



## EVALUATIVE EFFECTS OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONALITY CONSTRUCTS ON RAPE AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT AMONG YOUTHS IN IBADAN, OYO STATE NIGERIA

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### ABSTRACT

*In everyday life, human beings are confronted with numerous psychological problems. These psychological problems are numerous and vital that at times they claim human life. One of such psychological problems is the one being face by victims of rape and sexual harassment in which many individual may be hesitant to talk about but it is something that should be discussed, because of its psychological and social effects of it on its victims. The study is a descriptive survey research design of correlational type. The study was carried out in four different locations in Ibadan metropolis and volunteering sampling technique was used for the study due to characteristics of the study. The total sample for the study was 552. Three research questions were raised and answered using correlation and regression analysis. It was found that suicide ideation was the most potent contributor to victim of rape and sexual harassment while flash back was the next significant contributor to victim of rape and sexual harassment, followed by depression and anxiety in that order and the others factors like anger, shock, fear and self blame are not significant. Parents should made efforts to be there for their children despite their age by giving them counsel and moral training. Victims/survivors to any form of sexual trauma should seek professional help in order to alleviate any negative effects or aversion it might have on them. Counsellors' centres, office of crisis programme etc should be established and supported by government and parastatal for successful collaboration on this criminal act in our society. Conclusively, this study has been able to substantiate that schooling alone cannot produce a better and competitive future leaders but a full concerted effort using other various integrated and practical approaches that deal with skill acquisition and character. The study recommended inters alia that parents, guidance and significant others should try as much as possible to inculcate sound training to their child and ward before they become nuisance to the community.*

**Key words:** *Evaluation, Rape, Sex harassment, Psychological effects, Sociological Effects, Youths.*

### INTRODUCTION

In everyday life, human beings are confronted with numerous psychological problems. These psychological problems are so vital that at times they claim human life. Rape and sexual harassment are subjects which many individual may be hesitant to talk about but it is something that should be discussed, because of its psychological and social effects on its victims. **Rape** is any sexual intercourse with a person without his or her consent. It is an act of violence that uses sex as a weapon. According to Helen Benedict (1994) in her book titled "Recovery" she defined rape as any sexual act that is forced upon you. This rape happens when the victim does not know his or her offender. Many people believe that this type of rape happens to women who dress a certain way, walk alone at night or park in parking garages. The reality of stranger rape is that it happens during the day and at night, to people from all different works of life, and in lots of different places. Acquaintance rape is type of rape in which the victim and the perpetrator are known to each other. The perpetrator might be a partner, co-worker, best friend or neighbour. This is the most common type of rape about 84 percent of rapes happen among people who know one another. Most of the time a person is raped by someone they know, trust or love. While date rape is a specific kind of acquaintance rape, referring to a rape that occurs between two people who are dating partners. Often times the victim is emotionally manipulated or coerced into having sex with his other partner. Marital rate is one of the latest talked about forms of sexual assault, is a rape



between husband and wife. Its prevalence is probably higher because of personal and societal barriers to reporting marital rape.

The consequences of the rape on the victim is so enormous on the affected person, it leads to psychologically problems which affects all other parts or components of that person that is, mentally, spiritually, emotionally etc. Therefore, psychological effects take people to their early graves because of its implication and the way human beings react to issues differ that is when individual differences comes in. How we handle and accept things differs. Researcher have developed keen interest in studying the effects of rape and sexual harassment. Brown 2010 opined that the trauma and its effects are commonly injected into the picture by parental caregivers to shelter and calm the child. Although hearing a victim's disclosure might be uncomfortable for the sake of the victim's well being, it must still be properly handled.

Both men and women can be sexually assaulted. Rape can occur within a marriage. A victim never asks to be raped and is never to be blamed for behaviour of the perpetrator. Sexual assault can include child sexual abuse, rape, attempted rape, incest, exhibitionism, voyeurism, fondling and sexual harassment. There is a range of non -conscience sexual acts that create a continuum in which each form of sexual assault is linked to others by their root causes as well as, by the effects they have on individuals and communities.

While sexual assault can take many forms, it is important to remember that the use of power and control that a victim of sexual assault experience is a common trend. Many times the offenders doesn't need to use physical force with the victim-instead they take advantage of their own position of trust and authority.

Sexual abuse can include exposing youths to pornography, fondling the sexual parts of a youth's body, making a youth engage in sexual activity with others, and sexually penetrating them, orally, or vaginally with the penis, hand or any object. Summarily, rape and sexual harassment among youths in Ibadan metropolis are social vices eating up youths and the future of our communities is in danger when we cannot produce youths with sound mind and knowledge without being corrupt with different kinds of social vices like sexually transmitted disease e.g. HIV/AIDS due to the physical effect of rape, and sexual harassment. The psychological effects of rape and sexual harassment are numerous and they are as discussed below.

### **Psychological effects of rape and sexual harassment**

This study is set out to examine the composite and relative effects of the following psychological and sociological factors (of Short and long term psychological effects) which include: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, shock, intense fear, depression and suicidal ideation etc

**Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD):** Is a term for certain psychological consequences of exposure to, or confrontation with, stressful experiences that the person experiences as highly traumatic. The experience of rape and sexual harassment and other assaults can involve actual or threatened death, serious physical injury or a threat to physical and/or psychological integrity. It is occasionally called post-traumatic stress reaction to emphasize that it is a routine result of a traumatic experience.

**Anxiety:** Freud identified three kinds of anxieties. The first is realistic anxiety, which you and I would call fear. Actually Freud did too in German. But his translators thought "fear" to mundane! Nevertheless we talked about realistic anxiety when we are dealing with victims of sexual assaults. The second anxiety according to Freud is moral anxiety which deals with internalized



social world of the superego and the last type of anxiety is neurotic anxiety which is the fear of being overwhelmed by impulses from the id.

**Shock:** fear brings shock to victim of sexual assaults, shock make victim freeze, unable to react or think especially during the first twenty-four hours after the incident. The shock paralyzed victims that they will not have the strength to go out after the incident or shout or cry for help during the act.

**Intense fear:** This intense fear makes victim to believe they can be killed. They are threatening with murder and the threat is convincing- two thirds of victims are threatened with weapons. Another great fear victims experience is that they are badly hurt or mutilated. The fear of being hurt is also well founded in a government study of rape, 91 percent of the victims received injuries other than those caused by the rape itself. Most of them were not mutilations, but they did include bruises, broken bones and stab wounds. So, victims who choose to submit to rape do not do so out of indifference or desire, they do it to save their lives. For the rest there is no question of choosing at all- they are simply forced. (Helen Benedict 1994).

**Depression:** Victims experience serious depression which is accompanied by significant changes in the victim's functioning. Symptoms of depression that can be exhibited by victims are changes in appetite, sleep patterns and concentration and feelings of restlessness and anxiousness.

**Suicidal ideation:** The feeling that, they have lost so much and that in many important ways their life has come to an end-, victims also felt their sense of safety in the world, their ability to work or to take pleasure in anything, their capacities for trust and love, their self-esteem. What was the point of going on? All these and many more make victims or survivors to ideate or even commit suicide. The massive denial of those around them also aids victim's idea of suicide.

**Self-blame and shame:** Is among the most common of both short-and long term effects and functions as an avoidance coping skill that inhibits the healing process. There are two main types of self blame. Behaviours self blame (underserved blame based on actions) and character-logical self blame (undeserved blame based on character). Victims who experience behavioral self blame feel that they should have done something differently, and therefore feel at fault. Victims who experience *character-logical self blame* feel there is something inherently wrong with them which have caused them to deserve to be assaulted. A leading researcher on the psychological causes and effects of shame, Tangney, lists five ways shame can be destructive: Lack of motivation to seek care; Cutting themselves off from other people, anger and aggression.

Tangney says shame has a special link to anger. In addition, shame is connected to mental disorders as well as problematic moral behavior. *Behavioural self blame* is associated with feelings of guilt within the victim. While the belief that one had control during the assault (past. control) is associated with greater psychological distress, the belief that one has more control during the recovery process (present control) is associated with less distress, less withdrawal and more cognitive reprocessing.

**Flash backs:** Flashbacks, images and memory of sexual assaults can plague victim for a long period of time. Some events triggered the reminder, such as the sight of a man who looks like the rapist, the place where it happened, or the time when it happened.



**Guilt:** feel guilty and this makes them more vulnerable and remains in the memory of the assault for a long period of time.

**Loss of self-esteem:** In a way, loss of self esteem is an offshoot of the depression, because feeling down usually makes you dislike yourself. Victims may feel angry at themselves for getting involved in violence sex. Low self esteem also makes victims to be distracted from work or study without realizing it, they feel incapable, confused, or even a failure. These feelings may be so subtle that victims don't realize them. Another form this loss of self-respect can take is disgust with one's body. Victims can feel so sullied by the assaults that they despise their own femaleness and believe others despite it, too, especially lovers.

**Phobia:** Developing phobias after a rape or other assaults is extremely common and extremely disturbing, for it is one of the things that make victims feel certain that they are going crazy. Some of the phobias are common: they fear men who look like the attackers; they also develop fear of indoors or outdoors, of being alone or in a crowd. They might get paranoid about certain people they know and even feel plotted against. Eventually, phobias will fade to a manageable level if not go away altogether. If it doesn't, therapy can help.

**Nervous or compulsive habits:** Victims might find themselves getting into odd, compulsive habits, such as washing many times a day, or developing a nervous twitch. The stress they have been through has to come out in some ways:

**Disbelief:** Victims find it really hard to believe that such a horrible thing has happened to them. Also, it leads to taking crazy risks. It shakes victim sense of security so much, learning them with fear of men, of solitude, and of night fall. Victims start taking risks because they don't want to be intimidated such as walking in the dark Streets alone or sitting in deserted parks or places. Some victims see those as a sign of self-destructive mental instability. It is a gesture of defiance.

### **Statement of the problem**

It is no exaggeration saying that rape and sexual harassment have effects and aftermath on their victims or survivors. Victims of these social vices above experience physical trauma which include: Vaginal bleeding or infection, decreased sexual desire, chronic pelvic pain, genital irritation, unwanted pregnancy, sexual transmitted disease while the psychological trauma includes: self-blame, suicide, depression, anxiety, poor self-esteem and Victimization etc. Therefore, this study attempts to find out the various effects of rape and sexual harassment assaults on victims, how to cope with them, the victims' traumatic experience, and the physical effects and how their families and other loved ones react to it.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of this study is to determine the composite and relative effects of negative emotionality constructs on victims of rape and sexual harassed individuals among youths in Ibadan, Nigeria.

### **Significance of the study**

The onus therefore, lies on the parent, counseling psychologists, medical practitioners and governmental and non-governmental organizations handling issues on rape, and sexual harassment to exploit all avenues that would prevent these behaviours from manifesting it selves in our community. It is hoped that the study would complement various researches which



have been conducted by experts in course of reducing the act of drift of rape and sexual assault in Ibadan metropolis.

Finally, it would assist the victims not to die in silence, that there are people out there who understands how they feel and what they are passing through. They don not need to suffer in silence, they have to disclose their mind, although there is a negative social reaction to disclosures which is harmful to the survivor's well being but their survivors or victims need someone or people who sees their traumatic state.

### **Scope of the study**

The study is limited to the youths in Ibadan, Oyo state capital.

### **Research Design**

The study adopts descriptive research design of ex-post-facto type. This design is appropriate for the study in that variables of interest that will be investigated in the study are not going to be manipulated by the researcher. Their occurrences precede the investigation. Therefore, this study intends to examine the variables of interest as they currently exist in the repertoire of the participants.

### **Population**

The population is made up of the young adult aged from 18 to 30 years in Ibadan metropolis.

### **Sample and sampling procedure**

The sample of the study was selected from four different locations in Ibadan. After the sample has been selected, all the respondents were administered with the instrument.

### **Instrumentation**

A questionnaire specifically designed for the purpose of the study by the researcher and was used to collect data for the study. It is 38 item questionnaire classified into four (4) basic categories for ease of response and administration. The draft copy of the questionnaire was vetted by the experts approved before it was finally used for the research. It was a 4 - point Likert rating form with SA - strongly agree, A - agree, D - disagree and SD-strongly disagree.

### **Data collection procedure**

It was very difficult to get the questionnaire administered to the participants in the chosen location. The researcher had to fulfill certain obligations before they could be reached. Also, a lot of time was used in waiting and making appeals before most of these respondents could give response to the questionnaire. All questionnaires, dully filled were collected from the subjects for analysis. During the administration of the instrument, the respondents were briefed about the aim of the administration in order to disabuse their mind that the instruments given to them are not examination paper, hence there is no wrong or right answers to the instruments, the researcher collected back the instruments from the respondents for data analysis. The method of data analysis used was the correlation and multiple regression analysis. The tools were adopted because the study intends to discover if there is any relationship between psycho-social variables on victim rape and sexual harassment among youths.

## **RESULTS**

Research Question One:- Would there be significant relationship among the independent variables (anxiety, shock, fear, depression, suicide, self blame, flash back and anger) on victim of rape and sexual harassment in Ibadan metropolis?

**Table 1: Descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Anxiety	1.000								
Shock	0.267**	1.000							
Fear	0.509**	0.208**	1.000						
Depression	0.332**	0.206**	0.282**	1.000					
Suicide ideation	0.238**	0.350**	0.259**	0.079	1.000				
Self blame	0.260**	0.243	0.465	0.410	0.316	1.000			
Flash back	0.402*8	0.133	0.524**	0.322**	0.241**	0.428**	1.000		
Anger	-0.074	0.020	-0.047	-0.074	0.033	-0.084	-0.088	1.000	
Sexual harassment & Rape	0.401**	0.183**	0.405*8	0.273*8	0.409**	0.375**	0.409**	-0.030	1.000
Mean	11.44	11.77	6.28	6.34	9.17	8.40	9.15	1.55	8.08
Stand. Deviation	2.09	2.14	1.88	1.68	2.08	2.04	2.82	0.50	2.66

Table1 shows the mean, standard deviation and zero order correlation among the variables. It was observed that there was significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable (sexual harassment) in the following order of magnitude: Suicide thought ( $r=0.409, P<0.05$ ); flash back ( $r = 0.409, P<0.05$ ), fear ( $r= 0.405, P < 0.05$ ), anxiety ( $r = 0.401, P < 0.05$ ), Self blame ( $r= 0.375, P < 0.05$ ), depression ( $r= 0.273, P < 0.05$ ), Shock ( $r= 0.183, P< 0.05$ ) and anger ( $r= 0.030, P > 0.05$ ).

**Research Question Two:** To what extent when combined will independent variables (anxiety, shock, fear, depression, suicide ideation, self-blame, flash back and anger) predict rape and sexual harassment among the rape and sexual harassment victims?

Table 2: Joint effect of the independent variables

R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard error of the estimate			
0.585	0.342	0.315	2.20063			
ANOVA						
	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	P	Remark
Regression	481.751	8	60.219	35.36	0.000	Sig
Residual	924.969	543	1.703			
Total	1406.720	552				

Table 2 shows that these was joint effect of the independent variables on sexual harassment among the victims;  $R= 0.585, P < 0.05$ . The table further reveals 31.5% ( $Adj R^2= 0.315$ ) of the variance in the sexual harassment victim were accountable for by the linear combination of the



regression analysis show that there was significant effect of the independent variables on the dependent variables;  $F(8,543) = 35.36, P < 0.05$ .

**Research Question Three:-** To what extent will each of the independent variables predict rape and sexual harassment among the victims of rape and sexual harassment?

Table 3: Relative Effect of the Independent variable on the dependent variable.

	Unstandardized coefficient		Standardized coefficients	T	P	Remarks
	B	Std Error	Beta			
Constant	-1.395	1.295		1.076	0.283	NS
Anger	0.046	0.316	0.009	0.147	0.883	NS
Anxiety	0.232	0.092	0.183	2.521	0.013	S
Shock	-0.058	0.081	-0.046	0.714	0.476	NS
Fear	0.136	0.111	0.096	1.226	0.222	NS
Depression	0.126	0.107	0.148	2.275	0.041	S
Suicide ideation	0.355	0.085	0.278	4.202	0.000	S
Self blame	0.142	0.096	0.109	1.473	0.142	NS
Flash back	0.144	0.069	0.153	2.094	0.038	S

Table 3 above shows that four independent variables showed significant relative contribution to rape and sexual harassment. The variables include the following: suicide ideation ( $\beta = 0.278, t = 4.202, P < 0.05$ ), anxiety ( $\beta = 0.183, t = 2.521, P < 0.05$ ); flash back ( $\beta = 0.153, t = 2.094, P < 0.05$ ) and depression ( $\beta = 0.148, t = 2.275, P < 0.05$ ). It was observed that suicide ideation was the most potent contributor to victim of rape and sexual harassment while flash back was the next significant contributor to victim of rape and sexual harassment, followed by depression and anxiety in that order and the others factors like anger, shock, fear and self blame are not significant .

**DISCUSSION**

Discussion of the findings indicated that there is significant relationships among the independent variables (anxiety, shock, fear, depression, suicidal, ideation, self blame, flashback and anger) on behaviour of victim of rape and sexual harassment among the survivors. This findings is in line with Herman (1992) who found out that victimized adult are vulnerable to short and long-term psychological consequences. Immediate distress may include shock, fear, anxiety, confusion and social withdrawal. Rothbaum, (1992) in his own findings says survivors may also experience some psychological and sociological symptoms shortly after a violent act has occurred, such as emotional detachment, flashbacks and sleeping problems.

The second research question which was meant to determine the composite contribution indicates that the above independent variables are psychological and sociological effects victims experience after sexual trauma. This research question tends to find out to what extent when all the independent variables are combined (i.e anxiety, shock, fear, depression, suicidal, ideation, self blame, flashback and anger) will predict sexual harassment among the sexual harassment victims. This is in conformity with Dickinson et al. (1999) they found high rates of depressive disorders among rape survivors while it is against Cold et al; (2003) they formed no association between depression and adulthood sexual victimization.



Research question three stated that: to what extent will each of the independent variables predict sexual harassment among survivors or victims. According to table 4.3, it shows the variables which include anxiety ( $B=0.183, t=2.521, p<0.05$ ), flashback ( $B=0.153, t=2.094, p<0.05$ ), suicidal ideation ( $B=0.278, t=4.202, p<0.05$ ) suicide ideation was observed to be the most potent contributor to sexual trauma while flashback was the least, significant contributors to sexual harassment which is in line with Saunders et al, 1999 they came up with a findings that survivors are more likely to suffer from depression, suicide and other mental health problems which can also be compared to Stratham et al, 1998 in their finding they said that childhood sexual abuse was associated with an increase risk of a serious suicide even after accounting for the effects of previous psychological problems and a twin's history of suicidal behaviours.

### **Recommendation**

The outcome of this research work has clearly shown that the role played by all these psycho-socio variables investigated upon with regards to how sexual assault and topic related to it has been kept under our foot in this part of the world. People do not want to talk about it yet we have different psychopathological behaviours in our society. Youths who supposed to be happy are found to be more depressed and exhibit different forms of psychological behaviours that are anti-social or abnormal in our society today.

Parents should made efforts to be there for their children despite their age by giving them counsel and moral training. Victims/survivors to any form of sexual trauma should seek professional help in order to alleviate any negative effects or aversion it might have on them.

Counselling centres, crime prevention centres etc should be established and supported by government and parastatal for successful collaboration on this criminal act in our society.

### **Conclusion**

This study investigated the psychosocial effects as correlates of behaviour of victims of rape and sexual harassment among youths in Ibadan metropolis. It is hoped that it would complement various research findings which had been conducted on sexual assaults. Not only this it would make life more meaningful and worth living for youths in our society to be living with sound minds that is devoid of any psychological problem which can makes the future bright and promising. It is optimistic that these findings would not only be an academic exercise but beneficial to survivors, clinical psychologists and researchers in this field in assisting the youth in Ibadan metropolis.

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