

73. PREVALENCE AND PATTERNS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AMONG UNDERGRADUATES IN A NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY

Ntishor Gabriel Udam¹, Bonaventure Michael Ukoaka², Raphael Augustine Udoh³, Terem Gabriel Udam⁴, Kosy Victor Kelechi¹, Favour Satkyes Bachi⁵

¹ MBCh. University of Calabar Teaching Hospital, Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

² B.Sc, MBCh. Department of Internal Medicine, Asokoro District Hospital, Abuja, Nigeria

³ B.Sc, MBCh. University of Uyo Teaching Hospital, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

⁴ MBBS, Kursk State Medical University, Kursk, Russia

⁵ Fifth Year Medical Student. University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

BACKGROUND: Gender-based violence (GBV) is an umbrella term for any harmful act against a person's will based on socially ascribed differences between males and females. It can manifest as various forms of physical, sexual or psychological/emotional violence. These forms of GBV are not mutually exclusive, as multiple types can happen simultaneously and reinforce each other. Various factors encourage the perpetuation of GBV, including traditional attitudes towards women, race, social class, and sexuality. Staying far away from family, early life experiences of divorce, and parental violence are also familial factors that predispose to GBV. Violence survivors and their families suffer greatly from the impacts of GBV, which has major health, social and economic ramifications. **AIM:** To assess the prevalence and pattern of GBV among undergraduates and respondents' knowledge of its effects. **METHODOLOGY:** A cross-sectional descriptive study was employed in which self-administered questionnaires were distributed to 413 students in 7 faculties at the University of Calabar, Nigeria, chosen using a multi-stage sampling technique. The questionnaire inquired about the experience of GBV and respondents' knowledge of its effects. Analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21.0 for Windows. The significance level was set at a p-value less than or equal to 0.05. Relationships were tested using inferential statistical techniques (chi-square) appropriate for categorical variables. We employed multivariate analysis to assess the relationship between GBV and various potential contributing factors, account for multiple variables simultaneously, and identify significant predictors. **RESULTS:** The response rate for the study was 100%, and the overall prevalence of GBV among participants was 80 (19.4%), with emotional violence being the most prevalent experienced by the victims (18.6%). The prevalence of GBV was slightly higher in males than in females, but

this difference was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Other variables such as age, marital status and year of study were also not significantly associated with GBV ($p > 0.05$). Most respondents agreed that GBV has psychological, social and health implications. The Multivariate Regression Analysis also identified the second year of schooling as a significant predictor of Gender-Based Violence, as students in their second year exhibited a higher likelihood of experiencing GBV compared to their peers ($p = < 0.027$), with a Confidence Interval of 1.18 to 15.09. **CONCLUSION:** The study showed that Gender-based violence is a problem in Nigeria, affecting both genders. The results challenge entrenched gender stereotypes and suggest the need to develop inclusive policies and programs that support both male and female victims. These findings emphasize the importance of an inclusive approach, including heightened awareness and education, support services like mental health care and legal assistance, and addressing factors that promote violence among both sexes, including cultural and social norms, to ensure all victims receive the necessary support and protection. The university authority should also implement precise and clear-cut sanctions and penalties against GBV. Our findings' lack of statistical significance also underscores the need for further research with larger sample sizes to understand male GBV better and ensure robust, evidence-based interventions.

Table: Frequency and Patterns of Gender-Based Violence.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frequency of Occurrence		
Daily	11	13.8
Weekly	16	20
Two times weekly	13	16.3
Four times monthly	4	5
Monthly	36	45
Prevalent Patterns		
Physical	75	18.2
Emotional	77	18.6
Sexual	55	13.3

Key Words: Gender-based violence, Prevalence, Students, Male, Female.