

**EXPOSITION OF THE MENACES OF SEXUAL ASSAULT:
AN AWARENESS APPROACH**

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Abstract

It is a societal bane, the issue of sexual assault against women and children, most specifically. The fact that people are poorly informed about the nature and dimensions of sexual assault compounds to them living with it and its multiplicity. Thus, this article adopted an awareness approach to expose the menace of sexual assault in Nigeria. The research methodology was doctrinal approach, using expository and analytical research design. The main sources of data collection were various legal literatures, both from the physical library and the e-library. It was observed that there are chunks of occurrences of sexual assault mostly against women and children, and these are still on-going because of poor orientation and associated fear to expose what is believed as sacred. Therefore, it was recommended, among others, that feminist jurisprudence, human right scholars and the government should promote exposition by way of effective awareness of the nature and dynamics of sexual assault to scare to potential

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perpetrators and wise-up the helpless victims. Finally, this article was made to be significant to all stakeholders in human rights and feminism, and enriching in literature to scholars for further researches.

Keywords: women, exposition, menace, sexual assault, international law, feminism

1. Introduction

Sexual assault has devastating effects on the victims, who live with the memory for ages. Worst still are the victims who consistently experience the assault in their day to day lives. It is like living in hell while on earth. The appalling fact is that most of them do not know that they have any right that may be enforced, and that is if they can even distinguish the element of the act when it is brought to the beam light.

It is a factual saying that “knowledge is power”. However, it is not gainsaying that all sexual assault victims are without knowledge of what it is, rather the higher the number of informed individuals the easier to stampede and curb the malaise. Thus, the need for more awareness on the nature and menaces of sexual assault cannot be overemphasized.

Sequel to this backdrop, this article aims at carrying out an exposition of the menaces of sexual assault. Its objectives shall be to examine the concept of sexual assault, related forms and concepts of sexual assault,

some recent incidences on sexual assault, and make some recommendations.

2. The Concept of Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is an assault of a sexual nature on another person, or any sexual act committed without consent. Although sexual assaults most frequently are by a man on a woman, it may involve any combination of two or more men, women and children. The term sexual assault is used, in public discourse, as a generic term that is defined as any involuntary sexual act in which a person is threatened, coerced, or forced to engage against their will, or any sexual touching of a person who has not consented. This includes rape (such as forced vaginal, anal or oral penetration), inappropriate touching, forced kissing, child sexual abuse, or the torture of the victim in a sexual manner.

Sexual assault takes many forms including attacks such as rape or attempted rape, as well as any unwanted sexual contact or threats. Usually a sexual assault occurs when someone touches any part of another person's body in a sexual way, even though clothes without that person's consent. Female victims are much more likely to be assaulted by an acquaintance (such as a friend or co-worker), a dating partner, an ex-boyfriend or an intimate partner than by a complete stranger.

2.1 Related Forms and Contexts of Sexual Assault

A wide range of sexually assault can take place in different circumstances and settings. These include, for example:

- (a) Rape by strangers;

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- (b) rape within marriage or dating relationships;
- (c) systematic "war rape" during armed conflict;
- (d) unwanted sexual advances or sexual harassment, including demanding sex in return for favours;
- (e) sexual abuse of mentally or physically disabled people;
- (f) sexual abuse of children;
- (g) forced marriage or cohabitation, including the marriage of children;
- (h) denial of the right to use contraception or to adopt other measures to protect against sexually transmitted diseases;
- (i) forced abortion;
- (j) violent acts against sexual integrity, including genital mutilation and obligatory inspections for virginity;
- (k) Forced prostitution and trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation.¹

3. Some Recent Incidences on Sexual Assault

Case 1²

The Indian government sought yesterday to douse protest against rape by simultaneously clamping down and announcing a slew of measures to assuage demonstrators, including a new help line for woman's complaints and gender appropriate training for the capitals policemen. After two days of violent clashes between demonstrators and police over the gruesome gang rape of a young medical student on December

¹G Buga, 'Sexual Behaviour, Contraceptive Practice and Reproductive Health among School Adolescents in Rural Transkei' (2011) 86 *South African Medical Journal*, 523.

²Foreign Affair, 'Indian Govt. Moves to douse Protest against Rape...Announces Measures to deal with Problem' *The Daily Sun*, December 25, 2012, p.14.

16, protests were muted yesterday as authorities imposed a heavy security presence on the streets and shut down mine Metro stations to curb protesters' movements. A little more than 300 people demonstrated, sitting on street and shouting, "We want justice" and "Hang them." The government and the Delhi Court said a trial in the gang-rape case would begin January 3, a speed almost unheard of in Indian's painfully slow justice system. But even as the authorities moved to quell the unrest, many were caught off-guard by the massive outburst of anger over the weekend, especially in a country where sexual harassment and assault are frequent and routinely blamed on women. The brutal rape shook Indians out of their usual apathy, analysts said, and the response to it was galvanized by a complex confluence of factors, including the rise of a vocal, urban middle class, the use of social media and changing lifestyles. Similar factors triggered the massive anti-corruption movement that swept Indian cities last year.³

Case 2⁴

The names, addresses and photographs of convicted rapists will be posted online by police in India to publicly shame them for their crime. Ratanjit Pratap Narain Singh, the country's junior home minister, said the measure would begin in New Delhi, where a 23-year old woman was assaulted by six men as she travelled on a bus in the city. "We are very serious about dealing with the problem and taking all possible action as early as possible. The victim of the gang rape in New Deldi

³*Ibid.*

⁴Foreign Affair, 'Indian to post Names, Addresses Photographs of Rapists Online' *The Daily Sun*, December 28, 2012, p.14.

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on December 16 has been flown to Singapore for treatment for severe internal injuries. Police said six people had been arrested on suspicion of involvement in the attack.⁵

Case 3⁶

A Bayelsa State High Court has sentenced a 35-year-old man, Gift Meshack to three years imprisonment for raping a six-year-old girl. Meshack was said to have committed the offence in July 2010, when he forcefully had sex with the minor at Etegwé-Epie. Justice Nayai in her judgment said any attempt to have sex with a female counterpart without her consent is rape and that in this case, the victim is just six years old. While sentencing Meshack to the jail term, she said the accused had contravened the law and that it would be a deterrent to others. The prosecuting counsel, Mr. Boy Endoni had in his submission told the court that the accused had in July 2010 in Etegwé-Epie area of the Bayelsa State capital had unlawful and indecent carnal knowledge of the six-year-old (names withheld). According to him, the accused, while the victim was in his house held his victim, fondled, kissed and dragged her to his bed. He said the accused forcefully raped the victim behind closed door and committed an offence punishable under section 146(2) of the Criminal Code Laws of Bayelsa State. Endoni explained that the victim's complaint of pains in her private parts attracted the attention of the mother and questions were asked, "it was at this point that the victim told the mother what happened," the prosecuting counsel said. Meanwhile, a group, Anti-

⁵*Ibid.*

⁶F Folaranmi, Man, 35, 'Jailed for Raping 6-yr old girl' *The Daily Sun*, January 21, 2013, p.13.

Corruption Volunteers Corps had petitioned the Bayelsa State Government over the gang rape of one 118-year-old girl, Miss Imomoemi by some unknown youths.⁷

The coordinator of the group, Princess Elizabeth Egbe in the petition to Governor Seriake Dickson and the Attorney General of the state government should direct the Bayelsa Police Command to investigate the incident. Egbe explained that the victim was tortured and raped to death at a shop, where she was working in July 2012 and all efforts by the family to ensure justice is done was being frustrated by the police.⁸

Case 4⁹

On March 2012, the entire nation of Nigeria convulsed to an abrupt attention to the news captioned “village where widows are raped” I defecated as I was being raped, suspects regain freedom few hours after arrest. They threatened to kill us if we shout. Opi in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State used to be synonymous with sweetness because it is the home of honey, but now the news emanating from the community stings like a bee. In fact, it is revolting, repulsive, repugnant, reprehensible and heart-rending. It could have come straight out of the pit of hell. Women once more were at the receiving end of both physical and sexual assaults including rape and violations on this fateful 8th day of March, 2012. It is the story of wickedness not meant for any sane society. In the community, teenage boys derive pleasure in gang-raping widows, old enough to be their

⁷*Ibid.*

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹S Ani, ‘Village where Widows are Raped’, The Sunday Sun, July 18, 2012, p.8.

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grand-mother and great-grand mother. In October, 2011, the news broke that Ogbozall and Ibeku communities in Opi had become the theatres of the absurd, where young men between 17 and 25 years raped 60 to 80 year-old women. The rough necks terrorize the community, stealing and maiming. Worse still, those arrested were unceremoniously released to continue their dastardly acts. While many saw it as bizarre, sacrilegious and pathetic, some others did not believe it. Such people dismissed it as a fairy tale. Indeed, what is the attraction in old wrinkled women for young boys to violate them? The victims poured out their hearts as they gave graphic details of their pains and humiliation in the hand of depraved youth. One of them said that she was so mercilessly raped that she defecated on herself.¹⁰

According to Mrs. Monica Onah, a 60-year-old widow and mother of four narrated her ordeal. About 2am that fateful day, I heard a knock on my door. I was deeply asleep but I managed to stand up. As I opened the door, a young man descended on me and raped me. I shouted and cried for assistance before neighbours came and arrested him. He was handed over to the police. All the suspects that were arrested and taken to the police force headquarters have been released and they are moving freely. What an abomination for our society to handle such an offence in such a mild way. She added that since the incident, she has been having psychological problems sometimes, her heart skips in fear. Another widow, Madam Rosaline Ugwunwoti was also a victim, blessed with a daughter and seven grandchildren. She is in her 70s and she narrates her own ordeal. It rained heavily that night but the rapist came when it was drizzling. He knocked and pulled down the door and

¹⁰*Ibid.*

I saw a young man standing naked by my bedside, wielding a knife and touch light. He jumped on me on my bed and held my throat as if he wanted to strangle me to death. He warned me to keep calm or he would kill me. I cannot hear properly as a result of the beating I received from my attacker before the actual rape. He thoroughly beat me before he attempted strangling me, I surrendered and he pounded me to unconsciousness. Even after the hospital treatment, I still couldn't sit down properly.¹¹

For another widow victim, Mrs. Florence Ugwu, her assailant mercilessly violated her that she defecated on herself. As she was pounding me, I fainted and he ran away. Mrs. Obioma Ishiala is yet another widow that was violated when I woke up about 4am, I discovered that my lantern was dim and I was wondering whether there was no kerosene on it immediately, I saw a man and I called him by his name, he grabbed me on the neck and held it so tight. He hit my head against the wall and violently over powered me and had his way. Police men came from Nsukka and arrested him but he denied ever doing such a thing. At the police station, they didn't do anything to my attacker because his sister's husband is a policeman and he has spoken to his colleagues about the case. Madam Gladys Ezema's experience was not different except that the rapist also tried to rape her daughter. When she couldn't get her, he came to me as I was outside shouting for help and grabbed me by the neck. I couldn't talk and could hardly breathe. It was just like putting a noose round my neck while some body tightens it. That was the day I knew that strangulation was the easiest way to kill anybody. It was terrible. At that point, I fell down,

¹¹*Ibid.*

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he just mounted me and had his way and disappeared. Mrs. Mary Omeke, a widows and mother of four was also a victim. She was raped until she fainted. Just on the same vein Mrs. Christian Nnaji is a mother of five and a widow. The rapist mounted me, held my hands down and brought out a knife, warning that he would injure me if I didn't keep quiet. When he finished the first phase, he started smoking his marijuana, as he was enjoying his marijuana I managed to escape.¹²

Madam Janet Abonyi could have died as she bled and fainted while being raped. I sustained injuries even on my hand and mouth where he hit me with stick. I was alone that night. He manhandled me before the actual deed. After he had raped me, he asked for money even as I was groaning in pains. Since the incident, I have been having occasional heart palpitations and sometimes my head seriously aches. Mrs. Angelin Ugwuanyi's case is more pathetic because her husband is still alive. The mother of three narrates her ordeal. The man came from the back of the house around 1am. My husband was not at home that day. My two daughters are married and my only son lives at Onitsha with his wife and children. When the man came, he started flashing his torchlight everywhere, the whole of the compound became illuminated and I woke up. Suddenly he kicked the door and it opened before he descended on me. He asked me to keep quiet because I was shouting. Nobody came throughout the night because before he attacked me, he went to all my neighbours' houses and padlocked their doors. He beat me mercilessly before he raped me. I was taken to the hospital the following day but since the incident, I have been having constant headache. Sometimes, I would feel dizzy. Juliana Agbougwu was not

¹²*Ibid.*

raped but her daughter was. As they were coming home at night, Chijioke Agbonweze popularly called Gbogboyaya suddenly appeared and attacked them. He even stole my daughter's phone in the process. My daughter said when he caught her he dangled a sharp knife at her, asked her if she knew him and she said no, but in actual sense, she knows him very well. With the knife, he threatened my daughter to submission and raped her. She is just about 20 years old.¹³

The ridiculous presentations of these sexual abuses by our print and electronic media exacerbated the issue at hand. Still on the Sunday sun there is a heart breaking part that was captioned "Perpetrators are untouchable" investigation revealed that most women living in isolated areas of Ogbozalla village don't sleep at night any longer. That includes those raped and those yet to become victims. It was alleged that the boys were set free from police net by the so-called powerful men in the community. But the questions begging for answers are: Why would anybody protect those who commit this grave crime against humanity from facing the wrath of law? Who went to the police headquarters in Enugu to bail those detained? Why are the culprits being treated with kid glove? Why are they still terrorizing the community and nobody is saying anything?¹⁴

Case 5¹⁵

The Sun Newspaper narrates in its memories of a date rape attack that took place in July 1991. A notorious boxer Mike Tyson was accused of

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴*Ibid.*

¹⁵P Nwosu, 'Mike Tyson rapes Miss Black America' *The Daily Sun*, July 19, 2012, p.21.

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raping Desiree Washington, a contestant in the Miss Black American pageant, in an Indian polis, Indiana hotel room. At a time when the issue of date rape was entering the country's consciousness, Tyson's attack became a national sensation. Tyson, who had lost his heavyweight title in February 1990 to James Buster Douglas, was preparing for a chance to win it back, later in the year. However, Tyson's behaviour became increasingly erratic. His marriage to Robin Givens had fallen apart amid accusation of domestic violence. Furthermore, there were multiple reports that Tyson was known for unwanted, crude, and sometimes violent advances toward women wherever he went. Tyson attended the Miss Black America Pageant in Indianapolis to lend his celebrity to the event. At a photo opportunity with the contestants, Tyson flirted with the women by grabbing and hugging them. Later several women would testify that Tyson had made disgusting propositions to them. Still the boxer impressed Desiree Washington a college student from Rhode Island. After attending a Jonny Gill Concert that night, Tyson found himself without a date. He called Washington and convinced her to join him so that they could talk and get to know one another. At his hostel, Washington agreed to accompany Tyson to his room so that he could pick up something he claimed to have left in his room. Surprising her as she came out of the bathroom, Tyson pinned Washington to the bed, telling her to relax as he forced himself upon her.¹⁶

¹⁶*Ibid.*

Case 6¹⁷

The Sunday Sun reported another rape attack on the women of Opi Community in Nsukka Local Government Area of Enugu State after the mysterious attack, horror and ravishment of widows of Opi four months ago which was reported on 18th day of March, 2012. It was captioned “Enugu Widows Rape Update. Rapists dare Sullivan, Ekweremadu, Hoodlums rape victims again, women finger sponsors within, decry government’s silence. The hoodlums say, when rape season is over, they’ll go into kidnapping”. Four months ago, Opi community and university town of Nsukka raped helpless widows old enough to be their grandmothers and great-grand mothers. The abominable act recorded particularly in Ogbozalla and Ibeku area of the community, was exclusively reported by Sunday Sun in its edition of March 18 this year and attracted condemnation from across the society.¹⁸

However, apparently neither the federal nor the Enugu State Government did enough to fish out the perpetrators of the heinous crime and ensure that they face the wrath of law. Thus emboldened by the official in action, the rapist went back and raped their victims all over again. As if daring Governor Sullivan Chime, the Deputy Senate President, Ike Ekweremadu, as well as Senator Ayogu Eze and other political heavy weights from the state. Also begging for explanation is the seeming icy silence on the part of the authorities. Sunday Sun reveals that before the second incident, the victims received gifts that they were told came from the Governor Sullivan. The items included

¹⁷S Ani ‘Rapist dare Enugu Governor’ *The Sunday Sun* August 5, 2012, p .8.

¹⁸*Ibid.*

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foams, bed sheets, bags of rice, salt, seasonings, pots, plates and clothing's; each of the raped widows was also given a carton of milk, a carton of detergent and N5000. But surprisingly, exactly two weeks after the items were distributed to them, the women were roundly raped again. Now the women want to know where the gift items came from. They said they were curious because there are rumours that the gifts did not come from the Governor. They are also worried that all the raped women in Ogbozalla got the gift, a disturbing indication that somebody somewhere might be financing those engaged in the evil act.¹⁹

Moreover, how come the yet-to-be-identified donor knew all the raped women? Yet another source of the women's worry is the fact that it was a fellow woman who told the victims to remain indoors, hinting that the governor would send people to them with some gift items. They accused Ogbozalla leaders and elders of shielding the bad boys from facing prosecution adding that their sorrow started when some of the suspected rapists who were picked up and detained at the state police Headquarters, Enugu, regained their freedom in November, 2011. For seven months that these boys were in detention at the police Criminal Investigation Department, Enugu, there was absolute peace in the community. But since November, last year, when some powerful men in our community bailed them out of detention, we have not known peace in this community. Apart from raping old women, they also steal whatever they could lay their hands on, ranging from fowls,

¹⁹*Ibid.*

goats, clothes, and jewelleryes to money. They equally extort money by force in broad daylight from people.²⁰

Abonyi Janet narrating her ordeal said they came back again to rape her. This time it was more terrible and devastating because the wall of her house fell on her head. People only came when the hoodlums had run away. They used concrete blocks to hit her on the head. They wanted to kill her; she called on God to save her life. Her son who lives in Abuja came home and took her back to the city for treatment and to avoid future occurrence since the community can no longer protect them but the son died in his sleep. The shame and trauma killed him. He just couldn't come to terms with the cruelty being visited on his mother. What a pathetic story. Iruka Ugwuanyi is another victim who was visited twice by the evil boys. Her case was worse because her husband is still alive and she lives at OpiAgu while she lives in the family home and she was recuperating from an undisclosed sickness when they struck. It was the same person who came the first time that came this second time and she said she knows him very well. His name is Nnanna from Ibeku Opi. I was with a woman who has four children when the rapist came in. he didn't touch the other woman. It was even the woman who alerted me that she noticed flashes of torchlight. It was as if he cast a spell on the woman because she did not render any help to me. She started shouting and the rapist brought out a knife and gave her a deep cut on the head.²¹

²⁰*Ibid.*

²¹*Ibid.*

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The story of another widow Nnadi Christiana was very pathetic. In a bid to avoid a repeat of the ugly experience, she relocated from her husband's compound after the first attack because the place was lonely. But the bad boys traced the old woman to her new abode to defile her the second time. After the first incident, my husband's relations moved her to a place in her neighbourhood to ensure her protection. So I have been living with them since last year, until two weeks ago, when the son-of –the-devil visited again in but this time they were three men who swooped on her and threw her on the floor. I shouted and shouted but before help came, one of them had raped and they all fled. If not for the timely intervention of neighbours, three of them could have raped her and that would have been disastrous.²²

Esther Ezeama, an old widow had a different story. She was raped once and the second time they came around 5am. It was only one person that attacked and raped her. The rapist pulled her door down with a digger before he came into her house. She had pain in her legs and that kept her awake all through the night so it was just that early morning when I wanted to sleep that I noticed that somebody was pulling my wrapper. I thought it was the small boy lying beside me whom I have scolded for lying carelessly. I didn't know it was the rapist who had come into my room and was already getting to work. Before I knew what was happening, his flash light was on my face and he ordered her to shut up and immediately went for her throat. His hands remained there until he finished defiling her. Nobody came because he didn't allow her to

²²*Ibid.*

shout and even when I asked the small boy with me to go and inform our neighbour, he gave the small boy a very hot slap.²³

The Ogbozalla women lamented that they condemned the arrogance with which the suspects boast that when the season of rape is over, they would go into kidnapping. The embattled women also lamented their present plight. The rapists even wear masks to haunt them. The boys have the support of some powerful men in our community. If you ask any of the leaders in Ogbozalla about what is happening, he would deny that there are rapists in our community. The women lamented that they need government's urgent assistance. Our leaders are working with the criminals. The criminals provide their security. They snatch motorcycles in broad daylight. For peace to return, they pleaded that their town union president and the secretary should step down and also that the Neighbourhood watch should be dissolved.²⁴

Case 7²⁵

Another humiliating, devastating rape attack on the women is narrated by Alhaji Oyeyinka who hails from Abeokuta in Ogun State and the story was corroborated by his wife Mrs Rachael Oyeyinka. They unfortunately met the boko haram sect when they travelled to Kaduna and were abducted with nearly fifty people and kept in boko haram hell for three months. The women were raped by more than five men every day each. It was terrible, every day they will come and carry all the women out to be raped and those who did not come back were

²³*Ibid.*

²⁴*Ibid.*

²⁵C Igbokwe, 'Back from Boko Haram Hell' *The Saturday Sun*, August, 23, 2014 p .12.

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slaughtered because they resisted. It was terrible knowing that every day different kind of men will forcefully have sex with the women. He also said that his wife was raped every day by different men for three months and he could not do anything about it. Corroborating the above rape attack, reports in the recent months about the ordeals of women captives in Boko Haram's den reeked out agonies, pains and trauma of many of the women who were sexually assaulted and exploited by members of the insurgents, Mrs Rachael Oyeyinka who was taken captive for three months by the Boko Haram alongside her husband said the insurgents took turns to rape the women in their captivity. She said the women were gang raped and that some of the women that got pregnant were given concoction to flush it out. Many of the women who resisted were killed. The one that is very pretty will be reserved for their leader but as soon as he gets a replacement, he will push her out for general use.²⁶

Case8²⁷

A commercial motorcyclist (Okada) rider has been arrested for allegedly killing a female student and making love to her corpse. The student of school of Health Technology, Gusau, Zamfara State, Idowu Aliyu, was killed in a most horrid way in her village, Adogo Egayi near Lokoja. He was said to be a suspected cannibal. She was going back to school after spending her holidays when she met her untimely death. A police source who does not want his name in print, told *Crime watch* that on the faithful day, 22years old Idowu, boarded an *Okada* near the

²⁶O Olafioye, 'Like ISIS Like Boko Haram' *The Sunday Sun*, August 30,, 2014 p .14.

²⁷E Adeyemi, 'Callous! Cannibal sleeps with Student after killing her, Takes Victim on Okada to the Bush' *The Daily Sun*, August 16, 2012, p.36.

motor-park. The Okada rider sped off and diverted towards the bush part. He tried to rape her in the bush and the lady refused him. The suspect who was later identified as Jimoh Obubuh Salau, succeeded in strangulating Aliyu to death. He said after killing the young lady, the Okada rider wickedly started sleeping with her. While Salau was committing the gory act, a Fulani herdsman who was on top of a tree saw the bizarre act and raised an alarm which attracted his colleagues and they overpowered Salau and handed him over to the police. The police officer revealed that during interrogation, Salau allegedly confessed that he was contracted by a powerful politician (names withheld) in Okene to kill the lady and bring her body parts for ritual purposes.

The police officer further said that the police have launched a manhunt for the politician now at large. The politician is one of those jostling for a big position in the state. The suspect had told us that the politician asked him to bring the private part, breast and other parts.” He said during investigation, it was discovered that the suspect was a dismissed soldier and that he had been alleged to have been involved in several killings. The commissioner of police, Mohammed Katsina who confirmed the incident, said it was later discovered that Salau sometimes in 2003 killed his Ghanaian wife and her two kids. CP Katsina said the man is a cannibal as he ate some body parts of his deceased family members while some were sold to some suspected ritualists. He further revealed that after killing his family members, the dismissed soldier was charged to court and sentenced to death by

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hanging but that he later regained freedom. He said the suspect would soon be arraigned.²⁸

Case 9²⁹

A Turkish woman is awaiting trial after beheading a man who she said raped her repeatedly for months and is the father of her unborn child. Her lawyer said the woman killed the man to protect her honor. Nevin Yildirim, a 26-year-old-mother of two, lives in a small village in southwestern Turkey. She said the man, Nurettin Gider, began the attacks a few days after her husband left in January for a seasonal job in another town, according to a source close to the case. Yildirim said Gider threatened her with a gun and said he would kill her children, ages 2 and 6, if she made any noise, according to the source. That was the first of repeated rapes over the next eight months. At one point, Yildirim said, Gider sneaked into her house while she was asleep and took pictures of her. One of the pictures shows her pregnant body. Gider threatened to publish the pictures if she didn't obey him. In small villages like hers, honor is held above all else, and women carry the burden of honor for their families. Pictures like those would have been devastating for Yildirim and her family and could have posed a danger.

On August 28, at least five months pregnant by a man who she had had enough. Gider was climbing up the back wall of her house. "I knew he was going to rape me again," she said at her preliminary hearing August 30. She said she grabbed her father-in-law's rifle that was

²⁸*Ibid.*

²⁹Foreign Affairs, 'Woman beheads Rapist' *The Daily Sun*, September 14, 2012, p.14.

hanging on the wall and shot him. He tried drawing his gun and she fired again. I chased him and he fell on the ground. He started cussing and I shot his sexual organ. He became quiet. I knew he was dead. I then cut his head off.” Witnesses described Yildirim walking into the village square, carrying the man’s head by his hair, blood dripping on the ground. Yildirim told the men sitting in the coffee house on the square don’t talk behind my back, don’t play with my honor. Here is the head of the man who played with my Honor. The witnesses said she threw Gilder’s head to the ground. Witnesses called authorities and Yildirim was arrested. Gider was 35 and the father of two children, 15 and 9. He was married to an aunt of Yildirim’s husband. Yildirim told her legal representative she regrets what happened and that she thought of reporting him to the military police and to the district attorney, but this was going to mark me as a scorned woman. Since I was going to get a bad reputation I decided to clean my honor and acted on killing him. I thought of suicide a lot but couldn’t do it. Yildirim said she was worried on how people would judge her children because of what happened. She said now no one can call my children bastards, I cleaned my honor. Everyone will call them the children of the woman who cleaned her honor.”³⁰

Case 10³¹

According to Gbolagunte,³² another rape incident took place in Osogbo and it was captioned “Man, 56, arrested over rape of school pupil” A 56 year old man simply identified as Moses, has been arrested by

³⁰*Ibid.*

³¹B Gbolagunte, ‘Man 56, arrested over Rape of School Pupil’, *The Daily Sun*, July 17, 2012, P.13.

³²*Ibid.*

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officials of the Osun State Command of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) over alleged rape of 11 year-old primary school pupil in Osogbo the state capital. Moses, who lived in Osogbo was also alleged to have raped other young girls in the area. In his confession, Moses said it was 11-year-old girl that actually raped him in his living room when she came to visit him after school hours. The NSCDC boss informed that the suspect might soon appear in court, adding that the offence committed was a criminal one.³³

Case 11³⁴

A police corporal with the Imo State command is currently in trouble for raping a nursing mother, who had gone to the station to seek refuge. *Saturday Sun* gathered that Mrs. Maureen Anyalebechi, from Umukabi Autonomous Community, in Ngor Okpala Local Government Area, Imo State, had, on 10th day of November, 2012, gone to Umuguna Police Station to pass the night, when she could not locate the residence of her brother in the World Bank area of Owerri West Local Government Area. Owing to the fact that it was late in the night, Mrs. Anyalebechi went to the police station with her seven-month-old baby, where she met Corporal Chigozie Odenigbo and another female police officer. The victim told *Saturday sun*: “when I discovered that it was late to continue searching for my brother’s place, I decided to go to the nearby police station, to beg them to accommodate me for the night because it was already late. As I went in there with my baby, I met two police officers, a lady and a young man and after explaining my

³³*Ibid.*

³⁴G Onyejiuwa, ‘Policeman rapes Woman in Presence of Crying Baby’, *The Saturday Sun*, November 24, 2012, p.7.

situation, the male officer asked me to follow him to one officers house, where he claimed mosquitoes would not bit my baby and I. “I thanked him and followed him innocently, but to my greatest surprise, the policeman pounced on me. He bit me from behind and before I knew what was happening, he snatched my baby from me and flung him away.³⁵

He was holding me by the throat to stop me from shouting for help and started raping me.” She revealed that after the police officer had satisfied himself, he helped her to her feet and also picked up her baby and took her back to the police station. Mrs. Anyalebechi further narrated that when they came back to the police station, the female officer was alarmed when she saw that her clothes were torn and asked Corporal Odenigbo to explain what happened to her. The corporal, she said, denied ever doing anything to her. Mrs. Anyalebechi said that she had to report the matter to the Divisional police officer, when he arrived from duty in the morning, who promptly ordered the arrest of and detention of Corporal Odenigbo. She told *Saturday sun* that to her surprise, the policeman was released. Sensing that the police wanted to cover up the crime, she was taken to the lawyer, who took her to the Imo State Police Commissioner, Bolanta Adisa, last Friday, who summoned the DPO of Umuguma police station. *Saturday Sun* learnt that upon the confirmation of the rape assault on the nursing mother, CP Bolanta ordered the arrest of Corporal Odenigbo, promising that thorough investigation would be carried out. He said that he will be prosecuted and dismissed from the Force. Meanwhile, the police spokesman, Mr. Vitalis Onugu, a Deputy Superintendent of police

³⁵*Ibid.*

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(DSP), AND THAT Corporal Odenigbo will face administrative trial. *Saturday Sun* also learnt that Corporal Odenigbo was alleged to have sexually assaulted a female officer some months back.³⁶

4. Conclusion and Recommendations

From the foregoing, there are obviously chunks of occurrences of sexual assault mostly against women and children, and these are still on-going because of poor orientation and associated fear to expose what is believed as sacred. Basically, the media and civil society organizations have played less efficacious role to expose this social malaise. Thus, awareness gap propels scholarship approach to intensify awareness less uncovered by the media. In other words, an expository research is equally a pre-requisite for awareness and condemnation of the menace of sexual violence against women. Succinctly put, these were the fulcrums of this article.

Therefore, it is recommended that feminist jurisprudence, human right scholars, civil society organizations, and the government should promote pragmatic exposition by way of effective awareness of the nature and dynamics of sexual assault to scare to potential perpetrators and wise-up the helpless victims. Finally, this article is made significant to all stakeholders in human rights and feminism. It is as well enriching in literature to scholars for further studies.

³⁶*Ibid.*