

Original Article

SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIMS IN PAKISTAN

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Objective: To analyze female sexual assault reporting in medicolegal department and suggest rehabilitative rape trauma center for female victims.

Methods: A prospective descriptive study for the year 2016 and 2017 was conducted. Inclusion criteria were female sexual assault victims reporting in medicolegal section, in Services Hospital, Lahore. Exclusionary candidates were who refused consent. A structured, meticulously designed questionnaire was used to collect information; demographic profile, age, occupation, marital status of victim were included.

Results: Seventy Eight cases were reported in 2016 and 75 in year 2017, adding up to 153 total. Age wise, 41 of cases were of children and adolescent with age range 4-15 years. 108 were adult females. Marital status statistics stated, 107 sexually assaulted victims were unmarried, 41 were married whereas virgins raped were reported to be only 5 in number. Correlating with above percentage, occupational statistics showed 73% of sexually assaulted victims were unmarried domestic residents followed by 15% of married women victims. Working class women were reported to be in much safer zone as only 1% were assaulted. Housemaids and students were 4% and 7% respectively.

Conclusions: Results show that of all sexually assaulted victims only 3% were virgin. Given total number of cases it seems that acute rape victims are not reported. It is need of time to educate women rights and awareness regarding legal reporting of such heinous crime for not only prophylactic measures but to avoid further victimization of already inflicted individuals.

Keywords: rape, sexual assault and virgin.

Introduction

Sex is basic human carnal desire, most sorted out and craved of the urges, yet a physiological demand of a natural healthy human being. This instinctive behavior is initiated with puberty trigger, coupled with experimentation of all variety. Almost every healthy individual experiences sexual activity in his or her life in one or another way, whether it be heterosexuality or homosexual commotion.¹ Consensual sex without the wedlock bond at certain age permissible by law is a legal practice in most of the world except the Islamic countries where Nikkah is a legal and religious obligation. However strict the Islamic rules and regulations may be, yet the natural instinct takes over and the urges lead to all sorts of illicit experimentations, some of which might be of benign nature and others reported as heinous crimes such as rape and lust murders. Heterosexual pursuit is a lifestyle of choice by most as an inbred inherent trait despite of experimentation of other sexual alternative choices. However even at this age women are subjected to sexual activity followed by only shame and humiliation instead of provision of help and rehabilitation. Actual rape trauma victims are quiet

rarely reported. These are either threatened so as not to report offence or it is social stigma of being subjugated to never ending humiliation treated as an outcast as if entire blame of offence lay on victim herself.² A few of reported cases which are not only sexually violated but also physically traumatized and abused with psychological handicap. There is no actual rape trauma center which can not only document the medicolegal case scenario but also provide a rehabilitative counseling of the physical insult as well as the psychological anguish and misery.³

Methods

This is descriptive cross sectional study which included the volunteer female victims of sexual assault reporting in medicolegal section of Services Hospital Lahore either with police docket, court order or both. Sample size calculated according to statistical formula was 150. Meticulous history was recorded in detail. Victims were examined for signs of sexual assault after a proper valid informed consent in case of adult females and after receiving a proper authentic consent from a legal guardian in case of a minor victim. All ethical principals were abided in case of research on human subjects according to

WMA (world medical association) of Helsinki (2008). SPSS version 20 was applied for statistic study of gathered data.

Results

Data was collected from medicolegal department of Services Hospital Lahore. Variables to be analyzed were age of female victims and their status regarding marriage and occupation. 150 registered case were analyzed for above stated variables. Age was categorized as children ranging from 1 year up to 12 years of age. This was followed by adolescents with age range of 13-15 years. Then adults were legally classified from 16 years up to 40 years from where onwards final class was taken as old age. Categorization showed 27% of victims were children and adolescent within an age range of 4-15 years and 73% of entire sample size was adults of age 16-40+ years, as shown in **Table-1**. Furthermore marital status is depicted in bar chart as follows in **Fig-1**.

Table-1: Age category.

Age Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid (%)	Cumulative (%)
Child	16	10.5	10.5	10.5
Adolescent	25	16.3	16.3	26.8
Adult	108	70.6	70.6	97.4
Old	4	2.6	2.6	-
Total	153	100.0	100.0	100

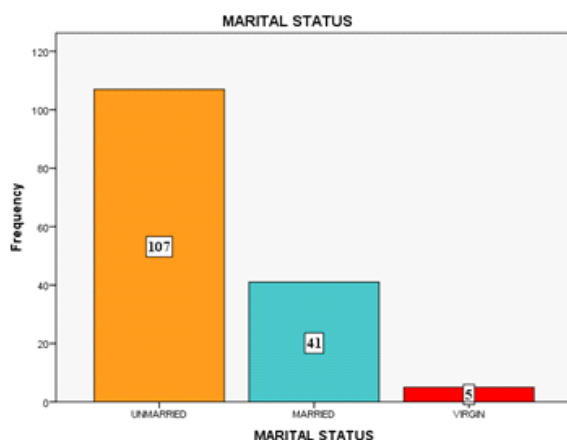


Fig-1: Marital status.

70% of 150 total female victims were although unmarried but only 3% out of total victims were virgins and 27% assaulted were married. Finally as per occupation of assaulted victims, 73%

were unmarried domestic residents followed by 15% victimization percentage of housewives. Student victims accounted for 7% of total victims, with housemaids reported to be 4% and job oriented only 1% were exploited, as in Fig.2

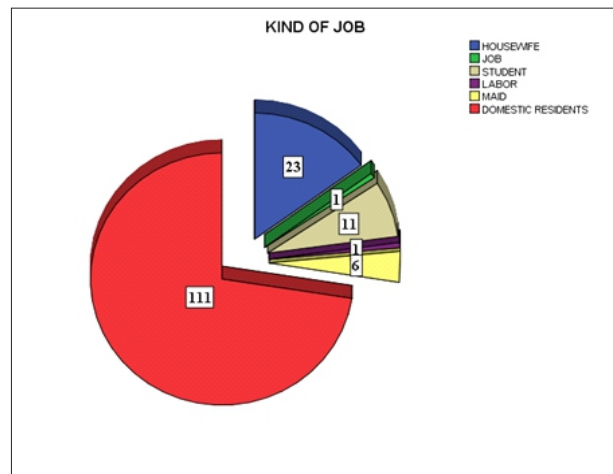


Fig-2: Kind of job.

Discussion

Sex is the cardinal desire of basic human instinct. Sexual urges start to kick in at an early stage of pubescence and youth experimentation regarding sex can lead to diverse experiences, ranging from consensual exploration to aggressive non-consenting sexual advances with eventuality of assault and battery.⁴ Young children and adolescent are most prone to sexual experimentation amongst themselves but mostly fall prey to sexual predators,⁵ as is evident by statistics showing 41 out of 153 victims were in age range of 4-15 years. Yet an alarming 71% of victims were unmarried adult females, who were engaged in sexual activity by either fraudulent temptation of being getting employed or were forced upon by some acquaintance. 27% of victims were married women. Statistical analysis shows that only 5 out of 153 registered cases over a span of two years were virgins. This is an ironic situation that either only sexually experienced women are molested or the virgins defoliated of their innocence do not report the tragic incidence.⁶ Most of the first time molestations go unreported either due to victim herself. Reasons leading to such silent behavior are either shame or fear. Even if the horrendous crime is shared by victim with either of her parents or sibling, they are suggested to hush it to avoid social stigmata.⁷ Furthermore exploratory analysis showed exploitation of victims according to their occupation. According to the data collected domestic female victimization on sexual front was highest reported.⁸

Job oriented women were the most secure from sexual harassment and victimization.⁹ At times even consensual relationships have heinous outcome, either way, as male is usually in for sexual favors and female counterpart seeks out monetary compensation for the mutually consented sexual act.¹⁰ Actual rape trauma victims are not reported in our society, due to multiple reasons. Shame, social stigma, fear or being forced in to reconciliation either due to influence or being hushed up by monetary compensation.

Conclusion

Hence the main objective and outcome as per utilization is to primarily initiate rape trauma victim center with provision of medical, gynecological facilities.¹¹ Psychological evaluation and professional help regarding psychiatric issue and

social life should be extended under one roof.¹² Victims should be encouraged to report sexual offenders to medicolegal system,¹³ so that a check and balance can be maintained to secure innocents from sex predators. It is speculated that reported cases are only tip of iceberg. Society norms are evident from results gathered from emergency medicolegal department of Forensic Medicine. If precautionary and curative measures are not taken to covert such heinous crimes, it shall result in an unchecked sexual chaos.¹⁴ Deteriorating moral values with promotion of sexual lewdness and vulgarity shall be an abominable curse of lust unleashed upon society.¹⁵

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