

Parental factors associated with the experience of gender-based violence among in-school adolescents during COVID-19 pandemic

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Abstract

Introduction: There are media reports that the lockdown measure against the COVID-19 pandemic may increase the incidence of GBV in the home, but empirical evidence is lacking. This study assessed adolescents' experiences of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 lockdown and the parental factors associated with the experience of gender-based violence among adolescents during the COVID-19 lockdown using Ibadan, Nigeria as a case study.

Methodology: In a cross-sectional study, 520 in-school adolescents were selected by multistage sampling and interviewed on their sociodemographic characteristics, parental characteristics, and experiences of GBV during the COVID-19 lockdown. Chi-square statistics were used to collect and analyze data.

Results: There were 266 females and 254 males, aged 15.28 ± 1.40 years (females) and 15.64 ± 1.53 years (males), and lived with both parents ($n=70.6\%$). Respondent's parents (about 79%) are currently married and living together. There is an association between the experience of violence during the lockdown and adolescent fathers' occupations ($\chi^2=11.88$, $p=0.008$). Previous home exposure to inter-parental violence was associated with adolescent's experience of physical violence ($\chi^2=10.43$, $P=0.001$), psychological violence ($\chi^2=16.35$, $p<0.001$), and financial violence ($\chi^2=14.51$, $p<0.001$) during the pandemic.

Conclusion: The study's findings suggested that parental factors such as inter-parental violence and the father's occupation were drivers of adolescents' experiences of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. Furthermore, measures are recommended to reduce parental and inter-parental violence in the home.

Keywords: Gender-Based Violence; Inter-Parental Violence; Adolescents; COVID 19

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic, caused by the brand-new coronavirus SARS-CoV-2, has altered the lives of a sizable portion of the world's population. From December 2019 to April 8, 2020, there were records of 1,500,830 confirmed cases and 87,706 deaths worldwide following the confirmation of the first case of COVID-19 in the city of Wuhan, China. The epidemic was labelled a "public health emergency of international concern" (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020, and a "pandemic" on March 11, 2020, according to Tang and colleagues [1]. Social containment measures have been proposed in numerous nations, including Nigeria, due to the disease's widespread distribution and community transmission in many of those nations. The World Health Organization (WHO) has implemented measures to combat the epidemic,

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including social isolation of suspected individuals. However, such support at different levels of society has negative effects on family life and economical operations. The lockdown strategy used to contain the coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) in some areas had unfavorable side effects, including loss of employment, isolation, crowded living conditions, stress and anxiety, domestic violence (gender-based violence), child abuse, and neglect, which put women and children at risk. The World Health Organization (WHO) has put policies in place to tackle the disease, such as socially isolating suspects. The lockdown strategy used to stop the spread of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) has had negative knock-on effects in several locations, including loss of income, isolation, crowded living conditions, stress and anxiety, domestic violence (gender-based violence), child abuse, and neglect, which puts women and children at risk. The World Health Organization (WHO) has acted against the epidemic, including socially isolating those who are suspected.

Any harm done against a person's will due to their gender and has an adverse effect on their physical or psychological health, development, or identity is known as gender-based violence. [2][3]. Gender-based violence includes a variety of violent behaviors such as domestic abuse, sexual harassment, marital rape, assault, sexual violence during conflict, and harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation, forced marriage, trafficking, forced prostitution, murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, and female infanticide, and prenatal sex selection [4][5][6]. Age, gender, class, ethnicity, and ethnic identities are among the many categories in which gender-based violence occurs. It is used as evidence for the conventional patriarchal norms that uphold men's control over sexualities, especially feminine and gender non-conforming sexualities. [7]. Violence has a significant impact on health and society around the world, contributing to death, illness, and disability.[8]. According to statistics, one in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual abuse at the hands of an intimate or non-intimate partner. Studies in the past have shown a connection between prior epidemics and an increase in gender-based violence; a rise in reports of rape, violence against women, and sexual assaults was documented during the Ebola outbreak in West Africa, adding to the global increase in domestic violence. [9]. Early data from 24 states during the pandemic lockdown (COVID-19) revealed a 56 per cent rise in gender-based violence in just 2 weeks of the lockdown. [10]

Adolescents are a frequently venerated group that is likely to suffer injury and go through a trying transitional period [11]. Due to the intersectionality of age, this group is particularly vulnerable to gender-based violence in humanitarian settings. Early adolescence is a crucial time for emotional and social development; abuse can impede a child's ability to develop normally and healthily throughout this time. Social services quickly identify incidents of physical abuse against children as detrimental, but it is more challenging to identify and diagnose cases of IPV exposure. Children exposed to IPV are often referred to as "forgotten," "invisible," or "silent victims" [12]. According to reports from Nigeria, experiencing parental abuse as a youngster might lead to an authoritarian perspective of violence. Childhood witnesses of violence are more likely to tolerate aggression in their relationships and react passively [13], as this is perceived by them as a suitable method of resolving conflicts. Young guys who experience such violence are more prone to acquire domineering behaviours and eventually turn violent toward their spouses.

Conversely, teenage girls who witness parental abuse are more likely to put up with abuse from their boyfriends and act passively [13]. Thus, the WHO emphasized that young children, often silent bystanders, contribute to the spread of violence by either being abused themselves or by others. Literature on adolescents' experiences with and exposure to parental IPV during the pandemic lockdown is scarce. This study aims to fill in these knowledge gaps by identifying the parental influences on adolescents' experiences with GBV during the pandemic lockdown.

2. Methodology

2.1. Study setting

The Ibadan North Local Government Area (LGA) of Oyo State served as the study's location. One of the LGAs that comprise the Ibadan Metropolis is Ibadan North Local Government Area. With 145.58 km² of territory and a population of 308,119, including 60,570 teenagers, it is the largest urban local government area in Nigeria (NPC, 2006). It was established by the Federal Military Government of Nigeria on September 27, 1991, after it and other entities were carved out of the long-gone Ibadan Municipal Government. Although Yorubas make up most of the ethnicities in the LGA, there are also Igbo, Urhobo, Hausa, Ijaw, and Itsekiri.

2.2. Study Population

The study population included male and female secondary school students, ages 15 to 19, who attended public and private schools in the Ibadan North local government region. This age range was chosen because older teenagers and young adults seem more susceptible to GBV than their younger counterparts [13]. Among the exclusion criteria are the

exclusion criteria for teenage boys and girls who missed school during the research period and whose parents refuse to allow them to participate.

2.3. Study Design

This study is a descriptive cross-sectional study.

2.4. Sample size

The sample size was computed using the two-sided test formula for a single percentage and the presumption that 28.3% of people aged 15–19 had suffered physical and sexual abuse. [13] At a 5% level of significance, the design effect was assumed to be 1.5, and 468 responses served as the bare minimum sample size. A 10% adjustment was made for non-response, which resulted in a minimum of 520 respondents.

2.5. Sampling Technique

The respondents were chosen using a two-stage sampling procedure. In stage one, two public schools and two private schools from the list of all public and private schools in Ibadan North LGA were chosen by simple random sampling, totaling four schools. Simple random selection was used to choose 130 respondents from each chosen school, for a total of 520 respondents. To calculate the proportionate sample size needed from each class, the actual population in each class was gathered. Respondents were randomly picked from each division of the school for stage two.

To obtain cooperation from the school administrators to gain access to the students, advocacy visits were made to the schools in July 2021 to discuss the study with the school administrator. The school authorities gave their commitment. Data collection commenced from 15th September, 2021 to 13th October 2021. The teachers were available to give support when needed.

2.6. Study Instrument

Quantitative data was collected using a semi-structured, self-administered questionnaire. The survey was divided into categories on inter-parental violence in the house, self-reported experience of violent behaviors during the lockdown, and demographic variables. The data collection instrument was derived from earlier studies by Fawole et al. (2018) and the WHO multi-country study (2005).

Questions about the experience of physical, sexual, and psychological violence were posed to the respondents to ascertain their level of understanding of the subject matter (GBV), using examples of such acts as "Has anyone touched you in any sensitive area of your body? do you feel threatened by someone? did anyone often shout at you?" In addition, inquiries regarding exposure to financial, psychological, and physical forms of parental abuse were made while providing examples of the violence in questions such as, "Have you ever witnessed your father hit, slap, or push your mother?" or "riddle or insult her?" or "deny her money for her care?" Likewise, the mother does the same to the father. The survey was pre-tested among 30 teenagers in the Ibadan Northeast local government area, Ibadan, Oyo State, which was outside the study area, to ensure the validity and reliability of the survey results.

2.7. Data collection

The sampled schools were visited during the academic year to administer the questionnaire. Respondents were closely watched while completing the survey, and the collection of data started right away. The interviewer gave out the questionnaires. A research assistant was hired and given the training to help with data gathering. The investigator gave two days of training to the research assistants. Before collecting data, respondents' permission and informed consent were acquired. The questionnaire was completed in roughly 15 minutes.

2.8. Study Variables

The dependent measures include having experienced physical, sexual, psychological, or any of the three types of violence mentioned above. WHO guidelines define violence. Experience of physical violence is defined as a positive reaction to at least one of the following acts: being struck, bitten, shoved, punched, grabbed, having an object or acid thrown at them, or being threatened with a deadly weapon. The term "sexual violence" covers a variety of behaviors, including unwanted touching of the breast or buttocks, unwanted kissing, being forced to watch sexually explicit material, being raped, being forced to have sex in exchange for money or other things, and being forced to eliminate pregnancy. Psychological violence was described as the purposeful use of spoken words to denigrate, contempt, humiliate, or intimidate the respondent.

The respondents' family history information, socio-demographic traits, and exposure to domestic violence between parents were chosen as the independent factors. The family background questions included the parents' education and occupation, whereas the demographic factors covered sex, age, class, and religion.

2.9. Data Management

The statistical program for social science (SPSS) version 20 was used to code, clean, enter, and analyze the data that were obtained from the study. Field data was input every day to prevent missing or mixed-up data. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics to present the information gleaned from the study in a clear and intelligible manner. The results underwent the necessary statistical analysis using Pearson's chi-square analysis at a 95% confidence level and a 0.05 p-value.

2.10. Ethical Consideration

Approval of the study was acquired from UI/UCH Ethic Review Committee with UI/UCH Ethics Committee assigned number UI/EC/21/0336. All the survey procedures aligned with the recommendations of ethics and regulatory board. Prior to the commencement of data collection, written and signed informed consent was obtained from each participant who participated in the study. For participant less than 18 years, consent was sought from the household head. The study posed minimal risk to the study participants, and all information was held confidentially.

3. Results

3.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of parents

The descriptive analysis of the parents' socio-demographic characteristics, as shown in Table 1, revealed that more than half the proportion of the fathers (n = 224, 55.6%) and mothers (n = 204, 53.2%) of the respondents were well educated, having attained a higher level of education. Additionally, most of the respondent's parents (n = 367, 79%) are married and currently living with their partner.

Table 1a Socio-demographic characteristics of parents

Socio-demographics	Male n= 254(%)	Female n=266(%)	Total n=520(%)
Father's highest education			
No formal education	6(66.7)	3(33.3)	9
Primary	11(45.8)	13(54.2)	24
Secondary	42(50.0)	42(50.0)	84
Polytechnic	26(40.0)	39(60.0)	65
University	111(49.6)	113(50.5)	224
I don't know	58(50.9)	56(49.1)	114
Mother's highest education			
No formal education	1(20.0)	4(80.0)	5
Primary	8(44.4)	10(55.6)	18
Secondary	45(43.7)	58(56.3)	103
Polytechnic	31(42.5)	42(57.5)	73
University	104(51.0)	100(49.0)	204
I don't know	65(55.6)	52(44.4)	117
Guardian's highest education			
No formal education	1(50.0)	1(50.0)	2
Primary	3(100.0)	0	3

Secondary	4(50.0)	4(50.0)	8
Polytechnic	2(33.3)	4(66.7)	6
University	9(39.1)	14(60.9)	23
I don't know	3(17.7)	14(82.4)	17
Not applicable	232(50.3)	229(49.7)	461
Father's marital status			
Single/never married	6(100.0)	0	6
Married/staying together	193(47.1)	217(52.9)	410
Married/not staying together	41(63.1)	24(36.9)	65
Divorced	4(23.5)	13(76.5)	17
Widowed	7(50.0)	7(50.0)	14
Others	3(37.5)	5(62.5)	8
Mother's marital status			
Single/never married	3(100.0)	0	3
Married/staying together	196(47.5)	217(52.5)	413
Married/not staying together	42(63.6)	24(36.4)	66
Divorced	3(18.8)	13(81.3)	16
Widowed	7(50.0)	7(50.0)	14
Others	3(37.5)	5(62.5)	8
Guardian's marital status			
Single/never married	2(28.6)	5(71.4)	7
Married/staying together	10(38.5)	16(61.5)	26
Married/not staying together	1(25.0)	3(75.0)	4
Widowed	1(25.0)	3(75.0)	4
Others	0	2(100.0)	2
Not applicable	240(50.3)	237(49.7)	477

Table 1b Socio-demographic characteristics of parents (parents' occupation)

Father's occupation	male n= 254	female n= 266	Total n= 520
Skilled	86(49.7)	87(50.3)	173
Semi-skilled	134(48.0)	145(52.0)	279
Unskilled	22(59.5)	15(40.5)	37
Others	12(38.7)	19(61.3)	31
Mother's occupation			
Skilled	94(51.4)	89(48.6)	183
Semi-skilled	125(46.0)	147(54.0)	272
Unskilled	11(44.0)	14(56.0)	25

Others	24(60.0)	16(40.0)	40
Guardian's occupation			
Skilled	14(31.8)	30(68.2)	44
Semi-skilled	7(29.2)	17(70.8)	24
Unskilled	1(50.0)	1(50.0)	2
Not applicable	232(51.6)	218(48.4)	450

3.2. Adolescents' Previous Exposure to Inter-parental Violence at Home

Table 2 shows adolescents' experiences of inter-parental violence in the home. Less than a quarter of male respondents reported seeing their father hit, slap, or push their mother occasionally ($n = 14$, 5.5%) and frequently ($n = 12$, 14.7%), while ($n = 9$, 3.4%) and ($n = 25$, 9.4%) saw their mother do the same to their father. Also, less than a quarter of males witnessed their father sometimes ($n = 46$, 18.1%) and often ($n = 8$, 3.2%) insult or ridicule their mother. Furthermore, more than average male respondents reported witnessing their mother sometimes ($n = 56$, 22.1%) and often ($n = 10$, 3.9%) insult or ridicule their father, and females reported witnessing the same sometimes ($n = 57$, 21.4%) and often ($n = 6$, 2.3%).

Table 2 Adolescents' previous exposure to interparental violence at home

	Male n=254			Female n=266		
	Often	Sometimes	Never	Often	Sometimes	Never
Hit, slap or push	12(4.7)	14(5.5)	228(89.8)	9(3.4)	25(9.4)	232(87.2)
Insult or ridicule	8(3.2)	46(18.1)	200(78.7)	9(3.4)	72(27.1)	185(69.5)
Denial of money for care	22(8.7)	23(9.1)	209(82.3)	15(5.64)	57(21.4)	194(72.9)
Frequently takes money that belongs to her	16(6.3)	34(13.4)	204(80.3)	19(7.1)	38(14.3)	209(78.6)
Deprive of working	28(11.0)	38(15.0)	188(74.0)	20(7.5)	39(14.7)	207(77.8)
Deprive of going out	14(5.5)	47(18.5)	193(76.0)	12(4.5)	38(14.3)	216(81.2)
Denies access to the house	11(4.3)	8(3.2)	235(92.5)	8(3.0)	13(4.9)	245(92.1)
Hits slap or pushes father	5(2.0)	13(5.1)	236(92.9)	7(2.6)	8(3.0)	251(94.4)
Insults or ridicule father	10(3.9)	56(22.1)	188(74.0)	6(2.3)	57(21.4)	203(76.3)
Denial of food	3(1.2)	27(10.6)	224(88.2)	9(3.4)	21(7.9)	236(88.7)

3.3. Adolescents' Previous Exposure to Inter-parental Violence At Home

Table 3 shows the prevalence of home exposure to gender-based violence by types of violence among adolescents. Of the five hundred and twenty (520) respondents that were recruited into the study, 174 have been exposed to physical acts of inter-parental violence in the home, of which 92 (17.69%) male and 82 (15.88%) female respondents reported witnessing the act. Furthermore, 253 participants reported witnessing a psychological form of inter-parental violence, with the majority ($n = 133$, 25.6%) female and less than a quarter ($n = 120$, 23.1%) male. One hundred eighty-four participants witnessed financial forms of inter-parental violence, with the majority ($n = 96$, 18.5%) being male and reporting witnessing the act.

Table 3 Adolescents' previous exposure to interparental violence at home

Home Exposure to GBV	Male n=254	Female n=266	Total	Chi-square	p-value
Physical violence					
No	162(31.2)	184(35.4)	346(66.5)	1.70	0.193
Yes	92(17.69)	82(15.8)	174(33.5)		
Psychological violence					
No	134(25.8)	133(25.6)	267(51.3)	0.39	0.530
Yes	120(23.1)	133(25.6)	253(48.7)		
Financial violence					
No	158(30.4)	178(34.2)	336(64.6)	1.26	0.261
Yes	96(18.5)	88(16.9)	184(35.4)		

Association Between Experience of GBV At Home and Parent's Socio-Demographic Characteristics
 Table 4 shows a significant association between parent socio-demographic characteristics (the father's occupation (2 11.88, P = 0.008) and the adolescent's experience of gender-based violence during the lockdown

Table 4 Association between experience of gbv at home and parent's socio-demographic characteristics

	Experienced GBV		χ^2	(p-value)
Father's highest education	No	Yes		
No formal	0	9(100.0)	6.49	0.261
Primary	1(4.2)	23(95.8)		
Secondary	7(8.3)	77(91.7)		
Polytechnic	12(18.5)	53(81.5)		
University	30(13.4)	194(86.6)		
Don't know	14(12.3)	100(87.7)		
Mother's highest education				
No formal	0	5(100.0)	9.56	0.089
Primary	1(5.6)	17(94.4)		
Secondary	9(8.7)	94(91.3)		
Polytechnic	10(13.7)	63(86.3)		
University	35(17.2)	169(82.8)		
Don't know	9(7.7)	108(92.3)		
Guardian's highest education				
No formal	0	2(100.0)	4.20	0.650
Primary	1(33.3)	2(66.7)		
Secondary	0	8(100.0)		
Polytechnic	1(16.7)	5(83.3)		
University	1(4.4)	22(95.7)		
Don't know	2(11.8)	15(88.2)		

Not applicable	59(12.8)	402(87.2)		
Father's marital status				
Single/never married	2(33.3)	43(95.56)	3.20	0.202
Married/staying together	52(12.7)	358(87.3)		
Married /not staying together	10(15.4)	55(84.6)		
Mother's marital status				
Single/never married	2(66.7)	39(95.12)	2.62	0.27
Married/staying together	52(12.6)	361(87.4)		
Married /not staying together	10(15.2)	56(84.9)		
Father's occupation				
Skilled	33(19.1)	140(80.9)	11.88	0.008*
Semi-skilled	25(9.0)	254(91.0)		
Unskilled	2(5.4)	35(94.6)		
Others	4(12.9)	27(87.1)		
Mother's occupation				
Skilled	25(13.7)	158(86.3)	1.04	0.792
Semi-skilled	30(11.0)	242(88.9)		
Unskilled	4(16.0)	21(84.0)		
Others	5(12.5)	35(87.5)		

3.4. Parental Factors Associated with the experience of Gender Based Violence

Table 5 revealed the parental factors associated with the experience of GBV during the pandemic lockdown. As shown in the table, there is an association between witnessing physical (2 10.43, $P = 0.001$), psychological (2 16.35, $P = 0.001$), and financial (2 14.51, $P = 0.001$) forms of inter-parental violence and experiencing GBV at home during the pandemic lockdown.

Table 5 Association between previous exposure to interparental violence at home and experience of gbv at home during the pandemic lockdown

Exposure to GBV at Home		Experience of GBV at Home during The Lockdown			
		No	Yes	Total	χ^2 Statistic
Physical violence					
No	54(15.6)	292(84.4)	346	10.43	0.001*
Yes	10(5.8)	164(94.3)	174		
Psychological violence					
No	48(18.0)	219(82.0)	267	16.35	<0.001*
Yes	16(3.1)	237(93.7)	253		
Financial violence					
No	55(10.5)	281(54.0)	336(64.6)	14.51	<0.001*
Yes	9(1.7)	175(33.6)	184(35.4)		

*= Statistically significant at $P < 0.05$

3.5. Logistic Regression for Exposure to GBV at Home and Experience of GBV at home during the pandemic lockdown

Binary logistic regression was used to examine whether being exposed to Inter-parental violence (exposure to GBV at home) predicted likelihood of adolescents' experience of GBV at home during the pandemic lockdown. As shown in table 6, participant who had witnessed physical inter-parental violence are not likely to experience GBV at home during the pandemic lockdown at (OR 1.32, P=0.55, 95% CI (0.54-3.24)), likewise those who witnessed psychological act of inter-parental violence being demonstrated by their parents, they are not likely than those who have not witnessed inter-parental psychological violence to experience GBV during the lockdown at (OR 1.85, P= 0.112, 95% CI (0.87-3.94)). Furthermore, participant who had witnessed financial inter-parental violence are not likely to experience GBV at home during the pandemic lockdown at (OR=2.16, P=0.072, 95% CI (0.93-4.99)).

Table 6 Logistic Regression for Exposure to GBV at Home and Experience of GBV at home During the Pandemic Lockdown

Pandemic Lockdown		
	OR	p-value
Age group		
10-14	1.0	
15-19	0.69(0.36-1.34)	0.277
School type		
Public	1.0	
Private	0.68(0.38-1.23)	0.203
Religion		
Christianity	1.0	
Islam	1.56(0.81-3.00)	0.187
Ethnicity		
Igbo	1.10(0.48-2.49)	.824
Yoruba	1.0	
Family type		
Monogamous	1.0	
Polygamous	1.33(0.57-3.10)	0.507
Currently stays with		
Mother	0.73(0.36-1.47)	0.374
Guardian	1.60(0.59-4.37)	0.359
Both parent	1.0	
Physical violence		
No	1.0	
Yes	1.32(0.54-3.24)	0.55
Psychological violence		
No	1.0	
Yes	1.85(0.87-3.94)	0.112
Financial violence		

No	1.0	
Yes	2.16(0.93-4.99)	0.072

4. Discussion

In this study, more than two-thirds of the respondents experienced violence during the pandemic lockdown. Since COVID-19 has caused an increase in domestic violence cases at a rate similar to that experienced during earlier pandemics, there seems to be a strong connection between COVID-19 and those pandemics (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2020). [14]

During the pandemic lockdown, a father's occupation was linked to an adolescent's GBV experience, with the unskilled category having the highest prevalence. This finding is in contrast with the findings of Badri (2014), who reported that GBV against girls of secondary age is not related to the socio-economic level of their parents [16].

Most respondents who had witnessed interparental violence between parents reported experiencing it during the pandemic lockdown. This was consistent with the study by Beyene et al. (2019), which found that parental aggression was the main cause of GBV. The fact that a higher proportion of crimes are committed by family members—parents or siblings—may be a result of increasing economic unpredictability and changes to daily family life, which lead to higher tensions within families and exacerbate violent situations.

Due to the economy, aggression may have been passed from parents to kids, and children of violent fathers are frequently physically mistreated alongside their mothers. Such youngsters experience psychological abuse from watching violent scenes, even when not physically mistreated (WHO, 2012).

It is important to remember that adolescents who witnessed parental abuse as children may have an authoritarian perspective of violence and are hence more inclined to accept abuse from their partners and behave passively. Boys raised in violent families are more likely to become controlling and abusive spouses later in life. Still, similar young women are more prone to accept violence from their relationships and respond passively. Thus, these silent observers of interparental violence play a role in disseminating violence by either being victims or perpetrators of abuse. Thus, by either being abused themselves or by their parents, these quiet bystanders of interparental violence contribute to the spread of violence.

5. Conclusion

The study's findings suggested that parental factors such as inter-parental violence and the father's occupation were associated with the adolescent's experience of GBV during the pandemic lockdown. Furthermore, measures to reduce inter-parental violence in the home are recommended.

Study limitation

Gender based violence is a sensitive issue that most people tend to deny because of the fear of stigmatization. The attitude of the respondents towards the filling and return of the questionnaire was a major limitation. Majority of the respondents were young and hesitant to talk about sexual issues. However, they were assured about the confidentiality of information given.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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