

## An overview on alleged rape cases examined in Chattogram Medical College, Bangladesh

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### Abstract

**Introduction:** The sexual offence and rape is still happening in alarming figure and it is a matter of great concern all over the world including Bangladesh. This study was aimed at identifying distributions of alleged rape victims defining demographic profile and to explore motives behind committing rape. **Materials and Methods:** A retrospective, descriptive study was conducted at the Forensic Medicine Department of Chattogram Medical College, Bangladesh. A total of 445 victims of alleged rape incidence examined during the study period spanning from January, 2016 to December, 2016. Data regarding age group, religion, marital status, occupation, relationship with the accused, time of arrival for medico-legal examination and enrolling case, motives behind committing rape was analyzed. **Results:** The results showed that among the rape victims, 329 (73.93 %) were unmarried, 195 (43.82 %) were students and 381(85.60%) were Muslim. The most frequent age range of the victims was early adulthood, 11-20 years, which were observed in 305 (68.53%) victims. Majority of the accused, 167 (37.52%) were acquaintance. The frequent time of arrival for medico-legal examination was in between 3 and 7 days, found in 140 (31.46%) victims, while most frequent time of enrolling a case was in between 24 and 72 hours and it was found in 124 (27.86%) victims. The most prevalent (239 or 53.70%) motives behind committing rape were coercion in different circumstances and it was. **Conclusion:** Rape is still considered a grave problem for civilized society and should be given high priority with regard to prevention. This study may help in formulating an effective preventing program on rape at community level.

**Key words:** Rape, victim, coercion.

*J Cox Med coll 2018;4(1): 25-29*

### Introduction

In every land in every generation human sexuality has been and still regarded as one of the outstanding problems of the day<sup>1</sup>. Ever since the ancient times, rape and other sexual offences were considered to be heinous crimes<sup>2</sup>. Rape is a legal term. It is defined as the unlawful sexual intercourse by a man with women against her will, without her consent, or with her consent obtained by force, fear, or fraud or with woman with or without her consent below the age of 14 years<sup>3</sup>. The laws regarding rape are mentioned in section 375 and 376 of Bangladesh Penal Code (BPC), Section-6 of repression of Women and Children (Special provisions) Act 1995, and Section-3 of suppression of violence against Women and Children, 2000 (Amended -2003)<sup>4</sup>. According to BPC 376, punishment for rape is imprisonment for life or imprisonment for 10 years with fine<sup>5</sup>. The incidence of rape is on an increase in the present times in Bangladesh. More and more woman is coming out of homes now-a day for earning of their livelihood

and for to be educated. Hence, when they are out of doors, in some extent, they easily fall prey to such incidents. The various media such as the satellite TV, the easy availability of video pornographic films, the lack of proper social, cultural and moral education at home and educational institutions are causing degradation of social morality and tempting the younger generation in such brutal act. The number of women raped throughout the country in 2016 is 1050<sup>6</sup>. Virtually almost not a single week or month is passed without reports of several such incidents on the daily newspapers, which is but only a fraction of total picture, as the brutal crime has become a social menace now-a-days. Different social values regarding sexual practice, along with various environmental, economical or mental factors influence the crime of rape. No age is exempted from this variety of offence<sup>7</sup>. Along with other motives; girls are enticed to sex with the false assurance of marriage<sup>8</sup>.

### Materials and Methods

This was an observational study based on secondary sources. The study was carried out at the department of Forensic Medicine of Chattogram Medical College on 445 alleged rape victims brought for medico-legal examination at Forensic Medicine department of Chattogram Medical College, from January to December in the year 2016. Data was obtained retrospectively from

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complete medical examination report and other records, preserved in the department. Data were compiled, analyzed, tabulated according to key variables and finally, inference was drawn after entering into a Microsoft Excel Spreadsheet for analysis.

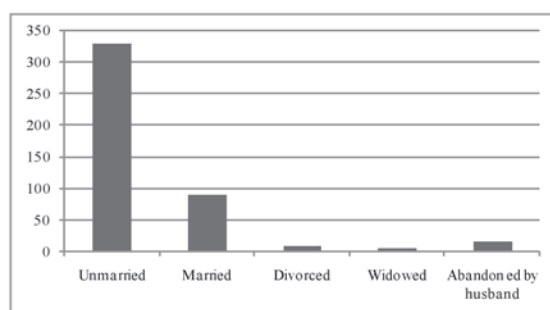
## Results

Out of total 445 alleged rape victims, 329 (73.93 %) victims were unmarried, 89 (20%) victims were married, 15 (3.37%) victims were abandoned by husband, 8 (1.79 %) victims were divorced and only 4 (0.89 %) victims were widowed (Fig 1).

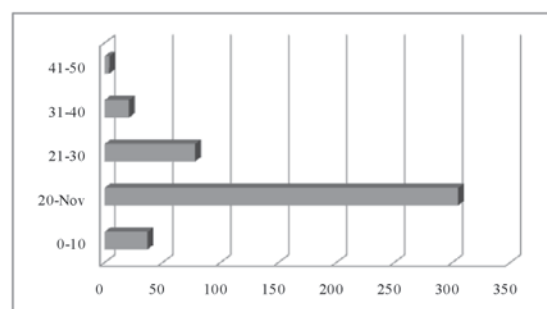
Fig 2 showing that the highest number of alleged rape victims 305 (68.53%) were from age group 11 to 20 years, followed by 78 (17.52%) victims from age group 21-30 years. Majority of the victims (381 or 85.61 %) are Muslims, followed by Hindu (36 or 8.08%) and Buddhist (28 or 6.29%), which is grossly corresponding to the national demographic profile for different religions<sup>15</sup> (Fig 3).

Table I showed different occupations of alleged rape victims. Among them, 195 (43.82 %) victims were students. On analysis of relation between the victim and the accused, it was found that among the accused, 167 (37.52 %) were acquaintance and 105 (23.59 %) were lovers (Table II). The time interval between incidence of rape and medico-legal examination, the majority (140 or 31.46%) were in between three and seven days (Table III). The most frequent time interval between incidence of rape and enrolling a case to the police or to the learned court was in between 24 and 72 hours, found in 124 (27.86 %) victims (Table IV).

Fig 4 illustrated that most prevalent motive behind committing rape, with coercion in 239 (53.70%), followed by false assurance of marriage given by accused in 67 (15.05 %), taking chance of mutual relations in 58 (13.03 %) and love trap in 45 (10.11%) victims.



**Fig 1: Distribution of rape victims by marital status.**



**Fig 2: Age based distribution of rape victims.**



**Fig 3: Distribution of rape victims based on religion.**

**Table-I : Occupational distribution of study population.**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Students	195	43.82 %
Housewives	71	15.95 %
Service	40	8.98 %
Garment/factory worker	53	11.91 %
Maid servant	04	0.89 %
Prostitute	03	0.67 %
Cultural activist	01	0.22 %
No occupation	78	17.52 %

**Table-II : Distribution of rape victims by relationship status. (n=445)**

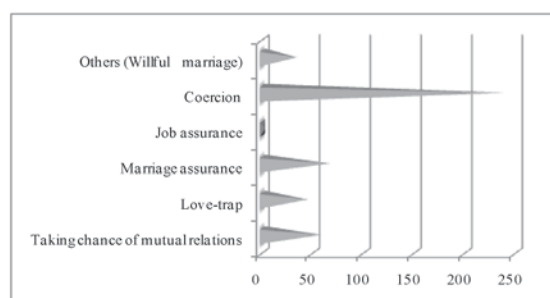
Relationship	Frequency	Percentage
Acquaintance	167	37.52 %
Lovers	105	23.59 %
Close friends	6	1.34 %
Neighbors	50	11.23 %
Relatives	13	2.92 %
Employer	3	0.67 %
Stranger	67	15.05 %
Others	34	7.64 %

**Table III: Distribution of rape victims by time interval between occurrence of sexual act and medical examination.(n=445)**

Time interval	Frequency	Percentage
Within 24 hours	18	4.04 %
Between 24 & 72 hours	73	16.40 %
Between 3 & 7 days	140	31.46 %
Between 8 & 30 days	104	23.37 %
Between 1 & 4 months	80	17.97 %
More than 4 months	30	6.74 %

**Table IV: Distribution of rape victims by time interval between occurrence of sexual act and enrolling case. (n=445)**

Time interval	Frequency	Percentage
Within 24 hours	39	8.76 %
Between 24 & 72 hours	124	27.86 %
Between 3 & 7 days	110	24.71 %
Between 8 & 30 days	79	17.75 %
Between 1 & 4 months	66	14.83 %
More than 4 months	27	6.06 %

**Fig 4: Distribution of rape victims by motives behind committing rape.**

### Discussion

The study revealed that majority of the alleged rape victims 329 (73.93 %) were unmarried, followed by 89 (20 %) victims were married. These findings are in agreement with other studies<sup>9,10,11,12,13</sup>. Beside this, 8 (1.79 %) victims were divorced, 4 (0.89 %) victims were widowed and 15 (3.37 %) victims were abandoned by their husband.

Regarding religion, 381 (85.61 %) Muslim victims were the most affected group, followed by 36 (8.08%) were Hindu and 28 (6.29 %) were Buddhist. This agrees with the other study findings<sup>14</sup>, since Muslims holding the 88.4 % of total population in Bangladesh<sup>15</sup>.

In this study, the age of the victims ranged from a three year old child to forty-nine year old woman. The highest number of victims 305 ( 68.53 %) was seen in the age groups of 11 to 20 years, followed by 78 ( 17.52 %) from 21 to 30 years, 37 ( 8.31 %) from 0 to 10 years, 21 ( 4.71 %) from 31 to 40 years and 4 ( 0.89 %) victims from 41 to 50 years. The age group below 20 years is adolescent and young women, usually found to be more at risk of rape than older women<sup>16</sup>. Increased incidence in younger could be due to their physical attractiveness, along with less astringency of maturity, decision making intellectuality, self-protection and contiguity with external world. Similar findings were observed by other studies<sup>8,11</sup>. Regarding occupation, majority of the victims 195 (43.82 %) belongs to Students, followed by 71 (15.95 %) were Housewives, 53 (11.91 %) were Garment workers and 40 (8.98 %) victims were Service holder and others. 78 (17.52%) victims did not have any occupation. These findings are consistent with other studies<sup>4,8,17</sup>.

This study pointed out that most of the accused were known to victims such as 167 (37.52 %) were acquaintance, 105 (23.59%) were Lovers, 50 (11.23 %) were Neighbors, 13 (2.92 %) were Relatives, 6 (1.34 %) were Close friends and 34 (7.64 %) were others. Stranger was 67 (15.05 %) in number. This finding is same as previously reported in other studies<sup>11,12,13,14</sup>.

Majority of the alleged rape victims 140 (31.46 %) were reported for medical examination to Doctor after incidence of sexual act in between 3 and 7 days, followed by 104 (23.37%) victims in between 8 and 30 days. This findings is in line with that of the research done by Barek A<sup>4</sup>. On the other hand, enrolling a case to the police or to the learned court was most frequent in between 24 and 72 hours after the incidence of sexual act found in 124 (27.86 %) victims, followed by 110 (24.71%) victims in between 3 and 7 days. These observation explores that, though majority of the victims got access to legal procedure earlier but reported for medical examination a bit later after sexual act incidence, which hampered to get adequate evidence like getting proper results of vaginal swab examination for spermatozoa, in time in most cases. This agrees with the study of Barek A<sup>4</sup>.

Most prevailing motive behind committing rape was coercion in 239 ( 53.70 %) victims, compare to other motive such as false assurance of marriage in 67 ( 15.05 %), taking chance of mutual relations in 58 ( 13.03 %), Love -trap in 45 ( 10.11 %), job assurance in 2 ( 0.44 %) and others in 34 ( 7.64 %) victims. Coercion implemented by stranger as well as some of the accused, who were known to victim before such as Relatives, Neighbors, Acquaintance,



Employer, Friends, even Lovers in some occasion.<sup>34</sup> rape cases, mentioned as others category, filed as a result of willful marriage turned to a charge of rape due to either female or both female and her partner got married under the marriageable age and/or without obtaining consent from parents and/or flown away from home for getting love marriage.

### Conclusion

Teen-age love affairs and consequent under marriageable aged marriage, impersonated love-trap, fabricated mutual relationship with malicious intent, false assurance of marriage, etc, are observed in this study as contributing events for occurrence of rape. Public awareness program on the danger of these facts, therefore, needs to be launched rigorously in the community level. Emphasis should be given on nurture of religious practice in daily life to keep the mind away from evil desire. Precise use of different electronic media should be monitored and maintained. Females should be encouraged to learn self-defense techniques so that they can defend themselves if they fall prey to such trap. Proper and hasty discharge of duties by the law-enforcing authorities, prompt execution of justice, imposing exemplary punishment for the crime along with boosting up the morality of the society are the other few ways to prevent the silent barbarous crime rape, such a disgraceful and miserable situation in terms of humanitarian aspect for a female.

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