

Research Article

# Sexual Violence and Associated Factors Among Women of Reproductive Age in Pawi Worda, Metekel Zone, Benishangul Gumuz, North West Ethiopia

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## Abstract

**Background:** Sexual violence can be defined as is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including unwanted sexual advances desires for sexual favor, contact of a sexual that creates a hostile or offensive environment. This study aimed to assess sexual violence and associated factors among of reproductive age pawi worda. **Objective:** this study is aimed to assess the sexual violence and associated factors among women of reproductive age in pawi worda, Metekel zone, North West Ethiopia in 2023. **Method:** A community based cross-sectional study design was employed in Pawi Woreda Benishangul Gumuz Northwest Ethiopia from April 30/2023-May 30/2023 on total of 467 sample size, and the simple random sampling technique was used to select Keble and female reproductive age groups. The data were collected by using structured questionnaire. The data were cleaned, checked for completeness, and entered using Epi Data-V.3.1 and exported to SPSS version 25 for analysis. Descriptive statistics like frequency, percentage were computed. Multivariable regression analyses was done to identify factors associated with sexual violence and statistical significance was declared at  $p\text{-value} \leq 0.05$ . Adjusted odds ratios are used to see the strength of association with 95% confidence interval. **Results:** The prevalence of sexual violence among female reproductive age group in Pawi district was 204 (43.8%). Rural women AOR [3.74 95% CI (1.64, 8.50)], unmarried AOR [[AOR: 2.3((1.07, 5.00)], mother secondary education [AOR: 3.49 95% (1.28, 9.49)], women who had two sexual partner [AOR =3.01 95% CI: 1.51, 6.00] and women who consumed alcohol [AOR=2.17(1.01, 4.66)] has significantly associated with sexual violence. **Conclusion and recommendation:** The prevalence of sexual violence among female reproductive age is high. Factors found to be significantly associated with sexual violence include age, residence, marital status, occupational status, mother educational status, number of sexual partner, and alcohol consumption.

## Keywords

Sexual Violence, Associated Factor, Reproductive Age Women, Pawi, Ethiopia

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## 1. Background

Sexual violence is: “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic” [1], or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the survivors/victims, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work [2].

Sexual violence form of verbal, non-verbal, rape and physical contact of a sexual nature manifests itself in a variety most common forms are verbal forms such as sexual jokes and sexual remarks about body clothes and sex life [3]. Physical forms as unsolicited physical contact, and non-verbal forms such as ‘staring and whistling. it difficult for affected individuals and groups to realize their full capacity [4].

Sexual violence concerns both genders, women are more likely to be victims and in most cases the perpetrators are male and known by the victim [5]. Sexual violence every year. Reproductive women, Childhood, disabled and starved women people are the most frequent victims of sexual violence [6]. Sexual violence is a problem that occurs throughout the either it be the urban or rural, rich or poor, public or private sector, Sexual violence is reproductive consequences like unwanted pregnancy, genital irritation, vaginal bleeding or infection and indirectly to a variety of mental health problems, such as psychological stress, substance abuse, and lack of fertility control and self-autonomy [7].

The stress resulting from violence can manifest itself in both physical and logical symptoms and frequently disrupts its victims' work with negative consequences for their long-term women life or employment path in short, sexual violence continues to limit women's chances of success [8].

Sexual violence can occur in many different ways the violence can be the victim's any community an agent of the family, partner in another area a co-worker, or a non-employee, the victim does not have to be the person violence but could be anyone affected by the offensive behavior, illegal sexual violence may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim, the violence victim's conduct must be unwelcome [9].

In Ethiopia context there no clear policy that challenge sexual violence specifically In order to eliminate the flaws in the implementation of this law, on March 8, 2012 Law No. 6284 on the Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence against Women entered into force. Law No. 6284 aims to protect women, children and victims of un lateral stalking who are married, engaged, divorced, in a relationship or who ended a relationship and are exposed to violence or in danger of being exposed to violence [10].

National Strategy focuses on Awareness raising, education and building child safe cultures, Supporting and empowering victims and survivors. Enhancing national approaches to children with harmful sexual behaviors, Offender prevention and intervention and improving the evidence base. [11, 12].

The effects of violence against reproductive women will cause various reproductive health, psychological, social and physical effects which may have a lifelong impact on the mental and physical development of the women but still difficult to determine the full impact of sexual violence against women since most research focuses on an institutional-based study that not considered those reproductive women out of community and the Home, and in transportation are the gaps to fills in these studies [13, 14].

## 2. Methods

### 2.1. Study Design and Setting

A community based Cross-sectional study design was employed among of women reproductive age in pawi woreda, metekel zone, Benishangul Gumuz, north west Ethiopia in from January to June in 2022.

This study was conducted in Benishangul Gumuz regional state pawi district, northwestern Ethiopia from January to June in 2022. Pawi woreda is one of the seven districts of the Metekel zone of the Benishangul Gumuz Region. Pawi is located in the Metekel zone 560 Km away from Addis Ababa. The total population size of the district is estimated to be 68, 122, and 35,287 females according to 2012 pawi woreda report. The Estimates numbers of reproductive age group women were 15,539, [woreda report 2012] and this age group commonly affected by sexual violence due to the perpetrators of such problem is not reported and community counted as culture in pawi woreda. The district is administratively 21 kebele comprising of seventeen rural and four urban Keble's. The health infrastructure in the Woreda comprises of 01 General hospitals, 03 health centers and 20 health posts.

### 2.2. Source and Study Population

All of reproductive age women living in this study area were a source of population. Study Population all randomly selected women of reproductive age in pawi woreda were included in this study All randomly selected women of reproductive age were included in this stud in Pawi woreda during study period. Women who had difficulty communicating during the study period, like critically ill. Sample size determination the maximum sample size is determined using a single population proportion formula. The calculated samples for both objectives are compared to obtain the maximum sample. Since the sample size calculated by a single population proportion is large, it is taken as a final sample. The final sample size 467 is distributing into each of the recruit ten Kebele using Proportionate allocation. Inside ring the non-response rate as 10%, the final sample size became 467.

## 2.3. Data Collection Tool and Procedure

Data collection tools are adapted from different kinds of literature and standardized questionnaire containing three parts, the first containing socio-demographic information, the second part containing the experience of sexual violence, and 3<sup>rd</sup> part containing socio-demographic and economic, environmental and, individual with sexual violence. The tool was prepared in English, translated to Amharic, and then translated back to English to check for consistency. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews with all reproductive women, and data collectors are ten diploma female midwifery and two BSc nurses. The purpose of the study will be explained to them to minimize bias during data collection.

## 2.4. Data Quality Assurance and Analysis

The data were cleaned, checked for completeness, and entered using Epi Data-Version.3.1 and will be exported to SPSS version 25 for analysis. Then, the data was analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics, and summarized by frequency, percentage, and mean. Bivariate and multivariable logistic regression analyses will be performed to identify associated factors of sexual violence. The variables in analysis with  $p < 0.2$  were entered into multivariable logistic regression. Finally, the analyzed data were organized and presented in tabular, graphical, and narrative form accordingly. P-value  $< 0.05$  was considered statistically significant.

## 3. Result

### 3.1. Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

This study had a total of 467 participants, with a response rate of 100%. One hundred fifty-four (33%) of the respondents were between the ages of 20 -24 year [Table 1]. Orthodox Christian were 296(30.1 %), followed by protestant 75 (16.1%) and marital status of the respondent married 289 61.9 %. Regarding to residence 327(70%) were the leading from urban residence and, ethnicity of the respondent 331 (70.9% of them Amhara.

Related to educational status of the respondents 278(59.5%) were primary school followed by unable to read and write 69(14.8%) and occupational status was farmer 261(55.9%). Most of the respondent 214 (45.8%) was living with Husband/boyfriend and supported 250 (53.5%) by their relative. Likewise most of respondents were receiving money every month 192(41.1%) and Most of 189(40.5%) of students have less than or equal to 1000 annual income in ETB. Among the total respondents, majority 194(41.5%) of them had only one sexual partner in their life time [Table 1, P-13, 14].

Table 1 Socio-demographic characteristics of study participants in paw district Benishangul Gumuz Regional state northwest, Ethiopia 2023 [p-13 and 14].

**Table 1.** Socio-demographic characteristics of study participants in paw district Benishangul Gumuz Regional state northwest, Ethiopia 2023.

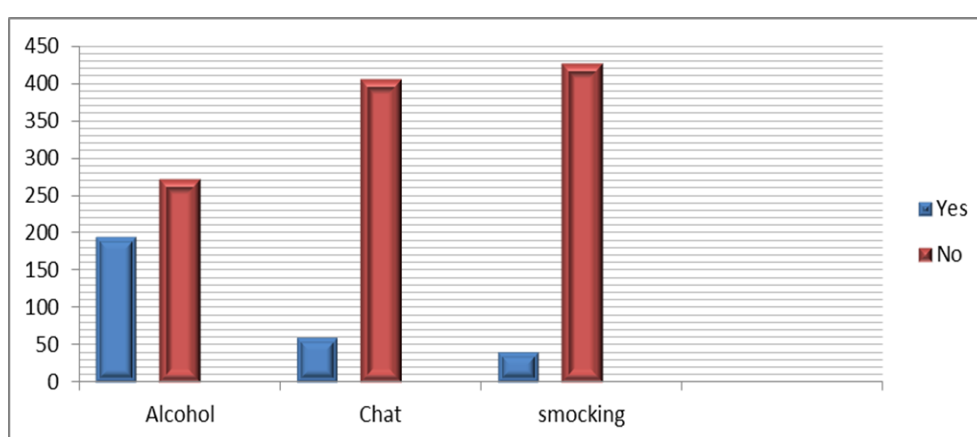
Socio demographic characteristics variable		Frequency	Percentage
Age cate- gory	15-19 year	69	14.8
	20-24 year	154	33.0
	25-29 year	17	3.6
	30-34 year	94	20.1
	35-39 year	64	13.7
	>40 year	69	14.8
Religious	Orthodox	296	63.4
	Catholic	45	9.6
	Protestant	75	16.1
	Muslim	51	10.9
Residence	Urban	327	70.0
	Rural	140	30.0
Marital status	Single	94	20.1
	Married	289	61.9
	Divorced	60	12.8
	Widowed	24	5.1
Ethnicity	Amhara	331	70.9
	Oromo	30	6.4
	Shinasha	72	15.4
	Other	34	7.3
Educational status	Unable to read and write	69	14.8
	Primary (1-8)	278	59.5
	Secondary (9-12)	64	13.7
	College and above	56	12.0
Occupation- al status	Farmer	261	55.9
	Merchant	159	34.0
	Government em- ployer	26	5.6
	Other	21	4.5
Living con- dition	Living alone	40	8.6
	With parent	198	42.4
	Husband/boyfriend	214	45.8
	With female friend	15	3.2
Source of	Total	467	100.0
	Parent	161	34.5

Socio demographic characteristics variable		Frequency	Percentage
financial support	Relative	250	53.5
	Husband	51	10.9
	Other	5	1.1
Frequency of financial support	Six month	189	40.5
	Once a year	83	17.8
	Monthly	192	41.1
	Not at all	3	0.6
	<1000	189	40.5
	1000-2000	140	30.0
	2001-3000	95	20.3

Socio demographic characteristics variable		Frequency	Percentage
Number of sexual partner	>3000	43	9.2
	One	194	41.5
	Two	237	50.7
	Three and above	34	7.3
	I haven't	2	0.4

### 3.2. Substance Use History of the Respondent

Of total of study participants 194(41.5%) of them were alcohol users and proportion of khat chewers was 60(12.8%) of the respondents while 8.6 % (40) [Figure 1, P-16].



**Figure 1.** Substance use history of the respondent among reproductive age groups of women in pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Ethiopia 2023.

Figure 1 Substance use history of the respondent among reproductive age groups of women in pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Ethiopia 2023 [p-16].

### 3.3. History of Sexual Violence

From a total of 467 respondents 43.8% of them were survivors of one or more incidences of sexual violence. The commonest form of sexual violence among the respondents

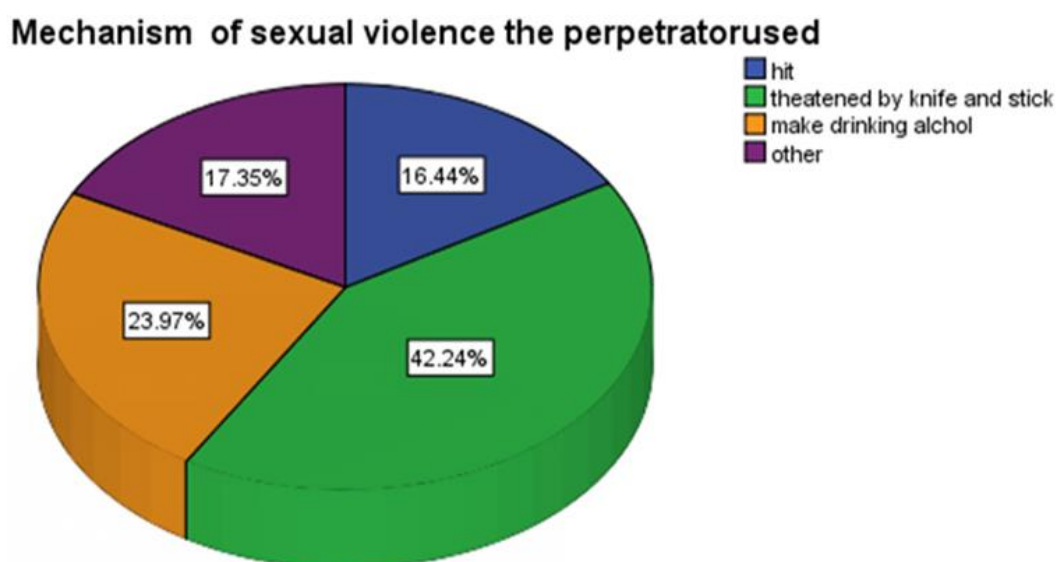
were exposed the sex organs of their body to you when you did not want it, 43.9% (n=205) followed by forced you to have sex when you did not want among respondents of reproductive age group was 138 (29.6%) (Table 2, P-14, 15) and (Figure 2, P-17).

Table 2: Sexual related history of study participants in pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Regional state northwest, Ethiopia 2023(p-14 and 15)

**Table 2.** Sexual related history of study participants in pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Regional state northwest, Ethiopia 2023.

Form of sexual violence variable		Frequency	Percentage
Exposed the sex organs of their body to you when you did not want it?	Yes	205	43.9
	No	262	56.1
Threatened to have sex with you when you did not want it?	Yes	119	25.5
	No	348	74.5

Form of sexual violence variable		Frequency	Percentage
Touched the sex organs of your body when you did not want this?	Yes	131	28.1
	No	336	71.9
Made you touch the sex organs of their body when you did not want this?	Yes	133	28.5
	No	334	71.5
Forced you to have sex when you did not want this?	Yes	138	29.6
	No	329	70.4
Had any other unwanted sexual experiences not mentioned above?	Yes	119	25.5
	No	348	74.5
Over all encountered sexual violence	Yes	204	43.7
	No	263	56.3



**Figure 2.** Mechanism used by perpetrators to force the victim during sexual violence among reproductive age group of pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Ethiopia 2023.

**Figure 2:** Mechanism used by perpetrators to force the victim during sexual violence among reproductive age group of pawi district Benishangul Gumuz Ethiopia 2023 [p-17].

### 3.4. Factors Associated with Sexual Violence Among Reproductive Age Group of Pawi District Northwest Ethiopia in 2023

In the bivariate logistic regression analysis, sexual violence was associated with age category residence, marital status, educational status, occupational status, current living condition, mother educational status, number sexual partner, alcohol use and intimacy of parent. Discussing reproductive health with parents didn't show any association with sexual violence on crude odd ratio. However, in multiple logistic regression analyses, sexual violence was associated signifi-

cantly with the residence, marital status, occupational status, number of sexual partner, and alcohol consumption.

The odds of experiencing sexual violence among females whose never married were about 2.3 times higher among never married when compared to married women [AOR: 2.3((1.07, 5.00)).

Number of sexual partners strongly associated factor with sexual violence as those who had two or more sexual partners had more than 3 times (AOR =3.01 (95% CI: 1.51, 6.00)) chance of enduring sexual violence than those who had one sexual partner in life (Figure 2, P-15,16).

**Table 3:** Multivariate logistic regression analysis for potential factors associated with sexual violence among reproductive age group of pawi district, Benishangul Gumuz northwest Ethiopia, in 2023. (P-15and16)

**Table 3.** Multivariate logistic regression analysis for potential factors associated with sexual violence among reproductive age group of pawi district, Benishangul Gumuz northwest Ethiopia, in 2023.

Variable	Sexual violence		Crude OR (95% CI)	Adjusted OR (95%CI)
	Yes	No		
Residence				
Urban	154(47%)	173(52.9%)	1	1
Rural	50(35.7%)	90(64.2%)	1.602( 1.065 2.410)	3.742 (1.647, 8.504)**
Marital status				
Married	47(50%)	47(50%)	1	1
Single	109(37.7%)	180(62.2%)	1.651 (1.033 2.640)	2.320 (1.075, 5.006)**
Divorced	42(70%)	18(30%)	0.429 (0.216 0.850)	0.660 (0.199, 2.186)
Widowed	6(25%)	18(75%)	3.000(1.094 8.225)	3.219 (0.764,13.554)
Educational status				
Unable read and write	38(55%)	31(44.9%)	1	1
Primary(1-8)	103(37%)	175(69.9%)	2.083(1.222, 3.550)	0.427(0.091, 1.999)
Secondary(9-12)	40(62.5%)	24(37.5%)	0.735(0.368, 1.472)	0.446(0.121, 1.653)
College and above	23(39.6%)	33(56.8%)	1.759(0.86, 3.588)	0.186(0.040, 0.861)
Occupational status				
Farmer	103(39.4%)	158(60.5%)	3.835(1.441, 10.205)	12.913(2.312, 72.132)**
Merchant	68(42.7%)	91(57.2%)	3.346(1.23, 9.072)	8.722(1.614, 47.139)**
Government employer	18(75%)	8(33.3%)	1.111(0.315, 3.921)	0.878(0.084, 9.147)
Other	15(71.4%)	6(28.5%)	1	1
Living condition				
Living alone	19(47.5%)	21(52.5%)	3.039(.827, 11.173)	2.090(0.220, 19.865)
With parent	82(41.4%)	116(58.5%)	3.890 (1.197, 12.645)	2.411(0.333, 17.445)
Husband/boyfriend	92(42.9%)	122(57%)	3.647(1.125, 11.820)	3.573(0.511, 24.993)
With female friend	11(73.3%)	4(26.6%)	1	1
Number of sexual partner				
One	108(55.6%)	86(44.3%)	1	1
Two	75(31.6%)	162(26.1%)	2.713(1.829, 4.022)	3.013(1.512, 6.004)**
Three and above	20(58.3%)	14(41.6%)	0.879(0.420, 1.841)	5.042(1.122, 22.659)**
Intimacy of parents				
Tight	67(40.8%)	97(59.1%)	1	1
Average	107(49.3%)	110(50.7%)	0.710(0.471, 1.070)	0.571(0.263, 1.239)
Loose	30(34.8%)	56(65. %)	1.289(0.750, 2.217)	0.950(0.317, 2.847)
Alcohol use				
Yes	87(44.8%)	107(55.1%)	1	1
No	117(42.8%)	156(57.1%)	1.084(0.748, 1.571)	2.174(1.013, 4.664)**

\*\* Other occupational status \*\*\* (private)



## 4. Discussion

In this study the life time prevalence of sexual violence was 43.7 %. The finding of this study was lower as compared to study conducted Swedish (50%) [45], in the study conducted in Kenya, (64.4%) [37] in rural Ethiopia, Butajira that revealed to be 59 % ( 32), study done in Mekelle reported prevalence of sexual violence to be 45.4 % [24] and study in Mekelle (50.2%) of the participants face sexual violence. The difference in tools used, sample size determined, and characteristics of involved study participants could be the reason of incongruence.

On the other hand this finding is higher than findings in Bangladesh; the prevalence rate was 35%, study in Norway prevalence of sexual violence were 21.6%, study in ambo (33.3%) and prevalence.

Of sexual violence among female college students was 37.3% [41]. This might be explained by the difference in study setting, socio cultural contexts and sample size between the study populations.

Of the strongly associated factors in this study the finding of this study showed that sexual violence of single/unmarried females 2. 3 times more likely to sexual violence compared with married female reproductive. This result is consistent with a study in northeast Nigeria, debark (Ethiopia) and south India (23, 24, 42, 48) this might be linked with that single female are considered free of husband regulation and social norms. The other explanation might be they are on time for choosing the good male they want.

Number of sexual partners in life is another strongly associated factor with sexual violence as, those who had two or more sexual partners in life had more than 3 times (AOR = (AOR =3.01 95% CI: 1.51, 6.00)) chance of enduring sexual violence than those who had one sexual partner in life. This is again consistent with a study done in Addis Ababa University among female students [34].

Lastly, alcohol use behaviors were found to be significantly associated with sexual Violence There was also a statistically significant association between ever alcohol use of participants and sexual violence. Females who had alcohol consumed had 2.1 times more likely to be sexually violence compared with those who had never alcohol consumed (AOR =2.17 (95%CI: (1.01, 4.66)). This study was similar to the study conducted in Jimma and Arba-Minch [15]. The possible explanation could be alcohol consumption causes loss of judgment and protective power of females from sexual violence. Another possible explanation could be alcohol consumption make female more at risk to protect themselves and places them in setting where the chance of sexual violence high. Similar findings were documented by studies done in Mekelle [24]. It is difficult from this study to judge which one is causing the other. Because it is also known that sexual abuse can predispose the victim to increased substance use [39].

## 5. Conclusion

The prevalence of sexual violence among female reproductive age is high which indicates that female reproductive age group is at high risk of sexual violence. Factors found to be significantly associated with sexual violence include age category, residence, marital status, occupational status, mother educational status, number of sexual partner, and alcohol consumption. Finding from this study confirmed that sexual violence among female reproductive is a very common phenomenon which deserves the following interventions from concerned bodies.

## 6. Recommendation

Develop secondary prevention measures such as victim support programs to take care of students affected by sexual violence; they might be suffering from physical and psychological problems. These interventions can be making access to proper counseling services, and emergency contraception. This can be done through establishing min clinic or opening psychological guidance offices and youth friendly services in the and linking referral systems with other nearby health institutions.

## 7. Limitation

The finding of this study was not triangulated on qualitative finding.

## Abbreviations

AOR	Adjusted Odds Ratio
PHSC	Pawi Health Science Collage
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
SV	Sexual Violence
WHO	World Health Organization

## Acknowledgments

We would like to say thank you Bahir Dar University for giving us the chance to conduct this research and support us in many ways.

## Declaration

I hereby declare that the information given above and in the enclosed document is true to the best of knowledge and belief and nothing has been concealed therein. I understand that if the information given by me is proved not true. I will have to face the punishment as per the law.

## Ethics Approval and Consent

To for this research Ethical clearance was obtained from the Ethical review committee of Bahir Dar University, college of health sciences in Ethiopia. After formal letter is written to study area data collection was started and verbal consent was obtained from participants.

## Author Contributions

For this study Tizazu Kuchi designed, writing result, analysis findings and Eleni Admassisu. Mekonon Melkie, again highly participated in interpretation and analysis of this research finding and Dereje Getahun prepare manuscript for this research. All authors approved the final manuscript of this research.

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## Data Availability Statement

The source of the data is present at corresponding author upon reasonable requested by concerned individuals.

## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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