Victim refuses to cooperate: A mixed methods examination of complainant cooperation in sexual assault cases involving adolescent victims

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Abstract

Existing research has firmly established the importance of complainant cooperation in sexual assault (SA) case outcomes. Relatively little research, however, has focused on identifying the factors that impact the likelihood of cooperation with police. Even fewer studies focus explicitly on the cooperation decisions of adolescent complainants, a problematic gap in research considering that cooperation is more difficult to establish and maintain with younger victims. This study uses data on SAs reported to Los Angeles police to address this issue. Because the contextual factors associated with SA experiences and cooperation decisions can vary dramatically depending on complainant age, this study estimates a model of cooperation that includes age-specific factors (e.g., victim age, suspect age, parent/relative/caregiver case participation). Additionally, this study discusses how police perceptions and practices likely interact with complainant characteristics to impact cooperation decisions. To further understand adolescent cooperation with police, this study incorporates a qualitative analysis of complainant reasons for withdrawing cooperation. The inclusion of qualitative information on complainant cooperation withdrawal provides evidence of additional steps police may need to take in order to establish and maintain cooperation with adolescent complainants.

Introduction

Victim cooperation plays a salient role in sexual assault (SA) case processing (Kaiser et al., 2017; O'Neal, 2017), with extant research emphasizing the prominent role cooperation has in predicting important case outcomes (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Dawson & Dinovitzer, 2001; Kerstetter & Van Winkle, 1990; O'Neal et al., 2016; Spohn & Tellis, 2014). Despite the importance of complainant cooperation in case outcomes, cooperation with police is often difficult to acquire and maintain (Roesler & Wind, 1994; Tellis & Spohn 2008). This is particularly true for younger (i.e., adolescent) victims whose cooperation may be hindered by fears of retaliation, punishment from others, being perceived as an illegitimate victim, their family's reputation being tarnished, and shame (Roesler & Wind, 1994). Cooperation reluctances complicate case processing, as cooperation impacts desirable case outcomes, such as a greater likelihood of suspect identification, arrest, and charging (Dawson & Dinovitzer, 2001; Spohn et al., 2001; Spohn & Tellis, 2014; Tasca et al., 2013). We use the terms victim and complainant interchangeably, given that false reports of SA are low. A recent study found a meta-analytic false report rate of roughly 5% (Ferguson & Malouff, 2016). Therefore, we approach each SA allegation as true by using validating language (e.g., victim) to demonstrate that we believe individuals who come forward to report SA. In addition, we use the term "criminal-legal system" (CLS) as opposed to "criminal justice system" because questions still remain whether sexual assault victims receive justice from the system (Spohn, 2020).

Due to the importance of victim cooperation in SA case outcomes, it is necessary to examine the factors that encourage or discourage cooperation (O'Neal, 2017). Few studies have explored victim cooperation in SA cases specifically, with even less research focusing on the cooperation decisions of adolescent complainants. Case processing research in general has neglected to pay sufficient attention to cases involving adolescent complainants (but see: Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2015; Meeker et al., 2019; Stein & Nofziger, 2008). Furthermore, SA case processing studies that include adolescents in their samples have yielded mixed findings (Beichner & Spohn, 2012; Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2015). Although there has been recent movement to examine criminal-legal (CL) actor decision making in cases involving adolescent complainants (e.g., arrest, initial filing; Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2015; Meeker et al., 2019; O'Neal & Hayes, 2020; Stein & Nofziger, 2008), contemporary cooperation research has neglected to consider the unique experiences of adolescent victims.

The current research contributes to the limited victim cooperation literature by determining some of the factors that predict cooperation with police in SA cases involving adolescent complainants. Because research examining the CL response to SA has historically focused on adult victims, a dearth of research exists regarding the CL response to adolescent complainants. This is problematic, as the situational factors associated with SA experiences and cooperation decisions can vary dramatically depending on the age of the victim. Additionally, research suggests that police interactions and attitudes toward complainants can vary by complainant age (Campbell et al., 2012; O'Neal & Hayes, 2020), an important consideration given that police practices and perceptions likely interact with victim characteristics to affect cooperation decisions (O'Neal, 2017). Therefore, this study estimates a model of cooperation that includes theoretically-relevant age-specific factors that may influence adolescent complainant cooperation. In order to further understand victim cooperation, this study incorporates a qualitative analysis of complainant reasons for withdrawing cooperation.

Literature Review: Adolescent Victim Cooperation in Sexual Assault Cases

As soon as SA victims initiate contact with the criminal-legal system (CLS), they encounter numerous decision points regarding their cooperation. Victim cooperation begins with the initial report of the incident and concludes with prosecution (Dawson & Dinovitzer, 2001; Kaiser et al., 2017; O'Neal, 2017). Research examining the victim's decision to engage the CLS began in the 1970's with rape law reforms facilitating discussions of SA reporting and victim participation with the legal system (Bachman, 1998; Horney & Spohn, 1991). Scholars believed that reform would increase reporting to the police (Bachman, 1998; Horney & Spohn, 1991); however, SA incidents remain underreported. Indeed, recent estimates indicate that only 25% of sexual victimizations were reported to police in 2018 (Morgan & Oudekerk, 2019). Like SAs involving adults, adolescent SA victimization is underreported and suffers from case attrition (Black et al., 2011; Eaton et al., 2012). According to Eaton and colleagues (2012), the

prevalence of reporting for SAs among adolescents is lower than the average prevalence rate of adult reporting (11.8% reporting rate for adolescent females). This suggests that differences between adult and adolescent SA case processing starts early with the victim's decision to activate police response.

The likelihood of cooperation and the factors that impact cooperation decisions may be different between adults and adolescents due to differential experiences and case factors between the two age groups. For example, research suggests that adolescent victims may not report their sexual victimization due to memory repression and may express worry about how the incident will impact the family (Roesler & Wind, 1994). Additionally, adolescent victims tend to disclose their victimization to parental figures as opposed to formal entities (Finkelhor & Wolak, 2003; Hanson, et al., 2003). Adolescents are more likely to know their perpetrators compared to adult SA victims; they are less likely to press charges due to this relationship (Muram et al., 1995). Finally, adolescent complainants are more likely to have a parent involved in the processing of their case (Muram et al., 1995). Given that approximately 30% of self-reported sexual victimization occurs in adolescence, (Black et al., 2011; Finkelhor et al., 2001; Smith et al., 2018), it is important to understand the factors that influence adolescent victims' cooperation with the CLS—especially since case processing research continues to highlight the importance of cooperation in case outcomes (Kaiser, et al., 2017; O'Neal, 2017). Below, we discuss victim cooperation in SA cases, with special attention paid to adolescent complainants and age-related factors. Given that adolescent cooperation in SA cases is relatively under-studied, we provide a broad overview of the complainant cooperation literature that includes adult and adolescent samples.

Cooperation with Police

Victims consider multiple factors when deciding to cooperate (or not) with the criminal-legal system. In fact, scholarship finds that victim cooperation increases when certain victim, suspect, and case characteristics are present (Bouffard, 2000; Kaiser et al., 2017; O'Neal, 2017; Schuller & Stewart, 2000; Tellis & Spohn, 2008). For example, SA victims are more likely to cooperate with police when they perceive their experience as a serious crime (Hirschel & Hutchison, 2003; Kaiser et al., 2017; Kerstetter & Van Winkle, 1990; Kingsnorth & MacIntosh, 2004; McLeod, 1983) and if the victim suffer injuries from the incident (Alderden & Long, 2016; Kingsnorth & MacIntosh, 2004; McLeod, 1983; Richards et al., 2019). Moreover, victims are more likely to cooperate when their perpetrator is a stranger (Felson & Lantz, 2016; O'Neal, 2017; Richards et al., 2019; Tellis & Spohn, 2008); indeed, research has long highlighted that the suspect/victim relationship influences victim cooperation decisions (Alderden & Long, 2016; Kingsnorth & MacIntosh, 2004; McLeod, 1983; Richards et al., 2019; Tellis & Spohn, 2008). Cooperation is also more likely in cases where evidence is present (Bouffard, 2000; Kerstetter & Van Winkle, 1990; O'Neal, 2017; Tasca et al., 2013); however, evidence in SA cases is hard to obtain (Campbell et al., 2015). For example, SA cases are less likely to involve witnesses to the crime and physical evidence compared to other offenses (Tasca et al., 2013). For these reasons, evidence collection

often becomes dependent on the cooperation of the victim (Bouffard, 2000). On the other hand, certain victim, suspect, and case characteristics decrease the likelihood of complainant cooperation. Specifically, police cooperation decreases if complainants fear retaliation from the perpetrator or if alcohol or drugs were consumed prior to the incident (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1978; Schuller & Stewart, 2000; Tellis & Spohn, 2008). Also, victims are less likely to cooperate when assaulted by an acquaintance or someone they are intimate with (Tellis & Spohn, 2008).

In addition to victim, suspect, and case characteristics, prior literature suggests that police officers' perceptions and treatment of victims, in addition to citizen/police interactions may influence victim cooperation (Hindelang, 1974; Kerstetter & Van Winkle, 1990; Kingsnorth & MacIntosh, 2004; O'Neal, 2017). First, research suggests that there is a trust and confidence gap regarding police between minoritized racial groups (i.e., groups who are "positioned in opposition to a more powerful social group;" D'Ignazio & Klein, 2020) and whites—research has found that minoritized racial groups are particularly suspicious of police officers (Hindelang, 1974). Therefore, victims who belong to minoritized groups may be hesitant to cooperate given historical racial tensions with the police. Also, regarding police perceptions/behavior and victim cooperation, neglecting to adequately investigate cases has been linked to cooperation withdrawal (O'Neal, 2017). This is relevant to victim credibility because investigative effort and resources may decline when officers hold rape myth-supportive beliefs or question the victim's credibility, subsequently resulting in cooperation withdrawal. Further complicating the relationship between officer perceptions and cooperation decisions, SA victims may experience secondary victimization if officers believe that only certain case characteristics are worthy of investigation (Patterson, 2011). Secondary victimization, consequently, can cause cooperation withdrawal with police (Frohmann, 1998), as cooperation is a continuous process—victims can withdraw at any time, they can change their minds about participating, and they can reestablish participation if the investigation is ongoing. Overall, officer credibility assessments are relevant to victim participation decisions with the CLS. Victims with cases characterized by credibility-damaging factors have reported feeling dehumanized, unimportant, emotionally distressed, not believed, and "so disillusioned with the C[L]S that they predicted never seeking help if a future victimization were to occur" (Patterson, 2011, pp. 341; also see O'Neal & Hayes, 2020). These instances of secondary victimization can arguably affect cooperation decisions. The research reviewed above has primarily relied on adult and mixed-aged samples. Although there is relatively little research looking specifically at the factors influencing adolescent victim cooperation in sexual assault cases, extant research in related areas can provide useful information in identifying theoretically relevant age-specific factors.

Identifying age-specific cooperation factors

In addition to relying on the body of cooperation literature above to inform our modeling of adolescent cooperation in sexual assault cases, we identify theoretically-relevant adolescent cooperation variables

based on related peripheral SA research. To begin, research on SA reporting and disclosures suggest that interactions with and participation from family members may impact adolescent cooperation decisions. Research suggests that adolescent victims prefer to disclose their victimization to parental figures as opposed to formal entities (see Finkelhor & Wolak, 2003; Hanson, et al., 2003), which may impact both the formal reporting of the crime as well as subsequent cooperation decisions. For example, victims whose parents or relatives make the initial report may be less willing to cooperate given that they themselves did not bring the incident to the attention of police (see Kingsnorth & Macintosh, 2004), as opposed to those complainants who had a more active role in the reporting stage.

In addition, there is reason to believe that victim credibility factors will be salient in adolescent cooperation decisions. First, research on adult and age-mixed samples suggest that victim credibility factors decrease the likelihood of cooperation with the CLS (Kingsnorth & Macintosh, 2004; Tellis & Spohn, 2008). Indeed, extant scholarship indicates that victims with documented character issues are less likely to cooperate with police (e.g., history of substance use problems; Tellis & Spohn, 2008). Moreover, prior research indicates that victims who engage in activities that are perceived as credibility-damaging (e.g., alcohol use) at the time of the assault are less likely to cooperate with police (Kingsnorth & Macintosh, 2004; Tellis & Spohn, 2008). These credibility-damaging behaviors may be even more relevant to adolescent complainant cooperation since this behavior not only damages credibility (like in adult cases), but also is against the law.

Prior literature notes that victim cooperation is an important factor impacting police decisions in SA case processing (Kaiser et al., 2017; O'Neal, 2017). As briefly noted, police practices and perceptions likely interact with victim characteristics to affect complainant cooperation decisions (O'Neal 2017). For example, victim credibility factors have been found to influence the decision to cooperate (Dawson & Dinovitzer, 2001; Kingsnorth & Macintosh, 2004). However, as O'Neal (2019) points out, police documentation of incident, victim, and suspect characteristics in reports may be different than the actual presence of these characteristics in cases. Instead, the very act of documenting reflects something about police perceptions and beliefs. For example, when the police document that a complainant engaged in alcohol use it does not necessarily mean that she is not credible, but instead, reflects information that the officer became aware of and felt was necessary to document.

Current Study

Relatively few studies have focused on predicting the factors that shape victim cooperation with police in SA cases involving adolescent complainants. Given the importance of victim cooperation in case outcomes, it is important to examine the circumstances that surround participation and refusal. Moreover, there is a need for research to examine the cooperation decisions of previously neglected groups (e.g., adolescents; O'Neal, 2017). Indeed, the majority of scholars responding to the call for increased SA case processing research have focused on adult victims and commonly excludes

adolescent victims from analyses (Alderden & Ullman, 2012; Beichner & Spohn, 2012; Kaiser et al., 2017; O'Neal, 2017; Tasca et al., 2013). The current study uses data on SAs reported to Los Angeles police in 2008 to address this issue. As demonstrated previously, the contextual factors associated with cooperation in SA cases can vary depending on the age of the victim; therefore, this study estimates a model of cooperation that includes age-specific factors that may influence complainant cooperation. Importantly, the current study integrates qualitative information of adolescent complainants' stated reasons for withdrawing or declining cooperation in order to contextualize the barriers adolescent complainants face when deciding whether to cooperate. Overall, the current study aims to answer two research questions: (1) What factors influence complainant cooperation in sexual assault cases involving adolescent victims? (2) What reasons do adolescent complainants give for withdrawing cooperation with police?

Quantitative Methods: Data, Multiple Imputation, and Variables

Quantitative Data

Data used for the current study was originally collected for a large-scale study of policing and prosecuting SA in Los Angeles County (see Spohn & Tellis, 2012). In 2008, Spohn and Tellis (2012) collected 944 SA case files involving female complainants over the age of 12 that were reported to the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) and the Los Angeles County Sheriff Department (LASD). All SA cases reported to the LASD were collected, but due to the numerous cases reported to the LAPD, the cases were stratified by division, and then by case clearance (arrest, exceptional means, investigation continuing, and unfounded). Case files were originally coded using SPSS version 19 (International Business Machines Corp.) for more than 350 variables based on several readings of the case narratives by the original research team (Spohn & Tellis [2012] and a graduate student). Complainants were interviewed by police using identical report documents; however, each interview was distinct in the type of information provided. The coding system was developed by Spohn and Tellis (2012), which examined the narratives and identified contextual themes. Cases were coded for phenomena relating to victim and suspect characteristics, assault characteristics, the victim's experiences with the CLS, and the combined influences of characteristics that result in an activation of CL response. To ensure coding consistency and inter-coder reliability, Spohn and Tellis (2012) reviewed a sample of the case files coded by the graduate student.

For the purpose of this study, adolescence is defined as the period between the ages of 12 and 17. The data collected for Spohn and Tellis's (2012) broader study of case processing limits the minimum age of adolescence included in the current study. However, this restriction is not problematic, as this age range is consistent with prior literature on adolescent sexual victimization (Kann et al., 2016; Meeker, et al., 2019; Stein & Nofziger, 2008). Among the original 944 female respondents, 289 female respondents were between the age of 12 and 17 (31.18% of the original sample). Although SA research

that relies on police data are limited because they reflect only incidents that become known to the CLS, focusing on these cases is justified given that the current study examines the complainant decision to cooperate with police. Police reports are an appropriate source of data because they provide detailed information regarding suspect, victim, assault, and case processing characteristics. Police reports are also fitting because they represent information that police officers are aware of and/or deem important to document, revealing aspects of police perceptions.

Imputation of Missing Data

A modest number of cases (17.1 %) had incomplete data on the variables used in the analysis of the current study—less than 2% of the total data values used in this study were missing. Missing data was observed in the following variables: suspect is a minority: 6.9% missing; parent or relative reported incident to police: 5.9% missing; suspect age: 5.6% missing; whether the victim first disclosed their victimization to a parent or relative: 4.9% missing; whether the suspect threatened to harm the victim or someone else: 2.1% missing. Data were imputed 10 times using the automatic multiple imputation method in SPSS version 25 (International Business Machines Corp.). Although five imputations is often considered the standard (Rubin, 1987), we increased the missing data imputations to 10 to ensure the stability of standard error estimates, confidence intervals, and *p*-values (see Bodner, 2008). Research has established the validity of multiple imputation techniques (Greenland & Finkle, 1995; Van der Heijden et al., 2006). All model diagnostics and analyses were performed separately for the 10 datasets and pooled results are presented. Imputation techniques failed for one case due to numerous empty cells. Listwise deletion was used to handle this single case. The current sample, therefore, includes 288 cases.

Dependent Variable

This study focuses on the complainant decision to cooperate after investigation begins (yes = 1, no = 0). For the original study, Spohn and Tellis (2012) collected data on three cooperation stages: at the time of initial reporting (*n* = 273, 94.8%), once the investigation began (*n* = 208, 72.2%), and after arrest (*n* = 104, 88.8%; percentage based on cases that resulted in arrest). The current study focuses on the decision to cooperate once the investigation began for three reasons. First, most adolescent victims cooperated at the reporting stage. Although understanding why victims decline to cooperate at this stage is important, the implications are less relevant for victim cooperation retention and case attrition. Second, examining the investigation stage allows us to tap into the impact of CL processes (e.g., evidence collection) on complainant decision making. Third, in this sample, 118 cases resulted in arrest. Therefore, examining this decision stage would decrease the sample size by more than half. After all, complainants can only cooperate at the arrest stage if the suspect is actually arrested. Although research shows it is possible for victims to restore cooperation at the arrest stage after initially withdrawing cooperation during the investigation stage (O'Neal, 2017), this phenomena did

not occur in the current sample. Once a victim withdrew cooperation at the investigation stage, they remained uncooperative—further demonstrating the importance of maintaining victim participation at this stage. As shown in Table 1, 72.2% ($n = 208$) of complainants expressed that they would cooperate at the stage under examination in the current study—once the investigation began.

[TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Independent Variables

Table 1 presents summary statistics on the independent variables. These variables are grouped into three categories: 1) age-specific factors 2) complainant credibility factors, and 3) case factors. Variable selection was based on extant victim cooperation and SA case processing research. We provide references to previous studies to justify our variable selection. Relevant to the discussion of variables below, police documentation of complainant, suspect, and case characteristics is different than the actual presence of these characteristics in suspects, complainants, and cases. For example, when an officer documents that a complainant was drinking alcohol, it does not necessarily mean that her behavior was risky, but instead, reflects information that the officer was aware of and felt was important to note.

Age-Specific Factors

Variables measuring age-specific factors include: suspect age, victim age, whether a complainant's parent or relative was witness to the incident, whether a parent or relative reported the incident to the police, and whether a parent or relative was the first person the complainant disclosed their victimization to. Continuous measures were included for both victim age and suspect age (see Dawson & Dinovitzer, 2001; Kingsnorth & MacIntosh, 2004; McLeod, 1983). Victims in this sample reported an average age of 15.3 years. The average age of suspects was 27.0 years. Suspect age was coded based on the police reports and does not necessarily reflect the suspect's self-identification of their own age. Whether a complainant's parent or relative was witness to the incident was coded using a dichotomous indicator (yes = 1, no = 0). Consistent with previous SA case processing research, this variable includes fresh-complaint witnesses. Fresh complaint witnesses are individuals that the victim interacts with after the assault who can corroborate the victim's story based on her behavior, appearance, or some other issue that is consistent with the allegations (Spohn & Tellis, 2012; also see: Alderden & Long, 2016). Almost a third of cases ($n = 81$, 28.1%) documented that either a parent and/or relative were witness to the incident. Whether a parent or relative reported the incident to the police was coded using a dichotomous indicator (yes = 1, no = 0). In about a third ($n = 95$, 33.0%) of these cases, the complainant's parent or relative contacted police to report the incident. Finally, whether the complainant first disclosed their victimization to a parent or relative was included (yes = 1, no = 0). Almost one half ($n = 128$, 44.4%) of complainants disclosed to a parent or relative first.

Complainant Credibility Factors

Variables measuring complainant credibility factors capture occurrences where officers questioned the victim's motive to report, documented the presence of victim mental health issues, documented the presence of victim character issues, and whether the victim reported consuming alcohol before or during the assault.

A dichotomous indicator was used to measure whether the police believed the complainant had a motive to lie about the assault (O'Neal & Hayes, 2020). Officers recorded in 42 cases (14.6%) that the complainant had a motive to lie about being assaulted. The police documentation of complainant mental health issues was measured dichotomously (yes = 1, no = 0), with police documenting that 20 (7.0%) complainants had mental health issues (O'Neal, 2019). One dichotomous indicator was used to measure victim behaviors that could be interpreted by police as damaging her credibility and character. Cases were coded 1 if the complainant had a past pattern of drug use, a past pattern of alcohol use, whether the complainant is a sex worker, whether the complainant has a criminal record, and/or whether the complainant is affiliated with a gang. In this sample, 29 (10.1%) complainants had one or more documented character issues. Finally, whether the victim reported consuming alcohol prior to or during the assault was coded using a dichotomous indicator (yes = 1, no = 0). Police reports documented that the majority of victims did not consume alcohol prior to or during the assault—approximately one-fifth of victims engaged in alcohol use ($n = 56$, 19.4%).

Case factors

Variables measuring case factors are categorized into three groups, including indicators of case seriousness, evidentiary strength, and demographic and agency variables. Regarding case seriousness, variables consistent with aspects of aggravated rape and whether the suspect threatened the victim were included. We include variables that capture if the suspect used or threatened a weapon, if there were multiple suspects to the incident, and whether there was collateral injury to the victim (see Estrich, 1987). The first variable is a 9-item variety score for *victim injury*, which combines dichotomous measures for the presence of *bruises*, *cuts*, *burns*, *broken bones*, *stab wounds*, *internal injuries*, *genital injuries*, *bite marks*, and *choke marks*. These dummy variables alone do not capture the number or severity of injuries. For example, one cannot compare injury severity of a complainant who reported receiving several bruises during an assault and a victim that reported one genital injury. Therefore, these variables were combined to capture the number of different types of injuries indicated in the report. This strategy follows previous case processing research that argues that the more various or extensive the injuries, the more serious the assault (Kaiser, et al., 2017). One third ($n = 93$, 32.3%) of complainants reported being injured at the time of the assault—complainants reported between zero and four types of injuries ($M = 0.48$). Weapon use was documented in approximately 10% of cases ($n =$

30). Regarding threats, 16.3% ($n = 47$) of cases documented a suspect who threatened the victim prior to or during the assault.

Tapping into strength of evidence in a case, we include a measure that captures the degree of physical evidence type collected from the scene of the incident or from the victim or suspect. A 9-item variety score for physical evidence collection is included that combines dichotomous indicators for the presence of clothing, semen, skin, fingerprints, blood, hair, or bedding ($M = .55$). Physical evidence collection was documented in 34.7% ($n = 100$) of the cases in this sample—of the cases with documented evidence, between one and five types were collected ($M = .55$).

Dummy variables were included to capture the suspect-complainant relationship (stranger, intimate, parent/relative, and nonstranger); cases involving complainants and suspects who are strangers serve as the reference category (see Spohn & Tellis, 2012). In this sample, 77 suspects (27.0%) were strangers to the complainant, 38 (13.0%) were intimates, 55 (19.0%) were a parent or relative, and 118 (41.0%) were a nonstranger (e.g., friend, acquaintance, etc.). Dichotomous variables were included for complainant race (victim racial/ethnic minority = 1, white = 0). This coding strategy was used based on research that suggests that racial/ethnic minorities are less likely to cooperate with police. The majority of complainants in this sample were racial/ethnic minorities ($n = 230$, 79.9%). The same measure was included for suspect race. The majority of suspects in this sample were racial/ethnic minorities ($n = 234$, 81.3%). Race/ethnicity was coded based on the police reports and reflects police perceptions of race rather than, necessarily, complainant or suspect self-identification of their own race. A variable that measures what agency the case was reported to (LAPD = 1, LASD = 0) was included. This variable controls for potential cooperation differences between victims who reported to the LAPD and victims who reported to the LASD. The majority of cases in this sample were under the jurisdiction of the LASD ($n = 208$, 72.2%).

Qualitative Methods: Data and Case Review

Qualitative data are also examined to supplement quantitative findings. Detailed summaries were written during the coding stage to ensure reliability and as a means of preserving qualitative case file information. Notes included information related to incident narratives, reported post-assault dynamics, documented complainant and suspect characteristics, reported precipitating events and threats, and interviews of the victim, suspect, and witnesses. Given the aim of the current study, qualitative case review was restricted to cases involving complainants between the ages of 12 and 17.

In this study, 80 complainants declined to cooperate at the investigation stage. Of these cases, 63 documented the specific reasons the complainant refused to continue with case processing. It is possible that victims in these cases provided reasons for withdrawing cooperation, but police did not record it – case files reflect information officers believe is important to note. Consequently, 17 were

excluded from the qualitative analysis because the reason the complainant withdrew cooperation was not documented in the report. In these cases, the complainant terminated cooperation but did not provide the investigating officer with a reason or the reason was not recorded, making categorization impossible. Although there is no definite guide to selecting qualitative sample sizes, scholars agree that saturation generally does not require more than 60 participants (Charmaz, 2006; Creswell, 1998; Morse, 1994). Therefore, the current sample size allows for identification, descriptive redundancy, and theoretical saturation of cooperation themes.

Methods: Analytic Strategies

Quantitative Analytic Techniques

To ensure the absence of multicollinearity in this sample, we begin by calculating the variance inflation factors (VIF) and tolerance levels for the variables included in the model. Next, we estimate the effects of age-specific factors, police perceptions, and case factors on the complainant's decision to cooperate at the investigation stage. Since the dependent variable is dichotomized, a logistic regression model is used. All model diagnostics and analyses were performed separately for the ten datasets and pooled results are presented for the logistic regression analysis. When discussing diagnostics, we present results across all imputed datasets.

Qualitative Analytic Techniques

Detailed qualitative data from police reports are used to identify the explicit reasons adolescent complainants gave for terminating cooperation with police. A thorough and systematic examination of the data was undertaken to assign codes to cooperation-related themes. Each case file was read in full while performing a line-by-line text analysis of the various documents. Analysis operated in an inductive framework; coding was substance derived, not resulting from preconceived notions (Charmaz, 2014). Detailed notes were written during coding to ensure reliability and to assist in constant comparison (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Constant comparison involves determining whether codes generated in one case apply across cases (Charmaz, 2014). This step is necessary to the process as it facilitates theory development (Charmaz, 2014)—a feature of qualitative research that enhances both reliability and validity (Morse et al., 2002). Given the objectives of this study, the emphasis in note-taking was on highlighting situational characteristics and consequences of SA and on gaining an understanding of why adolescent complainants withdraw cooperation with police. Using this approach allows for the use of systematic strategies centered on the idea of theory development from research grounded in data, rather than deducing testable hypotheses from existing theories (Charmaz, 2006). This methodology is well suited for the data in this study given the underdeveloped nature of adolescent-specific SA case processing research.

Results

Quantitative Results: Predicting Adolescent Complainant Cooperation

Before presenting results from the logistic regression predicting the likelihood of cooperation in SA cases involving adolescent complainants, a discussion of model diagnostics is needed. Model diagnostics were performed separately for all 10 datasets; therefore, diagnostics are not presented in table form. VIFs and tolerance levels for each predictor were reviewed to ensure parameter estimates are not biased due to multicollinearity (Pratt & Godsey, 2006). None of the VIFs exceed the “cutoff” point of 4.0 (Fox, 1991) and none of the tolerance levels fell below 0.2 (Hair et al., 2010). Thus, diagnostics for each imputed dataset suggest that the parameter estimates are not biased due to multicollinearity.

[TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE]

Table 2 presents the logistic regression pooled results from the ten computed imputations. As these data indicate, complainant cooperation decisions were based on age-specific factors, police perceptions of complainant behavior, case seriousness, evidentiary strength, and demographic characteristics. Regarding age-specific factors, adolescent complainants were two times more likely to cooperate if a parent and/or family member witnessed the incident ($b = .837, p = .041$). Additionally, complainants with older suspects were more likely to cooperate with police ($b = .046, p = .018$). Police perceptions negatively affected cooperation—adolescent complainants were less likely to cooperate if character issues were documented ($b = -1.200, p = .015$) or the police believed complainants had a motive to lie ($b = -.857, p = .036$). Regarding case seriousness, complainants were less likely to cooperate in cases involving the threat, display, or use of a weapon ($b = -1.283, p = .013$) and more likely to cooperate if the suspect threatened to harm the victim or the victim’s family ($b = .919, p = .054$). Regarding evidentiary strength, complainants were more likely to cooperate in cases with more types of evidence collected ($b = .501, p = .021$). Finally, victims were less likely to cooperate in cases with a minority suspect ($b = -1.238, p = .028$).

Qualitative Results: Why Adolescent Complainants Refuse To Cooperate

Eighty complainants in the current sample withdrew cooperation at the investigation stage. Of these cases, 63 documented the specific reasons for declining to continue with case processing. As Table 3 indicates, reasons for refusing to cooperate fell into seven categories.

[TABLE 3 ABOUT HERE]

Theme 1: Not interested in continuing/wants to put matter behind them

Victims in this category ($n = 31$; 49.2%) expressed that they were *not interested in continuing with the CL process* (subtheme 1a) or expressed that they wanted to *put the matter behind them* (subtheme 1b). Five of the complainants categorized into theme 1 did not elaborate on their reasons; the investigating officer paraphrased their reason for withdrawing cooperation (subtheme 1a and/or 1b). The remaining complainants in the category elaborated on their reasons for declining to continue cooperation. Regarding subtheme 1a, 16 complainants made explicit comments regarding the CL process. Complainants in this subcategory expressed that they were “unwilling to testify,” “not desirous of prosecution,” “would not meet the investigating officer for further interviews,” “would not respond to calls [from the investigating officer],” “does not want to go to court,” “will not answer the contact letter,” etc. One complainant explained that her cooperation was contingent on whether the witness cooperated—she withdrew cooperation when the witness declined to cooperate. Of interest in subtheme 1a is the support garnered by parents, guardians, and relatives. Within this subtheme, four parents/guardians/relatives explicitly supported the cooperation withdrawal of the complainant. In these cases, parents/guardians/and relatives noted “support[ing] her (the victim’s) decision” and withdrawing cooperation in their child’s interest. Regarding subtheme 1b, 10 complainants made explicit comments indicating that they wanted to move on/put the incident behind them. For example, complainants in this subcategory expressed “want[ing] to put it behind her and move on with her life,” the incident was “too painful and she wanted to put it behind her,” “not want[ing] to upset the normalcy” of her life, etc. Two complainants in this subcategory said that they did not want to talk about the incident. One complainant stated she was “stressed out” and could “not face the suspect.”

Theme 2: Self-blame/excusing the suspect’s behavior

Victims in this category ($n = 8$; 12.7%) *made excuses for suspect’s behavior* (subtheme 2a) or *blamed themselves for the violence* they suffered (subtheme 2b). Two of the complainants categorized into theme 2 did not elaborate on their reasons; the investigating officer paraphrased their reason for withdrawing cooperation (subtheme 2a and/or 2b). The remaining six complainants provided context for the cooperation withdrawal. Three complainants made excuses for the suspect behavior, mentioning that they withdrew cooperation because they “did not want to get [the suspect] in trouble” or because the suspect was “no longer bothering” her. One complainant in this subtheme said that the “incident occurred several years ago when [the suspect] was only 17 years old.” Regarding subtheme 2b, three complainants made comments that shifted the blame away from the suspect and onto themselves, indicating that they were “willing participants” or “went along with the events that came before the sex.”

Theme 3: Initially reported for reasons other than prosecution

Victims in this category ($n = 5$; 7.9%) withdrew cooperation because they initially *reported for reasons other than prosecution of the suspect* (subtheme 5a and 5b). All five complainants in this category

elaborated on their decision to withdraw cooperation. Three complainants reported that they only contacted police because their therapist and/or social worker told them they had to report (subtheme 5a). Another complainant reported that she contacted the police because she “was doing poorly in school” as a result of her victimization (subtheme 5b). The remaining complainant in this category withdrew cooperation because she had only reported in efforts of obtaining a restraining order (subtheme 5b).

Theme 4: Relationship-based

One complainant (1.6%) reported that the nature of her *relationship* with the suspects influenced her cooperation withdrawal decision. In this case, the victim told the investigating officer that she would “not answer his questions” and would “not testify in court against her brothers.”

Theme 5: Fear of the suspect or other consequences

Victims in this category ($n = 7$; 11.1%) withdrew cooperation because they *feared suspect retaliation* (subtheme 7a) or *other consequences* that could result from proceeding with police (subtheme 7b). Regarding subtheme 7a, four victims reported that they withdrew cooperation because they feared the suspect. One victim reported that she was “not brave enough to testify because [the suspect] is a crazy drug dealer” and because she “fears retaliation.” Two other victims in this theme told the investigating officers that they feared the suspect would kill them or their loved ones. The last complainant in this subtheme was fearful because the suspect “is a known gang member who owns a gun.” The remaining individuals in this theme feared other consequences of cooperation (subtheme 7b). For example, one complainant said she did not want to proceed with the case because of her “past behavior, and her actions the night of the incident might be the subject of serious defense questioning.” The other complainant in this subtheme said she did “not want to be considered a ‘rat’ for revealing the suspect’s identity.”

Theme 6: Does not want the suspect arrested

Five victims (7.9%) in this sample declined to cooperate because they *did not want the suspect to be arrested*. One complainant did not elaborate on her reasoning. The remaining complainants told the investigating officers they “did not want anyone to go to jail,” did not want the suspect to “go to jail or be put through all that,” “did not want anything to happen to the suspect,” and “did not want the suspect arrested or put in jail.”

Theme 7: Recanted

Six victims (9.5%) in this sample withdrew cooperation after *recanting* their allegations. Four of the complainants in the category did not elaborate on their withdrawal; the investigating officer

paraphrased the reason for ceasing participation. One complainant withdrew cooperation after she admitted to lying about the assault in hopes of being placed in her mother's care. The other victim in this category told the investigating officer that she "made up the assault" because she did not want to "get in trouble for running away from group home."

Discussion

This study responds to recent calls for research examining the processing of SA cases involving adolescent complainants and the cooperation decisions of previously ignored groups (Meeker et al., 2019; O'Neal, 2017; O'Neal & Hayes, 2020). Specifically, this work addressed a gap in the victim cooperation literature by predicting the factors that shape cooperation with police in cases involving adolescent complainants. This research focus is the result of two statements. First, and more generally, there are two key factors in victims' engagement with the CL process: police perceptions and victim decision making (O'Neal, 2017). Problematic officer perceptions can result in responses that deny appropriate protection to certain victims; therefore, it is important to discuss how police attitudes toward adolescent complainants and case characteristics can affect complainant cooperation decisions. Second, the contextual and situational factors associated with SA can vary depending on the victim's age. Therefore, this study estimated a model of cooperation that included factors unique to adolescent SA case processing and cooperation such as parent and relative participation in the case.

This study contributes to prior research on SA case processing and complainant cooperation in several important ways. First, this study focuses on victim cooperation in SA cases involving adolescent complainants. Extant SA case processing research has too commonly neglected to explicitly examine incidents involving adolescent complainants (but see Campbell et al., 2012; Campbell et al., 2015; Meeker et al., 2019; Stein & Nofziger, 2008). Second, this study contextualizes cooperation decisions in cases involving adolescent complainants by qualitatively examining the reasons complainants gave for refusing to cooperate. This study suggests that cooperation decisions are shaped by age-specific factors, police perceptions, and case characteristics. These findings shed light on the complex nature of complainant cooperation in SA case processing. Accordingly, four issues warrant further discussion.

First, our results support arguments that future case processing research should consider the unique experiences of adolescent complainants and work toward identifying whether cooperation decisions and reasons for withdrawal vary by complainant age. In this study, complainants were less likely to cooperate in cases involving older suspects. This finding may speak to discussions of age-related power differentials between suspects and complainants. Specifically, it is possible that older suspects may rely on their "position of authority" and have a heightened ability to use coercion to instill fear in adolescents, potentially resulting in withdrawal of cooperation with the CLS. Moreover, coercion may be exercised by exploiting the victim's young age and lack of maturity to legally consent (Tracy et al., 2012). Additionally, complainants were more likely to cooperate if a parent or relative was witness to

the crime. This finding may suggest that adolescent complainants need additional support structures in place to fully cooperate with the CL process. Although victims of SA benefit from exercising their voice, research suggests that adolescents are at a developmental stage where support and guidance is needed when making difficult decisions involving the CLS (Fehler-Cabral & Campbell, 2013).

Navigating the CLS is a cumbersome and complex endeavor that can be confusing; for adolescents, these feelings may be exacerbated. Our findings suggest that the presence of a support system may be imperative for continued adolescent cooperation. Recall, research examining the CL response to sexual violence has traditionally left adolescents out of their samples or examined samples without considering the ways age may affect case outcomes. This research trend is problematic, as the current study indicates that age-specific variables shape cooperation decisions in incidents that involve adolescent complainants. Therefore, valuable information may be missed if researchers examine the cooperation decisions of victims without acknowledging that the contextual and situational factors associated with victimization can vary according to the complainant's age.

Second, regarding police perceptions, the findings of this study suggest ways in which police and CL professionals can increase complainant cooperation in cases involving adolescents. Most importantly, complainants were less likely to cooperate with police if the investigating officer believed that that victim had a motive to lie about the assault or documented that the complainant suffered from character issues. This study provides further support regarding the ways in which police practices and perceptions likely interact with complainant characteristics to affect cooperation decisions (Kerstetter & Van Winkle, 1990; O'Neal, 2017; O'Neal & Hayes, 2020). O'Neal (2019), in their study of police victim credibility assessments, argued that the police need to prioritize dismantling rape myths or they will continue engaging in policing strategies that deny full protection to certain types of victims. O'Neal (2019) was referring to victims who were perceived to have character flaws and whose cases did not fit pervasive societal views about what constitutes a "genuine victim" and "real rape." The current study, couple with recent qualitative work by O'Neal & Hayes (2020), suggests that the same may apply to teenage complainants. O'Neal and Hayes (2020), in their qualitative study of sex crimes detective interviews, found that three-fourths of detectives mentioned that teenagers lie about SA. In the current study, complainants were less likely to cooperate if the investigating officer believed that she had a motive to lie. This suggests a need to actively work against myths surrounding false reporting (O'Neal & Hayes, 2020). In addition to denying protection, rape myth acceptance—like the belief that women lie about sexual victimization—contributes to underreporting and case attrition (Bachman, 1998; Edward & McLeod, 1999). Developing appropriate SA responses is important for police officers, as they are often the first interaction victims have with the CLS (O'Neal, 2019). Working toward dismantling rape myths may increase reporting and decrease attrition.

The findings of the current study support previous SA research that suggests that case seriousness and evidentiary strength predict cooperation decisions (Bouffard, 2000; Hirschel & Hutchison, 2003;

Kingsnorth & MacIntosh, 2004; McLeod, 1983; O’Neal, 2017; Tasca et al., 2013). Regarding case factors—specifically case seriousness—complainants were less likely to cooperate if the suspect threatened, displayed, or used a weapon during the assault. This quantitative finding, coupled with qualitative examples surrounding fear of retaliation as it relates to gun ownership and concerns about the suspect killing the complainant, suggests that police may need to develop strategies to ensure that complainants feel safe during case processing so cooperation withdrawal is not fear based. Interestingly, and a somewhat unexpected findings, complainants were more likely to cooperate in cases where the suspect threatened to harm the complainant or the complainant’s family before or during the assault. It may be that suspect verbal threats targeted toward complainants and loved ones are interpreted differently than weapon threats and use. Arguably, the use of or threatening of a weapon may be viewed as more life-threatening and, thus, have a negative effect on complainant cooperation. Future research would benefit from further disentangling findings regarding case seriousness and cooperation. Regarding evidence, complainants were more likely to cooperate when evidence was collected and documented from the scene of the crime, victim, or suspect. Victims receive subtle, yet powerful, messages regarding their worthiness through their interactions with police (Tyler, 1989). It is important to note that all victims who reported to the LAPD or LASD are eligible for a SART exam regardless of the amount of time since the incident. Evidence collection, thus, may communicate to the complainant that their case is being taken seriously, facilitating cooperation.

A third key conclusion of this research study relates to the qualitative findings regarding policies and practices when working with adolescent complainants of SA. Specifically, themes 1, 2, and 5 warrant further discussion. Regarding theme 1, 16 complainants explicitly commented about their unwillingness to testify, go to court, meet with the prosecutor for follow-up interviews, answer police phone calls and contact letters, etc. This qualitative information further supports the idea that adolescent complainants may need additional support from police personnel during the processing of their case. Indeed, the CL process can be difficult to navigate and it is possible that decisions to withdraw cooperation are a result of the inexperience associated with adolescence. Further, scholars have tied decreased reporting in younger adolescence to a lack in skills and/or development to disclose their victimization (Hanson et al., 2003). If police acknowledge these barriers to cooperation they may be better poised to provide enhanced support to adolescent complainants. Notably, the second largest theme uncovered during the qualitative analysis included reasons surrounding victim self-blame and the denial of suspect blame (theme 2). This finding suggests that officers need to work toward dismantling rape myths surrounding victim culpability if they want to gain and maintain complainant cooperation. Regarding theme 5, some victims withdrew cooperation because they feared suspect retaliation or other consequences. This finding speaks to some of the unique experiences of adolescent victims. Although the possibility of retaliation is not exclusive to assaults that happen to adolescents, younger complainants may encounter a heightened fear—especially if the perpetrator is an adult,

authority figure, or relative. Indeed, power differentials related to age may hinder cooperation—complainants may want to cooperate with the police, but see the cost as being too high (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1978). Therefore, officers should work *with* complainants to ensure their safety, so cooperation decisions do not need to be based solely on fear. This may be accomplished through dissemination of additional relevant resource material and referral to advocates and victim service agencies that are available to complainants.

Finally, it is important to discuss the recorded information found in these police reports, with particular attention to police documentation surrounding victim behavior. This discussion is necessary, as this study partly situated adolescent complainant cooperation within the context of police perceptions. Police documentation of complainant characteristics is sometimes different than the actual presence of these characteristics in complainants and cases. For example, when an officer documents that a victim had a motive to lie, it does not necessarily mean that she is not worthy of belief or confidence, but instead, reflects something about police perceptions and attitudes. Moreover, the recording of character issues, such as a pattern of alcohol use, in police reports reveals that officers find this information important to note. Overall, the police reports used in this sample provide a glimpse into police perceptions regarding what officers believe to be salient to case processing. Documentation surrounding complainant behavior, report motivation, mental health, and character issues is potentially problematic because *associated views can deny full protection to complainants who have character traits or act in ways deemed to be problematic by police.*

The above-mentioned contributions notwithstanding, this study is not without limitation. Because few studies focus explicitly on the case processing of SA involving adolescent complainants, replication is required before firm conclusions can be reached. The present study relied on a small number of cases that were reported to two agencies in the same location; therefore, it is exploratory in nature. Also, these cases are not representative of all adolescent sexual victimizations reported in the same timeframe, limiting generalizability. These findings do not represent adolescent SAs that did not come to the attention of the system. Additionally, a limitation includes the inability to verify the accuracy of the information in each case file. Although it cannot be known if the information provided by the investigating officer accurately represents the experiences of those involved, this information does accurately document the information that police officers are aware of and find important to document—which, as previously mentioned, reflects something about officer perceptions (O’Neal, 2017).

Implications

This study provides evidence that adolescent sexual assault cases are deemed worthy of further investigation. As such, future qualitative and quantitative endeavors should consider further examining the relationship between victim age and case processing decisions. Indeed, this study highlights the need for more qualitative research in order to better understand the unique contextual

and situational factors associated with adolescent victim decision making, generally, and in regards to adolescent victims' decision to cooperate, specifically. An important practical implication from this study is that adolescent victims may need additional support relative to adult victims in order to cooperate with police; therefore, police agencies may need additional training on how to establish and maintain cooperation with younger sexual assault victims. In order to further support adolescent victims, officers need to dismantle sexual assault myths and ensure complainant safety. Finally, future quantitative and qualitative research endeavors should consider using case file data, as this type of data can provide important contextual information regarding what officers deem important to the case for the consideration of future decision makers.

Conclusion

The present study is an attempt to understand the nuances of complainant cooperation, a salient issue influencing CL case processing. Ultimately, we focused on the cooperation decision-making stage after initial reporting. Although understanding why complainants decline to cooperate at the reporting stage is important, the implications are less prominent for complainant retention and case attrition. Also, examining the reporting stage makes it more difficult to assess the impact of officer behavior on complainant decision making. Therefore, by examining the investigation stage, the current study was able to assess how officer perceptions and the treatment of victims can influence cooperation beyond the initial reporting stage. Case characteristics related to complainant age were found to impact complainant cooperation. Future research is needed to uncover the ways in which police can improve the response to adolescent complainants. First, subsequent studies should replicate the current work by examining which factors shape the cooperation decisions of adolescent complainants. The current study has provided the groundwork for such research, but replication is necessary to move closer to making causal claims. Second, comparative studies should focus on how cooperation decisions in adolescent cases might differ from cooperation decisions made by adult complainants and why such differences occur. This recommended work will contribute to extant research in two areas: complainant cooperation and the limited—but growing—area of adolescent SA case processing.

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Table 1. Adolescent Complainant Cooperation in Sexual Assault Cases:			
Summary Statistics (N=288)			
Variables	Mean or %	Min.	Max.
DEPENDENT VARIABLE			

Complainant will cooperate at investigation stage	72.2%	0	1
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES			
<i>Age- Specific Factors</i>			
Suspect age	27.0	11	74
Complainant age	15.3	12	17
At least one witness to the crime was a parent or relative	28.1%	0	1
Parent or relative reported assault to the police	33.0%	0	1
Complainant first disclosed victimization to parent or relative	44.4%	0	1
<i>Police Perceptions</i>			
<i>Complainant Credibility</i>			
Complainant mental health issues documented in report	7.0%	0	1
Complainant character issues documented in report	10.1%	0	1
Complainant was consuming alcohol before or during assault	19.4%	0	1
Officer believed the complainant had a motive to lie	14.6%	0	1

Case Factors			
<i>Case Seriousness</i>			
Suspect threatened complainant before or during the assault	16.3%	0	1
Suspect threatened, displayed, or used a weapon	10.4%	0	1
Victim injury index	0.48	1	4
More than one suspect	15.3%	0	1
<i>Strength of Evidence</i>			
Physical evidence index	0.55	0	5
<i>Demographic and Agency Characteristics</i>			
Suspect is a stranger (reference)	27.0%	0	1
Suspect is an intimate	13.0%	0	1
Suspect is a parent or relative	19.0%	0	1
Suspect is a nonstranger	41.0%	0	1
Victim minority (reference white)	79.9%	0	1
Suspect minority (reference white)	81.3%	0	0
LAPD (reference LASD)	27.8%	0	1

Table 2. Logistic Regression Analysis Results: Adolescent Complainant Cooperation in Sexual Assault Cases (N = 288)			
	<i>b</i>	S.E.	Exp(b)
INDEPENDENT VARIABLES			
<i>Age- Specific Factors</i>			
Suspect age	.046*	.019	1.047
Complainant age	-.002	.114	.998
At least one witness to the crime was a parent or relative	.837*	.410	2.310
Parent or relative reported assault to the police	-.238	.397	.788
Complainant first disclosed victimization to parent or relative	-.169	.367	.845
<i>Police Perceptions</i>			
<i>Complainant Credibility</i>			
Complainant mental health issues documented in report	1.111	.699	3.038
Complainant character issues documented in report	-1.200*	.495	.301

Complainant was consuming alcohol before or during assault	.172	.451	1.188
Officer believed the complainant had a motive to lie	-.857*	.410	.424
Case Factors			
<i>Case Seriousness</i>			
Suspect threatened complainant before or during the assault	.919†	.477	2.506
Suspect threatened, displayed, or used a weapon	-1.283*	.515	.277
Victim injury index	-.071	.220	.931
More than one suspect	.398	.467	1.489
<i>Strength of Evidence</i>			
Physical evidence index	.501*	.218	1.650
<i>Demographic and Agency Characteristics</i>			
Suspect is an intimate	-.649	.500	.523
Suspect is a parent or relative	-.092	.552	.912
Suspect is a nonstranger	-.586	.387	.557
Victim minority (reference white)	.023	.476	1.023
Suspect minority (reference white)	-1.238*	.565	.290

LAPD (LASD reference)	-.364	.355	.695
Constant	1.156	1.943	3.176
Hosmer & Lemeshow Test (diagnostics across all imputed datasets suggest the model fits the data well)	Chi-Square	df	Sig
	≥ . 3.163	8	≥ .319
Nagelkerke R ² .292 (mean across imputed datasets)			
Entries are unstandardized coefficients * $p < .05$; † $p = .05$ (two-tailed test)			

Table 3. Why Adolescent Complainants of Sexual Assault Withdraw Cooperation (N = 63)	
	% (n)

Theme 1: Not Interested in Continuing/Wants to Put Matter Behind Them	49.2 (31)
1a: No longer interested with continuing with the CL process	
1b: Wants to put the matter behind her	(16)
Both subthemes (1a and/or 1b): police paraphrased reason in report	(10)
	(5)
Theme 2: Self-Blame/Excusing the Suspect's Behavior	
2a: Makes excuses for the suspect's behavior	12.7% (8)
2b: Blames herself for the incident	(3)
Both subthemes (1a and/or 1b): police paraphrased reason in report	(3)
	(2)
Theme 3: Initially Reported for Reasons Other Than Prosecution	
3a: Reported due to therapist/social worked encouragement	7.9% (5)
3b: Other (e.g., wanted to obtain a restraining order)	(3)
Theme 4: Suspect/complainant Relationship-Based	(2)
Theme 5: Fear of the Suspect or Other Consequences	
5a: Fears suspect retaliation	1.6% (1)
5b: Fears consequences of cooperating	
Theme 6: Does Not Want the Suspect Arrested	11.1% (7)
Theme 7: Recanted	(4)
	(3)
	7.9% (5)
	9.5% (6)