

Sexual Violence against Men in Conflicts: A Neglected Serious Issue

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Abstract : Cases of sexual violence against men have been reported in at least twenty-five conflict situations in history. However, there is a paucity of academic literature and minimal media, policy and legal discussions on sexual violence against men. Most studies and discussions remain locked in the 'male perpetrators, female victims' paradigm. Male victims continue to suffer the consequences of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings in silence. A rigorous narrative systematic review of the literature revealed few studies on the subject and those that exist have a narrow focus on rape as the only form of sexual violence despite the existence of other forms of sexual violence that have equally devastating effects. This paper argues that while research and discussions on sexual violence against women should continue, it is time to conduct rigorous mixed methods research to understand the experiences of men and boys survivors of sexual violence. There is a need to study sexual violence more broadly, without limiting it to rape, and to understand the determinants and health implications of sexual violence perpetrated on men. The paper concludes by proposing a research approach that gives voice to the experiences of male survivors of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings.

Keywords : conflict, male survivors, post-conflict settings, sexual violence

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