

**INTERROGATING THE PREVALENCE OF RAPE AND CAUSATIVE FACTORS IN LAGOS
STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Rape is a long-standing crime that is gradually becoming a way of life in developing societies. With the high incidences of rape that occur on a daily basis, it could be referred to as an epidemic. With victims refusing to report their ordeal to the law enforcement agencies, it has become so difficult to produce accurate statistics on rape in Nigeria. These issues acted as a catalyst for this study as it is borne out of the failure of the authorities to reduce the crime of rape. Arising from the identified loopholes, this paper embarked on a study of rape prevalence in Lagos State, Nigeria utilizing the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women as the frame of analysis. Data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. With retrieved data from the 340 out of 384 copies of questionnaire analyzed, interviews conducted and secondary sources, the study discovers that rape is surging rather than subsiding. It further observed that the blame on indecent dressing as a key causal factor for rape was misleading as it contributed minimally to the cause. The paper recommended the strengthening of existing laws on rape in other to act as a deterrence mechanism to would-be offenders. It strongly called for the utilization of ICT-enabled technologies in the fight against rape and suggests the forging of synergies and linkages between the government and non-state actors. It concluded that the relevant government parastatal should ensure the Nigerian state benefits from preexisting coalitions or conventions, which the state has assented to rather than join more without any mutual benefits accruing to her.

Keywords: Assault, Gender, Lagos, rape, Nigeria, Violence

Introduction

The alarming issue of rape in our society has become a topical concern in recent years with a long history traceable to several decades. The ability to choose which is a major distinguishing feature between man and animals is a fundamental right that every individual possesses irrespective of gender, or financial status but this fundamental right has been seriously violated in recent times. To further buttress the antiquated status of this menace, it is pertinent to state that the history of rape is a long one as the oldest documented law which classified this practice as a crime appeared in the code of Hammurabi at the beginning of the 17th century (Smith, 1974).

Rape has been defined as sexual penetration carried out without obtained consent (Savino & Turvey, 2004). It is an infringement on people's rights, privacy, self-preservation, and dignity and a raging health issue that has continued to increase in intensity (Chiazor, Ozoya, Udume & Egharevba, 2016). According to Onyejekwe (2008), rape is a public health problem that is condemned in public laws and regarded as a human right violation in the international political system. In spite of the condemnations and resentment, rape and its associated practices including its accompanying ideologies have continually evolved over time and across various climes (Bourke, 2020). Hence, perspectives on this vice are fluid and devoid of a coordinated viewpoint. This undoubtedly seems a major reason for the preponderance of rape which is endemic in the Nigerian state.

While quite a significant number of people are victims of this menace, it is sad to state that despite its pervasiveness, laws in countries are insufficient, inconsistent, not systematically enforced, and with a tendency to promote violence (Equalitynow, 2017). With the aforementioned, it is glaring that the factors that promote the spike or hike in this epidemic are not far-fetched.

Despite the international coalitions and conventions against rape, it seems entrenched and firmly rooted. It is common knowledge that victims of rape are often in a world of their own as they are humiliated, intimidated, and often made to face embarrassment and scorn whenever their dilemma becomes public knowledge. Hence, the aftermath is victims keeping shut and allowing their oppressors to roam the streets free. The prevalence of gender dominance ideologies and stereotypes have further helped to entrench this persistent occurrence. It is also instructive to state that rape is an act of terror, horror, and warfare with its consequences always disastrous. What is more worrisome about the subject of rape is the impunity of the perpetrators who seem not to be bothered by the consequences in their quest to satisfy their urges. It is worthy of note that every rapist remains a threat to society until they are identified and isolated. While there is a subtle attempt to cover the issue of rape, it is not news that rape occurs in every society though often not reported.

This alarming menace is a clear pointer to the frequency and intensity of its spread and occurrence in Lagos and by extension, the Nigerian state. It is on record that the cases of rape have not reduced as a total of six hundred and seventy-eight cases of rape were recorded by the police command of Lagos state and these cases occurred between the month of March 2012 up till 2013 the same months and only the first two months of the year 2021, there were 91 recorded cases of rape in Lagos state Nigeria (Adediran, 2021). This represents the central idea of this study as it aims to examine the rate of rape prevalence in Lagos state, Nigeria, and the extent to which international conventions specifically, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women have helped to curtail it with a specific focus on Lagos State.

What this study seeks to address is the fact that rape is an infringement of human rights with most victims being women and despite being a signatory to conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVAW) especially on rape prevention amongst other acts of sexual violence, rape incidences in Nigeria seem to be on the increase. It is against this background that this paper investigates the rape and the declaration on the elimination of violence against women specifically in Lagos State, Nigeria. In addition, the paper is structured into literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, result analysis and conclusion.

Literature Review

The global trend of rape is gradually becoming a crime executed against women almost across nations of the world (Peltola, 2018). Rape is sexual activity or relations without the consent of both parties involved, it is frequently performed using violence, intimidation, or fear. According to Onyejekwe (2008), sexual intercourse occurs when the man's reproductive organ is inserted, whether briefly or in a prolonged manner. However, some countries have modified the meaning of rape to include the non-consensual insertion of different bodily components or objects, such that legislation on rape may also penalize unwelcome oral intercourse, fellatio, and anal sex (Berman, 1981). According to Tredoux (1997), rape can be defined as sex without consent or simply put sexual robbery and burglary, an act laden with elements of force or coercion and is described as a deceptive action. In the words of Bourke (2001, p. 36), it is a non-consensual sexual act. For Palmer and Thornhill (2000), rape is a resisted copulation that has the propensity to lead to injuries or death on the part of the victim. In a similar dimension, Adams (2012), views rape as a forceful and violent act condemnable and resented by all irrespective of their nationalistic origin.

According to Imosemi & Adedamola (2018), the concept of rape is not peculiar to one sex alone as either of the sexes can rape the other. Pretorius & Hull (2005), opine that the rape of the male gender is often shrouded in mysticism and stereotypes which dampens the morale of victims from opening up to others about their experiences. They carried out an in-depth study by critically observing the traits of sexual assault from the prism of its effect on the victims and the support structure available to them. They made a case for victims of sexual

violence to be provided specialized and sensitive care rather than allow them to face victimization and dehumanization.

It is obvious from the literature that the major issue that defines rape is the absence of consent. Rape is a deviant and cruel behaviour that is at variance with acceptable norms in society. It is a form of sexual abuse or exploitation that apart from deflating the victim's confidence impairs their wellbeing. It impedes people's freedom and makes them lose their choice of sexual partner determination or decision. This endemic activity apart from being a violation of the individual's right is an aberration and an act of desecration to the society in which it is perpetuated (Esere, Idowu, Durosaro & Omotosho, 2009).

Rape culture is a way of life wherein sexual assault is normalized and victims are held accountable for their own assaults. It is not just about sexual violence in and of itself, but also about the societal norms and practices that defend rapists, encourage injustice, humiliate survivors, and force women to make extreme compromises to prevent the sexual attack (Taub, 2014). A culture of rape is characterized as a setting where violence is frequent and where the media and popular culture tolerate sexual assault. The use of misogynist and sexist vocabulary, the commodification of the look of women, and the glorification of sexual harassment continue to produce a culture of rape that culminates in a community that fully disregards women's rights and security. Rape culture affects men, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, as well as women (Ridgway, 2014; Stotzer, 2009).

Rape is not a stand-alone event as it is facilitated by a plethora of factors. Drugs for instance have been touted to promote rape. While there is the misleading opinion that the role of drugs is limited to rape perpetrators, victims of rape can be easily subdued or lose consciousness if ingested with drugs (Calhoun, Wesson, Galloway & Smith, 1996). In such a situation the assailants take advantage of the victim's weakness to assert themselves, subjugate and suppress them into submission. This in itself is an aberration that needs to be checked and condemned in its entirety.

Horvath & Brown (2006), in their work, examined the role of drugs in rape occurrences with their work throwing up a lot of interesting outcomes with overwhelming pieces of evidence suggesting an inextricable interface. Granted that individuals are sometimes victims of rape; we must sound a caveat that the consumption of hard substances or excessive intake of alcohol can increase their vulnerability or propensity to be taken advantage of by their assailants.

The absence of stringent legislation to punish rape offenders is seen as a major factor in its prevalence. Medie (2013), bemoans the frailty of existing laws on rape in Africa while expressing his displeasure over the culture of reconciliation often encouraged rather than the persecution of perpetrators. He posits that the frequent acts of truncating persecution do not augur well for the fight against sexual violence which ought to be total rather than the *laissez-faire* attitude currently experienced. The Liberian State is identified as a region with a high prevalence of gender-based violence due to the post-war experience it had. The concerted efforts made by women with a view to stemming the tide of rape are evaluated especially pertaining to awareness and sensitization.

Granted that rape is a momentary activity, its effects on the victim are perpetual (WHO, 2017), as one experience is common with rape victims which is rape trauma syndrome. This trauma which stays with the victims almost throughout their lifetime is a negative trend that needs to be checked as most victims of this negative experience find it very difficult to recover despite going through counselling sessions (Josse, 2010).

The most disturbing part of rape is the short, medium and long-term impacts it could pose on its victims. The aftermath of rape can be devastating to victims and their families (Ashiru & Amurawaye, 2019) because its memories apart from being laden with pain are lifelong (Obasi & Onagoruwa, 2019). This captures why Alhassan (2020), described the trauma that accompanies it as better imagined than experienced or recounted. Unwanted pregnancy, the transmission of sexually transmitted infections, mental risk disorder, diminished self-esteem, trauma, and depression amongst others are also outcomes of this perverse practice.

Nobody can deny that being a victim of rape is among the most unpleasant, horrifying, and demeaning occurrences a person can experience. Often it results in feelings of self-loathing, self-blame, and wrath in the victim, and it

can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Around 12% of women globally are affected by a global public health epidemic, which includes sexual assault, rape, romantic partners, and sexual abuse. Included in the lifelong diagnosis of anxiety disorders, depression, PTSD, eating and sleep disorders, suicide attempts, gynecological difficulties, neurological, Vascular, pulmonary, gastrointestinal, and autoimmune diseases, is a risk of a number of sexual assaults. Sexual violence can also result in an escalation in alcohol abuse, and marijuana, in some cases it also leads to the danger of further sexual re-victimization (Dartnall & Jewkes, 2013).

Across the globe, incidences of rape are occurring more frequently than ever. While the increase in social media usage can be blamed for this aberration, there are other factors that can continue to contribute to the spike and hike in this activity. While the searchlight has always been beamed on the Global South with the assumption that these less developed societies are the hotbed of rape, this assertion cannot be said to be totally true as there seems an incremental growth in most developed countries on rape cases. This is even worse when the majority of rape cases are presumed to be unreported. The prevalence of rape cases in these countries leaves people confused about what domain rape can be categorized into, whether an acceptable lifestyle or a deviant behavioral pattern.

In Nigeria, the problem of rape is multidimensional, multi-pronged, and multifaceted. Hence, it is thus very difficult to pinpoint a single cause of rape as there are a plethora of factors responsible for its perpetuation and sustenance. To capture the essence of this discourse, we are appraising rape in France, India, the United States, and Brazil from the prism of their casual factors, legislations, and prevalence with a view to providing a platform for interrogating the rape phenomenon in Nigeria.

Consent before sex in the Indian state seems outdated with the alarming rape statistics emanating from the region. One thing that stands out rape in India is the occurrence of gang rape which involves a group of people teaming up to sexually assault their victim. With this obnoxious activity becoming more entrenched, it thus seems there is no correlation between the incidence, prevalence, and consequences of rape in India. To buttress the state of affairs in this country, reports suggest a girl is raped every twenty minutes in India (Kamdar, Kosambiya, Chawada, Verma & Kadia, 2017).

Brazil's experience in the global rape conundrum has not fared any better as its plight has been further exacerbated by the supposed nexus between rape perpetuation and alcohol consumption (Massaro, Adesse, Laranjeira, Caetano & Madruga, 2019). Reports have it that a rape case is reported every eleven minutes (Drybread, 2020). This depicts the intensity and frequency of this sexual infraction and aberration in the country.

In the United States, rape is becoming more entrenched by the day with statistics showing that one in four women are raped in their lifetime (Campbell & Wasco, 2005). The occurrence of rape in the United States is worrisome as most women in the country are raped at a very early age (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). The alarming rate at which rape takes place is a clear pointer to the unsafe state of the United States with respect to rape occurrences and puts to rest the long-held assumption or presumption that rape is more likely to occur in under-developed or less developed regions of the world.

There is a belief that the resurgence of rape in the United States is a function of the porosity of anti-rape laws in that country. While this might demand some level of intellectual debate or interrogation, we make bold to state that the non-availability of stringent legislation, strong enough to deter perpetrators of rape in the United States cannot be divorced from the fact that a significant number of lawmakers in the country are men while a vast number of victims are women. Hence, the inability of these lawmakers to appreciate the magnitude of damage this can cause to the victims (Missirian & Kulow, 2019). This gap noticed in the US legal system cuts across nations of the globe as there is a fundamental need to revisit existing rape laws globally in order to drastically reduce incidences of rape. Therefore, to forestall the occurrence of rape in the United States, most states in the country have a standing sexual assault response team (Clifton, 2020).

Rape figures in France are equally alarming and surging by the day. In the year 2020, out of the 49,000 incidences of sexual violence over 46 % of them were rape cases. Hence, as a way of checkmating its occurrence, articles 222-23 of the French penal code prescribes 15 years imprisonment for acts of rape (Statista, 2022), while spousal

rape in the French nation irrespective of the circumstances under which it is committed is treated very sternly. Having amended the law in 2006, spousal rape is considered more seriously and sternly punished than rape involving strangers. To discourage the practice of rape, article 222-26 of the French penal code prescribes life imprisonment for perpetrators when rape is a product of torture or barbarianism (Bensussan, 2009).

Rape has become endemic and entrenched in the Nigerian state (Omoniyi, 2017). This is so because, at different levels, there is the perpetuation of rape in the state, hence, the spike in rape incidences in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2020). Just within the years 2001 to 2005 there were 10,000 reported cases of rape in the country (Peter & Olowa, 2010). Within the years 2010 to 2019, a record of over 12 million rape incidences have been reported (RAINN, 2022). The situation has degenerated to a point that Nigeria is touted to be closely contested with India as a very dangerous clime for females of all age brackets to inhabit (UNICEF & WHO, 2020). The preponderance and prevalence of rape in this clime can be blamed on a plethora of factors.

According to Oladapo and Oyekunle (2017), rape is one of the major safety issues women in Lagos state face. Fatusi and Alatisé (2006), report incidences of rape and murder by family members. This goes to buttress our earlier arguments that while it is often very easy for us to point accusing fingers at society, it is imperative to look inwards as the decline in family values seems to be a major precipitant for this hike, spike, or ultimately proliferation of such incidences in this clime (Fatusi, & Alatisé, 2006). It is therefore posited that it is high time every Nigerian irrespective of ethnic or religious affiliation lends their voice to the global campaign calling for an end to rape in all forms and manifestations.

Theoretical Framework

Many theories have been explored by different scholars to shed light on the issue of rape, but for this paper, the theory of self-control is adopted as the theoretical framework of analysis. The theory of self-control was propounded by Travis Hirschi & Michael Gottfredson (1990) and specifically looks at the reasons for rape prevalence. It views actions from the prism of willpower and restraint which implies that individuals have the ability to desist from taking part in activities that are inimical to the general good. Gottfredson & Hirschi (1990) argued that a lack of self-control is not only "the" cause of crime, but it also causes "analogous" actions. Those weak in self-control are more likely to have problems in social relationships, such as marriage, and are more prone to use drugs and abuse alcohol because they are insensitive to others and take risks. Amongst the assumptions of this theory are the ability to defer gratification which connotes that individuals must not be desperate to satisfy their urges even when the means to do so is not readily available. The theory also admonishes humans to exercise caution and diligence in all they do. It emphasizes the possession of cognitive activities and advises individuals to be sensitive and take into cognizance the feelings of others when taking decisions (Baron, 2003).

How relevant is this theory? This theory of self-control is relevant to this study because is premised on the inordinate desire of people to seek sexual gratification outside the ambits of the law. The theory of self-control offers valuable explanations for the prevalence of rape in Nigeria as perpetrators throw caution to the wind in a bid to satisfy their urges and lust. The Theory of Self Control argues that if individuals have the discipline to control their inordinate urges and lust for sexual gratification, they would not indulge in acts of forceful penetration or desecration of their fellow humans. It is of the opinion that it is their inability to tame lustful desires that drive them into taking part in such acts. The Theory of self-control posits that the inability of people to control themselves is a key cause of rape. It sees rape as a beastly behaviour that humans exhibit. It dwells on the inability of people to control their sexual urges and how they choose any random person as their partner. It argues that if people take charge of their emotions, they will not resort to rape because it is only animals that lack the element of sexual choice & restraint. It provides answers to the subsisting question of why people rape their blood relatives and subordinates at work as such individuals act based on the spur of the moment and often regret their actions afterward (Muraven, Pogarsky, & Blumberg, 2006).

There is, however, a great deal of mismatch between the reported cases of rape and actual occurrences largely due to the failure of rape victims to lodge complaints with law enforcement agencies. Rape victims are usually discouraged to go to law enforcement agencies like the police because they are either blamed for the atrocity or they are too ashamed and scared of stigmatization. They tend to hide under the umbrella of non-governmental

agencies that aid rape victims, make sure they don't contact infections or get pregnant and try to help with the trauma from the experience. Hence, it presents a gap that this study will bridge.

Methodology

This study used a cross-sectional survey design. The choice of this design is justified because it allows the researcher to examine the data obtained, it also allows for the description, analytics, interpretations, and inferences of research findings (Maninder, 2016).

The topic highlights two variables which are rape and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women with the independent variable being the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women and the dependent variable being rape. Selecting and adopting a suitable research design remains a core component of any successful research endeavour. The sample population for this study is the population of Ikeja local government area in Lagos State estimated at 861,300 inhabitants (City population, 2020) as data shows that Ikeja is part of the top three local government areas that has the highest number of rape cases reported among the 20 local government areas in Lagos State (Afolabi & Nwannekanma, 2021). The researcher uses Kress and Morgan sample size determination table to ascertain the sample size of the study which is 384 (Krejcie, & Morgan, 1970). Data was collected using both primary and secondary sources for the study. Useful secondary data were sourced from textbooks, journal publications, newspaper articles, and academic papers, and the research instruments adopted in this study are structured questionnaire and semi-structured interview. The researcher area of study for this work is Ikeja, Lagos State a city that served as Nigeria's federal capital before its movement to Abuja.

4.1 Result Analysis

4.2 Analysis of the Prevalence of Rape in Lagos State

S/N	Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD		Total F (%)
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
1	I hear of incidence of Rape in Lagos State often	122	35.9	146	42.9	56	16.5	14	4.1	2	0.6	340 (100%)
2	I read of Rape cases in Lagos State often	112	32.9	134	39.4	78	22.9	16	4.7	–	–	340 (100%)
3	I have witnessed incidence of Rape in Lagos State	14	4.1	26	7.6	86	25.3	146	42.9	68	20	340 (100%)
4	I believe Rape is rampant in Lagos State	106	31.2	134	39.4	84	24.7	16	4.7	–	–	340 (100%)
5	I know of the person(s) in Lagos who is/are victims of Rape in Lagos	46	13.5	62	18.2	82	24.1	100	29.4	50	14.7	340 (100%)
6	Females are more victims of Rape in Lagos State	190	55.9	110	32.4	36	10.6	4	1.2	–	–	340 (100%)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

As shown in the table above, the researcher highlights six statements asked as questions with the intent to scale or measure the opinion of respondents on the issues being interrogated. Hence, taking into consideration factors that could lead to rape prevalence in Lagos State, questions were asked and respondents were made to react to them.

The study revealed that rape is surging rather than subsiding. It blames this development on the dismally low complaints lodged to the law enforcement agencies with a resultant emboldening of perpetrators who never get apprehended. A significant discovery in this work is the culture of refusing to speak up because of the stigma victims often face. This aligns with the amnesty report in 2021 which states that the current under-reporting can be hinged on the acts of stigmatization victims are exposed to. This is quite an unpleasant situation that requires urgent remedy. Research feedback has shown that victims of rape even refuse to take their blood relations into confidence after they have been raped rather, they prefer to swallow their pills alone. This act apart from distorting national rape statistics has the tendency to deflate victims’ confidence while affecting them emotionally and psychologically. With such a culture of silence by victims, mothers might not even know when their daughters are raped. Also disturbing is the fact that most victims of rape are often defiled by persons very close to them. It is worthy to state that a five-year study of rape incidences in Lagos State, Nigeria revealed that 73.1% of the victims knew their assailants who were their neighbours (Akinlushi, 2014). The case of a five-year-old raped in Makoko, a suburb in Lagos by a neighbour buttresses this point (Igomu, 2019) and reinforces the issue of rape as a fundamental issue that demands urgent attention and remediation.

The overwhelming responses of questionnaire respondents and interviewees on the rate of rape in Lagos say it all as while it seems the issue is not getting the required attention it deserves; it is fast becoming an epidemic that might become difficult to surmount if not tackled urgently. Religious worship centers apart from being desecrated have also been used to perpetrate this activity. shops, public toilets in the market, automobile vehicles, and even victims’ homes have been utilized for this activity. The gang rape of a 14-year-old by four adult males in Bauchi state is one of the several existing incidences we have recounted (Daily Trust, 2020). Omoniyi states that across the length and breadth of the Nigerian State, there is a harvest of rape incidences that cuts across all age brackets (Omoniyi, 2020). This alarming intensity of occurrence is what has necessitated calls for more focus on it rather than the current lack of attention it has been given. Although our research upheld the pre-existing belief that females topped the chart as victims of rape, it opened up another dimension to the issue by stating that men must be taken cognizance of when whenever discourses on rape crop up as they are equally victims of this act of sexual violence.

The aggregated responses from the interview respondents point to one direction which is the fact that rape in Lagos state is now more of an epidemic. It is in this light that we have referred to rape as a pandemic due to its being a very prevalent violation of human rights in the country, this is in line with the report from amnesty international in 2021. While the efforts of groups such as Women at Risk International Foundation are commendable who have through their no tolerance campaign amassed a whopping 10 million following on social media (The Guardian, 2020). The same trend of thought can be deduced from Nextierspd, which is of the view that this perceived increase is a function of efforts made in encouraging victims to speak up rather than conceal their ordeal (Nextierspd, 2020). In spite of all these coordinated responses and coalitions to defeat the scourge, the incremental rise in rape statistics is a clear pointer to the fact that there are more grounds to cover. We are however optimistic that this scourge can be tackled headlong and defeated.

4.3 Analysis of the Factors Encouraging Rape Incidences in Lagos State

S/N	Statement	SA		A		N		D		SD		Total
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F (%)

1	Poor sex education is a cause of rape	104	30.6	110	32.4	56	16.5	60	17.6	10	2.9	340 (100%)
2	Undue exposure to sexual content is a cause of rape	130	38.2	118	34.7	44	12.9	44	12.9	4	1.2	340 (100%)
3	Skimpy and revealing clothing is a cause of rape	92	27.1	108	31.8	54	15.9	66	19.4	20	5.9	340 (100%)
4	Poor family upbringing is a cause of rape	124	36.5	104	30.6	58	17.1	38	11.2	16	4.7	340 (100%)
5	Drugs, hard substances or excessive intake of alcohol is a cause of rape	158	46.5	118	34.7	32	9.4	28	8.2	4	1.2	340 (100%)
6	Lack of strict laws to punish rape offenders is a cause of rape	206	60.6	96	28.2	18	5.3	16	4.7	4	1.2	340 (100%)

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Highlighted above are different factors that can be considered or seen as causes of rape. In a bid to provide plausible causal factors for the menace of rape in Lagos, certain principal questions were asked from the respondents.

A number of factors have been advanced as being responsible for the spike in rape statistics. In the course of this work, we itemized and critically evaluated obtained responses on the issues as depicted in this segment. Among the causes of rape established from this work is the weakness of the Nations’ legal systems which nullifies efforts made by the police and its sister agencies. This is largely due to the fact that there is a high propensity for their efforts to be nullified if these flaws are not rectified. The respondents’ feedback is a clear pointer to this factor. This aligns with the position of Gbenga-Ogu who harps on the fact that the need to develop sufficient laws and policies to combat issues of rape cannot be over-emphasized especially with regard to enforcement (Gbenga-ogu, 2020). This is so important as there is a general consensus that the laws that speak to rape are antiquated and outmoded (Anas, 2021).

The issue of poor sex education as a precipitant for rape when raised was also taken into consideration as a fundamental contributor to rape perpetuation and sustenance that most adolescents have limited or insufficient knowledge about sex education in this time and age is an anomaly with a capacity to contribute to the sustenance and perpetuation of rape in this clime (Musa, 2020). The exclusion of sex education in the current Nigerian curriculum can lead to a spike in the degree of vulnerability as when people are enlightened on their sexuality, they will be knowledgeable enough to take preventive measures against acts of sexual violation. The selective focus on female students to the detriment of their male colleagues when providing sex education is also a drawback and is responsible for the spike in this activity (Adebumiti, 2020).

Poor child upbringing has not helped the fight against rape in the words of the Liberian Vice President Jewel Howard-Taylor, poor parenting is a key contributor to the surge in rape cases and parents must make it a point of responsibility to arrest this burgeoning issue (Mehnpaine, 2021). In agreement with the Liberian Vice President, Abimbola Olayinka CEO of GalParenting Place stated that the failure of parents to live up to expectations by

bringing up their children with the right values is the reason for the astronomical growth in rape figures in Nigeria (Okechukwu-Osuizigbo, 2020). The secondary literature tally with our field responses which identified Faulty family upbringing as a major factor that encourages rape and inline lead to rape incidences increasing with over 60% of respondents pointing accusing fingers at it is a clear indicator of family culpability in the rape dilemma experienced in Lagos state and Nigeria by extension.

Respondents accused the media of being a culpable accomplice, especially the new media known and referred to as social media which seems to be on an indoctrination mission of inducting rapists and subtly promoting sexism through the type of content they promote. Published works equally blame social media for the increased rate of rape in the country (News Agency of Nigeria, 2017), as the unbridled, unrestricted, or unregulated usage of social media by adolescents can influence and alter their sexual behaviour (Nagaddya, Kiconco, Komuhangi, Akugizibwe & Atuhairwe, 2017). We have therefore called on the National Communications Commission to devise a strategy of regulating and restricting lewd contents when required.

The issue of indecent and improper dressing was given requisite attention as it was observed that indecent dressing triggered the urge for sexual activities in potential rapists who start scheming execution immediately. However, it is worthy of note that the issue of dressing as a factor for rape was not totally in the affirmative implying that a rapist will try to carry out their activities irrespective of whether the victim is properly dressed or not. The case of Barakat a Muslim girl veiled yet raped and killed shows that the blame on dressing for rape is outmoded and can no longer hold water (Sunnewsonline, 2020). This was supported by Adeshina who cited instances of Indian women who wear Sari yet fall victim to rape and posit that dressing should never be an excuse for rape (Adeshina, 2021). Gleaming through the causal factors for rape in Nigeria as enunciated by Akinade (2010), we can observe that indecent dressing is just one of the factors and not the sole one. However, in the midst of arguments and counter-arguments on dressing as a facilitator of rape or not, data obtained on the subject matter sends a message to agents of socialization such as family units and schools on the need to reform the dressing code of such category of ladies since seductive dressing has been discovered to play a role in the execution of rape.

Consumption of hard drugs and banned substances including excessive alcohol consumption was fingered as a strong propellant for rape as rapists acting under the influence of these substances don't consider the consequences and throw caution to the wind when caught in the rave of the moment. Since the issue of alcohol disorders, substance usage, and drug abuse is a public health challenge in Sub-Saharan Africa (Obeng & Obeng-Gyasi, 2021), there have been calls on the federal government to check alcohol and drug abuse among youth as a way of stemming the spike in rape cases (Onwuzoo, 2020).

Also brought to the fore is the male-centric construct which technically relegates and subjugates women while commodifying them as objects of abuse and recreation. Hence, the necessity for all stakeholders to enforce a radical paradigm shift and change this misrepresentation of women in other to reduce incidences of rape.

Conclusion

Rape in Nigeria remains endemic and transcends the previous conceptions as there is rape within the confines of marriage. The forceful sexual relationship seems to have remained a challenge in the state largely because it has not been treated with the degree of seriousness it deserves. The preexisting practice of shaming victims or stigmatizing them is an impediment to victims speaking up and further emboldens the perpetrators who escape apprehension and persecution. The study posits that rather than assent to conventions like the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, which will not likely be effective there is a need to revisit existing conventions and strengthen them. The work is concluded by calling on the government to strengthen laws bothering on rape to ensure they are sufficient to checkmate rape by stopping would-be rapists while a synergy should be forged with key stakeholders to persecute this war as the war against rape is a collective one and must be carried out headlong rather than with levity.

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