



## An Examination of Factors Responsible for the Prevalence of Child Rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria

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### Abstract:

This study examines the underlying factors responsible for the prevalence of child rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria, as well as its effects and the efforts made by both government and communities to address the menace. The objectives of the study are to: explore the causes of child rape, assess its effects, evaluate institutional responses, and suggest measures to curb the problem. The study is anchored on the Routine Activity Theory developed by Felson (1986), which posits that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian converge. This theoretical lens helps to explain how everyday patterns and lack of guardianship contribute to the vulnerability of children. A mixed-methods approach was adopted, comprising both quantitative (questionnaires) and qualitative (in-depth interviews) data collection across the three senatorial districts of Jigawa State. A total of 999 respondents completed questionnaires, while 12 individuals participated in interviews. Data analysis involved the use of SPSS for quantitative data and thematic analysis for qualitative responses. Findings revealed that child rape is highly prevalent in Jigawa State, with key factors including parental negligence (95.0%), lack of punitive measures (91.0%), street hawking (83.3%), and poor law enforcement. The consequences for victims are severe, ranging from psychological trauma to unwanted pregnancies and death. The study concludes that child rape remains a critical issue fueled by social and institutional failures. It recommends stronger legal enforcement, improved parental supervision, public sensitization, and community involvement as key strategies for mitigating the problem.

**Keywords:** Child Rape, Factors Responsible, Jigawa State, Prevalence of Child Rape, Nigeria.

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## 1.0 Introduction

Nigeria is engulfed by different forms of social problems that affect the social wellbeing of its citizens. Prominent among such problems is sexual abuse particularly against children. Today, children are sexually molested with the records of its persistence in most societies worldwide (Kemisola and Olawale, 2017). Rape is one of the most pervasive forms of violation against female in which the perpetrators uses sex to inflict humiliation on the victim or exert power and control over the victim. Child rape deprives a society the opportunities of developing its citizens' full potential and benefiting from such talent for the needed manpower necessary for national development as children who have been sexually abused experiences anxiety, depression, and lack of human connection among others. There is also a slight tendency for children who have been sexually abused to become child abusers themselves as that is their early experience which they may consider normal and appropriate.

Today, the prevalence of child rape in many parts of the country is alarming and becoming a threat to health and life of children. Child rape has become a cankerworm that is thriving and deepening its roots at an alarming rate in the society with its reports appearing in the national dailies. Moreover, child rape is believed to be one of the most underreported crimes which make the perpetrators escape apprehension and prosecution by the criminal justice system (U.S Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice statistics, 1997). Accordingly, children are sexually molested and raped by persons known to them who shamefully take undue advantage of such familiarities (Udekwe, 2013). However, the issue of child rape in any form ought to be put to an end; to ensure that all live in peace and harmony in society with a focus on the protection of the rights of children as one of the main focus of the society and growth of its citizens. Hence, this study examined the factors responsible for the prevalence of child rape with a view to proffer workable solutions that will address the problem.

There have been some researches on the topic of child rape, such as Udekwe's (2013) "Sexual Abuse among the Adolescents in Nigeria: Religious Implications and the Way Forward" and Kemisola & Olawale's (2017) "Rape and Sexual Violence against the Girl-Child Securing the Future through Good Governance in Nigeria". But to the best of the researchers' knowledge, none of the previous studies was conducted in Jigawa State, while there is increasing media reporting on child rape in the State. This is why the researchers were motivated to conduct the present study in order to fill the knowledge gap on the problem in the study area.

### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Explore the factors responsible for the prevalence of child rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria.
2. Find out the effects of child rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria.
3. Assess governments' and community efforts in addressing child rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria.
4. Suggest measures that will help in addressing the menace of child rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria.

## 2.0 Literature Review

This section present the review of related literature on child rape issues. Routine activity theory was also reviewed to explain the issue in question.

### 2.1 Conceptual Explanation of Child Rape

The concept of rape has been define and interpreted in different ways by different scholar

and organizations. According to UCR, rape refers to the carnal knowledge of a female, forcibly and against her will. The UCR definition excluded many sex offenses currently considered criminal in most jurisdictions, including those involving oral and anal sexual penetration, penetration with objects or body parts other than the penis, rape of males by males and by females, incest, rape of victims unable to give consent because of youth, disability, or drugs, and other types of offenses. In 2012, the UCR definition was changed to “the penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.”

In view of the foregoing definition of rape, Chukwuma (2013), described rape as unlawful behavior or action such as making a child touch, suck or caress one’s private parts to derive sexual pleasure. Arrigo (2006) define child rape as the penetration of a minor (child) through coercion or deceitful means. This act usually occurs when the victims are not capable of protecting themselves against such victimization. On the other hand, France Code P’enal (nd) defines Child rape as sexual penetration of a child through four kinds of force: “Any act of sexual penetration, whatever its nature, committed against a child by violence, constraint, threat or surprise. Accordingly, Ratican (1992) defines child rape as sexual intercourse between a child and an adult or older child, where the child’s participation is obtained through seduction or coercion. Child rape has significant negative and pervasive psychological impact on its victims.

The American Psychiatric Association, (2013) described child rape as sexual intercourse involving a child with a view of having sexual gratification to the perpetrator. Child rape includes activities such as penetration, incest and sodomy. It also includes other contact exploitation of a child by another person by using force, tricks, enticement, threat, or pressure. Literally, the possible effects of child rape include pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection. In some cases stains of blood on the legs or the child’s underwear; some children after the ugly experience find it difficult to walk, sit down or urinate. Some have pain or itching, in the genital area or bite marks to thighs and genital area.

## 2.2 Causes of Child Rape

Child rape is attributed to factors, such as lax rape laws, myths about sex, influence of drugs and alcohol, parental negligence, and loneliness, undue advantage. Firstly, the laxity of law against the rapist enables the heinous crime to continue with impunity since many of them have not been caught talk less of being punished. The laws in Nigeria lack implementation, they only appeared inside the paper. Reports of the rape to authorities concern do not guarantee redress or punishment of the perpetrators. This is because rape perpetuates powerful mythologies which make it difficult to prosecute rapists without evidence of physical injury from the victim, corroborating eye witnesses or other difficult evidence.

Secondly, the myth about the girls is that they are bound to have small breast, experience early menopause, painful menstruation and painful nipples when breast feeding their babies. Coupled with above myth is a myth that if the HIV infected men have sex with a virgin, they can be cured of AIDS (Garland, 2003). This myth has lured many men with HIV and AIDS to rape innocent girls in the society as a solution to their problem. Thirdly, people under the influence of drugs are prone to many criminalities which are mostly against persons. Child rape can be triggered through the use of alcohol and other related drug that induce sexual desires. Thus, alcohol and other related substance played a noticeable role in inducing certain types of sexual violence especially against children (Miczec, et al., 1993). However, Children find it more difficult to protect and guide themselves in the face of drunken opponents who might sexually attack them.

On the fourth factor (parental negligence), Kemisola and Olawale (2017) stated that

parental negligence is strong factor that predispose children to so many dangers. Some parents do carelessly handle their children by leaving them to stay with neighbours or allowing other close relations to take care of them even outside their sight thus increasing their vulnerability to rape and other sexual violence. Accordingly Omorodion, (1998) argues that Children from poor family may have less parental supervision when not in school, since their mothers may also be at work and unable to give them the necessary care. However, the children themselves may be working or hawking on the street and thus vulnerable to sexual exploitation.

Fifthly, most of the rape cases have taken place where the victims were observed to be alone or were found alone in isolated environment. Children playing in an isolated place or in school usually experience sexual assault by elderly; they could however be tricked into or be exposed to forceful sexual intercourses. However, mostly if not often, loneliness greatly facilitates the circumstances of child rape and sexual attacks (Kemisola and Olawale, 2017). This implies that children left alone without care giver may be vulnerable to sexual victimization especially by aged person who might be relatives or neighbours. Lastly, some adults also do take undue advantage over children and rape them or sexually harassed them. Some of these cases usually occur among teachers to their pupils while domestic servants also used undue advantage to sexually molest and rape the children around them (Udekwe, 2013; Kemisola and Olawale, 2017). This implies that care givers and other close associates of children often abuse the opportunities of been close with the children thereby victimising them sexually.

### 2.3 Effects of Child Rape

The menace of child rape has social, psychological/emotional and health effects. According to Nicole (2006) victims of child rape might be exposed to certain diseases without their knowledge. They are at risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDs, hepatitis and gonorrhea which could affect their health in the short and long term even leading to untimely death. Furthermore, this may increase burden on the family particularly on medication for the infected children. At times, the victim will exhibit symptoms of mental and emotional trauma through solitude and exclusion. They also develop fear in mingling and socialising with strangers and other people especially men. These effects can last for the duration of the victims' lifetime which affects their social interaction with other members of the society. Brigneti and Egbonimali (2002) argue that rape victims at the risks of getting pregnant. In most instances rape victims who become pregnant opt to abort the child that is considered the result of the crime committed against them. In some cases the situation is further complicated due to abortions not being a legal option for the victim. Again, rape may shorten one's life as the victim tries to abort the pregnancy resulting from rape. It may lead to dropping out of school or rushing into unplanned marriage or marrying the wrong person (Finn and Finn 2012).

Sometimes rape is committed through the use of force causing physical injury particularly to the vagina, uterus and other part of the reproductive system. This is greater if the victim is minor or a very young teen. In addition, the rape victims are often beaten up and tortured during and after the incidence which might even lead to severe injury or even loss of life (Brigneti and Egbonimali, 2002). This usually happen in situations where the victim attempt to resist or try to seek for the intervention of people nearby for possible rescue. Kayode (2010) and Alhassan (2013) argue that some suffered trauma, mental challenges and sexuality problems as married adults among other defects.

### 2.4 Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Routine Activity theory. Routine Activity theory could be traced to the work of Felson (1986). The theory argue that three elements are necessary for

crime to occur; the motivated offenders in contact with the suitable targets in the absence of capable guardians. The suitable targets and guardianship are considered as the core dimensions of criminal opportunity. They must co-occur with the opportunity for crime to be present (Cohen and Felson, 1979, Clarke and Felson, 1993 cited in Cullen et al. 2014). The theory also suggest that, the supply of suitable targets and the presence of capable guardians are all functions of our routine activities which may be within our family settings, working places, leisure activities among others. So, crime such as child rape occurs when there is the presence of motivated offender (rapist) who have access to the suitable target (Child) in the absence of capable guardian (any person or measure capable deterring an individual from offending). This implies that the prevalence of child rape is attributed to lack of adequate deterrent measures from the part of parents, community and government.

In addressing the prevalence of child rape and other crimes in the society, capable guardianship is necessarily required to discourage and deny motivated offender(s) the opportunity to victimize the suitable targets. Accordingly, Felson (1995) developed notion of guardians that can discourage crime from occurring. He identified three types of guardians; the guardians (those who keep watch over potential crime targets), the handlers (those who supervise potential offenders) and the managers (those who monitor places) However, the theory was criticized for placing emphasis on potential targets and capable guardian as the condition favorable for crime to take place ignoring the fact that even with the presence of capable guardians determined criminals, like rapists may not be scared away because in some occasions their mission is to threaten and intimidate the capable guardians before they perpetrate their offences.

### 3.0 Methodology

This section presents the brief history of the study area and methodology employed in the study.

#### 3.1 Brief History of the Study Area

Jigawa State Created on August 27, 1991 by General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida bringing the total number of states then to thirty. The announcement was given a legal backing through the; State Creation and Transitional Provisions Decree No. 37 of 1991. Jigawa State was a part of Kano State and was located in the northeastern-most region of Kano State, and it forms part of Nigeria's national border with the Republic of the Niger. The state capital and largest city is Dutse. Jigawa state has 27 local governments.

The Jigawa State economy remains largely dependent on agriculture. Due to state's semi-arid climate, outward migration by workers to neighboring states such as Kano State in search of off-season work is common. Scarcity of arable land within the state has become increasingly problematic in recent years, with arable farmland increasingly vulnerable to national disasters like flooding, which will become more prevalent due to climate change.

The socio-cultural situation in Jigawa State could be described as homogeneous: it is mostly populated by Hausa/Fulani, who can be found in all parts of the state. Kanuri are largely found in Hadejia Emirate, with some traces of Badawa mainly in its Northeastern parts. Even though each of the three dominant tribes have continued to maintain their ethnic identity, Islam and a long history of inter-marriages have continued to bind them together.

About 3.6 million people inhabit Jigawa State. Life expectancy as at 2001 was about 52 years with a total fertility rate of about 6.2 children per woman of childbearing age (a little above the national average). Although population of the state is predominantly rural

(90%), the distribution in terms of sex is almost equal between male (50.8%) and female (49.2%). This pattern of population distribution is same across various constituencies and between urban and rural areas.

### 3.2 Research Design

This research adopted a mixed research method that employs the use of a quantitative method using questionnaire and a qualitative method where an in-depth interview was conducted with relevant stakeholders (i.e community leaders, criminal justice officials, rape victims and parents/guardians of the victims).

### 3.3 Research Site

The study was conducted throughout the three senatorial district in Jigawa State i.e Jigawa North West (Kazaure, Gumel, Ringim, Maigatari, Babura, Roni, Gwiwa, Garki, Yankwashi, Taura and Gagarawa); Jigawa North East (Hadejia, Guri, Kirikasamma, Birniwa, Malam Madori, Auyo and Kafin Hausa) and Jigawa South-West (Jahun, Miga, Kiyawa, Dutse, Buji, Birnin Kudu and Gwaram).

### 3.4 Research Subject

Members of the general public, community leaders (i.e. traditional and religious leaders), criminal justice officials and victims of rape/their parents or guardians were used as the subjects for this study.

### 3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A sample of One thousand and eleven respondents were selected from the three senatorial districts. This was done using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) assertion that in a population of between 10,000,000 and 300,000,000 people, a minimum of 384 can be selected to represent the entire population. In view of this and looking at the population of the state, Nine hundred and ninety nine (999) were administered with questionnaire while twelve respondents were interviewed. For the questionnaire administration, three hundred and thirty three (333) respondents were selected from each senatorial district. Multi stage cluster sampling was used in the study. In the first stage, one local government was selected as clusters from each of the three senatorial districts using simple random sampling via lottery method. In the second stage, same method was used in selecting three political wards from each of the three LGAs selected from the three clusters. In the third stage, one areas was selected from each of the three political wards in each of the three LGAs selected. In the fourth stage, one hundred and eleven (111) respondent were administered with questionnaire in all the nine (9) areas selected from the three clusters. This was done using availability sampling method. For the in-depth interview, purposive sampling method was used in selecting 8 respondents (i.e 2 community leaders, 2 criminal justice officials, 2 rape victims and 2 parents/guardians of the victims).

### 3.6 Method and Instruments of Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative methods in generating the required data from the field. This was done through the use of two sets of instruments (i.e questionnaire and in-depth interview guide). The questionnaires contained both open and closed-ended questions and were administered by the research assistants.

### 3.7 Method of Data Analysis

The data was analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Inferential statistics was used in the analysis of the quantitative data through the application of the SPSS version 22. The qualitative data was presented through direct quotation to complement the quantitative data generated via the questionnaire.

### 3.8 Ethical Considerations

In adhering to the ethical principles of the research, informed consent of the respondents and participants was sought for voluntary participation. Also, confidentiality and anonymity of the respondents was ensured during the research.

### 4.0 Results and Discussion

This section presented the data collected, analysed, interpreted and discussed. It comprises of the quantitative data generated via 843 out of the 999 questionnaires administered and the qualitative data generated via 12 in-depth interviews conducted with relevant stakeholders.

#### 4.1 Section A: Socio Demographic Information of the Respondents

**Table 4.1: Sex Distribution of the Respondents**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	487	57.8
Female	356	42.2
Total	843	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 4.1 present the sex distribution of the respondents, where male constitute 57.8% while the female constitute 42.2%, implying that majority of the sampled population are male. Although the percentage of female respondents is very significant which shows the level of readiness of female to participate in social events in the study area.

**Table 4.2: Age Distribution of the Respondents**

Age Distribution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 20 years	230	27.3
20-30	332	39.4
31-40	129	15.3
41-50	70	8.3
51 and above	82	9.7
Total	843	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.2 present the age distribution of the respondents which revealed that those between 20-30 years constitutes 39.2% while the least with 8.3% are between the ages of 41-50. Drawing from the table, it implies that majority of the respondents are youths who are mostly involved in the cases of rape.

**Table 4.3: Highest Educational Qualification**

Highest Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non formal	71	8.4
Primary	141	16.7
Secondary	185	21.9
OND/NCE	270	32.0
Degree/HND	35	4.2
Postgraduate	89	10.6
Others	52	6.2
Total	843	100.0

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.3 presents the educational qualification of the respondents which revealed that the respondents possessed different qualifications with 32.0% having OND/NCE, 21.9

having Secondary education while the least with 4.2% have Degree/HND. This implies that majority of the respondents are literate with different level of education.

**Table 4.4: Marital status**

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	339	40.2
Married	379	45.0
Divorced	46	5.5
Widow	35	4.2
Separated	44	5.1
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 4.4 present the marital status of the respondents where 45.0% are married, 40.2% are single, while 4.2% are widow. This implies that those are married constitute the highest portion of the respondents while the least are the widows. However, those who are single are significant in number perhaps this may be attributed to the high population of youths in the area.

**Table 4.5: Occupational Distribution of Respondents**

Occupational Distribution of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Farming	130	15.4
Trading	206	24.4
Civil Service	255	30.2
Artisan	61	7.2
Others	191	22.7
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 4.5 present the occupational distribution of the respondents where 30.2% are civil servants, 24.4% are traders, 22.7% engage in other occupations, 15.4% are farmers while the least with 7.2% are artisans. This implies that respondents in the study area engaged in various occupation with the most significant number in civil service.

**Table 4.6: Monthly Income**

Average Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below N10,000	199	23.6
N10,001- 20,000	227	26.9
N20,001- 30,000	94	11.2
N30,001- 40,000	94	11.2
N40,001- 50,000	129	15.3
N50,001 and above	100	11.9
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 4.6 present the monthly income of the respondents where 26.9% earn N10,001- 20,000, 23.6% earn below N10,000, 15.3% earn N40,001- 50,000, 11.9% earn N50,001 and above, while 11.2% earn N20,001- 30,000 and N30,001- 40,000 respectively. This implies that respondents have different level of income with 11.9% having the highest income of N50,001 and above.



## 4.2 Section B: Factors Responsible for Child Rape

**Table 4.7: Awareness on Child Rape**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	711	84.3
No	132	15.7
Total	843	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 4.7 present the respondents' views on the awareness on child rape where 84.3% revealed that they are aware of the issue while 15.7% said they are not aware. This implies that child rape is a problem known by the majority of people in the study area.

**Table 4.8: Factors Responsible for Child Rape**

Factors Responsible for Child Rape	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Parental negligence	801 (95.0)	42 (5.0)	843 (100)
Use of sexual stimulants	508 (60.3)	335 (39.7)	843 (100)
Taking of undue advantage	791 (93.8)	52 (6.2)	843 (100)
Loneliness of the victims	588 (69.8)	255 (30.2)	843 (100)
Lack of effective punitive measures	767 (91.0)	76 (9.0)	843 (100)
Teenage girls street hawking	702 (83.3)	141 (16.7)	843 (100)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.8 present the respondents' views on the factors responsible for child rape. Drawing from the table, 95.0% identify parental negligence as the factor responsible for child rape, 93.8% said taking undue advantage, 91.0% said lack of punitive measures, 83.3% said teenage girls street hawking, 69.8% said loneliness of the victims while 60.3% said use of sexual stimulants. This implies that child rape is caused by multiple factors depending on the situations of the victims and perpetrators. In an IDI with community leader, he revealed that:

Today child rape is one of the disturbing issue affecting our community as the cases are increasing though in many instances they are not reported to appropriate authorities. For me, lack of adequate parental care and weak punitive measures are the factors responsible for child rape in our community (Community leader, 2025).

Another interview with criminal justice official revealed that:

Child rape is usually associated with girl Child Street hawking which exposed them to the risk of being trapped and raped street boys or aged person with questionable character (Criminal Justice Official, 2025)

The above findings affirms the assertion of Kemisola and Olawale (2017) which state that some parents do carelessly handle their children by leaving them to stay with neighbours or allowing other close relations to take care of them even outside their sight thus increasing their vulnerability to rape and other sexual violence.

**Table 4.9: Major Perpetrators of Child Rape**

Major Perpetrators of Child Rape	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Youth	782 (92.8)	61 (7.2)	843 (100)
Adults	769 (91.2)	74 (8.7)	843 (100)
Care givers	249 (29.5)	594 (70.5)	843 (100)
Parents	126 (14.9)	717 (85.1)	843 (100)

Source: Field Work, 2025

Table 4.9 present the respondents' views on the major perpetrators of child rape where 92.8% identify youths as the major perpetrators, 91.2% said adults, 29.5% said care givers while 14.9% said parents. This implies that youths and adults are the major perpetrators of child rape in the study area.

**Table 4.10: Rating the prevalence of Child Rape**

Rating the Prevalence of Child Rape	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very high	150	17.8
High	640	75.9
Low	30	3.6
Very low	20	2.4
I can't determine	3	0.4
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 4.10 present the rate of the prevalence of child rape in the study area, where 75.9% rated it as high while the least with 0.4% said they cannot determine. This implies that child rape is high in the study area and thus requires urgent and drastic measure to address it.

#### 4.2 Section C: Effects of Child Rape

**Table 11: Whether Child Rape has effect**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	843	100
No	0	0.0
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Fieldwork, 2025**

Table 11 present the respondents' views on whether child rape has effect. Drawing from the table it implies that all the respondents unanimously agreed that child rape has effect on various individuals including the perpetrator(s).

**Table 12: Effects of Child Rape on the Direct Victims**

Effects of Child Rape on the direct victims	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Transmission of STDs	804 (95.4)	39 (4.6)	843 (100)
Unwanted pregnancy	780 (92.5)	63 (7.5)	843 (100)
Stigmatising victims	797 (94.5)	46 (5.5)	843 (100)
Psychological trauma	788 (93.5)	55 (6.5)	843 (100)
Physical injury	777 (92.2)	66 (7.8)	843 (100)
Death of victims	689 (81.7)	154 (18.3)	843 (100)

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 12 present the respondents' views on the effects of child rape on direct victims where 95.4% said transmission of STDs, 94.5% said stigmatization of victims, 93.5% said psychological trauma, 92.5% said unwanted pregnancy, 92.2% said physical injury while 81.7% said death of victims. This implies that child rape has multiple effects and thus, victims can suffer one or multiple of such effects. In an IDI with a victim of rape, she revealed that:

Child rape is associated with multiple consequences affecting the wellbeing of victims. Common among such effects include stigmatising the victims, physical injury and transmission of sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhea and HIV/AIDS (Victim of Rape, 2025).

A parent of a rape victim also assert that:

The most common effects of child rape are child defilement, unwanted pregnancy and transmission of sexual related diseases like HIV/AIDS. This has made the menace a catastrophic disaster that threaten the life children nowadays (Parent of Rape Victim, 2025).

The above findings concur with the assertion of Nicole (2006) who argue that victims of child rape are at risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV/AIDs, hepatitis and gonorrhea which could affect their health in the short and long term even leading to untimely death. In addition, the rape victims are often beaten up and tortured during and after the incidence which might even lead to severe injury or even loss of life (Brigneti and Egbonimali, 2002). This has made child rape an issue of serious concern that requires drastic measures to curtail its occurrence in the society.

**Table 13: Rating the magnitude of the effect of Child Rape on Direct Victims**

Rating the magnitude of the effects	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very serious	300	35.6
Serious	266	31.6
Not serious	199	23.6
I can't determine	78	9.3
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 13 present the respondents' views on the magnitude of the effect of child rape on direct victims. Drawing from the table, it revealed that 35.6% and 31.6% rated the magnitude of the effect as very serious and serious respectively, 23.6% rated it as not serious while 9.3% said they can't determine. This implies that child rape has serious effects on the direct victims as it can lead temporary or permanent health deformity or cause the death of victim(s).

**Table 14: Effects of Child Rape on Perpetrators**

Effects of child rape on perpetrators	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Legal sanction	843 (100)	0 (0.0)	843 (100)
Loss of respect/dignity	842 (99.9)	1 (0.1)	843 (100)
Rejection by community members	801 (95.0)	42 (5.0)	843 (100)
Tarnishing the image of perpetrators family	803 (95.3)	40 (4.7)	843 (100)

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 13 present the respondents' views on the effect of child rape on the perpetrators. Drawing from the multiple responses, it revealed that all the respondents recognised legal sanction as the effect of child rape on perpetrator(s), 99.9% said loss of respect/dignity, 95.3% and 95.0% said tarnishing the image of perpetrators' family and rejection by community members respectively. This implies that perpetrator(s) suffer a lot of consequences upon committing rape against children. In an IDI with criminal justice official, he revealed that:

Child rape is a gross violation that attract penalty when proved beyond reasonable doubt by a competent court. Thus, the major effect of rape on the perpetrators is the legal sanction imposed on them which may serve as deterrent of on them and other potential perpetrators (Criminal Justice Official, 2025)

**Section D: Measures of addressing the Menace of Child Rape in Jigawa State****Table 15: Whether the problem of Child Rape can be address**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	841	99.8
No	2	0.2
Total	843	100.0

**Source: Fieldwork, 2025**

Table 15 present the respondents' views on whether the problem of child rape can be addressed where majority of the respondents with 99.8% revealed that the problem can addressed. This indicates the concern of the people over the menace of child rape in the study area.

**Table 16: Ways of addressing Child Rape**

Ways of addressing child rape	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Proper parental care	843 (100)	0 (0.0)	843 (100)
Severe punishment for perpetrators	789 (93.6)	54 (6.4)	843 (100)
Inculcation of moral values	741 (87.9)	102 (12.1)	843 (100)
Avoiding sexual stimulants	712 (84.5)	131 (15.5)	843 (100)

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 16 present the respondents' views on the ways of addressing child rape where all respondents agrees that proper parental care can address the problem of child rape, 93.6% said severe punishment for perpetrators, 87.9% said inculcation of moral values while 84.5% said avoiding sexual stimulants. This implies that child rape can be addressed using various measures through the collaborative efforts of various stakeholders. A community leader in an IDI stated that:

Addressing the menace of child rape requires a collective effort of parents, community leaders and the criminal justice system. Each of them must play his own part before the issue can be adequately addressed. The parents must give proper and adequate care to their children, community leaders needs to caution their people against immorality such as rape while the criminal justice system must handle rape cases with all the seriousness it deserve and treat perpetrators in accordance with the provisions of the law. Ensuring this will serve as a strong deterrence on the perpetrators and those who may think of engaging in the same act (Community leader, 2025).

**Table 17: Stakeholder(s) that can best address the problem of Child Rape**

One that can best address the problem of child rape	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
Government	758 (89.9)	85 (10.1)	843 (100)
Community leaders	690 (81.9)	153 (18.1)	843 (100)
Parents	843 (100)	0 (0.0)	843 (100)
Law enforcement officials	781 (92.6)	62 (7.4)	843 (100)
Courts	708 (84.0)	135 (16.0)	843 (100)
Civic society organizations/NGOs	764 (90.6)	79 (9.4)	843 (100)

**Source: Field Work, 2025**

Table 17 present the respondents' views on the stakeholder(s) that can best address the problem of child rape. The table revealed that all the respondents believed that parents are the best to address the problem, 92.6% said law enforcement officials, 90.6% said civil society organizations/NGOs, 89.9% said government, 84.0% said courts while 81.9% said community leaders. This implies that collaborative effort of various stakeholders is central in the adequate prevention of child rape.

**Table 18: Whether respondents are satisfied with Government efforts in addressing Child Rape in Jigawa State**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	232	27.5
No	611	72.5
Total	843	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 18 present the respondents' views on their satisfaction with government effort in addressing child rape where 27.5% are satisfied while 72.5 are not satisfied. This indicate that people in the study area did not see the impact of government effort in addressing child rape and thus, not satisfied. During an IDI with a parent of rape victim, he revealed that:

My take on governments' effort in addressing child rape is actually negative as there is no significant reduction of rape cases. Thus, I am not satisfied with the so-called efforts of the government in tackling this menace (Parent of Rape Victim, 2025)

**Table 19: Assessing the efforts of Community members in addressing Child Rape**

Responses	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Satisfied	299	35.5
Not satisfied	270	32.0
I can't determine	274	32.5
Total	843	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 19 present the respondents' assessment of the efforts of community members in addressing child rape where 35.5% are satisfied, 32.0% are not satisfied while 32.5% said they can't determine. This implies that community efforts in addressing child rape is not yielding the desired result and thus, not satisfying the community members. In an IDI with Rape victim, she stated that:

Sometimes victims are being raped within their communities and this continue to happen but the community members are yet to take any drastic measure that can curtail this menace. Therefore, I don't see the effort put in place by the community in addressing child rape that is worth assessing (Victim of Rape, 2025).

From the foregoing assessment of efforts by government and community stakeholders, it seems there are gaps in law enforcement, with limited public awareness, and inadequate victim support systems. Thus, the measures are insufficient given the scale and gravity of the child rape in Jigawa State.

## 5.0 Conclusion

This study has empirically examined the factors responsible for the prevalence of child rape in Jigawa State, Nigeria. The data clearly revealed that child rape is not only widespread in Jigawa State but also rooted in the interplay of social, economic, and institutional weaknesses. The major contributing factors for child rape as identified in the study findings include parental negligence, lack of punitive measures, exploitation of undue advantage by offenders, street hawking, and exposure to sexual stimulants. These elements create an environment where children are left unprotected, thus increasing their vulnerability. The involvement of both youth and adults as primary perpetrators underscores the deep social decay and moral challenges confronting communities in the region. The impact of child rape on victims is profound and multifaceted, ranging from psychological trauma, physical injuries, and sexually transmitted diseases to stigmatization, unwanted pregnancies, and even death. The burden is not borne by

victims alone; perpetrators face legal sanctions, social ostracization, and damage to personal and family reputation.

The study further assessed efforts by the Jigawa State and Federal Government, as well as community stakeholders, which revealed gaps in law enforcement, limited public awareness, and inadequate victim support systems in Jigawa State. Using the Routine Activity Theory as a guiding framework, the convergence of motivated offenders, vulnerable children, and the absence of capable guardians, has been shown to significantly contribute to the incidence of child rape as one of the heinous crimes in the study area. The capable guardians can be security institutions or parents and community members.

### 5.1 Policy Recommendations

While some measures have been introduced in order to address the problem of child rape, they are insufficient given the scale and gravity of the problem. Therefore, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The Jigawa State Government should prioritise the enforcement of existing child protection laws, ensure speedy prosecution of offenders, and establish special courts for handling rape and sexual abuse cases involving children.
2. Community-based programs should be introduced to educate parents on their roles in safeguarding their children, with emphasis on the dangers of neglect, poor supervision, and allowing children to hawk on the streets.
3. Age-appropriate sex education should be introduced in schools and religious institutions to empower children with knowledge about their rights, bodily autonomy, and how to report abuse.
4. Government agencies, NGOs, and religious bodies should organise regular sensitization campaigns to break the culture of silence and shame surrounding child rape and to encourage community vigilance.
5. Local communities should form child protection and neighborhood watch committees to monitor and report suspicious activities, especially in rural and high-risk areas.
6. Victims of child rape should be given free and confidential access to medical care, counseling, legal assistance, and rehabilitation to help them recover and reintegrate into society.
7. The state government should enforce laws that prohibit street hawking by minors and provide alternative economic support to vulnerable families to reduce child exposure to danger.
8. Religious and traditional leaders should be actively involved in advocacy efforts, using their platforms to condemn child rape, promote moral behavior, and support community-based interventions.

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