

**MALINKE MEN'S KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF SEXUAL
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ATTECOUBE MUNICIPALITY,
COTE D'IVOIRE**

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DECLARATION

This project paper is my original work and has not been submitted for examination in any other university.

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DEDICATION

To my parents, thank you for your unconditional support. To my sisters Marcelline, Ella, Clarisse, Sabine, Sandrine, Jeanne d'arc and Prisca, hoping that I have proven to you that there is no mountain higher as long as God is on our side.

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ABSTRACT

This study set out to explore the Malinke men's knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence against women in Attecoube municipality, Cote d'Ivoire. Data were collected through the survey method, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The study findings indicate that Malinke men see sexual violence as a normal occurrence in their community. In addition, they have a positive attitude to sexual violence against women and think that the phenomenon has no consequences for their women and community. The study, therefore, concludes that Malinke men's knowledge and perceptions are a 7vice. The study, then, recommends awareness programmes to educate Malinke men on the realities of sexual violence against women including the implications to women and the entire community. It also recommends the strengthening of awareness campaigns and involvement of the mass media in the implementation of the awareness campaigns targeting Malinke men in Attecoube municipality. In addition, a firm law enforcement measures to strengthen the existing 2008 Sexual Violence Act and promote the culture of zero tolerance

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SWAW	-	Sexual Violence against Women
SVCC	-	Sexual Violence Counselling Centre
UN	-	United Nations
UNICEF	-	United Nations Children's Fund
NIS	-	National Institute of Statistics
DEPG	-	Department for Gender Equality
UNFPA	-	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
WHO	-	World Health Organization
GBV IMS	-	Gender Based Violence Information Management System

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

According to a UNWOMEN (2013) global review of available data, 35% of women worldwide have experienced physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence. Violence against women is "an extensive human rights abuse" across Europe with one in three women reporting some form of physical or sexual abuse since the age of 15 and 8% suffering abuse in the previous 12 months, according to the largest survey of its kind on the issue, published by the European Agency for Fundamental Rights (2014: 5).

Morten Kjaerum (2014:20), director of the European Agency for Fundamental Rights said: "Violence against women, and specifically gender-based violence that disproportionately affects women, is an extensive human rights abuse that the whole world cannot afford to overlook". The report ranks countries in order depending on the responses to the survey. In the three countries often praised for their gender equality, for example, high numbers of women reported suffering violence since the age of 15. Thus, in Denmark (52%), Finland (47%), and Sweden (46%) of the women stated that they had suffered physical or sexual violence. According to WHO (2014:15), all over the world 14.8% of women over 17 years of age reported having been raped in their lifetime, with an additional 2.8% having experienced attempted rape.

In sub-Saharan Africa sexual violence is widespread and can be described as an epidemic. According to a report by UNICEF (2014:61), in a number of sub-Saharan countries one in five girls aged 10 to 14 reported suffering some degree of sexual abuse. The problem seems to be far worse in some countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo and Equatorial Guinea showing some 70% of adolescent females enduring rape or other forced sexual acts, and Uganda, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe all showing results of around 50 %. As the statistics show, the problem is not limited to countries beset by conflict.

In Cote d'Ivoire, UNICEF (2014:22) reports that 35% of females have experienced sexual violence. The National Institute of Statistics (INS, 2013: 75) states that 20 % of sexual violence against women (SVAW) was experienced in Abidjan, the capital city. Since 2010, the national machinery in charge of gender equality, notably the Directorate for Gender Equality (DEPG) under the Ministry of Family and Solidarity together with some NGOs such as the National Coalition of Women Civil servants, have expressed their concern about the rising incidence of SVAW in Cote d'Ivoire (DEPG, 2013: 14).

1.2 Problem statement

In Cote d'Ivoire, UNFPA (2012:30) released a report on sexual violence in the capital city Abidjan. The report focused on the prevalence rate of sexual violence in the 10 districts of the city. It shows that 70% of sexual violence perpetrators in Attécoubé municipality are from the Malinke community. This survey focused on the policy and programmatic intervention that look into SVAW but they did not put out or even touch

on the perception of the perpetrators, notably, their thoughts on the concept of sexual violence, their attitude and the subsequent actions.

Concerted efforts to curb the problem of sexual violence against females still continue unhindered and controlled. This has generated serious debate and provoked many questions from perceptive observers, researchers and academicians about community perceptions of the ever-increasing cases of SVAW in Cote d'Ivoire in general and Attécoubé municipality in particular.

Following the report, the Directorate for Gender Equality (DEPG) with financial support from UNFPA and the Ministry of the Family took steps to raise awareness through proximity and mass campaigns in Attécoubé municipality. The major objective was to reduce sexual violence in that district. Other campaigns have been conducted by NGOs in the municipality with the same intention.

However, sexual violence in Attécoubé has not gone down and worse incidents and cases of sexual violence perpetrated by Malinke men are increasing at an alarming rate. Media have portrayed Attécoubé district as a dangerous place for women and girls to live in. Each and every passing day the Ivorian media are awash with stories of females who have been sexually abused by Malinke men in Attécoubé municipality.

SVAW has emerged as a serious and widespread problem in Cote d'Ivoire. While there has been mounting concern over the rising incidents of SVAW perpetrated by a specific

community in the country, there has been little or no research carried out on the Malinke men's understanding of and attitudes to cases of SVAW. There are therefore serious gaps in our understanding and knowledge of that community.

Social norms are the standards of conduct that regulate a society. They are the unspoken rules that govern what is and what is not acceptable behaviour and how individuals and groups should interact. When social norms are internalized, they influence individual attitudes and beliefs as well as the ways in which people behave. For example, norms that support violence can be used to justify violent behaviour and practices, excuse perpetrators' actions and blame victims for events while trivializing or minimizing their suffering. Cultural factors, therefore, can play a key role both in the perpetration of violent behaviour at individual and community levels and in shaping the responses of both victims and institutions. Arguably, our understanding of the problem of Malinke men's perceptions of SVAW in Cote d'Ivoire remains limited due to the fact that no study of the nature has been undertaken on the community.

The proposed study seeks to address this gap and enable interested parties to gain a better understanding of the problem. In so doing it will seek answers to the following questions:

1. What is the level of knowledge of Malinke men on sexual violence in Attecoube municipality?
2. What is the attitude of these men to SVAW in that municipality ?
3. What do the Malinke men think could be the consequences of sexual violence against their women?

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

To explore Malinke men's knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence against women in Attecoube municipality, Abidjan.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- a) To determine the level of knowledge of Malinke men on sexual violence in Attecoube municipality.
- b) To describe the attitude of these men to SVAW in that municipality.
- c) To identify Malinke men's opinions on the consequences of SVAW for their women

1.4 Assumptions of the study

- a) Malinke men see sexual violence as a normal occurrence in society
- b) Malinke men have a positive attitude to sexual violence against women.
- c) Malinke men think sexual violence against females has no consequences for their women.

1.5 Justification of the study

The findings from this study could be of great interest to policy makers in three different ministries. First they should be helpful to gender policy makers within the Ministry of Family and Solidarity especially in the review of the national strategy paper against gender based violence. Section 5 of the national strategy determines the holistic

assistance for survivors and perpetrators of sexual violence especially psychosocial care. That step of assistance could take into consideration the cultural dimension while providing psychosocial aid to perpetrators of sexual violence detained in prison.

Second, the findings should be useful for policy makers charged with internal security. The National Police Training Institute could take advantage of them by reviewing curricula regarding gender based violence. The institute could include in the curricula the cultural dimension of sexual violence under the subject related to understanding its causes and consequences.

Finally, the findings could benefit the legal system policy maker so as to better understand the causes of sexual violence and set up appropriate mechanisms to address the issue of law enforcement. The findings could also benefit counselling organizations such as Sexual Violence Counselling Centres (SVCC) that are spread out nationally. The counsellors will gain valuable knowledge on community perception to better address the issue of psychosocial assistance for survivors and even perpetrators of sexual violence. The study should also be useful to researchers and academicians whose work is geared towards ending or reducing incidences of such violence. The findings of research will contribute to highlighting the phenomenon of sexual violence against females in Attécoubé municipality and offer suggestions on how to solve the plight of females being sexually abused by the Malinke men here and elsewhere in Cote d'Ivoire.

1.6 Scope and limitations of the study

The proposed study will take place in Attécoubé municipality in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire's capital city (Map 3.1). Attécoubé is a northwestern commune of Abidjan. It is situated to the northwest of Abidjan's central Plateau district overlooking the baie du Banco. The study will focus on Malinke men aged 21 years and above. Some key informants will be also interviewed for the purpose of accuracy. The study will be guided by social learning theory. This study may suffer from certain challenges such as the following. The community is a patriarchal society and may not be willing to freely disclose information regarding sexual violence against females. The researcher intends then to triangulate through focus group discussions and key informants interviews to generate additional information.

1.7 Definition of key terms

Perception: A way of regarding, understanding, or interpreting something; it is a mental impression

Knowledge: Facts, information, and skills acquired by a person through experience or education.

Sexual violence: Sexual act committed against someone without that person's freely given consent.

Community: A group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common.

Malinke: Refers to people sharing Mande language and are Muslims.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In this part of the proposal, the literature relevant to the research problem is reviewed using the following sub-headings: forms of sexual violence, myths and facts about sexual violence, and society's perceptions of sexual violence against women. The section ends with a discussion of the theory that will guide the study.

2.2 Myths and facts about sexual violence

A myth is a false idea that many people believe to be true. In many societies all over the world, people have believed and still believe in myths about what rape is and what causes it. Society's understanding of sexual violence can be influenced by misconceptions and false beliefs (commonly referred to as 'rape myths'). Separating myths from facts is critical to stopping sexual violence. In this regard, the Australian Rape Crisis Centre has listed some myths and facts that occur in Australian society. For example, one of the myths is that sexual assault is an uncontrolled act of lust. However, research shows that most offenders plan their attacks (Clark, 2010: 30). Another myth is that the way women dress and behave contributes to their sexual assault. On the other hand, research shows that sexual assault is not caused by the look or behaviour of the victim (Clark, 2010). The third myth is that sexual assault is committed in dark alleys by strangers. However, research has shown that in 70% of sexual assaults the offender is a family member, friend, work or school colleague. Of the remaining 30% the offender is usually someone

the victim meets socially or dates. Most sexual assaults occur in the victim's or perpetrator's home, car or workplace. Sexual assault by strangers account for less than 1% of sexual violence and an attack by a stranger in a dark place is even less common (ABS, 1996: 41).

The fourth myth is that a sex offender is easy to spot. The fact, however, is that sex offenders come from every class, profession, age and culture. They are not confined to any particular group or activity. They are usually 'nice' and social. This is how they gain access to their victim who thinks nothing of inviting them into their home or getting in their car (ABS, 1996: 41).

The fifth myth is that some women believe that rape could never happen to them. However, the fact is that 1 in 5 women in Australia will experience sexual assault at some time in their life and 1 in 10 women who are sexually assaulted will be assaulted by their current or past intimate partner. While age is no barrier to experiencing sexual assault, women aged 15 to 24 years are most at risk. (ABS, 1996:45). Finally, there is the myth that it is not sexual assault if those involved have had sex with each other before. However, the fact is that consent must be given for every occasion of intimacy. If consent is withdrawn that must be respected. Being married does not mean permanent consent, consent last night does not mean consent tonight and consent to one does not mean consent to others. Absence of 'no' is not consent. When negotiating a sexual encounter both parties have a responsibility to ensure the other is consenting. If a person

is affected by alcohol or other drugs to the point that they do not know what they are doing, it is a crime to have opportunistic sex with them (ABS, 1996: 48).

The South Africa Rape Crisis Centre (2015) has given some myths and truths about rape in the South African: One is that a woman who gets drunk is inviting rape. However, the truth is that men and women sometimes get drunk – it is not a crime to drink, it is a crime to rape. It is also a fact that a person that is too drunk might be incapable of consenting to sex; sex without consent is rape. The second myth is that it is not rape if a woman wears revealing clothing, because then she wants sex. On the contrary, sex without consent is always rape, no matter what the circumstances. Just because a woman wears a short skirt or a revealing top does not always mean that she is sending out a signal that she is available for sex. A woman always has the right to choose if, when and with whom she has sex. It is also true that when a woman wears revealing clothes she is not actively consenting to sex – she must still be able to deny her consent to sex if she chooses to (Budlender, 2011: 10).

Third, it is believed that women who wear revealing clothing invite men to rape them. However, appearance and clothing have nothing to do with who gets raped. Women are raped no matter what they wear: babies in nappies, old women in tracksuits and nuns in habits also get raped. Thus, clothing does not determine who gets raped. Fourth, it is not rape if the woman has given her consent to having sex with the man before. On the contrary, if a woman consents to sex once, that does not mean the man has a right to have sex with her anytime from now on. The truth is that both people need to consent to sex

every time. Fifth, it is not rape if the woman and man are married or in a relationship. However, the truth is that in South Africa a husband or boyfriend may never force his wife or girlfriend to have sex with him. If he does, he can be charged with rape. A woman has to give consent for sex, every time. Thus, in any relationship, a woman has the right to say no to sex (Budlender, 2011: 10).

Finally, it is argued that women say they have been raped to get revenge on a man. On the contrary, women very rarely do this, as reporting rape to the authorities and going through a rape trial are very traumatic. It takes a lot of courage to report a rape and go through with a rape trial. Other people often make rape victims feel ashamed or guilty about the rape, which makes it even less likely that a woman would lie about rape. Statistics show that the number of false reports of rape is the same as that of any other crime. In any case, the fact is that people lie about all crimes, not just rape. The number of people that lie about being the victim of a crime is very small (Budlender, 2011: 11).

2.3 Society's perceptions of sexual violence against women

2.3.1 Traditional gender norms and attitudes towards violence

One of the most consistent findings to emerge from studies of attitudes towards violence against women is a gender gap. Gender is a consistent predictor of attitudes that support use of violence against women. A wide range of international studies such as UNWOMEN (2013) annual report has found a gender gap in attitudes towards domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of violence against women.

In general, men are more likely than women to agree with myths and beliefs supportive of violence against women, perceive a narrower range of behaviours as violent, blame and show less empathy for the victim, minimize the harms associated with physical and sexual assault, and see behaviours constituting violence against women as less serious, inappropriate, or damaging (UNWOMEN, 2013: 22).

Gender differences in definitions and perceptions of violence are evident too with regard to particular forms of violence against women, such as sexual harassment (De Judicibus & Mc Cabe, 2001), date rape (Workman & Freeberg, 1999), and wife assault (Hillier & Foddy, 1993). Moreover, cross-gender differences in attitudes in many countries are stronger than differences associated with other social divisions such as socioeconomic status or education (Kennedy & Gorzalka, 2002: 229).

It is not sex per se, but gender orientations that shape men's and women's contrasting understandings of violence against women. There is a powerful association between attitudes towards violence against women and attitudes towards gender. Especially among men, traditional gender-role attitudes are associated with greater acceptance of violence against women (Davis & Liddell, 2002: 38). Conversely, the more that people maintain egalitarian gender attitudes, the better are their attitudes towards violence against women. They are more likely to see violence against women as unacceptable, to define a wider variety of acts as violence or abuse, to reject victim blaming, to support the victim, and to hold accountable the person using violence. The most consistent predictor of attitudes supporting the use of violence against women is attitudes towards

gender roles, that is, beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women (Berkel et al., 2004: 126). The relationship between adherence to conservative gender norms and tolerance for violence has been documented among males in a wide variety of communities and countries, both Western and non-Western, including Arab and ultra-orthodox Jewish communities in Israel (Steinmetz & Haj-Yahia, 2006), and adult men and young men in Australia (Pavlou & Knowles, 2001). The relationship between gender typing and victim blaming seems to be far weaker among women, perhaps because of their low levels of attributions of blame overall (De Judicibus & McCabe, 2001).

2.3.2 Gender and sexual norms

Attitudes to violence against women are inextricably grounded in and intertwined with attitudes towards women, gender, and sexuality. In other words, judgments of violence against women are shaped by wider norms of gender and sexuality. For example, perceptions of the legitimacy of men's violence against intimate partners are constituted through agreement with the notions that men should be dominant in households and intimate relationships and have the right to enforce their dominance through physical chastisement, have uncontrollable sexual urges, while women are deceptive and malicious, and marriage is a guarantee of sexual consent. Such beliefs have a long history in Western and other cultures, and they have been enshrined in Western legal systems (Straton, 2002) and social norms (Berkel et al., 2004). For example, women who dress less modestly and more suggestively are more likely to be seen as responsible for and deserving of sexual assault (Whatley, 2005:195). Women are seen as more likely to provoke sexual harassment if they are attractive (Golden 2001:31) and as more culpable

for date rape if wearing a short rather than long skirt (Workman & Freeberg, 1999: 29), whereas stereotypically attractive male perpetrators are judged as less harassing (LaRocca & Kromrey, 1999: 43).

Female victims of violence are judged more harshly where they are perceived to have provoked aggression, for example, by being verbally aggressive or in situations that might inspire their husbands' jealousy (Pavlou & Knowles, 2001: 79). When a man rapes his wife or girlfriend rather than a stranger, he is seen as less responsible, the behaviour is seen as less harmful, and it is less likely to be seen as rape (Cowan, 2002: 740). Violence-supportive norms and relations are evident in normal sexual, intimate, and family relations. For many boys and girls, sexual harassment is pervasive, male aggression is normalized, there is constant pressure among boys to behave in sexually aggressive ways, while girls are routinely objectified, a sexual double standard polices girls' sexual and intimate involvements, and girls are compelled to accommodate male needs and desires in negotiating their sexual relations (Tolman and Porche 2003: 32).

2.3.3 Religion, spirituality, and churches

Spiritual institutions potentially have an impact on attitudes towards violence beyond their influence on their direct participants. Although there is little empirical assessment of the potential impact, there is evidence of contexts in which religion is misused to justify violence against women or to perpetuate women's vulnerability to victimization. For example, Christian evangelism's emphasis on wifely submission and hierarchical gender relations can encourage pastors to counsel women to stay with their abusers (Nason-

Clark, 1997: 33). In some Arab and Islamic countries, selective excerpts from the Koran may be used to prove that men who beat their wives are following God's commandments (Douki et al., 2003:22). Shari'a (Islamic law) may be used to sanction male authority over female relatives and the legitimate use of physical violence (Hajjar, 2004:48).

2.4 Theoretical Framework

2.4.1 Social learning theory

This study will be guided by the social learning theory. This theory was developed by Albert Bandura in 1963. It integrates behavioural and cognitive theories of learning in order to provide a comprehensive model that could account for the wide range of learning experiences that occur in the real world (Bandura, 1963: 36).

The theory stresses the nature versus nurture debate (Viano, 1992:8). It states that aggression and violence are learned behaviours that can be passed on from one generation to the next. This aggression and violence manifests itself within particular social contexts, such as households where alcohol and/or drug abuse is prevalent.

Social learning theory proposed that violence is learned through observation; the basic premise of this view is that physical aggression between family members provides a likely model for the learning of aggressive behaviour, as well as for the appropriateness of such behaviour within the family (Bandura, 1973:29). Thus, the intergenerational transmission of violence stems primarily from principles of modelling (Bandura, 1973:36). The theory also proposes that a violent background may reinforce early signs

of violent behaviour not only by exposing individuals to violence, but by teaching approval for the use of violence (Gelles, 1972:42). As a result, children may grow up concluding that violence is sometimes a necessary and effective strategy for achieving behavioural change in family and intimate relationships (Simons et al., 1998:472). Reinforcement plays a role in learning but is not entirely responsible for learning.

Social learning theory has to be differentiated from the social cognitive theory of Bandura. In his social cognitive theory of personality, Bandura included the concept of observational learning as one of the main theoretical points. He argued that reinforcement does not simply work as a mechanism, but it is actually the provider of information of the next reinforcement to be given once the behaviour is repeated.

2.4.2 Relevance of the theory to the study

This theory is relevant to the study since it attempts to explain the behavioural transmission of violence. Children who grow up in a violent and abusive set up may learn violent/abusive behaviour, imitate those behaviours and then repeat them in future relationships. In a nutshell, when applied to sexual violence, social learning theory states that we model behaviour that we have been exposed to as children. Violence is learned, through role models provided by the family, either directly or indirectly, and reinforced in childhood and continued in adulthood as a coping response to stress or a method of conflict resolution (Bandura, 1973:28).

The central position of the researcher is that socialization and environment have an effect on men. From childhood, boys in most societies are taught to be aggressive and to regard women as second class citizens as a definition of masculinity. They are raised to believe that they have inherent rights to sexual release with women. They are also taught that they are entitled to be in control of their relationship with women and they have the right to express their anger using violence. This learning is reinforced by observation and imitation. For example, a boy who is raised up in a family where the father is physically violent will most likely become an abusive father and husband. This theory is therefore relevant to my study as it portrays the fact that social learning has a great impact on an individual's behaviour.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

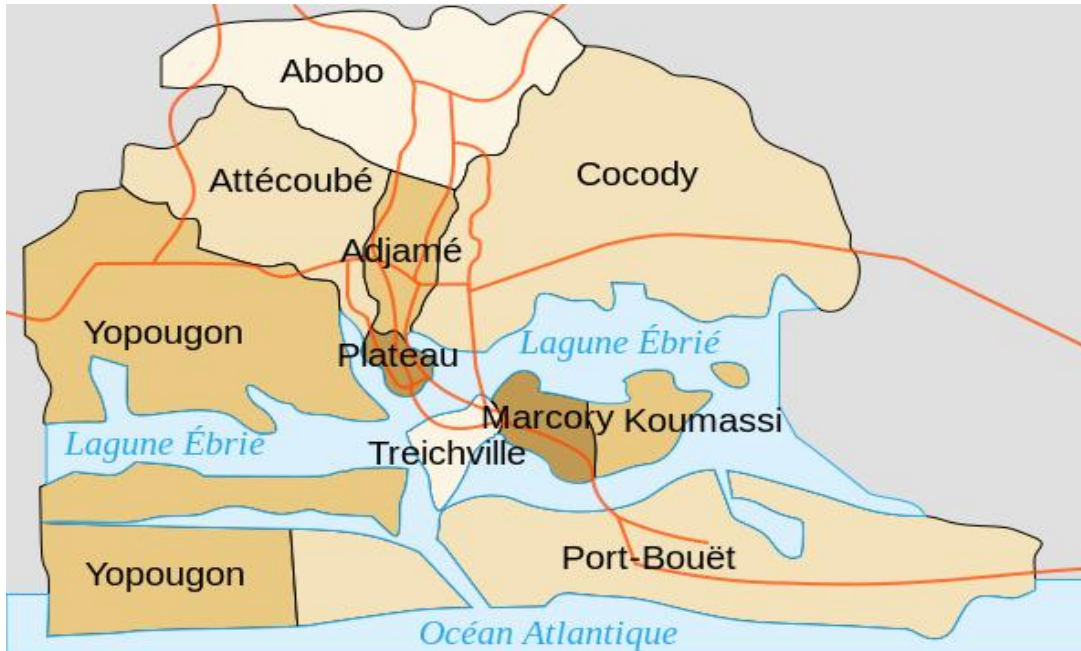
3.1 Introduction

This section presents a description of the study site, research design, study population and unit of analysis, sample size and sampling procedure, as well as data analysis and presentation. The section finally discusses the ethical considerations that will guide the study.

3.2 Research Site

3.2.1 Location

The study will be done in Attécoubé, a northwestern commune of Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire (Map.3.1). The commune is situated to the northwest of Abidjan's central Plateau district, overlooking the baie du Banco. It is bordered by Abobo to the North and Northeast, by Adjame to the East and Yopougon to the South.



Map 3.1: The capital city Abidjan showing the location of Attecoubé (Source: NIS, 1998).

3.2.2 The cultural profile of the Malinke

The Malinke are also commonly referred to as Mandinka, Maninka, Manding, Mandingo, Mandin, and Mande. The Malinke peoples speak slight variations of the broad Mande branch of languages. The term "Mande" frequently refers to a group of closely related languages spoken by the Malinke and other West African peoples such as the Bambara, the Soninke, and the Dyula.

a) Religion

The majority of Malinke people are Muslims and have adapted the teachings of Islam into their indigenous beliefs. Most Malinke villages or cities have a mosque. Women sit separate from the men, both in the mosque and during outside religious services.

Villagers, who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca, or even descendants of those who have made the journey, are highly respected.

The principal religious leader is the elected imam, an elder who leads prayers at the mosque and has great religious knowledge. The other Islamic clerics who play major roles as healers and religious counsellors are the marabout. They are respected as preservers of morality through oral traditions and the teachings of the Koran. They are perceived to be experts at preventing and healing ailments or injuries inflicted by mortals or those that are believed to have been inflicted by evil spirits (<http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Japan-to-Mali/Malinke.html#ixzz3raSAIAVv>).

b) Family life

The Malinke consider large families to be important. A large compound with brothers and their wives will always be bustling with family members of several generations and children of many ages. The Malinke practise polygyny, and Islam permits men to take up to four wives. However the high bride wealth and the fact that society requires that all wives be provided for equally means that only prosperous men can afford several wives.

Women are always busy with some kind of work, while it is common to see men sitting under a tree in the village square, chatting with other men and having a smoke and some tea. The household heads have the authority to make all important decisions, although women wield significant power behind the scenes (Egejwu 1990: 20).

The social organization of the Malinke is based on an ancient caste (class) system into which members are born. A Malinke can never change the caste-status into which he or she is born. There is rarely marriage between individuals of different castes. In an average village, however, the differences in wealth or status among the castes is barely visible. The size of the family is often more of an indication of wealth; small families with few children and few extended family members are thought of as poor and unfortunate (<http://www.everyculture.com/wc/Japan-to-Mali/Malinke.html#ixzz3raSAIAVv>).

3.2.3 Economic activities

Micro and small businesses are the main economic activities in the commune. Micro enterprises include income generating activities such as selling charcoals, food crops all over the streets. Small businesses include bakery, restaurants, and handicrafts. (<http://www.attecoube.net/index.php/business/developpement-economique/secteurs-economiques>).

3.2.4 Educational facilities

All the 33 cities and 5 villages in Attecoube have government schools as well as koranic (Islamic) schools for learning to recite verses from the Koran. The educational model of the government schools is based on those of the ex-colonial masters, the French. Poor attendance and high drop-out rates are common in city as well as village schools. Muslim parents often do not think it is as important for their daughters to get an education as it is for their sons, so the enrollment of boys is much higher than that of

girls. Only a small percentage of the village pupils pass the state examination at the end of sixth grade in order to go on to high school. In the countries where the Malinke live, generally less than half of the population is able to read

<http://www.attecoube.net/index.php/services-aux-citoyens/vie-communautaire-et-education/etablissements-scolaires>).

3.3 Research design

The study will adopt an exploratory descriptive survey design and both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected. Qualitative data will be collected through key informant interviews and focus group discussions. They will be analysed using content analysis and the findings presented using quotes and statements. On the other hand, quantitative data will be collected using a structured questionnaire, analysed using the SPSS software version 21 and the results presented in tables, bar charts and pie charts.

3.4 Study population and unit of analysis

The study will consist of Malinke men aged 21 and above and who live in Attecoube municipality. This is because in Cote d'Ivoire one becomes an adult when one attains the age of 21 years. The unit of analysis will be the individual Malinke man satisfying those two criteria.

3.5 Sample size and sampling procedure

The sample population consists of 50 Malinke men aged 21 and above years. These will be selected using the simple random sampling method. In selecting the sample population

the names of 100 Malinke men aged 21 and above will be written on papers which will be folded several times. The pieces of paper will be put in a jar which be shaken before the researcher picked 50 of them.

3.6 Methods of data collection

3.6.1 The survey method

The survey method will be conducted using a structured questionnaire (Appendix 1). Respondents will be asked to respond to a set of open and closed-ended questions touching on their socio-demographic characteristics and their knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence against women.

3.6.2 Key informant interviews

Six key informants will be targeted in the study to get professional and cultural insights into the research problem. The key informants will include professionals and gatekeepers. A key informant interview guide (Appendix 2) will be used to collect the data.

3.6.3 Focus group discussions

Focus groups will reveal a wealth of detailed information and deep insight. It will create an accepting environment that puts participants at ease allowing them to thoughtfully answer questions in their own words and add meaning to their answers. Five groups of 10 discussants each will constitute the set of group discussions. A focus group discussion guide will be used to collect the data. This will be based on issues emerging from the survey and will seek to obtain consensus on such issues.

3.6.4 Documentary sources

Secondary sources like books, theses, government official publications and journals will be reviewed to collect background information to the study. These sources will also be used as reference materials during the entire period of the study.

3.7 Data processing and analysis

Data obtained from key informant interviews and focus group discussions will be sorted out and interpreted in relation to the research objectives, to enable the researcher to provide overall interpretation of the findings showing how thematic areas and issues relate to one another. On the other hand, quantitative data will be edited, coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 21. Descriptive statistics will be run to give frequencies and percentages.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The researcher will maintain all the ethical considerations relevant to the study by adhering to the ethical code of conduct pertinent to this study. The researcher will ensure that the respondents participate willingly in the research. The purpose of the study will be clearly explained and the respondents will be made aware of the fact that it is a scholarly project. The respondents will also be assured of confidentiality of the information they will give. Considering the sensitivity of the subject the respondents will be assured of anonymity to protect their identity and privacy.

CHAPTER FOUR

**MALINKE MEN'S KNOWLEDGE AND PERCEPTIONS OF SEXUAL
VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study. It starts by providing information on the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. Section two deals with the respondents' level of knowledge on sexual violence against females while the next section focuses on the respondents' attitude to sexual violence against females. . Finally, the chapter provides findings on the respondents' opinions on the consequences of sexual violence against females.

4.2 Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

4.2.1 Age

Age was an important demographic factor in the study. Thirty-six per cent of the respondents were aged 30–39 years, 34% were aged 21–29 years, and 20% were of age 40-49 years while 10% were aged above 50 years (Fig.4.1).

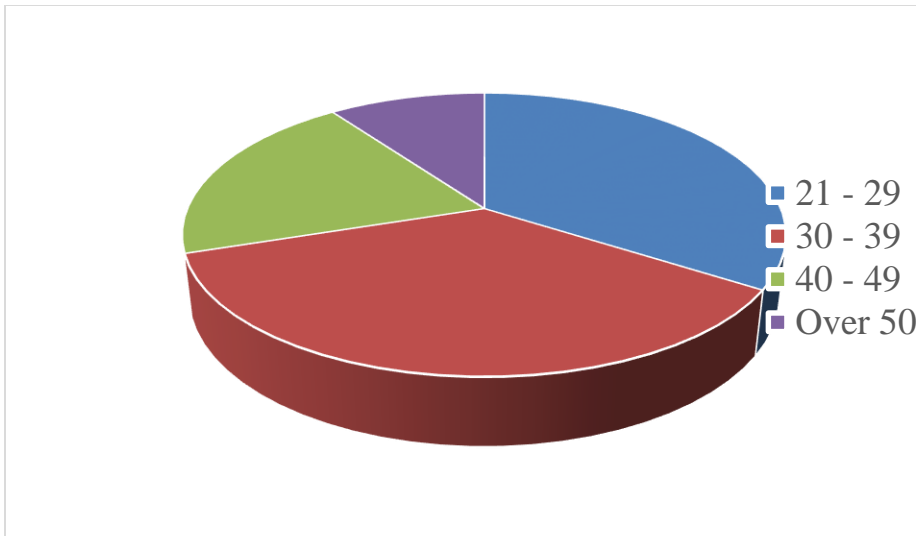


Fig. 4.1: Respondents' age groups

4.2.2 Highest level of education

The researcher was interested in relating the level of education with the level of knowledge and perception to sexual violence against women. Over half (54%) of the respondents had primary level education, 20 % had attained secondary level of education, 20% had attained the level of college education, while 6% had a master's degree (Figure 4.2).

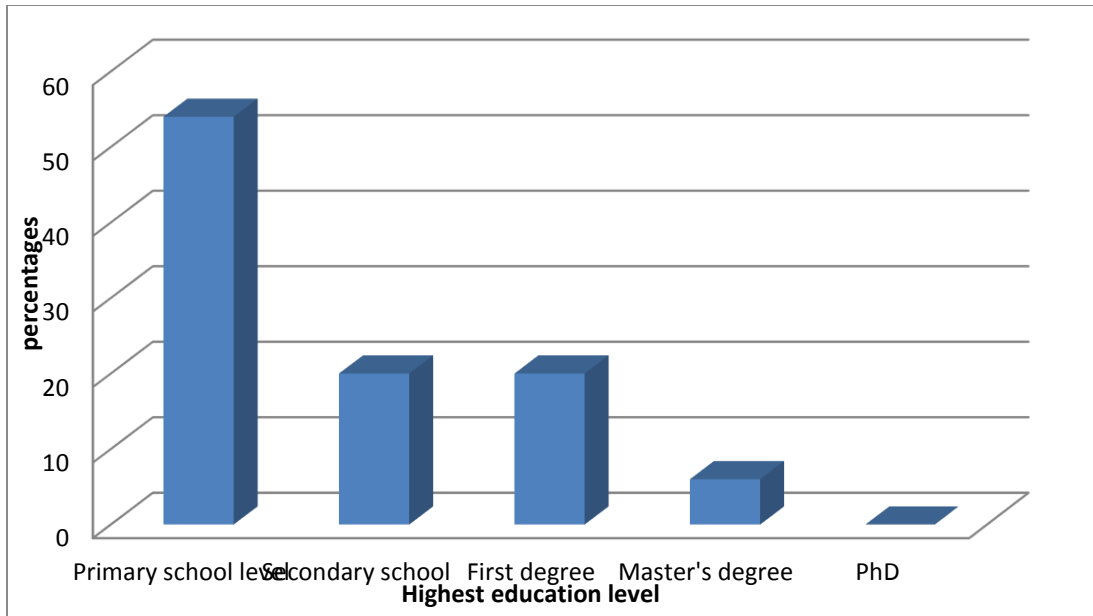


Fig. 4.2: Educational level of respondents

4.2.3 Professional status

The study revealed that at the time of the field work the majority (72%) of the respondents were business persons, 18% were jobless and 10% were civil servants.

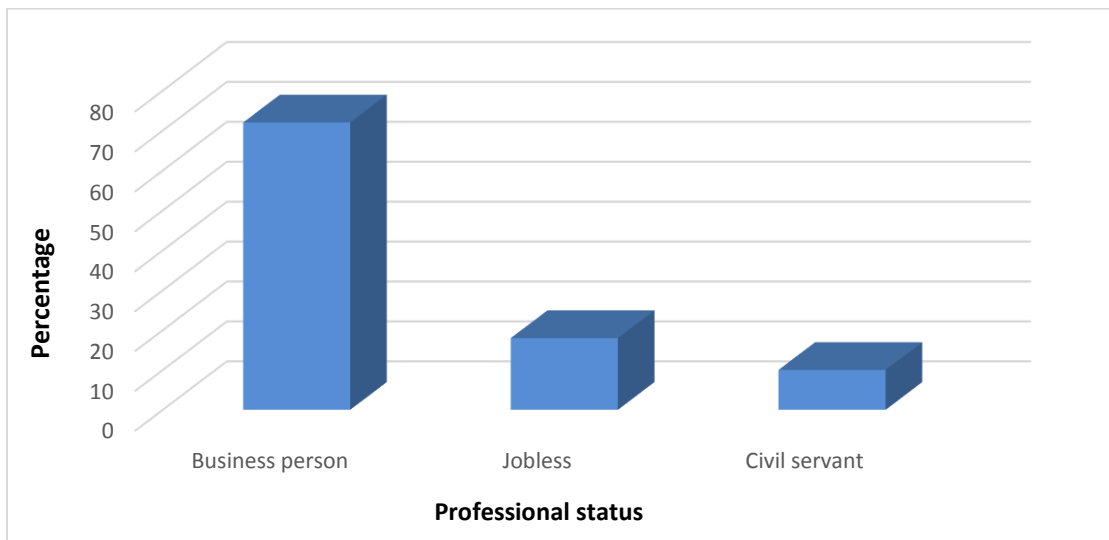


Fig. 4.3: Professional status of respondents

4.2.4 Duration in the municipality

The duration of the respondents in the municipality was of great importance for the researcher in order to establish a link between their duration in the city and their knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence. The findings indicate that 12% of the respondents had been living in Attecoube for 0-6 months, 8% for 7 months to 2 years, 10% for 3-5 years, 30% for 6–10 years and 40% for over ten years. These are summarized in Figure 4.4 below.

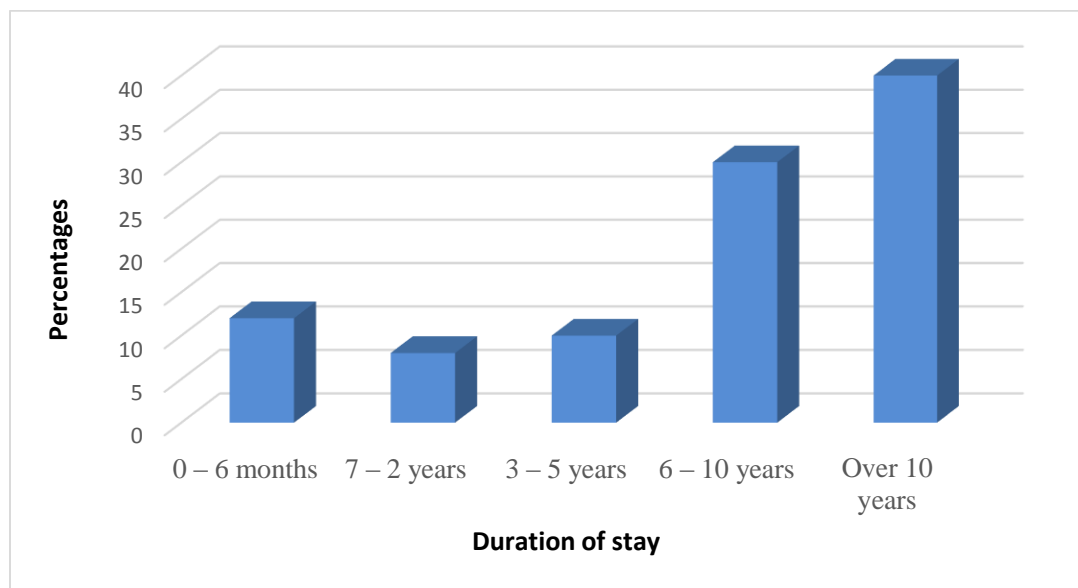


Fig. 4.4: Duration of stay in the municipality by the respondents

4.3 Malinke men’s knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence against women

4.3.1 Level of knowledge

The study results indicate that all the respondents had heard of the term sexual violence. Of these, over a half (56%) of them defined the term as the act of using a sexual organ to penetrate a female without her consent while 30% defined it as sexual intercourse ending

in bleeding. On the other hand, 14% stated that it means using a sexual organ or other object to penetrate a female without her consent (Figure. 4.5).

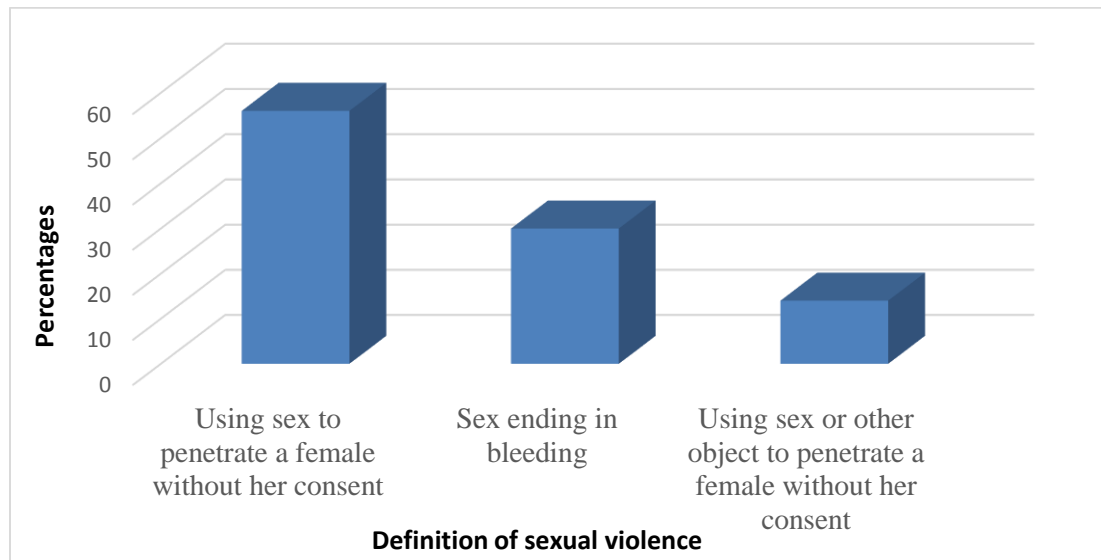


Fig. 4.5: Respondents' definition of sexual violence

The respondents gave various responses on their knowledge of different forms of sexual violence. The majority (76%) of them gave rape as the sole form of sexual violence, 14% thought rape and sexual harassment are the two forms, 4% felt that sexual violence comprises rape, sexual harassment, and sexual exploitation while 4% had no idea. Finally, a small minority (2%) of the respondents stated that sexual violence is comprised of rape, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, sex trafficking and forced marriage. Figure 4.6 summarizes these findings.

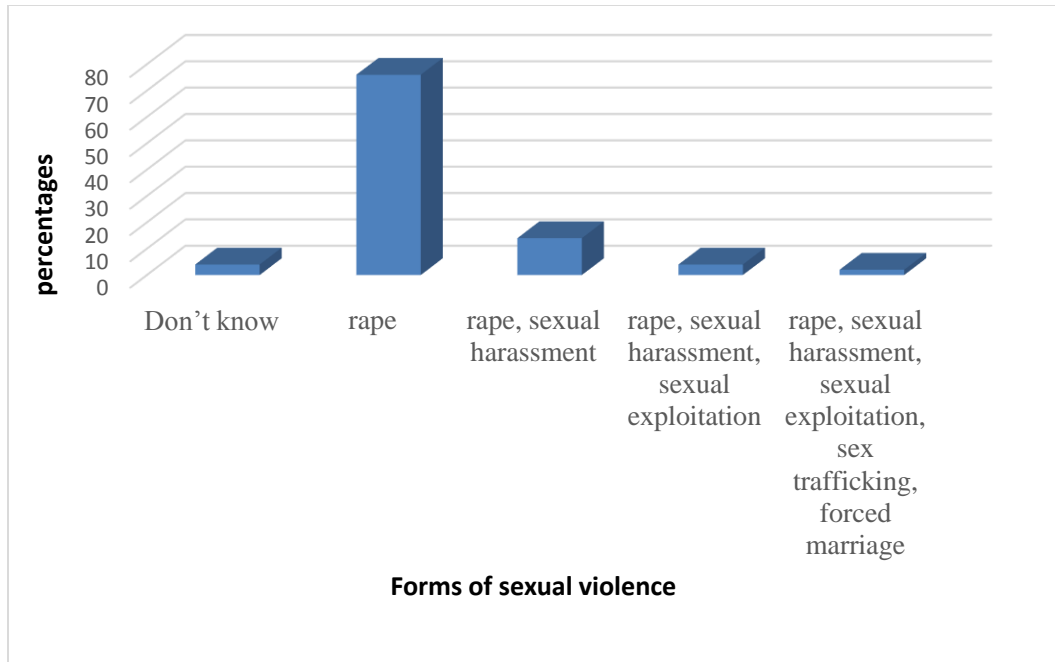


Fig.4.6: Forms of sexual violence

4.3.2 Attitudes of Malinke men to SVAW

On the question of who the perpetrators of sexual violence against women in this commune are, the findings indicate that men from other communities are more likely to be the perpetrators. This is because most (60%) of the respondents felt so, while 24% stated that both Malinke men and men from other communities were the perpetrators. Finally, 16% of the respondents thought that Malinke men were the ones (Figure.4.7). These findings suggest that, one; Malinke men are not aware that people from their community are the ones who are culprits of the sexual violence in their municipality. Two, the respondents are not aware that perpetrating sexual violence in their own community notably, does not constitute an act of sexual violence but something normal.

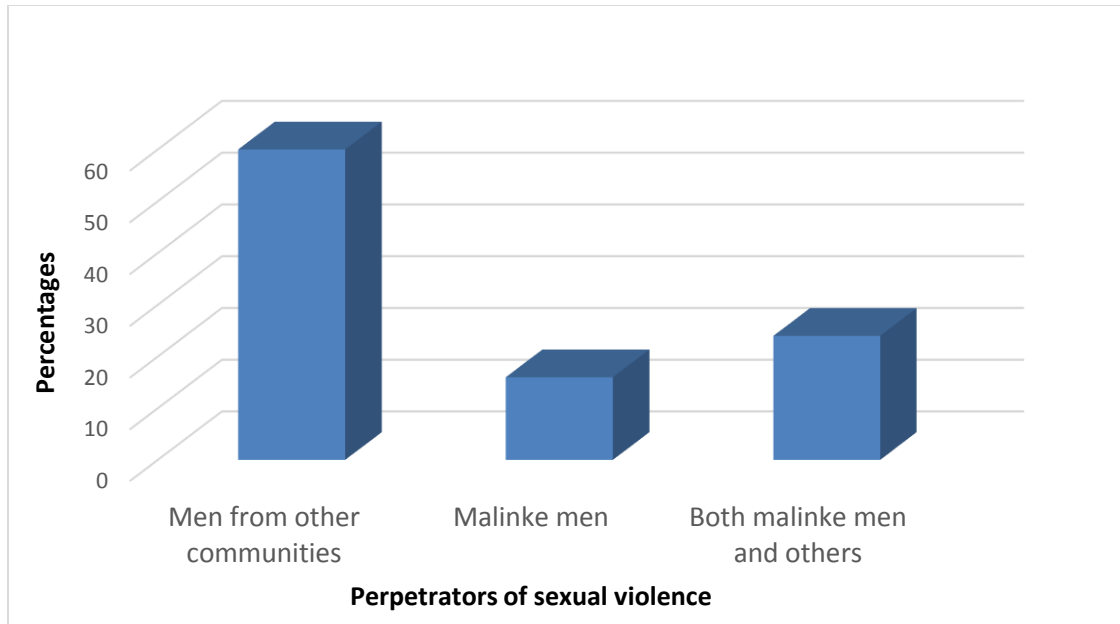


Fig.4.7: Perpetrators of sexual violence against women

On key informant, the municipality social affairs head had this to say about this particular issue.

La plupart des coupables des violences sexuelles perpétrées contre les femmes sont les hommes de la communauté Malinké. Les statistiques 2015 de la commune de Attecoube révèlent que sur les 75 coupables de violences sexuelles identifiés, 60 sont de la communauté Malinké.

(Translation)

Most of the perpetrators of sexual violence against women are Malinké men. The 2015 municipality statistics showed that 60 of the 75 perpetrators are Malinké men.

Culture may be by far the major factor that influences men to perpetrate sexual violence against women. The study results indicate that 70% of the respondents felt that culture greatly influences men in perpetrating sexual violence against women. In addition 10% stated that a man's marital status could be the influencing factor, while 8% related men's action to their financial status. The argument was that men perpetrate sexual violence because they are poor. Finally, 6% and 6%, respectively, felt that women are victims of sexual violence because of their dressing and lack of education on the part of men (Figure.4.8).

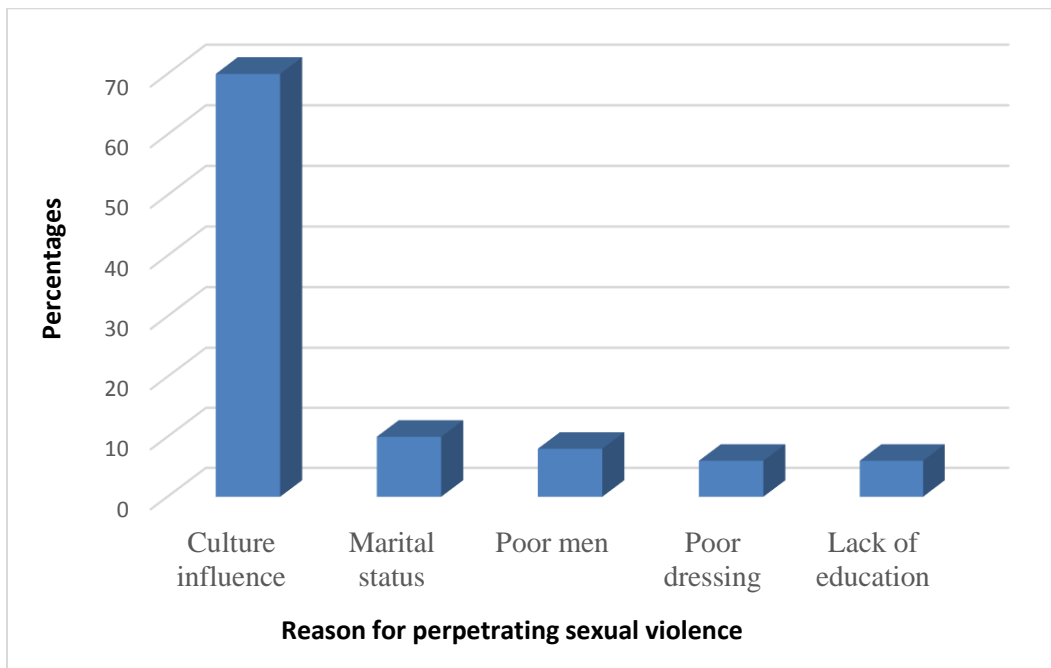


Fig.4.8: Reasons why men perpetrate sexual violence

On this issue the Malinke community leader, who was one of the key informants, had this to say:

Il n'est pas du tout facile d'expliquer à mes compatriotes que la culture d'aujourd'hui n'est plus celle d'hier. Il faut respecter la femme et la mettre au même niveau que nous les hommes.

(Translation)

It is not easy at all to tell my people that nowadays culture is very different from our tradition. There is need to respect women and consider them to be at the same level as we men.

Culture again appeared to be the critical factor regarding the respondents' various responses on what makes women more vulnerable to sexual violence. The majority (60%) of the respondents stated that women may be more vulnerable to sexual violence due to culture. Furthermore, 10% accused local leaders of being responsible while 8%, 8% and 8%, respectively, felt that fear of reporting the cases to authorities, lack of government involvement and women's inappropriate poor dressing, could increase the vulnerability of women to sexual violence. Finally, 6% of the respondents stated lack judicial prosecution is likely to increase women's vulnerability to sexual violence in the way perpetrators enjoy impunity. (Fig.4.9).

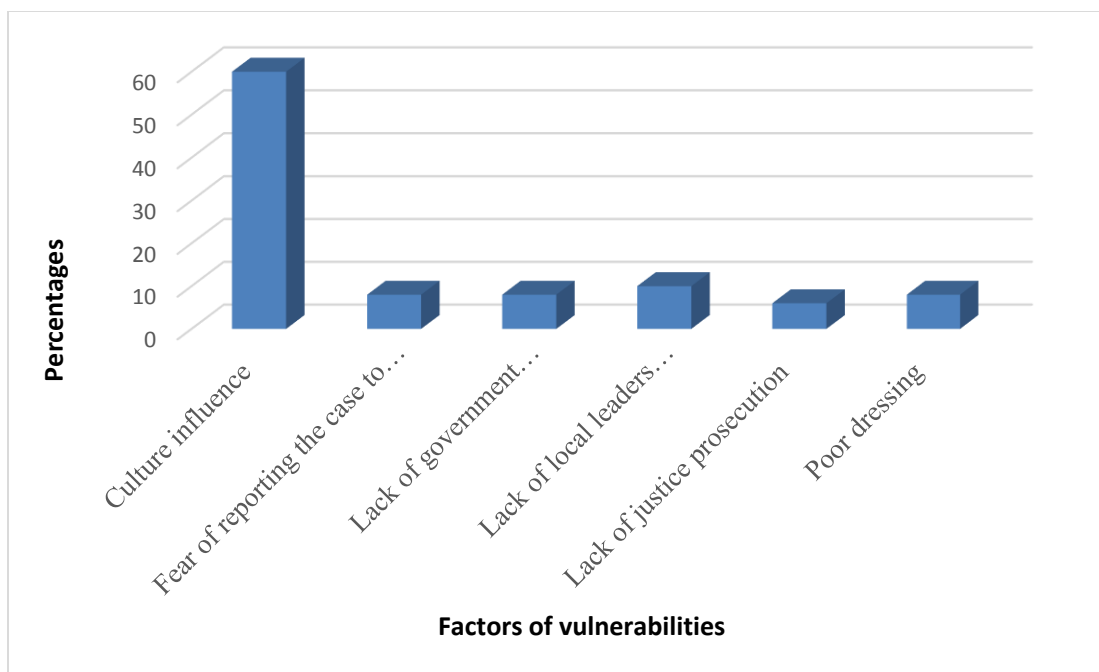


Fig.4.9: Factors increasing women’s vulnerability to sexual violence

The researcher also sought to find out whether the respondents were aware of the 2008 Sexual Violence Act or not. The findings indicate 48% of them were aware while the remaining 52% were not.

The senior legal affairs officer, who was one of the key informants, had this to say on the general awareness on the 2008 Sexual Violence Act:

A ce jour il existe des cliniques juridiques de prise en charge judiciaire des survivantes de violences sexuelles dans presque toutes les villes de la Côte d’Ivoire. Malheureusement rien n’est fait à l’endroit de la conscientisation de ceux qui perpètrent ces violences notamment les hommes sur le contenu de la loi.

(Translation)

Up to now there are many nationwide women's judicial clinics for legal support to survivors of sexual violence. Unfortunately, nothing is done to raise perpetrators' awareness on the provisions of the 2008 Sexual Violence Act. These perpetrators include males.

4.3.3 Consequences of SVAW

Sexual violence has unprecedented consequences on women including psychological, physical, and economical. The researcher sought to relate the level of the respondents' knowledge and perceptions to the consequences of SVAW.

The study population appears to think that sexual violence has no impact on families. This is because 60% of the respondents strongly disagreed and 8% disagreed that sexual violence impacts families negatively. They argued that they have never seen any family experiencing any difficulty because their daughters or women have been raped. The matter is settled within the community and life goes on. On the other hand, 18% and 14% strongly agreed and agreed, respectively, that sexual violence impacts families negatively. (Figure 4.10)

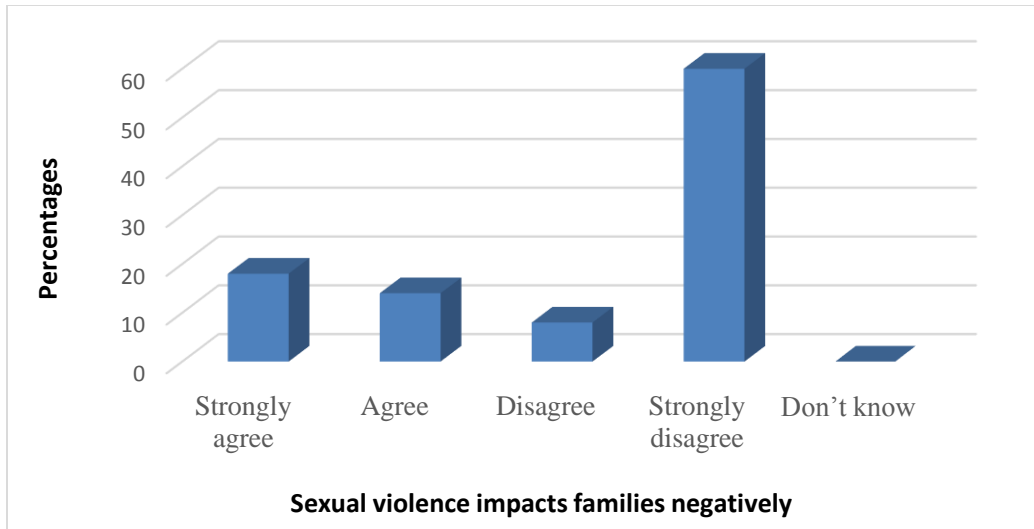


Fig.4.10: Sexual violence impacts families negatively

The results in Figure 4.11 below indicate that the majority (80%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 10% disagreed that perpetrators should be should be jailed for 15–20 years. On the other hand 4% and 4% respectively strongly agreed and agreed that perpetrators should be sentenced to that term while 2% said they did not know.

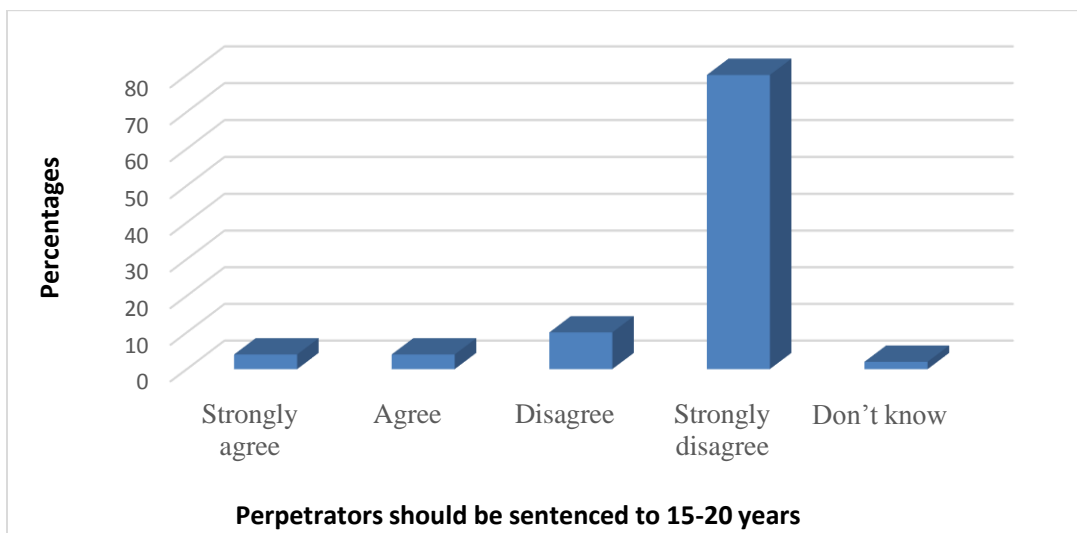


Fig.4.11: Perpetrators should be jailed for 15–20 years

It may be unlikely that sexual violence could result in the death of the victim. This is because the majority (60%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 14% disagreed with the likelihood that sexual violence could result in the death of the victim. On the other hand, 28% strongly agreed and 14% agreed, while 10% did not know. Figure 4.12 summarizes these findings.

One of the key informants, a senior legal affairs officer had this to say on this issue of sentence:

Une grande majorité de coupables de violence sexuelles n'ont pas connaissance de l'existence de la loi 2008 sur les violences sexuelles. Dans tous les cas nul n'est censé ignorer la loi. Nul n'est au-dessus de la loi. Malheureusement la réalité révèle que les coupables emprisonnés se retrouvent libres sous la base d'un deal des parents avec les autorités pénitentiaires. Et voilà.

(Translation)

A large majority of the perpetrators of sexual violence have no idea of the existence of the 2008 Sexual Violence Act. But anyway not knowing something doesn't mean you will be exempted. No one is above the law. Unfortunately, whenever we sentence them to jail their parents and prison authorities make a deal to release them. That is it.

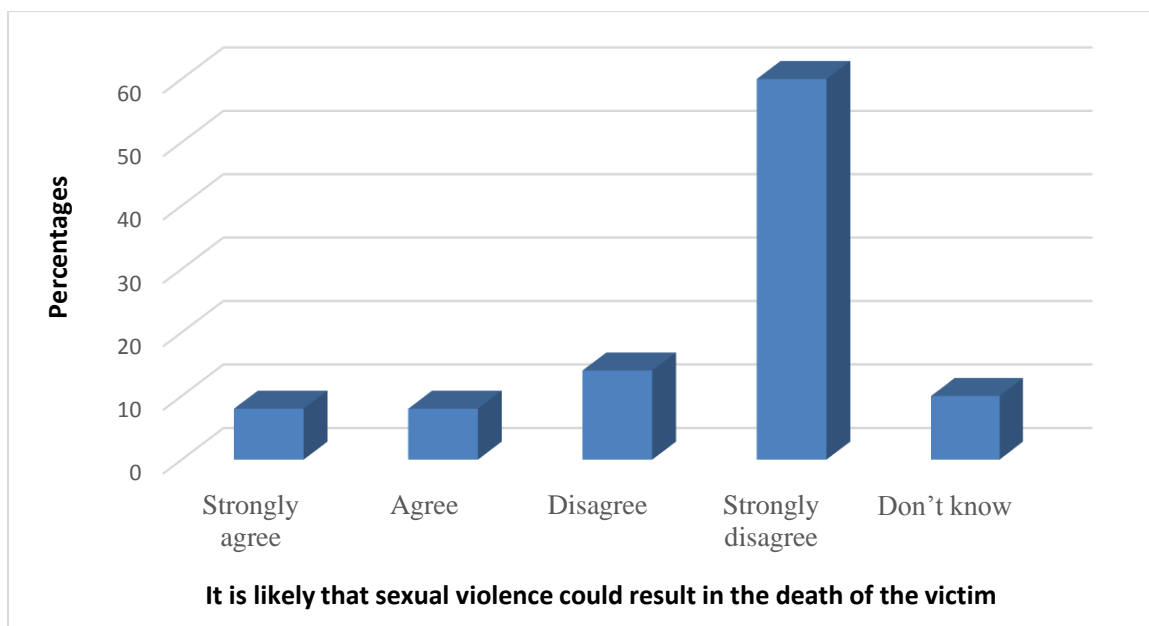


Fig.4.12: Likelihood of sexual violence resulting in the death of the victim

On this particular issue of death, a key informant, the municipality police commander stated thus:

L'année dernière on a enregistré deux décès de jeunes filles violées. Ces dernières avaient caché le viol et leurs parties par la suite s'étaient infectées jusqu'à ce que l'irréparable survienne...trop tard. Avant leur décès ces deux jeunes filles avaient donné l'identité des violeurs qu'elles connaissaient, deux hommes Malinké âgés de 29 et 35 ans. Ils ont été mis aux arrêts, jugés et emprisonnés. Mais jusqu'à leur incarcération ils ont toujours nie être les auteurs de leur mort arguant que violer une fille ne peut pas causer la mort quelles qu'en soit les circonstances.....étonnant....n'est-ce pas !

(Translation)

Last year two cases of rape that resulted in the death of two young girls were reported. These girls did not disclose the information until their intimate organs got deeply infected. Nothing could be done to save their lives...too late. But before passing away, they gave the identities of the perpetrators and it happened that they knew them well; two Malinke men aged 29 and 35. These perpetrators got arrested, prosecuted and jailed. But up to their imprisonment they kept denying responsibility for the death of these young girls. For them raping cannot at all result in death whatever the circumstances...amazing! Is it not?

The responses in Figure 4.13 below show that most (80%) of the respondents did not know whether female survivors of sexual violence may suffer from psychological and emotional distress. On the other hand, 4% and 4%, respectively, strongly disagreed and disagreed on the likelihood that survivors of sexual violence may suffer from psychological and emotional distress. Finally, 8% of the respondents strongly agreed and 4% agreed.

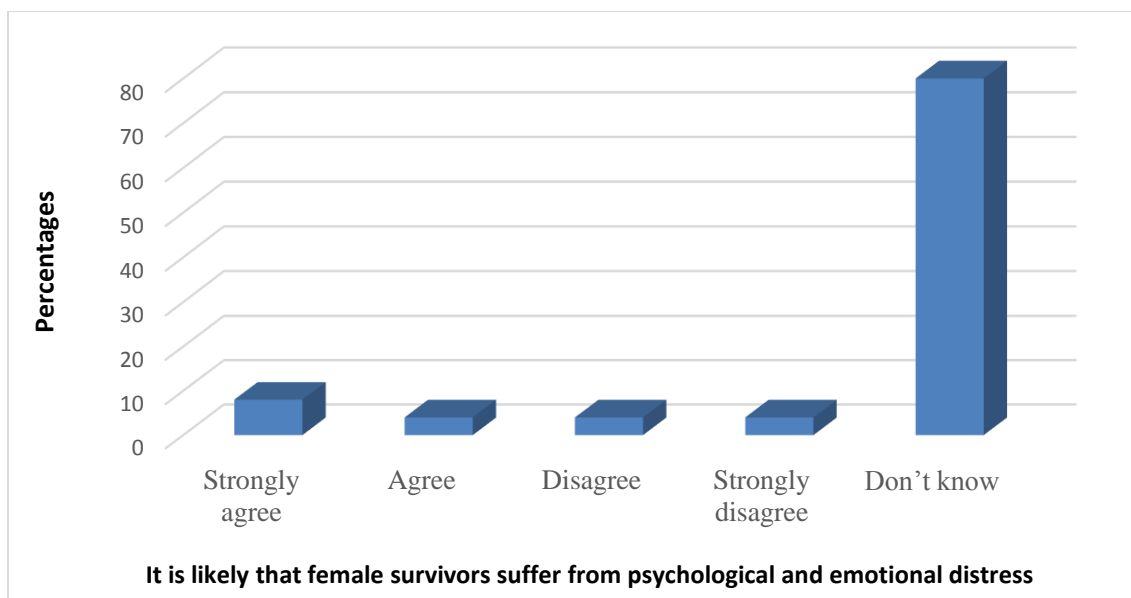


Fig.4.13: Likelihood of female survivors suffering from psychological and emotional distress

A key informant, the mental health unit head from the municipality health centre had this to say:

Nos rapports annuels révèlent que les hommes de la communauté Malinké n'ont aucun égard pour la femme. A la suite d'échange avec certains malinkés coupables de violence sexuelles, il ressort que pour eux coucher avec une femme sans son consentement ne peut en aucun cas avoir des incidences sur les émotions et le mental de ces femmes. Pour eux et cela s'avère absolument malheureux, les femmes sont femmes juste pour donner naissance et s'occuper des enfants. Cela est dû à la culture Malinké qui fait de la femme une personne entièrement soumise à l'homme.

(Translation)

Our annual records reveal that Malinke men have no regard for women. After interviewing some Malinke men perpetrators of sexual violence, we noticed one common thing, that having sex with a woman without her consent cannot result in emotional and psychological distress for the survivors. For them, and that is absolutely unfortunate, women are women just to give birth and cater for kids. That is related to Malinke culture that makes women submissive people.

On the issue of the likelihood that female survivors suffer from physical injuries as summarized in Figure 4.14 below, most (68%) of the respondents agreed and 12% strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand 10 % and 10%, respectively, strongly disagreed and disagreed that the female survivors could suffer from physical injuries.

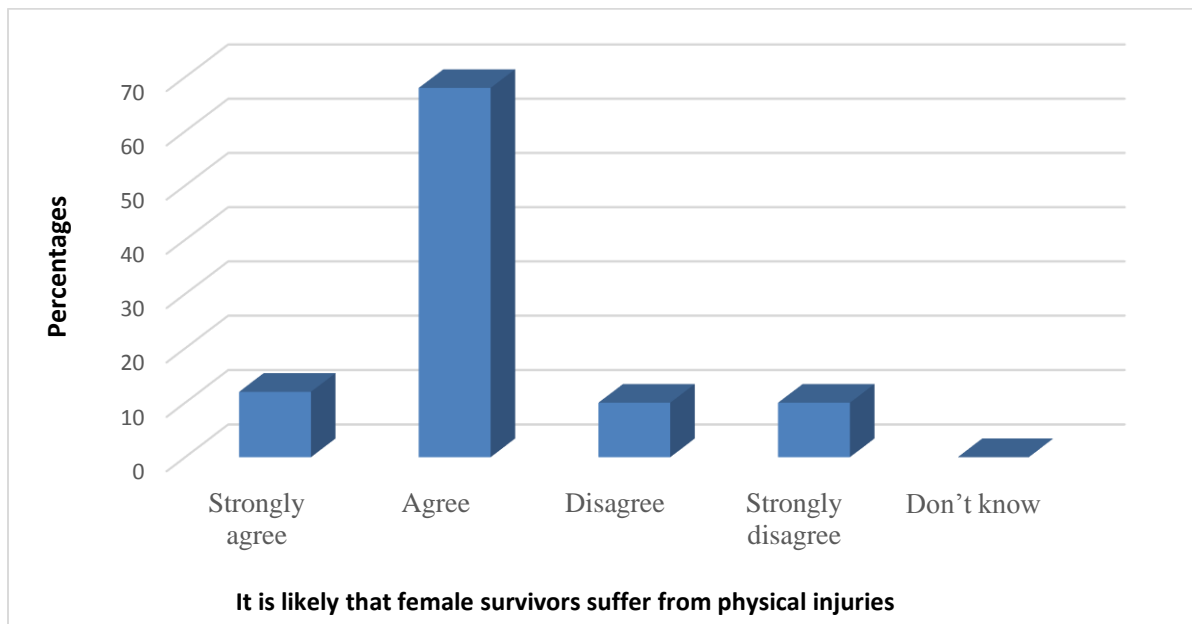


Fig. 4.14: Likelihood of female survivors suffering from physical injuries

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the study findings on the basis of the study objectives. The chapter then draws conclusions from these findings and a number of recommendations are made.

5.2 Discussion

The objectives of the study were to determine the level of knowledge of Malinke men on sexual violence in Attecoubé municipality, describe the attitudes of these men to SVAW in that municipality and identify Malinke men's opinions on the consequences of SVAW for their women.

The study findings indicate that Malinke men see sexual violence as a normal occurrence in their community. That suggests a strong patriarchal system in which men are rooted. Patriarchy is the hierarchical system of social organization in which cultural, political and economic structures are controlled by men (Kendall et al., 2007: 52). Patriarchy is a social system in which the male is the primary authority figure central to social organization and the central roles of political leadership, moral authority, and control of property, and where fathers hold authority over women and children. It implies the institutions of male rule and privilege, and entails female subordination.

Understanding the definitions of patriarchy and gaining insight into its practical meanings in society, it is clear that it is a social structure that runs contrary to the concept of gender equality in practical terms. This is perceived from the point that patriarchal societies basically support and encourage gender discrimination and inequality including sexual violence through the supremacy and dominance of the males over females.

The study indicates that the majority of Malinke men have a positive attitude to sexual violence against women. This finding is in tandem with the observation by Berkel et al., (2004:126) that the most consistent predictor of attitudes supporting the use of violence against women is attitude towards gender roles, that is, beliefs about appropriate roles for men and women. Once again patriarchy appears to be a major contributor to Malinke men's attitude. The patriarchal heritage of African societies gives men undue power over women in many matters including sexuality (Richter et al., 2004:440). While gender roles and power relations have undergone tremendous changes for gender equity and equality, men still have a big say on sexual matters in modern society.

The survey revealed that Malinke men feel that SVAW has no negative effects to women in their community. This is because a majority of them are neither aware of the negative impact of sexual violence on the victims, including psychological and emotional distress and even death; nor do they acknowledge the negative impact of sexual violence on the victims' families. Furthermore, respondents mostly do not know about the existence of the 2008 Sexual Violence Act. Finally, they strongly disagreed with the provision in that Act that perpetrators should be jailed for 15-20.

The overall impression from the study is that Malinke men's knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence against women is an issue that requires urgent attention. The study findings indicate that patriarchy is clearly the major contributor to sexual violence against women in Attecoube. Patriarchy is inextricably linked to culture and so one could conclude that Malinke culture obviously influences men to perpetrate sexual violence against women in Attecoube. Patriarchy has profoundly influenced Malinke men's knowledge and perceptions to the point that perpetrating sexual violence against women looks like it is okay and that is the norm among the Malinke community in Attecoube municipality.

Two major approaches that can help address the prevalence of sexual violence against women in Attecoube municipality are the enlightenment of community (Chinn, 2012:23) and law enforcement (Wazir & Oudenhoven, 1998:62).

Community level responses should address awareness issues. Culture is a central concern in relation to violence against women. As noted earlier, some men participate in sexual violence without realising that their activities actually constitute sexual violence because the cultural power distribution (Richter et al., 2004:17).

At the legal level, laws exist in Cote d'Ivoire that protect women from sexual violence such as the 2008 Sexual Violence Act. However, there is a problem with the enforcement of the law (Laster, 2001:34). This may in part be explained by ignorance among the police force, and the difficulties of proving sexual violence in the absence of physical

evidence or even the lengthy judicial process (Wanyonyi, 2004:10). It is important for law enforcement agencies to handle sexual violence firmly and make easy the judicial process in order to dissuade potential perpetrators.

A lot awareness and sensitization need to be conducted in Attecoube municipality because a large number of the Malinke men there do not understand what sexual violence is. Actually, the scope of the problem of community knowledge and perception of SVAW is an accurate indication that virtually all women are at the risk of victimization.

A lot can be done at the home, community and societal levels to curb the vice of sexual violence against women. In this connection, the government and civil organizations should be more proactively involved in the issues of community awareness and prosecution of the perpetrators. This is because this affects everyone in the community and the society at large and results in the propagation of gender discrimination including gender roles, power distribution; simply put patriarchy. Since this contributes directly to the achievement of gender equality, addressing community knowledge and perception of SVAW must take a holistic approach for the effort to succeed.

5.3 Conclusions

The overall overview from the study is that Malinke men knowledge and perceptions of sexual violence against women in Attecoube municipality is an issue that requires urgent attention. The issue of Malinke men seeing sexual violence as a normal occurrence in their community reflects a patriarchal system that depicts negatively on women. The

discrimination resulting from the gendered roles requires attention. Necessary measures must be put in place to ensure that Malinke men have a clear understanding of what sexual violence is.

The attitude of Malinke men to sexual violence against women illustrates the gender power relation between men who hold the power and women the ones who are subdued. Once again culture prevails in that attitudinal divide which displays the duality of master and slave. Having a negative attitude to sexual violence is crucial and must form part of any programme geared at improving men's attitude in Malinke community.

The issue of Malinke men feeling that sexual violence against women has no negative effects is detrimental to them. This is because they are neither aware of the consequences of sexual violence against women nor do they know the existence of the 2008 Sexual Violence Act that contains condemnation provision for perpetrators. Necessary measures aiming at building the capacities of Malinke men must be put in place.

Culture goes through a process of change and adaptation as a result of contact with other cultures, the influence of a dominant culture and the influence of the mass-media or communication technologies (such as the Internet) etc. As a result, culture must be seen as a dynamic mechanism that must adjust and adapt to external and internal conditions of existence with gender equality as final goal.

With good reason, culture has been a key target of community education campaigns in Attecoube municipality aimed at preventing violence against women. However, there has been relatively little coordinated issues that requires urgent attention.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations:

- a) Awareness programmes should be put in place to educate Malinke men in Attecoube municipality on the realities of sexual violence and the short and long term implications on the women as well as the community and the society at large
- b) Involve the mass media in the implementation of the awareness campaigns targeting Malinke men in Attecoube municipality.
- c) Firm law enforcement measures should be put in place to strengthen the existing 2008 Sexual Violence Act and promote the culture of zero tolerance.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Structured questionnaire

Introduction

My name is Didier Charles Kobena Kouadio and I am a student from the University of Nairobi. I am conducting research on Malinke men's knowledge and perception of sexual violence against women in this municipality. The research will enable me to compile a paper in order to complete the requirements for MA studies. You are one of those who have been selected to participate in the study. The questionnaire is completely anonymous and the information will be used only for the purpose of this study. Should you have questions or things you do not understand, kindly ask the researcher and they will be gladly explained to you. If you agree to participate in the study, please sign below.

I agree to participate.

Signature Date

Section I: General Information

Note : Tick the appropriate box

1. Which age bracket do you belong to?

21- 29

30 – 39

40 – 49

Over 50 years

2. What is your highest level of education ?

Primary school level

Secondary school

First degree

Master's degree

Ph.D

3. What is your professional status?

Jobless

Civil servant

Business person

4. How long have you been in this municipality?

0 – 6 months

7 months – 2 years

3– 5 years

6 – 10 years

Over 10 years

Section II: Level of knowledge of Malinke men on SVAF

1. Have you ever heard of the term sexual violence?

Yes/No

2. If yes, what does it mean to you?

.....
.....

What types or forms of sexual violence do you know?

.....
.....

According to you how do they occur?

.....
.....
.....

Section III: Attitudes of Malinke men to SVAF

1. Who are the perpetrators of sexual violence against women in this commune and why?

.....
.....

2. At what time and where is it most likely to occur ?

.....
.....

3. Is sexual violence limited to a particular community?

.....
.....

4. Who are the victims? What makes them more vulnerable?

.....
.....

5. Is sexual violence right? Does society condone it?

.....
.....

6. Is sexual violence cultural or does it evolve from social learning (e.g. violent fathers, violent sons, peers who violate women for fun)?

.....
.....

7. Is sexual violence genetic or acquired behaviour?

.....
.....

8. Should perpetrators be punished?

.....
.....

9. What are some of the punishments you think perpetrators should face?

.....
.....

10. Are you aware of the 2008 Sexual Violence Act?

.....
.....

11. If yes what are some of its provisions?

.....
.....

Section IV: Consequences of SVAF

Note: Tick the appropriate box

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
1	Sexual violence impacts families negatively					
2	Perpetrators should be sentenced to 15-20 years					
3	It is likely that sexual violence could result in the death of the victim					
4	It is likely that female survivors suffer from psychological and emotional distress					
5	It is likely that female survivors suffer from physical injuries					

Appendix II: Key informant interview guide

1. What do you think are the factors that influence Malinke men to perpetrate sexual violence against women?
 - Please explain.
2. Do you think Malinke culture has a part to play in the sexual violence against women?
 - Please explain.
3. How well are fathers in Malinke community doing in protecting their girl child against sexual violence?
4. To what extent does patriarchy influence Malinke men's attitude to violence against women?
5. Do you think Malinke community is doing enough to raise awareness among men on sexual violence against females?
6. Do you think the government is doing enough to curb the sexual violence perpetrated by Malinke men?
7. Do you think social workers and other concerned parties are taking necessary steps to raise awareness among Malinke men?
8. Do you think Malinke men are aware of the consequences of sexual violence against females?
9. What do you think are the major challenges in addressing sexual violence perpetrators among the Malinke men?
10. What do you think can be done to deter Malinke men from perpetrating sexual violence against their women in Attecoube?