided a sample survey
Surveys are implemented throughout the U.S. from 2014→

Challenge: no sampling frame for survey reports

OBJECTIVES

1. Conduct a systematic review of gray literature to identify and analyze data from Campus Climate Survey reports.
2. Measure how schools operationalized sexual assault.

METHODS

• Used 2 internet search engines to identify gray literature.
• Contacted school administrators from 2 consortiums.
• Screen, assess for eligibility and include total of 107 reports at 101 schools in qualitative synthesis.
• 2 independent coders at each stage of assessment.

RESULTS

Operationalization of sexual assault and WHTF definition

Key
Task Force definition
Attempted contact
Attempted penetration
Act
Penetration
Being made to penetrate
Not specified

Tactic
Consent
Force
Incapacitation
Coercion
Not specified

Great variation in the operationalization of sexual assault.
Approximately 25% of schools use the Task Force’s definition of defined sexual assault.

CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

Campus Climate Surveys are a powerful means to gather surveillance data across campuses nationally. Given their limitations, however, we recommend improvements that would involve:

1. Creating a national registry for survey administration.
2. Standardizing sexual assault measurement with a diverse group of stakeholders.
3. Prioritizing a public-health approach in the measurement of sexual assault
4. Creating a core set of questions on key areas of national interest.
5. Creating reporting guidelines for sharing key data similar to PRISMA, CONSORT, etc.
6. Incentivizing schools to register, participate in standardization, and share results.

REFERENCES


White House Task Force to Protect Students from Sexual Assault. Climate Surveys: Useful Tools to Help Colleges and Universities in Their Efforts to Reduce and Prevent Sexual Assault. Office of Violence Against Women; 2014.

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