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Knowledge About Rape Among Students in a Public University in Ghana

Samuel Osei Attakora

Head of Law Department, Faculty of Law, Governance and International Relations, Kings University College (KUC), Accra GP 18835, Ghana.

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***Corresponding author:** Samuel Osei Attakora, Head of Law Department, Faculty of Law, Governance and International Relations, Kings University College (KUC), Accra GP 18835, Ghana.

Abstract

The study assessed the level of university students' knowledge about rape in Ghana. Knowledge about rape was measured by using ten multiple-choice questions based on the Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29). The questions were vetted and approved by criminal law lecturers at Kings University College. Each question had two responses and a third response, which provided the student the opportunity to respond "I don't know". Of major interest in this study was how many students would select the "I don't know" response to each question. This approach provided the opportunity to students to admit not knowing the answer. "I don't know" responses were counted as incorrect answers for test scoring purposes. Each question was valued at 10 points, resulting in a total of 100 possible points for all 10 (ten) questions. On the whole, the level of knowledge the respondents had about rape was quite low. There were no differences in the knowledge about rape among the respondents, either based on gender or age. Academics stand to benefit from the outcomes of this research with respect to creating the academic atmosphere for further and more so increasing awareness of this phenomenon in Ghana. Also, managers of the University can benefit from this study to influence the approach used in sensitizing students on matters evolving around rape and its attendant legal consequences. Finally, policymakers can base on this study to draw targeted plans towards the education and sensitization of matters related to rape in public universities.

Keywords

Rape; Criminal Act 1960 (Act 29); Consent; Marital Rape; Ghana

1. Introduction

Rape has gained notoriety as one of the gravest problems in societies all over the world, particularly on university campuses (Oshiname, Ogunwale, & Ajuwon, 2013). The psychological, physical, and social disorders that victims of rape endure highlight the need for the promotion of preventive mechanisms to deal with the issue. Morley (2011) underscores the fact that any form of sexual harassment in an educational institution is an attack on the mind and body, which has the potential of affecting not just the academic performance of students but also their very lives.

In Ghana, rape is legally criminalised. According to section 97 of Act 29 (Criminal Offenses Act, 1960), "Whoever commits rape shall be guilty of first-degree felony and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years". In the English version of the Sexual Offences Act 1956, also referred to as SOA 1956, as substituted by the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, s. 142, it is an offence for a man to rape a woman or another man, for which the maximum punishment is life imprisonment. In spite of it

being such a serious offence, there are newspaper reports of its occurrence on a daily basis (Aryee, 2013; Quarshie et al., 2017). Quarshie, Davies, Badasu, Tagoe, Otoo, and Afriyie (2018, p.128) assert that "The Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service recorded a total of 3,937, 14,658 and 238 cases of rape, defilement and incest, respectively, between 1999 and 2014".

The dire consequences of rape demand that policymakers and scholars devote much attention to it. However, there has been scanty scholarly work in relation to the depth of knowledge the youth have about the subject matter. Most studies, so far, have concentrated on; the attitudes toward rape and rape victims (Boakye, 2009); how rape offenders view their crimes (Prah & Ayerakwa, 2001); rape myth acceptance among students (Rominski, Darteh, & Munro-Kramer, 2017); and the willingness to report sexual offences to police (Boateng & Lee, 2014). The few studies that have investigated the level of knowledge people have about rape focused on the insight people have about the causes, perpetrators, and effects of rape on victims (Abeid et al., 2015; Hamilton & Yee, 1990; Aryee, 2013), but not about the understanding of the concept from a legal perspective. These studies were therefore limited in terms of the scope of the subject matter. Thus, it is imperative to understand the level of knowledge university students have about the concept of rape in Ghana. This is important because what can usually be classified as a crime and its attendant consequences are usually jurisdiction-specific. Again, based on the theory of planned behavior, it is reasoned that students in institutions of higher learning become vulnerable to committing this crime because of their limited knowledge about rape (Ajzen, 1988).

Consequently, the objective of this study is to examine university students' knowledge of rape based on the provisions of the Criminal Offenses Act of Ghana, 1960 (Act 23). Specifically, the study will seek to address three objectives, which are as follows: Firstly, to assess the overall level of knowledge students have about rape; secondly, to determine whether gender influences the level of knowledge the respondents have about rape; and finally, to investigate whether age explains the level of knowledge differences among the respondents. A study of this nature has the potential to contribute to both literature and practice. With respect to literature, even though some studies (Abeid et al., 2015; Hamilton & Yee, 1990; Aryee, 2013) have looked at the general knowledge people have about rape, a study on how the youth appreciate the legal definition and consequences of rape is necessary to aid our understanding of the magnitude of the distortion created by rape myths. With respect to practice, this study has the tendency to inform feminists and educationists of the possible level of knowledge university students have about rape and by so doing assist them in crafting policies and strategies to minimize the incidence of the crime. Educational campaigns on the prevention of crime could be better targeted at areas where most students have limited knowledge. In addition to the above, feminists would be better positioned to empower female students to recognize and take on perpetrators of the crime.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the theoretical (i.e., the planned behaviour theory, feminist theory, and sociological theory) and the empirical literature (i.e., gender and rape nexus, and age and rape nexus) upon which this study is anchored.

2.1 Theoretical Review

This study is anchored on the planned behavior, feminist, and sociological theories. The main thrust of the theory of planned behavior is that the beliefs people hold are shaped by the information available to them. Also, their beliefs about the consequences of their behavior determine whether or not they will engage in that behavior (Ajzen, 1988). However, these beliefs "may rely on invalid or selective information; they may be irrational, reflecting unconscious biases, paranoid tendencies, wishful thinking, or other self-serving motives; and they may fail to correspond to reality in many other ways" (Ajzen, 2015, p. 133). Thus, the theory is helpful in explaining the antecedents of rape. The study is premised on the assumption that the knowledge (or information) university students have about rape is worth investigating because this could influence their decision as to whether or not to engage in it. Some students may unwittingly commit this offence because of their limited knowledge. Unfortunately, the legal principle is that a person shall not escape liability for violating a law merely by being unaware of its content (i.e., ignoratia juris non excusat or ignorantia legis neminem excusat).

Feminist theory suggests that biological and socialization disparities between men and women during their childhood could influence the level of knowledge they have on a subject matter (Chesney-Lind, 2006). It advances that society is patriarchally structured in a way that men are groomed to wield a lot of power than women (Brownmiller,

1975). Most of the identified rape myths are underpinned by these feminist assumptions. For example, the myth "Once a man is sexually aroused, he can't help himself; he has to have sex" assumes that women are not expected to have authority and power over their own bodies. From a sociological perspective, Burt (1980) purports that society has taught men to be aggressors while women take on a more passive role. The rape myth "Although most women wouldn't admit it, they generally like being physically forced to have sex" buttresses this assertion. The feminist and sociological perspectives of rape imply that gender could account for the depth of knowledge people have about rape.

2.1.1 Definition of Rape in Ghana

Following the content model of defining rape, section 98 of Ghana's Criminal Offences Act (1960) (Act 29) defines rape as "the carnal knowledge of a female not less than sixteen years without her consent". In instances where a person is required to prove carnal knowledge, the carnal knowledge is complete on proof of the least degree of penetration (R V Kataimaki). In Gligah & Atiso v. The Republic (2010) SCGLR 870, two policemen were prosecuted for the rape of a young woman at the police station where they were on duty. Affirming the conviction of rape, Doste J.S. Cat p.579 explains that the "Carnal knowledge is the penetration of a woman's vagina by a man's penis. It does not really matter how deep or however little the penis went into the vagina. So long as there was some penetration beyond what is known as brush work, penetration would be deemed to have occurred and carnal knowledge taken to have been completed."

As portrayed in the definition of rape in section 98 of Act 29, consent is an important element in the determination of rape offences. However, some forms of consent are deemed to be void in Section 14 of Act 29. According to section 14 (a & b) "a consent is void if the person giving the consent is under twelve years of age, or in the case of an act involving a sexual offence, sixteen years, or is, by reason of insanity or of immaturity, or any other permanent or temporary incapability whether from intoxication or any other cause, unable to understand the nature or consequences of the act to which the consent is given. A consent is void if it is obtained by means of deceit or of duress". In R. v Bree (2007) EWCA Crim 256, the "accused had been charged with the rape of a woman who had consented to sexual intercourse after having consumed a substantial amount of alcohol. It was unclear whether she had consented because of her state of inebriation or despite her state of inebriation, when she still had the capacity to consent. He was convicted." (Mensah-Bonsu, 2007, pp. 29-30). Again, the court held that consent obtained by fraud is not a valid consent in the case of R. v. Williams (1923) 1 KB 340. In this case "the appellant procured the consent of two girls by fraud, to have carnal knowledge of one, and to commit indecent assault on the other under the pretext of voice production" (Mensah-Bonsu, 2007, p.31). In addition to the above, a person has the right to withdraw an earlier consent given. This is illustrated in Kaitamaki v. R. (1985) AC 147, where an "appellant discovered after penetration that the woman was no longer consenting. He, however, did not desist from the intercourse. He was held to have raped her. The court stated that, "sexual intercourse is a continuing act which ends only in withdrawal". In not desisting, therefore, the appellant had been properly convicted of rape (Mensah-Bonsu, 2007, p. 146). The position of the common law is that rape cannot be committed by a husband on his wife, as it was presumed to have consented to all acts of intercourse within the marriage (Allen, 2015).

Society seeks to control the behavior of its members through the threats of formal (e.g., arrest and imprisonment) and informal (e.g., social disapproval and the withdrawal of resources) punishments (Wright, Caspi, Moffitt, Paternoster, 2004). The consequences of the offence of rape are stipulated in section 97 of Act 29 as "a person who commits rape commits a first-degree felony and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years."

2.1.2 Acquittance Rape

The majority of women become victims of rape as a result of the acts of people they know, such as boyfriends, ex-boyfriends, friends, colleagues, class mates, or spouses (Abbey et al., 2002; Anderson, 2017). The term "acquaintance rape" was coined to describe the incidence of the varied forms of non-stranger sexual assaults (Parrot & Bechhofer, 1991). What makes acquaintance rape serious is the fact that the majority of its victims do not report when it occurs nor seek medical and psychological attention (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2007). Even in a few instances where these sexual assaults are reported, there are generally low rates of arrests and prosecutions (Alderden & Ullman, 2012). Frazier and Seales (1997) investigated the differences in stress that female university students experience by comparing acquaintance rape with stranger rape. They found no significant differences between the negative outcomes of both.

According to Lee, Busch, Kim, and Lim (2007), most university students are not sure whether acquittance rape

was acceptable or not. The definition of rape in Ghana (see Section 98 of Act 29) makes most cases of acquaintance rape a crime in Ghana. Based on the supposed endorsement of marital rape in Section 42(g) of Act 29, the concept used to be a controversial issue in Ghana. However, Section 32 of the Domestic Violence Act of 2007 has been used to amend this provision in a subtle manner. This Section has empowered the courts to prosecute all cases of sexual abuse, whether in the context of marriage or otherwise.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Gender and Rape

Scholars have identified gender as one of the factors that influence the attitudes of people towards rape, rape victims, and perpetrators. In relation with the level of knowledge, a wealth of studies has reported that men are more likely than women to accept rape myths and thus increases the chance that women are more likely to knowledgeable about rape than men (e.g., Anderson & Swainson, 2001; Cowan, 2000; Fonow, Richardson, & Wemmerus, 1992; Forbes, Adams-Curtis, & White, 2004; Johnson, Kuck, & Schander, 1997; White & Kurpius, 2002). Apaak and Sarpong (2015) studied the knowledge level and incidence of sexual harassment in sports from the perspective of Ghanaian female athletes. They concluded that female athletes were very knowledgeable about the subject of sexual harassment. Based on the above discussion, it is anticipated that female students are likely to have more knowledge on rape than their male counterparts; thus, it is hypothesized that;

H_1: Female university students are more knowledgeable about rape than their male counterparts.

2.2.2 Age and Rape

According to Aronowitz, Lambert, and Davidoff (2012), young people are not being taught properly about sex and sexual behaviour. This concern is likely to be more pronounced in Ghana, given that the Ghanaian culture turns to abhor any open and limpid discussion on sex related subjects with or among children. Carrera, Williams and Philiber (2000) in studying the knowledge about reproduction, contraception and sexually transmitted infections among young adolescents in American cities reported that "Only 25% of the youth surveyed knew that urination and menstruation occurred through different openings in the vulva, 33% knew that withdrawal was an ineffective birth control method, and 37% knew that people could satisfy their sexual needs in activities other than intercourse. The average score on a sexual knowledge survey was 44% correct among college students". In light of the above narration, the study expects that older students are likely to be more knowledgeable about rape than their younger counterparts.

H_2: Older university students are more knowledgeable about rape than their younger counterparts.

3. Methods

The population of this study consists of business students at a Public University in Ghana. The goal for this research was to sample students from this public university to ascertain their level of knowledge about rape. Knowledge about rape was measured using ten multiple-choice questions based on the Criminal Offences Act 1960 of Ghana (Act 29). The questions were vetted and approved by criminal law lecturers at King's University College. Each question had two responses and a third response, which provided the student the opportunity to respond "I don't know ". Of major interest in this study was how many students would select the "I don't know" response to each question. This approach provided the opportunity to students to admit not knowing the answer. "I don't know" responses were counted as incorrect answers for test scoring purposes. Each question was valued at 10 points, resulting in a total of 100 possible points for all 10 questions. The lecturers of the respondents were requested to administer the test during their lecture periods. The students were made aware that the questionnaire would solicit their knowledge about rape. They were also informed that the questionnaire was only going to be used for research purposes and their scores would not affect their grades.

The data from the questionnaires were analyzed descriptively using SPSS. T-test and one-way analysis of variance were employed in testing the hypotheses of the study. The T-test is a common method for comparing the mean of one group to the value or mean of another. T-tests are very useful because they usually perform well in the face of minor to moderate departures from normality of the underlying group distributions. On the other hand, one-way analysis of variance is the typical method for comparing three or more group means. The usual goal is to determine if at least one group mean (or median) is different from the others.

4. Findings and Conclusions

4.1 Demographics

The results from Table 1 show that the majority of the respondents are males, 194(50.4%), as compared to the females, 191(49.6%). However, the distribution shows a relatively fair distribution of gender. With respect to the age distribution of the respondents, the results indicate that the highly represented age group is those in the 21-25 age bracket, 186(48.3%). This is followed by those in the brackets of 16-20 with 112(29.1%). The least group is those above the 30-year-old bracket, with only 7 individuals, hence representing 1.8% of the respondents. The age distribution shows that the respondents were relatively younger. In relation to their Levels at the university, it can be seen that levels 200's and 300's were the main participants in the study, with a cumulative percentage score of 65.5%

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	194	50.4
	Female	191	49.6
Age	11-15	12	3.1
	16-20	112	29.1
	21-25	186	48.3
	26-30	68	17.7
	Above 30	7	1.8
Level	100	45	11.7
	200	132	34.3
	300	120	31.2
	400 and above	88	22.9
	Total	52	100

Source: Field Survey, Ansong (2022)

4.2 Preliminary Descriptive Analysis

This section presents results and analysis based on the questions of this study. Descriptive statistics were used in analysing the data. The results and analysis are presented chronologically based on the stated objectives of this study.

4.2.1 Student Test Performance

The highest test score per Table 2 was 80% achieved by 13 students, and 23 students scored 70%. The lowest score of 10% was achieved by 15 students. More than 51.9% of the students scored below 50%, thus failing the test based on a passing score of 50%. Slightly over 14% achieved scores above 50% and 34.0% scored exactly 50%.

Table 2. Student Test Performance

Total Score	Number	Percentage	Cumulative percentage
10	15	3.9	3.9
20	25	6.5	10.4
30	14	3.6	14.0
40	146	37.9	51.9
50	131	34.0	85.9

Table 2 Continued

60	18	4.7	90.6
70	23	6.0	96.6
80	13	3.4	100

4.2.2 Student Performance on Questions

Table 3 presents each of the 10 questions and the number and percentage of students who answered the questions correctly, incorrectly, and did not know responses.

i. Knowledge on the Class of Offence of Rape

Question 1

Respondents were questioned as to the class of offence that the crime of rape belonged. In that regard, the question was posed as to whether or not Rape was a second-degree felony. In response to the said question, 193 respondents (50.1%), representing the majority of respondents, indicated that rape was a second-degree felony and therefore obtained an incorrect score. However, about 28.3% of the respondents demonstrated their knowledge of the class of offence with respect to rape and therefore had correct responses in that regard. Consequently, 21.6% of the respondents demonstrated total ignorance of the subject matter of rape and therefore demonstrated the same by choosing a 'Don't Know' response. In sum, a colossal percentage (71.7%) of the respondents were either ignorant of, or had an incorrect idea of the knowledge of the class of rape in respect of offences. The findings raise a huge level of concern regarding the class of offences that rape belongs and as such, it is no wonder that the offence is still engaged in. However, Section 97 of Act 29 in express terms provides that '***whoever commits rape shall be guilty of a first-degree felony…'***.

ii. Knowledge on the Penal Consequences of Rape

Question 2

Respondents were also questioned as to the penal consequences of rape. To that end, the question was posed as to whether or not '*a person who is liable on conviction of rape would be subject to a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and not more than twenty years*. In response to the said question, 205 (53.2%) respondents, representing the majority of respondents, indicated that the penal consequence of rape was for *a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and not more than twenty years,* and therefore obtained an incorrect score. However, about 25.3% of the respondents demonstrated their knowledge of the penal consequences of rape and therefore had correct responses in that regard. This suggests clearly that only a minority of respondents had the right knowledge on the subject matter. Consequently, 19.5% of the respondents responded that they did not know the penal consequences of rape. As such, a huge majority (72.7%) of the respondents were either ignorant of, or had an incorrect idea of the knowledge of the penal consequences of Rape in Ghana. The findings demonstrate clearly the reasoning behind the occurrence of rape in Ghana. However, Section 97 of Act 29 in express terms provides that '***whoever commits rape shall be guilty of a first-degree felony and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than five years and not more than twenty-five years.…'***.

iii. Knowledge on the Definition of Rape

Question 3

According to Section 98 of Act 29, Rape is defined as ***the carnal knowledge of a female of sixteen years or above without her consent***. In that light, respondents were tested as to whether or not '*rape was carnal knowledge of a female or a male not less than sixteen years without his/her consent*'. In response to the question posed, 168 (43.6%) respondents indicated rightly that the question was a wrong proposition of law relative to Section 98 of Act 29 by the inclusion of males in the definition. That notwithstanding, 41.3% of respondents provided incorrect responses to the question posed. However, 15.1% of the respondents had no knowledge whatsoever as to what rape was. This therefore suggests that 56.4% of respondents had incorrect knowledge about the legal definition of rape in Ghana and whether or not a male could be a victim of rape or not. This is most unfortunate and places the whole country a risk of exercising wrongful judgment in matters concerning sexual offences.

Table 3. Student Performance on Questions

Question	Correct		Incorrect		Don't Know	
	No.	Percent	No.	Percent	No	Percent
1. A person who commits rape commits a second-degree felony	109	28.3	193	50.1	83	21.6
2. A person is liable on conviction of rape to a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and not more than twenty years	103	25.3	205	53.2	75	19.5
3. Rape is a carnal knowledge of a female or a male not less than sixteen years without his/her consent	168	43.6	159	41.3	58	15.1
4. Carnal knowledge is the physical act of penetration; it is the consent to that which is in question in cases of rape	171	44.4	136	35.3	78	20.3
5. A consent given for sexual intercourse is void when given under the influence of drugs/alcohol	217	56.4	109	28.3	59	15.3
6. A consent given for sexual intercourse is not void just because it was obtained as a result of deception	177	46.0	136	35.3	72	18.7
7. A person cannot be held liable for raping his wife	207	53.8	105	27.3	73	19.0
8. A person can be held liable for raping his girlfriend	221	57.4	109	28.3	55	14.3
9. A consent is void in the case of sexual offences if the person giving the consent is under twelve years of age	161	41.8	160	41.6	64	16.6
10. A person cannot be held liable for rape if the partner with whom he is having sexual intercourse with initially gave consent and later seeks to withdraw it	196	50.9	128	33.2	61	15.8

iv. Knowledge of Consent in Relation to Rape

Question 4

Respondents were questioned as consent in lieu of rape. In that regard, the question was posed as to the fact that *carnal knowledge was the physical act of penetration and* whether or not *it was the consent to that which is in question in cases of rape*. In response to the said question, 171 respondents (44.4%), representing the majority of respondents, indicated rightly to the fact that consent was a key determinant in matters of rape. However, about 35.3% of the respondents had incorrect responses regarding the issue of consent. Also, 20.3% of respondents were ignorant of the issue of consent in rape and therefore identified with the 'Don't know' option. In total, a grave percentage (55.6%) of the respondents were either ignorant of, or had an incorrect idea of, the issue of consent in rape cases. However, Section 98 of Act 29 defines rape as ***the carnal knowledge of a female of sixteen years or above without her consent.'***.

v. Vitiating Factors of Consent

Question 5

Section 14 (a) of Act 29 stipulates that '***a consent is void if the person giving … in the case of an act involving a sexual offence… permanently or temporarily incapable whether from intoxication or any other cause, unable to understand the nature or consequences of the act to which he consents***". In that vein, respondents were quizzed as to *whether or not consent given for sexual intercourse is void when given under the influence of drugs/alcohol*. Respondents demonstrated a high level of knowledge on this subject matter, with the majority (56.4%) providing the correct answer to the question. On the other hand, 28.3% indicated an incorrect answer, whereas 15.3% had no idea of the issue of the vitiating role of intoxication in matters of consent. Cumulatively, the majority of respondents had correct knowledge on the role of drugs and alcohol in vitiating consent during sexual intercourse.

Question 6

Respondents were also tested on the role of deception in rendering sexual intercourse void with respect to consent. In that regard, the question was posed as to whether *consent given for sexual intercourse was not void just because it was obtained as a result of deception.* In response to the said test, 177 respondents (46.0%), representing the majority of respondents, indicated rightly to the fact that consent was vitiated by deception. However, about 35.3% of the respondents had incorrect responses regarding the issue of deceit vitiating consent. That notwithstanding, 18.7% of respondents were ignorant of the issue of deceit as a vitiating factor to procure sexual intercourse and therefore

identified with the 'Don't know' option. In total, a cumulative majority (54%) of the respondents were either ignorant of, or had an incorrect idea on, the issue of deceit in vitiating consent. For the avoidance of doubt, Section 14 (9) of Act 29, clearly spells out that ***consent is void if it is obtained by means of deceit or of duress***'.

Question 9

Section 14 (a) of Act 29 states emphatically that '***consent is void if the person giving it is under twelve years of age, or in the case of an act involving a sexual offence, sixteen years…***'. In that respect, respondents were questioned as to *whether or not consent is void in the case of sexual offences if the person giving the consent is under twelve years of age.* In response to the said question, 161 (41.8%) respondents, representing the majority of respondents, indicated that in the affirmative and obtained a correct score. However, about 41.6% of the respondents had incorrect responses to the subject matter, with the remaining 16.6% have no knowledge. Cumulatively, a huge majority (58.2%) of the respondents were either ignorant of, or had an incorrect idea of, the knowledge that the age bracket of less than sixteen is unable to give consent.

vi. Incidence of Rape in Intimate/Legal Relationships

Question 7

Section 98 of Act 29 defines rape as ***the carnal knowledge of a female of sixteen years or above without her consent***. It does not proceed to define which classes of persons are considered female within the context of rape and whether or not there are some exceptions. In that light, the ordinary meaning of Section 98 of Act 29 covers all females without any exception as to any intimate relationship or bond existing between the accused and the victim. In light of the foregoing, respondents were asked whether '*a person cannot be held liable for raping his wife'*. The majority of respondents (53.8%) demonstrated good knowledge of the law and answered negatively to negate such a question. However, respondents in the minority had an incorrect answer (27.3%), and 19% showed no knowledge of the subject matter.

Question 8

In the same vein and in direct recourse to Section 98 of Act 29, the respondents were quizzed on whether or not *a person could be held liable for raping his girlfriend*. The respondents once again, indicated with a huge majority (57.4%) demonstrated good understanding of the law by selecting the correct answer in that regard. That notwithstanding, respondents in the minority had 28.3% and 14.3% indicating incorrect responses and 'don't know' responses, respectively.

vii. Subsequent Withdrawal of Consent

Question 10

Section 42 (g) of Act 29 explicitly provides that '***A person may revoke consent which that party has given to the use of force against that person, and the consent when so revoked shall not have effect or justify force***'. As such, a person can always be liable for rape if initial consent is later withdrawn. To that end, the respondents were asked whether '*a person cannot be held liable for rape if the partner with whom he is having sexual intercourse with initially gave consent and later seeks to withdraw it'.* An impressive majority (50.9) rightly disagreed with such a proposition and therefore obtained the correct score. However, 33.3 % and 15.8% representing the minority obtained an incorrect score and exhibited no knowledge on the subject matter, respectively.

In summary, the data shows that the majority of respondents demonstrated a high level of knowledge in addressing Questions 5, 7, 8, and 10, coupled with an incorrect or no knowledge with respect to Questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 9. The poor performance on the part of the students is in line with the assertion held by researchers like Anderson and Swainson (2001) that knowledge on rape issues was more prevalent in academic and legal institutions than the entire citizenry, especially in developing countries.

4.2.3 Don't know responses

Table 4 places the percentage of "don't know" responses to a question from the highest percentage to the lowest. The "do not know" responses for the test takers range from a low percentage of 14.3 for question 8, "A person can be held liable for raping his girlfriend," to a percentage of 21.6 on question 1, admitting not knowing that "A person who commits rape does not commit a second-degree felony but rather a first-degree felony". Based on the findings, it can readily be said that only a little over 21% of respondents had no knowledge of all matters concerning rape. Impliedly, therefore, the majority, i.e., 79% had some knowledge of rape, albeit a chunk of that percentage being incorrect responses.

Table 4. Ranking doesn't know responses (from high to low)

Question	Question number	Don't Know	
		No	Percent
A person who commits rape commits a second-degree felony	1	83	21.6
Carnal knowledge is the physical act of penetration; it is the consent to that which is in question in cases of rape	4	78	20.3
A person is liable on conviction of rape to a term of imprisonment of not less than five years and not more than twenty years	2	75	19.5
A person cannot be held liable for raping his wife	7	73	19.0
A consent given for sexual intercourse is not void just because it was obtained as a result of deception	6	72	18.7
A consent is void in the case of sexual offences if the person giving the consent is under twelve years of age	9	64	16.6
A person cannot be held liable for rape if the partner with whom he is having sexual intercourse with initially gave consent and later seeks to withdraw it	10	61	15.8
A consent given for sexual intercourse is void when given under the influence of drugs/alcohol	5	59	15.3
Rape is a carnal knowledge of a female or a male not less than sixteen years without his/her consent	3	58	15.1
A person can be held liable for raping his girlfriend	8	55	14.3

Source: Field Data (2022)

4.3 Gender and Knowledge of Rape

It can be observed from Table 5 that Females had incorrect responses ranging from a percentage of 12.5 to 26.0 and a 'don't know' percentage response ranging from 8.3 to 14.0. However, in relation to males, the incorrect responses ranged from 11.7 to 25.7, whereas with respect to the 'don't know' responses, the male percentages were very low, ranging from 5.7 to 9.9. It can therefore be concluded that, comparatively, males' knowledge of rape was higher than opposed of females. However, further inferential statistic is required to authenticate such results, i.e., through the usage of the independent sample t-test.

Table 5. Distribution of Gender and Knowledge of Rape

	Male		Female	
Question	Incorrect (%)	Don't Know (%)	Incorrect (%)	Don't know (%)
1	25.7	9.9	24.4	11.7
2	27.8	7.5	25.5	11.9
3	24.4	6.0	16.3	9.1
4	19.0	8.6	16.4	11.7
5	15.8	5.7	12.5	9.6
6	17.4	8.6	17.9	10.1
7	11.7	8.8	15.6	10.1
8	13.5	6.0	14.8	8.3
9	23.9	6.8	17.7	9.9
10	19.2	6.2	26.0	14.0

Source: Field Data (2022)

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

The first hypothesis guiding the study was analysed using the independent sample t-test to discover the differences that exist between the scores of the males and those of the females. The hypothesis was in this regard.

H_1: Female university students are more knowledgeable about rape than their male counterparts.

Per Table 6, it is observed that the mean scores with respect to males (41.49) are slightly higher than their female counterparts (40.21). This is, however, unreliable as Levene's test of equality of variance indicates the conclusiveness of the observation.

Table 6. Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
SCORES	Male	194	41.4948	14.29999	1.02668
	Female	191	40.2094	15.28529	1.10600

Source: T-test Score, 2022

From Table 7, it can also be seen that the p-value of 0.700 with regard to the Equal variance assumed with respect to the score is not significant, i.e., p-value >0.05. As such, the null hypothesis embedded in the t-test that all variance has been assumed has failed in terms of rejection, therefore the Sig. The value of 0.395 would be read as the right value of significance. Per the threshold of significance, however, it is observed once again that the p-value of 0.395 is greater than the threshold of 0.05, and, as such, indicating the fact that there exist no differences between the mean score of the males and that of the females. Thus, the researcher's hypothesis that *female university students are more knowledgeable about rape than their male counterparts* is not statistically true. It can therefore be concluded that both males and females are equally knowledgeable about rape in the University. This result contradicts the view of several scholars (e.g., Anderson & Swainson, 2001; Cowan, 2000; Fonow, Richardson, & Wemmerus, 1992; Forbes, Adams-Curtis, & White, 2004; Johnson, Kuck, & Schander, 1997; White & Kurpius, 2002) and therefore sets the tone for greater understanding of this phenomenon. It may well be that, because males are entirely culpable in all instances of rape in Ghana, they tend to pay more attention to these matters better than their counterparts, who cannot face penal consequences regarding this sexual offence.

Table 7. Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test EoV		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
SCORES	Equal variances assumed	.149	.700	.852	383	.395	1.28542	1.50829	-1.68015	4.25099
	Equal variances not assumed			.852	380.434	.395	1.28542	1.50908	-1.68176	4.25260

4.5 Age and Knowledge of Rape

As illustrated in Table 8, it can be observed that respondents between the age group of 11-15 had very low incorrect responses, ranging from a percentage 0.3 to 2.3, coupled with a low 'don't know' response between 0.5% to 1.0%. This meant that they had great knowledge in appreciating matters of rape at that age. The age bracket of 16-20years had a percentage range of 6.2 to 16.6 and 4.4-6.5 incorrect and don't know responses. That notwithstanding, participants in the age range of 21-25 had a relatively high percentage of incorrect and don't know answers, ranging from a percentage of 11.9 to 24.9 and 4.2 to 10.4, respectively.

Table 8. Distribution of Gender and Knowledge of Rape

	Younger Generation						Older Generation			
	11-15		16-20		21-25		26-30		Above 30	
Question	Incorrect (%)	Don't Know (%)	Incorrect (%)	Don't know (%)	Incorrect (%)	Don't Know (%)	Incorrect (%)	Don't Know (%)	Incorrect (%)	Don't Know (%)
1	1.8	1.0	13.2	6.2	23.9	10.4	10.4	3.1	0.8	0.8
2	1.0	1.0	16.6	5.5	24.9	8.6	9.9	3.1	0.8	0.8
3	1.8	1.3	10.1	5.2	21.8	5.2	7.0	2.9	0.5	0.5
4	0.3	1.0	9.6	6.5	19.0	8.8	6.2	3.4	0.3	0.5
5	1.0	0.8	6.2	6.2	16.1	4.2	4.4	3.4	0.5	0.8
6	1.0	0.8	10.1	6.0	15.1	8.3	8.6	3.1	0.5	0.5
7	1.0	1.0	6.5	6.5	11.9	6.8	6.8	4.2	1.1	0.5
8	0.8	0.8	7.5	4.4	13.8	5.5	5.7	3.4	0.5	0.5
9	0.8	0.5	11..2	4.7	21.3	7.5	7.8	3.6	0.5	0.3
10	2.3	0.5	7.0	4.9	15.3	7.0	7.8	2.9	0.8	0.5

Source: Field Data (2022)

For the older generation, the age bracket of 26 to 30 years had a relatively low incorrect and don't know percentage, ranging from 4.4 to 10.4 and 2.9 to 4.2, respectively. Lastly, the age group above 3o had very low incorrect and don't know answers within a percentage bracket of 0.3 to 1.1 and 0.3 to 0.8. In summary, it can be rightly deduced that the older generation was more knowledgeable in matters regarding rape than the younger generation. Howbeit, the 11-15-year group is demonstrably also knowledgeable. Thus, whereas the older generation can be understood with their level of growth and exposure to knowledge, the advent of technology among the very youthful population of respondents indicated a good understanding of rape in Ghana. However, an inferential test would be used to authenticate these findings.

4.6 Hypothesis Testing

The second hypothesis guiding the study was analysed using the ANOVA test to discover the differences that exist between the scores of the older and younger students with respect to rape. The hypothesis was in this regard;

H_2: Older university students are more knowledgeable about rape than their younger counterparts

From Table 9, it is observed that the p-value falls above the threshold of 0.05. In that light, the hypothesized differences that are believed to have existed do not hold statistically. As such, a p-value of 0.95 only suggests that there exist no differences in the mean score of rape between the 5 classes of age groups in this study. To that end, and per the results from the ANOVA table, the researcher's hypothesis that *older university students are more knowledgeable about rape than their younger counterparts* is not supported.

Table 9. ANOVA Score

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1726.337	4	431.584	1.993	.095
Within Groups	82290.805	380	216.555		
Total	84017.143	384			

Source: Field Data (2022)

It is therefore concluded, based on the data, that all generations, irrespective of their age and generational class are knowledgeable in matters of rape without any exception. It does appear that matters in lieu of criminal offences, which have penal consequences either to a term of imprisonment, a fine, or both, can only activate vigilance in the eyes of all citizens, regardless of their age, since ignorance of the law has never been an excuse in Ghanaian jurisprudence.

5. Implications of the Study

This study provides a roadmap for the discussion of rape and its related issues in Ghana. To that end, academics stand to benefit from the outcomes of the research with respect to creating the academic atmosphere for further and more so increasing awareness of this phenomenon in Ghana. Also, managers of the University can benefit from this study to influence the approach of sensitizing students on matters evolving around rape and its attendant legal consequences. Finally, policy makers, for example, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), can base on this study to draw out targeted plans towards the education and sensitization of matters related to rape in public universities

6. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

This study can be replicated in all public universities in Ghana. Also, other offences within the Criminal Offences Act 1960 (Act 29) can be investigated to see how knowledgeable the citizenry is in tune with the offences as proscribed by law. The Limitation of this study revolves around the mythological limitations inherent in the usage of questionnaires in data gathering. As such, qualitative-based research can be done to validate the results of the study.

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