
POLICY BRIEF

**Print Media Analysis of
GBV cases in Nigeria**
(April - September, 2021)





Context

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is described as violence, including sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted on an individual in public or in private on account of the individual's gender. This includes the threat of violence, all forms of coercion and manipulations. GBV spectrum extends to all forms of intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and honor crimes ⁽¹⁾. The trauma associated with GBV has debilitating effects on the lives of survivors and this negatively affects their productivity and perpetuates the cycle of poverty survivors have to contend with.

WHO 2013 ⁽²⁾ survey indicates that globally, one in three women have been beaten, coerced into sex or abused in one way or the other, particularly by someone familiar to her. In like manner, over 30% ⁽³⁾ of Nigerian women between 15-49 years have experienced some form of physical violence in their life time, 9% have been exposed to sexual violence while 6% were exposed to physical violence while they were pregnant. It is significant to note that over 50% of women who had experienced some form of violence never reported the incidence. Slightly above 5% of survivors sought help from designated authorities who could be of help. Indicating that a significant number of GBV cases go unreported in most parts of the country.

We can only therefore postulate that just a fraction of GVB incidences in our communities get reported by the media. Considering the fact that part of the media's job is to give voice to the voiceless, taking stock of cases reported in the media will help strengthen the advocacy against GBV.

With the prevalent culture of silence in our communities, there needs to be irrefutable proof of the rise in occurrence of GBV. In view of these, YouthHubAfrica undertook the task of collating and documenting evidence from the print media to help in confirming the validity of the claim that GBV is on the rise in

Nigeria. With the confirmed rise in cases of GBV in Nigeria, there is a need to strengthen laws such as the VAPP Act, and provide adequate support for survivors while also ensuring perpetrators are adequately punished as a deterrent to others. At this point emphasis on the policies would be most required at state level.

At the federal level, a number of policies have been passed and duly adopted, however, these do not cover a significant number of states where the policies are in urgent demand.

Methodology

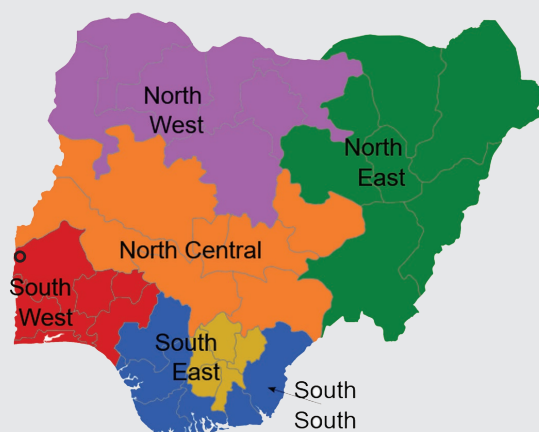
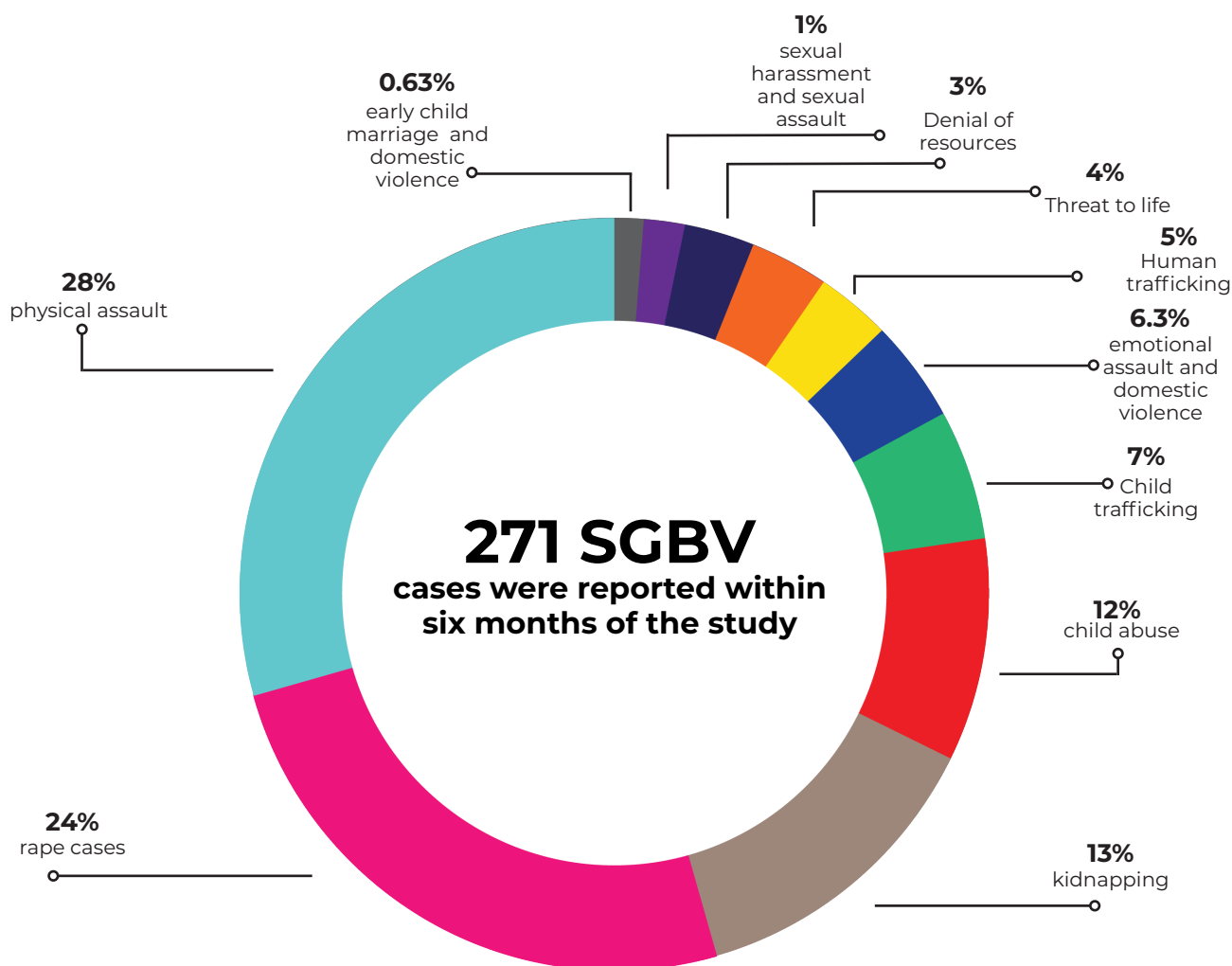


A purposive approach was adopted in identifying and selecting the print media category and the specific national dailies which were reviewed over the period of six months (April to September 2021).

The five national dailies reviewed are Daily Trust, This Day, Punch, Daily Sun and The Guardian newspapers. All forms of SGBV recorded in the selected print media sources were documented daily. Types of SGBV documented include: rape, physical assault, human trafficking, early child marriage, denial of resources, child trafficking, verbal assault, child assault, child trafficking, kidnapping, sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence and threat to life.



Findings



35% of the documented cases were from the South Western region of the country, while the North-Central region followed with **19%** of the reported cases while the North-West had **17%** reported cases, South-south had **14%** of cases. South-East and the North-East had the lowest reported cases at **9%** and **6%** respectively.



Older men between **30-49** were the most likely perpetrators of the acts.



Young ladies between **0-17** years as the most likely victims

A significant **43%** of perpetrators were identified as close relatives while **54%** were identified as individuals who had no close relationship with the survivor.



Most of the reported cases were found in the Daily Trust which reported **42%** of the GBV cases, while This Day newspaper had just **10%** which is the lowest percentage of the recorded cases.

Only 46% of the reported cases followed ethical reporting guidelines while a significant 54% of the reported cases did not follow ethical guidelines. Daily Trust incidence report of 21st September 2021 is a good example of ethical reporting. While This Day report of 6th September 2021 exemplifies an unethical reporting format. A closer look showed that Daily Trust topped the chart in following ethical reporting guidelines while This Day newspaper was at the bottom of the chart.

Within the reporting period, a few SGBV cases were reported across newspapers reviewed for the survey. No specific case was recorded across all four dailies under review. The highest reporting rate however, was in two of the dailies under review; this means that only a maximum of two dailies reported each case.

A total of 10 such cases were documented during the survey. Prominent among such documented cases was the arrest of a popular Nollywood actor on allegations of child defilement, murder of an Akwa Ibom based job seeker when she went for a phony interview, the a father who impregnated his step daughter who is still a minor and a teacher who defiled 14 pupils in Niger state



Policy Asks

In view of this, review of the regional report of these cases lays credence to the fact there is more awareness about GBV in the South-Western region. For instance in Lagos state, there is a dedicated and structured GBV referral pathway (referred to as the "Domestic and Sexual Violence Response Team – DSVRT) which makes reporting and documenting the incidences quit easy. The law in the states also criminalizes any form of cover-up of such cases.

- Strengthening the existing policy frameworks in states that have adopted policies such as the VAPP Act will go a long way in stemming the tide.
- Adoption of the VAPP Act in states where it has not been previously adopted, will be an important step in the fight against GBV.
- Difficulty faced by survivors can also be traced to the inability of enforcement officers to understand the consequences of GBV and their lack of capacity to respond appropriately. To this end, strengthening the capacity of gender-officers in all states is essential.
- Propagation of policy frameworks for ethical reporting of GBV cases is important.
- Institutionalization of regular capacity building sessions for media personnel on survivor centered reporting and coverage of SGBV.



References

1. NDHIS 2018
2. UNHCR 2021: UNHCR - Gender-based Violence
3. UNFPA 2021: Gender Based Violence Gender-based violence | United Nations Population Fund (unfpa.org)

Appendix

TABLE 1: Shows the breakdown of data collected from the cases of sexual and gender-based violence documented from five (5) select print media (Daily Trust, This Day, The Guardian, Daily Sun and Punch) for the second and third quarter (April to September) of 2021.

Percentage of Reported cases by individual Newspapers				
Daily Trust	This Day	Punch	Daily Sun	The Guardian
42%	12%	22%	10%	14%

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Percentage breakdown showing when GBV guidelines were followed by newspapers and when they were not followed					
	Daily Trust	This Day	Punch	Daily Sun	The Guardian
Yes	58%	27%	51%	32%	39%
No	42%	73%	49%	67%	61%

	Percentage breakdown of Survivor(s)/Victims age range	Percentage breakdown of perpetrator(s) age range
0-17	44%	2%
18-29	10%	10%
30 -49	3%	21%
49 AND ABOVE	4%	8%
NILL	39%	59%

	Percentage breakdown of Survivor/Victim(s)	Percentage breakdown of perpetrator(s) sex
FEMALE	74%	17%
MALE	20%	73%
NILL	6%	10%

Percentage breakdown of the relationship between Survivor/Victim and perpetrator(s)		
RELATED	STRANGER	NILL
43%	54%	3%

Percentage breakdown of cases that were reported to security agencies and that were not	
YES	NO
77	23



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www.youthhubafrica.org

26, Massenya Street, Off Cotonou Street, Zone 6, Wuse, Abuja