

PATTERNS OF CAMPUS SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY GASHUA, YOBE STATE, NIGERIA

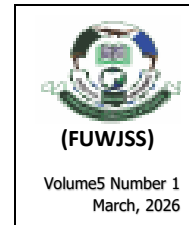
Sylvanus Otikwu

Department of Sociology

Faculty of Management and Social Sciences

Federal University, Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria

Email: sotikwu@yahoo.com



Abstract

Sexual violence remains a serious concern on university campuses globally, yet its manifestations and reporting patterns vary significantly by context. This study investigates the locations where rape occurs, reporting behaviours and barriers to disclosure among students at Federal University Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria. Using a mixed-methods approach that combined a survey with key informant interviews (KIIs), the study identifies victims' rooms and restrooms in off campuses hostels as leading hotspots for sexual abuse. Although 51% of respondents reported knowing where to lodge complaints, only 36.61% indicated that incidents involving known victims were reported to authorities. Barriers to reporting include low self-esteem, fear, self-blame, stigma, and restrictive cultural norms. Overall, the study concludes that sexual violence at Federal University Gashua is shaped by the interaction of unsafe physical spaces, fragmented institutional reporting mechanisms, and deeply rooted socio-cultural constraints that collectively suppress disclosure and accountability. Consequently, the study's findings highlight the need to strengthen campus reporting systems, improve awareness of available reporting channels and entrenchment of survivor-centered support services at Federal University Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria.

Keywords: Campus sexual violence, reporting behaviour, rape hotspots, non-disclosure, Yobe

Introduction

Sexual violence in university settings is a global problem that threatens student safety, academic success, and overall well-being. University environments often expose students, especially young women, to varying degrees of risk due to residential arrangements, peer interactions, social activities, and existing power dynamics between students and staff (Koss *et al.*, 2014). As students transition into adulthood, often living away from direct family supervision for the first time, universities become spaces where both freedom and vulnerability coexist. This intersection of increased independence, mixed-gender social interactions, and limited institutional

oversight creates conditions in which sexual exploitation and violence can occur. Sexual violence on higher education campuses has increasingly been recognized as a global public health crisis that affects students' physical and mental health, social relationships, and academic trajectories, yet many incidents remain unreported due to institutional barriers and stigma (Sharma *et al.*, 2025). Studies also show that while awareness of sexual violence has grown, significant gaps remain in prevention, reporting procedures, and institutional responses to protect student populations.

In Nigeria, sexual violence on campuses has gained increasing attention, with studies documenting rising cases of harassment, coercion, and rape among university students (Aja, 2020; Iliyasu *et al.*, 2011). Media reports and advocacy initiatives have exposed widespread abuses involving students, lecturers, hostel staff, and outsiders who gain access to campus spaces. Despite efforts by some institutions to develop sexual harassment policies and disciplinary committees, enforcement remains inconsistent. Moreover, the lived experiences of students differ across geopolitical regions, as socio-cultural norms heavily influence interactions, perceptions of harassment, and the likelihood of reporting. Thus, patterns of abuse and reporting behaviours are not uniform but shaped by gender relations, economic circumstances, cultural restrictions, and the availability or absence of institutional support systems.

The Northeast Nigeria is characterized with conservative socio-cultural values that shape gender interactions and reinforce patriarchal norms that limit women's autonomy and voice, sexual violence is a particularly sensitive issue and often goes underreported because of stigma, shame, and social expectations that discourage disclosure and help-seeking (Hoene *et al.*, 2025). Cultural norms that emphasize female modesty, family honor, and silence around sexual matters contribute to significant levels of stigma for survivors. As a result, many victims fear being blamed, ostracized, or judged harshly by peers, families, or community leaders if they disclose experiences of rape or sexual assault. These social dynamics complicate the already challenging process of seeking formal help or justice.

Federal University Gashua (FUGA), located in Yobe State, Northeast Nigeria, provides a unique context for examining these issues. The university is rapidly expanding, attracting students from within and outside the region, many of whom reside in mixed housing arrangements, including on-campus hostels, staff quarters, boys' quarters, and off-campus settlements like *Zango*. These varied residential settings create differential levels of exposure and vulnerability. Off-campus hostels, which are less regulated and often inadequately secured, may present heightened risks. The combination of a youthful population, socio-cultural constraints, inadequate reporting

structures, and environmental vulnerabilities makes FUGA an important site for studying the dynamics of campus sexual violence.

This study seeks to fill a critical knowledge gap by examining three key issues within this context: The major locations where sexual abuse occurs on or around campus, Reporting behaviours and the channels victims or witnesses use; and barriers that prevent victims from reporting incidents. While previous Nigerian studies have explored sexual violence in tertiary institutions, few have combined an analysis of rape hotspots, reporting pathways, and reasons for non-disclosure in a single empirical study. Additionally, most studies focus on older, larger universities in southern Nigeria, with limited attention to institutions in the Northeast, where cultural conservatism, insecurity, and weak support structures may shape unique outcomes. The present study seeks to fill these gaps by generating empirical evidence from Federal University Gashua, thereby contributing to national and regional debates on campus safety, gender-based violence, and student welfare.

By systematically analyzing these dimensions, the study provides evidence-based insights that can help the university strengthen its safety interventions, improve survivor support mechanisms, and develop more responsive policies. Ultimately, the findings will contribute to broader conversations on campus safety in Nigeria and inform strategies aimed at reducing the prevalence of sexual violence in higher education institutions.

Prevalence of Sexual Violence in Nigerian University Campuses

Campus sexual violence has increasingly been recognized as a global public health, human rights, and development challenge, with far-reaching implications for students' physical safety, psychological well-being, and academic trajectories. Universities, which are often idealized as safe spaces for intellectual growth, paradoxically create conditions that heighten vulnerability to sexual violence. International research identifies features such as secluded academic environments, residential living arrangements, hierarchical power relations between students and staff, and weak institutional accountability mechanisms as key risk factors (Bastomski & Smith, 2017; Campbell, 2008). These vulnerabilities are further reinforced by gender norms that normalize male sexual entitlement and silence survivors through stigma and victim-blaming.

In the Nigerian context, studies consistently demonstrate that sexual violence is not an isolated or exceptional occurrence on university campuses but a systemic problem embedded within broader socio-cultural and institutional frameworks. Empirical evidence shows that rape and other forms of sexual coercion frequently occur in lecture halls after official hours, secluded walkways, hostels, staff offices, and off-campus locations

commonly used by students (Abe, 2019; Ajuwon *et al.*, 2001). These spaces often combine poor lighting, minimal surveillance, and limited security patrols, creating environments where perpetrators can act with relative impunity.

Beyond physical infrastructure, socio-cultural dynamics significantly shape campus rape prevalence. Prevailing norms that blame victims for sexual violence by questioning their dress, movement, or moral conduct discourage preventive action and normalize silence. Consequently, the documented prevalence of campus sexual violence in Nigeria likely represents only a fraction of actual experiences, underscoring the importance of context-specific studies such as the present research at Federal University Gashua.

A growing body of literature demonstrates that rape on university campuses is produced through the interaction of structural, institutional, and interpersonal factors. In high-income countries, research indicates that between 20–25% of female students experience some form of sexual assault during their academic careers (Cantor *et al.*, 2015). While comparable large-scale prevalence studies are limited in many African contexts, available evidence suggests similarly alarming trends. Nigerian studies report varying prevalence rates across institutions and regions, but consistently emphasize that underreporting obscures the true magnitude of the problem (Adedayo & Ojo, 2020).

Patterns of campus rape in Nigeria reveal clear spatial and temporal dimensions. Rape incidents are frequently concentrated in poorly monitored hostels, lecture theatres after scheduled classes, isolated campus corridors, and informal student settlements outside campus boundaries. These locations are characterized by weak institutional presence and low informal social control, making them predictable “hotspots” for sexual violence. Such patterns resonate strongly with social disorganization theory, which posits that crime is more likely to occur in settings where collective efficacy, institutional regulation, and surveillance are weak (Sampson and Groves, 1989).

Importantly, these spatial patterns provide a valuable analytical lens for examining sexual violence risks at Federal University Gashua. As a relatively young federal institution located in a conflict-affected region, FUGASHUA may face additional infrastructural and security challenges that amplify students’ exposure to risk. Understanding how rape prevalence and patterns observed in other Nigerian universities manifest in this specific context is crucial for designing targeted prevention and response strategies.

Reporting Behaviours and Institutional Responses to Sexual Violence in Nigerian University Campuses

Despite the high prevalence of sexual violence, reporting rates remain strikingly low worldwide. Global studies estimate that fewer than 30% of campus rape incidents are formally reported, with many survivors choosing silence or informal disclosure to trusted peers (Fisher *et al.*, 2003). In Nigeria, reporting rates are even lower, reflecting deep-seated mistrust in institutional systems, fear of stigma, and limited awareness of reporting procedures (Okorie, 2021).

Research shows that Nigerian students often prefer informal reporting channels, such as friends, roommates, religious leaders, or sympathetic lecturers, rather than engaging formal mechanisms like campus security units, disciplinary committees, or gender desks (Odu & Akintayo, 2017). Formal reporting structures are frequently perceived as ineffective, slow, judgmental, or hostile to survivors, particularly when institutional actors lack training in survivor-centered approaches. In some cases, survivors report being subjected to secondary victimization through intrusive questioning, moral judgments, or pressure to withdraw complaints.

Institutional responses are further constrained by weak policy enforcement, patriarchal organizational cultures, and bureaucratic delays, which undermine confidence in justice processes (UN Women, 2020). Even where sexual harassment or gender-based violence policies exist, implementation is often inconsistent, and sanctions against perpetrators are rare or opaque. These systemic weaknesses raise critical questions about whether students at Federal University Gashua exhibit similar reporting preferences and whether institutional arrangements adequately support survivors' needs for confidentiality, safety, and justice.

Barriers to Reporting Sexual Violence in Nigerian University Campuses

Barriers to reporting rape are extensively documented in both global and Nigerian literature. Fear of stigma remains one of the most powerful deterrents, particularly in societies where female sexuality is heavily policed and sexual violence is framed as a moral failing of the victim rather than a criminal act (Jewkes & Abrahams, 2002). Survivors often anticipate blame, disbelief, or reputational damage from peers, family members, and university authorities, leading many to adopt silence as a self-protection strategy.

Additional barriers include fear of retaliation by perpetrators, especially when offenders occupy positions of authority or social influence; lack of confidentiality within reporting systems; absence of survivor-friendly procedures; and limited knowledge of legal and institutional rights (Abe,

2019). In many Nigerian universities, reporting mechanisms are poorly publicized, and students are unsure where or how to seek help.

In conflict-affected regions such as Northeast Nigeria, these barriers are compounded by broader insecurity, prolonged trauma exposure, and limited access to psychosocial support services (Henry *et al.*, 2021). The normalization of violence in everyday life may further desensitize institutions and communities to sexual victimization, while conservative cultural norms and rigid gender hierarchies intensify pressures on survivors to remain silent. Within this context, students at Federal University Gashua may face heightened constraints on disclosure, shaped by intersecting factors of insecurity, cultural conservatism, institutional fragility, and low awareness of legal protections.

Theoretical Framework

Understanding campus rape requires a multidimensional theoretical grounding that captures the interplay between individual behaviour, social norms, institutional structures, and environmental contexts. This study is guided by two complementary theoretical perspectives: Routine Activity Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour. Several theoretical frameworks help explain patterns of sexual violence and disclosure. Routine Activity Theory posits that sexual violence occurs when motivated offenders have access to vulnerable targets in unprotected environments (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This helps explain why rape often occurs in isolated campus zones. The Theory of Planned Behaviour suggests that reporting or not reporting rape is influenced by personal beliefs, social norms, and perceived control over outcomes (Ajzen, 1991). These theories illuminate the interplay between individual-level decisions and structural constraints, providing a useful lens for interpreting findings from Federal University Gashua.

Routine Activity Theory

Routine Activity Theory (RAT) by Cohen and Felson (1979) posits that crime occurs when three elements converge in time and space: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardianship. This framework helps explain the spatial and environmental aspects of campus rape, especially the identification of “hotspots.” University environments often contain secluded footpaths, poorly lit routes, idle classrooms, abandoned buildings, and hostels with weak supervision. These conditions reduce guardianship and create opportunities for perpetrators. RAT also highlights how student routines, late-night study sessions, movement to and from hostels, social activities, and interactions in isolated spaces, shape exposure to risk. In resource-constrained or peripheral campuses such as Federal University Gashua, infrastructural limitations (insufficient lighting,

minimal security presence, inadequate surveillance systems) can facilitate offender behaviour.

Theory of Planned Behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) provides a psychological and sociocultural perspective on survivors' decisions to report or not report rape. The TPB argues that behaviour is shaped by three components:

- a. Attitudes toward the behaviour (e.g., belief that reporting rape is helpful or harmful)
- b. Subjective norms (perceived expectations from peers, family, and society)
- c. Perceived behavioural control (confidence in one's ability to take action, including navigating institutional processes)

Applied to campus rape, TPB helps explain why many survivors do not file formal reports. A victim's attitude may be influenced by fear of not being believed, concerns about retraumatisation during investigations, or previous knowledge of ineffective institutional responses. Subjective norms may discourage reporting in cultural contexts where rape survivors are blamed or where sexual purity is closely tied to family honor. Perceived behavioural control is often low in university settings with unclear reporting channels, unresponsive security units, or lack of survivor-friendly services. TPB therefore helps illuminate the psychological, normative, and structural barriers to disclosure.

Using the two theories together provides a richer, more comprehensive understanding of campus sexual violence. Routine Activity Theory identifies the environmental and situational factors that make certain campus locations more dangerous. Theory of Planned Behaviour explains survivors' decision-making processes regarding disclosure and the barriers that shape reporting pathways. By integrating these perspectives, the theoretical framework captures the complex interplay between individual agency, structural inequalities, and environmental vulnerabilities, allowing for nuanced interpretation of the patterns emerging from the Federal University Gashua study. This integrative model also strengthens the study's explanatory depth and enhances its relevance for policy, campus safety planning, and survivor-centered interventions.

Research Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative insights from Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). A mixed-methods approach was considered most appropriate for exploring the complex and sensitive nature of sexual

violence on university campuses. The quantitative component enabled the identification of patterns regarding the locations of rape, reporting behaviour, and perceived barriers, while the qualitative component deepened understanding by providing contextual explanations from stakeholders with direct experience in campus safety and student welfare. This design therefore enhanced the robustness, credibility, and interpretive depth of the findings (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

The study was conducted at Federal University Gashua (FUGA), located in Bade Local Government Area of Yobe State in Northeast Nigeria. As one of the emerging federal universities established to expand access to higher education, FUGA serves a diverse population of young men and women from within and outside the region. The campus is characterized by a combination of on-campus hostels and off-campus accommodations, including the popular student settlement known as *Zango*. The institution operates within a socio-cultural environment marked by strong traditional norms, gender conservatism, and community expectations about sexual behaviour factors that shape both the prevalence and reporting of sexual violence. These contextual features make FUGA a strategic site for examining the dynamics of campus rape and reporting patterns in a conservative northern Nigerian setting.

The study population comprised undergraduate students, both male and female, enrolled at Federal University Gashua at the time of data collection in 2023, as well as key university personnel who play roles in campus security, student affairs, and welfare. A multistage sampling technique was employed for the quantitative survey. Faculties (Arts, Management and Social Sciences, Sciences and Agriculture) and departments (English and Literature, History, Sociology, Psychology, Accounting, Business Administration, Computer Science, Mathematics, Fisheries and Forestry) were selected purposively based on student size and accessibility, after which respondents were randomly selected within classrooms and hostel areas to participate in the study. This approach ensured representation across different academic levels and residential categories.

For the qualitative component, purposive sampling was used to identify individuals with relevant expertise or experience. These included the Chief Security Officer (CSO), hostel porters (1 male and 1 female), student affairs officer (1), and selected lecturers (2) known to handle student welfare issues. This strategy allowed for the collection of rich, experiential insights on reporting channels, institutional responses to cases of rape, and underlying cultural factors affecting disclosure.

A structured questionnaire was administered to students to obtain data on:

- a. Major locations where rape and sexual abuse occur

- b. Knowledge of reporting channels
- c. Reporting behaviour and preferred recipients of complaints
- d. Barriers to reporting such as fear, self-blame, or low self-esteem
- e. Perceptions of institutional and social responses

The questionnaire contained both closed and semi-open items, enabling the inclusion of fixed responses alongside brief explanations from participants. KIIs were conducted with selected university personnel to complement the survey data with deeper insights. Interviews explored:

- a. Perceived hotspots for sexual violence
- b. Challenges with security surveillance
- c. Patterns of perpetration and victimization
- d. Cultural and institutional factors shaping non-reporting
- e. Existing support systems and reporting processes

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, lasted between 30 and 45 minutes, and were guided by a flexible interview protocol. With permission, notes were taken during interviews; in cases where recording was permitted, audio files were transcribed verbatim.

Quantitative data were cleaned, coded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, and simple cross-tabulations). These statistics were used to summarize patterns such as the most common locations of rape and the distribution of reporting behaviour.

Qualitative data from KIIs were analyzed using thematic analysis. Transcriptions were read multiple times to identify recurring patterns and emerging themes related to reporting challenges, socio-cultural barriers, and institutional constraints. Themes were then organized in line with the study objectives.

Findings from both datasets were integrated during interpretation to provide a more comprehensive understanding of campus sexual violence and reporting dynamics.

Given the sensitivity of sexual violence research, special ethical measures were observed. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed of the purpose of the study, confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any time. No identifying personal information was collected to protect anonymity. For victims whose experiences emerged during the survey or KIIs, referral information for counselling and support services within the university community was provided. Approval for the study was granted by the appropriate university authorities.

Results and Discussions

Locations of Sexual Abuse in Federal University Gashua

The findings indicate that sexual abuse in Federal University Gashua occurs predominantly in victims' rooms and restrooms (22.4% each),

followed closely by off-campus hostels (21.4%) and, to a lesser extent, on-campus hostels, classrooms, and other secluded spaces. This spatial distribution is consistent with global and Nigerian studies that identify private or semi-private locations with limited guardianship as high-risk environments for sexual violence (Cantor *et al.*, 2015; Abe, 2019).

The prominence of victims' rooms suggests that many incidents occur in spaces presumed to be safe, highlighting the role of familiar perpetrators and trust-based interactions. This finding aligns with feminist scholarship emphasizing that campus sexual violence is often perpetrated by acquaintances rather than strangers, thereby complicating prevention and reporting efforts. Similarly, restrooms and isolated campus facilities offer anonymity and limited surveillance, increasing perpetrators' confidence and reducing the likelihood of interruption.

Off-campus hostels particularly *Zango*, as identified in the KIIs, emerge as critical hotspots due to weak security presence, dense student populations, and unrestricted access by non-students. This pattern strongly reflects Routine Activity Theory, which posits that crime is more likely where motivated offenders encounter suitable targets in the absence of capable guardians. In the context of Federal University Gashua, the reliance on off-campus accommodation, combined with limited regulatory oversight, significantly heightens students' vulnerability to sexual violence.

Knowledge of Reporting Channels

The results reveal a near-even split in awareness of reporting mechanisms, with 51% of respondents indicating knowledge of where to report sexual abuse and 49% lacking such knowledge. This finding underscores a significant institutional communication gap within the university's sexual violence response framework.

Notably, students who reported awareness identified a wide and fragmented range of reporting options, including lecturers, security units, health staff, student leaders, administrative offices, external agencies, and even social media platforms such as Twitter. This diversity suggests the absence of a clearly institutionalized, survivor-centered reporting pathway, forcing students to navigate reporting based on personal judgment rather than structured guidance.

Comparable studies in Nigerian universities report similar confusion, where victims are uncertain about whom to approach and fear inconsistent or inappropriate responses (Aja, 2020; Okorie, 2021). The lack of a single, visible reporting mechanism may inadvertently discourage disclosure, as survivors may perceive reporting as risky, futile, or emotionally exhausting. In Federal University Gashua, this fragmented awareness likely contributes

to delayed reporting and reinforces reliance on informal or external channels.

Reporting Behaviour

The study found that 63.39% of known sexual abuse cases were not formally reported, confirming substantial underreporting within the university community Fig. 1. This aligns with extensive Nigerian and global literature that identifies underreporting as one of the most persistent challenges in addressing campus sexual violence (Fisher *et al.*, 2003; Adedayo & Ojo, 2020).

Among cases that were reported, the police emerged as the most preferred reporting institution (25.5%), followed by health officials, family members, and friends. This preference for external authorities suggests limited confidence in internal university mechanisms. Survivors or witnesses may perceive the police as offering stronger legal authority or neutrality, especially in environments where university structures are viewed as slow, biased, or protective of institutional reputation.

The relatively low use of university-based channels mirrors findings from other conservative Nigerian settings, where institutional responses are often seen as inadequate or insensitive to survivors' needs (Iliyasu *et al.*, 2011). In the context of Federal University Gashua, the reliance on external reporting pathways reflects both institutional trust deficits and broader socio-cultural expectations regarding justice and authority.

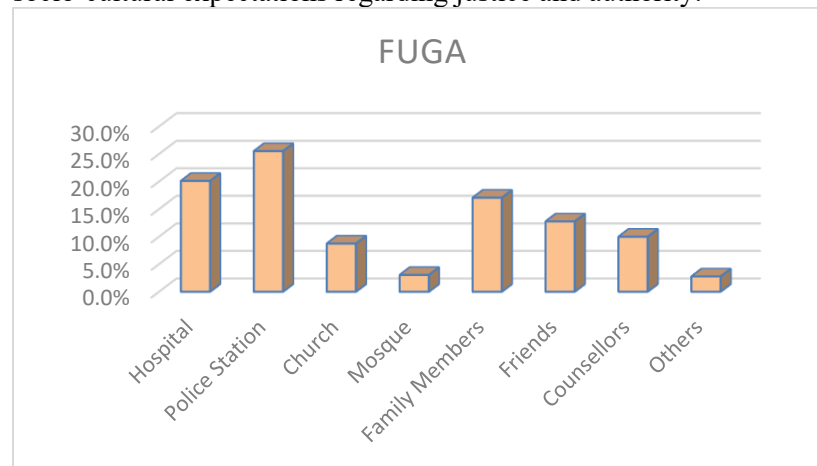


Fig. 1: Preferred choice of Report

Source: Field survey, 2023

Ease and Difficulty of Reporting Sexual Violence

Although a majority of respondents indicated that reporting sexual violence is “easy,” this perception coexists with substantial psychological and socio-cultural barriers. Key obstacles identified include low self-esteem (24.1%), fear (23.2%), and self-blame (16.1%), all of which significantly undermine reporting intentions Fig. 2.

These findings resonate with the Theory of Planned Behaviour, which emphasizes that individuals’ attitudes, perceived control, and anticipated outcomes shape behavioural decisions. Victims who internalize blame, fear social repercussions, or doubt their ability to navigate reporting systems are less likely to disclose abuse, regardless of formal reporting availability.

Qualitative evidence further reveals that conservative cultural norms, fear of retaliation, and family pressure to maintain social reputation play decisive roles in silencing survivors. In Northeast Nigeria, where communal honor and gender conformity are strongly emphasized, disclosure of sexual violence may be perceived as a threat to family and personal dignity. These dynamics reinforce emotional withdrawal and normalize silence as a coping mechanism.

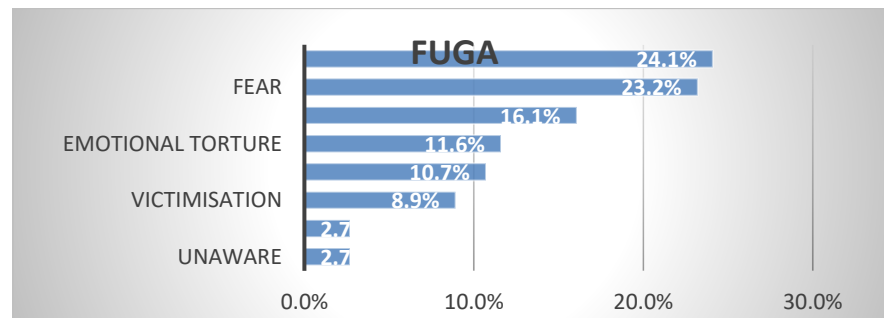


Fig. 2: Barriers to reporting of sexual violence

Source: Field survey, 2023

Gender Dynamics and Theoretical Implications

The observed pattern where females constitute the majority of victims and males the majority of perpetrators reinforces Feminist Theory, which locates sexual violence within broader systems of patriarchy and gender inequality. Male dominance, entitlement, and social power intersect with cultural expectations of female modesty and silence, creating conditions that normalize coercion while discouraging disclosure.

In conservative academic environments such as Federal University Gashua, these gendered power relations are further intensified by religious, cultural, and institutional hierarchies. The findings therefore suggest that sexual violence on campus is not merely an individual behavioural issue but

a structural problem rooted in gender norms, institutional practices, and socio-cultural contexts.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Overall, the findings highlight the urgent need for context-specific, survivor-centered interventions at Federal University Gashua. These include clearly defined reporting pathways, strengthened campus and off-campus security, confidential and professional response units, and sustained awareness campaigns targeting students, staff, and surrounding communities. Addressing both environmental risk factors and socio-cultural barriers is essential for breaking the culture of silence and strengthening institutional accountability.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined the locations, reporting behaviours, and barriers associated with sexual violence at Federal University Gashua. Findings reveal that rape occurs primarily in enclosed or poorly monitored spaces such as victims' rooms, restrooms, and off-campus hostels, especially in areas like *Zango* identified as high-risk. While some students know where to lodge complaints, a significant proportion lack awareness of formal channels, and reporting remains notably low. Emotional, cultural, and structural barriers, including fear, low self-esteem, and stigma, play a central role in discouraging victims from seeking justice.

The results highlight the need for FUGA to strengthen institutional responses to sexual violence through clearer reporting pathways, enhanced campus security, comprehensive awareness campaigns, and survivor-sensitive counselling services. Addressing socio-cultural norms that silence victims is equally critical. Through coordinated action, the university can promote a safer learning environment and encourage disclosure, ultimately contributing to justice for survivors and the prevention of future incidents.

Based on the findings of this study, there is a critical need to strengthen institutional responses to sexual violence at Federal University Gashua through comprehensive and survivor-centered reforms. First, the university should establish a centralized, confidential, and accessible reporting system that serves as a single entry point for all sexual violence complaints. Such a structure would reduce confusion, enhance trust, and ensure timely response to cases. This should be complemented by continuous student sensitization and awareness campaigns focused on reporting procedures, survivor rights, and available support services, using multiple platforms to reach both on-campus and off-campus students. Clear communication is essential for empowering students to seek help without fear of stigma or retaliation.

In addition, improving physical security and environmental safety is crucial for prevention. The university should strengthen surveillance and monitoring in identified high-risk locations, including restrooms, hostels, isolated campus pathways, and off-campus settlements where many students reside. This may involve improved lighting, routine security patrols, and collaboration with community leaders in surrounding neighborhoods. Parallel to these measures, the institution must prioritize comprehensive survivor support services, including access to professional counseling, medical care, and legal assistance, to address the immediate and long-term consequences of sexual violence and to encourage disclosure.

Finally, sustained progress requires policy reform and strategic partnerships. The university should develop and enforce a clear anti-sexual violence policy that outlines reporting procedures, protection measures, and accountability mechanisms for perpetrators and institutional actors alike. Collaboration with non-governmental organizations specializing in gender-based violence would enhance staff training, survivor response, and prevention programming. Furthermore, working with landlords and local authorities in off-campus student areas to enforce minimum safety standards would contribute to safer housing arrangements. Together, these measures would help create a safer, more responsive university environment that actively discourages sexual violence and supports survivors.

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