

**Gender discrimination and violence against women in Nigeria: A study of its socio-economic impact in Nasarawa State**

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**Abstract**

*The objective of this study is to evaluate the incidence, the types and causes of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa State. The study employed survey design and questionnaire was used to collect data. The respondents were selected randomly from three local government areas namely Akwanga, Karu and Lafia. These LGAs were purposely selected to represent Northern, Western and Southern Senatorial Districts. The data for the study rely heavily on primary source obtained through questionnaires. The sample size of 4,000 was drawn at random out of 1.8 million total population of Nasarawa state. Besides, the data would be analyzed using frequency distribution table and simple percentage for easy understanding of the target audience. This method was carefully selected to simplify the findings of the research to the target audience. The study reveals that there are incidences of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa State. Sexual, Physical, Emotional, and Economic violence are the types of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa State. The research concludes that gender discrimination and violence against women occurs in Nasarawa state as a result of traditional and religious beliefs and practices, poverty, low level of education of women among others. The study recommends that government should collaborate with NGOs, Civil organization, traditional rulers and religion leaders to intensify sensitization campaigns against Gender Based Violence in both urban and rural areas of the 13 local government areas of the state.*

**Keywords:** Gender, Discrimination, and Violence.

**Introduction**

CARE International<sup>1</sup> quoted Bank Ki-Moon to have defined gender based violence against women/girls as a global pandemic affecting all countries from low, middle and high-income countries. It is a very complex and widespread issue and it constitutes one of the most serious and most rampant forms of violation of women's human rights in the world today. According to United

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<sup>1</sup> CARE International. "Counting the cost: The price society pays for violence against women". Report of studies conducted in Zambia, Bangladesh and Cambodia. (2014).



Nations estimates, one in three women world-wide has experienced emotional, physical, or sexual violence because she is a woman<sup>2</sup>.

The violence against women/girls takes place virtually everywhere. In the home, in the market place, in other public spaces, on the way to work or in the workplace whether offices, factories, markets, restaurants, hospitals, schools, motor parks, as well as on the journey to and from work wherever that may be. The most common types of gender-based violence globally are intimate partner violence and other types of family violence mainly perpetrated in the home. Other forms include rape, sexual assault, sexual coercion and abuse, child sexual abuse, female infanticide, sex trafficking and forced labour; neglect, elder abuse. Others include harmful traditional practices such as early and forced marriage; killings and female genital mutilation/cutting; dowry-related crimes, and maltreatment of widows<sup>3</sup>.

Most governments around the world have passed specific national laws to end gender-based violence against women and girls. Particularly, on domestic violence, sexual assault and sexual harassment; forced and child marriage; sex trafficking; female genital cutting/ mutilation. This rich and growing body of legislation has built the legal and political basis for interventions to end gender-based violence against women. Federal government of Nigeria has ratified many international and regional conventions that condemn GBV and other acts that temper with the fundamental rights of women and other vulnerable groups<sup>4</sup>.

The gender based violence against women/girls poses a very serious concern globally. The perpetrators of the violence cut across categories of people including the clergy, law enforcement operatives among other. Examples include a policeman 32 year old raped a JSS1 girl. It was also reported that a police corporal, Anthony Onoja, raped a two year old. The Sun Newspaper of February 15, 2014 also reported the sentencing of a 62 year old Pastor who defiled a 10 year old girl in Benin. A boy of 14 raped a 9 year old girl to death; a girl of 16 year old was raped to death in Bayelsa State<sup>5</sup>. Some of the girls are even raped by their biological fathers. Other cases include the raping of a lady in Lagos by a popular musician who claimed it was consensual sex. In 2021, a minor of 3 months was raped in Adogi, Lafia, Nasarawa State. This means that women and girls are not safe in the society. The worse part of this problem is the absent mechanism for redress. That is why violence against women and girls are therefore perpetrated with impunity. This problem informed this study.

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<sup>2</sup> Oxfam. "The power of people against poverty: The Oxfam strategic plan 2013–19. Retrieved from [www.oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/how-we-work/our-goalsand-values](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/how-we-work/our-goalsand-values). (2013).

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Isma'il H. M. Gender based violence and violence against women in Nigeria: a sociological analysis. International journal of research and innovation in social science (IJRISS) vol. v, issue viii (2021).

<sup>5</sup> Action Aid Nigeria. Conflict and the search for justice: Report of enhancing access to justice and safe spaces for women and girls in conflict prone communities of Nasarawa state. (2014).

The objective of the study is to document the prevalence of gender discrimination and violence against women and girls in Nasarawa state. To achieve this, other objectives include:

- a) To evaluate the occurrence of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa State,
- b) To identify the types of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa State, and
- c) To investigate the causes of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa State.

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following research questions would be answered:

- a) Is there gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa state?
- b) What are the types of the gender discrimination in Nasarawa state?
- c) What are the causes of gender discrimination and violence in Nasarawa state?

## Literature and theoretical review

### *Coceptual Review*

**Gnder:** Gender refers to the socially constructed relationship between women and men, and the attributes, behaviour and activities to which each is expected to adhere. Gender differences are determined and reinforced by cultural, historical, ethnic, religious and economic factors. Gender roles differ over time and between cultures, but may be changed. Gender is often wrongly conflated with “sex”, which refers to the biological differences between women and men<sup>6</sup>.

**Violence:** Anthonia (2013)<sup>7</sup> quoted to have said violence has diffenret meaning to different persons depending on the definer and the situation in which it is defined. To her, violence connotes rough treatment, use of unlawfull force to hurt or harm others. Violence is regarded as an act of human inflictions, deprivations and discrimination resulting in or likely to result in unlawful physical, sexual and psychological harm, suffering or deprivation<sup>8</sup>. Besides, Arinze<sup>9</sup> sees violence as the use of physical force, accompanied by fury and outrage. He added that, it involves the utilization of physical force that induces damage or injury, intense natural force, energy, an abusive use of force, passion, fury and disturbance.

<sup>6</sup> Ellsberg, M., D. J. Arango, M. Morton, et al. Prevention of violence against women and girls: what does the evidence say? Violence against women and girls 1. The lancet 385: 1555-66. (2015).

<sup>7</sup> Anthonia O. U. Women in domestic violence in Nigeria: Gender perspectives. Open Journal of Philosophy. Vol.3, No.1A, 185-191 Published Online. (2013).

<sup>8</sup> UN. Human rights publication; connation for elimination of all forms of domestic violence against women (CEDAW). UNDP (2002), Arab Human Development Report 2002. (1993).

<sup>9</sup> Arinze-Umobi, C. Domestic violence against women in Nigeria: A legal anatomy. Onitsha: Folmech Printing and Pub. Coy Ltd. (2008).

**Gender-Based Violence:** Gender-based violence according to Abrahams, N., K. Devries, C. Watts, et al (2014) in Iyabo O., Ibukunoluwa B. O. & Busayo Qazeem, I (2020)<sup>10</sup> is a phenomenon deeply rooted in gender inequality, and continues to be one of the most notable human rights violations within all societies. Gender-based violence is an umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will, and that is based on socially ascribed gender.

Gender based violence refers to any harm perpetrated against a person's will on the basis of gender – the socially ascribed differences between males and females. Gender based violence includes physical, sexual, psychological and economic abuse; trafficking; practices such as female genital cutting, forced marriage and honour crimes; and widespread sexual violence and exploitation during and after conflicts and natural disasters. Gender-based violence is violence directed against a person because of their gender. Both women and men experience gender-based violence but the majority of victims are women and girls (Heise L. et al)<sup>11</sup>.

**Gender-Based Violence Against Women:** Oxfam (2013)<sup>12</sup> adopted the definition of UN which it as “any act of gender-based violence, which results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. This includes,... violence occurring in the family or domestic unit, ...physical and mental aggression, emotional and psychological abuse, rape and sexual abuse, incest, rape between spouses, regular or occasional partners and cohabitants, crimes committed in the name of honour, female genital and sexual mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, such as forced marriages”. Isma’ila (2021)<sup>13</sup> defined gender violence against women/girls as a technical term used to refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women.

#### ***Types/Forms of Gender Based Violence against Women***

Isma’ila (2021)<sup>14</sup> cited European Union (EU 1993) which identified four types of violence against women/girls namely: Physical violence, Sexual violence,

<sup>10</sup> Iyabo O., Ibukunoluwa B. O. Busayo-Qazeem, I. Gender-based violence and socio-economic development in Lagos State, Nigeria. Sapientia Foundation Journal of Education, Sciences and Gender Studies (SFJESGS), Vol.2 No.4 pg. 69 – 83 ISSN: 2734-2522 (Print); ISSN: 2734-2514 (Online). (2020).

<sup>11</sup> Heise, L. et al. Ending violence against women. population reports, series I, no.11. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University School of Public Health, Population Information Program. (1999).

<sup>12</sup> Oxfam Oxfam. The power of people against poverty: the oxfam strategic plan 2013–19. retrieved from [www.oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/how-we-work/our-goals-and-values](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what-we-do/about-us/how-we-work/our-goals-and-values) in (2022).

<sup>13</sup> Isma’il H. M. Gender based violence and violence against women in Nigeria: a sociological analysis. International journal of research and innovation in social science (IJRISS) vol. v, issue viii (2021).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid

Economic violence and Psychological violence. Nigerian women have over the years suffered political, social and economic discrimination<sup>15</sup>.

**Domestic Violence:** Aihie (2009)<sup>16</sup>, defined domestic violence as the intentional and persistent abuse of anyone in the home in a way that causes pain, distress or injury. It refers to any abusive treatment of one family member by another, thus violating the law of basic human rights. It includes battering of intimate partners and others, sexual abuse of children, marital rape and traditional practices that are harmful to women. Domestic violence can be described as the misuse of power by one adult in a relationship to control and establish fear to the other. This violence can take the form of physical assault, psychological abuse, social abuse, financial abuse, or sexual assault ([Ravneet & Suneela, 2008](#))<sup>17</sup>.

**Physical Violence:** Is the intentional use of physical force with the potential of causing injury or harm and death. This includes beating, slapping, pushing, shoving, biting, hair pulling, kicking, throwing things, choking, burning and the use of, or threats to use a weapon including a gun, knife or other object (WHO, 2017)<sup>18</sup>.

**Psychological Violence:** Psychological violence is an action or set of actions that directly impair the woman's psychological integrity. This include: threats of violence and harm against the woman through words or actions such as stalking or displaying weapons; harassment; humiliating and insulting comments, constantly criticising claiming that survivors are crazy, incompetent, and unable to do anything right, controlled and monitored, isolation and restrictions on communication (UN, 2015)<sup>19</sup>.

**Economic/Financial Violence:** Is a form of domestic violence in which the abuser uses money as a means of controlling his partner. It is designed to isolate a woman into a state of complete financial dependence. It includes controlling all the family resources such as time, food, transportation, clothing, shelter, property insurance and not being allowed to have independent income (Ganley, 1998)<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> UN Human rights publication; connation for elimination of all forms of domestic violence against women (CEDAW). UNDP (2002), Arab Human Development Report 2002, (1993).

<sup>16</sup> Aihie, O. N. Prevalence of domestic violence in Nigeria: Implications for counselling. Edo journal of counselling vol. 2, no. 1. (2009).

<sup>17</sup> Ravneet K. & Suneela G. Addressing domestic violence against women: an unfinished agenda. Indian journal of community medicine. Official publication of Indian association of preventive & social medicine courtesy of wolters kluwer – medknow publications. (2008).

<sup>18</sup> WHO. Rape, how women, the community and the health sector respond, sexual violence research initiative – world health organisation, 2007. <http://www.svri.org/rape.pdf> (2017).

<sup>19</sup> UN, 2015

<sup>20</sup> (Ganley, 1998)

**Sexual Violence:** WHO (2017)<sup>21</sup>, defines sexual violence as any sexual act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim in any setting. It includes rape, defined as the physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration of the vulva or anus with a penis, other body part or object.

**Rape and Sexual Assault:** WHO (2017)<sup>22</sup>, defines rape as the penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis, body part or object, without the voluntary consent of the individual. Marital rape is a sexual intercourse imposed on a woman by her husband against her will. Women who have been raped are severely traumatised and in most cases suffer from acute stress, anxiety and intense emotions. In fact, rape and sexual assault are among the most common causes of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder in women. Tjaden & Thoennes (2000)<sup>23</sup> defined Rape as an event that occurred without the victim's consent, that involves the use of threat or force to penetrate the victim's vagina or anus by penis, tongue, fingers, or object, or the victim's mouth by penis. The definition includes both attempted and completed rape. Rape is very common in Nasarawa state. The perpetrators and victims cut across ethnic and religious groups. However, in recent times herdsmen are noted for raping women from other ethnic groups. Women are raped by the herdsmen on the farms, desolate roads, and when they go about their gender assigned roles of fetching fire wood, fruits and water among others.

**Early and Forced Marriage:** In many parts of the world, young girls sometimes as young as age six are forced into early marriage often with men many years older by their families and communities, often justified by religious beliefs or tradition. Child marriage often results in early pregnancy and social isolation. It interrupts schooling, limits girl's opportunities and increases her risk of experiencing domestic violence (UNICEF, 2019)<sup>24</sup>. Early or forced marriage happens in Nasarawa, from 11 to 15 years of age. Most of the children/wards are out of school to become hawking merchandise for their parents. This practice often exposes girls to sexual violation. This is more common in areas like Kurikyo, Shabu, Tudun Gwandara, Tundun Abu in Lafia.

#### **Causes of Gender Violence Against Women/Girls**

The following are the causes of gender violence against women/girls in Nasarawa state:

**Religion and Traditional Beliefs:** Most religions in Nasarawa subscribe divine believe that God created man, then he made for him a helper, a woman. This arrangement places the man as the head of the family and he has absolute control of all affairs in the family and decision making powers while the woman

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<sup>21</sup> WHO (2017), rape, how women, the community and the health sector respond, sexual violence research

initiative – world health organisation, 2007. <http://www.svri.org/rape.pdf>. (2017).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid

<sup>23</sup> Tjaden P. and Thoennes N. Full report of the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of violence against women. national violence against women survey. (2000).

<sup>24</sup> UNICEF. child marriage around the world infographic and UNICEF (2017). is every child counted? status of data for children in the sdgs, p. 54. (2019).

as the helper. She cooks, takes care of the children, house and she is the mother of the children. Everything that belongs to the women is used to complement efforts of the household heads. This believe is common among Alago, Eggon Tiv, Agatu, Gbagi among others.

**Low Level of Education:** Lack of education and low social status in the community is linked to violence against women. Women with low education are more likely to experience violence than those with higher level of education. Also, rural residents tend to agree that a husband is justified for beating his wife more than those in urban areas. It is on this note that the enrolment of girls in schools in Nasarawa State is generally improved.

**Political Factors:** At the moment, there is no single woman in the State House of Assembly of 25 members. Since the creation of Nasarawa State in 1996, no woman has held the chairperson of a local government. Because females are not represented in politics, policy and law making, gender-sensitive issues and plight of women are not being giving adequate attention.

**Addiction to Drug and Alcohol:** Men who abused drugs are prone to violence against their wives. After an excessive consumption of alcohol or drugs, the husbands acting under influence descend violently on the wife inflicting upon her varying degrees of injuries or in some cases death occurs.

**Economic Factor:** Many women in Nasarawa State depend on their husbands for their sustenance and that of their children too. They find it difficult to leave their husbands even if they are being abused every day.

### ***Theoretical framework***

This paper adopts the *Social Learning Theory* postulated by Albert Bandura<sup>25</sup> (1977, p.9). The *Theory states that people learn behavioural patterns from other people around them*. He added that modelling on parental behaviour may also be relevant to the understanding of violence against women. Thus, there is a general belief that a man who witnessed violence against women/girls in childhood, is more likely to perpetrate it than a man who did not (Bandura 1986, p.29)<sup>26</sup> as cited in (Isma'il, 2021). Delaney (2015)<sup>27</sup> in Isma'ila (2021) suggest that early learning of violence make children more likely to not only engage in it but to also approve of it later in their lives.

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<sup>25</sup> Bandura, A. Social learning theory. General Learning Press in Isma'il H. M. (2021). Gender Based Violence and Violence against Women in Nigeria: A Sociological Analysis. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS) vol v, Issue viii. (1977).

<sup>26</sup> Bandura, A. Social learning theory (2nd Ed.). Prentice-Hall p.29 in Isma'il H. M. (2021). Gender Based Violence and Violence against Women in Nigeria: A Sociological Analysis. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS) vol. v, Issue viii. (1986).

<sup>27</sup> Delaney, A. X. Violent socialization and youth violence across different nations: international variations in familial and contextual factors in violence and crime in the family: patterns, causes, and consequences. (2015).



Eriksson & Mazerolle (2015)<sup>28</sup> added that early exposure to violence infuse in children cognitive beliefs condoning the use of interpersonal violence and thus increases the likelihood of them engaging in it.

### Emperical review

Previous empirical studies on the gender discrimination and violence against women are reviewed as presented. Anthonia<sup>29</sup> (2013) examined women in domestic violence in Nigeria: Gender Perspectives. He used questionnaire as instrument for data collection while simple percentage was adopted as method of the data analysis. The study revealed that most common victims are the daughters of same family or clan, co-wives of same family or clan, women in politics, women in same occupation, women in zones of same religious activities. His recommended strategies include: enhancing women education, effective application of the rule of law, encouraging women empowerment, attending to our religious duties and practices, encouraging women in politics, empowerment of gender equality in society, addressing negative traditional and cultural practices and embarking on public enlightenment.

Isma'il<sup>30</sup> examines gender based violence and violence against women in Nigeria: A Sociological Analysis. He used secondary data. Different forms of violence were identified in the study and they include beating; rape; humiliation; verbal abuse; widowhood practices; early marriage; sexual harassment and female genital mutilation. His study identified the following consequences which include depression; suicide; murder; sexually transmitted diseases; and physical injuries. He therefore recommended that government; individuals, civil society and non-governmental organizations should act accordingly towards eliminating the menace.

### Methodology

The study employed a survey design due to its ability to measures opinions of people and data collected is considered to be representative of the entire group. The study employed primary sources of data while questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The details data collected were simplify using tables. Simple percentage was used in data analyses for easy understanding of the target audience. The researchers purposlly selected Akwanga LGA in the Northern Senatorial District, Karu LGA from Western Senatorial District and Lafia from Southern Senatorial District. Yamane formula was adopted to determine the sample size of the population of this study.

Below is the Yamane formula

<sup>28</sup> Erikson, L., & Mazerolle, P. A cycle of violence? Examining family-of-origin violence, attitudes, and intimate partner violence perpetration. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30 (6): 945-964. (2015).

<sup>29</sup> Anthonia O. U. Women in domestic violence in Nigeria: Gender perspectives. *Open Journal of Philosophy*. Vol.3, No.1A, 185-191 Published Online. (2013).

<sup>30</sup> Isma'il H. M. Gender based violence and violence against women in Nigeria: a sociological analysis. *International journal of research and innovation in social science (IJRISS)* volume v, issue viii (2021).



$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

n = Sample size  
N = Population  
e = Level of precision

$$n = \frac{1,800,000}{1 + 1,800,000 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{1,800,000}{1 + 4500}$$

$$n = \frac{1,800,000}{4501}$$

$$n = 399.9$$

$$n \approx 400$$

**Table 1: Showing Distribution of Sample Size**

Local Government Area	Population at the 2006 Census	Formula	Sample Size
Akwanga	153,930	$\frac{153,930}{690,119} = 0.22 \times 400$	88
Karu	205,477	$\frac{205,477}{690,119} = 0.30 \times 400$	120
Lafia	330,712	$\frac{1330,712}{690,119} = 0.48 \times 400$	192
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>690,119</b>		<b>400</b>

**Source: Self Compiled 2022.**

A sample size of 400 was obtained out of 1.8 million population of the state using the Yamane formula and was used for the study. Eighty eight (88) respondents were drawn from Akwanga LGA, one hundred and twenty (120) respondents were selected from Karu LGA and one hundred and ninety two (192) respondents were selected from Lafia LGA.

A total of four hundred (400) copies of the questionnaires were administered out of which twenty one (21) copies representing 5% of the questionnaires were not properly completed or not returned. Out of the 376 returned questionnaires, 80(21%) aged between 15 and 24, 115(31%) aged between 25 and 34, 98(26%) aged between 35 and 34 and 83(22%) aged between 45 & above. 214(51%) were male and 162(49%) were female. 19(5%) had first school leaving certificate, 167(44%) secondary school certificate while 66(18%) had Diploma/National Diploma/NCE, 104(28%) had HND/Degree/PGD and 20(5%) had MSc/MPhil/PhD. On the marital status, 68(18%) were singled never married, 203(54%) were married and 105(28%)

divorced/divorcee/separated/widowed/widower. On the religion, 201(54%) were Christians while 163(43%) were Muslims and 12(03%) other religions.

**Table 3: Responses of Experience on Physical Violence**

**Female: Did you experience any of the following because you are a woman/Girl?**

**Male: Did you or someone you know do any of the following?**

S/NO	RESPONSES	Yes	No
A	Physically hurt with object like Knife/ Gun/ Bottle or any other objects.	248(66%)	128(34%)
B	Hit/Slapped/Kick.	286(76%)	90(24%)
C	Arm Twisted.	203(54%)	173(46%)
D	Beaten.	244(65%)	122(35%)
E	Bitten.	241(64%)	135(36%)
F	Was robbed.	248(66%)	128(34%)

**Source: Self Compiled 2022.**

Table 3 interrogates women/girls on their experience on physical violence reveals that 286(76%) were physically hurt with either knife/gun/bottle or other objects, 286(76%) were hit, slapped or kicked. 203(54%) were arm twisted, 244(65%) bitten with teeth, 241(64%) were bitten and 248(66%) were robbed. This experienced by women/girls in the study reaffirm the prevalence of violence within the state.

**Table 4: Responses of Experience on Emotional Violence**

**Female: Did you experience any of the following because you are a Woman/Girl?**

**Male: Did you or someone you know do any of the following?**

S/NO	RESPONSES	Yes	No
A	Someone said you are sexually unattractive	184(49%)	192(51%)
B	Humiliated	275(73%)	101(27%)
C	Threatened to kill you	147(39%)	229(61%)
D	Verbal attacks on your personality	188(50%)	188(50%)
E	Threatened to fail you in exam	184(49%)	192(51%)

**Source: Self Compiled 2022.**

Table 4 investigates experience of women/girls on emotional violence and its shows that 192(51%) responded that nobody told them they were sexually unattractive. 275(73%) were humiliated. 229(61%) were threatened to be killed, while 188(50%) said there personality was verbally attacked and 192(51%) were threatened to fail exam. This result shows a high level of disrespect for women/girls' concerning their desires and their bodies.

**Table 5: Responses of Experience on Sexual Violence**

**Female: Did you experience any of the following because you are a Woman/Girl?**

**Male: Did you or someone you know do any of the following?**

S/N	RESPONSES	Yes	No
A	Someone either touched/Kissed/Hugged when you did not want	199(53%)	177(47%)
B	Someone made sexually suggestive comments that made you feel offended	196(52%)	181(48%)
C	Someone sent you sexually explicit videos/films/pictures that made you feel offended.	162(43%)	214(57%)
D	Someone put drugs into your drinks so that he could have sex with you.	184(49%)	229(61%)
E	Someone forced you to have sexual intercourse	150(40%)	226(60%)

**Source: Self Compiled 2022.**

Table 5 reports on their experience on sexual violence of women/girls shows that 199(53%) said they were touched/Kissed/Hugged when they did not want. 196(52%) said someone made sexually suggestive comments that made them feel offended. 214(57%) said no body sent sexually explicit videos/films/pictures that offended them. 229(61%) said drugs was never used into their drinks to have sex with them and 226(60%) said they were not forced to have sexual intercourse.

### **Summary of major findings**

The findings of this research reveal the incidence of physical violence such as hurt with objects like Knife/ Gun/ Bottle. Others are hit, slapped, kicked, beaten, bitten with teeth, robbed, among others in Nasarawa state. The findings of this research are in line with that of Imam et al (2003) where some state agents were involved. A woman was slapped and kicked continuously by a Divisional Police Officer, for complaining when she was asked to pull her car off the road in a congested traffic. A pregnant woman was hit when a group of soldiers shot at a bus in which she was a passenger. Such incidents occur across the nation, but victims do not get justice. Many women were beaten while in detention.

Besides, there were incidences of different forms of emotional violence ranging from intimidation, humiliation, attacks on personality on women/girls in Nasarawa state. But majority of men/boys dissociated their selves from emotional violence. The right of women to human dignity is always violated. This finding is in agreement with that of Ogoh et al, 2014 who states that head of an organization based in Kadarko community reported that the security agents who came to protect the communities during the Giza crises also violated the girls, especially in the IDP camp.

Sexual violence was the most prevalent gender violence in the state. It involves sexually suggestive comments, touched, kissed, and hugged. Others include sending of sexually explicit videos, films, pictures without the acceptance of the woman/girl, use of drugs on drinks and force to have sexual intercourse. Although, majority of the male respondents accepted the incidence of both the physical, Sexual and Emotional violence in Nasarawa state but denied engaging in perpetrating the unlawful acts.

### **Conclusion**

The researchers conclude that there are incidences of gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in the Nasarawa state. The menace is everywhere, its in mosques, Churches, Schools as some male teachers exploit their female students. The more surpassing is the occurrence of the violence in Police Stations, Correctional Centres by law enforcement officers who take advantage of women/girls in their custody. The perpetrators and the victims cut across different ages, religions ethnicity, professions and other diversity in the state. Traditional and religious believe and practices are the major causes and reasons for gender discrimination and violence against women/girls in Nasarawa state and also the reason why women and girls remain silent about the abuses.

### **Recommendations**

1. There is need for collaboration by both the governmental and non-governmental organizations, religion and traditional leaders to intensify sensitization campaigns against Gender Based Violence in both urban and rural areas of the 13 local government areas of the state.
2. There is need for the Nasarawa state government to establish an agency that can provide victims of gender based violence with fundamental services such as accommodation, counselling, skills acquisition, financial assistance and many more.
3. There is need for the state government to revamp the state judicial system through capacity building of personnel, adequate provision of machines, modern equipments and modern gadgets in order to achieve global best practices in ensuring speedy dispensation of justice for the victims of gender based violence in the state.
4. There is need for the Nasarawa state government to enact and enforce stringent laws and measures to eliminate harmful traditional practices such as Female Genital Mutilation by Migili, female child hawking, women/girls street begging, in Tiv community in Kadarko, women are not allowed to participate in decisions being made by men at public among others that have positive correlation to gender based violence against women and girls in Nasarawa State.
5. There is also the need for the state government, non-governmental organizations, civil society and philanthropists to initiate and adequately fund more women economic empowerment programmes since there is a positive correlation between women's heavy economic dependence on gender based violence against women and girls.