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The Relationship between Hypermasculinity Rape Myth and Rape Proclivity amongst Undergraduate Males in Enugu State University of Technology

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity among undergraduate males in Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Agbani. A convenience sample of 150 males participated in the study. The participant's age ranges from 18 to 25, with a mean age of 21.19 years and a standard deviation of 2.02. A cross sectional survey design was used. Three instruments were used to collect data; the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, Short Hypermasculine Values Questionnaire, and the likelihood to Rape Scale. The result of the study showed that hypermasculinity is significantly predictive of rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males, accounting for 6% variance in predicting rape proclivity. The second finding showed that rape myth acceptance has a positive significant predictive relationship with rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males accounting for a 44% significant variance in predicting rape proclivity. A practical implication of the study is the need for universities to educate students on the consequences of sexual violence and reduce the likelihood of occurrence and prevalence by providing resources to unlearn the values found to be associated with rape proclivity. Suggestions for further studies were made.

Keywords: *Masculinity, rape, sexual violence, students*

Introduction

Nigeria is a country with no substantial data on the prevalence of sexual violence and aggression. According to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network [RAINN], (2019), one in every ten ever-married Nigerian women reports experiencing sexual violence in her lifetime. However, as high as that number is, it is misleadingly low: the best available data on the prevalence of sexual violence within the country does not account for unmarried women or girls. Globally, one in five women will be subjected to sexual assault in their lifetime (Rape Crisis UK, 2019), and in every 98 seconds, an American is sexually assaulted. (RAINN, 2018).

One can only imagine the situation in a country with limited research and underreported incidences of sexual violence. Findings from a National Survey carried out in 2014 on Violence Against Children in Nigeria, confirmed one in four females reported experiencing sexual violence in childhood with approximately 70% reporting more than one incident of sexual violence. Also, according to RAINN (2020), one in six women and one in thirty-three men will be victims of sexual assaults in their lifetime. However, the prevalence of sexual assaults is even higher among college males (Fedina et al., 2018). Considering the above facts, it is pertinent to study the factors that are related to sexual violence against women such as rape myth acceptance (RMA), hyper masculinity and rape proclivity. These factors are prevalent in males as many researches have found that women are far more likely to be victimized by sexual violence than men. The World Health Organization (WHO) reported in 2021 that 1 in 3 women globally experience physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner or sexual violence from a non-partner. Also from a study among college students in Germany by Walter, et al., (2013)

results showed that women were more likely to be victims of sexual violence compared to men, and that rape myths themselves focus on men's violence against women (Payne et al. 1999). Men are also more likely than women to perpetuate sexual violence and this informed the participants of the study to be on undergraduate males. Studies have also found males to believe more rape myths than females.

Burt (1980), defined rape myths as “prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists”. She identified examples of these myths, including “women ask for it” and “rapists are sex-starved, insane, or both”. Rape myths are persistent and widespread beliefs and attitudes that exonerate the perpetrator and blame the victim of rape (Lonsway & Fitzgerald, 1994). Rape myths serve to shift responsibility from the perpetrator to the victim and are often related to other hostile attitudes and behaviours toward women that may influence how and whether young men engage in sexual consent communication (Shafer et al., 2018).

Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994) defined rape myths as “attitudes & beliefs that are generally false but are widely and persistently held, and that serve to deny and justify male sexual aggression against women”. These myths have been internalized and are used to excuse sexual violence. While Rape myths serve as a form of justification of rape for men, women use it as a defense mechanism against vulnerability to rape, and lower likelihood that they will label their own experience of sexual assault as rape (Peterson & Muehlenhard, 2004). The perceptions and attitudes towards rape are generally sociocultural driven, wherein combative sexual beliefs, stereotyped gendered roles, acceptance of interpersonal violence, and sexual conservatism are some of the important underlying factors impacting the acceptance of rape myths. (Gautam & Tewari, 2024). While some cultures may view rape victims with compassion and understanding, others may regard them with humiliation and disgrace (Kazmi et al., 2023).

Rape myth acceptance (RMA) is the degree to which someone believes in rape myths. Lonsway and Fitzgerald (1994), defined rape myth acceptance as the extent to which a person accepts stereotypic and false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists." Research has identified rape myth acceptance as a risk factor for both perpetration of sexual violence by men (Yapp & Quayle, 2018). Therefore, rape myth acceptance is commonly targeted in anti-rape activism (e.g., the #MeToo Movement) and prevention work due to its association with perpetration, risk of victimization, survivor outcomes, and injustices in the criminal legal system (Pettyjohn et al. 2023).

Research demonstrates that people who endorse rape myths are more likely to blame victims for their own rape (Grubb & Turner, 2012). People can charge that the victim was in the wrong location at the wrong time, neglected to take the required precautions, or decided not to protect oneself (Pacilli et al., 2022). Additionally, rape victims may be associated with negative stereotypes, such as being promiscuous or “damaged goods” (Li & Zheng, 2022). Research has identified rape myth acceptance as a risk factor for both perpetration of sexual violence by men (Yapp & Quayle, 2018) and a high proclivity to rape. Although there are instances where females display heightened rape myth acceptance, most research indicates that men are most likely to subscribe to wide-ranging rape myths and exhibit more problematic rape supportive beliefs overall (Willmott et al., 2024).

The acceptance of rape myths can have catastrophic consequences for a rape victim, if the police don't believe her, the court system doesn't prosecute the rapist, or she doesn't receive the proper medical and mental help required after a rape (Sinclair & Bourne, 1998). Heightened rape myth acceptance among men is associated with increased self-reported rape proclivity and sexual coercion (Yapp & Quayle, 2018). Rape proclivity describes one's inclination or

predisposition towards rape. It is an individual's endorsement of the likelihood of committing sexual violence in the future, given the condition that the person would never be caught (Bohner et al., 2009; Bohner et al., 2006). The concept of rape proclivity has been studied by several researchers in the field of psychology, including Lonsway et al., (2009), who defined it as "the extent to which an individual has attitudes, beliefs, or values that are favorable toward sexually coercive behaviours". It refers to the tendency or disposition of an individual to engage in sexually violent behaviour. Rape proclivity has been measured with the likelihood to rape (LR) scale by Malamuth, (1981), by assessing individual's beliefs in their likelihood of committing rape under specific situations, like knowing they would not be caught.

According to Neil Malamuth, a leading researcher in the field of sexual aggression, rape proclivity is influenced by a combination of factors, including hostile masculinity, sexual promiscuity, attitudes supportive of violence, acceptance of interpersonal violence, and adversarial sexual beliefs (Malamuth, et al, 1996). Some other researchers have proposed that implicit personality theory may be a factor in rape proclivity. Polaschek and Ward (2002), proposed five implicit theories for rapists; "Women are unknowable/dangerous" (beliefs that women are different from men, and in that way men cannot understand how a woman's mind works), "Women are sex objects" (beliefs that the purpose of a woman is to please a man sexually), "Male sex drive is uncontrollable" (beliefs that men cannot control when they become aroused, and need to be satisfied when this happens), "Entitlement" (beliefs that all men are entitled to sex) and "Dangerous world" (beliefs that the world is full of dangerous and hostile individuals). Bohner and colleagues (1999), it was found that men who held sexist beliefs were more likely to hold rape-supportive attitude. By identifying and addressing the various factors that contribute to rape proclivity, researchers and practitioners can work towards reducing the incidence of sexual violence and promoting healthier attitudes towards sexuality and relationships (Malamuth et al., 1996).

Just like rape myth acceptance, another variable that relates to rape proclivity is hypermasculinity. In a society where people are defined by genders and gender roles, people tend to imitate and exhibit the behaviours and roles of the gender, which has been taught directly or indirectly to them. Such behaviour could be either masculine or feminine. However, the expected behaviour of the gender may be exaggerated and when this occurs for the masculine gender, it's called hypermasculinity.

Hypermasculinity is the inflation of stereotypic masculine attitudes and behaviours involving callous attitudes toward women, and the belief that violence is manly and danger is exciting (Mosher & Sirkin, 1984). The term hypermasculinity has its roots in criminology and the study of male pattern violence and aggression. Initial work in this area was done by Mosher and Sirkin (1984), they defined hypermasculinity as comprising three core attributes; 'a callous sexual attitude towards women', 'a belief that violence is manly' and 'the experience that danger is exciting'. Hypermasculinity is the exaggerated stereotype of what it means to be a man, such as the super evaluation of competition, devaluation of cooperation and care taking activities (Burk et al., 2004).

Archer (2010) defined hypermasculinity as a set of values and beliefs that emphasize exaggerated forms of traditional masculinity, which includes toughness and avoidance of femininity, control over women's sexuality and callous sexual attitudes toward women.

Hypermasculinity can extend beyond the sexual realm, such that hypermasculinity endorses traditional ideas about the need for men to be highly respected and to gain that respect by being aggressive and unfeminine (Pleck et al., 1993). Hypermasculine men may then misinterpret or ignore sexual communication signals from their female partners, especially

when their female partners' wants and signals are in opposition to their own. Hypermasculine men may also rationalize their aggressive behaviours by subscribing to less progressive beliefs about how women communicate sexual consent, such that they believe women want to be dominated by men and engage in "token resistance" as a submissive tactics. (Shafer et al., 2018).

Theoretically, hypermasculinity results from gender role socialization (Crowell & Burgess, 1996) in which cultural expectations of maleness produce both a turning away from relational ways of being (Bergman, 1991) and an adversarial relationship with females who are viewed as deficient, "other," and "dangerous" (Gilligan, 1982). Burk et al. (2004) suggest hypermasculine ideology places little value on emotion while overemphasizing competition and devaluation of cooperation. Hypermasculinity has been found to be associated with endorsement of rape myths and sexual assault perpetration (Locke & Mahalik, 2005; Zinzow & Thompson, 2015).

Both rape myth acceptance and hypermasculinity are learned behaviours that have been studied independently and found to have a relationship with rape proclivity. Malamuth (1995) and Bohner (2005) described RMA as a key risk factor for perpetrating sexual violence in previous studies. Studies of the association between masculinity and sexual aggression have found that men who possess hostile masculine or hypermasculine attitudes are more likely to self-report sexual aggression against women (Murnen, 2015). Patterson, (2023) found a moderate relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity and a strong relationship between rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity.

Statement of the problem.

Sexual violence is a significant and widespread problem, affecting communities, families and individuals. With the reports from various surveys, the prevalence is likely higher than is being reported eg (RAINN, 2018). Despite efforts to address this issue, rates of sexual violence remain high, and many perpetrators are never identified or held accountable for their actions. One of the key factors contributing to sexual violence is the belief of rape myths, or false beliefs about the nature and causes of sexual violence.

The relationship between hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance, and rape proclivity has been well established in the introduction. However, there is still much to be learned about how these factors influence sexual violence and how they can be addressed. The current study seeks to investigate this relationship in more detail, and to identify potential interventions that may be effective in reducing the incidence of sexual violence.

To this end, the study will provide answers to the following questions:

- Will hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance significantly correlate with rape proclivity among undergraduate males.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance, and rape proclivity in a sample of undergraduate students. The study seeks to explore how these variables are related to each other and to identify potential factors that may influence or moderate these relationships. Specifically, the study aims:

- To determine whether hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance will significantly correlate with rape proclivity among undergraduate males.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

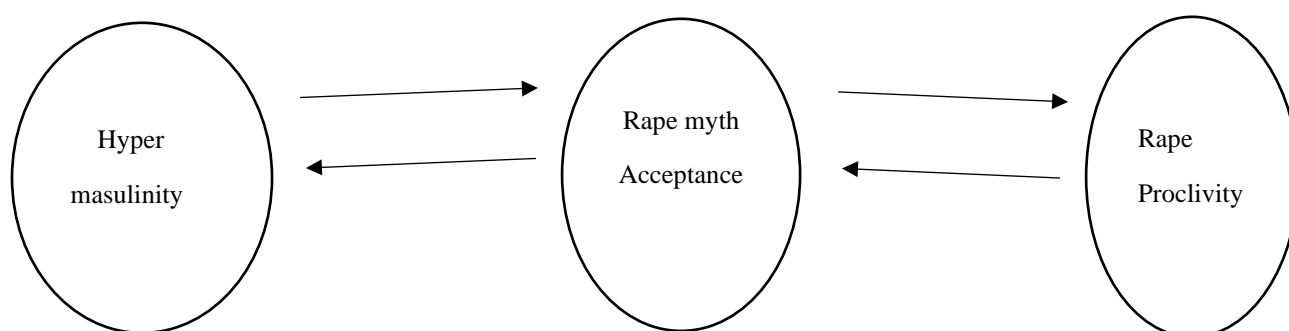


Figure 1: This diagram shows the relationship between hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity

Theoretical framework

The theory of planned behaviour is a psychological theory that explains human behaviour based on three factors: attitudes, subjective norms and behavioural control. These factors influence a person's intention to engage in a particular behaviour which in turn, influences their actual behaviour. In combination, the attitude toward the behaviour, the subjective norm, and the perceived behavioural control lead to the formation of a behavioural intention (Ajzen, 2002).

In understanding the relationship between the factors, hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity, the following factors contribute. Hypermasculine beliefs can lead to more accepting attitudes toward sexually coercive behaviours, viewing them as expressions of masculine dominance and power (Gavey, 2005). These attitudes are influenced by beliefs about the outcomes of engaging in such behaviours and the perceived value of those outcomes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010). For instance, individuals may believe that coercive sexual behaviour enhances their status among peers or that it is acceptable because it aligns with traditional masculine gender roles.

Endorsement of rape myths, which are false beliefs and stereotypes about sexual violence, can shape subjective norms surrounding sexually coercive behaviours (Burt, 1980). Individuals who accept these myths may perceive that their peers or society tolerate or even condone such behaviours. This perception can contribute to a sense of social pressure to engage in sexually coercive behaviours (Ajzen, 1991).

Hypermasculine individuals who believe they have control over their sexual interactions may feel more confident in their ability to engage in sexually coercive behaviours (Gannon & Ward, 2014). Perceived behavioural control can also be influenced by factors such as power dynamics in relationships, access to potential victims, and the perceived likelihood of facing the consequences for their actions (Conner & Sparks, 2015).

In particular, perceived behavioural control is presumed not only to affect actual behaviour directly but also to affect it indirectly through behavioural intention (Noah & Zimmerman, 2005).

Empirical Review

O' Connor (2020), studied the longitudinal effects of rape myth beliefs and rape proclivity, found that causality exists for RMA and rape proclivity. Using longitudinal data with a sample of 488 college men, this study used cross-lagged panel analysis to investigate these relationships across 4 time points according to 2 models: autoregressive effects of RMA and rape proclivity, meaning each construct predicts itself over time, and RMA and rape proclivity predicting each other over time. These findings have implications for prevention efforts directed toward modifying attitudes associated with sexual assault perpetration particularly for men who are at high risk of perpetrating sexual assault, including those with high rates of RMA and rape proclivity.

O'Connor (2022), on Profiles of men's rape myth beliefs and the association with rape proclivity. 474 incoming college men were grouped into four profiles after a Latent Profile Analysis. Some groups endorsed lower or mid-levels of rape myths and others endorsed higher levels of some or all rape myths. The findings indicate that subgroups of men with high levels of RMA have higher mean rape proclivity scores compared to the subgroup of men with the lowest level of RMA. (O'Connor, 2022).

Le et al., (2020) study on masculine norms and college men's rape myth acceptance: The mediating role of nurturance, examined (a) the extent to which conformity to distinct masculine norms and nurturance were associated with rape myth acceptance and (b) if nurturance mediated the associations between conformity to masculine norms and rape myth acceptance among 251 college-attending men. Results revealed that conformity to the masculine norms of power over women and disdaining gay men were positively associated with rape myth acceptance. Nurturance partially mediated the associations between the power over women and disdaining gay men norm and rape myth acceptance, such that men higher in those two masculine norms reported lower nurturance, which was associated with greater rape myth acceptance.

Navarro and Tewkesbury (2017), on Mythbusters: Examining rape myth acceptance among U.S. University students. The study examined rape myth acceptance among 727 university students from 21 U.S. institutions with the updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance scale. Findings showed sorority members rejected rape myths at greater rates than non-sorority members, but fraternity members were similar to non-fraternity members. Higher rape myth acceptance was associated with males, younger ages, lower GPAs, greater religiosity, greater alcohol consumption, and not knowing a victim of a sexual assault.

Patterson, (2023) studied on how hypermasculinity and rape myth acceptance (RMA) relate to rape proclivity in college males and used a sample of 48 males between the ages of 18-24, found that 30.9% of participants' answers indicated hypermasculinity and 69.1% did not. Additionally, 21.6% of answers indicated rape myth acceptance whereas 78.4% did not. Only 2.08% of the sample indicated rape proclivity. A moderate relationship was found between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity and a strong relationship was uncovered between RMA and rape proclivity.

Obierufu and Ojedokun (2019), carried out a study on masculinity as predictor of rape-supportive attitude among men. A survey using online questionnaire was used to collect data on rape myth, masculinity and its subcomponents from 107 men. The results indicated that masculinity, hypermasculinity, sexual identity, dominance and aggression, conservative masculinity, and devaluation of emotion contributed significantly to rape-supportive attitude.

Dragan, (2020) found that hypermasculinity was significantly associated with RMA ($p=.001$). Using a convenience sample of 59 Undergraduate men, to study how hypermasculinity affects undergraduate male's perceptions of sexual assault, consent, hook-up culture, and rape myth acceptance (RMA) using six validated inventories. Also, A significant relationship between hypermasculinity and motivations for participation in hook-up culture was also detected.(Dragan 2020).

Shafer et al., (2018), on the role of hypermasculinity, token resistance, rape myth acceptance and assertive sexual consent communication among college men, 370 undergraduate college men completed cross-sectional online surveys. Hierarchical multiple regression examined how hypermasculinity, token resistance, rape myth acceptance, and sexual communication assertiveness were associated with consent-related attitudes, intentions, and interpretations. Results showed that bivariate correlations among all variables were significant. In multivariate analyses, sexual communication assertiveness was positively associated with all consent outcomes, and token resistance and rape myth acceptance were negatively associated with some. However, hypermasculinity was not a significant factor.

Süssenbach and Euteneur (2022) studied rape myth acceptance and psychopathy as interacting predictors of rape proclivity, using a convenience sample of 185 German men, the results support a positive interaction account. In particular, the combination of being high on both risk factors (rape myth acceptance and psychopathy) as predictive of sexual violence.

Tamara, (2017) study on rapists among us? Rape proclivity and correlates in a New Zealand sample of men had two aims. The first aim of this study was to ascertain the prevalence of self-reported rape proclivity in a New Zealand community sample of men ($N = 118$). The second aim was to explore the relationship between rape proclivity and theoretically-related attitudes and beliefs including rape myth acceptance, hostile sexism, benevolent sexism, adversarial sexual beliefs and the acceptance of interpersonal violence. Findings confirmed that the rate of self-reported rape proclivity was similar to those found in international samples, with men more willing to admit to some likelihood of rape when responding to behavioural descriptors than explicit questions. Rape proclivity was associated with theoretically-related attitudes and beliefs in the expected direction. Furthermore, there was a clear difference in responding between men who reported no likelihood of rape and men responding that they perceived were somewhat likely to rape.

Oesterle et al., (2023) examined rape myth acceptance and sexual aggression among college men: Examining perceived peer approval as a moderating risk factor, where participants included a sample of 610 first-year college men completed survey assessments of rape myth acceptance, perceived peer approval for sexual violence, and history sexual assault perpetration since the age of 14. Participants also rated the extent to which hypothetical vignettes portraying coercive sexual activity were considered to be sexual assault. Data indicated significant main effects of both rape myth acceptance and perceived peer approval on recognizing sexual assault and for prior perpetration of sexual assault. A significant interaction between rape myth acceptance and perceived peer approval for sexual violence was detected for prior perpetration of sexual assault, indicating that expression of rape myths may be inhibited when peers are seen as unsupportive. Interactive effects between rape myth acceptance and perceived peer approval for sexual violence were not detected for recognizing sexual assault.

Hypotheses

1. Hypermasculinity will significantly correlate with rape proclivity among undergraduate males.

2. Rape myth acceptance will significantly correlate with rape proclivity among undergraduate males.

Method

Participants

This study used a convenience sample of 150 undergraduate males. 25 from the faculty of engineering, 27 from faculty of social sciences, 25 from faculty of law, 30 from the faculty of applied and natural sciences, 19 from faculty of pharmacy and 24 from faculty of management sciences, in Enugu State University of Science and Technology. The participants' age range from 18 to 25, with a mean age of 21.19 years and a standard deviation of 2.02. Other information relating to their department and level was obtained using the questionnaire.

Instruments

The instruments used to gather data on this study includes: the Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, Short Hypermasculine Values Questionnaire, and the likelihood to Rape Scale.

Short Hypermasculine Values Questionnaire (Archer, 2010)

Hypermasculinity was assessed with the Short Hypermasculine Values Questionnaire (HVQ-S, Archer, 2010). The questionnaire is a shortened version of the 26-item measures of stereotypical masculine values and contains 16 items, such as "Real men don't back away from bar room confrontations." Items 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 15 are reverse scored. The response options range from 1 (not at all agree) to 7 (very much agree). The mean of all item scores is calculated for the total measure score. The researcher conducted a pilot study and obtained a Cronbach alpha of .75. Hypermasculine Values questionnaire is a reliable and valid measure of hypermasculine values among men in various settings.

Updated Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011).

Rape Myth Acceptance was measured by the updated 22-item Illinois RMA Scale (McMahon & Farmer, 2011). The scale contains 22 items with updated language from the Illinois rape myth acceptance scale. It measures individual's acceptance of rape myths. It is a 5-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 (not true at all) to 5 (very much true), where higher scores indicate greater rape myth acceptance. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the measure obtained from a pilot study conducted by the researcher was .84. It also has good test-retest reliability.

Likelihood to Rape Scale (Malamuth, 1981)

Rape proclivity was measured using two questions "How likely would you be to force another person to do something sexual even if she didn't want to?" The second question "How likely would you be to have sex with another person who was too intoxicated to resist your sexual advances?" A reliability statistics conducted for the present study, showed a Cronbach alpha of .75. The items have also been used in various international studies to measure rape proclivity.

Procedure

A pilot study was conducted to validate the instruments in the present context. Voluntary participants similar to the sample for the main study from the University of Nigeria Enugu Campus (UNEC), were used for the pilot study. The Illinois rape myth acceptance scale had a mean of 70.7, a standard deviation of 14.3 and a cronbach alpha of .84. In the Hypermasculine Values Questionnaire, words in three items were changed for better understanding in the present context. In item 4, “macho” was changed to manly, in item 6, “passive” was changed to “submissive” and in item 8, “Nuke the bastards” was replaced with “destroy everyone”. The HVQ had a mean of 60.7, a standard deviation of 8.3 and a cronbach alpha of .75. The items that measured likelihood to rape had a mean of 4.6, a standard deviation of 2.4 and a cronbach alpha of .75.

Participation in the main study was voluntary and the aim and nature of the study were explained to the participants while being assured of confidentiality of their responses. A convenience sample was used and the questionnaires were shared to the available students. A Lecturer assisted with the distribution of the questionnaire and assistance was offered to the participants when required. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately after they were filled by the participants. 180 questionnaires were distributed, 169 were returned while 150 were properly filled after a recheck and were used for data analysis.

Design Statistics

The design adopted for the study was a cross-sectional survey design. Regression analysis was employed for the data analysis in addition to Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS).

Results

Table 1: Correlations of demographic variables (age and level of study), hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity.

SN	Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1	Age	21.19	2.02	-				
2	Level of Study	2.74	1.23	.72***	-			
3	Hypermasculinity	61.02	9.04	-.02	-.15**	-		
4	Rape Myth Acceptance	72.39	15.04	-.12	-.20**	.18**	-	
5	Rape Proclivity	4.79	2.57	-.003	-.011	.242***	.450***	-

***p < .001; **p < .01, *p < .05

Result of table one above showed that the demographic variables age ($r = .003$) and level of study ($r = -.011$) were not significantly related to rape proclivity. Hypermasculinity ($r = .24$, $p < .001$) was significantly positively related to rape proclivity among the participants. Rape myth acceptance equally have positive significant relationship with rape proclivity among the participants ($r = .45$, $p < .001$). Age was positively significantly related to level of study ($r = .72$, $p < .001$), and none significantly related to hypermasculinity ($r = -.02$, $p > .05$) and rape myth acceptance ($r = -.12$, $p > .05$). Level of study was significantly related to hypermasculinity ($r = -.15$, $p < .01$) and rape myth acceptance ($r = -.20$, $p < .05$). Hypermasculinity was significantly related to rape myth acceptance ($r = .18$, $p < .01$).

Table 2: Hierarchical multiple regression predicting rape proclivity from hypermasculinity and rape myth acceptance.

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Age	.01	.04	.04
Level of Study-	.02	-.05	-.05
Hypermasculinity		.25**	.18**
Rape Myth Acceptance			.44**
R	.01	.24**	.49**
R ²	.01	.06**	.24**
R ² change	.01	.06**	.18**
F value	F(2, 147)= .01	F(3, 146) = .03	F(4, 145)= 3.09

Note: *= $p < .05$

The results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression in table 2 above indicated that the demographics, age ($\beta = -.01$, $p > .05$) and level of study ($\beta = -.02$, $p > .05$) were not significant predictors of rape proclivity among participant. The demographic variables accounted for none significant 1% impact as predictors of rape proclivity ($R^2 = .01$). Hypermasculinity ($\beta = .25$, $p < .01$) entered in model 2 of the equation is a significant predictor of rape proclivity among participants. It accounted for significant 6% variance in predicting rape proclivity among participants ($\Delta R^2 = .06$, $p < .01$). Rape myth acceptance entered in model 3 significantly predicted rape proclivity among participants. It accounted for significant 44% variance in predicting rape proclivity among participants ($\Delta R^2 = .44$, $p < .05$). Therefore, increase in hypermasculinity and rape myth acceptances increases rape proclivity among participants.

Summary of Findings

1. Age and level of study were not significantly related to rape proclivity.
2. Hypermasculinity was significantly positively related to rape proclivity among participants.
3. Rape myth acceptance was significantly positively related to rape proclivity among participants.
4. Demographics, age and level of study were not significant predictors of rape proclivity among participants.
5. Hypermasculinity is a significant predicted rape proclivity among participants.
6. Rape myth acceptance significantly predicted rape proclivity among participants.

Discussion

The study examined the relationship between rape myth acceptances, hypermasculinity and rape proclivity among undergraduate males in Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu. The result of the study showed that hypermasculinity is significantly predictive of rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males, accounting for 6% variance in predicting rape proclivity. The findings of the study showed that the null hypothesis that there will be no significant relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males was rejected and the alternate hypothesis that there will be a significant relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males was accepted. This means that student's level of hypermasculinity has a relationship with their likelihood to rape. The findings of the study is consistent with the findings of Patterson (2023), which found that hypermasculinity has a significant relationship with rape proclivity with a correlation of 0.48, which is a moderate relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity. The findings of the study are however, inconsistent with the findings of Shafer et al (2018), which found that hypermasculinity was not directly

associated with sexual consent communication attitudes, intentions, or interpretations. This is contrary to other studies over the years that have found a relationship between hypermasculinity and sexual violence.

According to the social role theory, gender roles are social constructions that are influenced by cultural norms and expectations which can lead to the internalization of these roles by individuals (Eagly et al., 2000). This can result in the development of hypermasculine attitudes, which may include a strong emphasis on aggression, power, and control (Vechiu, 2019). This theory agrees with the findings of the study that hypermasculine values may reinforce male stereotypes such as seeing aggression as manly.

The second finding showed that rape myth acceptance has a positive significant predictive relationship with rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males accounting for a 44% significant variance in predicting rape proclivity. The null hypothesis that there will be no significant relationship between rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males was rejected and the alternate hypothesis that there will be a significant relationship between rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity among ESUT undergraduate males was accepted. This relationship implies that the increase in rape myth acceptance of undergraduate males will increase their likelihood to rape. The findings of the study are consistent with the findings of O'Connor (2022) which found that subgroups of men with high levels of RMA have higher mean rape proclivity scores compared to the subgroup of men with the lowest level of RMA. The findings of this study confirmed the relationship between rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity which is similar to the relationship between the variables as found in international samples.

According to Gilbert & Malone (1995), the fundamental attribution error, also called the correspondence bias, describes the tendency for observer's to attribute other people's behaviour to internal or dispositional factors and to downplay situational causes. This can contribute to the endorsement of rape myths, which are false beliefs about rape that serve to justify sexual violence and blame victims (Stormo, Lang, & Stritzke, 1997). Another theory that examines this relationship is the sexual scripting theory. Since learning about sexuality occurs through socialization, people tend to follow the "scripts" that they learned are more appropriate and expected of them (Simon & Gagnon, 1986). Sexual scripts that support dominance could have impact on the sexual relationship of a couple, and can normalize male sexual aggression.

Implications of the study

The findings of the study have many practical implications. In the findings of the relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity, it revealed a significant positive relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity. The practical implication of this is that undergraduate males' rape proclivity is heightened by hypermasculine values. The second study also revealed a significant positive relationship between rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity.

As previously stated, these values are learned and therefore can be unlearned. Universities can educate students on the consequences of sexual violence and reduce the likelihood of occurrence and prevalence by providing resources to unlearn the values found to be associated with rape proclivity. Furthermore, educational programs that address traditional beliefs systems and have negative values should be applied. The sexual scripting theory argues that sexual scripts can be formed, changed, or reinforced by various social contexts, such as family, education, and the media (Gagnon & Simon, 2003). Therefore, the family and media have an important role to play in reconfiguration of these values.

Limitations of the study

One limitation of this study is the use of participants from only one university, this makes it difficult to generalize to other populations besides from the University used. Students from other universities may have different attitudes towards the variables that were studied. A cross sectional study by Stephens et al., (2016), found that rape myth acceptance varies by country, this variation may also be evident in universities in different states and locations.

Another limitation is the reliance on self-reported data from the participants, who could likely confound the result by providing false information. Providing false information may also be due to the nature of the research which might have made participants uncomfortable in giving their answers that are not socially desirable.

Suggestions for further studies

For further studies, researchers may consider using a larger sample drawn from multiple universities in various geographical locations for better generalization of findings. In addition, researchers should consider studying other variables that may relate to rape proclivity such as personality, ethnicity, token resistance, exposure to violent media and religion. Further studies should also consider a carrying out a longitudinal study to understand the relationship between hypermasculinity and rape myth acceptance over time, and check for causality.

Summary and conclusion

The study investigated the relationship between hypermasculinity, rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity. The Illinois Rape Myth Acceptance Scale, the Hypermasculine Values Questionnaire and the Likelihood to Rape scale were the instruments used for data collection. The generated data was subjected to Hierarchical multiple regression analysis, all the demographic variables had no significant relationships with rape proclivity. The findings of the study revealed a positive significant and predictive relationship between hypermasculinity and rape proclivity which implies that an increase in hypermasculine values increases likelihood to rape among undergraduate males. Furthermore, the findings also revealed a positive significant predictive relationship between rape myth acceptance and rape proclivity. This relationship implies that an increase in rape myth beliefs will increase likelihood to rape among undergraduate males.

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