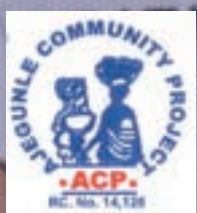




BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN



Violence against Women in Grassroots Areas of Lagos State

A Research Report

**BECAUSE
WE ARE
WOMEN**



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Violence against Women in Grassroots Areas of Lagos State

A Research Report

Ajegunle Community Project

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Violence against women is “those bad bad things that men do to we women because we be women”

Mrs. Ainoje, a market woman

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Abbreviations and Acronyms



- ACHPR** » African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Right of Women in Africa
- ACP** » Ajegunle Community Project
- CEDAW** » Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- CSO** » Civil Society Organisation
- GBV** » Gender-based violence
- GBV and D** » Gender-based violence and discrimination
- LGA** » Local Government Area
- NGO** » Non-governmental organisation
- NVAW** » National Violence against Women
- UN** » United Nation
- VAW** » Violence against women
- WHO** » World Health Organisation

Our Debt of Gratitude



Acknowledgement

A man's indebtedness... is not virtue; his repayment is. Virtue begins when he dedicates himself actively to the job of gratitude.

Ruth Benedict, US anthropologist

The Ajegunle Community Project (ACP) acknowledges with gratitude the funding support received from Cordaid Netherlands for this project.

We also thank Dr. Rasheed Akinyemi and Mrs. Mariam Quadri of the Department of Political Science at the University of Lagos, Mr. Kehinde Edremoda of the Democratic Alternative, the officers of the Area "B" Police Command, Apapa, and, most important, the research field workers for their active participation in the research process.

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Because We Are Women



We need to reassess our long-held cultural and traditional values and reject those atrocities that are committed against women under the guise of culture, tradition, and religion

Foreword

The enthusiasm to accept to write the foreword to this research report is based on three fundamental considerations. First, it is the importance of the subject of the project, which is violence against women and discrimination in our society. The importance of this phenomenon cannot be over emphasised, especially as it affects our societal development.

Gender-based violence is not restricted to economically underprivileged societies or countries. It is a widespread societal problem that cuts across countries and regions all over the world. It is an ancient and universal problem occurring in every culture and social group. It is for this reason that the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women. Article 1 of the UN Declaration defines violence against women as:

“any act of gender-based violence that 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 deprivations of liberty, whether occurring

BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN

in public or private life” (ECOSOC 1992).

From this definition, it is evident that it is a violence involving men and women, in which the female is usually the victim and which arises from unequal power relationship between a man and a woman. Such violence includes physical, sexual and psychological violence such as domestic violence; burning or acid throwing; sexual abuse, including rape and incest by family members; female genital mutilation (FGM); female feticide and infanticide; sexual slavery; forced marriage and forced pregnancy; honour killing; dowry-related violence; emotional abuse such as coercion and abusive language; and abduction of women and girls for prostitution.

To support the statistical facts contained in the Ajegunle Community Project report, the *UNIFEM Gender Fact Sheet (No. 5)* also shows that:

1. At least one in every three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused by a man in her lifetime
2. More than 20 percent of women are reported to have been abused by men with whom they live
3. Among women aged 15-44 years, gender-based violence accounts for more death and disability among women than the combined effects of cancer, malaria, traffic injuries and war
4. That trafficking in women and girls for sexual exploitation by men is most common among poor women and girls
5. Women who are victims of domestic violence are 12 times more likely to attempt suicide than those who do not experience such violence
6. An estimation of 85 to 114 million women and girls in Africa, Middle East and Asia, have undergone female genital mutilation.

Foreword: Because We Are Women

The Ajegunle Community Project (ACP) demonstrates through this very important research that all the above-identified act of violence against women is common in our communities. The project demonstrates well enough both the scope and depth of this violence in our society.

The second reason that motivates this foreword is to comment and commend the methodology and methods that the Ajegunle Community Project adopted in carrying out this investigation. It is a well-constructed survey research, situated between the two mainstream research paradigms. This approach called triangulation is a valuable research strategy that allows for the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon (Babbie 2007; Creswell 1994). The research process and methodology is straightforward for the purpose of replication by other community-based organisations. That is, the reliability and validity of the process is transparent. The ability to manage and conduct this empirically based research by a “grassroots” or community-based organisation (CBO) should alert all development stakeholders, especially policy makers and donors, of the importance of such structures on the ground and their potentials to contribute to participatory development. It is not only the elitist, urban-based, and middle-class so called “civil society” that should be entrusted with development issues and empirically based fact-findings. The example demonstrated by the Ajegunle Community Project through this research on gender-based violence and discrimination against women is evidence of the importance of CBOs as potential partners in bringing development closer to the people.

Third, this foreword is to serve the purpose of introducing and recommend the work to the reader. It is a report with which all stakeholders in development issues, security matters, policy makers, schools and other educational institutions, donors as well as the youth and families should be familiar. The report will serve as a ref-

BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN

erence material for educational purposes, awareness building, and policy formulation.

Finally, community leaders and businesses are called upon to engage themselves with the issues raised in the report with the aims of giving support to eradicating the basic roots of violence (which is poverty) in our society. Most violence is due to transferred aggression both in the public and in private sphere, especially in cases of domestic violence. Socio-economic conditions mostly are responsible for transferred aggression and the solutions lie in the economic and political empowerment of the people, through responsive governance and positive social responsibility of the state.

The on-going neo-liberal economic and political agenda of the government can only exacerbate an already dangerous situation where the absence of social infrastructure like education, health, transportation, employment, and basic needs like shelter, food, and clothing have created tension and insecurity and transferred aggression with the outcome of violence against the weak and the poor in the society. Also, we need to develop executable legislation on violence against women to criminalise gender violence in all forms and provide women with protection when facing violence or being threatened by it.

We need to reassess our long-held cultural and traditional values and reject those atrocities that are committed against women under the guise of culture, tradition, and religion.

All the above is to say that more research is needed to show that we are living in the world of reality and one of that reality is that gender-based violence is real and can be tackled successfully.

Rasheed I. Akinyemi, Ph.D.

16th September 2008

A Growing Pandemic

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The Ajegunle Community Project demonstrates through this very important research that violence against women is common in our communities

Gender-based violence and discrimination has become a phenomenon, which is receiving global attention because of its effect on women and the girl child worldwide. This pandemic, despite many treaties, laws, and campaigns against it from many quarters, is increasing every minute.

Since its establishment in the year 1996, Ajegunle Community Project (ACP) has been committed to the issue of gender inequality and gender-based violence and discrimination in our society as they affect women.

Between August and September 2007, the organisation carried out a research project to determine the prevalence of gender-based violence and discrimination in grassroots areas of Lagos State, Nigeria using Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area as a case study. One thousand five hundred (1500) questionnaires were administered to the inhabitants living in Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area during the fieldwork and 1483 persons responded to the questionnaires.

Out of total of 1483 persons that responded to ques-

tions (most common gender-based violence) in the questionnaire, sexual harassment has a total of 288 with 19.42 percent, followed by rape 273 with 18.41 percent and child abuse 195 with 13.15 percent. Wife battery has 163 with 10.99 percent, male preference 94 with 6.34 percent, female circumcision 72 with 4.86 percent and patriarchy 68 with 4.59 percent. Others are widowhood rites 65 with 4.38 percent, ritual-cleansing 57 with 3.84 percent. Two hundred and eight (208) persons did not respond at all to the questionnaires.

From the highlighted findings of the research above, it was discovered that sexual harassment and rape are the most prevalent gender-based violence problem in Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area. This is as a result of close dwelling pattern and lack of privacy; the number of people living in a room is just too high, which gives room for conflict or violence. High prevalence of child abuse was recorded as a result of child neglect due to poverty and lack of family planning. An average family size far outstrips the government recommendation of four children to one parent/household. Again, it was discovered that the prevalence of wife battery is high because most men are not gainfully employed and this gives room for domestic violence.

Overall, it was discovered that there is problem of social and physical disorder, which endanger Women and the girl-child in grass-roots areas. For instance, analysis indicates that male dominance in relationship engenders sexual abuse and violence with about 832 (56.10%) respondents supports this notion while 438 (29.53%) disagree and 213 (14.36%) are neutral. Also, the findings indicate that women tend to stay in abusive relationship because of societal expectation with 918 (61.90%) respondents believe in this argument and 385 (25.96%) disagree while 180 (12.14%) respondents did not answer this question.

The break down of findings, implications, and recommendations are discussed in the report.

Introduction & Background

Gender-based violence is any act or threat of action intended to hurt or make women or girls suffer physically, sexually or psychologically, and which affects them simply because they are women

1.0. Introduction

The term gender-based violence started attracting attention during the United Nations Decade for women between 1975 and 1985 and culminated when it appeared very conspicuously in the United Nations definition of violence against women in 1993.

The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines violence against women as: “.... any act of gender-based violence that 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 in private life.”

This statement defines violence against women as acts that cause, or have the potential to cause harm, and by introducing the term “gender-based” emphasises that it is rooted in inequality between women and men. Gender-based violence means any act or threat of action intended to hurt or make women or girls suffer physically, sexually or psychologically, and which affect them simply because they are wom-

en. The term gender-based violence is often used interchangeably with violence against women. These definitions point at violence against women as a result of gender inequality.

During Project Alert's national research on violence against women in Nigeria, some 'home-made' definitions of violence against women in Nigeria were sought as contained in *Beyond Boundaries: Violence against Women in Nigeria* (2001). Mrs. Ainoje, a market woman in Edo State defines it as "those bad bad things that men do to we women because we be women," while Hajiya Habiba in Adamawa State considered it to be "the bad ways women are treated in the family and in the society." Peace Epelle in Rivers State says it is the "maltreatment of women physically and emotionally."

The above definitions come from the three ethnic groups in Nigeria, thus it shows that the setting may change but violence against women share a common theme of "acts that are socially tolerated in parts because the victims are female."

Violence against women is a violation of Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) insofar as it constitutes discrimination that comprises or nullifies the enjoyment of individual rights and freedoms.

The protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Right of Women in Africa (ACHPR Protocol) calls for the elimination of practices injurious to women and protects them against specific forms of violence by guaranteeing them such rights as those to dignity, life, integrity, and security. Women world over, and especially in many African countries, are subjected to various forms of gender-based violence.

Forms of violence against women largely experienced in Nigeria include physical violence such as battery, sexual violence such as rape and incest, psychological violence, traditional practices that are harmful to health (e.g. female genital cutting, forced marriage, widowhood practices).

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

It was noted that in Nigeria, violence against women permeates all levels of the society. Women and girls remain victims of gender violence largely because Nigeria is a patriarchal society. As a result, atrocities are committed against women and girls under the guise of culture, religion, etc.

Hierarchical gender role attributes and responsibilities also ensure that women have lower status and less power in society than men. This is exacerbated by women's lack of means to sustain themselves owing to their low level or total lack of education, which ultimately results in their dependence and subordinate status within the family.

The consequences of this pervasive problem are enormous. Violence against women and girls affects the capability and quality of lives of women greatly. The connection has also been made with the health and well-being of women. Not only are the survivors most often unable to actualise their potential, every segment of the society such as economic, social and political suffers from the effects of gender violence.

The menace of violence against women is the most prominent form of abuse of women's human rights in Nigeria. This phenomenon affects women in public and private arenas and has been linked at different times with other global concerns, such as globalisation, neo-liberalism, poverty, and issues relating to power and control. Consequently, violence against women and girls has emerged over the years a critical area of concern for development practitioners and women's human rights activists.

Gender-based violence, or violence against women (VAW), is a major public health and human rights problem throughout the world. Violence against women has profound implications for health but is often ignored. The *WHO World Report on Violence and Health* notes "one of the most common forms of violence against women is that performed by a husband or male partner." This type of violence

is frequently invisible since it happens behind closed doors, and effectively, when legal systems and cultural norms do not treat it as a crime, but rather as a private family matter, or a normal part of life. The *WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women* (2005) shows that violence against women is widespread with far-reaching health consequences. It calls on governments to take concerted action and makes recommendations for the health, education, and criminal justice sectors to take the problem seriously.

This ground-breaking research has gathered comparable data from over 24,000 women interviewed in 15 cities in 10 countries: Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Peru, Namibia, Samoa, Serbia and Montenegro, Thailand, and United Republic of Tanzania.

It was discovered that most instances of intimate partner victimisation are not reported to the police. Only approximately one-fifth of all rapes, one-quarter of all physical assaults, and one-half of all stalking perpetrated against female respondents by intimates were reported to the police. Even fewer rapes, physical assaults, and stalking perpetrated against male respondents by intimates were reported. The majority of victims who did not report their victimisation to the police thought the police would not or could not do anything on their behalf.

Gender-based violence is also a key health risk for women in the Republic of South Africa. The Mzikazi Nduna, Medical Research Council, Personal Communication, (2003) analysed data from 1,395 interviews with women attending antenatal clinics in Soweto, South Africa, between November 2001 and April 2002 to estimate the prevalence of gender-based violence. The finding is as follows: physical/sexual partner violence (55.5%), adult sexual assault by non-partners (7.9%), child sexual assault (8.0%), and forced first intercourse (7.3%). Age at first experience of each type of violence was modelled by the Kaplan-Meier method, and Cox hazard mod-

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

els with time-varying covariates were used to explore whether child sexual assault and forced first intercourse were associated with risk of violent re-victimisation in adulthood. Child sexual assault was associated with increased risk of physical and/or sexual partner violence (risk ratio = 2.43, 95% confidence interval: 1.93, 3.06) and with adult sexual assault by a non-partner (risk ratio = 2.33, 95% confidence interval: 1.40, 3.89). Forced first intercourse was associated with increased risk of physical and/or sexual partner violence (risk ratio = 2.64, 95% confidence interval: 2.07, 3.38) and non-significantly with adult sexual assault by a non-partner (risk ratio = 2.14, 95% confidence interval: 0.92, 4.98). This study confirms the need for increased attention by the public health community to primary and secondary prevention of gender-based violence, with a specific need to reduce risk among South African adolescents.

This study confirms that gender-based violence is a key health risk among Republic of South African women. The finding that 21.8 percent of women seeking antenatal care experienced multiple assaults by a male partner in the last 12 months strongly suggests that violence during pregnancy is sufficiently common to warrant development of violence-related interventions for antenatal care in South Africa. The findings also provide evidence that primary and secondary prevention of gender-based violence is urgently needed among South African adolescents.

According to the National Violence against Women (NVAW) survey (1998), sponsored by the National Institute of Justice and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, intimate partner violence is pervasive in U.S. society. Nearly 25% of surveyed women and 7.5% of surveyed men said they were raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, or date at some time in their lifetime. Stalking by intimates is more prevalent than previously thought, exceeding previous non-scientific “guess-estimates” of stalking in the general population. Almost 5% of sur-

veyed women and 0.6% of surveyed men reported being stalked by a current or former spouse, cohabiting partner, or date at some time in their lifetime.

1.1 Background to the Project

As a result of the need for statistical information on the prevalence of gender-based violence and discrimination, the Ajegunle Community Project's Research and Documentation Department carried out a research survey using Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area as a case study with research field workers for fifteen days under the Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area. One thousand five hundred (1500) questionnaires were administered to the inhabitants living in various streets under Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area during the fieldwork and a total of 1483 persons responded to the questionnaires.

Prior to the field work the Ajegunle Community Project organised a one-day sensitisation workshop to train the twenty-five field workers that were deployed to the field to carry out the research on gender-based violence and discrimination prevalence in the various communities under Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area. The workshop took place on Tuesday August 28th 2007 at Embassy Hotel 4 Idewu Street. The resource persons for the workshop were Dr. Rasheed Akinyemi and Mrs. Mariam Quadri both from the Department of Political Science at the University of Lagos. At the end of the workshop, the participants had in-depth knowledge of gender-based violence and discrimination issues as they affect women and they were equipped with basic skills in survey research and in the analysis of data generated from the questionnaires. Also, ACP staff and some of the field workers conducted in-house house training and a role-play. The role-play highlighted some of the challenges that the field workers may likely encounter in the course of carrying their assignment.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

1.2 Project Objectives

The research objective is to determine the prevalence, nature and causes of violence against women and the girl-child in grassroots areas of Lagos State, using Ajeromi-Ifelodun Area, a grassroots community as a case study to identify the specific need areas, to determine how best to address them, and to fill a gap in existing literature.

1.3 Background of the Local Government

The Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area was carved out of old Ojo Local Government Area in November 1996 by the then military government. Prior to 1976, it was a district council which consisted of the following towns and settlements: Aiyetoro, Alayabiagba, Onibaba, Layeni, Awodi-Ora, Amukoko, Mosafejo, Oridilu, Alaba-Oro, Ojo Road, Araromi, Tolu, Ibafo, Alakoto, Dankaka and Kirikiri town. During the 1976 Local Government Reforms, however, it became known as Awori-Ajeromi District Council. The creation of Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government in November 1996 was as a result of the federal government's policy of bringing government closer to the grassroots for even development.

The local government has a teeming population of about 1.7 million. There are eleven (11) wards; the communities therein are Awodi-Ora, Ibafo, Dankaka, Alakoto, Layeni, Suru-Alaba, Oridilu, Oke-Oja, Amukoko, Mosafejo, Araromi, and Onibaba.

1.4 People

The existence of what is known today as Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area dates back to the 18th century with a strong linkage with the Egun and Awori. The local government area can be said to depict a cosmopolitan area of hope because of the peaceful co-existence of different ethnic groups. They include the Ijaw, Itsekiri, Urhobo, Hausa, Igala, Igbo, Isoko, and Ilaje, among others. It should be mentioned here that it is one of the highly populated and

educationally backward local governments in Lagos state.

1.5 Occupation

The people of Ajeromi-Ifelodun local Government are predominantly traders, civil servants, artisan, labourers with few farmers and fishermen. This area is known to have the highest number of markets, which shows that the people are mostly petty traders. There is little or no industry within the area.

1.6 Culture

Ajeromi-Ifelodun local government has a rich heritage. Most of the inhabitants are immigrants who have come to work and live in the area because of the various job opportunities therein.

Methodology



The realisation of women's rights is a global struggle based on universal human rights and the rule of law. It requires all of us to unite to end traditions, practices, and laws that harm women

2.1 Procedure

A multi-disciplinary method of conducting a research was employed. Apart from the scientific historical methods of investigation, the social sciences statistical data collection was adopted. Thus, we first carry out a general survey not only to ascertain the extent of the prevalence of gender-based violence and discrimination against the girl-child in the geographical area under study but we also gather statistical data on gender-based violence.

Training on research methodology was conducted for the research field workers used during the exercise. A consultant was employed, based on the investigation of the research and documentation department. The next stage was the administration of questionnaires by the trained field workers, thereafter; there was coding, editing and analysis on the generated information gathered.

2.2 Target Groups

Women, girls, some selected men, police, local government officials, and health management officers

and local non-governmental organisations.

2.3 Post Survey Briefing

On 29th January 2008, the Ajegunle Community Project organised a one-day post survey stakeholders briefing workshop of the research findings on the prevalence of gender-based violence in grassroots areas, using Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area as case study.

Research Findings



This research established a high prevalence of sexual harassment, rape, child abuse, and wife battery, and that social and physical disorder endanger women and the girl-child in grassroots areas

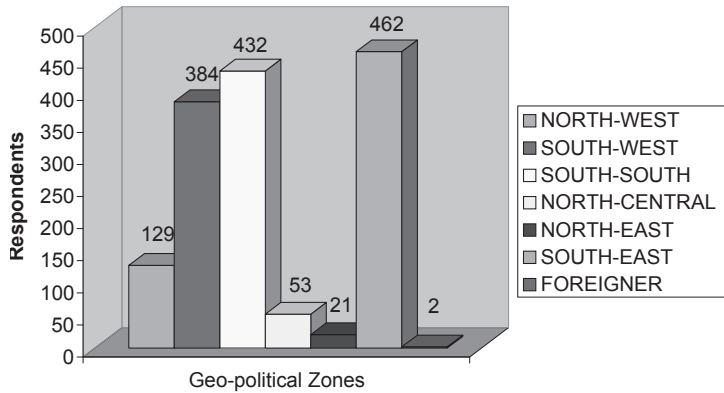
3.1 Classification of Data from the Questionnaire

In order to organise the data well, we had to classify and then tabulate the data with graphical representation. As a result of the multi-ethnicity of inhabitants living in Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area, the ethnic groups were divided into various Geo-political zones for purpose of collection of data. A glance at both the table and Bar chart below revealed that Ajegunle was divided into the six geo-political zones: North-West, South-West, South-South, North-Central, North-East, and South-East. Based on the survey, the Ethnic group from the South-East is the highest in the data collated with a population of 462, followed by South-South with 432. Others are South-West with 384, North-West 129, North-Central 53, and North-East 21. In the survey, only two (2) foreigners were interviewed.

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ETHNIC GROUP	TOTAL	%
NORTH WEST	129	8.70
SOUTH-WEST	384	25.89
SOUTH-SOUTH	432	29.13
NORTH CENTRAL	53	3.57
NORTH-EAST	21	1.42
SOUTH EAST	462	31.15
FOREIGNER	2	0.13
TOTAL	1483	100.00

ETHNIC GROUP OF RESPONDENTS

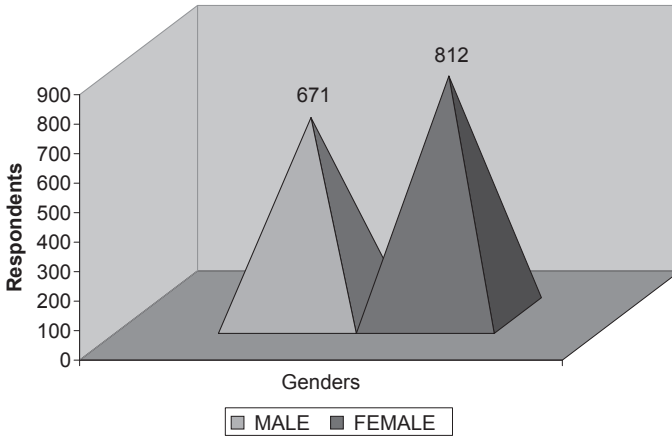


3.2 Classification of Data in Accordance to Gender

A total number of 1483 people responded to the questionnaire out of which 812 were female (54.75 percent) and 671 male (45.25 percent). This is clearly presented in the table and bar chart below.

GENDER	TOTAL	%
MALE	671	45.25
FEMALE	812	54.75
TOTAL	1483	100.00

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS



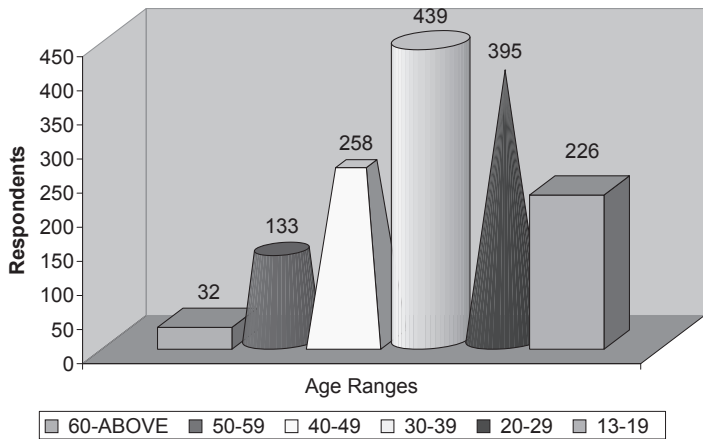
3.3 Classification of Data in Accordance to Age Groups

The purpose of classification of the age group was to reach out to the different age groups in Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA and to access their understanding of gender-based violence and discrimination against women as it affects them. The distribution in relation to the age groups were 13-19 with a total of 226 persons (15.24 percent), 20-29 totals 395 persons (26.64 percent), 30-39 totals 439 (29.60 percent), 40-49 totals 258 (17.40 percent), 50-59 totals 133 (8.97 percent), and those that are 60 and above a total of 32 (2.16 percent).

BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN

AGE-GROUP	TOTAL	%
60-ABOVE	32	2.16
50-59	133	8.97
40-49	258	17.40
30-39	439	29.60
20-29	395	26.64
13-19	226	15.24
TOTAL	1483	100

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS

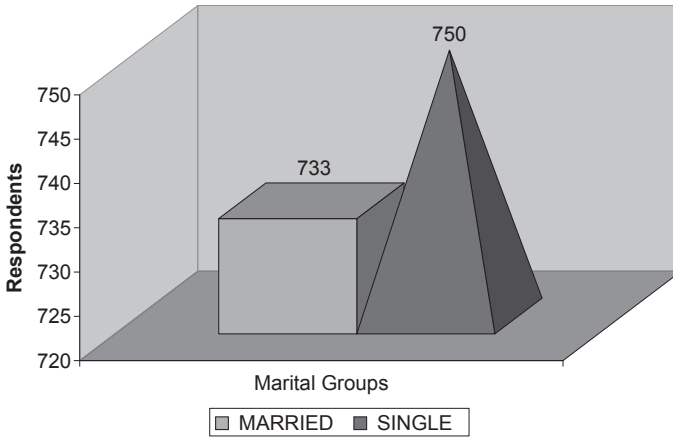


3.4 Classification of Data in Accordance to Marital Status

Of the 1483 respondents to the questionnaires, 733 were married (49.43 percent) and a total 750 (50.57 percent) are single.

MARITAL STATUS	TOTAL	%
MARRIED	733	49.43
SINGLE	750	50.57
TOTAL	1483	100

MARITAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS



3.5: Classification of Data in Accordance to Occupation

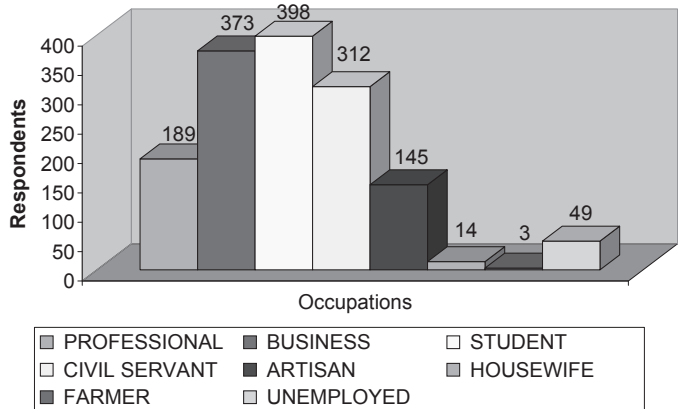
The classification of the data below shows that Students have the highest representation with a population of 398 (26.84 percent), followed by people who are into business 373 (25.15 percent).

OCCUPATION	TOTAL	%
PROFESSIONAL	189	12.74
BUSINESS	373	25.15
STUDENT	398	26.84
CIVIL SERVANT	312	21.04

BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN

OCCUPATION	TOTAL	%
ARTISAN	145	9.78
HOUSEWIFE	14	0.94
FARMER	3	0.20
UNEMPLOYED	49	3.30
TOTAL	1483	100

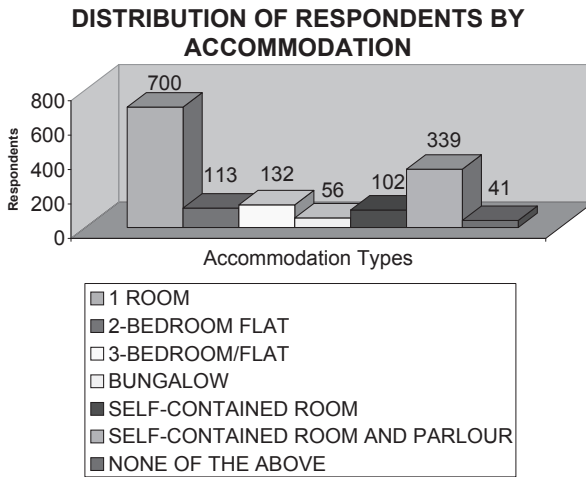
OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENTS



3.5.1: Respondent Accommodation Living Standard

From data below, a total of 700 persons (47.20 percent) of the total number of the respondents to the questionnaire (1483) said they lived in a room. This is an indication that Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA is highly populated with low-income earners.

ACCOMMODATION	TOTAL	%
I ROOM	700	47.20
ROOM AND PARLOUR SELF-CONTAINED	339	22.86
2 BEDROOM FLAT	113	7.62
3 BEDROOM FLAT	132	8.90
BUNGALOW	56	3.78
A ROOM SELF-CONTAINED	102	6.88
NONE OF THE ABOVE	41	2.76
TOTAL	1483	100



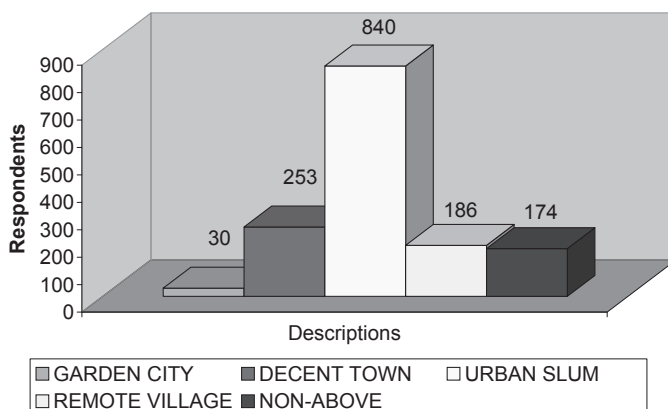
3.5.2: Respondent Description of Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA

A total of 840 (56.64 percent) out of the 1483 persons who responded to the questionnaire opined that Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA is an urban slum.

BECAUSE WE ARE WOMEN

DESCRIBE AJEROMI-IFELODUN LGA	TOTAL	%
GARDEN CITY	30	2.02
DECENT TOWN	253	17.06
URBAN SLUM	840	56.64
REMOTE VILLAGE	186	12.54
NON-ABOVE	174	11.73
TOTAL	1483	100

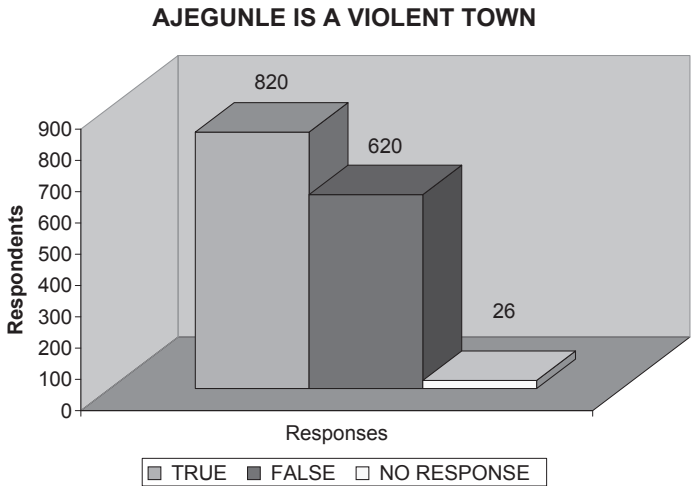
RESPONDENTS' DESCRIPTION OF AJEROMI-IFELODUN LGA



3.5.3: Respondent Opinion on Ajegunle as a Violent Town

A total of 820 (55.29 percent) agreed that Ajegunle is a violent town while 620 (42.95) percent disagreed and 26 persons (1.75) were silent about the question.

AJEGUNLE IS A VIOLENT TOWN	TOTAL	%
TRUE	820	55.29
FALSE	620	42.95
NO RESPONSE	26	1.75
TOTAL	1483	100



3.5.4: Respondent Opinion on Ajegunle as a Home of Gangsters

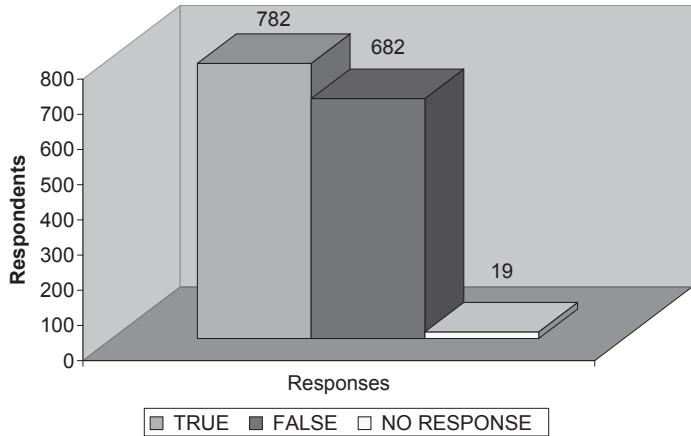
A total of 782 (52.73 percent) persons agreed that Ajegunle is a home of gangsters, while 682 (45.99 percent) disagreed, and 19 (1.28 percent) were silent about the question.

HOME OF GANGSTERS	TOTAL	%
TRUE	782	52.73
FALSE	682	45.99

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HOME OF GANGSTERS	TOTAL	%
NO RESPONSE	19	1.28
TOTAL	1483	100

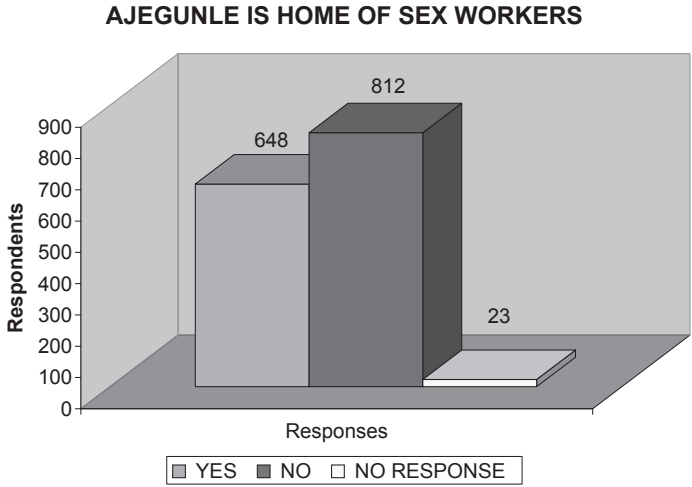
AJEGUNLE IS HOME OF GANGSTERS



3.5.5: Respondent Opinion on Ajegunle as a Home of Sex Workers

A total of 648 (43.70 percent) agreed that Ajegunle is a home of sex workers, while 812 (54.75 percent) disagreed and 23 (1.55 percent) were silent about the question.

HOME OF SEX WORKERS	TOTAL	%
YES	648	43.70
NO	812	54.75
NO RESPONSE	23	1.55
TOTAL	1483	100



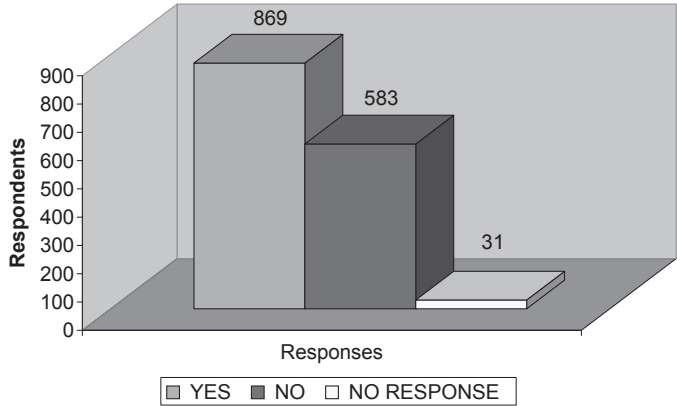
3.5.6: Students of Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA has a Traits of Hooliganism

A total of 869 (58.60 percent) agreed to the question that secondary students of Ajegunle show traits of hooliganism while 583 (39.31 percent) disagreed and 31 persons (2.09 percent) were silent about the question.

TRAIT OF HOOLIGANISM	TOTAL	%
YES	869	58.60
NO	583	39.31
NO RESPONSE	31	2.09
TOTAL	1483	100

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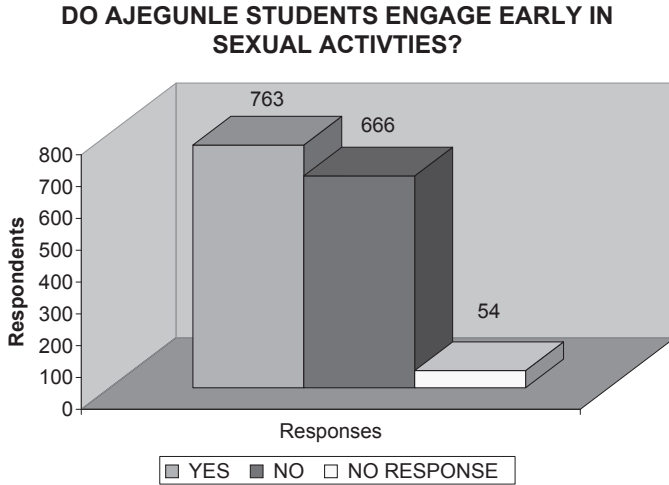
DO STUDENTS IN AJEGUNLE SHOW TRAITS OF HOOLIGANISM?



3.5.7: Secondary school students in are involved early in sexual activities

A total of 763 persons (51.45 percent) agreed to the question that Secondary Students in Ajegunle are involved in early sexual activities while 666 (44.91 percent) disagreed and 54 persons (3.64 percent) were silent about the question.

EARLY SEXUAL ACTIVITIES	TOTAL	%
YES	763	51.45
NO	666	44.91
NO RESPONSE	54	3.64
TOTAL	1483	100



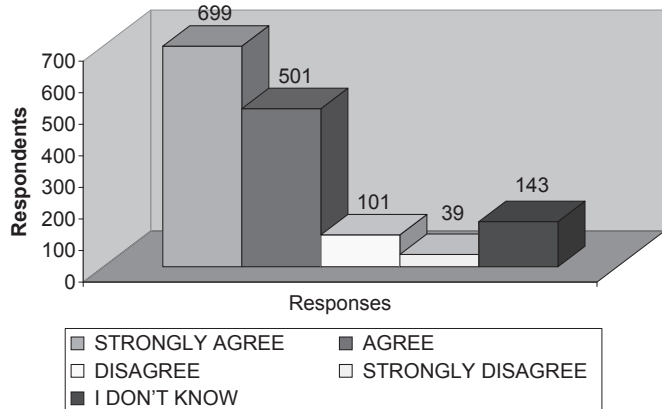
3.5.8: Unwanted sexual advances are a form of sexual violence

A total of 699 (47.13 percent) of the total number of respondent to the questionnaire strongly agreed those unwanted sexual advances are forms of sexual violence against women. The order of responses can be seen in the table below.

UNWANTED SEXUAL ADVANCE	TOTAL	%
STRONGLY AGREE	699	47.13
AGREE	501	33.78
DISAGREE	101	6.81
STRONGLY DISAGREE	39	2.63
I DON'T KNOW	143	9.64
TOTAL	1483	100

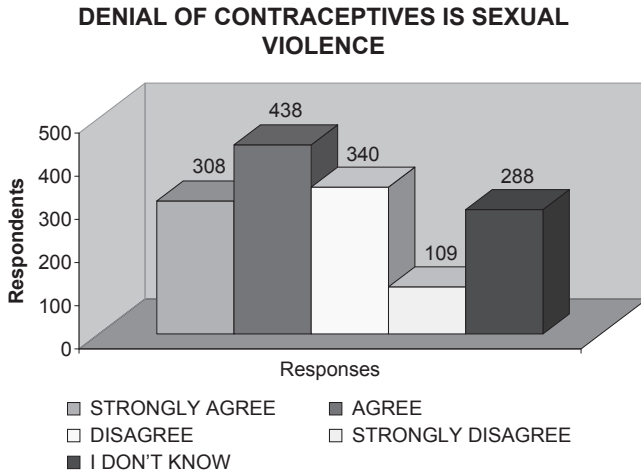
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ARE UNWANTED SEXUAL ADVANCES A FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

**3.5.9: Denial of contraceptive protection is a form of sexual violence**

A total of 308 (20.77 percent) agreed to the question that denials of contraceptive are forms of sexual violence against women. The order of responses can be seen in the table below.

DENIAL OF CONTRACEPTIVE	TOTAL	%
STRONGLY AGREE	308	20.77
AGREE	438	29.53
DISAGREE	340	22.93
STRONGLY DISAGREE	109	7.35
I DON'T KNOW	288	19.42
TOTAL	1483	100



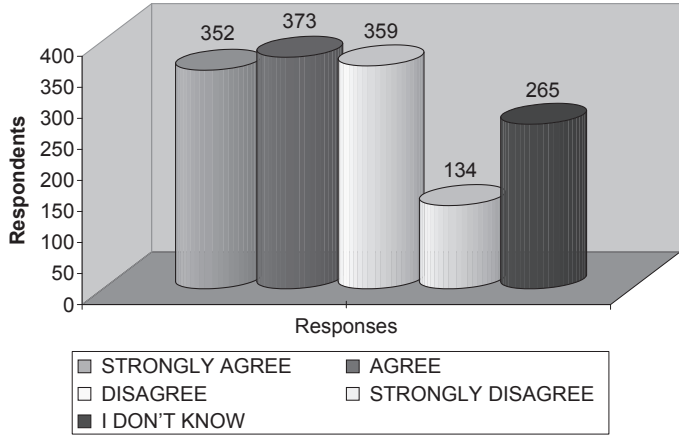
3.14 Female circumcision is a form of sexual violence

A total of 352 (23.74 percent) strongly agreed that female circumcision is a form of sexual violence against women. The order of responses can be seen in the table below.

FEMALE CIRCUMCISION	TOTAL	%
STRONGLY AGREE	352	23.74
AGREE	373	25.15
DISAGREE	359	24.21
STRONGLY DISAGREE	134	9.04
I DON'T KNOW	265	17.87
TOTAL	1483	100

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FEMALE CIRCUMCISION IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE

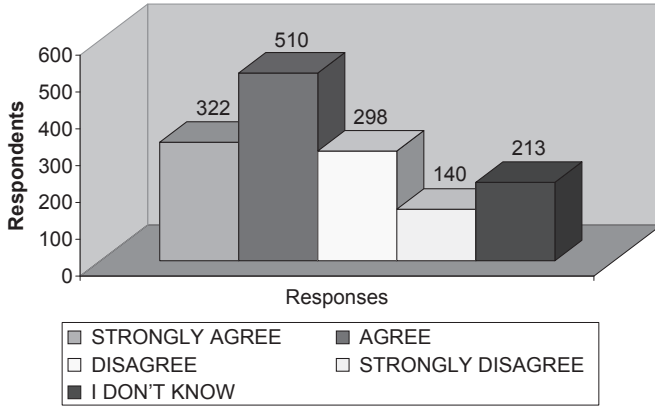


3.14 Male dominance in relationships engenders sexual abuse and violence

A total of 322 (21.71 percent) strongly agreed that male dominance in relationship engender sexual abuse and violence against women. The order of responses can be seen in the table below.

MALE DOMINANCE	TOTAL	%
STRONGLY AGREE	322	21.71
AGREE	510	34.39
DISAGREE	298	20.09
STRONGLY DISAGREE	140	9.44
I DON'T KNOW	213	14.36
TOTAL	1483	100

MALE DOMINANCE CAUSES SEXUAL ABUSE AND VIOLENCE



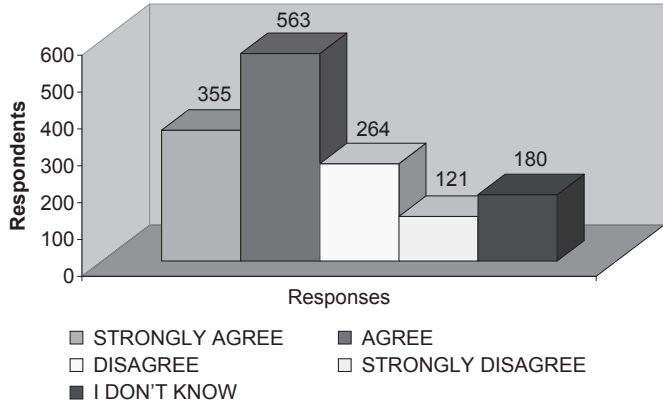
3.15 Women Tend to Stay in Abusive Relationship Because of Societal Expectation

A total of 355 (23.94 percent) strongly agreed that women tend to stay in an abusive relationship because of societal expectation. The order of responses can be seen in the table below.

WOMEN STAY IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS	TOTAL	%
STRONGLY AGREE	355	23.94
AGREE	563	37.96
DISAGREE	264	17.80
STRONGLY DISAGREE	121	8.16
I DON'T KNOW	180	12.14
TOTAL	1483	100

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SOCIETAL EXPECTATIONS FORCE WOMEN TO STAY IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIPS



3.16 Mention one gender-based violence and discrimination incident that is most rampant in your Area

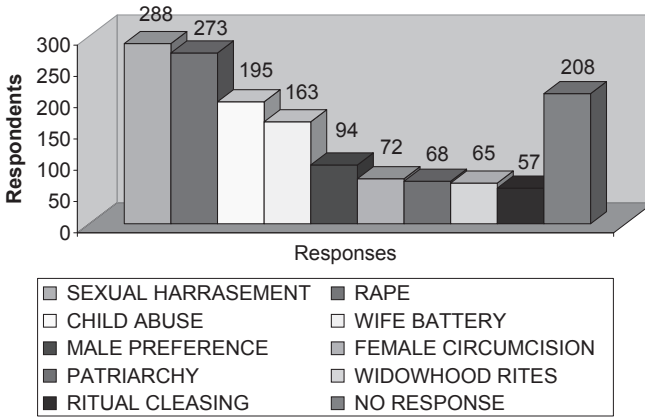
Out of total of 1483 persons that responded to this question in the questionnaire, sexual harassment has the highest prevalence in most areas in Ajeromi-Ifelodun LGA with a total of 288 or 19.42 percent. This is followed by rape (273 or 18.41 percent), child abuse (195 or 13.15 percent), wife battery (163 or 10.99 percent), male preference (94 or 6.34 percent), and female circumcision (72 or 4.86 percent). Others were patriarchy (68 or 4.59 percent), widowhood rites (65 or 4.38 percent), and ritual cleansing (57 or 3.84 percent). Two hundred and eight (208) persons did not respond to the questionnaire.

MENTION ONE GBV & D IN YOUR AREA	TOTAL	%
SEXUAL HARASSMENT	288	19.42
RAPE	273	18.41
CHILD ABUSE	195	13.15
WIFE BATTERY	163	10.99

Chapter 3: Research Findings

MENTION ONE GBV & D IN YOUR AREA	TOTAL	%
MALE PREFERENCE	94	6.34
FEMALE CIRCUMCISION	72	4.86
PATRIARCHY	68	4.59
WIDOWHOOD RITES	65	4.38
RITUAL CLEANSING	57	3.84
NO RESPONSE	208	14.03
TOTAL	1483	100.00

MOST RAMPANT GBV IN RESPONDENTS' AREAS



3.5.14 Findings

From the research survey analysed above, it was discovered that sexual harassment and rape are the most prevalent gender-based violence problem in Ajeromi-Ifelodun Local Government Area. This is because of close dwelling pattern and lack of privacy; the number of people living in a room is just too high, which gives room for conflict or violence. High prevalence of child abuse was recorded as a

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result of child neglect. Due to poverty and lack of family planning, an average family size far outstrips government recommendation of four children to one parent/household. Again, it was discovered that the prevalence of wife battery is high because most men are not gainfully employed and this gives room to domestic violence. It was discovered that there is a problem of social and physical disorder, which endanger women and the girl-child in grassroots areas.

Conclusions, Implications, and Recommendations



We must establish synergy for a fight against the dehumanisation and marginalisation of women. We must promote women's equal rights and human dignity

4.1 Conclusion and Implications

Having identified sexual harassment as the most prevalence gender-based violence in this research work, it is worrisome that victims of this violence do not report the cases to appropriate authority whenever they are violated.

The resultant effect of unreported gender-based violence and discrimination cases in our communities increases apprehension and fear of repeat violation and victimisation; women tend not to report initial violence incidents to the police. Moreover, just because a woman has reported once to the police does not necessarily mean she will report further incidents. The interviews with women in the survey suggested that they reported only those incidents that they perceived as being major, in particular failing to report harassment that consisted of a high number of seemingly minor incidents.

When a woman goes to the police station to make a report several things may happen. We have known many cases assisted by NGOs where the police re-

fused to take the report of women mostly in cases of domestic violence.

The police often referred the women back to the family where the abuse is taking place for peaceful settlement. While referral back to the family speak to the recognition that the police have for more informal systems of resolution, it also indicates a separation between what they perceive to be public and private issues. Treason for instance would not be referred back to the family for resolution nor would murder or robbery, because these are seen as crimes, whereas violence against women is seen as a family and private affair.

On the part of the police, they have argued that the Police Act and Regulations do not empower the Nigerian Police to intervene effectively in issues considered as family matters such as domestic violence. To further stress police challenges in handling cases of violence against women, a very senior police officer in an interview with Project Alert blamed patriarchy within our society for police poor handling of cases involving women. He argued that the society has subjugated women to the background for so long and that the police officers are products of the same society.

Police are lukewarm in following up on reported cases of family violence. Apart from questioning the woman about her conduct of being a good wife, the police would some times enquire if the woman cooked the food on time or washed his clothes, etc. When questioned on their attitude, reasons cited include culture and tradition; persuasion of women by family to drop the case; inability to afford the required money for case record and medical examination, and other excuses.

In the cases of rape and sexual violence, the female victim is doubly humiliated by being asked questions that tend to trivialise the crime or justify men's right to abuse women or girls. Such questions include: "why were you there?" "Is this your first time?" "Did you take his money?"

4.2 Recommendations

It is true that committed local and international organisations have devised various strategies to suit the diversity in the manifestation of violence against women in the world and particularly in Nigeria. These intervention activities, which are geared towards the elimination of gender-based violence, include social and legislative advocacy; information sharing; provision of support services; networking and alliances building among others.

However, while these organisations are doing theirs, a lot could be done by individual, group, community and the government. Some roles that can be done by the family, as a group and government are as follows:

The Family

The family as an agent of change has a lot to do in the attitudinal and behavioural change of a child especially the father and the male child. These suggestions could help to change negative thoughts of male to female from the childhood stage.

Coaching Boys into Men

The boys in our life need our time and energy: your son, grandson, nephew, younger brother. The boys you teach, coach and mentor. All need you to help them grow into healthy young men.

Boys are swamped with influences outside of the home – from friends, the neighbourhood, television, the internet, music, the movies... everything they see around them. They hear all kinds of messages about what it means to “be a man” – that they have to be tough and in control. There are numerous conflicting and some harmful messages being given to boys about what constitutes “being a man” in a relationship.

Boys need your advice on how to behave toward girls. Boys are watching how you and other men relate to women to figure out their own stance towards girls. So teach boys early, and teach them often,

that there is no place for violence in a relationship.

Here is how:

1. **Teach Early:** It is never too soon to talk to a child about violence. Let him know how you think he should express his anger and frustration – and what is out of bounds. Talk with him about what it means to be fair, share and treat others with respect.
2. **Be There:** If it comes down to one thing you can do, this is it. Just being with the boys is crucial. The time does not have to be spent in activities. Boys will probably not say this directly but they want a male presence around them, even if few words are exchanged.
3. **Listen:** Hear what he has to say. Listen to how he and his friends talk about girls. Ask him if he has ever seen abusive behaviour in his friends. Is he worried about any of his friends who are being hurt in their relationships? Are any of his friends hurting anyone else?
4. **Tell Him How:** Teach him ways to express his anger without using violence. When he gets mad, tell him he can walk it out, talk it out, or take a time out. Let him know he can always come to you if he feels like things are getting out of hand. Try to give him examples of what you might say or do in situations that could turn violent.
5. **Bring it Up:** A kid will never approach you and ask for guidance on how to treat women. However, that does not mean he does not need it. Try watching TV with him or listening to his music. If you see or hear things that depict violence against women, tell him what you think about it. Never hesitate to let him know you do not approve sports figures that demean women, or jokes, video games and song lyrics that do the same. And when it comes to time for dating, be sure he

knows that treating girls with respect is important.

6. **Be a Role Model:** Fathers, coaches and any man who spends time with boys or teens will have the greatest impact when they “walk the walk.” They will learn what respect means by observing how you treat other people. So make respect a permanent way of dealing with people – when you are driving in traffic, talking with customer service reps, in restaurants with waiters, and with your family around the dinner table. He is watching what you say and do and takes his cues from you, both good and bad. Be aware of how you express your anger. Let him know how you define a healthy relationship and always treat women and girls in a way that your son can admire.
7. **Teach Often:** Your job is not done once you get the first talk out of the way. Help him work through problems in relationships as they arise. Let him know he can come back and talk to you again any time. Use every opportunity to reinforce the message that violence has no place in a relationship.

The Government

The government and civil society organisations (CSOs) need to address the problem of poverty, which is a central factor that causes gender-based violence and discrimination. Although the Ajegunle Community Project has started in her own little way in addressing the problem of poverty by organising Skill Acquisition workshop to train grass-root women and out of school youths in different vocational skills like catering, bead making, and hat making. Also, ACP has a micro-credit association that gives women soft loan to run their businesses and there is also a skill-acquisition centre that is under construction to address issue of youth restlessness and women idleness at the same time. There should be more enlightenment programme to address the problem of gender-based violence and child

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abuse in grassroots areas and the issue of security should be taken seriously by the government, by deploying more police officers to maintain law and order in grassroots communities.

As a Group

Our collective duty, irrespective what sector of society we find ourselves – government, private sector, civil society or family is to expose and denounce as human rights violations those practices and policies that silence and subordinate women. We must reject specific legal, cultural, or religious practices by which women are systematically discriminated against, excluded from political participation and public life, segregated in their daily lives, raped in armed conflict, beaten in their homes, denied equal divorce or inheritance rights, killed for having sex or refusal to do so, forced to marry, assaulted for not conforming to gender norms, and sold into forced labour. Arguments that sustain and excuse these human rights abuses - those of cultural norms, “appropriate” rights for women, or western imperialism—barely disguise their true meaning: that a woman’s life matters less than a man’s. Cultural relativism, which argues that there are no universal human rights and that rights are culture-specific and culturally determined, is still a formidable and corrosive challenge to women’s rights to equality and dignity in all facets of their lives.

We must establish synergy for a fight against the dehumanisation and marginalisation of women. We must promote women’s equal rights and human dignity. The realisation of women’s rights is a global struggle based on universal human rights and the rule of law. It requires all of us to unite to end traditions, practices, and laws that harm women. It is a fight for freedom to be fully and completely human and equal without apology or permission. Ultimately, the struggle for women’s human rights must be about making women’s lives matter everywhere all the time. In practice, this means taking action to stop discrimination and violence against women.

The Survey Questionnaire

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The survey suggested that women reported only those incidents that they perceived as major, and failed to report harassment that consisted of seemingly minor incidents

1. *ETHNIC GROUP*:

2. *GENDER*:

Female: Male:

3. *AGE GROUP*:

60-above: 50-59: 40-49:

30-39: 20-29: 13-19:

4. *MARITAL STATUS*:

5. *NO. OF CHILDREN*:

6. *EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION*:

7. *OCCUPATION*:

8. *EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF PARENTS
(BOTH MOTHER AND FATHER)*

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9. OCCUPATION: -----

10. TICK THE TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION YOU LIVE IN:

A Room: A Room Self-contained:

Room and Parlour: Self-Contained:

2-Bedroom Flat: 3-Bedroom Flat: A Bungalow:

A Duplex: None of the above:

11. HOW DO YOU DESCRIBE AJEROMI-IFELODUN LOCAL GOVT. AREA?

Garden City: Decent Town: Urban Slum:

Remote Village:

12. GIVE REASONS FOR YOUR CHOICE: -----

13. AJEGUNLE CAN BE DESCRIBED AS A VIOLENT TOWN

True: False:

14. IF TRUE, GIVE REASONS: -----

15. IS IT CORRECT TO SAY THAT AJEGUNLE IS A HOME OF GANGSTERS (AREA BOYS)?

Yes: No:

16. IF YES, GIVE REASONS: -----

17. IS IT CORRECT TO SAY THAT AJEGUNLE IS A HOME OF SEX WORKERS OR PROSTITUTES?

Yes: No:

Appendix A: The Survey Questionnaire

18. IF YES, GIVE REASONS: -----

19. IS IT CORRECT TO SAY THAT SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN AJEROMI-IFELODUN LOCAL GOVT. AREA HAVE TRAITS OF HOOLIGANISM?

Yes: No:

20. IF YES, GIVE REASONS: -----

21. IS IT CORRECT TO SAY THAT STUDENTS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN AJEROMI-IFELODUN LGA ARE INVOLVE IN EARLY SEXUAL ACTIVITIES?

Yes: No:

22. IF YES, GIVE REASONS: -----

23. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION? (SEE EXAMPLES BELOW AND MENTION OTHERS YOU KNOW)

Wife Battery: Male Preference:

Sexual Harassment: Female Circumcision:

Widowhood: Patriarchy: Rape:

24. LIST SOME GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN AND THE GIRL-CHILD THAT OCCUR FREQUENTLY IN YOUR AREA: -----

25. UNWANTED SEXUAL ADVANCES AND HARASSMENT ARE FORMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

A) Strongly Agree: B) Agree:

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- C) Disagree: D) Strongly Disagree:
E) I Don't Know:

26. DENIAL OF CONTRACEPTIVE PROTECTION IS A FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- A) Strongly Agree: B) Agree:
C) Disagree: D) Strongly Disagree:
E) I Don't Know:

27. FEMALE CIRCUMCISION IS A FORM OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- A) Strongly Agree: B) Agree:
C) Disagree: D) Strongly Disagree:
E) I Don't Know:

28. MALE DOMINANCE IN RELATIONSHIP ENGENDERS SEXUAL ABUSE AND VIOLENCE

- A) Strongly Agree: B) Agree:
C) Disagree: D) Strongly Disagree:
E) I Don't Know:

29. WOMEN TEND TO STAY IN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP BECAUSE OF SOCIETAL EXPECTATION

- A) Strongly Agree: B) Agree:
C) Disagree: D) Strongly Disagree:
E) I Don't Know:

30. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY VICTIM OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION?

- Yes: No:

31. IF YES, CAN YOU INTRODUCE HER TO AJEGUNLE COMMUNITY PROJECT FOR COUNSELLING AND GUIDANCE?

Yes: No:

32. MENTION ONE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION INCIDENT THAT IS MOST RAMPANT IN YOUR AREA:

33. WHAT CAN BE DONE TO REDUCE GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION IN YOUR AREA? -----

34. WHAT DO YOU WANT GOVERNMENT TO DO TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION? -----

WOULD YOU WANT US TO CONTACT YOU AGAIN?

Yes: No:

IF YES, PROVIDE E-MAIL ADDRESS -----

AND/OR TEL. NO: -----

Sources Consulted



Violence against women permeates all levels of Nigerian society because it is patriarchal, allowing the perpetration of atrocities against women and girls under the guise of culture, religion, etc.

Following below is a selection of sources consulted for this report:

1. United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
2. Project Alert's *Beyond Boundaries* (2001)
3. African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights on the Right of Women in Africa (ACHPR Protocol)
4. Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
5. *WHO Multi-Country Study on Women's Health and Domestic Violence against Women* (2005)
6. The Mzikazi Nduna, Medical Research Council, Personal Communication, (2003)
7. National Institute of Justice and the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. *National Violence against Women Survey* (1998)



Violence against Women in Lagos State

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This report, the product of a survey research, demonstrates that violence against women is common in grassroots areas of Lagos State.

It is a report with which all stakeholders in development issues, security matters, policy makers, schools and other educational institutions, donors as well as the youth and families should be familiar. It will serve as reference material for educational purposes, societal awareness building, and policy formulation.



ABOUT AJEGUNLE COMMUNITY PROJECT

The ACP works to enable poor and disadvantaged women and youths defend their rights and gain improved access to socio-economic amenities. This involves promoting the rights of young persons and providing legal protection and aid for abused women and girl-children. It also involves facilitating the flow of information and the exchange of experience among young persons and advocating for gender equity and rights. The ACP does its work through awareness and education programmes for grassroots women and young girls for skill acquisition, as well as on gender-based violence and on democracy and good governance.

Ajegunle Community Project (ACP)