

Sexual Consent Representation in Magazines

Posted on September 21, 2018

Abstract

Sexual consent is defined as “an individual’s verbal or nonverbal expression of agreement to engage in sexual activity” (Hust, Marett, and Ren 281 para 3). From the definition, rape is then defined as sexual assault because one of the partners turns down the offer for sex. The mass media platforms are cited as being major educators among the public on matters concerning sexual consent. The effect of magazines is especially significant because, amidst the growth in technology, they command the second biggest audience (Hust, Marett, and Ren 281). A variety of magazines portray men and women in different perspectives regarding consent, adherence, and will to participate in sexual activities. Female participants are regarded as the moderators, while the males are the ever-interested participants. The magazines further affect men to forgo the importance of seeking consent from the females. The female is motivated to reject unwanted sexual favors, while other magazines create the impression of women being the determinants of consent.

Introduction

The author focuses on the power to accept or reject sexual advances by either male or female partners. Sexual consent is an opinion and hence is influenced by some other external force. This influence, the author cites, is due to the magazines that the two genders relate to. Female magazines have led women to feel liberated enough to decide whether to or not to grant sexual consent to a man. Further, the magazines bring out the female as the submissive and recipient of all sexual advances; hence, it is her responsibility to set limits. The men are the restless pursuant of the females and have no respect for consent by the women. Thus, the definition of rape and sexual consent needs research to understand.

Weaknesses of the Research

The article is important in pointing out the reason the meaning of the term rape is ambiguous. Rape is associated with sexual consent, defined as the sexual assault to lack of consent. First, the author emphasizes that consent in America cannot be legally given by an incapacitated person, such as asleep, intoxicated, or unconscious. Rape therefore includes inclusive sex between a couple without the consent of either (Hust, Marett, and Ren 285). In relation to consent, the people who from the research showed little intention in seeking consent were mythical about the definition of rape. The research on the students shows that the magazines affect men in such a way they seek sexual activity and disregard the consent of their female partners (Hust, Marett, and Ren 287 para 2). The

findings of the article insinuate that men have higher chances of being the rapists while women are the victims. This finding is contradictory to the findings from teen magazines, which encourage women to dress provocatively to attract sexual attention (Hust, Marett, and Ren 282). The author leaves the issue unclarified to the readers.

The research in the article is biased because it is not inclusive of different cultures and regions. The article relies on data collected from students in a common area and school. Also, the research generalizes the data collected from individuals of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Thus, the data collected is incomplete and non-specific. A complete comparison requires that information for both parties be presented. The hypothesis regarding the effect of exposure to magazines on male participants is unproven, but the effect of exposure on women is explained (Hust, Marett, and Ren 285). This limits the findings of the research team as biased.

Strengths of the Research

The research focuses on proving the effects of magazines on sexual decisions, consent, and the information in the magazines. The research points to the results of exposure of male magazines to men, where they focus on sexual prowess rather than consent. This explains the men's disregard for consent from women in seeking sexual activities (Hust, Marett, and Ren 287). On the contrary, women's magazines focus on empowering women to make decisions on consent. The finding explains the importance of the research in teaching women to adhere to safe sexual practices while conceding to sexual activities (Hust, Marett, and Ren 287). The research proves the significance of the magazines by pointing out the different information relayed to male and female readers.

The author claims that the magazines have a high impact on male and female readers. Further, the author alleges that the affected people are aged between the ages of 18-24 years. These magazines have a direct effect on the "knowledge, attitude, and beliefs related to sexual topics" (Hust, Marett, and Ren 283 para 2). The knowledge further influences the decisions young people make regarding safe sexual activities, the use of condoms, and health-related issues with sexual activities. It is for these reasons that the author is convinced that the magazines affect the sexual consent differences between men and women. While male magazines emphasize the importance of sexual activities, female magazines emphasize the role of women in giving or denying consent for sexual activities (Hust, Marett, and Ren 282 para 2). The author successfully explains the important roles that these magazines play in the development process of the younger generations.

Suggestion to Weaknesses

The research documented and generalized data from the 313 student participants. There were participants from different racial backgrounds who might have shown different results for different people (Hust, Marett, and Ren 283). Thus, the research should table the results with regard to race

and regions of origin. The author does not clarify the rape issue but instead leaves the decision to the reader (Hust, Marett and Ren 286). The research would clarify the rape issue only if the sixth hypothesis on adherence to sexual consent. This support of the hypothesis or denial will prove the male participant should or should not be the one to blame.

References

Hust, Stacey J.T., et al. "Establishing and Adhering to Sexual Consent: The Association between." *JOURNAL OF SEX RESEARCH* 51.3 (2014): 280-290. Print.