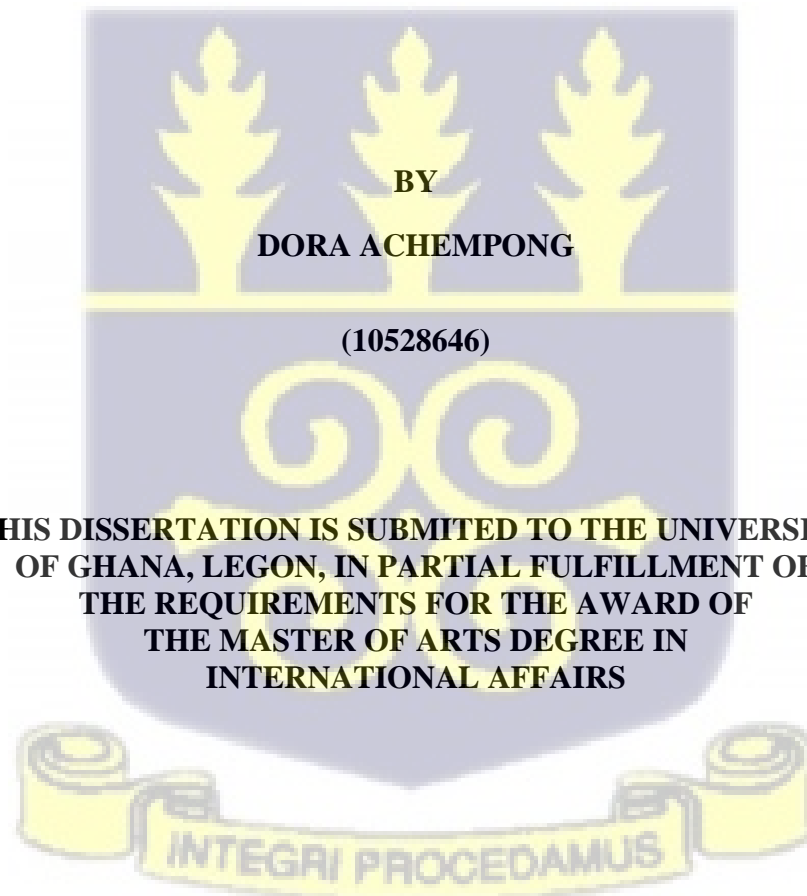


**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA**

**IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 16.1: ANALYSIS OF GHANA'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE**



**LEGON**

**OCTOBER, 2022**

DECLARATION

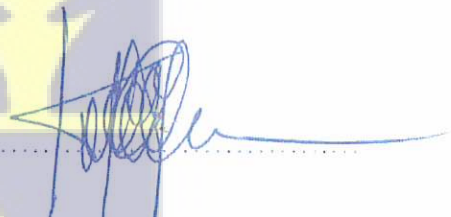
I, Dora Achempong, hereby declare that this dissertation is the final product of my own studies under the supervision of Dr. Frederick Boamah of the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), University of Ghana, towards the award of a Master of Arts (MA) degree in International Affairs. To the best of my knowledge, this dissertation is an original research work with the exception of references to other works which I have duly recognized. I also declare that this dissertation has not been submitted either in part or in whole for any degree elsewhere.



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DATE: 19TH OCTOBER, 2022



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DATE: 19TH OCTOBER, 2022



**DEDICATION**

To Theresa Bioh, you will forever be in my heart.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

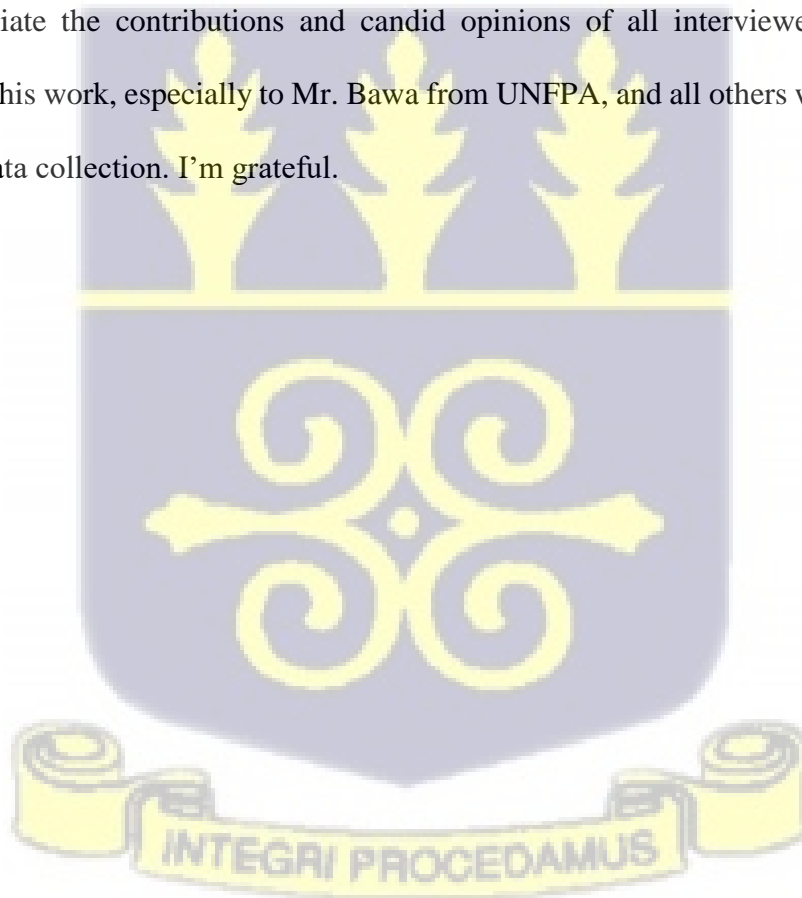
Foremost, I am grateful to God for His providence and mercies which are new every morning.

My sincerest appreciation goes to Dr. Fredrick Boamah for his support, guidance and consistent feedback toward this research. His consistency is the reason why I could finish this work.

I am also grateful to my family for their unending care and outstanding support through this journey. Especially to Mr. Acheampong, my dad, your assurances and daily prayers kept me afloat.

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Lastly, I appreciate the contributions and candid opinions of all interviewees who gave me information for this work, especially to Mr. Bawa from UNFPA, and all others who made time for me during my data collection. I'm grateful.



## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACHPR	-	African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights
ANPPCAN	-	The African Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect
AWD	-	Adults with Disabilities
CDC	-	Centre for Disease Control and Prevention
CEDAW	-	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CHRAJ	-	Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice
CID	-	Criminal Investigations Department
CSEC	-	Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children
CWD	-	Children with Disabilities
DOVVSU	-	Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit
ECOSOC	-	United Nations Economic and Social Council
FST	-	Feminist Security Theory
GA	-	General Assembly
GMA	-	Ghana Medical Association
GoG	-	Government of Ghana
GSGDA	-	Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda
GSS	-	Ghana Statistical Service
IDS	-	Institute of Development Studies
IEA	-	Institute of Economic Affairs
IGOs	-	Intergovernmental Organizations

ILO	-	International Labor Organization
IPV	-	Intimate Partner Violence
IPSV	-	Intimate Partner Sexual Violence
IR	-	International Relations
MDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
MGCSP	-	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
MWD	-	Men with Disabilities
NDPC	-	National Development Planning Commission
NGOs	-	Nongovernmental Organizations
NGP	-	National Gender Policy
NPA	-	National Plan of Action
NPV	-	Non-intimate Partner Violence
PTSD	-	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SCR	-	Security Council Resolution
SDGs	-	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	-	Sexual and Gender-based Violence
UDHR	-	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	-	United Nations
UNCRC	-	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	-	United Nations Population Fund
UNGA	-	United Nations General Assembly
UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

- UNICEF - United Nations Children Emergency
- UNODC - United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes
- WHO - World Health Organization
- WWD - Women with Disabilities



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## ABSTRACT

Sexual violence has been classified as a public health problem which happens in various forms and context such as rape, unwanted sexual advances, sexual abuse of vulnerable people, forced marriage or cohabitation, among others. Despite numerous existing instruments, sexual violence still persists, necessitating a more comprehensive guide in 2015 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Target 16.1 of the SDGs specifically seeks to reduce all forms of violence and its related deaths in the world. To achieve this target, some states have designed specific instruments and programmes aimed at reducing sexual violence by 2030, and these frameworks have been tailored into their national policies. To investigate the specific interventions being implemented by Ghana after the SDGs and the progress made so far, this study was conducted using qualitative research methodology. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with selected persons from key institutions such as DOVVSU, CHRAJ, UNFPA, UNICEF and Ark Foundation, as well as with victims of sexual violence. Findings show that before 2015, Ghana has been signatory to seventeen existing international instruments that prohibits sexual violence and has therefore translated some of these legal instruments into national policies and created institutions to spearhead their implementation. After the SDGs were adopted, more instruments and policies have been implemented in the short and medium term to further reduce sexual violence by 2030. The study reveals that recent legislations and commitments towards reducing sexual violence by 2030 are more pronounced than before as more resources have been committed towards this course especially by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Despite the various efforts, the study identified that new initiatives and policies spearheaded by government are not as progressive as anticipated due to inadequate financial commitments. Meanwhile, initiatives and programs steered by IGOs and NGOs are progressive due to adequate resource allocations and financial commitments. The study concludes that commendable strides have been made from 2015 to 2021 towards reducing sexual violence in Ghana through existing institutions, policies and legal frameworks, but more could be achieved. The study therefore recommends that government should make adequate financial commitment towards gender-related issues, must cut unnecessary bureaucratic processes that impede contributions of development partners and should revise some existing instruments to meet current standards.





## CHAPTER ONE

### RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 1.0 Introduction

Sexual violence is a global phenomenon that has been with society for ages and happens everywhere in the world, but incidences are more frequent in some parts than others. Sexual violence has been classified as public health problem (Ellsberg et al, 2015; Leseke et al, 2005) which happens in various forms and context such as “rape within marriage or dating relationships, rape by strangers, systematic rape during armed conflict, unwanted sexual advances or sexual harassment including demanding sex in return for favors, sexual abuse of mentally or physically disabled people, sexual abuse of children, forced marriage or cohabitation including the marriage of children, denial of the right to use contraception or to adopt other measures to protect against sexually transmitted diseases, forced abortion, violent acts against the sexual integrity of women including female genital mutilation and obligatory inspections for virginity, forced prostitution and trafficking of people for the purpose of sexual exploitation” (World Health Organization (WHO) 2002). Various attempts have been made to deal with sexual violence through numerous resolutions and policies by international organizations, states and stakeholders.

As a result, the United Nations (UN) through the Security Council, the General Assembly (GA) and various UN agencies have made considerable number of declarations and resolutions against all forms of sexual violence. The Security Council Resolution SCR 1325 (2000), SCR 2467 (2007), SCR 1820 (2008), SCR 1888 and 1889 (2009), SCR 1960 (2010), SCR 2106 and 2122 (2013), and 2242 (2015) seek to eliminate all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse (UNSCR, 2019). The GA on the other hand also made resolutions to intensify efforts towards the elimination of all forms of

violence against women which include sexual violence, from the year 2000 to 2016. In February 2007 during the sixty-second session of the GA, resolution (61/143) was adopted, which was comprehensive and focused on “eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations.” (UN, 2008). Some UN agencies like United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) have united efforts to reduce sexual violence in all settings and places (UNSCR, 2019). Despite all of the above, sexual violence still persists, necessitating the provision of a more comprehensive guide in 2015 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Therefore, the SDGs as part of the global agenda setting for development was implemented by the UN in 2015 to achieve 17 goals of development. The SDGs replaced the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after 2015 and has been termed as the “blueprint to a better world”; of which all members of the UN have subscribed to share development goals to achieve “increase peace and prosperity for all people and the planet, now and into the future” (UN, 2015). The agenda of the SDG is to tackle a range of issues, not limited to people only, but to the planet and animal life as well. The seventeen (17) goals are further divided into one hundred and sixty-nine targets (169) and two hundred and thirty (230) indicators to measure the entire framework.

Goal 16 of the SDGs seeks to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice and build effective and accountable institutions at all levels. Its implementation will prevent threats of international homicide, violence against children, human trafficking and sexual violence, which are important to promote peaceful and inclusive societies

for sustainable development.” (UNDP; 2016, 2019). Goal 16 of the SDGs seeks to reduce the various multifaceted problems of the world which include sexual violence of all forms and types.

Target 16.1 specifically seeks to reduce all forms of violence and its related deaths everywhere.

According to UNDP (2019), one of the most common type of violence, disaggregated by sex, age or location is sexual violence. Amoakohene (2005) explains that sexual violence affect both males and females but it is mostly instigated by males against females. Amoakohene further asserts that violence against men do not equate to that against women in terms of frequency, trauma, consequences, effects and severity.

Sexual violence is defined as “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.” (WHO, 2002). WHO further explains that sexual violence may take the form of rape within marriage or dating, unwanted sexual harassment or sexual advances, sex in return for favor, sexual abuse by children, and rape by strangers, family members, familiar people or gang rape.

According to WHO World Report on violence (2019), almost one out of four (1/4) women have experienced some form of sexual violence by an intimate partner, one out of three (1/3) adolescent girls “report their first sexual experience as being forced, and women between the ages of fifteen to twenty-four (15 -24) years would have experienced some form of sexual violence from their intimate partners by the time they reach their mid-twenties.” The report further explains that sexual violence against men is less talked about and under researched for reasons such as “myth and prejudice surrounding male sexuality.” Nevertheless, boys and men experience sexual violence

just like girls and women. Five to ten percent (5-10%) of men have ever experienced sexual violence during their childhood (WHO, 2002).

Globally, the most prevalent form of sexual violence is Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) which is perpetuated by intimate partners and it affects around six hundred and forty-one (641) million women (Centre for Injury prevention and Control, 2021). This is not to say that IPV is perpetuated against women only but they are mostly the victims as compared to men.

In Africa and some parts of the developing world, acts of sexual violence predominantly remain unreported, under-researched and less talked about as compared to other regions of the world. Meanwhile, The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women (2003) which was adopted sets to ensure that women especially are protected against sexual violence as started in (Article 3 (4); Article 4; Article 5; Article 6; Article 11 (3); Article 22 (b); Article 23 (b)). Other protocols such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights also guarantee the protection of children, adolescents and women against sexual abuse and exploitation. Despite the availability of these legal instruments, sexual violence is still prevalent on the continent.

Furthermore, sexual violence by an intimate partner is as high as 36% (McCloskey, 2016). Comparative studies made by WHO in three African countries; Namibia, Tanzania and Ethiopia revealed that about 16-59% of women from these three countries have ever experienced IPV. Data from South Africa, Nigeria, Kenya and Mozambique resonate with existing data that sexual violence is relatively higher in Africa due to reasons such as sex inequalities, male sexual entitlement and impunity for rape. (WHO, 2005; Jewkes et al 2002; Igreja, 2006). Statistics about sexual violence experiences of men are under-reported (Kumar, 2012), but the lowest recorded

among developing countries is “3.6% in Namibia, 14.6% in Tanzania and 20% in Peru” (WHO, 2020).

Comparatively, the situation is not any different in Ghana. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA, 2019) twenty-seven (27%) percent of women in Ghana have ever been sexually assaulted, one-third (1/3rd) of women in Ghana have been fondled against their will, one out of five (1/5th) have had sex against their will and seven percent (7%) of women have been forced to touch the genitals of men against their will. The figures are estimated to be slightly higher due to the fact that sexual violence in intimate relationships, especially marriages are not reported and also adolescent girls do not open up about their experiences of sexual abuse. Sexual violence against men in Ghana are predominantly sexual comments, followed by unwanted body touches and lastly forced sex, and statistics are 12.1%, 10.3%, and 6.9% respectively (IDS et al, 2016).

Sexual violence has tremendous impact on the physical and mental health of its victims (Kumar, 2012; Cantalupo et al, 2006), therefore, there was the need for the development of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) and more specifically target 16.1 by the United Nations (UN).

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Sexual violence is a multifaceted problem that affects people of all ages and classes, and different geographical regions have different policy response and measures to deal with this problem. Due to the impact of sexual violence on victims, it has gained global and regional attention, and has found expression in a number of international instruments and policies. As a result, a call for action to end this crime has brought together various stakeholders such as States, Intergovernmental

Organizations and Nongovernmental Organizations, who are adopting various dynamic measures and strategies to ensure that sexual violence is reduced drastically by 2030.

In response to the call, some states have designed specific instruments and programmes aimed at reducing sexual violence by 2030, and these frameworks have been tailored into national policies (UN Women, 2020). Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) as international partners are contributing their quota towards this goal as well as Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs).

Globally, more policies have been adopted to meet the framework and targets of SDG 16.1. Particularly in the past two years, the global pandemic which restricted movement and brought social isolation led to increased rate of sexual violence in many countries, as calls to helplines increased five-fold in some countries (UN Women, 2020). In response to that, fifty-two (52) countries as of September 2020 have integrated prevention, help and response plans into their COVID-19 recovery plans, and one hundred and twenty-one (121) countries have improved their services for victims of sexual violence (UNDP, 2020). Countries like “Bulgaria, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Lithuania, Paraguay and Peru have introduced specific laws and policy frameworks addressing violence against women and girls which include sexual violence in the context of COVID-19”; these countries have instituted stronger institutional coordination to ensure that victims and survivors recover if possible (UNGA, 2020).

Also, in some parts of Africa, shelters and temporary homes have been provided by governments and women support groups in some countries to shelter victims from their perpetrators. Both government and NGOs have partnered to eliminate all forms of sexual violence in some African countries. A report from the UNGA (2020) shows that countries like Senegal, Democratic

Republic of Congo, Morocco and South Africa have launched campaigns against sexual violence. Messages against sexual violence are delivered through traditional and print media and economic support are provided for vulnerable people. Women in the informal sector as well as young girls and women affected by HIV/AIDS are supported in their various communities.

In Ghana, notwithstanding the plethora of research that exists to look at the efforts to deal with sexual violence before the SDGs, research focusing on new and innovative approaches adopted by government and various development partners to deal with sexual violence in this SDGs era is scanty. Current research dealing with SDG 16.1 has focused on the perception of survivors (Kaburi, 2018), media coverage of violence against women (Owusu-Addo et al, 2018), and sexual violence as a transnational issue (Nyahuma, 2015). But it is important to investigate and examine new laws, policies, programs and institutions that are being implemented to deal with the issues of sexual violence. This research therefore looks at the efforts of government, IGOs, and NGOs in reducing sexual violence to achieve SDG16.1 in Ghana.

## 1.2 Research Questions

- a. What policies, institutions and instruments existed before the implementation of SDG 16.1 in Ghana to deal with sexual violence?
- b. What new policies, institutions and instruments have been implemented in Ghana to reduce sexual violence after signing the SDGs?
- c. What has been the efforts and inputs of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to achieve SDG 16.1 in Ghana?

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

- a. To investigate policies, institutions and instruments that existed before the implementation of SDG 16.1 in Ghana to deal with sexual violence.
- b. To examine new policies, institutions and instruments that have been implemented in Ghana to reduce sexual violence after signing the SDGs.
- c. To assess the contributions of intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to achieve SDG 16.1 in Ghana.

### **1.4 Rationale**

After signing the SDGs, various states have made commitments to reducing sexual violence in their countries. Therefore, it is imperative to investigate the various efforts made by Ghana to reduce sexual and related violence since research around this area is scanty. This study seeks to identify various approaches adopted by Ghana to curb sexual violence before and after the implementation of SDG 16.1. The findings of the study will eventually determine if Ghana, as a signatory to the SDGs, is on the right path to achieve SDG 16.1 or not. It also highlights the contributions of IGOs and NGOs toward reducing sexual violence in Ghana.

### **1.5 Scope of the Study**

This study examine policies, institutions and instruments aimed at reducing sexual violence in Ghana from 2000 to 2021. This period is examined in two fold; from the MDGs era (2000 -2015) and the SDGs era (2015 to 2021). This presents a clearer picture on the systematic progress made over the years towards reducing sexual violence in Ghana. In literature, there are no comprehensive studies that examine the continuous efforts made by Ghana and international organizations to

achieve SDG 16.1 through policies, institutions and legal instruments. Therefore, this study presents the progressive efforts towards meeting the target.

## 1.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework that will guide this study is Feminist Security Theory (FST). FST emanates from feminist approaches to security studies, which is a subfield of security studies as an academic discipline (Enloe, 2004). FST originates from liberal, empiricist, modified standpoints, and perspectives that emerged from conversational debates, cross-ideology and trans-epistemology among several feminists (Blanchard, 2003).

FST is a subset of feminist International Relations (IR), which began in the late 1980s and early 1990s, when Cynthia Enloe asked the question “where are the women?” This opened way for feminist contributions to IR, and as the scholarship continued to evolve and develop, so did different and diverse feminist contributions and approaches to security studies (Williams, 2017).

Feminist approaches adopt gender lenses to contribute to international security. Gender as defined by feminists transcend any distinction made between men and women, whether visible or not, and variances attributed to those perceived as men and women (Sjoberg, 2018). Sjoberg further explains that its definition includes traits and characteristics aligned with people (whether masculine or feminine) and how they function in “social or political life” at various levels and structures. Zalewski (1995) clarifies that feminism is centered on gender (men and women) and not just women.

FS theorists argue that whether normative or empirical, “the international system is gender-hierarchical,” which is wrong in the first place and also “gives inaccurate and incomplete explanations” to life. They further argue that gender regardless of being “biological sex, social

conditioning or discursive signification has the power to influence people's position in the world such that people, things, and institutions associated with femininities are seen, and treated differently than people, things, and institutions associated with masculinities" (Peterson, 2010). FS theorists also believe that asymmetric power relations between men and women often lead to gender inequality mostly against women which has the possibility of leading to violence against women (Steans, 1998). For the fact that masculinity is tied with perceptions such as strength, power and dominion often leads to violence against women because femininity is linked with weakness and vulnerability, which are all social constructs.

FS theorists further argue that sexual violence is a threat to the security of everyone in times of war or in peace, therefore both genders should be involved in building consensus about security and peace processes (Steans, 1998). They reject the argument that women are always the victims and are inherently non-violent as believed by the essentialist (Blanchard, 2003). Sjorberg (2016) points out that women who are culpable of sexual violence predominantly remain invisible because of the perception that women are associated with peace and there's a positive correlation between women and peace.

The theory explains that violence of any form prevents people from enjoying human rights which raises global security concerns (UN CEDAW, 1992). In cases of sexual violence by intimate partners, victims live in constant fear because of the repetitive nature of the abuse which creates insecurity and fear. FST posits that some culture practices and beliefs instigate violence against women. In the view of Abane (1999), a typical example is the cultural practice of 'bride price' which explains the widespread violence in marriages.

Critics of the theory debate how narrow the theory is and implore that it expands its tenets to all insecurity issues that face all individuals as well as states (Sylvester, 2010). Also, traditional IR

theorists have denounced FST as a strong unified theory. They argue that the theory is a discourse originating from various discussions, agreements and conflicting views of various feminists (Stean, 1998).

Despite the criticisms leveled against this theory, it is the most appropriate for this study because it advocates for policies and legislations that are more gender-sensitive and not neutral as states' policies have been over the years. The theory embraces the challenges of both males and females and offers better recommendations that are more gender sensitive. FST recommends that states should adopt better public policies to compensate and address all forms of social and economic injustices including sexual violence which affects women the most due to the social privileges of masculinity. The theory therefore enables the researcher to assess institutions, instruments and policies that were enacted from 2015 to 2021, and whether they address gender-sensitive issues such as sexual violence.

## **1.7 Literature Review**

This section discusses literature on the prevalence of sexual violence, root cause of sexual violence and the various strategies that have been adopted by some countries to ultimately reduce sexual violence.

### **1.7.1 Prevalence of Sexual Violence**

Sexual violence is common in every part of the world and has dire consequences which could be carried from one generation to another (Morrison, Quadara & Boyd, 2007), negatively affecting the development and progress of individuals, families, communities, societies and countries over time (Ellsberg, 2006). Sexual violence is mostly instigated against women as compared to men

(Amoakohene, 2005), although male sexual abuse is on the rise in most parts of the world (Bongiorno et al, 2019; Stemple and Meyer, 2014)

Globally, it is estimated that about seven hundred and thirty-six (736) million women, which is almost one out of three (1/3) women in the world have ever been subjected to either Intimate Partner Violence (IPV), non-partner sexual violence (NPV) or both, in their lifetime (Alkan and Tekmanlı, 2021). Violence against men whether IPV or NPV instigated by females has over the years remained under-researched (Dery and Diedong, 2014) and literature and policies on violence are mostly tilted on the side of women (Kumar, 2012; Lambert, 2012). Despite that, one out of six (1/6) men are sexually abused before the age of sixteen (16), and the prevalence could be as low as three percent (3%) in some countries and as high as seventy-six percent (76%) in other countries (Dube et al, 2013). These figures are mostly exclusive of sexual harassment, which is the most common form of sexual violence, and victims stand a higher change of depression, sexually transmitted infections, unplanned pregnancies and many other health complications which may last years after the incidence.

In developing countries, the prevalence of sexual violence is pronounced in literature. Sexual violence is most prevalent in Africa, specifically South Africa and ranks top of the global list, followed by Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini (Swaziland), Bermuda, Sweden, Surinam, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Grenada (Alesina, 2016). The statistics of sexual violence against men in developing countries are as high as forty to fifty-four percent (40-54) % in countries such as Barbados, Trinidad and Jamaica (Hilton, 2012) and as low as six or seven to twelve percent (6, 7-12) % in Indonesia, Rural- Urban- Papua (Fulu et al, 2013).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, growing studies about sexual violence posit that the first sexual experiences of most girls are unwanted and forced (Alesina et al, 2016). Thirty-one percent (31%)

of one hundred and ninety-one adolescent girls that reported teen-age pregnancy were forced, and when they were questioned on the consequences of refusing, seventy-seven percent (77%) responded that they feared being beaten for refusing sex. In countries where both men and women are the focus, more women suffer sexual coercion as compared to men (Halco'n, 2000).

In Ghana, Campbell (2016) reports that thirty-three to thirty-six (33-36) percent of women have experienced intimate partner violence at some point in their lives. Lithur (2013) also adds that thirteen to fifty-two (13-52) percent of girls have ever experienced sexual violence in their lifetime. All these figures are estimated to be lower due to low reporting rate of sexual crimes due to factors such as the perpetrator not known by the victim (stranger sexual assault), collective family shame and unwillingness of family to report the offender due to familiarity (Boateng, 2015).

### **1.7.2 Culture as the most prevalence cause of sexual violence**

Cultural norms and beliefs have been identified as a profound cause of sexual violence (Alkan, Yilmaz and Abar, 2020; Amoakohene, 2005; Issahaku, 2017) and Quintero-Hernández (2017) is of the view that although culture plays an integral part, it is important to understand that there are cultural differences and similarities between countries. Kalra and Bhugra (2013) contribute that, sexual violence takes place in all societies around the world, albeit under different socio-cultural practices, Alkan, Oktay, Unver and Gerni (2020) are also of the view that cultural continues to play a role in sexual violence because “acts of violence are behavioral patterns that are internalized in the socialization process by new generations and passed down to other generations in this manner”.

As a result, Kocacik and Dogan (2006) believe that culture does not enlighten women enough on their rights, therefore most women are not aware of their sexual rights. Ipekten and Yildiz (2014)

further contribute that cultural norm preaches that “men own women, manhood is all about violence, and violence is just ordinary behavior,...women must be submissive to men, rebelling against one’s husband is a sin, and in marriage, the sexual needs of men must be met.” Therefore, women especially do not consider acts of sexual violence as offensive and criminal. Eswaran & Malhotra, (2011) argue that “in many African countries, men are socialized to believe that they wield authority in partner relations and marriages” and Borumandnia et al, (2020) conclude that this is the reason for unequal power relations between men and women in society, which has the tendencies of victimizing women in sexual violence.

Moreover, many societies in sub-Saharan Africa enforce the payment of dowry during the marriage ceremony, which is mostly interpreted as the “transfer of rights from the woman’s family to the husband, allowing men to own their wives” (Archampong & Baidoo, 2011; Stafford, 2008; Tenkorang et al., 2013). This practice, according to literature instills patriarchal entitlement, which is known to be a strong basis for IPV, especially male partner sexual violence, where women are mostly the victims. (Amoakohene, 2004; Tenkorang et al., 2013).

Other studies show that there are customary forms of sexual violence against women in Africa and one of the most common forms is child marriage. (Hossain et al, 2015; Kamal et al, 2015). Practices such as child ransom and wife inheritance are still practiced in some parts of Africa. A girl-child is used as ransom to pacify the sins of her male family members by giving her out to the offended family, and about wife inheritance, the sister of the deceased wife is forced to replace the deceased in her marital home (Anankemag, 2016). Women are not the only gender affected by cultural dispositions. Due to cultural believes, most men are not able to report any form of sexual violence meted out against them, especially by women (Dolan, 2014).

Literature asserts that the prevalence of sexual violence against women in Ghana is due to the cultural disposition that males are supposed to dominate over women in every aspect of life (Takyi-Baffour and Mann, 2009). Other studies also posit how the cultural patriarchal system of subjugation and assertion of authority over women has led to sexual abuse in various forms (Johnson, 2006; Stark, 2007). Therefore Edström et al., (2014) are of the view adherence and compliance to such traditional masculinities predispose women to all forms of violence, including sexual violence. Other forms of patriarchal beliefs such as “men are the breadwinner, men are heads of home” are believed to justify sexual violence in the household under certain circumstances (Mann and Takyi, 2009).

These are consistent with the findings of Acheampong and Baidoo (2011) and Stafford (2008) which say “gender inequality; social norms around masculinity; social determinants and economic inequality; harmful behaviors, particularly alcohol misuse, and child maltreatment and abuse” are the most common causes of sexual violence.

### **1.7.3 Reducing Sexual Violence**

Despite the act being recognized as human rights violation, Garcia-Moreno & Watts., (2011) and Lalor, (2004) believe there are inadequate prevention and management policies for victims. Different approaches and policies are being developed by countries to match the root cause of the problem.

In developed countries, the Schwartz model is one of the many strategies that have been adopted over the years as a measure to reduce sexual violence. This model puts in place effective “intervention before birth, during childhood and in adolescence and young adulthood.”(Schwartz, 1991). In this model, right from childhood, child sexual abuse is introduced in discussions in the

media space for children and as the children grow, they are encouraged to own their personality and bodies to boost their self-image and confidence. This education continues through adolescence and young adulthood through enlightenment on the difference between sexual violence, coercion and myth about rape. According to Yuan et al (2019) and Yuan and Hesketh (2019) some countries in Asia have recently adopted the Domestic Violence Laws (DVL) to create awareness as a first step to eliminate all forms of violence against women.

Education-based programs have been developed for Africa and other developing countries to curb the issue of sexual violence and the two most prominent are Stepping Stones (1995) and Men as Partners (1998). These programs are designed for both men and women in the same age brackets and delivered using a participatory learning approach during seminars and workshops. These programs have over the years educated both men and women about issues of sexual violence, avoiding labeling victims and perpetrators as such, helping people to take responsibility for their offenses, communicating in a better way and promoting respect. Communities in Cambodia, Gambia, South Africa, Uganda and Tanzania that adopted these programs have reported a significant reduction in the rate of sexual violence against women. Other countries have also adopted a developmental approach to reduce sexual violence; they emphasize the importance of gender-balanced parenting and home nurturing of children (Malamuth et al, 2000; Malamuth, 1998). Experiences from Africa based on successfully implemented programs show that sexual violence must be addressed through a comprehensive policy guide from experts (Christofides et al 2005; Keesbury & Askew, 2010). This implies that countries that are willing to eliminate sexual violence should formulate policies that will deal effectively with the problem, but unfortunately, the extent to which countries have effective policies to prevent sexual violence is still unknown

(Loots, Dartnall and Jewkes, 2011). Despite the odds, Spangaro et al, (2013) are of the view that in Africa, sexual violence is on the decline.

Literature has very little to show how Ghana intends to curb this canker. Therefore, this study seeks to bring to light how government, IGOs and NGOs intend to reduce sexual violence especially against women with the help of legal instruments, state institutions and policies.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

Diverse approaches are employed in every research to collect, analyze and interpret data. The selection of a particular field for research, collection of data and the adoption of the appropriate technique for interpretation to conclude is termed research methodology (Silverman, 2005). This section describes the processes used for collecting and analyzing data to arrive at the objectives of this study; to analyze Ghana's efforts to reduce sexual violence. The study approach, sources of data, sampling methods and sample size, data analysis, ethical issues and limitations of the study as organized below will help to achieve the above objective.

### **1.8.1 Study Design**

There are three (3) main research designs, and these are the quantitative method, the qualitative method and the use of both the quantitative and the qualitative method known as the mixed method (Biggam, 2015; Creswell, 2014). This study adopts a qualitative research design. According to Crossman (2019), qualitative design gathers data and uses non-numeric data to generate meaning information out of the data gathered on the social lives of the sample. It entails the use of direct and interactive collection of information which provides the opportunity for the researcher to relate and appreciate the matter under study. Bobbie (2005), highlights some advantages of qualitative research method, which are flexibility and cost. Due to its flexible nature, researchers are at liberty

to alter, modify and strategize research questions as well as pose open-ended questions to obtain clarity and in-depth understanding. On the issue of cost, Bobbie asserts that qualitative research could be relatively less expensive. In his opinion, some basic materials such as a recorder, a pen and paper are enough for a researcher to undertake good research.

Qualitative research design is the most appropriate method for gathering and interpreting data on efforts made by Ghana to reduce sexual violence because apart from its flexibility and the cost component, this study intends to explore and dig deeper into the worldview of respondents. Also, the qualitative study design provides the opportunity to have direct contact with professionals and victims of sexual violence to draw meaningful outcomes out of their experiences and responses. Also, due to the sensitive nature of the subject of sexual violence, a qualitative study design was deemed appropriate due to its nature of adaptiveness and informality, which enable respondents to cooperate and make meaningful contributions to the subject matter.

There are four approaches to qualitative research; grounded theory, ethnography, case study and phenomenology (Hancock et. al., 2002). Among these, phenomenology was the most appropriate approach for this research. This approach is used to explain how the experiences of people should impact policy and change. It draws essence from the lived experiences of several individuals and makes inferences from them. The unpleasant experiences of victims and survivors of sexual violence over the years must influence national policies and institutions toward reducing the act by 2030. Thoughts, expressions and past experiences of victims could determine whether there are effective policies and institutions capable of reducing incidences of sexual violence by 2030.

### **1.8.2 Sources of Data**

This research was carried out in the Greater Accra Region, the capital of Ghana where most of the headquarters of the relevant institutions for this study are based. Residents of Greater Accra are engaged in both formal and informal economic activities and fall within different social and economic strata. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study. The primary data was gathered from the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service, Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ), UNFPA Ghana, UNICEF Ghana, The Ark Foundation, and victims of sexual violence. The above-mentioned institutions were also carefully selected because they are the main organizations that are responsible for or contribute to gender and its related issues in Ghana. Respondents were selected from the above-mentioned institutions due to their experience and expertise in sexual violence-related issues and policies. They were either heads or assistants of the gender unit of their respective organizations and therefore were instrumental in primary data collection.

Secondary data was equally important for this study, therefore they were collected from credible journals, articles, books, reports, statistics and related legislative instruments. Information was also gathered from the website of DOVVSU, CHRAJ, USAID Ghana, UNFPA Ghana and UNICEF Ghana.

### **1.8.3 Sampling Methods and Sample Size**

Some phenomena or characteristics are unevenly distributed in the universe, therefore, the most appropriate sampling method to use is a non-probability or non-random sampling (Kumekpor, 2002). To meet the objectives of this study, purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling was employed in selecting the respondents for this study. Purposive sampling, also known as subjective sampling is a sampling technique whereby the researcher employs his or her

discretion in the selection of respondents from a population (Etikan, 2016). Participants' selection was based on their ability to answer questions on sexual violence-related policies, institutions and legal instruments.

A total of eleven (11) respondents were purposively selected for this study. One professional each from DOVVSU, CHRAJ, UNICEF Ghana, UNFPA Ghana, and the Ark Foundation. One married woman who has ever experienced sexual violence was selected. Also, a lady and gentleman who are not married but have ever experienced sexual violence were interviewed. Lastly, a total of three adolescents, two (2) females and a male who have ever experienced sexual violence were selected for this study. The selection was useful in obtaining holistic data on how best the experiences shared by victims could be mitigated through effective policies and institutions

#### **1.8.4 Method of Data Collection**

A semi-structured interview guide was used in collecting primary data. This method according to Creswell (2013) helps the interviewer to appreciate people's perceptions and experiences of the topic under study. It allows the participants to express their own opinions and perspectives while keeping them in check. It also enabled the interviewer to probe more for clarity and insight. Primary data was collected through face-to-face interviews. Interviews were recorded using tape and were stored according to the name of the institution for further processing.

#### **1.8.4 Data Processing and Analysis**

Descriptive content analysis was used to interpret the primary data which were collected for this study. This helped the researcher gain a deeper understanding of every individual's unique experience. According to Silverman (2016), this method provides an excellent opportunity for

researchers to get the best out of the data gathered because they can draw meaningful understanding, and provide in-depth and valuable analysis of people's thoughts.

Data gathered were analyzed just as they were collected, devoid of bias. Responses were interpreted just as they were taken. Recorded interviews were transcribed from audio to text format and subsequently grouped into themes based on the research objectives of this study. According to (Braun & Clarke, 2006), thematic analysis is the process of identifying salient patterns or themes within qualitative data and aligning them in a manner such that they address the research problem and objectives. A summary descriptive analysis was used to explain all figures that were collected during this study.

### **1.8.5 Ethical Issues**

Ethical issues were considered throughout the entire study. According to Rogers (1987), issues about ethics are becoming more complex in a technology-advancing world and issues about societal values and roles are also changing dramatically. Vanclay et al (2013), are of the view that every researcher should consider ethical issues such as consent of participants, confidentiality, disclosure of sources of funding, voluntary participation, exclusive right to pull back and avoidance of excessive interference.

Due to the sensitive nature of sexuality and sex-related issues in our culture and society, the researcher assured participants of confidentiality, voluntary participation and exclusive right to pull back at any point. Interviewees from UNFPA and Ark Foundation waived their anonymity, therefore their positions were mentioned, but interviewees from the rest of the organizations are kept anonymous. Victims were equally kept anonymous, but to appreciate their varying experiences, they were given identities. The married woman is identified as victim 1, unmarried

women are identified as victim 2, unmarried men are identified as victim 3 and adolescents (both males and females are identified as victim 4. Additionally, participants were informed that the research was for academic purposes only, and verbal consent was sought before any interview was conducted. Privacy was assured to enable them to freely speak about issues.

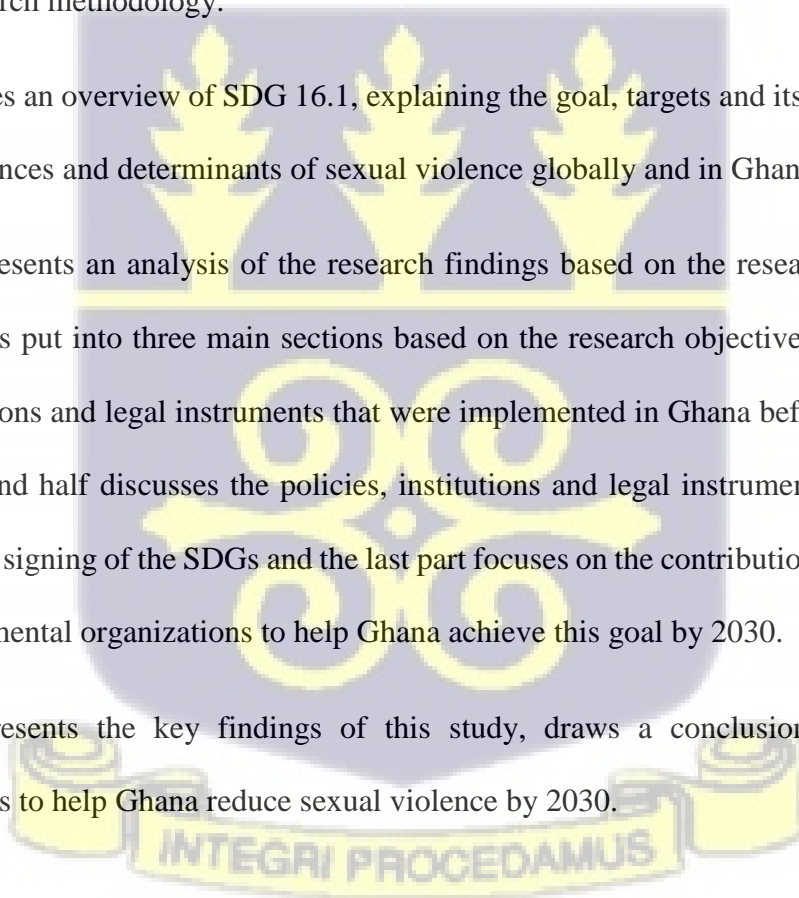
### **1.9 Arrangement of Chapters**

This study was organized in four chapters. Chapter one discusses the design of the research. It introduces the subject matter, provides a research statement, outlines the research questions and objectives, scope and rationale, theoretical framework which navigates the study, a brief literature review and research methodology.

Chapter two gives an overview of SDG 16.1, explaining the goal, targets and its indicators. It also highlights incidences and determinants of sexual violence globally and in Ghana.

Chapter three presents an analysis of the research findings based on the research questions and objectives. It was put into three main sections based on the research objectives. It discusses the policies, institutions and legal instruments that were implemented in Ghana before signing on the SDGs. The second half discusses the policies, institutions and legal instruments that have been adopted after the signing of the SDGs and the last part focuses on the contributions of international and non-governmental organizations to help Ghana achieve this goal by 2030.

Chapter four presents the key findings of this study, draws a conclusion and give some recommendations to help Ghana reduce sexual violence by 2030.



## CHAPTER TWO

### OVERVIEW OF SDG 16.1, INCIDENCES AND DETERMINANTS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE GLOBALLY AND IN GHANA.

#### 2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of SDG 16.1, explains the various forms of sexual violence that exist globally and in Ghana and highlights some determinants of the act. Goal 16 which is the broader vision, together with its 12 targets and 24 associated indicators explain the importance of strengthening institutions to reduce global crimes. On the other hand, this chapter explains global incidences of sexual violence and also explains the contextual meaning of sexual violence as defined by the Domestic Violence Act (2007) and the Criminal Offence Code 1960 (Act 29) of Ghana. Lastly, the chapter discusses some contributing factors to the crime.

#### 2.1 Overview of SDG 16.1

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals were adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 2015. They serve as a clarion call to end poverty, protect people and the planet, ensure universal peace and wellbeing and harness country-level collaborations to achieve world peace. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2019), the official UN agency in charge of the SDGs, countries which have ratified the agreement “have committed to prioritize progress for those who're furthest behind, because the SDGs are designed to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls;... they show progress, or lack thereof, on peace, justice and inclusion.”

The SDGs are divided into 17 goals, 169 targets and 230 indicators. Every goal has targets, and the targets are further divided into indicators to simplify the goals and make them more

measurable. SDG 16 seeks to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.” Under Goal 16, there are twelve (12) related targets which deals with issues of violence; child abuse, exploitation and trafficking; rule of law and equal access to justice; organized crimes and illicit financial and arms flows; corruption and bribery; effective, accountable and transparent institutions; responsive, inclusive and representative decision making; participation in global governance; universal legal identity; public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms; national institutions to prevent violence and combat crime and terrorism; non-discriminatory laws and policies (Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicator, 2016)

Target 16.1 which falls under goal 16 aims at reducing all forms of violence and its related death rates everywhere. This target is further divided into four indicators namely; 16.1.1- international homicide; 16.1.2 – conflict related death; 16.1.3 – Prevalence of all forms of violence; and 16.1.4 – public safety (UNDP, 2019). Explaining further, Indicator 16.1.3, encourages states to “significantly reduce all forms of violence and its related death rates across all countries by 2030” (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015). When countries build strong and accountable institutions, they are effective in dealing with any form of violence that affect its citizens. Sexual violence, which affects both males and females can be reduced when there are effective and accountable institutions that will ensure that policies and laws are effective enough to deter perpetrators and protect victims or survivors.

## 2.2 Global Overview of Sexual Violence

Globally, there are some forms of sexual violence that are more predominant, and happen in almost every country. Knowing and defining them is very crucial because this will give a clearer direction

and perspective to analyze the effectiveness of policies, legal instruments and institutions which are aimed to help reduce all forms of sexual violence by 2030.

### **2.2.1. Rape within Dating or Marriage Relationship**

Both men and women experience rape within dating or marriage relationships, and most times partners who experience sexual violence experience physical violence as well (Chibber et al, 2012). This phenomena is neither rare nor unique to a specific geographic location because studies across different regions indicate so.

Defining intimate partner sexual violence, specifically rape is difficult and this is as a result of the sexual and intimate nature of the relations between couples or partners (Bagwell-Grey et al, 2015). Bagwell-Grey et al (2015) further argue that, the term “rape” in marriages and dating relations have been downplayed and avoided altogether by many victims. As a result, some political terms like “legitimate rape” have been introduced due to the complicated nature of the situation (Jaco, 2012).

According to WHO (2002), rape is defined as “physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration – even if slight – of the vulva or anus, using a penis, other body parts or an object”. The above definition applies to everyone, including persons in intimate relationships. Explaining the terms and making distinctions between “being raped” and “had sex” become more complicated when the victim has in the past consented to any form of sexual contact with the perpetrator.

Rape within dating or marriage relationship fall under intimate partner sexual violence (IPSV), and the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) defines this act within four broad characteristics; lack of consent, whether the act was attempted or completed, type of force and the nature of sexual activity. According to WHO factsheet (2021), almost one-third (1/3), which is

approximately twenty-seven percent (27%) of women worldwide who fall between the ages of fifteen to forty-nine (15-49), and have ever been in a relationship have experienced sexual, and sometimes physical violence from their partner. Its prevalence is as high as thirty-three percent (33%) in South East Asia and Africa, thirty-one percent (31%) in Eastern Mediterranean region, twenty-five percent (25%) in America and twenty-two percent (22%) in Europe (IMF Factsheet, 2021).

### **2.2.2. Systematic Rape during Armed Conflicts**

Systematic rape during armed conflict has existed throughout history and it is as old as conflict itself (UN Women, 1998). Women have no or little influence in the outbreak of war but they are the gender that suffer most (Prescott, 2013). According to Leatherman (2007), rape during armed conflict has been part of the spoils of war, and although it affects both men and women, it is mostly instigated by men (military officers, civilians, militants, workers in displacement camps) against women. This atrocity had not received enough attention in the international space although it happened during World War I and II, but at the end of 1992 when the media reported the existence of detention and rape camps in former Yugoslavia, and in 1994 during the Rwanda genocide, when women were raped and sexually tortured as part of the campaign for ethnic cleansing (UN Women, 1998; Alcorn, 2014). Subsequently, systematic rape has become part of conflict and has been described as the “new war” (Kaldor, 2003; Weiss, 2006).

In all contemporary armed conflict, women are subjected to violence (Bernard, 2014). Rape in armed conflict is ubiquitous, but its statistics is dearth. UN Women (1998) and Alcorn (2014) estimate that over ten thousand (10,000) Muslim women and hundred thousand (100,000) girls and women were raped during armed conflicts in Yugoslavia and Rwanda respectively. During 2018 mid-year review of reported cases of rape, gang rape and sexual slavery in the South Sudan

conflict, it was revealed that about two thousand and three hundred (2,300) cases have been recorded and twenty-one percent (21%) were children (Lund, 2019). Lund further explains that in 2014, about six thousand (6,000) Yazidi women and children from Iraq were “captured and sold into sexual slavery” after an attack, and in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), about one thousand, four hundred and twenty-nine (1,429) cases are recorded annually, and sixty-eight (68%) of victims are children, including boys. Throughout history, rape has been used as a weapon of war and predominant in countries like Sri Lanka, Bosnia, DRC, Iraq and Central African Republic (CAR). Several reasons contribute to this problem, but the most common is the notion that women are part of the spoils of war, are properties to be owned and therefore victorious armies are entitled to this “property”.

### **2.2.3 Unwanted Sexual Harassment or Advances**

Sexual harassment is the most prevalent form of sexual violence and it happens in every country. Studies have identified sexual harassment or advances among the military, police, health workers, schools, faith based organizations and homes (Norman et al, 2012; de Haas, 2009; Timmerman, 1999; Fitzgerald, 1997). Also, it happens to both males and females regardless of occupation, race, geographical location, wealth status and level of education.

Sexual harassment is defined as any form of “sexual discrimination, unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct” (Council Revolution, 1990).

Sexual harassment could be physical, verbal and nonverbal, and there are different types and range of behaviors which constitute the act. They include, but not limited to gendered comments, seductive behavior, sexual coercion, sexual imposition, unwanted neck massage, unwanted sexual pressure for sexual favor, unwanted sexual look or gestures, unwanted sexual phone calls or letters in a sexual nature, persistent and unwanted gifts or dates, sexual comments, unwanted sexual jokes,

unwanted touch or hug, unwanted sexual teasing, remarks or questions among others (UN Women, 2019). The key elements in sexual harassment or advancement are that they are unwanted, unwelcomed, offensive, unconsented and intentional. It could be from a supervisor, friend, co-worker, schoolmates or strangers.

There are physiological, psychological and social effects of sexual harassment but literature conflict on which gender it affects most. While some believe it affects males the most (Fitzgerald, 2005), others believe it affects females the most due to “social power and their vulnerable status (Magley, Waldo et al, 1999) and the last category believe it affects both males and females alike, in terms of their health (Norman et al, 2012). Some of the effects are headache, panic attacks, sleep disturbance, nightmares, depression, anger, embarrassment, guilt, low self-esteem, shame, isolation, insecurity, withdrawal from school, public or work, absenteeism and poor performance (Whatley, 2010; Norman et al, 2012).

#### **2.2.4. Sexual Abuse of Mentally or Physically Challenged People**

People who are mentally or physically challenged are not left out of the terrible experiences of sexual violence. Both adults and children who live with disabilities face sexual violence more often than people with no disabilities (Nixon, 2016; Taylor et al, 2016). According to UNFPA (2018), girls and young women with disability face up to ten times more violence than those without any disability, and girls with mental disability are the most vulnerable. Children with disabilities (CWD) and adults with disabilities (AWD) face all other forms of violence, but CWD are at a higher risk of sexual abuse (Nixon, 2016). Also, Fogden et al (2016) report that women with disabilities (WWD) experience more violent victimization as compared to men with disabilities (MWD).

About 90% of mentally challenged children experience sexual violence at some point in their lifetime, and the perpetrators are caregivers, educators, drivers and domestic helps (Groce et al, 2013; Helander, 2004). Perpetrators often know the health conditions of victims, therefore making it a calculated abuse with the highest possibility of escape; and “children who are deaf, blind, autistic, or living with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities are most vulnerable to violence” (UNFPA, 2018). Men mostly prey on mentally challenged children because depending on the severity of their condition, most cannot narrate or tell who their abuser is, do not know that such act is illegal or have no one to complain to.

Thomson et al (2021) contribute that stereotypes such as “all disabled people as asexual, believing a disability means an inability to participate equally in an intimate relationship, and assuming that disabled people cannot control their urges, among many others” ultimately lead to neglect of the sexual needs of AWD. Unfortunately, just like other incidences of abuse, cases of sexual abuse of CWD and AWD normally go unreported, and perpetrators are left unpunished (Beckene, Forrester-Jones, & Murphy, 2017; Murphy et al., 2016). They are often victimized because they are mentally or physically challenged, they have low self-esteem and power imbalances in relationship when they rely on partners for basic surviving services, which mostly lead to sexual manipulation and violence (Thompson, 2021).

### **2.2.5 Sexual Abuse of Children; Child Marriage**

Children can be sexually abused in many ways just like adults but the most predominant way takes the form of child marriage. It is a global phenomenon which has been in existence for centuries, and is defined as “both formal marriages and informal unions in which a girl lives with a partner as if married before the age of eighteen” (UNICEF, 2005). Over the years, much effort have been

made to eliminate this canker from society through the ratification of international treaties. Key among them is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children (UNCRC) 1998.

Globally, one out of nine (1/9) girls is likely to marry before her fifteenth birthday, one out of three (1/3) girls in developing countries except China would be married before age eighteen, thirty-eight percent (38%) of girls in sub-Saharan Africa marry before age eighteen and most of these girls are poor, have no or less education and living in rural communities (Santhya, 2011; UNFPA and UNICEF, 2011). A report by UNICEF (2018) estimated the prevalence of child marriage to be 9% in South America and the Caribbean, 5% in the Middle East and North Africa, 44% in South Asia and 18% in sub-Saharan Africa. Very often, these girls have little or no say with respect to the age and partner they want to marry because their families orchestrate the marriage (Jensen and Thornton, 2003). If nothing is done to end child marriage, predictions are that by 2030 over one hundred and fifty (150) million more girls will marry before their eighteenth (18<sup>th</sup>) birthday, deepening the strides of poverty in their families (UNICEF, 2018). This is because they are likely to get pregnant and give birth without sufficient education or alternative pathway to equip them to make enough money to support themselves, their babies and families.

In 2017, efforts were made by UNICEF and UNFPA to reach over one million girls in four million communities in different parts of the world; Africa, Middle East and South Asia (UNFPA, 2018). This outreach was mainly about information dissemination, skills acquisition and service provision to empower girls to end child marriage. Nine out of the twelve countries which benefited from this program have developed national strategic programs to end child marriage. Also, efforts have been made to sensitize girls between the ages of ten to nineteen (10-19) years who are at risk of getting married in prevalent countries like Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia (UNFPA, 2018). Some

countries like Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yamen and Zambia have made commitments to end child marriage through education, legal enforcement, state interventions and gender-responsive health services (UNICEF, 2018).

#### **2.2.6. Rape by Strangers, Familiar People or Family Members**

Just like any form of sexual violence, rape by strangers, familiar people or family members happen to both males and females, but it affects females are most. Dedel (2011) opines that rape by strangers and rape by familiar people have the same defining terms as rape, but the only difference is the perpetrator; either a stranger or someone already known. Therefore she defined it as “offenses in which an assailant forces a victim to participate in a variety of sexual behaviors that may include the actual or attempted penetration of the vagina, anus or mouth with the penis or an object.”

Rape by strangers are committed by people unknown to the victim, and males are likely to rape female strangers than for females to rape male strangers (Lalumiere et al, 2005; Soothill et al. 2002). Some researchers believe that males who perpetuate this act use it as a weapon of power against women (Dedel, 2011; Ghitis, 2013). This could be as a result of sexual entitlement, sense of necessity to always be in control, hostility or anger (Rozee and Koss 2001; Abbey et al. 2007). Research has proven that rape by strangers is more traumatic and involves more violence than rape by a familiar person or a family members (Katz and Mazur, 1979). Males are more likely to be raped by strangers when they are unemployed and have no shelter, but the situation is not same for women because females are as likely to be raped by strangers with or without employment (Stermac et al, 2004).

Most victims face varying degrees of physical, emotional, sexual and social problems after an experience of assault depending on the relationship between the assailant and the victim. Some are severely injured, contract sexually transmitted diseases or get pregnant. National Center for Victims of Crime (2009) and Allison and Wrightsman (1993) also state that “almost all women experience psychological anguish, and many experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or a combination of fear and anxiety, denial, shock, disbelief; guilt, hostility, blame, feelings of helplessness or a loss of control at some point in their lives.” While the effects on others are momentarily or seasonal, others live with their experiences for longer period causing “disturbances in eating and sleeping, strained relationships with family, friends, and partners, difficulty maintaining employment; and sexual problems (Allison and Wrightsman 1993).

### **2.2.7. Gang Rape**

Gang rape is the least frequent and least reported among all forms of rapes, and it is explicitly undefined as some countries do not segregate multiple assailant rape (gang rape) and single assailant rape cases (Singha, 2013). According to Greenfield (2012) and Porter and Allison (2006), one out of ten (1/10) rape cases constitute gang rape in the United States of America, and approximately twenty (20) percent of gang rape victims die from injuries every year in United States and United Kingdom. Across Asia, in countries like China, Indonesia, Bangladesh and Malaysia, most men who indulge in gang rapes also commit single assailant rape crimes, and some of these victims are minors (Jewkes et al, 2013).

In Africa, countries like South Africa and Egypt record quite a number of cases, but most of them are not reported (Tadros, 2013). Furthermore, women in particular are more likely to report rape cases that have only one perpetrator (70%) as compared to two or more perpetrators (30%) (Anderson et al, 1998). Despite the low reportage, twelve (12) percent of all reported rape cases in

South Africa can be classified as gang rape, and in Egypt a lot more cases have been recorded, especially during the civil protest period, where about forty-six women were gang raped in four (4) days in the month of July, 2013 (Hirschowitz, 2000; Goodyear, 2011). Onyejekwe (2008), Dartnall and Jewkes (2012) explain that the situation is no different in Nigeria as thousands of gang rape cases have happened but only few were reported; and unfortunately, it is considered as one of the potential means for the spread of HIV/AIDS in the country.

The dynamics of gang rape is entirely different from single perpetrator rape. Although they are all unconsented sex, but the location, age of assailants (mostly between 15-29years), homogeneous identity, total number of assailants and the rape process (queuing to take their turn), less resistance and fewer weapons are some of the few characteristics that differentiate between the two (Jewkes, 2013; Ullaman, 2001 ). According to Vetten and Haffejee (2005) gang rapes happen everywhere but often in school settings among college students who are mostly members of a gang.

Literature suggests different reasons why women and most especially men decide to participate in gang rapes. Wood (1996) and Mokwena (1991) suggest that “gang rape may be used as a form of punishment by the friends or acquaintances of men whose girlfriends are suspected or known to have other partners; again, it may be used to put unattainable women in their place.” Others also suggest that gang rape may be one of the requirements or part of the initiation process into a gang, and also young women who may want to associate with or enter into “gang controlled prostitution” may have to be subjected to gang rape or participate as an assailant. (Merten, 1999; and Robertson, 1996). There are other factors such as drug use and alcohol consumption or part of other crimes such as robbery (Ullman, 2013).

### **2.2.8 Denial of the Right to Use Contraception and Forced Abortion**

Human rights are indivisible, and they include the right of both men and women to use contraceptives, or women to keep pregnancies when they want. WHO, (2014) reports that “protection and fulfilment of human rights contributes to positive sexual health outcomes”, which includes the right to contraception and pregnancies. Singh, (2012) asserts that about two hundred and twenty-two (222) million women have no access to proper contraceptive use, and this is predominant in regions where maternal mortality is highest. According to Cottingham et al, (2010) the problem of denial of right to use contraception emerges from state laws, cultural practices and societal policies that criminalize or ban their use in the country. Cottingham et al (2010) further explain that in this regard, some states prevent, limit or ban the availability of some contraceptive methods such as emergency contraception, and sometimes intentionally limit distribution which leads to an increment in prices. In male dominated cultures, women have no right to make decisions concerning contraceptives and pregnancies.

Forced abortion on the other hand is defined as “intentional termination of pregnancy without the prior and informed consent of the victim” (Council of Europe, 2011). It mostly originates from unconventional laws and policies which prevent people from keeping pregnancies to full-term, or sex-selective laws which prioritize one gender over other. Such laws until recently existed in some Asian countries like China, India and Korea in the form of population control policies, which were not official laws (Barboza, 2015). Denial of the right to use contraception involves discrimination, unavailability and inaccessibility of contraceptive information and service. Some face discrimination based on their location, age race, gender, socioeconomic and health status (ECOSOC, 2004).

Right to contraception has clear health benefits. It prevent unplanned pregnancies, which in the long run decrease infant and maternal mortality, because WHO (2014) estimates that providing access to all women, especially in developing countries will prevent over fifty-four (54) million unplanned pregnancies, twenty-six (26) million abortions (of which sixteen (16) million are likely to be unsafe), seven (7) million miscarriages, seventy nine (79) thousand maternal deaths and over one million infant mortality (Singh, 2012). Much benefits will be enjoyed by adolescent girls, who upon getting pregnant are forced to stay out of school or work, which lead to poverty, unattained education goals and has a high risk pregnancy term (WHO, 2011).

### **2.2.9 Sex Trafficking and Forced Prostitution**

Sex trafficking and forced prostitution have received global attention in recent years due to the involvement of violations and abuse of the rights of the victim. It is a growing business internationally, but unlike smuggling of humans, trafficking is done without consent and full disclosure, therefore trafficked persons do not make informed decision. The UN Protocol (2003) to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children defines trafficking and sexual trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion ..., for the purpose of exploitation (Article 3).

Trafficking is a criminal act that affects over fifty (50) million people worldwide, and out of that over twenty-six (26) million are estimated to be in sexual slavery and forced prostitution (Au'Vonnie, 2020). This implies that most trafficked people are forced into prostitution whilst the rest serve as slaves and laborers. Some researchers concluded that trafficking, especially of women and children has become very lucrative, and is very rewarding, and could be at par with drug trafficking and arms smuggling (Au'Vonnie 2020; Salt, 2000). Sexual trafficking affects all

genders, but mostly females, who constitute about ninety-eight (98) percent of the whole (UN Divisions for the Advancement of Women and UN Office on Drugs and Crimes, 2005; International Labor Organization (ILO) 2012).

Minors are trafficked also, and are sold for various sexual activities, which is termed as Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) which is further categorized into different forms such as prostitution, child sex tourism and child pornography (Miller-Perrin and Wurtele, 2017). Child sex trafficking is appalling because children are treated as commercial objects to satisfy the sexual needs of adult. For instance, child pornography according to Quayle, Loof, & Palmer (2008) “often involves financial exchange but can also be based on nonmonetary exchange via the Internet when images are traded or exchanged between pornography possessors and are treated as their own form of currency”.

Therefore, Shively et al (2012) have proposed series of comprehensive and collaborative responses to combat sex trafficking and forced prostitution, which they believe have a common source, which is “men’s decision to buy sex.” Buying sex always create demand, which will necessitate supply through illegal means such as sexual trafficking and forced prostitution. Discouraging men from buying sex will go a long way in reducing sex trafficking because they are the primary consumers and beneficiaries.

### **2.3. Defining Sexual Violence in Ghana**

Sexual violence has been defined in the sixth chapter of the Criminal Offence Code 1960, the Domestic Violence Act 2007, the Human Trafficking Act 2005 (Act 694), the Juvenile Justice Act 2003 (Act 653); and are explained as follows;

### 2.3.1. Rape, Carnal Knowledge and/or Unnatural Carnal Knowledge

Rape is one of the biggest social crimes in Ghana despite the various legal instruments implemented to discourage perpetrators (Quashie, 2017). Rape, according to the Criminal Offence Act 1960 section 98, is “carnal knowledge of a female of sixteen years or above without her consent” and the Criminal Code Amendment (Act 554) criminalize rape as a first degree felony which attracts a sentence of not more than twenty-five years and not less than five years (Section 97). Rape in Ghana is gender specific, which implies that the only gender that can be raped in Ghana is the female by a male, with the former as the victim and the later as a perpetrator.

Section 99 adds, “whenever, upon the trial of any person for an offence punishable under this Code, it is necessary to prove carnal knowledge or unnatural carnal knowledge, the carnal knowledge or unnatural carnal knowledge shall be deemed complete upon proof of the least degree of penetration.” Carnal knowledge and unnatural carnal knowledge were not explicitly defined by the Act, but over the years have been interpreted to mean sodomy. In *Hanson vs The Republic* (1978), the court held that rape can only be established when the penis penetrates the vagina, any other means such as stick, objects, fingers or tongue cannot be termed as such. Therefore, carnal knowledge (rape) implies the penetration of the vulva with the penis while unnatural carnal knowledge implies penetration into any part of the female body other than the vulva, with the male sex organ, or with other parts of the body or objects such as fingers, tongue, stick and dildos.

Regardless of the legal definitions, males report issues of rape but the figures are significantly low as compared to women. This does not mean few men experience rape, but could be as a result of the consequences of reporting rape as a male. Rape and forced sex mostly happens between the ages of 20 to 60 years, and the statistics indicates that 44.1% have ever been physically forced to

have sex, 8.1% reported being otherwise forced to have sex, 26% reported sex without consent, and 22.4% reported sex because they were afraid (Ganzi & Isharaza, 2016).

Other forms of rape such as multiple perpetrator rape, also known as gang rape is not defined but attracts same punishments as single perpetrator rape cases, and reports available on such crimes are woefully inadequate and scanty (Adinkra, 2017; Aryee, 2013). Adinkra (2017) further explained that such crimes are sometimes reported in the media space before handing over to the police for legal redress, making the media a reliable source of such information. A study conducted by Quarshie et al (2017) on the media reportage and coverage of gang rapes in Ghana from January 2000 to June 2016 established that a lot of such cases are not identified and reported. The few that could be reported had sixty-one victims and one hundred and eighty-four perpetrators in fifty-seven perpetrator group.

### **2.3.2. Early and Forced Marriage (Child Marriage)**

Child marriage remains a challenge in Ghana, despite the availability of various legal instruments. The 1992 constitution pegs marriage at the age of eighteen (18) years, although the legal age for consensual sex is sixteen (16) years, therefore any female who is forced to cohabit, marry or live with another man under the guise of marriage is liable to punishment by the law. Child marriage is defined as “both formal marriages and informal unions in which a girl lives with a partner as if married before the age of eighteen (18)” (UNICEF, 2018).

The Marriage Act (Cap 127) prohibits both boys and girls from getting married before the legal age of eighteen, but girls are more likely to be forced into early marriages as compared to boys, making boy child marriage not as common as girl child marriage (Alhassan, 2013). Child marriage is on decline in most parts of the world as well as Ghana, as the trend showed a decrement from

47% in 2010 to 27% in 2014 and a subsequent decrease to 19.3% in 2018 (Ghana Statistical Service, (GSS) 2014, 2018).

According to GSS (2014), child marriage occurrence is highest in the Upper East (39.2%), followed by the Western (36.7%), Upper West (36.3%), Central (31.2%), Ashanti (30.5%), Volta (29.3%), Brong-Ahafo (29.10%), Northern (27.4%) Eastern (27.2%), and Greater Accra (12.2%). Again, child marriage occur most in the rural centers as compared to the urban centers, 34.3% and 19.4% respectively. This can be attributed to economic, social and structural factors.. To effectively eliminate child marriage, community based approach and strategies, together with the legal framework must be adopted.

### **2.3.3. Defilement**

Defilement is the most prevalent form of sexual violence in Ghana (Ghana Police Service, 2015) and the Criminal Offence Act 1960 (Act 29) defines it as the natural or unnatural carnal knowledge of a child below the age of sixteen with or without the consent of the child. Act 29, section 101 (2) specifies that “a person who naturally or unnaturally carnally knows a child under sixteen years of age, whether with or without the consent, commits a criminal offense and is liable on summary conviction to a term of imprisonment of not less than seven years and not more than twenty-five years.” Crime of such nature involves acts such as “forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, which may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example, rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching inside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as looking at or in the production of sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse.” (Cornwell & Isle of Scilly, 2021).

Defilement, popularly called child rape, is gender neutral but females between the ages of three (3) months old to seventeen years old are mostly the victims, and the perpetrators who are mostly men are between the ages of fifteen (15) years to eighty (80) years (Bortei-Doku & Kuenyehia 1998). According to Ghana Police Service (2015), between 1999 and 2014, about 14,658 defilement cases were reported. Hauffe and Porter (2009) assert that, cases of formal reports have always been an insignificant fraction of the number of incidences that happens in most countries.

Yeboako (2010) and Ghana News Agency (2012) have opined that defilement is on the increase, and a study made by Morhe (2011) shows that, most girls who get pregnant as a result of defilement do not get justice. This is because, family members are unwilling to report such cases to warrant the arrest of the perpetrator, who they expect to take financial responsibility of the girl and unborn child. Therefore, the perpetrator pays an amount to the family as a fine, and is either forced to marry the girl or goes scot-free.

#### **2.3.4. Indecent Assault**

Section 103 of the Criminal Offences Act spells out indecent assault of all forms. The provision mentioned at section 103(2) reads; a person commits the criminal offence of indecent assault if, without the consent of the other person that person (a) forcibly makes a sexual bodily contact with the other person or (b) sexually violates the body of the other person, in a manner not amounting to carnal knowledge or unnatural carnal knowledge. Section 103(1) formulates that “whoever indecently assaults any person shall be guilty of misdemeanor and shall be liable to the conviction to a term of imprisonment of not more than six months”

Making inference from section 103(2), indecent assault include all physical, verbal and nonverbal sexual acts that do not amount to canal or unnatural canal knowledge, and as such are fondling,

harassment, sexual comments, unwanted touches, forced to have sex and seductive behavior. Among them all, the act which is most likely to be unofficially reported is fondling and sexual harassment. Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) and Associates (2016) reported that eighteen (18%) percent of women and approximately twelve (12.1) percent of men, a little above fifteen (15.3) percent of women and ten (10) percent of men, and nine (9) percent of women and almost seven (6.9) percent of men in Ghana have been subjected to sexual comments, unwanted touches and unwarranted pressure to have sex respectively. The report further highlighted the fact that people living in urban centers are more likely to be subjected to sexual comments (19%), unwanted touches (16%) and to be physically forced to have sex (10.1%) as compared with people living in rural areas, 16.9%, 14.5% and 7.8% respectively.

### **2.3.5. Incest**

Incest is a criminal act, and just like defilement, consent from the victim cannot justify the act. The Criminal Offence Act 1960, section 90 categorically list the nature of the offence, the legal penalty of the offence and the relationship that must exist between two people to be liable. It states that “a male of sixteen years or over who has carnal knowledge of a female whom he knows to be his grand-daughter, daughter, sister, mother or grandmother commits an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years and not more than twenty-five years.” Unlike rape, of which only women can be the victims as stated in the Act, there is a provision for males who may be victims of incest. As stated in the Act, “a female of sixteen years or over who has carnal knowledge of a male whom she knows to be her grand-son, son, brother, father or grandfather commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than three years and not more than twenty-five years.”

In Ghana, incest, just like other intra-family offences go unreported. Family members are unwilling to report because such cases have the capacity to bring disrespect and shame to the family (Osam, 2004). Official and reliable statistics of incest is uncommon, and knowledge of it is made mostly made known in the print and electronic media. A demographic study of incest reported cases by the media revealed that men are more likely to perpetuate this act against the females in their families as compared to women (Quarshie et al, 2005). Ages of victims were between three (3) to twenty-five (25) years and the most victimized (72.9%) fall between the ages of ten (10) to nineteen (19) years. This indicates that adolescent girls are more susceptible to sexual abuse by the males in their own families. Perpetrators' (men) were between twenty (20) to sixty-four (64) years, with the mean age being 41.6 years. Exactly half of the perpetrators were within the age bracket of forty (40) to fifty-nine (59), and within that bracket, men are either fathers, stepfathers, uncles, or grandfathers.

#### **2.3.6. Householder Permitting the Defilement of a Child**

Child rape is termed as defilement and households permitting the rape of children is not new in Ghana. According to the Criminal Offence Act (1960) section 106, household permitting the defilement of a child constitutes “(1) The owner or occupier of any premises or a person acting or assisting in the management of premises who induces or knowingly permits any child of less than sixteen years of age to resort to or be in or on his premises to be carnally known or unnaturally carnally known by any person commits an offence and shall be liable on conviction to imprisonment for a term of not less than seven years and not more than twenty-five years. (2) For the purpose of subsection (1) of this section it shall be an offence under this section whether carnal knowledge or unnatural carnal knowledge is intended to be with any particular person or generally.

(3) It shall be a defence to any charge under this section that the accused person had reasonable cause to believe that the child was of or above sixteen years of age.”

The defilement law is gender-neutral, and encompasses acts such as “the involvement of a child in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared and cannot give consent, or that violates the laws or social taboos of society” in or around the household or premises. Cases of household child sexual abuse are mostly intra-familial and the perpetrators are either fathers, brothers, cousins or uncles. According to Coker-Appiah and Cusack (1999), child sexual abuse takes the form of rape, being forced to touch the private part of an adult and touching the private part of a child.

Households permitting the defilement of a child takes different forms and twists. Mills-Odoi (2014) points out that sometimes, retired prostitutes rent out their residence to older men who prey on younger boys and girls. They provide the space and comfort to perpetuate this crime in exchange for a fee. Again, sometimes, the permit comes in the form of refusal to report crime to the right authorities for various reasons (Boakey, 2009) and condoning or participating in the act itself in a household. Boakey further argues that nondisclosure of household child sexual abuses are due to misconceptions or rape myths, patriarchal norms in society and the problem of collective shame.

### **2.3.7 Causing or Encouraging the Seduction or Prostitution of a Child under Sixteen.**

Just like any other offence, child prostitution is a criminal act, but has no specific legal definition by the Ghana’s Criminal Offense Act (1960). The Act categorically specifies the patronage of children into prostitution as criminal, but it has no legal sanctions attached to it, and violations are treated as misdemeanors. Child prostitution is defined as “the use of a child or an adolescent -

female or male – under 18 years old in sexual activities by an adult remunerated in money or in-kind to the child or adolescent (male or female) or to one or more third parties” (Addison, 2014). Child prostitution involves the trading of sex by a child, or the involvement of children in sexual activities in exchange of money, commodities or items, which may include basic necessities like food, shelter and clothing. Ashiabor (2013) argues that it includes acts such as production, promotion, sexting, creating and distribution of child pornography for sexual gratification of an adult or for financial gains.

A lot of factors account for the existing and growing demands of child sex workers in Ghana. These factors are often an interplay of globalization, technology, low economic status to support the development of children and weak legal instruments to deter perpetrators. Factors such as poverty, lack of education opportunities, insufficient and ineffective law enforcement strategies are the root cause of the canker. Najat (2008) also argues that globalization and the increased development of the tourism industry have roles to play in child prostitution, especially in child sex tourism. A report (2006) from the Coalition of NGOs on the rights of a child further explains that Ghana is one of the hottest and most popular destinations for child sex tourism in Africa due to poor law enforcement of child protection laws and reporting mechanism, making it a safe destination for the recruitment and production of child pornography. Children are often baited with gifts and money to cater for their basic needs and school fees (One World International, 2012). The easy access to internet, new technological advancements, also accounts for the exploitation of children. Children are persuaded to travel for better living conditions outside the country, and with nondisclosure of the nature of work available, are solicited and sold for sexual exploitation abroad, on the blind side of their family members (Agbermabiesie, 2013).

### 2.3.8 Procuration

Procuration is a criminal offence that amounts to a misdemeanor. According to the criminal offence Act (1960 section 107), anyone is liable when he/she “(a) procures any person under twenty-one years of age, not being a prostitute or of known immoral character to have carnal or an unnatural carnal connexion in Ghana or elsewhere with any other person; or (b) procures any person to become a prostitute in Ghana or elsewhere..” Procuration of people happens at the local and international levels, under the guise of migration or trafficking for economic purposes. The significant rise of migrant women from other parts like the Northern parts of Ghana to the Southern cities and towns to work in the informal sector encourage the subsequent smuggling of these women to neighboring countries like Benin and Nigeria, which serves as a transit hub to the Gulf States, where they are promised to achieve economic freedom (von Martius, 2017)

In contemporary times, globalization has facilitated the easy movement of services from one country to another, and one of the most notable movements that happens around the world is the procuration of young women into sexual slavery and prostitution in Arab Gulf countries. Edwards (2011) explains that countries like Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Bahrain, and Qatar have become an attractive destination to young migrant women due to the promises of better living conditions and remunerations and the constant demand for domestic labor. Whilst some are convinced of better economic opportunities, some are lured by testimonies of returned migrants (Sonmez et al, 2011).

Teming-Amoako (2018) asserts that over two thousand (2000) women were reported to be procured and faced all forms of abuse in the year 2015 only. The numbers are estimated to be significantly higher because such crimes are hardly reported and some women also lose their lives in the course of their work. Ngenbe (2017) reported an astonishing number of over sixteen

thousand (16,367) migrants to the gulf cities in the year 2016, among whom are knowingly and unknowingly sexual procured women and girls. Procuration is done by private agencies of whom most are unlicensed (Atong et al, 2018) and take young men and women to the Gulf States where some serve as sex slaves and prostitutes. Malit & Naufal (2018) and Imerion (2017) explained that migrant women, as compared to men were mostly subjected to sexual slavery and endured all forms of sexual abuse in their new environment, and is the primary reason some women moved back to Ghana despite the better remuneration

Mills-Odoi (2014) contributes that vulnerable girls who come from the north or girls born in the south but facing economic hardships are ignorantly ushered into prostitution either by retired prostitutes, who groom and train these younger girls for the trade, or older men and women who prey on these younger girls and boys as sex partners in exchange for economic gains or discreet rich and older gay men who demand the services of younger men. US department of States (2020) reports that in 2018 alone, the Government of Ghana prosecuted seven (7) cases of sex trafficking involving thirty-six (36) women who were primarily from Nigeria.

## **2.4. Determinants of Sexual Violence**

Several reasons account for incidences of sexual violence, but the most common among them all are level of education, culture and sociocultural norms, marital status, economic status and previous rape experience.

### **2.4.1. Level of Education**

Level of education has been mentioned as a strong determinant of sexual violence, for both victim and perpetrator. Sokoloff and Dupont (2005) contribute that although sexual violence mostly affects women in general, it does not affect them equally. According to Bhochhibhoya et al. (2019)

and Degue et al. (2014), there is a strong correlation between higher levels of education and victimization. WHO (2018) affirms that women with higher education are more likely to face sexual violence because they are more empowered as compared to women with no education. The empowerment is likely to lead to resistance and rebellion to patriarchy and sociocultural norms, therefore men sexually abuse them to gain control and position. .

On the other hand, men with low education levels are more violent and likely to sexually abuse their intimate partners (Reichel, 2017). Again, Babcock & DePrince (2013) are of the view that, women with higher education levels above their partners are more likely to be abused as compared to women with lower education levels below their partners.

#### **2.4.2 Culture and Sociocultural norms**

Patriarchy and culture plays a crucial role in the perpetration of sexual violence. According to Zinzow and Thompson (2015) and Walters (2019), some societal norms and values that have been held in esteem contribute gravely to sexual violence, especially to the victimization of women. Rape myths, such as victim blaming and collective shame is one factor that has been identified as contributing to sexual violence with impunity (Boakye, 2009). Kalra & Bhugra (2013) are of the view that prevalence is still high in Africa due to culture and sociocultural norms that make women extremely gullible to sexual violence. Harcourt (2013) and Eswaran & Malhotra, (2011) noted that in many African countries, men are socialized to wield authority over their female partners, legitimizing patriarchy on the continent, which mostly result in abuse.

#### **2.4.3 Marital Status**

Sexual violence within marriage is very common, and global statistics indicate that married women are more likely to be sexually abused as compared to single women (Apatinga and Tenkorang,

2021). Solomon et al. (2009) discovered in his study that married men who contribute very little to household income are more likely to sexually force their wives as compared to men who contribute significantly to household income. Wives who are pregnant, lactating or have a higher income often experience unwanted sex from their husbands (Santhya et al., 2007).

In Ghana, more than one-third of married women experience forced sex (Chirwa et al., 2018; IDS, GSS, & Associates, 2016) and this could be partly attributed to the dominance of male sexuality in marriage. Apatinga and Tenkorang (2021) attribute sexual violence in marriage to the emphasis made on “legitimate sex right of males in marriage.” They further explained that during marriage ceremonies in Ghana, women are advised never to deny their husbands sex regardless of the circumstance, therefore married men feel entitled to sex, sometimes leading to sexual abuse in marriage.

#### **2.4.4 Economic Status**

According to the WHO (2010) report on Africa, lower levels of education often translates to lower levels of income, and this is why men who have low income status are more likely to abuse their intimate partners. Reichel (2017) supports this claim and contributes that men with poor income are more likely to abuse their partners. McCloskey, Williams, & Larsen, (2005) also revealed that women with lower income levels “accept sexual violence” as compared to women with higher income levels. Furthermore, Messing and Thaller (2014) are of the view that men with employment problems are more violent than men with stable jobs.

Babcock & DePrince (2013) further assert that women who earn more than their partners are likely to be assaulted, as compared to women who earn less than their partners in Europe. Greenstein, & Lang (2005) and Szczepanikova (2008) also support the assertion that men who earn more are less

violent that men who earn less, but for women, level of abuse between those who earn more and those who earn less are almost insignificant. Reichel (2017) also concluded that women at the two extremes of income level, that is high and low, are the most sexually assaulted by their partners.

There is a difference between level of income (earning) and contribution to the household income. In a study by Chibber et al (2012) in India, she found that women who contribute an equal share of household income are more abused sexually, as compared to women who are solely responsible for household income. She further described this as protection for women. Solomon et al. (2009) also discovered that women who are married to men that contribute very little to household income experience forced sex and marital rape.

#### **2.4.5 Previous Rape Experience**

It has been established in the works of Steele et al (2020) and Walters (2019) that both men and women who have history of sexual violence perpetration are more likely to repeat the crime in future. Carr and VanDeusen (2004) explain that, boys who have experienced sexual violence are more likely to grow to sexually abuse other people too. Again, childhood victimization is likely to result in victimization during adulthood.

#### **2.5 Conclusion**

To conclude, this chapter focused on the overview of SDG 16.1, and the various forms of sexual violence that are dealt at the global and national level. It has been established that sexual violence is a global phenomenon that can affect anyone, regardless of religion, race, geographical location, level of education, income status, married status, age and gender.

At the national level, the various forms of sexual violence was discussed, focusing on the contextual definitions of sexual violence as stipulated by the various national legal instruments. It

was revealed that the most predominant form of sexual violence in Ghana is defilement. This chapter also reviewed the risk factors or the determinants of sexual violence. Moving forward, policies, institutions and legal instruments will be measured based on their ability to effectively tackle the various forms of sexual violence that exist in Ghana. For the purposes of this study, they will be assessed based on their ability to help Ghana reduce all forms of sexual violence to achieve SDG 16.1 by 2030.



## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH FINDINGS: ANALYSIS OF GHANA'S EFFORTS TO REDUCE SEXUAL VIOLENCE

#### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses research findings on the efforts made by Ghana to reduce sexual violence by 2030. According to Feminist Security Theory (FST), states can reduce all forms of violence and inequalities by adopting policies and legislations that are gender sensitive. Ghana's obligation towards reducing sexual violence by 2030 should reflect in its policies, institutions and international commitments. This chapter will therefore analyze policies, international and national instruments as well as government institutions that were established before and after signing the SDGs. Lastly, various contributions made by international and non-governmental agencies toward reducing sexual violence by 2030 are discussed.

#### 3.1 Policies, Instruments and Institutions Established before Signing the SDGs

During the MDGs (2000 – 2015), commitments toward eliminating sexual violence were high and reflected in the various policies, instruments and institutions that were established. Although a lot were done, much success could not be recorded which necessitated various legislations now in the SDGs. The efforts by Ghana to reduce sexual violence before 2015 are as follows;

##### 3.1.1 National Domestic Violence Policy (DV Policy, 2009)

This policy framework was implemented in 2009 by the Government of Ghana (GoG) through the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (now the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, MGCSP) and its subsidiaries. The overarching purpose of this policy framework is to establish a National Plan of Action (NPA) and a Secretariat that shall ensure effective

implementation of the Domestic Violence (DV) Act, 2007. The purpose of the NPA is to facilitate a smooth implementation of all the stated Acts, sections and sub-sections of the DV Act 2007 within the short term (2009) to long term (2026). In analyzing the effectiveness of the DV policy to reduce sexual violence, the interviewee from DOVVSU mentioned that;

*The legislation of the DV policy was timely, and its principal objectives are to reduce the frequency of all forms of violence in Ghana, to promote the safety and empowerment of victims, to protect victims, to enhance access to service and quality delivery to survivors, encourage the use of the justice system, promote efficiency through protocols and guidelines, promote stakeholders involvement in reducing violence in society, and promote cooperation and stakeholders engagements (DOVVSU, 2021)*

According to the policy brief, the aim of this policy is to “promote the survival, development and protection of women and children to achieve equal status for them in society” (National Domestic Violence Policy, 2009). This is in synch with the criteria of an effective policy according to the FST, because it is gender sensitive towards reducing violence against women and children who are deemed most vulnerable (Alkan and Tekmanlı, 2021). The interviewee from MGCSP asserted that;

*The regulatory principle of the DV policy is hinged on four broad prospective; protection, prevention, safety and service delivery; and one of the key strategies employed in this policy is stakeholders’ engagement and support in reducing all forms of violence in Ghana (MGCSP, 2021).*

### **3.1.1.2 Child and Family Welfare Policy (2014)**

Developed in 2014, this policy seeks to protect children from all forms of abuse and violence that happen within the family and society at large. Reports were made on some cruel treatments meted

out to many children in homes and schools, therefore through MGCSP, this policy was implemented to protect all children in Ghana from “corporal punishment, domestic violence, sexual abuse, sexual violence, exploitation, children living and/or working on the streets, early marriage, female genital mutilation/cutting and the trokosi system of ritual enslavement” (MGCSP, 2014). The interviewee explained that;

*A report made by PLAN Ghana (2009) indicated that about 14% of children in various schools have experienced some form of sexual abuse and shockingly, about 53% of the abuse happened in schools and 47% happened at home. This influenced the adoption of this policy framework which seeks to promote the wellbeing of children, prevent violence and protect children from exploitation (MGCSP, 2021).*

According to de Groot et al., (2018), sexual violence against children is quiet common and predominately through child marriage. In reducing such incidences, the interviewee asserted that;

*Plans have been made to ensure effective coordination at all levels in child care systems, to strengthen families to effectively deal with abuse, to improve upon the competence of various institutions that provide services for child victims, to review existing laws to meet standards, provide adequate resources to strengthen the child welfare system and constantly monitor and evaluate progress, growth and challenges (MGCSP, 2021).*

### **3.1.2 Instruments**

FST argue that violence at the international, regional, national and family level are all interconnected. This promotes the relevance of international instruments which are mostly the foundation of national laws and policies. Ghana has ratified both global and regional conventions which bar sexual and any form of violence. At the global level, the Universal Declaration of

Human Rights (1948) and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) are the principal instruments. At the regional level there are two main instruments; The African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights (ACHPR) and The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (Maputo Protocol). At the national level, the overarching instrument is the Domestic Violence Act, 2007. According to the interviewee from the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ);

*All ratified international treaties serve as substantive sources of national laws. The UDHR and others that prohibit all forms of violence influenced to a large extent national policies and laws that prohibit sexual and gender-based violence (CHRAJ, 2021).*

International instruments to a large extent have influenced the legislation of national policies and institutions with the mandate of eliminating all forms of violence in Ghana. This is in agreement with findings from Hannum (2016) who argues that being a signatory to an international convention translates into the willingness of that state to abide by its principles. The crises center manager of the Ark Foundation contributes that;

*Ratification of CEDAW and similar conventions by Ghana greatly influenced the legislation of the DV Act, 2007 and the DV policy which prohibits violence of any form. The importance of international treaties or conventions cannot be overemphasized in the context of reducing sexual violence in Ghana. (Ark Foundation, 2021).*

The importance of international instruments toward reducing sexual violence in Ghana is in line with arguments made by Appiah (2015) and Owusu and Agbemafle (2016) who opine that

domestic laws and policies which border on issues such as women representation and domestic violence were implemented after the ratification of various conventions.

**Table 1: Ghana's International Commitments to Combating Violence**

International Instruments	Ghana's Commitments	
	Signatory	Ratification
1. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights		1948
2. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979	17-07-1980	02-01-1986
3. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW OP) 1999	24-02-2000	
4. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) 1966		7-12-2000
5. The Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC)		
6. The Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women	1985	1985
7. The Vienna Declaration on Human Rights	1993	1993
8. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	1995	1995
9. The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) declaration	1994	1994
10. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR)	03-07-2004	24-01-1989
11. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 2000		
12. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) 1966		7-12-2000
13. The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People		
14. The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD)		04-01-1969

15. The International Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	1991	02-09-1990
16. The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (MWC) 1990		01-07-2003
17. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment – New York	10-12-1984	07-09- 20

Source: Government of Ghana Report to CEDAW committee 2016

### 3.1.3 Institutions

Institutions established before 2015 with the mandate to protect, ensure justice, educate and enact policies geared towards the reduction of incidences of violence and exploitation in Ghana are the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ).

#### 3.1.3.1 Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU)

Since its recreation in 2005, the unit has responded to over 180,000 cases through its offices and desks nationwide as a unit under the Criminal Investigations Department (CID). As the primary institution responsible for handling all domestic violence cases including sexual violence, it has contributed significantly to reducing sexual violence in Ghana through counseling, provision of medical needs and prosecution.

- **Counseling**

Counseling is an integral part of dealing with sexual violence. Section 24 (2) of the DV Act 2007 makes provision for counseling services to be provided for both victim and culprit, and in extreme

cases, psychiatric help for the culprit. Some officers double as counselors and provide service at no fee. The officer who served as the interviewee contributed that;

*Before victims are scheduled for counseling, they go through series of interviews with officers to ascertain their level of psychological need, and whether they would need counseling or not. Because just a few trained counselors are available at the department to attend to the needs of victims, and a handful of officers double as counselors as a result of accumulated experience overtime.”(DOVVSU, 2021).*

Although counseling is extremely important, most interviewees (victims and survivors) who have ever received counseling and support services from the department complained bitterly about their experiences. It was revealed that some victims wish they never reported their cases because the services they received were substandard and traumatizing. Below are some of their grievances;

Interviewee: *“counseling sessions are unnecessarily long and tedious because officers ask unending questions and I had to repeat myself most of the time. Each time I went there, I was attended to by a different officer and this meant I had to repeat my story all over again to different people every time. This was very embarrassing and discouraging. Before that, I had to join a long queue before I was attended to meanwhile my case was an emergency.”(Victim 4, 2021)*

Interviewee: *“the processes involved are long and complex, takes a lot of time which delay the relevance of the service. When I complained, I was told officers are busy working on other things as if my need for help was not equally important. Again, some officers are not very punctual at work and because they have dealt with several cases of sexual violence, nothing is new to them and this explains their attitude towards work.” (Victim 2, 2021)*

Interviewee: *“I virtually spent the whole day at their department on days that I was scheduled to meet an officer. I arrived and was told the officer in-charge of the case was unavailable. This experience is relatable to most people who know nobody at their offices.”* (Victim 3, 2021)

Interviewee: *“I needed counselling urgently but I was told my case is not as serious as I think. They explained that counselling was offered at the discretion of the officer in-charge and I would only get counselling services when the officer felt the need for it. I was physically and emotionally broken. I was willing to pay for it but I reconsidered because they would take the money but I would not have gotten professional help as I wanted.”* (Victim 1, 2021).

- **Basic and Medical Needs**

The DV Act (2007) enjoins the state to provide funds to cater for basic needs of victims such as feeding, accommodation, medical bills and transport whilst their cases are pending. Financial support given to victims helps reduce dependency on perpetrators. Agbitor (2012) noted that victims’ dependency on their perpetrators is enough grounds for further abuse, and this account for the lower reporting rate of abuse. Financial provision for victims is supposed to be made through DOVVSU but as at 2021, this provision in the Act is yet to be implemented. In December 2017, the government of Ghana was sued by Martin Kpebu, an attorney, for shirking this particular responsibility (Ghana Justice, 2018). The officer mentioned that;

*DOVVSU has no money to give to victims to cover medical expenses because there are no financial allocations for this. In fact, hospitals do not charge for the medicals but rather monies are taken by the medical doctors. Calls have been made on Ghana Medical Association (GMA) to forfeit taking money but they refuse, claiming that those monies cover transportation costs in situations where they have to serve as witnesses for the victims in court (DOVVSU, 2021).*

- **Prosecution**

One of the key responsibilities of DOVVSU is ensuring that justice is served through laid down legal procedures, which include but not limited to prosecution. The officer asserted that;

*Any person, including the victim or any third party can report cases of sexual violence to the police for the necessary action to be taken. The police in response will issue a warrant for the arrest of the perpetrator once the crime has been established beyond reasonable doubt. The aim for prosecution is to seek justice for victims.(DOVVSU, 2021).*

### **3.1.3.2 Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)**

One of the earliest institutions established to promote human rights, transparency and public accountability is the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice [CHRAJ], in the year 1993. It draws its mandate from the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the Human Rights and Administrative Justice Act, 1993 (Act 456), the Juvenile Justice Act, 2003 (Act 653), Children's Act 1998 (Act 560), Human Trafficking Act, 2005 (Act 694), the Whistleblower Act, 2006 (Act 720) and the CHRAJ (Investigation Procedure) Constitutional Instrument (CI 67).

As the national human rights institution, the Commission operates a quasi-judicial system to protect and uphold human rights by redress of grievances through systematic complaint channel. Within its mandate is the power to investigate all sexual-related offences that happen in government institutions, and over the years has been effective in handling cases of sexual violence.

The Commission, as part of its mandate undertake periodic sensitization and public education programs in institutions and public domain. It works closely with its stakeholders in monitoring and ensuring that human rights are upheld in government institutions to prevent incidences such as sexual abuse or harassments. They seek to achieve this mainly through capacity building and

training exercises for staff of the Commission as well as for government institutions and Civil Society Organizations. The interviewee mentioned that;

*“In our report to Parliament, it was recorded that during the reporting year, the Commission organized a total of 3,966 public education programs on fundamental human rights and freedoms nationwide covering topics such as harmful cultural practices (early and forced marriages), right to education and health, child neglect and parental responsibilities, child labor and domestic violence, which of course include sexual violence” (CHRAJ, 2021).*

As part of meeting the targets of SDG 16.1, the Commission has worked towards streamlining the definition of sexual violence and its penalty for all government institutions because there is none as at now. The interviewee further opined that;

*“The Commission is almost done with presenting the newly drawn anti-sexual harassment policy document for all government institutions in Ghana. This is the first of its kind because all existing anti-sexual harassment policies are for individual organizations. Once the policy is endorsed and operationalized, the Commission will make sure that it works effectively in Ghana. Complaints on the violation and infringement of human rights are always welcomed. Once the premise of the complaint exceeds our powers or depending on its nature and recommendations by the investigator or unit in charge, the case will either be referred to the immediate government institution set in place to handle such cases or we’ll collaborate with such institutions” (CHRAJ, 2021).*

### **3.1.3.3 Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP)**

Previously known as the Ministry of Women and Children’s Affairs, its primary objective is to formulate, coordinate, monitor and evaluate policies about social protection of all genders including children, in the context of the development of Ghana; which will ultimately lead to the achievement

of gender equality, equity, the empowerment of women and girls, promoting the survival and development of children, thus ensuring their rights.

As the institution that hosts the thirteen-member (13) Domestic Violence Secretariat, it is responsible for promoting gender parity, ensure protection of the vulnerable in society and promoting the sexual rights of all individuals as stated in the Domestic Violence Act 2007. The ministry is also mandated to provide protection for victims of violence, especially women and children who are deemed as the most vulnerable in society. It has various departments that collaborate to achieve its mandate, but the focus for this study is the Department of Social Development, formerly known as the Department of Social Welfare.

The Department of Social Welfare together with other state agencies collaborate to prevent all forms of violence, and have achieved quite a lot through their campaigns and advocacies. From time to time, they engage communities to sensitize them about violence against vulnerable groups and the importance of reporting incidences of all forms of violence. In fulfilling its mandate, the department has engaged about half a million people across two hundred and fifty (250) communities in almost all regions in Ghana. One of its recent achievement is the opening of the Orange Support Centre in March 2021 at the Domestic Violence Secretariat in Accra by the collaborative help of UNFPA and DOVVSU. This Support Centre is an initiative that allows victims of SGBV to report incidences to the appropriate authorities. Victims can either call a toll-free hotline (0800 111 222) or download a volunteer platform called Boame App to report cases of violence to receive psychosocial, legal, medical and physical support. Victims 3 and 1 mentioned that relevant help they received when they used the Boame App. The mentioned that;

“As a man, walking to DOVVSU or any police station to report sexual abuse is shameful, so when I saw the advertisement on TV about the Boame App, I quickly downloaded and reported my complaints. I was quickly attended to and received the help that I needed.” (Victim 3).

“I have never received such quick response from any help line as I did with the toll-free number. It was very convenient, but I still had to go to DOVVSU for further help.” (Victim 2).

One of its biggest challenge is lack of funds to adequately fund their shelters and keep it open for abused victims. At present, there are three shelters available but not currently operational due to unavailable funds to keep them running. These shelters are located in the Greater Accra, Upper West, and Volta region. Shelters are essential because they reduce incidence rate due to temporal separation of victims from their perpetrators. Shelter services also speed up healing process in cases where victims were traumatized as a result of the experience.

Table 2: Information about Institutions

Name of Institution	Year of Establishment	Primary Role	Challenges
Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Curbing all forms of sexual and gender-based violence</li> <li>• Promoting women empowerment</li> <li>• Social development</li> <li>• Promoting child’s right</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of financial resources</li> <li>• Lack of coordination between DV agencies</li> <li>• Cultural barriers</li> </ul>
Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ)	1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National human rights institution of Ghana</li> <li>• Ombudsman of Ghana administrative justice</li> <li>• Anti-corruption agency and ethics office for public service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protecting the identity of perpetrators</li> <li>• Complaints sometime fall their jurisdiction</li> </ul>

Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit	1988 but Rebranded in 2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Counselling services</li> <li>• Investigation and prosecution</li> <li>• Sensitization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under resourced (human capacity)</li> <li>• Lack of resources and logistics</li> <li>• Lack of compliance from victims and family members</li> </ul>
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Source: Author’s Compilation

### 3.2 Policies, Instruments and Institutions Implemented after Signing the SDGs

Post-SDGs, the findings reveal that three national policies and instruments have been legislated but no new institution has been established to deal with issues of sexual and its related violence. In agreement with Kaburi (2018), great strides have been made recently toward eliminating violence in Ghana and the findings are presented below;

#### 3.2.1 Policies

FST rejects the argument that women are always the victims and are inherently non-violent. Hence, the theory advocate for legislation that protect all gender, but most especially the most susceptible to violence, women. It was identified that all policies that were legislated after 2015 recognize both men and women as susceptible to violence and advocate for measures to reduce incidences. These policies are the National Gender Policy, Child and Family Welfare Operational Plan and the Five-Year Strategic Plan for Gender Statistics.

##### 3.2.1.1 National Gender Policy (NGP, 2015)

The sub-theme of the NGP is mainstreaming gender equality and women’s empowerment into Ghana’s development efforts to accelerate growth and development for all people. Ghana has made great strides towards promoting and expanding gender inclusion in socio-economic, political and cultural domains. This policy framework serves as a comprehensive national response towards

women empowerment and gender inclusion towards all areas without borders. The evidences of the preparedness towards promoting gender development and sustainable growth are apparent in various existing frameworks in the forms of policies, enactments, strategies and commitments, and the NGP serves a national machinery to consolidate them all. The head of gender unit of UNFPA on the relevance on this policy towards achieving SDG 16.1 asserted that;

*“SGBV against women is one of the identified problems which ought to be eliminated to promote growth and sustainable development among both women and men. This policy promotes strategies to eliminate all forms of discrimination and inequality faced by people in society. The policy guide also identifies challenges to women empowerment and gender equality and its framework was drawn from global, regional and national instruments geared towards gender equality.”* (UNFPA, 2021).

The strategic outline for the NGP towards eliminating SGBV in Ghana is to provide adequate funding for all mandated institutions, assist the legislation process of the national policy and plan of action, launch shelters for victims of SGBV, and collaborate with various stakeholder such as DOVVSU, DSW, and Human Rights Courts.

### **3.2.1.2 Child and Family Welfare Operational Plan (2015 - 2019)**

The Child and Family Welfare system policy was legislated in 2014, and its operational guide, the Child and Family Welfare Operational Plan was implemented in 2015. The operational plan of the welfare system policy is to give clarity and coherence to the policy framework in its implementation and rollout by the various stakeholders identified. It is to ensure that the operational stage is streamlined to encourage effectiveness, accountability, monitoring and evaluation of the success of the policy framework. Attached, is the cost component of the entire

framework, C 38.5 million, as the budget needed for the four year period to warrant a smooth rollout of the framework, to prevent child abuse, violence, exploitation and harmful cultural practices.

The first objective of the child and family welfare system is to protect every child from all kinds of violence and abuse, and this is the responsibilities of families, community heads, chiefs, traditional and youth leaders. The second objective is to ensure collaboration of all stakeholders in the fight for the wellbeing of all children. The third objective is to ensure effective response to situations of abuse and violence, and this could be achieved by building the confidence of children and adolescents to report cases of abuse and exploitations. The next objective is to build capacity of all institutions that are mandated to deal with issues of violence and abuse across every region in Ghana. Reformation of existing laws and policies to create a harmonious plan of action for the prevention of child abuse is the next objective and the operation plan is to revise the legal structure and redress system towards child abuse. Proposals were made towards the amendment of the Children's Act 1998 (Act 560) and the Juvenile Justice Act (2003). The last objective is to ensure availability of human and technical capacities to achieve all objectives.

### **3.2.1.3 Five-Year Strategic Plan for Gender Statistics (2018 -2022)**

This policy framework is to create statistics on men, women and children in Ghana in order to fill gender gaps that have been created over the years, and to accelerate decision making on the basic needs, wants and expectations of all people. This data collection policy is to ensure the availability of gender statistics to influence policy directives in mainstreaming gender issues to eliminate gender inequalities and disparities. In all levels of development, it is important to ascertain the figures of men and women involved, their diverse needs and challenges, and their priorities and preference in order to make informed decisions that will influence lives in a positive direction.

This is in conformity with FSS. The policy has the capacity to fill data generation gaps on gender statistics and guarantee availability of data for effective decision making on gender-related issues.

The framework has five strategic objectives; to make recommendations on how best to fill gender inequality gaps, revise existing trends on the use of available gender-related information, improve the use of gender-related information for policy making, to use gender statistics to influence agenda setting, and to bridge gendered gaps using improved methods of data collection. “The main objective of the five-year Strategic Plan for Gender Statistics is to improve upon gender statistics and to accelerate its’ production and utilization for the formulation of policies, programmes and activities to promote, balance development, gender equality and women’s empowerment through the bridging of gender inequality gaps” (MGCSP, 2018).

The framework of this policy is geared towards the direction that “without identifying gender differences, it will not be possible to devise programmes to meet the specific needs of men and women, boys and girls and address existing inequalities. The process of identification and distribution of tasks, activities and rewards associated with the sexual division of labor as well as the relative positions of women and men is important” (MGCSP, 2018). The MGCSP in collaboration with GSS and funding from the World Bank will collate national data on various genders to aid gendered decision making.

### **3.2.2 Instruments**

The adoption of the SDGs in Ghana was spontaneous because the UN conducted various consultation services with the government of Ghana and received prompt feedback to ensure the willingness of the government to commit to the targets and goals of the SDGs (Bexell and Jonsson, 2020). As such, the SDGs aligns with the short, medium and long-term strategic development

goals of the country (National Development Planning Commission (NDPC, 2018). The national development frameworks that supplement the achievement of SDG 16.1 are the 7th Government of Ghana/UNFPA Country Programme (2018-2022), the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (2014-2017), and the President’s Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024).

### 3.2.2.1 7th Government of Ghana/UNFPA Country Programme, (2018-2022)

The Government of Ghana together with the UNFPA planned a five-year (2018-2022) comprehensive strategic framework aimed at improving sexual and reproductive healthcare, gender and youth, gender equality and women empowerment, and population and development. The UNFPA is the principal contributor for this framework and has totaled an estimate of US\$ 20.4 million over the entire period of the program.

Table 3: Funding for Ghana/UNFPA Country Programme

<b>Strategic Plan Outcome Areas</b>		<b>Regular Resource (million dollars)</b>	<b>Other Resource (million dollars)</b>	<b>Total (million dollars)</b>
Outcome 1	Sexual and reproductive health	0.5	7.3	7.8
Outcome 2	Gender and youth	3.1	1.7	4.8
Outcome 3	Gender equality and women empowerment	1.5	2.96	4.4
Outcome 4	Population development	1.5	0.7	2.2
Program Coordination and Assistance		1.2	-	1.2
<b>Total</b>		<b>7.8</b>	<b>12.6</b>	<b>20.4</b>

Source: United Nations Population Fund Country programme document for Ghana.

The head of Gender Unit who served as the interviewee from UNFPA mentioned that;

*“This strategic framework is to reduce all forms of sexual and gender-based violence that are mostly perpetrated against women. The intervention will be channeled to building capacity to prevent, protect and provide adequate responses to all sexual and gender-based violence offences in Ghana; to increase advocacy in women and girls’ empowerment, inclusion and development of policies that promote gender equality”* (UNFPA, 2021).

At the end of 2022, the program seeks to “strengthened national capacity to advance gender equality; prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence and harmful practices; and promote women and girls’ empowerment, including in humanitarian settings” (UNDP, UNFPA and UNOPS, 2017).

### **3.2.2.2 Ghana Coordinated Programme of Economic Social Policies (2017 – 2024).**

This policy framework is the national instrument that directs the human, social, economic, government, environmental and infrastructural development of Ghana from the year 2017 to 2024. It defines the development needs of Ghana and outlines the processes through which the aligned goals could be achieved by the government. Gender related matters are key components of the policy framework, and Ghana seeks to improve upon its existing gender interventions to further promote gender parity within all sectors. Over the years, statutory frameworks have helped established gender-centered institutions and policies to ensure that women and girls do not suffer any form of abuse, to criminalize the act and also to promote women participation in governance. Regardless of the existing frameworks little improvement have been made towards reducing sexual and gender-based violence.

To achieve more, the policy framework announces the creation of gender desks in all government establishments to mainstream gender issues and not left at the periphery as it has been in the past. This seeks to reduce all forms of sexual and its related abuses and harassment that happen at the workplace. Another policy measure that will be implemented within the stated period (2017 -2024) according to the framework is the passage of the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill and the Domestic Workers' Bill. These bills when passed into laws will promote women participation and further reduce sexual and its related violence through legislation. It further elaborates that “the overall goal of women’s empowerment policies is to attain gender equality and equity in political, social and economic development systems and outcomes ... by strengthening GOG funding to institutions responsible for gender issues”. Halfway through the timeframe of the policy framework (2017-2024), both bills, the Affirmative Action (Gender Equality) Bill and the Domestic Workers' Bill is yet to be passed. Existing gender institutions still face conventional challenges since its creation and more is yet to be done fulfil the demands of the policy.

### **3.2.2.3 The Ghana Medium-term National Development Policy Framework (Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda, (GSGDA 11, 2014 -2018).**

GSGDA is an expression which was developed to provide a comprehensive policy guideline to the economic and social development of the country from 2014 to 2018. Although developed in 2014, it was operationalized in 2015. It tackles issues that ranges from poverty alleviation, gender equality, accelerating economic and human growth, creating employment opportunities, technological growth and environmental sustainability, which are all geared towards “Accelerating a Better Ghana Agenda”.

In areas of gender disparity and inequality, the policy framework identified some core challenges such as inconsistencies and disintegrated government social policies within institutions which lead

to facsimile in policies, interventions and service delivery. Other challenges include enforcement and effectiveness of successfully implemented programs, lack of consistent data for forecasting and planning, and lastly poor monitoring and evaluation. In remedying the problem, a medium-term policy was put together geared towards protecting women and children from sexual and its related violence to form a comprehensive national gender policy with various agencies who have oversight responsibility of gender protection. The policy sought to achieve this through “physical, social, emotional and psychological development; establishment of a well resources continuum of care services at all levels for prevention of, and reintegration of victims of violent abuse and exploitation; and the development and adoption of a National Child Protection Policy” (GoG, 2014).

Sexual and health rights were identified as key components to the development of Ghana. The right for women to make informed decisions on their preferred method of contraception was acknowledged as a principle step towards national progress. Therefore family planning was purposed to be mainstreamed into national policies to ensure accessibility, affordability and availability, especially to women, youth and adolescents.

### **3.2.3 Institutions**

From 2015 till 2021, no new public institution has been established in addition to the already existing ones to deal with issues of sexual violence. Various interviewees from both private and public institutions admitted there are enough organizations in Ghana to deal with sexual and all other forms of violence because the services they provide are enough to empower victims to contribute to the fight against sexual violence. Ansara and Michelle (2010) also emphasize this assertion. Head of Gender Unit from UNFPA asserted that;

*“Ghana has enough institutions to deal with issues of sexual violence but the problem lies with funding, compliance and public education. DOVVSU and MGCSP are enough to deal with all issues of sexual violence if not for inadequate funding. A typical example is DOVVSU, which is poorly funded under the Ghana Police service. Due to our partnership, we identified that sometimes subventions delay for three or four months but the government expect employees to work. Although subventions for their work delay most of the time, officers receive their salary at the end of every month; paying salaries but not providing subventions for the unit to function properly.” (UNFPA, 2021).*

### **3.3 Contributions of International and Non-governmental Organizations**

From the era of the MDGs, it was noticed that development goals can be better achieved through partnership, inclusiveness and consultations (UN, 2015). Ghana’s partnership with IGOs and NGOs has yielded much results in reducing incidences of sexual violence, and according to Darkwa and Prah (2015) most states in developing countries expect IGOs and NGOs to meet the excess demands shirked by government. Outlined below are the contributions;

#### **3.3.1 United Nations Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)**

As one of the UN agencies, its mandate falls within protecting the rights and welfare of children all over the world. Its contribution towards reducing sexual violence such as rape has been tremendous. In partnership with the Judicial Service of Ghana and the Denmark government, ten new juvenile courts have been established all over Ghana. This is to ensure that child victims of sexual violence are given fair trials and justice. The juvenile courts have been established in the circuit courts in Dormaa Ahenkro, Ashanti Akropong, Damongo, Nalerigu, Techiman, Gaoso, Bibiani, Kumasi, and two in Accra.

According to the agency, “the ten new child-friendly courts are important steps to increasing access to justice for children and women and encourage them to report violations. It is also critical for perpetrators to be brought to trial and be sentenced. Sexual gender-based violence is a crime. It ruins the lives of children and women. Let’s all join efforts in ending these serious violations. Let’s protect children and enable them to realize their dreams.” (UNICEF, 2021)

### 3.3.2 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The UNFPA, as one of the development partners of Ghana has a mandate that centers on maternal health and sexual and reproductive health of young people. Their key targets are women and girls, and their partner agencies are GoG and its agencies, CSOs, NGOs and Individuals. Their mandate is driven by the SDGs, the UNFPA strategic plan and the National Development Plan of Ghana. According to the interviewee;

*“The organization has three key transformative goals (three zeros) based on their strategic plan. The last zero is to ensure that all forms of sexual and gender-based violence is totally eliminated through developing policies, capacity building, data generation and service delivery in Ghana. As such, the organization helped in developing the gender policy and the child marriage strategic framework. The most recent of all is the policy frameworks that engages older and matured students in the adult education schools across the country. A curriculum has been specially designed to meet their educational needs on their sexual and reproductive rights and it is tailored to meet the structures of the informal education sector of Ghana”* (UNFPA, 2021).

With respect to capacity building and service delivery, the organization has successfully mainstreamed sexual violence as a course into the police and military training schools. The interviewee explained that;

*“The course is to ensure that every person who successfully passes from the training school to the field has some basic knowledge about sexual and its related violence, whether the person will be posted to DOVVSU or not. As motivation to take the course seriously, award schemes have been instituted for best graduating student in SGBV. Also staff at the MGCSP have been trained to help them provide standard and quality service for victims. With service delivery, we in collaboration with MGCSP opened the Orange Support Center, which is a technological integrated system for victims to report cases of SGBV and receive help through a mobile app called Boame App or a toll free line.” (UNFPA, 2021).*

Data generation has been identified as one of the most effective ways to reduce sexual violence, and UNFPA is funding this project. Data provides comprehensive basis for legislation and decision making, which has direct influence in reducing sexual violence. The interviewee further explained that;

*“Previously, all cases that were reported to DOVVSU were written on papers and filed on papers. Subsequently, an electronic data system has been developed to help in data collection at least at the regional level, which will all be transferred to Accra for policy and decision making. This will help us determine the national figures on case such as rape, defilement, child marriage, and all other related forms to formulate robust policies and programs. Also with the MGCSP, we have donated some computers and provided internet services for them to help coordinate with other agencies whose mandate fall within sexual and other related violence or abuse” (UNFPA, 2021).*

### **3.3.3 The Ark Foundation**

The Ark Foundation is a Christian Mission NGO that was established in 1999, and draws its mandate from the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, the Children’s Act, the Criminal Offence Code

1960 and the Domestic Violence Act 2007. They provide passionate care services through counselling, legal services, skill acquisition training, shelter, public education and sometimes financial donations to victims. Its core focus is on women and children, and is recognized as one of the key organizations that pushed for the passage of the Domestic Violence Act, 2007.

The most important provision offered by this NGO is shelter services because as at 2021 it is the only institution that provides shelter services for abused women and their children. The crises center manager who served as the interviewee and Victim 1 opined that;

*“Social welfare only offer shelter services for abused children but not adults. Others are being built but they are not yet operational. The Ark shelter is the only facility in Ghana that accommodates both abused women and their children. This is because abused women always come together with their children. The shelter was closed in 2016 due to financial constraints but was reopened in 2018 and it’s still in operation today.”*(Ark Foundation, 2021).

*“I had no idea there was shelter that accommodates mother and children. I needed to leave home because I was always forced to have sex and ended up treating STDs, and refusal to have sex with my husband always led to physical abuse. Had I known, I would have left earlier but I stayed to gather enough money to rent a new place.”*(Victim 1, 2021).

The NGO also organize training sessions and skill acquisition programs for officers and victims respectively. During skill acquisition sessions, beneficial are educated on the effects and impact of SGBV on the victim, community and nation at large. The interviewee further explained that;

*“The mission throughout its existence has organized numerous training service for DOVVSU and social welfare officers on how to respond to cases and survivors of sexual abuse. The mission in the past had a training institute for women called Women in Law Institute where people enrolled*

*and were taken through courses in decision and policy making, governance and politics participation. Also, the mission has given public education on sexual violence to over a million people in Ghana. These public education lectures are mostly done in schools, mosques, churches, markets and workplaces. Young people who have benefited from these sensitization activities are encouraged to carry the mandate of creating awareness where ever they are on preventing and reporting cases of sexual violence” (Ark Foundation, 2021).*

### **3.4 Conclusion**

Policies, instruments and institutions are mostly intertwined because policies are influenced by instruments, and institutions are governed by policies. Efforts made by Ghana to reduce sexual violence during the MDGs are quite different in the SDGs. During MDGs, government put in much efforts in creating institutions and legislating policies that criminalize sexual violence due to its international commitments. Currently, much efforts are geared towards contributing financial resources to finance already existing institutions and making policies that will make existing frameworks function. IGOs and NGOs have contributed significantly through the provision of financial and legal services, counselling, public education, training programs and provision of shelter for abused women and their children.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This is the concluding chapter of the entire study. It highlights key findings according to the research objectives, gives a conclusion and make some recommendations towards reducing sexual violence in Ghana by 2030.

#### 4.1 Summary of Findings

Sexual violence is a Stone Age problem in society that cannot be completely eliminated but can be drastically reduced by legislating effective policies and instruments. The summary of the entire research is presented according to the research objectives, and they are as follows;

##### 4.1.1 Policies, Institutions and Instruments that Existed before the Implementation of SDG 16.1 in Ghana

It has been established that legislations are extremely important according to FST and proof of its effectiveness is its specificity and ability to address peculiar needs and challenges of each gender. The study found that the two most suitable policies that were legislated before the SDGs to reduce sexual violence in Ghana are the DV Policy (2009) and the Child and Family Welfare Policy (2014). Also, it was noted that Ghana is signatory to seventeen (17) international instruments that promote human rights and condemn abuse, violence and discrimination. With respect to institutions, the study identified three principal institutions; DOVVSU, CHRAJ and MGCSP. These institutions are responsible for providing services to victims, prosecution perpetrators, among others

Again, the study identified that some policies that were legislated before 2015 have not been reviewed. Most importantly, the DV Act (2007) which is the principal instrument has not been reviewed to meet current trends of sexual violence. The definition of sexual violence as stated in Article 1 (ii) does not adequately define the act as stipulated in ratified international conventions, especially with the definition of rape. Also, some of its Articles, from 24 to 34 and its itemized provisions are not operational. This is because as at now, there is no established fund as stated in those Articles. Also, all institutions that were established before 2015 are under resourced, and DOVVSU is understaffed. These shortfalls reduce their capacity and effectiveness, and explain the complaints made by all victims on service delivery at these institutions.

#### **4.1.2 Policies, Institutions and Instruments Implemented in Ghana to Reduce Sexual Violence after Signing the SDGs.**

The findings of the study show that policies that were legislated after 2015 are the National Gender Policy, Child and Family Welfare Operational Plan and the Five-Year Strategic Plan for Gender Statistics. The instruments that were legislated are the 7th Government of Ghana/UNFPA Country Programme (2018-2022), the Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (2014-2017), and the President's Coordinated Programme of Economic and Social Development Policies (2017-2024).

The study found that the above mentioned instruments and policies are more comprehensive and gender inclusive as compared to before, and they identify men, women and children as victims of abuse in general and solutions are tailored to their specific needs. Although much attention is paid to women and children in a whole, men are not entirely left out. Old methods have not yielded much results, therefore new ways have been adopted through child sensitization and socialization to help children understand their basic sexual rights, respect for the sexual rights of others and

reporting incidences of abuse as early as possible. Parents, schools and communities are encouraged to educate children on sex and sexual rights and involve children in decision making and resolutions.

Notably, no new institution has been created after signing the SDGs towards reducing sexual violence in Ghana. The study found that training for officers at existing institutions such as MGCSP, DOVVSU and CHRAJ have intensified in the last few years. Also, the study identified that public education by these institutions have increased despite the fact that they are under resources. Collectively, these institutions have served over three million Ghanaians through advertisements, service provision, awareness creation and public lectures.

#### **4.1.3 Contributions of IGOs and NGOs towards Reducing Sexual Violence in Ghana**

The study identified that without the support and efforts of international and non-governmental organizations, there is very little government could have achieved in mainstreaming issues of sexual violence as a crime in Ghana. Over a period of twenty-one years (2000 – 2021), the contributing efforts of IGOs together with NGOs supersede the various efforts of government. This is because, policies and institutions are run with resources and government invest very little in gender issues.

The study found that the most important component IGOs like UNICEF and UNFPA bring on board is financial resources since they do not provide direct services to victims. The budget of UNFPA alone towards zero sexual violence, gender inclusion and women empowerment in Ghana from 2018 to 2022 is US \$ 20.4 million. This money has been used in the opening of the Orange Support Center, renovating shelters operated by the MGCSP for abused children, donating office equipment to DOVVSU and MGCSP, funding a national violence database and organizing period

training for officers from state institutions on best practices with respect to providing services for victims and perpetrators. UNICEF on the other hand has built ten child friendly courts across Ghana to prosecute child abusers. Non-governmental organizations such as Ark Foundation also plays an important role, as the only institution in Ghana that operates a functioning shelter service for abused women and their children.

The study found that UNFPA has successfully advocated for the inclusion of gender and its related issues into syllabus of the police and military training schools as a guarantee that officers who successfully pass out to join the services have some basic knowledge on how best to deal with victims and cases of violence. Again, adults who are enrolled in informal adult education programs have curriculums designed to meet their needs and understanding on sexual and all other forms of violence. The Ark Foundation also coordinates skill acquisition programs for survivors of sexual violence to equip them with life surviving skills which also ensures financial liberation from their abusers. The quality of services provided by officers towards victims have the potential to reduce incidences of sexual violence but unfortunately, institutions randomly factor that into their budgets, therefore, IGOs and NGOs have taken up that responsibility.

Lastly, NGOs effectively contribute their quota through counselling services, provision of shelters, legal services, skill acquisition trainings, public education and sometimes financial donations to victims. They augment service provision because government institutions cannot meet demands of victims due to numbers. The Ark Foundation alone has reached out to over a million Ghanaians through public education and provision of free counselling services to traumatized victims. The IGOs have also organized public education forums for young girls and adolescents and training sessions for officers from DOVVSU and MGCSP.

## 4.2 Conclusion

Reducing sexual violence is one of the many SDG targets for every UN member state to achieve. Different countries have legislated various policies, strengthened existing institutions and taken initiatives towards this target. Ghana made commitment towards reducing sexual violence by 2030 after signing the SDGs, as such, various efforts geared towards reducing sexual violence through policies, instruments and institutions were assessed. Also, contributions of IGOs and NGOs towards reducing sexual violence were evaluated.

The study concludes that existing institutions, policies and legal frameworks in Ghana are enough to reduce sexual violence, but the problem lies with commitment and adequate financial allocation. Although new policies and instruments have been legislated which are more comprehensive than those legislated before 2015, nothing has been done towards enforcing these new policies to make them operational.

With the help of IGOs and NGOs tremendous success have been realized, and should they continue on same tangent Ghana will be able to reduce sexual violence to the minimum by 2030. This is because sexual and gender-based violence has gained public attention in these past few years through public education and awareness creation. Both men and women are sensitized periodically through the collaborative efforts of government and its development partners to reduce existing under reported figures which stand at 27% for females and 10.3% for males. Streamlining gender issues in Ghana has the capacity to create sustainable environment where basic human rights are promoted towards national growth and development.

## 4.3 Recommendation

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study

- Government should review and restructure some policies and institutions that were implemented or established before 2010. This is because some of them do not meet current standards and best practices. Legislating new complex policies and frameworks are important but reviewing existing ones is equally important because they provide the foundation upon which new ones are built.
- Timely financial allocations and subventions paid by government to institutions are central to the work of these institutions because they keep the wheels running to enable them to function as expected. Government pays workers in these institutions but provides very little to enable them to do the work they are being paid for. Delaying subventions translate into rendering poor and unsatisfactory service to victims which in the long run yield no effective outcomes. Government should therefore pay subventions on time, increase capacity of staff, expand their working spaces and provide modern equipment to help in their line of duty.
- Gender-related initiatives and policies should encompass men, women and children because gender is not synonymous with women. Government, IGOs and NGOs should factor adults and young men into their programs and initiatives geared toward eliminating SGBV in Ghana. Most initiatives have women and children only taking the center stage especially during financial allocations. Although women and children are the most vulnerable, there are always exceptions. Men should be given equal attention and care relating to issues of sexual violence because they are equally susceptible.
- Government should cut unnecessary red tape and bureaucratic processes that slow down progress of development partners. IGOs and NGOs cannot operate without permission from government and most times, their progress are stalled due to non-compliance and

bureaucratic processes from state institutions. Some government officers are not cooperative enough on the realization that subject matters are from IGOs and NGOs because they classified such as extra work with no direct financial benefits which triggers lackadaisical attitude in offering help. Government should therefore lay some simple procedures to make the process less cumbersome.

- Providing shelters for abused individuals is one of the most effective ways of breaking the cycle of sexual violence in homes. Shelters are one of the safest temporary homes for extremely traumatized victims, but unfortunately, there is only one state-owned shelter that is not functioning. Therefore, individuals and corporate organizations can build and also support shelters as part of their contribution or corporate social responsibility towards society. All men and women who are under constant threat of sexual violence in their respective homes are either to rent new places or go back to their abusers. Most victims of sexual violence do not have emergency funds to reallocate and mostly go back to their abusers creating a cycle of abuse.
- Existing gender-related policies should influence national agenda and government's direction. Mostly, gender issues are not considered as "hard politics" and are mostly at the periphery of governance. NDPC should ensure that political parties align their gender policies towards existing frameworks and the winning party should be held accountable for the promises. Also, presidential debates organized by the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) must include practical ways each party seeks to eliminate sexual and various forms of violence in Ghana.

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## **E. Interviews**

Head of Gender Unit, UNFPA Ghana, 26<sup>th</sup> October, 2021

Crises Center Manager, Ark Foundation 11<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Interviewee DOVVSU, 6<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Interviewee, CHRAJ, 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Interviewee, MGCSP, 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Victim 1, 8<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Victim 2, 10<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Victim 3, 14<sup>th</sup> November, 2021

Victim 3, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2021.

**APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1**

**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INSTITUTIONS**

**Background Information**

1. Self-introduction

- Name
- Position
- Working years and experience

**Knowledge about the Institution**

2. What is the mandate of the institution?
3. What are the relevant laws/legal framework that guide the institution to achieve its mandate?
4. Are existing protocols sufficient to execute the mandate?
5. What are some of the challenges faced in implementing the mandate?

**Knowledge about SDG 16.1**

6. What is the institution doing specifically to fulfil the obligations under SDG 16.1?
7. In your view, are they enough to reduce incidences of sexual violence by 2030?

**Service Provision**

8. Has there been changes in service delivery to meet the target of SDG 16.1?
9. What specific challenges do you face in service provision?

**Expectations and Recommendations**

10. In your view, are existing policies and institutions effective enough to reduce sexual violence by 2030?
11. If no, what more could be done?



## INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE

### Background Information

1. Can you introduce yourself?
  - Sex
  - Age
  - Marital Status
  - Level of education
  - Occupation
2. Who do you live with?
  - Alone
  - With nuclear family
  - With extended family
3. Where did you grow up?

### Knowledge about Victims

4. Have you ever experienced sexual violence, and how frequent is/was it?
5. When did the incidence happen? (Whether past or current experiences)
6. What was/is the nature of the sexual abuse?
7. Who was/is the perpetrator?
8. What steps did you take knowing you have been sexually abused? (Open-ended question)

### Help Services for Victims

9. Did you seek help after the incidence? (From state-owned institutions or otherwise)
- If yes, what form of help did you get?
  - If no, why?
10. How responsive was the institution and how useful was the service you received? (Open-ended question)
11. Will you encourage a colleague or friend to report similar incidence to this institution?
12. To the best of your knowledge has there been any changes in service delivery from 2015?

### **Expectations and Recommendations**

13. What are the biggest obstacles in getting justice?
14. What should be changed or improved upon to enhance the work of the institution?

