

Original Paper

Sexual Violence. Inadequate Reporting of a Silent Scourge in Secondary Schools in Cameroon

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Abstract

The paper examined how boys and girls are affected by sexual violence in relation to their learning and foxed out of the study, how the learning of students is affected in schools by violence in Cameroon. Sexual violence is more often than not, linked to the female gender with the males always almost forgotten. The essence of the study is to investigate the effects of sexual violence on the learning abilities of students of both sexes in schools in the framework of global learning and in Cameroon. The study was conceived as an experimental group design with a cause-effect approach. The study used the quantitative approach with structured questionnaires that have been tested and validated through multinational and regional organizations and institutions. 924 students were randomly selected from eight secondary schools in one region of Cameroon. and used as the primary sample. Structured questionnaires were used to elicit data. The collected data was analysed using JAMOVI. The analysis was dependent on descriptive statistics. The study's findings show high levels of sexual violence against both genders, with the males, more affected, by high levels of different forms of violence and poor school quality. This situation reduces schools to arenas of illicit sexual activities thereby compromising the learning and social justice for the students. In perspective, therefore, a lot of research needs to be undertaken to unravel such a teeming quagmire.

Keywords

sexual violence, educational quality, social justice, global learning, human rights

1. Introduction

Sexual violence has gained global attention but reduced to conflict-ridden reporting and hardly in countries that are relatively peaceful (Wondieh, 2011). Many scholars and activists are becoming increasingly aware that male victims of sexual violence have been overwhelmingly rendered invisible (Zalewski et al., 2018). Such abuse distorts the concept of quality education (EFA, 2005; UNESCO, 2000)

and makes it irrelevant. It underscores the child's right to education via accessibility by disregarding gender disparity, tolerance, and responsible behaviour. Education indicates what is acquired by the children and how this is appropriated to by them (Grima, 2008, p. 1). Quality education subscribes to peaceful social interaction (Bowling & Hershcovis, 2017). This position is supported by (UNICEF, 2000, p. 4) by arguing that "educational quality helps the learners to be healthy, well-nourished and ready to participate and learn, and supported in learning by their families and communities in environments that are also healthy, safe and protective." However, the widespread violence in education remains a universal challenge. Education that is problem-posing is "a humanist and liberating praxis that is fundamental to helping those under subjugation to fight for their liberation" (Freire, 2005, p. 67). Such liberation requires thoughtful and reflective action from the victim in the school milieu where the abuses are prevalent. Hence, the concept of developing inclusive schools as the most effective means for achieving quality education for all, to Agbenyega (2006) is underpinned by the notion of social justice, empowerment, and democratic participation, which becomes problematic. In view of all these and with regards to the quality of education indicators (EFA, 2005; UNESCO, 2000), these actions completely stand against such a framework and negates such universally accepted concepts through poor school climate, engendering violence, school dropout, negative feedback, and the inability to attain EFA goals. Framing sexual abuse against men with this study indicates its relevance and the need for careful documentation (Wondieh, 2011). Conventional wisdom shows the denial of sexual violence against men and with this study, the myth surrounding it is completely shattered, thereby giving rise to different probabilities (Wondieh, 2011; Tangwe, 2021)..

This paper is adapted from the study of quality education and violence and how violence affects the learning of students in the context of Cameroon. In this paper, I will use it to demonstrate from the findings how sexual violence is misrepresented and inadvertently referred to as pair sexual or domestic violence. Hence, I will begin by identifying the context and specifying the problem. The paper will proceed by examining the limited literature related to sexual violence in the school milieu in Cameroon and discuss the challenges. The methods used to garner data and the findings will follow suit, and I will conclude with a reflective assessment of a silent scourge that is unfortunately neglected.

1.1 Background and Problem

On an international level, the protection and enhancement of the child's rights (EFA 2005; Mumthass, Munavirr, & Gafoor, 2014) is seen as a standard. Such an ideal strengthens the rights of the child to quality education by accessibility and eliminating gender disparity, instilling a positive school climate, self-esteem, responsible behaviour, freethinking for life, tolerance, and democratic actions (EFA, 2005; Dakar Framework for Action UNESCO, 2000). Human rights give individuals the right to conduct their lives, even when their choices challenge societal or community norms in regard to political, sexual, or religious orientations. Violent and peaceful social interaction needs sensitive and detailed explication of the values and meanings that shape behaviour in various social settings (Bowling & Hershcovis, 2017).

1.2 Sexual Victimization

“Sexual victimisation entails several forms of non-consensual sexual acts, including unwanted comments, kissing, touching sexual parts of the body, forced masturbation, attempted rape, and rape” (Berlo & Ploem, 2018, p. 4). These actions of a sexual nature are deemed to be against a person’s will and without their consent, commonly conceived as rape and seen as completed or attempted penetration of some kind (Lisak et al., 2010; Basile & Smith, 2011). Sexual violence becomes complex when limited to sexual abuse that is sexual acts involving an “adult and a child, or any other situation in which there is a power imbalance and the victim is vulnerable, and in the case of a teacher and a pupil” (Berlo & Ploem, 2018, p. 4). It is commonly referred to as gender-based violence involving sexual acts, attempts to obtain sexual gratification, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion by any other person. The sexuality of all individuals is used to ascertain their sexual risk behaviour and promote their sexual health (Basile & Smith, 2011) in the face of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and other diseases and health challenges. Sexuality education or sex and relationship education has been defined as “a curriculum used to teach youth about sex, sexual identity, the opposite sex, and sexual behaviour” (Kwachou, 2015, p. 1).

In Cameroon’s educational landscape, the incidence of sexual violence remains an arduous task because its treatment is ineffective and instead seen as a taboo (Nchia et al., 2015) and not handled as a violent form in a transparent manner. It is rather treated in an obscure dimension. This is noticeable in Cameroon primarily with regard to sensitization and information programs on AIDS that have been implemented along with efforts to promote the use of condoms and family planning programs (Rwenge, 2000; Kwachou, 2015). Cameroon has adopted strategies to eliminate violence against women, including ratification of international policies, penal codes, and support of local and international efforts that promote women. Still, these initiatives are under lock and rarely implemented by the stakeholders. The implementation of comprehensive sex education has not yet been taken seriously, even with the Joint Ministerial Decision No. 281/07 of 18/01/2007 of Family Life Education. Thus, it handles population issues, and HIV in the program of primary, secondary, and teachers’ training schools in Cameroon using a trans-disciplinary approach (Nchia et al., 2015). Cameroon, like most countries in sub-Saharan Africa, does not have institutionalized sex education mechanisms and frameworks. Cameroon still faces problems in the successful implementation of sex education by the sparse training of teachers and the unseriousness of lesson delivery (Heslop & Banda, 2013). This has led to the failure to adequately educate students about a responsible sexual life as well as to support students victimised by sexual violence (Magnussen & Shankar, 2019). In addition, the setting and situation in Cameroon schools are closely linked to the dimension of sexual violence in schools that deals with power relations and refers to patriarchal structures in society as male dominance through the overall subordination of women (Le Mat, 2016).

Schools are referred to as safe sites. Ironically, tolerating sexual violence in these supposedly safe sites, which are in principle supportive of sexual and reproductive health promotion, can be unsettling in

terms of gender identities (Le Mat, 2016). As Cameroon is a patriarchal society with male dominance and hyper-masculinity or dangerous masculinity, holding sway, compounded by repression in all community facets, especially the students, remain preoccupied with their parents refusing to talk about sex and reproduction (Kwachou, 2015). Sexual repression is multifaceted from rape, exploitation, breast ironing, and female genital mutilation-FGM (Kwachou, 2015), and at school, the available structures and content completely negate sexual education and see it as a cultural taboo.

However, empirical evidence shows that “women and girls have already had sexual intercourse, and 20% did so for the first time against their will, while 30% had the intercourse before the age of 15” (Abena, 2013, p. 2). Moreover, 49% of young people attending middle-school education had had intercourse before the age of 16, especially girls against their will while the boys are sexually abused but submerged in dangerous masculinity and suffer in silence (Rwenge, 2000). This indicates an alarming scenario of sexual violence in Cameroon schools. Sexual abuse and victimisation of the students take place at home and in school, and probably out of fear, embarrassment, and frustration, the students, are uncomfortable talking about their experiences and are not given a listening ear (Meincke, 2002). According to multiple studies (Kwachou, 2015; Nchia, 2015; Rwenge, 2000), the Cameroonian society is patriarchal, sexist, and gender-biased with the students sexually victimised by teachers and school stakeholders, forced into early marriages with the victims accepting silence, pains, and fear with the resultant effect seen in their dismal school outcomes. Reports on “sexual violence typically come from the police, clinical settings, non-governmental organizations, and survey research” (Krug et al., 2002, p. 150). The relationship between these various sources and institutions regarding the global trend of sexual violence corresponds to an iceberg floating in water (Krug et al., 2002) (see Figure 1 below).

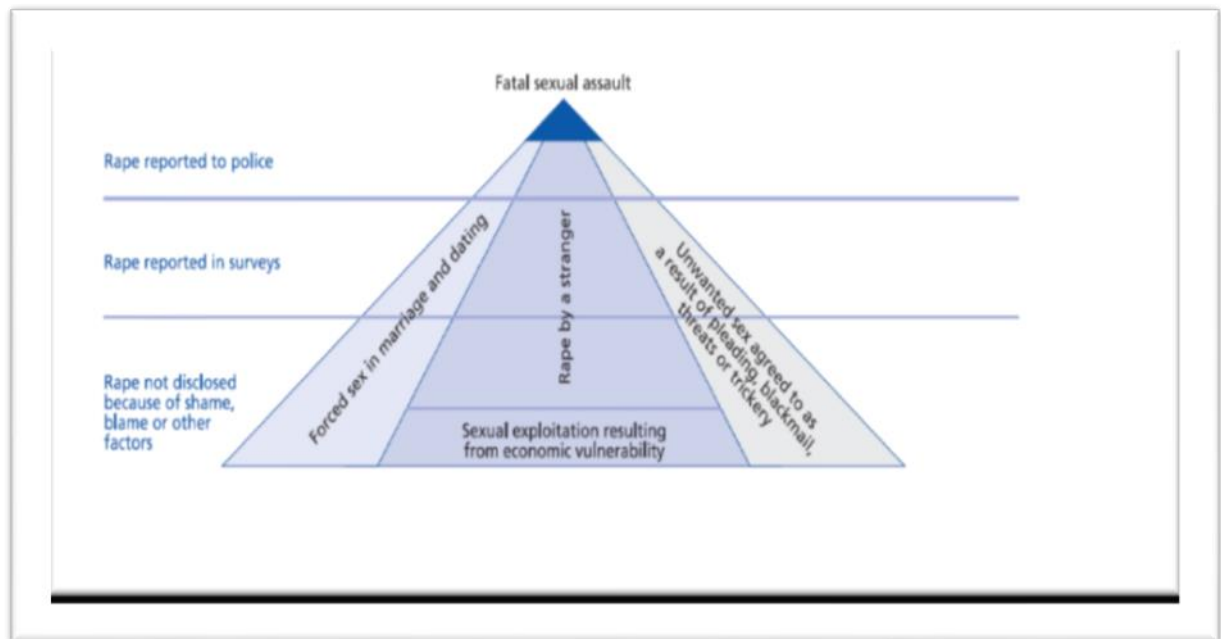


Figure 1. Magnitude of the Problem of Sexual Violence, Krug et al., 2002, p. 151

Given the Figure above, the tiny visible tip on a global scale represents cases reported to the police. A more extensive section may have been expatiated through survey research and the work of other institutions. But beneath the surface remains a substantial and unquantified dimension of the problem of sexual violence, which remains a neglected problem that is handled by research (Krug et al., 2002). A vast majority of the discourse on sexual violence has been tailored through partner relationships, at the workplace, and more often than not, against women (Heslop & Banda, 2013). It is uncommon to see such discourse handling sexual harassment and victimization in sub-Saharan Africa in general and Cameroon in particular. Such studies are limited to gender sexual victimization and completely negate the influence of sexual victimisation and violence on the students' learning outcomes emanating from their socioeconomic backgrounds. This study in addition to other scanty write-ups will modestly commence the discourse on this sensitive concept, even if the collected data may not show the whole problem.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sexual Violence: An Ignored Challenge.

The nature of sexual violence is a socially constructed paradigm and can be handled by social and historical trends particularly, the feminist rights and the child protection movements, that started over the last 50 years and has re-configured discussions of sexual violence (McCartan, Kemshall, & Tabachnick, 2015). In view of this, it is important to understand and comprehend why social change occurs, in addition to the degree it impacts the lived-in reality of cultures; in regard to sexual violence as a complex area with widespread social and cultural implications, as well as profound personal ones (McCartan, Kemshall, & Tabachnick, 2015; Berlo & Ploem, 2018). Sexual violence includes multiple forms of sexual acts that are not consensual and diverse in nature ((Berlo & Ploem, 2018; Tangwe, 2021). In addition, sexual violence includes a wide range of abuses and violations, prominent among which, is rape, coerced undressing, and non-penetrating sexual assault (Nordås & Cohen, 2021). According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), a world report on violence and health by Krug et al., (2002), noted that the reports related to sexual violence are got only from the police, clinical settings, non-governmental organisations, and survey research. Consequently, the global trend from these different sources in relation to sexual violence indicates an iceberg floating inside the water (Krug et al., 2002). Gialopsos (2017), and contends that sexual violence at any point in life is traumatic and victimising, and in college has the propensity to derail a student's aspiration for further education thereby hindering career opportunities and academic performance. However, the prevalence of violence varies from one context to another (Baldri, 2014; Tangwe, 2021). Such violence includes sexual violence and basically, three forms of sexual violence are prevalent and reported in sub-Saharan African countries and include, sexual abuse, sexual violence, and sexual exploitation (Baldri, 2014). Irrespective of the forms, there is no denying that sexual violence is an outstanding health challenge and a human rights scourge (Berlo & Ploem, 2018).

Scholars and research prospects on this problem have decided to approach this challenge, with the psychological theoretical paradigm. According to Gannon and ÓCiardha (2012) with extensive reference to “Ward and Siegert’s Pathways Model theory (2002)”, they argue that the theory espoused five indicators of offending, that relate to learning, biological and cultural factors. The ensuing subtypes are psychological and depict the dysfunctional nature of the perpetrator. These subtypes are emotional regulation, sexual scripts, intimacy, antisocial thinking, and multiple dysfunctions. Intriguingly, perpetrators with intimacy defects are those of them with a psychological vulnerability that lacks adult intimacy thereby motivating their offences against the children (Gannon & Ó Ciardha, 2012). Feminist scholars opined that irrespective of the position explaining the abuse and victimisation of women based on their peculiar characteristics and diverse contexts, the situation in particular patriarchal settings devolve immense influence on sexual violence and assault (Vanderwoerd & Cheng, 2017). Such societies are prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa. On the global trend, science reports that 8% of women have experienced sexual violence, while 21% have experienced both physical and sexual violence (Abena, 2013).

2.2 Sexual Violence in Secondary Schools in Cameroon.

Sexual violence in secondary schools in Cameroon is rife and perpetrated by several members of the society including public and educational authorities, parents, family members, and community members (Abena, 2013). Apparently, the informal structures of the school, the social values, and norms provide the most outstanding influence over teachers’ behaviours (Meyer, 2008). There is the absence of institutionalised sex education mechanisms and the very sparse training of teachers, which reduces lesson delivery to abstinence-focused phrasing (Kwachou, 2015). The teachers are therefore faced with the paradox of dispensing social and scientific knowledge that distorts their personal conception (Nchia, et al., 2015). Secondary school students are thus at risk due to age, developmental stage, closeness to each other, and their access to social activities determined by peer pressure, alcohol, drugs, and tips (Kimberly, 2017). Unfortunately, the sexual situation in Cameroon has been reduced to a traditional heterosexual gender norm (Tangwe, 2021), and in stark disregard of the situation confronting the males. Irrespective of this tricky situation, sexual violence in secondary schools in Cameroon is complicated and complex because it is reduced to sexual acts and abuse between adults and children of both sexes, where there is a power imbalance between the teacher and the students (Berlo & Ploem, 2018). The exacerbation of this problem is due to the fact that most teachers have the tendency of avoiding the approaching of intimate dimensions in sexual education and rather argue that such concepts would encourage the children to indulge in early sexual experimentation (Nchia et al., 2015). The implicit dimension of this challenge is that there is a patriarchal tendency in which the tradition of senior and junior student relationships enhances respect. Junior students are therefore coerced to pay allegiance to senior ones considering that one level is higher than the other (Ngorang, 2016). This practice engenders contempt and violence in the rank of the students as the young are victimised by the old without the possibility of complaining or revolting ((Nchia et al., 2015; Kwachou, 2015; Ngorang, 2016). The

landscape of the schools in Cameroon is slowly steeped into a silent social construct of sexual violence because of the unsettling contextual organigram. The outstanding literature on sexual violence (Krug et al., 2002; Meincke, 2002), reduces such abuses to peer, pair, and gender violence and does not explicitly espouse the conundrum in its different dimensions. There is an absence in the different scientific documents of the effects of the scourge on the male gender, especially in school. Moreover, there is no explicit gauging of the problem in the study outcomes of the male and females while in school. Above all, irrespective of the ascertained and glaring challenging context of Cameroon that is patriarchal, sexist, and gender-biased with the sexual victimisation of students by teachers and school stakeholders (Tangwe, 2021; Rwenge, 2000), the position and situation of the male gender in school remains obscure and completely negated.

3. Methods

In view of the fact that the desired learning process in regard to sexual violence against students could not be made visible in regular educational environments, a research approach and design had to be reflected to support the process (Bakker, 2018). The study adopted the quantitative research approach and depended on the cross-sectional design method. Structured questionnaires were administered to $n = 924$ participants from a study population of 22, 122 in a region in Cameroon. Eight secondary schools were selected (4 urban and 4 rural) specifically from two districts in the region. The selection of the participants utilized simple random sampling and care was taken in each school to ensure gender equity in the representation process with an approximate age range from 11-18 years, which is the accepted secondary school age in Cameroon. The use of the simple random sampling method was an opportunity to offer each participant the possibility from the bulk of the student population, that anyone of such element had the probability of inclusion in the sample (Gall et al., 2003). Above all, the random selection of participants was to provide generalisable output to a larger population through the use of a margin of error to be determined by different statistical formulas (Gall et al., 2003; Kothari, 2004; Pandey & Pandey, 2015).

Noteworthy is the fact that the age representation of the participants was flawed by some inconsistency with a probability of class repetition of some participants. The selection of the participants from each of the schools was limited to classes four and five of the first cycle of secondary school and classes six and seven in the second cycle of secondary schools in the case of Cameroon. The reason revolves around the principle of implicit stratification of participants for data collection and took note of the last two classes in the first cycle of secondary school and the two classes in high school. The approach was dependent on the sensitivity of the subject under review, the ability of the participants to be able to read and understand the different variables on the questionnaires, and their ages.

The data collection utilised tested instruments by international research organizations and institutes with a streamlining of the research instruments through a pilot study of instruments to assess the reliability of the instrument and the level of difficulty for the participants. The data collection process

was undertaken during school hours and lasted for 40 minutes. The participants were encouraged to take part and were free to respond to the instruments or withdraw from the process. Furtherance to this, their anonymity and confidentiality of the procedure were guaranteed. All dispositions were taken to avoid any influence peddling from their peers by ensuring a sitting arrangement in class that ensured that they were able to sit individually. Research assistants were recruited, trained, and mentored for the process of data collection. The selection exercise took into consideration their knowledge and expertise in working with children, their experience of carrying out similar research projects and possessing skills of multiculturalism, cognisant of the context of Cameroon. The questionnaire return rate was 100% because the questionnaires were filled during school hours and returned.

The collected data were analysed using the statistical package of JAMOVI 0.9.0.1. which was utilised as a processing tool for analysing and interpreting the data instruments. The analysis adopted descriptive statistics, means, standard deviations, frequencies, and linear regressions but for this paper, descriptive statistics have been adopted.

4. Description of Results and Analysis

The findings of the data obtained from 924 participants showed that 12 were missing in the data. The concise participants were 912, comprising 390 or 42.8 %, who were males, and 522 or 57.2 % who were females. (See Table 1 below),

Table 1. Participants Composition

Levels	Counts	% of Total	Cumulative %
Male	390	42.8 %	42.8 %
Female	522	57.2 %	100.0 %

Source: Primary data, 2018.

From Table 1 above, the participant's composition is not balanced and this is explicitly visible in the fact that the researcher was permitted to collect data at schools that were low in tuition with academic prestige that was as well low. Hence, the families with fluid and liquid socio-economic backgrounds send the males to better educational institutions that are not represented in the sample. Each of the classes had more females than males, as explained and seen in Table 2 below,

Table 2. Gender Composition of Classes

Class Students in Males Females					
total					
n % n %					
Grade 4	54	24	44.4	30	55.6

Grade 5	175	85	48.6	90	51.4
Grade 6	442	195	44.1	247	55.9
Grade 7	235	82	34.9	153	65.1

Source: Primary Data, 2011.

The ages of the participants revolve from 12-30 years with the (M) = 18.1, median = 18.0, and the (SD) = 2.54 as can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Summary of Participants Ages

N	890
Missing	34
Mean	18.1
Median	18.0
Standard Deviation	2.54

Source: Primary data, 2018.

Furthermore, the age distributions of the participants showed a dissimilarity in the ranges. The participants with ages from 15 years were 54 in number and accounted for 6.1%. Those of them with 15 years but lower than 20 amounted to 604, (67.8%), and all other participants above 20 years were 232 (26.1%). The males had a mean = of 18.1 and the females indicated a mean of = 18.0. The standard deviation (SD) for the males was 2.57 and for the females was 2.48 (Table 4 below)

Table 4. Age Ranges of Participants

Age	Frequency	Valid Percentage
Below 15	54	6.1%
15 but below 20	604	67.8%
20 and above	232	26.1%
Total	890	100%

Source: Primary data, 2018.

4.1 Experience with Sexual Violence

The experience of sexual violence by the participants in this study was alarming and was assessed on a scale of 1= never, 4 = many times. The results from the scale showed a mean (M) =1.44, and a standard deviation (SD) = 0.55). From the output, 24.0 % of the students had suffered from sexual violence. Both girls and boys had been affected equally. 201 students, (22.7%) of the reported 885 participants, experienced sexual abuse by the teachers asking them for sexual gratification in exchange for marks.

The following results from the independent variables related to sexual abuse descriptively present the findings. In Figure 1, the participants were asked if “any teacher had made them have sex in exchange for marks” and it led to the following output,

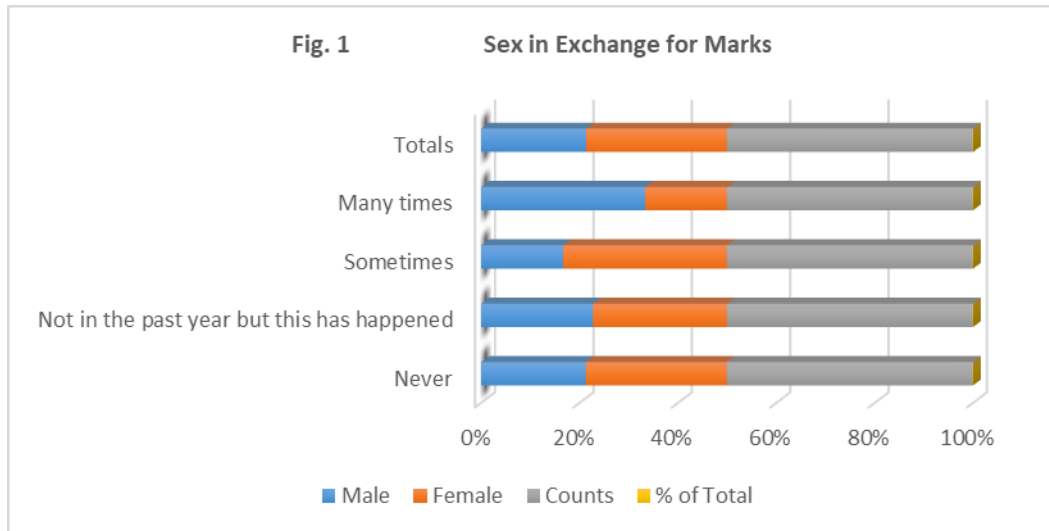


Figure 1. Sex Exchange for Marks

Source: Authors’ design.

From the participant’s responses in Figure 1 above, 27 of them, 9 males and 18 females (2.9%) indicated that their teachers had sometimes had sex with them in exchange for marks while 12 participants, 8 males and 4 females (1.3%) indicated that they had sex many times with their teachers in exchange for marks. They were further asked if “someone had tried to have sex with them when they did not want to” and they presented the following responses (see Figure 2).

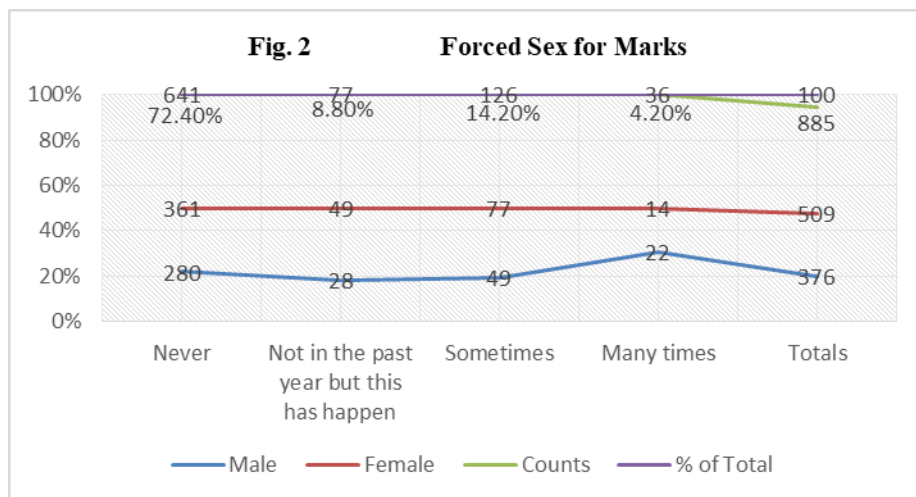


Figure 2. Forced Sex Exchange for Marks

Source: Authors' design.

The responses from the participants in figure 2 showed that 126 participants made up of 49 males and 77 females (14.2%) indicated that sometimes this was happening. 36 participants comprising 22 males and 14 females (4.2%) said this had occurred many times. Lastly, the participants were asked if “anyone had touched their private parts or made them to touch theirs” and 99 respondents comprising 47 males and 52 females (11.2%) sometimes did this and 34 made up of 21 males and 13 females (3.9%) accepted doing this many times. (see Figure 3 below).

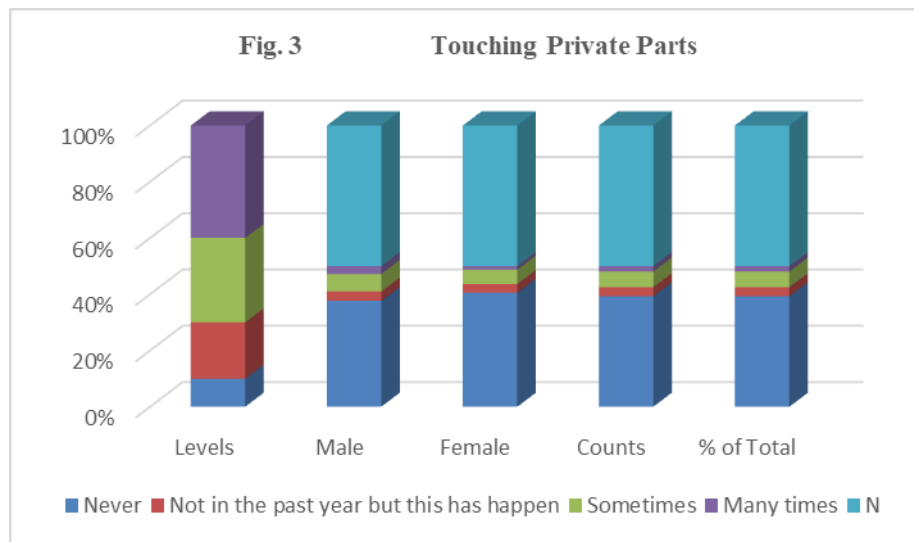


Figure 3. Touching Private Parts

Source: Authors' design.

The data, therefore, indicate that sexual victimisation is rife as a form of violence in the sample of this study. The three variables on sexual violence show that in the three instances, the males suffered more times from sexual victimisation than the females while in school. The findings are summarised in Table 5.

Table 5. Experienced Sexual Violence

Level	N = Number of Students	% of Respondents
(1) Never	680	76.0
(2) Not in the past year, but this has happened	73	8.1
(3) Sometimes	107	12.0
(4) Many Time	35	3.9

Note. As sexual violence leads to traumatic experience which should have zero probability, the scale was related to the different levels by using 1 for 1,0; 2 = 1,01 to 2,0; 3 = 2,01 to 3,0; 4 = 3,1 to 4,0 n = 924; as 895 responded to the scale = 96.8%.

Source: Authors' design.

Over and above all, the findings show that the prevalence of sexual violence in the school under review in Cameroon is very rife with the boys seemingly and slightly more affected than the girls irrespective of the fact that the girls are more in these schools. The implication is that the notion that girls suffer more from sexual violence than boys is becoming moribund base on the above findings. It reveals a hypothetical thought that the schools under review have been transformed into same-sex sexual experimentation environments by male teachers and peers of the students, and lastly, that the female teachers are sexually abusing the male students in school.

5. Discussion

This study examined how boys and girls are affected by sexual violence in relation to their learning abilities. The focal point was to identify and demonstrate how the male gender in some secondary schools in Cameroon was sexually more abused than the girls. In the findings, 24% of the students have suffered from sexual violence with boys and girls equally affected. On the variable of sex in exchange for marks, 201 (22.7%) of the participants reported that teachers abused them for sexual gratification. This aligns with the argumentation of Gialopsos (2017) who argues that such actions are victimising the students and are sure to derail their desire for education, therefore hindering their educational outputs. The results also confirm (Baldri, 2014) treatise on sexual exploitation and abuse, thereby compromising the health and human rights needs of the learners (Berlo & Ploem, 2018). The prevalent abuse and sexual exploitation of learners in these schools in Cameroon are at variance with the dysfunctional nature of their abusers and perpetrators (Gannon & Ó Ciardha, 2012). The perpetrators are conscious of their actions and it rather accentuates the coercion paradigm (Ngorang, 2016) and confirms the society as patriarchal, sexist, and gender-biased in line with the postulations of (Tangwe, 2021; Rwenge, 2000).

Moreover, the results further present an uncanny situation with the male gender suffering more from sexual victimisation in the schools than the girls. In view of the descriptive statistics regarding different variables, especially sex in exchange for marks, 8 males, and 4 females (1.3%) indicated that they had sex with their teachers many times in exchange for marks. On attempted forced sex for marks, 22 males, and 14 females (4.2%) accepted that this occurred many times, and touching their private parts or obliged to touch that of others, 21 males, and 13 females (3.9%) indicated that this had occurred many times. This action dismisses the long-held view from outstanding and renowned organisations including researchers (Krug et al., 2002; Meincke, 2002), that sexual violence is limited to pairs, peers, and gender, specifically against women. It is opening a new dimension in sexual violence that is hitherto

neglected and not consciously reflected.

The findings of this paper in the Cameroon context are open to diverse interpretations while providing new indicators to this challenge. Multi-layered research and empirical studies on sexual violence point to one direction; the abuse of the female gender and almost always overlooking, and referring to the male gender as the abusers. Unfortunately, the findings of this paper have uncovered dangerous antecedence and debunked Magnussen and Shankar (2019) position that regards sexual violence as a gendered social problem, with women as the victims and men seen as the perpetrators. It provides three hypothetical insights; First, the female teachers are abusively obliging the male students to satisfy their sexual needs for marks. This will relate to unmarried female teachers and the married female teachers not having sexual satisfaction from their partners. Next, male students are sexually abused by teachers whose sexuality is inclined toward same-sex partners. This is very revealing because, in the context of Cameroon, same-sex relationships are taboo and forbidden by law in the Cameroon penal code, article 347-1 of 12 July 2016 with an imprisonment term or a financial fine. Hence, the hostile setting of Cameroon to same-sex relationships has made its practitioners to transform the schools into the experimental ground to satisfy their sexual needs with the unsuspecting and helpless victims. The Cameroon schools thereby revert to a gender-sexual biased and patriarchal setting (Tangwe, 2021; Rwenge, 2000). Lastly, male students sharing the same boarding house are sexually abused by males with same-sex instincts (Nchia, et al., 2015; Kwachou, 2015; Ngorang, 2016). It becomes more complicated as students are not accorded the opportunity to take responsibility for their learning and lives because of the inherent values guiding the Cameroon polity. Such legal provisions do not respect global tenets of human rights, social justice, and principles of cross-culturalistic guides. The essence of quality education that incarnates such deep and far-reaching global values becomes moribund thereby inhibiting the dispensation of standardised education.

5.1 Limitations

Schools that were selected for this study suffered from the absence of a fully randomised sample selection. The reason for this was that the education authorities had already pre-determined the schools to be used for the study. Consequently, highly rated schools and faith-based private institutions were not part of the process, which implicitly explains why the girls were highly represented in the current sample. Further studies are needed to stem the tides.

The study was designed as a quantitative survey and failed to gauge the perceptions of the sample of the current study. It is therefore imperative for a qualitative design to assess their experiences with regard to sexual violence.

5.2 Conclusion

Sexual violence in the context of secondary schools in Cameroon remains preoccupying and challenging and completely debunks the pathway model theory. The fixation is reduced to abusive actions by teachers, and peers of the students. The results of this study show the impact of sexual violence and the effect it has on the learning outcomes of the learners. The implication of this problem

is the power-oriented nature of Cameroon society and the manner in which treating the concept is handled. The findings have inadvertently touched the hornet nest of a challenging concept that remains taboo in all facets of Cameroonian society. Such an alarming and poor treatment of learners hinders their learning abilities, disregards their fundamental rights, subject them to psychological and emotional torture, and pulls back their self-esteem, and motivation to learn. In spite of the numerous legislation by the authorities in Cameroon, sex education in Cameroon remains a skewed concept. The measures put in place by public officials to check such abuses are not comprehensive, nay, explicit. Apparently, an individual's sexuality issue in the context of Cameroon has been pulled under the rug and reduced to a smokescreen. It is more complex because of the outlawing of same-sex relationships that are outlawed by the Cameroon penal code. There is an urgent need for institutions that are empowered to come to the aid of these abuses by the educational institutions of learning through sensitisation. Moreover, it is absolutely imperative to identify a learner-friendly curriculum that handles such sex education. The male students who are hard hit by the findings of this study should be encouraged to denounce such nefarious attitudes from whoever condemns such abuses. They should disregard dangerous masculinity and feel free to express their emotions. Irrespective of the fact that Cameroon society is patriarchal, sexist, and gendered bias, empowering teachers and students to talk freely regarding their sexuality is the way forward in this conundrum.

5.3 Recommendations

Considering the challenge of determining a person's sexual orientation as an outstanding defect, there is an urgent need to undertake an empirical survey with a qualitative approach to investigate and understand the position of the sample related to their sexuality.

Sex education should be elaborated on and inserted into the education curriculum and taught in schools as separate and independent course. Through such content, the learners should be encouraged and sensitised to speak up as well as denounce any attempt aimed at abusing them.

The education stakeholders in synergy with public authorities should be able to design policy and legislation that is more explicit and ready to hold to account all those involved in abusing the learners. Such policy statements should ensure that the abusers are soundly sanctioned.

5.4 Acknowledgement

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