

Environmental Sustainability, Value Re-Orientation as a Panacea to Gender-Based Violence and Culture of Silence Among Adolescent Girls

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Abstract

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an alarming global threat. It has repercussions on victims and their offspring. The detrimental African cultural customs that have supported gender-based violence are a deeply rooted problem that requires sensitive and urgent attention. Therefore, this study examined the perceived effects of environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV. Data were collected from 420 respondents who were randomly selected from Osun State, Nigeria. Descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used to analyse the data. Results show that the girl child is highly vulnerable to GBV, while the urban-rural divide and religious demographics influence the rate of GBV. Environmental stressors, power imbalances, gender inequalities, and social norms were identified as major causes of GBV that result in physical, reproductive, and mental health consequences for victims. Promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation emerges as a potential strategy to curb GBV, while equitable resource management and women's economic empowerment were identified as preventive measures. Regression analysis highlights the predictive effects of environmental sustainability ($\beta = 0.344$, $p < .001$) and value reorientation ($\beta = 0.384$, $p < .001$) on GBV, underscoring the need for comprehensive interventions. Preventing GBV requires addressing the underlying causes, which include socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental issues. The fundamental causes of GBV, which include socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental issues, must be addressed to prevent it. For victims of gender-based violence, the Osun State Government should collaborate with non-governmental organizations and religious groups to increase their access to support services. Community leaders should implement community-based interventions, such as locking up or imprisoning those who have committed any type of GBV within their community. The State Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs should develop a value reorientation program that challenges social norms and the prevailing culture of silence.

Keywords: Gender-based violence, Value re-orientation, Environmental Sustainability, Women, Culture of Silence, Social norms

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1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, environmental degradation, increased competition over scarce resources, and cultural values are increasing gender-based violence among

females. Nigeria alone recorded over 24,000 cases of Gender-based violence (GBV) nationwide in one month, with Lagos, a megacity of Nigeria, alone receiving 5624 cases in one year. The cases reported include sexual, emotional, physical, or economic abuse. GBV is not limited to a specific gender, race, colour, group of people, culture, socio-economic status, or religion (Ochani et al., 2024). It affects everyone; however, women and girls are most vulnerable and disproportionately affected (John et al., 2020). The rate at which cases of domestic violence are increasing in Nigerian society can be attributed to the environmental change, degradation, cultural beliefs, and norms that have made women a subject of violence and domination in marriage. Women are often sexually assaulted, emotionally abused, and physically violated. Gender-based violence can have lasting effects on girls' physical and mental health. Addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality are fundamental to environmental work that contributes meaningfully to SDG 5, which aims to promote gender equality (Rapinyana & Baratedi, 2023).

Environmental degradation can exacerbate existing gender inequalities, making it more difficult for marginalized female gender to access land, economic resources, and services that could help to address the issue of violence and abuse. Environmental degradation manifests in various forms, including land pollution, deforestation, air pollution, water pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. These can affect women in various ways; for example, environmental degradation and pollution can have a negative impact on the health and well-being of girls, which can in turn increase their vulnerability to violence. Girls are also more vulnerable to the impact of climate change, which can lead to food and water shortages, displacement, loss of livelihoods, and more dependence on the opposite gender who may exploit the opportunity to abuse them sexually and emotionally. Moreover, the aftermath may create a culture of silence and fear, where women may be less likely to speak out against abuse or violence they receive because they lack the resources needed to support themselves (Rezwana & Pain, 2021).

Additionally, it is unfortunate that in some African cultures, some cultural beliefs and norms keep women from realizing their full potential. One such belief is that women are inferior to men and should not be given equal opportunities in education, career, leadership positions, land, and other inheritances like men. This has led to a lack of investment in women's education and development, resulting in limited access to resources and opportunities, which can put them on the same pedestal as the male gender. Moreover, some cultural practices, such as early marriage and female genital mutilation, further perpetuate the marginalization of females and the violence against them (Mshweshwe, 2020).

1.1 Problem Statement

Globally, the rate of GBV is on the rise. Nigeria alone recorded 24,720 cases of GBV in one month—September 2023—with 975 vital cases, 1505 cases closed either at family, community, religious, or traditional levels, or the survivors themselves closed their cases due to fear, intimidation, cultural beliefs, and the silent culture in Africa. This menace is worrisome; the effects on individual victims and their children are unimaginable. It is time GBV is eliminated from our society for peace and the achievement of Agenda 2030. The harmful African cultural practices that have perpetuated gender-based violence are a deeply ingrained issue that needs to be addressed with urgency and sensitivity. It is time to break the cycle of violence and discrimination and embrace a culture of equality and respect. It is essential for African societies to challenge these harmful beliefs and traditions and strive towards creating a more equitable and just society for all. Addressing gender-based violence and promoting gender equality are fundamental for environmental work that meaningfully contributes to SDG 5 of promoting gender equality. It is on this premise that the study investigated gender-based violence and a culture of silence among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions are formulated to guide the thrust of the study:

- a. What are the perceived causes of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria?
- b. What are the perceived effects of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria?
- c. What are the perceived impacts of promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria?

The study assessed Gender-Based Violence and a culture of silence among adolescents with the following specific objectives:

- a. To identify the perceived causes of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria.
- b. To explore the perceived effects of GBV among adolescents in Osun State.
- c. To find out the perceived impacts of promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV among adolescents in Osun State.
- d. To examine the significant effect of promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV among adolescents.

The testable hypothesis of the study is “Environmental sustainability and value

re-orientation do not have a significant effect on GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria”.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender-based violence (GBV) against adolescents refers to any harmful act that is carried out against the adolescents' will (Wei et al., 2023). This act is based on socially attributed differences between males and females within the context of a given society. It includes various forms of violence, emotional abuse, sexual harassment, physical abuse, financial abuse, human trafficking, and forced marriage. It is the most pervasive yet least visible human rights violation globally. It also includes the threat of violence, coercion, and deprivation of liberty, whether in public or private. Society is responsible mainly for GBV occurrence and prevalence as society has failed in its role of instilling the right values in children (Paudel, 2007). Our weak legal system, social stigmas, environmental degradation, bad cultural norms of gender inequality, and poor education system in Nigeria are responsible for GBV against adolescents.

The prevalence of GBV is staggering, with statistics indicating that one in three women worldwide has experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime (World Health Organization, 2021). However, these numbers likely underestimate the true extent of the problem due to underreporting and the silence culture that surrounds GBV. It can occur in various settings, including homes, workplaces, and public spaces. When violence persists and it is being normalized and taken with levity, it becomes a rampant act. Silence culture refers to a situation where people feel pressured or afraid to speak up, share their thoughts, or talk about important issues. It is like an unwritten rule in a group or community that requires people not to say anything that might make others uncomfortable or challenge the status quo. In a silent culture, problems, injustices, or concerns may be ignored or hushed up, making it difficult for people to address and solve them openly. This culture can make some individuals feel isolated and powerless, preventing important discussions from taking place. Breaking a silent culture often involves encouraging open communication and creating an environment where everyone's voice is heard and respected.

Azeez (2020) attributed the culture of silence among female folks regarding violence perpetrated against them to the effect of the socialization process in different cultures. The culture of silence has remained one of the major challenges militating against the effective handling of GBV. It is a phenomenon in which the victims of GBV often endure violence in silence due to fear, shame, or societal pressure. This silence culture not only allows GBV to persist but also perpetuates the cycle of abuse. Silence culture surrounding GBV has its roots in

historical gender inequalities and societal norms that have perpetuated patriarchal power structures. These norms often dictate that discussions about GBV should remain private, further reinforcing the culture of silence. It is believed that one gender is more relevant than the other and that cases of violence against the not-so-privileged gender should be taken with caution and silence. Issues involving the perpetuated patriarchal power should be looked away from as the victims suffer in silence (Mshelia, 2021).

One consequence of a silent culture is the unlawful appropriation of blame. A situation in which the victims are held responsible for the violence they suffered. This blame-shifting phenomenon is deeply embedded in societal attitudes, which many times prevents survivors from speaking out. The oppressed group, who are supposed to be supported, gets blamed for an act perpetrated against them. Silence culture thrives on fear and stigma, making it difficult for survivors to come forward and seek help. Fear of retaliation, judgment, or disbelief contributes to the perpetuation of GBV (Ikuteyijo et al., 2023). It can be said that a silent culture is one of the reasons gender-based violence still thrives in society. The marginalized group usually does not find the boldness to speak up as they are usually termed the “weak ones”.

Cultural norms and traditions can also reinforce a silent culture. In some societies, discussing GBV openly is considered taboo, and victims are expected to endure the violence silently for the sake of family honour or community harmony. It is considered disrespectful and inappropriate for women to speak up about their struggles with gender-based violence. Most times, perpetrators of GBV are closer to the victims than one can imagine, and this also fuels the dangerous act of silence about it (Thelma, 2024).

Environmental degradation can exacerbate existing gender inequalities, making it more difficult for marginalized females' gender to access land, economic resources, and services that could help to address the issue of violence and abuse (Huyer et al., 2020). Environmental degradation manifests in various forms, including land pollution, deforestation, air pollution, water pollution, and the loss of biodiversity. These can affect women in various ways; for example, environmental degradation and pollution can have negative impacts on the health and well-being of girls, which can in turn increase their vulnerability to violence (Gwangndi et al., 2016). Girls are also more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, which can lead to food and water shortages, displacement, loss of livelihoods, and more dependence on the opposite gender who may exploit the opportunity to abuse them sexually, emotionally, and otherwise. Moreover, the aftermath may create a culture of silence and fear, where women may be less likely to speak out against abuse or violence they receive because they lack the

needed resources to support themselves (Rezwana & Pain, 2021).

Values refer to enduring, often deeply ingrained beliefs and principles that guide an individual's attitudes, behaviours, and decisions. These beliefs and principles are considered important and serve as a framework for evaluating what is right or wrong, desirable, or undesirable, and meaningful or meaningless in various aspects of life. According to Enu and Esu (2011), values are basic beliefs and attitudes in a society, whether of individuals or groups, that are considered worthwhile and serve as a guide to choices and behaviors in our daily lives. Esu (2009) further defined values as ideals that guide or qualify your personal conduct, interaction with others, and involvement in your career. Values help to inform one on how he or she can conduct one's life in a meaningful way. Values can encompass a wide range of ideals, including moral, ethical, cultural, social, and personal beliefs. They play a fundamental role in shaping an individual's identity, influencing their priorities and informing their choices in both personal and societal contexts.

3. METHODOLOGY

Study Design: This study explored gender-based violence and a culture of silence among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. The study used a descriptive research design.

Study Area: Osun State is one of the rural states in Southwest Nigeria. It is popularly known as a land of virtue. Cultural beliefs are deeply rooted in the daily lives of the people of the state. The state is known for its rich cultural heritage, which is evident in its arts, traditional festivals, music, and dance. The cultural practices of the people of Osun State are closely tied to their beliefs in the gods and goddesses, whom they consider to be their ancestors.

Population of the study: The population for this study consists of all females in Osun State, Nigeria.

Sample and Sampling Method: Given the sensitive nature of the subject of this study, a purposeful sampling technique was used to select 150 adolescents from each of the three federal senatorial districts in the State, making a total of 450 adolescents. However, only 420 questionnaires supplied with complete information were considered valid and usable for the study.

Research Instrument: The instrument used for the collection of data was "Gender-based Violence Among Adolescent Girls" (GBVAW). The questionnaire consisted of four sections (A -D). Section A elicited responses on the demographic data of the respondents. Section B was based on the Causes of

gender-based violence among adolescents. Section C was based on the effect of the Culture of Silence, while Section D was based on mitigating gender-based violence among adolescents.

Validation of Instrument: The measurement instrument designed was assessed for three types of validity: face validity, content validity, and construct validity.

Reliability of Instrument: The reliability and internal consistency of the subscales were determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient test. Data collection bias was minimized as only the researchers conducted focused group discussions and interviews with all respondents who could speak English and Yoruba. Three research assistants were engaged and trained to help administer the questionnaires.

Data Collection Procedure: The researchers, with the aid of two trained research assistants, visited each of the three senatorial districts in the state and administered the research instrument of the study on the selected sample. At least 50 adolescents from each of the three local government areas in each of the senatorial districts were requested to fill the research questionnaire. The responses were collected immediately after the filling was completed. Prior to data collection, participants' consent was sought to include them in the study, and the study's objectives were shared. In addition, adequate assurance was given about the confidentiality of the responses provided.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics (mean and percentage) and regression analysis were used to analyse the data.

Ethical Consideration: This research followed the ethical consideration guidelines for conducting research in Osun State University. The consent of the respondents was also sought before the data collection.

4. RESULTS

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

This study comprised 420 participants selected from the three senatorial districts in Osun State. Given the sensitive nature of this study, only participants who voluntarily chose to participate were included. They included 150 respondents (35.7%) from the Osun-East, 149 (35.5%) from Osun-West, and 121 (28.8%) from Osun-Central. The majority of the respondents (91.9%) were females, and the remaining ones (8.1%) were males. A greater percentage of the participants (56.9%) fell in the age category of 13-15 years old, followed by those within 16-19 years old (41.7%), and only six of them (1.4%) were in the 20 years old and above. Most of the participants (67.1%) were living in urban residential areas,

followed by the rural areas (25.2%), and the least was those from the semi-urban areas (7.6%).

Majority of the participants were of Christian faith (62.1%). This is followed by the Muslim participants (34.0%), and the remaining ones (3.8%) were of traditional faith. In terms of the accommodation types where the participants resided, a greater number (25.2%) lived in a room and a parlour apartment, followed by those who lived in 2-bedroom flats (20.2%), then those who lived in single rooms (20.0%), those who lived in duplex (18.3%), and the least were those who resided in mini flats (16.2%). Almost two-third of the participants (59.3%) were living in their personally owned buildings, while the remaining ones (40.7%) lived in a rented apartment. Majority of the participants (77.1%) were secondary school education certificate holders, followed by primary school certificate holders (22.2%), then those without any formal education (1.7%), and the least were those who had tertiary education (1.0%). Lastly, almost half of the respondents (48.1%) agreed that they had previously experienced gender-based violence, while the remaining ones (51.9%) responded that they had not. Table 1 presents details of the demographic variables and their associated responses.

Table 1. Demographic Variables of Respondents (n = 420)

S/No	Variables	Frequency	Percent
	Senatorial Zone: Osun-East	150	35.7
	Osun-West	149	35.5
	Osun-Central	121	28.8
2.	Gender:		
	Male	34	8.1
	Female	386	91.9
3.	Age:		
	13-15years	239	56.9
	16-19years	175	41.7
	20 years & above	06	1.4
4.	Location of Residence:		
	Rural	106	25.2
	Semi-urban	32	7.6
	Urban	282	67.1
5.	Religious Belief:		
	Christianity	261	62.1
	Islam	143	34.0
	Traditional	16	3.8
6.	Accommodation Type:		
	Single Room	84	20.0
	A room and a parlour	106	25.2
	Mini Flat	68	16.2
	2-bedroom Flat	85	20.2
	Duplex	77	18.3
7.	Nature of Accommodation:		
	Rented	171	40.7

	Personal Building	249	59.3
8.	Level of Education: No Formal Education	07	1.7
	Primary	85	20.2
	Secondary	324	77.1
	Tertiary Education	04	1.0
9.	Experience with GBV: Yes	202	48.1
	No	218	51.9

4.2 Data Analysis for Research Questions

Qus.1: What are the perceived causes of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 2. Perceived Causes of GBV among Adolescents

S/N	Variables	Disagreed		Agreed		Mean	Std. Dev
		N	%	N	%		
1.	Competition over dwindling natural resources like water and arable land can lead to conflicts within families resulting in Gender-based violence (GBV)	73	17.4	347	82.6	3.03	0.84
2.	Environmental degradation, like climate change, can force people to become internally displaced. In such situations, the vulnerability to GBV often increases among adolescents.	117	27.9	303	72.1	2.74	0.92
3.	Social norms and peer pressure to conform to certain behaviours can influence GBV	154	36.7	266	63.4	2.98	0.87
4.	A culture of silence discourages victims of GBV from reporting it, allowing it to persist	101	24.0	319	76.0	2.92	0.93
5.	Breakdown of social order, displacement, and stress following a natural disaster can increase the vulnerability of adolescents to sexual harassment and assaults	120	28.6	303	71.4	2.89	0.86
6.	Fear of social stigma can make GBV persist	96	22.9	324	77.1	3.03	0.88
7.	Fear of retaliation can make GBV persist	105	25.0	315	75.0	2.99	0.91

Table 2 revealed perceived causes of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. As shown in the table, the percentage of participants who agreed to each of the items in the table is far greater than those who expressed disagreement. This suggests that most of the participants accept that the measuring items are a true reflection of the causes of GBV among adolescents in

the sampled population. More specifically, the majority of the participants agreed that “Competition over dwindling natural resources like water and arable land can lead to conflicts within families...” was the topmost perceived cause of GBV among adolescents (82%, $M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.84$). The second most perceived cause was “Fear of social stigma.” (77%, $M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.88$), followed by “A culture of silence discourages victims of GBV from reporting it...” (76%, $M = 2.92$, $SD = 0.93$), then “Fear of retaliation...” (75%, $M = 2.99$, $SD = 0.91$), among others.

Qus. 2: What are the perceived effects of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 3 shows findings of the data analysed for the perceived effects of GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. The table revealed a resounding agreement among the participants for each of the items measuring the perceived effect. This suggests that most of the participants accept that those items are a true reflection of the effects of GBV among adolescents in the sampled population. Specifically, the findings showed that the topmost perceived effect of GBV was: “Adolescents who experience GBV may suffer injuries, ranging from minor bruises to severe physical trauma...” (86%, $M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.84$). The second most perceived effect was “GBV may lead to unwanted pregnancies” (85.7%, $M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.79$), followed by “GBV can lead to reproductive health complications” (85%, $M = 3.12$, $SD = 0.79$), then the view that “GBV can lead to low self-esteem, self-blame and feelings of worthlessness” (83%, $M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.86$), and that “Adolescents who experience GBV may engage in risky behaviour like substance abuse” (82%, $M = 3.13$, $SD = 0.83$), to mention but a few.

Table 3. Perceived Effect of GBV among Adolescents

Variables	Disagreed		Agreed		Std.	
	N	%	N	%	Mean	Dev
Adolescents who experience GBV may suffer injuries, ranging from minor bruises to severe physical trauma	59	14.1	361	85.9	3.23	0.84
Sexual violence does not lead to sexually transmitted infections	124	29.6	296	70.4	2.87	0.98
GBV may lead to unwanted pregnancies	60	14.3	360	85.7	3.21	0.79
GBV can lead to reproductive health complications	61	14.6	359	85.4	3.12	0.79
Adolescents who experience GBV may engage in risky behaviour like substance abuse	73	17.4	347	82.6	3.13	0.83
GBV can lead to post-traumatic stress disorder	90	21.5	330	78.5	3.03	0.86

GBV can lead to low self-esteem, self-blame, and feelings of worthlessness	71	16.9	349	83.1	3.16	0.86
GBV can lead to thoughts of self-harm or suicide in adolescents	79	18.9	341	81.1	3.08	0.83
GBV can lead to academic decline, affecting future education and career prospects	81	19.3	339	80.7	3.10	0.88
GBV can lead to isolation and withdrawal	83	19.8	337	80.2	3.06	0.89
Adolescents who witness GBV within their families may be at increased risk of perpetuating a cycle of violence	85	20.2	335	79.8	3.13	0.87
Adolescents who experience GBV may face stigma and shame, making it difficult for them to seek help or support	92	21.9	128	78.1	3.07	0.88
The effect of GBV can persist into adulthood, influencing an individual's mental and emotional well-being for years to come.	111	26.5	308	73.5	2.94	0.94

Qus. 3: What are the perceived impacts of promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 4 presents the findings on the perceived impacts of promoting environmental sustainability and value reorientation on GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. The table showed that a greater percentage of the participants agreed with the potential impact of most of the items listed (as capable of reducing GBV among adolescents in the sampled population). Particularly, the most rated perceived impact of promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV among adolescents was “Equitable and sustainable management of resources can reduce tensions and conflicts in families and communities” (82%, $M = 3.11$, $SD = 0.89$). The second most perceived impact was “Sustainable energy solutions such as clean cook stoves and solar power can reduce the need to collect firewood thus improving their health and reducing the risk of GBV that can occur during wood collection” (80%, $M = 3.05$, $SD = 0.85$), followed by “Women's access to eco-friendly agricultural or renewable energy projects can create job opportunities...” (79%, $M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.91$), then the view that “Providing support services like medical care and legal assistance to survivors of GBV can reduce GBV” (78%, $M = 3.04$, $SD = 0.86$), and that “The establishment of a community-based mechanism for holding individuals and groups accountable for GBV...” (77%, $M = 2.98$, $SD = 0.90$), among others.

Table 4. Perceived Impacts of Sustainability and Value Reorientation on GBV among Adolescents

Variables	Disagreed		Agreed		Std.	
	N	%	N	%	Mean	Dev
Equitable and sustainable management of resources can reduce tensions and conflicts in families and communities	75	17.9	345	82.2	3.11	0.89
Sustainable energy solutions, such as clean cook stoves and solar power, can reduce the need to collect firewood, thereby improving their health and reducing the risk of GBV that can occur during wood collection.	84	20.0	336	80.0	3.05	0.85
Respecting women's sustainable traditional knowledge can empower women	97	23.2	322	76.8	3.04	0.91
Women's access to eco-friendly agricultural or renewable energy projects can create job opportunities that can empower women economically, reducing their vulnerability to GBV	90	21.5	330	78.8	3.04	0.91
Challenging traditional norms and stereotypes that justify unequal power dynamics can reduce GBV	131	31.3	288	68.8	2.92	0.90
Value reorientation can help women assert their rights	111	26.4	309	73.6	2.93	0.92
Providing support services like medical care and legal assistance to survivors of GBV can reduce GBV	93	22.1	327	77.9	3.04	0.86
Responsible media portrayal of gender and relationships, discouraging the glamorization of violence, and promoting healthier representations can't reduce GBV	155	36.9	265	63.1	2.76	0.93
A cultural shift where society collectively rejects GBV as unacceptable behaviour cannot reduce GBV	158	37.7	261	62.3	2.72	0.95
Teaching individuals about healthy relationship consent and the negative consequences of GBV cannot reduce GBV	160	38.3	258	61.7	2.77	0.97
Engaging religious and cultural leaders in promoting values of respect and equality in their community cannot reduce GBV	145	34.6	274	65.4	2.82	0.89
The establishment of a community-based mechanism for holding individuals and groups accountable for GBV can reduce the incidence of GBV	97	23.2	322	76.8	2.98	0.90

4.3 Multiple regression analysis for predictive effect of environmental sustainability and value re-orientation on GBV among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria.

A standard multiple regression analysis using the “Enter method” was performed to determine the predictive effect of environmental sustainability and value re-orientation (the independent variables) on GBV among adolescents (the dependent variable). The analysis aimed to determine whether the two independent variables could make a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of GBV among adolescents in the current study. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of multicollinearity, singularity, and normality. As shown in Table 5, the two independent variables have reasonable positive correlation coefficients with the dependent variable (0.558 and 0.538 for value reorientation and environmental sustainability, respectively), indicating that the higher the environmental sustainability and value-reorientation practices, the higher the chances of reducing GBV among adolescents. In addition, the two independent variables were moderately correlated with each other (0.504), suggesting that the two variables were fit to be included in the model since they are not strongly correlated.

Table 5: Multiple Regression’s Preliminary Assessment of Correlations among Variables

		GBV among adolescent s	Value- reorientation	Environmental sustainability
Pearson Correlation	GBV among adolescents	1.000	.558	.538
	Value-reorientation	.558	1.000	.504
	Environmental sustainability	.538	.504	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	GBV among adolescent	.	.000	.000
	Value-reorientation	.000	.	.000
	Environmental sustainability	.000	.000	.
N	GBV among adolescent	416	416	416
	Value-reorientation	416	416	416
	Environmental sustainability	416	416	416

Table 6 revealed that the multiple regression model (the combination of value reorientation and environmental sustainability) produced $R^2 = .400$, $F(2, 413) = 137.48$, $P < .0005$. This result indicates that the two independent variables of the study jointly explained 40 per cent of the total variance in the dependent variable (GBV among adolescents). Simply put, this value implies that the two variables accounted for 40 per cent of the various factors that contribute to gender-based violence among adolescents in the current study. The model value was

statistically significant ($P < .0005$). The table further shows that each of the two independent variables (value reorientation and environmental sustainability) uniquely explained 38.4% and 34.4% of the variance in the dependent variable, respectively. All the contributions were statistically significant ($P < .0005$). Besides, the model output shows that the tolerance and the VIF (Variance inflation factor) values (.746 and 1.341, respectively) were within the range of acceptability (Tolerance value was not below .10, and VIF value was not above 10), which further indicates no issue of multiple correlations among independent variables or singularity problem. Altogether, this result implies that value reorientation and environmental sustainability have statistically significant effects in the prediction of gender-based violence among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. That is, the higher the entrenched culture of environmental sustainability and value-reorientation, the better the chances of reducing GBV among adolescents in the sampled population. Of these two variables, value reorientation made the largest unique contribution ($\beta = 0.384$), although environmental sustainability also made a statistically significant contribution ($\beta = 0.344$).

Table 6: Summary of Analysis of the Predictive Effects on GBV among Adolescents

Model	Std. Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
				Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tol.	VIF
1	(Constant)	6.53	.000					
	Value-reorientation	8.71	.000	0.558	0.394	0.332	.746	1.34
	Environmental sustainability	7.79	.000	0.538	0.358	0.297	.746	1.34
Regression (sum) = 49.43								
Residual (sum) = 74.25								
Total = 123.68								
R = .632; $R^2 = 0.400$; Adj. $R^2 = 0.397$; Std. Error Estimate = 0.424; $df_1 = 2$; $df_2 = 413$; F-Change = 137.4; $P = .000$								

a. Predictors: (Constant), Environmental sustainability, Value reorientation

b. Dependent Variable: GBV among adolescents

5. DISCUSSION

Environmental stress factors, particularly those related to water and land scarcity, can increase tensions within families and communities, leading to violence against women and girl children. This is because in most communities, women and girls are often responsible for collecting water for their households.

Water insecurity can lead to GBV, especially in a patriarchal society among intimate partners (Tallman et al., 2022; Cole et al., 2023). However, Agrawal et al. (2023) have suggested that focused interventions and policies to reduce the effects of climate change and environmental stressors will decrease the prevalence of GBV.

Moreover, this study has also identified social stigma as a factor responsible for the prevalence of GBV, as many victims may be reluctant to report GBV due to fear of stigmatisation. Most victims fear social shame, ostracism, and blame that they may suffer from society. This, in most cases, leads to a culture of silence that has been identified in this study also as one of the causes of GBV. Societal norms and values sometimes discourage victims from speaking out about their experiences of GBV, thus perpetuating a cycle of violence for them (Harrison & Gill, 2017).

The range of socioeconomic situations in which GBV occurs is reflected in the distribution of participants between urban and rural locations. Studies conducted by Gupta et al. (2018) and Clark et al. (2019) have demonstrated that social norms, limited educational opportunities, and poverty can all lead to increased incidences of gender-based violence in rural areas. According to this study, the main causes of GBV are the interaction of socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental factors. Competition for scarce natural resources has been identified as the primary driver of GBV, which is consistent with research showing how environmental stressors exacerbate violence. The fear of GBV-related social stigma is consistent with research showing the significant influence of societal norms and attitudes on survivors' willingness to come forward and ask for assistance (Jewkes et al., 2017). Because of the stigma associated with GBV, survivors may be discouraged from seeking help, which could contribute to a climate of impunity and silence.

Research showing the impact of social norms that prevent honest conversation and disclosure of violence is consistent with the identification of a culture of silence as a major obstacle to reporting GBV. It has been discovered that cultural elements, including traditional gender roles for women and views on family privacy, are connected to the culture of silence among GBV survivors in Osun State. This result is in line with the conclusions drawn by Ellsberg et al. (2008).

The idea that retribution is the root cause of gender-based violence (GBV) is consistent with research by Gupta et al. (2018) and Jewkes et al. (2017), which highlight the control mechanisms and power dynamics that sustain violence in relationships. Furthermore, the fear of retaliation can keep survivors in abusive relationships and hinder their capacity to report abuse to the proper

authorities or leave violent situations. This study found that among adolescents in Osun State, physical injuries were the most perceived result of GBV. Research such as that conducted by Ellsberg et al. (2008) has demonstrated that GBV can cause injuries of varying severity, ranging from mild bruising to severe trauma, which can affect the physical and mental health and well-being of survivors. From this study, promoting environmental sustainability and value re-orientation was perceived to have a positive impact on the reduction of gender-based violence (GBV) among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. Ensuring equitable and sustainable resource management within families and communities is a key strategy for reducing conflicts and violence in society. Scarcity and competition for environmental resources can exacerbate violence within families and communities, making sustainable resource management crucial for preventing GBV. The findings of Akabuiro (2022) attest to the fact that energy poverty can perpetuate gender-based violence within the community. For example, access to clean energy alternatives, such as solar power and clean cook stoves, can enhance women's safety by reducing exposure to indoor air pollution and the need to collect firewood in unsafe, hostile neighborhoods or environments. Research on the impact of economic empowerment in reducing vulnerability to gender-based violence aligns with the recognition of women's access to eco-friendly agricultural and renewable energy projects, which offer work opportunities (Gupta et al., 2018).

Women who are financially independent are more able to escape violent environments, get the help they need, and question the gender stereotypes that encourage violence. This observation aligns with the conclusions drawn by Jewkes et al. (2015). Access to healthcare, legal support, therapy, and housing can lessen the psychological, social, and physical effects of gender-based violence while promoting the healing and self-determination of survivors.

The recognition of the significance of offering assistance to GBV survivors is in line with a holistic strategy to combat violence, which includes the prevention and response tactics that research by Ellsberg et al. (2008) emphasized. The importance of community involvement in resolving violence and encouraging the changing of societal norms is shown in the construction of community-based systems for holding people and groups accountable for GBV (Jewkes et al., 2017). Involving men, boys, and other community leaders in GBV prevention initiatives helps promote a culture of respect and non-violence by encouraging a sense of collective responsibility and support for survivors. This outcome is in line with the research conducted by Clark in 2019.

Beyond what is explained by other factors in the regression model employed in this study, the two independent variables —environmental

sustainability and value reorientation —individually explain an additional 26.5% of the variance in GBV. This suggests that value reorientation and environmental sustainability each individually contribute to the prediction of GBV among teenagers in Osun State, highlighting the phenomenon's complex character (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Value reorientation and environmental sustainability were both statistically significant predictors of gender-based violence (GBV) in adolescents, but the influence of value reorientation was greater, as evidenced by its larger beta value. The importance of these predictors in understanding and addressing the prevalence of GBV is underscored by their statistical significance, which suggests that interventions focused on value reorientation may have a particularly strong impact on reducing the incidence of GBV in Osun State, Nigeria. This outcome is in line with what Hair et al. (2019) found.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlighted the prevalence, causes, consequences, and possible interventions for gender-based violence (GBV) among adolescents in Osun State, Nigeria. The girl child is highly vulnerable to gender-based violence in Osun State. In Osun State, Nigeria, social norms, power disparities, and environmental stressors have all been linked to gender-based violence. It has been discovered that GBV has an impact on young women's and girls' physical, reproductive, and mental health. In the meantime, equitable resource management and women's economic empowerment were highlighted as preventive measures, and promoting environmental sustainability and value reorientation appears as a feasible way to minimize GBV. Regression analysis highlights the necessity for comprehensive interventions by highlighting the predictive impacts of value reorientation and environmental sustainability on GBV. In Osun State, Nigeria, addressing the socioeconomic, cultural, and environmental underlying elements that impact gender-based violence (GBV) is essential to both reducing GBV and advancing gender equality among adolescents.

Environmental factors can increase gender-based violence. For example, access to resources like water and land can lead to increased competition and conflict within families, often disproportionately affecting women and girls. While the provision of sustainable energy solutions, such as clean cookstoves and solar power, can reduce the need to collect firewood, thereby improving women's health and reducing the risk of GBV that can occur during wood collection. Women's access to eco-friendly agricultural or renewable energy projects can create job opportunities that can empower women economically, reducing their

vulnerability to GBV. Moreover, climate change-induced disasters can disrupt livelihoods, displace families, and increase stress levels for women, making them vulnerable to violence. Environmental degradation can limit access to essential resources and services, which may force women and girls to travel long distances, increasing their risk of exposure to violence and exploitation.

Value reorientation can be a powerful tool for preventing GBV. It can promote gender equality and foster respect for women. It can shift societal attitudes, behaviours, and perceptions towards women and the girl child. It can create a more equitable and just society where GBV is no longer tolerated.

6.1 Recommendations

To reduce GBV prevalence and promote gender equality and social justice in Osun State, the following are recommended:

Strong political will and leadership are essential for prioritizing the prevention and response to GBV. Therefore, non-governmental organisations and religious bodies should collaborate with the Osun State Government to increase survivors' access to support services such as medical care, legal assistance, and shelter.

Community leaders should put community-based interventions into practice, such as holding people accountable for any GBV in their neighbourhood.

Gender equality and wholesome relationships should be encouraged in schools and places of worship by religious and school authorities.

To lessen the likelihood that girls and women may be the targets of abuse and violence, the Osun State Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs should give them access to employment options. School and religious leaders should promote gender equality and healthy relationships in schools and worship centres. Osun State Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs should empower girls and women economically by providing job opportunities to reduce their vulnerability to abuse and violence. Osun State Government should implement initiatives for equitable and sustainable resource management to reduce tensions and conflicts in families.

The State Ministry of Youth and Women Affairs should develop a value re-orientation programme to challenge cultural norms and the culture of silence. Further research is needed on GBV in low and middle-income countries to address specific cultural, social, and economic contexts. Moreover, there is a need for investigating the role of technology in both perpetuating and preventing GBV, including cyberbullying, online harassment, and the use of technology for victim support.

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