



Determinate Factors Impinging Adolescent Girls from Reporting Sexual Gender-Based Violence in Public Institutions. A Case Study of Blantyre District in Malawi

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The study investigated determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting sexual gender-based violence in public institutions.

Design/Methodology/Analysis –A qualitative research design was employed, utilizing purposive sampling to leverage the researcher’s expertise in selecting cases. This approach allowed for flexibility and targeted selection based on judgment. Structured questionnaires were administered to 270 respondents in Blantyre, Malawi. Using open-ended questions, the questionnaire assessed determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting SGBV cases in public institutions.

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant authorities before the research was conducted. Informed consent was obtained from participants and their parents/guardians. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were ensured by using anonymous identifiers and handling data securely. The research complied with ethical guidelines, and potential risks or benefits to participants was minimized and disclosed. Thematic data analysis was used, and the results were analyzed using descriptive statistics and percentages/frequencies calculations and presented as tables and graphs.

Findings – The study indicates that sexual gender-based violence generally goes unreported. The study went further to discover why SGBV is mostly not reported in public institutions. The most important reasons for non-reporting include lack of knowledge about SGBV, perceived lack of benefits for reporting, believing that the perpetrators would change, and lack of legal knowledge and information about SGBV. The results present an information gap among adolescent girls concerning gender, human rights, and reporting mechanisms.

More sensitization meetings, capacity building, and inclusiveness of gender, and human rights topics in primary and secondary school syllabus, promote same-sex interviews, scaling-up of female service providers, development of sundry community child protection committees, community victim support unit, and development of electronic confidential reporting system are the best strategies and programs that can help to increase reporting rate of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls.

Keywords: Sexual Gender-Based Violence Adolescent Girl Reporting Malawi

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Sexual Gender-Based Violence against adolescent girls is underscored and gained international recognition as the biggest social problem and human rights concern on earth because it affects a large fraction of women and girls. Violence against girls takes many forms ranging from sexual, psychological, economic, and physical violence whether happening in public or in private. Sexual Gender-based violence against children is the most pervasive yet least recognized human right in the world (Ward, 2005, Mwangi & Guyo, 2009; Herse, Ellsberg, and Gottmoeller, 2002).

Sexual Gender-Based Violence remains a serious developmental challenge in Malawi, as women and girls are continually facing all forms of GBV, especially SGBV every day compared with their counterparts. Furthermore, violence against women and girls is a menace that takes many forms, ranging from domestic violence to trafficking, sexual violence in conflict child marriage, genital mutilation, and feticide (Samati et al., 2021).

1.1. Background

In Malawi, women constitute 51% of the population, and 5 million are girls under 18. This shows that young girls in Malawi cover a large segment of the population. One in five adolescent girls experiences SGBV before 18 years old, representing 74.4% of the prevalence rate. Out of these statistics,

one in three girls are the survivors of forced or coerced sex. Furthermore, one in three children witnessed GBV at home, and over one-half of females ranging from 13 to 14 years old in Malawi experience all forms of violence in their lifetimes (the NSO Report, 2017& 2020; WHO, 2020& 2014).

Many gender policies and laws in Malawi recognize different forms of GBV, especially violence against women and vulnerable groups, as a severe impediment to social well-being because of the magnitude of the effects and scars painted on the survivors. Though Malawi through different international and local partners are striving to mitigate the impact of the SGBV cases, many adolescent girls are still registered as survivors of sexual abuse. Almost 80% of the cases of sexual abuse against teenage girls remain unreported, and many cases are reported to informal service providers like parents, guardians, and chiefs (the NSO Report, 2020; World Bank Group Report, 2022).

1.2. Problem Statement

Though many adolescent girls are survivors of SGBV, a study conducted by Ellsberg & Gottmoeller (2002) and Oparinde& Matteau (2021) revealed that many victims of sexual gender-based violence across the world do not report after being sexually abused. Studies conducted in Malawi by the NSO (2013) indicated that out of all SGBV cases experienced by girls, only 1% of the survivors report to the police. Furthermore, the Malawi Gender Assessment Report by World Bank Groups (2022) stated that out of cases of gender-based violence reported in Malawi from 2010 to 2016, 40% of the victims sought help, and 49% never sought help. The same report indicated that out of all the cases of violence reported in Malawi, 62% reported to informal helpers like family members whilst 10% reported to formal service providers like police. The study conducted in Malawi by Shawa (2020) revealed that 32-39% of girls from 15-19 years never disclosed or sought help after experiencing sexual gender-based violence. Furthermore, the same report indicated that many children fail to disclose any sexual abuse because of many interrelated and contextual reasons.

In Blantyre District, adolescent girls face alarming rates of gender-based violence, with at least two cases reported daily, perpetrated by various individuals, including: male strangers, male close relatives, male intimate partners, male friends and male acquaintances. Many cases of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls are not reported to public institutions principled to protect adolescent girls and women from different forms of gender-based violence. Very few cases are reported to informed service providers such as relatives, and religious leaders who have got no or less child protection expertise. Considering the increasing of non-reported sexual gender-based violence among adolescent girls, and the magnitude of effects of SGBV against adolescent girls, the researcher investigated the determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting cases of SGBV in public institutions, and find a possible solution to the problem.

1.3. Objective of the study

The overall objective of the study was to investigate the determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting cases of SGBV in public institutions and find a possible solution to the problem

1.3.1. Specific Objectives

1. To investigate the determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting cases of SGBV in public institutions.
2. To find out if many public institutions handle cases of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls
3. To investigate why there is little progress in addressing the problem.
4. To recommend strategies that will help effectively address the problem

1.4. Research Question

1. What are the determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting SGBV cases in public institutions?
2. Does Malawi have public institutions that handle cases of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls?
3. Why there is little progress in addressing the program?
4. What strategies can be used to address the problem?

1.5. Limitations of the study

The researcher anticipated some challenges during the implementation of the study. The sensitive nature of the subject under study meant that some participants would be uncomfortable answering some questions that talk about sexual behavior and experiences because of social and cultural norms.

1.6. Delimitations of the study

The researcher dealt with some of the limitations to have credible results. For example, the researcher created strong and meaningful relationships with the respondents, where, among others, the study objectives and significance of the study were systematically explained to the respondents. This helped

the participants to respond to the sensitive questions during the interview. In addition, the participants were assured of their rights, privacy, and confidentiality of the information. Furthermore, the respondents were oriented before conducting the interviews to avoid errors and misrepresentations of answers.

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theories of the study

2.1.1. Motivation theory and Social Behavior theory

The theories suggest that behavior depends on one's intention to perform the behavior. According to the theory, threat, fear, response efficacy and self-efficacy give a person the ability to respond in a certain way either positive or negative. The researcher used these theories to understand the factors that prevent adolescent girls from seeking help or disclosing their experiences of sexual and gender-based violence.

2.2. Overviews of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls

Several studies conducted in Malawi, especially studies by the WHO (2014); Bisika & Konyani (2014); and Samati et al, (2021) agreed that girls are the most survivors of SGBV mainly perpetrated by men and boys. Statistics presented in a study conducted by Clappa (2020) deduced that 1 in 3 girls aged 15-19 years experienced sexual gender-based violence at one point in time in their lives. Findings of the study by Alkan & Tekmanli (2021) discovered that women and girls between 16-19 face a high risk of sexual gender-based violence than any other age group. Furthermore, the findings of the study conducted by Samati (2021) deduced that 70% of girls in Malawi experienced sexual gender-based. The trend of sexual gender-based violence shows that sexual abuse against girls is a global phenomenon and Malawi is no exception.

2.3. Public Institutions that handle cases of SGBV in Malawi

The Malawi Human Rights Commission (MHRC), the Department of Human Resource Management and Development (DHRMD), the Malawi Police Service, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Youth, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Judiciary, the Ministry of Gender, the Legal Aid Bureau, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour (the Malawi Ministry of Gender Report, 2020). According to the findings, there are innumerable public institutions mandated by the laws of Malawi to handle all cases of GBV, including sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls.

2.4. Factors impeding adolescent girls from reporting cases of sexual gender-based violence

Studies conducted in Malawi like studies by Samati (2021); Bisika and Konyani (2014); and the NSO (2020) indicated that many women and girls do not report or disclose to anyone after experiencing sexual gender-based violence. The findings of their studies indicate that poor social gender norms and girl's subordinate status prompt many of them not to report any forms of abuse, especially sexual abuse.

The study conducted by Amin, Sajenda, and Anderson (2011) stated that reporting sexual abuse is taboo. Furthermore, the survey conducted by the NSO (2023) indicated that 10% of women and girls failed to report sexual gender-based violence because they did not know where to report it, 30% thought it was not important to report, 25% thought it is part of life, 8% thought the perpetrators will change in future, 5% were afraid to report, 14% did not want to be disgraced by their families, 7% thought they will be embarrassed, 5% were fearing divorce, 2% were afraid that the perpetrator will be in trouble.

On the other hand, the findings of the study conducted by Bisika (2014) indicated that many girls failed to report after experiencing sexual abuse because 15.4 % were intimidated, 26. 8% failed because of ignorance of the law, and 52.2% of them failed because they did not know that it was an offense. The findings of the studies indicated that there are several factors affecting women and girls to report or disclose cases of sexual gender-based violence to formal and informal service providers.

3.0. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design for this study was a cross-sectional survey. It involved administering a structured questionnaire to gather data from the respondents of the study. The survey investigated the determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting sexual gender-based violence in public institutions.

3.2 Sampling

A purposive sampling technique was used due to its flexibility in accommodating the judgment of the researcher in the selection of cases. In addition, the technique was preferred because of its ability to enable the researcher to capture necessary and specific information for the study.

3.3 Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire used in this study was self-developed and evaluated by the researcher to ensure validity and reliability. Additionally, it underwent rigorous review by subject experts to further enhance its credibility. Expert feedback was incorporated to ensure the questionnaire effectively measured the intended constructs. The questionnaire was developed based on the research objectives and the identified variables.

3.4 Questionnaire Validation

The questionnaire was reviewed by experts in the field of gender to ensure content validity. Their feedback was incorporated to improve the questions' clarity, relevance, and appropriateness. A pilot study was conducted with a small sample of survivors of sexual gender-based violence to assess the clarity and understanding ability of the questionnaire. Based on the feedback from the pilot study, necessary modifications were made to the questionnaire.

3.5 Data Collection

Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed to the selected participants. The respondents were given instructions on how to complete them. The research team supervised data collection sessions to address any questions or concerns from the participants.

3.6 Data Analysis

Qualitative data obtained from the questionnaires were analysed using appropriate thematic data analysis techniques. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, were calculated and presented as tables and graphs.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant authorities before conducting the research. Informed consent was obtained from participants and their parents/guardians. Participants' privacy and confidentiality were ensured by using anonymous identifiers and handling data securely. The research complied with ethical guidelines, and potential risks or benefits to participants was minimised and disclosed.

3.8. Sample size

The estimated population size of the target study area was 1000-1200, and the researcher administered questionnaires to 270 respondents. The table below describes the population size and the sample size that the researcher settled for.

N	S	N	S	N	S
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306

Source: Krejcie and Morgan (1970) in Cohen *et al*, 2000

4.0. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.0. Demographic Information of the respondents.

4.1.1. Response rates according to participants' categories

According to data in Table 4.1, the researcher administered 270 questionnaires, and all of them were answered and used during data analysis representing a 100% response rate. The study interviewed survivors, and perpetrators of SGBV to get practical insight into the subject matter.

Table 4. 1: Response rates by category

Respondents' Categories	Planned no. of respondents	Actual no. of respondents	Response rate (%)
Adolescent girls (survivors of SGBV)	30	30	100%
Parents of survivors of SGBV	30	30	100%
Inmates (arrested after committing SGBV against Adolescent girls)	30	30	100%
Police Officers (working at PVSU)	30	30	100%
Social Welfare and Youth Officers	30	30	100%
Health workers (working at OSC)	30	30	100%
Teachers (secondary and public primary schools)	30	30	100%
NGOs	30	30	100%
Youth representatives (in and out of schools)	30	30	100%
	TOTAL	270	100%

4.1.2. Association of the respondents Age bracket, gender, marital status, and occupation

Table 4.2 presents a comprehensive overview of the surveyed respondents' socio-demographic characteristics. The predominant respondents of the study were female (n=155). A significant proportion of the respondents were aged ranged 20-29 (n=80), followed by 30-39 (n=60). In terms of marital status, the study gets hold of respondents who are married (n=161), followed by respondents who are single (n=44). Regarding occupation, a significant proportion of the respondents were farmers (n=92), followed by businessmen (n=86). The demographic overviews indicated that the study interviewed many respondents who have vast experience concerning adolescent stage, and sexual gender-based violence.

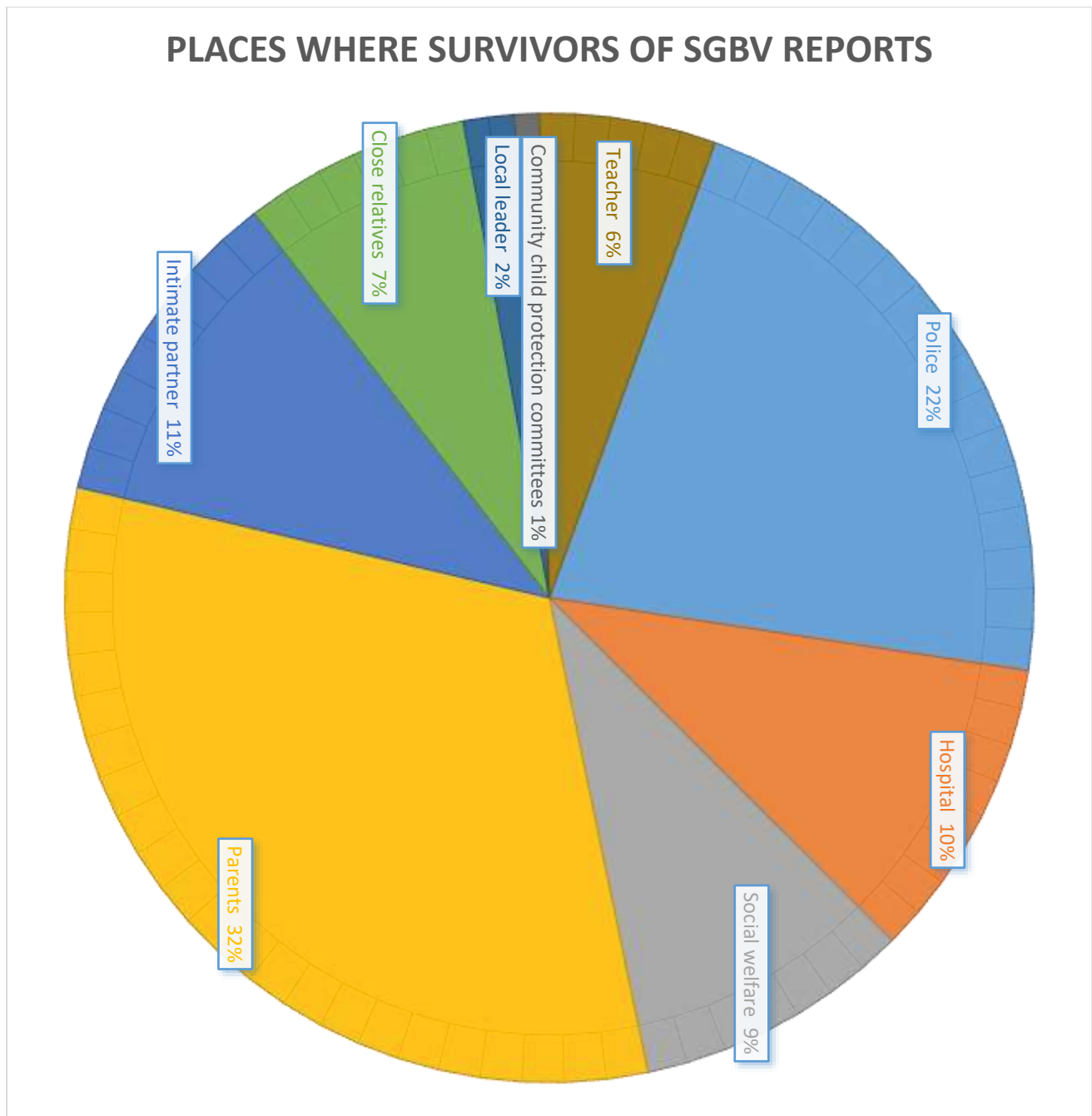
Table 4. 2: Association of the respondent's Age bracket, gender, marital status, and occupation

Age	Gender		Marital Status				Occupation					Total
	M	F	Single	Married	Divorce d	Wido w	Business	Self	Farmer	Employed	Student	
10-19	18	42	7	42	6	5	28	9	15	3	5	60
20-29	24	56	12	49	13	6	32	4	26	4	14	80
30-39	47	31	16	41	18	3	17	9	39	7	6	78
40-49	16	21	3	22	4	8	7	9	8	13	0	37
50-above	10	5	6	7	1	1	2	3	4	6	0	15
TOTAL	115	155	44	161	42	23	86	34	92	33	25	270

4.2. Place where survivors report after experiencing SGBV

Fig 4.1 presented a significant proportion of formal and informal service providers where survivors of SGBV report, parents (32%), and police (22%). It is noted that many survivors of SGBV choose to report cases to their parents and guardians rather than formal service providers that are principled to prevent different forms of abuse against women and adolescent girls like police, social workers, judiciary, and health workers.

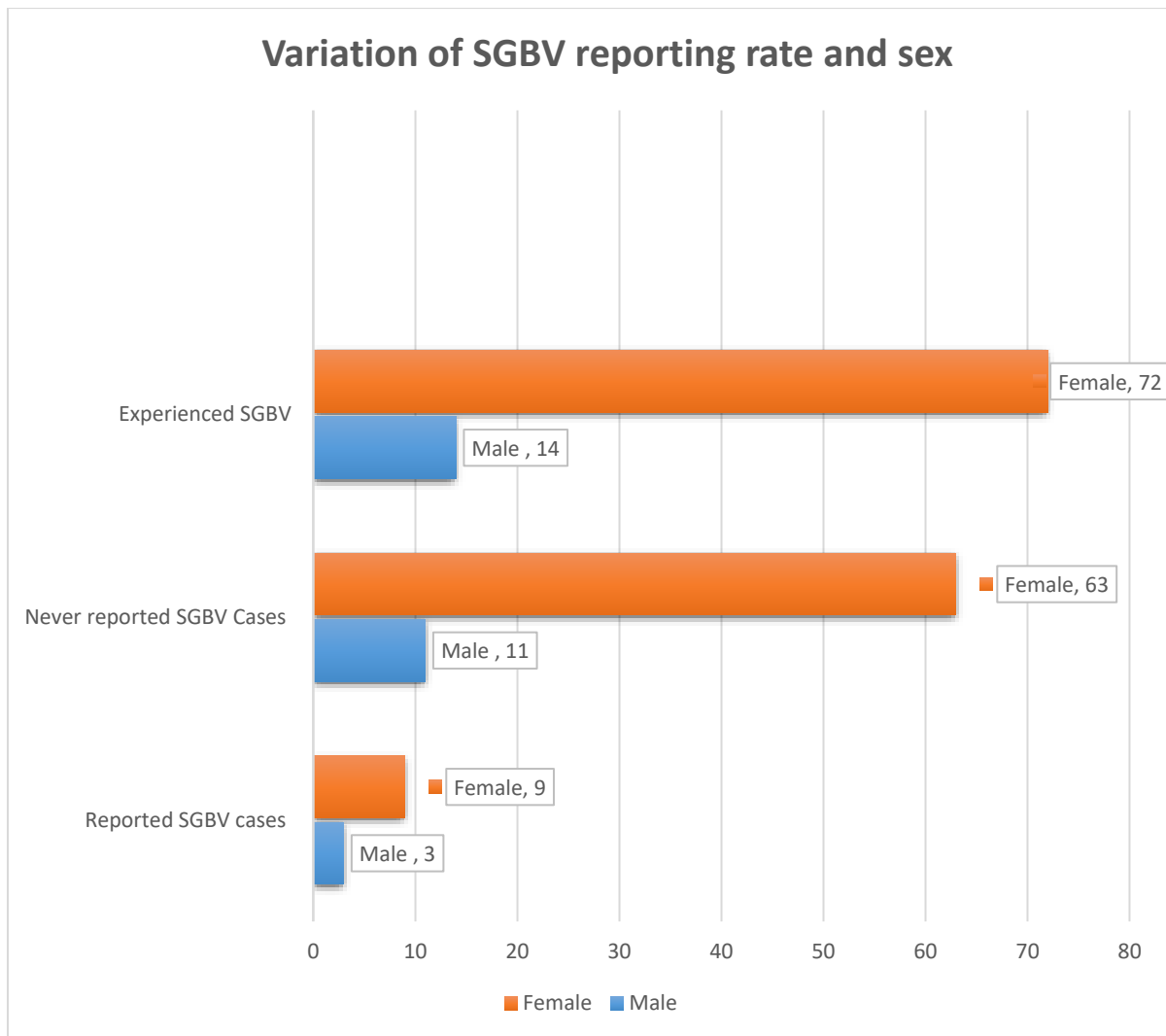
The findings of the study indicate that many survivors of SGBV do not access quality service delivery because many of the cases are handled by untrained service providers like parents, guardians, and other close relatives. These results are in agreement with the findings produced by the World Bank Group Report (2022) which stated that out of all forms of GBV cases reported in Malawi from 2010 to 2016, 62% of cases were reported to informal helpers like family members, whilst 10% were reported to formal service providers like police. Similarly, the results of the study agree with statistics presented by Bisika and Konyani (2014) which revealed that 35.7% of survivors of SGBV report to their teachers, 35% to their parents, and 0.6% to the police.

Fig 4. 1: Places where survivors of SGBV reports after experiencing the abuse

4.3. Variation of sexual gender based violence reporting rate and sex

Fig 4.2 below shows the association of gender and SGBV reporting rate. Out of (n=86) survivors who experienced SGBV, only (n=12) reported the matter to formal and informal service providers; representing 12% reporting rate. Fig 4.2 presents data variation of reporting rate and gender; out of (n=72) females who experienced SGBV, only (n=9) females reported. Similarly, out of (n=14) male survivors who experienced violence, only (n=3) males reported. The same table indicated that out of (n=72%) females who experienced SGBV, (n=63) females never reported the matter; and (n=14) males who experienced SGBV, (n=11) never reported the matter.

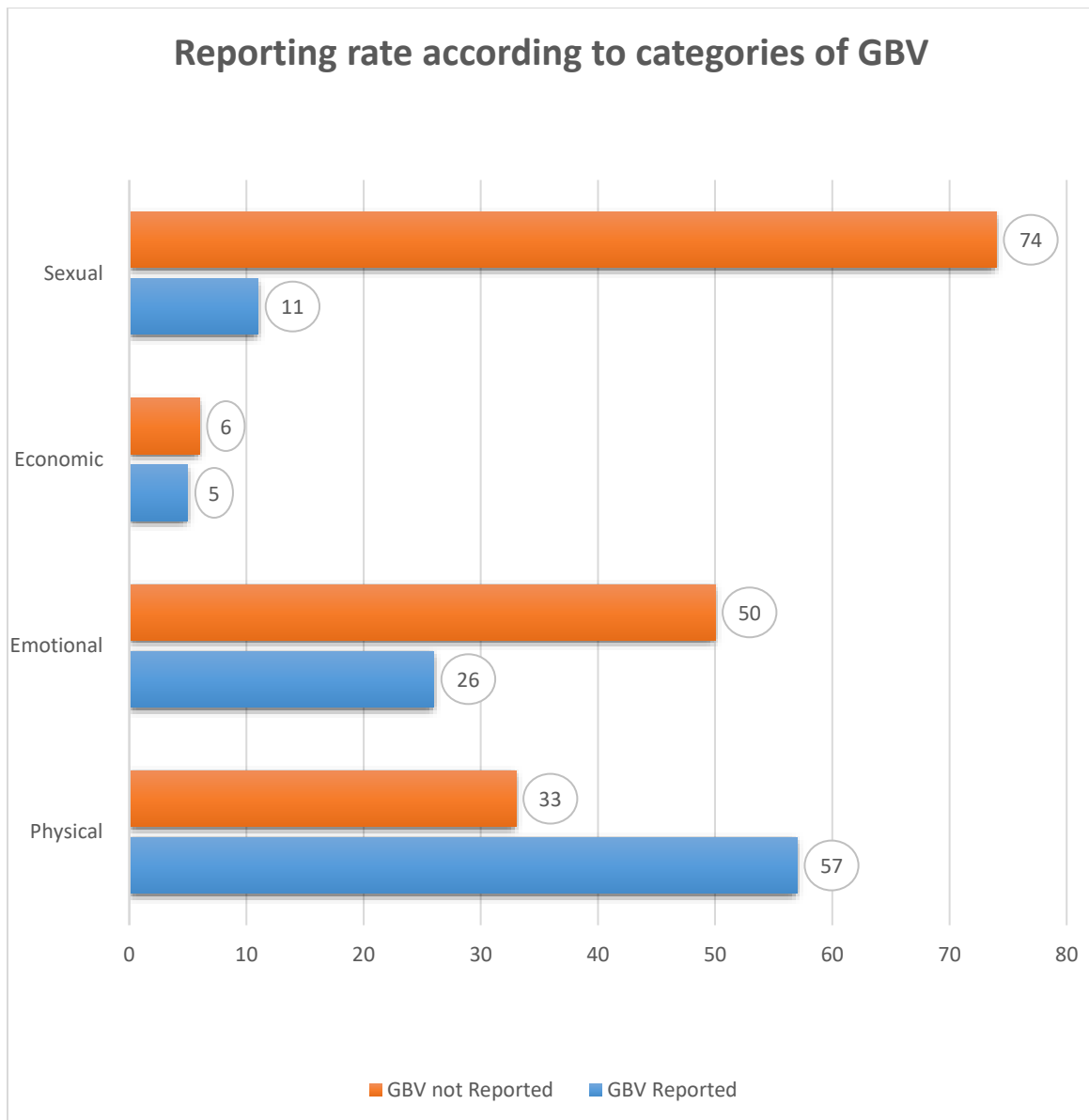
The data indicated that many survivors of SGBV, especially females do not report after experiencing SGBV. Females, especially adolescent girls should be oriented on the reporting mechanism, and benefits of reporting SGBV to formal service providers and relatives. The findings of this study agree with World Bank Group Report, (2022) and Bisika & Konyani et al. (2014) which indicated that among all SGBV cases that happen against girls and women, only 1% of the cases are reported.

Fig 4.2 Variation of SGBV reporting rate and sex

4.4. Disparity of reporting rate and forms of gender based violence

Fig 4.3 shows aggregation data analysis of GBV reporting rate according to categories. The data analysis shows that out of (n=86) SGBV cases experienced, only (n=11) were reported, and (n=75) remained unreported. Furthermore, out of (n=90) physical abuse experienced, (n=57) physical GBV cases were reported, and (n=33) cases were not reported. The same Fig 4.3 indicated that out of (n=76) emotional abuse cases registered, (n=26) were reported, and (n=50) cases were not reported. In addition, out of (n=11) cases of economic abuse registered, (n=5) cases were reported, and (n=6) were not reported. The data analysis indicated that many forms of GBV remained unreported.

Fig 4.3 shows the variation in reporting rate against forms of violence. The study indicated that many cases of physical abuse were reported; whereas, many cases of SGBV remain unreported. Community engagement programs and orientation meetings targeting the community should be enhanced to advance SGBV reporting rates and mechanisms. The findings of the study validate the findings of previous studies conducted in and outside Malawi by Oparinde & Matteau (2021); Shawa (2020); Bisika and Konyani (2014) and Ellsberg & Gottmoeller (2002) which indicated that many victims of SGBV across the world do not report after being sexually abused. Equally, the World Bank Group Report (2022) indicates that many children fail to disclose any sexual abuse because of many interrelated and contextual reasons

Fig 4. 3: Disparity of reporting rate and forms of gender-based violence

4.4. Factors impeding adolescent girls from reporting cases of sexual gender-based violence in public institution

Earlier, it was reported that SGBV generally goes unreported. The study went further to find out why SGBV is mostly not reported in public institution. According to the results in Table 4.3, some of the reasons for non-reporting include lack of knowledge about SGBV, perceived lack of benefits for reporting, believing that the perpetrators would change, and lack of legal knowledge and information about SGBV. The results present information gap among adolescent girls concerning gender, human rights, and reporting mechanisms. Based on the findings of the study, girls should be oriented on the subject matter, and empowered to report cases of SGBV soon after the incident.

The results are in agreement with the NSO Report (2000), which revealed that survivors failed to report after experiencing SGBV because they didn't know where to report, thought it wasn't important, thought it was part of life. They could handle the issue on their own, thought the perpetrator would change, were afraid of divorce, afraid of further abuse, afraid to put him in trouble, didn't want to disgrace the family, were afraid that they would be embarrassed, and failed to report because of other reasons better known to themselves.

Table 4.3: Reason why respondents failed to report SGBV cases to public institutions

REASON FOR NOT REPORTING	FREQUENCY (%)
I didn't know it was SGBV	12%
I was afraid	7%
I didn't know where to report	5%
I thought the perpetrator would change	14%
Not interested	10%
Because of shy	12%
I thought I would be ashamed and exposed	8%
Intimidated by perpetrators, and relatives	6%
I was persuaded to forgive the perpetrator	7%
I don't see any benefit of reporting	12%
Had no transport	7%

4.5. Disadvantages to delayed or not reporting sexual gender-based violence in designed public institutions

Fig. 4.2 indicated that many adolescent girls do not report, and some report late after experiencing sexual gender-based violence. The study discovered that delaying or failing to report sexual abuse has physical, emotional, and health consequences for the survivor and people close to her, and poor criminal case outcomes.

Table 4.4 shows that delayed or failure to report SGBV cases increase PTSD (n=261), Trauma (n=230), Nightmare and poor concentration (n=172), unwanted pregnancies (n=196), and lower odds of perpetrators identification (n=166). The respondents have justified that failure to report or reporting late cases of SGBV against adolescent girls have adverse physical, emotional, health and criminal case implications.

Table 4.4: Disadvantages of failing to report or reporting late of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls.

<i>Disadvantages of not reporting or reporting cases of SGBV very late</i>	<i>Freq.</i>
<i>Poor court/ police case outcome</i>	80
<i>Lower odds of perpetrators identification</i>	166
<i>Unwanted pregnancies</i>	196
<i>Sexual Transmitted Infections (STIs)</i>	123
<i>Trauma</i>	230
<i>Nightmare and poor concentration</i>	172
<i>Increased PTSD</i>	261
<i>People's negative perceptions include stigma and being blamed</i>	66

4.6. Strategies that can enhance reporting of sexual gender-based violence cases against adolescent girls in public institutions.

Table 4.3 indicates that there are several reasons why many adolescent girls do not report or report late cases of sexual gender-based violence in public institutions. Table 4.5 presents some of the primary strategies and programs that can enhance the reporting rate of sexual gender-based violence against girls. (n=247) increase gender, human rights awareness and sensitization meetings targeting parents/ guardians, and youth, (n=217) develop electronic confidential reporting system, (n=259) enhance same-sex interviews, (n=216) scale-up female service providers, (n=261) include gender, human rights and sexual topics in primary and secondary school syllabus, (n=113) develop more community child protection committees at the village levels, (238) develop community victim support unit at village headman level to improve service delivery accessibility, (n=229) increase capacity building of service providers on handling of SGBV cases. The study presented significant initiatives and programs that can help to increase the reporting rate of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls.

Table 4.3. Strategies to enhance reporting of sexual gender-based violence cases against adolescent girls in public institutions.

Strategies to enhance reporting of sexual gender-based violence	Freq.
Increase gender, and human rights awareness and sensitization meetings targeting parents/ guardians, and youth	247
Enhance same-sex interviews	259
Include gender, human rights, and sexual topics in primary and secondary school syllabus	261
Scale-up female service providers	216
Develop more community child protection committees at the village levels	113
Develop an electronic confidential reporting system	217
Develop community victim support unit at village headman level to improve service delivery accessibility	238
Increase capacity building of service providers on handling of SGBV cases	229

5.0. Discussion of the results

The study indicated that many adolescent girls who are survivors of sexual gender-based violence do not report or report late after being exposed to sexual abuse. Furthermore, a significant proportion of adolescent girls report to informal service providers like parents, and guardians who more often do not motivate the survivors to report cases to police and other service providers, especially when the perpetrators are breadwinners or close relatives. Furthermore, the study indicated that the police victim support unit (PVSU) is the most public institution where more survivors report cases of sexual abuse than any other public institution mandated to handle child protection issues.

The findings of the study validate the findings of previous studies conducted in and outside Malawi by Oparinde & Matteau (2021); Shawa (2020); Bisika and Konyani (2014) and Ellsberg & Gottmoeller (2002) which indicated that many victims of SGBV across the world do not report after being sexually abused. Equally, the studies conducted in Malawi by World Bank Group (2022) indicated that many children fail to disclose any sexual abuse because of many interrelated and contextual reasons.

The study indicated that there are several reasons why many survivors do not report cases in public institutions mandated to handle violence against children (VAC) cases. Some of the reasons for non-reporting include lack of knowledge about SGBV, perceived lack of benefits for reporting, believing that the perpetrators would change, fear and intimidation by the perpetrator, and relatives, survivors' perception, and lack of legal knowledge and information about SGBV. The results present an information gap among adolescent girls concerning gender, human rights, and reporting mechanisms. The results validate the findings of the studies by Ellsberg & Gottmoeller (2002) and Oparinde & Matteau (2021)

More sensitization meetings, capacity building, and inclusiveness of gender, and human rights topics in primary and secondary school syllabus, promote same-sex interviews, scaling-up of female service providers, development of many child protection committees, community victim support unit, and development of electronic confidential reporting system are the best strategies and programs that can help to increase reporting rate of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls. The results of the study agreed with the findings of the study conducted by Samati (2021); Cappa and Petrowski (2020); the World Bank Group Report (2022); Bisika and Konyani et al. (2014) which indicated that many survivors of sexual gender-based violence do not report after experiencing abuse, therefore, capacity building and programs should be developed to increase reporting system.

5.1. Conclusion

This study delved into determinate factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting sexual gender-based violence cases in public institutions. The study found that many adolescent girls do not report to public institutions after experiencing sexual gender-based violence because of different personal, and social gender norms and perceptions.

Considering the magnitude of the effects of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls, the government through international and local organizations should develop unsurpassed strategies to enhance the reporting rate of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls, especially, raising awareness on the significance of early reporting of sexual abuse, creation of electronic confidential reporting system, and developing community victim support units at village head man level to improve service accessibility.

Despite the valuable insights gained, this study has some limitations. The reliance on self-reported data introduces the potential for response bias, affecting the accuracy of reported knowledge and skills. Furthermore, the study was exclusively designed to determine factors impinging adolescent girls from reporting sexual gender-based violence cases in public institutions. The findings from this study offer a foundation for future research and initiatives to discover why survivors of different forms of gender-based violence do not report in public institutions.

SGBV: Sexual Gender-Based Violence

VAC: Violence Against Children

Adolescent Girls: Young females who are going through puberty but have not yet reached adulthood (aged 10-19).

OSC: One Stop Centre

PVSU: Police Victim Support Unit

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