

2008-09

Scottish Crime and Justice Survey

Sexual Victimisation and Stalking



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2008-09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Sexual Victimisation and Stalking

**2008-09 SCOTTISH CRIME AND JUSTICE
SURVEY:
SEXUAL VICTIMISATION AND STALKING**

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In spite of all this support, any errors that may remain in this report are, of course, our own.

TNS-BMRB

15th December 2009

Forthcoming publications

The 2008-09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings was published on November 27th 2009. In addition to the current report, two further supplementary reports on the subjects of partner abuse and illicit drug use will be produced.

As the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) carries national statistics accreditation, publication dates are pre-announced and can be found via the UK National Statistics Publication Hub:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/index.html>

Copies of the reports and other SCJS related Scottish Government publications are available from the survey Internet site:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey>

For further information about the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey and Scottish police recorded crime statistics, please email stuart.king@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or write to: Scottish Crime and Justice Survey, Scottish Government, St Andrew's House – GWR, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG.

This report is a National Statistics output produced to the highest professional standards and free from political interference. It has been produced by researchers from the respected independent social research organisation TNS-BMRB working with Scottish Government Researchers in the Justice Analytical Services Department.

Conventions used in figures and tables

The following conventions are used in the figures and tables for this report, including the annexes.

Figures

Each figure has a title, the data source (survey year etc), a base definition and the unweighted base figures, showing the number of respondents who answered the question / in the specified group.

Unweighted base

All SCJS percentages and rates presented in the tables are based on weighted data (annex 2). Figures and tables show the unweighted base which represents the number of adults aged 16+ interviewed in the specified group.

Percentages

Row or column percentages may not add to 100 per cent due to rounding or because the data are multi-coded.

Most tables present cell percentages where the figures refer to the percentage of respondents who have the attribute being discussed. The complementary percentage to add to 100 per cent is not shown.

A percentage may be quoted in the report text for a single category that is identifiable in the tables only by summing two or more component percentages. In order to avoid rounding errors, the percentage has been recalculated for the single combined category and therefore may differ from the sum of the percentages derived from the tables.

Table abbreviations

' - ' indicates that no respondents gave an answer in the category.

'0' indicates less than 0.5%.

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Executive summary

Introduction

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) is a large-scale continuous survey measuring peoples' experience and perceptions of crime in Scotland. The survey is based on, annually, 16,000 in-home face-to-face interviews with adults (aged 16 or over) living in private households in Scotland. The results for 2008-09 are presented in a series of reports including this one which provides information on stalking and sexual victimisation.

Forms of stalking and sexual victimisation covered by the report include:

- *Stalking and harassment*: receiving obscene or threatening correspondence; receiving obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent telephone calls; someone waiting outside the home or workplace; being followed around or watched;
- *Less serious sexual assault*: indecent exposure; sexually threatening behaviour; touching sexually when it was not wanted;
- *Serious sexual assault*: forcing / attempting to force someone to have sexual intercourse or forcing / attempting to force someone to take part in other sexual activity when they did not want to.

For each form of stalking and sexual victimisation within these groups the report examines the percentage of adults experiencing overall and among different groups of adults and their relationship with the offender(s). The chapter on stalking and harassment concentrates on the latest / most recent incident experienced in the last year and also includes details on reporting to the police. Due to the small numbers experiencing these in the last 12 months, chapters covering less serious sexual assault and serious sexual assault provide information on adults' experiences since the age of 16.

Stalking and harassment

Six per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09. Males were equally as likely to experience stalking and harassment in the last 12 months as females. 10% of 16-24 year olds had experienced at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months compared with two per cent of those aged 60 or over.

Almost two-thirds (65%) of those experiencing at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months knew the offender(s), six per cent had seen the offender(s) before, but did not know them and a quarter (25%) had never seen the offender(s) before.

One in five (20%) of those experiencing stalking and harassment said the police came to know about the most recent / only incident they experienced in the last 12 months. This reporting rate was similar to the reporting rate for the most recent / only incident of partner abuse as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09.

Less serious sexual assault

Nine per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09. This included 15% of women experiencing at least one form of less serious sexual assault and three per cent of men.

The relationship with the offender(s) varied by the form of less serious sexual assault experienced since the age of 16. For indecent exposure, 73% said the offender(s) was someone they had never seen before while for sexual threats, 45% said the offender(s) was their partner and 23% said it was someone they had never seen before. For unwanted sexual touching, 18% said it was their partner, 26% said it was someone else they knew and 36% said the offender(s) was someone they had never seen before.

Almost all (96%) women experiencing any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 said the offender(s) was male. In contrast, 48% of men experiencing any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16, said the offender(s) was male, four in ten (40%) said the offender(s) was female and 10% said there were some male and some female offenders.

One per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of less serious sexual assault in the last 12 months.

Serious sexual assault

Three per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16. This included five per cent of women experiencing at least one form of serious sexual assault and one per cent of men.

More than half (56%) of adults experiencing at least one form of serious sexual assault were assaulted by their partner. Nine in ten (90%) said the offender(s) was male and eight per cent said the offender(s) was female.

Less than 0.5% of adults had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault in the last 12 months.

1 Introduction

The Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS)¹ is a large-scale continuous survey measuring adults' experience and perceptions of crime in Scotland. The survey is based on, annually, 16,000 in-home face-to-face interviews with adults (aged 16 or over) living in private households in Scotland.

The main aims of the SCJS are to:

- Provide a valid and reliable measure of adults' experience of crime, including services provided to victims of crime;
- Examine trends in the number and nature of crime in Scotland over time;
- Examine the varying risk of crime for different groups of adults in the population;
- Collect information about adults' experiences of, and attitudes to, a range of crime and justice related issues.

The first findings for 2008-09 are presented in a series of four reports. This report presents the key findings collected through the self-completion section of the SCJS 2008-09 on stalking and sexual victimisation. Separate technical reports are also available.²

1.1 Stalking and harassment in the SCJS 2008-09

The SCJS 2008-09, defined stalking as:

- Obscene or threatening unwanted letters, e-mail, text messages or cards;
- Obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent telephone calls;
- Waiting or loitering outside the home or workplace on more than one occasion;
- Being followed or watched on more than one occasion.

It recorded such behaviours carried out by any person including, but not restricted to, a partner or family member.

¹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/scjs>.

² <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

The Scottish Government defines stalking and harassment as:

“...a form of harassment involving intentional repeated behaviour, which causes fear, upset and annoyance to the victim.”³

A report into stalking and harassment in Scotland published by the Scottish Government in 2002 (Morris et al. 2002) reviewed previously available literature and research. This suggested that stalking was most often associated with domestic abuse arising within an intimate, personal relationship, though it was not confined to this type of situation. Stalking could occur in a wide range of relationships and in situations where the stalker and victim were complete strangers, although this latter type of situation was relatively rare. The range of behaviours also varied, including both violent and non-violent forms of contact either in person or remotely. Available evidence showed that the level of seriousness of individual behaviours differs; in the most serious cases, stalking can culminate in serious assault or murder. At the same time the cumulative effect of the pattern of conduct, as opposed to any discrete act, is often severe and prolonged (Morris et al. 2002).⁴

1.2 Sexual victimisation in the SCJS 2008-09

The Scottish Crime & Justice Survey 2008-09 defined sexual victimisation in two ways:⁵

- *Less serious sexual assault*: including indecent exposure, sexual threats and unwanted touching;
- *Serious sexual assault*: including forced sex or forcing someone to take part in other sexual activity, including attempts, by any person including, but not restricted to, a partner or family member.

During the planning and development of the SCJS 2008-09 a key issue was improving the ability of the survey to identify and report on sexual victimisation in an ethical manner. Annex 3 describes how information about sexual victimisation was collected and how this changed from previous surveys.

The way the Scottish criminal justice system deals with sexual offences has been reviewed and updated over recent years. Changes have been brought about by the passing of the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009⁶ and reform

³ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/sah-00.asp>.

⁴ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/11/15756/13113>.

⁵ The terms ‘less serious sexual assault’ and ‘serious sexual assault’ are adopted throughout this report to distinguish between the two types of sexual assault which were asked about separately in the SCJS 2008-09 questionnaire. This is consistent with the practice adopted by the Home Office in reporting of the British Crime Survey. The terms do not relate to the seriousness of the impact on the individual experiencing an incident, as this may vary according to the particular circumstances of an incident.

⁶ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice/crimes/8980/rape-sexual-offences-bill>.

of the way the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) investigates and prosecutes rape and other serious sexual offences.

The Act reformed the law on sexual offences, changing the way sexual offences were defined and creating a range of new statutory offences which criminalised sexual conduct taking place without consent. It clarified the manner in which consent to sexual activity was understood, defining consent as "free agreement" and making clear that consent may be withdrawn at any time.

1.3 The structure of the report

This report looks at the extent of sexual victimisation and stalking among adults in Scotland. It is divided into three chapters, covering each of the three forms of stalking and sexual victimisation included in the SCJS 2008-09:

- Stalking and harassment;
- Less serious sexual assault;
- Serious sexual assault.

Each chapter follows the same structure, looking at:

- The overall risk of experiencing;
- How risk varies among different groups of adults;
- The relationship with the offender(s).

The chapter on stalking and harassment also includes details on reporting to the police. However, base sizes were too small to permit robust analysis of the data for sexual victimisation on this matter.

Annex 1 provides additional data tables showing the risk of stalking and sexual victimisation by selected sub-groups. Annex 2 includes information about the method used for the self-completion section of the questionnaire and annex 3 provides additional discussion about measuring sexual victimisation in the SCJS 2008-09.

2 Stalking and harassment

2.1 Summary

Forms of stalking and harassment measured by the SCJS in 2008-9 included:

- Receiving obscene or threatening correspondence, such as letters, emails, text messages or cards;
- Receiving obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent telephone calls;
- Having someone waiting outside a home or workplace on more than one occasion;
- Being followed around and watched on more than one occasion.

Results indicated that:

- Six per cent of adults said they had experienced at least one of the four forms of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months. The risk of experiencing stalking and harassment was the same for both men and women;
- The risk of experiencing stalking and harassment decreased as age increased. 10% of 16-24 year olds had experienced at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months compared with two per cent of those aged 60 or over;
- 65% of those experiencing at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months knew the offender(s), six per cent had seen the offender(s) before, but did not know them and 25% did not know the offender(s) at all;
- 20% of those experiencing stalking and harassment said the police came to know about the most recent / only incident they experienced in the last 12 months. This reporting rate was similar to the reporting rate for the most recent / only incident of partner abuse as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 (21%).

2.2 Introduction

There is no legal or clear-cut definition of stalking and harassment in the UK, and the two terms are often used interchangeably (Morris et al. 2002). However, stalking and harassment has been described by the Scottish Government as:

*"Intentional repeated behaviour, which causes fear, upset and annoyance to the victim."*⁷

⁷ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/consultations/sah-00.asp>.

Throughout this chapter, the term stalking and harassment has been used to describe four forms of conduct. It should be noted that while all stalking may involve an element of harassment, not all harassment could be said to involve stalking, since the latter is almost invariably focused on a personal relationship (real or imagined, ended or on-going) between the offender and victim.

Questions asking directly about experience of stalking were avoided because people who had experienced such behaviour may have been uncertain as to whether the term applied to them. The survey instead referred to experience of being pestered or harassed and asked about four specific examples of stalking and harassment:

- Receiving obscene or threatening correspondence, such as letters, emails, text messages or cards;
- Receiving obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent telephone calls;
- Having someone waiting outside a home or workplace on more than one occasion;
- Being followed around and watched on more than one occasion.

Therefore the survey does not provide measures of the prevalence of all forms of stalking and of harassment, but rather four types of behaviour that could be construed as forms of stalking and / or harassment.

2.3 Overall risk of stalking and harassment

As measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 six per cent of adults said they had experienced at least one of the four forms of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months (Figure 2.1). Within this broad grouping:

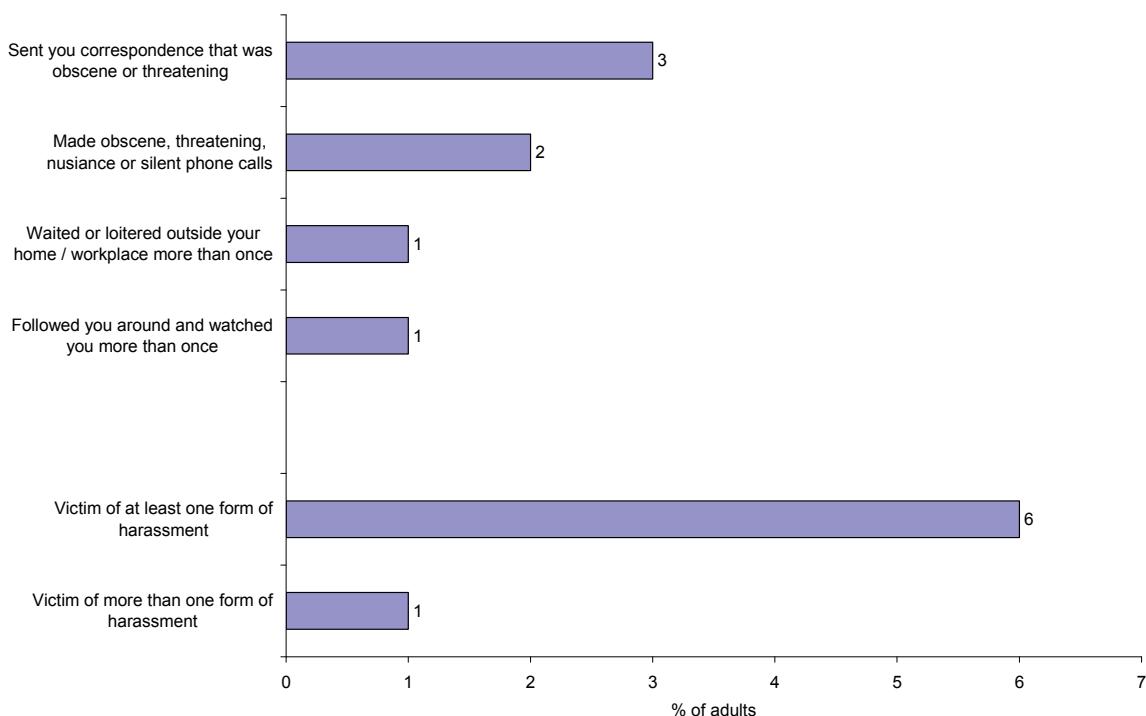
- Three per cent had received obscene or threatening correspondence, such as letters, emails, text messages or cards in the last 12 months;
- Two per cent had received obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent telephone calls in the last 12 months;
- One per cent experienced having someone waiting outside a home or workplace on more than one occasion in the last 12 months;
- One per cent had been watched or followed on more than one occasion in the last 12 months.

One per cent had experienced more than one of the four forms of stalking or harassment in the last 12 months as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09.

Figure 2.1: Percentage of adults experiencing at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months

SCJS 2008-09

Adults (base: 10,974)



2.4 Varying risk of stalking and harassment

Looking in more detail at the extent of stalking and harassment, Figure 2.2 shows:

- The risk of experiencing stalking and harassment was the same for both men and women (both six per cent);
- Younger adults were more likely to be at risk, rising to 10% of 16-24 year olds compared with two per cent of those aged 60 or over;
- Victims of all crime measured by SCJS 2008-09 in the main survey, were the most likely to experience stalking and harassment (11%) compared with five per cent of non-victims;⁸

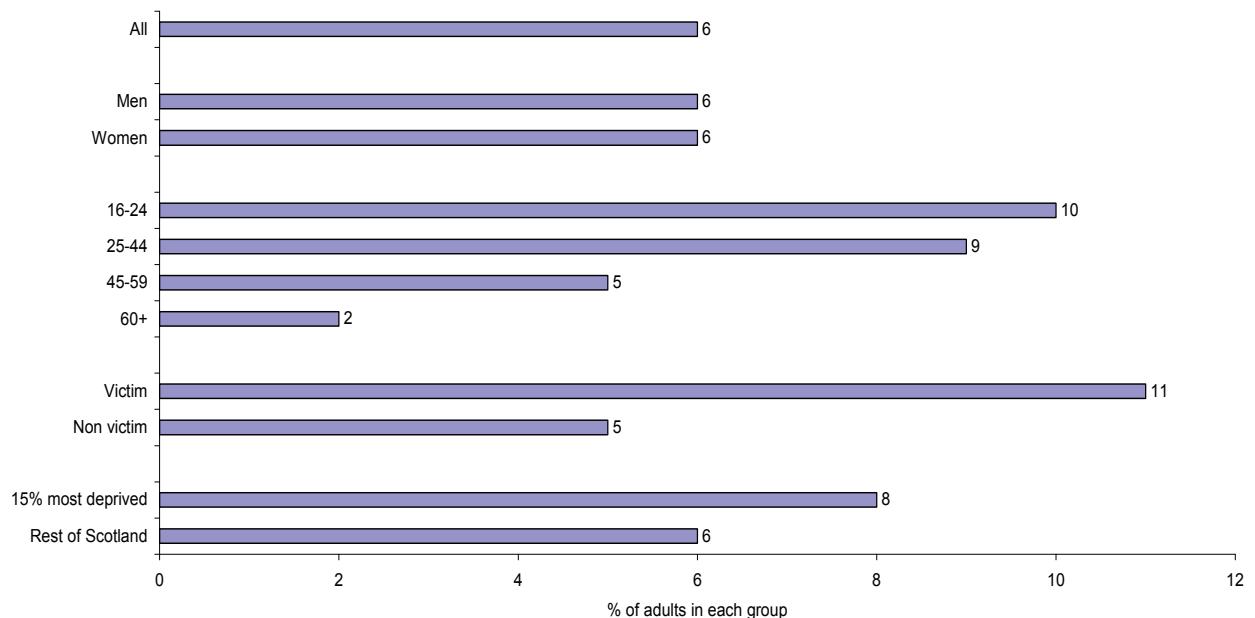
⁸ Victim status indicates whether a respondent was the victim of a crime as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 (for further details of crimes included see annex 3 of 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>).

- Eight per cent of those in the 15% most deprived areas had experienced stalking and harassment in the last 12 months compared with six per cent living in the rest of Scotland.⁹

Figure 2.2: Percentage of adults in each group experiencing at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months

SCJS 2008-09

Adults (base: 10,974); adults in each sub-group (bases range from females: 6,061 to adults aged 16-24: 1,004)¹⁰



2.5 Relationship with the offender(s)

Among those experiencing at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months, a majority (65%) knew the offender(s), six per cent had seen the offender(s) before, but did not know them, and one quarter (25%) did not know the offender(s) at all.

As Figure 2.3 shows:

- Almost one in five (19%) said the offender(s) was someone close to them, such as a partner or other family member (12% and eight per cent respectively);

⁹ Area deprivation is measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>.

¹⁰ Further details of base sizes for the different groups can be found in the published tables that accompany this report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

- For 13% of those experiencing stalking and harassment the offender(s) was someone the person had dated and for 10% the offender(s) was someone they had a casual sexual relationship with;
- Almost three in ten (28%) of those experiencing stalking and harassment in the last 12 months said the offender in the most recent / only incident was someone else they knew (other than those they were in some form of intimate relationship with or a family member).

Figure 2.3: Relationship with the offender(s) in the most recent / only incident of stalking and harassment experienced in the last 12 months
SCJS 2008-09

Adults experiencing at least one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months (base: 659)

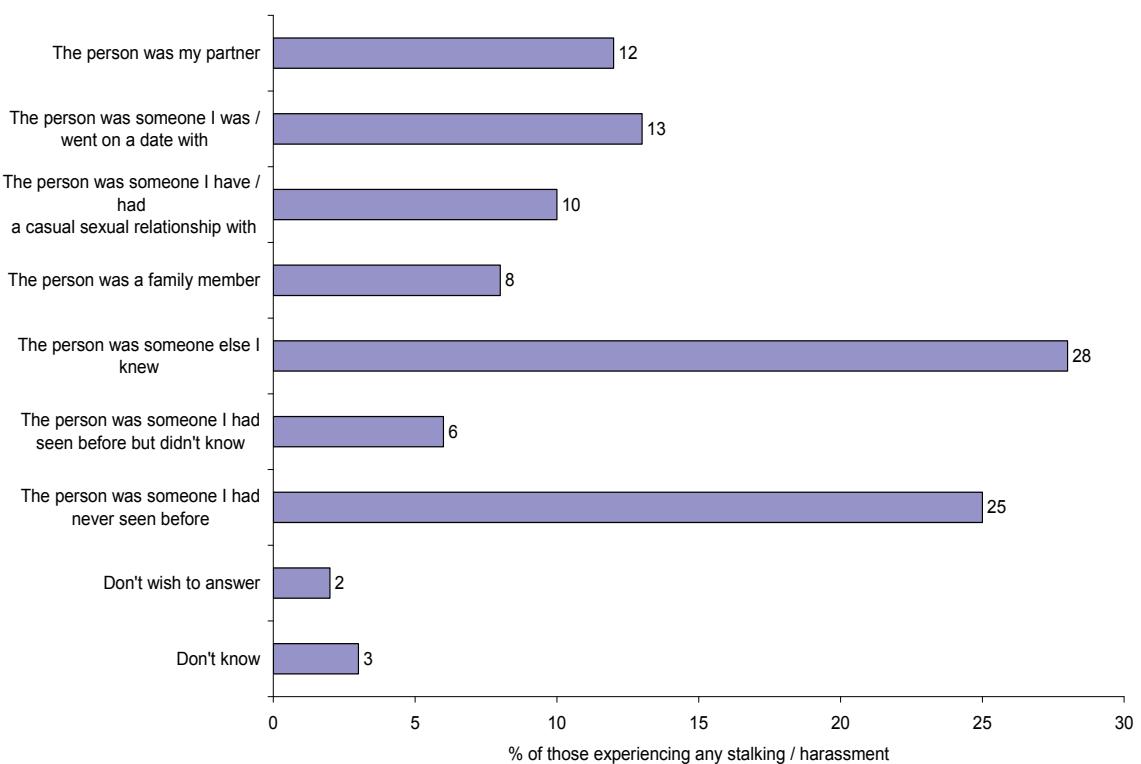


Table 2.1 shows the relationship between the victim and the offender for each of the four forms of stalking and harassment individually.

Table 2.1: Relationship with the offender in the most recent / only incident of each form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months
SCJS 2008-09; column percentages
Adults experiencing each form of harassment in the last 12 months

	Unwanted correspondence	Unwanted telephone calls	Waiting outside	Watching or following
The person was my partner	15	13	17	10
The person was someone I was / went on date with	15	9	10	15
The person was someone I have / had a casual sexual relationship with	11	9	12	14
The person was a family member	8	9	7	7
The person was someone else I knew	27	23	42	35
The person was someone I had seen before but didn't know	5	4	5	10
The person was someone I had never seen before	21	28	11	13
Do not wish to answer	2	3	3	3
Don't know	0	6	-	1
Base	339	246	106	151

Where adults had experienced more than one form of stalking and harassment in the last 12 months as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09, almost two-thirds (65%) said the same person was responsible.

2.6 Reporting to the police

Almost four in five (79%) of those experiencing stalking and harassment said the police did not come to know about the most recent / only incident they experienced in the last 12 months (Figure 2.4). The reporting rate for stalking and harassment was 20%, which is similar to the reporting rate for the most recent / only incident of partner abuse (21%).¹¹

- The police were more likely to have come to hear about the most recent / only incident of stalking and harassment experienced by women (24%) than by men (15%);

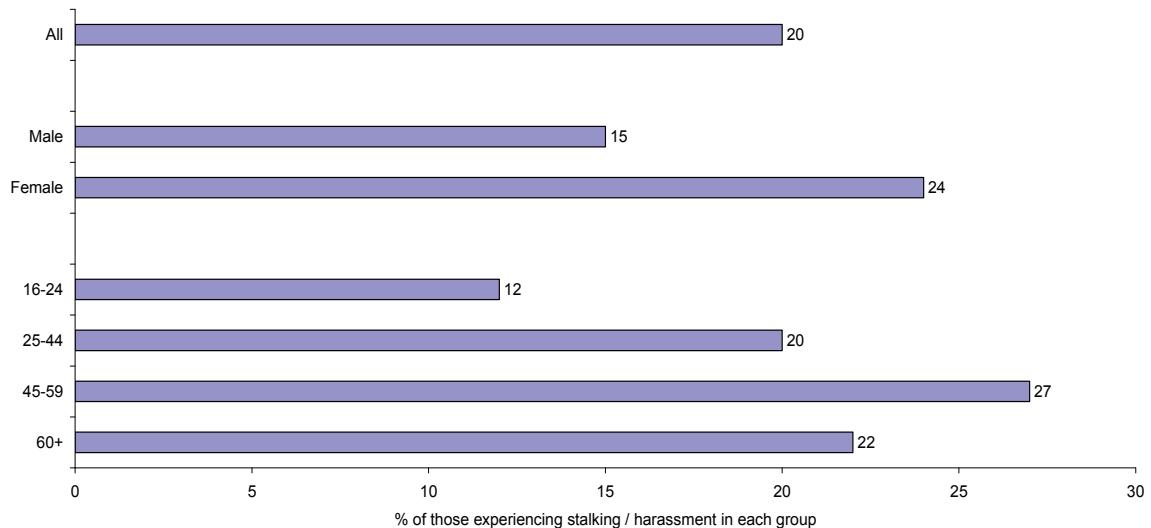
¹¹ Reporting of domestic abuse was measured through the self-completion section of the questionnaire and is included in a separate report: 2008-09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: Partner Abuse; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

- The police were less likely to have come to hear about the most recent / only incident of stalking and harassment experienced by 16-24 year olds (12%) compared with that experienced by older age groups.

Figure 2.4: Whether police came to know about the most recent / only incident of stalking and harassment happening in the last 12 months

SCJS 2008-09

All within each group experiencing at least one incident of stalking / harassment in the last 12 months (base all: 659; other bases range from females: 397 to adults aged 60+: 59)¹²



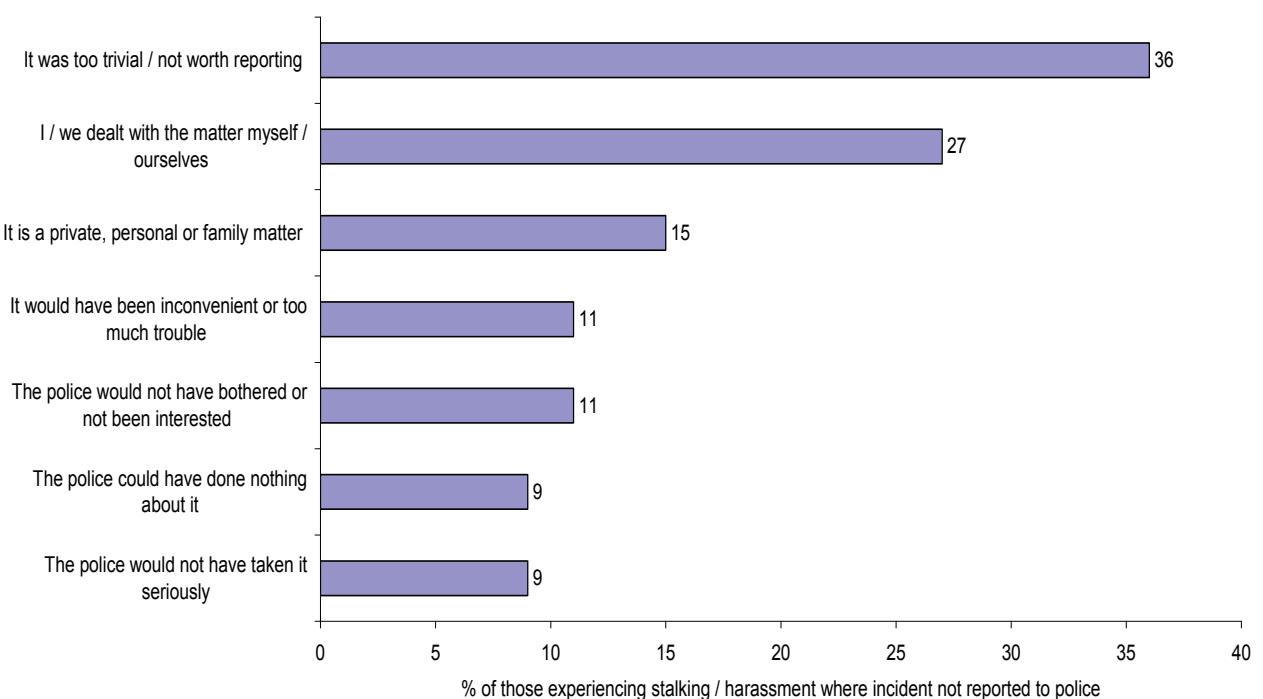
Where the police did not come to know about the most recent / only incident of stalking and harassment, a variety of explanations were given (Figure 2.5). Over a third (36%) said they did not report the incident because it was too trivial / not worth reporting, 27% said they dealt with it themselves and 15% said it was considered to have been a private, personal or family matter.

Other reasons given for the police not coming to know about the most recent / only incident included that it would have been inconvenient or too much trouble to report it (11%) or that the police would not be interested (also 11%). Nine per cent said it was because the police could do nothing about it and nine per cent also said that the police would not have taken it seriously.

¹² Further details of base sizes for the different groups can be found in the published tables that accompany this report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

Figure 2.5: Why police were not informed about the most recent / only incident happening in the last 12 months – most common reasons¹³
SCJS 2008-09

All where police did not come to know about the most recent / only incident happening in the last 12 months (base: 507)



¹³ All other reasons were mentioned by fewer than four per cent of adults and are not shown in Figure 2.5

3 Less serious sexual assault

3.1 Summary

Less serious sexual assault as measured by the SCJS in 2008-9 included:

- Indecent exposure;
- Sexually threatening behaviour;
- Touching sexually when it was not wanted.

Results indicated that:

- Nine per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16;
- 15% of women and three percent of men had experienced at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16.
- The relationship with the offender(s) varied by the form of less serious sexual assault experienced since the age of 16. For indecent exposure, 73% said the offender(s) was someone they had never seen before. For sexual threats, 45% said the offender(s) was their partner and 23% said it was someone they had never seen before. For unwanted sexual touching, 18% said it was their partner, 26% said it was someone else they knew and 36% said the offender(s) was someone they had never seen before;
- 96% of women experiencing any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 said the offender(s) was male. 48% of men experiencing any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 said the offender(s) was male, four in ten (40%) said the offender(s) was female and 10% said there were some male and some female offenders;
- One per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of less serious sexual assault in the last 12 months.

3.2 Introduction

This chapter begins to examine adults' experiences of sexual victimisation, specifically of three forms of less serious sexual assault including:

- Indecent exposure;
- Sexually threatening behaviour;
- Touching sexually when it was not wanted.

The chapter examines the overall risk of less serious sexual assault as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 both since the age of 16 and in the last 12 months. For each form of less serious sexual assault that an adult had experienced, follow-up questions were asked about the characteristics of the offender(s). The chapter provides results for the characteristics of offender(s) as identified by those experiencing less serious sexual assault since the age of 16. It is not possible to provide results for the characteristics of offenders for each form of less serious sexual assault happening in the last 12 months because of the small base sizes.

Similarly it is not possible to report on whether the police came to know about the most recent / only incident that had happened in the last 12 months because of the small number of respondents who reported experiencing each incident.

3.3 Overall risk of less serious sexual assault

Nine per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16. As shown in Table 3.1:

- Five per cent had experienced indecent exposure since the age of 16;
- Five per cent had been touched sexually when it was not wanted since the age of 16;
- Two per cent had been sexual threatened since the age of 16.

Two per cent of adults had experienced more than one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16.

One per cent of adults had experienced any less serious sexual assault in the last 12 months. The risk of experiencing indecent exposure or unwanted sexual touching in the last 12 months were both one per cent, and for sexual threats it was less than 0.5% (Table 3.1).

Table 3.1: Percentage experiencing at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 / in the last 12 months
SCJS 2008-09; column percentages
Adults

	Since age of 16	Last 12 months
Indecently exposed themselves to you	5	1
Touched you sexually when you did not want it	5	1
Sexually threatened you	2	0
Victim of at least one form of less serious sexual assault	9	1
Victim of more than one form of less serious sexual assault	2	0
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,974</i>	<i>10,974</i>

3.4 Varying risk of less serious sexual assault

Unlike stalking and harassment, women were significantly more likely to experience less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 than men (Table 3.2):

- Women's risk of experiencing at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 was five times higher than men (15% and three per cent respectively);
- Experience of each of indecent exposure (eight per cent female; two per cent male) and being sexually threatened (four per cent female; one per cent male) was four times higher among women than men;
- Experience of being touched sexually against their wish was eight times higher among women than men (eight per cent and one per cent respectively).

Women were also more likely to experience more than one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 than men were (four per cent, compared with less than 0.5% of men).

Table 3.2: Percentage experiencing at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 by gender
SCJS 2008-09; column percentages
Adults in each group

	Male	Female
Indecently exposed themselves to you	2	8
Touched you sexually when you did not want it	1	8
Sexually threatened you	1	4
Victim of at least one form of less serious sexual assault	3	15
Victim of more than one form of less serious sexual assault	0	4
<i>Base</i>	<i>4813</i>	<i>6161</i>

Victims of other types of crime as measured by SCJS in 2008-09 were more likely to experience at least one of these forms of less serious sexual assault than non-victims were (14% of victims compared with eight per cent of non-victims).

Annex 1 provides further details of the risk of less serious sexual assault by different sub-groups.

Among those experiencing more than one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16, three in ten (30%) said that the same person or people were involved in every incident. This was lower than for stalking and harassment (65%) as seen in chapter 2 or serious sexual assault (70%) (chapter 4).

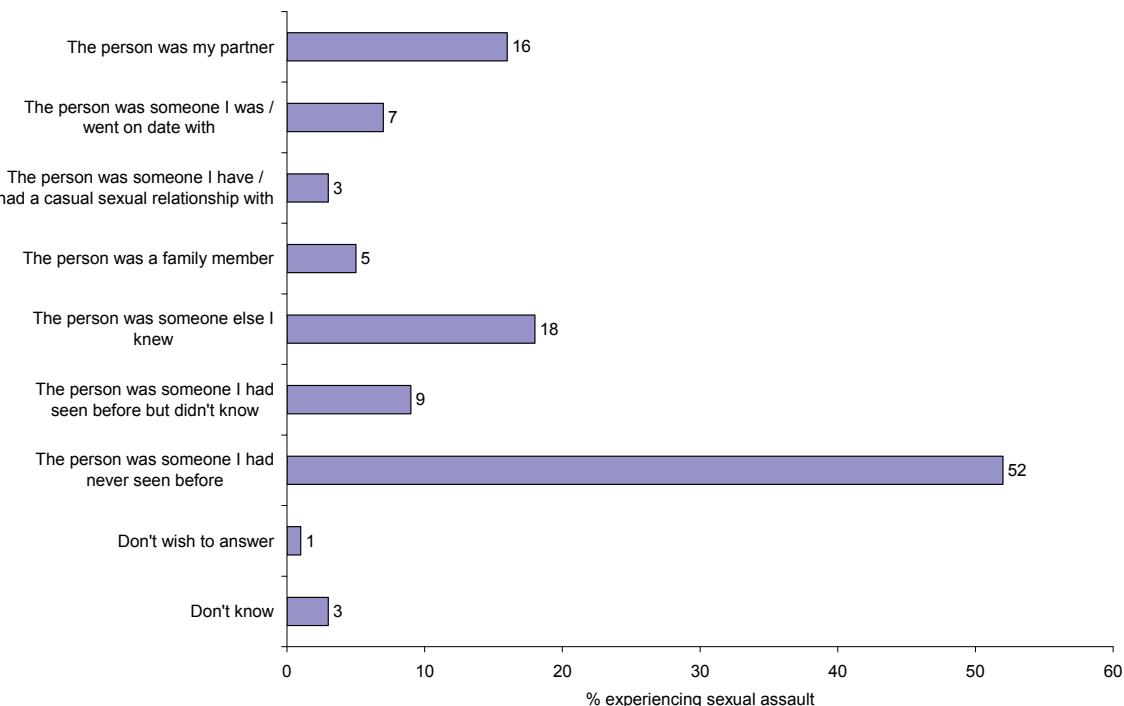
3.5 Relationship with the offender(s)

Among those experiencing at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16, 52% had not seen the offender(s) before, 16% said the offender(s) was their partner and 18% said the offender(s) was someone else they knew (other than those they were in some form of intimate relationship with or a family member).

Figure 3.1: Relationship with the offender(s) – less serious sexual assault experienced since the age of 16

SCJS 2008-09

Adults experiencing at least one form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 (base: 1,121)



The relationship with the offender(s) varied by the form of less serious sexual assault experienced, pointing to differences in their characteristics. Table 3.3 shows this relationship for those experiencing each form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16:

- The majority of those experiencing indecent exposure since the age of 16 said this was carried out by someone they had never seen before (73%);
- 45% of those experiencing sexual threats since the age of 16 said the offender(s) was their partner and 23% said it was someone they had never seen before;
- Over one third of those experiencing being touched sexually when they did not want this since the age of 16 said this had been carried out by someone they had never seen before (36%). However, the majority did know the offender(s), including one in five (18%) who said it was their partner and a quarter (26%) someone else they knew (other than those they were in some form of intimate relationship with or a family member).

Table 3.3: Relationship with the offender(s) – each form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16

SCJS 2008-09; column percentages

Adults experiencing each form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16

	Indecent exposure	Sexual touching	Sexual threats
The person was my partner	4	18	45
The person was someone I was / went on date with	3	10	10
The person was someone I have / had a casual sexual relationship with	2	3	7
The person was a family member	2	8	8
The person was someone else I knew	11	26	16
The person was someone I had seen before but didn't know	8	9	4
The person was someone I had never seen before	73	36	23
Don't wish to answer	0	2	2
Don't know	1	0	1
<i>Base</i>	574	567	272

3.6 Gender of the offender(s)

Almost nine in ten (88%) adults who experienced any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 said the offender(s) was male, seven per cent said the offender(s) was female and two per cent said there were some male and some female offenders (not necessarily in the same incidents).

For women experiencing any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 the offender(s) was almost always male (96% male; one per cent female; one per cent some male / some female in the same or different incidents).

For men experiencing any form of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 the picture was more mixed. Almost five in ten (48%) men said the offender(s) was male, four in ten (40%) said the offender(s) was female and 10% said there were some male and some female offenders.

4 Serious sexual assault

4.1 Summary

Serious sexual assault as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 included:

- Forcing and attempting to force someone to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to;
- Forcing and attempting to force someone to take part in other sexual activity when they did not want to.

Results indicated that:

- Three per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 and one per cent had experienced more than one form since that age;
- Five per cent of women and one percent of men had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16.
- More than half (56%) of adults who experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault were assaulted by their partner;
- Nine in ten (90%) adults who experienced serious sexual assault since the age of 16 said the offender(s) was male and eight per cent said the offender(s) was female;
- Less than 0.5% of adults had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault in the last 12 months.

4.2 Introduction

This chapter examines adults' experiences of four forms of actual or attempted serious sexual assault as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 including:

- Forcing and attempting to force someone to have sexual intercourse when they did not want to;
- Forcing and attempting to force someone to take part in other sexual activity when they did not want to.

The chapter examines the overall risk of serious sexual assault both since the age of 16 and in the last 12 months. For each incident that an adult had experienced follow-up questions were asked about the characteristics of the offender(s). The chapter provides results for the characteristics of offender(s) identified by those experiencing serious sexual assault since the age of 16. It is not possible to provide results for the characteristics of offenders for each form of serious sexual assault happening in the last 12 months because of the small base sizes.

Similarly it is not possible to report on whether the police came to know about the most recent / only incident that had happened in the last 12 months because of the small number of respondents who reported experiencing each incident.

4.3 Overall risk of serious sexual assault

As measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 three per cent of adults had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16. This includes:

- Two per cent experiencing forced sexual intercourse and two per cent experiencing attempted forced sexual intercourse when they did not want to since the age of 16;
- One per cent experiencing another forced sexual activity and one per cent experiencing attempted forced sexual activity when they did not want to since the age of 16.

One per cent of adults had experienced more than one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 as measured by the SCJS in 2008-9.

In the last 12 months, less than 0.5% of adults had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault, as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09.

4.4 Varying risk of serious sexual assault

As with the forms of less serious sexual assault described in the previous chapter, experience of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 varied by the gender of those experiencing it, with women being at significantly greater risk than men. Five per cent of women had experienced at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 compared with one per cent of men. The pattern was repeated within the individual forms of serious sexual assault as shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Percentage experiencing at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 overall and by gender

SCJS 2008-09; column percentages

Adults overall and in each group

	All	Males	Females
Forced you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to	2	0	3
Tried to force you to have sexual intercourse when you did not want to	2	0	3
Forced you to take part in another sexual activity when you did not want to	1	0	1
Tried to force you to take part in another sexual activity	1	0	1
Victim of at least one form of serious sexual assault	3	1	5
Victim of more than one form of serious sexual assault	1	0	2
<i>Base</i>	<i>10,974</i>	<i>4,813</i>	<i>6,161</i>

Annex 1 provides further details of the risk of serious sexual assault by different sub-groups.

Seven in ten (70%) adults experiencing more than one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 said that the same person or people were involved each time.

4.5 Relationship with the offender(s)

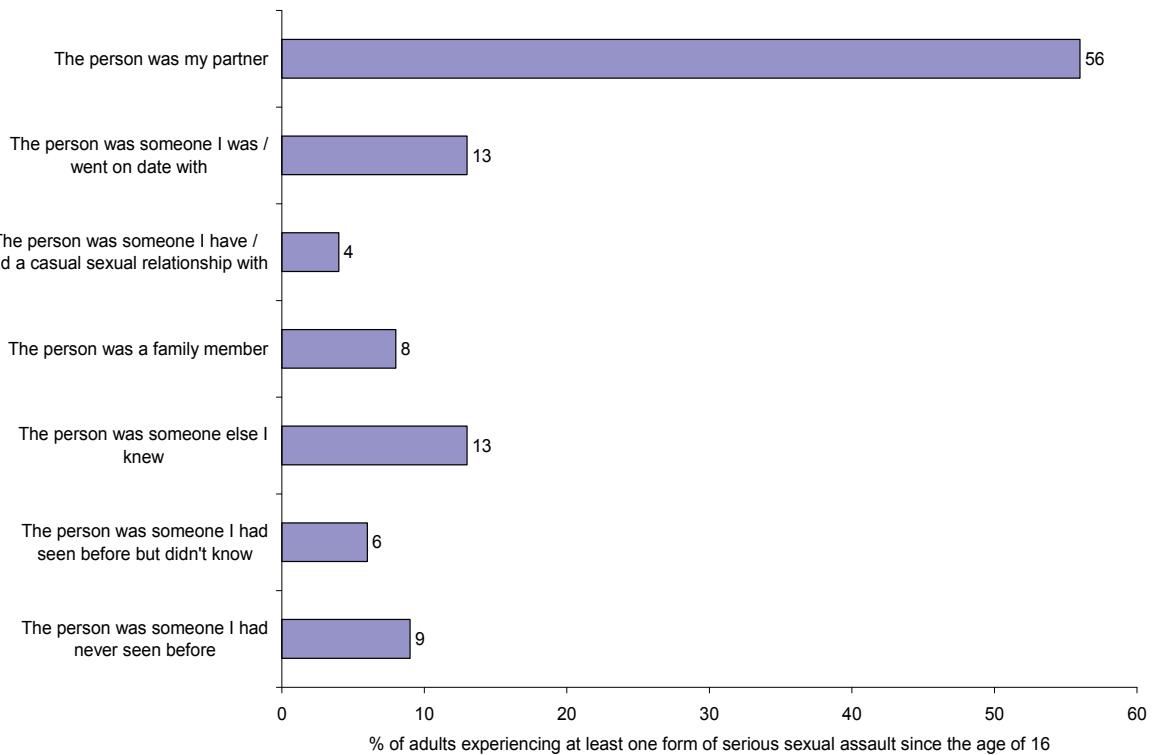
More than half (56%) of adults experiencing at least one form of serious sexual assault were assaulted by their partner (Figure 4.1). This fell significantly for the other answers:

- Around one in eight (13%) of those experiencing this said the offender(s) was someone they were on a date with;
- The same percentage (13%) said the offender(s) was someone else they knew (other than those they were in some form of intimate relationship with or a family member);
- Eight per cent said the offender(s) was a family member;
- Nine per cent said it was someone they had not seen before.

Figure 4.1: Relationship with the offender(s) – serious sexual assault experienced since the age of 16

SCJS 2008-09

Adults experiencing at least one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 (base: 411)



Partners were also said to be responsible for high proportions of serious sexual assault when it was further broken down by the different forms:

- 63% of those experiencing forced sexual intercourse;
- 68% of those experiencing attempted forced sexual intercourse;
- 57% of those experiencing other forced sexual activities;
- 60% of those experiencing attempted other forced sexual activities.

Of those experiencing more than one form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16, 87% said the offender(s) was their partner.¹⁴

¹⁴ The base sizes for those experiencing other forced sexual activities (83), attempted other forced sexual activities (84) and more than one serious sexual assault (88) are all relatively small and subject to large confidence intervals so the figures quoted should be used with caution.

4.6 Gender of the offender(s)

Nine in ten (90%) adults who experienced serious sexual assault since the age of 16, as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09, said the offender(s) was male and eight per cent said the offender(s) was female.

For women experiencing any form of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 the offender(s) was almost always male (97% said they were male, one per cent said they were female). Further analysis of the gender of the offender(s) for men experiencing serious sexual assault is not possible because of the small numbers experiencing this since the age of 16.¹⁵

¹⁵ 43 male respondents said they had experienced at least one of the forms of serious sexual assault since the age of 16, as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09.

References

Morris, S., Anderson, S. and Murray, L. (2002); *Stalking and Harassment in Scotland*; Edinburgh; Scotland; the Scottish Executive

Annex 1: 2008-09 data tables

Table A1.1: Experience of any stalking or sexual victimisation since the age of 16 / in the last year by demographic variables, 2008-09

SCJS 2008-09; row percentages

Adults (base: 10,974)

	Experienced any stalking and harassment in the last year	Experienced any less serious sexual assault since age 16	Experienced any less serious sexual assault in the last year	Experienced any serious sexual assault since age 16	Experienced any serious sexual assault in the last year
Age					
16-24	10	10	5	3	1
25-44	9	12	1	4	0
45-59	5	10	1	4	0
60 or over	2	6	0	1	0
Male					
16-24	8	7	5	2	1
25-44	8	3	1	1	0
45-59	5	3	0	1	0
60 or over	2	1	0	0	0
Total male	6	3	1	1	0
Female					
16-24	13	13	5	5	1
25-44	9	19	2	7	0
45-59	5	17	1	7	0
60 or over	1	9	0	2	0
Total female	6	15	2	5	0
Victim status					
Victim	11	14	3	6	1
Non Victim	5	8	1	2	0
Multiple deprivation					
Those living in 15% most deprived areas	8	8	2	4	1
Those living in the rest of Scotland	6	10	1	3	0
ALL	6	9	1	3	0

- See Table A1.3 for the question used to identify stalking and harassment; Table A1.4 for less serious sexual assault and Table A1.5 for serious sexual assault and more details of what is included in each one.
- Victim status indicates whether a respondent was the victim of a crime as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 (for further details of crimes included see annex 3 of 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>).
- Multiple deprivation is measured by the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>.

Table A1.2: Estimates of numbers of adults experiencing any stalking or sexual victimisation since the age of 16 / in the last year by gender
SCJS 2008-09; row percentages
Adults aged 16+; numbers experiencing (000's)

	Best estimate	Higher estimate	Lower estimate
Experienced any stalking in the last year			
All	262	287	237
Male	118	135	101
Female	144	162	126
Experienced any less serious sexual assault since age 16			
All	399	429	370
Male	67	80	54
Female	332	359	306
Experienced any less serious sexual assault in the last year			
All	57	69	44
Male	21	30	13
Female	35	44	27
Experienced any serious sexual assault since age 16			
All	135	151	118
Male	17	23	11
Female	118	133	103
Experienced any serious sexual assault in the last year			
All	14	20	9
Male	6	10	2
Female	8	12	4

1. For definitions of terms used in this table refer to table A1.3.
2. Numbers are rounded to the nearest thousand. They are derived by multiplying the prevalence rate by the population aged 16+. Population estimates were based on mid-2008 population estimate in Scotland produced by GROS of 4,254,966 adults aged 16+.
3. Higher and lower estimates are derived using the 95 per cent confidence interval.

Table A1.3: Experience of stalking and harassment in the last year by demographic variables, 2008-09

SCJS 2008-09; row percentages

Adults (base: 6,816)

	Experienced any stalking and harassment	Experienced unwanted correspondence	Experienced unwanted telephone calls	Experienced anyone waiting outside	Experienced being watched or followed
Age					
16-24	10	6	3	2	3
25-44	9	5	4	2	2
45-59	5	2	2	1	1
60 or over	2	1	1	0	0
Male					
16-24	8	5	3	3	2
25-44	8	4	4	1	1
45-59	5	3	1	1	1
60 or over	2	1	1	0	0
Total male	6	3	2	1	1
Female					
16-24	13	7	3	2	4
25-44	9	5	4	2	2
45-59	5	2	3	1	1
60 or over	1	0	1	0	0
Total female	6	3	3	1	2
Victim status					
Victim	11	6	5	3	2
Non Victim	5	3	2	1	1
Multiple deprivation					
Those living in 15% most deprived areas	8	3	5	1	1
Those living in the rest of Scotland	6	3	2	1	1
ALL	6	3	2	1	1

- The question used to identify stalking and harassment was: Since <INSERT DATE 12 MONTHS BEFORE MONTH OF INTERVIEW>, has ANYONE ever done any of the following things to you? This may have been a partner, a family member, someone you knew casually, or a stranger.
 - Sent you a number of unwanted letters, emails, text messages or cards that were either obscene or threatening (shown as unwanted correspondence in the column above);
 - Made a number of obscene, threatening, nuisance or silent phone calls to you (shown as unwanted telephone calls in the column above);
 - Waited or loitered outside your home or workplace on more than one occasion (shown as anyone waiting outside in the column above);
 - Followed you around and watched you on more than one occasion (shown as being watched or followed in the column above).
- Victim status indicates whether a respondent was the victim of a crime as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 (for further details of crimes included see annex 3 of 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>).
- Multiple deprivation is measured by the Scottish Index of multiple deprivation; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>.

Table A1.4: Experience of different forms of less serious sexual assault since the age of 16 by demographic variables, 2008-09
SCJS 2008-09; row percentages
Adults (base: 10,974)

	Experienced any less serious sexual assault	Experienced indecent exposure	Experienced unwanted sexual touching	Experienced sexual threats
Age				
16-24	10	6	6	2
25-44	12	6	6	3
45-59	10	5	5	3
60 or over	6	4	2	1
Male				
16-24	7	6	2	0
25-44	3	1	2	1
45-59	3	1	2	0
60 or over	1	0	1	0
Total male	3	2	1	1
Female				
16-24	13	6	9	4
25-44	19	10	11	4
45-59	17	9	9	5
60 or over	9	7	3	1
Total female	15	8	8	4
Victim status				
Victim	14	7	7	4
Non Victim	8	4	4	2
Multiple deprivation				
Those living in 15% most deprived areas	8	4	4	2
Those living in the rest of Scotland	10	5	5	2
ALL	9	5	5	2

- The question used to identify less serious sexual assault was: Since the age of 16, has ANYONE ever done any of the following without your consent? This may have been someone you were in a relationship with, someone you knew or a stranger.
 - Indecently exposed themselves to you (i.e. flashing); (shown as indecent exposure in the column above);
 - Sexually threatened you (e.g. demanded sex when you did not want it, followed or cornered you in a sexually threatening way); (shown as sexual threats in the column above);
 - Touched you sexually when you did not want it (e.g. groping, touching of breasts, bottom, or genitals, unwanted kissing); (shown as unwanted sexual touching in the column above).
- Victim status indicates whether a respondent was the victim of a crime as measured by the SCJS in 2008-09 (for further details of crimes included see annex 3 of 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>).
- Multiple deprivation is measured by the Scottish Index of multiple deprivation; <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>.

Table A1.5: Experience of serious sexual assault since the age of 16 by demographic variables, 2008-09

SCJS 2008-09; row percentages

Adults (base: 10,974)

	Experienced any serious sexual assault	Experienced forced sex	Experienced attempted forced sex	Experienced forced other sexual activity	Experienced attempted forced other sexual activity
Age					
16-24	3	1	1	0	1
25-44	4	2	2	1	1
45-59	4	2	2	1	1
60 or over	1	1	1	0	0
Male					
16-24	2	0	0	-	1
25-44	1	0	0	0	0
45-59	1	0	0	0	0
60 or over	0	0	0	-	0
Total male	1	0	0	0	0
Female					
16-24	5	2	2	1	1
25-44	7	4	3	1	2
45-59	7	5	4	1	2
60 or over	2	1	1	0	0
Total female	5	3	3	1	1
Victim status					
Victim	6	3	3	1	2
Non Victim	2	2	1	1	1
Multiple deprivation					
Those living in 15% most deprived areas	4	2	1	1	1
Those living in the rest of Scotland	3	2	2	1	1
ALL	3	2	2	1	1

- The question used to identify serious sexual assault was: Since the age of 16, has ANYONE ever done any of the following without your consent? This may have been someone you were in a relationship with, someone you knew or a stranger.
 - Forced you (either physically or by threatening you) to have sexual intercourse(vaginal or anal) when you did not want to (shown as forced sex in the column above);
 - Tried to force you (either physically or by threatening you) to have sexual intercourse (vaginal or anal) when you did not want to (shown as attempted forced sex in the column above);
 - Forced you (either physically or by threatening you) to take part in another sexual activity (for example, oral sex) when you did not want to (shown as forced other sexual activity in the column above);
 - Tried to force you (either physically or by threatening you) to take part in another sexual activity (for example, oral sex) when you did not want to (shown as attempted forced other sexual activity in the column above).
- For definition of victim status and multiple deprivation see notes below table A1.4

Annex 2: Self-completion questionnaire method

Crime and victimisation surveys have been carried out in Scotland since the early 1980s. The geographical coverage, sample size, method and reference period have varied across these surveys. The current survey was launched in April 2008 as the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey (SCJS) and it represented a major shift in design, methodology and sample size from previous surveys. The two main changes introduced in the SCJS were an increase in the sample size and a move to continuous fieldwork with a different reference period from that used in previous sweeps.

The target sample size for the SCJS was substantially increased (to 16,000 from around 5,000 in most of the previous crime surveys). The move to an increased sample size was associated with continuous data collection and a change in the survey reference period. The SCJS rolling reference period asked respondents about events that had taken place in the last full 12 months before the date of interview rather than the fixed reference period used previously.

The self-completion section of the SCJS 2008-09 questionnaire covered sensitive subject areas such as illicit drug use, partner abuse and sexual victimisation (section A2.2). This improved reporting of these types of crime and ensured that information was collected in an ethical manner. Coverage in the self-completion section of the questionnaire was extended to all adults so that the experiences of older adults were included for the first time.¹⁶

This annex provides more detail about aspects of the self-completion questionnaire method and specifically about the questions covering sexual victimisation and stalking. Details are also included about the development and content of the self-completion interview and the weighting used on the data.

Further information about the design of the SCJS is contained in annex 2 of 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings report and in the accompanying technical report to the main survey and, of most relevance here, in the accompanying technical note to the self-completion sections.¹⁷

A2.1 The self-completion interview

Interviews in the SCJS 2008-09 were conducted in the respondent's home using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) and, for more sensitive questions in the self-completion section of the questionnaire such as those reported here, Computer Assisted Self-completion Interviewing (CASI).

¹⁶ Previously adults aged 60 or older were excluded from the self-completion section of the questionnaire.

¹⁷ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>

Interviews to the whole survey lasted 39 minutes on average in total, with the self-completion section taking just over eight minutes on average to complete.

The results included in this report are based on interviews conducted by TNS-BMRB between 01 April 2008 and 31 March 2009. Respondents to the SCJS had the option of refusing to participate in the self-completion section which means this part of the questionnaire was not completed by all 16,003 respondents to the main survey. In the SCJS 2008-09, 10,974 respondents agreed to participate in the self-completion questionnaire, a response rate of 69%.

The majority of respondents who answered the questions (66%) used the touch sensitive tablet PC on their own without any help from the interviewer. A third of respondents (33%) asked the interviewer to enter their answers for them, and 14% of respondents entered their own answers but asked the interviewer for some degree of help.

A2.2 Who did and did not answer the self-completion section

Table A2.1 below compares the profile of respondents to the SCJS 2008-09 who answered the self-completion section of the questionnaire (including those who did so with help) and those who did not answer it:

- Equal proportions of males and females answered the self-completion section (69%);
- The proportions answering the self-completion section decreased as age increased (for example 76% of 16-24 year olds answered the self-completion section compared with 61% of those aged 60 or over);
- Among women, within age, the proportion answering the self-completion section was particularly low among those aged 60 or older (59%) compared with women in other age groups;
- A higher proportion of victims of crime as identified in the main survey answered the self-completion section than average while the proportion of non-victims was closer to the average (75% of victims and 67% of non-victims compared with 69% for all respondents);
- A lower proportion of those living in the 15% most deprived areas answered the self-completion section compared with those living in the rest of Scotland (58% and 71% respectively).

Table A2.1: Percentages of respondents overall and in selected sub-groups who did and who did not answer the self-completion section of the SCJS 2008-09

Row percentages

	Self-completion	No Self-completion
Total Sample	69	31
Male	69	31
Female	69	31
16-24	76	24
25-44	73	27
45-59	71	29
60+	61	39
M 16-24	75	25
M 25-44	71	29
M 45-59	69	31
M 60+	64	36
F 16-24	77	23
F 25-44	74	26
F 45-59	73	27
F 60+	59	41
Victim	75	25
Non-Victim	67	33
15% most deprived	58	42
Rest of Scotland	71	29

A2.3 Questionnaire development

During the original questionnaire development phase of the SCJS, a set of questions in the self-completion section of the questionnaire was specifically developed to elicit people's experience of sexual victimisation. Ethical considerations were paramount in the development of these questions on sexual victimisation and related decisions.

The motivation both to collect information as sensitively as possible and to reduce the burden placed on respondents influenced the decision to use self-completion data collection. The sexual victimisation and stalking questions did not ask about each incident occurring within the reference period separately and they did not fully replicate or repeat the questions in the victim form. As a result, the number of questions asked about an incident was greatly reduced.

The draft self-completion questionnaire sections covering sexual victimisation (reported here) and partner abuse (reported separately)¹⁸ were discussed with representatives of three organisations concerned with the domestic abuse and sexual victimisation of males and females. A summary report of the discussions and the changes made to the questions as a result is available.¹⁹

¹⁸ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

¹⁹ <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

A2.4 Questionnaire content

The SCJS 2008-09 questionnaire consisted of three elements:²⁰

- The main questionnaire, which included screener questions on incidents that may have happened to the respondent or their household and which filters respondents into or out of the victim form;
- A repeated victim form which collected details about the separate incidents a respondent may have experienced;
- A self-completion questionnaire covering sensitive issues including illicit drug use; partner abuse and sexual victimisation.

The questions on sexual victimisation and stalking were included in the abuse section of the self-completion questionnaire. Respondents were first asked about whether they had been stalked or harassed in the 12 month reference period (including confirmation of whether this was via written correspondence; telephone calls; someone waiting outside their home or workplace; someone following them).

Subsequently they were asked about sexual victimisation. This included:

- Indecent exposure; sexual threats; being touched sexually when it was unwanted (referred to in the report as less serious sexual assault);
- Forced sex or being forced into another sexual activity and attempts to do these (referred to as serious sexual assault).

Those experiencing any sexual victimisation or stalking were asked similar follow-up questions. They included who the offender(s) was and what their relationship to them was. The respondent was also asked whether the police came to know about the incident, and if not, why not.

Those experiencing sexual victimisation were also asked the gender of the offender(s); whether the incident happened in Scotland; when the incident(s) happened; how many times it happened in the last 12 months and how the incident was reported to police (if reported).

Adults experiencing serious sexual assault were additionally asked about the location of the incident(s); injuries received and emotional harm experienced; who was informed about the incident(s); additional details about reporting the incident including whether it resulted in prosecution or conviction; satisfaction with police contact and the involvement of alcohol or drugs. The small numbers experiencing any serious sexual offences in the last 12 months prevented reporting of these questions. The questionnaire was changed for the SCJS 2009-10 so that these follow-up questions were asked about experiences since the age of 16, to enable more detailed reporting.

²⁰ The questionnaire used in the SCJS 2008-09 is available on the Scottish Government SCJS website: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>.

To avoid repetition, the self-completion section of the questionnaire was linked to the victim form. This meant that questions relating to incidents which had been recorded previously in the victim form were not repeated there. Instead data provided in the victim form was subsequently incorporated into the data included in this report at the data processing stage.

A2.5 Disclosure of sensitive information

Given the sensitive nature of the questions, a separate don't wish to answer button was provided at the top of the screen at every question in the self-completion section of the questionnaire. At the start of the sexual victimisation questions, respondents were reminded that they could skip such sensitive questions that they did not want to answer:

Although the questions may seem quite intrusive they are important in helping us understand more about these types of crime. If the questions upset you in any way you can just pass over them by pressing 'Don't wish to answer'. However, we hope you will continue to the end.

For the three initial screening questions which established whether a respondent had experienced less serious sexual assault, serious sexual assault or stalking, no more than two per cent said they did not want to answer. Of those who said they had experienced any of these, most respondents went on to answer the follow-up questions. For most of the questions, no-one used the don't wish to answer button. The maximum number of respondents using the button at any follow-up question was four.

A2.7 Weighting

The results obtained in the SCJS 2008-09 were weighted to correct for the unequal probability of selection for interview (arising from the sample design) and for differences in the level of response among groups of individuals.

In view of the reduced response to the self-completion section, additional weighting was necessary for use when analysing this sub-sample. The self-completion weights were calculated using the same variables and in a similar way to the main individual and household weights but based only on respondents who had answered the self-completion section of the questionnaire.²¹ The individual weight was applied to all of the questions included in this report as they all related to the experiences and opinions of individuals.

²¹ Further detail of the weighting used in the survey and an explanation of when to use the different weights is provided in the accompanying technical report:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Research/by-topic/crime-and-justice/crime-and-justice-survey/publications>

Annex 3: Measuring sexual victimisation in the SCJS 2008-09

The SCJS 2008-09 produced two key measures of crime as defined by the survey.²² This included the number of crimes estimated to have happened to a population in the specified period (also known as the incidence) and the proportion of a population who were victims of any offence in that period (also known as the victimisation rate, prevalence rate or risk).

Sexual offences were not included in the overall crime measures for the reasons discussed below.

A3.1 Difficulties in measuring sexual victimisation

Sexual crimes, especially the more serious sexual assaults, are relatively rare. Previous crime surveys have included a specific question in the screener section of the main questionnaire asking about sexual assault. Experience of these surveys showed that very few incidents of sexual assault were reported by respondents. Understandably, a respondent may not want to disclose they had experienced sexual assault to an interviewer.

To avoid the need for interaction with the interviewer, questions on sexual offences were included in the self-completion section of the questionnaire. Of course it is important to note that this would still be likely to underestimate the number of actual sexual offences occurring as, even with a self-completion format, a degree of under-reporting would be expected.

A3.2 Exclusion of sexual assault screener question

As a result of previous difficulties in measuring sexual victimisation a filter question on sexual offences was not explicitly included in the screener section of the main questionnaire (annex 2). Despite this, in a small number of cases respondents provided details of a sexual offence in a victim form through another screener question. In total 13 respondents provided information about 26 crimes that were coded as sexual offences in the victim form.

The decision to exclude the specific screener question on sexual assault from the screening questions that generated victim forms was taken on ethical grounds. The basis for the decision was that it was more important to identify respondents' experiences and to gather information about them in as sensitive a way as possible and without putting them in an uncomfortable position, rather than to include them in the main measures of crime provided by the survey. Instead it was agreed that the number of such victimisations would be reported separately.

²² The main survey report provides more details about the definition of crime and the measures produced: 2008/09 Scottish Crime and Justice Survey: First Findings;
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/26114015/>

A3.3 Reasons for excluding sexual victimisation from the main crime count

It was not possible to include sexual offences solely reported through the self-completion section in the measures of crime produced by the main survey. This was firstly because a limited number of questions were included compared with the victim form to avoid the potential of causing unnecessary distress to respondents. As a result, not all of the sexual offences covered in the self-completion section could have been coded with certainty.

Secondly, for the same reason, no information was gathered about the number of crimes where more than one had happened in the last 12 months. This would still allow an estimate of the risk of victimisation to be produced, but would not allow the number of crimes to be calculated (even where offence coding was possible).²³

Importantly, the sum of the number of victim forms and the number of incidents of sexual victimisation collected through the self-completion section of the questionnaire could be more than five for an individual respondent.²⁴ This would introduce a bias to the survey as crimes experienced by victims of more than five including experiencing sexual victimisation would contribute a higher number of crimes to the estimates compared with similar victims who had not also experienced sexual victimisation (using the current collecting conventions).

The number of sexual offences collected in the victim form was known to be under-reported (section A3.1) and could not be boosted by coding the offences collected through the self-completion section to provide a more accurate estimate for these crimes. As a result the sexual offences collected through the victim form were not included in the estimates of crime. At the same time, where possible the details collected through the victim form are included in this report so that all experiences are taken account of.

²³ The technical report that accompanies the survey reports provides further details of offence coding. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/26114015/0>

²⁴ The number of victim forms a respondent was asked to complete was restricted to five, so that additional incidents identified by them were not included in the estimate of the numbers of crimes. See annex 3 of the main survey report for further details: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2009/10/26114015/0>.

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This report has been produced by researchers from the respected independent social research organisation TNS-BMRB working with Scottish Government Researchers in the Justice Analytical Services Department.

UK Statistics Authority - Assessment Report

Under the provisions of the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007, the UK Statistics Authority has a statutory function to assess sets of statistics against the Code of Practice for Official Statistics, with a view to determining whether it is appropriate for the statistics to be designated, or retain their designation, as National Statistics. Designation as National Statistics means that statistics are deemed to be compliant with the Code of Practice.

The statistics published from the Scottish Crime and Justice Survey have been assessed by the UK Statistics Authority and have been confirmed as National Statistics. The Scottish Government will report back to the Authority by January 2010 on some specific enhancements it was to make, as identified by the Authority. The Assessment Report, which was published in September 2009, can be accessed via the following link:

<http://www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/assessment-reports/assessment-report-12--scottish-crime-and-justice-survey--15-september-2009.pdf>

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