

Causes and Psycho-Social Impact of Rape on Victims as Perceived by Secondary School Students in Oyo State, Nigeria

BOLU-STEVE¹, Foluke Nike, FADIPE, Rasaq Abimbola², KAYODE, Olajide Charles³

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Abstract: Rape is a heinous and serious crime against humanity. It is not a mere sexual disorder, but rather a criminal offence. The study, therefore, investigated the causes and psychosocial impacts of rape as perceived by secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria. Respondents were selected through a multi-stage sampling method. Firstly, a proportionate sampling technique was used to select the Local Government Areas (LGA) in Oyo state. Secondly, purposive sampling was used to pick secondary schools with the largest population of students. Finally, a simple random sampling technique was applied to select forty-seven (47) respondents from each of the (9) secondary schools selected in this study. The Perceived Causes and Psycho-social Impact of Rape Questionnaire (CPSIRQ) developed by the study authors, was used to gather information from respondents. For the instrument, a reliability coefficient of 0.77 was obtained. Data were analysed using a t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Mean scores that are above 2.5 were accepted as the causes and psycho-social impact of rape while scores below 2.50 were considered as low. The research employed quantitative and qualitative methods. The study found that poor parental upbringing, indecent dressing, and exposure to pornographic films were perceived as major causes of rape, while social stigmatization, insomnia, and depression were perceived as psycho-social impacts. The study recommends proper parental guidance, government enforcement of policies, and community-based initiatives to support victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

Keywords: Causes, Psycho-social Impact, Rape, Secondary school students, Oyo state, Nigeria

¹ Department of Counsellor Education University of Ilorin, Nigeria: Email: bolu-steve.fn@unilorin.edu.ng

² Department of Counsellor Education University of Ilorin, Nigeria. Email: fadiperasaqabimbola@gmail.com

³ Department of Counsellor Education University of Ilorin, Nigeria; Email: charlz.kayode@gmail.com

Introduction

Rape is a form of non-consensual, forceful sexual intercourse, meaning it occurs without the consent of the victim. Rape can take place in various contexts, often leaving a traumatic impact on victims due to the violence involved, which can severely affect their psychological well-being. Despite being a recognized social problem, many people avoid discussing it openly due to the stigma attached.

The rising occurrence of social vices within Nigerian schools has become a significant concern for stakeholders. The issue of rape among in-school adolescents continues to draw media attention, especially as many survivors are tragically murdered after the assault (Amuda, 2021). Safety within the school system is a growing concern, with studies showing a rise in rape cases among students, leading to a decline in school enrollment (Leach, Dunne, & Salvi, 2014). This abnormal, antisocial behaviour has sparked controversy among secondary school students. According to the UN Human Rights Office, students in at least 70 countries, including Nigeria, face threats of rape in schools (Punch Newspaper, 2021). Female students are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence, intimidation, harassment, and abduction, all of which have contributed to lower school attendance (Izzi & Obinuch, 2016). In response to this global issue, sex education has been integrated into the academic curriculum of secondary schools in Nigeria, with the aim of reducing students' vulnerability and providing restorative care for victims' mental health (Orji & Uche, 2021). The American Center for Disease Control (2022) reported that approximately one in six boys and one in four girls are sexually abused before the age of 18 worldwide.

Rape is a global issue. For instance, statistics show that someone is raped every 20 minutes in India. The case of a medical student who was raped by six men on a public bus in New Delhi made international headlines. In Uganda, a teenage girl was sentenced to six hours in jail

for killing her father, who had repeatedly raped her since she was 13 (WHO, 2019). In Africa, about 33% of women have experienced sexual violence (Qu Xianguo et al., 2023). In Nigeria alone, the United Nations reported 11,200 rape cases in 2020 (Punch Newspaper, 2021). A study by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in 2021 revealed a particularly high incidence of rape in Oyo State, prompting calls for urgent government intervention (Ilo, 2021). The issue of rape among secondary school students in Nigeria remains largely unaddressed, and its increasing prevalence is alarming, requiring urgent action. Government officials, school counsellors, teachers, parents, scholars, and researchers in Oyo State have all expressed concern (Ogunwale, Dipeolu & Olaitan, 2020). Marcus Williams, a member of the Oyo State Child Protection Network, warned about the steady rise in rape cases in the state (Ogunyemi, 2014). Many states in Nigeria have recorded a high prevalence rate of rape and so many perpetrators have been arrested (Oyekola, 2023 & Shittu 2024).

Adekoye (2023) confirmed the growing incidence of rape among secondary school students in Oyo State, a trend that was not as prevalent in the past. On March 22, 2023, four students were charged with unlawful sexual relations and conspiracy after they gang-raped a 16-year-old girl with mental health challenges. This violated Section 516 of the Criminal Code and Section 34 of the Oyo State Child Rights Law of 2006 (Nigeria Police Force, 2013). A study in Ibadan, Southwest Nigeria, found that 55% of school-going adolescents had reported experiencing rape. In 2014, police in Oyo State arrested a teacher in Ibadan for allegedly raping three students, including two orphans (Adepoju, 2014). Gaba (2010) noted that both male and female students in Oyo State are frequently exposed to various forms of sexual violence. Taiwo and Omole (2014) reported that one in three women have been victims of rape, with unmarried women more likely to experience it than their married counterparts. There are also many undocumented and unreported rape cases in Oyo State, especially among secondary school students. In 2013, the Nigeria Police Force recorded 365 cases of rape in Oyo State alone.

Schuhofers (2017) Ogunwale, Dipeolu and Olaitan (2020) have explained that rape has become a daily occurrence in Oyo state because the government has failed to address the issue adequately. Perpetrators often escape punishment, while in most cases victims are denied justice. African culture, which encourages silence around rape, has only worsened the psycho-social struggles of victims. While rape can affect both genders, it disproportionately impacts women (Bennett et al., 2007). In many cases, males perpetrate rape under the influence of alcohol or uncontrolled sexual desire (Onianwa et al., 2021). Some cultural beliefs widely held across Africa, such as the notion that premarital sex can cure small testicles or erectile dysfunction in boys or relieve painful menstruation in girls, lead to experimentation through rape (Ilo, 2021).

Rape is frequently carried out through coercion and physical force (Adebusuyi, 2021), and its impact on victims' physical and mental health can be profound. The consequences, both immediate and long-term, can affect victims' social well-being (Olatunji & Agunbiade, 2020). In-school adolescents in Nigeria who experience rape often face higher levels of depression, distress, and trauma (Imoyera, Adebayo & Ojo, 2023). Understanding the psycho-social effects of rape on youth can help guide the development of policies to support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable. Victims often struggle with daily life due to stigma and feelings of guilt (Orji & Uche, 2021). Survivors frequently have trouble concentrating in school, which leads to poor academic performance (Agubosi et al., 2022). Rape can prevent students from reaching their full intellectual, emotional, and educational potential (Tade & Udechukwu, 2020). A study carried out by Ogunwale, Dipeolu & Olaitan (2014) revealed that most victims of rape in Oyo state often drop out of school because of stigmatization. Several factors, including societal norms, economic conditions, the school environment, and cultural factors, make students vulnerable to rape (Agubosi et al., 2020). Victims are also at risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and pelvic inflammatory diseases. Rape can have devastating psycho-social effects, including emotional breakdowns, feelings of guilt, inferiority

among peers, fear, panic, nightmares, unwanted pregnancies that may lead to unsafe abortions, and school dropout (Jina, 2013).

Furthermore, victims may develop intense anxiety, melancholy, and irrational behaviours (Bennett et.al., 2007; Nolen-Hoeksema, 2008). Other effects include anger, sorrow, embarrassment, emotional imbalance, self-denial, self-blame, shame, depression, flashbacks, mood swings, and difficulty trusting others (Ugwuanyi, Njeze & Ogbozor, 2021). Sexual assault victims are at risk of developing post-traumatic stress disorder (Durmus, 2013). Many rape cases go unreported due to stigma, as victims often feel embarrassed and fear being blamed (Osodi et al., 2020).

Numerous studies have examined the issue of rape. For instance, Orji & Uche (2021) explored the menace of rape in Nigerian society, while Olatunji and Agunbiade (2020) focused on its psychological effects on victims in Sub-Saharan Africa. Lasisi and Ozurumba (2021) studied the prevalence and patterns of sexual violence among Nigerian adolescents in the North-Central Geo-Political Zone. However, to the best of the researchers' knowledge, no study has combined the variables of causes and the psychosocial impact of rape. Moreover, most studies have been conducted outside Oyo State, which is the gap this research intends to fill.

The following terms were operationally defined:

Psycho-social Impact: refers to the combination of psychological and social consequences of rape on the victims.

Rape: is an unlawful non-consensual sexual intercourse which involves coercion and threat

Victims of Rape: are those who have experienced unlawful and non-consensual sexual intercourse through coercion.

Secondary School Students: are students in both Junior and Senior Secondary Schools between the age of 11 and 19 years.

Research Questions

The study addressed the following basic research questions:

- 1) What are the causes of rape as perceived by secondary school students in Oyo state?
- 2) What are the psycho-social impacts of rape on victims as perceived by secondary school students in Oyo state?
- 3) Is there any significant difference in the respondent's perception of the causes of rape in Oyo State due to gender?
- 4) Is there any significant difference in the respondent's perception of the impact of rape in Oyo State due to age?

Methods and Procedures

Study design

The research design used for this study was a mixed method of descriptive and concurrent exploratory research. This is because data were gathered from similar target populations concurrently. Amdii (2010) noted that descriptive survey research employs questionnaires and/or interviews to determine the opinions, attitudes, preferences and perceptions of the respondents. The descriptive survey method was used because researchers are interested in finding out the perceived causes and psycho-social impact of rape.

Study setting

Oyo state has three senatorial districts: Oyo North with 13 LGAs; Oyo Central has 11 LGAs, and Oyo South has 9 LGAs. As such there are thirty-three LGAs in Oyo state. Secondary schools located in all the Local Government Areas of Oyo state formed the target population. Local

Government Areas are cities that exist within Oyo state and are grouped for easy administration of the state. Oyo is one of the largest states in Nigeria and its located in South West of the country. The state covers about 28 454 square kilometres and is ranked as the 14th by size in West Africa. Most of the schools used in this study were government-owned,

Participants

All secondary school students in all the Local Government Areas of Oyo State were the population for this study. A total population of 420 respondents participated in the study.

Sampling

In this study, a multi-stage sampling method was employed. Multi-stage sampling technique is a process where every sample size is equally selected at different levels of sampling procedures. Nine (9) Local Government Areas were chosen from the thirty-three LGAs at the first stage using proportionate sampling (Oyo North has 13 LGAs: $13 * 9/33 = 4$; Oyo Central has 11 LGAs: $11 * 9/33 = 3$, and Oyo South has 9 LGAs: $9 * 9/33 = 2$). The selection was on a ratio of 4:3:2 respectively. Proportionate sampling gives a better representation of the population at large, this is because the sample size of each LGA is proportionate to the population size of the stratum. In the second stage, purposive sampling was used in selecting four secondary schools with the largest population of students within Oyo North Senatorial District. Equally, three secondary schools from Oyo Central Senatorial District and two secondary schools from Oyo South Senatorial Districts were selected. Purposive sampling was employed to select respondents that would best contribute to this study. In the third stage, a simple random sampling technique was applied to select forty-seven (47) respondents from each of the (9) secondary schools selected in this study. This makes a total of 423 respondents. Simple random sampling was used because it allowed every member of the population to be included in the sampling. Thematic

analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Using a research Advisor (2006) a sample of 381 was selected for the population of 50,000 at a confidence level of 95% and margin error of 5%. To cater for the attrition, the researcher added 11 per cent to make a total of 423 respondents who were given the questionnaire. The researchers were just able to retrieve 420 questionnaires. Four hundred and twenty participants were finally used in this study. This number was selected to ensure a balanced representation of gender and age.

Data Collection

The qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted for this study through the use of questionnaires and interviews. A structured and unstructured researcher-designed instrument titled Perceived Causes and Psycho-social Impact of Rape Questionnaire (PCPSIRQ) was used to collect data from the respondents. Items on the questionnaire were derived from information obtained from the review of related literature. The structured section of the instrument has three parts i.e. sections A, B and C. Section A dealt with the personal information of the respondents (age, gender), section B sought for causes of rape, with ten items (e.g., poor parental upbringing, Ignorance, revenge) and section C focused on psycho-social impact of rape (such as suicidal behaviour, depression, feeling of inferiority complex). Sections B and C were patterned in line with four (4) point Likert type rating scale format of Strongly Agree 4 points; Agree 3 points; Disagree 2 points; and Strongly Disagree 1 point. The use of a point Likert-type scale is important because the respondent's opinion is curial without being neutral.

For the unstructured section, questions such as "What do you think are the causes of rape in this society", and "What are the psychosocial impact of rape on students" were raised. The Perceived Causes and Psycho-social Impact of Rape Questionnaire (PCPSIRQ) was content and face validated by five experts in the field of Psychology. After some corrections, it was affirmed that the content measured what the

instrument was meant for. The reliability was established using the test re-test method. This method was used because it measures the consistency of results when administered twice on the same sample. With a 0.77 reliability coefficient, the instrument was considered reliable for this study. A letter was collected from the Ministry of Education in Oyo state permitting the researchers to distribute their questionnaire in each of these schools. All schools in Oyo state report to the Ministry of Education. The questionnaires were personally administered by the researchers and research assistants and this assisted in ensuring confidentiality and proper completion of the questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered to students who indicated and were willing to participate in the study. Most of the questionnaires were collected on the spot and the remaining parts were returned to the researchers later.

Data analysis

The data collected for this study were analysed with descriptive statistics such as mean scores for the main research questions 1 and 2. The research questions were allotted these scores on Four (4) point Likert type rating scale format of Strongly Agree 4 points; Agree 3 points; Disagree 2 points; and Strongly Disagree 1 point. The average score that any respondent can obtain is $4+3+2+1 = 10/4 = 2.50$. Therefore, mean scores of 2.5 and above were accepted as the causes and psycho-social impact of rape while mean scores below 2.50 were regarded as non-acceptance or low. Inferential statistics such as a t-test was used to test hypotheses 1 and 3 while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for hypotheses 2 and 4 which are quantitative aspects of the instrument while thematic analysis was used for qualitative information. All formulated hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. This was done by pinpointing, examining, and recording patterns within data. The eight people interviewed were those who were willing to participate in the process. The open-ended questions were analysed by using

thematic coding. The thematic analysis helped in establishing meaningful patterns in the analysed data. This process is a method of identifying and analysing different patterns of the data collected and it includes getting familiar with the process, coding, generating themes, identifying the themes and reportage. This is in line with Braun, Virginia and Clarke (2006) who used thematic processes in psychology research. The participants were purposively selected from within the school system.

Before the administration of the questionnaire, the researchers took permission from the school authority. They then requested volunteers both from junior (JSS) and senior secondary school (SSS). The informed consent of the volunteers who decided to participate in this process was sought. Those who showed interest were served with the questionnaire. Also, the students consented to the researchers recording all discussions during the interview and this was later transcribed. Participants were between the ages of 11 and 17 years. All the respondents are secondary school students. Eight students participated in this interview process. To derive the theme, the researchers read and reread the transcripts and the cogent quotes with themes were identified. Finally, the report was written.

Results

Information gathered through quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS software. This data was analyzed using the mean, t-test and ANOVA as shown in the tables below. The decision to reject the null hypothesis was set at a $P = 0.05$ level of significance.

Demographic Data of the Respondents**Table 1: Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender and Age**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	171	42.75
Male	229	57.25
Total	400	100.0
Age	Frequency	Percentage
11-13 years	96	24.0
14-16years	110	27.5
17-19years	194	48.5
Total	400	100.0

Table 1 presented that 171 representing (42.75%) of the respondents were females, while 229 representing (57.25%) of the respondents were males, indicating that a higher number of male respondents participated compared to their female counterparts. Based on age, 96 representing (24.0%) of the respondents were between 11 and 13 years; 110 representing (27.5%) of the respondents were between 14 and 16 years, and 194 representing (48.5%) of the respondents were between 17 and 19 years; this indicated that these age groups had the highest level of participation.

*Causes of Rape as Perceived by Respondents***Table 2: Mean and Rank Order of the Respondents' Perceptions of the Causes of Rape**

N	Items	Mean	Rank
1	Poor parental upbringing	3.77	1 st
8	Indecent dressing	3.73	2 nd
5	Exposure to pornographic films	3.70	3 rd
3	Ignorance	3.65	4 th
4	Drug abuse	3.61	5 th
6	Sexual harassment	3.22	6 th
7	Negative peer pressure	3.01	7 th
10	Curiosity	2.59	8 th
2	Revenge	2.57	9 th
9	Sexual frustration	2.51	10 th

Table 2 presents the mean and rank order of the respondent's perceptions of the causes of rape. The table reveals that all the items were rated higher than 2.50, with items 1, 8 and 5 ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd with the mean score of 3.77, 3.73 and 3.70 respectively. It can be concluded that secondary school students attested that poor parental upbringing; indecent dressing; exposure to pornographic films are the main causes of rape.

*Psychosocial Impact of Rape***Table 3: Mean and Rank Order of the Respondents' Perceptions on the Psycho-social Impact of Rape**

N	Items	Mean	Rank
10	Social stigmatization	3.89	1 st
6	Insomnia	3.85	2 nd
2	Depression	3.81	3 rd
3	Feelings of inferiority	3.79	4 th
7	Emotional trauma	3.77	5 th
1	Suicidal behaviour	3.73	6 th
4	Lack of trust in opposite sex	3.71	7 th
8	Loss of self-esteem	3.66	8 th
9	Social withdrawal	3.60	9 th
5	Eating disorder	3.55	10 th

Table 3 presents the mean and rank order of the respondents' perceptions of the psycho-social impacts of rape. The table shows that all items ranked above the mean cut-off point of 2.50. Items 10, 6 and 2 state that social stigmatization; insomnia; and depression ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd with mean scores of 3.89, 3.85 and 3.81. Since all the items ranked above 2.50 mean score, this implies that secondary school students perceived that social stigmatization; insomnia; and depression among others are the main psycho-social consequence of rape.

Face-to-face interviews were carried out with eight secondary school students in Oyo State, Nigeria to cross-check the responses from questions raised. The themes that emerged from the analysis of the qualitative data are presented below:

Rape interview: Useful and relevant

All the respondents agreed that the discussion on rape was good useful and relevant but it is agreed by some participants that it should be a private discussion while some feel that it's a daily occurrence and must be deliberated on.

Illustrative examples are below.

Participant A: "stated that this interview is an eye opener because it has changed my perspectives on the causes of rape and its impact on victims".

The respondent explained that some of the questions asked were not something she thought could lead to rape for example the issue of indecent dressing. She feels that men should be disciplined enough to control themselves in such a modern society.

Participant C: "Well the issue of rape is real because I have experienced it before but God helped me to escape. I enjoy discussing my escape and not the incidence".

Causes of Rape:

Social and Cultural Factors

Participant D, "said lack of discipline"

The respondents affirmed that lack of discipline on the part of male students (inability to control libido), most times can lead to rape.

Participant F: "noted that the non-challant attitude of the parents is a major social factor that encourages the incidence of rape".

As a boy, I was raped by our house help at the age of 12 and my parent did not notice until I shared my experience with them when I got to senior secondary school around 15 years.

Participant H: "said that lack of severe punishment to the perpetrator is the main cause of rape".

She emphasized that the lack of severe punishment for those who engaged in such acts is a major factor that leads to the reoccurrence of rape in our society.

Participant H: "affirmed that the cultural believe system of Nigerian parents predisposes youths to rape".

Most people believe that experiencing rape is taboo and as such issues like that should be kept secret from the public. This is one of the reasons why perpetrators keep getting involved in rape.

Individual and Psychological Factors

Participant G: "Involvement in rape can be caused by exposure to pornography"

He explained that youths that are exposed to pornography are likely to engage in rape. They sometimes take advantage of innocent students to fulfil their sexual urges.

Participant A: "explained that rape can be caused by psychological disorder".

According to the respondent father-daughter relationship is an abnormal behaviour which is seen as a psychological disorder. She narrated an incidence that happened in her environment of how the father raped his child.

Situational Factors

Participant F: "explained that some situations can lead to rape"

The participant stated that situational factors such as walking on isolated and secluded paths, living in areas with high crime rates or natural disaster and sometimes group sexual assault or gang violence can be grouped under this.

Psychological Impact of rape

Emotional Impact

All the respondents agreed that the *incidence* of rape impacts students negatively. This can lead to emotional breakdown.

Participant A:" stated that rape could result in emotional damage".

Participant B: 'attested that rape can cause post-traumatic stresses. Participants gave different examples. Respondent (E) told us of a student who never recovered from the emotional trauma she experienced when she was raped, and respondents (G) attested to the fact that rape can lead to a lot of psychological problems.

Social and Interpersonal impact

Participant D:" mentioned the issue of Stigmatization and post-traumatic stress disorder"

The participants (e.g. C and F) affirmed that stigmatization is one of the major consequences of rape. Respondents (F) say many prefer not to report the issue of rape because of stigmatization. As such, they keep suffering in silence which sometimes affects their personalities and interpersonal relationships.

Physical impact: Inflicting of injury on the victim.

Respondent (H) shared an experience of how a student was raped and badly injured. Participants attested to the physical impact such as sustaining bruises fractures, and genital injuries. This can lead to infections like STDs and sexual dysfunction of wounds in the delicate areas of the body.

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value showing differences in the Respondents' Perceptions of the Causes of Rape Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	p-value
Female	171	62.99	5.62			
				398	5.06*	0.00
Male	229	59.90	6.33			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 4 indicates that the calculated p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than the level of significance, the hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the perceived causes of rape among secondary school students in Oyo State based on gender.

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing differences in the Respondents' Perceptions of the Causes of Rape Based on Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. f-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	419.182	2	209.591		
Within Groups	28808.808	397	72.566	2.88	.057
Total	29227.990	399			

Table 5 shows that the calculated p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is greater than the level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is no substantial disparity exists in the perceived causes of rape among secondary school students in Oyo State when analysed according to age.

Table 6: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value showing differences in the Respondents' Perceptions of the Psychological Impact Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	p-value
Female	171	58.78	9.06			
				398	3.64*	.000
Male	229	55.68	7.92			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 6 reveals that the calculated p-value is less than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is less than the level of significance, the hypothesis is rejected this indicates that a notable disparity exists in the psychological impacts of rape, as experienced by secondary school pupils in Oyo State, concerning gender.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the difference in the Respondents' Perceptions of the Psychological Impact of Rape Based on Age

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-ratio	p-value
Between Groups	349.998	3	174.999		
Within Groups	28877.992	396	72.924	2.39	.087
Total	29227.990	399			

Table 7 reveals that the calculated p-value is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Since the p-value is greater than the level of significance, the hypothesis is accepted. This implies that no substantial disparity exists in the psychological ramifications of rape as assessed by secondary school pupils in Oyo State, with regard to gender.

Discussion

The study found several perceived causes of rape among secondary school students in Oyo State. The primary causes identified by the respondents included poor parental upbringing, indecent dressing, and exposure to pornographic materials. Interviews revealed that social and cultural factors such as lack of discipline in society, lenient punishment, parental neglect, father-daughter incest, exposure to pornography, indecent dressing, and parental carelessness were also significant contributors. Furthermore, individual and psychological factors (such as psychological issues) and situational factors (like walking in secluded areas and gang rape as a form of punishment) were cited as causes of rape. These findings suggest that rape is driven by a combination of social, psychological, and environmental factors. This conclusion aligns with the findings of Hadiza, Hussaini, and Bulus (2021), who identified poor upbringing as a key factor contributing to the rise in rape cases in Yobe State. Similarly, the study supports the work of Francis, Moses, Armiya'u, Tungchama, and Maigari (2017), who carried out a study in Jos that highlighted factors such as drug addiction, poverty, indecent

dressing, social media, peer pressure, illiteracy, and lack of parental care as major causes of rape in Nigerian schools. These findings indicate that rape is not caused by a single factor but rather a combination of individual predispositions, societal attitudes, and situational opportunities. Conversely, Obagboye (2019) argued that the causes of rape go beyond day-to-day occurrences, suggesting that most perpetrators may have underlying psychological issues.

The psycho-social impacts of rape include social stigmatisation, insomnia, and depression. Interviews identified emotional and psychological distress, social and interpersonal challenges, and physical harm as the main consequences of rape for victims. This highlights the far-reaching effects of rape, extending beyond immediate physical harm to emotional, psychological, and social well-being. These findings are consistent with Johnson and Gberevbie (2022), who explained that rape can lead to depression, insomnia, and suicidal tendencies. The study also supports Agubosi, Ajokpaniovo, and Adegbite (2022), who identified sadness, insomnia, social stigma, unintended pregnancies, and sexually transmitted infections as common consequences of rape. In the same vein, Qu Xianquo (2023) described rape as a social quagmire impeding economic development, a public health crisis, and a violation of women's fundamental human rights. Without appropriate psychological intervention, victims may develop suicidal tendencies, sometimes leading to actual suicide. The psycho-social impacts are rooted in the profound nature of sexual violence and are exacerbated by sociocultural contexts. In many African societies, female survivors of rape are often blamed, with cultural beliefs reinforcing the idea that victims bear responsibility for sexual assault.

Male and female respondents expressed differing opinions on the causes of rape, suggesting that gender-specific cultural and personal experiences shape their perceptions. Rape is not a gender-exclusive issue, as perpetrators can be either male or female. This finding is consistent with Johnson and Gberevbie's (2022) work, which found that male and female university students differed in their views on who to

blame for rape incidents, with males more likely to endorse rape myths and attribute less fault to perpetrators. However, Campbell and Raja (2005) revealed that power disparities make women more likely to experience sexual abuse than men.

In this study, age did not play a significant role in the perceived causes of rape. This finding supports the research of Agubosi, Fashina, and Olaide (2020), who found no significant difference in age-based factors driving risky sexual behaviour among teenagers in Kwara State. Rape is a criminal act that can happen to anyone, regardless of age. However, this contrasts with the findings of Ilo (2021), which suggested that the causes of rape differ between younger individuals and adults.

The study also found that male and female respondents differed in their perceptions of the psychological impact of rape. This suggests that gender influences how individuals view the psychological consequences of sexual violence. Female students, for example, are at a higher risk of rape than their male counterparts (Alhassan, 2020; Nnaemeka & Aganuli, 2021). This difference could be due to cultural emphases on masculinity and emotional restraint, leading some males to under-report or downplay the emotional trauma associated with rape. Females, on the other hand, may experience more pronounced emotional and psychological impacts due to the social stigma attached to rape (Olatunji & Agunbiade, 2020).

Regardless of age, respondents generally shared the same views on the psycho-social impacts of rape. This finding is consistent with the work of Francis, Moses, Armiya'u, Tungchama, and Maigari (2017), who reported that respondents across different age groups had similar perceptions of the psycho-social impacts of rape. This may be because young people tend to process complex emotional issues like rape in similar ways due to their cognitive development. However, other studies, such as those by Agubosi, Ajokpanioo, and Adegbite (2022) and Alhassan (2020), found significant variations in the perceptions of

secondary school students in Kwara State regarding the psychological effects of rape, based on age.

Conclusion

Finally, the study identified numerous causes of rape, including poor parental upbringing, indecent dressing, and exposure to pornographic materials. Given the severe psycho-social impacts of rape, such as social stigmatisation, insomnia, and depression, there is an urgent need for immediate intervention to address this pressing issue.

Recommendations

Based on the study's findings, the following are recommended:

- There is a necessity for effective parental guidance and upbringing to instill the appropriate moral and societal ideals into their children and wards.
- Children should be encouraged by parents, guardians, teachers and other members of society to dress decently since indecent dressing is part of the major causes of rape.
- The study has indicated that drug misuse is a significant contributing factor to incidents of rape within society. Consequently, it is imperative to enhance the capabilities of the law enforcement agency, specifically the National Drug and Law Enforcement Agency, to effectively combat drug abuse.
- The government, in conjunction with Non-Governmental Organisations, should initiate comprehensive awareness programmes in secondary schools to prevent stigmatisation and challenge the misconception of emotional and psychological beliefs that rape victims carry for life.
- To address the issue of rape effectively, it is imperative that various stakeholders, such as guidance counsellors, religious leaders, community leaders, and school instructors, undertake the task of raising awareness and providing education to students

regarding the underlying causes and psycho-social consequences of rape.

- The use of legal intervention, advocacy, and enforcement of sexual violence laws are imperative in curbing the issue of rape.

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