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RAPE: EFFECTS ON VICTIMS IN THE SOCIETY

The recent problems that have been ravaging individuals in our society is sexual assault commonly known as rape, Rape is a form of sexual assault usually involving sexual intercourse or other forms of penetration carried out against a person without that persons consent. This act may be carried out by physical force, coercion, abuse of authority or against a person who is incapable of giving valid consent, such as one who is unconscious, incapacitated, has an intellectual disability or is below the legal age of consent.

However, In these recent times the incidence of rape has increased drastically among females in our country Nigeria and it has been a major concern in our society. Historically, women have always been subjected and oppressed by men in most cultures in Nigeria, those who survived the sexual assault have common response to rape and sexual violence these effects can take many last many years or take many years to show themselves some of the effects have damaged the victims emotionally, physically, psychologically and mentally.

Moreover, victims of rapes are prone to face painful aftereffects in different ways, due to the violence and the force ensued during the rape the physical effects are bruising, bleeding, and soreness in the sexual organs or the assaulted part, difficulty in walking, broken bones and if not taken to the hospital immediately may cause further damage. In some cases, the victims gets infected with (STDs) Sexually transmitted disease, these are diseases which can be transmitted to others through sexual intercourse, examples of stds are gonorrhoea, syphilis, hiv/aids etc. this is a risk to the lives of the victims as it causes death, and pregnancy, pregnancy is very common among rape victims and it has destroyed the lives of many

especially young girls who are still students and because of this most of them have to dropout from schools, they are also shunned by the society and their family members and they also have to be mothers at a very young age, and early pregnancy among underage girls and abortion can damage the wombs and also take their lives .

Another way rape can affect the lives of victims is mentally, the mental effects on victims may include post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) including flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety, and uncontrollable thoughts, depression including prolonged sadness, feelings of hopelessness, unexplained crying, weight loss or gain, loss of energy or interest in activities previously enjoyed this is expected when the victims come to terms with the fact that they have been raped and they start remembering their experiences, suicidal thoughts or attempts , dissociation including not being able to focus on work or schoolwork, as well as not feeling present in everyday life.

Furthermore, the victims go through painful emotions and experiences as a way to cope after being sexually assaulted, the emotional effects on victims include changes in trusting others, anger, shock or emotional numbness in this case victims initially feels calm and shut off from everything and everyone around including their family and friends , loss of control in behavior can act as a coping mechanism for many victims as they start acting abnormally in some cases victims most likely start acting like children , shame ,fear, helplessness, fear, self-blame or guilt in this case the victims may feel that they could have done something to prevent the rape or at times when they know the rapist they feel that they provoked the rape or it is their fault that they were raped.

Lastly, rape affects its victims psychologically, The psychological effects of rape include muscle tension, shortness of breath, involuntary shaking, changes in eating and sleeping patterns and sexual dysfunction, sexual dysfunction majorly in female victims is the persistently reduced interest in sexual activity and whenever they try to engage in sexual activities might result in them having a breakdown or panic attack since they now see sex as a cause of great pain and shame.

In conclusion, Rape is a menace that need to be curbed from the society and in order that no individuals ever suffer that fate the government should enforce punishment for rapists and increase the security in the country so as to ensure the safety of all citizens, this would reduce the rate of unwanted pregnancies, death and school dropouts in the society.