



Characterization of sexual violence victimization: an analysis of clinical records from selected health units in Maputo City, Mozambique

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INTRODUCTION

- Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a significant public health problem and human rights violation with a negative impact on Mozambique's health, education, and economy (INE,2013; MOH, 2020).
- The evaluation focused on sexual violence (SV) since has severe, negative health consequences, including HIV and psychological.
- Existing data indicates women are the primary survivors.
- Other survivor details, such as the most affected age group, marital status as well as relation to perpetrators, are not well detailed.

OBJECTIVE

- To characterize SV victimization and perpetrators in selected health units in Maputo City, Mozambique.

METHODS

- We conducted a descriptive study based on the secondary data analysis from all reported survivors of sexual violence assisted in 13 Maputo City health facilities (HFs), from January 1 to December 31, 2021.
- Study variables included: age, sex, education, occupation, marital status, site of occurrence, number of perpetrators, and their relationship with the survivors.
- We used EpiInfo version 7.2.5.0 to conduct descriptive analysis to characterize victimization and perpetrators.



CONCLUSIONS

- **More than half of cases the victims of sexual violence were minors of both sexes.**
- **Most were victimized in supposedly safe places by people they knew.**

RECOMMENDATION

- Increased community education on protecting the safety of minors and reporting of SV could play a key role in reducing the harmful consequences of SV at the social and school levels, contributing to their future.

INE. Moçambique: Inquérito Demográfico e de Saúde 2011. Maputo, Moçambique; 2013.

MISAU. Pacote de Formação sobre o Atendimento Integrado às Vítimas de Violência Baseada no Género. Maputo;2020.

World Health Organization. Violence Against Women: Key Facts. Geneva; 2021.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- We reviewed 442 clinical records of SV survivors, of whom **96% (424/442) were female with 14 years median age** (IQR: 10 – 20 years) and 72% [318/442] were single.
- **24% (106/442) were under ten years of age.**
- 64% (281/442) were students, of whom 70% (196/281) were in secondary school.
- A quarter of the records did not contain information on the survivors' education, occupation, and marital status.
- 77% (342/442) of survivors were victimized by one perpetrator, 6% (26/442) by more than two perpetrators, and the remaining 17% were undocumented.
- More than half (53%; 234/442) of the survivors knew their perpetrator, among which 71% (167/234) included documentation of the relationship details. Of these, 58% (97/167) had a close relationship (defined by familiarity and degree of intimacy) with the survivor, and 34% (33/97) were intimate partners. About 45% (198/442) of the events occurred in the survivors' homes.
- Studies on GBV report that violence against women and children is worsened by the fact that it is deeply rooted in social and cultural structures as well as harmful norms and values that govern the societies in which it occurs- such as silence and denial (WHO, 2021).
- As described in the findings of this evaluation, more than half of the perpetrators were individuals known by the survivors.
- Unfortunately, a considerable number of SV cases are not reported to the authorities for due prosecution and accountability in the name of family protection or exchange for economic remuneration.