



Age Wise distribution of rape cases: A retrospective 3 year study in PBM Hospital, Bikaner

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Abstract

Rape word is originated from Greek word meaning seize. No age is safe from rape because small babies and even elderly women are vulnerable to sexual assault. The crime of rape takes place in various places like in school, at work place, on the street & in children institutions. Maximum number of rape cases is reported in 16-20 years of age group.

Keywords: Rape, Sexual abuse, Social evil, Victim, Virgin.

Introduction

Rape (Latin rapio, seize, snatch) is an assault by a person involving sexual intercourse with another person without the person's consent¹. Historically the rape word is originated from Greek word Rapio that means seize. No age is safe from rape, as children of 1 year or less and old women of 85 years have been raped. Children are more frequently raped than adults as they cannot offer much resistance and also due to false belief that venereal diseases are cured by sexual intercourse with a virgin².

Rape is the fourth most common crime against women in India³. In the darker side of our society this is one of the

ways to earn money easily by inducing women, often minor girls, pushing them to “red light area” or for prostitution. Often a women or a girl is allured with promise of service or marriage, taken to a distant place and then subjected to prostitution. Government and different NGOs are acting against this social evil but this clandestine process to earn money could not be eradicated⁴. Due to this evil the females who are not consenting for this profession, they escape from the custody of these peoples and lodge complains of rape against the offenders.

Aims & objectives

The main aim of this study is to highlight the vulnerable age in which the incidence of rape occurs maximum so that preventive policy can be made either by government or by law enforcement agencies.

Material & Methods

This study is retrospective one, conducted in the department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology at S.P.Medical College, Bikaner. All the cases of rape reported to department for medico legal examination in the year 2015 to 2017 are included in the study. All cases

studied are reported through police or court for medico legal examination with requisition. The consent of victim/parents was taken prior to examination in each & every case as per age of the victim.

Inclusion criteria: - All rape cases reported for medico legal examination through police or court. All cases registered under Section 376 I.P.C. by the police, with or without sections of other offences. The information regarding victim's age was collected from requisition submitted by police for victim's examination and from information given by victim & her relatives.

Exclusion criteria: - Nil

Review of literature

The incidence of rape has increased by 733.8% from 2487 in 1971 to 20737 in 2007⁵.

Indian ministry for women and child development conducted a survey on child sexual assault in 2007 and reported that children under 16 years of age are raped every 13th hour, 1 in every 10 children are sexual abused at any point of time and that there is very low reporting of such crimes⁶.

No age is safe from rape because small babies and even elderly women are vulnerable to sexual assault⁷. In India, as in other countries, rape on children is not uncommon and sometimes rationalised to the superstitious belief that gonorrhoea and syphilis could be cured by sexual intercourse with a virgin. In text book of medical jurisprudence and toxicology 24th edition Dr. Jaisingh P Modi illustrates the various age group like 14 years, 13 years, 5 years and 55 years by his experience by examining the rape cases during his service⁸.

The social impact of the crime, e.g. where it relates to offences against women, dacoity, kidnapping, misappropriation of public money, treason and other offences involving moral turpitude or moral delinquency which have great impact on social order, and public

interest, cannot be lost sight of and per se require exemplary treatment⁹.

The question of minimum age of the women does not arise, because victims of rape have ranged from infants to the old and infirm¹⁰.

In 2007 the Ministry of Women & Child development published the study on child abuse. The study looked at different forms of child abuse like physical abuse, sexual abuse and emotional abuse. It is surprisingly found that 53% of the children having faced sexual abuse & maximum of them were rape cases¹¹.

The main places where this crime committed are in school, at work place, on the street and in children institutions¹².

Younger age was significantly associated with an increase number of genital injuries: Approximately 50-70 % of reported rape occurs in girls younger than 18 years of age¹³.

Observations

During the study period (1st Jan 2015 to 31st Dec 2017) total 135 cases were brought in the department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, S.P. Medical College, Bikaner for examination of rape. Maximum number of rape cases that is 42 (31.10%) are reported in 16-20 years of age group, followed by 21-25 years of age group that is 28 (20.74%) [T-1]. Minimum number of rape cases that is 1 (0.74%) is reported in more than 50 years of age [T-1]. In children of age group less than 10 years of age the number of reported cases are 4 (2.96%) & it is 25 (18.52%) in age group of 10-15 years of age [T-1]. More cases of rape are reported from urban background that is 96 (71.10%) than rural background that is 39 (28.90) [T-2].

Table-1 Age wise distribution of rape cases

S.NO.	Age Group in Years	No of cases reported				Percentage (%)
		2015	2016	2017	Total	
1	<10	0	2	2	4	2.96%
2	10-15	10	6	9	25	18.52%
3	16-20	15	12	15	42	31.10%
4	21-25	9	7	12	28	20.74%
5	26-30	3	5	11	19	14.07%
6	31-35	0	1	7	8	5.93%
7	36-40	0	0	2	2	1.48%
8	41-45	1	1	2	4	2.96%
9	46-50	1	1	0	2	1.48%
10	>50	1	0	0	1	0.74%
Total		40	35	60	135	100%

Table-2 Distribution of population based on Urban or Rural background

	2015	2016	2017	Total	Percentage (%)
Urban	28	22	46	96	71.1%
Rural	12	13	14	39	28.90%
Total	40	35	60	135	100%

Discussion: In our study maximum number of rape cases 42(31.10%)are reported in 16-20 years of age group, followed by 21-25 years of age group (Total cases 28 i.e. 20.74%). These observations are in accordance with the findings of other authors¹⁴⁻¹⁶. La Harpe R et al. a study done in 2012 found majority of rape victims were aged between 15-30 years¹⁴. Palmar C M et al. recorded 73% of rape victim reported were aged under 30 years and only 4% were over 50 years¹⁵. Some studies from Bangladesh & Pakistan have detected around 34%to 64% of the victims are between 10-19 years of age¹⁶.

Maximum cases reported in 16-20 years of age group are explained due to more outdoor activity of this age girls and hormonal changes. During study period when the girls are far away from their parents and they became free to interact with each other and sometimes they allured with promise of marriage and the incidence of rape is increased.

Minimum number of rape cases 1 only (0.74%) is reported in age group of more than 50 years is explained by less outdoor activity and age factor.

In children of age group less than 10 years of age the number of reported cases are 4 (2.96%) & it is 25

(18.52%) in age group of 10-15 years of age that is surprisingly increase in 10-15 years of age & again explained by increase outdoor activity and prepubertal age in which attraction to opposite sex is a natural phenomenon. More cases of rape are reported from urban background is explained on the basis that in urban population there is more advancement, more frank behaviour, more outdoor activity of females, more availability of communication sources, lack of observation by guardians and parents & more mixing of peer groups.

The fewer incidences in a rural background population is due to less reporting of cases due to some social reasons & lack of awareness regarding reporting due to illiteracy.

Conclusion

- Maximum number of rape cases was reported in 2nd & 3rd decade.
- In younger age group prevalence of associated injuries were more.
- More cases were reported in urban background

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