

# FORENSIC RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY

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## Prevalence of gang rapes in Mthatha region of South Africa

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**Background:** Gang rape is one of the most conspicuous forms of violence, has reached epidemic proportions in South Africa. It prevalent in all spheres of society and all women are potential victims.

**Objectives:** To determine the prevalence of gang rapes in Mthatha region of South Africa.

**Methods:** This one-year retrospective study focused on all cases of gang rape reported by complainants over 16 years at Sinawe Rape Crisis Center in Umtata General Hospital during January 2008 to December 2008. Recorded details included the age, addresses, number of perpetrators, relation with perpetrator and physical violence.

**Result:** There were 379 cases of rape recorded. Of this, 63 (16.6%) were gang rapes. Majority 181 (47.8%) were between the age of 16 and 20 years. The highest number 30 (47.6%) were in the area of Mthatha followed by Tsolo 9 (14.3%), Engocobo 9 (14.3%), and Libode 7 (11.1%). In majority 47 (74.6%) of victims had two perpetrators, 10 (15.8%) had three perpetrators, and 3 (4.8%) had four perpetrators. Most of the perpetrators 44 (69.8%) were not known to the victims. Most of the gang rapes were part of robbery and took place at victim's house.

**Conclusion:** There is a high prevalence of gang rape in Mthatha area of South Africa.

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