

Study of Rape Cases Recorded at a Tertiary Care Hospital in Bangladesh

Rahman MM¹, Chowdhury MH², Hossain MG³

Abstract

Background: Rape is a global problem. Epidemiology of Rape differs from country to country. Objective: This study was carried out to determine the incidence of Rape Cases in tertiary care hospital in Bangladesh. **Methodology:** This retrospective study was conducted on the characteristics of the rape cases reported in the Department of Forensic Medicine at Dinajpur Medical College from January 2005 to December 2007. Cases were examined by taking the proper papers from the legal authority. All the cases were referred from 13th Police station of Dinajpur District, Dinajpur. **Result:** A total number of 300 cases were collected in this study. The overall cases of rape were 2.3%. More detailed data from 300 cases reveals that 2/3 of the cases were in the age group of 14 to 20 years. Consider the socio-economics status of the victim, it is found that the highest frequency of rape is within the lowest socio-economic group. **Conclusion:** In the conclusion, the study reveals that the majority of the rape cases were in lower social-economic group with an age 15 to 18 years. [J Shaheed Suhrawardy Med Coll, 2014;6(2):64-66]

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Introduction

The word rape is derived from Latin word "Rapio" which means to seize. Thus rape literally implies forcible seizure. In other words rape is violation with violence of the private person of a woman or it may be considered as ravishment of woman without her consent by force, fear, and fraud¹. In other words rape is defined as non-consensual penetration of the vagina or the anus by a penis². Rape is a type of sexual assault usually involving sexual intercourse which is initiated by one or more persons against other persons without that person's permission. In other words sexual offence is almost off infinite Variety of physical acts by person with another person or animal either executed or attempted in the furtherance of sexual gratification³.

Legally Rape is defined as a man is said to commit rape that has sexual intercourse with a woman under the circumstances of against her will, with her consent and with her consent that has been obtained by putting force, fear, intoxication, fraud and unsoundness of mind⁴. The cause of rape amounts not only related with the accused but also associated with some factors of victim. Social and legal insecurity and backwardness of the woman in the society are remarkable. Now a days different news papers publish the sexual offence with due importance still many cases are remaining un-reported due to social stigma, fear and prestige of the family. To perform the study, the permission of Forensic Medicine Department and from legal authority was taken. The punishment for rape victim is imprisonment

1. Prof. Dr. Md. Mizanur Rahman, Professor, Department of Forensic Medicine, Enam Medical College & Hospital, Dhaka

2. Prof. Dr. Md. Habibuzzaman Chowdhury, Professor, Department of Forensic Medicine, Dhaka Medical College, Dhaka

3. Dr. Md. Gisan Hossain, Lecturer, Department of Forensic Medicine, Enam Medical College, Dhaka

Correspondence

Prof. Dr. Md. Mizanur Rahman, Professor, Department of Forensic Medicine, Enam Medical College, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh; Email: msdrana75@gmail.com; Cell no.: +8801813035383

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for 07 years which may extend up to 10 years even for long life or fine or both. The purpose of the present study was to see the frequency of rape case reported at a tertiary care hospital in Bangladesh.

Methodology

This retrospective study was conducted in the Department of the Forensic Medicine at Dinajpur Medical College, Dinajpur from January 2005 to December 2007. Dinajpur is located around 300 KM away from the Dhaka city in the north-west of Bangladesh. This is a tertiary care hospital and all the post-mortem as well as the rape cases is reported here. This hospital covers a broad area of that zone. During the study period all the medico-legal cases were referred from different police stations of the same district to Forensic Medicine Department at Dinajpur Medical College. All the rape cases at any age were included in his study after taking the permission from the Department and from legal authority. The victim was examined in brought-day light in presence of a female third person. The victim was examined physically; furthermore, hair distribution and dental status were also examined. The vaginal swabs were collected and were sent for chemical examination. The data were collected from the victims and the ages were determined with the help of Radiological Examination by the consultant of Radiology and Imaging at Dinajpur Medical College. Odontology and physical examination were done by Forensic Medicine Specialist of the Department of Forensic Medicine at Dinajpur Medical College.

Result

A total number of 300 cases were brought by different districts for medico-legal examination to Forensic Medicine Department. Considering the Socio-economic status of the victims, it is found that higher frequency of rape occurred in the lower Socio-economic group (64.09%) (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of cases according to Socio-economic status of the cases

Socio-economic status	Frequency	Percentage
Upper Class	35	11.7
Middle Class	100	33.3
Lower Class	165	55.0
Total	300	100.0

Majority of the victims were unmarried (61.44%) (Table 2). The highest cases of the victims (32.8%) are in the age group (15-18) years (Table-III). The highest frequency of the offence was found to occur in the maid servants (70.25%) followed by students (18.5%) and Housewives (3%) (Table 4).

Table 2: Distribution of cases by their marital status of the cases

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage
Unmarried	160	53.3
Married	100	33.3
Divorced and widow	40	13.4
Total	300	100.0

Discussion

Rape is the most serious sexual offence. It can only be committed by a biological male but victim may be of either sex. It was redefined in the criminal justice and public order act 1994 as non consensual sexual penetration of the vagina or the anus by a penis. Medical proof of intercourse is not legal proof of rape. Rape is not a medical diagnosis; it is only a legal definition. The report should contain negative as well as positive findings. The doctor should never make a diagnosis of a rape. He may give opinion that there are signs of recent vaginal penetration, recent sexual intercourses. According to the opinion of experts, among majority of the cases, no evidence of definite sexual act were found.

Table 3: Distribution of cases according to age of the cases in each year

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
0 to 10 Years	20	6.7
11 to 15 Years	45	15.0
15 to 18 Years	175	58.3
23 & above	60	20.0
Total	300	100.0

Now-a-days, the number of rape cases is increasing day by day. According to the Bureau of Police Research and Development, the number of rape cases has been increased from 9.70% to 8.5% in 2007. National Commission on causes and prevention of violence in 2003 showed that 47.4% of all reported sexual offence was perpetrated on victim's age group of (18-25) years and 23.7% on victims aged 26 years and above.

Table 4: Occupational Distribution among the study population

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Maid servants	210	70.0
Students	63	21.0
Housewives	27	9.0
Total	300	100.0

Every day in our newspapers there are news on cases of sexual assaults, majority of them described as on unmarried younger girls and children of working group. Our study shows that victimization of rape increases with age of the female. Highest frequency was on (14-18) years of age. At this age, the adolescent girls become matured sexually and attractive physically. Muslims were victimized as majority group of population than other majority groups. The victim refused medical examination for fear of shame and due to examination by male doctor and the remaining victims refused due to arrangement for marriage with the accused⁵.

Regarding this study it has been found that highest frequency of rape 64.1% were within lowest socio-economic group. In 2005 it was about 70%, in 2006 91% and in 2007 80%. In upper socio-economic group it was 9% in 2005, 11 in 2006 and 15% in 2007 and in middle socio-

economic group 22% in 2005, 30% 2006 and 48% in 2007. On the basis of marital status unmarried person was reported 65%, 88%, 78% in 2005, 2006 and 2007 respectively. In married person 23% in 2005, 29% in 2006 and 42% in 2007 were reported. On the basis of distribution of cases the age in year of 0 to 10 years was 7% in 2005, 9% in 2006 and 7% in 2007. In 11 to 15 years 21% was in 2005, 24% was in 2006 and 16% was in 2007. In 15 to 18 years 35% was in 2005, 42% was in 2006 and 47% was in 2007. In 23 years 15% was in 2005, 24% was in 2006 and 13% was in 2007. In 23 years and above 10% was in 2005, 21% was in 2006 and 15% was in 2007. On the basis of religion and expert opinion it was also differentiation from year to year⁶.

There is no age limit either for the victim of rape or for the accused⁷. However, if the victim is below 16 years of age, sexual intercourses in any case account to be rape. Some author describes this as statutory rape⁸. Rape can also be committed with elderly women. Similarly, in cases of the accused male, law does not specially exclude any age group, higher or lower, when a person can not be charged for commission of rape. For the purpose of committing rape one need not be potent in the scientific sense because to commit the offence of rape, slight penetration of vulva by the penis is sufficient⁸. Hence full erection, intermission and ejaculation are not essential. Old age is not a bar for a man to be capable to perform sexual intercourse. Regrettably, a significant proportion of non domestic homicides are associated with sexual offences because of woman reject the sexual approach⁷.

Conclusion

In conclusion rape cases are reported more commonly among the lower socioeconomic condition people. Furthermore unmarried and adolescent young girl are the most common age group who are raped. It can be said open heartedly that society should have proper feelings and understanding of the plight of a poor rape victim and the state should have the responsibility of them in mental, social and other wise rehabilitation very seriously in as much acceptable manner and steps as possible.

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