

SEXUAL GENDER BASED-VIOLENCE AGAINST ADOLESCENT GIRLS IN BLANTYRE DISTRICT. EXAMINE HOW TIME AND PLACES SHAPE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR SEXUAL ABUSE

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Abstract

Introduction: The study examines how time and places shape the opportunity for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls in Blantyre District, Malawi. **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 examined how time and places shape the opportunity for sexual abuse. Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant authorities before the research was conducted. Informed consent was obtained from participants. 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 were 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 discovered that many adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence within the household, family settings, in public spaces, streets, and at school; at any time because of the absence of parents and guardians, easy access to the survivor, and control over the survivors. Equally, limited public security, security lights, and lack of child protection policy system enforcement shape the opportunity for sexual abuse against adolescent girls. Multifaceted approaches such as challenging harmful gender norms, increasing law enforcement in high-risk areas, increasing training and awareness, increasing men’s and boys’ engagement, developing defense and safety skills, and building strong community support networks should be heightened to preclude adolescent girls from experiencing sexual abuse.

Keywords: Sexual Gender Based Violence, Adolescent girls, Places and Time of occurrence, Blantyre District Malawi.

1.0. INTRODUCTION

Sexual gender-based violence remains a serious developmental challenge in Malawi, as women and girls are continually facing 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 (Maida, 2024; Samati et al., 2021; Ward, 2005).

1.1. Background

In Malawi, 5 million are girls under 18. In Malawi, adolescent girls 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 (Maida, 2024; the NSO Report, 2017 & 2020; WHO, 2020 & 2014).

The Constitution of Malawi recognizes 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 alleviate the effect 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 (Maida, 2024; the NSO Report, 2020; World Bank Group Report, 2022).

1.2. Problem Statement

In Blantyre District, adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence, with at least five to ten cases reported daily in public institutions, and informal institutions, perpetrated by various individuals, including male strangers, male close relatives, male intimate partners, male friends, and male acquaintances (Maida & South West Region Annual Report (2024).

Studies conducted in Malawi, especially studies by Maida (2024); Samati (2021); Bisika & Konyani et al. (2009) pointed out that Malawi is taking several steps to address and respond to sexual gender-based violence against women and girls such as capacity building, strengthening access to justice, community-based interventions, public awareness campaigns, and apprehension of perpetrators.

Despite the efforts against sexual gender-based violence, many adolescent girls in Blantyre are continuing to experience sexual abuse every day. Voluminous studies that have been conducted in Blantyre District focus on factors contributing to sexual gender-based violence against women and girls, the effectiveness of legal frameworks, and places and times where sexual abuse against women and girls occurs.

There are few studies conducted in Blantyre to examine the times and places where adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence. Hence the study examined how time and places shape the opportunity for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls in Blantyre District, Malawi. The results of the study will help to address the issue and protect adolescent girls against sexual abuse.

1.3. Objective of the study

The overall objective of the study was to examine how time and places shape the opportunity for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls in Blantyre District, Malawi.

1.3.1. Specific Objectives

1. To examine the time and places where sexual gender-based violence against girls occurs
2. To investigate how time factors, shape the opportunities for sexual gender-based violence in adolescent girls
3. To investigate how places, shape the opportunities for sexual gender-based violence in adolescent girls
4. To recommend strategies that will help effectively address the problem

1.4. Research Question

1. When and where do girls experience sexual gender-based violence?
2. How does the time factor shape opportunities for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls?
3. How do place settings shape the opportunities for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls?
4. What strategies can be used to address sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls?

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. Furthermore, the researcher expected challenges in accessing comprehensive data on sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls in Blantyre District.

1.6. Delimitations of the study

In order to deal with the limitations of the study, the researcher built a strong and meaningful relationship with the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare, the Ministry of Homeland Security, and the Ministry of Health to

access valid data on sexual abuse against adolescent girls. In addition, the researcher used a purposive sampling technique where respondents were singled out based on their knowledge of the subject matter.

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theories of the study

2.1.1. Ecological Systems Theory

The theories point out that human behavior is influenced by multiple layers of environmental systems. The theory helps explore how different times and settings affect the occurrence of sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls.

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

The global overviews of sexual gender-based violence indicated that sexual abuse against girls is a global phenomenon and Malawi is no exception. Many reports such as the WHO Report (2020) asserted that sexual violence against girls is a growing concern, with significant percentages of girls around the world experiencing sexual abuse and exploitation. Malawi's statistics presented by the UNFPA (2020); WHO (2018); and UNICEF (2017) as cited by Maida (2024) revealed that 1 in 4 girls, representing 25% under the age of 18 experience sexual gender-based violence mainly perpetrated by their counterparts, especially former and current male intimate partners.

The report presented by UNICEF (2017) revealed that 15 million girls aged 15-19 worldwide experienced sexual violence at some point in time. 12 million girls under the age of 18 are survivors of forced marriage each year, resulting from sexual abuse (UNFPA, 2020). One in five adolescent girls in Malawi 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 (Maida, 2024; Samati, 2021; the NSO Report, 2017 & 2020; WHO, 2020 & 2014).

Sexual gender-based violence against girls causes far-reaching mental health, psychological, and economic impacts such as sexually transmitted infections, depression and anxiety, school dropouts, social stigma and isolation, loss of economic opportunities, and the cycle of violence (World Bank Group Report, 2022; UNFPA, 2020; WHO et al, 2018).

2.3. Possible Time of Sexual Gender-Based Violence against Adolescent Girls

Sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls can occur at various times and in different settings. Most sexual abuse involving adolescent girls occurs after school hours, during weekends, holidays, school vacations, at night or in the early morning, during or after social events, during or after conflicts or disasters, at home throughout the day, and when the girl is alone (Alkan & Tekmanli, 2021; UNFPA, 2020; WHO, 2018; UNICEF et al., 2017).

The study conducted in Malawi by Shepard (2016) found that many adolescent girls and women experienced different forms of violence at schools, prisons, hospitals, police, workplaces, religious institutions, private transport, toilets, boreholes, natural disaster displacement places, and homes. According to the NSO, (2013), 66% to 71% of SGBV against adolescent girls occur during the daytime between 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The empirical findings from different studies conducted at the international and national levels authenticate that there are no specific times for sexual abuse against adolescent girls. Grounded on the findings from the previous studies, a significant proportion of girls experience sexual abuse at any time as long as there is an obvious opportunity.

2.4. Possible places where sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls occurs

The survey conducted in Malawi by the NSO (2013) indicated that 66% to 71% of SGBV against adolescent girls occurred in the bush, at the victim's home, and the house of the perpetrator. Based on the study findings, SGBV against adolescent girls occurs anytime and at any place as long as there is an opportunity.

Many adolescent girls experience sexual abuse at home, perpetrated by family members, intimate partners, and caregivers. Some girls experience sexual abuse at school, public spaces like streets, parks, and public transport, refugee camps and conflict zones, workplaces, online (cyber violence and exploitation), community and religious settings, social gatherings such as bars, clubs, and many more, healthcare settings, and public institutions like police, and prison (UNHCR & UNFPA et al, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2019; ILO, 2018; UNICEF, 2017).

2.5. Malawi's legal frameworks against sexual gender-based violence.

There are several international and national legal frameworks that Malawi is using to address sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls. At the international level, Malawi is using different international legal frameworks such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Maida, 2024; Samati, 2021; Shepherd et al., 2016; Mwangi & Guyo, 2009).

Malawi also uses Regional and National Legal Frameworks like the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (1981), the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of

Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol) (2003), The Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment, and Eradication of Violence Against Women (Convention of Belem do Para) (1994), Domestic Violence and Sexual Offenses Acts, the Constitution of Malawi, Child Care Protection and Justice Act, and the Penal Code (Maida, 2024; Samati, 2021; Shepherd et al., 2016).

2.6. Multilateral response to sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls in Malawi

Malawi involves coordinated efforts between international organizations, regional bodies, local civil society organizations, and public sector efforts in addressing sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls. The major multilateral response to sexual gender-based violence includes legal reforms, survivor support services, public awareness campaigns, and strengthening law enforcement responses (National Gender Based Policy, 2015; Ellsberg & Gottmoeller, 2002).

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 examines how time and places shape the opportunity for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls.

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 analyzed 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. 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 were minimized 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.

4.0. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

4.1. Demographic Information of the respondents.

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

Table 4.1: Association of the respondent's Age bracket, gender, marital status, and occupation

Age	Gender	Marital Status	Occupation	Tota
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	M	F	Singl e	Marrie d	Divorce d	Wido w	Busine ss	Sel f	Farme r	Empley e	Stude nt	I
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
TOTA L	11 5	15 5	44	161	42	23	86	34	92	33	25	270

Table 4.1 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 were married (n=161), followed by respondents who were 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 cross-examined many respondents who have vast experience concerning adolescent stage, and sexual gender-based violence.

4.2. Time and places where sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls occurs

Table 4.2: Time and places where adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence.

Place			Time		
Description	Freq.	%	Description	Freq.	100 %
Schools	37	14%	Any time	33	12%
Boreholes	10	4%	After school hours	21	8%
Religious Institutions	12	4%	During weekends	37	14%
Toilets	17	6%	School vacations	18	7%
Workplace	33	12%	Early in the morning	5	2%
Private transport	11	4%	During holidays	26	10%
Victims' place	14	5%	Home throughout the day	13	5%
Displacement places	5	2%	During the day	32	12%
Rest houses/ hotels	26	10%	During/ after social events	24	9%
Bush	55	20%	During/after disaster	6	2%
Perpetrators' place	10	4%	During/ after conflicts	8	3%
Social gatherings/ clubs, bars	18	7%	When the girl is alone	36	13%
Streets	13	5%	During workshops	4	1%
Parks	9	3%	During part times	7	2%

Table 4.2 above indicates times and places where sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls occurs. The data synopsis indicates that majority of the adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence in the bush 20% (n=55), 12% (n=33) at the workplace, especially, in public institutions like the police, hospital, social welfare, and other public institutions principled to protect girls. 10% (n=26) of adolescent girls experience abuse in rest houses/ hotels and lodges, 7% (n=18) in social gatherings like clubs, bars, and football programs, 6% (n=17) in toilets, 5% (n=13) in the streets, and 5%(n=14) at victim's home.

The results of the study validate studies conducted in Malawi and across the world like studies by (UNHCR& UNFPA et al, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2019; ILO, 2018; UNICEF, 2017; the NSO Report, 2013) which indicates that adolescent girls experience sexual abuse at different places such as public institutions, religious places, on the road, at the bush, and in rest houses.

The data analysis in Table 4.2 indicates that many adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence 14% (n=37) during weekends, 13% (n=36) when the girl is alone, 12% (n=32) during the day, 10% (n=26) during holidays, 9% (n=24) during and after social events, 8% (n=21) after school hours, 7% (n=18) during school vacations, and 5% (n=13). The results are related to the findings of the study conducted by (Maida, 2024; UNHCR& UNFPA et al., 2020, Human Rights Watch, 2019; and UNICEF, 2017; Bisika& Konyani et al., 2009) which indicated that there is no specific time when adolescent girls experience sexual abuse.

4.2. How time factor, shape opportunities for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls

Table 4.3. How time factors shape opportunities for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls

Time	How time factors shape opportunities for sexual abuse against adolescent girls	Freq.	%
<i>When the girl is alone</i>	The absence of parents and relatives at home creates an ample opportunity for perpetrators, such as close relatives, maids, and garden boys to persuade for sexual abuse.	53	19%
	The perpetrators take advantage of the darkness and the absence of relatives to abuse adolescent girls.	66	23%
<i>During night time</i>	Lack of supervision because during night hours, parents and guardians are always busy with other activities, and some parents and guardians sleep earlier.	35	12%
<i>During holidays and School Vacations</i>	During school holidays and vacations, many adolescent girls are left unsupervised which increases opportunities for perpetrators to sexually abuse them.	22	8%
	Social Isolation- During long breaks from school, children have more time with family members who often perpetrate sexual abuse.	28	10%
<i>During social gatherings</i>	Events like traditional dances, parties, and different community gatherings influence many adolescent girls to experience sexual abuse due to isolation, and supervision lax by parents and guardians	30	11%
<i>During girl's initiation ceremonies</i>	Some girls' initiation ceremony, especially cultures that have rites of passage for girls to adulthood fuels sexual abuse against adolescent girls.	16	6%
<i>During extreme weather conditions</i>	The scarcity of water during droughts and other hard environments forces adolescent girls to cover long distances to have water for household chores. The condition creates opportunities for perpetrators to persuade sexual abuse.	19	7%
<i>During conflicts, and natural disaster</i>	The breakdown of law and orders during conflicts, and natural disasters increases opportunities for perpetrators to influence sexual abuse.	11	4%

The association of data in Table 4.3 indicated that many adolescent girls experience sexual abuse when they are alone because 19% (n=53) perpetrators like garden boys, and other close relatives take advantage of the absence of responsible parents and guardians to coerce sexual gender-based violence. Some adolescent girls experience sexual abuse during nighttime because of 23% (n=66) darkness and absence of responsible parents and guardians, and 12% (n=35) because of lack of parental supervision.

The data synopsis in Table 4.3 asserted that many adolescent girls experience sexual abuse during holidays and school vacations because of 8% (n=22) inadequate supervision by parents, guardians, and school authorities, and 10% (n=28) social isolation due to long holidays. Furthermore, during social gatherings, many adolescent girls experience sexual abuse because of 11% (n=30) social isolation and supervision lax by responsible parents and guardians.

Additionally, during initiation ceremonies, many girls experience sexual abuse because of the 6% (n=16) culture that rites passage for girls to adulthood. Equally, many adolescent girls experience sexual abuse during extreme weather conditions because many adolescent girls travel long distances to fetch water, and on the way they experience sexual abuse. The findings of the study validate studies conducted by (Maida, 2024; Oparinde 1& Matteus, 2021; UNHCR& UNFPA et al., 2020, Human Rights Watch, 2019; and UNICEF, 2017) which indicated that girls face sexual abuse because of different time factors.

4.3. How place factors shape opportunities for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls

Table 4.4: How place factors shape the opportunities for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls

Places	How place factors shape the opportunities for sexual abuse against adolescent girls	Freq.	100%
<i>Household and Family Settings</i>	A significant proportion of adolescent girls experience sexual abuse at home perpetrated by close relatives because of the existing trust, access, and authority over the survivor.	40	15%
	Some adolescent girls are exposed to sexual abuse by family members within the home settings because of dysfunctional family dynamics	16	6%
	Lack of guardians' protections and poor family communication create opportunities for family members to be coerced into sexual abuse	12	4%
<i>School settings.</i>	A significant proportion of adolescent girls are exposed to sexual abuse	33	12%

	within the school settings because of insufficient protective monitoring systems, and lack of strict policy enforcement, and mechanisms.		
	Disproportionately peer pressure among students influences sexual abuse against adolescent girls in different school levels.	18	7%
Public spaces and streets	Adolescent girls who cover long distances from schools are likely to experience sexual abuse, commonly perpetrated by strangers.	37	14%
	Lack of security lights on the road and public spaces influences sexual abuse against adolescent girls.	20	7%
	Limited public security, and community policing structures in public spaces and streets influence many adolescent girls to experience sexual abuse	16	6%
Rural Areas and Remote Locations	Limited access to, security, legal, and health services in rural, cultural practices, and poor social gender norms in remote areas influence sexual abuse among adolescent girls	23	9%
Displacement camps	Breakdown of social structures, absence of strong legal protection frameworks, overcrowding, and limited security measures increase girl's vulnerability to sexual abuse	21	8%
Digital and Online Spaces	A significant proportion of perpetrators use social media to exploit, groom, and coerce adolescent girls into unwelcomed sexual situations	9	3%
Workplaces and Informal Economies	Lack of strong protection framework and enforcement, isolation, and desperate economic situation of families influence adolescent girls doing domestic work, and street vending at high risk of experiencing sexual abuse	25	9%

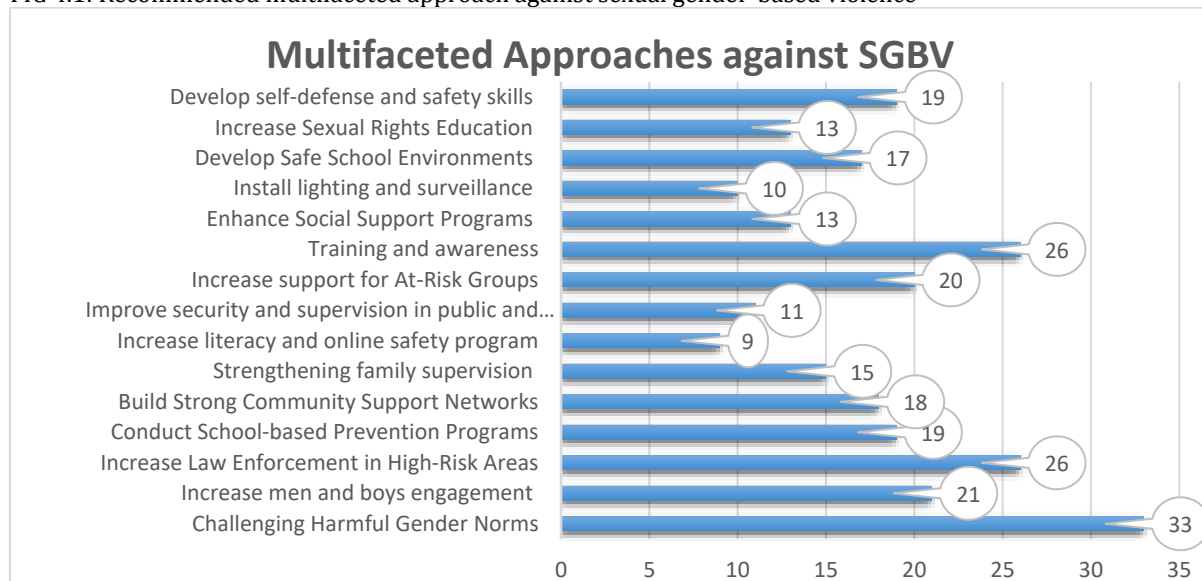
Table 4.4 indicates that a significant proportion of adolescent girls experience sexual abuse in household and family settings because of 15% (n=40) existing trust, easy access to the survivor, and authority over the survivors, and 6% (n=36) because of dysfunctional family dynamics. Public spaces and streets are other places where adolescent girls are exposed to sexual abuse because of 14% (n=37) of the distance from school, 7% (n=20) lack of security lights, and 6% (n=16) limited public security and community policing structures.

Furthermore, the Table 4.4. deduced that girls experience sexual abuse in school settings because of 12% (n=33) insufficient protective monitoring systems, lack of strict policy enforcement and mechanisms, and 7% (n=18) disproportionately peer pressure. Equally, the table shows that workplaces and informal economies like street vending and domestic work influence adolescent girls to be survivors of sexual abuse because of 9% (n=25) lack of strong protection framework and enforcement, isolation, and desperate economic situation.

In addition, Table 4.4 indicated that girls in rural and remote locations were exposed to sexual violence because of 9% (n=23) limited access to security, legal and health services as well as cultural practices and social gender norms (Maida, 2024; Samati, 2021; Cappa; Petrowski& WHO, 2020; Bisika& Konyani, 2014& 2009).

4.4. Recommended multifaceted approach to address both place factors and time factors against sexual gender-based violence.

FIG 4.1: Recommended multifaceted approach against sexual gender-based violence



The association of data analysis in Fig 4.1 above shows the recommended multifaceted approach that can help to address place and time factors against sexual gender-based violence such as 12% (n=33) challenging harmful gender norms, 10% (n=26) increase law enforcement in High-Risk Areas, 10% (n=26) increase training and awareness, 8% (n=21) increase men and boy's engagement, 7% (n=20) increase support for At-Risk Groups, 7% (n=19) increased school-based prevention activities, 7% (n=19) develop self-defense and safety skills, and 7% (n=18) build strong community support networks.

Furthermore, Fig 4.1 indicated that sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls can be addressed by 6% (n=17) by developing a safe school environment, 5% (n=15) by strengthening family supervision, 5% (n=13) by increasing sexual rights education, and enhance social support programs. The results of the study support the findings of the study by (UNHCR& UNFPA et al, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2019; ILO, 2018; UNICEF, 2017) which states that the prevention of sexual abuse against adolescent girls requires different multifaceted approaches.

5.0. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

A significant proportion of the respondents acknowledged that adolescent girls are the most survivors of sexual gender-based violence. Many girls experience sexual abuse in the bush, at school, at the workplace, and in public institutions principled to address human rights, gender, and child protection like police, social welfare, and health facilities. Most adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence at any time, during weekends, during the day, during holidays, and when the girl is alone. The results of the study validate studies conducted by (Maida, 2024; Samati, 2021; Shawa, 2020; Shepherd et al., 2016) which indicated that there is no specific time and place where girls experience abuse.

The study discovered that girls experience sexual abuse within the household and family settings because of existing trust, easy access, and authority over the survivors. Equally, many adolescent girls are exposed to sexual abuse in public spaces and streets because of limited public security, lack of security lights, and community policing structures. The findings of the study agree with the results of the study and reports presented by (UNHCR& UNFPA et al, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2019; ILO, 2018; UNICEF, 2017) which indicated that mutual trust and relationship between girls and their relatives create obvious opportunity for sexual abuse.

A significant proportion of adolescent girls experience sexual abuse in different places and times because of the absence of responsible parents and guardians, darkness, social isolation, and supervision lax by parents and guardians. During droughts, many girls, especially in remote areas experience sexual abuse because of long distances covered to access portable water for household chores.

Owing to the significance of the problems, multifaceted approaches such as challenging harmful gender norms, increasing law enforcement in high-risk areas, increasing training and awareness, increasing men's and boys' engagement, develop-defense and safety skills, and building strong community support networks should be enhanced to prevent adolescent girls from experiencing sexual abuse. The results of the study support the findings of the study by (UNHCR& UNFPA et al, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2019; ILO, 2018; UNICEF, 2017; Anderson& Sayenda, 2011) which states that the prevention of sexual abuse against adolescent girls requires different approaches. Amin Sajenda and Anderson (2011).

5.1. Conclusion

This study delved into examining how time and places shape the opportunity for sexual gender-based violence against adolescent girls. The study discovered that many adolescent girls experience sexual gender-based violence within the household and family settings. The study also indicated that a significant proportion of adolescent girls are exposed to sexual abuse in public spaces, streets, and at school at any time because of the absence of parents and guardians, easy access, and control over the survivors. According to the study findings, limited public security, security lights, and lack of child protection policy system enforcement fuel sexual abuse against adolescent girls.

Multifaceted approaches such as challenging harmful gender norms, increasing law enforcement in high-risk areas, increasing training and awareness, increasing men's and boys' engagement, developing defense and safety skills, and building strong community support networks should be enhanced to prevent adolescent girls from experiencing sexual abuse.

Despite the valuable insights gained in this study, the findings from this study offer a foundation for future research and initiatives to discover the efficacy of the countries' legal frameworks and multifaceted approaches against sexual gender-based violence.

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