

An Observational Study on the Sexual Assault Victims in the Year 2018 at Tertiary Health Care Center of Rajasthan

Mahendra Singh¹, R.K Punia², Deepali Pathak³, Shashank Sharma¹

¹Senior Demonstrator, ²Senior Professor, ³Associate Professor (Forensic Medicine) SMS Medical College, Jaipur

Abstract

Introduction:- Sexual assaults are inhuman crimes against individual as well as the whole society. This study was thus initiated to obtain statistical pattern of sexual assaults pertaining to analyze various aspects including socio-demography and victim assailant relation, other relevant factors.

Materials and Method:-

Inclusion Criteria :- all the victims/sexual offence survivors examined at SMS Medical College, Jaipur during 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018

Exclusion Criteria:- all the alleged cases of sexual offence whom consent could not be obtained.

Results:- total 60 cases were studied. The mean age of the victims in present study was 20.98 years. 73.33% victims were from urban regions. 50% victims were educated. 70% victims in the present study were married. Most common place of commission of the crime was the victim's own home (46.67%) . 43.34% victims reported within one week time period from the incidence. 88.33% victims were assaulted by a single person. 76.67% victims were assaulted by familiar persons. In 51.67% cases, the victim had been assaulted multiple times. In 85% cases, there was peno-vaginal intercourse. 71.67% cases had no injury in the present study. 3.33% victims got pregnant after the sexual assault.

Conclusion:- Females of reproductive age group were the most common victims in the present study. Familiar persons committed the crime in most cases and victim's home was the most common site of occurrence. There was delayed reporting of the crime in most cases which was the main reason for loss of vital trace evidences.

Suggestions:- Strict adherence to protocols for medical examination of victims of sexual assaults should be mandatory. Sex education should be provided to school students of teenage to increase awareness regarding medical and legal issues related to such events to increase the reporting of this crime.

Key Words:- sexual offences, Hymen, victim, accused, POCSO.

Introduction

Sexual assaults are inhuman crimes directed against individual as well as the whole society¹. Sexual offence

may be associated with physical violence also². No age or gender stands bar to this crime³. Rape is usually under-reported crime experienced by women in all sections of the society and obtaining an accurate measurement of sexual assault is a challenge⁴. Sexual assault, a form of sexual violence, often used synonymously with rape, could include anything from touching another person's body in a sexual way without the person's consent to forced sexual intercourse - oral and anal sexual acts, child molestation, fondling and attempted rape. The Prevention of children against sexual offences act (POCSO ACT, 2012)^{5,6} has been added as well as

Corresponding Author:

Dr. R.K. Punia-

Sr. Professor, (Forensic Medicine) SMS Medical College, Jaipur

Phone no. 9414780654

Email Id – rkpunia86@gmail.com

section 375 IPC and 376 IPC amendments have been done to combat any form of sexual intentions directed against children and females irrespective of gender. Multidisciplinary approach is required for investigation of these cases⁷

This study was thus initiated to observe the pattern of sexual assaults pertaining to analyze all aspects including socio-demography and victim assailant relation, other relevant factors and further recommendations.

Materials and Method

1. Total 68 victims of sexual assault reported at Department of Forensic Medicine, SMS Medical College and attached Hospitals, Jaipur included as Hospital Based observational study universe

2. 60 Victims of sexual assault/ relatives who consented were included for study. Out of them there were 53 survivors and 07 non survivor victims who suffered fatal injuries in the incident.

3. Only two male victims of sexual offence were reported at SMS hospital during the study period (03.33%), The number of female victims among study group population have been reported to be 96.66%

4. All the cases were interviewed on socio demographic profile and relevant factors according to the proposed Proforma. The medico-legal examination for bodily injuries and genital examination for rape was conducted along with the doctors preparing the medico-legal reports.

5. Continuous variables were summarized as mean and standard deviation whereas nominal/categorical variables as proportion. Chi-square test was used for analysis of nominal categorical variables. Statistical analysis was conducted using Medcalc 16.4 versions software

Observations

1. Out of 60 total case 44 victims(73.33%) were from urban region and rest 26.67% victims from rural status. the majority of victims were unmarried being 70% and married being 30%. majority of victims (50%) were adequately educated, secondary or higher as per their age & Only 25% victims (15 out of 60) were educated below secondary education and 25% of them totally illiterate. Majority of victims in the present study were students (35%) followed by housewives (23.34%). hymen was recently torn in 15% cases and old insignificant tears in 65% cases. The hymen was intact in 13.33% cases. The total number of cases with ruptured hymen was 80% .Two cases of sexual assault got pregnant after the assault (03.33%) .

2. In 85% cases in the present study natural sexual intercourse offence was committed whereas there were 08.33% cases of unnatural sex booked under Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (peno-oral sex in 03.33% cases and peno-anal sex in 5% cases). In rest 6.67% cases there had occurred touching, fingering etc. to the external genitalia.

Table : 1: Distribution of Victims according to Age and Gender

Age Group (Years)	Male	Female	Total (%)
0-5	0	05	05 (08.33%)
6-<18	02	20	22 (36.67%)
18-49	0	31	31(51.67%)
> 50	0	02	02 (03.33%)
Total (%)	02 (03.33%)	58 (96.67%)	60 (100%)

Table 2: Alleged place of incidence of sexual assault

Alleged place of incidence	Total (%)
Home	28 (46.67%)
Neighborhood	12 (20%)
Hotel	05 (08.33%)
Home of assailant	05 (08.33%)
Unknown	03 (05%)
Office/ factory	02 (03.33%)
Fields	02 (03.33%)
Variable Multiple	02 (03.33%)
School	01 (01.68%)
Total	60 (100%)

Table 3: TIME Gap between incidence of sexual assault and Medico-legal examination

Time Period	Total (%)
Same day	03 (05.00%)
2nd day	09 (15.00%)
3rd day	05 (08.33%)
4th day	02 (03.33%)
5th-7th day	07 (11.67%)
1-4 week	05 (08.33%)
1-6 month	14 (23.34%)
>6 month	15 (25.00%)
Total	60 (100%)

Table 4: Distribution of cases of sexual assault according to number of Assailants

Number of Assailants	Total (%)
One	53 (88.33%)
Two	03 (05%)
Three	04 (06.67%)
Total	60 (100%)

Table 5: Relation between victims and the Assailant

Relation to Assailants	Total (%)
Neighbor	16 (26.67%)
Stranger	14 (23.34%)
Close Friend	08 (13.33%)
Co-worker or Senior at Job	08 (13.33%)
In Law relatives	05 (08.33%)
Relative or Friend of Relative	04 (06.67%)
Husband	03 (05%)
Father or Paternal Uncle	02 (03.33%)
Total	60 (100%)

Table 6: Distribution of cases of sexual assault according to the presence or absence of Genital and/ or Bodily injuries

Sn	Genital Injuries		Bodily Injuries		Total
	Present	Absent	Present	Absent	
1		YES		YES	46 (76.67%)
2		YES	YES		8 (8.33%)
3	YES			YES	3 (5%)
4	YES		YES		9 (15%)

Discussion

1. Female out-proportionate the male in number as victim of sexual offences. The mean age of the victims in present study was 20.98 years. Majority of the victims in the present study were between 18 to 49 years of age (51.67%) followed by 6 to 18 years of age (31.67%). There were 08.33% victims who were less than five years of age.

2. 46.67% victims were sexually assaulted in their own homes in the present study followed by next 20% sexual assaults in neighborhood. Other common sites of occurrence of these crimes were hotels (08.33%) followed by fields and offices (03.33% each); and, in 5% cases the place of assault remained undetermined owing to drugging of the victim or death of victim.

3. In the present study, only 5% victims had reported the crime on the same day. Another 15% had reported on second day, 08.33% on third day and rest 15% between fourth to seventh days.

4. In 88.33% cases the victims had been assaulted by a single offender. In five percent cases there were two assailants and rest 6.67% cases were gang rape cases. Seven victims were killed after the episode of sexual assault (11.67%). 76.67% victims knew their assailants in the present study and 23.33% victims were assaulted by strangers. Amongst the known offenders, neighbors were the most common assailants (34.78%) followed by close friends and coworkers (13.33% each). Relatives or their acquaintances comprised the remaining 30.44% cases

5. In 41.66% cases the crime had occurred only once and was reported. 51.67% victims suffered multiple times before reporting the crime.

6. In the present study, there was no injury at all in 71.67% cases. There were isolated bodily (extra-genital) injuries in 08.33% cases and isolated genital injuries in 5% cases. 15% victims had both genital as well as extra genital injuries.

Conclusion

Sexual violence against women and children is a major public health issue. Females of reproductive age group were the most common victims in the present study. Most commonly affected ages were 17 and 22 years.

Familiar persons committed the crime in most cases and victim's home was the most common site of occurrence.

In majority of cases, there was no evidence of forceful sexual intercourse but still opinion of penetrative sexual assault was concluded in 45% cases.

There was delayed reporting of the crime in most cases which was the main reason for loss of vital trace evidences. This is also indicative of underreporting of this crime owing to social stigma.

Strict adherence to protocols for medical examination of victims of sexual assaults should be mandatory along with the development of a referral system to with fully equipped expert medico-legal teams for examination. sex education should be provided to school students of teenage to increase awareness regarding medical and legal issues related to such events to increase the reporting of this crime.

Suggestions:-

- DES prophylactic therapy as post coital drug should be advised

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Conflict of Interest: Nil

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