



Assessment of Awareness and Perception of Sexual Violence in Benin Metropolis: A Gender and Locational Perspective

by

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Abstract

The study assessed the awareness and perception of sexual violence from gender and locational perspective. The target population were residents of Benin Metropolis who were 15-70 years old. The mixed survey approach, which combines systematic random sampling with on-the-street survey techniques, was modified to provide an all-inclusive study that included participants from every sphere of life. A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, with 50 copies in each of the sampled ten (10) neighbourhoods. Kruskal-Wallis H test and multiple linear regression analysis were employed to test the hypotheses. The results showed that, gender and the level of awareness of sexual violence did not differ significantly. Additionally, there were no significant variations between the level of awareness of sexual violence and the locality. However, there was a significant difference between gender and perception of sexual violence, while there was no significant difference between location and perception of sexual violence. The regression model showed that the seven independent variables used only explained 20.8% of the variation in the awareness of sexual violence in the study area. Family type and education beeing significant were the only variables that were significant. It was recommended that government should strengthen sexual harassment policies and provide toll free telephone helplines for counselling and educational interventions (formal and informal) should be carried out to sensitise the populace on sexual violence.

1) Introduction

Sexual violence is defined as any sexual act or attempts to get a sexual act done by the offender without the victim's consent, which can take the form of sexual assault, unwanted fondling or touching of the victim's body parts, voyeurism, indecent exposure, and sexual exploitation (World Health Organization, 2002; National Sexual Violence Resource Center, 2010). Most of the time, the terms "sexual violence" and "sexual abuse" are used interchangeably; though the sexual acts committed are similar, sexual violence is a term used to refer to violence on a global scale (Henry, 2018), whereas sexual abuse is more commonly used to refer to violence against kids and adolescents. It refers to sexual

actions between an adult and a kid, as well as any other circumstance in which there is a power imbalance and the victim is vulnerable, such as between a teacher and a student, a therapist and a client, or a caregiver and a client with intellectual impairment (Berlo & Ploem, 2018).

Sexual violence is common around the world, but it is especially prevalent in underdeveloped nations (Emeka *et al.*, 2022). As a growing public health and human rights issue, it is an indicator of the world's greatest violation of human security (Bajpa, 2019). Sexual violence is an ubiquitous and complicated societal issue in Nigeria, with far-reaching effects on individuals and society as a whole (Igbo & Ikpa, 2013). It is an issue that affects people of all ages, genders, and socioeconomic origins, and it is frequently linked to deeply embedded cultural norms and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequality and discrimination (Awosusi & Ogundana, 2015; Quing, 2021).

Sexual violence can be perpetuated either through the following forms; verbal (Macdonald & Daniels, 2005; Anderson, 2006; Gillard, 2014), non-verbal (Delaney *et al.*, 2006), written (Hebert, 1995), visual which includes the display of pornography, public display of nude and touching one's self sexually (Young *et al.*, 2004), and physical (Maree, 2015; Hogshead-Makar & Steinbach, 2003). It is crime that can be perpetrated by both genders and it occurs over space be it in the rural, suburbs and urban environment. As a crime that has a spatial (space) and temporal (time) characteristics, it is an issue of interest to geographers, planners and population experts.

This research investigates the effect of gender and location on the awareness and perception of sexual violence in Nigeria. Specifically, the factors that influence individuals' understanding of the issue, the extent to which cultural norms and practices perpetuate victim-blaming, and the effectiveness of current educational interventions in increasing awareness and understanding of sexual violence. This study intends to fill a research gap by providing a thorough and up-to-date examination of gender and location awareness and perception of sexual violence in the study area, to influence policy and practice targeted at lowering the occurrence of sexual violence.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2015), one in every four girls and one in every ten boys in Nigeria suffered sexual abuse before the age of 18. Sexual assault has been on the rise in Nigeria (Nwusulor & Onwubiko, 2021). The most effective tool in the campaign against sexual violence is awareness (Nwosu, 1986). The level of awareness and perception of sexual violence among individuals varies between regions and work contexts; developed countries have a higher level of awareness than developing ones (Paludi & Barrickman, 1991; Eze, 2013). While it is well accepted that sexual assault occurs in all nations and at all levels of society, trustworthy information on its prevalence among persons of various socioeconomic positions in Nigeria is few (Fawole *et al.*, 2005).

It has frequently been claimed that societal conventions, perceptions, and attitudes all play a role in sexual assault. Accordingly, society largely determines whether behaviours are considered acceptable and harmful (World Health Organisation, 2002; Government Delegation for National Plan on Drugs, 2018; Prego-Meleiro *et al.*, 2022). Cultural factors that support direct or structural violence and inhibit the victims' response are thus considered to be examples of cultural violence (Galtung, 1990). In this regard, a society that does not recognise all forms of sexual violence would not only be unable to suppress and punish it, but will also be unable to put forth measures to avoid it, particularly among young people (Sasson & Paul, 2014).

Nlewem and Amodu (2016), assessed the knowledge and perception of sexual abuse among female students in Abia State. It was observed that the majority of responders identified factors that constitute sexual abuse, with only a few demonstrating poor understanding. The majority of replies on the right definitions and descriptions of child sexual abuse were greater than 70%. Uthman *et al.* (2017) carried out a study on the awareness and prevalence of sexual among students. It was observed that virtually all the participants had the awareness of the constitutes sexual violence. Oche *et al.* (2020) assessed the awareness, attitude, and experience of sexual violence among female employees in Sokoto metropolis. It was discovered that the majority of the respondents had a good awareness of sexual violence. The gap in the studies of Nlewem and Amodu (2016), Uthman *et al.* (2017), and Oche *et al.* (2020) is that the studies were based on awareness of the female sex, neglecting the male gender who are also victims of sexual violence. The awareness between both sexes may differ and as such, it necessitated the need to determine if the awareness level of both genders is differing. Also, they neglected the role of location (environment) can play in sharpening the experiences of people and in turn, shaping their awareness and perception of an event.

Several elements can influence one's awareness of sexual violence. It has been discovered that education level is a highly significant predictor of sexual violence awareness (Oche *et al.*, 2020). Educated individuals are more likely to be aware of sexual violence and to comprehend what it means (Oche *et al.*, 2020). Because they are more likely to become victims of sexual assault, women are more likely than males to be aware of it. Due to cultural and gender stigmatisation conventions that prohibit them from talking about delicate subjects like sexual violence, men may have limited awareness of the problem. Younger individuals may be less aware of sexual assault than older individuals. This is especially true in rural and traditional societies, where frank talks of sexuality and sexual abuse are discouraged by cultural standards. Different places may have different levels of awareness about sexual violence. Due to more access to education and media, urban areas may have higher awareness, whilst rural areas may have lower awareness due to less access to education and media in developing countries. Socioeconomic standing: Individuals with higher socioeconomic standing might have more access to media and education, which could raise their awareness of sexual violence. Religious and cultural practices and beliefs might affect how much sexual violence is understood. Sexual assault may be acceptable or normalised in some cultures, which might reduce public awareness of the problem. And having experienced sexual assault firsthand might help you grasp the problem better. Those who have suffered sexual violence may be more aware of and knowledgeable about the problem than those who have not. The tactics used to raise awareness of sexual abuse and provide assistance for survivors can benefit from an understanding of these variables.

2) Objectives of the Study

The major aim of the study was to assess the awareness and perspectives of sexual violence from the viewpoint of gender and location. In other to achieve this, the following objectives were meant to; determine the variation in the level of awareness of sexual violence between genders, determine if there is a difference in the level of awareness of sexual violence among locations, examine if there is a difference in the perception of sexual violence between gender, examine if there is a difference in the

perception sexual violence in a different location, and determine the factors that affect awareness among the respondents.

To achieve these objectives, the following hypotheses were set;

- H₀₁ There is no significant difference in the level of awareness of sexual violence between gender in Benin Metropolis.
- H₀₂ There is no difference in the level of awareness of sexual violence among locations in the study area
- H₀₃ There is no significant difference in the level of perception of sexual violence between gender in the study area.
- H₀₄ There is no difference in the level of perception of sexual violence among locations in Benin Metropolis
- H₀₅ There is no relationship between socio-demographics and awareness of sexual violence among respondents in Benin Metropolis.

3) The Study Area

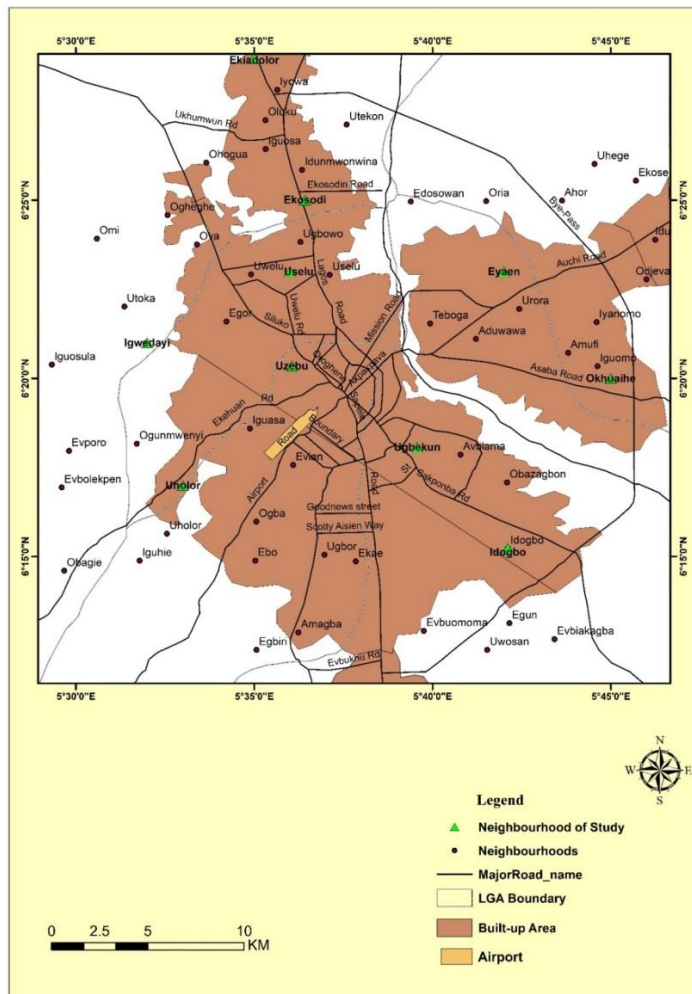


Fig. 1: Benin Metropolis Showing Neighbourhood of Study
Source: Edited by Authors' 2023

Benin metropolis (Fig. 1) is the research area, which includes Oredo, Egor, Ikpoba-Okha, and urbanised areas of Ovia North-East and Uhunmwode Local Government Areas (Balogun & Onokerhoraye 2017; Egharevba & Edohen 2020; Atewe & Egharevba 2022). It comprises sequences of contiguously built communities, which are spontaneously being urbanised outwardly. Within the LAGs (Uhunmwode and Ovia North-East) that comprised the metropolis, there are patches of rural communities.

According to the 2006 census, Benin Metropolis is the fourth-largest city in Nigeria after Lagos, Kano, and Ibadan. Benin is located on the southern border of Edo State, between latitudes 6° 16' and 6° 33' north of the equator and longitudes 5° 31' and 5° 45' east of the Greenwich meridian. Benin Metropolitan covers roughly 1,318 km² and has a perimeter of 166 km (Ekhaese *et al.*, 2014; Asikhia & Nkeki, 2013). Edo state was the 8th state with the highest female literacy level (94.9%) while it was the joint highest, in terms of male literacy level (98.3%) in Nigeria (Abdulsalam,2018).

4) Materials and Methods

The mixed survey method (on-the-street and systematic random sampling survey techniques) was adapted to create all-inclusive research, in which, people from all facets of life between the ages of 15-70 were included in the research. The systematic survey method introduces a probabilistic sampling method. Two neighbourhoods (one urban and suburb) were selected from each of the five LGA that make up the metropolitan area of Benin, making it a total of ten neighbourhoods (see Figure 1).

Table 1: Sample Frame

S/N	LGA	Neighbourhood	Street					Questionnaire Distributed	
			A	B	C	D	E		
1	Egor	Urban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Suburban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Total	2						
2	Ikpoba-Okha	Urban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Suburban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Total	2						
3	Oredo	Urban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Suburban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Total	2						
4	Ovia North-East	Urban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Suburban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Total	2						
5	Uhunmwode	Urban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Suburban	1	5	5	5	5	5	25
		Total	2						
Total			10	50	50	50	50	50	250

Source: Fieldwork

A total of 250 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the respondents in the study area. From the aggregate, 50 copies were administered in each of the ten selected neighbourhoods. In a neighbourhood, a street was purposively selected as the first street and five copies of the questionnaire were administered to individuals who were willing to be part of the research and were residents of the street. After the first respondent, every third person found on the street that was willing to participate in the

research was administered a copy of questionnaire, until the five copies of the questionnaire allotted to the street were exhausted. Thereafter, every other fourth street from the initially selected street was selected for questionnaire administration. Uselu (urban) and Igedayi (suburban) were chosen in the Egor LGA. Ugbekun (urban) and Idogbo (suburban) were chosen in the Ikpoba-Okha LGA. In Oredo, the neighbourhoods of Uzebu (urban) and Uholor (suburban) were chosen. Ekosodin (urban) and Ekiadolor (suburban) were chosen for Ovia North-East. Eyaen (urban) and Okhuaihe (suburban) were chosen in Uhumwode LGA. See Table 1 for the sample frame.

5) Results and Discussions

Gender and Locational Awareness of Sexual Violence

Gender Level of Awareness of Sexual Violence

To determine the awareness level of respondents, it was necessary to assess their awareness level of some factors that makes up sexual violence as it is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Crosstabulation of the Level of Awareness of the Constituents of Sexual Violence

Constituents Of Sexual Violence	Gender	Level of Sexual Violence Awareness					Total
		Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	
Rape as a Sexual Violence	Female	0	6	16	23	14	59
	Male	8	14	48	67	54	191
	Total	8	20	64	90	68	250
Sex without Consent	Female	0	4	27	17	11	59
	Male	5	12	75	63	36	191
	Total	5	16	102	80	47	250
Forced Sex After Withdrawn Consent	Female	1	2	13	26	17	59
	Male	6	8	49	74	54	191
	Total	7	10	62	100	71	250
Husband Forcing Sex from Wife	Female	1	5	19	21	13	59
	Male	24	34	54	42	37	191
	Total	25	39	73	63	50	250
Unwanted Sexual Touching	Female	3	9	14	19	14	59
	Male	16	33	45	66	31	191
	Total	19	42	59	85	45	250
Sex With Minor	Female	0	1	17	28	13	59
	Male	8	21	35	73	54	191
	Total	8	22	52	101	67	250
Unwanted Exposure to Pornography	Female	0	5	10	19	25	59
	Male	9	12	31	61	78	191
	Total	9	17	41	80	103	250
Public Display of Private Nude	Female	2	5	20	14	18	59
	Male	10	26	55	59	41	191
	Total	12	31	75	73	59	250
Public Display of Self Nudity	Female	0	4	20	25	10	59
	Male	11	13	64	60	43	191
	Total	11	17	84	85	53	250
Use of Sexual Verbal Comments and Gestures	Female	1	5	26	21	6	59
	Male	4	38	50	61	38	191
	Total	5	43	76	82	44	250

Sources: Fieldwork

From Table 2 it can be observed that the level of awareness of unwanted exposure to pornography was measured as the highest among the constituents of sexual violence with a percentage of 41.2% (n=103) of the respondents, stating that their awareness level was very high. The awareness level of respondents was highest for rape, forced sex after consent for sex was withdrawn, unwanted sexual touching, sex with a minor, public display of nudity, and use of sexual verbal comments and gestures were high with a respective percentage of 36% (n=90), 40% (n=100), 34% (n=85), 40.4% (n=101), 34% (n=85) and 32.8% (n=82). However, the respondents reported the highest response to moderate awareness level of sex without consent, husband forcing sex from wife, and public display of private nudity with the respective percentage of 40.8% (n=102), 29.2% (n=73) and 30% (n=75). It was observed that, although the total responses to husband forcing wife for sex were moderate, it was high with the female respondents (n=21) while it was moderate with male respondents (n=34). This showed that the awareness level of the female is higher than that of the male on that constituent of sexual violence.

Overall, the level of both genders' awareness of the components that consist of sexual violence was found to be high a majority (n=839) of the responses and this can be seen in the multiple response table in Table 3. This finding is similar to the findings of other researchers (Nlewem and Amodu 2016; Uthman *et al.*, 2017; Oche *et al.*, 2020) and this was irrespective of the targeted object of study.

Table 3: Multiple Response to the Level of Awareness of the Constituents of Sexual Violence

Level of Awareness of the Constituents of Sexual Violence	Gender of Respondents		Total
	Male	Female	
Very Low	8	101	109
Low	46	211	257
Moderate	182	506	688
High	213	626	839
Very High	141	466	607
Total	59	191	250

Sources: *Fieldwork*

To determine if there was a significant difference in the responses between gender in the study area, Kruskal-Wallis H test was employed. Before computing it, the Likert scale responses for the level of awareness of sexual violence were transformed into a categorical variable. The result can be seen in Table 4.

Table 4: Kruskal Wallis Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Awareness of Sexual Violence
Chi-Square	.633
Df	1
Asymp. Sig	.426

a. *Kruskal Wallis Test*

b. *Grouping Variable: Gender of Respondents*

From Table 4, it is seen that the significance value is 0.426 (i.e., p = .426) which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. With $\chi^2 = 0.633$ and a mean of female and male awareness level of sexual violence ranking 119.24 and 127.43 respectively. It can therefore be stated that, there is no statistically significant difference in the mean response

between gender, and as such, the H_0 is accepted. This means that irrespective of gender, the awareness of sexual violence is high in the study area.

Locational Level of Awareness of Sexual Violence

As indicated in Table 5, it was required to assess the respondents' level of awareness of specific aspects that contribute to sexual assault to estimate their level of awareness by location which was categorised into urban and suburban. The assumption of this study was tied to the decay of level awareness from the urban core towards the rural areas, which is based on the distance decay concept. That is, the level of awareness of sexual violence fades from the urban core to the rural areas.

Table 5: Crosstabulation of the Level of Awareness of Sexual Violence and Location

LGA	Neighbourhood	Level of Awareness of Sexual Violence					Total
		Very Low	Low	Moderate	High	Very High	
Egor	Uselu (Urban)	0	5	7	9	4	25
	Iguedayi (Suburban)	1	2	9	8	5	25
	Total	1	7	16	17	9	50
Ikpoba-Okha	Ugbekun (Urban)	0	1	8	12	4	25
	Idogbo (Suburban)	0	3	9	10	3	25
	Total	0	4	17	22	7	50
Oredo	Uzebu (Urban)	2	2	9	4	8	25
	Uholor (Suburban)	1	3	6	9	6	25
	Total	3	5	15	13	14	50
Ovia North-East	Ekosodin (Urban)	1	1	6	9	8	25
	Ekiadolor (Suburban)	1	0	10	9	5	25
	Total	2	1	16	18	13	50
Uhunmwode	Eyaen (Urban)	0	5	11	8	1	25
	Okhuaihe (Suburban)	0	0	10	3	12	25
	Total	0	5	21	11	13	50

Source: Fieldwork

From Table 5, it can be observed that the response to the level of awareness of sexual violence was very high in a rural neighbourhood (Okhuaihe, n=12) and an urban neighbourhood (Eyaen) recorded the lowest response to very high (n=1) as a level of measure of awareness. This negates the assumed farmwork of the study.

Table 6: Kruskal Wallis Test Statistics^{a,b}

	Awareness of Sexual Violence
Chi-Square	.805
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	.370

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Mean perception Score

Kruskal-Wallis H test was used in the study region to see if any locational variations in responses were statistically significant. The results from the Likert

scale for the categorical variable level of awareness of sexual violence were then computed. The outcome is shown in Table 6.

As seen in Table 6, the significance value is greater than the alpha value of 0.05 and is 0.370 ($p = .370$) with $\chi^2 = 0.805$, mean rank of awareness of sexual violence in urban and rural communities value of 121.58 and 129.42 respectively. And as a result, the H_0 is accepted because there is no statistically significant variation in the mean responses among locations. This indicates that the research area has a moderate awareness of sexual violence, regardless of location.

Gender and Locational Perception of Sexual Violence

Gender Perception of Sexual Violence

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used in the study region to see if any locational variations in the perception of respondents on sexual violence and test if they were statistically significant.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance Table

Awareness of Sexual Violence	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.876	1	1.876	9.643	.002
Within Groups	48.243	248	.195		
Total	50.119	249			

a) *Kruskal Wallis Test*

b) *Grouping Variable: Mean perception Score*

From Table 4, we can see that the significance value is 0.002 (i.e., $p = .002$), which is lower than the alpha value of 0.05 and therefore, there is a statistically significant difference in the mean response between gender, and as such, the H_0 is rejected. This means that there is variation in the perception between gender, indicating that the perception of male form that of female.

During an interview with some female respondents, they felt dressing to express themselves should not be a reason to be raped. In addressing the same issue, the male respondents opined that how a lady dresses most times is the reason they are raped, and as such, dressing to cover one's self will prevent rape. On the issue of a male sexually abusing his wife, the male opined that one cannot rape one's wife because he paid for her bride price, and as such, she should be ready for him sexually. The female opined that paying for the bride does not mean she does not have a choice to say no sex. She is not a commodity to be bought and her body is hers. Over all, when compared to men, women are more likely to be motivated to pay closer attention to sexual violence (Craig, 2006; Borg-Lauf, 2017; Frentzen *et al.*, 2022). All these have accounted for the differences in the perception of sexual violence between gender.

Locational Perception of Sexual Violence

Kruskal-Wallis H test was used in the study region to see if there are any locational variations in perception respondents on sexual violence and test for their statistical significance.

Table 8: Kruskal-Wallis H test Statistics^{a,b}

	Locational Perception of Sexual Violence
Chi-Square	0.376
Df	1
Asymp Sig.	0.540

- a) Kruskal Wallis Test
- b) Grouping Variable: Mean perception Score

As seen in Table 8, the significance value 0.540 ($p = 0.540$) is greater than the alpha value of 0.05, with a χ^2 value of 0.376 and mean ranking of locational perception score of 24.50 and 28.81 for urban and rural areas respectively. As a result, the H_0 is accepted because there is no statistically significant variation in the mean answer among locations. This indicates that location does not influence the perception of sexual violence.

Factors that Determine Individuals' Awareness of Sexual Violence

As established in the literature review, several factors were listed to included location, gender, age, socio-economic, education, etc. that determines an individual's awareness of sexual violence. These variables were adopted and family type and tribe were added as they were peculiar in the study area. In this case, awareness of sexual violence was ranked from 1-5; as respondents were asked to rank the level of awareness of sexual violence as 1 and 5 denotes low and high level of awareness respectively.

Multinomial logistic regression analysis was carried out to determine the variables that affect an individual's awareness level of sexual violence in the study area. Level of awareness of sexual violence was used as the predictor variable while neighbourhood, gender, age, tribe, family type, religion, and education of respondents were used as the response variables. The regression model table was generated (see Table 9).

Table 9: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.456 ^a	.208	.185	.90458

The R and R² values are shown in Table 9. The "R" Column's R-value, which stands for the simple correlation, is 0.456 (45.6%) and denotes a moderate level of correlation. The R² value (included in the "R Square" column) represents the percentage of variance in the independent variable (degree of knowledge of sexual violence) that can be attributed to the dependent variables (while neighbourhood, gender, age, tribe, family type, religion, and education of respondents). The model indicated that the seven independent variables used accounted for 20.8% of change in the dependent variable.

The ANOVA table reports how well the regression model fits the data (i.e., predicts the response variable) and it is shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Analysis of Variance Table

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	51.857	7	7.408	9.053	.000
Residual	198.019	242	.818		
Total	249.876	249			

Table 10 indicates that the regression model predicted the dependent variable significantly. The p-value is 0.000 (i.e., $p = .000$), which was lower than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, there is a statistically significant relationship between the predictor variable and response variables. and of such, the H_0 is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis states that there is a relationship between the level of awareness, location, and socio-demographic factors. And indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically significantly predicts the outcome variable (i.e., it is a good fit for the data).

The Coefficients table in Table 11 was used to indicate the response variables that are significant and contributed to the regression model.

Table 11: Coefficients^a Table

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	1.884	.455		4.137	.000
Gender of Respondents	.034	.139	.014	.245	.807
Age of Respondents	-.001	.002	-.014	-.241	.809
Tribe of Respondents	.070	.041	.100	1.695	.091
Family Type	-.220	.093	-.149	-2.356	.019
Religion of Respondents	-.101	.131	-.047	-.777	.438
Level of Education	.436	.069	.376	6.359	.000
Neighbourhood of Residence	.030	.020	.088	1.519	.130

From the table, it can be observed that family type ($p=0.019$) and level of education ($p=0.000$) which is lesser than the alpha value of 0.05 were significantly associated with the awareness level of sexual violence. That is, one’s educational level and type of family (single parent, both parents, foster care, orphanage home) contributes to the level of awareness of sexual violence. A unit change in the gender of the respondents will lead to a positive increase of 0.014 in the level of the awareness of sexual violence. A unit change in the age of the respondents will lead to negative increase of -0.014 of the awareness of sexual violence. Although, the priory expectation was not met, but the result made sense. It was observed that, the older respondents view of sexual violence was different as most opined that a husband cannot sexually assault his wife, it was the duty of the wife to make it available when needed. A unit change in tribe of the respondents will lead to an increase of 0.100 of the awareness of sexual violence. A unit change in family type will lead to a decrease of -0.149 of the awareness of sexual violence. A unit change in the religion of respondents will lead to a decrease of -0.047 of the awareness of sexual violence. A unit change in level of education of respondents will lead to an increase of 0.376 of the awareness of sexual violence. A unit change in neighborhood will lead to an increase of 0.088 of the awareness of sexual violence.

6) Conclusion and Recommendations

The level of awareness of the constituents of sexual violence in the study area was high and there was no significant difference in the awareness level of sexual violence between genders. Locationally, there was no significant difference in the level of awareness among the neighbourhoods. Whereas, it was observed that there was

significant difference in the perception level of sexual violence between genders. However, there was no significant difference in the level of perception among neighbourhoods in the study area. Although a lot of individuals agree that sexual assault is a serious problem that needs to be addressed, there are deeply rooted cultural practices and conventions that encourage victim blaming and downplay the seriousness of sexual violence. Family type and education were the key responsive variables that were significant in determining the level of awareness of sexual violence in the study area. It was concluded that, constant teachings of the younglings on vices of sexual violence within the family structure, an improvement in the level of education of the people, will translate to an increase the awareness and perception level and thus, diminish the rate of the occurrence of the sexual violence.

According to the report, authorities should create or strengthen their sexual harassment policy statement and set up phone lines for counseling and quick assistance. There is a need for focused educational interventions (formal and informal) to raise knowledge and comprehension of the issue because education has been demonstrated to be a strong predictor of awareness and understanding of sexual violence. Also, there is the need for Governmental organisations (GOs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) to convey sexual violence awareness outreach to both the rural and urban neighbourhoods in the study area and emphases should be laid on the male gender to reorient their perception on sexual violence. Finally, the government should strengthen and enforce sexual violence, harassment and abuse polices and provide toll free telephone help lines for counselling and educational interactions (formal and informal) should be carried out to sensitise the people.

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