

Gender and Age Related Differences in Attitude towards Rape and Acceptance of Rape Myths

Manvi Chauhan^{1*}

ABSTRACT

India has a long history of patriarchal hierarchy which has led to deep seated gender biases that effect our day to day perception of events. In cases of rape these biases are known as 'Rape Myths' which refer to attitudes and generally false beliefs about rape, rapists and sexual assault victims that are widely and persistently held. Rape myths serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women and vice versa. With an increase in cases of rape across India it's important to understand the rape myths people accept as well as the attitude they hold towards rape. This information can be a useful for reforming laws and educational content. The current study aims to identify the impact that gender and age has on acceptance level of rape myths and overall attitude towards rape. It was hypothesized that older individuals would be more accepting of rape myths and have a more negative attitude towards rape as well as males would be more accepting of rape myths and have a more negative attitude towards rape than females. A sample of 147 individuals (103 females, 44 males; 103 young adults, 44 adults) filled the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (uIRMA) and the Modified Attitudes toward Rape Scale (ATRS). Bivariate correlation and Independent sample t-test were used for data analysis. Results indicate that uIRMA, its subscales and the ATRS are significantly (0.01 level) and positively correlated. It also indicates that age and gender are significantly and negatively correlated with uIRMA whereas only age has a significant correlation with ATRS. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in uIRMA score indicating that males and adults were more accepting of rape myths (lower mean score). The difference in ATRS scores was not statistically significant.

Keywords: rape, rape myths, gender differences, attitude, age differences

When it comes to crime against women, rape is the most common as well as under reported crime in India. It's carried out in different forms like rape with false intent to marry, rape of a minor, rape as revenge, etc. It is an unlawful act that typically involves sexual intercourse which is carried out forcibly or under threat of injury against a person's will. In 2013 FBI updated the definition of rape to "Penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by an organ of another person, without the consent" (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2014)

¹PhD Scholar, Amity Institute of Psychology and Allied Science, India

*Corresponding Author

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According to the statistics maintained by National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a woman gets raped every twenty minutes in India. It was the 4th most reported crime against women in the year 2020. Experts believe that the recent drop in the number of registered rape cases is no reason to celebrate as it's entirely possible that women were unable to report the crime due to the lockdown.

Registered crime rate increased from 7.3 in 2019 to 7.9 in 2020. The crime rate registered per lakh women population came out to be 56.5 in 2020 in comparison with 62.3 in 2019. A total of 27,863 reports of rape were filed during 2020. Although astonishing these numbers do not depict the real picture of the sexual violence epidemic in India because the incidence of rape and its rates of reporting vary widely from rural to urban areas and across India.

NCRB stats suggest that 27,863 reports of rape were filed during 2020. Although astonishing these numbers do not depict the real picture of the sexual violence epidemic in India because the incidence of rape and its rates of reporting vary widely from rural to urban areas and across India.

In Accordance to the Principal Offense Rule, each criminal incident is recorded as one crime. This means in case of a rape followed by murder, the case will be counted under murder. The current rape scenario has seen an increase in murder after rape which means that numbers of reported rape cases are higher than reflected in the NCRB report.

The predominately patriarchic society polices its women into so called acceptable molds on a daily basis creating a 'second-class' status for women. The fear of not being accepted into society once the label of 'rape' is associated with them as well as the threat of violence to the family of the victim or the victim themselves holds back a lot of women from registering a complaint against the rapist. Add to this the promise of marriage after or before rape which makes the crime an acceptable notion to the family as well as the society in a lot of places because the rapist is doing the honorable thing. Even though Currently, India's Penal Code has explicitly noted that getting hitched to the victim does not act as an absolving factor in case of rape (Jolly et al 2006) it doesn't deter highly educated judges from asking questions like "Will you marry her?" As if a woman is a commodity who's value can only be maintained if the forceful taker of her bodily autonomy agrees to keep her forever.

Even our Home Minister G. Parameshwara, Abu Azmi, and other officials stated that "western" women clothing and values were the cause of the rapes implying that families should not allow them to go to parties or major celebrations. (Deutsche Welle, 18 July 2017) Such ideologies in combination with a fear of being belittled & dismissed by the authorities, guilty for shaming their families, experiencing sexual shame, self-blame, (Luo et al 2000) psychological trauma following the rape combined with a desire to not relive the experience in trial causes a large portion of the female population to not register a complaint against the rapist.

A 2018 opinion poll by the Thomson Reuters Foundation of London dubbed India 'The world's most dangerous country for women' based on the opinion of 550 experts. The government of India (GOI) responded to these claims by publishing an online and newspaper wide press release saying that the 'bad opinions' were perhaps built because of the open system between, media, policy makers and NGO's that highlight women issues without any restrictions in India. This response acted as a shield for the heat the government received after the Reuters opinion poll, the reply gave out numbers about female feticide, bank

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account operated by women; etc. It is noteworthy that the Indian media only has news to show because cases of rape followed by death (Nirbhaya case, 2012), Live burning (Unnao rape case, 2019), Minor rape (Basirhat case, 2022) are rapidly increasing.

The utter lack of substantial sex education in schools as well as homes of most individual drives them to gain their knowledge about sex from pornography where the concept of consent, boundaries and the overall power dynamic is dysfunctional. This further leads to no case being reported as the casualty may not fully grasp that rape has occurred. In cases where a minor is raped, especially a girl it's common to find that rape has occurred when a pregnancy is discovered. There is stark proof collaborating the idea that sex education has a preventive role in sexual violence. (Tripathi et al 2013, Santelli et al 2013). A minor with ample knowledge about consent can inform a trusted adult when there are initial indicators of inappropriate touch.

The Mathura Rape Case of 1972 was the first rape case that caused a nation-wide uproar. Here, a teenage Adivasi girl was abducted by several policemen and raped inside a police station. Police's argument of defense was that Mathura was a 'loose' girl, thus any sexual activity with her could not be termed raped. This unsound and absurd argument was accepted by the Supreme Court during the trials. (Feminism in India, 2017)

Nirbhaya rape case was the most wide-spread case in the last decade and it took 7 years for the four convicted rapist to be hanged after the verdict was given. This brings into question the effectiveness of the judicial system which in another reason cited when an individual denies their right to file a report against their rapist. The almost vigilant like encounter of 4 rapists by Telangana police in 2019 is indicative of the trust level the people have in the judicial process when it comes to trial of rape cases.

The latest anti-rape bill was passed in 2013 which included a revised definition of rape as well as newer guidelines to punish rapists.

Rape is defined under Section 375 of IPC as

“A man is said to commit ‘rape’ if he

- a) Penetrates his penis, to any extent, into the vagina, mouth, urethra or anus of a woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person; or
- b) inserts, to any extent, any object or a part of the body, not being the penis, into the vagina, the urethra or anus of a woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person; or
- c) manipulates any part of the body of a woman so as to cause penetration into the vagina, urethra, anus or any part of body of such woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person; or
- d) Applies his mouth to the vagina, anus, urethra of a woman or makes her to do so with him or any other person, under the circumstances falling under any of the following seven descriptions:
 - First—against her will.
 - Secondly—without her consent
 - Thirdly—with her consent, when her consent has been obtained by putting her or any person in whom she is interested, in fear of death or of hurt.
 - Fourthly—with her consent, when the man knows that he is not her husband and that her consent is given because she believes that he is another man to whom she is or believes herself to be lawfully married.

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- Fifthly—with her consent when, at the time of giving such consent, by reason of unsoundness of mind or intoxication or the administration by him personally or through another of any stupefying or unwholesome substance, she is unable to understand the nature and consequences of that to which she gives consent.
- Sixthly—with or without her consent, when she is under eighteen years of age. Seventhly.—when she is unable to communicate consent.

Exception 1.—A medical procedure or intervention shall not constitute rape.

Exception 2.—Sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under fifteen years of age, is not rape. (Sexual offences,2013)

The 2013 laws on rape in India mirror the deep rooted patriarchal attitudes in Indian society. The current laws only protect cis-women from sexual assault (including rape, harassment, etc.) but not men or transgender people which are major issues. Marital rape is still legal, even the rape of a "married" child, aged between 15 and 18 is legal- unless the couple is separated.

However if an unmarried girl and boy of about 17 years have consensual intercourse, the boy risks being sent to a juvenile home for three years, reported for statutory rape by unhappy parents, unofficial caste-councils, or religious moral police because the age of consent was raised to 18 which makes all sex between consenting teenagers illegal. Adding to this is the Amendment in 'The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015' that now permits juveniles (16 years or older) to be tried as adults for abominable crimes like rape and murder. While politicians in state and central legislatures accused of abominable crimes may remain in office and benefit from the slow justice system until convicted.

On the other hand, the law developed the rape which now explicitly says that absence of physical struggle doesn't equal consent. Evidence gathering procedures as well as the proceedings of trial are a little easier on women now, and more careful of disabled people's rights.

The issue of false accusations increasing was raised but as pointed out by a study via the Crown Prosecution Service that the false cases is much rarer than many believe and eventually they just end up compromising justice for women who have in fact been raped, assaulted or harassed. (O.Bowcott, Rape Investigation, 2013). Individuals likely overestimate the chances that a rape claim is false due to a few highly publicized trials where there is evidence a woman is lying.

Disbelief in the testimonies of survivors, blaming survivors for having 'provoked' the rape and discriminatory attitudes survivors of sexual violence stems from deep-seated gender biases and acceptance of rape Myths. Survivors are subjected to shame, disbelief and assumption that they have 'wrongly accusing the rapist' from their own family, from the community, from the police, health care professionals, judges even defense lawyers. (Equality Now & Dignity Alliance International, 2021)

Believing that a victim is at fault stems from our perception of gender roles, value of a woman in society and willingness to accept rape Myths. Rape Myths are not only personal characteristics or opinions; they are and have been structurally and institutionally embedded.

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Generally, myths carry connotations that are rooted in historical, religious, and cultural origins which essentially equate to mistaken beliefs, or stereotypes (Ryan, 2011).

The term 'rape myth' was originally coined in the 1970's during the second wave feminist movement (Brownmiller, 1975) although it was most prominently defined by Burt as "prejudicial, stereotyped or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (Burt, 1981, p.217) while introducing the first Rape Myth Acceptance Scale.

A modified description of rape Myths is stated as "outlooks and ideas that are majorly false, but are extensively and tenaciously held by individuals that negate and give justifications to male sexual aggression against women" (Lonsway and Fitzgerald 1994, p.134) This statement formed the basis of The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale.

Media has a Notable impact on consumer's attitudes (Bryant and Oliver 2009) and the universality of rape Myths in media meaning media has a directly affect on consumer's attitudes towards rape.

Some researchers have proposed that rape Myths acceptance rate may be decreasing (Edward and McLeod 1999), it is unclear whether this is due to high levels of social desirability (Lonsway and Fitzgerald 1994) or a better understanding of the concept of rape.

The existence of Rape Myths within legal, religious and media institutions leads to difficulty in obtaining justice. A lawyer or police personal who is highly welcoming of rape Myths could shame the victim for past sexual history, dressing sense or not fitting into the rape victim stereotype (Page 2008).

Individuals of every gender identity experience rape and there are specific rape Myths linked with each sex alongside the generic ones. For this research the focus will be on rape Myths that affect individuals perceived as women.

A large quantity of research studies has been conducted regarding rape Myths outside India with emphasis on age and gender.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Abeid M., Muganyizi P. et al (2015) a cross-sectional review was attempted among May and June 2012. The review was led in the Kilombero and Ulanga country locale in the Morogoro Region of Tanzania. People matured 18-49 years were qualified for the review. An aggregate of 1,568 members were consulted. The greater part (58.4%) of members was ladies. Most (58.3%) of the ladies respondents had unfortunate information on sexual savagery and 63.8% had tolerating perspectives towards sexual viciousness. The individuals who were hitched were essentially bound to have great information on sexual viciousness contrasted with the separated/isolated bunch however less inclined to have non-tolerating mentalities towards sexual brutality contrasted with the single gathering. Sex of respondents, age, conjugal status and level of training were related with information and mentalities towards sexual savagery. Expanding age and advanced education were related with better information and less tolerating perspectives towards sexual viciousness.

Aissa L. (2021) The current article audits the writing on rape myth acceptance as a significant risk factor in the sexual exploitation of women and a precursor for a hostile social attitude towards victims of rape. Through the assessment of the verbal responses of the

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Moroccan public to the instance of assault and torment of Khadija "the tattoo gir" YouTube, it endeavors to survey and expose explicit instances of assault legends present in the Moroccan sociocultural setting. Discoveries propose the presence of intrinsically social assault fantasies, for example, as “the myth of the willing victim”, “it is impossible to rape a resisting woman”, and “women are prone to make false allegations”, alongside injurious casualty accusing social generalizations, for example, “she was asking for it”.

Barnett, M. D., Hale, T. M. et al (2017) The motivation behind this study is to explore whether sexual dysfunctional convictions — convictions about sexuality and gender roles that have been connected to sexual disorders — makes sense of change in rape myth acceptance past that made sense of by a person's masculinity or femininity. Heterosexual college going individuals in the U.S. (N = 840) filled out a form. The outcome recommends, among all kinds of people, sexual dysfunctional beliefs are better predictors of rape myth acceptance than masculinity and femininity.

Boakye K.E. (2009) this study investigates the helpfulness of the feminist theory in making sense of attitudes toward rape and casualties of assault in Ghana. There is proof of rape myth acceptance in Ghana; gender identity is a huge in anticipating levels of rape myth acceptance; lastly, age, and education is also associated significantly with rape myth acceptance. Males had consistently higher levels of rape myth acceptance compared to females.

Cantwell A, (2019) The study aims to find gendered difference towards acceptance of rape myths along with empathy levels towards rapists. A total of 168 Irish Adults took part in the research. It was concluded that acceptance of rape myths was higher for in male compared to females.

Carroll M. H., Rosenstein J. E. et al (2016) This research tried to act as an underlying investigation of the rape-supportive belief systems of people drawn to these groups. Members were selected from students entering 2 military service academics (U.S. Military Academy, n = 1,169 out of which 1,003 are men and 166 are women; U.S. Maritime Academy, n = 1,916 out of which 1,551 are men and 365 are women) plus fraternities and sororities at a Midwestern college (n = 393, 188 men, 205 ladies). All members finished the Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale-Short Form. Steady with past discoveries related to gender, men were more accepting of rape myths than women. Despite the fact that across all gatherings the women communicated essentially lower levels of rape myth acceptance than the men, women and men from the United States Military Academy were more firmly adjusted in their convictions than women and men from different samples.

Chapleau K.M., Oswald D.L., (2013) this study applied framework support hypothesis to figure out the capacity of assault legend acknowledgment. Members read an assault situation that controlled the distinction in status between the culprit and casualty, as well as the likely danger to culprit as portrayed by whom the casualty told about the assault. Individuals with higher resistance to equity announced less assault legend acknowledgment when a higher-status culprit pulled off assault than when he was accounted for to police. On the other hand, individuals with lower resistance to correspondence announced more assault legend acknowledgment when the higher-status culprit pulled off assault. Orientation anticipated assault legend acknowledgment with the end goal that when the lower-status culprit was accounted for to the police, ladies revealed more rape myth acceptance while men announced less assault legend acknowledgment.

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Duff S., Tostevin A. (2015) The reason for this paper is to evaluate the effect of gender-stereotypical beliefs and related factors (orientation, level of rape myth acceptance (RMA), and occupation) public attitudes towards rape victims. A total of 185 participated in the research and were arbitrarily allotted to one of three circumstances in light of the attacker's occupation. Participants finished an online survey comprising of a RMA survey, reading a short vignette portraying an assault situation and finished a further poll on their perspectives towards rape victims. The outcomes demonstrate that both occupation and level of RMA significantly contributed to Attitude towards rape victims.

Hanif Qureshi, Teresa C. Kulig et al (2020) the motivation behind this study is to evaluate the degree to which assault fantasies endure in Indian culture and to inspect the wellsprings of those convictions. In light of an overview of 55 things drawn from earlier examination, an example of Indian undergrads (N = 910) showed far and wide acknowledgment of these convictions. Both male and female respondents embraced assault legends, however acknowledgment was higher among guys and a few things were more acknowledged than others. Reactions to a subset of things remembered for past investigations uncovered those understudies in India concurred with assault fantasies more than their U.S. partners.

Hayes R.M., Lorenz K. et al (2013) the current review inspected the relationship among orientation, confidence in a simply world, and rape myth acceptance. It was entranced that men will be bound to stick to assault legends than ladies. It was observed that orientation was essentially connected with rape myth acceptance ($t = -6.81, p < .01$); supporting our speculation.

Hill S., Marshall T.C. (2018) This study was conducted to investigate the connections among rape myth acceptance, attitudes toward women, plus hostile and benevolent sexism. 112 Indian Adults and 117 British Adults took part in the study. Analyses affirmed a social contrast in rape myth acceptance. India being a more conventional culture, tolerates myths to a more prominent degree than the more libertarian culture. India's member's prominent rape myth acceptance was made sense of by their more conventional orientation gender role attitudes and hostile sexism.

Horse shelter R., Powers R.A. (2018) This article offers experiences on college undergrads' viewpoints in two new nation settings — India and the United Kingdom. A sum of 693 undergrads added to the information assortment for this review. Assault legend acknowledgment was genuinely low for the two nations; in any case, undergrads in India were bound to underwrite assault fantasies. This study makes a significant commitment to the surviving writing to address scarcity of information and elevate understandings to assist with emerging nation explicit and proper arrangement, practice, and instruction and mindfulness programs.

Jayalakshmi G, Srinivas B. et al (2016) This study was pointed toward evaluating the mentalities of clinical undergrads towards ladies, their demeanor towards assault casualties, levels of assault legends acknowledgment, and relationship among information and perspectives, zeroing in on orientation, age contrasts and buries factor relations. A cross-sectional review was attempted. Members were 400 clinical undergrads going from age 18 to 37 years, who answered self-revealed Questionnaires of Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (IRMA), Attitudes Towards Women Scale Short Form (AWS-SF), Attitudes toward Rape Victim Scale (ARVS). Male orientation and expanding age were related with more prominent dismissal of assault legends. Female orientation, expanding

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age, wedded status had tolerating mentality towards assault casualties. More youthful age and female orientation are related with more populist demeanor. The current review showed that age and schooling level impact mentality towards assault casualties.

Krolnik Campos M., (2019) the motivation behind the current review was to analyze the effect of level of cooperation and orientation in rape anticipation preparing on assault legend acknowledgment (RMA) and reaction dormancy to a speculative date assault situation among an example of Western understudies. There were no distinctions in sexual orientation on IRMA scores or reaction dormancy.

Mccarthy M.A. (1992) Males and Females have been found to vary on their discernments connected with date assault. Aftereffects of this study showed that females were more probable than men to encounter antagonism toward men in cases of rape. The results indicate that there are significant differences in acceptance of rape myths gender – wise.

Mittal S., Singh T. (2017) the current review was wanted to figure out the common assault legends and mentalities of youthful grown-ups, and to investigate orientation and social way of life as variables impacting the perspectives towards endlessly assault casualties. A sum of 208 members, the two guys and females answered a Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, Attitude towards Victims Scale and Causal Attribution towards Sexual Violence Scale. Results demonstrated that contrasted with male respondents, females hold lesser assault legends however have more bad demeanor towards survivors of assault. Results likewise uncover the huge impacts of social class and orientation on causal attribution for sexual savagery.

Nisar S., Zafar K. et al (2021) The current study examines whether hostile sexism, benevolent sexism impacts acceptance of rape myths. 240 college students (188 Males, 122 Females) from Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan filled out The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale and Ambivalent Sexism Inventory scales were. Results were computed using the Bivariate Correlation indicated that males had higher acceptance of Rape Myths and Ambivalent Sexism.

Okolie D. (2019) this study utilized information from a bigger report to inspect the indicators and outcomes of rape myth acceptance among college students during the spring and fall of 2003. The study had a total of 389 members (172 men, 217 women). The results indicated that Gender is a significant predictor of Acceptance of rape myths along with college date rape attitudes although economic state was not a factor. Overall, it was concluded that males have more rape myth acceptance than females. For males negative attitude towards college date rape translated into acceptance of more rape myths than females. Safri T., (2015) This research endeavored to concentrate on the level of prevalence of rape myths in India in the age bracket of 18 - 35 years during the current social setting. A fifteen question interview was led on 100 members (50 males and 50 females) . It can be stated that not much difference exists between the attitudes of men and women towards various rape myths.

Sivagnanam G, Bairy K L et al (2005) Rape myths among medical services suppliers might affect the care of rape victims negatively. 422 medical undergrads between the ages of 17 and 34 years (male as well as female) studying at two Malaysian Institutes partook in this research. The age scope of clinical understudies was 17 to 34 years. It was concluded from the collected data that female had a significantly higher ($p= 0.0004$) total average score than

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males which indicates that females have a positive /less negative attitude towards rape as well as less acceptance of rape myths.

Sleath, E. and Bull, R. (2015) this paper wants to establish whether or not individuals in police force acknowledge stereotypical rape myths at a more elevated level than individuals from different populaces. A total of 352 participants consisting of 147 psychology undergraduates (18 to 37 years), 82 law students (19 to 32 years) and 123 Police Officers from two U.K. police forces (21 to 54 years) were asked to fill The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale. It was concluded that modern U.K. police officers accept rape myths that deny the occurrence of rape at a higher level than others while it was the Psychology and Law) students who accept rape myths that reject occurrence of rape at a higher level.

Stephens, T., Kamimura, A. et al (2016) The research inspects relationship of nations and gender differences in rape myth acceptance among college undergrads in the United States, Japan, and India. Male and female undergrads (N = 637) in these three nations took part in a self-administered study in the fall of 2012 (the United States, n = 206; Japan, n = 215; and India, n = 216). By and large, female members were more averse to put stock in the rape myth acceptance, disbelief of rape claim and victims are responsible for rape. The study recommended that the people who have less information about local area or association that work on sexual assault prevention end up reporting higher rape myth acceptance.

Zepeda E. (2011) the reason for the examination is to investigate ways to deal with directing a survivor-focused grounds reaction to rape. The examination will zero in on address 'How does a university assess the campus climate and students perceptions of rape victims, rape prevention, and false beliefs about rape?' The overview populace incorporated all male undergrads going to Cal Poly Pomona, 43 students took an interest in the study. 100 percent of the male students disagree to "in most cases when a woman was raped, she deserved it" yet represented casualty accusing convictions that harmonize with the assertions "proactively dressed women are asking for it" and "if she doesn't fight back, it's consensual".

METHODOLOGY

This is a quantitative research study which took place over a period of 12 weeks from 31st January 2022 to 23rd April 2022.

Aim

To study the impact of gender and age on attitude towards rape and the acceptance level of rape myth.

Rationale

Rape is a global issue. Individuals of all ages and gender can become victim to this heinous crime but women are still the leading targets. In patriarchal societies like India women generally tend to live a less privileged life than their male counterparts. Rape myths are ideologies that perpetuate the ideals established in the victim precipitation theory as well as the lifestyle theory. A society with high acceptance level of rape Myths & negative attitude towards rape is a place where victims of rape will be shamed and belittled for speaking against their assaulter. Such prejudice can have effects on the proceeding and punishment in rape cases. This study will help by giving an updated idea about acceptance or rejection of rape myths in our society which in turn will help us identify the type of educational programmes and changes in law will help the society.

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Objective

To find out difference in male – female as well as young adults – adults for rape myths acceptance and attitude towards rape.

Hypothesis

Devised hypothesis are as follows:-

- Rape myths will positively and significantly correlate among themselves
- Rape myths will positively and significantly correlate with attitude towards rape
- Gender will significantly and negatively correlate with rape Myths and attitude towards rape
- Age will significantly and negatively correlate with rape Myths and attitude towards rape
- Men will show a higher rape myth acceptance than Female
- Male will show more negative attitude towards rape than Female
- Adults will show a higher rape myth acceptance than young adults
- Adults will show more negative attitude towards rape than young adults

Research Design

This study is Quantitative in nature. ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ (uIRMA) And the Modified Attitudes toward Rape Scale (ATRS) were utilized for data collection from participants. A correlation approach to the analysis of data was used.

Variables

This study has the following variables:-

Independent Variables: Age and Gender

Dependent Variables: Scores of the ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ and its sub-scales, Scores of the Modified Attitudes toward Rape Scale.

Participants

For this study only binary genders i.e. Female and Male between the age group 18-60 years were taken into consideration. Out of the 150 responses received 147 participants filled the eligibility criteria. The participants consist of 103 females between the age range 18-53 (M=25.59, SD= 6.929) and 44 males between the age range 18-50 (M=26.16, SD=6.703).

Tool Description

The participants were asked to fill out the following two scales

- **‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ (uIRMA):** Developed by McMahan & Farmer in 2011 (McMahan & Farmer, 2011) this 22 item self-report scale is the updated version of the 45 item Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale which was developed in 1999 by Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald. (Payne, Lonsway, & Fitzgerald, 1999). The scoring is based on a 5 point likert scale where 1 stands for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for neither agree nor disagree, 4 for disagree and 5 for strongly disagree. It consists of four subscales (she asked for it, he didn’t mean to, it wasn’t really rape, and she lied) to measure rape myth acceptance. The first 17 items are derived from the 1999 IRMA. The internal consistency is high for this scale ($\alpha = .92$) The questions for the subscale, “she lied,” were added separately. A higher score on the uIRMAS indicates greater rejection of rape Myths.
- **The Modified Attitudes toward Rape Scale (ATRS):** The Attitudes toward Rape Scale (ATRS) is an instrument designed by Barnett and Feild (1977) to examine

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attitudes with regards to rape and it consists of 32 self-report statements. For this study we used the Maureen Ann McCarthy's slightly altered version of the original ATRS. The modified scale has a four-point Likert scale instead of the six-point Likert scale in the original ATRS, the used scale ranges from strongly agree (scored 1) to strongly disagree (scored 4). For this scale a low score is indicative of anti-victim and/or pro-rape sentiments.

Procedure

Informed consent (see appendix A) was asked of all participants before they begin to fill out the form. They were informed about the purpose of the study and the strictly academic use of the data obtained from their responses. After taking their demographic details (Participants had the right to not give their name for the study) they were asked to fill the 5 point Likert uIRMAS based and the 4 point likert scale based attitude towards rape scale. After form collection the data was appropriately scored.

STATISTICS AND RESULT ANALYSIS

The following tables and data within them have been analyzed as below:-

Table 1 - Descriptive statistics

PARAMETER		FREQUENCY				PERCENTAGE
AGE	YOUNG ADULTS(18-25)	103				70.1
		Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	
			22.36	23	23	1.577
	ADULTS (>=26)	44				29.9
		Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.	
			35.73	32	26	7.777
OVERALL	147				100	
	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.		
		25.76	23	23	6.844	
GENDER IDENTITY	FEMALE	103				70.1
	MALE	44				29.9
EDUCATION QUALIFICATION	CLASS 12	17				11.6
	BACHELORS	64				43.5
	MASTERS	64				43.5
	PHD	2				1.4
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	90				61.2
	IN RELATIONSHIP ^A	22				15
	ENGAGED	2				1.4
	MARRIED	33				22.4

The above shown table 1 depicts the statistical data relevant to the data collected

Table 2 – Inter-Correlation among Sub-Scales of ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ and with Attitude towards Rape Scale

SUB SCALE OF IRMAS	SUB SCALE OF IRMAS			ATRS
	He didn’t meant it	It wasn’t rape	She lied	
She asked for it	.649**	.777**	.568**	.412**
He didn’t meant it		.613**	.565**	.602**
It wasn’t rape			.607**	.497**
She lied				.492**
TOTAL				.591**

***significant at 0.01 level*

The above given Table 2 shows an inter-correlation among Sub-Scales of ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ and with Attitude towards Rape Scale. Results indicate a positive and significant correlation among different rape myths. Results also stipulate that rape myths are significantly and positively related to attitudes towards rape.

Table 3 – Correlation of age and gender with ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ and Attitude towards Rape Scale

	AGE	GENDER
IRMAS	-.272***	-.193**
She asked for it	-.295***	-.156*
He didn’t meant it	-.102	-.165**
It wasn’t rape	-.339***	-.101
She lied	-.210**	-.230***
ATRS	-.159*	.044

**significant at 0.10 level*

***significant at 0.05 level*

****significant at 0.01 level*

The above table 3 indicates a significant but negative correlation of age and gender with ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’, its sub-scales and Attitude towards Rape Scale.

This indicates an increase in age decreases the score on ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’, its sub-scales and Attitude towards Rape Scale which is indicative of higher level of acceptance of rape myth as well as a negative attitude towards rape.

The one tailed correlation between age and Attitude towards Rape Scale as well as gender and ‘She asked for it’ indicate that the changes here will be one- sided only.

There’s no significant correlation between Gender and ‘It wasn’t rape’ as well as the attitude towards rape scale. This means any change in gender will not bring about significant changes in these 2 categories.

Table 4 - Effect of gender on rape myths and attitudes towards rape

SCALES		GENDER				ONE SIDED P- VALUE
		Female (N=103)		Male (N=44)		
		(M)	(SD)	(M)	(SD)	
UPDATED ILLINOIS RAPE MYTH ACCEPTANCE	She asked for it	26.06	4.818	24.41	4.853	.030
	He didn't mean it	23.55	5.158	21.70	4.991	.023
	It wasn't rape	22.11	4.226	21.18	4.076	.111
	She lied	19.33	4.506	17.09	4.028	.003**
	Total	91.05	16.154	84.39	14.366	.008*
ATTITUDE TOWARDS RAPE		84.21	8.297	85.00	8.325	.300

**significant at 0.10 level*

***significant at 0.05 level*

The table 4 above shows the effect of gender (Male and Female) on the ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’, its sub-scales and the Attitude towards Rape Scale.

An independent sample t-test was conducted where the ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’, its sub-scales (She asked for it, He didn’t mean it, it wasn’t rape and she lied) and the Attitude towards Rape Scale were taken as test variables and gender (female and male) were taken as the grouping variable.

The means reveal that males have lower score in all 4 sub-scales (She asked for it, He didn’t mean it, it wasn’t rape and she lied) and the total of ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’ which is indicative of males having a higher acceptance of rape myths than females.

Whereas females had a lower mean score on the attitude towards rape scale is indicative of more anti-victim sentiments than males.

There’s no significant difference in ‘She asked for it’ between Males (M=24.41, SD=4.853) and Females (M=26.06, SD= 4.818); $t_{145}=1.897$, $P=.030$.

There’s no significant difference in ‘He didn’t mean it’ between Males (M=21.70, SD=4.991) and Females (M=23.55, SD= 5.158); $t_{145}=2.009$, $P=.023$.

There’s no significant difference in ‘It wasn’t rape’ between Males (M= 21.18, SD= 4.076) and Females (M= 22.11, SD= 4.226); $t_{145}=1.228$, $P=.111$

There’s no significant difference in the ‘Attitude towards Rape Scale’ between Males (M= 85.00, SD= 8.325) and Females (M= 84.21, SD= 8.297); $t_{145}=-.526$, $P=.300$

There’s is a significant difference at 0.10 level in ‘She lied’ between Males (M= 17.09, SD= 4.028) and Females (M= 19.33, SD= 4.506); $t_{145}=2.845$, $P=.003$

There’s is a significant difference at 0.05 level in the ‘total ‘Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale’’ between Males (M= 84.39, SD= 14.366) and Females (M= 91.05, SD= 16.154); $t_{145}=2.479$, $P=.008$

Table 5 - Effect of age on Rape Myths and Attitudes towards Rape

Scales	Age (Mean)				One sided P-Value	
	Young Adults (<26)		Adults (>26)			
	(M)	(SD)	(M)	(SD)		
'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale'	She asked for it	26.53	4.004	23.30	5.916	<.001**
	He didn't mean it	23.23	5.136	22.45	5.241	.202
	It wasn't rape	22.66	3.262	19.89	5.371	.001**
	She lied	19.16	4.439	17.50	4.391	.020
	Total	91.58	14.285	83.14	17.944	.004**
Attitude Towards Rape	84.93	8.226	83.32	8.405	.140	

***significant at 0.01 level*

The table 5 above shows the effect of age (young adults i.e., below 26 years and adults i.e., above 26 years) on the 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale', its sub-scales and the Attitude towards Rape Scale.

An independent sample t-test was conducted where the 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale', its sub-scales (She asked for it, He didn't mean it, it wasn't rape and she lied) and the Attitude towards Rape Scale were taken as test variables and age (with cut point as 26) was taken as the grouping variable.

The means reveal that adults have lower score in all 4 sub-scales (She asked for it, He didn't mean it, it wasn't rape and she lied) and the total of 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale' which is indicative of adults having a higher acceptance of rape myths than young adults.

Adults' mean score for Attitude towards Rape Scale is lower than that of young adults which is indicative of pro-rape sentiments.

There's no significant difference in 'He didn't mean it' between Young Adults (M=23.23, SD=5.136) and Adults (M=22.45, SD= 5.241); $t_{145}=-.837$, $P=.202$

There's no significant difference in 'She lied' between Young Adults (M=19.16, SD=4.439) and Adults (M=17.50, SD= 4.391); $t_{145}=-2.077$ $P=.020$

There's no significant difference in the 'Attitude towards rape scale' between Young Adults (M=84.93, SD=8.226) and Adults (M=83.32, SD= 8.405); $t_{145}=-1.082$ $P=.140$

There's a significant difference at 0.01 level in 'She asked for it' between Young Adults (M= 26.53, SD= 4.004) and Adults (M= 23.30, SD= 5.916); $t_{145}=-3.864$, $P=<.001$

There's a significant difference at 0.01 level in 'It wasn't rape' between Young Adults (M= 22.66, SD= 3.262) and Adults (M= 19.89, SD= 5.371); $t_{145}=-3.864$, $P=.001$

There's a significant difference at 0.01 level in the 'total 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale'' between Young Adults (M= 91.58, SD= 14.285) and Adults (M= 83.14, SD= 17.944); $t_{145}= -2.770$, $P=.004$

DISCUSSION

The motive of this current study was to attempt to understand the impact age and gender have on attitude towards rape & on acceptance of rape myths. It also explores the correlation

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between various rape myths among themselves, with attitude towards rape, with age and with gender.

For the present study it was hypothesized that Rape myths will positively and significantly correlate among them and with attitude towards rape. It was also hypothesized that gender and age will significantly and negatively correlate with rape Myths and attitude with respect to rape. Further it was also hypothesized that male and adults will show higher acceptance of rape myth and a more negative attitude towards rape compared to Female and young adults respectively.

Findings of this study support our hypothesis that Rape Myths will positively and significantly correlate among themselves and with attitude towards rape. This indicates that an individual scoring high on one rape myth is expected to score higher on the other myths & on attitude towards rape. These results are consistent with Mittal S., Singh T. et al 2017 for rape myths. This is indicative of the fact that a person scoring high on rape myths i.e., rejecting rape myths will also hold a more positive attitude towards rape. The study also partially supports our hypothesis about age and gender being negatively correlated with rape myths and attitude towards rape. The sub-scale 'He didn't mean it' didn't show a significant correlation with age where as the sub-scale 'It wasn't rape' failed to correlate with gender. Further the Modified attitude towards rape scale didn't correlate with gender. This means older person will score lower on rape myths (overall and on 2 sub-scales) and attitude towards rape. According to the gender coding of the study (Female=1, Male=2) the negative correlation is indicative of male have a lower score on 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale'.

This study suggest that male have significantly ($\alpha=.05$) ($p=.008$) more acceptance of rape myths than female. Males scored lower than female in all 4 sub-scales of the 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale'. The discovery are consistent with Raines, Lynn, 2006; Boakye K.E. 2009; Hanif Qureshi, Teresa C. Kulig et al , 2020; Barn R., Powers R.A. 2018; Sivagnanam G, Bairy K L et al 2005; Okolie 2019; Carroll, M. H., Rosenstein, J. E. et al 2016; McMahan 2007; McMahan 2010; Bannon et al., 2013; See W. W. (2017); Sleath, E. and Bull, R. 2015; Anderson, Cooper, & Okamura, 1997; Frese, Moya, & Megias, 2004; Paul, L. A., Kehn, At al (2014); Hayes, R. M., Lorenz, K., & et al (2013); Hammond, E. M., Berry, M. A., et al (2011) Diehl, C., Glaser, T., & Bohner, G. (2014); Aronowitz, T., Lambert, C. A., et al (2012); Chapleau, K. M., Oswald, D. L., et al (2007); Suarez & Gadalla, 2010; Payne et al., 1999.

The 'She lied' sub-scale shows a significant ($\alpha = .10$) ($p=.003$) difference indicating than males have a tendency to not believe female victims of rape. This is consistent with results obtained in McMahan's 2007; McMahan's 2010; Cowan G (2000) and Whatley MA, Riggio RE (1993).

Very few studies have been conducted exploring the impact of age (young adults and adults) on acceptance of rape Myths. The current study shows a significant ($\alpha = .01$) ($p=.004$) difference in acceptance of rape myths. Young adults scored higher in all sub scales of the 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale' which indicated that young adults have a lower acceptance of rape myths than adults. There was a Significant ($\alpha = .01$) difference in the 'She asked for it' ($p=<.001$) and 'It wasn't rape' ($p=.001$) subscales.

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Independent sample t-test Results obtained for the Modified attitude towards rape scale are not significant in nature. Although males scored minutely higher than female indicating they have a more positive attitude towards rape which is not on par with the prior significant findings of this research. Further young adults scored higher than Adults which boosts the prior significant findings of the study but is not significant in nature.

The reason for these inconsistent and insignificant results might have roots in the major difference in participant's number for the study. (70.1 % female, 29.9% male, 70.1 % young adults and 29.9% adults).

In Indian culture, female purity and virginity prior to marriage have been extremely emphasized, (Abraham, 1999). Thus, it's possible that a section of men who believe that rapist marrying their victims absolves them of their crimes might hold a positive attitude towards rape because they see it as a means of obtaining unattainable women. The negative connotation associated with rape might have contributed to socially desirable responses on the Modified attitude towards rape scale.

The Modified attitude towards rape scale was developed in 1978 making it's vocabulary a little dated which might have contributed to bad responses leading to insignificant results.

As Modified attitude towards rape scale and 'Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale' are positively and significantly related it should be noted that a bigger and/or equally distributed participants might change to result to significant in the independent t-test.

The hypothesis that Male will show more negative attitude towards rape than Female was disproved but the results were not statistically significantly.

The hypothesis Adults will show more negative attitude towards rape than young adults was proved but the results were not statistically significantly.

The discoveries of the current review have significant hypothetical and reasonable ramifications. The current examination was an endeavor to add to the current writing and develop the exploration with respect to rape myths. A higher acceptance of rape myths is indicative of believing that the victim is lying or was 'asking for it' making it difficult for victims to come forward. These outcomes are additionally significant for those working with the Indian legal framework as it would work on the consciousness of these predispositions among them alongside the people in question. Educational programmes at every level of education and even in work places should be placed in an attempt to counter the negative ramification of high acceptance of rape myths. The information on what pessimistic mentalities individuals hold towards casualties of assault can assist with recognizing ways of warding these inclinations, accordingly assisting with limiting the disparagement.

CONCLUSION

According to the data obtained it can be concluded that males and adults (≥ 26) hold a higher acceptance level of rape myths. India being a patriarchal society these 2 strata wields most of the societal as well as judicial power. Thus, educational programmes, workshops and other avenues must be explored to help individuals understand and correct their false beliefs for the betterment of rape victims and the society in general.

Limitations and further suggestion

The scales used in the study are old as no newer scales to reliably measure these parameters have been developed. The sample size is pretty small and not evenly distributed among male, female, young adults (<26) and adults (>=26). The Study could have been impacted by friendly allure. Any future examinations might utilize more roundabout estimates that could give considerably more exact outcomes. Future examinations may likewise investigate the circumstances where these biased assault related perspectives create.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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