

Perception of Consequences of Rape Among Students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo

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Abstract

This study examined perception of consequences of rape among tertiary institution students. A survey research design was adopted for this study. The population comprised all students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. The sample consisted of two hundred and fifty (250) students randomly selected from the college. Structured questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. Reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha statistics which yielded a coefficient of 0.85. Data were analysed using mean, ranking and t-test. The results showed that consequences of rape are emotional disturbance, depressive symptoms, pregnancy and sleeping difficulties among others. It was also found that family type and marital status have significant influence on perception of consequences of rape among tertiary institution students ($t = 7.192, p < 0.05$ and $t = 3.185, p < 0.05$) respectively while gender and religion do not ($t = 5.183, p > 0.05$ and $t = 6.030, p > 0.05$) respectively. It was therefore recommended that brief cognitive – behavioural programme should be administered shortly after rape to hasten the rate of improvement of psychological damage arising from trauma.

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1. Introduction

Rape is considered to be a worrisome epidemic that has ravaged every society of the world. It has been treated through history with silence. People find it difficult to talk about and the police and legal system find it difficult to deal with rape cases. Rape is a world-wide crime that is posing problem for the criminal justice system of every nation of the world. It had been, undoubtedly, acknowledged as one of the war crimes at the international level. Despite decades of feminist advocacy and awareness contributions, targeting at breaking the silence surrounding sexual victimization, the rape of girls and women persists as a world-wide public health challenge and unfortunately, the public response to sexual violence often seems too pale in comparison to its prevalence (Orchowski, 2010).

Rape is the act of forcing someone to have sex without the person's consent. It is a crime of sexual violence. According to Zanni (2009), the types of rape that exist include stranger rape, acquaintance or date rape, intimate-partner rape, gang-rape, the rape of males, war or armed conflict rape and party rape. In the same vein, Alexis (2009) discussed three categories of rapists as power rapist, opportunist rapist and entitlement rapist.

There are factors increasing the risk of rape among girls and women which include peer group pressure, exposure to modernity, indecent dressing, bad parenting, offender's sexual curiosity, resentment and so on. Rape has physiological, psychological, moral and social consequences on the raped. It may bring guilt, anxiety, fear, disappointment, frustration, anger at self and others, depression and lowered self-esteem (Litchfield & Litchfield, 2012). Many rape victims experience what is referred to as Rape-Related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder which is associated with four major symptoms of re-experiencing the trauma, social withdrawal, avoidance behaviors and actions and increased physiological arousal characteristics.

Rape leaves painful memories and a life long consequences on the victim. The consequences include pregnancy and gynecological complications, sexually transmitted diseases, mental health, suicidal behaviour and social ostracization. It was reported that victims of sexual assault are three times likely to suffer from depression, six times more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, thirteen times more likely to abuse alcohol, twenty-six times more likely to abuse drugs and are four times more likely to contemplate suicide (Soetan & Ademikanra, 2023)

Rape not only affect its immediate victims but also impact secondary victims and society as a whole. Indirect victims such as family members, friends or even professionals may experience immediate and long-term consequences (Mc Cann & Pearlman, 1990). Emotional and mental health symptoms are a key component of a victim's negative post rape experiences (Green & Pomeroy, 2007; Norris & Kaniasty, 1994)

The debilitating effect on the victims of rape cannot be over-emphasized. Perception is a key factor in determining individual's attitude towards a phenomenon. It involves selecting, organising and interpreting changes in the environment. Combating rape among tertiary institution students starts from considering how they perceive the consequences so that all hands would be on deck to fight the menace. This is why this study aims at investigating perception of consequences of rape and how gender, family type, religion and marital status can influence the perception. To guide the conduct of the study, the following research question was raised and hypotheses were postulated.

1.1. Research Question

What are the consequences of rape as perceived by tertiary institution students?

1.2. Research Hypotheses

- a. There is no significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on gender.
- b. There is no significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on family type.
- c. There is no significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on religion.
- d. There is no significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on marital status.

2. Method

The research design that was employed for this study is descriptive survey. This design is used because data were collected from representative sample and were generalized for the whole population. Population for the study consisted of all students in Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo. The sample comprised two hundred and fifty (250) students randomly selected from the five (5) schools in the college. The schools are; School of Education, Languages, Arts and Social Sciences, Sciences, and Vocational and Technical Education. Structured questionnaire was used as instrument to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was divided into two sections (A & B). Section A is personal data of the respondents while section B consisted of items on consequences of rape with four options. Reliability of the instrument was ascertained using Cronbach's Alpha statistics which yielded a coefficient of 0.85. Data collected were analysed using mean, ranking and t-test.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Research Question: What are the Consequences of Rape as Perceived by Tertiary Institution Students?

Table 1 revealed the consequences of rape as emotional disturbance ranked 1st which with mean value of 3.34, depressive symptoms ranked 2nd with mean value of 3.27, pregnancy ranked 3rd with mean value of 3.25, sleeping difficulties and anxiety ranked 4th with mean value of 3.23, lowered self-esteem ranked 6th with mean value of 3.16, aggressive behaviour ranked 7th with mean value of 3.11 and social ostracization ranked 8th with mean value of 3.07 while gynecological complications ranked 9th and last with mean value of 3.03.

Table 1. Mean and Rank Order Table Showing the Consequences of Rape as Perceived by Tertiary Institution Students

S/N	Consequences of Rape	Mean	Rank
1	Pregnancy	3.25	3 rd
2	Depressive symptoms	3.27	2 nd
3	Aggressive behavior	3.11	7 th
4	Sleep difficulties	3.23	4 th
5	Emotional disturbance	3.34	1 st
6	Gynecological complications	3.03	9 th
7	Suicidal behavior	3.02	10 th
8	Social ostracization	3.07	8 th
9	Lowered self-esteem	3.16	6 th
10	Anxiety	3.23	4 th

3.2. Testing of Research Hypotheses

3.2.1. Research Hypothesis One: There Is No Significance Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Gender

In testing this hypothesis, the subjects were grouped into male and female and scores on the perception of consequences of rape were analysed using t-test. The results are presented in Table 2. As shown in Table 2, male subjects have a mean score of 31.20 and a standard deviation of 7.311 whilst female subjects have a mean score of 30.73 and a standard deviation of 8.092. A t-test analysis of these values yielded a t-value of 5.183 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This implies that there is no significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on gender.

Table 2. Independent t-Test Summary Showing the Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Gender

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	St.D	Df	t	Sig	P
Perception on the consequences of rape	Male	103	31.20	7.311	248	5.183	.901	>.05
	Female	147	30.73	8.092				

Source: Field, (2023)

3.2.2. Research Hypothesis Two: There Is No Significant Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Family Type

In testing this hypothesis, the respondents were grouped into monogamy and polygamy family and scores on consequences of rape were analysed using t-test. The results are presented in Table 3. Table 3 shows that respondents from monogamous family have a mean score of 24.71 and standard deviation of 6.046 while those from polygamous family have a mean score of 18.30 and standard deviation of 4.449. A t-test analysis of these values yielded a t-value of 7.192 which is significant at 0.05 level. Size of effect ($\eta^2 = 0.173$) reveals that family type had high effect (according to Cohen, 1988 and Field, 2000 rule of thumb for size of effect) on the perception of consequences of rape; that is, type of family accounted for 17.3% change in the perception of students towards the consequences of rape.

Table 3. Independent t-Test Summary Showing the Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Family Type

Variable	Family type	N	Mean	St.D	Df	t	Sig	P	η^2
Perception on the consequences of rape	Monogamy	96	24.71	6.046	248	7.192	.000	<.05	0.173
	Polygamy	154	18.30	4.449					

Source: Field, (2023)

3.2.3. Research Hypothesis Three: There Is No Significant Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Religion

In testing this hypothesis, the subjects were grouped into Christians and Muslims and scores on consequences of rape were analysed using t-test. The results are presented in Table 4. As shown in Table 4, Christian subjects have a mean score of 27.04 and standard deviation of 5.251 while Muslim subjects have a mean score of 26.91 and standard deviation of 5.272. A t-test analysis of these values yielded a t-value of 6.030 which is not significant at 0.05 level. This implies that there is no significant difference between Christians and Muslims in the perception of consequences of rape based on religion.

Table 4. Independent t-Test Summary Showing the Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Religion

Variable	Religion	N	Mean	St.D	df	t	Sig	P
Perception on the consequences of rape	Christianity	148	27.04	5.251	248	6.030	.605	>.05
	Islam	102	26.91	5.272				

Source: Field, (2023)

3.2.4. Research Hypothesis Four: There Is No Significant Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Marital Status

In testing this hypothesis, the subjects were grouped into single and married and scores on consequences of rape were analysed using t-test. The results are presented in Table 5. Table 5 showed that single subjects have a mean score of 18.84 and a standard deviation of 6.046 while married subjects have a mean score of 15.22 and standard deviation of 1.813. A t-test analysis of these values yielded a t-value of 3.185 which is significant at 0.05 level.

Table 5. Independent t-Test Summary Showing the Difference in the Perception of Consequences of Rape Based on Marital Status

Variable	Marital status	N	Mean	St.D	Df	t	Sig	P	η^2
Perception on the consequences of rape	Single	183	18.84	6.046	248	3.185	.000	<.014	0.039
	Married	67	15.22	1.813					

Source: Field, (2023)

3.3. Discussion

The study revealed that the consequences of rape include emotional disturbance, depressive symptoms, pregnancy, sleeping difficulties, anxiety and lowered self-esteem among others. This corroborated the finding of Litchfield and Litchfield (2012). The results showed that there is no significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on gender. This implies that both male and female students consider rape as a crime having debilitating effect on the victims, though those who advocate traditional attitudes tend to believe that women are often to blame for rape (Shechory & Idisis, 2000)

The findings also revealed that there is significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on family type and that it had high effect among tertiary institution students. This implies that the type of family (monogamous or polygamous) a student comes from determines how he/she perceives the consequences of rape on the victims. Ojo (2014) opined that rape may be as a result of poor family environment.

It was found in the study that religion has no significant influence on the perception of consequences of rape among tertiary institution students. This is in line with the view of Achunike and Kitause (2014), who noted that different interest groups in Nigeria are showing great concern to addressing the rape problem from different dimensions including trying to shape the moral characters of Nigerians.

The results also showed that there is significant difference in the perception of consequences of rape based on marital status. This is corroborated by Koss, Gidycz and Wisniewski (1987), who reported that three-quarters of the women raped were between ages and 21; the average age at the time of rape was 18. This is an indication that majority of the victims are single and mostly affected.

3.3.1. Recommendations

Based on these findings, the following recommendations were made:

- Brief cognitive-behavioural programme should be administered on the victim shortly after rape in order to hasten the rate of improvement of psychological damage arising from trauma.
- There should be programme that would make perpetrators admit responsibility and to be seen as responsible for their actions.
- Workshops that would help men take greater responsibility for their actions, relate better, have greater respect for women and communicate more effectively should be organised in order to address the problem of sexual violence against women.
- People should be encouraged to report incidents of rape to the police and to improve the speed and sensitivity of the processing of cases by the courts.
- Centres that will provide or coordinate a wide range of services, including emergency medical care and medical follow up, counselling, collecting forensic evidence of assault, legal support, and community consultation and education should be located in places such as hospital or police station so as to ensure comprehensive care to victims of rape.

4. Conclusion

It was concluded from this study that rape has physiological, psychological, moral and social consequences on the victims. It was found that family type and marital status have a significant influence on perception of consequences of rape while gender and religion do not.

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