

Introduction

- Reported rapes resulting in conviction is as low as 5.3% (Amnesty International, 2005)
- Juries' decision making is influenced by the endorsement of RMA which exonerates the perpetrator and blame the victim (Bohner et al., 2009)
- To ensure that victims of rape obtain a fair evidentiary-based trial we should screen individuals who are susceptible to stereotypical beliefs and rape myths (Krahé & Temkin, 2009)
- Without screening out jurors with high RMA the conviction rate will never increase or represent the true number of guilty cases



Aims

- The effectiveness of a screening tool has not yet been examined, thus the present study aims to explore whether a scale measuring RMA can be used to this effect
- Hypothetical rape scenarios were employed in the present study to examine individuals' attitudes, perceptions and beliefs about rape and victim-blaming attributions
- Individuals with high RMA were expected to make more rape-supportive and victim-blaming attributions for a marital and alcohol-assisted rape compared to a stranger rape, than individuals with low RMA

THE EFFECT OF RMA ON RAPE-SUPPORTIVE AND VICTIM-BLAMING ATTRIBUTIONS: EXPLORING THE UTILITY OF THE IRMA-SF AS A POSSIBLE SCREENING TOOL FOR POTENTIAL JURORS

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Method and Findings

- 140 male and female students volunteered to fill out the compiled questionnaires
- A within-participants design was employed as all participants completed scales for all three rape-type conditions

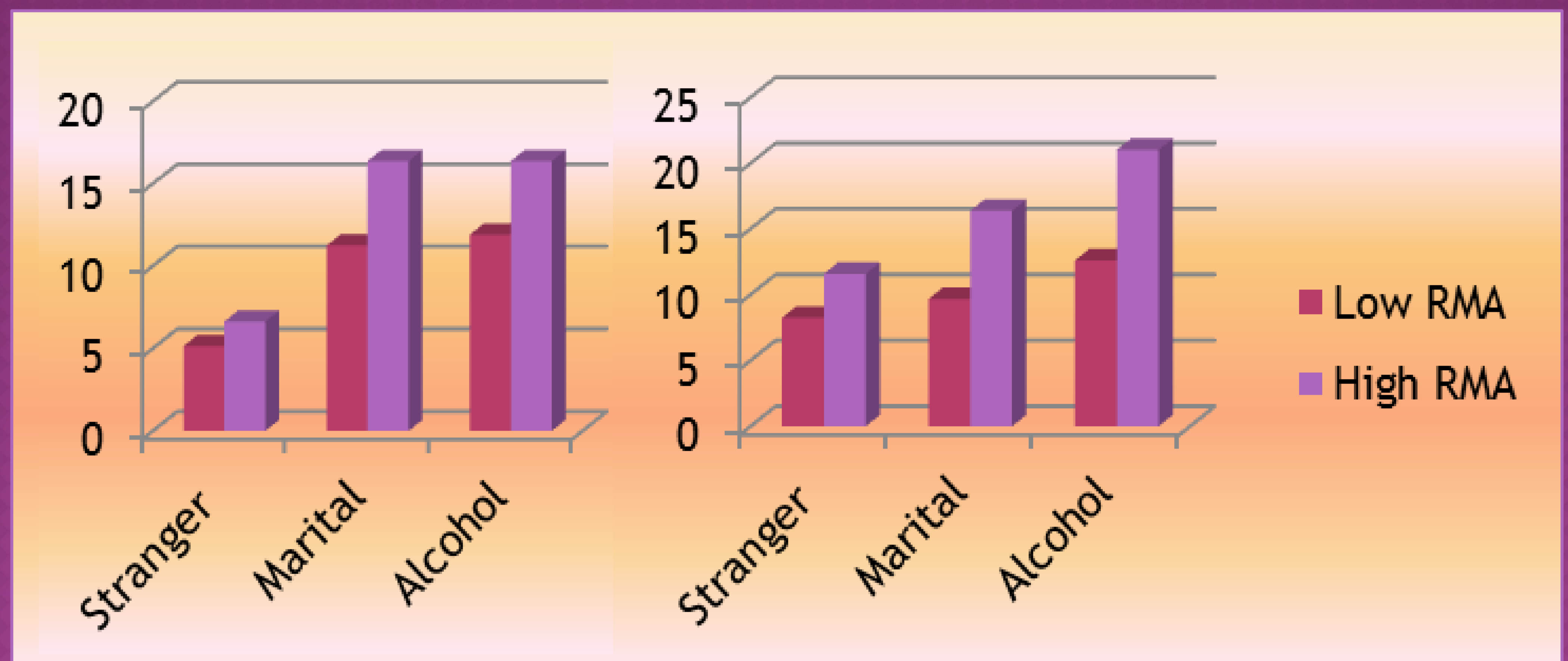
Stranger Rape

Marital Rape

Alcohol-assisted Rape

- Payne et al.'s (1999) Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (Short Form; IRMA-SF) was used to distinguish between individuals with high RMA and individuals with low RMA
- A mixed between-within subjects analysis of variance was conducted to assess the influence of a high or low IRMA score and gender on participants' rape-supportive and victim-blaming attribution scores, across the three rape-type conditions

Rape-Supportive Attributions Victim-Blaming Attributions



Discussion

- Possessing a high IRMA score is linked to making more rape-supportive attributions and more victim-blaming attributions
- The results correspond with Ewoldt et al.'s (2000) finding that participants make more rape-supportive attributions when the victim and perpetrator are in a relationship than when they are strangers
- Victims are held more responsible when they are acquainted with their attacker (Grubb & Harrower, 2009)
- In order to increase the conviction rate for rape these high-RMA individuals should be screened out from serving as a juror
- This would lead to fairer rape trials without the influence of stereotypical perceptions and pre-existing attitudes

Key References

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