MALE RAPE AND THEIR VICTIMIZATION: A HISTORICAL EXPOSITION

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Abstract

This paper examines several works of literature to uncover common myths in and about society as it engages with the literature on male rape. The purpose of this paper is to explore several works on male rape while looking for various myths and stereotypes that have been brought up in numerous studies. With the use of primary and secondary data gathered by the researcher, the aim is to further analyse the prevalence of male rape. There are various misconceptions about male rape victims, offenders, and stereotypes. Defined by (Anderson 1999), (Fulcher and Scott 1999) due to which male rape is a hidden concept. These are beliefs about men's invulnerability, and as a result, neither society nor men recognize themselves as rape victims. There is limited study and scant literature on male rape in India. Male rape is considered a crime in the eyes of the law, hence research in this area has mostly originated in the USA, UK, Australia, and Denmark. Due to a dearth of cases that have been recorded, male rape is researched in the UK using small-scale samples that are typically clinical in nature. This study makes an effort to align with existing knowledge to improve understanding of such occurrences.

INTRODUCTION

Male rape is not an impossibility; today's male rape victims experience similar hardships to those women did hundreds of years ago. (Estrich 1987). Estrich claims that a prevalent misconception about male rape is that the victim is homosexual, without taking into account the possibility that any males, regardless of their sexual orientation, may become victims of rape. Although the majority of Estrich's writing focuses on female rape, she claims that during the time of her research, she was able to recognise the prevalence and covert character of male rape.

HISTORY OF RAPE LAW IN INDIA

In this paper, we'll talk about the evolution of rape law reforms from the 1980s to the most recent IPC revisions. Since the 1980s, a number of women's organisations have fought to broaden the definition of rape under section 375 of the IPC. Three cops sexually assaulted a girl named Mathura in the infamous case of Mathura. An open letter criticising the decision was sent to the Chief Justice of India as a result of the Supreme Court's ruling that the girl had consented because no injuries had been discovered on her body.

Once the prosecution has established sexual intercourse, it was demanded that the burden of proof of consent be shifted to the accused, and that the victim's sexual history should not be taken into account when determining the guilt of the offender. Under IPC 375, this finally resulted in significant changes.

A writ petition was filed in the matter of Sakshi v. Union of India[1] to broaden the definition of rape under the IPC. In response, a law commission[2] was established to make recommendations

and close the gaps in section 375 of the IPC. The following organisations were consulted regarding the recommendations: IFSHA (Interventions for support, healing, and awareness), AIDWA (All India Democratic women's association), and NCW (National commission for women). In the end, it was suggested that section 375's scope be expanded by making it gender neutral. It was not included in the amendment, though.

Making rape law gender neutral was suggested in the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill, 2012[3]. The suggestions were adopted, and on February 3rd, 2013, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance 2013 was enacted as a result. The aforementioned ordinance was changed by the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013 [4] because of the strong resistance it faced from numerous women's rights organisations. This new law was gender specific and included a broader definition of rape.

Advocate Sanjiv Kumar filed a PIL[5] in the Delhi High Court in 2017 to replace the existing statute with a gender-neutral rape provision under the IPC. The PIL made the argument that India had gender-neutral rape laws in place for 58 days, from 3 February to 1 April 2013, and that it is hard to think that a man may be sexually assaulted and not be considered a victim of rape. According to a study, out of 96 nations, 63 had gender-neutral rape laws, 27 had gender-specific rape laws, and 6 had partially gender-neutral legislation where the victim could be either male or female.

Senior attorney KTS Tulsi proposed the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2019[6] in Parliament, arguing that all sexual offences should be gender-neutral to cover both perpetrators and victims of both genders and restore the balance in the law that is currently disturbed. To make it gender neutral, the terms "any woman" and "any man" should be changed to "any person."

GENDER NEUTRAL LAW

Giving men, women, and persons of other genders equal treatment without prejudice is referred to as gender neutral law. Gender neutrality, according to Arvind Narrain (2013), can be regarded in three ways:

1. Gender equality with regard to victims

2. Gender neutrality with regard to offenders

3. Gender neutrality in relation to custody, conflict, and communal settings.

The revelation that section 375 of the IPC exclusively designates women and girls as rape victims is disheartening. This misconception overlooks the potential for men and transgender individuals to also experience sexual assault and rape. A gender-neutral rape law is necessary, where offenders face punishment irrespective of the victim's gender. Research has highlighted that rape is not solely driven by the perpetrator's desires but is often employed as a means to exhibit power and dominance, particularly over marginalized communities. Thus, there is no valid rationale to exclude men from the possibility of being raped.

In the landmark case of Vishakha vs. State of Rajasthan, special provisions were established to safeguard women from workplace sexual assault. Similarly, an equal need exists to protect men

from such assaults in the workplace.

Gender Neutrality in the Context of Perpetrators

The assertion by Susan Brownmiller that females cannot rape males, especially within patriarchal societies, has ignited debates. While some contend that it is biologically implausible (Moore, S1975), there is counterresearch suggesting that both females and males can be perpetrators. Notably, the State govt vs. Sheodayal (1956) case witnessed convictions of women for gang rape, challenging prevailing beliefs.

In Custodial, War, Communal, and Conflict Situations

Rape has been utilized as a tool to establish dominance and superiority. Situations like communal riots and caste-based conflicts differ from normal circumstances, characterized by their conflict-driven nature. Here, the victim's gender and their role in the community or religion become crucial factors. While IPC typically hinges on gender to determine victim or perpetrator status, conflict scenarios incorporate caste, race, and religion. The recent Kathua case starkly demonstrates how rape is employed as a weapon to assert dominance based on religion, caste, race, and more.

The Unspoken Suffering

The villages of Kunan and Pushpora in Kashmir bore witness to an astonishing event in 1991. Villagers accused Indian army personnel of sexual assault, which garnered significant attention. However, the distressing reality was the lack of discourse on the sexual assault of men in these villages. Historian Uma Chakraborty notes the underreporting of sexual violence against men, highlighting that men endure comparable levels of sexual violence to women.

Sexual Male Victims in Institutions

Due to insufficient reporting, our knowledge of the incidence and presence of male sexual victims within UK prisons remains limited. This segment will incorporate studies from both the UK and the USA, shedding light on the existence of male rape in prison settings (Abdulla-Khan, 2002). Additionally, it will address the pervasive misconception that 'male rape only occurs in prison'. Globally, prisons hold the highest concentration of male rape victims (Scarce, 1997). Originally, male rape was regarded as synonymous with prison life and its recognition primarily stemmed from institutional contexts. In the UK, this awareness remained latent until the 1980s when media attention brought it to the forefront. It was often seen as a minority issue, attracting minimal public and academic interest. The prevalent assumption was that only children and young adults could be male rape victims, contributing to the recent acknowledgment of male rape (Abdulla-Khan, 2002).

The damaging myth in UK society, suggesting that male rape solely transpires in prison, dismisses male rape occurring within societies and outside institutional settings. This concept has often been associated with consensual homosexual activity (Shivakumaran, 2005), causing instances of non-institutional rape to be overlooked by both governmental and voluntary bodies, wrongly treated as consensual acts. The entrenched belief that a 'real man' possesses the strength to resist coercion and cannot be compelled into unwanted actions has permeated

prison staff and inmates alike (Young, 2007). The occurrence of male prison rape can be construed as an assertion of power forcibly imposed by perpetrators upon victims, suppressing them both physically and sexually. However, the general lack of sympathy stems from the prevalent notion that a 'man' cannot be coerced into acts against his will (Abdulla-Khan, 2002).

The propensity of officials to overlook this issue within prisons may be rooted in the misconception that men cannot rape other men. Furthermore, officials may disregard these cases due to the belief that inmates reap what they've sown upon being subjected to rape while incarcerated for criminal offenses (Javaid, 2017). The scarcity of research in this realm primarily results from male victims' reluctance to report instances of sexual victimization (Rideau and Sinclair, 1982).

A survey encompassing seven male prison institutions revealed that 21% of inmates had experienced sexual violence while incarcerated. The true extent of the issue remains uncertain due to male victims' hesitancy to openly come forward (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman Johnson's, 2000). The evidence implies that male rape in institutions can be influenced by racial and cultural disparities. Studies indicate that 60% of targeted victims were 'white', while 74% of perpetrators were 'black' (Javaid, 2017). In certain cases, black men perpetrate sexual violence against white men as an assertion of power and a response to historical injustices during the era of slavery.

Factors contributing to male rape in prisons include the necessity for stringent supervision among inmates to prevent manipulation, inadequate control due to understaffing, and overcrowding that fosters illegal activities. Financial cutbacks further exacerbate staff shortages, ultimately reflecting negatively on the treatment and responses provided to male rape victims (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Inadequate security and overcrowding elevate the risk of male rape in prisons, endangering inmates' well-being and lives (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman Johnson's, 2000). The rise in the number of incarcerated criminals and longer sentences since the 1980s has been accompanied by overcrowding, inadequate security, and stress due to confined living spaces, contributing to rape incidents among inmates (Neal and Clements, 2010). Proper categorization of inmates, segregating those more susceptible to victimization from potential aggressors, could potentially mitigate male rape cases (Man and Cronan, 2001).

To truly grasp the underlying causes of male rape in prison, empirical research is paramount. Current research conducted in the UK often relies on small-scale clinical samples, making it challenging to generalize findings to a broader context encompassing male rape victims (Neal and Clements, 2010). The reluctance of male rape victims to report their experiences, stemming from societal pressures and stereotypes, may lead to an underestimation of the extent of prison male rape (Rideau and Sinclair, 1982).

Male inmates hesitating to report sexual assault due to fears of disbelief, retaliation, and loss of masculinity contributes to the miscalculation of prison male rape victims. These individuals may experience secondary victimization, feeling they've forfeited their manhood and blaming themselves for not resisting their attackers (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman Johnson,

2006). A paucity of knowledge regarding the nature and scope of male rape poses a significant issue, further compounded by the risk of HIV infection among inmates compared to the general population. Incarcerated men who endure rape may develop resentment and hostility toward society, holding it responsible for their humiliation and HIV infection. Many victims endure physical trauma as a result of their exposure to sexual violence, with gang rape inflicting not only physical harm but also severe mental health consequences. Societal attitudes often reinforce victim-blaming, rooted in the belief that a 'real man' cannot be coerced into actions against his will. Media portrayals of male rape, even if treated humorously, contribute to a general atmosphere of insensitivity (Neal and Clements, 2010). Furthermore, prison male rape victims may be more prone to suicidal tendencies compared to other victims (Struckman-Johnson and Struckman Johnson, 2006).

Research also suggests that male rape is not confined to prisons, extending to military settings as well (Abdulla-Khan, 2008). Yet, limitations and regulations within the military present barriers to research in this field. Male victims of military sexual violence often find themselves unsupported by state and other agencies, leading to their reluctance to register cases against perpetrators (Mulkey, 2004). The training that soldiers undergo, emphasizing emotional control and insensitivity, discourages disclosure of such incidents. Military culture, defined by values of strength and toughness, associates emotions with vulnerability and dismisses them as characteristic of homosexuality and feminism (Zaleski, 2015). The stigma attached to reporting male rape within the military discourages victims, who fear being labeled as vulnerable and disloyal. Additionally, they may apprehend open retaliation.

Soldiers, well-aware of the consequences tied to revealing their victimization, often choose silence. Sexual violence is often treated as a personal matter, leading victims to keep quiet. Research in the US suggests that sexual assault prevails more in military settings than non-institutional ones. Men undergoing such trauma often experience mental distress, mood fluctuations, and strained relationships with peers, stemming from sexual assault (Goyer and Eddleman, 1984). This implies that male rape within institutions in the US constitutes part of overall crimes, yet detailed research on its levels is lacking. More comprehensive research hinges upon institutions acknowledging and supporting studies on male rape (Abdullah-Khan, 2002).

Military establishments embody hegemonic masculinity, discouraging victims from disclosing their victimization. Hindrances like backlash, homophobia, and gender norms thwart the truth from emerging (Turchik and Edwards, 2012). Soldiers subjected to sexual victimization may feel isolated, pressured, experience diminished performance, and loss of self-esteem. The military tends to acknowledge such issues only when media intervention forces their hand (Zaleski, 2015). This underscores the military's response to media coverage of sexual assault cases involving soldiers. Military culture often propagates insensitivity and emotional detachment, factors that contribute to the occurrence of sexual violence. A hierarchical structure further amplifies power dynamics among soldiers. New cadets are instructed on control mechanisms, effectively subjecting them to the leadership's dominion. Given institutional willingness, further research on male victims within institutions could offer

valuable insights. Dispelling the myth that male rape victims are limited to prisons is essential, as those in communities may be neglected. Addressing other myths about male rape would provide a foundation for the state and other entities to support male rape victims (Turchik and Edwards, 2012).

India grapples with a scarcity of academic literature on male rape. Unlike female rape, male rape is frequently overlooked, exacerbated by the absence of human rights instruments highlighting male sexual victimization (Modi & Dada, 2015). Doctrinal ambiguity muddles the definition and analysis of rape in India. The Indian Penal Code portrays men as perpetrators and females as victims, rendering men exempt from rape accusations (Gupta, 2005). India's gender-based violence paradigm primarily targets women, viewing rape as a threat to their well-being rather than that of men (Sharma & Gupta, 2013). Prisons house victims and perpetrators of the same gender. Isolated from their natural environments and partners, inmates resort to alternate means to satisfy sexual urges, giving rise to homosexual abuse and gang rape. This leads to severe health consequences like HIV infection, anal trauma, trauma, and even suicide (Giri & Praneetha, 2016).

Male rape, while comparable to female rape in terms of sexual violence, is met with different societal reactions. The women's movement has championed female rape awareness, while male sexual victimization remains hidden due to a dearth of research, knowledge, and pervasive myths (Whatley & Riggio, 1993). Research indicates that male victims tend to shoulder more blame than their female counterparts, particularly if they possess criminal records (Abdullah-Khan, 2002). Challenging the myth that 'male rape is a homosexual problem,' McMullen suggests that most rapists are heterosexual. However, empirical data does not substantiate his claim, as sexual offender identities predominantly align with heterosexuality (McMullen, 1990). Sexual orientation plays a pivotal role in understanding male rape, debunking the misconception that only homosexual men perpetrate or suffer it. Heterosexual and homosexual victims undergo different forms of sexual assault, often referred to as 'stranger rape' and 'date rape,' respectively (Stermac et al., 1996). Society tends to dismiss gay victims' experiences, subjecting them to negative reactions (Rumney, 2008).

The homophobic attitudes of both police and society lead to secondary victimization of male rape victims. Aware of societal paradigms and stigmas, victims anticipate a lack of seriousness from law enforcement. Fearful of homophobia and the threat to their masculinity, victims often remain silent (Davies, Rogers, & Bates, 2008). Public perceptions shape societal responses and victims' self-perception, fueled by rape myths, stereotypes, and homophobic attitudes that ultimately contribute to victim-blaming (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Embracing male rape myths leads to victim-blaming, discouraging reporting (Katelyn, 2019).

Recognizing that sexual orientation is not fixed but subject to change is crucial. Inconsistencies in studies may arise from the difficulty in accurately determining the sexual orientation of offenders, which is often assumed rather than confirmed. An offender could identify as heterosexual but commit male rape for reasons other than sexual pleasure, such as demonstrating dominance or seeking revenge (Javaid, 2017). Categorizing the sexual orientation of both offenders and victims can present challenges due to limited sample sizes,

but it aids in revealing pervasive myths about male rape that require debunking. It is an oversimplification to assume that victims will always resist; this is a common misconception. Some victims may yield to minimize harm. The societal perception of a 'real man' as strong, capable of self-defense, and a dominant heterosexual figure endures (Stanko, 1990). The inability to resist can embolden the attacker, while fear of physical harm and death may compel victims to comply (Carpenter, 2009). The victim's physical response often connects with the notion of consent, implying that those who cannot resist have implicitly agreed to the act (Graham, 2006). Societal norms uphold an idealized version of masculinity that encompasses strength, the ability to protect oneself and others, reinforcing the belief that men are powerful and impervious. They are not expected to be victims, which starkly contrasts with the vulnerability associated with rape (Stanko, 1990).

The myth that erection and ejaculation indicate pleasure is another widespread misconception about male rape. Unfortunately, this false belief diminishes the gravity of male rape in the eyes of the public. Research contradicts the notion that an erection signifies enjoyment. Intense anxiety, anger, shock, or fear can trigger an erection in men (Abdulla-Khan, 2002). Studies reveal that males can still function sexually under emotional states like anxiety, anger, and fear. Situations that provoke victim anxiety can lead to genital responses, highlighting the intricate link between emotions and male sexual response. The conclusion is that a physiological response in male rape victims doesn't necessarily denote pleasure. Perpetrators exploit the erection and ejaculation myth to shift blame onto victims, implying consent and tarnishing their credibility. This strategy discourages victims from reporting, as they fear being accused of consensual sex due to their physiological responses (Groth & Burgess, 1980).

The challenge of underreporting male rape cannot be underestimated. Reporting crimes is pivotal for enacting preventive measures, yet male rape remains a largely taboo topic. Enhanced reporting would bolster victim support services and transform societal attitudes (Javaid, 2017). Literature underscores the prevalence of male rape myths and its underreporting. Reporting can be influenced by how victims are treated by law enforcement agencies and their experiences during reporting. A 2010 study, utilizing data from the National Crime Victimization Survey, indicated that only 15% of male rape victims disclose the crime and report it to authorities (Weiss, 2010). This highlights that male rape is underreported compared to female rape. The problems faced by male victims in reporting are akin to the challenges faced by female victims centuries ago (ibid). Female victims hesitated to report due to societal humiliation, victim-blaming by law enforcement, concerns about family honor, and potential retaliation from the offender (Lees, 2002). Similarly, male victims grapple with emotional turmoil, societal pressures, and homophobic attitudes, deterring them from reporting (Abdullah-Khan, 2008).

Hegemonic masculinity intersects significantly with male rape. This section delves into the concept of hegemonic masculinity within the framework of 'social constructions.' Societal expectations of behavior for men and women transcend biological attributes, encompassing cultural definitions of masculinity and femininity (Connell, 2005). Society expects masculine traits like toughness, power, and invulnerability from men. The idea of a 'real man' adhering to

these traits conflicts with femininity. Male victims may be deemed weak or inadequate for failing to embody societal expectations of strength (Javaid, 2014a). Hegemonic masculinity dictates that real men aren't supposed to be victims; this perception is further exacerbated by derogatory labels like 'muff,' 'coward,' or 'softie' assigned to male victims who don't conform (Connell, 2005). Male victims experience the same emotional struggles as female victims due to societal pressures and the need to maintain traditional gender roles (Evans & Wallace, 2008).

In Western societies, men often resort to behavior reflecting traditional masculinity to avoid being perceived as feminine or homosexual (Goffman, 1967). For male victims, maintaining their masculinity may become a priority even after a rape. Engaging in risky behavior can be an attempt to reaffirm their broken masculinity (Carlson, 2008; Mullaney, 2007). This drive to 'repair' their masculinity might deter them from reporting, as it goes against their self-image (Owen, 1995). Reporting could expose vulnerability, making it challenging for male victims to seek help openly (Stanko & Hobdell, 1993). Societal expectations play a role; male victims might feel they aren't permitted to be victims due to cultural norms (Connell, 2005).

Hegemonic masculinity's influence extends to male rape and attempted victimization. In these cases, men might feel compelled to fight back aggressively to uphold their masculine identity, proving their dominance (Weiss, 2010). By resisting, they aim to maintain their self-perceived masculinity. Attempted victimization can allow male victims to demonstrate their masculinity by retaliating against the perpetrator (Weiss, 2010). Such actions fulfill societal expectations and safeguard their masculinity. However, male rape victims who don't adhere to these norms may suffer humiliation, low self-esteem, and feelings of inadequacy (Groth & Burgess, 1980).

Challenging hegemonic masculinity is pivotal to addressing male rape. Societal ideals expect men to be heterosexual and, in a complex interplay, associate the victim role with femininity (Connell, 2005). Societal norms often depict women as weak and powerless, making it difficult for male victims to disclose or report the crime (Weiss, 2010). The aftermath of a male rape goes against the societal image of masculinity, which might lead victims to avoid reporting due to potential shame and humiliation (Abdullah-Khan, 2008). Society's expectations create a dilemma; male victims might fear being tagged as feminine or homosexual, adding to their reluctance to disclose (Weiss, 2010). This complex interplay of gender norms and perceptions impacts male victims' decisions to report male rape cases.

Society and Gender in Male Rape

Foucault introduced the Theory of Normalization in 1979, shedding light on comprehending distinct behaviors exhibited by male rape victims, a factor contributing to underreported cases and explaining the societal reluctance to acknowledge that even a typical man can experience rape. According to Foucault, societies possess established structures, norms, and values, labeling anything opposing or jeopardizing these standards as abnormal and deviant. Contemporary societies employ discipline to enforce social control, ensuring public behavior aligns with stability-maintaining norms. This control is executed through a process of normalization, involving continuous supervision, examinations, and observation, intricately linked to upholding social order. Regular individuals function both as subjects and agents of

power, required to adhere to and promote uniformity in conduct, thought, and action, imposing pressure on men to conform to masculinity norms, signifying heterosexuality and virility. Male rape victimization contradicts these masculine norms, leading to their classification as deviant or abnormal. The process of discipline extends to regulating one's body, under supervision or manipulation for operational purposes, potentially leading male victims to conceal their experiences to prove their "real man" status. Consequently, this safeguards societal stereotypes that genuine men are powerful and capable of self-protection. In essence, the theory highlights how heterosexual and masculine men meet societal expectations of manhood, concentrating on comprehending the male rape myth.

Rape operates under informal norms that define roles, responsibilities, and perceptions, acquired from an early age. These norms shape notions of provocation, consent, mainly attributed to women, determining who can and cannot be subject to rape. For instance, marital rape, where a husband cannot rape his wife, aligns with these norms (Claudia Card, 2010). These same norms are applicable to men, thus categorizing them as non-victims of rape. This perspective is also prevalent in UK societies (Abdulla-khan, 2008). The term "victimization" excludes men, rendering them "invisible" as victims, especially to law enforcement. This exclusion weakens their masculine identity (Javaid, 2015a). Male rape victims are subject to secondary victimization by the police and courts, as their cases are often not treated with the seriousness they deserve, potentially deterring reporting due to a lack of confidence in law enforcement. The criminal justice system and police perpetuate the myth that men are always perpetrators of sexual assault and rape, while women are the victims (Rumney, 2007), despite evidence from the British Crime Survey demonstrating men's vulnerability.

Male-on-male rape: In the UK, male rape was acknowledged as a crime in 1994, previously viewing men as offenders and women as victims. Non-consensual sex between men was termed "buggery," punishable by a 10-year sentence, while rape warranted life imprisonment. The Sexual Offences Act of 2003 rendered rape victims gender-neutral, contingent on penile penetration, thereby excluding the possibility of women raping men. The penile penetration criterion (PPC) is contested as a legal double standard, lacking justification (McKeever, 2018). The rationale behind PPC is rooted in gendered stereotypes and biases about male and female sexuality, asserting male dominance over female sexuality, valuing female sexual purity, and portraying sex as an act initiated by men. Although rape is historically employed as a tool of male oppression against females, it can also be perpetrated by females (McKeever, 2018). While UK law expanded the definition of rape to encompass male victims, it simultaneously excluded the possibility of female perpetrators. Consequently, if a woman engages in non-consensual sexual activity with a man, even if he is incapacitated, the act is not labeled as rape. Although the punishment may remain consistent, such offenses are regarded with less severity. The nomenclature of a crime plays a pivotal role in defining its gravity, the punishment for offenders, and the treatment of victims. Distinctions between male-female and female-male penetration underscore societal sexual norms, questioning whether sex should be defined exclusively by male-female intercourse (Mckeever, 2018).

A prevalent misconception is that women cannot rape men due to physiological aspects or the mechanics of sex. However, physical sexual responses, including erection and ejaculation, can occur even if the male does not desire sex (Sarrel & Masters, 1982), thereby dismissing the argument that such acts cannot be classified as male rape. Men are often perceived as physically stronger than women, leading to the belief that they cannot be compelled to have sex or be raped by a woman. Victims who do not resist a sexual act are not necessarily consenting. Male rape victims experience psychological distress, grappling with the notion that a woman can perpetrate rape against a man. These victims may be hesitant to disclose their experiences to friends and authorities due to the fear of not being taken seriously. Changes in rape laws, with male rape recognized as a crime post-1994, reflect progress; however, the absence of a defined crime where women are perpetrators leaves male rape victims in a vulnerable position (Mckeever, 2018). The argument is made that women can also derive pleasure from rape (Wertheimer, 1996).

Responses to Male Rape

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the prevailing attitudes and responses of law enforcement agencies towards male victims of rape. It delves deeply into various empirical studies conducted to investigate the interactions between male rape victims and the police, with particular emphasis on the myriad barriers that impede the recognition and validation of such victims by law enforcement personnel.

Police statistics, which constitute the official records of reported criminal incidents, play an integral role in shaping public awareness and societal acknowledgment of these transgressions. A thorough scrutiny of these statistical data provides valuable insights into the prevalence of reported cases and potentially exposes the unsettling phenomenon of underreporting. However, a veil of skepticism looms over the authenticity of these police statistics. The contention arises that the actual figures pertaining to rape crimes are shrouded in secrecy by law enforcement authorities, thereby casting aspersions on the integrity and veracity of these ostensibly comprehensive statistical accounts. The enigmatic concept of the "tip of the iceberg" or the "dark figure" of crime alludes to a multitude of unreported and covertly concealed incidents that elude formal documentation, thereby introducing a troubling element of doubt into the reliability and accuracy of police data. Furthermore, the granular distinction between male victims who underwent the harrowing experience of rape during their childhood, adulthood, or as child victims often remains obfuscated, which could potentially skew the veracity and comprehensiveness of the collected data. This opacity is exacerbated by instances where juvenile victims may lack the cognitive acumen to recognize and label their traumatic experiences as rape, thereby further convoluting the reporting dynamic.

Research endeavors consistently underscore that male rape, as a subject of academic inquiry, is often marginalized and relegated to the peripheries of societal consciousness, engendering an atmosphere of stigma and unacceptability that contributes to the stark underreporting observed. Echoes of this phenomenon are found within American research landscapes, which posit that the prevalence of male rape cases far surpasses the documented statistics due to systemic societal negligence and the resultant dearth of reporting. A key element amplifying

underreporting is society's misconstrued perception of male rape as a gendered crime, inducing a prevailing societal narrative that further exacerbates the reluctance to report such cases.

The considerable impact of media representation, specifically its portrayal of rape as a gendered crime, warrants meticulous examination in comprehending the dynamics of male rape victim reporting. The skewed representation offered by media outlets can potentially introduce a significant bias into the calculus, thereby influencing the legal recognition and subsequent adjudication of male rape cases. Moreover, the intrinsic hesitancy exhibited by male victims to report instances bereft of palpable physical injuries inadvertently contributes to the potential trivialization of their victimhood, subsequently propagating a misconstrued perspective on the gravity of their experiences. It is crucial to underscore that the universality of these findings remains somewhat circumscribed due to limitations in sample size and the representativeness of certain studies.

Society's multifaceted misconceptions concerning male rape victims, encompassing notions of masculinity, invulnerability, and vulnerability, serve as formidable impediments to the reporting of male rape incidents. Myths, such as the erroneous correlation between male rape victims and homosexuality or the misguided assumption that erection during rape implies a form of consent, engender a climate of inhibition that thwarts the victims' inclination to report their traumatic experiences. Furthermore, the specter of societal judgment and the emasculation that may accompany the act of reporting constitute additional psychological barriers, compounded by the inherent societal disbelief that a "real man" can be a victim of such a heinous crime.

An intricate web of influences emanating from police occupational culture assumes paramount importance in the context of male rape victims and their interactions with law enforcement agencies. This culture, often characterized by a hegemonic manifestation of masculinity, serves as an influential backdrop against which the service and support rendered to male victims unfold. It is imperative to comprehend the intricate ways in which this culture permeates and influences perceptions, as skepticism and a lack of sensitivity towards male rape cases can be inadvertently perpetuated. The inextricable nexus between policing occupational culture and skepticism towards male rape cases is a noteworthy determinant that merits introspection. In this vein, the foundational role of policing occupational culture in engendering an array of policing challenges is a fact that warrants nuanced examination to fathom the profound implications on male rape victims' experiences, thus providing a crucial backdrop for unraveling the underreporting enigma. The pivotal query arises as to whether law enforcement agencies genuinely consider male rape victims as "real victims" and their plight as deserving the same gravity and urgency as their female counterparts. The malleable yet pervasive nature of police occupational culture necessitates careful consideration, particularly when juxtaposed with evolving societal norms and perceptions. While police culture is a dynamic construct, the underlying characteristics of racial prejudice and unwarranted suspicion underscore its complexities, potentially underscoring the need for a paradigm shift towards a more professionalized cultural orientation.

The landscape of male rape victim reporting in the UK has undergone transformation following the formal acknowledgment of male rape as a crime. This evolution is manifest in the increased reporting and prosecution of offenders, reflecting a growing willingness among male victims to come forward and report. The interplay between legal changes and evolving policing attitudes warrants meticulous scrutiny, particularly concerning their efficacy in rendering support and justice to male rape victims. Yet, a lurking question pertains to the fate of cases that reach the trial stage, as the narrative suggests a potential neglect or omission of these cases. The introduction of specially trained officers to handle and investigate rape cases underscores a nascent endeavor to accommodate male victims. However, the gender composition of these specialized officers, predominantly skewed towards females, could potentially yield a discomforting environment for male victims. A nuanced understanding of the influence of the officer's personality and attitude, rather than gender alone, is pivotal in fostering a conducive reporting atmosphere.

Victim-blaming attitudes and lingering apprehensions regarding preconceptions and biasness within law enforcement agencies pose additional hurdles for male rape victims contemplating reporting. These apprehensions can be exacerbated by prior negative experiences with law enforcement, further complicating the decision-making process. It is important to recognize the divergent attitudes within the law enforcement ecosystem, particularly in comparison to female rape victims. This recognition underscores the importance of altering these attitudes to facilitate a more inclusive and empathetic approach towards male victims. The advent of the concept of "rape suites" as a dedicated environment for the interviews and medical examinations of all rape victims, irrespective of gender, exemplifies an evolving response to this crisis. However, the challenge remains in establishing the efficacy of these measures in bolstering the reporting of male rape cases, particularly when juxtaposed with the complex interplay of psychological barriers.

In summation, this section presents a comprehensive panorama of the multifaceted challenges and determinants underpinning the underreporting of male rape cases. These encompass entrenched societal misconceptions, media representations, policing attitudes, and cultural norms, collectively forging a formidable barricade to the accurate reporting and empathetic support of male victims. Despite incremental progress in recognizing and addressing male rape, there persist significant obstacles that necessitate concerted efforts to render male victims' experiences visible, valid, and worthy of support and justice.

VOLUNTARY AGENCIES

The primary responsibility of legislative bodies and governmental bodies lies in the formulation of policies, while the execution and interpretation of these policies often involve the crucial participation of voluntary organizations. These voluntary agencies play a significant role in raising awareness among individuals about the various policy provisions. However, when it comes to voluntary agencies focused on aiding male rape victims, their presence is limited, primarily due to a lack of substantial empirical research (as mentioned previously).

Understanding the operations and responses of these voluntary agencies is of paramount importance, given their pivotal role in offering support to male rape victims. Social stereotypes that dictate that "real men" are self-sufficient might compel male rape survivors to grapple with their trauma individually, although a few may find a path to share their harrowing experiences (Carpenter, 2009). This underscores the significance of ensuring that voluntary agencies possess an awareness of the challenges encountered by male rape victims, particularly in the context of factors like hegemonic masculinity that contribute to their silence.

Voluntary agencies serve as critical interventions that facilitate the disclosure of victimization experiences. However, it's argued that certain therapeutic interventions lack sensitivity and fail to adequately address the specific issues faced by male rape victims (Washington, 1999). The concept of hegemonic masculinity further perpetuates the notion that males are inherently powerful and resilient, leaving no room for the acknowledgment of victimization (Connell, 2005). Men are often pressured to conform to societal ideals of masculinity, and those who don't meet these expectations risk being labeled as "unreal" men. Hence, voluntary agencies must adopt an approach that recognizes and embraces the nuances of masculinity, steering clear of interventions that inadvertently harm victims. Instead, a framework that respects and nurtures their masculinity while empowering them to confront their trauma is advocated (Carpenter, 2009).

The victimization of male rape survivors unfolds across multiple levels. Initially, they are victimized by their assailants; subsequently, they endure ridicule and scorn from society, including potential rejection by family and friends. Finally, they may encounter insensitive treatment within the legal system. These factors exacerbate self-blame and contribute to a reluctance to seek assistance. Numerous studies have unveiled the profound impact of sexual assault on male victims, resulting in both short-term and enduring psychological consequences (Carpenter, 2009).

In conclusion, male rape victims confront intricate emotional and psychological repercussions, which can manifest in the short or long term. Voluntary agencies are pivotal in addressing the aftermath of such experiences. Nevertheless, an alarming observation is that even though male victims might reach out for support, they often encounter inadequate attention from support services. This lack of adequate response stems from a scarcity of dedicated support centers and societal norms that discourage the reporting of male victimization. It is suggested that the limited training provided to support centers catering to female victims might contribute to the insufficient aid extended to male survivors (Carpenter, 2009). This cycle perpetuates a lack of reporting in male rape cases. Furthermore, the absence of well-established support infrastructure, financial backing, and resources for male rape victims underscores the unequal treatment they receive compared to female survivors. This oversight sends a distressing message that male victims are not deserving of help in coping with their ordeals, thereby reinforcing the misguided notion that male rape is not a grave issue. To effectively address this, a diverse range of specialized voluntary agencies is indispensable, each tailored to cater to the unique needs of male rape survivors and providing them with the essential support and resources required to navigate the aftermath of their experiences (King, 1995).

Male individuals who experience rape and are subjected to forced penetration, as compared to other forms of victimization, often show reluctance to seek help from voluntary organizations. This hesitance may stem from a sense of confusion about their sexual orientation (Monk-Turner and Light, 2010). Unfortunately, some professionals working in voluntary agencies hold the misconception that males cannot be victims of rape, leading to a preconceived notion that male rape does not occur and is not a concern for men. Additional research indicates that healthcare providers tend to view rape as a gender-specific crime, with the stereotype of men as perpetrators and women as victims (Apperley, 2015).

Numerous studies have explored the attitudes of psychological and medical professionals towards male rape victims (Donnelly and Kenyon, 1996). These studies have revealed a lack of available services, support, and appropriate responses for male victims of rape. Furthermore, it is argued that male rape victims experience secondary victimization from medical professionals and counselors (Washington, 1999). However, it is important to note that the results of the current research cannot be generalized to all male rape victims, as the study was based on a sample of only six individuals.

One concerning aspect is the potential link between hesitancy to seek psychological help and an increased risk of suicide among male rape victims. It is observed that long-term mental and health issues are commonly faced by these victims. Symptoms such as restlessness, depression, disrupted sleep patterns, difficulties in sexual relationships, anger, loss of self-esteem, and avoidance of social interactions have been noted. These factors often contribute to their avoidance of seeking psychological assistance. Male victims who do approach voluntary agencies may provide various reasons for seeking help, such as the recommendation of a medical advisor, without disclosing the true nature of their victimization due to the stigma surrounding male rape.

Interestingly, the support and assistance available to male rape victims lags behind that provided to female victims by approximately twenty years (Rogers, 1998). Men are more likely to report their sexual victimization in extreme circumstances, such as severe injury or gang rape (Frazier, 1993). Additionally, some male victims may seek medical help for injuries sustained during the assault but may avoid disclosing the true cause, resulting in a lack of examination for potential sexually transmitted diseases contracted during the rape (Kaufman, 1980).

The psychological and emotional effects on male rape victims have been the subject of research as well. Studies have investigated various factors contributing to victimization and suggest that not all members of society are equally vulnerable. Lifestyle, vulnerability, and interactions with potential perpetrators are key factors influencing victimization (Tweksbury and Mustaine, 2001). Gay and bisexual individuals are at a higher risk of experiencing "date rape" and "corrective rape," which is a hate crime motivated by the victim's sexual orientation. Corrective rape aims to change the victim's sexual orientation to heterosexual, reflecting homophobic attitudes.

While extensive research exists on the psychological aftermath of rape for female victims, there is a noticeable lack of research concerning male rape victims. In comparison to female victims, male rape victims tend to exhibit more aggressive and depressed reactions to their victimization (Frazier, 1993). This difference is attributed to societal expectations of masculine behavior, where expressing anger is deemed an acceptable way to cope with trauma. In contrast, socialized males often suppress their emotional responses, leading to long-term psychological effects (Kaufman et al, 1980).

Male rape victims frequently perceive themselves as highly vulnerable and adopt protective behaviors to prevent re-victimization (Mezey and King, 1989). They may also undergo a shift in self-perception, feeling shame for being unable to resist the assault or blaming themselves for the incident. Research suggests that self-blame can hinder effective coping (Frazier & Schauben, 1994). These negative psychological effects can lead male victims to question their sexual orientation.

Heterosexual victims, for example, may question their sexual orientation after being raped, especially if the assault involved same-sex contact. This uncertainty can lead to self-blame and resentment towards the gay community. Such victims may even develop a sense of hatred towards gay individuals, assuming the perpetrator to be homosexual (McMullen, 1990). A significant proportion of heterosexual victims reported struggling with their sexual orientation long after the rape incident (Walker, 1993).

Similarly, gay male victims may grapple with confusion about their sexual orientation, viewing the rape as a form of punishment due to their homosexuality. For these victims, sex may transform from a source of pleasure to one of disgust, causing difficulties in maintaining sexual relationships (Walker, 1993). Sexual dysfunction is a common consequence among male rape victims, often persisting for years after the assault (Keane, Young, Boyle, Curry, 1995). Such dysfunction manifests as discomfort, avoidance of sexual activity, and promiscuity, further impacting their emotional well-being.

In some cases, male victims may perceive a loss of their masculinity, leading to heightened anger and aggression towards society. They may hold society accountable for their insensitivity and lack of support. The unique challenges and psychological effects faced by male rape victims underscore the urgent need for comprehensive research and support services tailored to their experiences. Efforts to understand and address these complex issues are vital for promoting healing and recovery among male survivors of sexual assault.

Negative physical and psychological effects follow male rape victims (Struckman-Johnson & Struckman-Johnson, 1994). The author made the argument that all victims of abuse by male perpetrators experienced sexually negative and disturbed feelings, and that victims of rape by female perpetrators who claimed there was no significant impact on them may have hid the true impact of the rape because societal ideals view sex with women as an opportunity even when it goes against the victim's wishes. Further, it is said that male rape by female is consistent with heterosexual male identity, whereas male rape by male is inconsistent with heterosexual male identity. It is therefore contended that in later cases, the victims may be more willing to

accept the negative effects of victimisation. However, it does not eliminate the detrimental effects when female perpetrators are involved (Davies, 2000). Victims in these circumstances of female offenders may also feel conflicted about declining sex, which may cast doubt on the victim's sexual orientation. Such a victim who declines sex with eager women may be gay, which is why he is finally denying sex. They also worry about telling others about the incident of female rape since they might not be believed. According to research, men are more likely than women to commit large-scale stranger rapes against both men and women (King & Wolllett, 1997). The studies on male rape victims have limitations, for example, the conclusions are based only on data from specific samples, such as only those victims who contacted counsellors (King & Woollett, 1997), emergency rooms (Pesola, Westfel & Kuffner, 1999), or psychiatrists (Huckle, 1995).

Gay & Bisexual & Heterosexual Victims

Bisexual and gay people are more likely to be raped by both their romantic relationships and total strangers than men are. The attackers go for their target in public restrooms and parks, where they look for weak victims before attacking them. It might also be done to commit an anti-gay hate crime, for example (Stonewall Report, 1996). Rape is used as a tool or weapon in these situations to humiliate the victims. The Stonewell investigation claims that the language used during the attack on a gay victim expressed hatred for such victims; terms like "AIDS carrier" and "faggot" were used. These gay and bisexual victims feel that they are being punished for who they are—gay and bisexual—and for their sexual orientation.

Due to their behaviours, heterosexual men may likewise be the target of anti-gay crime. Males who are discovered acting homosexually face victimization in order to conform to social norms for men (Berill, 1990). The claim that "all men who are raped are gay" is a lie and that straight male rape victims doubt their own sexual identity after being raped stems from the fact that gay and bisexual men are more likely than heterosexual males to become rape victims. In fact, it might be argued that all males are at risk of being raped. Due to their reluctance to report incidents to the police or seek medical attention, these victims prefer to keep quiet out of fear of homophobic retaliation, disbelief, and self-blame (ibid). This may lead police and medical professionals to conclude that male rape is not a big social problem.

To show one's heterosexual identity, to prevent homophobic reactions, or to hide their sexual orientation in the case of gay and bisexual victims, it is believed that in extreme circumstances such male rape crimes are reported to authorities when there are severe injuries (Hodge & Canter, 1998). A comparison of male and female rape victims treated in hospital emergency rooms led researchers to the conclusion that male rape victims suffered more serious injuries (Frazier, 1993). Furthermore, it was asserted that in a small number of instances, male rape victims who had suffered significant injuries reported medical emergencies but kept the rape a secret (ibid).

One prominent concern with regard to these male rape victims is secondary victimization. Numerous studies have shown that male rape victims experience less pity and empathy than female rape victims (Davies, 2000). In comparison to female rape, male rape was regarded as

less serious (Burczyk and Standing, 1989). In contrast to female victims, these victims are expected to take action, defend themselves, and avenge themselves (Perrott & Webber, 1996). Gay victims' rape is treated less seriously than that of heterosexual victims because they are blamed for their sexual orientation (Pollard & Archer, 2000b). Depending on the gender of the perpetrator, attitudes towards such male rape victims vary. When female offenders are involved, it is reasonable to believe that the victim may have experienced sexual satisfaction.

Male Rape a Neglected Concept in India

India, where Hinduism is the predominant religion, adheres to heteronormative sexual norms, with men and women exclusively engaging in vaginal intercourse after marriage, according to Weber (Weber, 2000). Manu smriti, also known as "Manava-Dharma-Shastra," is a non-legal treatise that serves as the foundation for traditional Hindu doctrine. It explains why "marital rape" is an exemption to Indian law and that women's roles are adjustable throughout life. Manu asserts that sacrifice, responsibility, and duty are to be upheld by each individual, with the obligation of the husband being to manage his wife (Olivelle, 2004). Hinduism is not a religion but rather a "way of life" that forbids homosexual relations. Law that has been influenced by Hinduism upholds patriarchal and heteronormative norms and also portrays men and masculinity as related. Male rape is often disregarded in India compared to female rape, hence there is a dearth of literature on the subject. Male rape is neglected since researchers have long focused on female rape (Modi & Dada, 2015). It is further stated that because there is no human rights instrument that specifically addresses sexual violence against males, it is a severe issue because male rape is not regarded as a violation of human rights. The legal system is built on the concept that males commit crimes and women are the victims, which is problematic because it offers no assistance to male rape victims. It is ironic that feminist organizations want to eradicate "toxic masculinity" since it strengthens patriarchy, but it is asserted that both feminist organizations and politicians have disregarded male rape victims (Kujat, 2017). Common misconceptions can also be found in India, such as the idea that "real men can protect themselves" and, as a result, "real men cannot be raped" (Stemple & Meyer, 2014). 'Victim blaming' and 'victim shaming' could result from this. The argument goes on to say that male rape victims may choose silence since the act of rape calls into question their manhood, whereas society expects a "real man" to be a strong individual who can defend himself.

The attitude of the police is another institutional issue that prevents male rape victims from reporting their crimes. Male rape victims should also be included in the police's support and prevention efforts because police culture and moral policing are said to be centred on heterosexuality and masculinity (Javaid, 2015). Male rape victims, however, are hesitant to report the crime due to their dread of these circumstances, and they also experience feelings of manhood loss and self-blame. In a similar vein, male rape in military institutions is likewise caused by masculinity (ibid). In the context of male rape in India, there is a dearth of scholarly and legal study.

Notes

1) Sakshi vs Union Of India (Uoi) And Ors,1999 CriLJ 5025

2) Law Commission of India, 172nd report on review of rape laws, March 2000.

3) https://www.epw.in/journal/2012/35/web-exclusives/criminal-law-amendment-bill-2012-sexual-assault-gender-neutral

4) https://www.prsindia.org/uploads/media/Ordinances/Criminal%20Law%20Ordinance%202013.pdf

5) https://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-pil-seeks-to-replace-rape-laws-with-gender-neutral-versions-2548902

6) https://www.indiatoday.in/india/story/bill-to-make-sexual-crimes-gender-neutral-introduced-in-parliament-1568504-2019-07-13

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