

Sexual violence perpetration among young male adolescents in South Africa

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Presentation outline

Background

Study methods

Results

Conclusion

Background

25% of men in South Africa reporting rape

75% of first rapes perpetrated before age 20



Sexual harassment and violence perpetration begins before adulthood

Perpetration among men associated with factors like childhood adversity, inequitable views, drug use...

Few studies with young adolescent males, e.g. 10-15 years old

Important to understand when SV behaviors begin and their associations to inform prevention

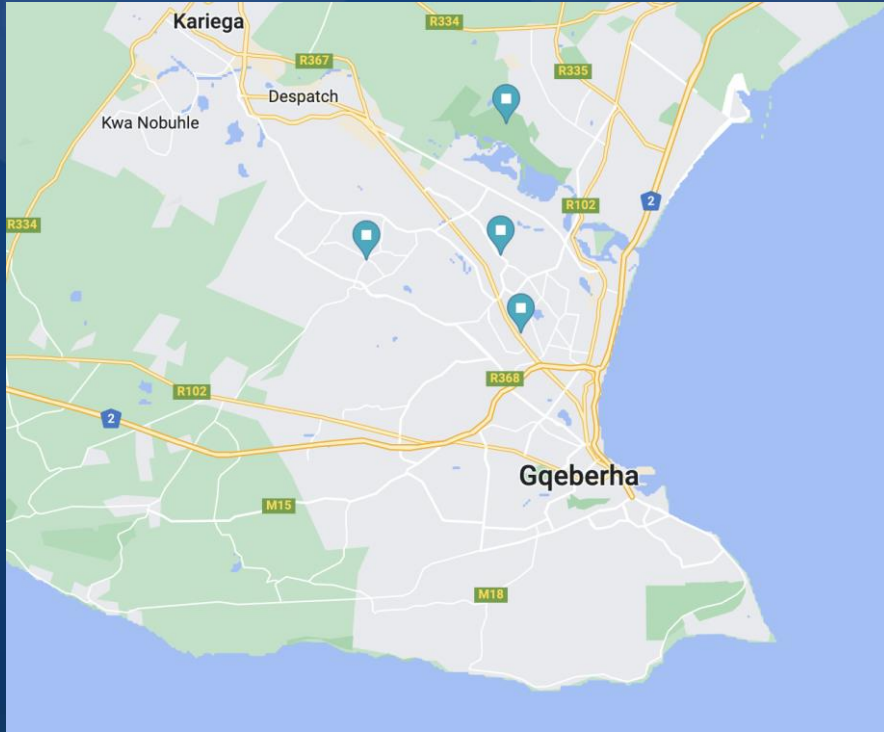
Study aim

- To assess prevalence of sexual violence perpetration and explore its associated risk factors among young adolescent males in South African peri-urban townships



Methods

Study setting



- 9 public schools in four areas of Gqeberha, South Africa
 - 5 primary schools
 - 4 secondary schools
 - Mixture of isiXhosa (n=5) and Afrikaans (n=4) speaking
- Enrolled from Feb-Nov 2022 into a cluster RCT testing a sexual violence prevention intervention

Data collection

- Baseline survey among male participants in the cRCT (n=558)
- Participants included adolescent males, aged 10-19
- Survey conducted in the classroom setting by trained research assistants



Measures

Outcome

- Sexual violence perpetration, past 12 months
 - Forced, coerced, or sex with an incapacitated partner or non-partner – 8-items
 - ‘Offline’ sexual harassment – 5-items
 - Technology-facilitated-SV behaviors towards partner and non-partners – 4-items

Covariates

- Age, race, no. of household members, ever in relationship

Risk factors

- Gender-equitable attitudes (victim blaming, hypermasculinity, men take responsibility, sexual relationship stereotypes) – 24-items
- Alcohol use, ever – 1-item
- Experience of sexual violence, ever – 5-items



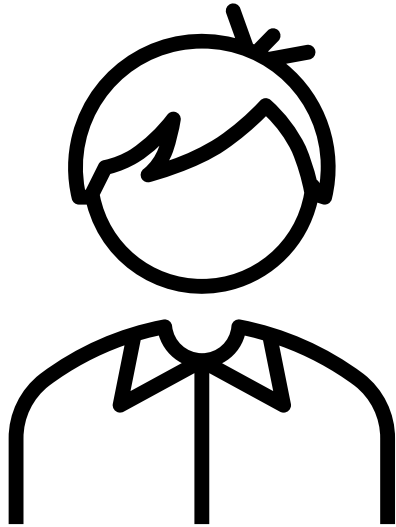
Analysis

- Descriptive statistics summarizing participant characteristics, prevalence of SV perpetration
- Generalized estimating equation with Poisson regression analyzing association between SV perpetration and risk factors
 - Accounting for school clusters of varying sizes
 - Adjusted for age, race, household composition, and relationship status



Results

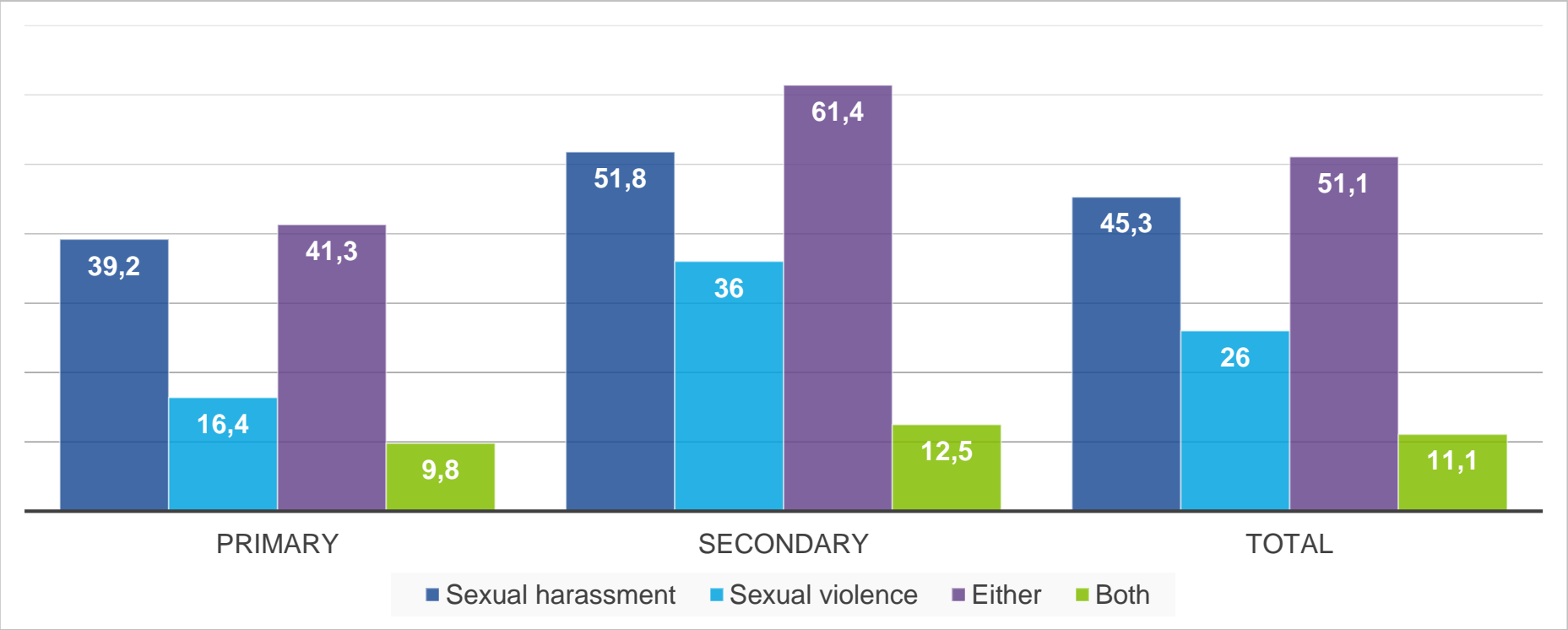
Participant characteristics



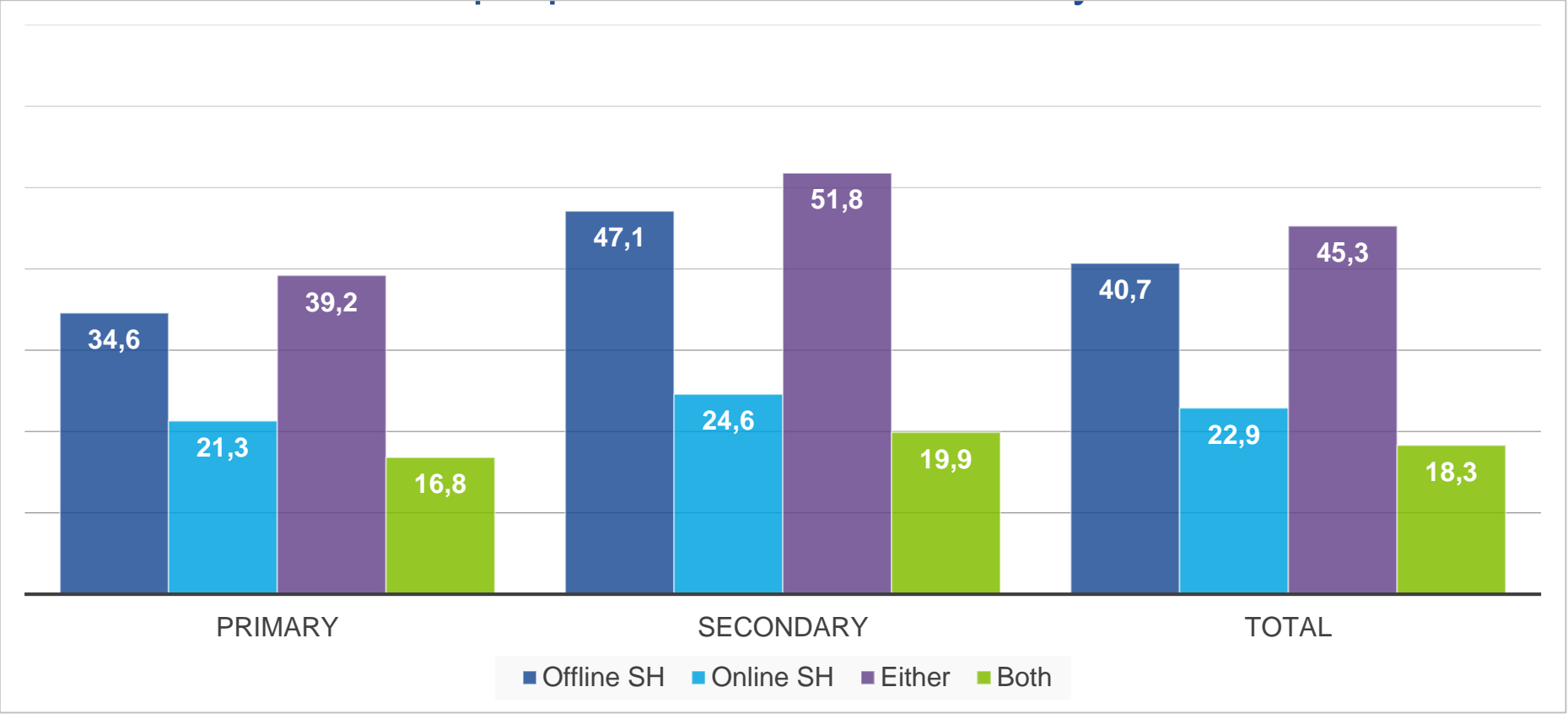
- Mean age 13
- 51% in primary school
- Predominately identify as Black (87%)
- 69% ever had a girlfriend/boyfriend
- Mean gender norms score of 53.3 (SD: 10.7)*
- 47% ever drank alcohol
- 25% reported SV experience, ever

*Range: 24-96 higher scores indicate more inequitable beliefs

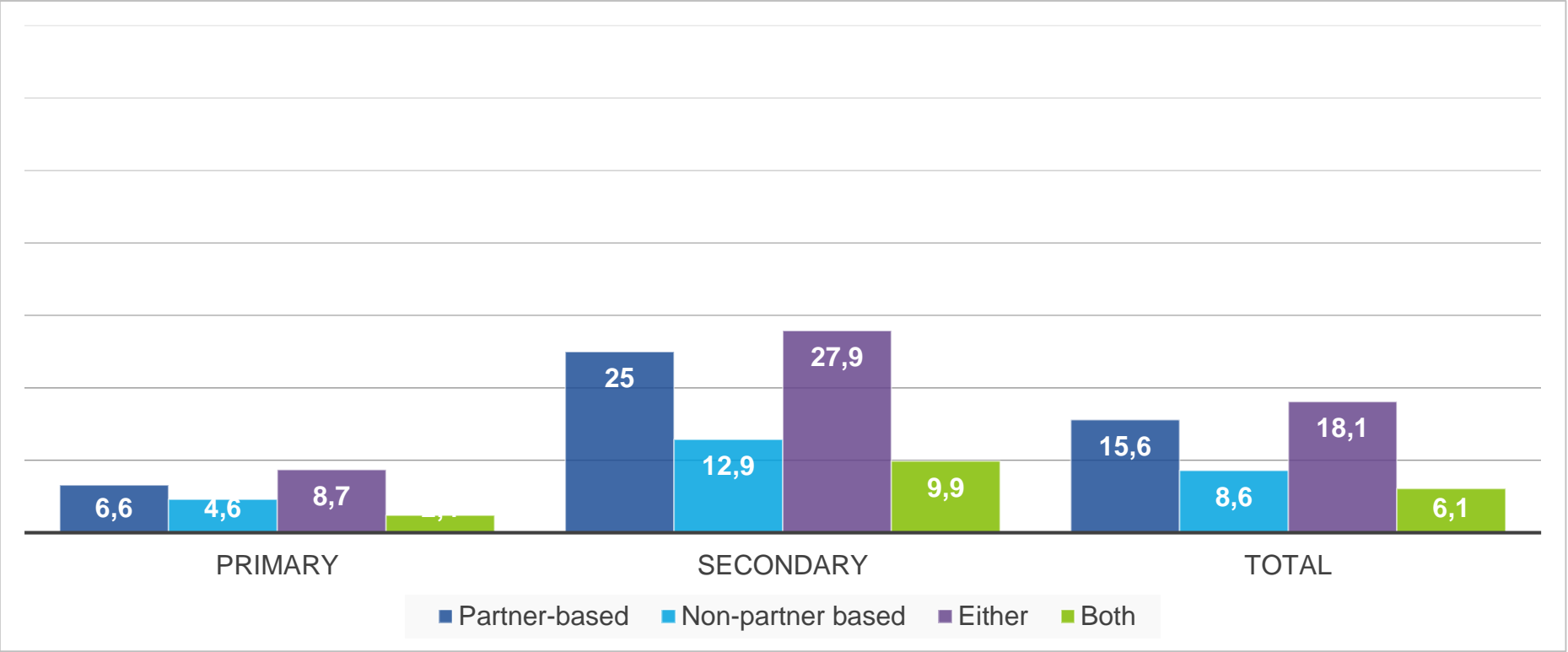
Sexual harassment or violence perpetration, overall and by school level



Sexual harassment perpetration, overall and by school level



Sexual violence perpetration, overall and by school level



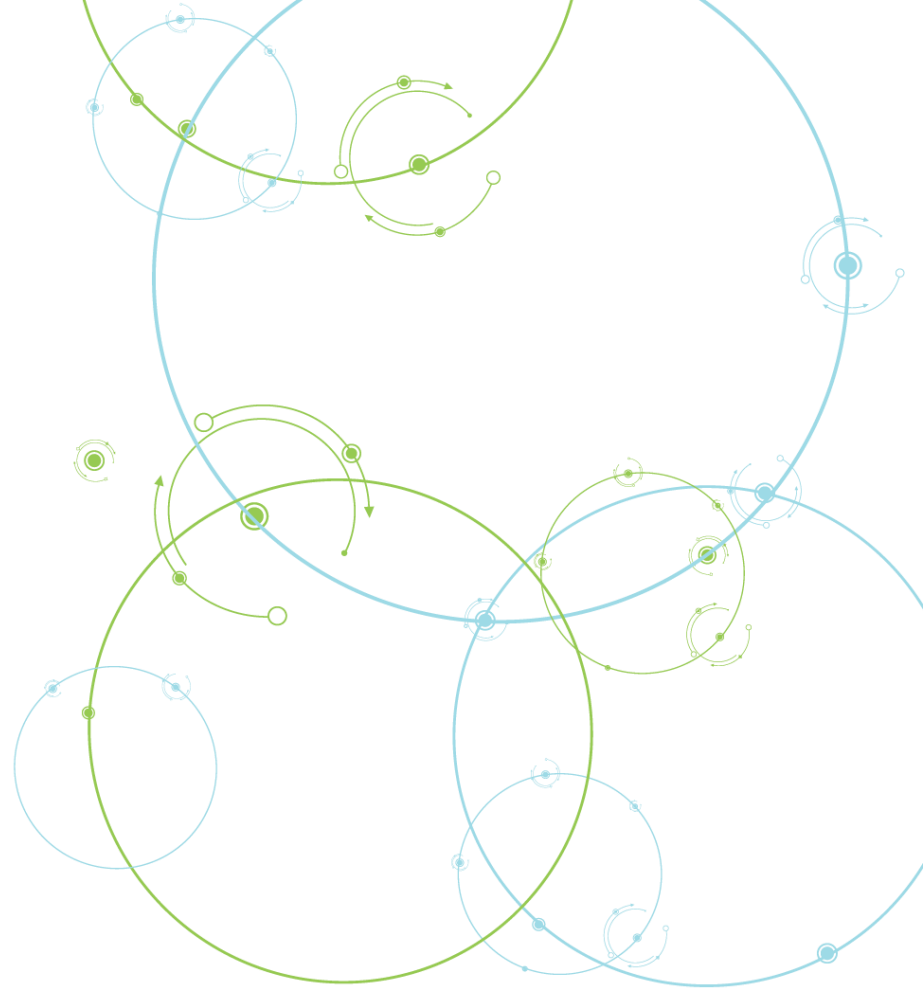
Associations between SV perpetration and risk factors

	adjRR	95% CI	P-value
Experience of SV	2.53	1.46-4.42	0.008
Ever drank alcohol	1.39	1.05-1.85	0.03
Gender norms	1.35	0.45-3.95	0.51

Adjusted for age, ethnicity, household composition, and intimate partner status. Gender norms scale standardized according to SD, thus represents RR associated with each change in standard deviation (10.7 pts).

Conclusion

- High levels of self-reported SV perpetration – harassment or contact violence (51%)
- Offline and online harassment behaviors start in primary schools
- Strong association between perpetration and having been victimized and with alcohol use, in this setting



Recommendations

- Need to start early with SV prevention for boys, including preventing and responding to their own SV experiences
- Prevention should address harassment, online and offline
- Alcohol use as another entry point / target area for violence prevention, even among relatively young adolescent males



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