

**PRAGMATIC ACTS AND STRATEGIES IN THE CRIME NARRATIVES OF
ACCUSED RAPISTS IN AGODI CUSTODIAL CENTRE, IBADAN, NIGERIA**

BY;

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

This thesis is evidence of Jesus' unfailing love to me, indeed, he is my God and deserves the centre stage. I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Chief Mrs Egunola Omole, my daughter, Moyinoluwa Jocelyn (Momo Bloom), my late father, Chief Oladiran Omole and my late grand uncle, Dr Lawrence Omole (Grandpa).

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ABSTRACT

Crime narratives of Accused Rapists (ARs) in correctional facilities, like Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, offers insights into confessional cues that could aid administration of justice in Nigeria. Existing linguistic studies in Nigeria have examined investigator's communicative acts through the identification of power play, questioning, deception and concealment strategies in coercive investigative discourse, with little attention paid to non-coercive investigative discourse involving ARs in correctional centres. Therefore, this study was designed to examine language use in ARs' crime narratives, with a view to determining the pragmatic acts, the goals of the acts involved and the pragmatic strategies deployed to influence investigative interviewer's (II) pragmatic interpretation of the crime narratives.

Jacob Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory was adopted as the framework, while the descriptive design was used. Purposive sampling was deployed for the selection of Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, of the Nigerian Correctional Service, Oyo State Command, because it is the facility holding most of the command's ARs. Fifty ARs approved by the Controller of Corrections Oyo State Command were interviewed using Preparation and Planning, Engage and Explain, Account, Closure and Evaluation (PEACE) model. The interviews were audio-recorded. The data were subjected to pragmatic analysis.

The evoked practs were denying, distancing and justifying. Denying was evoked through descriptive/explanatory and emphatic statements to contend the negative image attached to ARs to instigate doubt of the rape accusation. Distancing was engaged to show ARs' disconnection from the crime situation and the victims, while justifying presented rationalised arguments to reduce the severity of the crime. The practs were employed to achieve three goals, namely impression-controlling (for face-maintaining and face-saving), allegation-refuting and offence-minimising, to avoid the punishments attached to rape. The pragmatic strategies deployed were identity-framing, identity-reframing, attention-seeking, information-controlling, crime-relabelling and attention diversion. Identity-framing drew on indirect referencing by association with generalised stereotypes (age group and social values) suggestive of the associated beliefs for maintenance of the supposed trustworthy profile; while identity-reframing depended on crime admission for redefinition of self. Attention-seeking (fishing for pity, exaggerating self-worth and self-soothing) was relied on for emotional exploitation, in order to gain emotional support through personal stories shared to self-prove for investigator's validation. Information-controlling (sharing extraneous information and withholding information) was positioned to intentionally conceal clear and concise information about the crime from the investigative interviewer to show innocence or feign ignorance. Crime-relabelling drew on stereotypic allusion to sexual relationship for crime redefinition, where the ARs shared same status – "the adult status" with their underage victims as if they were in a sexual relationship between two consenting adults. Attention diversion (playing the victim and blaming the victim) was relied on by the ARs to attack the image and character of the victims and their parents as crime enablers to deflect attention from the ARs.

The crime narratives by Accused Rapists in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Nigeria, deploy practs and pragmatic strategies to influence narrative interpretation in their favour. Therefore, investigators need to take cognisance of the narrative-influencing tactics of accused rapists to prevent perversion of justice.

Keywords: Crime narratives, Accused rapists, Investigative discourse

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title page	i
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	vi
Table of contents	vii
Abbreviations	x
Gail Jefferson's (1984) Transcription notation	xi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background to the study	1
1.2 Nigerian Correctional Service: Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria	3
1.3 Statement of the problem	4
1.4 Aim and objectives	5
1.5 Scope of the study	5
1.6 Significance of the study	6
1.7 Definition of terms	7
1.8 Chapter summary	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	
2.0 Preamble	8
2.1 Conceptual review	8
2.1.1 Rape	8
2.1.1.1 Statistics of rape in Nigeria	10
2.1.2 Communication	11
2.1.2.1 Verbal communication	12
2.1.2.2 Nonverbal communication	13
2.1.3 Language	15
2.1.4 Applied linguistics	16
2.1.5 Forensic linguistics: history	18
2.1.5.1 Forensic linguistics: definition and overview	19
2.1.6 Pragmatics	22

2.1.6.1	Importance of pragmatics in criminal investigation	23
2.1.6.2	Pragmatic influence	24
2.1.6.3	Pragmatic manipulative influence	25
2.1.7	Narrative and narrative identity	28
2.1.8	Interrogation in Nigeria	29
2.1.9	Investigative interviewing	35
2.1.9.1	PEACE model of investigative interviewing	36
2.2	Empirical Review	39
2.2.1	Studies on police/suspect interrogation	39
2.2.2	Studies on investigative interviewing of offenders	43
2.2.3	Studies on crime narrative identity	51
2.2.5	Appraisal of the literature reviewed	57
2.3	Theoretical framework	57
2.3.1	Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory	57
2.4	Chapter summary	63
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY		
3.0	Preamble	64
3.1	Research design	64
3.2	Study population	64
3.3	Sampling technique	64
3.4	Nature and methods of data collection	65
3.5	Method of data analysis	66
3.6	Ethical consideration	67
3.7	Chapter summary	68
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION		
4.0	Preamble	69
4.1	Pragmatic acts in accused rapists' crime narrative	69
4.1.1	Denying pract	69
4.1.2	Distancing pract	78
4.1.3	Justifying pract	87
4.2	Pragmatic goals of accused rapists' crime narratives	94
4.2.1	Impression controlling goal	94
4.2.1.1	Impression controlling goal for face-maintaining	94
4.2.1.2	Impression controlling for face-saving	97

4.2.2	Allegation-refuting goal	100
4.2.3	Offence-minimising goal	102
4.3	Pragmatic strategies in ARs' crime narratives	105
4.3.1	Identity-framing	105
4.3.2	Identity-reframing	110
4.3.3	Crime re-labelling	115
4.3.4	Attention-seeking	131
4.3.4.1	Fishing for pity	132
4.3.4.2	Exaggerated self-worth	138
4.3.4.3	Self-soothing	143
4.3.5	Information control	148
4.3.5.1	Sharing extraneous information	148
4.3.5.2	Withholding information	156
4.3.6	Attention diversion	165
4.3.6.1	Playing the victim	165
4.3.6.2	Victim blaming	169
4.4	Discussion of findings	173
4.5	Chapter summary	181
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS		
5.0	Preamble	182
5.1	Summary of the study	182
5.1.1	Summary of findings	182
5.2	Conclusion	185
5.3	Recommendations	186
5.4	Contributions to knowledge	187
5.5	Suggestions for further studies	188
REFERENCES		189
APPENDICES		202
Appendix I: Transcribed Crime Narratives of 39 Accused Rapists		202
Appendix II: Letter of Completion of Research Data Collection from Nigerian Correctional Service		231

ABBREVIATIONS

ARs	-	Accused rapists
FL	-	Forensic linguistics
HRW	-	Human rights watch
INF	-	Inference
II	-	Investigative interviewer
IPO	-	Investigating police officer
NCHR	-	Norwegian centre for human rights
NOPRIN	-	Network on police reform in Nigeria
NPF	-	Nigeria Police Force
SCK	-	Shared cultural knowledge
SSK	-	Shared situational knowledge
SVAWGs	-	Sexual violence against women and girls
REF	-	Reference
REL	-	Relevance
RULAAC	-	Rule of law and accountability advocacy centre
UNICEF	-	United nations children's fund
VCE	-	Voice

Gail Jefferson's (1984) transcription notation

- (.) - A brief pause, usually less than 0.2 seconds.
- ,
- >text< - Indicates that the enclosed speech was delivered more rapidly than usual for the speaker
- .
- ALL CAPS - Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.
- (text) - Speech which is unclear or in doubt in the transcript.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Sexual violence against women and girls (SVAWGs), particularly rape, is alarmingly prevalent and deadly in Nigeria (Ezeilo, 2020; Amnesty International, 2021). The violent rape and murder of Vera Omozuwa, Barakat Bello, and Azeezat Shomuyiwa in 2020 sparked global outrage, demanding urgent action against SVAWGS (*Punch*, 2021). Recent statistics by Lagos State Government and UNICEF revealed that one in four Nigerian girls is sexually abused before the age of 18 (*Premium Times*, 2021). Also, in 2020, United Nations Women reported 11,200 rape cases, including children (*Punch*, 2021). Similarly, the culture of impunity due to stigmatisation and victim-blaming contributes to this surge (Ezeilo, 2020; Amnesty International, 2021), with inadequate investigations and flawed legal proceedings (Joseph and Bamigboje, 2022; *Premium Times*, 2019; Amnesty International, 2021) hindering justice administration. These statistics and systemic issues accentuate the need for combative intervention against sexual violence, in order to create a safer environment for women and girls in Nigeria.

Forensic linguistics (FL) is an innovative investigative approach that can be implemented to address SVAWGS in Nigeria. In enhancing credible criminal investigations, FL draws from other subfields like pragmatics, stylistics, dialectology, and phonetics (McMenamin, 2002; Olsson, 2008; Ali, 2020). At the core of applying FL to crimes like rape is crime narrative, emerging from investigative interviewing or investigative interrogation of victims, suspects and witnesses. The circumstances that surround rape are mostly known to victims and perpetrators alone, therefore, applying FL to crime narratives of suspects and victims will enhance the elicitation of evidential cues, that could aid credible identification of suspect(s).

Linguistic studies on crime narratives emerged from recognising language's crucial role in criminal investigation. Language is crucial in interpreting linguistic behaviour

of participants during investigation. Globally, scholars have examined power asymmetry, confessions, deception and credibility (Sadiq, 2011; Kebbell and Daniel, 2006; Masip and Herrero, 2013; Sunday and Akinrinlola, 2017). These works provide the framework to understand the language dynamics employed within investigative interrogation and investigative interviewing discourses.

Investigative interrogation is adjudged coercive and risky for suspects. This prompted some western countries like the UK, Australia, Canada and the Netherlands to adopt investigative interviewing, a non-coercive and ethical technique to enhance justice administration (Bull and Rachlew, 2020; Chung, Ng and Ding, 2022). However, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) continues to use interrogative techniques despite criticisms and information obtained is still admitted in courts, even without any other substantial evidence (Maliki, 2009; Human Rights Watch, 2012; Amnesty International, 2014). Additionally, investigative discourse studies like Sadiq (2011), Farinde, Olajuyigbe and Adegbite (2015), and Sunday and Akinrinlola (2017) attest to this. These studies focused on investigator's communicative behaviour through the identification of power play, questioning, deception and negotiation strategies in police/suspect interrogation, with little attention paid to investigative interviewing of Accused Rapists (ARs) in correctional facilities.

This landscape emphasises the need to engage investigative interviewing with ARs to show it as a more effective alternative to interrogation utilised perpetually by the NPF. This is because investigative interviewing techniques have the components to enhance the identification of suspects through crime narratives. However, language maneuvering poses a risk when engaging suspects like ARs with investigative interviewing, as ARs can use their crime narratives to achieve selfish implicit goals.

Societal stigma, limited witnesses, scant medical evidence and justice perversion are reasons that could propel ARs to strategically weave language to create divergence between their expressed intentions and their true motives. Therefore, this study applies Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory to ARs' crime narratives, with a view to determining the pragmatic acts, the goals of the acts involved and the pragmatic strategies deployed by ARs to influence investigative interviewers' perception and interpretation of the crime narratives. This endeavour contributes significantly to the

broader context of forensic discourse studies and justice administration, in the fight against SVAWs in Nigeria.

1.2 Nigerian Correctional Service: Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan

There are about 244 correctional facilities in Nigeria (Nigerian Correctional Service, 2022) and they are operated and maintained by the Nigerian Correctional Service under the supervision of the Ministry of Interiors and Civil Defence, Immigration and Correctional Service. Until August, 2019, correctional centres were known as prisons, before it was changed by President Muhammadu Buhari after signing the 2019 Nigerian Correctional Service Acts into law (Ogadinma, Adejumo and Festus, 2015; Orakwe and Chigbogu, 2021). However, correctional facilities started as detention centres to native authority prisons, then to the current federal system available today. This modern Nigerian Correctional Service dates back to 1861, a year when Western-style prisons emerged following the declaration of Lagos as a colony. At the time, prisons were basically serving the interests of the colonial administration for labour and public works (Orakwe and Chigbogu, 2021). Because the early prisons lacked a clear penal policy, they primarily focused on containment rather than rehabilitation. It was in 1934 that meaningful efforts towards modernisation started, during the tenure of Colonel V. L. Mabb. He established a unified structure to enhance the overall conditions within the prisons, signifying a shift towards an organised approach to imprisonment and treatment (Orakwe and Chigbogu, 2021). R. H. Dolan succeeded Mabb and his tenure introduced changes aimed at rehabilitation. Vocational training, visits by relatives, educational classes, and other initiatives were introduced to enhance prisoners' well-being and prospects for reintegration into the society (Orakwe and Chigbogu, 2021). Similarly, in 1972 decree No.9 was introduced, outlining the goals of Prisons. This decree enhanced secure custody, reform, and rehabilitation. Likewise, the Nigerian Correctional Service Act of 2019 introduced changes that aligned with best practices internationally, aiming to enhance the Nigerian penal system (Ulo, 2019). The decision to gather data from Nigerian Correctional Service, as opposed to alternatives like a police station from the NPF, establishes an ethically controlled and contextually pertinent setting. Particularly, this choice serves to underscore the credibility of investigative interviewing as an ethically humane approach for eliciting non-coercive information from crime suspects, including ARs, in contrast to the prevailing coercive methods like interrogation often used by the Nigeria Police. The

structured environment and ethical dimensions positioned correctional facilities as the strategically valuable option for procuring comprehensive and dependable data that harmonises with this study's aim and objectives. Therefore, out of the 244 correctional facilities in Nigeria, Oyo State plays host to Agodi Custodial Centre where the data used for this study was collected. However, there are 3 other correctional facilities in Oyo State command and they are Abolongo in Oyo town, farm centre in Ogbomoso, and one in Olomi that is still under construction (Nigerian Correctional Service Agodi, 2020). Significantly, Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan was selected for this study because the facility houses most of the command's accused rapists. The facility was established in 1895. It houses low to medium grade criminals. The offences range from common theft to rape and burglary. Agodi Custodial Centre has the capacity to hold 389 inmates but at the time the data was collected, it holds about 1000 inmates, out of which close to 100 inmates are sex offenders either as Awaiting Trials Persons (ATPs) or convicts (Nigerian Correctional Service Agodi, 2018).

1.3 Statement of the problem

The surge in SVAWGs, especially rape poses critical and grave threat to the safety and dignity of women and girls in Nigeria. Despite wide media coverage and global condemnation, violent rape still persists. Therefore, urgent intervention is imperative, through enhanced investigative processes. Although existing linguistic studies on investigative discourse in Nigeria have shed light on the state and dynamics of investigative process, particularly, the dominant usage of interrogation by the NPF to acquire information from suspects as against investigative interviewing, a non-coercive and ethical method. Significantly, linguistic studies involving crime suspects like rapists have been largely overlooked too.

Specifically, existing linguistic studies on investigative discourse in Nigeria predominantly focus on investigator's communicative acts in coercive investigative discourse with little attention paid to the communicative acts of crime suspects, especially, those of accused rapists. These studies reveal the existence of power play (Farinde, 1997; Sadiq, 2011; Farinde, Olajuyigbe and Adegbite, 2015; Ajayi, 2016), rapport building, concealment and negotiation strategies (Sunday and Akinrinlola, 2017; Akinrinlola, 2017; 2021) and the various questioning forms (Farinde, Oyedokun-Aliu, and Iroegbu, 2021) that exist in police/suspect interrogation. In contrast, studies on non-conceive discourse have made great strides abroad than in

Nigeria. Some explored the communicative behaviour of non-real life crime suspects (Masip and Herrero, 2013) and real life crime suspects (Leahy-Harland and Bull, 2017; Selepe, Lindegger and Govender, 2020), but not within the framework of pragmatics.

Consequently, there is sparsity of literature on non-coercive investigative discourse within the framework of pragmatics in Nigeria. The distinctive structure and prevalent communicative features in the crime narratives of ARs during investigative interviewing sessions are inadequately accounted for. Failure to address these gaps may result into missing out on vital evidential cues that could undermine the comprehensive understanding of ARs' crime narratives, which could potentially hinder the development of effective investigative techniques, crucial to the administration of justice towards combating rape in Nigeria. Therefore, this study seeks to address this gaps by examining language use in ARs' crime narratives in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, with a view to determining the pragmatic acts, the goals of the acts involved and the strategies deployed by ARs to influence investigative interviewer's interpretation of the crime narratives.

1.4 Aim and objectives

The aim of the study was to investigate pragmatic acts and strategies in the crime narratives of accused rapists (ARs) in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan. This aim is achieved through the following objectives, to:

1. identify the pragmatic acts evoked by ARs in their crime narratives.
2. discuss the goals of the acts involved by ARs in their crime narratives; and
3. examine the strategies deployed by ARs to influence investigative interviewer's perception and pragmatic interpretation of the crime narratives.
4. discuss the functions and implications ARs' practs and strategies have for language of rape-specific crime narratives.

1.5 Scope of the study

In Nigeria, correctional facilities like Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, provide suitable environment for accessing crime suspects, like ARs, who can provide firsthand insights into their crime narratives. Therefore, within the framework of Jacob Mey's (2001) pragmatic acts theory, this study was limited to the exploration of pragmatic

acts, the goals of the engaged acts and strategies deployed by ARs in their crime narratives in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Oyo State. This enhanced the exploration of how ARs attempt to influence investigative interviewer's perception and interpretation of their crime narratives. The study also discussed the functions and implication of the identified pragmatic acts, goals and strategies deployed in the crime narratives for the administration of justice in Nigeria.

1.6 Significance of the study

This study will contribute to the existing knowledge of linguistics on investigative discourse in Nigeria and beyond, specifically about how accused rapists (ARs) can use language to structure their narratives to influence the investigative interviewers' (IIs') perception and pragmatic interpretation of their crime narratives. Particularly, this will contribute to the field of pragmatics and expand our understanding of language use in the context of criminal narratives.

The findings of the study will have practical implications for the criminal justice system in Nigeria, especially in correctional facilities like Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Oyo State. Understanding the pragmatic acts and strategies used by ARs can provide valuable insights for II, law enforcement agencies, and legal practitioners. By identifying specific linguistic cues and patterns in ARs' narratives, this study can help in evaluating the credibility, reliability, and potential deception in the crime narratives of ARs. Such insights can enhance the accuracy of investigative interviews, evidence gathering, and decision-making processes, ultimately aiding the administration of justice.

Furthermore, the significance of the study extends to the broader societal context. By examining the pragmatic acts of ARs and their strategies, the research can contribute to the prevention and detection of similar crimes. Understanding the linguistic patterns and evidential cues employed by offenders (and in this case ARs) can assist in the identification of potential high-risk individuals and the development of targeted intervention programs. The study's findings may also inform the design of educational programs to improve the pragmatic competence and training of investigative interviewers and professionals working in the criminal justice system.

Therefore, this study would be made available to the Federal government especially the judiciary, Nigeria Police Force, Nigerian Correctional Service, Nigerian Bar

Association and NGOs. The social media would also be used to project the findings of this study. Similarly, the study would be presented at conferences and research articles from the study would be published in both local and international academic journals.

In summary, the significance of this study lies in its potential to advance both theoretical knowledge in pragmatics and practical applications in the field of criminal justice. By examining the pragmatic acts and strategies in the crime narratives of ARs in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, the study will deepen understanding of language use, inform investigative practices, and contribute to evidence-based approaches in the administration of justice, ultimately benefiting both the academic and professional communities and society as a whole.

1.7 Definition of terms

1. **Accused rapists (ARs):** In this study, accused rapists are the offenders accused of sexual violence against women and girls and are awaiting trials.
2. **Crime narratives:** In this study, crime narratives are the accounts given by ARs about the crime they were accused of committing. The stories entail details surrounding the actual crime and the participants (accused offenders and victims), however, it is from the point of view of the ARs.
3. **Investigative interviewer (II):** In this study, an investigative interviewer is someone who interviews crime suspects (and in this case ARs) during the investigation of a crime.
4. **Sexual violence against women and girls (SVAWGs):** This is all forms of sexual violence against women and girls. They include rape, sexual molestation, sexual harassment and genital mutilation.

1.8 Chapter summary

In this chapter, this study was introduced through the background details about the issues surrounding rape in Nigeria and the state of existing linguistic studies, aim and objectives, significance and scope. The focus of the next chapter is the review of relevant studies and concepts, and the theoretical framework of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Preamble

This chapter presents the review of relevant literature and the theoretical framework for this research. Empirical studies in the areas of crime narrative, interrogation and investigative interviewing are reviewed. The theory adopted in this study is Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory.

2.1 Conceptual review

In this section, the concepts that are crucial for the comprehension of this thesis are introduced and explained clearly. The purpose of the following concise explanations is to assist the reader in comprehending some technical aspects of the work that may seem technical.

2.1.1 Rape

Rape is a type of sexual violence that is globally prevalent (Eze, 2013). The Federal Bureau of Intelligence (FBI, 2017) defines it as penetration no matter how small of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the victim's knowledge or consent. Also, Medlineplus (2016) describes rape as a sexual intercourse that is forced on a person without his or her consent. It could actually involve force or the threat of physical force. It may also be perpetrated against someone who is unable to give consent. It was further explained that the rape may be vaginal or anal or oral and that it may involve the use of a body part or an object. Similarly, *Legal dictionary* (2016) describes rape as a criminal offence; a forced sexual relation with a person against such a person's will. The act is typically carried out by physical force, coercion, or abuse of position, or even against a person that is unable to give valid consent, such as someone who is unresponsive, incapacitated, has an intellectual disability, or is under the age of legal consent.

Furthermore, rape can also be defined explicitly as any non-consensual vaginal, anal, or oral penetration of another person with any bodily part or object. This can be done by anyone, known or unknown to the survivor, within relationships and marriages, as well as during times of armed conflict (Office of justice programme - OJP, 2004). It was further explained that rape is usually a forced and or violent and unwanted assertion of power over the victim; however, it was once thought to be caused by unbridled sexual desire (OJP, 2004). Usually for most rapists, it is not always about the sex, it is more about power, controlling another human being. In fact, rapists may use drugs to impair a victim's ability to fight back. Similarly, this study considers rape as a criminal act in which an unwilling person or underage but willing, male or female, is unconsensually made to perform a sexual act by force, verbal coercion, threat of life, or blackmailed in a relatively secluded place. All of these definitions of rape agree on one thing and that is: rape is a crime that thrives on force and the lack of victim's consent/ legal consent, thereby, making it punishable under any nation's law. Rape is not just being physically forced into a sexual act, it also includes pressure that makes someone feel like they had no choice but to have sex (Disrespectnobody, 2021).

There are different kinds of rape and when they are categorised according to the perpetrator's relationship with the victim and the context of the sexual assault, they could be: date rape, gang rape, marital rape, child sexual abuse (incest inclusive), prison rape, acquaintance rape, war rape and statutory rape, corrective rape, and male-on-female rape, male on male rape, female on male rape, female on female rape (D'Arcy, 2015). This implies that anyone can be a victim of rape, whether they are women, men, children, straight or gay or lesbian. However, this study only considers rape against women and girls, regardless of whether it is gang rape, adult-to-child rape, or adult-to-adult rape.

In Nigeria, rape is a widespread decadence that has become alarmingly more prevalent (Amnesty International, 2021). In fact, it has led to the death of many. In 2020, the violent rape and murder of Vera Omozuwa, Barakat Bello, and Azeezat Shomuyiwa commanded national protests, global attention and a call for urgent and appropriate actions against SVAWGs in Nigeria (Amnesty International, 2021). In a recent statistics conducted by Lagos State Government in conjunction with UNICEF, it was submitted that one in four girls is sexually abused before the age of 18 in Nigeria (*Premium Times*, 2021). Nigeria's high rate of rape and other sexual violence have

continued to draw the attention of the government, civil societies, non-governmental organisations, human rights activists and the society at large.

The causes of the rise in rape cases in Nigeria are intricate and numerous but interrelated. Chief among the causes of this prevalent act is the culture of impunity (where rapists are infrequently held accountable for their crimes because victims are stigmatised and blamed by the society), weak legal frameworks (that are limited to protect the rights of women and girls) and weak legal proceedings resulting into delayed prosecution of offenders. These have made victims to feel responsible for their own misfortune and are faced with prejudice and social exclusion. Consequently, victims have found silence a better option to making a report of the crime to the police. Socio-cultural factors and gender inequality also play significant roles, especially the continuous perpetuation of harmful attitudes and norms that condone sexual violence. Traditional beliefs and practices always prioritise male dominance and control over the female gender. Likewise, poverty and economic factors exacerbate the vulnerability of women and girls, as they may be forced into precarious situations that make them more vulnerable to sexual violence. Furthermore, the influence of patriarchy and power dynamics within the society create a climate conducive to rape. Apparently, lack of comprehensive sex education also plays a role in the leading causes of rape in Nigeria. This leaves individuals unable to understand and manage consent issues, thereby, leading to misunderstandings and harmful behaviours.

Rape has serious physical, psychological and emotional consequences for its survivors. Victims often suffer physical injuries, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. The psychological trauma can be long-lasting and can lead to depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and even suicidal thoughts. In addition, socioeconomic impact of rape on its victim is profound, as they may experience difficulty accessing education, employment and health care, enabling a vicious cycle of disadvantage.

2.1.1.1 Statistics of rape in Nigeria

Nigeria accounts for 60% of all children trafficked from Africa to Europe in 2004 and between 2012 and 2013, approximately 30% of women in Nigeria experienced some form of domestic violence (Women at Risk International Foundation (WARIF, 2014). Also, Nigerian national survey on violence against children confirmed that one in four

women reported experiencing sexual violence in their childhood, with around 70% reporting more than one incident of sexual violence (WARIF, 2014). The same study found that 24.8% of women aged 18-24 experienced sexual abuse before the age of 18, out of which 5.0% sought help and only 3.5% received any services (WARIF, 2014). Similarly, in 2015, UNICEF reports that one in every four girls and one in every ten boys in Nigeria have experienced sexual violence before the age of 18 and that Northwest, Northeast, and Southwest Nigeria have the highest percentage of rape cases in Nigeria in 2019 (United Nations Development Programme - UNDP, 2020).

Furthermore, Africa Unite, an arm of the UN Women campaign against gender-based violence, reports in 2019 that 45% of women in Sub-Saharan Africa have been sexually assaulted by someone they may have known at some point in their lives (*Punch*, 2020). Also, there has been an unprecedented increase in the incidence of sexual violence in almost all Nigerian communities over the last two years. In fact, the Inspector General of the Nigeria Police reveals that 717 rape cases were reported from January to June, 2020 (*Punch*, 2020). Moreover, National Gender-based Violence dashboard of the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs recorded that there were 155 reported rape cases between January 2020 and April 2021. In its 2020 annual report, the National Human Rights Commission reported receiving 11,200 reported rape cases (Amnesty International, 2021).

2.1.2 Communication

Communication is an essential part of human interaction (DeVito, 2019). Giffin and Patten (1976) and Adler and Rodman (2006) concur that communication is the process of creating meaning and also imparting it. Communication is the channel for the exchange of ideas and information between group members (Griffin and Patten, 1976; McLean, 2018). DeVito (2019) says it empowers the exchange of thoughts, information and feelings, aiding meaningful connections between individuals. Adler and Rodman's (2006) definition of communication is more comprehensive. They describe it as the act of exchanging ideas, information, or messages from one person or place to another through words or signs that the parties involved can comprehend. They reiterate that communication is significant to people because it fosters collaboration and understanding. A society can only work effectively through communication. In fact, one of the components of communication is language. Language promotes easy communication and the exchange of ideas. Different

languages are spoken all over the world. These languages reflect the culture and diversity of people in different regions. Communication consists of seven main elements, namely sender, message, encoding, channel, receiver, decoding and feedback.

The above is a generalised description of communication. Hence, there is a need to describe the aspect of communication that this study focuses on and that is interpersonal communication. Adler and Rodman (2006) define interpersonal communication as a face-to-face communication in which both the form and content of the communication reflect individuals' personal characteristics as well as their social roles and relationships. They argue that interpersonal communication is also partially or fully intentional. That is, it is the intentional production of words, either verbal/written or non-verbal behaviour. Therefore, it can be asserted that there are two main classifications of communication, namely: verbal communication (which can be oral or written) and non-verbal communication.

2.1.2.1 Verbal communication

Verbal communication has to do with language, either spoken or written (Adler and Rodman, 2006; DeVito, 2019). By this, we mean our use of words, either written or spoken. Humans rely on verbal communication to exchange information with one another. Oral communication can be described as a spoken message in face-to-face conversations, group discussions, consultations, interviews, radio and television programmes. It can be formal and informal. Written communication can also be considered as a written notice/words (McLean, 2018). People make decisions about the word they are comfortable with based on the context and the audience. These differences, then, illustrate the pragmatics of our verbal communication (Lumen Learning, 2020). Verbal communication helps people perform several important functions in their day to day living. In fact, our existence is closely related to how we communicate. We use verbal communication to define our reality, organise, think, and shape attitudes (Department of Communication, Indiana State University, 2021) because verbal communication defines reality, everything from ideas, emotions, experiences, thoughts, objects, and people are reflected (Blumer, 1969). Therefore, it can be said that through verbal communication, people label and define what they experience in their lives. Also, the choices they make about what to focus on, how to

explain what they experience and how it affects how they understand and live in their world are expressed through language.

In addition, verbal communication helps our thoughts and imagination. The ability to reason and communicate is most commonly used to distinguish humans from other animals. With the use of language (a component of communication) we are able to reflect on the past, contemplate the present and the future. Humans develop memories by using language. Similarly, verbal communication helps shape attitudes about the world. The way people use language shapes their attitude towards the world around them. For this reason, Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf (1920s-30s) developed the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis to explain that language determines thought. People who speak different languages or use language differently think differently (Whorf, 1956; Sapir, 1949). When people name, explain, or evaluate events in their lives, they use the symbols of the language they speak. Their use of these symbols to represent their realities affecting their perspectives and attitudes towards the world. It makes sense, then that the more sophisticated our repertoire of symbols as humans are, the more sophisticated our worldview can be for us (Department of Communication, Indiana State University, 2021).

Based on the above, it is very striking that the way we communicate as humans (especially through the use of language) shows who we are, that is, it shows our identity. This simply implies that many inferences can be drawn from a person's use of language. For this reason, it is of paramount importance in this study to examine the language behaviours of accused rapists during investigative discourse. Therefore, the research light in this study is strictly focused on verbal communication of accused rapists only.

2.1.2.2 Nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication is the way we communicate without using words (McLean, 2018), for example, our hands, posture, eyes, can not speak, but they communicate a lot more about us (especially our emotions) than we speak (Adler and Rodman, 2006; Burgoon, Guerrero and Floyd, 2016). This communication mode is not the same as verbal communication; which is governed by rules with a common system of symbols (Adler and Rodman, 2006). Rather, nonverbal communication is mostly spontaneous, unintentional, and may not follow formalised systems of symbolic rules (Adler and

Rodman, 2006). There are different types of non-verbal communication. They are facial expressions, body movement and posture, gestures, eye contact, touch, space and voice (Burgoon, Guerrero and Floyd, 2016). Each of these types of nonverbal communication would be discussed in turn.

The first type of nonverbal communication to be looked at is the facial expression. The human face is very expressive. It transports countless emotions and information without saying a word (Adler and Rodman, 2016). Facial expression is universal, especially the facial expression for happiness, sadness, anger, surprise, fear, disgust, and they are the same in all cultures (Ekman, Friesen and Tomkins, 1971). The next nonverbal communication is body movement and posture. The way we move and carry ourselves as human beings provides a lot of information about us in general and how we feel in or about a communicative exchange (Adler and Rodman, 2016). The non-verbal cues here include posture and the subtle movements we make.

Gestures are another type of nonverbal communication. Here we can wave, point, wave or use our hands when we are in a deep conversation or argument. We humans often express ourselves with gestures without thinking (Burgoon, Guerrero and Floyd, 2016). However, different types of gestures can have different meanings in the different cultures around the world. Through eye contact, we can also communicate how we feel about someone, something, or a situation. These feelings include interest in something or someone, affection, hostility, or attraction. Eye contact improves or keeps the conversation flowing and helps gauge the listener's interest or response (Argyle and Cook, 1976). Similarly, touch is another mode of non-verbal communication and a lot can be communicated through it (Field, 2001). These include a weak or firm handshake, a warm hug, a patronising slap on the back or on the head, or a grab on the shoulder or arm.

In addition, proxemics/space is also a kind of nonverbal communication. The amount of space we have with people around us in a conversation can determine how we feel (Hall, 1966), we can feel threatened or relieved. It can also convey signals of intimacy and affection or aggression and dominance. Finally, our tone of voice can also make people feel angry, confident, threatened, or show affection in a particular communicative exchange. Similarly, people pay attention to timing and speed, how loud we speak, our tone and intonation, and sounds that convey understanding. Because our tone of voice can make people feel something, therefore, it shows how we

are feeling, as well as avail an indication of how sarcastic, angry, affectionate, or self-confident we are in a conversation.

2.1.3 Language

Language is the main component of communication and the human means of communication. It is the major tool people use to communicate their thoughts and desires; which can then be studied to reflect who we are. Odebunmi (2016) says that language is a distinctive human ability that has given humanity expressiveness. It allows people to let their minds run wild and engage in interactive associations. Odebunmi reiterates that language binds the members of a language community together in ongoing interrelationships as it is the instrument of sociocultural identification.

Odebunmi (2016) reiterates that language does not support our thoughts and actions alone; it also reflects our culture. The cultural domiciliation nature of language situates each language in a culture. Oyeleye (2004:172) goes on to expatiate that if we do not have this opportunity, it will seem impossible to exchange ideas. This implies that language animates our thoughts, actions and even our customs and traditions (culture).

Another peculiar feature of language according to Barber (1999) is that language enables us to influence the behaviour of others and influence it down to the smallest detail, thereby enabling human cooperation positively or negatively. From the above descriptions of language, we can then posit that language has the capacity to reveal our innermost thoughts, our desires and how we see things around us and it can also be a tool of persuasion or manipulation. In essence, a speaker's use of language, particularly the choice of words in communication and the way the speaker projects the words in a way that suits his/her purpose especially the information that the speaker wants to convey to his/her interlocutors, corresponds to the thoughts and ideas of the speaker's essence of what he/she stands for and even his/her intention. In short, our use of language clearly reflects who we are and what we want to achieve.

Furthermore, Mey (2001) points out that the study of language is divided into two independent parts. One part regards language as a human product and the other as language in its human use. In other words, Mey (2001) sees language as a description of language structure and a description of its use. Consequently, this study is an attempt at examining language in its human use, especially as used by accused rapists. Mey

also posits that pragmatics looks at the use of language by people and the people who produce the language. He reiterates that we need pragmatics to find a logical explanation for the behaviour of human language. Therefore, a critical study of the human language is paramount in order to specifically identify and distinguish the language of a group of people is the core area and specialty of applied linguistics, in which forensic linguistics and even pragmatics find their roots. Therefore, in the following sections, applied linguistics will be explored with a clear focus on forensic linguistics and pragmatics as areas for the study of the use of language by humans.

2.1.4 Applied linguistics

The origin of applied linguistics dates back to 1948 with the publication of the first issue of the *Journal on Language Learning*, a journal of applied linguistics (Davies, 1999; Kaplan, 2010). Having a clear definition of applied linguistics has been a major challenge for scholars (Davies, 1999; Cook, 2003; Cook, 2006; Cook and Kasper, 2005; Berns and Matsuda, 2006; Kaplan, 2010; Ortega, 2009). However, applied linguistics has evolved over the years, starting from the perception of the 1950s to reflect the insights of structural and functional linguists, which applied directly to second language teaching and, in some cases, to first language literacy (L1) and language arts issues, and in the 1960s, it continued to be associated with the application of linguistics to language teaching and related practical language problems, to the point of being labelled as a problem-solving field for the society (Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens, 1964; Corder, 1973; Davies, 1999).

Cooks (1999; 2006) says that applied linguistics does not lend itself to a simple definition. She claims that applied linguistics means a lot to many people. However, she agrees with Widdowson's description that the task of applied linguistics is to mediate between linguistics and language use (Cook, 2003:20). However, the term has been studied and defined and interpreted in different ways based on the various descriptions of different scholars over the years and up to the present day. The Board of AILA (1992) describes applied linguistics as a means of solving specific problems in society. Davies (1999) argues that applied linguistics focuses on numerous and complex areas in the society in which language plays a major role. He goes on to explain that it seems to be widely accepted that the goal of applied linguistics is to apply the insights and techniques from research in linguistics and related disciplines to

solve or address practical problems, particularly language-based problems in the context of the real world. Scholars such as Cook (2003) Cook and Kasper (2005), Berns and Matsuda (2006), Kaplan (2010), Nordquist (2019), seem to share the same view.

Applied linguistics is thus generally and often described as an interdisciplinary field of study based on the different ways in which applied linguistics can be interpreted in fields such as psychology, sociology and pedagogy to solve real-world problems. Nordquist (2019) compares applied linguistics with theoretical linguistics, which deals with areas such as morphology, phonology and lexis. He also states that the areas of interest for language teachers in applied linguistics include language acquisition, corpus studies and sociolinguistics. He goes on to reiterate that the study and practice of applied linguistics is specifically designed to address practical problems as opposed to theoretical constructs. Nordquist's contribution resonates with many contributions by some scholars on applied linguistics (such as Davies, 1999; Cook, 1999, 2006; Cook, 2003; Cook and Kasper, 2005; Berns and Matsuda, 2006; Kaplan, 2010; Ortega, 2009).

Applied linguistics has been described as covering many branches. These branches include bilingualism, multilingualism, conversation analysis, contrastive linguistics, sign linguistics, language diagnostics, literacy, literary studies, gender studies, speech therapy, discourse analysis, psycholinguistics, language pedagogy, second language acquisition, language planning and policy, stylistics, language teacher training, pragmatics, forensic linguistics and translation, Censorship, professional communication, media studies and lexicography (Davies, 1999; Cook, 1999; 2006; Cook, 2003; Cook and Kasper, 2005; Kaplan, 2010; Ortega, 2009; Nordquist, 2019). These are the areas in which applied linguists have engaged. According to Davies (1999), these areas serve as an indication of the extent to which linguists view applied linguistics as a coherent interdisciplinary field rather than a collection of disjointed language projects.

Crime and its investigation are part of the problems facing the world and the field of applied linguistics has a role in providing solutions to it through forensic linguistics, a subfield that is concerned with solving crimes and legal problems. Forensic linguistics has become widely successful because of its interaction with other subfields of applied linguistics such as stylistics, pragmatics, dialectology, phonetics, and semantics.

Therefore, this study focuses on the interaction of some components of the sub-field of pragmatics to forensic linguistics to define and interpret language use in offenders' accounts (especially accused rapists) and offer insights into confessional cues that could aid the administration of justice Nigeria. Therefore, some sections are dedicated to forensic linguistics, pragmatics, application and importance of pragmatics to criminal investigation, pragmatic influence and pragmatic manipulative influence.

2.1.5 Forensic linguistics: history

It has been claimed that forensic linguistics (FL) began in the United States in 1966 when the Miranda Rights or Miranda Warning were specifically created in light of violations of the Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights by Ernesto Arturo Miranda (Svartvik, 1968; Shuy, 2002; 2005; MacMenamin, 2002; Olsson, 2004; Ariani, Sajedi and Sajedi, 2014). While some have claimed that FL specifically emerged in 1968 with Professor Jan Svartvik's (The Evans statement: A case for FL analysis of statements made by police officers at Nottingham Police Station in 1953 (Svartvik, 1968; Shuy, 2002; 2005; MacMenamin, 2002; Olsson, 2004; Ariani, Sajedi and Sajedi, 2014). However, Svartvik is the first to officially analyse a case for FL. Historically, that's how FL started its work. This enables Svartvik to work scientifically in the field of corpus linguistics. The 1980s introduces Australian linguists who attempt to apply linguistics and sociolinguistics tools to legal cases. Then, the German shows up at the Federal Criminal Police Office in 1988 to hold a two-day conference on forensic linguistics. In 1991, France hosts a FL conference and in 1992 another conference holds at the University of Birmingham in the UK; many linguists from Great Britain, Greece, Brazil and Germany took part (Svartvik, 1968; Shuy, 2002; 2005; MacMenamin, 2002; Olsson, 2004; Ariani, Sajedi and Sajedi, 2014).

Eventually, forensic linguistics becomes an international academic discipline when Australia and the US held meetings in 1995 and 1997, respectively (Svartvik, 1968; Shuy, 2002; 2005; MacMenamin, 2002; Olsson, 2004; Ariani, Sajedi and Sajedi, 2014). Teachings in universities on FL commence in the late 1990s, although, many countries still could not offer formal training on the subject. This prompts University of Birmingham analyst and Professor, Malcolm Coulthard to fill this gap by hosting international summer schools in FL. As FL becomes more established, the first master's degree in FL was awarded at Cardiff University in the UK in 1999. Also in 2008, Birmingham Aston University establishes the Centre for FL (MacMenamin,

2002; Olsson, 2004; Ariani, Sajedi and Sajedi, 2014, 2014; Umiyati, 2020). These great developments resulted in linguists becoming more involved in criminal and judicial processes.

2.1.5.1 Forensic linguistics: definition and overview

As asserted earlier, forensic linguistics is a subfield of applied linguistics. Derin, Evizareza, Deliani and Hamuddin (2019) posit that the study of language as human activity is scientifically termed linguistics and when applied to a specific social setting, and in this case legal discourse, it is termed forensic linguistics. The Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC, 2009) describes it as an area of linguistics concerned with solving crimes and legal problems. Many scholars (such as McMenemy, 2002; Olsson, 2004; Fadden and Disner, 2018; Umiyati, 2020; Ali, 2020) generally assert that FL involves the use of linguistic evidence analysis to resolve the ambiguities in criminal investigations and legal issues. They reiterate that FL uses scientific mechanisms derived from other subfields of linguistics such as stylistics, pragmatics, dialectology, phonetics, and semantics. According to Coulthard and Johnson, 2007; Coulthard, Grant and Kredens (2011), there are two ways FL can be defined. The first comprises the written and oral interaction samples which, together with the testimony of a language expert, can be presented as evidence in court proceedings. While the second looks at speech analysis, which can be applied during investigations to help identify suspects or witnesses, or determine the meaning of utterances or writings on a case.

Ariani, Sajedi and Sajedi (2014:223) argue that forensic linguists are concerned with the use of language by the police in interviewing suspects and witnesses and the language used by lawyers and witnesses in court proceedings at trials, investigations and judgments. Furthermore, Ali (2020) describes FL as an interface between linguistics and law. He argues that FL is also related to speech offences, that is, with language offences such as bribery, perjury, conspiracy, incitement, plagiarism and threats.

Farinde (2008) defines forensic linguistics as the study of language in the context of law. He believes that law is a predominantly linguistic institution. Sanni (2016) calls FL an emerging sub-discipline of forensic science, which is an interdisciplinary field of applied/descriptive linguistics that encompasses the study, analysis, and

measurement of language in the context of crime, trial, or litigation. He says FL can see the intersection between language, crime and law. Umiyati (2020) synonymises FL as legal linguistics or language and law and consequently describes it as the application of linguistic knowledge, methods and insights to the forensic context of law, language, criminal investigation, process and judicial procedure. Olsson (2008) gives a detailed definition of FL. He describes it as the interface between language, crime, and law, where law includes law enforcement, judicial matters, legislation, disputes or judicial proceedings, and even disputes that may only involve breaking the law or the need to seek a remedy.

McMenamin (2002) asserts that forensic linguistics is the scientific study of language in relation to forensic purposes and contexts. Fadden and Disners (2018) further contend that when linguistic evidence constitutes a crime, coercion, bribery, hate literature and hate speech. It can have a severe impact on itself or when linguistic evidence is peripherally related to a case, it might require a linguist to clarify the meaning of what is written or spoken, the way it is conveyed, and the role of context in interpreting the messages (Fadden and Disner, 2018).

There are three stages in a court proceeding where language skills may be required, namely investigative, trial and appeal stages. Linguistic analysis is often limited to the first phase, that is the investigation phase. First of all, ransom, demands, specific threatening letters, mobile phone text messages, farewell letters, the speaking and writing style (in written and oral statements) and the behaviour of the victims and suspects are considered and examined. It is seldom that linguists are needed for the negotiation phase, where facts and relevant laws are examined in court. However, when a linguist is unusually appointed, he is given the responsibility of analysing authorship, threat, interpretation, and construction of text (Coulthard and Johnson, 2007; Coulthard, Grant and Kredens, 2011). Forensic linguistics can be applied to voice identification, interpretation of expressed meaning in laws and legal writings, analysis of discourse in legal settings, interpretation of intended meaning in oral and written statements (confessions), authorship identification, the language of the law (plain language), analysis of courtroom language used by trial participants (judges, lawyers, and witnesses), trademark law, and interpretation and translation when more than one language must be used in a legal context. (McMenamin, 2002; Olsson, 2004; Coulthard and Johnson, 2007; Coulthard et al., 2011; Umiyati, 2020).

Scholars such as McMenamain (2002), Olsson (2004), Coulthard (2007), Coulthard et al. (2011), Umiyati (2020) support the view that FL is an application of science because of the various theories of language that can be engaged to analyse speech samples in a criminal case. Therefore, forensic linguists cite observations from studies conducted in fields as diverse as language and memory research, conversation analysis, discourse analysis, grammar theory, cognitive linguistics, pragmatics (speech act theory, pragmatic act theory), phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, psycholinguistics, neurolinguistics, sociolinguistics, dialectology, computational linguistics and corpus linguistics. The reason for reliance on a wide range of linguistic fields is understandable, given that the data linguists receive for analysis may require something to be talked about, how the average person remembers language, how conversations are structured, what movements speakers or writers make in the course of a conversation or written text, or they may need to explain themselves in court on some aspects of phrase or sentence structure (McMenamin, 2002).

Coulthard et al. (2011) and Derin et al. (2019) attribute the main challenge facing FL to a burgeoning need to build a culturally competent problem-solving court that appropriately responds to all participants, regardless of their age, race, and level of speaking skills, particularly in language interpretation and comprehension for L2 speakers (this has to do with the conviction/acquittal of suspects). This challenge began when the bias in scholarly inquiry became well known, when scholars discovered that the most important factor in determining credibility is the perceived educational attainment. With regard to speaking ability, Coulthard and Johnson (2011) assert that the way people speak (their speaking style) is always an influencing variable on the court verdict, since it promotes their credibility, which is important to win a case.

McMenamin (2020) still reiterates the question of credibility, that the application of linguistic expertise in the context of law is subject to shortcomings such as brevity of documents, small data samples and general features of language (generic language features of suspects) and the particular nature of the language as something that could be corrupted by constant change. In this area, the quality of the evidence collected by FL depends largely on the experience and knowledge of the individual linguists involved in a particular case. Therefore, courts in many countries allow forensic evidence according to different criteria. For example, in the United States, the

admissibility of expert testimony in federal court proceedings is only allowed after it has been determined to be reliable and scientifically valid (Umiyati, 2020).

2.1.6 Pragmatics

There are so many definitions of pragmatics and most of them are given by scholars based on different points of view from which they looked at it. Pragmatics is often referred to as the garbage can of linguistics (Mey, 2001). In general, pragmatics has been viewed as the study of language use in relation to context (Levinson, 1983:5) but has also been associated with syntax and semantics as an aspect of semiotics (Morris, 1938). However, definitions here will only be focused on language use. For example, Sperber and Wilson (1986) defines pragmatics as the study of how people use language in context, with an emphasis on how speakers convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of their words.

Similarly, pragmatics as defined by Huang (2012), is the study of how people use language in context to achieve their communication goals. It focuses on how speakers use context, implied meanings, and social norms to convey intended messages and understand the intended meaning behind the utterances of others. Huang and Yan (2016) submits that pragmatics explores the interactive and dynamic aspects of communication, taking into account factors such as speaker intentions, premises, implications, and speech acts. Furthermore, pragmatics deals with utterances, by which we mean specific events, the deliberate acts of speakers at the time and place that typically involve language.

Thomas (1995) shows three levels of meaning in the study of pragmatics as follows:

1. Abstract meaning: this deals with the interpretation of phrases, words and sentences to see the different meanings that can be found in a word or a sentence.
2. Utterance meaning: deals with the meaning intended by the speaker depending on the context.
3. Level of Force: This focuses on a speaker's communicative intent, what is, what the speaker intends to say.

In summary, pragmatics studies how language is used in interpreting actual utterances. This means that people who study pragmatics are interested in when language is used,

where it is used, by whom it is used, how it is used, what it is used for and, perhaps most importantly, how it is interpreted becomes things it is used for by the people who use it when they do it.

2.1.6.1 Importance of pragmatics in criminal investigation

Pragmatics is a branch of applied linguistics that studies how language is used in real-life contexts to convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words (Verschueren, 1999). It involves the study of various aspects of language use, including implicature, presupposition, speech acts, and context. In the field of criminal investigations, pragmatics plays a significant role in understanding and interpreting the nuances and implicatures of crime accounts provided by criminals. Implicatures are implied meanings conveyed indirectly (Bach and Harnish, 1979; Sperber and Wilson, 1986) and they can be used by offenders to avoid explicit incrimination or to contend an accusation. Therefore, when pragmatics is applied to criminal accounts, it enables investigators to uncover hidden messages, implications and intentions and then identify gaps, inconsistencies and underlying motivations in crime accounts.

Also, analysing crime accounts using pragmatics helps to identify patterns and uncover deceptive strategies in the the language use of offenders. Often, offenders use various pragmatic strategies to manipulate information, downplay their involvement, or create false narratives. These strategies can include ambiguity, evasion, softening language, and the use of implicatures. By examining these pragmatic clues, investigators can identify attempts to deceive or distort the truth. This provides valuable insights into the mindset of the offenders and paves the way to identify crucial evidence that could be used against the offender(s).

Furthermore, in criminal investigation, pragmatics is important for language profiling and forensic linguistics. Examining language patterns, language styles, and pragmatic features in crime accounts, investigators can develop profiles that can help identify suspects and narrow the scope of investigations (Coulthard and Johnson, 2007). Pragmatic analysis also contributes to the scientific and systematic examination of linguistic evidence and increases the accuracy and effectiveness of criminal investigations. It allows investigators to uncover linguistic patterns and cues that may point to a specific group or individual, thereby aiding the entire investigative process.

Considering credibility and truthfulness of offenders' crime accounts in criminal investigation, pragmatic analysis plays a significant role. Especially, in evaluating pragmatic cues, such as hesitation, self-repair, or inconsistency in language use by offenders in their crime accounts. Pragmatic analysis provides valuable indicators of deception or truthfulness. Analysing these cues, investigators can make informed judgments about the reliability and accuracy of the information provided by offenders. This evaluation of credibility assists in distinguishing between genuine and deceptive narratives, and then contribute to the integrity and validity of the investigative process.

In summary, pragmatics is paramount in criminal investigations, especially when analysing crime accounts presented by criminals. It is invaluable in undersanding the pragmatic aspects of language use that allows investigators to uncover hidden meanings, identify fraudulent strategies, assess credibility, and gain insight into the motivations behind offenders' narratives. Therefore, incorporating pragmatic analysis into criminal investigations improves the accuracy, effectiveness and fairness of the investigative process and ultimately contributes to the pursuit of justice.

2.1.6.2 Pragmatic influence

Language as a channel of communication enables the conveyance of domination and social force (Habermas, 1967). Habermas reiterates that language permits the connection of organised power which presupposes communicative influence. Communicative influence is always planned so that it can yield the desired interpretation as it compels certain interpretation. This supports Oswald's (2014) definition of influence as an interpretative constrain bearing on information. Influence has the ability to move people to take actions that bring about the manifestation of the influencer's communicative goals, which could be positive or negative.

According to Sidirenko (2002), influence as a psychological element affects the consciousness, feelings, and actions of the target and provides the target with an opportunity to respond to the influence. Duncan (2018) asserts that influence is negative when a person manipulates others for his/her own selfish interests, and influence is positive when a person persuades others to take actions that favour both parties. What really separates manipulation and persuasion is intent. The process of influence during an interaction is simply that of a speaker attempting to change a listener's behaviour, attitudes, ideas, and intent (Petrovskyi and Yaroshevskyi, 1990) to

achieve goals common to both the speaker and be beneficial to the listener or beneficial to the speaker alone and detrimental to the hearer.

What drives people to influence (whether persuasion and manipulation) in communication is their desire to achieve specific personal goals that benefit them alone, or common and even personal goals that benefit the listener and them through the positions that they occupy in the contextual situation and the social factors they built (to fit into the communicative exchange) to be in sync with the general exigencies of the situation. Considering Mey's (2001:227) description that pragmatics is all about human adaptability is a confirmation of the pragmatic nature of influence. The behaviour surrounding persuasive and manipulative communication can be compared to Mey's (2001:227) description of pragmatic acts; a showcase for contextualised adaptive behaviour, where the speaker adapts to a context while also adapting the context to himself. Jacob and Jackson (1983b) also interpret adaptive behaviour as an influence on conversation. Mey (2001:227) explains Jacob and Jackson's 'conversational influence' as how speakers attempt to influence themselves through language use to achieve their goal during a communicative exchange. This may appear as if pragmatic acts (and in this case communicative or dialogical influencing) is a demonstration of power, but Mey (2001:229) says it is only an exploitation of one's social power. Mey posits that the speakers may be free agents, but they operate within the constraints imposed by the society.

2.1.6.3 Pragmatic manipulative influence

Manipulation is a deceptive communication for covert influence adopted by a manipulative speaker intentionally, so as to indirectly influence the target's beliefs, emotions or desires in ways that are not in the best interest of the target but the manipulators (Goodin, 1980:59). Ware (1981:149) also sees manipulation as a covert influence in which the target has no knowledge or understanding of the manipulator's decisions and their effects on him. For this reason, the manipulator skillfully uses utterances that are not directly related to his intentions and are confirmed when the target fails to perceive the hidden intentions behind the speaker's utterances (Tarasov, 1990:26). Moreover, Mills (1995) describes manipulation as what appears to be legitimate persuasion that offers good arguments while actually projecting bad arguments. This can be described as a violation of Grice's (1975; 1989) maxim of

quality, because the speakers attempt to dishonestly influence the listener without him/ noticing. Describing manipulation as a covert influence creates an opportunity for scholars to see the pragmatic nature of manipulation. Especially as one that manifests its goals without the target being able to overtly discern the speaker's covert intent.

Similarly, de Saussure and Schulz (2005:126) call manipulation as an intrinsically goal-oriented phenomenon intended only to satisfy the interest of the speaker. van Dijk (2006a:360) also describes it as an interactional communicative situation in which manipulators exercise control over their targets, against their will and against the well-being of the target. This implies that the target's will is not taken into consideration, because the desire is one-sided. This is why manipulation carries negative connotations because it goes against social norms.

Furthermore, Blass (2006) calls manipulation a kind of deception. The manipulator attempts to influence the listener in such a way that the listener's decisions and actions are used as tools to achieve the manipulator's goals, without the listener realising that he/she has been negatively influenced. Even Coons and Weber's (2014:59) description of manipulation testifies to its concealment. A situation in which the target is influenced against his will through the exploitation of his weaknesses (information resources).

Equally important is Faden and Beauchamp (2014:70) attempt of the representation of manipulation by identifying three types of manipulation. The first is called 'options manipulation'. This type of manipulation works through targeting the options in the environment for change, either increasing or decreasing the options available, it could also be done through rewards or the threat of punishment. Manipulation of information is the second type of manipulation identified by Faden and Beauchamp (2014). This manipulation targets the listener's perception, modifying the listener's perception of options through a strategy that unconvincingly affects his or her understanding of the situation. The third manipulation is psychological manipulation. Faden and Beauchamp describe this type of manipulation as the process whereby the listener is influenced by a cause of change in the mental processes other than those involved in understanding. These types of manipulation are pragmatic in nature, as they revolve around context (especially the first two); whereby the speaker influences the situation surrounding the interaction by adapting (modifying) social factors for the manifestation of the communicative goals.

de Saussure and Schulz (2005), van Dijk (2006a) and Al-Hindawi and Kamil (2017) commonly submit that one of the reasons manipulation is successful is because each manipulator's range of vision is larger than the targets, that is, the manipulator knows more than the target. Another reason is the listeners' inability to resist manipulation, as they lack the required knowledge, values, ideologies and basic norms and professions, social positions and statuses that make people easily vulnerable and willing to accept manipulative speaker's arguments (Al-Hindawi and Kamil, 2017). This explanation is based on van Dijk's (2006a) earlier assertion about manipulation that it succeeds because the target did not have the critical resources to recognise and resist manipulation. Coons and Webers (2014) refer to this as the influence of a prey based on the weaknesses (information resources) of the target/prey. Therefore, the manipulator has a great advantage over his target, and as such he tries to get the target to see things exactly the way he wants them to by pushing the targets to consider possible situations and actions they have not explored for the manifestation of his hidden goals that are only in his best interest and not in the interest of the targets. This includes getting target to consider adjusted dimensions of social factors to arrive at the interpretation aimed at by the manipulator.

Continuing with the above definitions and descriptions of manipulation, it is very obvious that manipulation is pragmatic in nature. During communication, the pragmatic nature of manipulation reveals itself in its covertness. These pronounced malicious influencing characteristics of manipulative communication operate as a result of the adjustment and maneuvering of the social context (the conditions of communication), not due to the use of some particular lexical or grammatical item. Hence, manipulation exerts influence (control) over the listener, which to be likened to what Mey (2001:229) calls an exploitation of social empowerment; while the speaker is free to exercise that empowerment, but still within the constraints imposed by the society. The reason people use manipulative influencing tactics might be to avoid taking responsibility for the consequences of their actions or to protect self-esteem. Ultimately, manipulation is a selfish motive. This goal must not differ from the aspirations of most accused rapists (ARs) in their crime accounts (investigative discourse or investigative interrogation). Therefore, as part of the objective of this current study, an exploration of the pragmatic nature of the influencing strategies in the crime narratives of ARs is attempted as a means of getting evidential clues that

will be valuable to the prosecution process of ARs. Specifically, this study examines the strategies deployed by ARs in their narratives. However, the pragmatics acts engaged by the ARs are investigated first, which now gives a strong background for the deployed strategies.

2.1.7 Narrative and narrative identity

Narratives are connected passages that narrate past events (Labov and Waletzky 1967). Narration is an intentional act that people use to tell their thoughts and desires about past experiences. Davies (2005:99) explains that it is mainly about the experiences and thoughts that are put into words. Narratives could also be referred to as storytelling, either written or spoken. Storytelling sheds more light on how people act, feel, think and what they value as individuals or as members of a community. According to Labov (1972), the study of narrative encompasses a wide range of human activities such as novels, short stories, poetic and prosaic epic/films, folklore, interviews, oral memoirs, chronicles, stories, comics, graphic novels and other visual media. He goes on to reiterate that this mode of communication usually relies on the basic human ability to transfer experiences from one person to another through oral narratives of personal experiences. Laccelle (2018) also argues that narratives are the initial and ongoing means of shaping our existence. That is, it structures our reality, creates and maintains identity, gives meaning to people, institutions and cultures. He goes on to explain that people cannot help but understand and represent their lives in the form of stories.

Narratives/stories help people to make their life choices and actions understandable to themselves and others (listeners). How they tell their stories can differ depending on who they are, how they perceive themselves, who is listening, the context or sociocultural position, or the life stage they are in. Often, people choose what they tell about themselves and highlight the experiences, choices, actions, and positive ideas that contribute most to how they see themselves and how they want others to see them. That tells us how powerful narrative is. It can be used to portray oneself in a positive light, undermine the sacrifice of another person's identity to encourage self-holiness, ultimately leading to deception.

The narrative of identity can be viewed as the narrative of personality (McAdams, 1996). McAdams asserts that human personalities are made up of different levels of

organisation and complexity and involve different types of psychological activity. He explains further that, at the simplest level, human personality is made up of genes, neurophysiology, and temperament. At the next level, more complex cognitions, prejudices, and assumptions influence human thoughts and feelings. Another level of personality is the narrative level, where a person's story(s) about themselves are constantly being constructed and deconstructed. The last level deals with the influence of social beliefs and stories.

Similarly, Ward and Marshal's (2007) argue that narrative identity is subject to the narrators' capabilities to engage available resources and opportunities to achieve their goals. In essence, narratives about ourselves are the richest human aspect of personality. The change of the experienced self, especially in relation to others, takes place at the level of storytelling (Adler, Kissel and McAdams, 2008). Adler et al. (2008) reiterate that individual identity in humans is articulated in the language of self and other. The key point here is that the stories individuals tell about themselves allow them to be recognised by others in their group and also allow them to speak about themselves in the past and future in the way they want to be perceived.

In summary, the narrative sheds more light on how people act, feel, think, and what they value as individuals when recounting past events (Davies, 2005:99). In the process, our true emotions, desires, and intentions will seep through. For this reason, the narrative is also useful for considering the language behaviours of accused rapists in their crime narratives. The personal themes underlying the offence (criminal roles) can be perceived in crime stories; in that it shows the characteristics of offenders before or after the crime. The offender's criminal narrative demonstrates intent, which is about the motivation arising from the offender's personal experiences and circumstances. Therefore, exploring the significance of investigative interviewing to the investigation of rape and the administration of justice will be possible through the examination of the narratives (crime accounts) that emanate from the interview of accused rapists (ARs) at Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan.

2.1.8 Interrogation in Nigeria

The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Subsection 35(2) (as amended) grants a detainee the right to remain silent before questioning begins and to have access to a lawyer (Ladan, 1998; Maliki, 2009). This is because, interrogation

can easily become coercive if the detainee does not receive the counsel of a legal practitioner before or during the interrogation. This provision appears to be an influence of the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution; which states that no one may be compelled to testify against himself in a criminal proceeding (Maliki, 2009). The US Supreme Court has ruled, *inter alia*, in *Miranda v. Arizona*, and it has been argued that interrogation in custody is inherently coercive. Therefore, an arrested person must be warned of their right to remain silent until they have obtained the counsel of a lawyer before being questioned by the police. The reason for this is because interrogation techniques are somewhat coercive and may likely involve torture, therefore, it is capable to produce false confessions.

However, this declaration has not been considered nor accepted and applied by the Supreme Court of Nigeria, nor has it been reviewed and required to amend the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to make it legally binding on all law enforcement agencies (Aborisade and Fayemi, 2015). This is one of the main reasons investigative interrogation techniques (like torture) remain prevalent in Nigeria despite the introduction and practice of humane questioning techniques (like investigative interviewing) by western countries like the UK, Canada, Australia, Netherlands. Investigative interviewing is a better method of gathering information than interrogation as it does not constitute coercion and no human rights are violated during its deployment. Although, US police still use interrogation to investigate crimes, a detainee's right to remain silent and consult a lawyer persists in practice, unlike in Nigeria where torture for confession begins upon arrest (Amnesty International, 2015).

Nigerian law, similar to numerous countries, enshrines the presumption that until an individual is found guilty by a court of competent jurisdiction, he/she remains a suspect or an accused person and should be treated as an innocent citizen (Alieke, 2022), regardless of evidence or confessions of the suspect. This implies that the suspect must not be subjected to torture or inhumane treatment, and if subjected to such, the information is to be considered as being under influence and as such inadmissible. Despite this, the Nigeria police continues to use torture and many other inhumane treatments on suspects from the immediate moment of arrest, even without evidence tying the suspect as the guilty perpetrator. This brutality remains a major mistake by the Nigeria police and has continued to attract much public condemnation (Amnesty International, 2015; Ogunode, 2015). Persistently, human rights activists,

lawyers, journalists and social analysts. regularly report police brutality and abuses of rights, including torture, bribery, theft and extortion (Amnesty International, 2014; Aborisade and Fayemi, 2015; *Pulse*, 2016).

A Human Rights Watch (HRW, 2005) study on torture in Nigeria reveals that the use of torture and other inhuman treatment of detainees is prominent in the routine of Nigeria police force during investigation. This study by HRW involves extensive interviews with victims and witnesses in the cities of Lagos, Kano and Enugu. Based on their findings, brutal acts of torture by the police include: death threats, slapping, kicking with boots, shooting in the leg, stoning, denial of water and food, tying of arms and legs behind the detainee's body, suspension of hands and legs from a pole or the ceiling with concrete blocks placed on them, severe beatings with metal or wooden objects done repeatedly, continuous spraying of tear gas in the face and eyes, and on many occasions, rape of female detainees and even other forms of sexual violence on male detainees too like the use of electric shocks or pliers on the penis are among the many inhumane treatments meted on detainees by the Nigeria Police Force; with dozens leading to deaths of detainees.

Similarly, the study did report that senior police officers are in the know of the violations perpetrated by interrogators who are popularly nicknamed "Officer in Charge Torture" with an interrogation room perfectly equipped for that purpose. More vivid gory stories of physically abusive interrogations by the Nigeria Police Force have continued to come out. So much that even children, cognitive impaired, and the disabled are not left out in police brutality, and in most cases, the experiences are psychologically traumatising for the arrestees (NOPRIN - Network on Police Reform in Nigeria, 2010; HRW, 2012; Amnesty International, 2014).

The study by Maliki (2009) examines the nature and forms of police brutality in order to determine the extent and reasons for the persistence of police brutality in Nigeria. The results of Maliki's two-month intensive empirical study detailed unlawful practices by investigating police officers (IPO) during interrogations in Kaduna State and Zaria State in Nigeria. In particular, the investigation confirms that there is a major gap between the law and police torture practices. Although the practice of torture is illegal, the government and other criminal justice institutions have continued to turn a blind eye to it, allowing it to persist. Significantly, the study shows that the police lacks basic technical equipment to support investigations, such as fingerprint

powder, working phones and forms to record basic information. This makes IPOs at police stations to rely heavily on information obtained during interrogation or from informants. Therefore, they put pressure on the examinee(s) to obtain information, even resorting to torture as a last resort if the suspect does not provide the information they feel is required. An earlier study by Maliki (1995) confirms that IPOs use torture only to punish suspects or extort money from them. This is just like the HRW's study on the different ways police tortures suspects,

Maliki (2009) also identifies several ways IPOs torture suspects. For example, repeated spraying of tear gas directly in the eyes of suspects until the IPOs are satisfied that no further information can be obtained from the suspect. Another form of torture that has been identified is the application of a bare end of a live electrical cable to the suspect's genitals. Putting a rectangular wooden headgear on a suspect and fastening it from the two wiry sides, making the suspect feel like his brain is being pushed out, which gives the suspect an instant headache. Sometimes the suspect would be stripped to the waist, handcuffed to a vertical bar in the centre of a window, and flogged thoroughly with cowhide (koboko). Being whipped in this position is designed to make the suspect feel utterly helpless, unable to deflect blows or prevent the koboko's welts on his skin. The suspect cannot stand, sit or stand upright. In addition, whenever the suspect is reluctant to answer questions or if the IPO feels he is lying, torture can also be administered by beating with fists, clubs and boots. Also, the study reveals that IPOs often know some suspects are innocent but still continue to detain and then torture them because the IPO may have released the real culprits after bribery, so, they intentionally use someone else as a suspect to cover up or extort more money.

It has been observed that torture is a routine method used against suspects of lower socioeconomic status and that such suspects always choose not to go to court, preferring instead to pay the police. Maliki's concludes that these unlawful acts by the police and many others persist because of the perpetrators' lack of accountability. Similarly, according to Rule of Law and Accountability Advocacy Centre (RULAAC, 2021), police brutality still persists because of the failure of the Nigerian government to fulfill voluntary obligations imposed under regional and international human rights and humanitarian law adopted to prohibit torture. Okechukwu Nwanguma, the Executive Director of RULAAC claims that the culture of violence was inherited from the colonial police force and is still retained as a modus-operandi within the Nigeria

police force. He cited President Muhammadu Buhari's orders to shoot and the Inspector General of Police's order to act without regard to the rules of engagement and the Nigeria police's lack of sensitivity to the protection of human rights (including torture) as reasons for the enduring culture of violence.

Nigerian human rights organisations such as the Network on Police Reform in Nigeria (NOPRIN) and the Human Rights Social Development and Environmental Foundation (HURSDEF) have always reported, and have consistently acknowledged, the use of torture by the police to extract confessions from suspects. They submit that these confessions got through torture are still permissible and used in court for conviction (Amnesty International, 2016). These reports have caused widespread concern and condemnation of the interrogation techniques used by police in criminal investigations across the country (Owen, 2014; Ajayi, 2014; Aborisade and Fayemi, 2015).

Ibrahim Coomasie, a former inspector general of police, once accused the Nigeria police of barbarically treating Nigerians (*Punch*, 2016). This from an ex-police IGP is a confirmation of all the allegations against the Nigeria police of inhumane tactics used to obtain a confession from suspects, but the NPF has always debunked the allegations. For example, a report by Amnesty International on police brutality published the experiences of some female ex-convicts of sexual abuse by police officers, including rape and pepper spraying genitals. However, the police promptly denied the allegations made in the reports (*Premium Times*, 2016). The Nigeria Police dismissed the report, calling it misleading, a clear misrepresentation of facts, unverified reports and an outright distortion of the current situation in the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) across the country. Its spokesman, Don Awunah, a deputy commissioner of police, describes the report as an ongoing pattern by Amnesty International to always disregard and castigate public institutions in developing countries like Nigeria (*Premium Times*, 2016; Aborisade and Fayemi, 2015). Despite this, reports of police brutality continue to regularly flood newspapers, television and social media. However, since the of END SARS protest that shook the nation in 2021, several people have come out to speak about their gory experiences at the hands of the Nigeria police and the Nigeria Police Force has not really been able to deny all the allegations against them.

A recent qualitative study by Aborisade and Adedayo (2020) examines recurring controversies surrounding the interrogation-based investigative technique used by the

Nigeria police to obtain confessions from suspects. Based on their interviews with 37 investigators from 12 police stations, four divisional police headquarters in Abeokuta, Ijebu-Ode, Sagamu and Ogun State Police Headquarters, police investigators deny involvement in arbitrary arrests in public areas but acted, if preliminary information is available. The study reveals that the basic needs of detainees are not adequately provided for. This is because the well-being of the detainees depends on police officers, the complainants, the detainees themselves or their families. They note that allegations are made against suspects, finding inconsistencies in suspects' reports, gaining suspects' trust in order to obtain a confession, lengthy interrogation sessions to wear the suspect down, deception and threats are the enforced interrogation tactics, used by the police when questioning suspects. Aborisade and Adedayo (2020) call the identified questioning tactics high-pressure investigation tactics. Therefore, a call for attention is proposed to address the high-pressure tactics through the use of modern investigative techniques, in particular, equipping the police on best practices in investigations and enabling an effective police accountability and control system across Nigeria.

The above underscores the need to adopt a humane investigative technique for gathering information, which is a starting point for curbing police brutality in criminal investigations in Nigeria. As previously mentioned, several developed nations such as the UK, Canada, Australia, Netherlands. have adopted investigative interviewing as a better technique for gathering information, and it has been widely lauded by human rights organisations such as the UN for being non-coercive. Precisely, investigative interviewing is a non-coercive, non-confrontational, effective, practical, and human rights-compliant technique for conducting interviews with victims, witnesses, and suspects of crime. It allows them to give their own testimonies without the use of force or coercion, which usually seems to permeate normal police interrogations of suspects in Nigeria.

Recently, the first professional investigative interviewing training in West Africa was hosted in Ghana in 2021 and it was attended by over 30 law enforcement officials and prosecutors from Ghana, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria with the aim of building the capacity of law enforcement agencies and the broader judicial system for investigative interviews in West Africa (Norwegian Centre for Human Rights (NCHR, 2021). The number of participants is quite small and the motivation of the

trained investigators who use investigative interviewing as a best practice is low. Therefore, further training covering a large number of officers is strongly recommended. Besides research like this current one is significant, as it reveals the strengths of investigative interviewing as well as the inherent weaknesses investigative interrogation poses by engaging with Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory. This is not achievable in the existing studies, since most of the studies on criminal investigation of crimes in Nigeria come from the field of sociology, psychology and law and are essentially about the popularisation of police brutality. Similarly, those conducted in the language area focus more on the examination of the power that IPOs exercise over suspects.

2.1.9 Investigative interviewing

Questioning in the broader criminal investigation is an important task of law enforcement and the way police conduct questioning will have an indelible impact on the outcome and fairness of the criminal proceedings that follow (NCHR, 2021). Investigative interview is an efficient, practical and human rights-compliant method of conducting interviews with victims, witnesses, and suspects of crime. Harwoth (2009) describes it as an efficient method for collecting linguistic evidence because it is a casual, efficient, practical, and human rights-compliant method of conducting interviews with victims, witnesses, and suspects. It allows them to give their own testimony without using force or coercion, which usually seems to permeate normal police interrogations of suspects in Nigeria and most countries around the world. This is really not in practice in Nigeria and its non-use could be attributed to insufficient training of investigators. In fact, in 2021 the first professional training on investigative interviewing in West Africa was held in Ghana, where over 30 law enforcement officials and prosecutors from Ghana, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria participated in the training workshop with the aim of enhancing the capacity of law enforcement agencies and the wider judicial system for investigative interviewing in West Africa (NCHR, 2021). Police interviews are understudied, particularly in the field of pragmatics in Nigeria. Conducting effective and appropriate interviews with ARs is particularly important to this study for the administration of justice.

The rationale for examining investigative interviewing as a type of investigative information gathering technique is that this current study has the capability to show how a non-judgmental approach to police questioning of suspects can be improved by

allowing suspects/charged criminals to give their own accounts, without the use of force or coercion that normally seems to permeate normal police interrogations of suspects in Nigeria. Investigative interviewing is a police investigative technique used in a criminal investigation to gather information, specifically objective facts, by asking open-ended questions and allowing the suspects to give answers at their own pace without any form of coercion (Milne and Bull 1999; Milne, Shaw and Bull, 2007; Walters, 2002; McDannell, 2022). Filipovic (2019) calls investigative interviewing a special type of discourse, where the roles of the participants are clearly defined and the goal of the communication is information gathering, which is well established before the communication starts. This implies that there is no coercion, the respondent gives consent (the suspect/accused) before it starts and the suspect/accused can opt-out of the discourse at any time.

Powell, Fisher and Wright (2005) suggest that police questioning of suspects is fundamental to criminal investigations. Consequently, the aim of investigative interviewing, as with any other police questioning, is to gather evidence that will help determine whether or not a criminal act has taken place, and if a criminal act is identified or acknowledged, this will also help provide context and to determine the nature of the act and the person who committed it. Haworth (2009) also argues that interviewing is conducted as part of the initial information gathering phase of a criminal proceeding, where the resulting data can then become criminal evidence. He explains that as the interview data is subsequently passed through the criminal justice system, it is transformed into various formats that serve different functions for a variety of users, from the investigating police officer to the attorney, judge, and jury (Powell et al., 2005). The data collected during interview is central to the court proceedings. Scholars (such as Milne and Bull, 1999; Shaw and Bull, 2007; Walters, 2002; Powell, 2003; Powell et al., 2005; Haworth, 2009; Filipovic, 2019; McDannel, 2022) claim that police interviewing/investigative interviewing has five elements common to all investigative interview protocols and these include: establishing a relationship, introducing the problem topic, identifying narrative details, clarification/specific questions, and conclusion.

2.1.9.1 PEACE model of investigative interviewing

Investigative interviewing is a pivotal process for the collection of vital information, comprehending events and securing testimonies from individuals involved in a crime

or incident during investigation (Milne and Bull, 1999; Davinson, 2021). This information gathering technique plays a crucial role in upholding a just and equitable legal system (Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook, Eastwood, Stinson, Tedeschini, and House, 2010). However, cases of wrongful convictions, particularly high-profile cases like the Guilford Four and the Birmingham Six in the United Kingdom, underscored the necessity for a more ethical and humane approach to interviewing (Baron, 2017; Davinson, 2021). Therefore, a collaborative effort was made in the early 90s by law enforcement agencies and psychologist from England and Wales to create an investigative interviewing framework (Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; Davinson, 2021). Professor John Baldwin who was part of this collaborative effort created the PEACE model of investigative interviewing in 1992 (Davinson, 2021). It emerged as a response to the shortcomings identified in traditional interrogation methods (Milne and Bull 1999; Snook et al., 2010).

The acronym PEACE is a summary of the five stages of managing a humane interview process (Davinson, 2021). The stages are Preparation and Planning, Engage and Explain, Account, Closure and Evaluation model. The PEACE model is designed to establish an environment conducive to gather dependable information while upholding the rights and dignity of interviewees (Milne and Bull, 1999; Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; Case IQ, 2021; Naeem, 2022). Interviewers are to meticulously plan the interview by understanding its significance within the broader investigation during the Preparation and Planning stage. Specifically, they are to familiarise themselves with the interviewee's background, outline investigative objectives, develop a timeline of events, and prepare opening questions based on existing evidence (Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; Case IQ, 2021; Naeem, 2022). While the Engage and Explain stage emphasises the establishment of rapport, ensuring that interviewees understand the purpose of the interview. This phase creates a respectful and professional atmosphere, ensuring interviewees understand their legal rights and the process they will undergo (Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; Case IQ, 2021; Naeem, 2022).

In the Account phase, tailored strategies are employed for cooperative and uncooperative interviewees. The cognitive interview, designed to enhance memory recall, is employed for cooperative individuals. For interviewees who are uncooperative, a conversation management approach is utilised. The process starts

with an open-ended question to encourage a comprehensive narrative. Subsequently, topics of interest are identified, probed, and summarised, systematically uncovering relevant information (Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; French, 2019 Case IQ, 2021; Naeem, 2022). However, the Closure and Evaluation phase ensures the interview is concluded professionally and courteously. Interview objectives are reviewed, main points are summarised, and the interviewee is given the opportunity to clarify or add information. Importantly, interviewers assess the impact of new information on the investigation and its alignment with existing evidence (Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; Case IQ, 2021; Naeem, 2022).

The PEACE model offers some benefits. Firstly, it eliminates coercive tactics, reducing the likelihood of inadmissible statements and protecting the rights of interviewees. Additionally, it fosters accuracy by utilising a systematic approach that generates comprehensive narratives without relying on manipulative techniques (Marin, 2004; Snook et al., 2010). Furthermore, the PEACE model maintains an equivalent confession rate to traditional accusatorial methods, suggesting its effectiveness in obtaining confessions (King and Snook, 2009; Snook et al., 2010). Additionally, the model incorporates principles from the cognitive interview, enhancing memory recall for cooperative interviewees (Milne and Bull, 1999; Snook et al., 2010).

In conclusion, the PEACE model represents a significant departure from traditional accusatorial interrogation methods, offering an ethical, comprehensive, and effective approach to investigative interviewing. Conceived as a response to the lapses of past practices, it prioritises dependable information gathering while safeguarding the rights and well-being of all interviewees. The PEACE model has gained global recognition across diverse industries, solidifying its status as a best practice in investigative interviewing (Oxburgh and Dando, 2010; Snook et al., 2010; Baron, 2017; French, 2019 Case IQ, 2021; Naeem, 2022). Its structured approach, coupled with its focus on rapport building and fact-finding, aligns with the evolving standards of justice and ethical conduct. As the field of investigative interviewing continues to evolve, the PEACE model stands as a testament to integrity and effectiveness.

2.2 Empirical review

There are several studies on investigative discourse, and these studies have been conducted within and outside Nigeria. The following reviews cover related topics to present the state of research and the perspectives of previous scholars.

2.2.1 Studies on police/suspect interrogation

Studies on Police/Suspect interrogation is no new research area in Nigeria. It has enjoyed a wide range of scholarly interest from many scholars. These scholars have approached this field of research with different goals and intentions and have achieved different results. For this study, the works of a number of scholars relating to language use in police/suspect interrogation are examined and their findings are projected to further explain and clarify the research gaps that this current study fills.

Farinde's (1997) study on police/accused interrogation looks at motivation and orientations of participants towards each other and the subject of interrogation. His findings show that IPOs perform a number of communicative acts during investigative interrogation. The work is fundamental in explaining the intricacies of how police interrogation works. However, Farinde did not examine the underlying ideological underpinnings of the discourse and the indirect influence of language as a channel in constructing the discourse within police-suspect interrogation. This would have enhanced investigative discourse in Nigeria.

Sadiq's (2011) study on police/suspect interrogation examines the communication strategies and motivation of participants in negotiating interaction using Grice's (1975) cooperative principle and Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) discourse Analytic framework. The research reveals the patterns of the discourse acts engaged in criminal investigation as question/answer sequences. The questioning forms are used to control the flow of discourse in police/suspect interrogation. Sadiq's work also explains the power role of the interactants and asserts that IPOs have power and control over the suspects and they can use lots of techniques to obtain a confession from the suspect. Furthermore, Sadiq highlights the significance of taking cultural and sociolinguistic factors into consideration when analysing interrogation language but did not fully address this aspect; especially the cultural diversity in Kano and the influence of sociolinguistic factors on communication in interrogative discourse. Doing this could offer a well-rounded contribution to literature.

Farinde, Olajuyigbe, and Adegbite's (2015) study examine discourse control strategies used in police-suspect interrogations. The study provides valuable insights, especially on the power imbalance in favour of investigating police officers (IPOs) and concludes that police interrogative discourse is a peculiar genre where the presence of the interplay of power asymmetry and dominance is inevitable. The study lacks a comparative analysis between different types of interrogations in different police departments. If the study is a comparative analysis, it would have provided a more nuanced understanding of how discourse control strategies may differ based on factors such as the seriousness of the crime. In addition, one of the aims of the study is to provide a broader study of the cultural and social factors affecting discourse control strategies, but this aspect is not fully explored in the study. If the impact of cultural norms, power dynamics, and societal influences on police suspect interrogations is considered, it would enhance a better understanding of the complexities at play. By ignoring this, the study misses an opportunity to delve deeper into the contextual factors that shape discourse control strategies in Nigerian police-suspect interrogations.

Similarly, the study by Sunday and Akinrinlola's (2017) provides valuable insights into the negotiation tactics engaged during police-suspect interrogations in Ibadan. The results show the communication strategies utilised by both police and suspects during the interrogative discourse. They include persuasion, threats, denial, deflection, and justification. The study highlights the complexity of negotiation in these interactions and emphasises the influence of power dynamics on the tactics employed. However, exploring negotiation tactics in interactions between police and suspects can potentially vary depending on the specific city or cultural context within the country.

The study by Akinrinlola (2017) investigates the role of deception in police-suspect interrogation in Ibadan. The study describes how deception expresses power relations. Akinrinlola engages Sperber and Wilson's theory of relevance to capture how inferential communication affects interaction. The study provides valuable insights into how IPOs manipulate suspects during interrogation sessions. The study is significant, especially as it reveals that police/suspect interrogation involves a high level of psychological manipulation from the IPOs. A larger sample size is recommended for future researchers, so as to showcase a wider spectrum of deceptive strategies employed in different interrogations involving various types of crimes. This

is because a larger and more diverse sample has the capability to enhance the universality of the study's findings and provide a more comprehensive understanding of deception in police-suspect interactions across the country.

The study by Farinde, Oyedokun-Aliu, and Iroegbu (2021) identifies various question types used in police-suspect interactions, such as declarative, choice, restricted and non-restricted WH-questions, special formulas, and projected questions. The findings reveal that the questioning strategies employed by the police afford them the opportunity to control the interrogation, suggesting that the frequency of certain questioning methods may correlate with increased coercion. However, how power is exercised or resisted during interrogation is not fully explored. A full exploration of this would have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the complexities of police-suspect discourse in Nigeria, showing the likely implications of linguistic coercion on administration of justice, such as false confessions and infringement of rights of the accused. Similarly, the study lacks details on sample size and demographics affecting generalisability.

Akinrinlola (2021) has another study on police suspect interaction. However, this particular study investigates rapport building strategies adopted by investigating officers (IPOs) in getting confessional statements from suspects during interrogation sessions. Akinrinlola adopts Gumperz's interactional sociolinguistic theory, with emphasis on how context-specific strategies are captured in negotiating the goals of participants in a discourse. The study reveals that topic change is adopted by IPOs to signal defection so as to get confessional statements from suspects. The findings also show that IPOs do engage empathy, common interest and positive reinforcement to identify with suspects. Therefore, the study concludes that rapport building in PSI is a function of power relations between IPOs and suspects. This study would have been the closest to this current study. However, because of its consideration of rapport building strategy as a function of power relations makes it different, as this study is not concerned with power relation at all. This current study within the ambit of pragmatic acts theory, aims to identify and discuss the peculiar communicative behaviours of ARs in their crime narratives and to discuss their implications on narrative perception especially by investigative interviewers. The study would then enhance the projection of investigative interviewing as the ultimate practice for getting a more humane linguistic evidence that would be admissible at the court of law, to fast-track the

process of conviction/acquittal of accused offenders; which could lead to the reduction in the rise of rape cases in Nigeria.

Similarly, Ajayi (2014) utilises politeness and impoliteness tools of pragmatics to study police/suspect discourse in his study. The study reveals that IPOs employ “bald on record without redress”, positive politeness, negative impoliteness, withhold politeness and meek politeness strategies to attack the suspects, to exert power over them and infringe on their rights during interrogation. However, just like most of the previously reviewed works, the study by Ajayi is also limited in sample size and lacks diversity. He analyses a small number of police-suspect interactions, which may not capture the full range of linguistic patterns and strategies employed in different contexts and across different police departments in Nigeria.

Akinrinlola’s (2021) study on police/suspect interrogation (PSI) focuses on the use of concealment strategies in the extraction of confessional statements from suspects, while also focusing on their implications. Akinrinlola anchors the study on Dell Hymes’ ethnography of communication (EOC), because of its unequivocal engagement with contextual linguistic resources in representing participants’ goals in discourse. The study reveals that IPOs and suspects adopt veiling, jargonisation, lexical replacement, hedging and deflection as concealment strategies. Based on this, the suspects resort to concealment to seek exclusion, ignorance, withdrawal and anonymity. Akinrinlola explains that the IPOs’ concealment strategies are orchestrated to seek suspects’ cooperation, allay suspects’ fears, boost suspects’ confidence, achieve confession with minimal input and protect suspects’ rights during interrogation sessions. The study shows that the the Nigeria Police Force is engaging interrogative tactics that are not really coercive. However, it is worth noting that this study, similar to most of the reviewed studies, has a small sample size. Consequently, the study may not encompass the complete range of strategies that can be employed by both suspects and Investigating Police Officers (IPOs). Expanding the sample size in future research endeavours would enable a broader exploration of strategies utilised by both parties.

The reviewed works above are studies on police/suspect interrogation. The researches by Nigerian scholars, confirm that interrogation is the major form of linguistic criminal investigation technique employed by the Nigeria Police Force. They

commonly concentrate on the interrogation style or method of IPOs, with little attention given to the language use of suspect/accused offender, thereby showcasing the power distribution of such institutional interaction. Also, these studies commonly provide generalised characteristics of suspects of different crimes despite the limited size of their samples. However, this current study aims to provide insights into a particular group of offenders and in this case accused rapists, their assumed identities and narrative intention based on their language use, to accentuate the efficacy of investigative interviewing technique; as a non-coercive information gathering method that will facilitate a more robust evidential clues for the administration of justice in Nigeria.

2.2.2 Studies on investigative interviewing of offenders

With the ever rising cases of crimes, investigation and prosecution of offenders have been of great concern to psychologists, lawyers, criminologists and human rights activists. It is believed that accurate investigation processes will facilitate a better prosecution of offenders with little or no legal or human rights contention. Mainly, the contention is due to the unethical interrogation techniques used widely by police officers in many countries, including Nigeria. Hence, the introduction of investigative interviewing techniques. Since its introduction, there has been several studies by scholars on investigative interviewing of offenders. The studies are dedicated to the development of theories and effective approaches that underline confession and reflect the importance of some interview techniques that have been tested on offenders. Although, most of these studies are not really specific to any crime group.

However, more recently, there are some studies that focused on investigative interviewing techniques among offender groups such as sex offenders (rapists). Generally, crimes are somewhat difficult to investigate, but the difficulties encountered in investigating sex offences are peculiar. Because, the accounts of complainants and suspects are often the only evidence available to investigative interviewers or interrogators in a country like Nigeria. Therefore, obtaining descriptive details through the investigative interviewing of sex offenders is truly critical for investigators to prosecute offenders. Using an effective investigative interview technique has the ability to elicit willing confessions from suspects. In addition, effective interviewing of complainants and alleged perpetrators can greatly increase

the credibility of the amount of information provided by both victim and suspect. This is evident in many studies conducted by some scholars.

The study by Kebbell, Hurren, and Mazerolle (2006) examines sex offenders' perceptions of how they were interviewed and explores potential implications for enhancing the effectiveness of such interviews. Nineteen convicted sex offenders are interviewed. The findings suggest that sex offenders have various perceptions of police interviewing techniques, with some perceiving them as confrontational or coercive. On the other hand, the study shows that half of the convicted sex offenders assert that there is no conclusion or prior decision to confess or not to confess to the crime before the interview.

They also found that some sex offenders confessed to their crimes because they expected a light sentence, while some used it to assuage guilt. The study demonstrates the influence and strength of investigative interview to obtain noncoercive confessions. In addition, the study highlights the importance of building rapport, utilising appropriate questioning techniques, and maintaining a non-confrontational approach to foster. While the study underscores the importance of rapport-building and non-confrontational approaches in interviews, it seems to oversimplify the complex dynamics of sex offender interviews. The study's emphasis on these aspects are likely to overshadow other crucial interview strategies that could contribute to extracting reliable and accurate information from sex offenders.

While the study provides valuable insights into the perceptions of sex offenders, it falls short in deeply exploring specific interview techniques and their impacts on obtaining reliable information. More nuanced investigation into the effectiveness of various questioning strategies, cognitive biases, and potential memory distortion among sex offenders would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in this field.

In comparison to existing studies, the findings of this research align with previous research that emphasises the importance of rapport-building and effective communication techniques in police interviews.

Similarly, the second study by Kebbell, Hurren and Mazerolle (2006) on sex offenders is focused on the police's perception of investigative interview. For their data, they examine the survey responses of 44 convicted male sex offenders. Their focus is

specifically on the examination of the significance of ethical and humane investigative interviewing techniques. While exploring the viewpoint of law enforcement is insightful, the reliance on survey responses from a limited sample of 44 convicted male sex offenders raise concerns about the generalisability of findings.

The study's focus on the significance of ethical and humane investigative interviewing techniques is commendable. However, it falls short of providing a comprehensive assessment of the practical efficacy of these techniques. The study's emphasis on perception rather than verifiable outcomes leaves room for ambiguity regarding the actual impact on interview outcomes and the reliability of information obtained.

Just like the previous study by Kebbel, Hurren, and Mazarelle (2006), there are other studies that support the importance of an ethical and humane investigative interviewing techniques. One of such studies is Boyle and Vullierme (2018). Their study also attests to the significance of effective investigative interviewing technique as one of the most crucial instrument for a successful crime detection and investigation in interviewing of victims, witnesses and suspects. However, the study lacks a comprehensive analysis of specific techniques, strategies, or methodologies that contribute to this effectiveness. Without a deeper exploration of the actual techniques employed and their impact, the study's contribution remains somewhat broad and lacks actionable insights for law enforcement practitioners.

Kebbell and Daniels's (2006) study explore the factors that influence suspects' decisions to confess in a mock crime scenario. The findings of the study indicate that both eyewitness statements and identifications have a significant impact on suspects' decisions to confess. The presence of strong eyewitness statements and accurate identifications increased the likelihood of suspects confessing, while weak statements and inaccurate identifications reduced the propensity to confess. These findings provide valuable insights into the psychological dynamics involved in suspects' decision-making during the interrogation process. A major gap in the study is its reliance on mock crime scenarios rather than real-world criminal investigations. While mock scenarios provide controlled conditions for research purposes, they can not fully capture the complexity and high-stakes nature of actual criminal cases. In comparison to existing research, this study aligns with a body of literature emphasising the influence of eyewitness evidence on suspects' decisions to confess. However, it would be beneficial to incorporate studies that investigate these dynamics within real-world

contexts and further explore additional factors that can potentially affect confession decisions. This could involve examining the impact of various interrogation techniques, individual differences among suspects, and the presence of legal representation, thus providing a more comprehensive understanding of the factors at play in confession-related decision-making.

Oxburgh's (2013) study examines police officers' perception about interviews conducted in cases of sexual offences and murder involving both child and adult victims. The study reveals several important insights. Firstly, police officers consider child victims to be more vulnerable and in need of specialised interviewing techniques compared to adult victims. It also emphasises the significance of building rapport and creating a supportive and conducive ambience for child victims during interviews. Secondly, the study identified a discrepancy in training and experience among police officers when it comes to interviewing child and adult victims, suggesting a need for enhanced training programs to address this gap. A potential gap in the study is that it focuses exclusively on perceptions of police officers. While these perspectives are important, it would be valuable to also include the views and experiences of other stakeholders involved in the interview process, such as child advocacy professionals, psychologists and legal practitioners. Also, the reliance of the study on subjective perceptions of police officers introduces a potential for biases rooted in individual experiences and beliefs. When compared to existing research, this study is consistent with previous studies emphasising the importance of specific interviewing techniques for child victims. However, it would be useful to consider studies that examine the specific techniques used in interviews and their effectiveness in obtaining accurate and reliable information from victims.

Despite the different angles the above scholars tackled the issues of investigative interview from, evidence can be identified as a crucial factor in a suspect's decision when it comes to confession. There are three important things that are derived from those four studies, and they are: (1) the use of interviewing techniques that are ethical; (2) minimisation technique is suggested when discussing the crime; and (3) police officers should show awareness of the cognitive distortions that may be experienced by suspects.

Furthermore, on strategic use and presentation of evidence during investigative interviews, Hartwig, Granhag, Stronwall, and Kronkvist (2006) investigates the

effectiveness of strategic disclosure as a method of detecting deception. The study shows that the strategic disclosure of information during an investigative interview can elicit different responses from truthful and fraudulent individuals, thus helping to detect deception. The results of the study also show that deceptive suspects tend to be more responsive to strategically disclosed information than truthful suspects. This implies that strategic disclosure can be a valuable tool in detecting deceptions. A potential gap in the study, however, is that it relies on laboratory settings and simulations rather than real-world contexts. Although laboratory experiments provide controlled environments for studying deception, they may not fully capture the complexities and nuances of deception in real-world situations. Furthermore, the study focuses primarily on individuals' cognitive and behavioural responses during the interview process, neglecting the role of other contextual factors and non-verbal cues that can help detect deception. Also, when compared to existing research, this study is consistent with previous studies that emphasise the value of strategic disclosure in detecting deception. However, it is important to remember that no single method can provide foolproof deception detection and that multiple techniques and approaches are typically used in combination.

Read, Powell, Kebbells and Milne (2009) is a study on investigative interview of sex offenders that attempts a synthesis of existing literature on sex offenders to put together a precursory guide to identify best practices for the investigative interviewing of sex offenders, and of course, offenders generally. The findings of the study suggest that best practice in investigative interviewing involves a combination of cognitive interviewing techniques, rapport building, and the use of open-ended questions. The study emphasises the importance of building rapport with suspects and creating a supportive environment to enhance the quality and accuracy of information obtained during the interview process. A potential gap in the study is the limited discussion of the challenges and complexities of interviewing sex offender suspects. While the study provides valuable insight into best practices, it does not delve into the unique dynamics and complexities involved in interviewing this specific demographic. When compared to existing research, this study is consistent with previous studies that emphasise the importance of relationship building, cognitive interviewing techniques, and open-ended questions in investigative interviews. However, it should be noted that

the field of investigative questioning is complex and evolving, and there are additional factors and techniques that contribute to best practices.

Read and Powell's (2011) study also present strategies that can help police officers implement narrative framework during investigative interviewing of child sex offenders. The approach includes in-depth interviews with key stakeholders who are leaders in their respective fields. Read and Powell engage these experts in discussions about the process and design of a good sex offender interview. The findings of the study suggest that incorporating a narrative approach in the interview process can be beneficial in eliciting detailed and coherent accounts from suspects. Specifically, the study highlights the significance of using open-ended questions, active listening, and encouraging the suspect to provide a chronological account of events to facilitate the construction of a narrative. However, the study is limited in the exploration of potential challenges and limitations associated with applying a narrative framework in the context of child sex offender interviews. While the study offers strategies for the application of the narrative approach, it does not extensively discuss the potential barriers or difficulties investigators may encounter when implementing these strategies. This study aligns with previous studies that emphasise the value of narrative approaches in investigative interviewing. However, it is important to note that the field of investigative interviewing is multifaceted, and there are various interviewing approaches available.

Researchers have also studied questioning types in investigative interviewing of crime suspects. One of such studies is Leahy-Harland and Bull (2017). The study investigates the strategies employed by police during real-life serious crime interviews and examines the responses of suspects. The study reveals that interviewers commonly use a combination of strategies, including questioning techniques and confrontation tactics, to elicit information from suspects. Similarly, the study reveals that the likelihood of suspects admitting to the alleged crime is highly associated with rapport/empathy and open-ended questions. While, a lower likelihood is associated with the description of trauma, and negative questions. Moreover, it also reveals the variability in suspect responses, ranging from denial to partial admissions or full confessions, which suggests that the effectiveness of police strategies can be influenced by individual factors. However, there is a limited exploration of the situational factors that may affect suspects' responses during interviews.

Understanding the underlying reasons for different response patterns, such as resistance or compliance, would provide valuable insights into the dynamics of the interview process. It is notable to submit that the use of rapport-building, strategic questioning, and confrontation tactics are consistent with other studies in the field. Although, it is important to note that the effectiveness of specific strategies may vary depending on the context and individual characteristics of suspects.

Another aspect of investigative interview that has gained attention from researchers is deception. The goal of these researchers is to develop interviewing approaches to increase behavioural differences between liars and truth tellers. Some of these studies examine deception in investigative interview from the angle of impression management strategies. The study by Colwell, Hiscock-Anisman, Memon, Woods, and Michlik (2006) engages students to provide honest or deceptive statements in an investigative interview regarding the theft of a test. The students are made to give statements that were helpful and convincing enough to avoid the implication of guilt for the theft they committed. On the one hand, the study reveals that deceivers often rely on specific techniques to convince others, such as appearing cooperative, providing excessive details, and using emotional expressions. On the other hand, truth-tellers tend to rely more on consistent statements and providing accurate information. Besides, the study highlights the importance of considering behavioural cues and verbal strategies when assessing the credibility of individuals, particularly in forensic contexts. However, because the study primarily focuses on impression management strategies in a controlled laboratory setting, the complexity and nuances of real-life deceptive situations are not fully captured. Therefore, exploring the applicability and effectiveness of these strategies in actual forensic contexts would provide a more comprehensive understanding of their practical implications. Furthermore, the findings of these study are consistent with existing research regarding the differences in strategies employed by deceivers and truth-tellers.

Masip and Herrero's (2013) study is another existing study on deception. The study examines the possibility that serious crime suspects may attempt to manipulate their behaviour during a behaviour analysis interview (BAI) so that they can appear innocent. However, the engaged respondents for the study are not criminal suspects. In fact, seventy-four students are instructed to imagine themselves guilty or innocent of a serious crime. Then they asked them to fill out a questionnaire about the strategies

they are likely to use during a BAI. The study reveals that both the innocent and guilty respondents (presumed suspects) are more willing to show innocence than show BAI guilt indicators. They also found that innocent respondents blindly rely on the power of innocence to demonstrate they are not guilty while guilty respondents tend to employ more evasive strategies, such as avoiding direct answers and providing incomplete or vague information. In contrast, innocent suspects are more likely to provide detailed and consistent responses, demonstrating their willingness to cooperate and clarify any misunderstandings. The study sheds light on the complex dynamics of suspect interviews and highlights the importance of analysing verbal and nonverbal cues to assess credibility accurately.

However, the study's utilisation of a hypothetical scenario rather than real-life interviews, limits the ecological validity of the findings. Examining actual behaviour analysis interviews conducted in real criminal investigations would provide more robust and applicable insights. Notably, the study focuses primarily on the strategies employed by guilty and innocent suspects, without considering other factors that may influence suspect responses, such as personality traits, cultural backgrounds, or the presence of legal representation. Exploring these additional variables could enhance our understanding of the complexities involved in suspect interviews. In comparison with existing research, the findings align with previous studies that have identified differences in verbal and nonverbal behaviours between guilty and innocent suspects. Similar patterns of evasiveness and inconsistency among guilty individuals and cooperativeness and consistency among innocent individuals have been reported in other studies examining suspect interviews.

Selepe, Lindegger and Govender's (2020) study on investigative interviewing focuses on examining the toxic discourses of sex offenders in the accounts of their sexual violence in Limpopo Province, South Africa; with the aim of exploring male entitlement. The results show that most of the respondents believe in the right to have sex, particularly with women with whom they are in a relationship. Therefore, these offenders consider themselves victims because they are wrongfully arrested for practicing what they considered normal in a romantic relationship. Specifically, the sex offenders employed various discursive strategies, including denial, justification, victim-blaming, and minimising their own responsibility. These strategies reflect broader societal attitudes and cultural norms surrounding gender, power, and sexual

violence in the South African context. The study shows the importance of understanding the discourses used by sex offenders to challenge and dismantle harmful beliefs and attitudes that contribute to the perpetuation of sexual violence. The findings of this study align with previous studies that have highlighted the use of discursive strategies by sex offenders to downplay their actions and shift blame onto the victims. Similar discursive patterns, such as denial, justification, and victim-blaming, have been observed in studies conducted in various cultural and societal contexts.

Studies on investigative interviews have really received a lot of attention over the years. The list of the different areas that researchers have studied is quite long and cannot be exhausted in this current overview. So, the existing studies on investigative interviewing of sex offenders are quite robust. Despite the many issues and topics several scholars have raised and examined, there are still areas with paucity of literature. For instance, researches into the control and influence sex offenders (ARs) may pose on investigative interviewer, need to be investigated. Studies on deception and toxic discourses by sex offenders (Colwell et al., 2006; Hartwig et al., 2009; Masip and Herrero, 2013; Selepe et al., 2020) are closely related to this current study. However, none of these studies examined and identified strategies in the accounts given by sex offenders from the field of pragmatics, especially to reveal ways sex offenders can attempt to take advantage of the interview to give crime accounts in a way that may influence the investigative interviewers' perception and interpretation of the crime. These are the gaps this current study fills.

2.2.3 Studies on crime narrative identity

There are several studies on crime narratives, however, only few that are related to this current study are reviewed here. According to Polkinghorne (1988), crime narratives link individual human actions and events into inter-connected areas of a composite that is comprehensible; this implies that crime narratives link actors to their actions (Dutta-Flanders, 2017). First, there are several ways offenders present themselves and this has been well established (Brookman, 2015). Skye and Matza's (1957) study is one of the earliest studies on how offender's self-represent themselves in their narratives. That study presents neutralisation techniques; from which a large body of studies have emerged (Brookman, 2015).

There are a lot of studies that have evolved from Skye and Matza's (1957) study on neutralisation techniques and most of these studies focus on how offenders present positive self-images to neutralise their crime or to excuse or justify their offending. For example, in a study by Presser (2004) where 27 violent male offenders are interviewed, the findings show that the offenders lay claim to a morally decent identity in the present. Similarly, Coston's (2014) exploratory study of neutralisation techniques in the returned survey from 38 serial sex murderers shows that most of the offenders employed the neutralisation technique - denial of responsibility to excuse their behaviour by indicating that they are not responsible for their crime because of the many sociological and psychological tragedies that they suffered while growing up. Denial of victim and appealing to a higher authority are the other neutralisation techniques engaged by the offenders.

In another study by Bryant, Schimke, Brehm and Uggen (2018), the focus is on examining techniques of neutralisation and identity work among accused genocide perpetrators (following the 1994 Rwandan genocide). The defendants are placed on trial at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and they testified on behalf of themselves. The findings show that the defendants engaged Skyes and Matza's (1957) neutralisation techniques as a way of rationalising, managing impression and negotiating their identity. However, they also identified more techniques in the accounts of the defendants that are adequately captured in the ones by Syke and Matza. Bryant et al., strongly assert that the neutralisation techniques engaged by the defendants are well established in their narratives, such that the techniques not only account for their actions, but strongly presents a positive and socially acceptable sense of self to counter the negative identities brought on by genocide accusation.

However, studies have expanded beyond the evolvments over Skyes and Matza's (1957) neutralisation techniques. For example, Canter (1994) is the first to explore criminal behaviour using narrative theory in his book *Criminal shadows*. He submits that crime narrative is best comprehended through indepth analysis about criminal's personal stories and also by connecting those personal narratives to characteristic roles and actions. Dutta-Flanders (2017) reiterates Canter's submission that to comprehend the actions of a lot of offenders it is practical to give regard to their 'self-created' narratives that give shape and importance to their actions. Similarly, Presser (2010) describes crime narrative as invaluable in accounting for the meanings that offenders

give to their crimes. The study pays particular attention to the conceptualisation of narrative and offender in order to provide practical advice towards the best practices for narrative study in criminology. Presser's study demonstrates the power of narrative identity and how the role offenders play in their lives become a central element of their criminal activities. In crime stories, there are different roles in which offenders see themselves during a crime. The study provides valuable insights into their motivations, experiences, and perspectives, offering a deeper understanding of their backgrounds, decision-making processes, and the social contexts that shape their criminal behaviours.

By examining the narratives of offenders across various crime types, the study offers a holistic understanding of the commonalities and differences among offenders, contributing to the existing body of knowledge on criminal behaviour. Although the in-depth interviews offer rich and detailed narratives, the findings may not capture the full range of criminal behaviours. Presser's study aligns with existing studies that emphasise the importance of understanding the subjective experiences, motivations and self-representation of offenders. Similar studies have highlighted the significance of narrative analysis in unraveling the complexities of criminal behaviour.

Youngs and Canter's (2011) study on narrative roles presents an integrative framework for differentiating offenders based on their narratives. The study highlights the importance of narratives in understanding criminal behaviour and proposes a comprehensive typology of narrative roles that offenders adopt. This offers valuable insights into the ways in which offenders construct and articulate their narratives, shedding light on the motivations, intentions, and self-perceptions underlying their actions. The strength of this study is its theoretical framework, which provides a systematic approach to understanding the diverse narratives of offenders. The typology of narrative roles offers a useful tool for differentiating between various offender types. The study's emphasis on the individual narratives of offenders contributes to the existing literature on offender profiling and offers a valuable perspective on the role of narratives in criminal actions. Youngs and Canter's study aligns with existing studies that emphasise the role of narratives in understanding criminal behaviour. Similar studies have highlighted the importance of narrative analysis and the potential for differentiating offenders based on their narrative styles and content.

However, in another study on offenders' narrative roles by Youngs and Canter (2012), they present an integrative framework for differentiating offenders based on their narratives. Specifically, they develop narrative roles questionnaire (NRQ), offering a structured approach to analysing and understanding the narratives of offenders. They propose a comprehensive typology of narrative roles that offenders adopt. They are four thematic narrative roles: the professional, victim, tragic hero and revengeful mission roles that criminals play during a crime. This classification helps in identifying patterns and motivations within the narratives and contributes to our understanding of how offenders perceive themselves and their actions. Furthermore, the study explores the relationship between the narrative roles and specific criminal behaviours, offering insights into the possible psychological and emotional factors driving offenders' actions. In comparison to existing research, Youngs and Canter's study aligns with existing studies that highlight the significance of narratives in understanding criminal behaviour. Importantly, the use of a standardised questionnaire - NRQ, adds to the growing body of research on the analysis of crime narratives. In addition, Youngs and Canter's study on offenders' crime narratives contributes to the field of offender profiling

Ioannou, Youngs, and Canter (2016) investigate the relationship between emotions and offence narrative roles during the commission of a crime. The study sheds light on the emotional experiences of offenders during criminal acts and how these emotions relate to the narrative roles they assume. By examining the interplay between emotions and offence narrative roles, the study offers valuable insights into the psychological processes underlying criminal behaviour. Furthermore, the study's integration of emotions and narrative roles provides a nuanced understanding of the subjective experiences of offenders, contributing to the field of criminology and aiding in the development of more effective intervention strategies. By investigating the emotions experienced by offenders during the commission of a crime and their connection to narrative roles, the study deepens our understanding of the psychological dynamics at play. The findings reveal that different narrative roles are associated with distinct emotional experiences, such as anger, fear, and excitement. This study aligns with prior studies that acknowledge the significance of emotions in criminal behaviour. Specifically, the integration of emotions and narrative roles expands upon existing literature by highlighting the specific emotions associated with different offence

narrative roles. This study complements previous studies that have explored the role of emotions in criminal decision-making and the subjective experiences of offenders. However, existing studies also recognise the influence of contextual factors, such as social environment and situational cues, on emotions and criminal behaviour.

Similarly, Ioannou, Synnott, Lowe, and Tzani-Pepelasi (2018) apply the Criminal Narrative Experience (CNE) Framework to young offenders while committing a broad range of crimes, with the aim to gain a deeper comprehension about their crime narratives and emotional experiences. Interviews of 120 criminals convicted for a variety of crimes are analysed, revealing four themes of CNE: elated hero, calm professional, distressed revenger, and depressed victim. These are in line with the earlier NRQ framework by Youngs and Canter (2012) on narrative offence roles. The findings provide valuable insights into the narrative roles and emotional dynamics of young offenders, shedding light on the psychological processes underlying their criminal behaviour. The integration of the CNE framework with young offenders is a notable strength of the study, highlighting the importance of exploring the narratives and emotions of this specific group. Particularly, the revelation of these distinct narrative roles adopted by young offenders and the emotions associated with these roles. This will inform a tailored intervention that addresses the emotional needs and developmental challenges of young offenders, ultimately contributing to more effective rehabilitation strategies. Also, Ioannou, Canter, Youngs, and Synnott (2016) also identify four narrative crime roles that offenders are likely to associate with. They are also Hero, professional, revenge and victim roles. They submit that hero and professional roles are associated with theft (like burglary, and shoplifting), drug offences, and robbery while revenge and victim roles are associated with violence, and sexual offences.

Furthermore, Ioannou, Canter, Youngs, and Synnott (2016) explore the crime narratives of offenders across different types of crimes, aiming to uncover the variations and commonalities in their storytelling patterns. The study also identifies four narrative crime roles that offenders are likely to associate with. They are also Hero, professional, revenge and victim roles. Hero and professional roles are associated with theft (like burglary, and shoplifting), drug offences, and robbery while revenge and victim roles are associated with violence and sexual offences. The study's findings provide notable insights into the narrative dynamics of offenders. The study's

focus on comparing crime narratives across different types of crimes is a notable strength, shedding light on the narrative patterns that transcend specific offences. Notably, the findings highlight both similarities and differences in the content and structure of offenders' narratives, contributing to our understanding of the cognitive and emotional processes involved in their storytelling.

Zeyrek-Rios, Canter and Youngs (2022) also attempt an application of the Narrative Roles Questionnaire (NRQ) framework developed by Youngs and Canter (2011) on 468 Turkish male inmates who committed a wide range of offences from fraud to murder. The study's result reveals that Turkish offenders also adopt narrative roles such as professional, revenger, hero, and victim, echoing the original formulation proposed by Youngs and Canter (2011). The study fills a gap in the literature by examining crime narratives in a specific cultural context and highlights the cross-cultural applicability of the NRQ framework. The study contributes to the growing body of literature on crime narratives and offender profiling, emphasising the significance of narrative analysis in understanding criminal behaviour.

Moreover, Sandberg's (2013) study also attempt the possibility of a unified coherent and consistent self-narrative of offenders (Just like Maruna (2001) and Presser (2008)). Maruna (2001:7) says the fundamental presumption is that coherence and consistency are the basic characteristics of self-narratives. Sandberg's paper on narrative criminology focuses on a 1500-page manifesto of Breivik Anders, a terrorist who carried out two terrorist attacks in Norway where 77 people died in 2011. In the manifesto, Breivik attempts to give a coherent story that explains his ideology and life-story, as well as a justification for the attacks. Sandberg describes the manifesto as a story that shifts between different competing characters and narrative tones. The study reveals that although, Breivik's story is a product of anti-Islamic or counter-jihadist social movement narratives that are only on the internet, he creatively adjusts it. Furthermore, Sandberg's study also attempts to develop a framework for narrative criminology based on the argument that offender's narrative is meant to be analysed as an agency determined by culture and context. This argument is the basic function of pragmatics, that language is to be interpreted based on culture and context of use. Sandberg concludes that the crime narratives (stories) are to be taken as shots at coherency and integration, while also taking cues from a broad variety of cultural discourses.

The studies reviewed contribute to the understanding of crime narratives and offer insights into the subjective experiences of offenders. Also, the reviewed studies primarily focus on narrative identity, narrative roles, and emotions, with limited exploration of other factors influencing criminal behaviour, such as social context and situational cues. Consequently, in crime narratives (like in investigative interviews as well), identifying roles and deciphering the meanings embedded in them could be significant in getting evidential clues that may propel the identification of the true crime perpetrator; especially, if a pragmatic framework is applied.

2.2.5 Appraisal of the literature reviewed

The previous studies on investigative discourse have extensively considered communicative acts, questioning and response strategies of both the investigating officers and suspects. However, none of these earlier works by scholars in Nigeria have considered the pragmatic acts and strategies of accused rapists during investigative interviewing sessions (in correctional facilities like Agodi Custodial Centre Ibadan), which is the focus of this study. This current study invokes the awareness of the distinct pragmatics acts engaged in the crime narratives of ARs in Agodi Custodial Centre Ibadan. This study is also an exploration of the goals of the acts involved and the functions of the influencing strategies deployed by these ARs that earlier studies have not been able to identify in crime narratives of ARs.

2.3 Theoretical framework

This section handles the theoretical framework for this study. The theoretical framework for this study is Jacob Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory (2001).

2.3.1 Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory

Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory is a theory of pragmatics that originates as a development over speech act theory, due to speech acts' lack of theory of action of non-situatedness (Mey, 2001). Mey (2001:214) argues that even if it does have such theory, it is individual, not society oriented. He asserts that for speech acts to be effective, they have to be situated. Mey equally minimises the emphasis placed on the description of individual speech acts. He says there is no one-to-one relationship that exists between speech acts and pragmatic acts. This is because, pragmatic acts do not necessarily have to include specific acts of speech. Speech acts do not come alone; they are always accompanied by other acts that also contribute to their successful

manifestation in conversation. Some of these other acts are mainly speech oriented, while others acts are more general in nature. They may be the extra linguistic aspects of communication which include gestures, facial expressions, body postures, intonation, facial mimics. So in pragmatic acts theory, a pract may be a speech act. Most practs are speech acts, however, not all speech acts are pragmatic acts.

The importance of context especially in the study of language and meaning is inevitable. According to Mey (2001:217), there is no conversational contribution that can be successfully understood without it being properly situated within the environment where it was meant to be understood. With context, interlocutors can comprehend what a language unit stands for, in a way that the exact pragmatic import of utterances are realised. Therefore, it can be said that a pragmatic act (pract) or pragmeme is an act in context. The theory emphasises the importance of socio-cultural and societal components in the consideration and comprehension of meaning. It explains the human language use not just from words uttered by a speaker, rather, it focuses on the interactional situation (context) in which the interlocutors (speaker and hearer) achieve their goals. Mey (2006:542) submits that, it is from the outside in, not from the inside out, that is, instead of beginning from what is said, and looking for what the word could mean, the situation where the words fit is resorted to for the description of what can be said and what is actually being said.

The “implied identification” is key to Mey’s Pragmatic acts. There are two parts to the realisation of a pragmeme in pragmatic acts theory. They are the activity and textual parts. Both are used in the decoding of the contextual meaning of any communication. The interaction between the activity and textual parts of a pragmeme result into a pract. The activity part includes speech acts (direct illocutionary acts), indirect speech acts, conversational (dialogue) acts, psychological acts (emotions), prosody (intonation, stress), physical acts. Those characterise the options that are available to the speakers to perform the different functions or actions they desire. The textual part helps in the realisation of the pragmatic function (pract) in a communication event to specifically communicate speaker intention. The textual include inference (INF), reference (REF), relevance (REL), voice (VCE), shared situational knowledge (SSK), shared cultural knowledge (SCK), metaphor (MPH) and metapragmatic joker (M). As said earlier, the activity part shows the participants the options that are available for them in a conversation while the textual part shows the context within which the

pragmeme operates. Therefore, it can be said that in communication, the interlocutors combine the options available to them in both the activity and textual parts to perform pragmatic acts. Accordingly, both parts (activity and textual) co-act to produce the intended meaning of interactants. The chart below shows Mey's (2001:222) scheme of a pragmeme.

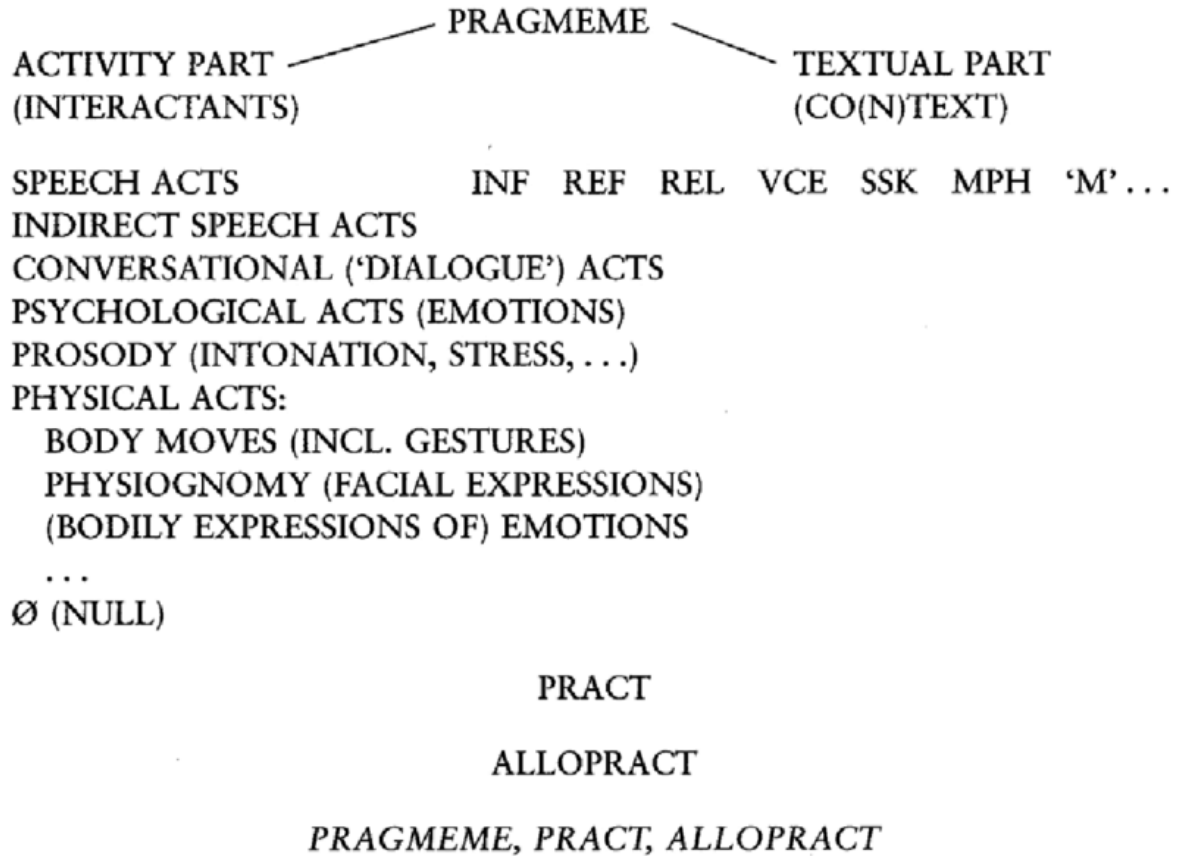


Figure 1: Jacob Mey's (2001:222) Model of Pragmatic Acts

Over the years, some scholars have proposed modifications on pragmatic acts theory. One of such is Odebunmi (2006:153-168). In his study of proverbs in Yerima's plays, he proposes the addition of 'shared cultural knowledge' (SCK) to Mey's scheme of pragmeme to cater for utterances that are culturally bound. Odebunmi's argument is that social knowledge cannot be contextually navigated fully through 'shared situational knowledge' (SSK). Therefore, this modification is an extension of the contextual scope of Mey's (2001) pragmeme that utterances are not only situational-bound, but are equally cultural-bound.

Critiquing Mey's pragmatic acts theory, Kecskes (2010:2896) argues that it is not consistent enough in its description of the relationship between the semantic content of expressions and the actual context of situation. He reiterates that, although Mey (2001) claims that pragmatic acts rely on, and actively create, the situation in which they are realised, but more emphasis is still given to situational context in the construction and comprehension of meaning than to the linguistic expressions that encode their history of use which depends on prior experience of interactants.

Also, Allan (2010) contends with the major arguments of Mey (2001) on the introduction of pragmatic acts theory. He argues that Mey's submissions are not strong enough to introduce a new theory. Allan claims that there seems to be nothing extraordinary about Mey's (2001) description of pragmeme and pragmatic acts. Allan asserts that Mey's major declaration about the importance of common ground in the determination of the forms and meanings of speech acts is not a new phenomenon, therefore, it does not justify the need for a new theory.

Similarly, Acheoah (2015) also introduces a theory called the pragma-crafting theory as an extension of Mey's (2001) pragmatic acts theory. Acheoah's theory introduces new components for the pragmatic analysis of spoken and written communication. According to him, Mey's theory and indeed other existing pragmatic analytical frameworks have not been able to account for features of immediate and remote contexts as well as the analysis of latent meanings in communicative events. In making up for this, an interdisciplinary and integrative analytic framework is required, hence the introduction of the pragma-crafting theory.

Furthermore, pragmatic acts theory framework serves as a foundational element for understanding the role of language in diverse contexts. Significantly, it is a framework

that offers a comprehensive analysis that extends beyond identifying speech acts. It acknowledges that meaning and function are context-dependent and that context plays a critical role in influencing linguistic interpretation. The applicability of the theory can be seen in a variety of communication settings, such as everyday conversations, investigative discourse, demonstrating its versatility across linguistic and communication domains. Given the broad application of the theory, it can be challenging to identify and categorise pragmatic acts, especially when analysing complex communicative interactions.

Defining precise boundaries for pragmatic acts can prove a bit challenging because, the theory lacks precise analysis guidelines which could potentially result into arbitrary interpretations during application. Due to the context focus of the theory and the the impact cultural variation has on the perception of and comprehension of pragmatic acts, cultural variations have a significant impact pragmatic act interpretation due to the theory's context focus, with cultural norms influencing act perception and understanding. The depth and range of of the theory might be improved by closer integration with other linguistic and pragmatic theories.

In conclusion, Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory contributes offers a valuable perspective as a theory of action. Its strengths include comprehensive analysis and versatile applicability. However, complexity, boundary clarity issues, analysis guidance gaps, sensitivity to cultural differences, and the potential for a broader theoretical integration are potential weaknesses.

Despite the various criticisms about the Pragmatic Acts Theory, the theory has gained general prominence useful in accounting for the acting of utterances within certain social context. Therefore, in this study, pragmatic acts theory is utilised to examine how the activity and textual parts of the pragmeme co-act to produce and showcase the roles and intentions of the participants in the discourse. Pragmatic acts theory is considered suitable for the analysis of the crime narratives of ARs because of its ability to interpret utterances based on the embedded situational and socio-cultural contexts in which people act in and the combination of everything that they bring into the interaction.

2.4 Chapter summary

The chapter reviews previous studies and concepts as well as the theoretical framework used in the study. The approaches of earlier studies to investigative discourse were reviewed and the gap this study is filling was identified.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This chapter presents the research design, description of data, research instrument and data collection method, data selection process, data processing, data analysis method, and ethical consideration.

3.1 Research design

A descriptive design was adopted in this study and within the ambit of Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory, the language use of Accused Rapists (ARs) in correctional facilities like Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan is explored to describe how they wield language during investigative interviewing to influence investigative interviewers' (II) perception and pragmatic interpretation of the crime narratives. This is done through the identification and discussion of the pragmatic acts evoked by ARs, the goal of the acts involved and the pragmatic strategies deployed in their crime narratives. The functions and implications of the practs, goal and strategies to administration of justice were also discussed.

3.2 Study population

The data were obtained directly from 50 voluntary ARs at Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Agodi Custodial Centre has the capacity to hold 389 inmates but as at the time the data was collected, it was holding about 1000 inmates, out of which almost 100 inmates are sex offenders either as Awaiting Trials Persons or convicts.

3.3 Sampling technique

The purposive sampling technique was used to select the sample. The purposive selection of a correctional facility from the Nigerian correctional service as opposed to other alternatives in Nigeria like a police station in the Nigeria Police Force, establishes an ethically controlled setting. Particularly, this choice serves to underscore the credibility of investigative interviewing as an ethically humane approach for

eliciting non-coercive information from crime suspects, including accused rapists, in contrast to the prevailing coercive methods like interrogation often used by the Nigeria Police. The structured environment and ethical dimensions position correctional facilities as strategically valuable option for procuring comprehensive and dependable data that harmonises with this study's aim and objectives

There are four custodial centres in Oyo State, they are Agodi Custodial Centre Ibadan, Abolongo Custodial Centre Oyo, Ogbomoso Farm Centre and Olomi maximum facility, currently under construction. Out of these four facilities, Agodi Custodial Centre was selected because it houses most of the command's sex offenders. Also, it was selected because the approval given by the Controller of Corrections, Oyo State Command covers only Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan. Similarly, Fifty ARs were interviewed, however, only 39 interview sessions were fully transcribed due to audibility issues. Therefore, the study's analysis revolves round only the fully transcribed interview sessions.

3.4 Nature and methods of data collection

The data that were gathered were direct data. The method used for data collection were investigative interview and a voice recorder device. They facilitated the gathering of the verbal accounts provided by the ARs during the interviews, capturing their crime narratives, emotional responses and linguistic features (verbal and nonverbal). Due to the sensitive nature of the response and the data, the Controller of Corrections, Oyo State Command gave the researcher the approval to conduct interviews with only 50 ARs, particularly those who voluntarily agree to participate in the study. The interviews were conducted under the supervision of the research officer and the psychologist of Oyo State Correctional Service. Prior to the commencement of the interview sessions, informed verbal consent was obtained from the ARs and at the beginning of each session, verbal consent was obtained again, reconfirming their willingness to participate and their rights to withdraw from the research. By this, their rights as research subjects are protected. The data collection took place at the Inmates' Admission Room (common room) of Agodi Custodial Centre, which served as the setting for the interviews.

The interviews followed an unstructured guide by Preparation and planning, Engage and explain, Account, Closure and Evaluation (1993 PEACE) model of investigative

interviewing by Baldwin John (1993). This model provides a systemic approach to gathering information from suspects, aiming to elicit uncoerced comprehensive and reliable crime narratives. Thirty-nine interview sessions out of the 50 ARs interviewed were transcribed due to issues of audibility. The interviews were done at the Inmate Admission Room (common room) where different activities were ongoing at the same time, hence, the environment was noisy. This affected the quality of some of the audio recordings, which necessitated the researcher to purposively select only the interview sessions that were audible. Specifically, the audio recordings of the 39 interview sessions were transcribed using Gail Jefferson's (1984) Transcription notation for the purpose of accounting for the nonverbal cues present in the utterance of the ARs, which are capable of accentuating the implied meaning of the utterances. Also, the transcription notation was employed for visible recognition and understanding of the speech patterns of the ARs.

Following the transcription process, the data were translated from Yoruba language and Pidgin to English to ensure uniformity and accessibility for analysis and interpretation. This step allowed for a standardised language format, enabling effective examination and understanding of the crime narratives provided by the accused rapists. Overall, the steps aimed to ensure the reliability and comprehensibility of the collected data for the subsequent stages of the research.

3.5 Method of data analysis

The translated crime narratives of 39 accused rapists in Agodi Custodial centre Ibadan were analysed using a descriptive method for an in-depth discussion of each of the crime narratives. Excerpts from the crime narratives of the ARs were drawn to cater for the various aspects of the analysis. Within the scope of Mey's Pragmatic Acts Theory, the analysis in this study was in three parts. The first part dealt with the identification and description of the evoked practs in the crime narratives of the ARs. The second stage covered the identification of the goals of the acts engaged by the ARs. The third stage dwelled on the discussion of the pragmatic strategies deployed by ARs in their crime narratives for the purpose of influencing the investigative interviewer's interpretation of the narratives. These were accounted for through a combined description presence of the activity (direct and indirect speech acts and psychological acts) and textual parts of the pragmeme (reference, inference, relevance,

voice, shared situational knowledge, and shared cultural knowledge) and the active roles they played towards the construction of ARs' intended narrative interpretation.

3.6 Ethical consideration

To collect the data for this study, a letter of introduction was written for the researcher by the Head of the Department of English, University of Ibadan to the Controller of Corrections, Oyo State Command. The researcher was interviewed by the Controller of Corrections, Oyo State Command to know what the research was about before approving the data collection from inmates using a voice recorder device. The data collection permit granted by the Controller of Corrections, Oyo State Command only include access to 50 inmates (rapists), particularly those who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study with their voice being recorded on a voice recorder.

Prior to the commencement of data collection, informed oral consent was obtained from all the 50 ARs who participated voluntarily. Specifically, the research officer and the psychologist of Corrections, Oyo State, spoke with over 100 ARs in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan and 50 of them who were willing were led to the researcher one after the other to be interviewed. The researcher clearly explained the purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits of the study to the volunteered ARs, and they were given the opportunity to ask questions and provide voluntary consent. It was emphasised that participation was entirely voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. Similarly, the privacy and confidentiality of the volunteered ARs were strictly maintained throughout the study. Each AR was assigned a unique identifier like AR1 to AR39. This unique identifier helped to ensure anonymity.

Furthermore, the researcher maintained a professional and respectful relationship with the volunteered ARs. They were treated with dignity, irrespective of whatever their responses revealed about them. The researcher ensured that no physical or mental harm or discomfort was caused during the data collection process and that the ARs' well-being was prioritised. Also, it is worthy to submit that the data was collected for two days between 12:00pm and 2:00pm under the watchful eye of the research officer and psychologist of Corrections, Oyo State Command. Finally, the researcher was given a letter of completion of data collection from the Nigerian Correctional Service, Oyo State command. The letter is shown in the appendix.

3.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has examined the data collection procedure, sampling, and the method of analysis for. The analysis of the transcribed data is discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Preamble

This chapter focuses on the analysis for this research. The analysis is based on multiple excerpts drawn from the transcription of thirty-nine purposively selected crime narratives of ARs in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria and the ARs are identified by a unique identifier and number - AR1 to AR39; while the researcher is identified as investigative interviewer (II). The analysis encompasses three segments and they are the identification and discussion of the pragmatic acts employed by ARs in their crime narratives, goals of the acts involved and the contextualised pragmatic strategies that characterise the use of language in ARs' crime narratives. The study adopted Gail Jefferson's (1984) transcription notation to present excerpts from the crime narratives of the ARs.

4.1 Pragmatic acts in Accused Rapists' crime narratives

The analysis in this section is done by identifying and describing the constituents of the practs evoked by the ARs in their crime narratives. There are three practs evoked by the ARs in their crime narratives, and they are denying, distancing and justifying practs. These practs are made up of the combination of some constituents of the activity (direct and indirect speech acts) and textual parts of the pragmeme (reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared situational knowledge or shared cultural knowledge).

4.1.1 Denying pract

This is the assertion of claims to deny the rape allegation. In some crime narratives, some ARs seek to alter the attributions made by the accusation against them, so, they evoke the denying pract to not only contend the rape allegation but to also instigate doubt of the accusation as well. Basically, it is done through the use of suggestive descriptions or explanations and emphatic statements to counter the accusation, so that the accusation is implied as false, hinting innocence, while also subtly protesting their

detention. The ARs who engage this pract did because, being accused of rape puts them at a disadvantage. It is a threat to their identity, character, and it subsequently shatters their self-esteem. This is the reason some narratives show active attempts of ARs to resist the allegation by denying to counter the allegation as false, emphasizing indirectly the ultimate goal of the denial. Specifically, ARs in this category, combine some constituents of the activity (direct and indirect speech acts) and textual parts of the pragmeme (reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared situational knowledge) to evoke and realise the denying pract so as to challenge and convincingly refute the rape accusation. This can be seen in the following crime narratives of ARs:

Excerpt 1:

II: What offence were you accused of and how did it happen?

AR3: >I Am charged for rape. They accused me for raping a girl<. THE GIRL HAPPENS TO BE MY FRIEND'S GIRLFRIEND, >That my friend works in Lagos. He came home that weekend, when he was in Lagos, they had an agreement that he would give her ten thousand naira. When the guy came, he called the girl, we were drinking together. He now called the girl, to go home with us< <When we got home, the girl and him went inside the house together while I was outside>. <I realised that they were arguing, I entered the house and saw both of them fighting. I told the girl she was rude with the way she was speaking to her boyfriend>. THE GIRL THEN MADE A STATEMENT THAT WE WILL BOTH PAY FOR WHAT WE DID NOT BUY. <I now asked her what she meant by we will pay for what we did not buy>. >That was how the girl left<. <The police came to arrest me after two weeks>. <I was the first person the police arrested>. I said what happened., <They said a lady said we raped her>. I SAID WHY AM I THE FIRST TO BE ARRESTED, I AM NOT HER BOYFRIEND...,

AR3

Some of AR3's responses to questions from the II regarding the rape allegation entail direct and indirect referencing (REF) of some individuals in the crime scenarios to facilitate the perception of innocence, such as "*the girl*", "*my friend's girlfriend*", "*that my friend*" and "*her boyfriend*". This is to show that the individuals play important roles in the incidence that surrounds the allegation and that is why AR3 referenced them continuously throughout the narrative. Also, these referencing (REF) establish a shared understanding of the people involved in the situation and puts them in their rightful relevant (REL) positions in the crime scenarios. Therefore, the scenarios AR3 constructed subsequently centre around these individuals. Indirectly, this direct referencing helps AR3 to subtly create the idea of innocence (INF). Thereby, implying

(INF) that, because of his use of reference, he is directly emphasising the actors in the crime scenarios while indirectly showcasing and establishing his lack of involvement in the crime. It also enables him to accentuate the validity of his question of “*I SAID WHY AM I THE FIRST TO BE ARRESTED? I AM NOT HER BOYFRIEND,*”. Therefore, AR3’s use of direct and indirect referencing is pushing for the investigative interviewer (II) to not only question the genuineness of the allegation but to most importantly perceive his innocence.

Likewise, AR3's utilisation of indirect inference (INF) prompts II to draw alternative conclusions. For example, when AR3 makes this statement with a raised voice, "*THE GIRL THEN MADE A STATEMENT THAT WE WILL BOTH PAY FOR WHAT WE DID NOT BUY* ", he is emphasising the significance of that statement. Particularly, that statement indirectly challenges the credibility of the accusation by projecting a potential motive of conspiracy behind the girl's (victim) statement. His questioning of the victim’s statement made in a slow speech “*<I now asked her what she meant by we will pay for what we did not buy>*” is also meant for emphasis so that the II would ponder on it and then arrive at the inference that the rape allegation is unfounded and just a conspiracy. Besides, by stating that he asked the girl for clarification about her statement, AR3 seeks to portray the girl's words as ambiguous and lacking substance. Therefore, it can be said that the questioning serves the pragmatic implication of undermining the credibility of the accuser's statement (victim) and further reinforces AR3’s denial of any wrongdoing. Thereby, indirectly urging the II to draw a conclusion that affirms his innocence because his narrative implies “I did not commit the crime” and "there is no evidence linking me to the crime".

Similarly, the use of relevance (REL) can also be found in AR3’s narrative as shown in the excerpt above. Specifically, AR3's responses focus on relevant details, events, and circumstances to strengthen the denial. For instance, AR3 mentions being present at the scene, witnessing an argument – “*<I realised that they were arguing, I entered the house and saw both of them fighting>*”, and addressing the girl's behaviour - “*<I told the girl she was rude with the way she was speaking to her boyfriend>*”. These statements are presented in a slow speech to accentuate their relevance. With the slow speech, AR3 calls the attention of the II to pay special attention to the information, which indirectly propels the II to ponder on them. Those statements then serve as relevant information that counters the accusation. These relevant details given by AR3

serve the purpose of conflicting testimony to cast doubt on the victim's accusation. His explanation about witnessing an argument between the girl and her actual boyfriend and his intervention to address the girl's behaviour present an alternative scenario. It is the aim of AR3 to create confusion regarding the events and raise questions about the victim's credibility. The introduction of a different narrative helps to convincingly counter the accusation and properly situate the denying pract.

Regarding voice (VCE), AR3 adopts an assertive and confident voice throughout his narrative. His indirect implication of "I did not commit the crime" and "there is no evidence linking me to the crime" through the scenarios created – “>*I Am charged for rape. They accused me for raping a girl*<. *THE GIRL HAPPENS TO BE MY FRIEND’S GIRLFRIEND*” project conviction and aim to convey credibility and trustworthiness, and lack of personal motive to commit the alleged crime is highlighted. The fast paced speech – “>*I Am charged for rape. They accused me for raping a girl*<” and the statement – “*THE GIRL HAPPENS TO BE MY FRIEND’S GIRLFRIEND*” made in a loud voice serve the pragmatic implication of AR3 presenting himself as someone with no reason or desire to engage in such behaviour, as he is not the victim’s boyfriend. Also, his emphasis on the lack of motive aims to challenge the plausibility of the accusation and strengthen his denial. In conclusion, the denying pract evoked by AR3 in his narrative is a combination of the activity (direct and indirect speech acts) and the textual parts (reference, inference, relevance and voice) of the pragmeme, helping him to construct a narrative that challenges the rape accusation and forges the creation of innocence effectively.

Excerpt 2:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR11: Rape (.)

II: Did you commit the offence?

AR11: I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD

II: Who is she to you and what happened?

AR11: SHE IS NOT MY FAMILY MEMBER. <The girl’s father and my children are friends>. <When that incidence happened, there is a woman in that our house>. <The house is owned by siblings>. <While the woman was talking to me>, I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK. <I couldn’t go to work. I only go to my mechanic workshop sometimes. I always go to the hospital>. <That woman now said we should be in a relationship>. I SAID I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <I told the woman that you can see that your husband always prostrates to great me and he calls me baba. Your husband and my children are friends>. I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <The same thing happened the following day again. I now said okay that she should allow me to get well. My plan was to just pack out when I have recuperated>. <She

came to meet me another day, I lied to her again. She came to me again and saw me having the attack>. <I now said she too can see that I am not well>. SHE THEN SAID SHE WILL SHOW ME AND LEFT ANGRILY. <I called her to appeal to her but she did not respond>. <Whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me>. <So, those children were with me that day>. <When I came back from the hospital, I went to buy food. Usually, the children and I eat together>. <So, when the woman came again, that thing started affecting me again>. <I now decided to go and eat so that I can use the medication I bought>. <She said what about my cloth. I said at least you can see that this thing is affecting me>. She now started putting the children on me(.)

AR11

In the excerpt above, the pragmatic implication of AR11's responses to the questions asked by the II is to project and accenuate the denying pract. Through the combined use of some constituents of activity part (direct and indirect speech acts) and textual part (reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared situational knowledge), assertive claims are made to deny the rape allegation, cast doubt on the allegation and assert innocence. Some of AR11's responses to the questions from the II regarding the rape allegation entail direct and indirect referencing (REF). For example, he refers to “*a woman in that our house*”, “*the girl*” and “*<the girl's father and my children are friends>*”. Making these references help AR11 to establish a shared understanding of the context and the people involved in the incident. Also, AR11 makes specific references (REF) to his medical condition, such as “*I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK*”, which serves as an indirect way of implying that he was physically incapable of committing the alleged crime. By making bold his health issues, AR11 implies that the accusation is unfounded and emphasises his lack of ability to engage in the alleged crime. What he did with the referencing of his medical condition is intentional and can be described as conveying implied meaning (INF) through context of shared situational knowledge (SSK). This implicature relies on shared situational knowledge about the limitations imposed by health conditions.

Similarly, AR11's reference (REF) to “*a woman in that our house*” and the scenarios created around who the woman is and her role in the crime situation are projected intentionally to push the II to make an inference (INF) that holds the woman as the instigator and conspirator of the rape allegation against him. For instance, he submits that the woman in the house was interested in having a relationship with him based on her actions and statements made in slow speech and in increased volume speech like – “*<that woman now said we should be in a relationship>. I SAID I CANNOT DO*

SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE”, and this statement “*<she came to meet me another day, I lied to her again. She came to me again and saw me having the attack>*” and this statement as well – “*SHE THEN SAID SHE WILL SHOW ME AND LEFT ANGRILY. <I called her to appeal to her but she did not respond>*”. These statements are given with the raised voice and slow speech to emphasise their importance, so that the II will ponder on them and then would be propelled to make the inference (INF) that the “*woman*” out of spite falsely accused AR11 of sexually molesting the little girl after their interactions because he did not give in to her advances. This can be called counter explanation, as inferences arrived at challenge the validity of the accusation and offer alternative explanations for the events.

Furthermore, AR11 selects and presents information that he deems relevant to his denial. For example, the assertive proclamation of his age – “*I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD*”, the relationship with the girl's father – “*<the girl's father and my children are friends>*”, their living arrangements – “*your husband and my children are friends>*. *I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE*”, and his interaction with the children (victim) – “*...whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me>*” are relevant (REL) for the establishment of a context where the alleged crime would be unlikely to occur. Focusing on these details, AR11 highlights the relevance of his personal circumstances through the statement – “*COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK. <I couldn't go to work. I only go to my mechanic workshop sometimes. I always go to the hospital>*”, to disprove the accusation. Therefore, he is implying (INF) that the situations described do not align with the crime, so, his denial is reinforced. Ultimately, this strengthens his assertion of innocence and undermines the credibility of the accusation. Regarding voice (VCE), AR11 adopts a defensive voice all through his narrative as he creates scenarios to convey his innocence and frustration. This defensive voice is a make up of explanations, appeals and pleas for understanding. Even his speech tone, that is, the loud voice and the slow paced speech he used to voice out his counter claims accentuate his defensive stance. These help him to create believable impressions.

AR11's leverages shared cultural knowledge (SCK) to strengthen his denial. He makes reference to the relationship between the girl's father and his own children – “*<the girl's father and my children are friends>*” and even highlight the cordial and trustworthy relationship that exist between him and the victim's parents; exemplified

by how the victim's parents always bring the children to him whenever they are going out – “<*whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me*>. <*So, those children were with me that day*>”. His reliance on this shared cultural knowledge suggests the implication that it would be unlikely for him to engage in an inappropriate behaviour with the victim given their social connections. His reliance on SCK is enabled because of an assumption that there is a shared cultural knowledge and understanding between him and the II about the specific relationships and events he mentioned. Especially the likely impressions that may be formed based on those details. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of the situation. Therefore, it can be submitted that SSK and SCK enhance AR11's denying pract by leveraging the assumed understanding of contextual factors to dispute the accusation effectively. In conclusion, the pragmatic implication of AR11's responses create a narrative that undermines the credibility of the rape allegation so that innocence is perceived by the II through some constituents of the parts of the pragmeme.

Excerpt 3:

- II: What offence were you accused of?
 AR12: >Rape<
 II: How old is the girl they said you raped?
 AR12: >Eight years<
 II: Tell me how it happened.
 AR12: <I was at home with my wife that day>. <So, as I was feeling hot inside I now decided to go upstairs to play>. <That was how that girl passed through that place>. BECAUSE THE MOTHER WAS ALREADY HOLDING GRUDGES AGAINST ME, SHE NOW SAID I RAPED HER CHILD. <They went for doctor's report, they said there is nothing there>. THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING.
 II: Did they catch you on her?
 AR12: NO
 II: So, why did they say you raped her?
 AR12: <They said she wasn't walking properly>. MY WIFE AND CHILD WERE AT HOME, WILL I NOW LEAVE MY WIFE AND CHILD AND GO TO HAVE SEX WITH THE GIRL?
 II: What now happened?
 AR12: <They brought the police to arrest me>.
 II: What happened to the doctor's report?
 AR12: THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING IN THE DOCTOR'S REPORT.
 II: Why have you not been released?
 AR12: THE PERSON THAT DOESN'T HAVE ANYONE HAS GOD.

AR12

Reference is a crucial contextual element in AR12's responses to II's questions. For instance, AR12 refers (REF) to specific individuals such as "*that girl*" "*the mother*," and "*my wife*". By using these references (REF), AR12 establishes a shared

understanding of the people involved in the situation, allowing for clearer communication and contextualisation of the denial. Also, he relies on specific events and circumstances to shape II's understanding of the situation. He employs suggestive descriptions/explanations, such as “<I was at home with my wife that day>. <So, as I was feeling hot inside, I now decided to go upstairs to play>” and “<that was how that girl passed through that place>”, and these statements are made in slow paced speech to situate their importance to the scenario he is creating, implying that his encounter with the girl was coincidental and innocent. By referencing these details, AR12 attempts to cast doubt on the accusation and present himself as a victim of misinterpretation. These references contribute to the construction of a narrative that supports his denial and challenges the credibility of the allegations.

Similarly, AR12 involves the use of intertwined inference (INF) to challenge the veracity of the accusation. For example, mentioning that the mother had grudges against him— “*BECAUSE THE MOTHER WAS ALREADY HOLDING GRUDGES AGAINST ME, SHE NOW SAID I RAPED HER CHILD*”, especially in a raised voice is intentional to lay strong emphasis and show his frustration about being misrepresented. Consequently, that statement made in a loud voice is to propel the II to make an inference that the victim's mother misrepresented him because of a potential ulterior motive, that is, the grudge. The implication of this is that the victim's mother is discredited and a doubt is cast on her credibility. The way he presents his version of events encourages the II to infer alternative interpretations of the situation. For example, by implying that his encounter with the girl was coincidental and innocent through statements like— “<so, as I was feeling hot inside, I now decided to go upstairs to play>” and “<that was how that girl passed through that place>”, AR12 encourages the inference that there was no malicious intent on his part. These guided inferences aim to undermine the credibility of the accusation and shape the II's perception in his favour.

Furthermore, relevance (REL) plays a significant role in AR12's crime narrative as he selectively introduces contextual details that are relevant to support his innocence. To reinforce the argument that the accusation is baseless, he highlights that he was at home with his wife and child on the day of the alleged rape — “*MY WIFE AND CHILD WERE AT HOME, WILL I NOW LEAVE MY WIFE AND CHILD AND GO TO HAVE SEX WITH THE CHILD?*”. Because of this strong emphasis (through his loud speech)

on the presence of his wife and kid at home the day the incident occurred, he questions why he would leave them to engage in a sexual activity with the girl. This relevant (REL) information strengthens his denial and reinforces his innocence. Specifically, this relevant detail functions as an establishment of alibi and therefore creates doubt about his involvement in the reported rape. Highlighting the presence of his family members is an attempt to demonstrate that he had no opportunity or motive to commit the crime. He also mentions the doctor's report, which allegedly found nothing – *“THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING IN THE DOCTOR'S REPORT”*. This doctor's report is strongly emphasised to establish its relevance in supporting AR12's denial. The relevance of all of these details is that they strengthen the credibility of his defence and align his narrative with his claim of innocence.

Assertive voice (VCE) is a prominent element in AR12's crime narrative. This is based on his utilisation of emphatic statements made in increased volume speech to assert his innocence firmly. Emphatic statements like *“BECAUSE THE MOTHER WAS ALREADY HOLDING GRUDGES AGAINST ME, SHE NOW SAID I RAPED HER CHILD ”* and *“MY WIFE AND CHILD WERE AT HOME, WILL I NOW LEAVE MY WIFE AND CHILD AND GO TO HAVE SEX WITH THE GIRL?”* and this statement as well – *“<they went for doctor's report, they said there is nothing there>. THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING”*, help AR12 to project confidence, assertiveness and conviction; thereby enhancing the implausibility of the accusation and reinforcing his innocence.

Similarly, AR12's responses invoke shared situational knowledge (SSK) through his reference to the doctor's report that found nothing, stating *“THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING”*. This appeals to the shared understanding that a medical examination would typically reveal physical evidence in cases of sexual assault. By referencing (REF) this shared situational knowledge (SSK), AR12 aims to undermine the credibility of the allegations and strengthen the denial. This also serves to highlight lack of physical evidence to support the accusation and by drawing attention to the absence of evidence, AR12 attempts to weaken the credibility of the claim and reinforce his denial.

Overall, AR12 constructs a narrative that challenges the rape accusation and asserts his innocence. By employing some of the elements of the parts of the pagmeme, AR12

attempts to shape the II's perception and interpretation, reinforce his denial, and appeal support for his innocence.

4.1.2 Distancing pract

A major aspect of a crime investigation is the knowledge of the crime scene and the awareness of who the victim is. Therefore, for some ARs to prove their innocence, they evoke the distancing pract. The distancing pract is a complete withdrawal from everything relating to the crime; a display of total ignorance of the crime. Some ARs evoked this pract through the combination of some constituents of the activity (direct and indirect speech acts) and textual parts of the pragmeme (reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared cultural knowledge and shared situational knowledge) to project a disconnection from the crime situation and even the victim. The ARs involved try as much as possible to show disconnection from the crime by giving stories that seem verifiable to prove that they have nothing in connection to the crime. First, they assert that they are not responsible for the crime, then they proceed to show a disconnection from the victim which may be by stating that they do not know the victim or by a show of limited connection with the victim, and finally, by subtly protesting and condemning the police over their manner of arrest.

Excerpt 4:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR1: I was accused of rape (.). IT HAPPENS NOT TO BE TRUE. <The child I am talking about lives with her mother close to our own house>. <They packed into our house in 2016>. I DON'T KNOW THE MOTHER; THE MOTHER TOO DOESN'T KNOW ME. The mother, the mother is no longer with the father (.) The child and her father live together (.) NO, THE CHILD AND THE ELDER SISTER LIVE TOGETHER. <So, we don't live together in our family house, we don't live together there>. That woman (.), IN FACT, it wasn't up to seven days that they brought the girl there(.). THE GIRL MET ME THERE. She was about ten years old, and we sometimes send her on errands. It was in the tenth month that I actually met the child. Sometimes, <when I go to work in the morning, it is till night; when I come back in the evening, it's till the next day. I don't speak with the people I live with, we don't see at all because when we enter the house in the night, its till the following day>. <However, this year we just entered, I have not seen her at all>. The only way I can say I have seen her is (.) I saw her one day...

AR1

Based on the above excerpt, AR1's direct reference (REF) to being accused of rape "*I was accused of rape (.)*" establishes the core context for the crime narrative, although

there is a slight hesitation in his response. This slight hesitation may imply that he is trying to gather his thoughts or he is ashamed of stating that he is accused of rape. However, his explicit but hesitant acknowledgement of the accusation serves as his recognition of the seriousness of the crime under investigation. This reference sets the stage for the subsequent distancing pract, which allows AR1 to shape his narrative in response to the accusation. He signifies a deep understanding of the crime, and establishes a foundation upon which his narrative of innocence and disconnection can be built on. Notably, AR1's reference (REF) of the child, who she lives with and the proximity of where they live in statements like – “<the child I am talking about lives with her mother close to our own house>. <They packed into our house in 2016>” and this as well – “*THE CHILD AND THE ELDER SISTER LIVE TOGETHER*”, serve to demonstrate AR1's knowledge of the victim's existence. Therefore, his provision of the specific details about their proximity is an attempt to create an image of awareness without assuming any responsibility or connection to the crime. The implication here is that AR1 possesses relevant information about the victim but projected in a way that shows a limit in their connection. This helps him to establish the distancing pract.

Also, AR1's inference (INF) about the child's living situation contributes to his distancing pract. Specifically, the inference from this statement “*THE GIRL MET ME THERE. <She was about ten years old, and we sometimes send her on errands>*” is meant to suggest that AR1's knowledge of the child is derived from occasional encounters rather than a close familial relationship and the pronoun “we” in the statement implies that he relates with the girl the same way other people living within the same compound as him relate with her. On that account, the implication is that AR1's connection to the child is minimal, and this enables AR1 to distance himself from any direct involvement in the crime.

Furthermore, relevance (REL) plays a crucial role in AR1's distancing pract. AR1's emphasis on their living situation is relevant to the victim and the crime for the portrayal of his innocence. His assertion that he does not live together with the child and her family in the statement “*I DON'T KNOW THE MOTHER; THE MOTHER TOO DOESN'T KNOW ME*” and this statement “<sometimes, when I go to work in the morning, it is till night; when I come back in the evening, it's till next day. I don't speak with the people I live with...>” is an attempt to create a narrative that highlights the lack of opportunity or interaction that could have contributed to the alleged

offence. This relevance establishes a framework wherein AR1's limited association with the victim and even his limited relations with neighbours become a significant evidence of his disconnection from the crime. The implication is that the lack of cohabitation and limited interactions even with his neighbours strengthen AR1's claim of innocence and further supports his distancing pract.

Similarly, AR1's use of defensive voice (VCE) is essential in projecting his narrative of detachment from the crime and the victim. His narration of limited encounters with the victim – “<so, we don't live together in our family house, we don't live together there>” and “<however, this year we just entered, I have not seen her at all>”, the absence of communication within his living arrangements “<sometimes, when I go to work in the morning, it is till night; when I come back in the evening, it's till next day. I don't speak with the people I live with...>” and absence of significant contact - “...we sometimes send her on errands. It was in the tenth month that I actually met the child...”, reinforce his distancing pract. By presenting himself as an observer rather than an active participant in the victim's life, AR1 aims to create a perception of emotional distance and disengagement. The implication is that AR1's personal defensive voice adds credibility to his claims of limited involvement and accentuates his claim of innocence and supports his overall distancing pract.

In addition, AR1 draws upon shared situational knowledge (SSK) to provide plausible explanations for his lack of interaction or engagement with the child and the crime, which indirectly serves as an alibi. He describes his busy schedule and long working hours – “<when I go to work in the morning, it is till night; when I come back in the evening, it's till next day. I don't speak with the people I live with, we don't see at all...>”, to create a scenario where his limited availability, that is, entering the house late at night and leaving early in the morning aligns with his claimed detachment. Also, his reference of shared cultural knowledge (SCK) regarding household routines and patterns of communication, helps him to construct a narrative that seems believable within his and II's cultural and situational context. The implication is that AR1's reliance on shared situational and cultural knowledge lends credibility to supports his assertion of innocence and aligns his narrative with societal expectations, thereby, reinforcing his distancing pract.

Overall, reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared situational knowledge, and shared cultural knowledge work in tandem to evoke the distancing pract. The

pragmatic implication is that AR1 strategically constructs a narrative that seem credible and relatable within the context of the crime situation; helping him to present himself as innocent of the crime through his disconnection from the crime and the victim.

Excerpt 5:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR21: rape(.)

II: How old is the girl they said you raped?

AR21: let's say nineteen years (.)

II: Okay. Please, tell me what happened? Are you guilty or not guilty?

AR21: I AM NOT GUILTY

II: What happened? You didn't rape the girl?

AR21: I DID NOT RAPE THE HER

II: Why were you now arrested?

AR21: IT SURPRISED ME TOO

II: Why did they bring the police to arrest you if you didn't rape the girl?

AR21: BOTH OF US WERE FRIENDS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREET THAT BROUGHT POLICE TO ARREST ME; BOTH OF US ARE FRIENDS

II: Why did they arrest you if you didn't rape with the girl?

AR21: I DON'T KNOW TOO

AR21

AR21's use of reference (REF) is crucial in establishing the context and providing specific information. When asked about the offence, AR21 directly responds with "*rape (.)*", referencing the accusation against him but hesitantly. This hesitancy can imply that he is contemplating his response or gathering his thoughts on how he will respond all through the discourse. However, his stance is obvious in the rest of his responses to the II. Although, his reference serves the pragmatic function of acknowledging the gravity of the allegation and framing the subsequent statements within the context of a serious crime. Also, with reference, AR21 provides connections between specific events and his overall narrative, creating distance from the crime and reinforcing his claim of innocence. For example, when AR21 mentions that – "*BOTH OF US WERE FRIENDS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREET THAT BROUGHT POLICE TO ARREST ME; BOTH OF US ARE FRIENDS*", he emphatically references the relationships and circumstances surrounding the accusation. Emphasising these details, AR21 seeks to distance himself from the crime and suggest that his arrest was a result of external factors beyond his control.

Similarly, inference (INF) is utilised by AR21 to guide the II towards conclusions that support his narrative of innocence and distancing. For instance, in the statements “*IT SURPRISED ME TOO*” and “*BOTH OF US WERE FRIENDS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREET THAT BROUGHT POLICE TO ARREST ME*”, AR21 expresses surprise about his arrest and claims not to know why the police were involved. By this, he indirectly implies that there might be other explanations or a lack of understanding. Urging the II to draw logical inferences from these statements, AR21’s intention is to create doubt about his involvement in the crime and reinforce his distancing narrative. Also, when the II asked AR21 about the age of the victim involved, he suggests she is approximately 19 years old, using the phrase “*let’s say (.)*”. The pragmatic function of the inference here is the creation of a narrative that aligns with legal age of consent and implies that any relationship between AR21 and the girl is consensual. By framing the inferred age as a plausible circumstance, AR21 aims to distance himself from the potential wrongdoing associated with engaging with a minor.

Furthermore, in the excerpt above, AR21 emphasises the relevance (REL) of his friendship with the victim. When the II questions him about his arrest, his response “*BOTH OF US WERE FRIENDS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREET THAT BROUGHT POLICE TO ARREST ME*” implies that he may have been arrested because of his friendship with the victim, and it was the people living on the street who brought the police. Also, this information is relevant for the establishment of AR21’s limited connection to the crime. Moreover, the statement is also relevant to urge the II to make the inference that the arrest was based on false accusations or misunderstandings. Therefore, the pragmatic function of this relevance helps AR21 to create doubt about the legitimacy of the accusations and portray himself as an innocent party caught up in the situation. Which implies that he distances himself from the accusation and undermines its credibility.

The voice (VCE) in AR21’s excerpt above is characterised by his continuous emphatic assertion of not being guilty in his responses. When AR21 firmly states, “*I AM NOT GUILTY*”, “*I DID NOT RAPE HER*,” “*IT SURPRISED ME TOO*” and “*BOTH OF US ARE FRIENDS*”, he employs a strong voice to emphasise his disconnection from the crime and reinforce his narrative of innocence. The emphatic voice enhances AR21’s distancing practice because he aligns his narrative with the expectations of someone who

is falsely accused, and through his expression of surprise and confusion about the arrest. He indirectly appeals to II's sense of fairness. Consequently, this emphatic voice helps him distance himself from the crime and as well convey his certainty of being wrongly accused.

AR21 relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) to reinforce his narrative. His assertion that "*BOTH OF US WERE FRIENDS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREET THAT BROUGHT POLICE TO ARREST ME*" is an intentional reference to shared cultural knowledge. AR21's intention is to make the II make the inference that the arrest is as a result of external interference like gossips, rumours, hatred and false accusation of people in his community rather than his own actions. Specifically, he is trying to project the prevalence of false accusations and potential influence of community dynamics or rumors.

In summary, AR21 utilises reference, inference, relevance, voice, and shared cultural knowledge in his responses to distance himself from the crime and establish his innocence. Through this, he constructs a narrative that aims to create doubt about his involvement and undermine the credibility of the accusation. The reference to specific events, drawing inferences, introducing relevant details, employing an emphatic voice, and potentially relying on shared cultural knowledge are intentional attempts to shape II's perception, reinforce his distancing narrative to gain support for his claim of innocence.

Excerpt 6:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR23: >Raping<

II: how old are you?

AR23: >I am 35 years<

II: Where are you from?

AR23: >Kaduna State<

II: Tell me what happened

AR23: I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL

II: How old is she?

AR23: THEY SAID SHE IS 9 YEARS

II: You don't know the girl?

AR23: IT'S THE GIRL'S MOTHER I KNOW THROUGH HER SHOP.

II: You have not seen her before?

AR23: I HAVE SEEN HER TWICE

II: Why did they now arrest you?

AR23: I DID NOT DO IT. I KNOW THE GIRL THROUGH HER FATHER'S FRIEND

II: Is she a Hausa girl

AR23: >No, she is Igbo<

II: Why did they arrest you?

AR23: I DON'T KNOW. IT IS THE POLICE THAT CAME TO ARREST ME THAT I DID IT.

AR23

In the excerpt above, reference (REF) is observed in the distancing pract evoked by AR23 to show a disconnection between himself and the crime for the establishment of his innocence. For example, the statements "*I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL*" and "*I KNOW THE GIRL THROUGH HER FATHER'S FRIEND*" and even this statement "*IT'S THE GIRL'S MOTHER I KNOW THROUGH HER SHOP*" are intentionally emphasised through the increased volume speech referencing to project the limited nature of his acquaintance with the victim. The emphasis on lack of personal familiarity with the victim and the attribution of his connection to a third party, are active attempts to distance himself from the crime and suggest that he has no direct involvement.

Similarly, inference (INF) plays a crucial role in AR23's evocation of distancing pract in his crime narrative. For example, when AR23 states "*THEY SAID SHE IS 9 YEARS*", it implies that he is relaying information received from others, which then subtly suggests a lack of personal knowledge or direct involvement with the victim. This inference allows the II to consider the source of the allegation against AR23. Similarly, inference is utilised by AR23 to guide the II towards conclusions that support his distancing pract. For example, AR23's expression of ignorance about the reason for his arrest, stating that "*I DON'T KNOW. IT IS THE POLICE THAT CAME TO ARREST ME THAT I DID IT*", indirectly implies that there may be misunderstandings or false accusations at play. He projects this indirectly so that II would draw logical inferences (from those statements) that will create doubt about his involvement in the crime and subsequently reinforce the successful evocation of his distancing pract.

Furthermore, in AR23's excerpt above, relevance (REL) is evident in his responses as he introduces limited details but are contextual and pertinent for the realisation of his distancing pract. For instance, when AR23 presents information like "*IT'S THE GIRL'S MOTHER I KNOW THROUGH HER SHOP*", "*I HAVE SEEN HER TWICE*" and "*I DID NOT DO IT. I KNOW THE GIRL THROUGH HER FATHER'S FRIEND*", are relevant details to establish a limited and indirect connection with the victim. With

this relevance-based distancing, AR23 attempts to shift the focus away from any personal connections to the victims towards the external circumstances surrounding the accusation; suggesting that his interaction with the victim is minimal. This may then reinforce the idea that he is not involved in the crime.

Finally, AR23's voice in the excerpt above is assertive for example, when he firmly asserts "*I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL*", "*I DID NOT DO IT*" and "*I DON'T KNOW*". Moreover, the use of pronoun "*I*" and his explicit denial of the crime – "*I DID NOT DO IT*" convey a strong conviction and assertiveness. Also, those emphatic statements accentuate the projection of disconnection from the victim. They particularly help him to strongly vocalise his innocence and reinforce his narrative of being wrongly accused.

In summary, for the successful evocation of the distancing pract in AR23's narrative, he uses reference, inference, relevance and voice to distance himself from the crime and assert his innocence. They enable him to construct a narrative that aims to create doubt about his involvement and undermine the credibility of the accusation. Therefore, his reference to specific ideas, inferencing, introduction of relevant details and the engagement of an assertive voice enhance his intention to shape II's perception and evoke support for his claim of innocence; thereby, perfecting his distancing pract.

Excerpt 7:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR24: I WAS ACCUSED OF RAPE. THEY LIED AGAINST ME

II: How old are you?

AR24: >I have clocked 35 years<

II: How old is the girl they said you raped?

AR24: 7 years old (.)

II: Do you know the girl?

AR24: IN FACT, I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL NEITHER DO I KNOW THE MOTHER

II: What job were you doing before you got here?

AR24: I WORKED AS A DRIVER. I ALWAYS TRAVEL

II: How did it happen?

AR24: <We went to eat; as we now left the place, we now decided to pass through the school to change our clothes, we now saw the police running towards us. *WE ASKED WHAT HAPPENED? THEY SAID WE RAPED A LITTLE CHILD. THAT WAS HOW THEY ARRESTED ALL OF US.*

AR24

In the excerpt above, AR24 emphatically establishes the distancing pract when he states "*IN FACT, I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL NEITHER DO I KNOW THE MOTHER*". This emphatic statement directly references (REF) his lack of familiarity

with both the victim and even her mother, emphasising his disconnection from them. By claiming that he doesn't know the victim or her mother, AR24 implies (INF) that he cannot be responsible for the alleged crime because he has no connection whatsoever with the victim. The inference is that someone else must be responsible, as he denies any knowledge or involvement with the individuals involved. Similarly, AR24 provides information about his previous occupation as a driver but adds his frequent travels "*I WORKED AS A DRIVER. I ALWAYS TRAVEL*". AR24 makes the statement through the increased volume speech to show its relevance to the impression and scenario he is creating. Particularly, the statement "*. I ALWAYS TRAVEL*" is relevantly presented so that the II would arrive at the inference that due to his work and constant travels, he would have limited opportunities to engage in such a crime. This relevance (REL) supports his narrative of being disconnected from the crime and even the victim.

Furthermore, through the description of the events leading up to his arrest, AR24 adopts a voice (VCE) that portrays him as innocent and ignorant of the accusation. His description of the event through the statement - "<We went to eat; as we now left the place, we now decided to pass through the school to change our clothes>" and even this statement - "<*we now saw the police running towards us*>...*WE ASKED WHAT HAPPENED? THEY SAID WE RAPED A LITTLE CHILD*" are used by AR24 to emphasise his lack of knowledge and expression of surprise at being accused. AR24 engages this voice to evoke empathy and present himself as a victim of unjust targeting. Also, the details of the events leading up to AR24's arrest are relevantly given as plausible narrative to support his claim of innocence and disconnection from the crime.

Finally, AR24 subtly protests and condemns the police over their manner of arrest "...<*we now saw the police running towards us. They said they were running after us. We asked what happened*> *THEY SAID WE RAPED A LITTLE CHILD. THAT WAS HOW THEY ARRESTED ALL OF US*". By expressing confusion and surprise at being accused of such a serious crime, he aligns himself with shared cultural expectations of fair treatment from law enforcement. This appeal to shared cultural knowledge (SCK) aims to strengthen his defence. In summary, AR24 asserts his lack of knowledge about the victim which then distances him from the crime, presents a verifiable story to

support his disconnection, and appeals to shared cultural knowledge to protest his arrest by the police.

4.1.3 Justifying pract

This is the presentation of rationalised arguments to reduce the severity of the crime. The rationalised arguments are presented in different ways. Some ARs in this category attempt to minimise the impact of their actions by relating their actions to situations that are generally acceptable in the society. While some try to put the responsibility of their actions on their victims to challenge the accusation. However, the aim is to avoid taking responsibility for their actions. This is why the narratives of the ARs in this category project logical arguments as reasons for committing the crime or attempt to make justifiable excuses for having sexual intercourse with their victims (who are minors) so as to convince the audience that they have not committed a crime, rather, what happened is a consensual act. Statements like or close to these are usually made by some ARs: “It wasn’t my fault, she led me on”, “I didn’t force her” or “I didn’t know what I was doing, I had too much alcohol...”. Those statements are ways they place the responsibility of their actions on someone or something else. All excuses given are made to challenge, and reduce the gravity of the crime or even displace the crime for the creation of a positive perception. See narratives below:

Excerpt 8:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR10: >Rape<

II: Okay, how old is the girl they said you raped?

AR10: >19<

II: How did it happen?

AR10: SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND

II: Explain what happened to me.

AR10: <What happened that day was she called me that her mother was going to a party that she will have the opportunity to come to my place that evening>. <Her father is a soldier and he is not always around. She came to my house around 8:30pm on the 11th after her mother had gone to the party>. <By the time it was around 10:30 pm, we have finished doing what we wanted to do>

II: Did you force her?

AR10: It wasn’t as if I forced her like that because she is my girlfriend(.) <I have never seen her father before. That was how they came to break my door>. <Before I could say anything, they had handcuffed me and carried me to the army barrack>. <They said I came to kidnap their child>.

AR10

AR10's narrative utilises reference, inference, relevance, voice, and shared situational knowledge to shape II's perception of the incident and justify his actions. For example, AR10's statement "*SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND*" serves as an emphatic reference (REF)

to establish the role of the victim in his life and shift the focus away from the heinous offence. It implies (INF) a romantic relationship between them and suggests that the sexual relationship was consensual based on their relationship status. This reference to consent is aimed at justifying his actions and implying that no crime has been committed.

Similarly, inference is also evident in AR10's narrative when he provides details about the victim's age and their relationship status. His statement about the victim - "*SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND*" and fact that she is "19" years old, suggest a consensual and mutually understood romantic relationship. This inference attempts to counter the notion of non-consensual sexual activity and implies that their actions were permissible within the context of their relationship. Also, his portrayal of the victim as the active actor and himself as the passive actor is intentional. This can be seen in the scenario "*<what happened that day was she called me that her mother was going to a party that she will have the opportunity to come to my place that evening>*". The statement is made in a slow paced speech, intentionally calling the II's attention to the information he is providing. This implies that the victim masterminded and initiated the sexual relation. Besides, his statement "*it wasn't as if I forced her like that because she is my girlfriend(.)*" implies that there may have been some form of coercion or force applied, which contradicts the earlier assertion of a consensual relationship, indicating that his narrative may not entirely reflect the true picture of the incident, but rather an attempt to hide behind the umbrella of a romantic relationship.

Furthermore, relevance (REL) plays a crucial role in AR10's narrative. His emphasis on the circumstances surrounding the victim's visit to his house - "*<she came to my house around 8:30pm on the 11th after her mother had gone to the party>*". "*<By the time it was around 10:30 pm, we have finished doing what we wanted to do...>*", highlights the '**absence**' of her parents, the invitation to spend time together and her honouring of that invitation. These details are presented as relevant factors that contribute to the understanding of the situation. AR10 seeks to establish a narrative where the encounter between him and the girl is seen as a consensual/voluntary and anticipated event, rather than an act of rape. Also, AR10's narrative has a chronological progression, from discussing the victim's visitation plans to the actual sexual intercourse encounter and her subsequent return home, and they are relevant for the realisation of his intention(s). AR10 aims to justify his actions by presenting a

sequence of events that supports the narrative of consensual sexual activity, thereby downplaying the seriousness of the crime.

Regarding voice in the narrative, AR10 assumes a passive but defensive stance in his narrative so as to shape the perception of his actions as driven by mutual agreement. His emphasis on the victim's status - "*SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND*", serves to generate understanding from II. AR10 wants to shape the narrative and position himself as the victim rather than the offender, thereby reinforcing his assertion that the sexual encounter was consensual; hence, the gravity of the crime is undermined

Shared situational knowledge (SSK) is implied when AR10 submits that the victim is his girlfriend and she is 19 years old, her phone call informing him of her mother's plan to go to a party, and the victim's father being a soldier who is frequently absent. This information contextualises the victim's visit to AR10's house, as her parents' absence may be perceived as an opportunity for them to spend time together. By drawing on shared situational knowledge, AR10 aims to create an understanding that their interaction was a natural outcome of the circumstances, rather than an act of rape. The relationship card and emphasis on the shared background knowledge about romantic relationships, facilitate the creation of the inference that being in a romantic relationship guarantees consent for sex. Shared cultural knowledge (SCK) is in AR10's construction of a narrative that portrays their relationship as consensual and emphasises contextual factors that contribute to the perceived legitimacy of their actions.

In summary, AR10's utilisation of reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared situational knowledge aid his attempt to construct a narrative that justifies his actions and counters the accusation of rape.

Excerpt 9:

What were you accused of?

AR20: I was accused of defilement (.)

II: What is the girl's age?

AR20: That girl's age should be between 15 to 16 years (.)

II: So what actually happened?

AR20: >Actually nothing happened, because that day I went somewhere as in, every year, all these Igbo people, they always do Igbo day, so that day, it was on Sunday, I went there<

II: So you didn't know the girl before that day?

AR20: >I know the girl; she lives on my street. I just newly relocated to that street. The girl we are talking about; I don't even know her name. it was when this happened that I know her name<.

II: Why were you then arrested for rape?

AR20: <So actually, I find myself doing it but I didn't plan it>. I DIDN'T HAVE THE INTENTION. IT JUST HAPPENED. <The girl used her two legs to walk into my room>. <Although on my way coming from the party, there is a hotel in front of my house. On my way entering the house, I saw the girl, around 8:30 to 9pm at a corner there with a man>. <So, the man left the girl and the girl came to me to collect money and I asked the girl why she wants to collect money from me>. <She says because I am already drunk>.

AR20

AR20's reference (REF) to being accused of defilement at the beginning of the narrative sets the foundation for his narrative – “*I was accused of defilement (.)*”. His hesitant acknowledgement of the specific offence, establishes the context for his subsequent explanations and justification. The hesitancy is also seen in his next response to the II about the age of the victim – “*that girl's age should be between 15 to 16 years (.)*”. this could be as a result of his realisation of the gravity of the crime he committed and he feels ashamed, hence, his reluctance. Also, AR20's submission that - “*>actually nothing happened because that day>*” about how the incidence played out is a quick attempt to downplay the severity of the crime through a fast paced speech. His response is not related to the question asked - “so what actually happened?”. However, his response is in consonance with the propagation of his intention to downplay the crime. Moreover, AR20's reference to a ceremony he attended on the day in question – “*>because that day I went somewhere as in, every year, all these Igbo people, they always do Igbo day, so that day, it was on Sunday, I went there<*”, is an attempt to divert II's attention.

Inference (INF) is also evident in AR20's excerpt above. AR20 confessed to have committed the crime but still attempts to rationalise his misbehaviour by subtly presenting the victim as the only active actor in the crime incidence while he becomes the passive actor – “*<So actually, I find myself doing it but I didn't plan it>. I DIDN'T HAVE THE INTENTION. IT JUST HAPPENED. <The girl used her two legs to walk into my room...>*”. This mixed statements with strong emotions and emphasis are to make the II make the inference that the victim initiated the encounters that provoked the commission of the crime. This is further accentuated in his description that she approached him for money while he was under the influence of alcohol - “*<...and the*

girl came to me to collect money and I asked the girl why she wants to collect money from me>. <She says because I am already drunk>”. This inference is supported by his assertion that he “found himself doing it,” suggesting a lack of intention or premeditation. His projection of himself as a passive participant his presentation of the victim's actions accentuates AR20’s attempts to rationalise his behaviour and diminish his responsibility. Also, his submission that the victim mentions that she was ready to do anything with him if he gives her money is intentional. This submission is to urge the II to make an inference that sees the victim as the reason for him to have found himself “doing it”. In fact, it is an attempt to incite the II against the victim so that the II would make the inference that the victim is the one that took advantage of him in his vulnerable state (as he was under the influence of alcohol). Also, his claim that the “the girl used her two legs to walk into my room...” is made intentionally so that the II would make the inference that the victim was not forced or coerced into his room. These inferences are intentionally projected to shape II's perception of the incident, so that the responsibility of the crime is shoved on alcohol and the victim.

Similarly, relevance (REL) plays a critical role in AR20's narrative. AR20's narrative is structured to emphasise the circumstances that he believes are relevant for his defence. He mentions attending an Igbo ceremony and as a result, he became highly intoxicated. This is seen in statements like this– “>...*that day I went somewhere as in, every year, all these Igbo people, they always do Igbo day, so that day, it was on Sunday, I went there...<*” and this statement as well “...*on my way entering the house, ...girl came to me to collect money and I asked the girl why she wants to collect money from me>. <She says because I am already drunk>”*. These statements imply that these factors played a role in the events that unfolded. These details serve to establish a context that could potentially reduce his culpability. The relevance of these elements is intended to redirect attention away from his actions and onto external factors that could be seen as the influencer of his behaviour.

Furthermore, AR20’s voice (VCE) is an emphatic one that shows that he feels very bad for what he did, that is, “<So actually, I find myself doing it but I didn’t plan it>. I DIDN’T HAVE THE INTENTION. IT JUST HAPPENED...”, acknowledging the seriousness of the situation. This implies that, because he was under the influence of alcohol, he didn’t realise the gravity of his alcohol induced action until after he had

committed the crime. By adopting this voice, AR20 aims to evoke empathy from the II, so as to potentially sway his perception and generate a more sympathetic interpretation of his actions. The use of a remorseful voice is an intentional choice to shape II's understanding of his character and state of mind when the crime occurred.

AR20 draws on shared situational knowledge (SSK) by referring to the presence of the victim with another man and his intoxicated state. He aligns with societal understanding of vulnerability and impaired judgment when under the influence of alcohol. The incorporation of these shared situational knowledge is an indirect attempt to influence II's interpretation of the incident, framing it as a situation where his impaired judgment and the victim's actions played a significant role.

In summary, AR20's reference, inference, relevance, voice, and shared situational knowledge aid his construction of a narrative that questions his involvement in the crime, emphasising the absence of his sanity during the alleged incident. Also, they work together to challenge the severity of the accusation and create doubt regarding his culpability for the alleged defilement.

Excerpt 10:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of??

AR39: >Rape<

II: How old is the girl?

AR39: >16 years old<

II: Did you do it or not?

AR39: I DID NOT DO IT BUT I HAVE BEEN HAVING SEX WITH THE GIRL BEFORE

II: Why were you arrested if you did not commit the offence?

AR39: IT WAS BECAUSE THEY NEED A LITTLE MONEY FROM ME TO TRAIN THE GIRL IN SCHOOL.

II: So the girl's family knew you were in a relationship with the girl.

AR39: YES

II: If you leave here, what would you do?

AR39: I WILL MAKE SURE NOT TO DO THAT THING AGAIN

AR39

AR39 denies raping the 16-year-old victim but strongly acknowledges their romantic relationship status – “*I DID NOT DO IT BUT I HAVE BEEN HAVING SEX WITH THE GIRL BEFORE*”. By that statement, he indirectly references (REF) their pre-existing sexual relationship. This emphatic referencing establishes a basis for his justification, suggesting that his actions with the victim is consensual because of the assumed sexual relationship. Therefore, he is implying (INF) that he should not be held solely responsible for the alleged crime. Also, AR39's statement that he did not

do it – *“I DID NOT DO IT”* despite admitting to having a sexual relationship with the victim, implies that he believes the act was consensual irrespective of the fact that the victim is not of the age of consent. He is projecting this through the indirectly referenced pre-existing boyfriend/girlfriend relationship. This allows him to hide under it to justify his actions. However, he contradicts himself when he is asked about what he would do if he gets released, he says *“I WILL MAKE SURE NOT TO DO THAT THING AGAIN”*. That statement implies “INF” that AR39 acknowledges the wrongdoing in his previous actions. By expressing his intention to change his behaviour, it implies that he committed the crime, he is only attempting to hide under the umbrella of boyfriend/girlfriend relationship to justify his actions so as to avoid taking responsibility for his crime for eventual face-saving.

Similarly, the statement *“I WILL MAKE SURE NOT TO DO THAT THING AGAIN”* might also be aimed at portraying himself as someone who has learned from the situation and is committed to avoiding similar incidents in the future. This inference aligns with societal expectations of personal growth and rehabilitation. Furthermore, AR39's continues his attempt to justify his relationship with the victim by stating that *“it was because they need a little money from me to train the girl in school”*. With that statement, he aims to challenge the notion of coercion or non-consent. In fact, when asked if the victim's parents know about their relationship, he says *“YES”*. He is emphasising the implication that he got consent to be in sexual relationship with the victim from her parents. On that account, AR39 is implying that his actions were not predatory or forceful. This relevance (REL) is used to diminish the severity of the alleged crime and present the sexual activity as a consensual act. Also, with the statement - *“IT WAS BECAUSE THEY NEED A LITTLE MONEY FROM ME TO TRAIN THE GIRL IN SCHOOL”*, AR39 aims to actively shift the blame of his arrest on the victim's parent to show that he only got arrested because he didn't give the victim's parent money, so, they got him arrested.

Likewise, AR39's justification relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) and stereotypes that place the responsibility of rape on the victim and her family. By stating that the girl's family wanted money from him to support her education, he indirectly suggests that the girl's family may have encouraged or allowed the relationship due to financial motives. This appeals to cultural biases that may question the victim's credibility, justifies his actions and shifts the blame away from the

accused. Overall, AR39 employs contextual elements such as reference, inference, relevance, and shared cultural knowledge to present justifications for his actions and distance himself from taking full responsibility for the alleged crime. His emphasis on consent by implicating the girl's family, expression of remorse by promising personal growth are active attempts to shape a narrative that portrays himself as an individual who is not guilty of the crime.

4.2 Pragmatic goals of Accused Rapists' crime narratives

This subsection presents the goals of the pragmatic acts evoked by ARs in their crime narratives. The goals are the intentional and conscious efforts behind the pragmatic acts performed by the ARs. The practs were employed to achieve three goals, namely impression-controlling (for face-maintaining and face-saving), allegation-refuting and offence-minimising to avoid the punishments attached to rape.

4.2.1 Impression controlling goal

This goal is for the preservation of reality. That is why the ARs evoked only practs that manage their impression so that their reality is preserved. The goal encompasses the actions performed by ARs to influence the II's perception of their narratives. Basically, being accused of rape already gives the accused a negative image, hence, ARs evoke practs to control the impression of the II. Therefore, impression controlling goal is the reason behind the practs engaged by ARs to influence the perceptions, decisions and opinions of the II. The impression controlling goal is for face-saving and face-maintaining. These sub-goals are attempted by the ARs through the projected information and how the information is being projected.

4.2.1.1 Impression controlling goal for face-maintaining

The impression controlling goal for face-maintaining is the goal of ARs that evoked the denying pract, especially the older ARs. In Nigeria, and even in most African cultures, the society have ascribed some positive qualities to older adults. This is the reason the older adults accused of rape, are under pressure to sustain that impression/dignity, that is, the positive reputation about older adults because the rape allegation threatens their face, that is, the positive image and social status that they stand for. Therefore, the older ARs ensure the maintenance of that image (face), to avoid disgrace and stigmatisation, so that they don't lose their social status. As a result, personal stories that portray them in a positive light are projected to substantiate their

denial of the crime; towards the enhancement of the impression controlling goal for face-maintaining.

Excerpt 11:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR5: Rape(.)

II: Did you commit it or not?

AR5: AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?

I CLOCKED 63 YEARS THIS YEAR, ON THE SECOND OF JANUARY WHICH MEANS THAT I WAS ABOUT 58 YEARS WHEN THE INCIDENT ACCUSED.

II: How old is the child they said you raped?

AR5: IN FACT, I THOUGHT THE CHILD WAS BETWEEN 7/8 YEARS BUT THE FATHER SAID SHE is 13 YEARS. She came to me. <What brought her to my place was because of what I was putting in my mouth>. The girl was sent out of school (.) I asked why?, <She said she stole her teacher's food>. <I asked her for the reason, she said her father and mother left the house this morning without giving her money for food before they left>. My wife was not around, I SAID AH! I DON'T KNOW YOU, she also said she doesn't know me, <Whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA. <When my father was alive, he gives little children things. Especially when he brings gifts for us his children. If he sees little children, he gives them out of it> <It happens that there is a certain woman that is my best friend's wife. We were both born in that street. She started visiting me when she knew that my wife had travelled and I told her, I have my own wife, it's just that she travelled.

AR5

AR5's evocation of the denying pract in his responses can be attributed to the impression controlling goal for face-maintaining. As an older adult accused of rape, AR5 feels immensely pressured to sustain the positive reputation associated with a person of his age and avoid disgrace or stigmatisation that may arise from the allegation. Therefore, his goal is to maintain his face, the positive image and social status he represents, by denying the crime and presenting himself in a favourable light.

AR5 strongly relies on socio-cultural context (SCK and SSK) to successfully realise this goal through the denying pract. This can be seen glaringly in the assertive statement he utilises to immediately deny the offence - "*AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?*" His expression of disbelief and invocation of his old age are means of rejecting the possibility of him ever committing such a crime. This reference to his old age also reflects his distressful need to not only deny the crime but also distance himself from the crime and challenge the notion that someone of his age would commit such a heinous act. Through the strong emphasis on his advanced age, he

invokes a perception of wisdom, respectability, and moral character, aligning with the positive qualities ascribed to older adults in Nigerian and in African cultures generally. This positive image may propel the II to make an inference that perceives AR5 in a positive light. Specifically, the inference that AR5's old age is a strong barrier to engage in such a behaviour. This shows that the denial enables the manifestation of AR5's impression controlling goal of preserving his face through the portrayal of himself as incompatible with the alleged crime.

Furthermore, AR5's incorporation of personal details is intentional to bolster his denial and subsequently realise the impression controlling goal for face-maintaining. It serves to protect his face by challenging the credibility of the accusation and maintaining a positive image associated with older adults. Specifically, his utilisation of relevant (REL) stories to strengthen his denial for the realisation of the impression controlling goal for face-maintaining. For example, his description of his benevolent actions towards children in his neighbourhood – "*<whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA*", substantiated by the description of his father's habits of giving gifts to children – "*<when my father was alive, he gives little children things. Especially when he brings gifts for us his children. If he sees little children, he gives them out of it>*", as well appeal to shared cultural knowledge. This projection aligns with the cultural expectation of older individuals being caring and generous towards children. By evoking these cultural norms, AR5 strengthens the perception of his innocence, hence, his face is being maintained.

Still on relevance (REL), when AR5 was discussing the age of the alleged victim, he initially states that he believed she was between seven and eight years old, contrasting with the reported age of thirteen – "*IN FACT, I THOUGHT THE CHILD WAS BETWEEN 7/8 YEARS BUT THE FATHER SAID SHE 13 YEARS*". By emphasising this difference, AR5 suggests an inference that the accusation may be based on misinformation or exaggeration, further undermining the credibility of the claim. His introduction of inconsistencies is relevant for him to cast doubt on the validity of the allegation. Accordingly, the manifestation of the impression controlling goal of maintaining AR5's face is accentuated.

In addition, AR5 incorporates shared situational knowledge (SSK) into his responses. He references the presence of a woman who visits him in his wife's absence,

emphasising that he made it clear to her that he is married – “<...a certain woman that is my best friend’s wife. We were both born in that street. She started visiting me when she knew that my wife had travelled and I told her, I have my own wife...>”. Sharing this information establishes AR5’s commitment to maintaining appropriate relationships and boundaries. This portrayal reinforces his positive character and counters the perception of him as a potential perpetrator. The evocation of shared situational knowledge strengthens the impression controlling goal for face-maintaining, positioning himself as a respectable and trustworthy individual.

Overall, AR5’s evocation of the denying pract in his narrative serves the impression controlling goal for face-maintaining. AR5’s strong denial of the crime through the emphasis on his age and the projection of his positive character lean heavily on shared cultural knowledge and shared situational knowledge incorporating elements of reference, inference, relevance and voice to give rise to an interpretation that preserves his face and upholds his reputation, so as to avoid disgrace or stigmatisation associated with the rape accusation. All of these strengthen the realisation of the impression controlling goal, demonstrating AR5’s efforts to maintain the attributed positive image and social status within his community.

4.2.1.2 Impression controlling for face-saving

The impression controlling goal for face-saving is the communicative purpose of ARs that evoked the justifying pract. Mostly, ARs who are guilty of statutory rape have this goal. To cover their crime, these ARs hint the idea of consent through the projection of romantic relationship as justification for committing the crime to restore/rebuild/repair their face (face-saving). This helps to reduce embarrassment or to make them look better in this shameful situation.

Excerpt 12:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR7: >rape<

II: Did you do it or not?

AR7: >Ehen, I did it<,

II: Tell me what happened?

AR7: I can say that when the girl (.), was in SS3 at that time (.) <So we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>. I HAVE A HAND WORK. I WORK FOR JOBS. I WORK AS A BARBER, I WORK AS A DJ, I DO VIDEO COVERAGE AND I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER, AND I HAVE A SHOP. >Since we both agreed not to have sex, so when she

finished her school certificate, I asked her what she wants to do now. She said she wants to go for computer training and that was what she was learning<.

II: Was it you that gave her the money for it?

AR7: <No, it wasn't me, her parents gave her the money but I paid out of it>. Her parents did not know me, >later, it happened<. <She was the one that volunteered herself that we should do it>. <We then had sexual intercourse. We did it in my room. It is not now we started doing it>.

AR7

AR7's evocation of the justifying pract in his narrative can be attributed to impression controlling goal for face-saving. As someone guilty of statutory rape, AR7 has a strong need to cover up his crime to save his face in this shameful situation and the justifying pract enables him to achieve this. AR7 utilises the statement "*<...so we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>*" to make reference (REF) to the kind of relationship between the victim and himself. He aims to make the II infer (INF) that both of them are in a romantic relationship. Going back to his response on whether he committed the crime or not and he says "*>ehen, I did it<*". This submission is made in an increased volume speech, indicating an urgency in the speaker's delivery. This implies that AR7 is trying to convey this particular message quickly because he doesn't want the II to form any lasting impression about it. Therefore, combining these statements "*>ehen, I did it*" and "*<...so we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>*", it can be deduced (INF) that AR7 is aware that the victim is not of the age of consent and he was not meant to have any sexual relations with her. However, because of his intention to save his face, he situated his action within the context of a romantic relationship (SCK) to make his action legitimate and acceptable. This helps to save his face as it presupposes a generally acceptable behaviour in the society and also presupposes consent.

Similarly, AR7's references (REF) cultural expectation through the agreement between himself and the victim that they would not engage in sexual activity until she graduates from secondary school is intentional – "*<so we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>*". Specifically, this agreement is a reference to cultural expectations of adhering to a mutually agreed-upon arrangement. Consequently, AR7's projection of this puts him in positive light. It helps him to mitigate the negative perception associated with the offence. What this implies is that AR7 agrees that what he did is

statutory rape but to him, it is legitimate because he had the consent of the victim to do that based on their relationship status and the fact that the sexual relation did not happen until the victim had finished her secondary school education based on their agreement to wait; as if the completion of secondary school is the benchmark to start having sex.

Also, AR7's continuous reference to the victim's willingness to have sexual relations with him after her secondary school education is intentionally relevant, as it makes an inference that shifts the blame and responsibility of the offence to the victim. This is evident in his statement "*>later, it happened<. <She was the one that volunteered herself that we should do it>*" that reiterates that the victim willingly engaged in the sexual encounter and that they had been engaging in such activities for a while. These inferences are to create doubt about AR7's culpability and redirect attention towards the victim's alleged consent. His presentation of himself as less responsible for the offence helps him realise his face-saving goal.

Furthermore, AR7 emphasis on his role in supporting the victim's education, especially his contribution to the victim's computer training – "*<...no, it wasn't me, her parents gave her the money but I paid out of it>*", aims to create a favourable image of himself as a caring and supportive individual. This is relevant (REL) for AR7 to present himself as someone who had positive intentions and acted in accordance with the victim's educational pursuits. This further supports his face-saving goal. Similarly, AR7's maintenance of a confident and assertive voice throughout his narrative is importance for his face-saving goal. For example, his open admission to the crime – "*>ehen, I did it<*", as well as his provision of justifications – "*>later, it happened<. <She was the one that volunteered herself that we should do it>*", and the further admission to the crime "*<we then had sexual intercourse. We did it in my room. It is not now we started doing it>*", showcases him as a honest and sincere person. This confident voice enables him to not only regain credibility but also have control over the narrative, that is, his show of self-assurance in his explanations, thereby, shaping the impression formed by the II.

AR7's use of reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared cultural knowledge show that the goal behind the justifying pract evoked in his crime narrative is impression controlling goal for face-saving. Specifically, his leverage on shared cultural knowledge aligns his actions with societal expectations. Also, his engagement

of inference to shift blame onto the victim, the emphasis on his role in supporting victim's education, as well as his maintenance of a confident voice shape his narrative towards a more positive light; reducing the social and reputational consequences that come with being accused of statutory rape. In summary, AR7's evocation of justifying pract in his crime narrative is an attempt to salvage his reputation and avoid the stigmatisation and consequences associated with being labeled a statutory rapist.

4.2.2 Allegation-refuting goal

This is also a goal behind the distancing and denying practs evoked by some ARs and it is geared towards proving the rape allegation as wrongful. This is vehemently projected through the presentation of situations/arguments that may distance them from the crime/victim or the projection of personal stories that seem reliable and accountable or stories that are likely to gain some form of validation are told by ARs to strongly refute the rape allegation.

Excerpt13:

II: So, how do you feel about what happened to you?

AR6: I am not feeling alright but the reason I don't think too much about it is because an honest person cannot die in the position of a sinner. I still have faith in God I serve Allahu. I know that nothing can happen without the permission of God. God knows about everything.

II: Do you have faith that you will come out of this place?

AR6: <I have faith because I did not do it. Even my wife believed me because she traveled a day before the incident happened>. WHAT WOULD I SAY ENTICED ME IN THE BODY OF A 6-YEAR-OLD? WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK? WHEN I KNOW THAT MY WIFE WOULD COME BACK THAT NIGHT. WHAT WOULD PUSH ME LIKE THAT? WE ARE NOT EVEN IN THE SAME LEVEL NOW.

AR6

The above excerpt is from the latter part of AR6's narrative. The function reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared situational background and share cultural background collectively perform show how allegation refuting is the goal behind the denying pract evoked by AR6 in his crime narrative. For example, when AR6 raises his voice in a loud speech that "*AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER...*" he is intentionally referencing the offence again so as to reemphasise and strongly demonstrate his innocence to refute the allegation. It can also imply (INF) that AR6 is demonstrating strong emotions such as anger or

frustration to strongly protest the allegation against him. In essence, the reference allows AR6 to assert his integrity and challenge the validity of the allegation.

Similarly, in AR6's responses, how inference is utilised to cast doubt on the credibility of the accusation shows that allegation-refuting is the goal of the denying pract evoked by AR6. For example, the rhetorical questions "*WHAT WOULD I SAY ENTICED ME IN THE BODY OF A 6-YEAR-OLD?*", "*WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK?*" and "*WHEN I KNOW THAT MY WIFE WOULD COME BACK THAT NIGHT, WHAT WOULD PUSH ME LIKE THAT?*" posed by AR6 are intentionally projected in a loud voice to communicate his anger about being accused of committing such a crime with such a young child and the fact that his wife would be back that day, makes the accusation more appalling. This has the intention of propelling the II to draw conclusions that challenge the plausibility of AR6's involvement in the crime. Also, those rhetorical questions suggest alternative explanations for the situation and presents AR6 as wrongly accused. Ultimately, this may propel the II to undermine the allegation's validity.

Furthermore, how AR6 selectively presents relevant (REL) information that supports his innocence and challenges the accusation show how allegation-refuting is the goal behind the denying pract he evoked. For example, AR6's the information given about his wife's absence during the incident, her imminent return – "*WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK? WHEN I KNOW THAT MY WIFE WOULD COME BACK THAT NIGHT*", and her belief in his innocence – "*<even my wife believed me because she traveled a day before the incident happened>*" are significant to the case. It strengthens AR6's defence and undermines the credibility of the accusation. This implies that AR6's innocence is reinforced. The allegation is clearly and strongly refuted accordingly.

Through the expression of unwavering faith that nothing can happen without the permission of God. AR3 adopts a confident and assertive voice in his responses. This allusion to religious context enables AR6 to project the credibility and sincerity of his denial through these statements – "*AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER. <I still have faith in God I serve Allahu> I know that nothing can happen without the permission of God>. <God knows about everything>*". Therefore, AR6 intentionally co-opt II to make the inference that will change II's perception of him and the situation that surrounds crime.

Finally, AR6 relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) to construct a narrative that enhances the manifestation of the allegation-refuting goal. For example, AR6's indirect reference to cultural norms and beliefs surrounding fidelity in marriage, age differences, and societal expectations – *“WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK? WHEN I KNOW THAT MY WIFE WOULD COME BACK THAT NIGHT. WHAT WOULD PUSH ME LIKE THAT? WE ARE NOT EVEN IN THE SAME LEVEL NOW”*. This appeals to shared cultural knowledge (SCK), creating doubt and presenting an alternative narrative that challenges the validity of the accusation. This allows him to align his defence with commonly held beliefs and values, making his denial more convincing.

Overall, AR6 attempts a successful allegation-refuting goal as he addresses the offence directly through reference, casts doubt on the accusation through inference, present relevant information, project credibility through his voice, and appeal to shared cultural knowledge. AR6 use them all together to deny and undermine the accusation, and to also present an alternative narrative and establish his innocence in the eyes of the II.

4.2.3 Offence-minimising goal

This is also a goal behind some ARs who evoked the justifying practs. The ARs involved are mostly those that raped underage teenagers but do not want to confess and even those who confessed committing the crime but attempt to present rationalised arguments or excuses that reduce the crime gravity. This is targeted at negotiating a positive outlook despite confessing guilt.

Excerpt 14:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR2: >I was accused of rape<

II: Did you commit the crime or not?

AR2: I DID NOT RAPE THE GIRL, BUT WE BOTH HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AS MAN AND WOMAN

II: What now happened? Where you both in a relationship?

AR2: We are in a relationship and we are not in a relationship (.)

II: What does that mean?

AR2: Because in the house that I went to work as a private driver, she lives in that house as a house help(.) So, before the incident occurred, THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY MAN RELATES, WITH A WOMAN but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER. <Along the line, I reported it to one of my colleagues who also works in that house>. He then advised me to not allow the devil to use me.

<At times, I might be sleeping and very tired, she would come to play with me>. <So, the girl would be removing my trouser, play with my manhood> and then begin to say that (.) <I don't have what the men she has slept with her>. So, I now said, WHY IS SHE DISTURBING ME SINCE I DON'T HAVE IN MY BODY WHAT OTHER MEN HAVE. <So, she didn't let me be>. SO, ALONG THE LINE, SHE DID NOT LET ME BE <I dodged her several times, that opened the door, I went out. When I entered again to carry my bag, she closed the door, she troubled me, pulled my cloth. Along the line, I realised that I lost control as a man when she told me that I will not be the first man to have sexual intercourse with her>. I THEN DID WHAT A MAN DOES WITH A WOMAN. I then went home. So when I came to work the following morning (.), <our boss got me arrested for this offence>. THEY TAUGHT HER TO LIE ON ME... (II interjects)

II: What happened after you both had sex?

AR2: <I didn't really have fun with her very well again because when it pained her, she shouted.

AR2

The contextual elements of reference, inference, relevance, shared cultural knowledge and shared situational knowledge in AR2's responses contribute to why and how offence-minimising is the goal behind AR2's evocation of the justifying pract. For instance, AR2 makes reference to specific circumstances and events to present the sexual encounter with the victim as a normal consensual occurrence, so as to reduce the severity of the crime to something that is not a crime at all. Specifically, his description of the 16-year-old victim as woman “*I DID NOT RAPE THE GIRL BUT WE BOTH HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AS MAN AND WOMAN*” conveys his strong intention to minimise the gravity of the crime; despite knowing that victim at that age cannot be a woman. Hence, his reference (REF) to the sexual encounter with the victim properly situates his attempts to minimise the crime by shifting the focus away from the criminal act of rape and portraying it as a mutual agreement between two adults.

Similarly, statements like “*so, the girl would be removing my trouser, play with my manhood>...*”, “*SO, ALONG THE LINE, SHE DID NOT LET ME BE.*”, and “*<Along the line, I realised that I lost control as a man when she told me that I will not be the first man to have sexual intercourse with her>*”, are AR2's attempts to reduce the offence. His inference (INF) there is that external factors and the victim's actions contributed to the provoked sexual encounter, thereby, reducing his own responsibility and culpability. The aim of this inference is to minimise the crime.

Furthermore, AR2's use of relevance (REL) shows that offence-minimising is the goal behind the evocation of the justifying pract in his crime narrative. For instance, AR2 highlights some factors that he deems relevant to justify his actions and reduce the gravity of the offence. These factors are "caution", "resistance", and external pressure and they can be inferred from some statements "*but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER*", "*<I dodged her several times...>*", "*...and then begin to say that (.) <I don't have what the men she has slept with her>*" and "*THEY TAUGHT HER TO LIE ON ME*". By underscoring his resistance and the victim's persistence, AR2 rationalises his actions and presents himself as understandable given the circumstances. This rationalisation diminishes the gravity of the crime by framing it as a momentary lapse in judgment rather than a deliberate act of rape. Notably, offence-minimising can be said to be the goal of the justifying pract evoked by AR2's in his crime narrative from the statement "I didn't really have fun with her very well again because when it pained her, she shouted". His description of the crime scene that is, the sexual act with the word "fun" – "*<I didn't really have fun with her very well again...>*" is intentionally utilised to imply (INF) that the sexual relations with the victim is an act of fun not rape. This means that AR2 reduces his crime of rape to just an act of fun.

Notably, AR2's reliance on socio-cultural norms and situations (SCK/SSK) facilitated his rationalising behaviour to downplay the severity of his offence. This can be seen in his arguments like "*<so, before the incident occurred>, THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN*", "*<So, the girl would be removing my trouser, play with my manhood>*", and "*<along the line, I realised that I lost control as a man when she told me that I will not be the first man to have sexual intercourse with her>*". These statements are made so that II would make the inference that AR2's actions are influenced by the victim's behaviour and societal factors to prove himself as a man.

Overall, the presence and the manner of usage of the contextual elements reference, inference, relevance, shared cultural knowledge and shared situational knowledge show that the justifying pract evoked in the constructed narrative of AR2 is as a result of the offence-minimising goal. This is because AR2's narrative is an embodiment of an intention to reduce the gravity of the offence.

4.3 Pragmatic strategies in ARs' crime narratives

Generally, for ARs, the investigative interviewing discourse is for the verbal presentation of facts detailing their involvement in the alleged crime. It is a channel that helps them to use the presented details as some form of defensive mechanism against the accusation. This act is a consequent of human's desires to take control and protect self from situations that are beyond their control. Therefore, intentional verbal influence of the II's feelings and actions are the end result of the strategies. That is the reason ARs present different arguments to displace, dismiss, question, and to reduce the crime to something that is not a criminal act.

The strategies deployed by the ARs are engaged to influence the investigative interviewer's (II's) interpretation of their crime narratives. Through the indirect projection of self-interests in the crime narrative of ARs, the II is suggestively influenced to make inferences that are likely to be favourable to the ARs. Therefore, these pragmatic strategies are actively but subtly deployed by the ARs to attempt the realisation of their goals (impression controlling goal for face-saving and face-maintaining, allegation-refuting and offence-minimising goals); and these pragmatic strategies are the embodiments of the full compositions of the pragmatics acts evoked by the ARs. Basically, the strategies encompass all the indirect attempts of ARs to influence the II's interpretation of their crime narratives. The strategies are delivered through the choice of expressions and how the choices are being used; which changes as the discourse focus changes too. Similarly, the strategies are products of the contextual features like inference (INF), reference (REF), relevance (REL), voice (VCE), shared situation knowledge (SSK) and shared cultural knowledge (SCK) exploited by the ARs indirectly to bring to reality the objectives of their influencing.

4.3.1 Identity-framing

This is a stereotyped identification; an indirect referencing by association with generalised stereotypes (age group and social values) suggestive of the associated beliefs for the maintenance of an acclaimed trustworthy profile. This stereotypic association to a certain category of people or social values indirectly calls into mind, the general beliefs associated to that profile. Tapping into some stereotyped profiles promote a sense of shared identification for identity maintenance, facilitating the substantiation of the crime denial. Specifically, this defence mechanism is deployed by older ARs to positively represent themselves in three ways: (1) show selves as capable

of providing accurate testimony, (2) prove selves as people who have good intention towards others, and (3) demonstrate self as people who adhere to high moral standards in the society. It is targeted at upstaging the negative image that comes with being tagged a rapist towards maintaining their face as respected old men. This strategy is activated through the importation of the socio-cultural context, where the various cultures have a reserved revered stereotypes for older adults. For this reason, the older ARs tap into this for the preservation of their reality.

Generally, stereotypes are easily accessible to ARs because in social domains, stereotypes provide a shared point of view. Some ARs use this tactic to set-up the II towards a positive perception as against the tagged negative image. Consequently, for the ARs, the attempted stereotypic association also implicates a creation of doubt about the genuineness of the allegation levied against them. This is exemplified in the excerpt from AR5's crime narrative below:

Excerpt 15:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR5: Rape(.)

II: Did you commit it or not?

AR5: AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?

I CLOCKED 63 YEARS THIS YEAR, ON THE SECOND OF JANUARY WHICH MEANS THAT I WAS ABOUT 58 YEARS WHEN THE INCIDENT ACCUSED.

II: How old is the child they said you raped?

AR5: IN FACT, I THOUGHT THE CHILD WAS BETWEEN 7/8 YEARS BUT THE FATHER SAID SHE 13 YEARS. She came to me. <What brought her to my place was because of what I was putting in my mouth>. The girl was sent out of school (.) I asked why?, <She said she stole her teacher's food>. <I asked her for the reason, she said her father and mother left the house this morning without giving her money for food before they left>. My wife was not around, I SAID AH! I DON'T KNOW YOU, she also said she doesn't know me, <Whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA. <When my father was alive, he gives little children things. Especially when he brings gifts for us his children. If he sees little children, he gives them out of it>

AR5

AR5 strategically utilises identity-framing to subvert the negative image attached to rapists by associating with the culturally stereotyped image of old age. This is referencing (REF) by aligning with cultural image (SCK). In most Nigerian cultures, it is generally assumed that older people are custodians and upholders of good morals values. Thus, his statement - "*AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE? I CLOCKED 63 YEARS THIS YEAR*", made in a loud voice is a strategic referencing

(REF) of his old age. His adoption of a defensive tone of disbelief at the idea of committing such an act in his old age is relevant (REL) to accentuate his identity-framing intention. That statement aims to counter the allegation, emphasising the incongruity between his age and the crime. The statement is intended to encourage the investigative interviewer (II) to make the inference (INF) that it is unlikely for someone of his age to commit rape.

Similarly, AR5 provides additional details to culturally contextualise his relationship with the victim. He describes a situation where the girl came to him because she saw him eating – “<what brought her to my place was because of what I was putting in my mouth>”; suggesting a casual and familiar interaction. It was further contextualised with the statement “<whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA”. This strong emphasis establishes a positive image, portraying him as a respected figure in the community.

Furthermore, the statement “<when my father was alive, he gives little children things...” is relevant (REL) to accentuate the image he is projecting. His references (REF) to his father possessing the same generosity characteristic makes it more grounded, showcasing giving children food or things as a moral value that is hereditary (INF). The statements are relevant (REL) for AR5’s substantiation of his affinity to the positive characteristics of the culturally stereotyped old age. Therefore, AR5’s utilisation of identity framing is intended to influence the II to maintain the benign image/perception attributed to old age rather than the one attributed to a perpetrator. This implies that the goals behind this strategy is face-maintaining goals.

Excerpt 16:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR11: Rape (.)

II: Did you commit the offence?

AR11: I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD

II: Who is she to you and what happened?

AR11: SHE IS NOT MY FAMILY MEMBER. <The girl’s father and my children are friends>. <When that incidence happened, there is a woman in that our house. The house is owned by siblings>. <While the woman was talking to me, I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK>. <I couldn’t go to work. I only go to my mechanic workshop sometimes>. <I always go to the hospital>. <That woman now said we should be in a relationship>. I SAID I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <I told the woman that you can see that your husband always prostrates to great me and he calls me baba. Your husband and my children are friends>. I CANNOT

DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <The same thing happened the following day again. I now said okay that she should allow me to get well. My plan was to just pack out when I have recuperated>. <She came to meet me another day, I lied to her again>. <She came to me again and saw me having the attack>. <I now said she too can see that I am not well>. SHE THEN SAID SHE WILL SHOW ME AND LEFT ANGRILY. <I called her to appeal to her but she did not respond>. <Whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me>. <So, those children were with me that day>. <When I came back from the hospital, I went to buy food. Usually, the children and I eat together>. <So, when the woman came again, that thing started affecting me again>.

AR11

Just like AR5, AR11 deploys the use of implicit stereotyped identification in his narrative. Cognitively and emotionally, he references (REF) and projects the old age characteristics he identifies with. Strategically, his narrative bears a semblance to both the positive and negative characteristics ascribed to people in their old age. On the one hand, in Nigeria, older people are positively viewed as being wise, kind, calm, honourable, harmless, protective and respectable, for this reason, AR11 contextualises this shared cultural perception (SCK) in his narrative. For instance, his statement "*I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD*" shows how AR11 strategically employs inference (INF) to contextualise his stereotypic association to old age. He emphasises his old age as a way to indirectly challenge the likelihood of him committing the alleged crime.

Moreover, negative perception about older adults has to do with the decline in health, and agility of older people; as they are generally regarded as being slow, weak, sexually inactive, and vulnerable. Therefore, AR11 adapts the old age stereotyped context (SCK) to influence every distinct aspect of his narrative so as to buttress and accentuate his denial of the crime for eventual face-maintaining. For example, AR11 presented his vulnerability through his ill health with "*<while the woman was talking to me, I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK>*". His strong reference (REF) to his health condition is relevant to his intention. This strong emphasis on his health condition through slow paced speech and loud voice aims to appeal to II's empathy and understanding, reinforcing his image as an innocent individual facing false accusations.

Besides, AR11's continuous reference (REF) of his poor health through statements like "*<I always go to the hospital>*", "*<she came to me again and saw me having the*

attack>”, “*<when I came back from the hospital...>*” and “*<She said what about my cloth. I said at least you can see that this thing is affecting me>*” is intentionally relevant to propel II to make the inference that AR11 an incapacitated man and so he cannot commit the offence. This relevance and its implication is possible because in Nigeria, when it comes to sexual activity in older people, there are some general misconceptions that older adults do not or should not have interest in sex, and cannot have sex because they are old and usually have poor health.

Based on the narratives of ARs 5 and 11, they share some peculiar personal features as older adults, who have a revered social status in the society already. Younger parents around these older adults, usually entrust the safety of their children into the hands of these older adults. This can be confirmed in the references AR11 makes about the victim’s father- “*<the girl’s father and my children are friends>*” and “*<whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me>*. *<So, those children were with me that day>*.” It is worthy to note that AR11 references (REF) to the victim’s father is relevant (REL) to buttress the inference (INF) that he is familiar with victim and her parents. Specifically, those statements empower AR11 to create a sense of familiarity and trust; which then presents him as someone who would not harm the children of his own children’s friend. The implication from the above is, older men are likely to indulge in predatory sexual relations with children due to the ascribed reverence and assumptions about their health conditions. Therefore, the revered status becomes a suitable cover. The implication of this is, children can easily be preyed upon by these older adults due to their lack of both physical and mental strengths as compared to their molesters.

Furthermore, AR11’s employment of reference (REF) and relevance (REL) to recount a major incident involving a woman in his house confirms his usage of identity-framing strategy. He explanation that the woman made advances to him, but he rejected those advances because of their close proximity as neighbours and the friendship between his children and the woman's husband. This can be seen in these statements - “*<that woman now said we should be in a relationship>*. *I SAID I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE*” and this as well- “*...you can see that your husband always prostrates to great me and he calls me baba. Your husband and my children are friends>*”. They are relevant (REL) to accentuate

AR11's good moral character and aligns himself with shared cultural knowledge (SCK) of maintaining appropriate conduct within their community.

Stereotypes are deeply rooted in the cultures of different societies. Therefore, for any AR adopting or contextualising the stereotypes as the image aligned with, the use of elaborate scenarios to suppress and dispel the negative connotations and undertones of the rape allegation is usually employed. This is particularly common to older ARs. The consequences of the allegation weigh them down so much that the strategies applied in their narratives show emotionally laden narratives, and excessive justification of situations and actions. This is because, as earlier stated, in most Nigerian cultures, elderly people are highly respected in the society. They are seen as the upholder of customs and traditions of their people. For this reason, being accused of rape, becomes more shameful for the elderly, as it goes against the societal image ascribed to a person in that category. AR11's desperation to resist being shamed or stigmatised can be felt throughout his responses, as he adopts a defensive voice (VCE) that emphasises his innocence and vulnerability.

ARs 5 and 11 share another peculiar feature. They both claim that their accusation is a vengeful set up by some women who wanted amorous sexual relationship with them. Despite all these references and inferences (done through depictions and allusions) made by them, especially to the old age stereotype, some burning questions arose, which are: if it is indeed a vengeful accusation, and they are truly incapacitated old men as portrayed, then, why would the acclaimed women want to have amorous sexual relationship with them? Is it that the women find their fragile state enticing? Also, it has been established that ARs in this category structure their narratives in a way that only relevant (REL) stories that would project them in a positive light or stories that are likely to gain them some form of validation are told. It favours only them, and not the victim. Therefore, they have attempted to use language through identity-framing strategy to resist the rapist identity that puts them in a negative position.

4.3.2 Identity-reframing

This is an identity repairing attempt, where the ARs involved indirectly depend on crime admission for redefinition of self. The ARs involved engage this strategy through the admission of guilt, making of statements to mitigate the crime or try to give justifiable excuses for the crime and some even make statements that express

remorsefulness; in an attempt to repair their image positively. The goal of ARs in this category is face-saving. They also make their narrative to show self as capable of providing adequate testimony through their cooperation; while subtly attributing their misbehaviour to external factors. This implies that the involved ARs' narratives can be tagged implicit denial of the crime while explicitly admitting to committing the crime. This strategy is an appeal to logic to make the II to be favourable to them; which may then promote the elicitation of a lenient judgement.

Excerpt 17:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR25: >Rape<

II: How old is the girl?

AR25: >19<

II: How old are you?

AR25: >35<

II: Did you do it or not?

AR25: I DID IT

II: Where did you do it?

AR25: >Inside the room in my friend's house<

II: How were you arrested?

AR25: <She went to report to them in their house>

II: Did you force her?

AR25: NO. SHE HAS BEEN COMING TO OUR HOUSE BEFORE.

II: Your friend's house?

AR25: <She has been coming to my friend's house before>

II: Did you regret doing it?

AR25: I REGRET WHAT I DID O. ENJOYMENT OF FIVE MINUTES HAS TURNED INTO SUFFERING OF FOUR MONTHS.

II: Would you do something like this again when you are released?

AR25: NEVER! <I don't do things like this before>.

AR25

In the excerpt above, AR25 attempts to reframe his identity by openly admitting to committing the crime – “*I DID IT*”. By that simple sentence made in a loud voice, he clearly references (REF) his actions. This implies that he acknowledges his guilt without any hesitation or denial. Similarly, AR25's admission of guilt is implicitly expressed (INF) through the acknowledgement of his responsibility for the crime, indirectly proving to the II that he is cooperative. This establishment of cooperation is relevant (REL) to his attempt to reframe his identity positively. To prove this, he also attempts to reframe his identity positively by expressing regret and remorse for his actions, suggesting a desire for personal growth and redemption through the statement

“I REGRET WHAT I DID O. ENJOYMENT OF FIVE MINUTES HAS TURNED INTO SUFFERING OF FOUR MONTHS”.

Furthermore, AR25's voice reflects a combination of regret and accountability. He uses phrases like " *I REGRET WHAT I DID O* " and expresses the consequences of his actions - "*ENJOYMENT OF FIVE MINUTES HAS TURNED INTO SUFFERING OF FOUR MONTHS*", highlighting the suffering he has experienced in the aftermath. By using this voice, AR25 aims to repair his image positively and elicit sympathy from the II.

Despite acknowledgement of the crime, AR25 still attempts to downplay any perception of coercion or malicious intent. By stating “*NO*” to the question asking whether he forced the victim or not, followed by “*SHE HAS BEEN COMING TO OUR HOUSE BEFORE*” AR25 is implying familiarity and a pre-existing relationship. This suggests that AR25’s encounter with the victim is not entirely unexpected or out of the ordinary. Finally, AR25 asserts that he would never engage in such behaviour again once released – “*NEVER! <I don’t do things like this before>.*”; aligning his statement with cultural norms that condemn such actions. By so doing, he aims to portray himself as someone who has learned from his mistakes and is committed to positive change.

Through the strategic deployment the identity-reframing strategy. AR25 admits to the crime, expresses remorse and regret, and distances himself from the possibility of repeating such behaviour and by so doing, he is propelling the II to see him in a positive light as a changed person. Therefore, he has attempt to repair his image and elicit empathy from the II, positioning himself as someone capable of personal growth and rehabilitation.

Excerpt 18:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR26: >Rape<

II: Did you commit it or not?

AR26: <I did it, my friend and I raped her>

II: How old is the girl?

AR26: >She is 15 years old<

II: Where did the two of you rape her?

AR26: <Where we were working as night guards>

II: How did it happen?

AR26: Actually, the girl lives on that street and we have been speaking to her
(.). <Sometimes, things happen due to the work of the devil>

- II: Where did you see her? Was she walking alone?
 AR26: <A car came to drop her>. <We now spoke with her. When we finished speaking with her>, it seems I was the first to have sex with her (.) <and besides, it was when I finished having sex with her, that she became stubborn and it turned into trouble...> (II interjects)
 II: Did you deceive her to come inside?
 AR26: We deceived her to come inside (.) >It was where we work. It's just a public place. We did inside a makeshift shop<.
 II: Where was she coming from?
 AR26: >She said she was coming from her aunty's place; that her aunty and her had a quarrel<. <We now asked her for money but she said she doesn't have>. <So my colleague now suggested that we should have sex with her>.
 II: How were you now arrested?
 AR26: >She went to report to the street's chairman. When we returned to work the next day, the chairman brought the police to arrest us<.
 II: If you are released, would you commit this type of crime again?
 AR26: ME! GOD WILL NOT ALLOW ME TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS AGAIN.

AR25

AR26 begins his identity-reframing strategy by explicitly admitting his involvement in the crime “<I did it, my friend and I raped her>”. This straightforward admission strengthens his credibility and cooperation. It indirectly shows his willingness to confront his actions. However, when he is being asked to talk about how the incidence happened, his response <Sometimes, things happen due to the work of the devil>” attributes the crime to the devil. The attribution of the crime to the devil is an attempt to justify his involvement in the crime, and suggest that he was under compulsion to commit the offence, that is, he was under the influence of the devil; thereby subtly imploring the II to make an inference (INF) that accepts the devil as the criminal while he becomes the victim. Also, it is an importation of the religious context (SCK) into the narrative to implicitly deny the crime. The implication is that despite admitting to the crime explicitly, he is also denying the crime implicitly through his attempt to subtly push the responsibility of the crime on the devil.

After, AR26's admission to the crime and the attribution of the responsibility of the crime to the devil, he then describes how he and his accomplice raped the victim. This makes his narrative to seem like a truthful testimony just to show himself as capable of providing adequate account of the crime incidence. However, there are some parts in the narrative like “<we now spoke with her. When we finished speaking with her>, it seems I was the first to have sex with her (.) <and besides, it was when I finished

having sex with her, that she became stubborn and it turned into trouble...>”. That shows AR26’s subtle attempts to prove to the II that they had some form of good rapport and agreement about having sexual intercourse with the victim prior to the crime. The words “*stubborn*” and “*trouble*” in the statement are used intentionally to make reference (REF) to the devil (based on his earlier attribution of the crime to the devil) and to make the II make the inference (INF) that the victim began to make *trouble* after their consensual sexual intercourse because of the devil’s involvement.

Also, when he was asked to talk about how they were able to get the victim to come to them, he responded that “*we deceived her to come inside (.) >It was where we work. It’s just a public place. We did inside a makeshift shop<*”. His response is more than what is required. Grice (1975) calls this the violation of the maxim of quantity. However, the extra information given is necessitated by his desire (REL) to further substantiate (that is, continuous reference of) the crime as “*...the work of the devil>*”, that is, the crime was masterminded by the devil. Basically, rape is mostly done in private, so AR26 describing the place where the rape incidence took place as a public place is to subtly reduce the crime to a consensual sexual activity that they (the rapists and the victim) were comfortable enough to do inside a make shift shop in a public place.

Similarly, when he was asked the question on where the victim was coming, his response – “*>she said she was coming from her aunty’s place; that her aunty and her had a quarrel<. <We now asked her for money but she said she doesn’t have>. <So my colleague now suggested that we should have sex with her>*” is an attempt to mitigate and justify the crime, and it has two implications. The first implication is intended at propelling the II to make the inference (INF) that the victim’s refusal to give them money is the cause of the crime, which then goes with the popular saying – ‘money is the root of all evil’. This is still a subtle reference (REF) to his claim that the crime is the “*...work of the devil>*”. The second implication is that the latter part of the expression – “*<so my colleague now suggested that we should have sex with her>*” is intended for the II to also make inference (INF) that AR26’s colleague is the one who is directly responsible for being influenced by the devil; thereby making the devil and his colleague to become the crime accomplice and to share the responsibility of the crime, while he remains the passive actor in the crime incidence.

Furthermore, his statement – “*ME! GOD WILL NOT ALLOW ME TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS AGAIN*” to the question – “*If you are released, would you commit this type of crime again?*” shows AR26’s continuous invocation of religious beliefs (religious context-SCK) to achieve his goal. However, in this case, it portrays a sense of remorse and personal transformation; which can be interpreted (INF) as an assertion of newfound moral conviction and a commitment to not repeat the same crime in the future. His emphasis the role of God, presents him as someone who has undergone a profound change and is now morally bound against engaging in similar criminal behaviour. The aim is to evoke empathy and suggest that they have learned from their past actions, positioning himself as someone who has been reformed or redeemed. Similarly, his emphasis on the role of God is relevant (REL) for the interpretation he wants the II to make, which is- he wants the II to make the inference (INF) that he believes that ‘God’ will control/protect him from committing the mistake again because he is changed. Although, AR26 did not directly call the crime a mistake, but it can be inferred (INF); which can also be referred (REF) to as a form of crime minimisation. Therefore, through admission of guilt, statements of mitigation and expressions of remorsefulness, AR26 indirectly reconstruct his identity positively (face-saving) for a positive inference by the II.

Finally, in the context of AR26’s response, the exclamation of “*me!*” serves as an emphatic self-assertion statement. This draws attention to his personal commitment which can then be interpreted as a form of self-conviction, indicating a strong belief in his own ability to resist committing the same crime again. It is a rhetorical device to reinforce his sincerity and determination in conveying his transformed mindset. Overall, AR26’s appeal to logic by reframing himself as someone capable of providing testimony for redemption, is aimed at image repair; which could potentially elicit a more lenient judgment.

4.3.3 Crime re-labelling

Crime-relabelling strategy indirectly draws on socio-cultural context through stereotypic allusion to sexual relationship for the redefinition of crime or the role played in the crime, which eventually helps to downplay the gravity of the crime. The ARs involved achieve this through a subverted context; where the crime context is reconstructed in a way that makes the ARs share same status – “the adult status” with

their underage victims as if they are in a sexual relationship between two consenting adults.

The context reconstruction showcases a situation where ARs attempt to present logical arguments or crime details that present them (ARs and the victims) performing same roles to imply that what transpired between them is not crime. The ARs re-allocate roles to themselves and their victims to showcase a different perspective of the crime; so as to corroborate their denial of the crime, thereby causing a re-label of the crime. The goal of this strategy is to save-face by not only corroborating the crime denial but to subtly evoke feelings of doubts about the authenticity of the crime, which may likely influence the mindset of the II for a more positive perception, and a downplay of the crime seriousness. ARs in this category are young men between the age of 20 to 36 years old, and are accused of raping teenagers between the age of 14 to 17 years. Their type of rape is called statutory rape and their crime narratives revolve round a mutual romantic relationship between the victims and them.

Today, in most cultures, a typical romantic relationship involves sexual intimacy between boyfriends and girlfriends or a man and a woman (adults) and some level of commitments. Usually, when it comes to sexual intimacy, there is no power imbalance. Therefore, the partners share the same status, irrespective of the age. However, legally, romantic relationships are to be between adults, and in this case, two consenting adults. Therefore, sexual intimacy should not happen between an adult and a minor, because a minor cannot give consent. Legally, in some nations like Nigeria, the age of consent (adulthood) starts from 18 years. Even with adults, the sexual intimacy must be consensual.

In the crime narratives, some of the ARs rely on shared cultural knowledge about romantic relationship to construct their narratives. This puts them in the same status as their underage victims (man and woman/boyfriend and girlfriend status). This is an indirect attempt to cause a shift in the crime focus from the age/status of the victim (as a minor) to the projection of the mutual romantic relationship. The mutual romantic relationship projected offers a ground where the II can make the inference (INF) that accepts that it is right for the ARs to have had sexual intercourse with their victims because they are in a romantic relationship. They use the relationship context as a prove of social consent and social approval for their actions.

This type of context reconstruction is actively projected by some ARs (who have been accused of rape of under-aged girls) to justify their reasons for having a sexual intercourse with their victims and to convince the II that they have not committed a crime. Mainly, ARs do this, to negate the place of age, and consent before any sexual intimacy, thereby, taking the status they share (being in a romantic relationship) with the victims as enough reason for non-consensual sexual intercourse. In fact, what the ARs in this category are attempting to do is to relabel the crime name to something that is less of a crime. This is an influential attempt to sway perception towards their face-saving goal”. Therefore, the crime-re-labelling strategy is deployed through the adaptation of the crime context to actively project stories/arguments that dismiss/replace/question the genuineness of the accusation. This is exemplified in an excerpt from AR2. See the below excerpt:

Excerpt 19:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR2: >I was accused of rape<

II: Did you commit the crime or not?

AR2: I DID NOT RAPE THE GIRL, BUT WE BOTH HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AS MAN AND WOMAN

II: What now happened? Where you both in a relationship?

AR2: We are in a relationship and we are not in a relationship (.)

II: What does that mean?

AR2: Because in the house that I went to work as a private driver, she lives in that house as a house help(.) <So, before the incident occurred>, THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN...

AR2

AR2’s crime re-labelling strategy is projected through a subverted relationship context. In AR2’s excerpt above, he starts his narrative by denying the offence, while attempting to make reference (REF) to how he sees himself and the victim and the role they performed. The victim is a minor yet AR2 says “*WE BOTH HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AS MAN AND WOMAN*”. That “man” and “woman” referencing (REF), is an attempt to propel the II to make an inference (INF) that pictures a man and woman (adults) having sexual intercourse, and not a man (adult) having sexual intercourse with an underage girl (a minor). He gives the victim an adult status, showing that he sees the victim as an adult and not a minor; thereby, removing the focus from the age and the original status of the victim (16 years- a minor) and from the notion that the offence he committed is rape.

Furthermore, AR2's statement "<So, before the incident occurred>, THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN..." is a subtle reference (REF) to the sexual intimacy that exists between a woman and a man in a romantic relationship, which confirms his reason for changing the status of the victim. Also, the statement confirms the inference (INF) that he sees the victim as an adult (not a minor) therefore, he had a sexual intercourse with a woman as a man; because she plays with him the way a woman (an adult) relates with a man sexually. In essence, that statement shows how AR2 leverages on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about romantic relationships to shape his narrative. He draws on societal expectations and traditional gender roles, implying that the victim's behaviour was consistent with being in a relationship. By so doing, AR2 tries to justify the sexual encounter based on social norms, suggesting that it is acceptable for a man and a woman in a romantic relationship to engage in sexual intimacy, regardless of the victim's age.

Likewise, AR2's statement "*THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN...*" is intentionally given so that the II can infer (INF) shared responsibility. AR2's use of term "*plays*" emphasises mutual involvement; consequently, an impression of equal participation is initiated. This implies that the victim was also an active participant in the sexual encounter. This tactic serves to minimise AR2's culpability and blur the lines of consent. Specifically, the idea of 'consent' is inferred (INF) from the statement, because, it suggests that AR2 is saying that: *'I have the consent to have sexual intercourse with her because she plays with me the way an adult (woman) plays with a man'*, insinuating that he had sexual intercourse with the victim based on the sexual invitation (seduction) from the victim before the act. Therefore, to him (AR2), 'there is nothing like rape', because the victim's actions (of playing with him the way a woman relates with a man) is a projection of a picture of sexual intercourse invitation, which should be enough to prove that what happened is not rape but sexual intercourse between two consenting adults. Similarly, he did not describe how a "woman plays with a man" to the II because he has assumed that they have some shared background knowledge in relation to that (SCK).

AR2's narrative has shown how he wants to be perceived, including the victim, and the circumstances that surround the incidence (crime) before and after the occurrence

of the crime to prove that what happened between him and his 16-year-old victim is not rape but rather, a consensual sexual intercourse. The narrative of AR2 shows how Ranciere's idea of 'common scene' (discussed by Mey, 2001) can be adapted, and manipulated to project personal intentions. This is enhanced by the circumstances that surround the rape incidence, especially the fact that it is an offence that usually has no witness (just like most rape cases), therefore, it is the accused's statement/ confession/ narratives against the victim's and vice versa. This gives the AR a great opportunity to tell the story in a way that favours him, hence, the reason the details of the crime are projected through a subverted romantic relationship context.

Overall, the crime-relabelling strategy as utilised by AR2 aims to undermine the seriousness of the crime and challenge II's perception of his actions as rape. Specifically, the context reconstruction and presentation of a narrative that blurs the lines between consensual and non-consensual acts will help to diminish AR2's culpability and evoke doubt in the mind of the II.

AR7 is another AR whose crime narrative shows an intentional projection of the crime incidence through the stereotypic allusion to romantic relationship. His leverage on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about romantic relationships is to help shape his narrative. AR7's refusal to acknowledge that the victim is a minor takes the attention off the age and status (minor) of the victim, rather, great prominence is placed on their relationship status, that is, girlfriend and boyfriend. His adoption of this style implies that his narrative is controlled by the intention to put himself in a positive light. See excerpt from the narrative of AR7 below:

Excerpt 20:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR7: >rape<

II: Did you do it or not?

AR7: >Ehen, I did it<,

II: Tell me what happened?

AR7: I can say that when the girl (.), was in SS3 at that time (.) <So we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>. I HAVE A HAND WORK. I WORK FOR JOBS. I WORK AS A BARBER, I WORK AS A DJ, I DO VIDEO COVERAGE AND I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER, AND I HAVE A SHOP. >Since we both agreed not to have sex, so when she finished her school certificate, I asked her what she wants to do now. She said she wants to go for computer training and that was what she was learning<.

II: Was it you that gave her the money for it?

AR7: <No, it wasn't me, her parents gave her the money but I paid out of it>. Her parents did not know me, >later, it happened<. <She was the one that volunteered herself that we should do it>. >We then had sexual intercourse. We did it in my room. It is not now we started doing it<. <Suddenly, she got home, I don't know how it happened>. <The next day they came to my shop to pick me up. I went for lecture>. <As I arrived, the four of them asked for my name. I mentioned my name to them. They asked me if I know the girl> <I said she is my girlfriend>. >From there, they said they want to see me somewhere. When we got there, they asked me to kneel down< WHAT HAPPEN? >They started slapping me<. AH, I SAID SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND, they said do I know her age, I SAID 16 YEARS. They said this girl is not 16 years, THEY SHORTENED THE GIRL'S AGE TO 12. >...

AR7

In the excerpt above, AR7's statement - *<so we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>*" is a subtle reference (REF) to pre-existing relationship, and it relevant (REL) to make the inference (INF) that such a commitment is an indication that their relationship is a romantic one. This implies that they are boyfriend and girlfriend. It also implies (INF) that they both are aware and agree that they would engage in sexual intercourse at some point in their relationship. Similarly, AR7's reference to their agreement again *">since we both agreed not to have sex ..."* is intentionally relevant (REL) to make II know the importance of that agreement to their relationship. Already, the agreement has implied the 'boyfriend and girlfriend' relationship, hence, a repetition of that agreement is also making reference (REF) to their type of boyfriend-girlfriend relationship, which is a consensual romantic relationship. That puts them in the same status. Therefore, it removes the focus from the victim's age and the minor status. Similarly, it also implies (INF) that the agreement between them is an evidence that they have made a commitment to have sexual intercourse at a certain stage in their romantic relationship.

Furthermore, AR7 reveals that they later had sexual intercourse, but it happened after the victim had finished from secondary school based on their agreement. His submission that *">since we both agreed not to have sex, so when she finished her school certificate, I asked her what she wants to do now. She said she wants to go for computer training...<"* is relevant (REL) to act as a testament to their agreement and it can also be inferred (INF) that AR7 is attempting to confirm to the II that he (both of them) did not breach their agreement before the due date/time and even waited after

the completion of her school certificate. This is relevantly projected so that the II can make the inference (INF) that what happened between them is not rape, rather, a consensual sexual intercourse. He then proceeds to substantiate this through this statement- “>later, it happened<. <She was the one that volunteered herself that we should do it>. >We then had sexual intercourse. We did it in my room”. The use of the word “volunteer” in that statement is a subtle hint at a willing consent, and not a coerced consent. It also implies that not only is the sex consensual but the romantic relationship (with the minor) itself is not forced.

It is worthy to note that AR7’s crime narrative is a chronological one, that is, a process, gradually evolving from being in a romantic relationship, to a consensual agreement/commitment to not having sex till the fulfillment of that agreement, and finally, to when they had sex, which is the volunteering stage. All the stages are relevant (REL) for the fulfillment of the intention of AR7, which is to prove that the incidence was not rape, rather a consensual sex. Notably, AR7’s chronologically style of narrative is effective, as he is able to adapt some commonly shared cultural knowledge (SCK) on romantic relationship, involving commitments, agreements and keeping to it, and the importance of consent before sexual intercourse in a relationship.

The voice of AR7 is an assertive defensive one that enables crime/role reconstruction. This is visible from how he repeatedly emphasise their relationship status, their agreement and commitment (to not have sex until a certain time), to the victim’s volunteering to have sex with him. Based on the excerpt, it can be inferred (INF) that AR7 is aware that the victim is a minor, and he is equally aware that there is need for consent before engaging in sexual intercourse. That is why he lays so much prominence on their agreement, commitment and the victim’s volunteering to have sex with him, so as to negate the true status of the victim; a minor, who is in no position to give consent for sex.

As evidenced in the excerpts of the examined ARs above, it is clear that some ARs always try to initiate their narratives by projecting a supposed relationship with their victims (either minor), that is, the creation of a romantic relationship context as a license for having sexual intercourse with a minor. They use the relationship context as a prove of social consent. AR14 is also not different from the other ARs discussed so far.

Excerpt 21:

II: what offence were you accused of?
AR14: >I was accused of rape<
II: Did you commit the offence?
AR14: NO, I DID NOT
II: How long have you known the girl?
AR14: WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER SINCE 2012 TILL 2014
II: How old is the child?
AR14: >16 years<
II: How did it happen?
AR14: BOTH OF US HAVE BEEN IN A RELATIONSHIP SINCE 2013 BUT HER MUMMY SAID SHE SHOULD NOT DATE ME. <Her mummy went for a party and she came to stay in my house for about a week, then she went back to her mummy.> <Her mummy knows where I live. Her mother now said she did not know where her daughter was for over one week, that I didn't allow her to come home>. <As I came back from work the next morning, her mother brought police to arrest me.

When AR14 was asked about how long he had known the victim, he started off by playing the relationship card that is, making reference (REF) to boyfriend/girlfriend relationship - "*WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER SINCE 2012 TILL 2014*". This is the beginning of the projection of his intention, and just like the other ARs above, he started with the relationship card as a defensive mechanism for his action so as influence the interviewer's perception. The best response could have been "*I have known her since 2012 till 2014*". However, because of his intention, he made his response to not only show how long he had known the victim, but to also show that they have been in a relationship since then, thereby, making reference (REF) to their status and thus implying (INF) that they are in a romantic relationship where sexual intercourse is permissible.

Furthermore, when he mentioned the victim's age (16 years old), it can be inferred that he had been in a sexual relationship with the victim since she was much younger (14 years old). This inference (INF) is possible based on his earlier claim "*WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER SINCE 2012 TILL 2014*". This is a fair inference that his projection of a romantic relationship is dubious because, he knows that the victim is a minor, yet took advantage of her since the age of 14 and still continued to take advantage of her with is reference to boyfriend and girlfriend status; which is a leverage on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about romantic relationships.

Similarly, when AR14 was further asked to talk about how the incident happened, he still referenced (REF) their relationship. This strong emphasis on their relationship status is made in a loud voice, stating the exact time the relationship started “*BOTH OF US HAVE BEEN IN A RELATIONSHIP SINCE 2013...*” is relevant (REL) for the creation of the impression that despite the fact that the victim’s mother was against it, the victim still stayed with him. The relevance (REL) of this is in the inference (INF) of consent that he wants the II to perceive. Also, AR14 may want the II to make the inference (INF) that the victim’s visit to his house for one week was made possible because they are truly in a consensual romantic relationship (based on the commonly shared cultural knowledge about commitments in romantic relationships) and that the visit is a representation of ‘consent’. AR14 manipulated the context to project an image of an innocent man, just to convince the II that what happened between him and the victim was not rape, but a consensual sexual relationship because of their relationship status, despite the fact that the victim is a minor.

Overall, the perspective of AR14 is projected through the status he constructed for him and the victim. Every details/arguments made in the narrative is relevant for the projection of AR14’s intention (which is for him to be perceived in a positive light). AR14’s attempt at projecting a romantic relationship status is a dubious one to subvert II’s interpretation of the crime situations. Furthermore, in the crime narrative of AR15, there is an attempt to influence II’s perception through the subverted romantic relationship context too. He, like other ARs above, rides on the commonly shared cultural knowledge about romantic relationship to project an automatic consent for sexual intercourse in a boyfriend and girlfriend relationship. See excerpt below:

Excerpt 22:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR15: >I was accused of rape<

II: How old are you?

AR15: >24<

II: How old is the girl they said you had raped?

AR15: >17 years<

II: Who is the girl to you?

AR15: SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND.

II: Can you explain how it happened?

AR15: <That day, she was coming back from school, I now carried her. When my passengers alighted> (II interjects)

II: Are you a taxi driver?

AR15: >Yes< <I now told her to come and know my house. she said she is going to her house. i now said she should use the opportunity to know my house>

II: She has never been to your house?

AR15: >No<. <I said she should just use this to know my house. So that she can be coming to my house later>. When we got there, I asked if she would drink water or take soft drink. I asked her what she wants. She said I should buy rice and beans for her. I bought it with a drink> <She wanted to go when she finished eating but I told her not to go, that since we have been in a relationship, she has never allowed me to touch her>. SHE NOW SAID NO PROBLEM. <After we finished doing it and wanted to start going...>

AR15

In the excerpt above, AR15 references (REF) the type of relationship that exist between the victim and himself through the assertion that the victim is his girlfriend, which makes him her boyfriend. This reference (REF) also confirms his reliance on shared cultural knowledge about romantic relationships (SCK). Based on AR15's description of the events that led to his arrest, it can be inferred (INF) that AR15 verbally manipulated and coerced the victim (a minor) to follow him to know his house after the other passengers had alighted from his taxi leaving only her (as passenger) left in his taxi – “<I now told her to come and know my house. she said she is going to her house. i now said she should use the opportunity to know my house>”. If they had been in a relationship truly, prior to that day, why was that day the first time she would visit his house? Therefore, the implication here is that AR15 knew the victim because he had been carrying her in his taxi, and not that they had been in a relationship, and when other passengers had alighted, he used that opportunity to verbally coerce her to follow him to his house, being that the victim is young and naive’. This negates his earlier assertion that the victim is his girlfriend. It could as well be a ploy to intentionally propel the II to make the inference (INF) that since they are in a relationship, therefore, the sexual relation that happened is not rape, rather, a consensual sexual relation based on their relationship status.

However, his description of what happened when they got to his house could be implied as verbal coercion “<she wanted to go when she finished eating but I told her not to go, that since we have been in a relationship, she has never allowed me to touch her>. SHE NOW SAID NO PROBLEM”. This description is relevant (REL) to intentionally propel the II to make the deduction (INF) that the victim gave her consent. Specifically, it can be inferred that the description suggests that the victim is

verbally coerced and it could have been enabled by the food and drinks he bought for her- “<I asked her what she wants. She said I should buy rice and beans for her. I bought it with a drink>”. The victim may have given in to AR15’s request for sex as her way of showing gratitude for the food and drink he bought for her (sexual gratification). However, his reference (REF) to their relationship status, makes it look as if they are in a romantic relationship; which gives him the right to ask for sex and have sexual intercourse with a minor. AR15’s influencing act here is used as a tool to re-label his role in the crime. His malicious intention to subvert the II’s inference is also made known through his projection of the relationship context to rename and justify his act of rape as a consensual sexual intercourse.

There are other ARs that fall into this category but with slightly different stories. These ARs confessed to have committed the rape crime but still projected the relationship status; unlike the ARs above who did not agree that what they have done with their underage victims is rape. For example, AR9 confessed to have committed the crime, but he still leverages on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about romantic relationships to shape his narrative. His stereotypic allusion to sexual relationship aims to reconstruct the crime and the roles he and the victim played. See excerpt below:

Excerpt 23:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR9: >Rape<

II: How old is the girl?

AR9: >16<

II: Did you commit the offence or not?

AR9: >I did it<. SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND. SHE COMES TO MY HOUSE. I HAVE BEEN IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER FOR LIKE FOUR MONTHS. IN FACT, SHE LIVES IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE.

II: What now happened?

AR9: <She came to my house that day; she has always been coming, and we did it>.

II: You have been having sex with her before?

AR9: I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HAVING SEX WITH HER BEFORE. <She came to my house that day, after we have had sex that day, it was on Sunday, she then went back home>.

AR9

In AR9’s excerpt above, the statement “*SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND*” that follows the admission of “>I did it<” is an intentional referencing (REF) by AR9 to establish the type of relationship exist between the victim and himself. AR9 wants the II to deduce

(INF) that he raped the victim because of her status as his girlfriend. However, that statement is contradictory and this is because he already confessed to the crime. His confession is contradicting the inference (INF) of consent that comes as a result of the relationship referencing (REF).

Similarly, AR9 keeps making reference (REF) to their romantic relationship status and how the victim usually comes to visit him in his house to have sexual intercourse with him - "*I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HAVING SEX WITH HER BEFORE. <she came to my house that day, after we have had sex that day, it was on Sunday, she then went back home>*". The continuous repetition and referencing (REF) of their relationship status and her constant visit to his house is a subtle relevant (REL) act invested at shifting the focus from himself to the victim, thereby assigning a passive role to himself, and an active role to the victim as a willing performer of the action. This also removes focus from the age and original status of the victim (minor), while inferencing (INF) the idea of consent subtly. For AR9, the idea of consent may be an implication of AR9's assumption that the victim's act of leaving her house, to come to his house is an act of giving consent for sexual intercourse.

AR9 keeps projecting the relationship status to manage his and the victim's status/roles as reference (REF) which then may lead to the II's forming the impression (INF), that is, AR9's intended meaning that what happened was not rape but a normal consensual sexual intercourse, because the victim wants it to happen and that's why she always comes to his house - "*<she came to my house that day; she has always been coming, and we did it>*". It is a twisted justification (through language use) for having sexual intercourse with a minor. Every aspect of the narrative is relevant (REL) to AR9 for the projection of his intention. AR9's attempt to change the outlook of his action through the stereotypic allusion to romantic relationship (SCK) is deliberate and relevant (REL) for the recreation of perception.

Excerpt 24:

II: What kind of offence brought you here?

AR22: >Rape<

II: How old are you?

AR22: >22 years<

II: How old is the girl you raped?

AR22: >15 years<

II: Are you guilty or not guilty?

AR22: WALLALTALAH I SUMOBILAH I AM NOT GUILTY

II: Did you not have sex with the girl?
 AR22: I AM NOT GUILTY, IN FACT ... (II interjects)
 II: Please, answer my question, did you have sex with the girl or you did not have sex with the girl?
 AR22: I HAD SEX WITH HER, BUT I AM NOT GUILTY.
 II: Why did you say you are not guilty?
 AR22: THE REASON I SAID I AM NOT GUILTY IS BECAUSE SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND AND I DID NOT FORCE HER.
 II: How did you know the girl?
 AR22: >She sells goods to us<. <She sells orange and we both had a discussion that I would marry her but not yet. I do tell her till I had sex with her>.
 II: Where did you have sex with her?
 AR22: >My house<
 II: How were you arrested?
 AR22: The reason I was arrested was because that night around 10(.) <I didn't see any one till the night of the fifth day. I didn't see anyone till the next morning, early morning. It was five days after that day that I saw like two men. They said they were looking for "this person, this person". I came out, they asked if I was the one dating their daughter that they only want to see me at the police station>.

AR22

The excerpt above shows how AR22 strategically deploys the crime re-labelling strategy through his responses. His narrative starts with a very assertive answer to II's question on whether he is guilty of the crime or not and he assertively answered "*WALAITALAH I SUMOBILAH I, I AM NOT GUILTY*". This is a religious statement usually made by Muslims in the western part of Nigeria, when they want their listeners to believe that what they have said is true. By making that statement, AR22 is referencing (REF) honesty and also emphasising his innocence of the crime against him. Also, to reinforce his innocence, AR22 repeats "*I AM NOT GUILTY, IN FACT...*" when the II asked if he raped the victim or not. He attempts to not only reinforce his innocence but to also avoid responding directly to whether he raped the victim or not until the II implores him to directly respond to the question. His response "*I HAD SEX WITH HER, BUT I AM NOT GUILTY*" made in a loud voice is intentional, to a delineation between what he did and what he did not do. Specifically, his use of the word "*sex*" not "*rape*" is relevant (REL) to establish a clear difference between what he did and what he did not do. "*Sex*" appeals to the mind implying consent while "*rape*" means not consensual. Hence, his use of the word "*sex*".

It also establishes his intention to justify his action so as not to take responsibility for it, despite the victim being a minor. This is evident in his next statement made in an increased volume speech “*THE REASON I SAID I AM NOT GUILTY IS BECAUSE SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND AND I DID NOT FORCE HER*”. By referring to the girl he allegedly raped as his girlfriend – “*SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND AND I DID NOT FORCE HER*”, AR22 strongly establishes a perceived mutual consent and shared romantic involvement, attempting to downplay the criminal nature of the act. This reference (REF) serves as a cornerstone for his subsequent arguments as he wants the II to make the inference (INF) that the sexual activity was consensual based on their relationship. This conveniently shifts the focus away from the girl's age and the lack of legal consent. By reemphasising his innocence while admitting to having sex with the victim – “*THE REASON I SAID I AM NOT GUILTY IS BECAUSE SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND AND I DID NOT FORCE HER*”, he attempts to reconcile these seemingly contradictory statements by relying on the notion that their romantic relationship validates their actions. That statement also shifts the focus away from the victim's age and the lack of legal consent, by relying on the notion that their romantic relationship validates his actions. Therefore, the implication of this is that AR22 is implying that the sexual encounter with a 15-year-old minor was consensual or does not constitute a crime. Through the projection of the inference of consent, AR22 aims to divert attention from the criminal nature of the act and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the accusation.

Similarly, AR22 consistent emphasises of his innocence through the reference to the boyfriend/girlfriend projection is relevant (REL) for his justification intentions. He justifies his not guilty plea by stating that the girl was his girlfriend and that he did not force her into the sexual act. By emphasising their relationship and the absence of coercion, AR22 seeks to diminish the gravity of the crime and present it as a consensual act between two individuals in a romantic context. Also, AR22 shares how he knew the victim, stating that “*she sells orange*” and then adds the claims that “*<...and we both had a discussion that I would marry her but not yet. I do tell her till I had sex with her>*” is relevant (REL) to AR22 for the construction a narrative that portrays a consensual romantic relationship, suggesting that his actions with the victim are within the boundaries of a typical relationship and not indicative of a crime. AR22 also adopts a defensive tone with the use of a phrase like “*WALAITALAH*”

SUMOBILAH!" to assert his sincerity and innocence. This vocal religious proclamation aims to enhance his credibility and persuade the II to question the veracity of the accusation.

Equally important is AR22 reliance on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about romantic relationships to support his arguments. The implication of this is that being in a romantic relationship automatically implies consent and equal status between the partners, regardless of the victim's age. By invoking these cultural beliefs, AR22 aims to shift the focus from the victim's age and lack of legal consent to the perceived legitimacy of their romantic relationship. Also, this cultural understanding aligns with AR22's attempt to reframe the crime as a consensual relationship, appealing to the II's preconceived notions. Ultimately, AR22's deployment of the crime re-labelling strategy is significantly aimed to manipulate II's perception of the crime narrative.

Excerpt 25:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR29: >Rape<

II: Did you commit the offence or not?

AR29: I DID IT BECAUSE WE ARE BOTH IN A RELATIONSHIP

II: How old is the girl?

AR29: >26 years<

II: What about you?

AR29: >31 years<

II: How many years have you known the girl?

AR29: <We were in a relationship for 6 months>

II: How did it happen? Why were you accused of rape?

AR29: <I am a Muslim, she is a Christian and her parents did not accept me>.

II: How did her parents know that you slept with her?

AR29: <What happened was that; you know that whatever they report at the station is what the police will use>.

II: Was it the girl that brought the police to arrest you?

AR29: <No, her parents>

AR29

The deployment of crime-relabelling strategy is evident in the excerpt of AR29 above. For example, AR29 refers to his relationship with the victim as a justification for his actions. He explicitly states, "*I DID IT BECAUSE WE ARE BOTH IN A RELATIONSHIP*" attributing his behaviour to the consensual nature of their romantic involvement as they are both adults. AR29's emphasis of the existence of a supposed romantic relationship between himself and the girl, implies that the sexual encounter with the victim is a natural progression of their mutual affection. He relies on the inference (INF) that being in a relationship implies the absence of non-consensual acts.

Similarly, AR29 highlights the duration of their relationship “<we were in a relationship for 6 months>” to suggest that their sexual encounter was not an isolated incident but a regular occurrence within their established romantic involvement. This shared situational knowledge is relevant to make the inference that there is an ongoing consensual relationship. What’s more is AR29 presentation of their different religions affiliations as the reason the supposed victim’s parent got him arrested – “<I am a Muslim, she is a Christian and her parents did not accept me>”. This information is relevant (REL) as it helps him appeal to shared cultural knowledge (SCK). This propelled his attempts to shift the focus from the alleged crime to religious differences. It is not uncommon in Nigeria for parents to frown at or take drastic actions that will ensure their children do not marry someone of a different religion. The inference is that the parents' disapproval of his relationship with the supposed victim may have led to the accusation of rape, suggesting a potential motive for their actions. Therefore, AR29 relies on this socio-cultural context and in this case ‘religion’ to present a strong reason for being accused of rape.

In summary, through the strategic deployment of crime-relabelling strategy, AR29 attempts to reframe the situation as a consensual act within a romantic relationship, emphasising shared religious differences as the major contributing factors to the accusation. By so doing, AR29 aims to downplay the seriousness of the crime and evoke empathy or understanding from the II.

In all the excerpts of the ARs discussed above, there is a dominant construct of the socio-cultural context (SCK) that can be referred to as a subverted romantic relationship context (the manipulative stereotypic allusion to romantic relationship). The constructed context is for the re-label of the crime/crime role. accordingly, it enhances ARs’ projection of same status with their underage victims. The romantic relationship may entail many things like commitments, including sexual intimacy. Therefore, based on the narratives of the ARs in this category, the romantic relationship status is used to show “consent for sexual relations”, implying that being in a romantic relationship is an automatic consent for sexual intercourse. It is also a subtle way for some ARs to project their beliefs that age does not matter when it comes to romantic relationship involving an adult and a minor. Can this be attributed to patriarchy? Anyways, looking at how the ARs in this category, have manipulated and adapted the context of romantic relationship with their victims (bearing in mind

the shared cultural knowledge about romantic relationship) have resulted into crime re-labelling targeted at influencing or recreating the perception of the II about them and their situation. Another peculiar feature of the ARs in this category is that they did not try to distance themselves from the victims/crime, rather, they only attempted to re-label the crime.

4.3.4 Attention-seeking

This strategy is the emotional exploitation of the investigative interviewer (II). The aim of ARs in this category is to seek emotional support by sharing personal stories that are emotional to self-prove for II's validation. The goal is face-maintaining for positive inferencing. It exploits the idea of intimacy; an attempt to feign some form of closeness/a relationship with the II. This involves sharing emotion laden personal stories (not particularly related to the crime) with the II to evoke a feeling of closeness (intimacy). Often, people share personal stories with those they trust and feel would be empathetic towards them, especially to their situation. The motive is usually to use these personal stories to self-prove to gain validation from the II so as to absolve self from guilt, low self-esteem and anxiety. The engagement of this strategy is noticeable when some ARs use some part of their narratives to seek for support by recounting personal stories to influence the investigative discourse so that the II would feel a certain level of closeness and thus believe that for the AR to have given personal details about himself, it implies that the AR has a high regard for the II. These ARs consciously make efforts to take some part or the most part of their narrative to talk about themselves.

The personal and or past details are deep emotional situations about them, and/or on the effects the rape allegation has on them. Therefore, hinting at a shared certain level of intimacy/closeness, co-opts the II to infer that they (the ARs) feel validated and safe with him (the II), for this reason, he should feel the same way. The ARs put their validation into the hands of the II, showing openness, vulnerability, and ultimately trust. Ordinarily, the adoption of an investigative interview appeals to the ARs that their stories would be heard, therefore the II are adjudged as good listeners. Hence, ARs actively deploy this strategy to condition the II to make deductions that would be favourable to them while also making the II feel that the inference was not influenced by them. This is relevant to achieving their communicative goal.

4.3.4.1 Fishing for pity

This sub-strategy is used by ARs to look for emotional support and to indirectly demand for sympathy by making statements about the effects the rape allegation has had on them. Therefore, they complain/lament/protest their situation in a way that may arouse sympathy in others; just so that they get sympathetic attention from the II, and it is usually for acceptance, and validation. Some even share deep emotional stories about their past lives generally (strengths, weaknesses, illness, emotional problems.) or even about the crime event, so as to generate some deep sympathetic reactions to emotionally exploit the II. This strategy not only set-ups the II to feel a certain way about the AR, the II is also co-opted by the emotional picture the AR has created; for the II to understand and share in their distress.

Excerpt 26:

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR5: Rape(.)

II: Did you commit it or not?

AR5: AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?

I CLOCKED 63 YEARS THIS YEAR, ON THE SECOND OF JANUARY WHICH MEANS THAT I WAS ABOUT 58 YEARS WHEN THE INCIDENT ACCUSED.

AR5

AR5's reference (REF) to 'old age' draws attention to his vulnerability and the likelihood of his involvement in the crime – "*AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?*". AR5 brings his personal circumstance on board and with this AR5 seeks to evoke sympathy and understanding, appealing to the perception of older individuals as vulnerable and less likely to engage in criminal behaviour. Similarly, implicit request for empathy can be inferred (INF). The statement "*AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?*" contains an implicit plea for the II to empathise with his situation. By highlighting his age as a barrier to committing the alleged crime, AR5 indirectly seeks support and understanding from the II, with the hope that he will question the legitimacy of the accusation. Besides, subtle self victimisation can be inferred (INF) the statement "*I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?*" That statement helps AR5 to position himself as a victim of false accusations due to his old age. He is attempting to portray himself as someone who should be pitied and defended against unfair judgment.

Furthermore, from the exclamation "AH!" implies (INF) surprise and disbelief, indicating that AR5 finds the accusation against him to be shocking and unexpected. By expressing this emotional response, AR5 hopes to influence the II's perception and elicit sympathy. It is also an emotional appeal that strongly emphasises AR5's emotional state. It serves to capture the attention of the II and create an immediate emotional response. Similarly, AR5 relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about societal perceptions of older individuals. He implicitly expects the II to understand that advanced age typically comes with physical limitations and a reduced capacity for engaging in certain activities, including criminal behaviour. AR5 leverages this understanding to shape the II's perception and provoke empathy.

Overall, AR5's mention of his age is relevant (REL) to the context of the crime allegation. He suggests that his advanced age is incongruous with the commission of the crime, reinforcing the notion that he should not be seen as a likely perpetrator. This relevance aims to cast doubt on the accusation and challenge the II's perception of his culpability.

Excerpt 27:

<...What brought her to my place was because of what I was putting in my mouth>. The girl was sent out of school (.) I asked why?, <She said she stole her teacher's food>. <I asked her for the reason, she said her father and mother left the house this morning without giving her money for food before they left>. My wife was not around, I SAID AH! I DON'T KNOW YOU, she also said she doesn't know me., <Whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA. <When my father was alive, he gives little children things. Especially when he brings gifts for us his children. If he sees little children, he gives them out of it> <It happens that there is a certain woman that is my best friend's wife. We were both born in that street. She started visiting me when she knew that my wife had travelled and I told her, I have my own wife, it's just that she travelled. My children are grown ups, some are in their husbands' houses, some have wives. Even, my first born learnt the work of an electrician just like I did>. That was how I sent the child away(.) <She came to me the following week again, saying baba, baba, let's start. I said you this woman you want to put me in trouble. I am looking around for what to eat; your husband and I were born in this street your husband and I eat and drink together>. SHE NOW SAID IF I DON'T AGREE WITH HER THAT SHE WILL GO AND REPORT ME. SHE THEN SNAPPED TOGETHER HER MIDDLE FINGER AND THUMB AT ME. <The child came to me because she my left over food and this woman saw her eating in my place she now started shouting that she saw a little child with baba, maybe he has had sex with her...>

AR5

In the excerpt above, AR5 refers (REF) to his own actions and circumstances to elicit sympathy. He mentions that the girl came to him because of what he was eating - “<what brought her to my place was because of what I was putting in my mouth>”. This is intentionally relevant to highlight his vulnerability, suggesting that he innocently engaged in a harmless activity. Also, in the excerpt, AR5 attempts to imply his lack of knowledge about the girl through the statement made in an increased volume speech “I SAID AH! I DON’T KNOW YOU, she also said she doesn’t know me.”, emphasising his unfamiliarity with her and distancing himself from any potential wrongdoing. This inference seeks to shift the blame and responsibility away from AR5.

Similarly, AR5 relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about social dynamics and interactions. He mentions how children often call him “BABA” and how his father used to give gifts to children – “<whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA. <When my father was alive, he gives little children things>”. This evocation of these cultural norms aim to enable AR5 establish himself as a benevolent figure who is wrongly accused. Therefore, utilising shared cultural knowledge (SCK) is very relevant (REL) to appeal to the II's empathy. Furthermore, in the excerpt above, AR5 adopts a defensive and indignant voice (VCE), emphasising his surprise and disbelief at the accusations. He expresses his innocence by stating that does not know the girl and that the woman who made the accusation wanted to cause trouble. This voice seeks to elicit sympathy and portray AR5 as a victim of false accusations.

However, it is worthy to note that AR5's account of events is presented to undermine the credibility of the accusation against him. He provides a detailed narrative of his interactions with the victim and the involvement of a woman who he claims has malicious intentions against him. This contextualisation of the incident enables him to present himself as a target of false allegations and it shows that AR5 aims to cast doubt on the validity of the charges. Overall, through the use of contextual elements reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared cultural knowledge, AR5 employs the fishing for pity strategy in his narrative. Specifically, by referencing his actions and circumstances, making inferences about his innocence, utilising shared cultural knowledge, adopting a defensive voice, and highlighting the relevance of his narrative, AR5 attempts to fish for pity and present himself as a victim unjustly accused of a

crime. The goal is to evoke empathy, challenge the credibility of the accusations, and sway the II's perception in their favour.

Excerpt 28:

II: Did you commit the offence?

AR11: I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD

AR11

In the above excerpt, AR11 emphatically references (REF) his old age – “*I AM 63 YEARS OLD*”, and this assertion of his advanced age is aimed at evoking sympathy and portray himself as an unlikely perpetrator of the alleged offence. It is an intentional appeal to the perception of the that older people are less likely to engage in criminal behaviour. Also, with the statement “*I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD*”, AR11 implies (INF) that his age should absolve him of responsibility for the offence. By asserting “*I did not do it,*” he draws an inference that his age alone is a sufficient evidence of his innocence. This inference seeks to shift the focus away from the actual details of the alleged offence.

Similarly, AR11 relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about societal expectations and stereotypes associated with older individuals. He assumes that the II will have an understanding of the belief that people of in his age group are less likely to commit crimes. This shared cultural knowledge is utilised to garner sympathy and challenge the credibility of the accusation. Furthermore, AR11 adopts a defensive and self-victimising voice – “*I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD*” to deny his involvement in the offence and emphasising his age. His response made in an increased volume speech carries a tone of disbelief and shock, suggesting that he perceives the accusation as unfair and unwarranted. This voice aims to elicit sympathy and cast doubt on the validity of the allegation.

The relevance (REL) of AR11's mentioning his age is because it references advanced age, which propels the implication that it is unlikely for someone of his generation to commit the offence in question. This relevance seeks to create doubt in the II's mind and prompts him to question the validity of the accusation. Accordingly, the contextual elements show the function and implication of AR11's fishing for pity strategy. By referencing his age, making inferences about his innocence based on that age, utilising shared cultural knowledge about societal expectations, adopting a defensive voice, and highlighting the relevance of his age to the accusation, AR11 aims to elicit sympathy and present himself as an unlikely offender. The objective is to

leverage pity from the II, challenge the credibility of the accusation, and influence the II's perception in his favour.

Excerpt 29:

AR11: <...When that incidence happened, there is a woman in that our house. The house is owned by siblings>. <While the woman was talking to me, I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK>. <I couldn't go to work. I only go to my mechanic workshop sometimes>. <I always go to the hospital>. <That woman now said we should be in a relationship>. I SAID I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <I told the woman that you can see that your husband always prostrates to great me and he calls me baba. Your husband and my children are friends>. I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <The same thing happened the following day again. I now said okay that she should allow me to get well. My plan was to just pack out when I have recuperated>. <She came to meet me another day, I lied to her again>. <She came to me again and saw me having the attack>. <I now said she too can see that I am not well>. SHE THEN SAID SHE WILL SHOW ME AND LEFT ANGRILY. <I called her to appeal to her but she did not respond>. <Whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me>. <So, those children were with me that day>. <When I came back from the hospital, I went to buy food. Usually, the children and I eat together>. <So, when the woman came again, that thing started affecting me again>. <I now decided to go and eat so that I can use the medication I bought>. <She said what about my cloth. I said at least you can see that this thing is affecting me>. She now started putting the children on me(.) I now said what kind of thing is this?, PLEASE DON'T BE ANNOYED. She carried the children (.) <and put them on my body>. >She started saying that is your wife<. I REALLY BEGGED HER BUT SHE DID NOT LISTEN. <She angrily left the way she usually does...>

AR11

In the excerpt above, AR11 references (REF) his health condition, specifically his coughing and asthma attack – “*while the woman was talking to me, I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK*”. AR11’s strongly highlights his physical ailments and by that, it aims to evoke sympathy and present himself as a vulnerable individual. This reference to his health condition is used to elicit pity from the II. Also, his description of the asthma attack and coughing fit during the supposed incident infers (INF) evidence, an of his inability to engage in such an inappropriate behaviour. The statements “<*so, when the woman came again, that thing started affecting me again*>.” and “<*she said what about my cloth. I said at least you can see that this thing is affecting me*>” confirm this. With this inference, AR11 seeks to emphasise his pathetic state and to also shift the focus away from the accusation.

Similarly, just like AR5, AR11 relies on shared cultural knowledge (SCK) about societal expectations and moral boundaries. This statement “*so, when the woman came again, that thing started affecting me again*”. *<I now decided to go and eat so that I can use the medication I bought>*”, and this statement “*<She said what about my cloth. I said at least you can see that this thing is affecting me>*”, including this statement “*she now started putting the children on me(.) I now said what kind of thing is this?, PLEASE DON’T BE ANNOYED*” and finally these statements “*>She started saying that is your wife, that is your wife<. I REALLY BEGGED HER BUT SHE DID NOT LISTEN*”. Owing to those statements, it can be implied (INF) that AR11 assumes that the II will understand and empathise with the challenges posed by his ill health, particularly during intimate situations or relationships (SSK). He is using this shared situational knowledge to garner sympathy and question the feasibility of his alleged involvement. Furthermore, AR11 adopts a defensive and self-justifying voice (VCE) to emphasise his refusal to engage in a relationship with the woman mentioned in the narrative – “*<...your husband and my children are friends>. I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE*”. His description of his interactions with the woman expresses his resistance to any inappropriate behaviour. This voice conveys AR11’s sense of innocence and portrays him as a victim of the woman’s advances.

AR11's focus on his poor health condition and the impact it had on his daily life is strategically relevant (REL) to the discussion – “*<I couldn’t go to work. I only go to my mechanic workshop sometimes>. <I always go to the hospital>*”. By highlighting his vulnerability and the challenges he faced because of his poor health, he is attempting to create doubt about his involvement in any illicit activities. This relevance seeks to sway the II's perception by evoking sympathy and framing the accusation as unfounded. Overall, the contextual elements in AR11’s narrative reveal the utilisation of fishing for pity strategy. Especially the referencing of his health condition, the inferences about his inability to engage in inappropriate behaviour, the utilisation of shared cultural knowledge and shared situational knowledge about societal expectations, his adoption of a defensive voice, and finally, his emphasis on the relevance of his health issues. They show AR11’s intention to elicit sympathy and present himself as a sickly innocent old man. The objective is to leverage pity from the

II, question the credibility of the accusation, and influence the II's perception in his favour.

4.3.4.2 Exaggerated self-worth

This strategy is an inflated sense of self-importance to influence the II for positive inferencing, especially to gain approval. It is the promotion of a sense of self-esteem and a sense of superiority. This strategy is engaged by some ARs through bragging to qualify themselves for acceptance. They do this by making some part(s) of their narratives to display a self-acclaimed uniqueness, which is used to just create a sense of higher status, even to their victims. For example, embellished stories that proclaim them as good people deserving liberation and not detention. This sets-up the II to form a new impression about the ARs. It is associated with people with low self-esteem and are seeking to redeem it to feel better and safe. The strategy is an indirect attempt to propel the II to making an inference that suggest that with their high level, they cannot stoop so low to commit the crime. For example, part of the narrative of AR6 displays the use of this strategy:

Excerpt 30:

II: So, how do you feel about what happened to you?

AR6: I AM NOT FEELING ALRIGHT BUT THE REASON I DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT IS BECAUSE AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER. <I still have faith in God I serve Allahu>. <I know that nothing can happen without the permission of God>. <God knows about everything>.

II: Do you have faith that you will come out of this place?

AR6: <I have faith because I did not do it>. <Even my wife believed me because she traveled a day before the incident happened>. WHAT WOULD I SAY ENTICED ME IN THE BODY OF A 6-YEAR-OLD? WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK? WHEN I KNOW THAT MY WIFE WOULD COME BACK THAT NIGHT. WHAT WOULD PUSH ME LIKE THAT? WE ARE NOT EVEN IN THE SAME LEVEL NOW!

AR6

In the excerpt above, AR6 references (REF) his belief in being an honest person and highlights the contrast between an honest person and a sinner – “*I DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT IS BECAUSE AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER*”. By positioning himself as an honest individual, he seeks to establish a perception of moral superiority through religious context (shared cultural knowledge), implying that his innocence is a natural outcome of his character. He also attempts to make the inference (INF) that his faith in Allah and his conviction that

nothing can happen without Allah's permission serve as evidence of his innocence. This can be seen in the statement "<I still have faith in God I serve Allahu>. <I know that nothing can happen without the permission of God>. <God knows about everything>". He indirectly suggests that his faith and belief in a higher power to deliver him. He is also implying that it is the will of God. This inference is meant to shape the II's perception in a positive light.

Similarly, through the statement "*I DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT IS BECAUSE AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER*", AR6 relies on shared situational knowledge about societal values that place importance on honesty, faith, and the notion that a person's behaviour is influenced by their level of character. By drawing on these shared beliefs, AR6 attempts to align his self-worth with the II's understanding of societal norms and expectations. Also, through the statements "<I have faith because I did not do it>. <Even my wife believed me because she traveled a day before the incident happened>. *WHAT WOULD I SAY ENTICED ME IN THE BODY OF A 6-YEAR-OLD...*", he adopts a confident and assertive voice (VCE), expressing unwavering faith in his own innocence. His tone reflects a sense of self-importance and superiority, emphasising his ability to exercise self-control and loyalty to his spouse. AR6's confident voice is intended to enhance his credibility and sway the II's perception of him.

On the one hand, the rhetorical question "*WHAT WOULD I SAY ENTICED ME IN THE BODY OF A 6-YEAR-OLD?*" aims to position AR6 as someone who is morally superior and above engaging in the alleged offence. By suggesting that there is no conceivable reason or temptation that could lead him to commit such a heinous act, AR6 seeks to establish himself as a person of high integrity, this helps him to accentuate his supposed innocence. Also, the pragmatic import of that rhetorical question is to evoke a sense of disbelief and incredulity. It implies that the very idea of him being enticed or driven to commit such an act towards a 6-year-old is preposterous. On the other hand, the rhetorical question "*WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK?*" also reinforces AR6's exaggerated self-worth. By insinuates possession of immense self-control and would never succumb to any temptation or desire, particularly in the absence of his wife. This implies that he has the strength and discipline to wait for their wife's return.

Furthermore, AR6's statement "*WE ARE NOT EVEN IN THE SAME LEVEL NOW!*" is for the assertion of superiority. That exclamation aims to establish perceived superiority between himself and the alleged victim and her family. The exclamation implies that AR6 considers himself superior to them and so, it is impossible to engage in the alleged crime with the victim because of it. Overall, the pragmatic import of the exclamation highlights AR6's attempt to project an inflated sense of self-importance and superiority.

Additionally, AR6's emphasis on his honesty, faith, and marital loyalty is strategically relevant (REL) to the discussion at hand – "*I DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT IS BECAUSE AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER*". With the emphasis on these qualities, AR6 aims to create an image of himself as a good and trustworthy individual, deserving of liberation rather than detention. This relevance seeks to persuade the II to form a new impression that aligns with his exaggerated self-worth. In summary, AR6 references to his honesty, inferences about the influence of his faith, reliance on shared cultural knowledge, the adoption of a confident voice, and the relevance of his character traits, enabled him to project a sense of superiority to gain the II's approval. The objective is to indirectly lead the II to infer that someone of his perceived high level and moral standing could not possibly stoop so low as to commit the alleged crime.

Excerpt 31:

II: Tell me what happened?

AR7: I can say that when the girl (.), was in SS3 at that time (.) <So we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>. I HAVE A HAND WORK. I WORK FOR JOBS. I WORK AS A BARBER, I WORK AS A DJ, I DO VIDEO COVERAGE AND I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER, AND I HAVE A SHOP. >Since we both agreed not to have sex, so when she finished her school certificate, I asked her what she wants to do now.

AR7

In the above excerpt, AR7's statement "*I HAVE A HAND WORK. I WORK FOR JOBS. I WORK AS A BARBER, I WORK AS A DJ, I DO VIDEO COVERAGE AND I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER, AND I HAVE A SHOP*" is a self-assurance referencing (REF) about his multiple professions as a barber, DJ, videographer, photographer, and having a shop. This referencing serves as a means to enhance his perceived importance and success. By listing a range of occupations, AR7 attempts to establish a sense of superiority and worthiness. Similarly, AR7's reference to his many professions implies

(INF) that he is financially stable and that makes him a desirable individual, particularly in the context of his relationship with the victim. His presentation of professional success serves as an evidence of his high social status and desirability, indirectly suggesting that his partner would have benefited from being associated with someone of his caliber.

Also, AR7 talks about a supposed agreement between the victim and himself - “<So we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>”. The mention of the girl's agreement not to engage in sexual activity until after her secondary school graduation suggests a shared understanding or agreement between AR7 and the girl. This shared knowledge creates a context in which AR7 can emphasise his self-proclaimed restraint and highlight his willingness to respect the agreement. AR7's tone in the excerpt above conveys a sense of pride and self-importance, especially when he was listing his various occupations. The inference there is that AR7 believes in his own desirability and superior qualities, which is reflected in his confident and assertive voice.

Furthermore, the strategy of exaggerated self-worth is relevant (REL) in this context as AR7 seeks to portray himself as someone who is highly accomplished and desirable. By highlighting his multiple professions and implying financial stability, he aims to establish a sense of superiority and worthiness, potentially influencing the II's perception of him and his credibility.

Overall, the strategy of exaggerated self-worth in AR7's excerpt is manifested through the presentation of multiple occupations and accomplishments. Although, the question asked was not to talk about what he does but to narrate what happened, and in the course of the narration of the crime incidence, he halted it to quickly boast about himself, so that the II would have a glimpse of what he had going on in his life as an indication that he is a good and responsible man as against what the crime projects him to be. By emphasising his professional success and social status, AR7 aims to enhance his perceived desirability and superiority, potentially influencing the II's inference and judgment. Furthermore, AR18 also shared some personal stories to create a sense of self-importance. See the below:

Excerpt 32:

II: Ok. Explain how it happened.

AR18: <It happened that both of us were in a relationship in that street. I just moved into that street. What happened that day was, when I newly moved into that street, there was no electricity in that street and I brought two big generators. Whenever I switch it on, people would come and charge their phone and she came too requesting to charge her phone and I allowed her. When her phone was charged, she left and came back the next day and she has been coming since then. Later we spoke and she agreed, we started dating and she would come to visit me at home>

II: Before you quarreled were you both in a relationship?

AR18: >We have been in a relationship for a long time before we quarreled<

II: What is the reason for the quarrel?

AR18: I BOUGHT A SMALL GENERATOR, SHE SAID I SHOULD GIVE HER. I GAVE HER; I EVEN BOUGHT FUEL FOR IT. SO WHEN WE QUARRELED, I WENT TO HER HOUSE TO CARRY THE GENERATOR. SHE NOW GOT ANGRY BECAUSE I CARRIED THE GENERATOR AND SHE STOPPED RELATING WITH ME. IT WAS WHEN I WAS GOING ON MY OWN, THAT SHE CAME TO ME AND STARTED SHOUTING AND I SHOUTED AT HER TOO. I DIDN'T DO MORE THAN SHOUTING. I DIDN'T BEAT HER AT ALL. IT WAS THE SHOUTING, THAT BROUGHT PEOPLE TO GATHER AROUND US. SHE NOW SAID I RAPED HER...

AR18

In the above excerpt, AR18 makes reference (REF) to his impressive status prior to the allegation - “<when I newly moved into that street, there was no electricity in that street and I brought two big generators...>”. Although, the statement is not directly related to the question asked, but it is relevant (REL) to establish the direction of AR18’s denial and distancing from the crime. Therefore, his description of himself, especially as someone who recently moved into a street and brought two big generators in a street that has no electricity and allows people to charge their phones can be inferred (INF) as an attempt to establish a sense of importance and resourcefulness. Because, offering a free service to people in a street where there is no electricity would make people respect him. Therefore, referencing this status creates an impression of being well-liked or respected. Also, it is intended to make the II make the inference that he is a generous person and popular person. With this, AR18 aims to enhance his perceived generosity, popularity and superiority to potentially influence the II's inference and judgment.

AR18’s attempt to shape II’s perception is established on the inference arrived at through the presence of mutually shared background knowledge (SSK and SCK) about

moral values, especially generosity and interactional relationships that exist amongst people within the society. These identifications provide insights into how AR18 seeks to be identified and perceived by the II. So far, the ARs have shown that humans can have an adaptation of any context that appeal to their current situation, especially the ones that would be beneficial to their communicative cause to prove-self.

4.3.4.3 Self-soothing

The engagement of this strategy is aided by the importation of the religious context. It is a self-comforting strategy deployed by some ARs to comfort themselves from the emotional anxiety that comes with being accused of rape and being incarcerated. This helps them to move forward, or past their current negative situation. ARs usually do this by showing optimism about their situation; through the display of religiosity as a form of hope and belief in God that they would gain their freedom. Some even become accepting of their situation as fate or as the will of God, or as punishment for not doing God's will at some point in their lives. It is an act used to exploit the II for emotional sympathy. This is common to ARs who deny committing the offence. For example:

Excerpt 33:

<I still have faith in God I serve Allahu>. <I know that nothing can happen without the permission of God>. <God knows about everything>.

AR6

In the above excerpt, AR6 reaffirms his earlier position on the crime, which is an indirect reference (REF) to his denial of the crime. He also attempts to substantiate his denial through the declaration of his belief in Allah, and taking consolation in Allah who must have permitted the situation. This makes it look as if he is at the mercy of Allah, and could not have been able to escape being accused of the crime because it was permitted by Allah. Similarly, the referencing implies (INF) that AR6's seeks comfort and reassurance in the face of being accused of rape and being incarcerated. He imports the religious context to find solace and alleviate the emotional anxiety that arises from their situation.

Furthermore, through the shared situational knowledge (SSK) of being accused and incarcerated, AR6 attempts to create a sense of hope and optimism. AR6's emphasis of his unwavering faith in Allah and acknowledgement of Allah's knowledge of everything is intended to convey AR6's sense of trust in the divine plan and the

ultimate outcome of his situation. This display of religiosity serves as a form of self-comfort and serves to console himself emotionally.

The voice in AR6's response is one of conviction and belief, as he asserts his faith in the God serves. The relevance of this self-soothing strategy lies in its potential to evoke emotional sympathy from the II. By presenting himself as an individual who finds solace and hope in his religious beliefs, AR6 aims to elicit understanding and compassion. This has the potential to influence II's perception of his character and innocence.

Excerpt 34:

II: Are you happy?

AR7: <I am not happy at all, but I am still thankful to God because there must be something God wants me to learn here; that's why I am here. If it is not so, I won't be here. It was not up to 2 months that my brother died>. I AM NOT HAPPY AT ALL.

II: So if you are freed, what would you do?

AR7: Eeh (.), if I am released (.), <before God has called me for his work but I turned deaf hear to it; that is why I am suffering now>. When I leave this place, I HAVE A LOT OF WORK BEFORE ME. I WILL GO BACK TO THE CHURCH AND I WILL GO BACK TO SCHOOL.

AR7

In AR7's excerpt above, the deployment of self-soothing strategy can be observed through the incorporation of the religious context, AR7 expresses gratitude to God – “<...but I am still thankful to God...>”. AR7 seeks solace and reassurance in the face of his unhappiness caused by the accusation of rape and his current incarceration. Similarly, AR7 consoles himself by disclosing his disobedience to God's calling which he turned deaf ears to – “<...before God has called me for his work but I turned deaf hear to it; that is why I am suffering now>”. With that statement, AR7 wants the II to make the inference (INF) that if he had not yielded to God's calling, he would not have been accused of rape and be incaserated.

He commits himself to a future action of going back to church, and school after being released from the correctional facility – “I WILL GO BACK TO THE CHURCH AND I WILL GO BACK TO SCHOOL”. Through the statement “<...because there must be something God wants me to learn here; that's why I am here. If it is not so, I won't be here>”, AR7 is attempting to propel the II to make the inference (INF) that he is at the mercy of God; which indirectly references (REF) his denial of the crime to indirectly imply that as someone called by God, he could not have committed the crime. This

implies that AR7 is trying to add credibility to his crime denial claims through the excerpt above.

In addition, AR7 rides on shared situational knowledge (SSK) of Christian religion – “<...there must be something God wants me to learn here; that’s why I am here. If it is not so, I won’t be here>”. With that statement, AR7 makes the inference that his presence in the correctional facility is not a coincidence but rather a part of God's plan for him. He interprets his confinement as an opportunity to learn and grow, suggesting that there is a deeper purpose behind his current circumstances. This perspective helps him to find meaning and acceptance in his situation, providing emotional comfort and stability. All of these inferences are projected to co-opt the II to perceive him in a positive light.

The voice (VCE) in AR7's excerpt above reflects a tone of resignation and faith – “<before God has called me for his work but I turned deaf hear to it; that is why I am suffering now>”. Despite his unhappiness, he expresses gratitude to God for the lessons he believes he is meant to learn in incarceration – “<I am not happy at all, but I am still thankful to God because there must be something God wants me to learn here; that’s why I am here>”. His acknowledgement of his past disregard for God's calling expresses a sense of regret and acknowledges the connection between his actions and his current suffering. Similarly, the relevance (REL) of the self-soothing strategy lies in its potential to evoke sympathy and understanding from the II. AR7's display of gratitude and his intention to pursue God's work and continue his education after release can elicit empathy and compassion, influencing the II's perception of his character and potentially generating a sense of emotional support.

Furthermore, the self-soothing strategy is also deployed by AR13. This can be seen in the excerpt below:

Excerpt 35:

II: How are you feeling?

AR13: I see everything as the will of God (.). <It’s temptation>.

II: Would you look for the girl you leave this place?

AR13: <There’s nothing I can do to her, I will just go on my own. The knife has cut the child’s hand. The knife has done what it wants to do>

AR13

In the excerpt above, the self-soothing strategy is evident through AR13’s importation of the religious context and the acceptance of his situation as the will of God. As stated

earlier, this strategy is employed by ARs to find comfort and alleviate emotional distress associated with being accused of rape and being incarcerated. For example, AR13's statement "*I see everything as the will of God (.). <It's temptation>.*" references (REF) faith and his reliance on that faith to cope with the current circumstances. By attributing his situation to God's will, he seeks solace and perceives his experience as a test or temptation to overcome. Implying (INF) that he is at the mercy of God, and couldn't have escaped the situation. This religious perspective can be referred to as the deploration of shared cultural knowledge and serves as a form of self-comfort, allowing him to find meaning and purpose in his plight.

The statement "*<the knife has cut the child's hand. The knife has done what it wants to do>*" is a metaphorical expression that align with shared cultural knowledge (SCK) This metaphorical expression suggests a belief that the harm has already been done, and he is resigned to his fate. The use of the metaphor implies (INF) that AR13 see himself as a passive participant in the events and have no control over the outcome. Similarly, AR13's tone conveys a sense of acceptance and resignation, indicating that he has come to terms with his situation. His response reflects a self-soothing mechanism that aims to find emotional stability and peace by surrendering control to a higher power.

Furthermore, the relevance (REL) of the self-soothing strategy in AR13's excerpt is to manage his emotional anxiety and maintain a sense of hope and resilience. By referencing his experience as part of God's plan and accepting his circumstances, he seeks emotional comfort and projects a level of calmness and composure, which may propel the II to see him in a positive light.

Excerpt 36:

II: How are you feeling now?

AR19: I AM NOT HAPPY BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN. I AM SUFFERING OVER WHAT I DIDN'T DO.

II: When you are released, would you go to the girl?

AR19: I have submitted everything to God (.). <God is the King that can do it>. I have submitted to the will of God>.

AR19

In AR19's above, the self-soothing strategy can be observed being deployed through the lens of religious belief and in this case 'faith', drawing upon contextual elements such as reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared situational knowledge and shared cultural knowledge. The reference (REF) to being a Christian in AR19's statement is a

crucial contextual element – *“I AM NOT HAPPY BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN. I AM SUFFERING OVER WHAT I DIDN'T DO”*. By identifying himself as a Christian, he taps into shared cultural knowledge (SCK) of religion that resonates with many people, especially in societies where Christianity is prevalent. This shared cultural knowledge allows him to draw upon the beliefs, values, and practices associated with his faith as a source of comfort and reassurance.

Furthermore, the inference (INF) made in AR19's excerpt is that his Christian faith provides him with a framework for understanding and coping with his current situation. By stating, *“I AM NOT HAPPY BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN,”* he implies that his faith plays a significant role in shaping his emotional response to the false accusation. This inference is based on the assumption that Christianity offers solace, guidance, and a sense of purpose during challenging times.

Similarly, AR19's voice (VCE) in the excerpt reflects a tone of sincerity and conviction. His use of statements like *“I have submitted everything to God (.). <God is the King that can do it>. <I have submitted to the will of God>”* conveys a deep sense of trust and reliance on a higher power. His words carry a genuine belief in the power of God to intervene and bring about a just resolution. This voice aligns with the self-soothing strategy as it aims to find emotional stability and reassurance through religious devotion.

Relevance (REL) is evident in AR19's excerpt as he directly addresses the question of how they would approach the situation when released. Instead of contemplating revenge or seeking confrontation with the accuser, he redirects the focus towards his submission to God's will – *“I have submitted everything to God (.). <God is the King that can do it>. <I have submitted to the will of God>”*. This relevance highlights his belief in divine justice and the importance of aligning his actions with his religious values, even in the face of injustice.

Likewise, shared situational knowledge (SSK) is evident in AR19's statement about suffering over something he didn't do – *“I am suffering over what I didn't do”*. This suggests a common understanding that being falsely accused of a crime can have significant emotional repercussions, regardless of guilt or innocence. The shared situational knowledge allows the II to relate to his experience and empathise with the emotional distress he is undergoing.

In summary, AR19 effectively employs the self-soothing strategy, utilising their Christian faith as a source of comfort and strength. They draw upon shared cultural and religious knowledge, infer the significance of their faith in their current situation, employ a sincere and trusting voice, address the relevance of their approach, and connect with others through shared situational knowledge. Overall, this response showcases the role of religion in offering solace and emotional support in times of hardship.

Common to all ARs in this category, is their display of sadness while professing religiosity through their declaration of reliance on God as the one who permitted their predicament, therefore, they have no choice than to accept their fate as God is involved. However, this show of weakness is done in reference to their denial of crime, as a show of credibility for their claims.

4.3.5 Information control

ARs deploy this strategy to intentionally conceal clear and concise information about the crime from the II so as to show innocence or feign ignorance. Basically, it is the control of the crime details by giving information in a way that keeps the II in the dark. In any manipulative communicative exchange, whether offensive/defensive, the scope of vision of the manipulator is usually larger than the target's. This implies that the manipulator knows more than the other interlocutor(s). This state, puts the manipulator at an advantage over the others. He/she has the power to control the amount of information to be availed in the communicative exchange. The manipulator could decide to share more information than is needed, withhold the required information, and even provide distorted information, depending on how he/she wishes to achieve his/her manipulative intention. Therefore, this strategy can be referred to as an implicit but intentional refusal to have a cooperative communication with the II. The sub-strategies of this strategies are exemplified below.

4.3.5.1 Sharing extraneous information

This is information overload by some ARs to intentionally overwhelm the II, so that a clear and timely impression/conclusion/judgement would not be formed. Particularly, it is the engagement of unsolicited excessive information to delay and confuse the investigator's in forming a quality and decisive perception of the crime incidence. This strategy is an indirect attempt to keep the II away from a having a clear and concise

account of the crime. Therefore, through topic shift, some ARs give unsolicited excessive information. This topic shift helps them to bring in unrelated demonstration of benevolence, which aids the referencing of their supposed good standing in the community; specifically, through the relay of past good deeds. The strategy is often adopted by ARs who deny committing the offence or by those who are trying to justify their actions. It is a distraction that aids in keeping the true crime picture at bay. Giving unsolicited extraneous information enhances the suppression of the seriousness of the crime and the harm done to the victims.

Sometimes, some ARs deploy it to convey to the II that their actions are justified, therefore, not a crime. This is why their narrative is projected in form of an explanation that makes enough sense to gain acceptance from the II or influence the investigator's perception of them and the situation but the manner of delivery of the extraneous information causes confusion for lacking coherence and often filled with ambiguity. Similarly, this strategy enables fabricated information and common to this strategy is the distortion of information either by incoherence or equivocation, or both. In a crime narrative, when an accused offender, gives too much information, it is prone to incoherence and equivocation because the narrative tends to entail fabricated stories or events that are not needed.

In this study, incoherence is about the lack of coherence and balance in a crime narrative. ARs controls the narrative by making inconsistent statements making their narratives unclear and unconcise. Equivocation is all about the use of vague or ambiguous language to give unclear picture about the crime incidence. These two characteristics of extraneous information in a crime narrative birth confusion/ambiguity, thereby, incapacitating the II from making the right perception or right decision about the situation. What make them obvious is that often time, these stories do not always have a direct relation to the topic of discussion or situation. Similarly, these stories are used to make reference to specific people or specific past situations that may show them in a good light. This is done by ARs to add credibility to their asserted claims. AR1 is one of the ARs who adopted this strategy. The below is the complete narrative of AR1.

Excerpt 37:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR1: I was accused of rape (.). IT HAPPENS NOT TO BE TRUE. <The child I am talking about lives with her mother close to our own house>.

<They packed into our house in 2016>. I DON'T KNOW THE MOTHER; THE MOTHER TOO DOESN'T KNOW ME. >The mother, the mother is no longer with the father<. >The child and her father live together<. NO, THE CHILD AND THE ELDER SISTER LIVE TOGETHER. <So, we don't live together in our family house, we don't live together there>. That woman (.), IN FACT, it wasn't up to seven days that they brought the girl there(.). THE GIRL MET ME THERE. She was about ten years old, and we sometimes send her on errands. It was in the tenth month that I actually met the child. Sometimes, >when I go to work in the morning, it is till night; when I come back in the evening, it's till next day. I don't speak with the people I live with, we don't see at all because when we enter the house in the night, its till the following day<. <However, this year we just entered, I have not seen her at all>. The only way I can say I have seen her is (.) I saw her one day; whenever I come back from work, she is always happy to see me, saying >brother, what did you bring for me, what did you buy for me<; >if there was money on me, I would give her, if I don't have anything on me, I won't give her<. IT IS NOT BY FORCE. So when it was this year 2017, as I got back from work, she came to tell me that she has started learning to be a tailor. >I now said, who took you to learn tailoring<, you that is not intelligent; God will forgive them o, okay o, you will know it o (.). It was after that, that she asked me for fifty naira. I said I don't have money and promised to give her tomorrow. That was the first time. When I was coming back from work one day, she came again saying brother, brother, what about the money you promised to give me, I NOW SCREAMED AT HER THAT AH WHAT IS IT. I AM JUST ENTERING THE HOUSE AND YOU ARE ATTACKING ME? >She now ran back inside that day<. <Since then I have not seen her at all>. <When it was now the weekend like Saturday that the police men came...

AR1

AR1 deploys the strategy called sharing extraneous information in the excerpt above by inundating the discourse with a plethora of unrelated details. Through the use of reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared cultural knowledge, and shared situational knowledge, AR1 attempts to control the narrative and obscure the clarity and conciseness of the crime's details. The presence of each of the contextual elements in AR1's excerpt would be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Throughout the excerpt above, AR1 makes references (REF) to various individuals and their relationships. These references help paint a picture of the relationships and living arrangements surrounding the incident. He mentions the victim and her mother – “<the child I am talking about lives with her mother close to our own house>”, stating that they live close to his own house. AR1 then counters his assertion by stating that the child and her father live together – “>the child and her father live together<”.

He even counters it further by mentioning that the victim lives with her elder sister – “*NO, THE CHILD AND THE ELDER SISTER LIVE TOGETHER. <So, we don’t live together in our family house, we don’t live together there>*”. By providing these references, AR1 aims to establish some form of disconnection from the victim. This may make the II to form an impression that as AR1 is mixing up the unsolicited information about who the victim lives with, it implies that truly AR1 has no connection with the victim. However, it could also mean that AR1 provides contradictory information because he is attempting to hide the correct information from the II and that is why he kept changing who the victim lives it.

Also, AR1’s extraneous information entails the referencing specific past events and interactions. Specifically, he mentions that the child and her family moved into his house in 2016 and describes the encounters and conversations he had with the child over time. By referencing these specific incidents – “*<they packed into our house in 2016>*” and “*IN FACT, it wasn’t up to seven days that they brought the girl there(.). THE GIRL MET ME THERE*”, AR1 attempts to provide a timeline and contextual background to support his narrative and claim of innocence. Although, these statements contradict his earlier assertions of the victim not living in the same house with him – “*<so, we don’t live together in our family house, we don’t live together there>*”. The implication of this is AR1 is engaging in fabrication. A fabricated narrative can only be devoid of errors like equivocation and incoherence mostly when the narrator is adept at fabrication, which takes practice. Because AR1 is not an adept information fabricator, those features are identifiable. However, it is important to note that, despite AR1’s overcompensation through his excessive explanation, he didn’t actually avail any specific information. This is because the focus is to prevent the disclosure of the incriminating aspect of the crime incidence and to cover every aspect of the asserted claims.

Similarly, AR1 makes references to cultural norms and expectations (SCK). He mentions sending the child on errands – “*>...we sometimes send her on errands...<*” and describes the monetary gifts he usually gives to the victim whenever he returns from work – “*>whenever I come back from work, she is always happy to see me, saying brother, what did you bring for me, what did you buy for me; if there is money on me, I would give her<*”. AR1’s assumption here is that these cultural references will add credibility to his account and influence the II’s perception. Specifically, these

references tap into shared cultural knowledge, assuming that the II is aware of these common practices and would perceive them as normal interactions. AR1 incorporates these references to shape the II's perception and potentially gain acceptance or sympathy. The references in the contextual information about relationships and past events draw on shared cultural knowledge to present the extraneous information, though contradictory, they are presented intentionally to shape the narrative and influence the II's perception.

Furthermore, it becomes apparent that AR1's goal is to vehemently refute the accusation of rape when he asserts "*IT HAPPENS NOT TO BE TRUE*". That statement implies (INF) that AR1 is defending himself against the allegations and also attempting to cast doubt on the veracity of the allegation. This also implies that all of the extraneous information AR1 availed, though contradictory, they are given because of his desperation to counter the allegation. Also, the relevance (REL) of the information shared by AR1 appears tenuous at times. This can be seen from various unrelated details, such as the child's living arrangements, interactions with family members, and even unrelated incidents like learning tailoring and requesting money, that he delves into. Although seemingly disconnected from the initial question, AR1 presents these details as relevant in establishing his innocence or feigning ignorance. Besides, AR1's voice (VCE) throughout the excerpt remains defensive, showcasing his desire to counter the accusation and present his perspective on the situation. His voice reflects a strong denial of the offence, and he employs a tone aimed at justifying his limited relation with the victim, so as to discredit the allegation. Similarly,

Based on the above, it is glaring that AR1's responses suffer from incoherence and imbalance. The overwhelming amount of unrelated anecdotes and tangents serve to confuse and divert the attention of the II. This strategy aims to control the narrative, diminish the severity of the offence, and manipulate the II's perception or decision about the situation. Yet, the abundance of details delivered in a fragmented and ambiguous manner undermines the effectiveness of the strategy and creates confusion, hindering the II's ability to form a clear understanding of the crime. Instead, AR1 creates a deceptive impression.

AR36 also has constructed fabricated stories within his narrative, and just like ARs 1, he targets the enhancement of his supposed good features. However, such narratives

are usually plagued with equivocation (ambiguities) and incoherence, causing confusion and distraction for the investigator. See AR36's excerpts below:

Excerpt 38:

II: What kind of offence were you accused of??

AR36: >Rape<

II: Did you commit the crime?

AR36: NO, I DID NOT

II: How did it happen?

AR36: What happened was that when I was going to Quran class (.), <that girl, Sidikat is her name> <I have known her since when she was in SS1> <and we had an agreement that we would be in a relationship>. I AM AN ALFA, <so we don't see always because I was not always at home>. <So, in 2014, she visited me in my house and she slept over in my house>. <We had sex that midnight>. She already had someone she was in a relationship with before (.). <I now said since she has someone she is dating that she should allow me look for mine too so that I won't break their relationship; that was how we didn't see again>.

AR36

In AR36's response to the question of whether he committed the crime, he firmly states "*NO, I DID NOT*". This establishes his voice (VCE) and denial. However, when he was asked to explain what happened, instead of directly addressing the specifics of the crime, he immediately introduces extraneous information by referencing (REF) a girl named Sidikat and their previous agreement to be in a relationship. This reference (REF) creates a diversion from the main question and a contradictory narrative element is introduced. AR36's reference to specific individuals and events, especially that of 'Sidikat', their prior relationship agreement when she was in senior secondary school year 1 (SS1) – "*<that girl, Sidikat is her name> <I have known her since when she was in SS1>*", Sidikat's visit to his house in 2014 and engaging in sexual activity - "*so, in 2014, she visited me in my house and she slept over in my house>. <We had sex that midnight>*", are relevant (REL) to AR36 to establish that there is a pre-existing relationship with the supposed victim. It also implies that the sexual activity they once had was a consensual one. He also mentions their joint decision to discontinue seeing each other. By introducing these details, AR36 attempts to shift the focus away from the alleged crime and instead focuses on the nature of his relationship with Sidikat. Besides, AR36 mentions his role as an Alfa (a religious leader) and his attendance at Quran classes and Islamic lectures. This is intended to establish himself as a religious person. Over all, these references draw upon shared cultural knowledge (SCK) to shape the narrative and potentially influence the II's perception.

Excerpt 39:

II: Why were you then arrested that you raped her?

AR36: <That's what I am trying to explain. Some months later, she saw me around as I was coming back from an Islamic lecture. We chatted and she told me she was no longer dating that man again>. I NOW SAID WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ME. I NOW PUSHED HER AWAY. <She now said I embarrassed her; that was how she shouted and people came out. Since no one knows me amongst them, they asked what happened, she now said I wanted to rape her>.

II: Were you seen inside the house or outside the house?

AR36: OUTSIDE. THOSE WHO SAW IT TESTIFIED TO IT; THAT WAS HOW THEY BROUGHT THE POLICE TO ARREST ME. <When we got to the station, she kept talking about the embarrassment>. <She now said I raped her younger sister>.

II: How old is her younger sister?

AR36: >17 years<

II: So, you are not guilty?

AR36: I AM NOT GUILTY. IT'S THE MOTHER I HAVE ISSUE WITH NOT THE CHILD.

AR36

AR36 continues to deploy the strategy of sharing extraneous information in response to the question regarding his arrest. He mentions a later encounter with Sidikat after an Islamic lecture, where she informed him that she was no longer in a relationship with the other man – “<...she saw me around as I was coming back from an Islamic lecture. We chatted and she told me she was no longer dating that man again>”. This information seems unrelated to the crime at hand or even to the question asked by the II, but AR36 includes it to shift the focus and introduce a new narrative element. By highlighting his confusion about the relevance of Sidikat's disclosure and their subsequent interaction – “I NOW SAID WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ME. I NOW PUSHED HER AWAY. <She now said I embarrassed her; that was how she shouted and people came out>”. With this change in narrative, AR36 creates an impression of doubt on the supposed victim's accusations and divert attention from the rape allegation and that is the relevance (REL) of the extraneous information shared by Sidikat.

Furthermore, AR36 mentions pushing Sidikat away after she made the disclosure, leading to her accusation of embarrassment and attempted rape. These statements “...I NOW SAID WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ME. I NOW PUSHED HER AWAY” and this statement – “<she now said I embarrassed her; that was how she shouted and people came out” and this statement as well - “<since no one knows me

amongst them, they asked what happened, she now said I wanted to rape her>". AR36 gives this extraneous detail to propel the II to arrive at an inference (INF) that sees him as a victim of false accusations - "*OUTSIDE. THOSE WHO SAW IT TESTIFIED TO IT; THAT WAS HOW THEY BROUGHT THE POLICE TO ARREST ME*", which may then lead to the II forming a perception that discredits the credibility of the allegations.

Similarly, when AR36 is questioned about the location of the incident, he brings in shared situational knowledge (SSK) by mentioning witnesses who testified to the incident happening outside the house - "*<OUTSIDE. THOSE WHO SAW IT TESTIFIED TO IT; THAT WAS HOW THEY BROUGHT THE POLICE TO ARREST ME*". By referencing (REF) these witnesses, AR36 seeks to bolster his defence and present a narrative that aligns with the testimonies of others, implying (INF) that his account is corroborated by multiple sources. This is a further challenge of the accusation. However, the question that would be ringing in the mind of the II is 'if there are witnesses that could testify of his innocence, then why was he still arrested them? This is because he says "*...THAT WAS HOW THEY BROUGHT THE POLICE TO ARREST ME*".

AR36's introduces another participant into the narrative in his final response - "*<when we got to the station, she kept talking about the embarrassment. She said I raped her younger sister>*". There has been no mention of a child all through the extraneous information he has given until the end. This implies that the child is relevant to the crime incident but he chose to leave it till the end. He intentionally made reference (REF) to the ex-girlfriend severally and not the victim, so that the II will make the inference (INF) that there is no connection between himself and the victim and that the allegation was out of anger from the ex-girlfriend whose exact relationship with the victim is made unclear based on the contradictory statements made by AR36 "*<...she said I raped her younger sister>*". However, when he was asked if he is guilty of the offence or not, he says "*I AM NOT GUILTY. IT'S THE MOTHER I HAVE ISSUE WITH NOT THE CHILD*". This is an implication that the initiated past stories in the narrative is fabricated, based on his inability to stay true to one statement. Who the victim is exactly is not clear: is she the daughter of his supposed ex-girlfriend or the younger sister?

The disjointed and contradictory stories within the narrative made the narrative difficult to understand. This is an intentional manipulative attempt to distract the II by

hiding the true picture of the crime incidence, so as to protect his self-image. However, this influencing tactic is not successful in distancing AR36 from the crime and even the victim. Rather, it has been able to expose the malicious intention of AR36 to influence the II's perception of him and the crime. Overall, AR36's excerpts above reveal that the incorporated extraneous details that AR36 gave are strategically deployed. They may seem irrelevant or contradictory to answer the questions asked by the II but they are intended to create confusion, cast doubt on the allegations, and contend that the accusation is false.

Common to all the ARs in this category is not just their outright denial, rather, it is their attempt to substantiate the denial by dissociating themselves from the offence, and even their victims. Their narratives are structured in a long but disjointed way, targeted at making them look innocent, and like victims of situation. Therefore, their narratives follow the same pattern, with unarguable features like, denial, distancing, incoherence, ambiguity and motion verbs, due to fabrication. Conclusively, it can be submitted that ARs talk excessively when they are being defensive, and manipulative; and because the cognitive load is high, they give a lot of explanation for them to feel convinced that the II will believe them.

4.3.5.2 Withholding information

This is the intentional suppression of information. Some ARs use this strategy to prevent information about their involvement in the crime incident from being revealed. This strategy denies the II of important information about the crime incidence; which then prevents the II from getting a complete picture of the incidence. Some ARs withhold the information that are needed to clearly project all that happened. They do this through a flat-out denial, refusing to admit they have done wrong, and refusing to reveal any information about the crime, or reveal their involvement in the crime. This strategy limits the II, as the II cannot form any opinion or make decision or perception about the narrative. This is because, the information provided in the narrative is not enough to make a meaningful sense of the crime incidence, and form a clear and concise perception about the crime, the AR, and the victim. Common to the ARs whose excerpts are in this category is that their narratives are not just short but also filled with statements or information that are neither coherent nor related to the situation under appraisal.

This is different from the incoherent and equivocated extraneous information in the previous section. This is about the limited information given by some ARs, how it was given and the relation of the information provided to the crime situation. The ARs here give short information that is plagued by distortion through the use of statements or utterances that are neither coherent nor clear about the crime incidence. This is an intentional act by the ARs. They give responses that are not only short but also not directly related to the questions asked. They simply want to deny and distance themselves from the offence by not revealing any information that may directly link them to the crime, or even the victim. Their narratives always make them appear clueless about the crime incidence.

Also, this sub-strategy is a defensive mechanism. It allows ARs to be assertive by evasion, enabling them to make utterances that only allows them to deny, make claims, while also making statements that gives little information. Even the little information given are usually not relevant to the crime incidence; as they pattern their communication according to their goal, and in this case, to totally refute the allegation, so as to influence II's perception.

Excerpt 40:

II: Did you rape the girl?

AR17: NO

II: How old is he child?

AR17: >9<

II: How did it happen that you were accused of sexually molesting the girl?

AR17: I DID NOT HAVE SEX WITH HER. I SAW HER IN THE HOUSE OF MY LANDLORD.

II: Why did they now accuse you of raping her?

AR17: The child mentioned my name whereas it is not me (.). <The police arrested the old man but they released him>.

II: How did they detect that she was raped?

AR17: >They arrested two of us but I was in Iyaganku, he was in Mapo. He was arrested on Saturday and I was arrested on Sunday. They said he committed his last year<.

II: The first person committed his own last year?

AR17: >Last year<

II: You committed yours this year. How did they know? did they catch you raping the child?

AR17: They did not see me with her,

II: Why did they now arrest you?

AR17: THAT GIRL LIED AGAINST ME THAT I AM THE ONE. <Initially, the child said it was not me that raped her<. <I said was it not on that baba's bed that I met her>. <She said it's not true that it was me, it was me>

AR17

AR17 strategically deploys the withholding information strategy throughout his responses in the excerpt above by limiting the details provided, evading direct answers, and diverting attention from his potential involvement in the crime. This strategy is aimed at preventing the II from obtaining a clear and complete understanding of the incident by intentionally suppressing crucial information that the II needs to form a perception about the accused. When asked if he raped the girl, AR17 firmly denies the accusation, using a short and direct response of "NO". This emphatic denial made in an increased volume speech establishes his voice (VCE) and refusal to admit any wrongdoing, effectively withholding information that could shed light on his actions.

Also, in response to the question about the age of the victim, AR17 provides an impatient response of ">9<". While this information is relevant (REL) to understanding the victim's age, it lacks further context or explanation regarding the incident, leaving the II with limited insight. Similarly, when he was questioned about how he was accused of sexually molesting the victim, he offers a vague and unrelated response, stating "*I DID NOT HAVE SEX WITH HER. I SAW HER IN THE HOUSE OF MY LANDLORD*". This statement serves as a diversionary tactic aimed at withholding crucial details about his actual relationship with the victim or any direct involvement in the crime.

Similarly, when asked about the reason behind the accusation, AR17 shifts the blame onto the victim, asserting that she falsely mentioned his name – "*the child mentioned my name whereas it is not me (.)*". He also mentions the arrest and subsequent release of an old man briefly - "*<the police arrested the old man but they released him>*", which is not directly relevant to the question at hand; but only relevant to AR17 to avoid addressing the accusation directly and withholds pertinent information that could clarify his role in the incident. Also, in terms of inference (INF), AR17's responses imply his intention to keep the II in the dark about the full extent of his involvement. By providing vague and fragmented information, AR17 forces the II to infer and fill in the gaps in his narrative. For instance, when asked about the accusation, AR17 mentions the child mentioning his name – "*THAT GIRL LIED AGAINST ME THAT I AM THE ONE. <I said was it not on that baba's bed that I met her> <...she said it's not true that it was me>*", but fails to provide any additional context or explanation. This deliberate omission of information is relevant (REL) to

AR17's intention to refute the allegation by withholding crucial information about the crime. However, it encourages the II to draw his own conclusions without access to crucial details.

Furthermore, AR17's response to the inquiry about how it was detected that the child was raped, AR17 provides an evasive response by discussing the arrest of two people in different locations, with him inclusive. This information ">they arrested two of us but I was in Iyaganku, he was in Mapo. He was arrested on Saturday and I was arrested on Sunday. They said he committed his last year<" is disconnected. It has no relation whatsoever to the question asked. This implies that AR17 is intentionally withholding details about his own actions or involvement. Also, when he was asked if he was caught in the act of raping the victim, with his response "they did not see me with her," denies being seen with her, effectively withholding any direct evidence or information about his actions. By so doing, he further reinforces his strategy of withholding information to distance himself from the crime. Through the deployment of the withholding information strategy, AR17 consistently provides limited and evasive responses, avoids directly addressing the allegations, and selectively shares information that distances himself from the crime. This calculated approach restricts the II's ability to form a comprehensive understanding of AR17's actions, the crime incident, and his relationship with the victim.

Excerpt41

II: How old is the girl they said you raped?

AR19: >15 years<

II: Who is the girl to you?

AR19: >What happen was that my friend and I live together. The girl is in a relationship with my friend and my friend and I live together. So, she didn't go their house for about one week. She was with me<.

II: Where was that?

AR19: <Our house where my friend and I live>.

II: The girl was with you?

AR19: <She spent like a week with me before she went home>. <So that my friend travelled and before he came back, the girl went to their house>. >When she got home they said she was bleeding<. >They now came to our own house<. Am I the one dating her?, THE GIRL SAID NO. <The girl's mother called the police to arrest me>

II: Your friend was not around?

AR19: NO. >When we got to the station, they called him, they deceived him so that he would come<. <May be he know what had happened but he didn't come>. <That is how the case brought me here>

AR19

In the excerpt above, AR19's responses exhibit a selective use of reference (REF). When asked about the age of the victim he is accused of raping, the tone of his response ">15 years<" sounds like he is impatient and he did give the response without offering any additional context or information about his relationship with her, even when he is asked who the victim is to him, he impatiently gives his response in a very fast paced speech – "*what happen was that my friend and I live together. The girl is in a relationship with my friend and my friend and I live together. So, she didn't go their house for about one week. She was with me*<". The response is ambiguous as it has details that do not correspond. This deliberate incoherence creates a sense of ambiguity and prevents the II from gaining a clear understanding of the dynamics between AR19 and the victim.

Also, AR19 also utilises inference (INF) to indirectly address the question about the victim's identity. Instead of directly responding, he diverts the conversation towards his living arrangements with a friend – ">*what happen was that my friend and I live together. The girl is in a relationship with my friend and my friend and I live together*<". By implying that the girl is in a relationship with his friend, AR19 indirectly suggests his own lack of involvement or responsibility in the situation. This requires the II to infer the extent of AR19's involvement. However, immediately after that statement, AR19 he shoots himself on the leg when he let it slip that while his friend was away, his friend's 15-year-old girlfriend (a minor) stayed with him for a week – ">*...so, she didn't go their house for about one week. She was with me*<". The question is, what could the victim who is a minor and also a girlfriend to his friend be doing with him for a week when the supposed boyfriend is away? His description of the incidence is incomplete and filled with short contradictory statements that are not clear enough to give the true picture of the crime incidence.

Similarly, AR19's introduction of details about the victim staying with him for a week while his friend may seem relevant to the case, however, these details are presented in a way that lacks coherence and clarity, making it difficult for the II to form a clear understanding of AR19's actions and intentions; especially when he contradicts himself afterwards. Furthermore, AR19's voice throughout the excerpt above is defensive and evasive. He emphasises his lack of direct involvement with the victim by employing rhetorical question and stating that the girl denied his involvement, AR19 attempts to distance himself from the accusation and shifts the focus onto others

– “>when she got home they said she was bleeding<. >They now came to our own house<. Am I the one dating her?, THE GIRL SAID NO. <The girl’s mother called the police to arrest me>”.

In summary, AR19 strategically withholds information by providing selective references, using inference to imply his involvement, introducing partially relevant details, adopting a defensive voice, and relying on shared situational and cultural knowledge. This strategy aims to obscure his role in the alleged crime and limit the II's ability to form a complete understanding of the situation.

In summary, AR19 strategically withholds information, employing techniques such as selective reference, inference, relevance, and voice. By utilising these elements, AR19 constructs a narrative that deflects direct questions, obscures his involvement, and attempts to create doubt in the II's mind. This strategy aims to limit the II's ability to form a complete understanding of the situation and potentially sway his perception of AR19's guilt or innocence.

Excerpt 42:

II: Did you do it or not?

AR28: >I did it<

II: How old is the girl they said you raped?

AR28: >15 years<

II: How old are you?

AR28: >21<

II: Do you know the girl?

AR28: >I know the girl<

II: Did you do it or not?

AR28: >I did it<

II: Are you guilty or not guilty?

AR28: I AM NOT GUILTY

II: Do you know the girl?

AR28: I DON'T KNOW HER BEFORE. WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER DATING, THEY QUARRELED WITH HER AND SHE WENT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE. WHEN THE POLICE CAME THEY SAID WE RAPED HER, MEANWHILE IT WAS MY FRIENDS THAT SLEPT WITH HER.

II: It was your friends that slept with her?

AR28: YES

AR28

In the excerpt above, AR28's use of reference is notable. AR28 initially admits to committing the crime when asked about his involvement in the act “>I did it<”. By providing a direct but reference to his own action, AR28 acknowledges his responsibility but done impatiently shown in his fast paced speech “>I did it”. Also,

when asked about the victim's age, his response– “>15<” is given in a fast paced speech, implying that he is impatient about the questions being asked. His responses in a fast paced speech are intentional, so that the II would not be focused on them, especially, as the victim is a minor. Similarly, in his response to the question about his knowledge of the victim, he employs reference selectively by stating “*I AM NOT GUILTY. I DON'T KNOW HER BEFORE. WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER DATING, THEY QUARRELED WITH HER AND SHE WENT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE. WHEN THE POLICE CAME THEY SAID WE RAPED HER, MEANWHILE IT WAS MY FRIENDS THAT RAPED HER*”. Although, the response confirms that he knows the victim but he still diverts the focus by emphatically attributing the crime to his friends instead of himself in a loud voice. This deliberate omission of his personal involvement introduces ambiguity and raises questions about his true role in the incident.

Furthermore, AR28 strategically implies his innocence also by suggesting that his friends are the ones who raped the girl. By stating “...*WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER DATING, THEY QUARRELED WITH HER AND SHE WENT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE. WHEN THE POLICE CAME THEY SAID WE RAPED HER, MEANWHILE IT WAS MY FRIENDS THAT RAPED HER*”, he is indirectly inferring that he did not commit the specific act of rape for which he is being accused. Furthermore, relevance plays a crucial role in AR28's responses. He introduces information about the girl's relationship and the dispute with his friends – “*WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER DATING, THEY QUARRELED WITH HER AND SHE WENT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE*”. With that statement, he is highlighting a potential motive for her accusation. The emphasis on the quarrel insinuates that the girl reported the incident out of spite. It is a deliberate attempt by AR28 to discredit the victim's credibility and redirect suspicion away from himself. This selective inclusion of relevant details is targeted at shaping the II's perception and cast doubt on his guilt.

Regarding voice, AR28's voice is assertive and defensive throughout the excerpt. Despite his initial admission to the act, he maintains a confident tone in asserting his innocence. He repeatedly affirms his lack of guilt and shifts blame to his friends so as to persuade the II and create a perception of being wrongly accused. His assertive

voice strengthens the withholding strategy by presenting a consistent and self-assured narrative.

In summary, AR28 strategically deploys the withholding information strategy through the use of reference, inference, relevance and voice. With his selective disclosure of information, diversion of blame and assertion of innocence, AR28 aims to withhold crucial details about his involvement in the crime. This strategy is designed to influence the II's perception, create doubt about his guilt. However, his switch from “>I did it<” to “*WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER DATING, THEY QUARRELED WITH HER AND SHE WENT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE. WHEN THE POLICE CAME THEY SAID WE RAPED HER, MEANWHILE IT WAS MY FRIENDS THAT RAPED HER*” has caused a contradiction, such that the II may become confused at recognising the exact offender and be unable to even rely on the information AR28 has provided. AR28’s equivocation is a backfired defensive manipulative tactic that has exposed his intention to pervert the truth.

Excerpt 43:

II: Did you do it or not?

AR38: Ehen, I committed the offence and I didn't commit the offence (.).

II: What do you mean by that? How did it happen?

AR38: SOMETHING YOU AND SOMEONE HAVE BEEN DOING BEFORE, SUDDENLY YOU NOW SAID HE FORCED HER TO DO IT.

II: Both of you have been doing it before?

AR38: WE HAVE BEEN DOING IT

II: How old is the girl?

AR38: >17 years<

AR38

AR38 strategically deploys the withholding information strategy through his responses in the excerpt above by utilising elements such as reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared situational knowledge, and shared cultural knowledge. AR38's use of reference (REF) is evident in his responses especially when he is asked about his involvement in the crime – “*Ehen, I committed the offence and I didn't commit the offence (.)*”. AR38 was hesitant in making that statement and the reason for the hesitancy can be implied from the statement. Especially as it is a confusing contradictory statement. This ambiguous reference creates confusion and leaves the II uncertain about AR38's actual role in the incident. By withholding a clear admission or denial, AR38 maintains a level of secrecy regarding his culpability.

Similarly, AR38 implies (INF) that the victim's consent was present based on the protesting emphatic statement - "*SOMETHING YOU AND SOMEONE HAVE BEEN DOING BEFORE*". This inference (INF) suggests a prior sexual relationship or activity between AR38 and the victim, leading to the assumption that the act was consensual. However, AR38 refrains from providing further details or clarification; which leaves the II to draw his own inferences and speculate on the nature of the relationship. Furthermore, relevance plays a role in AR38's responses through his introduction of a pre-existing sexual relationship. The emphasis that they had been engaging in similar activities before implies that the alleged offence is not a one-time occurrence or an act of aggression. This selective inclusion of relevant (REL) information aims to shape the II's understanding of the situation and potentially mitigate the perception of wrongdoing. However, this might be impossible because the victim is ">17 years<" old according to AR38; which implies that he is automatically guilty of statutory rape as the legal age of sexual consent in Nigeria is 18 years.

AR38's voice in his responses is characterised by a matter-of-fact and dismissive tone. His use of phrases like "*ehen*" and "*suddenly you now said*" conveys a nonchalant attitude, suggesting a lack of concern or remorse. This voice is employed strategically to downplay the significance of the crime and create a sense of indifference or detachment to potentially minimise the impact of the offence and also influence the II's perception.

Shared situational knowledge (SSK) is subtly utilised by AR38 to imply a mutual understanding between himself and the II. He states "*SOMETHING YOU AND SOMEONE HAVE BEEN DOING BEFORE*" so that the II can relate to the experience of engaging in similar activities. By assuming shared situational knowledge, AR38 seeks to establish a common ground with the II, potentially fostering empathy or understanding and shaping his perception of the situation. Additional shared cultural knowledge (SCK) is implied in AR38's responses. He references societal expectations or assumptions about consensual sexual relationships. His statement "*SOMETHING YOU AND SOMEONE HAVE BEEN DOING BEFORE*" suggests that engaging in such activities with someone implies an ongoing consent unless otherwise stated. AR38's appeal to shared cultural knowledge aims to influence the II's interpretation of the case, suggesting that the alleged offence may be viewed differently within a cultural context that assumes prior consent.

In summary, AR38 strategically deploys the withholding information to withhold crucial information about his level of involvement and the nature of the relationship with the victim. This strategy is designed to shape the II's perception, create uncertainty about guilt or innocence, and potentially elicit understanding or justification for his actions.

4.3.6 Attention diversion

This strategy is deployed to attack the image and character of victims and their parents as crime enablers so that ARs can deflect attention from the themselves. It helps the ARs to avoid taking responsibility for their actions. It is engaged to divert the attention of the II away from committed crime to the victims or to other people or even to themselves but by painting a good or positive images of themselves, while projecting the victim in a negative light. Sometimes, they focus on other issues that should not be a direct reason for committing the atrocity; basically, they are deliberately evasive in their responses to questions asked. They mostly just want to project the other actors in the crime incidence. The below are the tactics ARs employ to achieve this strategy.

4.3.6.1 Playing the victim

The ARs in this category, divert attention from themselves and the part played in the crime incidence by attempting to logically present themselves as the victim. Therefore, they make their narratives to project selves as victims of situation. In their narrative, they are the passive actors, rather than the active participants. They don't deny committing the crime out rightly, they only aim at downplaying their strength, so as to look weak, and helpless in situations where they are in fact the perpetrators of the crime. It is a tactic ARs use to not only gain sympathy and evoke compassion from the II but to also focus the attention on their victims. It is subtle way of instigating hate against the victim, based on the inappropriate portrayal of the victim by the ARs targeted at gaining a positive perception from the II.

Excerpt 44:

II: What now happened? Where you both in a relationship?

AR2: We are in a relationship and we are not in a relationship (.)

II: What does that mean?

AR2: Because in the house that I went to work as a private driver, she lives in that house as a house help(.) <So, before the incident occurred>, THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER. <Along the line, I reported it to one of my colleagues who also works in that house>. He then advised me to not allow the devil to use me.

<At times, I might be sleeping and very tired, she would come to play with me>. <So, the girl would be removing my trouser, play with my manhood> and then begin to say that (.) <I don't have what the men she has slept with her>. So, I now said, WHY IS SHE DISTURBING ME SINCE I DON'T HAVE IN MY BODY WHAT OTHER MEN HAVE. <So, she didn't let me be>. SO, ALONG THE LINE, SHE DID NOT LET ME BE. <I dodged her several times>, <that opened the door, I went out. When I entered again to carry my bag, she closed the door, she troubled me, pulled my cloth>. <Along the line, I realised that I lost control as a man when she told me that I will not be the first man to have sexual intercourse with her...>

AR2

The above excerpt above shows how he attempted to portray himself as the victim who is innocent of rape charge levied against him. He portrays himself as an unwilling participant in the crime incidence. A passive actor that is provoked by the victim through seduction till he lost control because the victim told him he would not be the first man to have sex with her. Based on that, he lost control and the inference is that he had no choice than to rape the victim. Also, AR2 referred to himself as an adult, older than the victim who is 16 years-old, and as he claims 'he cautions her' whenever, she starts to misbehave, is an indication that he knows and accepts that the victim is a minor. Despite his influencing attempt to justify his action and portray himself as a passive unwilling participant, he ends up working against himself. This is due to his choice of role he assumes and the victim's role in the crime narrative; an underage teenage victim as the seductress (the active actor) and himself, an adult as the victim (the passive actor) and later an adult who knows that sexual intercourse should be between two consenting adults; as confirmed in the narrative, he says "*THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER*".

In the excerpt above, AR2 makes use of reference (REF). His response "*we are in a relationship and we are not in a relationship (.)*" to the question about the relationship between the victim and himself is a contradictory statement. Stating that they are in a relationship and that they are not can be referred to as ambiguity and ambiguity in reference creates confusion. This has the potential propelling the II to create an impression that would not be favourable AR2. This implies that his intention to manipulatively influence the II's perception of his involvement has failed. Similarly, through some statements AR2 implies (INF) that his action is a response to the victim's behaviour. He describes instances where the victim initiates intimate

interactions “...*THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN. <...I might be sleeping and very tired, she would come to play with me. So, the girl would be removing my trouser, play with my manhood...>*” and taunts him about his perceived inadequacy as a sexual partner – “*<she troubled me, pulled my cloth. Along the line, I realised that I lost control as a man when she told me that I will not be the first man to have sexual intercourse with her>*”. This implies that AR2 was provoked and coerced into engaging in sexual activities with the victim by the victim herself. The portrayal of the victim's behaviour as a catalyst for his actions, AR2 aims to shift the blame and present himself as a victim of the supposed victim's manipulation.

Furthermore, relevance plays a role in AR2's responses through his emphasis on the victim's persistent provocative and seductive actions and his own attempts to resist or avoid the situation. AR2 highlights instances where he claims to have dodged the victim's advances and even left the room to escape her harassment - “*but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER*” and “*<I dodged her several times>, <that opened the door, I went out. When I entered again to carry my bag, she closed the door, she troubled me, pulled my cloth>*”. This selective inclusion of relevant information aims to depict AR2 as a helpless individual who was coerced into engaging in sexual activity due to the victim's relentless pursuit. By highlighting his resistance, AR2 seeks to elicit sympathy and understanding from the II. Also, in the responses of AR2, he adopts a tone (VCE) of helplessness and vulnerability. His narrative portrays him as a person who gets overwhelmed by the victim's actions and gradually loses control. This implies that AR2's presentation of himself as a victim aims to evoke compassion and minimise his own agency in the situation. This voice is employed strategically to elicit sympathy and deflect responsibility for his actions.

Besides, shared cultural knowledge (SCK) is implied in AR2's responses through his portrayal of societal expectations and norms regarding appropriate sexual behaviour. He mentions that he cautions the victim about her actions – “*but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER*”, implying that his actions were guided by social boundaries and moral principles. By appealing to shared cultural knowledge, AR2 seeks to justify his actions and gain the II's understanding and support. Overall, AR2 strategically deploys the playing the victim strategy by using reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared cultural knowledge. Through his contradictory statements,

emphasis on the victim's behaviour, portrayal of resistance, and adoption of a helpless voice, AR2 aims to divert attention from his own culpability and present himself as a victim of manipulation and provocation. This strategy is designed to evoke sympathy, understanding, and a positive perception from the II while potentially instigating a negative portrayal of the victim based on the inappropriate characterisation of her actions.

Excerpt 45:

II: How old is he girl?

AR32: >19<

II: Do you know the girl?

AR32: WE ARE BOTH BEFRIENDING OURSELVES BUT HER MUM DOESN'T LIKE ME

II: Have you been having sex with the girl?

AR32: YES

II: And you are married?

AR32: I am married

II: Then why are you in a relationship with the girl when you are married?

AR32: <What happened was that, the girl came to sleep overnight at my house>

II: Was it at your house?

AR32: <Yes>

II: Where was your wife?

AR32: <My wife had gone to her parents' house>

II: So you slept with the girl in your house?

AR32: <Yes, she slept overnight in my house>

II: She agreed with you not that you forced her?

AR32: NO O

II: Why did they now arrest you that you raped her? Who went to report?

AR32: <She slept in my house overnight. Her mother is someone that doesn't like me but she sees us together; but she doesn't like me>.

AR32

AR32 strategically deploys the playing the victim strategy through his responses in the excerpt above. AR32 utilises reference (REF) in his responses when he discusses his relationship with the girl. Specifically, he confidently references their mutual romantic relationship by stating “*WE ARE BOTH BEFRIENDING OURSELVES...*”. He also acknowledges the disapproval of the girl's mother towards their relationship – “*BUT HER MUM DOESN'T LIKE ME*”. This reference highlights the complex dynamics between the individuals involved. Similarly, AR32's statement “*WE ARE BOTH BEFRIENDING OURSELVES...*” is intentionally stated so that the II would make the inference (INF) that his relationship with the girl is consensual through the affirmation “*yes*” that they have been having sex. This implies that both parties willingly engaged

in sexual activities. Although, AR32 did not explicitly address the question of consent, instead he leaves it open to interpretation. By making this inference, AR32 attempts to portray himself as a participant in a mutually agreed-upon relationship rather than a perpetrator of a crime.

Furthermore, relevance is demonstrated in AR32's responses through his emphasis on the circumstances surrounding their interaction. He mentions that the girl slept overnight at his house while his wife was away - “<*what happened was that, the girl came to sleep overnight at my house*>” “my wife had gone to her parents' house...>”. This selective inclusion of relevant (REL) information aims to create a narrative where the encounter with the girl is depicted as an isolated incident within a specific context. By highlighting the absence of his wife and the victim's voluntary presence, AR32 seeks to downplay his responsibility and shift the focus away from his own actions. Significantly, AR32 adopts a defensive tone in his responses especially, his portrayal of himself as a victim of prejudice – “<*she slept in my house overnight. Her mother is someone that doesn't like me but she sees us together; but she doesn't like me*>”. His inclusion of how the girl's mother disapproves of his relationship is stated intentionally so that the II would make an inference (INF) that the disapproval of the mother of the victim influences the accusation of rape. By presenting himself as a victim of unfair judgment and bias, AR32 aims to elicit sympathy and understanding from the II.

In summary, AR32 strategically deploys the playing the victim strategy by using reference, inference, relevance, voice and shared cultural knowledge. Through his selective use of reference, implication of consensual engagement, emphasis on contextual circumstances, adoption of a defensive voice, and highlighting of societal expectations, AR32 aims to divert attention from his own culpability and present himself as a victim of prejudice and misunderstanding. This strategy is designed to evoke sympathy, understanding, and a positive perception from the II while potentially instigating a negative portrayal of the girl's mother as an antagonist.

4.3.6.2 Victim blaming

This is a strategy targeted at causing diversion by being offensive. This diversionary strategy is used by ARs to shift the focus off their behaviour to another person, especially by blaming the victim, or other people for their actions. They make their narrative to show that their misbehaviour is a product of the actions of the victim. Here, they project the victim and even others as the active actors in the crime incidence. In

their narratives, they subject the victim to ridicule by painting a bad image about the victim. Common to the ARs in this category is their quest to ascribe actions to the parents of victims in the crime incidence.

Excerpt 46:

AR20: >Actually nothing happened because that day, I went somewhere as in, every year, all these Igbo people, they always do Igbo day, so that day, it was on Sunday, I went there<

II: So you didn't know the girl before that day?

AR20: >I know the girl; she lives on my street. I just newly relocated to that street. The girl we are talking about; I don't even know her name. It was when this happened that I know her name<.

II: Why were you then arrested for rape?

AR20: <So actually, I find myself doing it but I didn't plan it>. I DIDN'T HAVE THE INTENTION. IT JUST HAPPENED. <The girl used her two legs to walk into my room>. <Although on my way coming from the party, there is a hotel in front of my house. On my way entering the house, I saw the girl, around 8:30 to 9pm at a corner there with a man>. <So, the man left the girl and the girl came to me to collect money and I asked the girl why she wants to collect money from me>. <She says because I am already drunk>.

II: So you were drunk already?

AR20: <Yes, I was already drunk>. SHE SAYS IF I WANT TO DO ANYTHING WITH HER THAT I SHOULD GIVE HER MONEY THAT SHE IS READY FOR ME. <I just left her and went inside my room>. <As I was removing my cloth she just walked into my room>, THE NEXT THING I KNOW, I FOUND MYSELF DOING IT.

AR20

AR20 strategically deploys the victim blaming strategy through his *responses* in the excerpt above. He utilises reference (REF) in his responses, as he provides specific details about his whereabouts on the day the crime was committed, mentioning his attendance at an Igbo cultural event – “>...every year, all these Igbo people, they always do Igbo day, so that day, it was on Sunday, I went there<”. By referencing this event, AR20 attempts to create an alibi that will later support his submission of being intoxicated. He also utilises that statement to temporarily divert attention away from his actions. He also acknowledges knowing the girl who lives on his street but claims not to know her name until the incident occurred – “>she lives on my street. I just newly relocated to that street. The girl we are talking about; I don't even know her name<”. This reference establishes a familiarity with the victim, through his emphasis on shared proximity.

Similarly, AR20 implies that his encounter with the girl was not premeditated through the statement “*<So actually, I find myself doing it but I didn't plan it>. I DIDN'T HAVE THE INTENTION. IT JUST HAPPENED. <The girl used her two legs to walk into my room>*”. This inference suggests that the initiation of the interaction was driven by the actions of the victim, who approached him for money and expressed willingness to engage in a sexual act – “*SHE SAYS IF I WANT TO DO ANYTHING WITH HER THAT I SHOULD GIVE HER MONEY THAT SHE IS READY FOR ME*”. By framing the encounter as a spontaneous and unplanned event, AR20 attempts to distance himself from any responsibility or intent.

Furthermore, relevance (REL) is demonstrated in AR20's responses by providing contextual details about the events leading up to the incident. He mentions seeing the girl with another man near a hotel – “*<on my way coming from the party, there is a hotel in front of my house. On my way entering the house, I saw the girl, around 8:30 to 9pm at a corner there with a man>*”, implying that she was engaged in a questionable behaviour prior to approaching him for money. This information is intended to shift the focus onto the girl's actions and choices, painting her in a negative light. AR20 also highlights his own state of drunkenness – “*<...the girl came to me to collect money and I asked the girl why she wants to collect money from me. She says because I am already drunk*”, suggesting that his impaired judgment played a role in the unfolding events. Through his emphasis on these contextual factors, AR20 attempts to rationalise his behaviour and minimise personal accountability.

Regarding voice (VCE), AR20's adopts a defensive tone. He presents himself as passive recipients of the victim's advances, stating that she walked into his room without his explicit invitation – “*<the girl used her two legs to walk into my room>*”. By framing himself as a victim of the supposed victim's actions, AR20 seeks to elicit sympathy and understanding from the II. Notably, shared cultural knowledge (SCK) is implied in AR20's responses through his reference to the cultural event he attended. By mentioning the Igbo day celebration, AR20 taps into shared cultural knowledge and expectations.

In summary, AR20 strategically deploys the victim blaming strategy by using reference, inference, relevance, voice, shared situational knowledge, and shared cultural knowledge. Through his selective use of reference, implication of a spontaneous encounter, emphasis on contextual factors, adoption of a defensive voice,

and drawing on shared situational and cultural knowledge, AR20 attempts to shift the blame onto the victim and justify his actions. This strategy is aimed at diverting attention from his own culpability and eliciting a sympathetic response from the II while painting a negative image of the victim.

Excerpt 47:

II: How old are you

AR35: <62 years>

II: How old is the girl you raped?

AR35: 14 years old (.)

II: Who is the girl to you? Do you live in the same house?

AR35: >We live in the same house together<

II: Where did you rape the girl?

AR35: Inside my room (.)

II: Why did you rape the girl?

AR35: <She comes to play with me>

II: What type of play?

AR35: SHE PLAYS WITH ME A LOT; LIKE SOMEONE SLEEPING AND SHE WILL BE LYING ON TOP OF THAT PERSON

II: Ok, that was why you raped her?

AR35: YES

II: Who reported the case?

AR35: <It was her mother's friend that reported to her mother that I have been having sex with the girl till it became a police case>

AR35

AR35 is the only convicted AR amongst all the ARs. He was given life imprisonment for raping a 14-year-old girl. His conviction must have limited his responses; may be that was the reason he could not deny the crime but then opt to put the blame of the crime on the underage victim. In the excerpt above, AR35 strategically deploys the victim blaming strategy through his responses. He unashamedly asserts that he raped the underage 14-year-old victim because she plays with him by laying on top of him through the statement “*SHE PLAYS WITH ME A LOT; LIKE SOMEONE SLEEPING AND SHE WILL BE LYING ON TOP OF THAT PERSON*”. This implies (INF) that the victim's playful behaviour is the reason for the rape. AR35 indirectly wants the II to make an inference that blames the victim as the crime instigator, that is AR35 was provoked or enticed by the victim's actions, shifting the blame onto her for initiating or encouraging the sexual encounter.

Similarly, relevance (REL) is demonstrated in AR35's responses the contextual details he provided about the nature of his interactions with the victim. He describes the victim as someone who frequently plays with him to emphasis physical contact, such

as lying on top of him – “...*LIKE SOMEONE SLEEPING AND SHE WILL BE LYING ON TOP OF THAT PERSON*”. This information is intended to downplay the severity of the crime by framing the interactions as an action initiated by the victim.

Besides, AR35's responses exhibit another pattern of victim blaming through his portrayal of the reporting process. *<it was her mother's friend that reported to her mother...>*”. By highlighting this detail, AR35 indirectly suggests that the reporting was initiated by someone else, implying that the victim may not have willingly come forward with the accusation. Furthermore, the use of shared situational knowledge (REL) can be inferred in AR35's reference of their living proximity – *>we live in the same house together<*” By providing this information, AR35 aims to create a sense of strong familiarity with the victim, suggesting that the victim's presence and their interactions were a regular part of their shared living arrangement. This shared situational knowledge may be used to imply that the victim willingly engaged in the playful behaviour described, further reinforcing the victim blaming narrative.

It is possible that AR35 might continue to perpetrate the act if he was not caught. Common to all the ARs in this category is their intentional blame of the crime and reliance on their underage victims to act right. These help them to avoid taking responsibility for their actions, as their goals are face-saving and offence-minimising to co-opt the II for positive inferencing. It is important to note that the victim blaming strategy employed by AR35 is a manipulation tactic aimed at deflecting responsibility and evoking sympathy or doubt from the II. By portraying the victim as an active participant or provocateur, AR35 seeks to shift the blame away from himself and onto the victim, ultimately attempting to elicit a more favourable perception from the II. Victim blaming is a harmful strategy that perpetuates victimisation and undermines the responsibility of the perpetrator. Therefore, it is crucial to approach such narratives with skepticism and consider the power dynamics, consent, and the vulnerability of the victim. Victim blaming is a harmful strategy that perpetuates victimisation and undermines the responsibility of the perpetrator.

4.4. Discussion of the findings

This current study stands out through its focus on ARs' crime narratives, taking a more specialised approach by examining language use in investigative interviewing involving ARs. This specialised focus allows for a deeper exploration of how ARs use

their linguistic cues (verbal and nonverbal) to influence investigative interviewers' perceptions and interpretation.

The exploration of language use in ARs' crime narrative in this study goes beyond general communication acts by delving into the specific pragmatic acts employed by ARs. The study reveals three intertwined but functionally different practs in the crime narratives of ARs' in Agodi Custodial Centre Ibadan. The practs are; denying, distancing and justifying. The findings show some ARs' activation of the denying pract through suggestive descriptions/explanations and emphatic statements to counter and contend the rape allegation, so as to qualify themselves as innocent. The ARs involved did this, so that the investigative interviewer (II) infers the allegation as false. Thereby, instigating a doubt of the crime. The findings also revealed that ARs engage the distancing pract to display a complete disconnection from everything relating to the crime and the victim; first, these ARs make assertions that they are not responsible for the crime, and then they show a disconnection from the victim which could either be by stating that they do not know the victim or by a show of limited connection with the victim, which is performed through the presentation of stories that seem verifiable to confirm and affirm their ignorance of the crime.

Similarly, through the presentation of rationalised arguments, some ARs evoked the justifying pract. Particularly, some ARs attempt to minimise the severity of their actions by relating them to situations that are generally acceptable in the society, while some try to put the responsibility of their actions on their victims to challenge the accusation. The identified practs in ARs crime narratives are employed to achieve the impression-controlling (for face-maintaining, face-saving) allegation-refuting and offence-minimising, so as to avoid the punishments attached to rape.

While the reviewed existing linguistic studies on investigative discourse in Nigeria are not focused on ARs but on other crime suspects, there are still some areas of alignment with the findings of this current study on evoked practs by ARs. For example, the study by Sunday and Akinrinlola (2017) explores negotiation tactics used during police-suspect interrogations, including strategies like persuasion, threats, denial, deflection, and justification. These negotiation tactics in suspect interactions align with the "denying" and "justifying" practs identified in this current study. ARs' use of suggestive descriptions, emphatic statements (denying pract) and rationalised arguments (justifying pract) to counter allegations and instigate doubt align with the

negotiation strategies discussed in Sunday and Akinrinlola's study. Also, Akinrinlola's (2017) study investigates the role of deception in police-suspect interrogations, the strategies of deception employed by suspects align with the distancing pract. ARs' assertions that they are not responsible for the crime and their attempts to disconnect from the victim align with the concept of deception discussed in Akinrinlola's study. Therefore, the level of the detailed description and analysis of the practs evoked by the provides a nuanced understanding of how ARs strategically evoke practs to navigate their narratives to achieve their goals, which is distinct from the broader communication acts and strategies discussed in the existing studies.

Furthermore, the study reveals three goals behind the three practs evoked by the ARs in their crime narratives. They are impression-controlling goal (for face-maintaining and face-saving) allegation-refuting goal and offence-minimising goal. Impression-controlling goal (for face-maintaining, and face-saving) facilitates the management and preservation of the reality of the ARs. Specifically, impression controlling goal for face-maintaining is the goal of the denying pract evoked by some ARs especially older ARs. These ARs are particularly under pressure to sustain their social status/dignity (culturally acquired positive impression); because the rape allegation threatens their face, that is, the positive image and social status that they stand for. This is therefore the reason older ARs ensure the maintenance of their social image (face), to avoid disgrace and stigmatisation.

However, the impression controlling goal for face-saving is the communicative intention of ARs that evoked the justifying pract. Mostly, ARs who are guilty of statutory rape have this goal, so as to cover their crime for the restoration/rebuilding of their face (face-saving). Impression controlling goal (for face-saving and face-maintaining) aligns with studies like Farinde (1997) and Sadiq (2011), which explore the motivations and orientations of participants, including IPOs and suspects, in police-suspect interrogations. While these studies did not focus specifically on ARs but on other crime suspects, they delve into the dynamics of communication strategies, power relations, and the use of discourse acts to manage impressions, which resonate with the Impression controlling goal (for face-saving and face-maintaining).

Allegation-refuting goal is the communicative goal behind some ARs who engaged the distancing and denying practs and it is geared towards proving the rape allegation as

wrong. They vehemently projected this in situations where some ARs present accountable or seemingly reliable personal stories and/or arguments that substantiate their denial or distance them from the crime/victim to strongly refute the rape allegation. However, the offence-minimising goal is achieved with the performance of justifying pract. ARs who confessed to the crime and even those who raped underage teenagers give accounts of the crime incidence in ways that their victims are posed as the cause or the instigators of the rape. The findings on how ARs use justifying pract to minimise the severity of their actions by shifting responsibility onto victims align with the concept of minimising and manipulation discussed in studies like Akinrinlola (2021) and Farinde, Oyedokun-Aliu, and Iroegbu (2021). These studies touch on manipulation, deception, and the use of linguistic strategies to shape the discourse and downplay offences, which aligns with the findings on the offence-minimising goal.

It is significant to note that the identified practs are well situated in the crime narratives of ARs in a way that they capture and project self-representations that are strongly assertive. These self-representations are compelled by the goals of the acts they evoked (their intentions). Moreover, the practs align with the concept of offenders' self-representation that has been examined and discussed in some existing studies (like Ward and Marshal, 2007; Adler, Kissel and McAdams, 2008; Presser 2004; Coston 2014; Bryant 2018) on crime narrative identity. Those works evolved from Skye and Matza's (1957) study on neutralisation techniques found in the narratives of juvenile delinquents. They presented a list of neutralisation techniques comprising of denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, condemnation of the condemned and appeal to higher loyalties. These neutralisation techniques have been improved on and are now engaged in the analysis of offenders' narratives (not just on juveniles alone). Skye and Matza (1957) submit that the discrete neutralising techniques are reasons for continued deviance.

Similarly, in a subtle way, the pragmatic acts performed by ARs also reflect the crime roles (as proposed by Youngs and Canter 2011; 2012 and reiterated in Ioannou et al., 2016; Zeyrek-Rios et al., 2022) they ascribe to themselves. Therefore, the pragmatic acts performed by the ARs and the identification of the goals of the acts involved did not only help to identify their crime roles but also helped to decipher the implied meaning of their ascribed crime roles. This significantly propels evidential clues that

can be investigated further. Additionally, the identification of impression-controlling, allegation-refuting, and offence-minimising goals adds depth to this research and sheds light on the psychological motivations driving ARs' communication strategies

The study finds out that the ARs deployed six pragmatic strategies in their crime narratives. They are identity-framing, identity-reframing, attention-seeking, information-controlling, crime-relabelling and attention diversion. The identity-framing strategy are particularly deployed by older ARs. They draw on socio-cultural context for indirect referencing by association with generalised stereotypes (age group and social values) suggestive of the associated beliefs for maintenance of the supposed trustworthy profile. Identity-framing strategy show the degree of the commitments of some ARs (to themselves). The great attention some ARs paid to their image; (especially the older ARs that their reputation is at stake) testify of what is important to them. This particularly strategy echoes Ward and Marshal's (2007) study on how the viability of offender's narrative identity is determined by the commitments the person (offender) has, what is of importance to him or her, and ultimately, to what kind of person he or she becomes (post-release).

The identity-reframing strategy is targeted at influencing indirectly the II's inference and it is deployed by some ARs through a goal driven crime confession as a leverage to reconstruct their identities. They ARs involved only admit to the crime so as to gather some favour from the II, while still subtly assigning the crime responsibilities to another. However, attention-seeking strategy (fishing for pity, exaggerating self-worth and self-soothing) is a strategy ARs relied on for emotional exploitation, to seek emotional support through personal stories shared to self-prove for investigator's validation. Based on the findings, the sub-strategy fishing for pity is the use of statements by ARs to complain/lament/protest their situation in a way that may arouse sympathy from II for a favourable perception. However, exaggerated self-worth is a way some ARS use a part of their narratives to emotionally display a self-acclaimed uniqueness that is sometimes meant to create a sense of higher status than their victim, as a proof of self-worth/self-importance to qualify themselves for II's acceptance. Whereas, the findings reveal that the self-soothing sub-strategy is mostly displayed by ARs to relief themselves from the anxiety that comes with being incarcerated through an emotional show of religiosity where proclamations of hope and belief in God for exoneration and freedom is made.

As shown above, attention-seeking strategy is a ploy to exploit IIs. The target to get emotionally entangled with IIs through the infusion of pathetic stories about themselves, is usually done in a bid to reshape the crime details. As in this study, some ARs desperately attempted to connect emotionally with the II; to be on the same emotional frequency. Therefore, cognitively, IIs should be aware of this tendencies of ARs, especially, not to be emotionally tangled with ARs in a bid to show empathy. Showing empathy to suspects is good, at least as seen in some existing studies like Oxburgh, Ost and Cherryman (2012), Leahy-Harland and Bull (2017). These studies confirmed that empathy aids good rapport for evidential clues. While, making use of it, IIs should bear in mind, the emotional exploitation tendency of offenders (as seen in this study). This study serves as a guide to IIs to differentiate the results of empathy (in terms of rapport) and the tactics that can evolve if offenders exploits it (that is, the empathy shown by II). However, since this study has shown the ways ARs are likely to manifest this, therefore, IIs now have a leverage over the ARs or suspects generally.

Similarly, information-controlling strategy is intentionally positioned by ARs to conceal clear and concise information about the crime from the II to show innocence or feign ignorance. Some ARs deployed this strategy through two sub-strategies namely: sharing extraneous information and withholding information. Based on the findings, sharing extraneous information sub-strategy is deployed by some ARs to intentionally overwhelm the II with irrelevant and unsolicited excessive information so that a clear and timely impression, conclusion and appropriate judgement would not be formed. It can be submitted that the extraneous information causes confusion for the II and are mostly fabricated stories due to the manner in which the information is presented, especially with the presence of some features like incoherence, ambiguity, motion verbs; while the withholding information sub-strategy is the intentional suppression of information by the ARs, to prevent information about their involvement in the crime incident from being revealed to the II, and subsequently becomes unable to form any opinion or perception or make any decision about the narrative.

Information-controlling strategy is a strategy deployed to prey on the vulnerability of the II with regards to information. According to some scholars (de Saussure and Schulz, 2005; van Dijk, 2006; Al-Hindawi and Kamil, 2017), one of the reasons manipulation is successful is because every manipulator's spectrum of vision is larger than the target's; the manipulator knows more than the target. van Dijk (2006) further

reiterates that, targets of manipulators lack the crucial resources (information/knowledge) to resist, detect and avoid the manifestation of manipulation. This gives the manipulators (and in this case, the ARs) a great advantage over their target (II) and as such, they seek to deceptively make their targets (II) to see things just the way they want by pushing targets (IIs) to consider possible situations and actions that they did not explore for the manifestation of their covert goals that is only in their best interests and not the hearers'. This includes social factors that they (the II) did not consider. Specifically, the manipulators (ARs) subtly make their targets to consider another dimension of the social factors in order for the target (II) to arrive at the intended interpretation that the manipulator targeted. Therefore, this is replicated in the crime narrative of a crime like rape. Often time, the spectrum of vision of rapists is usually larger than the investigator. This is because, the suspects and their victim usually know more about the crime than the investigator. This is because rape is a crime that is usually conducted in the secret and in a country like Nigeria, victims are likely not to show up again after the first report.

This study confirmed that truly, offenders and in this case ARs know more than the II and they take advantage of this to attempt to actively reshape the crime incidence in their crime narratives by negotiating their roles, resisting participation and responsibility for the crime. This is an area of vulnerability for IIs that ARs know and exploit to their advantage. Therefore, this study also serves as a precursory guide to IIs to be aware of the manipulative tendencies of ARs and to use the results of this study as a template for the recognition of ARs' manipulative tactics.

While information-controlling strategy is a strong strategy deployed by ARs, the way ARs in this study used it did not meet up with the fundamental premise of Maruna (2001) and Presser (2008). Maruna (2001:7) posit that coherence and consistency are the basic characteristics of self-narratives. Just as incoherence and inconsistency was found (in the 1500-page manifesto) of a Norway terrorist named Breivik that Sandberg (2013) examined; some ARs too deployed the Information-controlling strategy to conceal clear and concise information about the crime from the investigative interviewer to show innocence or feign ignorance. What gave the ARs away is that, in their bid to conceal information or give too much information to confuse the II, their narratives showed signs of apprehension through their verbal errors of incoherence, and narrative mix-ups. Therefore, IIs/analysts should be on the lookout for signs of

apprehension in ARs'/offenders' narratives. They can be spotted easily. Also, this strategy echoes Faden and Beauchamp (2014) description of their second type of manipulation. They called it Manipulation of information and it is explained as the type of manipulation that targets the hearer's perception, where the hearer's perception of options is modified by a strategy that non-persuasively affect his/her understanding of the situation.

As for crime-relabelling strategy, the ARs draw on stereotypic allusion to sexual relationship for the redefinition of crime; this is where some ARs share same status – “the adult status” with their underage victims as obtainable in a sexual relationship between two consenting adults. This strategy resonates with what Selepe et al (2020) described as sexual intercourse entitlement, in their study on the toxic discourses of sex offenders in the accounts of their sexual violence in Limpopo province, South Africa. Although, theirs was more about men's violent sexual entitlement in marriage, the ARs who deployed this strategy are those who committed statutory rape and attempted to counter the allegation by presenting situations (romantic relationship) that make them automatically entitled to sex from their underage partners.

However, some ARs deployed attention diversion strategy to deflect attention from themselves by attacking the image and character of victims and their parents as crime enablers. This strategy is perfected through two sub-strategies namely: playing the victim and blaming the victim. With the sub-strategy playing the victim, the ARs in this category portray selves as victims of situation by taking on passive roles while their victims are presented as major actors in the crime incidence, so as to deflect attention from themselves. However, blaming the victim sub-strategy is deployed by ARs to intentional shift the II's focus off their misbehaviour through the subjection of the victim toridicule by painting a bad image of the victim, so that the II would form an impression that the ARs' misbehaviour is the cause of the crime.

Some existing linguistic studies on investigative discourse in Nigeria like Ajayi (2014), Sunday and Akinrinlola (2017), Akinrinlola (2017; 2021) resonate in a little way with this study's findings on ARs' strategies. They share common ground based on the exploration of the linguistic strategies, power dynamics, and complexities of interactions within investigative discourse although the existing studies in Nigeria centre around police-suspect interrogation considering the strategies of investigators

and suspects of other crimes other than ARs. While this study's sole focus is ARs' crime narrative in investigative interviewing.

The comprehensive breakdown of the strategies deployed by ARs in their crime narratives provides a holistic view of how ARs manipulate linguistic resources to shape the interviewer's perception and interpretation of their crime narratives. Similarly, this study takes into consideration the social, cultural, and religious contexts in which these crime narratives unfold, adding a layer of contextual understanding that is crucial for interpreting the intricacies of ARs' communication behaviour within the Nigerian context.

In summary, the uniqueness of this study lies in its specialised focus on ARs' non-coercive investigative discourse, its detailed analysis of specific pragmatic acts and linguistic strategies, its exploration of underlying goals, and its potential to improve investigative interviewing practices and contribute to addressing a critical societal concern.

4.5 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the analysis of data was done in three stages in the order of the objectives. The stages are the identification of the pragmatic acts evoked by Accused Rapists (ARs) in their crime narratives; discussion on the goals of the acts involved by ARs in their crime narratives and the examination of the strategies deployed by ARs to influence investigative interviewer's (II's) interpretation of the crime narratives. The next chapter focuses on summary of the study, conclusion, contribution to knowledge and suggestions for further studies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Preamble

This chapter presents the conclusion to the study. It encompasses the summary of the study, the presentation of the major features of the findings, conclusion, recommendations, contributions to knowledge and suggestions for further studies.

5.1 Summary of the study

This study examines Accused Rapists' (ARs) crime narratives in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, to offer valuable insights into evidential cues that could impact the prosecution of ARs towards combating rape in Nigeria. Background details about the issues surrounding rape in Nigeria, the state of existing studies, aim and objectives, significance and scope are presented in the introductory chapter. Jacob Mey's (2001) Pragmatic Acts Theory formed the theoretical framework for this study. This theory and conceptual and empirical literature review are captured in chapter two while the study's research methodology was presented in chapter three.

Similarly, the study's analysis in chapter four reveals three practs, three goals and six pragmatic strategies in ARs' crime narrative in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan. These findings are summarised in the next sub-section.

5.1.1 Summary of the findings

The findings of the study are as follows:

1. Pragmatic acts in the crime narratives of ARs

There are three intertwined but functionally different practs in the crime narratives of ARs in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan and they are denying, distancing, and justifying practs. **The denying pract** is mostly utilised by the older ARs to counter and challenge the rape allegations, aiming to maintain their social status and avoid stigmatisation. **The distancing pract** involves the ARs creating a disconnection from the crime and the victim, either by claiming no responsibility or by presenting limited connections to the victim.

Specifically, they employ this pract to affirm ignorance of the crime and weaken the accusations against them. Meanwhile, some ARs engage **the justifying pract** to logically justify their actions by rationalising them and shifting the blame onto their victims, particularly in cases of statutory rape.

The categorisation and examination of these practs provide a deeper understanding of how ARs construct their crime narratives to counter and contend rape allegations. It is worthy to note that the detailed analysis of the practs provides a nuanced understanding of how ARs evoke practs to navigate their narratives towards achieving their goals, which is distinct from the broader communication acts and strategies discussed in the existing studies.

2. Pragmatic goals in the crime narratives of ARs

The goals behind the identified practs evoked by the ARs include impression controlling goal (for face-maintaining and face-saving), allegation refuting, and offence minimising. Impression-controlling goal (for face-maintaining, and face-saving) facilitates the management and preservation of the reality of the ARs. Specifically, **impression controlling goal for face-maintaining** is the goal of the denying pract evoked by some ARs, especially older ARs. While, **impression controlling goal for face-saving** is the communicative intention of ARs that evoked the justifying pract. Mostly, ARs who are guilty of statutory rape have this goal, to cover their crime for the restoration/rebuilding of their face (face-saving).

Similarly, **allegation-refuting** goal is the communicative goal behind some ARs who engaged the distancing and denying practs and it is geared towards proving the rape allegation is wrong. However, the offence-minimising goal is achieved with the performance of justifying pract. ARs who confessed to the crime and even those who raped underage teenagers give accounts of the crime incidence in ways that their victims are posed as the cause or the instigators of the rape. The examination of these goals sheds light on the psychological motivations driving ARs' pragmatic acts and strategies. It also adds depth to the study.

3. Pragmatic strategies in the crime narratives of ARs

Six discourse strategies are realised in ARs' crime narratives. They are identity-framing, identity-reframing, attention-seeking, information-controlling, crime-relabelling and attention diversion. Older ARs use the **identity-framing strategy** by indirectly associating themselves with generalised stereotypes related to their age group and social values. With this strategy, they attempt to maintain a supposed trustworthy profile by leveraging socio-cultural context and the beliefs associated with these stereotypes. Some ARs also use the identity-reframing strategy to indirectly influence the II's inference by confessing to the crime with the goal of reconstructing their identities so as to gain some favour from the II, while still subtly assigning the crime responsibilities to another.

Attention-seeking (fishing for pity, exaggerating self-worth and self-soothing) is a strategy some ARs relied on for emotional exploitation, to seek emotional support through personal stories shared to self-prove for investigator's validation. However, information-controlling strategy is intentionally positioned by ARs to conceal clear and concise information about the crime from the II to show innocence or feign ignorance. Some ARs deployed this strategy through two sub-strategies namely: sharing extraneous information and withholding information.

Regarding **crime-relabelling strategy**, some ARs draw on stereotypic allusion to sexual relationship for the redefinition of crime. This is where some ARs share same status – “the adult status” with their underage victims, as obtainable in a sexual relationship between two consenting adults. However, some ARs deployed **attention diversion strategy** to deflect attention from themselves by attacking the image and character of victims and their parents as crime enablers. This strategy is perfected through two sub-strategies namely: playing the victim and blaming the victim.

The comprehensive breakdown of the strategies deployed by ARs in their crime narratives provides a holistic view of how ARs manipulate linguistic

resources to shape the interviewer's perception and interpretation of their crime narratives. Similarly, this study takes into consideration the social, cultural, and religious contexts in which these crime narratives unfold, adding a layer of contextual understanding that is crucial for interpreting the intricacies of ARs' communicative behaviour within the Nigerian investigative context.

Regarding the implications for investigative interviewing, this study not only highlights the practs, goals and strategies employed by ARs but also offers valuable insights for investigative interviewers to recognise and counter these manipulative pragmatic strategies. This practical application sets this study apart from existing studies, as it offers profound contributions to improving the investigative process and judicial outcomes in Nigeria.

Addressing the rise of rape cases in Nigeria, this study's focus on rape narratives has significant societal implications, given the pressing issue of sexual violence against women and girls in Nigeria. By examining how ARs shape their narratives, this research informs legal proceedings and contribute to combating the rise of rape cases through better detection and more informed investigation.

Overall, the uniqueness of this study lies in its specialised focus on ARs' non-coercive investigative discourse, its detailed analysis of specific pragmatic acts and linguistic strategies, its exploration of underlying goals, and its potential to improve investigative interviewing practices and contribute to addressing a critical societal concern. This unique combination of factors sets this study apart from the existing linguistic studies on investigative discourse in Nigeria.

5.2 Conclusion

Rape is a high stake crime that puts whoever that is accused under pressure to aspire to construct and reconstruct identities that can withstand and repair their ruined image/identity as a result of the allegation. Therefore, investigative interviewers (IIs) must be aware that Accused Rapists (ARs) have their identities, dignity and reputation at stake and would make every effort to work against being convicted, whether they are guilty or not. Their attempts greatly incorporate socio-cultural factors to excecute believable and logical crime narratives.

Importantly, the study emphasises the vulnerability of IIs to manipulation by ARs who possess more knowledge about the crime. It highlights the need for IIs to be aware of these manipulative tendencies and to avoid emotional entanglement while showing empathy. By recognising the manipulative tactics employed by ARs, IIs can maintain a critical perspective and better analyse the narratives for evidential clues.

Consequent upon the discussions and submissions, it can now be asserted that the crime narratives of ARs in correctional facilities like Agodi custodial centre, Ibadan, is a socio-culturally constrained discourse, where ARs are manipulatively competent to exploit socio-cultural factors to perform pragmatic acts and deploy strategies to influence investigator's pragmatic interpretation of their crime narratives. Therefore, this study serves as a precursory guide for investigative interviewers to recognise and navigate the complexities of such crime narratives, thereby enhancing their ability to gather credible information and make informed judgments. Overall, investigators particularly those in Nigeria are to ensure strong cognisance of the crime narrative influencing tendencies of ARs to prevent perversion of justice.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the study's emphasis on the manipulative influencing practs and strategies employed by ARs in their crime narratives to shape the perception of IIs, it is recommended that IIs receive specialised pragmatic training on recognising and addressing these communicative behaviours to ensure a more accurate understanding of the intricacies in crime narratives. Trainings should include pragmatic techniques to avoid emotional entanglement, maintain objectivity, and identify signs of manipulation or inconsistency in the narratives.

There is a need for improved investigative techniques given that ARs often have more information about the crime than the II. It is therefore crucial to enhance investigative questioning techniques to gather comprehensive and reliable evidence. This could involve collaborating with other professionals, such as forensic pragmatist or forensic experts or psychologists, to collect and analyse evidence effectively. It is important to minimise the reliance on offenders' narratives alone and seek additional evidence to validate or challenge their claims.

Empathy is still important in investigative discourse. While IIs should be cautious of ARs' attempts to exploit empathy, it is still essential to maintain a supportive and

empathetic approach toward suspects. Providing a safe and supportive environment for them to give their accounts can lead to better rapport and increased disclosure of crucial information. Empathy should be balanced with professional skepticism and an awareness of manipulative tactics.

Given the complexity of rape cases in Nigeria, there is a strong need for interdisciplinary collaboration between professionals from various fields. Close cooperation between law enforcement, legal experts, psychologists, forensic pragmatists or forensic experts, social workers, and other relevant stakeholders can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the crime narratives and enhance the quality of investigations and prosecutions in Nigeria.

Public awareness campaigns and educational programs can play a vital role in preventing rape and addressing misconceptions surrounding the crime. These initiatives should focus on promoting consent, dismantling victim-blaming attitudes, and encouraging reporting of sexual offences. By fostering a supportive and informed society, the stigma associated with reporting rape can be reduced, and survivors can receive the necessary support while the perpetrators are brought to justice.

5.4 Contributions to knowledge

This research has made contributions to knowledge in the following ways:

1. This study contributes to the body of works on language use in investigative discourse in Nigeria and beyond, specifically about how ARs evoke practs and deploy strategies to invoke implied meanings that are capable of replicating the goals of the practs employed, in a way that investigators' pragmatic interpretation of the crime narratives is influenced covertly.
2. This study contributes to the body of works on forensic linguistics in Nigeria, especially the area of crime narrative analysis as it simplifies the application of pragmatic analysis to the crime accounts of ARs. The practs and strategies that this study reveals provide valuable insights for investigative interviewers, law enforcement agencies, and legal practitioners for the evaluation of credibility, reliability, and potential deception in the crime narratives of ARs and suspects of similar crimes. Such insights enhance the accuracy of investigative interviews, evidence gathering, and decision-making processes, ultimately aiding in the administration of justice.

3. Earlier studies in Nigeria have not been able to profile and describe the constituents of the crime narratives of ARs (in correctional facilities like Agodi Custodial Centre Ibadan) to ascertain their communicative acts, the goals of their acts and the strategies they deploy to influence perception within the framework of Pragmatic Acts Theory.
4. Earlier studies have identified some specific communicative act and strategies unique to offenders generally. However, this new study has expanded it by identifying pragmatic acts, goals of the acts involved and pragmatic strategies that are unique to ARs.
5. The study's results contribute significantly to the criminal justice system in Nigeria. Specifically, the evoked practs, the goals of the acts involved and the pragmatic strategies identified in this study generate evidentials cues that are valuable for the administration of justice to ARs and even to suspects of similar crimes in Nigeria and abroad.
6. The study contributes to the potential design of educational programs dedicated to the improvement of linguistic competence and training of investigative interviewers and professionals working in the criminal justice system.

5.5 Suggestions for further studies

This study engages the descriptive design to examine language use in the crime narratives of Accused Rapists (ARs) in Agodi Custodial Centre, Ibadan, Nigeria. The study focuses on investigating the pragmatic acts, the goals of the acts involved and the pragmatic strategies deployed by ARs to influence investigative interviewer's interpretation of the narratives. While this has been done, it is however limited to the verbal communication of Accused Rapists, hence, a comparative pragmatic study of ARs in other regions of Nigeria could be done, focusing on ARs' non-verbal communication; as it is capable of revealing more peculiar features of the language use of ARs. Even, a comparative study of suspects of other violent crimes could be done as well. While this study is limited to male ARs, a comparative study on female ARs could be of great interests to future researchers in linguistics, criminology, psychology, gender studies and sociology.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Transcribed Crime Narrative of 39 Accused Rapists

ARI's crime narrative

- II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
- AR1: I was accused of rape (.). IT HAPPENS NOT TO BE TRUE. <The child I am talking about lives with her mother close to our own house>. <They packed into our house in 2016>. I DON'T KNOW THE MOTHER; THE MOTHER TOO DOESN'T KNOW ME. >The mother, the mother is no longer with the father<. >The child and her father live together<. NO, THE CHILD AND THE ELDER SISTER LIVE TOGETHER. <So, we don't live together in our family house, we don't live together there>. That woman (.), IN FACT, it wasn't up to seven days that they brought the girl there(.). THE GIRL MET ME THERE. >She was about ten years old, and we sometimes send her on errands. It was in the tenth month that I actually met the child. Sometimes, when I go to work in the morning, it is till night; when I come back in the evening, it's till next day. I don't speak with the people I live with, we don't see at all because when we enter the house in the night, its till the following day<. <However, this year we just entered, I have not seen her at all>. The only way I can say I have seen her is (.) >I saw her one day; whenever I come back from work, she is always happy to see me, saying brother, what did you bring for me, what did you buy for me<; >if there was money on me, I would give her, if I don't have anything on me, I won't give her<. IT IS NOT BY FORCE. So when it was this year 2017, as I got back from work, she came to tell me that she has started learning to be a tailor. >I now said, who took you to learn tailoring<, you that is not intelligent; God will forgive them o, okay o, you will know it o (.). It was after that, that she asked me for fifty naira. I said I don't have money and promised to give her tomorrow. That was the first time. When I was coming back from work one day, she came again saying brother, brother, what about the money you promised to give me, I NOW SCREAMED AT HER THAT AH WHAT IS IT. I AM JUST ENTERING THE HOUSE AND YOU ARE ATTACKING ME? >She now ran back inside that day<. <Since then I have not seen her at all>. When it was now the weekend like Saturday that the police men came. They asked if I am the one bearing >so so so?, I said yes, <they said we are going to "Mapo". They came with their vehicle; I didn't even know that they brought their vehicle. They took me to the vehicle, when we got to where their vehicle was parked, they pointed a torch at me, they pushed me inside the vehicle, asking me if I know the child and her mother. Since I didn't know her mother, I saw the child. Since I cannot recognize her mother, they now said> >this this that<. <The police men started beating me that I know what I did, I now said. "I don't know what I did o, we continued the journey, we then got to Mapo, they now took me out of the vehicle>. <They now said I raped the girl>, I DID WHAT?" >This, this that<. When? They said it was about two weeks ago that they had sex with the child and they don't know who did it. I now said, what's my own?

<They started beating me again>. <They now said, some boys slept with her – two boys on Monday; two weeks ago. They went to arrest one of them, the second one was not home. The boy now said he was not the one that slept with the girl that it was one old man he saw on her bed when he entered. They went to arrest the old man. The child said it was not the man. They brought another case again that we should pay some money for the child’s treatment at the hospital>. Later... (II interjects...)

- II: Were you able to see and speak with the child?
AR1: <I saw her but I didn’t speak with her>.
II: Did the child say you were the one that raped her?
AR1: The child said yes (.). <You know they have manipulated her>. <That was how they brought us here o>.
II: Do your people come to check you here?
AR1: <Yes, my people do come>.
II: Thank you for your time.
AR1: God will always help you.

AR2’s crime narrative

- II: What offence were you accused of?
AR2: >I was accused of rape<
II: Did you commit the crime or not?
AR2: I DID NOT RAPE THE GIRL, BUT WE BOTH HAD SEXUAL INTERCOURSE AS MAN AND WOMAN
II: What now happened? Where you both in a relationship?
AR2: We are in a relationship and we are not in a relationship (.)
II: What does that mean?
AR2: Because in the house that I went to work as a private driver, she lives in that house as a house help(.) <So, before the incident occurred>, THIS CHILD PLAYS WITH ME THE WAY A MAN RELATES WITH A WOMAN but as someone younger to me(.), I DO CAUTION HER. <Along the line, I reported it to one of my colleagues who also works in that house>. He then advised me to not allow the devil to use me. <At times, I might be sleeping and very tired, she would come to play with me>. <So, the girl would be removing my trouser, play with my manhood> and then begin to say that (.) <I don’t have what the men she has slept with her>. So, I now said, WHY IS SHE DISTURBING ME SINCE I DON’T HAVE IN MY BODY WHAT OTHER MEN HAVE. <So, she didn’t let me be>. SO, ALONG THE LINE, SHE DID NOT LET ME BE. <I dodged her several times>, <that opened the door, I went out. When I entered again to carry my bag, she closed the door, she troubled me, pulled my cloth>. <Along the line, I realised that I lost control as a man when she told me that I will not be the first man to have sexual intercourse with her>. I THEN DID WHAT A MAN DOES WITH A WOMAN. I then went home. So when I came to work the following morning (.), <our boss got me arrested for this offence>. THEY TAUGHT HER TO LIE ON ME... (II interjects)
II: What happened after you both had sex?
AR2: <I didn’t really have fun with her very well again because when it pained her, she shouted. So I had to remove my manhood so that I

could check if people heard the noise, whether they were rushing down to check what happened>. When I got back, I saw blood on the floor and she was already rushing to wear her cloth (.). I then returned inside the garage. <I really tried to beg her, she said there is no problem, she then said, I should start going home that there is no problem>. I then went home. <By the time I got back to work the next day, our boss then asked what I did to his house help yesterday>. May be because of the blood they saw on her cloth (.); <I now apologised to him>. >I then explained to him that we both had fun<. <So, because of her age 16 years, she now lied that she is a child>.

- II: They now took you to the police?
AR2: YES
II: What did the judge say? Have they said you should be set free from here?
AR2: <They have not said so. May God grant me favour before them. I am praying for God's favour>.
II: Do your family come to visit you.
AR2: >They do come to visit<
II: Thank you for your time.

AR3's crime narrative

- II: What offence were you accused of and how did it happen?
AR3: >I Am charged for rape. They accused me for raping a girl<. THE GIRL HAPPENS TO BE MY FRIEND'S GIRLFRIEND, >That my friend works in Lagos. He came home that weekend, when he was in Lagos, they had an agreement that he would give her ten thousand naira. When the guy came, he called the girl, we were drinking together. He now called the girl, to go home with us. When we got home, the girl and him went inside the house together while I was outside<. <I realised that they were arguing, I entered the house and saw both of them fighting. I told the girl she was rude with the way she was speaking to her boyfriend>. THE GIRL THEN MADE A STATEMENT THAT WE WILL BOTH PAY FOR WHAT WE DID NOT BUY. <I now asked her what she meant by we will pay for what we did not buy>. >That was how the girl left<. <The police came to arrest me after two weeks>. <I was the first person the police arrested>. I said what happened., <They said a lady said we raped her>. I SAID WHY AM I THE FIRST TO BE ARRESTED, I AM NOT HER BOYFRIEND...,
II: Did it happen in Ibadan or?
AR3: Yes. I said why should it be me that I am not her boyfriend., After one week, they arrested the guy,. When they arrested the guy, they carried us to the station, <They said I should call any of my family member, so that they can settle the issue. I called my aunty, my aunty got angry with me and said she cannot get involved. My aunty later came and the guy and I were told to bring N350,000 to settle the case before the withdrawal letter would be written for our release. My aunty said the money was too much that there is no way she can get it>.
II: Have you been charged to court?
AR3: We have been charged to court

II: What did the judge say?
 AR3: <You know that it's the file that is taken to the court that the court will use> So, the hearing has been adjourned.
 II: How old are you?
 AR3: >28<
 II: Are you happy about what happened?
 AR3: <I am not happy>
 II: Do you have people visiting you?
 AR3: <I have people that come to check on me; my wife>
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR4's crime narratives

II: What type of offence were you accused of?
 AR4: >Rape<
 II: How old are you?
 AR4: >24<
 II: was it just you or two or three of you that was accused?
 AR4: >Three of us. We were eight but five were released at the State CID because they had surety<.
 II: How old was the child?
 AR4: >The child was five years<
 II: What's your occupation?
 AR4: > I work as a bricklayer<
 II: Explain how it happened.
 AR4: <On that day I went to the site. It was under renovation. We were renovating the place. So after we had finished working, we now went to eat. When we were coming back, we saw some policemen. They arrested everyone, including the security man working there, we were all arrested>
 II: You went to work in that school?
 AR4: >It was inside that school< >They were constructing one structure so when we finished, we now went to eat< <When it was evening, the policemen came to carry us all to Iyaganku. It remains just three of us because we couldn't get anyone to bail us as we came from Ekiti>.
 II: Did you know the girl before the incidence?
 AR4: I HAVE NOT SEEN THE GIRL BEFORE
 II: Are you happy about the whole thing?
 AR4: <I am not happy because I have not seen my family. I am married and I have four children>.
 II: So your wife is in Ibadan?
 AR4: NO, SHE IS IN EKITI. WE GO TO WORK IN DIFFERENT PLACES. WE TRAVEL TO IBADAN, LAGOS AND ALL AROUND.
 II: Thanks for your time

AR5's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?

R5: Rape(.)

II: Did you commit it or not?

AR5: AH, I DIDN'T DO IT, WITH MY OLD AGE?

I CLOCKED 63 YEARS THIS YEAR, ON THE SECOND OF JANUARY WHICH MEANS THAT I WAS ABOUT 58 YEARS WHEN THE INCIDENT ACCUSED.

II: How old is the child they said you raped?

AR5: IN FACT, I THOUGHT THE CHILD WAS BETWEEN 7/8 YEARS BUT THE FATHER SAID SHE 13 YEARS. She came to me. <What brought her to my place was because of what I was putting in my mouth>. The girl was sent out of school (.) I asked why?, <She said she stole her teacher's food>. <I asked her for the reason, she said her father and mother left the house this morning without giving her money for food before they left>. My wife was not around, I SAID AH! I DON'T KNOW YOU, she also said she doesn't know me., <Whenever children see me eating, they always shout> BABA, BABA. <When my father was alive, he gives little children things. Especially when he brings gifts for us his children. If he sees little children, he gives them out of it> <It happens that there is a certain woman that is my best friend's wife. We were both born in that street. She started visiting me when she knew that my wife had travelled and I told her, I have my own wife, it's just that she travelled. My children are grown ups, some are in their husbands' houses, some have wives. Even, my first born learnt the work of an electrician just like I did>. That was how I sent the child away(.) <She came to me the following week again, saying baba, baba, let's start. I said you this woman you want to put me in trouble. I am looking around for what to eat; your husband and I were born in this street your husband and I eat and drink together>. SHE NOW SAID IF I DON'T AGREE WITH HER THAT SHE WILL GO AND REPORT ME. SHE THEN SNAPPED TOGETHER HER MIDDLE FINGER AND THUMB AT ME. <The child came to me because she my left over food and this woman saw her eating in my place she now started shouting that she saw a little child with baba, maybe he has had sex with her>. <This woman told the child's parents to go and check their child to ascertain that I have not raped her; just because she saw her eating on my bed>.< That was how they carried me to the police station>. They took me to state CID (.). They gave me a severe beating before they charged me to court(.).

II: How have you been coping?

AR5: I AM NOT HAPPY BECAUSE I AM NOT A THIEF NEITHER AM I LAZY; THAT WAS WHY I WAS RIDING BIKE SO THAT HUNGER WILL NOT KILL ME.

II: Thanks for your time.

AR6's crime narrative

- II: What kind of offence were you of?
- AR6: Rape
- II: Did you commit it or not?
- AR6: I DID NOT COMMIT IT
- II: Can you tell me what happened?
- AR6: That morning, I am a baker (.). >On that day, I was meant to have left for work since 7am but I over slept. I now decided to start rushing to prepare for work<. Our house is a storey building (.). I now went down stairs (.). I am a bread baker at Agbede (.). >The children of the woman we are involved in this case were having their bath. One was 10 years, another was 6 years. They were having their bath downstairs, I now decided to take water from them. That was how I took a bad to take water from them. I used it to wash my face and leg. I did everything<. <That was how I went upstairs to dress up. Whenever I come back in the night, I do bring bread for them; because of these children, because we have plenty children in that our house>. That morning (.), <there was one bread I did not finish eating the previous night, if I decide to leave it till evening it would get spoilt. I now took the bread to go and give those children down stairs. As I was going downstairs, I met that child in the passage, and I gave her that "you and your elder sister should eat it. That child then went back downstairs> As I now went back to my room to continue dressing up, suddenly, >I saw the mother hitting my door with a stick sounding "gba gba gba", she said that I should bring out her child that is in my room "this that this that< your child, <that was how I opened my door>. WHERE IS YOUR CHILD? <She hit me on the head with a stick when I opened the door. She entered my room as I was dragging the wooden stick from her; where is your child in my room?> >she said I have thrown the child downstairs< >That was how we saw the child downstairs< AND YOUR CHILD WAS NOT INJURED? <We went downstairs. That was how we went downstairs and found the child eating the bread. She was eating that bread downstairs. She was holding and eating out of the bread> She now asked the child, she said I gave her bread and as I gave her, she came back downstairs, <She started shouting at that child>
- II: How old was that child?
- AR6: <6 years>.
- II: Were you taken to the police station?
- AR6: Yes,
- II: Was any medical examination conducted on the child?
- AR6: Yes, <but they did not go to conduct the test in my presence> <As they told them to go and run the test, I was taken to the cell. I don't know whether that test was done or not>
- II: So, how do you feel about what happened to you?
- AR6: I AM NOT FEELING ALRIGHT BUT THE REASON I DON'T THINK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT IS BECAUSE AN HONEST PERSON CANNOT DIE IN THE POSITION OF A SINNER. <I still have faith in God I serve Allahu>. <I know that nothing can happen without the permission of God>. <God knows about everything>.

II: Do you have faith that you will come out of this place?
AR6: <I have faith because I did not do it>. <Even my wife believed me because she traveled a day before the incident happened>. WHAT WOULD I SAY ENTICED ME IN THE BODY OF A 6-YEAR-OLD? WHAT BODY CAN I NOT HOLD TILL MY WIFE GETS BACK? WHEN I KNOW THAT MY WIFE WOULD COME BACK THAT NIGHT. WHAT WOULD PUSH ME LIKE THAT? WE ARE NOT EVEN IN THE SAME LEVEL NOW!
II: Thank you for your time.

AR7's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?
AR7: >rape<
II: Did you do it or not?
AR7: >Ehen, I did it<,
II: Tell me what happened?
AR7: I can say that when the girl (.), was in SS3 at that time (.) <So we both had an agreement, that till she graduates from secondary school that we would not have sex, and she agreed>. I HAVE A HAND WORK. I WORK FOR JOBS. I WORK AS A BARBER, I WORK AS A DJ, I DO VIDEO COVERAGE AND I AM A PHOTOGRAPHER, AND I HAVE A SHOP. >Since we both agreed not to have sex, so when she finished her school certificate, I asked her what she wants to do now. She said she wants to go for computer training and that was what she was learning<.
II: Was it you that gave her the money for it?
AR7: <No, it wasn't me, her parents gave her the money but I paid out of it>. Her parents did not know me, >later, it happened<. <She was the one that volunteered herself that we should do it>. >We then had sexual intercourse. We did it in my room. It is not now we started doing it<. <Suddenly, she got home, I don't know how it happened>. <The next day they came to my shop to pick me up. I went for lecture>. <As I arrived, the four of them asked for my name. I mentioned my name to them. They asked me if I know the girl> <I said she is my girlfriend>. >From there, they said they want to see me somewhere. When we got there, they asked me to kneel down< WHAT HAPPEN? >They started slapping me<. AH, I SAID SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND, they said do I know her age, I SAID 16 YEARS. They said this girl is not 16 years, THEY SHORTENED THE GIRL'S AGE TO 12. > They said I took the girl and have something with her. They said what I did with her is called rape<. I SAID I DID NOT DO RAPING WITH HER O. THAT IN FACT, I DIDN'T MEET HER A VIRGIN. <They now said, I am lying that I am the one that deflowered her> THEY WENT TO CONDUCT A TEST. I WAS HAPPY, AS IT CAME OUT THAT SHE IS NOT A VIRGIN.
II: No one can remain a virgin after having sex.
AR7: >I didn't even argue it with them before<. <After they were done, they took me to police station. They too started beating me>. >They called the girl's father. The girl's father called the human right. The human

right now transferred me to the station. I was charged to court from there<.

II: Are you happy?

AR7: <I am not happy at all, but I am still thankful to God because there must be something God wants me to learn here; that's why I am here. If it is not so, I won't be here. It was not up to 2 months that my brother died>. I AM NOT HAPPY AT ALL.

II: So if you are freed, what would you do?

AR7: Eeh (.), if I am released (.), <before God has called me for his work but I turned deaf hear to it; that is why I am suffering now>. When I leave this place, I HAVE A LOT OF WORK BEFORE ME. I WILL GO BACK TO THE CHURCH AND I WILL GO BACK TO SCHOOL.

II: Thank you for your time.

AR8's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR8: >Rape<

II: How old are you?

AR8: >25<

II: Do you know the girl or not?

AR8: SHE IS MY GIRL FRIEND

II: How old is she?

AR8: >21 years<

II: Tell me how it happened.

AR8: IT HAPPENED THAT THE GIRL IS MY GIRLFRIEND. <She came to my place and spent about one week with me>. <She wanted to tell her dad that we are in a relationship but her father did not give her the chance> <So, they brought the police to arrest me the next day. He now changed it for me>. THE GIRL WANTED TO TELL THE FATHER THAT I DID NOT RAPE HER BUT THE FATHER DID NOT GIVE HER THE CHANCE TO TALK. <So that was what happened>.

II: How do you feel.

AR8: <I am not happy but I have faith that there is nothing God cannot do>.

II: Thanks for your time

AR9's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR9: >Rape<

II: How old is the girl?

AR9: >16<

II: Did you commit the offence or not?

AR9: >I did it<. SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND. SHE COMES TO MY HOUSE. I HAVE BEEN IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH HER FOR LIKE FOUR MONTHS. IN FACT, SHE LIVES IN FRONT OF MY HOUSE.

II: What now happened?

AR9: <She came to my house that day; she has always been coming, and we did it>.

II: You have been having sex with her before?

AR9: I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN HAVING SEX WITH HER BEFORE. <She came to my house that day, after we have had sex that day, it was on Sunday, she then went back home>. <When it was around 5:30pm that evening, her mother, brought police officers to arrest me in the house>.

II: How old are you?

AR9: <I am 20. That was how the police officers took to me to the station in Mokola. It was from there they charged me to court and from there to this place>.

II: How are you feeling?

AR9: I AM NOT HAPPY AT ALL.

II: What will you do once you are released?

AR9: <I have nothing to do>.

II: Do you have faith that you would be released?

AR9: <I have faith that I will be released from here>

II: Thank you for your time.

AR10's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?

AR10: >Rape<

II: Okay, how old is the girl they said you raped?

AR10: >19<

II: How did it happen?

AR10: SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND

II: Explain what happened to me.

AR10: <What happened that day was she called me that her mother was going to a party that she will have the opportunity to come to my place that evening>. <Her father is a soldier and he is not always around. She came to my house around 8:30pm on the 11th after her mother had gone to the party>. >By the time it was around 10:30 pm, we have finished doing what we wanted to do<

II: Did you force her?

AR10: It wasn't as if I forced her like that because she is my girlfriend, <I have never seen her father before. That was how they came to break my door>. <Before I could say anything, they had handcuffed me and carried me to the army barrack>. <They said I came to kidnap their child>. <It was from there they transferred me to Iyanganku>

II: Did they allow the girl to speak?

AR10: <No, she was not allowed>

II: How are you feeling. Are you happy or not?

AR10: WHEN I GOT HERE INITIALLY, I WASN'T HAPPY; <but with time I realised that there is nothing I can do, so I have accepted my fate>

II: So, would you commit this kind of offence again if you are released from here?

AR10: THIS CAN NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN

II: So do you agree that you raped the girl?

AR10: I agree,

II: Thank you for your time

AR11's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?

AR11: Rape (.)

II: Did you commit the offence?

AR11: I DID NOT DO IT. I AM 63 YEARS OLD

II: Who is she to you and what happened?

AR11: SHE IS NOT MY FAMILY MEMBER. <The girl's father and my children are friends>. <When that incidence happened, there is a woman in that our house. The house is owned by siblings>. <While the woman was talking to me, I WAS COUGHING AND HAVING ASTHMA ATTACK>. <I couldn't go to work. I only go to my mechanic workshop sometimes>. <I always go to the hospital>. <That woman now said we should be in a relationship>. I SAID I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <I told the woman that you can see that your husband always prostrates to great me and he calls me baba. Your husband and my children are friends>. I CANNOT DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT IN THIS HOUSE. <The same thing happened the following day again. I now said okay that she should allow me to get well. My plan was to just pack out when I have recuperated>. <She came to meet me another day, I lied to her again>. <She came to me again and saw me having the attack>. <I now said she too can see that I am not well>. SHE THEN SAID SHE WILL SHOW ME AND LEFT ANGRILY. <I called her to appeal to her but she did not respond>. <Whenever that man and his wife want to go out they always bring their children to me>. <So, those children were with me that day>. <When I came back from the hospital, I went to buy food. Usually, the children and I eat together>. <So, when the woman came again, that thing started affecting me again>. <I now decided to go and eat so that I can use the medication I bought>. <She said what about my cloth. I said at least you can see that this thing is affecting me>. She now started putting the children on me(.) I now said what kind of thing is this?, PLEASE DON'T BE ANNOYED. She carried the children (.) <and put them on my body>. >She started saying that is your wife<. I REALLY BEGGED HER BUT SHE DID NOT LISTEN. <She angrily left the way she usually does>. <I couldn't stand up to go after her because that thing was affecting me>. >One hour after those children left my room, the woman went to call everybody living on our street saying that I am having sex with a little child<. <So, that was what happened>.

II: Did they conduct any test on the child at the hospital?

AR11: <They did not go for any test>

II: How are you feeling now? Are you happy or not happy?

AR11: AH. I AM NOT ALRIGHT AT ALL. I AM NOT HAPPY. I WAS WORKING BEFORE, NOW I HAVE NOW BECOME A PRISONER. CAN SOMEONE NOW GO BACK TO HIS WORK AND BE LIKE IT WAS BEFORE?

II: Thank you for your time

AR12's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?
AR12: >Rape<
II: How old is the child they said you raped?
AR12: >Eight years<
II: Tell me how it happened.
AR12: >I was at home with my wife that day<. >So, as I was feeling hot inside I now decided to go upstairs to play<. <That was how that girl passed through that place>. <Because the mother was already holding grudges against me, she now said I raped her child>. <They went for doctor's report, they said there is nothing there>. THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING.
II: Did they catch you on her?
AR12: NO
II: So, why did they say you raped her?
AR12: >They said she wasn't walking properly<. MY WIFE AND CHILD WERE AT HOME, WILL I NOW LEAVE MY WIFE AND CHILD AND GO TO HAVE SEX WITH THE CHILD?
II: What now happened?
AR12: <They brought police to arrest me>.
II: What happened to the doctor's report?
AR12: THEY DIDN'T SEE ANYTHING IN THE DOCTOR'S REPORT.
II: Why have you not been released?
AR12: THE PERSON THAT DOESN'T HAVE ANYONE HAS GOD..
II: How are you feeling now? Are you happy or not?
AR12: I CAN'T BE HERE AND BE HAPPY. I LEFT MY WIFE, CHILD, MY HANDWORK, AND EVERYTHING. I AM NOT HAPPY HERE.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR13's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
AR13: >rape<
II: How old are you?
AR13: >25<
II: Did you commit the offence or not?
AR13: I DID NOT DO IT
II: You did not do it?
AR13: <At all>
II: How old is the girl they said you raped?
AR13: >25<
II: Tell me what happened?
AR13: <She is like a prostitute walking on the street>. <We found her when we were coming back from the club>. <We were coming from the club when we saw the girl shouting>. <We stopped to asked her what happened>. <She said some people raped her and robbed her of all she had with her, including money>. <We wanted to help her, when we saw the police coming, the girl was still shouting they now said we were the ones that committed the crime>. >That was how they arrested us<.
II: How are you feeling?

AR13: I see everything as the will of God (.). <It's temptation>.
II: Would you look for the girl you leave this place?
AR13: <There's nothing I can do to her, I will just go on my own. The knife has cut the child's hand. The knife has done what it wants to do>.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR14's crime narrative

II: what offence were you accused of?
AR14: >I was accused of rape<
II: Did you commit the offence?
AR14: NO, I DID NOT
II: How long have you known the girl?
AR14: WE HAVE BEEN TOGETHER SINCE 2012 TILL 2014
II: How old is the child?
AR14: >16 years<
II: How did it happen?
AR14: BOTH OF US HAVE BEEN IN A RELATIONSHIP SINCE 2013 BUT HER MUMMY SAID SHE SHOULD NOT DATE ME. <Her mummy went for a party and she came to stay in my house for about a week, then she went back to her mummy.> <Her mummy knows where I live. Her mother now said she did not know where her daughter was for over one week, that I didn't allow her to come home>. <As I came back from work the next morning, her mother brought police to arrest me. When we got to the station, she said I raped her daughter>. <That is the offence that brought me here>. THE GIRL HAS EVEN BEEN HERE TWICE TO CHECK ON ME.
AR: How are you feeling about you being here?
AR14: I AM NOT HAPPY AS I AM HERE <but I have accepted it as my destiny> and also it is he will of God (.)
II: Thank you for your time.

AR15's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
AR15: >I was accused of rape<
II: How old are you?
AR15: >24<
II: How old is the girl they said you had raped?
AR15: >17 years<
II: Who is the girl to you?
AR15: SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND.
II: Can you explain how it happened?
AR15: <That day, she was coming back from school, I now carried her. When my passengers alighted> (II interjects)
II: Are you a taxi driver?
AR15: >Yes<. I NOW TOLD HER TO COME AND KNOW MY HOUSE. SHE SAID SHE IS GOING TO HER HOUSE. I NOW SAID SHE SHOULD USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO KNOW MY HOUSE
II: She has never been to your house?
AR15: >No<. >I said she should just use this to know my house. So that she can be coming to my house later>. <When we got there, I asked if she

would drink water or take soft drink>. <I asked her what she wants. She said I should buy rice and beans for her. I bought it with a drink> <She wanted to go when she finished eating but I told her not to go, that since we have been in a relationship, she has never allowed me to touch her>. SHE NOW SAID NO PROBLEM. <After we finished doing it and wanted to start going>... (II interjects)

- II: Both of you had sexual intercourse?
AR15: YES
II: Was she a virgin? Were you the first to have sex with her?
AR: I WASN'T THE FIRST PERSON.
II: Why were you arrested?
AR15: <So as we were about to leave, I have even entered the car, and I was waiting for her to enter the car; that was when her mother's friend met us there>. <Her mother's friend asked her what she was doing here. She said she came to know my house. Her mother's friend asked her why she did not go home. She said she is about to go home. That was how her mother's friend called her mother. That was how her mother brought some police officers. That was how they carried me to the station in Iyaganku. It was from there they brought me here>.
II: How do you feel about all of this?
AR15: YOU CAN SEE IT TOO, I TOLD HER TO COME AND KNOW MY HOUSE. I DID NOT FORCE HER. IT WAS CAUSED BY HER MOTHER'S FRIEND WHO SAW HER.
II: She agreed?
AR15: YES. I AM NOT HAPPY AS I AM HERE, IN FACT, I HAVE NOT SEEN MY PEOPLE. IT ONLY GOD THAT HAS BEEN MERCIFUL TO ME.
II: Do you have faith that you would be released from here?
AR15: <I have faith that I would be released because since then that girl's parents said that they have dropped the case and they should release me. The police asked for money but since I no longer have a father or mother, no money to pay the police; that was the police officers brought me here.
II: Thank you for your time>.

AR16's crime narratives

- II: What kind of offence brought you here?
AR16: >Rape<
II: How old is the girl they accused you of raping?
AR16: >24 years<
II: How old are you?
AR16: >34<
II: Did you commit the crime?
AR16: NO. SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND
II: Tell me how it happened?
AR16: THAT GIRL, I AM IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH THAT GIRL <and she got pregnant for me>. <I now told her to go explain to her parents>. <Her parents refused>. HER PARENTS REFUSED TO LISTEN TO HER. <They said I have been raping her, their daughter; maybe I have

been hypnotising her till she got pregnant for me>. <That was how they came with the police to arrest me>.

- II: Have you heard from that girl since then?
AR16: >I didn't see her neither have I heard anything about the girl since then<.
II: So how are you feeling?
AR16: I am not happy (.), I LEFT MY WIFE AND CHILDREN
II: So how did you know the girl?
AR16: >My place of work<
II: Where did you always take the girl to have sex with her?
AR16: >My younger brother's house<
II: Did she agree to have sex with you or you forced her?
AR16: SHE AGREED. I DID NOT FORCE HER.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR17's crime narrative

- II: What offence were you accused of?
AR17: >Rape<
II: Did you rape the girl?
AR 17: >No<
II: How old is he child?
AR 17: >9<
II: How did it happen that you were accused of sexually molesting the girl?
AR 17: I DID NOT HAVE SEX WITH HER. I SAW HER IN THE HOUSE OF MY LANDLORD.
II: Why did they now accuse you of raping her?
AR 17: The child mentioned my name whereas it is not me (.). <The police arrested the old man but they released him>.
II: How did they detect that she was raped?
AR 17: >They arrested two of us but I was in Iyaganku, he was in Mapo. He was arrested on Saturday and I was arrested on Sunday. They said he committed his last year<.
II: The first person committed his own last year?
AR17: >Last year<
II: You committed yours this year. How did they know? did they catch you raping the child?
AR: They did not see me with her,
II: Why did they now arrest you?
AR17: THAT GIRL LIED AGAINST ME THAT I AM THE ONE. <Initially, the child said it was not me that raped her<. <I said was it not on that baba's bed that I met her>. <She said it's not true that it was me, it was me>
II: You met her on that baba's bed?
AR17: YES
II: What were you doing in that baba's room?
AR17: <It was when I opened the curtain to greet the baba "good morning" that I found her on the bed>.
II: So where is the baba now?
AR17: <They have released him>

II: Why?
AR17: <The police said the baba cannot do it>.
II: That you are the one that did it.
AR17: Yes,
II: How old are you?
AR17: >28<
II: How are you feeling?
AR17: MY MIND IS NOT AT PEACE AS I AM HERE.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR18's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?
AR18: >Rape<
II: Did you commit the crime?
AR18: NO. I DID NOT.
II: How old are you?
AR18: >I am going to be 30<.
II: How old is the girl?
AR18: She is around 26 (.)
II: Ok. Explain how it happened.
AR18: <It happened that both of us were in a relationship in that street. I just moved into that street. What happened that day was, when I newly moved into that street, there was no electricity in that street and I brought two big generators. Whenever I switch it on, people would come and charge their phone and she came too requesting to charge her phone and I allowed her. When her phone was charged, she left and came back the next day and she has been coming since then. Later we spoke and she agreed, we started dating and she would come to visit me at home>
II: Before you quarreled were you both in a relationship?
AR18: >We have been in a relationship for a long time before we quarreled<
II: What is the reason for the quarrel?
AR18: I BOUGHT A SMALL GENERATOR, SHE SAID I SHOULD GIVE HER. I GAVE HER; I EVEN BOUGHT FUEL FOR IT. SO WHEN WE QUARRELED, I WENT TO HER HOUSE TO CARRY THE GENERATOR. SHE NOW GOT ANGRY BECAUSE I CARRIED THE GENERATOR AND SHE STOPPED RELATING WITH ME. IT WAS WHEN I WAS GOING ON MY OWN, THAT SHE CAME TO ME AND STARTED SHOUTING AND I SHOUTED AT HER TOO. I DIDN'T DO MORE THAN SHOUTING. I DIDN'T BEAT HER AT ALL. IT WAS THE SHOUTING, THAT BROUGHT PEOPLE TO GATHER AROUND US. SHE NOW SAID I RAPED HER. THE CHAIRMAN OF THE LANDLORD ASSOCIATION SAID WE SHOULD COME AND SEE HIM; THAT WAS HOW WE WENT TO SEE HIM. WHEN WE GOT THERE, HE SAID, HE IS IGBO, HE SWITCHES ON HIS GENERATOR EVERYDAY LIKE PEOPLE WORKING AT A PETROL STATION, WHAT IS HE SAYING. WE WENT TO HIM FOR ANOTHER ISSUE, HE IS TALKING ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE. THEY WERE ASKING WHO MY LANDLORD IS. I MENTIONED HIS NAME. THEY NOW SAID,

MY LANDLORD IS A THIEF TOO AND HE USUALLY HABOURS THIEVES IN HIS HOUSE. THAT WAS HOW THEY TOOK ME TO THE STATION. THEY WENT TO ARREST MY LANDLORD THAT HE IS A THIEF TOO AND HE STILL RENTED OUT HIS HOUSE TO A THIEF. >My landlord was later bailed<.

- II: Why were you then arrested for rape?
AR18: <That girl said I raped her>
II: You have been having sex with her before?
AR18: VERY WELL. >That was how she came to my house that I poured fuel into that generator, that people working in petrol station do not have money to buy fuel into their generator the way you have been using the generator. She was the one that said I should be arrested by Abule Station officers<.
- II: So how did the issue of rape came about?
AR18: <That's what I wanted to say>. >It was the police men that said I raped her. The girl and I got to the state CID together. She said she is not interested in the case again but it was the police chief that said we should go to court to settle it. The girl did not appear in court when we were charged to court and since then, I have not seen the girl. What happened was, I was taken to DPP, they did not see my case file again. Even my IPO, I did not see anyone again<.
- II: How are you feeling now?
AR18: I AM NOT HAPPY but I know that it's the will of God (.). IF I LEAVE THIS PLACE, THERE IS NOTHING I CANNOT DO TO HER BUT MY PEOPLE HAVE TOLD ME TO STOP TALKING LIKE THAT. <I have some friends that has promised to help me when I am released from here>.

AR19's crime narrative

- II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
AR19: >Rape<
II: How old is the girl they said you raped?
AR19: >15 years<
II: Who is the girl to you?
AR19: >What happen was that my friend and I live together. The girl is in a relationship with my friend and my friend and I live together. So, she didn't go their house for about one week. She was with me<.
- II: Where was that?
AR19: <Our house where my friend and I live>.
II: The girl was with you?
AR19: <She spent like a week with me before she went home>. <So that my friend travelled and before he came back, the girl went to their house>. >When she got home they said she was bleeding<. >They now came to our own house<. Am I the one dating her?, THE GIRL SAID NO. <The girl's mother called the police to arrest me>
- II: Your friend was not around?
AR19: NO. >When we got to the station, they called him, they deceived him so that he would come<. <May be he know what had happened but he didn't come>. <That is how the case brought me here>.
- II: How are you feeling now?

AR19: I AM NOT HAPPY BECAUSE I AM A CHRISTIAN. I AM SUFFERING OVER WHAT I DIDN'T DO.
 II: When you are released, would you go to the girl?
 AR19: I have submitted everything to God (.). <God is the King that can do it>. <I have submitted to the will of God>.
 II: How old are you too?
 AR19: >30 years<
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR20's crime narrative

II: What were you accused of?
 AR20: <I was accused of defilement>
 II: What is the girl's age?
 AR20: That girl's age should be between 15 to 16 years (.)
 II: So what actually happened?
 AR20: >Actually nothing happened because that day, I went somewhere as in, every year, all these Igbo people, they always do Igbo day, so that day, it was on Sunday, I went there<
 II: So you didn't know the girl before that day?
 AR20: >I know the girl; she lives on my street. I just newly relocated to that street. The girl we are talking about; I don't even know her name. it was when this happened that I know her name<.
 II: Why were you then arrested for rape?
 AR20: <So actually, I find myself doing it but I didn't plan it>. I DIDN'T HAVE THE INTENTION. IT JUST HAPPENED. <The girl used her two legs to walk into my room>. <Although on my way coming from the party, there is a hotel in front of my house. On my way entering the house, I saw the girl, around 8:30 to 9pm at a corner there with a man>. <So, the man left the girl and the girl came to me to collect money and I asked the girl why she wants to collect money from me>. <She says because I am already drunk>.
 II: So you were drunk already?
 AR20: <Yes, I was already drunk>. SHE SAYS IF I WANT TO DO ANYTHING WITH HER THAT I SHOULD GIVE HER MONEY THAT SHE IS READY FOR ME. <I just left her and went inside my room>. <As I was removing my cloth she just walked into my room>, THE NEXT THING I KNOW, I FOUND MYSELF DOING IT. After I had slept with her, I found out that she is a virgin (.) I was ashamed (.) <I then stood up to go to the bathroom to get water for her to clean up, but by the time I got back to the room, she was no longer there>.
 II: So how were you arrested?
 AR20: <I think when she was going to her house to clean up, they were already looking for her, so when they found her, there was blood on her cloth and they asked her where she was coming from, that was why she brought them to my house>.
 II: When were you arrested?
 AR20: <I was arrested that night because her dad is a police officer. So they took me straight to the police station>.
 II: So how are you feeling now?
 AR20: I AM NOT HAPPY. I FEEL VERY BAD FOR WHAT I DID.

II: Where are you from?
 AR20: I am from Imo State
 II: How old are you?
 AR20: I am 32 years old
 II: I really appreciate you for your time.

Crime narrative of AR21

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
 AR21: <rape>
 II: How old is the girl they said you raped?
 AR21: >let's say nineteen years<
 II: Okay. Please, tell me what happened? Are you guilty or not guilty?
 AR21: I AM NOT GUILTY
 II: What happened? You didn't rape the girl?
 AR21: I DID NOT RAPE THE HER
 II: Why were you now arrested?
 AR21: IT SURPRISED ME TOO
 II: Why did they bring the police to arrest you if you didn't sleep with the girl?
 AR21: BOTH OF US WERE FRIENDS. IT WAS THE PEOPLE LIVING ON THE STREET THAT BROUGHT POLICE TO ARREST ME; BOTH OF US ARE FRIENDS
 II: Why did they arrest you if you didn't rape with the girl?
 AR21: I DON'T KNOW TOO
 II: Okay. Are you happy or not happy?
 AR21: I AM NOT HAPPY
 II: Okay, thanks for your time.

AR22's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence brought you here?
 AR22: >Rape<
 II: How old are you?
 AR22: >22 years<
 II: How old is the girl you raped?
 AR22: >15 years<
 II: Are you guilty or not guilty?
 AR22: WALLALTALAH I SUMOBILAH I, I AM NOT GUILTY
 II: Did you not have sex with the girl?
 AR22: I AM NOT GUILTY, IN FACT ... (II interjects)
 II: Please, answer my question, did you have sex with the girl or you did not have sex with the girl?
 AR22: I HAD SEX WITH HER, BUT I AM NOT GUILTY.
 II: Why did you say you are not guilty?
 AR22: THE REASON I SAID I AM NOT GUILTY IS BECAUSE SHE IS MY GIRLFRIEND AND I DID NOT FORCE HER.
 II: How did you know the girl?
 AR22: >She sells goods to us<. <She sells orange and we both had a discussion that I would marry her but not yet. I do tell her till I had sex with her>.
 II: Where did you have sex with her?

AR22: >My house<
 II: How were you arrested?
 AR22: The reason I was arrested was because that night around 10(.) <I didn't see any one till the night of the fifth day. I didn't see anyone till the next morning, early morning. It was five days after that day that I saw like two men. They said they were looking for "this person, this person". I came out, they asked if I was the one dating their daughter that they only want to see me at the police station>.
 II: How are you feeling?
 AR22: <Her people told the police to release me but because I didn't have the money they requested from my father, they now brought me here>.
 II: If you leave here, what would you do if the see the girl?
 AR22: <I can marry the girl I suffered over>.
 II: Thank you for your time.

Crime narrative of AR23

II: What offence were you accused of?
 AR23: >Raping<
 II: how old are you?
 AR23: >I am 35 years<
 II: Where are you from?
 AR23: >Kaduna State<
 II: Tell me what happened
 AR23: I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL
 II: How old is she?
 AR23: THEY SAID SHE IS 9 YEARS
 II: You don't know the girl?
 AR23: IT'S THE GIRL'S MOTHER I KNOW THROUGH HER SHOP.
 II: You have not seen her before?
 AR23: I HAVE SEEN HER TWICE
 II: Why did they now arrest you?
 AR23: I DID NOT DO IT. I KNOW THE GIRL THROUGH HER FATHER'S FRIEND
 II: Is she a Hausa girl
 AR23: >No, she is Igbo<
 II: Why did they arrest you?
 AR23: I DON'T KNOW. IT IS THE POLICE THAT CAME TO ARREST ME THAT I DID IT.
 II: If you leave here, would you go meet the girl or her family?
 AR23: TO DO WHAT? I CANNOT GO BACK TO MEET THEM.
 II: Do you believe you would be release from here?
 AR23: <I believe Insha Allah>
 38. II: Ok, thank you for your time.

AR24's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?
 AR24: I WAS ACCUSED OF RAPE. THEY LIED AGAINST ME
 II: How old are you?
 AR24: >I have clocked 35 years<
 II: How old is the girl they said you raped?

AR24: 7 years old (.)
 II: Do you know the girl?
 AR24: IN FACT, I DON'T KNOW THE GIRL NEITHER DO I KNOW THE MOTHER
 II: What job were you doing before you got here?
 AR24: I WORKED AS A DRIVER. I ALWAYS TRAVEL
 II: How did it happen?
 AR24: <We went to eat; as we now left the place, we now decided to pass through the school to change our clothes, we now saw the police running towards us. They said they were running after us.> WE ASKED WHAT HAPPENED. THEY SAID WE RAPED A LITTLE CHILD. <That was how they arrested all of us>.
 II: How many of you?
 AR24: >Three of us<
 II: How are you feeling?
 AR24: I AM NOT HAPPY
 II: Thanks for your time

AR25's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
 AR25: >Rape<
 II: How old is the girl?
 AR25: >19<
 II: How old are you?
 AR25: >35<
 II: Did you do it or not?
 AR25: I DID IT
 II: Where did you do it?
 AR25: >Inside the room in my friend's house<
 II: How were you now arrested?
 AR25: <She went to report to them in their house>
 II: Did you force her?
 AR25: NO. SHE HAS BEEN COMING TO OUR HOUSE BEFORE.
 II: Your friend's house?
 AR25: <She has been coming to my friend's house before>
 II: Did you regret it?
 AR25: I REGRET WHAT I DID O. ENJOYMENT OF FIVE MINUTES HAS TURNED INTO SUFFERING OF FOUR MONTHS.
 II: Would you do something like this again when you are released?
 AR25: NEVER! <I don't do things like this before>.
 II: If you come out and you see the girl, what would you do?
 AR25: <I can't do anything>
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR26's crime narrative

II: What offence were you accused of?
 AR26: >Rape<
 II: Did you commit it or not?
 AR26: <I did it, my friend and I raped her>
 II: How old is the girl?

AR26: >She is 15 years old<
 II: Where did the two of you rape her?
 AR26: <Where we were working as night guards>
 II: How did it happen?
 AR26: Actually, the girl lives on that street and we have been speaking to her
 (.). <Sometimes, things happen due to the work of the devil>
 II: Where did you see her? Was she walking alone?
 AR26: <A car came to drop her>. <We now spoke with her. When we finished
 speaking with her>, it seems I was the first to have sex with her (.)
 <and besides, it was when I finished having sex with her, that she
 became stubborn and it turned into trouble...> (II interjects)
 II: Did you deceive her to come inside?
 AR26: We deceived her to come inside (.) >It was where we work. It's just a
 public place. We did inside a makeshift shop<.
 II: Where was she coming from?
 AR26: >She said she was coming from her aunty's place; that her aunty and
 her had a quarrel<. <We now asked her for money but she said she
 doesn't have>. <So my colleague now suggested that we should have
 sex with her>.
 II: How were you now arrested?
 AR26: >She went to report to the street's chairman. When we returned to work
 the next day, the chairman brought the police to arrest us<.
 II: If you are released, would you commit this type of crime again?
 AR26: ME! GOD WILL NOT ALLOW ME TO DO SOMETHING LIKE
 THIS AGAIN.
 II: If you come out of this place and you see the girl, what would you do?
 AR26: <I have decided that when I am released, I would look for elderly
 people that would go with me to beg the girl>
 II: Thank you for your time.
AR27's crime narrative
 II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
 AR27: >Rape<
 II: How old are you?
 AR27: >I don't know my age<
 II: What is your occupation?
 AR27: >I work as a vigilante<
 II: How old is the girl?
 AR27: >Seven years<
 II: Do you know the girl?
 AR27: NO O, THE GIRL IS NOT FROM THAT AREA. <They came for an
 event there>. IT WAS ONE UNFORTUNATE PERSON THAT
 RAPED THE GIRL IN THE BUSH. <My friend and I just finished
 eating eba at one baba's place...> (II interjects)
 II: Is he here too?
 AR27: He has come inside. <When we left the Baba and as we were going,
 they just came to arrest all of us to the police station>.
 II: How are you feeling now?
 AR27: YOU TOO CAN SEE HOW I AM LOOKING. I WAS A FINE BODY,
 NOW I HAVE BECOME DIRTY.
 II: If you leave here, what would you do?

AR27: WALAHI, TALAHI, IF I LEAVE HERE, I WOULD FIRST GO TO MOSQUE TO GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR28's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
AR28: >Rape<
II: Did you do it or not?
AR28: >I did it<
II: How old is the girl they said you raped?
AR28: >15 years<
II: How old are you?
AR28: >21<
II: Do you know the girl?
AR28: >I know the girl<
II: Did you do it or not?
AR28: >I did it<
II: Are you guilty or not guilty?
AR28: I AM NOT GUILTY
II: Do you know the girl?
AR28: I DON'T KNOW HER BEFORE. WHEN THEY WERE NO LONGER DATING, THEY QUARRELED WITH HER AND SHE WENT TO REPORT TO THE POLICE. WHEN THE POLICE CAME THEY SAID WE RAPED HER, MEANWHILE IT WAS MY FRIENDS THAT SLEPT WITH HER.
II: It was your friends that slept with her?
AR28: YES
II: How many of your friends
AR28: TWO OF THEM
II: How are you feeling since you have been here?
AR28: THIS PLACE IS NOT GOOD AT ALL
II: How has it been
AR28: THIS PLACE IS NOT EASY AT ALL
II: When you leave here, what would you do?
AR28: >I will continue the handwork I learnt<
II: You won't go to that girl?
AR28: <I don't hold grudges against people. If I see her, I will just be looking at her>.
II: Thank you for your time

AR29's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
AR29: >Rape<
II: Did you commit the offence or not?
AR29: I DID IT BECAUSE WE ARE BOTH IN A RELATIONSHIP
II: How old is the girl?
AR29: >26 years<
II: What about you?
AR29: >31 years<
II: How many years have you known the girl?

AR29: <We were in a relationship for 6 months>
 II: How did it happen? Why were you accused of rape?
 AR29: <I am a Muslim, she is a Christian and her parents did not accept me>.
 II: How did her parents know that you slept with her?
 AR29: <What happened was that; you know that whatever they report at the station is what the police will use>.
 II: Was it the girl that brought the police to arrest you?
 AR29: <No, her parents>
 II: Did the girl say she doesn't know you?
 AR29: <No, the girl said we are in a relationship>
 II: How many times have you had sex with the girl?
 AR29: For about two months (.)
 II: How many times?
 AR29: May be about four times (.)
 II: How are you feeling?
 AR29: <I am not happy but I have accepted it as my fate>
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR30's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of?
 AR30: >Rape<
 II: Did you do it or not?
 AR30: I DID NOT DO IT
 II: How old is the girl they said you raped?
 AR30: >30 years<
 II: Where did this incidence occur?
 AR30: >Club<
 II: You went to the club?
 AR30: >Yes<
 II: Are you guilty or not guilty?
 AR30: I AM NOT GUILTY
 II: How did you meet the woman?
 AR30: <We left the club and met her outside. She was standing by the gate of the club we came out from>.
 II: How were you arrested for the rape? How many were you?
 AR30: <Just two of us. It was when we were driving out that we saw her shouting. We parked, I was the one that left the car. She said a bike rider snatched her bag and they raped here. As we were speaking with her, the police met us there. That was how the police said we would follow them to the station. When we got to the station, the police changed the story against us>.
 II: Did the girl say you raped her?
 AR30: <No, the police said so>
 II: How are you feeling?
 AR30: WHAT I DID NOT DO? I AM NOT HAPPY
 II: If you are released, what will you do?
 AR30: <There is nothing I can do than to go back to my hand work>
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR31's crime narrative

II: What offence did you commit?
AR31: THEY ACCUSED ME OF RAPE
II: Did you commit the offence or not?
AR31: NO, I DID NOT COMMIT IT.
II: How old is the girl?
AR31: >She was 29 years then<
II: What happened? Why did they say you did it?
AR31: I DID NOT DO IT. <We were four in the house>
II: Do you know the girl or you do not know the girl?
AR31: I DON'T KNOW HER. <The police came to the house to arrest us as I was about to enter the house to ease myself>
II: Were you the only one they arrested?
AR31: <It was only me.
II: What about the others?
AR31: THEY ESCAPED
II: Did the girl say you raped her?
AR31: SHE SAID I DID NOT RAPE HER. THE POLICE SAID SINCE THEY DID NOT SEE THE PEOPLE THAT DID IT, THAT THEY WILL ARREST ME.
II: Has your people come to check on you?
AR31: <My father is not in Nigeria. It is my sister that works in Mobil that has come to visit me once>.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR32's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
AR32: >Rape<
II: Did you commit it or not?
AR32: >I did it<
II: How old are you?
AR32: >22<
II: How old is he girl?
AR32: >19<
II: Do you know the girl?
AR32: WE ARE BOTH BEFRIENDING OURSELVES BUT HER MUM DOESN'T LIKE ME
II: Have you been having sex with the girl?
AR32: YES
II: And you are married?
AR32: I am married
II: Then why are you in a relationship with the girl when you are married?
AR32: <What happened was that, the girl came to sleep overnight at my house>
II: Was it at your house?
AR32: <Yes>
II: Where was your wife?
AR32: <My wife had gone to her parents' house>
II: So you slept with the girl in your house?

AR32: <Yes, she slept overnight in my house>
 II: She agreed with you not that you forced her?
 AR32: NO O
 II: Why did they now arrest you that you raped her? Who went to report?
 AR32: <She slept in my house overnight. Her mother is someone that doesn't like me but she sees us together; but she doesn't like me>.
 II: How do you feel about this?
 AR32: I AM NOT HAPPY
 II: If you leave here, would you go to the girl?
 AR32: I CANNOT GO TO HER WHEN I HAVE A WIFE
 II: Does your wife come to check on you?
 AR32: <My wife comes>
 II: And she did not hold any grudge against you?
 AR32: <She was angry with me. She said she was around, yet I went to sleep with the young lady>
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR33's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
 AR33: >Rape<
 II: Did you commit it or not?
 AR33: >I did it<
 II: How old is the girl?
 AR33: >20<
 II: How old are you?
 AR33: >29<
 II: Where did you meet the girl?
 AR33: >She is from my street I live. Her place of work is beside her mother's shop<
 II: You now called the girl to your house and you slept with her in your room?
 AR33: >Yes, before she went to report to her mother<
 II: Have you been charged to court?
 AR33: Yes
 II: How many years did the judge sentence you to?
 AR33: 15 years
 II: How are you feeling now?
 AR33: <I am unhappy about what I did>
 II: If you are released, would you do it again?
 AR33: AH! I WON'T DO IT AGAIN
 II: Will you commit this kind of offence again if you are released?
 AR33: AAH! I WILL NEVER ATTEMPT SUCH AGAIN. I DID NOT KNOW THE LAW BEFORE, BUT NOW I KNOW THE LAW.
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR34's crime narratives

- II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
AR34: <Rape and robbery>
II: How old are you?
AR34: <I was born in 1978>
II: Why did you rape her?
AR34: <I did not rape her, we are together. She is my girlfriend>
II: How old is the girl?
AR34: It's been over 13 years that this incident occurred. I don't know how old she would be now (.).
II: How old was she then?
AR34: >30 years<
II: So you did not rape her? She was your friend?
AR34: SHE WAS MY GIRLFRIEND. I DID NOT RAPE HER.
II: Why did they now say you raped her?
AR34: <I ceased her sim card and phone when we quarreled. It was her friends that advised her to accused me with rape to deal with me. She was with me in Lagos before she came ran back to Ibadan when we quarreled. That was how they came to arrest me that I raped her. The girl has even come here to apologise to me that she will write a withdrawal letter. I will be released in this coming week>.
II: When is the court hearing?
AR34: NO O, I WILL BE RELEASED BECAUSE THE CASE HAS BEEN DROPPED IN COURT.
II: When you are released would you go look for the girl?
AR34: <When I am released, we will be together because she has come here to apologise to me. I have asked her if she would become my second wife and she has agreed>.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR35's crime narrative

- II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
AR35: Rape (.)
II: How old are you
AR35: <62 years>
II: How old is the girl you raped?
AR35: 14 years old (.)
II: Who is the girl to you? Do you live in the same house?
AR35: >We live in the same house together<
II: Where did you rape the girl?
AR35: Inside my room (.)
II: Why did you rape the girl?
AR35: <She comes to play with me>
II: What type of play?
AR35: SHE PLAYS WITH ME A LOT; LIKE SOMEONE SLEEPING AND SHE WILL BE LYING ON TOP OF THAT PERSON
II: Ok, that was why you raped her?
AR35: YES
II: Who reported the case?

AR35: <It was her mother's friend that reported to her mother that I have been having sex with the girl till it became a police case>
 II: How many years did the judge sentence you to?
 AR35: Life imprisonment
 II: Do you have faith that you would leave here?
 AR35: <I have faith>
 II: If you leave here, would you do this again?
 AR35: <I won't attempt such again>
 II: Baba, thank you for your time

AR36's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
 AR36: >Rape<
 II: Did you commit the crime?
 AR36: NO, I DID NOT
 II: How did it happen?
 AR36: What happened was that when I was going to Quran class (.), <that girl, Sidikat is her name> <I have known her since when she was in SS1> <and we had an agreement that we would be in a relationship>. I AM AN ALFA, <so we don't see always because I was not always at home>. <So, in 2014, she visited me in my house and she slept over in my house>. <We had sex that midnight>. She already had someone she was in a relationship with before (.). <I now said since she has someone she is dating that she should allow me look for mine too so that I won't break their relationship; that was how we didn't see again>.
 II: Why were you then arrested that you raped her?
 AR36: <That's what I am trying to explain. Some months later, she saw me around as I was coming back from an Islamic lecture. We chatted and she told me she was no longer dating that man again>. I NOW SAID WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH ME. I NOW PUSHED HER AWAY. <She now said I embarrassed her; that was how she shouted and people came out. Since no one knows me amongst them, they asked what happened, she now said I wanted to rape her>.
 II: Were you seen inside the house or outside the house?
 AR36: OUTSIDE. THOSE WHO SAW IT TESTIFIED TO IT; THAT WAS HOW THEY BROUGHT THE POLICE TO ARREST ME. <When we got to the station, she kept talking about the embarrassment>. <She now said I raped her younger sister>.
 II: How old is her younger sister?
 AR36: >17 years<
 II: So, you are not guilty?
 AR36: I AM NOT GUILTY. IT'S THE MOTHER I HAVE ISSUE WITH NOT THE CHILD.
 II: So you have faith that you would be released?
 AR36: YES
 II: Thank you for your time.

AR37's crime narrative

- II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
AR37: >I was accused of rape<
II: How old are you?
AR37: >33 years<
II: How old is the girl?
AR37: <21 years<
II: Tell me how it happened?
AR37: <What happened was that, we have been talking for a long time; for about two to three years and her father is the Landlord of our house. That day, I did not go to work, I was at home. As I was in the house, I was sleeping. She was the one that came to wake me up. I don't know who went to inform her dad that his daughter is with me. Her father caught us as we were both having sex. Her father entered as we were having sex. Her father started shouting when he entered that I am raping his daughter. It was later the girl said I did not rape her that we are in a relationship>. WHEN WE LATER GOT TO THE STATION, THE GIRL CHANGED HER WORDS AND LIED THAT I FORCEFULLY BROUGHT HER TO MY ROOM TO RAPE HER.
II: Do you have faith that you would be released?
AR37: I HAVE FAITH IN GOD AND THE STEPS MY PARENTS ARE TAKING.
II: How are you feeling?
AR37: NO ONE CAN BE IN OUR POSITION AND BE HAPPY. WHEN I REMEMBER THE THINGS I OUGHT TO HAVE ACHIEVED, I WOULD BECOME SAD.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR38's crime narrative

- II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
AR38: >Rape<
II: Did you do it or not?
AR38: Ehen, I committed the offence and I didn't commit the offence (.).
II: What do you mean by that? How did it happen?
AR38: SOMETHING YOU AND SOMEONE HAVE BEEN DOING BEFORE, SUDDENLY YOU NOW SAID HE FORCED HER TO DO IT.
II: Both of you have been doing it before?
AR38: WE HAVE BEEN DOING IT
II: How old is the girl?
AR38: >17 years<
II: Where did you meet the girl?
AR38: >The girl lives on my street<
II: Where did you sleep with the girl, inside your room?
AR38: >Inside my room<
II: And it was not with force?
AR38: NO, I HAVE BEEN HAVING SEX WITH HER
II: Do you have faith that you would be released?
AR38: <I will be released by God's grace>

II: Are you happy about the incidence?
AR38: I AM NOT HAPPY
II: What would you do if you are released?
AR38: AH, I WILL GIVE THANKS TO GOD.
II: Thank you for your time.

AR39's crime narrative

II: What kind of offence were you accused of??
AR39: >Rape<
II: How old is the girl?
AR39: >16 years old<
II: Did you do it or not?
AR39: I DID NOT DO IT BUT I HAVE BEEN HAVING SEX WITH THE GIRL BEFORE
II: Why were you arrested if you did not commit the offence?
AR39: IT WAS BECAUSE THEY NEED A LITTLE MONEY FROM ME TO TRAIN THE GIRL IN SCHOOL.
II: So the girl's family knew you were in a relationship with the girl.
AR39: YES
II: If you leave here, what would you do?
AR39: I WILL MAKE SURE NOT TO DO THAT THING AGAIN.
II: Thank you for time

NIGERIAN CORRECTIONAL SERVICE



Tel:

ALL COMMUNICATION SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE CONTROLLER OF CORRECTIONS

Email: oyo.cmd@prisons.gov.ng



OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER OF CORRECTIONS
STATE HEADQUARTERS
P.M.B. 5224
IBADAN,
OYO STATE,
NIGERIA.

Our Ref: CHOY.1224/VOL.III/ 976

Your Ref:

7th October, 2021

THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT,
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH,
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN,
OYO STATE.

COMPLETION OF RESEARCH DATA

With reference to your letter dated 28th February, 2017, requesting permission to collect research data in Agodi Custodial Centre (formerly Nigerian Prisons Service) by **OMOLE IBIJOKE OYETOLA** with Matric No: **162651 Ph.D** student from the department of English.

The research data collection was done and completed successfully.

Attached here is her introduction letter from the university of Ibadan and the approval letter given.

The department wishes her success in all her future endeavor.

*Mrs Olatayo
Bogade
Kindly file
7/10/21*


DEPUTY Supt. OF CORRECTIONS (RESH)
FOR: CONTROLLER OF CORRECTIONS
OYO STATE COMMAND

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN, NIGERIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

514

28 February, 2017

The Controller of Prisons,
Nigeria Prisons Service,
State Headquarters,
Ibadan.

Dear Sir,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION:
GHOLE, Ibijoke Oyetola (Matric. No. 162651)

This is to confirm that GHOLE, Ibijoke Oyetola (Matric. No.162651) is a Ph.D. student of the Department of English.

She wants to access some information in your office that will enable her write her research work title: "The Pragmatics of Prison Inmate Sex Offenders"

It would be appreciated, if you could accord her the necessary assistance she may need in carrying out her research.

Thank you.

Signed
E.B. Omebevale
Professor & Head of Department

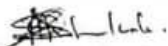
PROV.2768/Vol.VII/514

Nigerian Prisons Service,
Oyo State Command,
Ibadan.

6th March, 2017.

The Deputy Controller of Prisons,
Nigerian Prisons Service,
Agodi Prison,
Ibadan.

I am directed to endorse the above for your information and further necessary action, please.


MOROHUNKOLA A.O.
DEPUTY SUPT. OF PRISONS (R/Policy)
for: CONTROLLER OF PRISONS
OYO STATE COMMAND.

Despatched by
Adeyemi T.P
AG/3/17

51

UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN, IBADAN, NIGERIA
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

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E-mail: english@mail.ui.edu.ng

28 February, 2017

The Controller of Prisons,
Nigeria Prisons Service,
State Headquarters,
Ibadan.



Dear Sir,

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Thank you.

E. B. Omobowale
E. B. Omobowale
Professor & Head of Department
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

*"B" report
Pls address to agali prison
for further action
shulali. 02/28/17*

*A
DSP Research & Policy
P/s. handle
2/2/17*