

Original Research Article

Prevalence of Feminine Sexual Exploitation and Allied Factors among Secondary School Students at Ambasel Woreda, South Wollo, Ethiopia

Fanta Asmare¹, Mulugeta W/Selassie², Prem Kumar³

¹Student Clinic, Institute of Technology, Wollo University, Kombolcha, Ethiopia

²Departments of Pediatrics and Child Health Nursing, College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS), Wollo University, Dessie, Ethiopia

³Departments of Comprehensive Nursing, CMHS, Wollo University, Dessie, Ethiopia

Corresponding Author: Prem Kumar

ABSTRACT

Introduction: Sexual abuse is one of the major problems of students that affect their health and security. Though Sexual abuse of female students is a problem of many developing countries including Ethiopia, its prevalence, associated factors and circumstance in which sexual abuse occurs are largely unknown including in the study area.

Objective: to assess the feminine sexual exploitation among secondary school female students and allied factors.

Methods: Institutional based cross-sectional study design conducted from January 9-May 25, 2019. A simple random sampling method used to select 321 Grade 9 up to 12 female students from the Wuchale and Marye schools. A structured self-administered questionnaire used to collect the data. The cross tabulation and percentage were used to describe the prevalence and forms of female sexual abuse in the school and binary logistic regression (bivariate and multivariate analysis) was employed with P-value <0.3.

Results: Out of 310 female students, 144(46.5%) of them were sexually abused and the rest 166 (53.5%) were not abused which means its prevalence rate was 46.5%. Female students who live Rural resident (AOR=2.247(1.425-3.543)), Close relation with male students (AOR=3.07(1.528-6.168)) and Female students' absence of gender education at school (AOR= 6.37(3.805-10.669)) were risk factors of female student sexual abuse.

Conclusion: Feminine sexual exploitation of female students is a common problem students live in rural area. Due attention is needed by schools, family and other concerned bodies and designing a program to fight against sexual abuse of female students.

Keywords: Female students, Sexual abuse, Prevalence and associated factors, Ethiopia.

INTRODUCTION

Ethiopia is one of the developing countries with multiethnic and diverse socio-cultural background where the majority (84%) of the population lives in rural areas. Most of the populations are followers of the Orthodox Christian and Muslim religions. It is a male dominated society with deep-rooted issues of gender

including defining roles of men and women. In most Ethiopian cultures, sex is something that is not discussed openly. ⁽¹⁾ According to the World Bank, in 2011 the GDP was \$30.25 billion and population 84.73 million. The proportion of children in the country is very high. In 2010, the population below the age of 18 years old was 42,384,000, being over 50% of the total population. With

respect to education, 47.3% finish primary education, 16.3% enrolled in general secondary, and 4.2% in preparatory secondary. Of the students in secondary schools, 44.8% are girls. At the tertiary level, gender differences are higher with more boys enrolled than girls. The HIV prevalence rate is, being higher in urban areas with 4.2% as compared to rural areas with 0.6%. The prevalence rate among women is higher as compared to men, with 1.9% and 1.0%, respectively. ⁽²⁾ Sexual abuse is a form of violence, which has mostly affected females from all age groups and across cultures. ⁽³⁾ Researchers do not have the same definition for sexual abuse. Sexual abuse to some people refers to the activity of having sex with someone against their wishes or without their agreement. ⁽⁴⁾ Forms of sexual abuse include asking or pressuring someone to engage in sexual activities (regardless of the outcome), indecent exposure of the genitals to a victim, displaying pornography, actual sexual contact with a person, physical contact with the person's genitals, viewing of the person's genitalia without physical contact, or using a pornography. ⁽⁵⁾ Sexual abuse, perhaps the worst form of exploiting children, ranges from simple touching to penetration and involves engaging a child in sexual act including fondling, rape and exposing a child to other sexual activities. ⁽⁶⁾ A social institution, like school, which lacks the necessary inputs that are required for the healthy execution of its activities, faces a high probability of confronting inadequacies in fulfilling the social expectation directed to it. ⁽⁷⁾ In this regard, schools are among the institutions entrusted with the responsibility of providing children with healthy environment and basic information. Schools are responsible agents to provide children with primary socialization that is essential for the healthy continuation of the social harmony and their own personal, physical, emotional, social and cognitive development. ⁽⁸⁾ Though schools play great roles for the proper socialization of students, they are affected by different internal and

external factors such as; social, economic, political, legal and spiritual ones. ⁽⁹⁾ To start with, sexual abuse is becoming a common problem affecting both boys and girls. Estimates by WHO showed that worldwide about 150 million girls and 73 million boys under the age of 18 had faced different forms of sexual abuse. ⁽¹⁰⁾ Effects of sexual abuse include guilt and self-blame, flashbacks, nightmares, insomnia, fear of things associated with the abuse (including objects, smells, places, doctor's visits, etc.), self-esteem issues, sexual dysfunction, chronic pain, addiction, self-injury, suicidal ideation, somatic complaints, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, other mental illnesses including borderline personality disorder and disorder, propensity to re-victimization in adulthood, bulimia nervosa, physical injury to the child, among other problems. Many factors may play a role in the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and youth at different levels. At the societal level, the dynamics of socialization as well as society's collective history of denial of sexual abuse and exploitation may contribute to environments in which opportunities for abuse and exploitation can occur. ⁽¹¹⁾ Therefore, this study mainly dealt with exploring the prevalence and investigating the factors associated with sexual abuse of female students in Ambasel woreda high school.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Study Design: The study design was institutional based cross-sectional study in which quantitative method employed.

Study Area and Period: The study areas was Ambasel Woreda, in south Wollo zone located at a distance of 420 km from the regional capital, Bahir Dar and 460 Km North of Addis Ababa, capital city of Ethiopia from January 9-May 25, 2019 in Ambasel Worda, Ethiopia.

Source Population: The source populations of this study were all female students at Ambasel Woreda secondary schools.

Study Population: All randomly selected female students were included in the study.

Inclusion Criteria: All female students included in the sample and complete the questionnaire based on their willingness.

Exclusion Criteria: Female students were not able to complete the questionnaire without assistance due to visual impairment and other problems.

Sampling techniques & Sample Size Determination: Simple random sampling technique used to select 321 samples are selected using single proportion formula.

Dependent Variables

- Female sexual abuse

Independent variables

- Age
- Religion
- Educational status
- Marital status
- Socioeconomic status
- Family factors
 - ✓ Broken family
 - ✓ Loss of family
- Situational factors

Physical location of the school far from the centre

Relationship between the family and the school

- Individual factors
 - ✓ Close relationships with male students
 - ✓ Close relationships with teachers
 - ✓ Living alone
 - ✓ Being sexual abuser
- School factors
 - ✓ Absence of appropriate measures taken by the school to the offenders
 - ✓ Less attention given to females
 - ✓ Inadequate/absence of gender education, counseling service

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The data collected by using structured questionnaire. Before the actual data collection, the questionnaire pre-tested on 5% (16 Students) in Haik secondary schools in Tehulederie Woreda near Ambasel Woreda. Analysis conducted by

using descriptive and inferential statistics. Bivariate and multivariate analysis with 95% confidence interval. Then, to control the effect of confounding factors, variables which had P-value <0.3 in bivariate analysis were entered in to multivariate analysis in order to identify adjusted significant associated independent variables of female sexual abuse. Odd ratio (OR) and 95% confidence interval (CI) for each variable of interest P-values were calculated by likelihood ratio test for the significance of the beta coefficients; $P \leq 0.05$ was considered significant for all the independent variables in the model.

Ethical Consideration

The ethical clearance obtained from Wollo University College of health science Ethical Review Board. Formal permission is obtained from respective Ambasel Woreda Administration, and other concerned bodies. Health and Education offices and then letter of permission was secured to communicate with relevant bodies in schools. A written consent is obtained from the student's parent for their age less than eighteen, the consent form sent to the students.

RESULTS

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table:-1.Socio-demographic characteristics of female students at Ambasel Woreda secondary school in 2019.

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age		
≤ 18years	274	88.4
>18 years	36	11.6
Educational status(Grade)		
Grade 9	119	38.4
Grade 10	103	33.2
Grade 11	48	15.5
Grade 12	40	12.9
Marital status		
Married	77	24.8
Single	224	72.3
Others	9	2.9
Religion		
Orthodox	258	83.2
Muslim	46	14.8
Others	6	2.0
Residence		
Urban	151	48.7
Rural	159	51.3
Family Monthly income		
≤ 2000ETB	190	61.3
2001ETB-4000ETB	105	33.9
>4000 ETB	15	4.8

Three hundred twenty one students were involved with three hundred ten completed questionnaires that were 96.6% response rate. Out of the total 310 female students, 274 were less than or equal to 18 years of old. Concerning to residence 151 and 159 were from urban and rural areas respectively. In terms of religion, 258 were Orthodox Christian, 46 were Muslim and 6 were Protestant. From the total respondents 77 of them were married and 224 were single.

Prevalence of feminine sexual exploitation

The result shows female respondents who had experienced at least one of the five major forms of sexual abuses were 144(46.5%). The prevalence of the problem in terms of their age was explained as: out

of abused 144(46.45%) female students, 125 (86.8%) were less than or equal to 18 years old. Based on their educational status, out of 144 (46.45%) abused female students, 62(43.1%) were from grade nine, 41(28.5%) from grade ten, 21 (14.6%) from grade eleven, 20(13.9%) were from grade twelve.

Forms of feminine sexual exploitation

The forms of sexual abuse identified in the study area includes complete sexual intercourse, sexual kissing, touching genital organs, showing sex films, photos and pictures verbal sexual insult. The result identified that the most common abusers were male students and community members.

Table:-2. Forms of feminine sexual exploitation at Ambasel Woreda Secondary School in 2019.

Forms of sexual exploitation	By Teachers		By Male students		By Family members		By Community members	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Sexual kissing	6	1.9	32	10.3	2	1.0	30	9.7
Complete sexual intercourse	12	3.9	9	2.9	2	1.0	12	3.9
Touching genital organs	3	1.0	33	10.6	3	1.0	29	9.4
Showing sex films	13	4.2	7	2.3	4	1.3	14	4.5
Verbal sexual insult	42	13.5	75	24.2	6	1.9	68	21.9
Not abused	239	77.1	163	52.6	264	85	172	55.5
Total	310	100	310	100	310	100	310	100

Associated Factors for Feminine Students Sexual exploitation

The independent variables and dependent variable (sexual abuse) examined through the binary logistic regression model that abused or not. Independent variables which had a P- value <0.3 in bivariate analysis inter in to multivariate analysis the model revealed the following results. Female students live in rural areas were more sexually abuse than those who live in urban areas but, other socio demographic factors were not statistically significant. Female students close relation to male students, Female student departure from family, absence of gender education at schools, physical location of the school far from the Centre, and no punishment for abusers at community level increase the risk of sexual abuse among high school female students in the study area. However, other

independent variables were not statistically significant to female student sexual abuse.

Table:-3. Socio-demographic factors associated with feminine Sexual exploitation

Variables	Sexual abuse		AOR(95%CI)
	Yes	No	
Age			
≤18 years	125	149	1.332(0.664-2.673)
>18 years	19	17	1
Grade			
G-9	64	55	1
G-10	43	60	0.919(0.449-1.882)
G-11	23	25	1.525(0.725-3.1053)
G-12	14	26	1.286(0.554-2.985)
Family Income			
≤2000ETB	80	110	1
2001ETB-4000ETB	55	50	0.661(0.409-1.068)
>4000 ETB	9	06	0.485(0.166-1.417)
Marital status			
Married	29	48	0.828(0.192-3.566)
Single	112	112	0.500(0.22-2.049)
Others	3	6	1
Residence			
Urban	58	100	1
Rural	86	66	2.247(1.425-3.543)*

Table:-4. Factors associated with feminine Sexual exploitation at Ambasel Woreda Secondary School in 2019.

Variables	Sexual abuse		AOR(95%CI)
	Yes	No	
Individual factors			
Close r/p with male students	114	153	3.070(1.528-6.168)*
Close r/p with teachers	23	39	1.592(0.888-2.853)
Family factors			
No Discussion about sexual issue	57	91	0.540(0.343-0.849)
Loss of Mother/Father	10	9	1.723(0.931-3.190)
Departure from family	98	148	4.079(2.178-7.639)*
School factors			
Fear of academic failure	85	113	1.434(0.854-2.407)
Fear of teachers	17	23	1.126(0.534-2.374)
Absence of gender education/counseling	56	132	6.371(3.805-10.669)*
inadequate measures taken to abusers in the school	109	138	1.903(1.028-3.525)
Situational factors			
Physical location of the school far from the centre	82	136	3.356 (1.986-5.671)*
Loose r/p b/n the school & family	95	116	1.019 (0.612-1.695)
Presence of student maladaptive behavior	18	26	0.66 (0.383-1.137)
Community factor			
Thinking of male greater than female	50	61	1.092(0.685-1.741)
No punishment for abusers	53	96	6.409 (3.566-9.123)*
*Indicates that factors associated with female sexual abuse			

DISCUSSION

The prevalence of feminine Sexual exploitation at Ambasel Woreda secondary school was 46.5%. That means out of 310 female students 144(46.5%) were abused in at least one form of sexual abuse by either of community members, family members, male students and teachers. This is comparable with a study conducted in Gondar town by Kelemu Fenta in 2013 showed that the prevalence of sexual abuse among female high school students was 49.6 %. (15) Another study conducted in Malawi among high schools female students between ages 14-21 showed that the problem is prevalent (42.2%). (14) This might be from differences in socio-cultural backgrounds of the study area and Malawi female high schools students' age only between 14-21. Similar study conducted in Swaziland high schools in 2009 revealed that the problem was prevalent (33.2%) at the age of 18 and below. (12) This difference might be in this study includes both under and above 18 years old but in Swaziland it was under 18 only. Other study conducted in U.S southeast Michigan high schools revealed that 53% of female students are sexually abused. (13) This might be due to differences in socio-cultural backgrounds of the study area and the number of schools taken was greater than two in U.S southeast

Michigan high schools. Similar study conducted in Sweden high schools in which 49% girls were abused. (6) This is almost comparable to this study.

Forms of sexual abuse in this study includes complete sexual intercourse, sexual kissing, touching genital organs, showing sex films, and verbal sexual insult. Another study conducted in Malawi high schools of age between 14-21years (14) showed that sexual touch, unwanted sex, sexual comments are a common form that is consistent with this study. Similar study conducted in Gondar town high schools, (15) the result revealed the same forms of sexual abuse but it does not assess the prevalence in terms of the types of participant rather it showed the total prevalence. The major factors that were responsible for female students' sexual abuse examined based on binary logistic regression, which used to explain and predict the relation between dependent variable (status of sexual abuse) and independent variables. Among these Factors associated with sexual abuse; female students live in rural resident were 2.5 times more abuse than those who live in urban residents. This is relatively lower than a finding from study done in Bahir Dar town among private college female students. (16) This difference due to that in Bahir Dar town high number of study participants and

more than two private colleges included in the study. The second factor was individual factor; among these factors close relation with male student 1.9 times more sexual abuse than those who said that close relation with male students was not one of the factors, which contribute for their sexual abuse. This is relatively lower than a finding from study done in Gonder town among high school female students. This could be due to a study in Gonder town the factor includes all relationships but in this study used only relationship to male students. The third factor was family factor; among these factors, female students' departure from family 4.0 times sexually abused as compared to those who said that departure from family was not one of the factors, which contribute for their sexual abuse. This finding was lower as compared to a study conducted in Harar town, ⁽¹⁷⁾ this could be due to they used quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The fourth factor was school factors; among this absence of gender education at school 6.0 times more sexually abused as compared to those who said that absence of gender education was not one of the factors, which contribute for their sexual abuse. This finding is higher than other studies conducted in Gonder town. ⁽¹⁵⁾ This difference may be due to School authorities in this study did not invite gender related organizations in order to teach students about sexual abuse and gender related issues and there was no gender clubs at school. However, in Gonder Town there was gender clubs but not strength. The fifth factor was situational factor; that Physical location of the school far from the centre 3.4 times more likely to experience sexual abuse than those who not Physical location of the school far from the centre. The last factor was community factor; among these factors, no punishment for abusers at a community level 6.4 times more sexually abused than those who said that this factor was not contribute factor for their sexual abuse.

CONCLUSION

Among the study participant, half of feminine Sexual exploitation this indicated that sexual abuse is still a common problem among high school female students in the study area. The students were faced Different forms of feminine Sexual exploitation, which were complete sexual intercourse, Sexual kissing, touching genital organs, Verbal sexual insult and Showing films, photos and pictures.

Recommendations

Schools and other concerned institutions can create or strengthen available structural units (Establish gender clubs, training and education on the issue) that could have a significant input in securing the rights of the students. Further studies in a larger scale including male students can conducted for better understanding of the contributing factors for sexual abuse.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We would like to acknowledge Wollo University College of Medicine and Health Sciences, for giving us this opportunity to conduct this research. Our appreciation and special gratitude goes to Dr Eshetu Girma and Sr. Bezawit Eyob for their encouragement and provision of constructive comments and guidance throughout the thesis result. We also thank to study participants and school authority for their cooperation and hospitality.

REFERENCES

1. Gobena Daniel. Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Addis Ababa High Schools, Aworking Paper Addis Ababa –Ethiopia (1998).; 2-3: 48-50.
2. M.L.J. (Marielle) Le Mat. Addressing Sexual Violence in Schools Perspectives from Teachers and Students in a Secondary School in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. (2013).
3. Paula Reavey, Sam Warner: New feminist stories of child sexual abuse, sexual scripts and dangerous dialogues Routledge (2003), pp. 2 (or more).
4. Getnet Tadele & Desta Adoye. The Situation of Sexual Abuse and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Girl Children in Addis Ababa, Research paper, Addis Ababa- Ethiopia. (2008).

5. UNICEF. Child Sex Abuse and Commercial and sexual Exploitation of Children in the Pacific; A regional Report. (2006, 2008).
6. Eva Witkowska and Ewa Menckel. Perceptions of sexual harassment in Swedish high schools: experiences and school environment problems.
7. Speizer IS et al. Dimensions of child sexual abuse before age 15 in three Central American countries: Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, (2008); 32(4):455–62.
8. Save The Children Denmark & Ethiopian Ministry of Education. Study on violence against schoolchildren.
9. Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children in BahirDar Town; Base Line Survey, BahirDar- Ethiopia, (2005): 2-5, 62, and 70.
10. Dargie.T. The Problem of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation in Ethiopia; Policy Review for Instrument to Social Policy Analysis Addis Ababa- Ethiopia. (2008).
11. MOLSA. National Action Plan on Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (2005); Addis Ababa- Ethiopia.
12. Andrews G et al. Child sexual abuse. In: Ezzati M, et al, eds. Comparative quantification of health risks global and regional burden of disease attributable to selected major risk factors (2004). Geneva, World Health Organization.
13. Columbia RH, Kadzamira E, Moleni C. *The Safe Schools Program: student and teacher baseline report on school-related gender-based violence in Machinga District, Malawi*. Washington, DC, United States Agency for International Development (USAID). 2007.
14. R Dzimadzi a H Kloppernd. Knowledge of sexual abuse amongst female students in Malawi. (2010).
15. Kelemu Fenta Gebeyehu. The Prevalence and Determinant Factors of Child Sexual Abuse of Female students in Gondar Town High Schools. (2012).
16. Bizuayhu Shimekaw, Berihun Megabiaw and Zelalem Alamrew. Prevalence and associated factors of sexual violence among private college female students in BahirDar city, North Western Ethiopia. *Ethiopian medical journal*.2013; Vol.5, No.6:12.
17. Jote Markos Cafo, Agumassie Semahegn Demisie, Balcha Berhanu Abera. Assessment of sexual violence and associated factors among high school students in Harari Regional State, Harar Town, Eastern Ethiopia. *Science publishing group*. September 30, 2014; Vol. 2, No. 5, 2014:96.

How to cite this article: Asmare F, W/Selassie M, Kumar P. Prevalence of feminine sexual exploitation and allied factors among secondary school students at Ambasel Woreda, South Wollo, Ethiopia. *International Journal of Research and Review*. 2019; 6(12):383-389.
