



2023 RAPE CASES IN NIGERIA

THE RAPE FIGURES

4th January 2024

Background

The pervasive issue of rape in Africa has cast a dark shadow on the realization of sustainable development goals across the continent. The profound impact of rape is evident in its significant contribution to the escalating number of girls currently deprived of education, as well as its role in perpetuating poverty among victims and reinforcing gender inequality. Recognizing the urgent need for effective intervention, gender equality advocates and social development experts are actively engaged in the collection and analysis of data. This data-driven approach aims to inform the formulation of legislations and the strategic execution of programs geared towards fostering societal development and dismantling the barriers posed by rape.

Objective

The objective of this study is to conduct an assessment of the socio-demographic characteristics of rape victims and evaluate the conviction rate of individuals accused of rape within the jurisdiction of Nigeria. This research aims to provide comprehensive insights into the prevailing patterns associated with both victims and perpetrators of rape, thereby contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the dynamics surrounding sexual assault cases in the country.

Methodology

Socio-demographic information pertaining to both victims and perpetrators, as well as the responses of law enforcement agencies, was sourced through desk research. The ensuing secondary data underwent analysis employing descriptive statistics. This analytical approach entails the utilization of charts and graphs to interpret the data, ensuring effective communication and presentation of the findings.

Summary of findings

In the examination of 85 recorded rape cases, the study unveiled distinct patterns in the relationships between victims and suspects. Notably, a substantial majority (70%) of the victims were subjected to sexual assault by individuals outside their familial circles, as opposed to incidents involving family relatives (30%). Additionally, the research highlighted that 23% of the documented cases involved gang rape.

Further investigation extended to various variables, including geographical region, the average age of victims and suspects, and the response of law enforcement agencies. Among the six regions, the South West exhibited the highest incidence of rape cases, totaling 22, while the South South reported the lowest with 9 cases. The average age of victims was established at 14 years, while suspects tended to be approximately 28 years old.

Regarding law enforcement response, the study revealed that 53% of the perpetrators involved in the 85 rape cases had been apprehended, whereas only 1% had been successfully convicted. The remaining 46% represented individuals who were either arraigned, subject to ongoing investigations, or still at large. These findings shed light on the multifaceted dynamics surrounding rape cases, emphasizing the critical need for nuanced interventions and a more effective legal response.

Introduction

Rape, a grave criminal offense, has become a focal point in national discussions, eliciting diverse perspectives from social scientists and legal practitioners regarding its definition. The discourse often hinges on varying viewpoints, with some emphasizing the role of consent, while others consider penetration as the defining factor. For the purposes of this study, rape is defined as an unlawful sexual activity involving forced or coercive sexual intercourse, typically against the will of a female or a male or with an individual below a certain age or incapable of providing valid consent.

Beyond the physical ramifications, rape inflicts profound social and psychological trauma, leaving enduring effects that extend far beyond the immediate incident. Reports consistently highlight the heightened vulnerability of women and girls to this societal ill, influenced by factors ranging from economic dependence to cultural norms reinforcing masculine dominance. Culture not only contributes to the occurrence of rape but also impedes reporting, resulting in underreporting and limited data for comprehensive analysis and decision-making. In recent years, increased attention from civil society organizations and the domestication of the Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act 2015 (VAPP Act) in select states have led to a notable rise in reported cases.

Despite this positive trend in reporting, concerns persist regarding the swift dispensation of justice. Many perpetrators remain at large or have been apprehended, with only a fraction facing prosecution and conviction. This underscores the urgent need to fortify the criminal justice system, considering measures such as the establishment of dedicated courts or innovative approaches to ensure expeditious justice delivery.

This study endeavors to assess the prevailing trends and patterns of rape in Nigeria, a country situated within the ECOWAS and African Union frameworks. The hypothesis posits the existence of incidences of rape in Nigeria, underscoring the imperative for a comprehensive understanding of this pervasive issue and the development of effective strategies to address it

Study Population

Worldometer reports that Nigeria's population exceeds 200 million people, distributed across six geopolitical zones: North East, North West, North Central, South West, South East, and South South. The country's literacy level is documented at 62%, reflecting the proportion of the population with basic reading and writing skills. Additionally, according to estimates from the World Population Review, there is an approximate ratio of 1.04 males to every 1 female in Nigeria. These demographic insights provide a foundational understanding for further research and analysis.

Data Collection

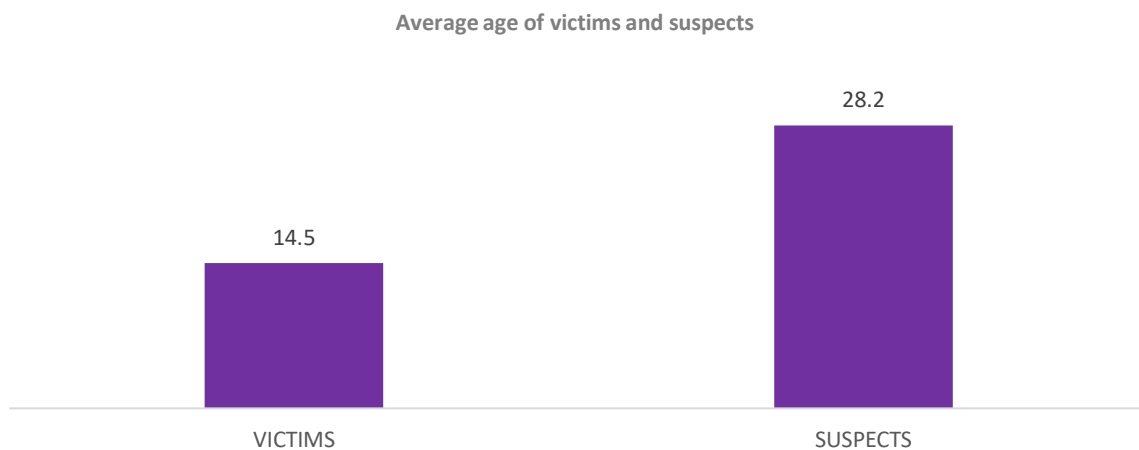
The research methodology involved the systematic collection of data pertaining to critical aspects of reported cases, including the age, gender, geographical location of the victims, the nature of their relationship with perpetrators, and the efficacy of law enforcement responses. Secondary data was sourced through desk research. The acquired information was meticulously entered into an Excel Spreadsheet, and

stringent procedures were implemented to validate and verify data accuracy, ensuring the reliability of the dataset for subsequent analysis.

Result:

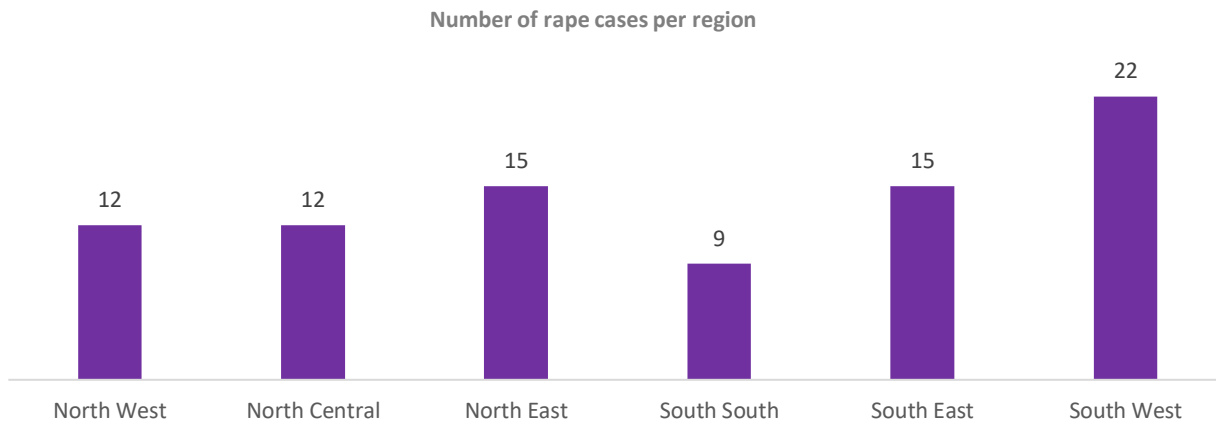
AGE DISTRIBUTION

The analysis presented in Figure 1 delineates that the mean age of suspects involved in the studied cases was 28 years, juxtaposed with victims who exhibited an average age of 14 years. The chart below meticulously encapsulates the average age distribution of both suspects and victims, providing a comprehensive overview of the demographic characteristics within the context of the study.



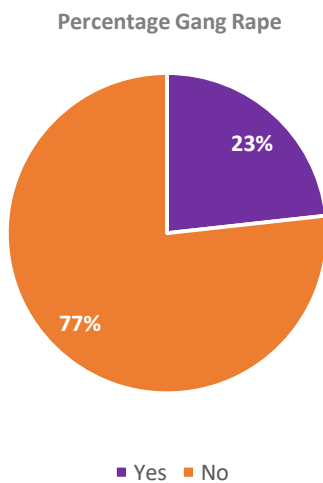
CASE DISTRIBUTION BY REGION

The data presented in Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of reported rape cases across various regions. The South West region exhibited the highest incidence of rape cases, totaling 22 reported cases. In contrast, the South South region recorded the lowest number of reported cases, amounting to 9. The remaining regions reported the following figures: North West (12 cases), North East (12 cases), North Central (15 cases), and South East (15 cases). The accompanying chart visually represents this regional distribution, providing a comprehensive overview of the prevalence of rape cases across different geographical areas.



PERCENTAGE OF GANG RAPE

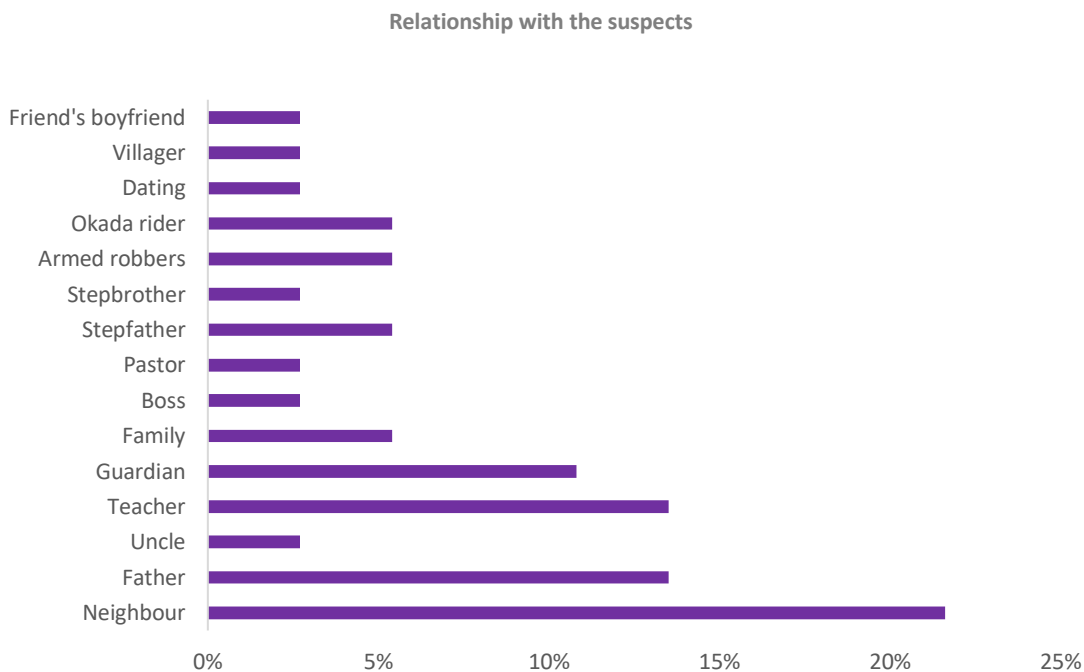
In Figure 3, an analysis of rape cases reveals that 23% of the reported incidents were categorized as gang rape, whereas the majority, constituting 77% of the cases, did not involve gang rape. The corresponding chart below visually represents this distribution for clarity and comprehension.



RELATIONSHIP WITH VICTIMS

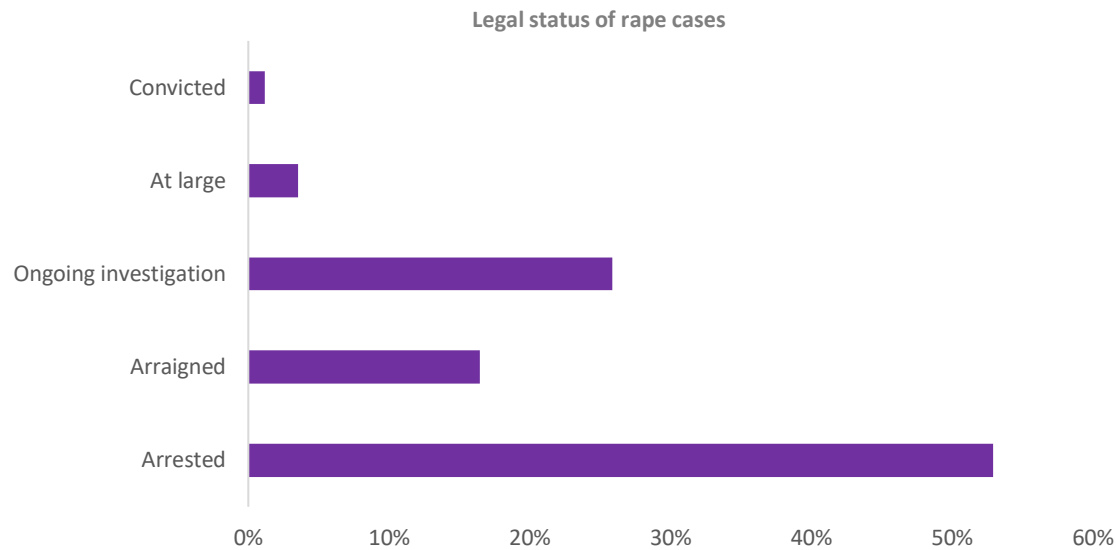
Figure 4 depicts the nature of the relationship between victims and suspects in reported cases. Notably, 22% of the suspects were identified as neighbors of the victims. Other categories include uncles, bosses, pastors, stepbrothers, dating partners, villagers, and friends' boyfriends, each accounting for 3%. Okada riders, armed robbers, stepfathers, and family relatives were reported at 5% each. The analysis further

revealed that 14% of the suspects were fathers, another 14% were teachers, and 11% were guardians. The chart below provides a visual representation of this relational analysis.



THE STATUS OF THE RAPE CASES

The graphical representation in Figure 5 provides insights into the legal status of the examined cases. Notably, the majority of cases (53%) pertain to individuals who have been arrested, signifying a predominant category within the dataset. Furthermore, 26% of cases are currently under ongoing investigation, 16% have progressed to the stage of arraignment, and 4% involve suspects who remain at large. A marginal percentage of 1% accounts for cases where the suspects have been convicted. The corresponding chart effectively encapsulates the nuanced distribution of legal statuses within the analyzed dataset.



LIMITATIONS

The study encountered challenges in acquiring comprehensive and accurate information from the reported cases. Ensuring the correctness of the data became a pivotal concern throughout the research process. To address these challenges, meticulous processes were implemented to guarantee the accuracy of facts and maintain the correctness of the data.

CONCLUSION

Achieving the sustainable development goals by 2030 necessitates a significant reduction in rape cases. This can be accomplished through the expeditious administration of justice and the prompt adoption of the VAPP Act by states that are yet to do so. Urgent and concerted efforts are imperative to create an environment where justice prevails and the rights of victims are safeguarded, fostering a society free from the devastating impact of rape.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For effective reduction in rape cases and the achievement of sustainable development goals, the following recommendations should be earnestly implemented:

1. Civil society organizations play a pivotal role in pressuring states that have not yet domesticated the VAPP Act to do so promptly. This legal framework serves as a formidable deterrent against rape and reinforces the commitment to justice.

2. Implementing an advocacy program is crucial in combatting victim-blaming and stigmatization of rape survivors. Creating an environment that encourages victims to come forward and share their experiences is vital for fostering a supportive community.
3. Establishing special courts within the judiciary dedicated to handling rape cases can significantly contribute to the swift dispensation of justice. This ensures that legal proceedings are expedited, providing closure to victims and holding perpetrators accountable.
4. Increasing awareness and education, particularly targeting minors and teenagers, is essential in addressing the social problem of rape. By subtly instilling consciousness about this issue, young individuals are better equipped to recognize potential threats from family members, strangers, and neighbors, thereby empowering them to protect themselves.

Implementing these recommendations collectively will contribute to the comprehensive effort to combat rape and create a safer and more just society for everyone.