

Incidence And Pattern Of Drug Facilitated Sexual Assaults: Date Rape

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Abstract

Background: The term "date rape" refers to a form of "acquaintance rape" in which non-consensual sex takes place between two people in a dating relationship.

Objective: The purpose of this research was to examine the frequency with which date rape incidents occur.

Materials and Methods: Our hospital conducted a retrospective examination of all sexual assault allegations during a seven-year period, from 2016 to 2022. Date rape refers to any sexual assault while the victim and the perpetrator are or were in a romantic or intimate relationship. The police report, victim statement, and medical exam results were all thoroughly examined and studied.

Result: Total of 187 claimed sexual assault cases were reported, out of which 7% were by date rape cases. 50% of the cases occurred in unknown places percentage of occurrence in hotels or dimly lit restaurants and house of a common friend are somewhat similar and are 22.2% and 27.8% respectively. Alcohol and drugs were used in 61.1% of incidents and in 23.5% of the cases suspected inhalational anesthetic agent was used.

Conclusion: It's possible that underreporting is increasing the true incidence of such cases beyond what has been identified. Due to delays in reporting and sample collection, it was not possible to determine the precise drug or agent type utilised in several of the cases. Raising awareness about date rape amongst young women is crucial right now. It may be suggested that they exercise caution and stay away from potentially harmful foods and beverages.

Key Words: Alcohol, Acquaintance, Date rape, Sexual assault, Drug,

INTRODUCTION

In 1980s, the terminology of *date rape* or *acquaintance rape* were first included in public health jargon so that the fallacy that most of the rapes occurred as random attacks by strangers could be dispelled.⁽¹⁾ Date rape, also known as acquaintance rape, is the act of coercing a victim into sexual activity by a friend, romantic suitor, or peer using violence, use of incapacitating substances, misuse of authority, threat of violence or verbal pressure. This term is most commonly used in industrialised countries. This act can occur through physical or verbal pressure, use of incapacitating substances, violence or threat of violence, or may be by exploitation by someone in a position with authority. Mostly, date rape victims know their attackers and did not consent to sexual activity.⁽²⁾ In scientific literature, date rape is rather termed as Drug-facilitated sexual assault (DFSA). A person debilitated by a mind changing substance, for e.g., alcohol in majority of cases, or a number of prescription and non prescription drugs, commonly known as "date rape drugs" can lead to a temporary or permanent loss of consciousness or induce sedation and amnesia leading to disinhibition and can put her or him at risk of non consensual sexual exploitation.^(3, 4) Accurate statistics regarding rape are notoriously difficult to obtain. However, as per statistics put together by the National Police Bureau (NPB) rape is the fastest growing crime in Pakistan. In 2022 only, 16,153 cases of workplace harassment have been filed by the women.⁽⁵⁾ In Pakistan, date rape is seen as a blight brought by the West, and similar threats are on the rise.⁽⁶⁾; however, due to unavailability of appropriate monitoring systems the exact figures are not available.⁽⁷⁾ To assess the frequency and distribution of rape by acquaintances, we conducted the present study at our hospital.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This retrospective study was conducted at Department of Forensic Medicine and Toxicology, Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences (LUMHS), Jamshoro. All cases of sexual assault examinations were included it received between 2016 and 2022. The examination results and the police and victim accounts were carefully analysed. Date rape is defined as sexual assault where the victim and the offender are or were in a personal relationship, such as a first date or an ongoing relationship, and if drugs, alcohol, or any agent were used to incapacitate and enable the assault. Statistical tests were used to evaluate the study's results.

RESULTS

Total of 187 claimed sexual assault cases were reported, out of which 7% were by date rape cases (Figure 1). Till 2018, there were no case reports of date rapes but in by 2019 and 2020, 13.16% and 15.56% of the Date rape cases were among the alleged sexual assault cases (table 1). A total of 66.7% of the victims were Muslims and 50% of the girls were below the age of 20 years [Figures 2 and 3]. 44.4% of them were students of schools or colleges [Figure 4]. 87.8% of the reported instances occurred in the late afternoon or early evening [Figure 5]. Figure 6 shows that 50% of the cases occurred in unknown places percentage of occurrence in hotels or dimly lit restaurants and house of a common friend are somewhat similar and are 22.2% and 27.8% respectively. Alcohol and drugs were used in 61.1% of incidents and in 23.5% of the cases suspected inhalational anesthetic agent was used. [Figure 7].

DISCUSSION

Sexual assault when inflicted by a person who is trusted by or in a position of responsibility to the victim, as the psychological impact of the breach of trust and can produce considerable long-term harm.^[8] Even more humiliating when the victim is debilitated under the effect of incapacitating drugs or alcohol and has lost the ability to offer resistance.^[9] Number of alleged rape cases and in turn rape cases by acquaintances have been increasing day by day during the past few years. No cases of date cases were reported until 2018 but significant surge is observed in figures of 2021 (13.16%) and 2022 (15.56%) compared to previous years. An increase in date rape cases have been observed over last decade and our findings are consistent with studies of Hurley et al., (2006).^[10] and Doandeu et al., (2006)^[11] It is seen that victims belonging to adolescents and young adults age-groups are four times more common. Jones J et al.^[12] observed that The risk of sexual assault by a stranger increases for women under the age of 20. Ricket VI et al.^[13] also observed similar findings. Our study also concluded majority of the victims were teenaged school-or college-going students. Higher ratio of Muslim victims is due to the dominance in the local population. As per the survey conducted by British crime bureau date rapes are more common in urban areas, mostly on holidays and after evening.^[14] In contrast, in Pakistan there is none to minimal concept of partying at night and thus mostly cases occurred in the afternoon and early evening (27.8% and 50% respectively). Furthermore, majority of alleged DFSA cases take place at a common friend's residence (27.8%) or victim under influence of sedating drugs is taken to unknown place (50%). Possibilities which raises red flags of a drug-facilitated sexual assault are recalling of having a drink by victim but not remembering what happened afterwards, suspicion of sexual contact by victim but no memories of details, waking up of victim wit a feeling of hung over and amnesia for a period of time. Besides alcohol, medications like flunitrazepam (Rohypnol) and gamma-hydroxybutyrate (GHB) are frequently used for this purpose. (15) Two-and-a-half percent of participants in our survey admitted to using alcohol, and one-third of those participants reported being unconscious after drinking. Majority of the cases (38.9%) reported loss of consciousness after sniffing a cloth/handkerchief but the exact agent used cannot be ruled out. Use of an inhalant anesthetic agent has also described in the study conducted by Payne JP.^[16] Crucial is to collect biological specimens timely and victim should be compelled not to hold micturation until proper collection of required specimen.^[17]

CONCLUSION

Date rape is seen by some as a Western cultural invasion. Non-reporting means that the actual incidence may be higher than reported. Because of delays in reporting and sample collection, in several cases, the precise medicine or agent administered could not be identified. Raising awareness about date rape amongst young women is crucial right now. It may be suggested that they exercise caution and stay away from potentially harmful foods and beverages. Awareness of the importance of prompt reporting of such crimes is also likely to aid in the fair administration of justice.

Year	Total Number of Alleged Rape Cases	Total Number of Date Rape Cases	Percentage
2016	16	0	0
2017	19	0	0
2018	10	0	0
2019	25	1	4%
2020	34	2	5.88%
2021	38	5	13.16%
2022	45	7	15.56%
Total	187	15	7%

Table 1: Displaying the alleged sexual assault and date rape cases by year

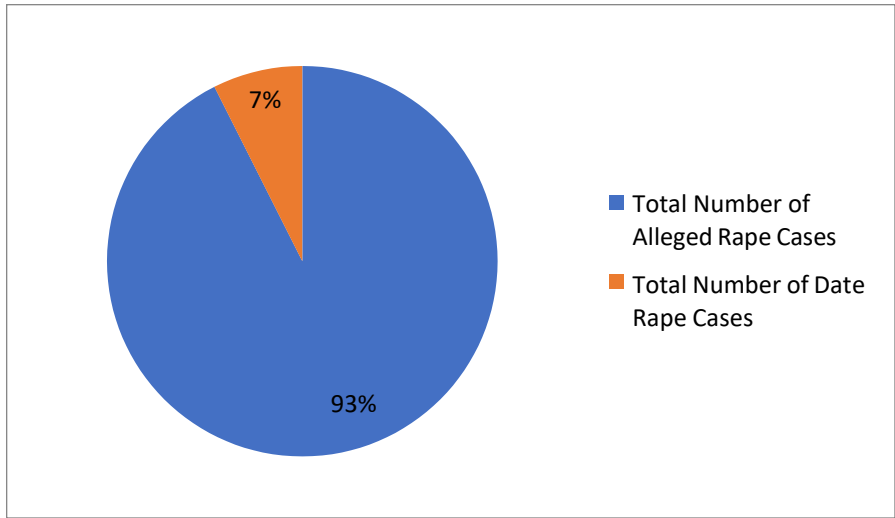


Figure 1: displaying the overall number of rape incidents

		AGE			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	13-20 YEARS	9	50.0	50.0	50.0
	>20-25 YEARS	7	38.9	38.9	88.9
	>25-30 YEARS	2	11.1	11.1	100.0
Total		18	100.0	100.0	

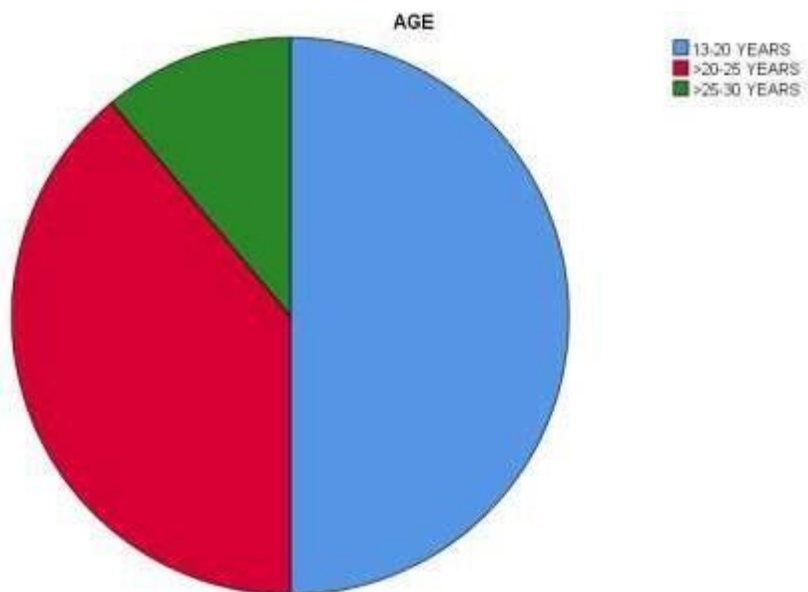
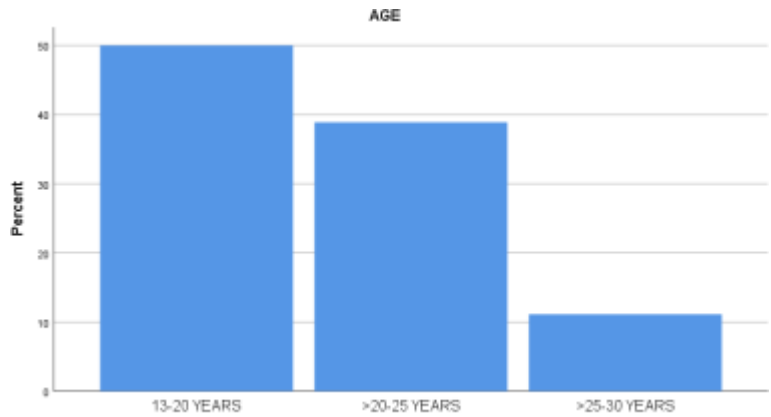


Figure 2: Showing the age of victims

		CASTE			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MUSLIM	12	66.7	66.7	66.7
	NON-MUSLIM	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

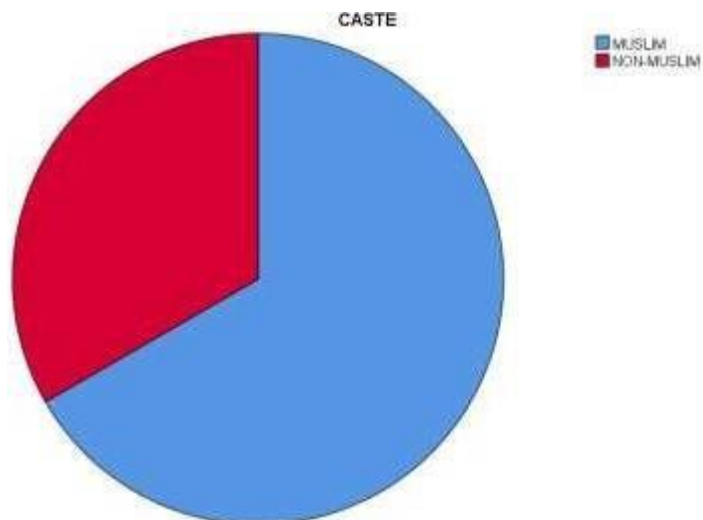


Figure 3: Showing the caste distribution of victims

		OCCUPATION			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	STUDENT	8	44.4	44.4	44.4
	EMPLOYED	5	27.8	27.8	72.2
	UNEMPLOYED	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

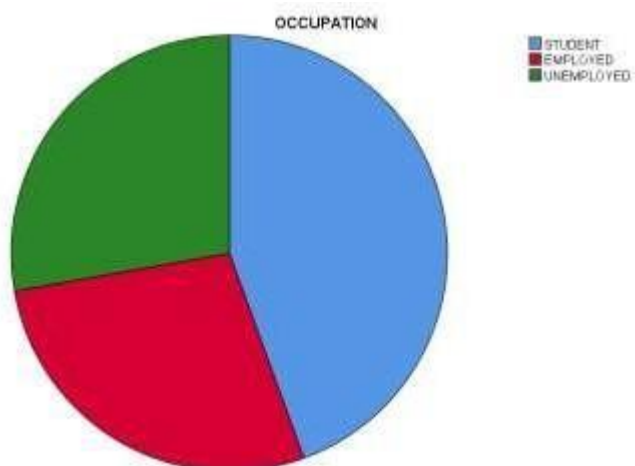


Figure 4: Showing the occupation of victims

		TIME OF OCCURENCE			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MORNING	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	AFTERNOON	5	27.8	27.8	33.3
	EARLY EVENING	9	50.0	50.0	83.3
	NIGHT	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

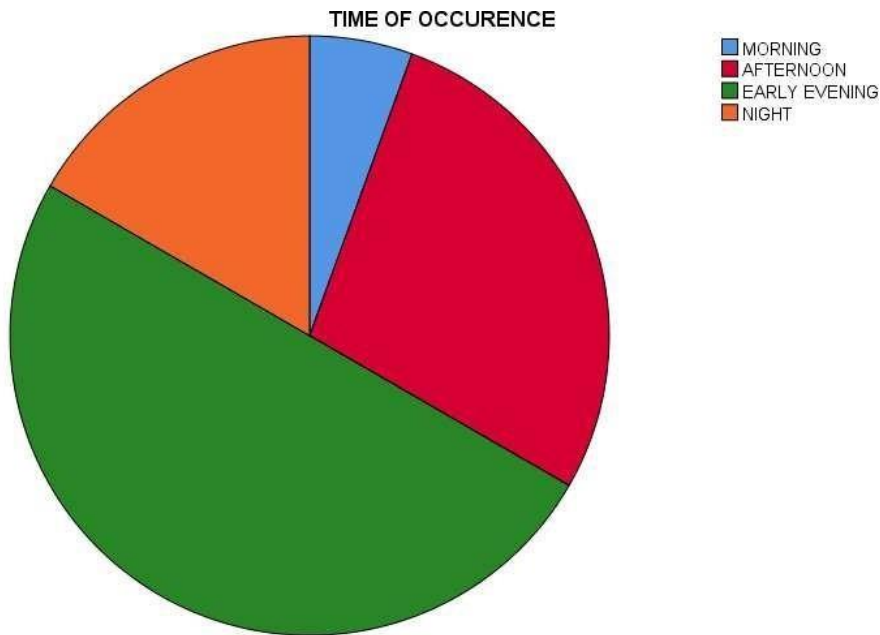


Figure 5: Showing the time of occurrence of incident

PLACE OF OCCURENCE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	RESTAURANT	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	COMMON FRIEND'S HOUSE	5	27.8	27.8	50.0
	UNKNOWN	9	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

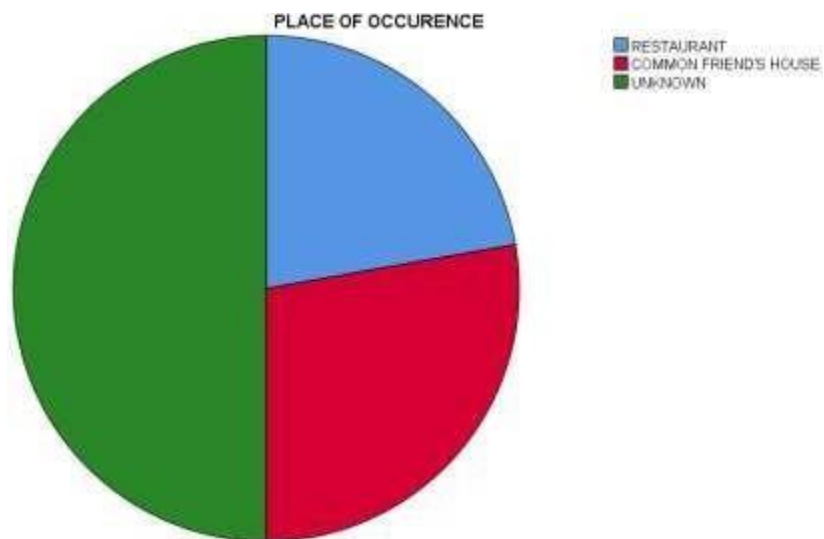


Figure 5: Showing the place of occurrence of incident

TYPE OF AGENT USED

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	DRUG	6	33.3	33.3	33.3
	SUSPECTED INHALANT ANESTHETIC	7	38.9	38.9	72.2
	ALCOHOL	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

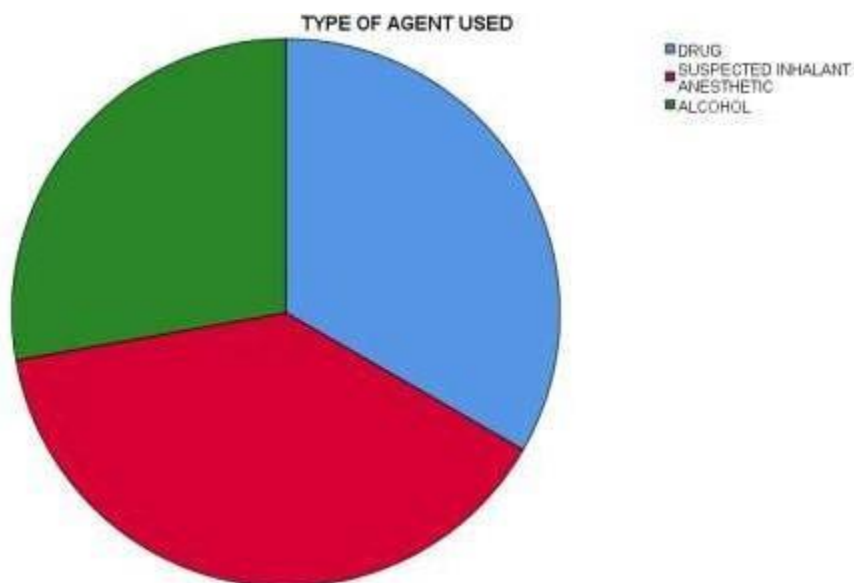


Figure 5: Showing the type of agent used

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