

## **EXTENDED ABSTRACT**

### **Title:**

**Intrafamilial and Same-sex Sexual Abuse in Sagamu, Nigeria : A Silent Noise**

Author: Odunayo Ayoola

Affiliations: Olabisi Onabanjo University

**Keywords: Sexual violence, Female survivors, same-sex assault, intrafamilial abuse, coping mechanisms.**

### **INTRODUCTION:**

Sexual violence is a prevalent phenomenon in Nigerian society, transcending gender and sexual orientation boundaries. Approximately 6% of women worldwide, including those within sub-Saharan Africa, have experienced non-partner sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. (WHO, 2021). These survivors face unique challenges, including same-sex assault and intrafamilial abuse. The impact of same-sex assault on survivors is often compounded by social stigma, discrimination, and a lack of support systems. Intrafamilial abuse, on the other hand, involves sexual violence perpetrated by family members, including parents, siblings, and other relatives. The psychological and emotional toll of intrafamilial abuse can be particularly devastating, as survivors must navigate complex dynamics within their own family structures while also grappling with the trauma of their experiences. Understanding the long-term effects of sexual violence on survivors is crucial for providing appropriate solutions. This qualitative inquiry aims to delve into the enduring experiences of sexual violence survivors in Sagamu, Ogun State, Nigeria, with a specific focus on incidents involving same-sex assaults and intrafamilial abuse.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

This study endeavors to meticulously examine the enduring impacts on female survivors of sexual violence in Sagamu, Nigeria, with a nuanced exploration of instances involving same-sex individuals and relatives. It seeks to elucidate various dimensions, including forms of sexual harassment, psychological sequelae, coping strategies, and factors influencing survivors' decision to remain silent.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY:**

By delving into same-sex assaults and intrafamilial abuse, this study holds significant importance in shedding light on the often overlooked experiences of sexual violence survivors in Sagamu, Ogun State, Nigeria. The findings serve as a cornerstone for the development of tailored interventions and support services essential for addressing survivors' unique needs within this socio-cultural context. Additionally, the integration of theoretical frameworks such as the ecological-transactional model and Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory adds depth to the analysis, providing a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of sexual violence and its implications for survivors' well-being.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

In-depth interviews were rigorously conducted with 10 female survivors aged 18 to 24 from Olabisi Onabanjo University. Thematic analysis techniques, rooted in a constructivist paradigm, were systematically applied to discern recurring themes in survivors' narratives and coping strategies.

## **RESULTS:**

The findings elucidate that 4 out of 10 of the survivors of same-sex sexual violence grappled with profound feelings of shame and confusion, exacerbated by pervasive societal stigma and a dearth of empathetic support networks. Furthermore, 6 resorted to avoidance behaviors as a coping mechanism, while 2 sought solace through expressive means such as journaling and participation in survivor support groups. Conversely, 8 of the survivors of intrafamilial abuse encountered familial disbelief and denial, compounded by societal stigmatization. Despite these adversities, survivors resiliently employed coping strategies such as narrative reconstruction and seeking support through community-based survivor groups.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The pervasive societal stigma and familial disbelief significantly exacerbate survivors' psychological distress, highlighting the imperative for targeted interventions and robust support services. Culturally sensitive community-based interventions emerge as pivotal in facilitating survivors' healing journey and fostering a sense of empowerment and collective resilience.

## **CONCLUSION:**

This study underscores the exigency for contextually relevant interventions and collaborative efforts to mitigate the impact of sexual violence and provide comprehensive support to survivors in Sagamu, Nigeria, rooted in an ecological-transactional framework.

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