

PREVALENCE AND ASSOCIATED FACTORS OF GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AMONG HIGH SCHOOL FEMALE STUDENTS IN ALETA WONDO TOWN, SOUTH EAST ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND: Gender Based violence is a worldwide problem and it is frequently occurred in low resource countries like Ethiopia. The psychosocial and health impacts of violence include depression, anxiety, stress, undesirable pregnancy, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections and leads to maternal morbidity and mortality.

METHODS: Institution based cross-sectional study design was conducted. A structured and pre-tested interviewer administered questionnaire was used to collect the data from 370 study participants. The data were entered with Epi info version 3.5.3 software and exported to Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 22.0 for further analysis. Both bivariate and multivariable logistic regression analysis were performed to identify associated factors. P values <0.05 with 95% confidence level were used to declare statistical significance.

RESULT: A total of 370 respondents participated in the study with a response rate of 96.7%. The overall prevalence of gender-based violence among the students during the life time was 68.2% with 95% CI [63.3 - 73.0]. The prevalence of physical, psychological and sexual violence was 56.14% [95% CI: 51.0-61.3], 34.8% [95% CI: 30.0-40.0] and 26.3% [95% CI: 21.7-30.8] respectively. The analysis indicated that respondents having boyfriends [AOR=2.16(95%CI; 1.09, 4.25)], and having habit of drinking alcohol (AOR = 3.69(95% CI, 1.42, 9.58) were more likely exposed to gender-based violence than others.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS: This study has found that the prevalence of gender-based violence was over two- third among female students in the study area. The prevalence of physical, sexual and psychological violence in their lifetime and current among female students was high. Therefore, it is recommended that gender-based violence needs due attention and remedial action from policy makers, district officials, high school and other concerned bodies. Gender based violence is associated with certain variables such as having a close boyfriend and drinking alcohol.

KEYWORDS: Gender, violence, high school, Ethiopia

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BACKGROUND

Gender-based violence is defined as violence that is directed against an individual on the basis of their sex or gender. It includes physical, sexual and emotional violence committed or unnoticed within the family, the overall society or by the state and its organizations¹. According to the Second World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in 1993 gave main concern to this issue, which endanger women's lives, bodies, psychological integrity and liberty². Gender-based violence (GBV) is worldwide phenomenon and knows no borders³. But it is most commonly occurred in low resource country like Ethiopia⁴.

Studies also showed that the health impacts of sexual violence are more brutal because it is related to a number of the most intractable reproductive health concerns of our time such as undesirable pregnancy, unsafe abortions, sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS⁵. Worldwide more than 1.3 million people die every year as a result of violence which contributing 2.5% of global death. Globally, it is the fourth leading cause of death for people aged between 15–44 years. In addition to that 10,000 of people around the world are sufferers of non-fatal violence every day⁶. Multi-country study conducted on women's' in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) countries showed that various alarming results about the problem of gender-based violence; which ranging from 20% to as high as 71%⁷.

Ethiopia is one of the countries with the highest prevalence of both sexual and physical violence's by an intimate partner or others⁸. Worldwide an expected 33 % of women are physically or sexually abused and twenty percent of them had experienced rape or attempted rape in their lifetime⁹. There are significant results to school related gender-based violence in learning settings, which relating to physical and mental health, and educational achievement. The physical health related consequences of violence of female students result in forced sex which includes gynecologic problems such as exposure to STIs (HIV/AIDS) as well as unwanted conception, high-risk youth pregnancy and childbirth, and unsafe abortions. The psychological consequences which resulting from the experience of sexual violence leads to intake disorders, hopelessness, and in feelings of guilt, anxiety,

undermine self-esteem, post-traumatic stress disorder and suicidal tendencies¹⁰.

Several studies indicated that the consequences of school related gender-based violence (SRGBV) negatively affect girls' educational achievement and students were losing their attention in class, bad feeling for themselves, absent from school, and even dropping out⁴. In Ethiopia youth accounts more than 65% of total population and have faced various sexual and reproductive health problems due to gender inequality¹¹. One of known causes of poor school achievement and school dropouts of in Ethiopia among school girls is violence that targets them on the basis of their gender¹². Different study which was conducted in Ethiopia showed that the prevalence of gender-based violence range from 34-65% and it is one of the public health problems of the country¹³⁻¹⁵. But the factors associated with high prevalence of gender-based violence was not studied so this study is used to assess and identify prevalence which related with gender-based violence and associated factors among female students in high school, Aleta Wondo town, South Ethiopia.

METHODS

Study Area

This study was conducted in Sidama Zone, Aleta Wondo town high school students from March 15 to April 15, 2018. Aleta wondo town was located in 64 km away from regional capital of Hawassa and 339 Km South East of Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia. It has three kebeles. The total population of town is 52, 604 of whom 26,407 are females in 2010 E.C. It has one District hospital, four private clinics and six private pharmacies and there are one TVET college and one governmental high school have grade 9 to 12 found in Aleta wondo. The total numbers of grade 9 to 12 students are 4,354, of those female students' accounts 1,751(40.22%) and regarding service of adolescent no gender club in school compound and not well functional youth friendly service in the town.

Study Design and Period

Institution based cross-sectional study was conducted from March 15 to April 15, 2018

SOURCE POPULATION

All regular female students who enrolled in Aleta Wondo high school for academic year in 2017/18.

STUDY POPULATION

Regular female students who were in grade 9 to 12 and stayed at least one semester in Aleta Wondo high school, 2017/18

Sample Size determination

A single proportion formula was used to estimate the sample size required for the study. The sample size calculation assumed the proportion (p) estimated prevalence of gender based violence 67.7% (15). Adding non-response rate of 10% and considering the assumption of 95% confidence level, 5% margin of error the final sample size was 370 respondents.

Sampling Procedure

First the students list and identification number were obtained from registration office of high school. The total sample size was allocated into each section in grade 9-12 based on proportion to population (female students) in school preceding the data collection period. Grade nine 104: grade ten 184: grade eleven 23, and grade twelve 59. Then, Individual participants in each grade were selected by using simple random sampling during the data collection period until the required sample size at each grade was obtained.

Operational definitions

Sexual violence: For the purpose of this study we defined "sexual violence" as unwanted or non-consensual sexual act through force, threat or intimidation.

Gender Based Violence: For the purpose of this study we defined Gender based violence as physical or sexual and/or psychological violence that targets individuals on the basis of their gender

Physical Violence: In this study physical violence includes if a student is saying "yes" at list one of them a mild form (slapping, and punching) or sever form (kicking/drugging, beating/hitting with any object, cutting/ biting, shaking, shoving, pushing, throwing, and burning/chocking) against women or girl

Data collection tool

The data collection method that was used in this study was semi-structured self-administered questioner. The English version questionnaire was translated into

local language Amharic to obtain data from the study participants and to ensure clarity of its content. Then the Amharic version was transcribed back to English version to check for uniformity. It was prepared by the principal investigator based on literature reviews; the questionnaire was designed to obtain information on socio demographic-characteristics and factors associated with gender-based violence. The tool was pretested for its reliability. The content validity of the questionnaire was revised by qualified public health experts.

Data collection procedure and quality control

Before actual data collection occurred one day training was provided for data collectors and the supervisor about techniques of data collection and briefed on each question included in the data collection tool. Pretest was done on 5% (19) of the sample in Garbicho lella high school a week before beginning of the actual data collection and modification were done based on feedback from the pre-test. After pre-testing the questionnaire, Cronbatch's Alpha was calculated by using SPSS window version 23.0 to test internal consistency (reliability) of the item and Cronbatch's Alpha greater than 0.7 was considered as reliable. Data were collected by trained data collectors.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data was entered in to Epi info version 3.5.3 software and then exported to SPSS version 23 for analysis. Then explanatory data was checked outliers, missing value and multicollinearity for variables. Descriptive statistics were done and summarized by tables, frequencies, graphs, mean, and proportion. The association between gender-based violence and its independent variables were examined by binary logistic regression. Variables which show significant association in the previous studies and independent variables having value ≤ 0.25 in binary logistic regression were a potential candidate for multivariable logistic regression analysis to control confounders in regression models. Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness of test was done for the model fitness and backward stepwise regression methods were applied to assess the independent variables in multivariable logistic regression. Association between outcome variable and independent variables were reported by odds ratio at 95% CI and variables having

p-value less than 0.05 in multivariable logistic regression model were determined as significant.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical clearance was obtained from Ethical Review Committee of Arbaminch University, College of Health Science, and Department of Public Health. Respondents were informed about the purpose and procedure of the study, the importance of their participation, and the right to withdrawal at any time if they want. The privacy and confidentiality of the information was given by each respondent's kept properly and name was not recorded.

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of respondent

From a total of 370 respondents who were invited for interview 358 consented to participate in the study giving a response rate of 96.7%. The mean age and standard deviation of the respondent's was 16.92 years \pm 2.36 SD. Among the total respondents 279 (77.9 %) were between the age of 15 -19 years. Most, 280 (78.2%) of respondent was Sidama ethnicity and 222 (62.0%) of the respondents were protestant religion followers. majority 176 (49.2%) of the respondents were educational level of Grade 10. Above the half of respondents were urban residence 200 (55.9%) and about 60% of respondents were currently live with their family (Table 1).

Table 2: Substance-use among high school female students in Aleta Wondo town, Sidama, Southern Ethiopia, April, 2018 (n=358).

Variables	Parameter	Frequency	Percentages
Age	Less than 15	6	1.7
	15-19	279	77.9
	20-24	58	16.2
	Above 24	15	4.2
Ethnicity	Sidama	280	78.2
	Guraghe	35	9.8
	Amhara	29	8.1
	Others*	14	3.9
Religion	Protestant	222	62.0
	Orthodox	76	21.2
	Catholic	34	9.5
	Muslim	26	7.3
Education level	Grade 9	100	27.9
	Grade 10	176	49.2
	Grade 11	23	6.4
	Grade 12	59	16.5
Last semester average result	Greater than 80	42	11.7
	60-80	143	39.9
	Less than 60	173	48.3
Place of residence	Urban	200	55.9
	Rural	158	44.1
With whom currently live	Alone	43	12.0
	Family	213	59.5
	Husband/boyfriend	42	11.7
	Female friend	60	16.8
Current marital status	Married	26	7.3
	On relationship	124	34.6
	No partner at all	208	58.1
Pocket money from family	Yes	117	32.7
	No	241	67.3

Not key - * other indicates Silte and Oromo in their ethnicity.

History of student's substance use and Sexual experiences
Among study participants experiences of ever chewing chat, smocking tobacco and consuming alcohol were reported by 26 (7.3%), 14(3.9%) and 50(14%) of the respondents, respectively. 66 (18.4%) of the respondents have either male or female friends who drank alcohol. Out of total participants 115(32.5%) of them had

sexual partner currently. Similarly, 136(38.0%) of the participant ever had started sexual intercourse and 98(72%) of who started sexual intercourse was below age 19 years (Table 2).

Table 2: Substance-use among high school female students in Aleta Wondo town, Sidama, Southern Ethiopia, April, 2018 (n=358).

Variables	Parameter	Frequency	Percentages
Ever chew chat	Yes	26	7.3
	No	332	92.7
Ever smoked cigarette	Yes	14	3.9
	No	344	96.1
Ever consume alcohol	Yes	50	14.0
	No	308	86.0
Have peer who drunk	Yes	66	18.4
	No	292	81.6
have sexual partner currently	Yes	115	32.1
	No	243	67.9
Ever had sexual intercourse	Yes	136	38.0
	No	222	62.0
Age first sexual intercourse	Less than 15	19	13.9
	15-19 years	79	58.1
	above 19 year	2	1.5
	I don't know	36	26.5

FAMILY HISTORY

From the total of study participant 288(80.7%) were living together with their family. Regarding parent's occupational status 108(30.2%) participants father and 205 (57.3%) participants mother were farmer and housewife respectively. 39 (10.9%) of their parents' monthly income were less than 500 Ethiopian Birr.

The majority of the students 262 (73.2%) respond that their families did not freely discuss about physical, psychological and sexual violence with them (Table 3).

Table 3: Family History among high school female students in Aleta Wondo town, Sidama, Southern Ethiopia, April, 2010/2018 (n=358).

Variables	Parameter	Frequency	Percentages
Parents	Live together	288	80.4
	Either alive	50	14.0
	Both of them not alive	20	5.6
Father education	No formal Education	45	12.6
	Grade 1 - 8	78	21.8
	Grade 9-12	107	29.9
	Above grade 12	128	35.8
Mother education	No formal Education	66	18.4
	Grade 1 -8	148	41.3
	Grade 9 - 12	87	24.3
	Above grade 12	57	15.9
Father occupation	Housewife	108	30.2
	Merchant	124	34.6
	Civil servant	84	23.5
	Private Business	42	11.7
Mother	Housewife	205	57.3
	Merchant	77	21.5
	Civil servant	55	15.4
	Private Business	21	5.9
Family monthly income	Less than 500	39	10.9
	501-1000	63	17.6
	1001-2000.	85	23.7
	2,001-6, 000	125	34.9
Family free discussion	Greater than 6,000	46	12.8
	Yes	96	26.8
Family near by 1	No	262	73.2
	Yes	230	64.5
Family near by 2	No	128	35.5

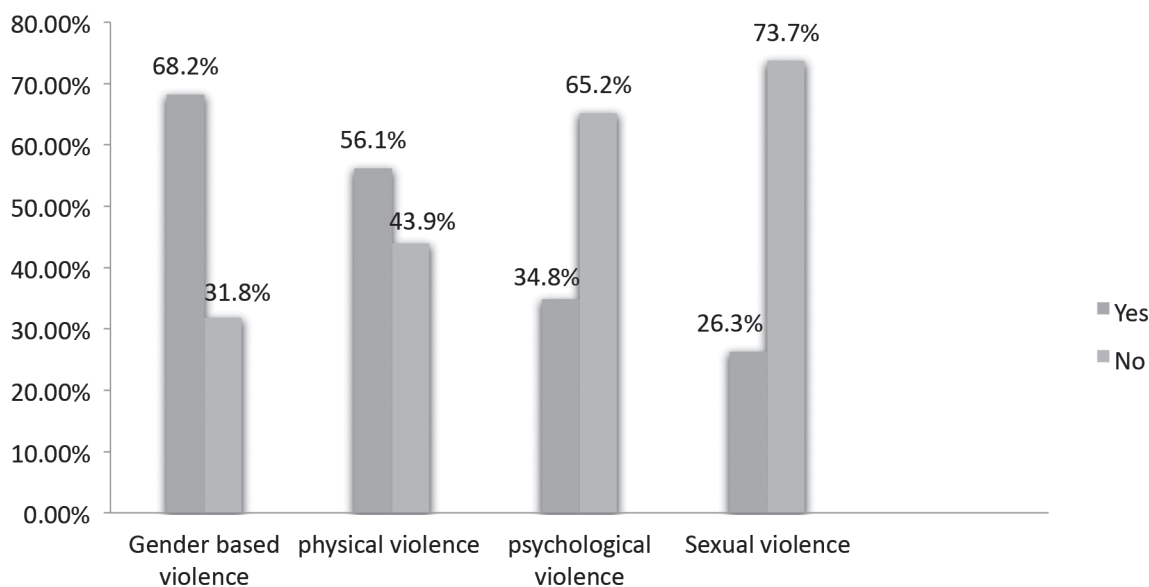
PREVALENCE OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (GBV)

The overall prevalence of GBV (physical, sexual or/and psychological violence) among the study participants in the study area was 244(68.2%) with 95% CI [63.3% - 73.0%] during their life time. Physically, sexually and psychologically violence was reported by 201 (56.14%) with 95% CI [51.0% 61.3%], 94 (26.3%) with 95% CI [21.7%-30.8%] and 125 (34.8%) with 95% CI [30.0%-40.0%] respectively (figure 1).

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

The multivariable analysis was carried out to determine possible association between the independent variables with gender-based violence. The result showed that having boyfriends, family occupations, habit of drinking alcohol, having sexual partner were some of the factors associated with gender-based violence at P-value <0.05.

Students who had boyfriends were 2.16 times more likely experienced gender-based violence than students who did not have boyfriends at all (AOR=2.16, 95 % CI; 1.1- 4.25; p=0.026). The female students who had the father occupation being farmer were 2.37 times more likely exposed to gender-based violence than others (AOR=2.37,95 % CI; 1.05-5.38; p=0.039). Female students who live within the female friends were 2.62 times more likely to encountered violence than students live with their families (AOR=2.62; 95 % CI; 1.13- 6.04, p=0.025). The likelihood of experiencing gender-based violence in their life time was 3.69 times higher among those students who had a habit of taking alcohol than those who didn't have a habit of alcohol intake (AOR = 3.69; 95% CI, 1.42- 9.58, p=0.007). Student who had sexual partner currently were 2.12 times more likely exposed to gender-based violence than others (OR=2.12; 95%CI; 1.01-4.43, p=0.047) (Table 4).



Gender based violence and its types

Figure 1. prevalence and types of gender-based violence among high school female students in Aleta Wondo town, Sidama, Southern Ethiopia, April, 2010/2018 (n=358)

Table 4: factors associated with genders-based violence among high school female students in Aleta Wondo town, Sidama, Southern Ethiopia, April, 2010/2018.

Variable	Gender based violence		Crude OR with 95% CI	Adjusted OR with 95% CI	P-Value
	Yes	No			
With whom currently live					
Family	134	76	1	1	
Alone	29	14	1.22(0.61-2.45)	0.76(0.34-1.69)	0.501
Husband/boyfriend	30	12	1.47(0.71-3.04)	0.91(0.39-2.09)	0.817
female friend	51	9	3.34 (1.56-7.15)	2.62(1.13-6.04)	0.025
Current marital status					
Married	20	6	2.35(0.91-6.09)	0.95(0.30-3.01)	0.932
Have boyfriend	102	22	3.27(1.91-5.59)	2.16(1.09-4.25)	0.026
No partner at all	122	86	1	1	
Father occupation					
Farmer	84	24	2.63(1.23-5.62)	2.37(1.05-5.38)	0.039
Merchant	77	47	1.23(0.60-2.5)	0.99(0.46-2.15)	0.991
Civil servant	59	25	1.77(0.82-3.82)	1.71(0.74-3.95)	0.207
Private Business	24	18	1	1	
Ever consume alcohol					
Yes	44	6	3.96(1.64-9.59)	3.69(1.42-9.58)	0.007
No	200	108	1	1	
Have partner sexual currently					
Yes	97	18	3.52(2.00-6.19)	2.12(1.01-4.43)	0.047
No	147	96	1	1	

DISCUSSION

This study showed that the overall prevalence of gender-based violence among high school female students in Aleta Wondo town was 68.2%. For each category the prevalence of physical, sexual and psychological violence in the study area was 56.14%, 26.3% and 34.8% respectively. The finding of this study is comparable with the same study conducted in Menkorer high school in Debre Markos town which revealed that the prevalence of gender-based violence was 67.7%¹³. However, this finding was relatively higher than the same study conducted in Northern Nigeria which showed that the prevalence of gender-based violence was 58.8%¹⁶. In addition to this a cross sectional study conducted in Iran designates that the prevalence of sexual violence against women was found to be around 63.8%. The discrepancy might be due to socio cultural and economic difference. This finding is also higher than the same study conducted in eastern parts of

Ethiopia which showed that the prevalence of gender-based violence was 58.3 %¹⁷. The discrepancy might be due to study period difference and in our study area due presence of different socio-cultural group. In this finding the overall prevalence of physical violence was 56.1 which were higher than the same study conducted in the Hadiya Zone showed that the overall prevalence of physical violence was 33.46¹⁸. The discrepancy might be due to some sort of conflict was there in our study area before conducting our study so this may contribute to rise of Gender based violence in this finding. This finding is also lower than the same study which was conducted in the Jimma Zone¹⁹. The discrepancy might be due to study area and sample size difference. In this study the prevalence of physical violence experienced in student by husband or boyfriends 43.1%, family members in their home 76.7%, students 74.3%, other relatives 53.4%, teachers 40.0%, and stranger 37.6% respectively. This finding is also supported by the same

study conducted in Ethiopia^{13,16}. Regarding to factors associated with sexual violence in this study. Students who had boyfriends currently were two times more likely experience gender-based violence than those who had no partner at all. The possible explanation for this might be those students who have boyfriends predispose the violence earlier and may consider violence as a normal part of their life. This finding supported with studies conducted in other parts of Ethiopia high school students^{13,18,20}. Similarly, in this study female students who reside with their female friends were almost three times more likely faced higher risk than those who settled with their family, this might be due to students away from parents get liberty from their control and that may expose them to the gender based violence. But studies conducted in north Ethiopia, Mekelle town and Ambo showed that there is no association between current students live away from parents and gender-based violence ^{20,21}. Students who had father's occupation farmer were two times more likely violated than fathers who had private business in their occupation, this finding supported with the study conducted in the high school student in Hadiya zone¹⁸. But studies conducted in Debre Markos and Mekele town show that there is no association between parent occupation and gender-based violence^{13,20}. Students who had habit of alcohol drink were almost four times more likely experience gender-based violence than those who didn't use alcohol. This finding supported by studies conducted in Uganda, Ambo high school, Mekelle town, Debre Markos high school and Wolayita Soddo University^{13,20-23}.

CONCLUSION

This study revealed that over two-third of respondents were violated by the either form of physical, sexual or/and psychological violence in their life time in the study area. The prevalence of physical, sexual, and psychological violence during their life time were 56.14%, 34.9% and 26.1% respectively. The factors significantly associated with gender-based violence were having boyfriends currently, student's current living condition, parent's occupation, experience of ever had sexual partner and having habit of alcohol drinking. We recommend

that the Ethiopian government should focused on the factors that leads to Gender based violence in school because Gender-based violence (GBV) is a human rights violation, a public health challenge, and a barrier to civic, social, political, and economic participation. It undermines not only the safety, dignity, overall health status, and human rights of the millions of individuals who experience it, but also the public health, economic stability, and security of nations so it needs cooperation and participation of many player trained counselors, trained teachers, informed students and parents to reduces this unspoken cause of female students drop out of school and common cause of unwanted pregnancy and its related compactions and deaths.

DECLARATIONS

Ethical approval and consent to participant

Ethical clearance was obtained from Ethical Review Committee of Arbaminch University, College of Health Science, and Department of Public Health. Respondents were informed about the purpose and procedure of the study, the importance of their participation, and the right to withdrawal at any time if they want. Accordingly, after the objective of the study was explained, verbal informed consent was obtained from all participants. Moreover, the confidentiality of information was guaranteed by using code numbers rather than personal identifiers and by keeping the data locked.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

GBV: Gender based violence; AOR: Adjusted odds ratio; CI: confidence interval

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AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIAL

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Not applicable

AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTION

AD, MS, AA and BW conceived the study and undertook statistical analysis. AD and MS supervised the study design and statistical analysis. BW and AA contributed to the writing of the manuscript and all authors approved the submitted version of the manuscript.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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