

Unwanted Sexual Experiences among Adolescent Males in Sub-Saharan Africa: Prevalence and Context

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Unwanted sexual experiences are most frequently examined from the woman's perspective yet these experiences happen to men as well. Unwanted sexual experiences are connected over an individual's lifetime to demographic and health outcomes such as STI exposure, including HIV, as well as negative psychological effects that place males at risk of future negative health outcomes.¹ Nationally-representative surveys collected in 2003-2004 in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Uganda and Malawi with 12-19 year olds show that between 4-12% of 12-19 year old boys state that they were "not willing at all" at sexual debut and between 3-7% say that they have ever been forced to have sex. Further analysis in the paper presents risk and protective factors that frame boys' vulnerability to unwanted sexual intercourse. In-depth interviews portray males' narratives of coercive sexual intercourse experiences.

Background

The majority of research done to date on unwanted sexual experiences has focused on girls' experiences. A study conducted by the WHO which included males found that males across cultures have had unwanted sexual experiences.² The greater body of research on females has established clear evidence between unwanted sexual experiences and negative social, psychological and sexual health outcomes.³ These relationships among males have been only examined in a select number of studies. Data gathered in Lima, Peru found that while there was evidence of a correlation between having experienced sexual coercion and unintended pregnancies or symptoms of STIs, this relationship was not significant for males while it was for females. Other studies in the Central African Republic and in Goa, India have found that males who had experienced a forced sexual debut were more likely to report multiple sexual partners in adulthood.^{4,5} School performance and continuation have also been shown to suffer after males' unwanted sexual experiences.⁶ Other correlates of sexual abuse identified in the study in Goa were having experienced other forms of violence and abuse in the previous 12 months. Among those who had experienced abuse, almost half reported more than one experience of abuse and a quarter reported three or more experiences of abuse.⁵

Studies looking at males' experiences of forced sex found that the percent reporting having ever experienced unwanted sex ranged from 2.5 percent to 42 percent with the highest rates being reported among students in Ibadan, Nigeria.^{5,7-10} In the US, a nationally representative survey of in-school adolescents found that 5 percent of the males had experienced forced penetrative sex.¹¹ Unwanted sexual experiences occurring in the educational setting have been reported by 1-2 percent of male primary school students and 4 percent of male secondary school students in a study in Kenya.¹² Unwanted touch, attempts at forced sex and actual forced sex were captured in Ibadan, Nigeria among male students and apprentices and among male Ethiopian high school students. Among the behaviors studied, unwanted touch was reported most frequently by

Nigerian apprentices while attempts at forced sex were reported most frequently by Nigerian students.⁹ The Nigeria study found that almost all of the respondents knew the sexual aggressor.

Some studies have found males reporting being forced into sex with a female. The same Nigerian study cited above found over half of the males who had experienced forced sex and two-thirds of those reporting unwanted touch said that the perpetrator had been female.⁹ In-depth interviews with males 16-22 years old in Mexico City found that a number of them reported females pressured them to have sex through undressing, touching, commenting on his penis and taunting his lack of virility.¹³ Having sex with “sugar mummies” to obtain food or pocket money has been reported by adolescent males in sub-Saharan Africa. Boys describe this as being seduced to have sex against their will or being “conned” by older women.^{14,15}

In other settings, the most common way forced sex among males has been found to occur is through older boys pressuring younger boys to have anal sex.¹⁶ Older men were identified as common perpetrators in Sri Lanka and Nigeria.^{8,9} Studies with street boys in different parts of the world have found this practice to be more common among this population than among the population at large.¹⁷⁻¹⁹ A study in Goa, India found that the most common perpetrators of forced sexual relations with males were older students or friends.⁵ Less frequently mentioned types of sexual pressure from males include peer pressure to engage in sex with prostitutes.

Risk is not uniformly distributed in the population. Studies that have looked at protective factors have found that having a close relationship with ones’ parents reduced young men’s probability of experiencing unwanted forced sex. Specifically, feeling understood by ones’ parents and feeling satisfied with the time spent with ones’ parents both significantly reduced young men’s vulnerability.⁵ But this remains an understudied aspect of the topic.

Much remains unknown about young men’s unwanted sexual experiences in Sub-Saharan Africa. Due to the prevalence of HIV in the region, unwanted penetrative experiences carry relatively greater danger for boys there than in other regions of the world. It is a region where the dominance of the social construction of male sexual voracity and extreme, socially sanctioned homophobia make it challenging to collect accurate data on this subject. Due to their greater vulnerability in general compared to adults, adolescents remain particularly at risk for these negative and dangerous experiences.

Methodology

This study draws on qualitative and quantitative data, each of which provides a unique contribution to understanding unwanted sexual experiences among boys. The nationally-representative survey data provide information on the prevalence of coercive sexual intercourse at sexual debut, characteristics of the respondent and his partner, as well as the overall lifetime exposure to unwanted sexual experiences (coital and non-coital) including who perpetrated the unwanted experience. In-depth interviews provide insight from the boys’ perspectives into the particular context surrounding sexual experiences

named as unwanted by male respondents yet the sometimes conflicting information presented in their narratives at times serves to further confound rather than illuminate our understanding of boys' so-called "unwanted" sexual experiences.

SURVEY

Four nationally representativeⁱ, household-based surveys of 12-19 years olds were conducted in 2004 in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi and Uganda. Survey questionnaires were designed to be similar in content and structure across the countries. The questionnaires were translated (and back-translated) into major regional languages and pre-tested. Informed consent was obtained for all adolescents and consent was also obtained from parents or guardians for unmarried adolescents aged 12-17 years in each country. Interviews lasted about 45 minutes. The final survey samples were 5,955 in Burkina Faso, 4,410 in Ghana; 5,112 in Uganda; and 4,031 adolescents in Malawi. (Surveys are available at <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/PNG-data.html> and full descriptions of the country specific methodologies are available at <http://www.guttmacher.org/sections/adolescents.php?scope=other%20country%20specific>.)

Coercion at sexual debut was determined by the question, "Thinking about the first time you had sexual intercourse, would you say you were very willing, somewhat willing or not willing at all?" Respondents who answered "not willing at all" are categorized as having been coerced at sexual debut. The question on lifetime exposure to unwanted non-coital sexual experiences was, "Sometimes people do things to us we do not want. Has anyone ever touched you in an unwanted sexual way such as touching, kissing, grabbing or fondling?" The response categories were yes, no, refused and don't know. The question on lifetime exposure to unwanted sexual intercourse was, "Has anyone ever physically forced, hurt or threatened you into having sexual intercourse?" The response categories were the same as above. The response categories that capture the relationship between the respondent and the individual who forced them to engage in unwanted non-coital or coital sexual behavior is not gender-specific. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether it was a same sex or an opposite sex individual who coerced the adolescent. Multiple responses were allowed on this question, capturing whether more than one individual had victimized the respondent.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Approximately 102 in-depth interviews were conducted in each of four countries in the study with 12-19 year old males and females. The samples were selected to have an equal number of urban and rural residents, as well as in-school and out-of-school respondents. Special populations were also sought out and included: street children, refugees (Uganda only), disabled adolescents (Uganda only), residents of homes for pregnant teenagers (Ghana only), petty traders, and adolescents living in juvenile/remand homes or orphanages. The interviews lasted between 45 minutes and 2 ½ hours and took place in local languages. They were translated during the transcription process.

ⁱ The Uganda sample is not nationally representative because four districts in the Northern region of Uganda had to be dropped from the sample due to security concerns during fieldwork.

Results

Coercion at Sexual debut

Overall, about 6 percent of males between the ages of 12 and 19 years old reported that their first sexual experience was “not willing at all:” 5 percent in Burkina Faso, 12 percent in Ghana, 8 in Malawi, and 4 percent in Uganda. Younger adolescents (12-14 years of age at the time of the interview) were more likely to report that they were coerced than older adolescents (15-19 years of age at the time of the interview) although this finding was statistically significant (at the .05 level) only in Uganda (see Table 1). Boys who had their sexual debuts before the age of 12 were more likely to report that the experience was “not willing at all” in Burkina Faso, Malawi and Uganda, but this difference was only significant in Malawi. The most common perpetrators of coercive first sex were casual partners/otherⁱⁱ. In Ghana, Malawi and Uganda, the proportion who were “not willing at all” at sexual debut with a casual acquaintance/other was approximately double the proportion who were “not willing at all” with a girlfriend or live-in partner.

Urban males reported higher levels of being coerced into having their first sex experiences but this association was significant only in Burkina Faso where nine percent of urban as opposed to 4 percent of rural males reported that they were not willing at all at sexual debut. Age difference with one’s partner, wealth, schooling status (the exception being Ghana where being in school was significantly correlated with having experienced an unwanted debut) and whether the respondent had received sex education before sex did not appear to be significantly linked to being coerced into first sex.

Surprisingly, condom use at sexual debut looks very similar among those who were coerced at debut compared to those who had not been coerced (see Table 2). Overall condom use is low across all four countries. In each country the proportion who used a condom and were coerced is slightly lower than the proportion who used a condom and were not coerced, yet the differences are small. Assuming that condoms are being used at the males’ discretion, condom use suggests male control. Therefore, the fact that there is so little difference between those that said they had been coerced and those that had not been coerced suggests that males were able to retain some control over the sexual experience even though it was coerced.

Preliminary analysis of an extremely limited model predicting coercive first sex show that younger current age of the respondent is correlated with having experienced a coerced sexual debut in Uganda, having had one’s sexual debut with a casual acquaintance/other significantly increases the probability of being “not willing at all” in Malawi and Uganda, and being in school is correlated with being “not willing at all” in Ghana (see Table 3). Rural/urban residence demonstrated no significance in the model. Due to the small sample sizes, pooling the data allowed us to identify certain patters that were not emerging when each country was being looked at separately. Pooled data revealed that younger age of the respondent at the time of the interview was positively correlated with having had a coerced first sex experience. Having one’s sexual debut with

ⁱⁱ Other includes stranger, commercial sex worker and other.

other partners besides a girlfriend or live-in partner significantly increased the probability of the sexual intercourse being coerced and being in school increased boys' probability of experiencing an unwanted debut. A cross-country comparison predicting coercion at sexual debut showed that adolescents in Ghana are significantly more likely to experience a coerced sexual debut than adolescents in the other countries.

Ever Experienced Forced Sex

The survey also asked whether adolescents had been physically forced, hurt, or threatened into having sexual intercourse at any point in time. Because of their sensitive nature, caution was exercised so that adolescents in the same household would not know that anyone else in their household was asked these questions since the information could have potentially implicated a fellow family member in perpetrating abuse. Therefore, these questions were only asked of one eligible adolescent per household. A further precaution taken was that if another household member older than 3 years was within hearing range, these questions were not asked. As a result, the number of adolescents to whom these questions were asked is small (see Table 4). Overall, approximately 6 percent of males 12 to 19 years of age reported that they had ever been forced to have sexual intercourse: 3 percent in Burkina Faso and Malawi, 5 percent in Ghana and 7 percent in Uganda. Of those who had ever been forced to have sex, overall 21 percent mentioned a girlfriend as the perpetrator, ranging from about 5 percent in Burkina Faso to more than one third in Ghana. Friends and schoolmates were also mentioned by about 23 and 16 percent, respectively, from all males (see Table 5).

In-depth interviews

Sexual debut

Perhaps due to the high level of stigma attached to the topic of unwanted sex among males, or perhaps because of its low overall prevalence in the population, very few narratives of unwanted sex emerged from the in-depth interviews. Among the stories that did emerge, sometimes the respondents' label of the situation as forced did not match the description of the experience. Other times, boys' narratives were so sparse, we are left with little else to understand what took place than the boy calling it a forced experience. What is clear from the boys' narratives is that the force boys relate experiencing is qualitatively different than the force talked about by the girls.ⁱⁱⁱ

An urban 14 year old boy from Malawi recounted his first sexual experience which took place with his girlfriend where the first time they had sex, it was not forced but the second time they had sex (in the same night), it was forced:

Respondent: She forced me but I did not want.

Interviewer: Did you want it or not?

R: I wanted but for fear.

I: So did she draw you into it or she just offered what you wanted?

ⁱⁱⁱ For an analysis of the females' experiences of sexual coercion in this same data set, see Moore, Ann M., Kofi Awusabo-Asare, Nyovani Madise, Johannes John-Langba and Akwasi Kumi-Kyereme. "Coerced First Sex among Adolescent Girls in Sub-Saharan Africa: Prevalence and Context." *African Journal of Reproductive Health*. In press.

R: She just forced me.

I: Why do you say it like that?

R: Because I tried to resist by saying that that's all but she insisted that we should do it a little bit more.

--urban, 14 year old, Malawi

Encouragement and perhaps pressure from his girlfriend was construed by this respondent as force.

In the Ugandan sample, more stories emerged of male sexual coercion than in Malawi. One boy had been living on the street when the forced sex occurred while another was living on the street at the time of the interview (placing them at high risk). Both were young at the time the event occurred. Piecing together different parts of the respondents' narratives provides the most complete picture of the unwanted sexual intercourse experience.

This respondent was 5 or 6 years old at the time of the occurrence. He does not provide much detail about the event stating that he does not remember what happened.

If I am to remember, in the place where I used to stay there was a woman who raped me. I don't really know what happened. Anyway, I forgot about it. [...] Since I was young what I remember up to now is that someone raped me but I don't know how it happened. [...] There is nothing I felt, but when I grew up and they used to teach us about rape and it's a disadvantage, that's when I came to realize that some one did it to me. [...] I don't even feel like remembering.

--urban, 15 year old, Uganda

We were together; she asked me to have sex. Then we went to a classroom and then had sexual intercourse. It was at night. [...] She would ask me to have sex but for me I did not want. [...] [I was] fearing if she got pregnant. [...] For me, I never wanted to have sex. She forced me into it. [...] I feared someone finding us. If we were found, they would beat us. We could even be suspended [from school].

--urban, 13 year old street child, Uganda

This respondent describes the situation as forced yet the reasons he gives as to why he did not want to have sex were because he feared she would get pregnant and because he feared getting suspended from school if they were to have been found. Although he clearly stated he never wanted to have sex, he did go with her to a classroom after she asked him to have sex, indicating that perhaps he was ambivalent about having sex.

Pressure to Engage in Sexual Intercourse

In the in-depth interviews, males described engaging in unwanted sex out of a desire to prove that they were men or because of pressure from a female. Burkinabé males related experiencing pressure from both their male and female friends to engage in sexual intercourse. In Malawi, more boys related being pressured by their girlfriends than were pressured by their friends to have sex while in Uganda and Ghana, peer pressure from

male friends seems to be more present than pressure from girlfriends. Pressure from girls included walking enticingly, wearing skirts with slits, and sleeveless shirts so you could see her breasts (rural, 18 year old, Malawi), sexual suggestions from their female partners such as taking her clothes off (urban, 18 year old, Malawi), females suggesting sex, and by females asking males to buy something for them (rural, 16 year old Malawi).

Some girls pressured boys through questioning their masculinity. A rural, 14 year old from Uganda related, "Girls have always pressured me to have sex with them. [...] I have always refused and told them that I do not want and they go away from me after laughing at me by saying that I don't know those things [how to have sexual intercourse]." Another stated:

I always talked about studies when I was with her but she always talked about sex. [...] She is the one who told me that I should prove if I am a man since I act like am a boy. She then took me to their home when her mother had gone to the garden and I played sex with her for my first time. Then I did it again with her and this time I felt good. <<shyly smiling.>> At first I was so scared, but when we did it again I felt so good but I can't do it again. [...] I feared getting sick and making her pregnant. I also feared being caught playing sex with her because if I was caught I would be taken to prison. [...] Yes, she wanted me to have sex with her just to prove that I am a man...I feared because I felt it was not the right thing.
--rural, 17 year old male, Uganda

Therefore, although this respondent states that he enjoyed the sex he had, he is also clear about saying that he did not want to be engaging in sexual intercourse as he did not feel that it was the right thing to do and there was too much at stake: she could get pregnant and he could be sent to prison for it. He did it because his partner was calling into question his masculinity.

Fear of AIDS/STIs was another reason boys were not interested in engaging in sexual intercourse. On rural, 14 year old Malawian boy said he did not have sex when pressured because some girls have sores. A rural, 13 year old from Uganda related, "There is a woman who had asked for sex from me and I refused. I cannot accept because I saw a young boy with AIDS so I also fear to get AIDS." A rural, 19 year old Ugandan talked about how he tried to avoid his girlfriend's pressure:

R: I kept dodging her. Eventually she stopped pressuring me because she saw I was not interested in playing sex with her.

I: How did you feel?

R: Alright. That is what I wanted because I feared that she would infect me with HIV/AIDS.

One male related having sex when it was not wanted to protect his partner's reputation as, according to her, her reputation was being challenged by the fact that her male partner did not behave as men are expected to behave, specifically, to be sexually voracious.

Fellow students used to make noise for us saying so and so likes that girl--that is for the boys. Also the girls were saying she likes that boy, meaning me...She told me that people are always talking about us, "I am your wife but we have never even done anything, why don't we do it so that they talk when indeed we have done what they think we are doing?" [She said:] "They talk, but you do not show that you love me. I would like them to talk when we have indeed been in love, when we have had sex together. [...] According to her my failure to have sex with her was a sign that I did not like her. [...] She was asking me whether I had other girls if my love is not for her. [...] She insisted that I do not like her and I enjoy seeing her being embarrassed by boys and girls in school. I told her I fear playing sex because I had never done it. She told me that she had also never had sex but let's go and start together. She insisted and I felt she was forcing me into having sex. She wanted to know whether I really liked her. She gave me an ultimatum saying that I should tell her so that she makes a decision because there are a lot of other boys who would like to be her boyfriends. [...] We went in the truck talking with her and when we reached Masaka where our school was to play a football match, I asked her to take a walk with me so we walked around looking for a nearly bush where we could go. [...] She was not a virgin. She just lied to me so that I could have sex with her. [...] My heart was beating terribly about the idea of having sex. I feared a lot wondering how I was going to play sex. The first time scared me.

--urban, 19 year old, Uganda

This couple was not married. She was referring to herself as his wife to underscore the seriousness of the relationship that she wanted to have with this boy. She was calling being in love having had sex together. Because of the assumption that men need or at least always want to have sex, she questioned his fidelity because he was not making overtures to engage in sexual intercourse with her. The reason why she would be embarrassed by boys and girls in school is most likely because they would make fun of her for being romantically connected to a boy who was perceived to be less masculine because he was not engaging in sexual intercourse. They went to the bush to be able to have some privacy to engage in sexual intercourse. While the extent to which the boy was motivated to have sex with her because he thought she was a virgin was not clear at the beginning of the story he narrated, at the end he made clear that he had sex with her thinking that she was a virgin and felt betrayed when he discovered that she was in fact not a virgin. Similar ultimatums of the girl telling the boy that sex had to happen or it would mean the end of their relationship were recounted in Burkina Faso. An urban, 16 year old Burkinabé male related the ultimatum his partner gave him: "She invited me to dance, and I refused but she said that if I refused it could mean the end of our relationship. After the dance she proposed to sleep together and I did not refuse."

Pressure from friends to engage in sexual intercourse usually occurred through emasculation by one's peers for not engaging in sexual intercourse. One urban, 19 year old Ugandan related: "My friend...told me to play sex since when the sperms remain inside your penis they can spoil your penis." He went on to relate that his friends call him impotent. "It's not true [that I am impotent] yet my friends are insisting on it as if it's

true. So they want to force me to do something which I don't want." Boys in Ghana related being teased and ridiculed by their friends for not having a girlfriend or for not having sex.

I: Have you ever been pressured to go for a girl before?

R: Yes, my friends at school they keep telling me I'm a small boy just because I don't have a girlfriend.

--urban, 17 year old, Ghana

I: Has any one pressured you to have sex?

R: Yes.

I: Who?

R: My friends.

I: In what ways?

R: They often tease me and say that I am not a correct guy.

--urban, 16 year old, Ghana

Sexual Intercourse Avoidance In The Face Of Coercion

Faced by a female encouraging him to have sex with her, the strategies used by Malawian males to avoid sexual intercourse were unique and situational: saying he's been sent somewhere (the only strategy employed twice within the sample); telling parents that the girl was pressuring him to have sex [with the expectation being that the parents would intervene and punish the girl]; telling the girl he doesn't love her; telling her that it's not for her to decide but it's up to him, the male, to decide; refusing to go when she calls him [presumably to have alone time together during which sex could occur]; going and playing football with his friends; saying he is not yet of age to have sex; and just buying them what they ask for and then leaving. In Ghana, one male reported how he successfully avoided coercion.

My friends pressured me to have sex when we were playing at night. They told me that as a visitor they had to find a girlfriend for me. They brought a girl and said that they were going to perform the marriage rites. After that they suggested that I should have sex with the girl but I did not do it because I was not feeling well.

--rural, 17 year old, Ghana

Challenges/Implications

Adolescents are left to learn about sexuality, in many places, in a near vacuum of information. A comparative study of sexual risk taking in Cambodia, Cameroon, Chile, Costa Rica, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Zimbabwe found that while premarital sexual activity was condoned, no information or instruction was provided to young people so that they remained vulnerable to the perhaps unwanted advances of older individuals, both male and female, and they do not have a specified framework within which to develop healthy sexual behavior.²⁰ The fact that a number of the respondents said that they were scared of sex may be evidence of this lack of information leading to fear and anxiety related to sex among the sample interviewed for this study.

Therefore, giving youths more information about sex may not have prevented these sex acts from taking place, but the boys may have experienced less fear and anxiety around the experience. This may have implications for the probability of using condoms at that time.

Due to the stigma associated with men admitting that they had been sexually coerced (as is evident in the fact that men almost never publicly make accusations of rape), the experiences captured in this research project are most likely an undercount. The incentive to underreport sexual coercion perpetrated by a female is that men are expected to be in control and also not turn down an opportunity to have sexual intercourse. Admitting that one did not want to be engaging in the sex that was taking place contradicts those expectations.

The incentive to underreport sexual coercion perpetrated by a male on another male is the supremely high levels of homophobia in all of the countries where the study was conducted. The quantitative questions on sexual coercion at sexual debut and forced sex over the life course were not written to capture same-sex behavior. There was no qualitative evidence of unwanted sexual experiences that were perpetrated by another male. Therefore, these data cannot speak to same sex versus heterosexual coercion.

These data from sub-Saharan Africa support certain trends identified in previous research on males' unwanted sexual experiences and challenges others. The prevalence rates are at the low end compared to what has been found in other settings. While previous research has found that boys who have experienced unwanted sex are less likely to thrive in school and more likely to drop out, in three of the four countries in this data set, schooling was not associated with coerced first sex and in Ghana, the relationship looked in fact opposite of what it had been found in Ethiopia: In school boys were more likely to have experienced coercion at debut. The types of sexual coercion reported by boys in the qualitative data appear to be similar to the way that coercion was perpetrated upon males in Mexico City—suggesting sex and questioning the boy's masculinity constitute coercion for young men. Peer pressure among males to engage in sex with women also emerged in this sample as it has in previous research with males.

Coercion does not have the same profile for boys as it does for girls—it doesn't occur to the same portion of the population and the narratives describing coerced experiences are very different for boys than for girls. Age difference with one's partner is not a risk factor for boys while it is for girls. What is similar about both sexes is that unwanted sex is much more likely if the partner is not a stable partner (girlfriend/boyfriend, husband/live-in partner). Aside from the boy in Uganda who had been raped as a young boy, the rest of the respondents did not express pain when relating the unwanted sexual experience. This is in juxtaposition to girls' narratives of unwanted sex where they expressed betrayal, hurt, disappointment and sadness when they had been forced to have unwanted sex. For the boys, sex was unwanted because they were afraid of the girl getting pregnant or being discovered but it did not seem like the sex itself was unwanted *per se*. This was not the case for girls. They expressed more unhappiness with the fact that sex had occurred and it seemed less tied to worries about pregnancy and possible punishment.

As long as the paradigm of male sexual response remains as limited as it is today in terms of what it defines as acceptable male sexual behavior, males will most likely continue to feel inhibited in naming sexual experiences as unwanted or forced since this is in juxtaposition to dominant messages about masculinity that males are taught. Furthermore, the fact that there is very little language as well as social acknowledgement about sexual ambivalence may result in some adolescent males reporting the experience as forced when in fact it would be more accurate to represent the experience with ambivalence but they lack the language to do so.

It is likely that stigma against reporting male sexual coercion as well as experiences of coercion do not occur at the same intensity or through the same pathways in each of the four countries included in the study. Yet due to the lack of previous evidence from these settings on this phenomenon, we are not in a position to generate hypotheses about country-specific differences nor are these data detailed enough to allow us to formulate hypotheses about country-specific differences.

By using a mixed methods approach, this study advances our understanding of unwanted sexual experiences among young men in the countries where the study took place since non-consensual sex among boys needs to be put on the sexual and reproductive health and rights agenda as part of the process of protecting the next generation.

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Table 1 Percent of males aged 12-19 years who were coerced at first sexual debut by selected background characteristics, National Survey of Adolescents, 2004

	Burkina Faso		Ghana		Malawi		Uganda	
Characteristic	% Coerced	N	% Coerced	N	% Coerced	N	% Coerced	N
Very willing	75.9		64.5		70.8		71.9	
Somewhat willing	19.2		23.2		21.5		24.1	
Not willing at all (coerced)	4.9		12.3		7.6		3.9	
Current age								
12-14	6.8	74	--	13	8.6	175	7.2	170
15-19	4.7	556	11.5	193	7.1	666	3.0	624
Age at first sex								
< 12 years	8.1	37	--	23	13.1	130	6.1	132
12-14 years	5.3	209	11.9	42	8.6	338	4.4	317
15-19 years	4.4	384	12.2	139	4.4	365	2.0	346
Relationship with partner								
Girlfriend/partner	4.5	535	9.7	145	5.9	674	3.0	632
Casual acquaintance/other	6.4	94	19.7	61	13.2	167	7.6	172
Age difference with partner								
Within 4 years of own age	4.1	536	12.8	179	7.1	784	3.6	742
Partner 5-9 years older	--	5	--	7	--	2	--	12
Partner 10+ years older	--	0	--	3	--	7	--	3
Don't know	7.9	89	--	13	14.6	41	5.4	37
Place of residence								
Urban	9.0	167	15.5	97	10.5	153	5.0	80
Rural	3.5	463	10.1	109	6.7	688	3.9	727
Wealth status								
Lowest 40%	5.5	236	9.1	77	9.7	320	5.3	320
Middle 20%	6.0	151	11.1	36	6.7	208	4.1	172
Highest 40%	3.4	238	15.2	92	5.2	310	2.9	307
Schooling status at first sex								
Not in school	4.4	457	5.8	69	4.1	146	2.3	130
Was in school	6.4	173	15.4	136	8.1	696	4.3	677
Sex education before sex								
No	5.1	573	9.5	137	7.6	708	4.5	626
Yes	3.5	57	18.8	69	6.7	134	2.2	181
Total	4.9	630	12.3	206	7.6	841	3.9	806

-- N less than 25; * P-value < 0.05; ** P-value < 0.01

Ns may not add up to total because of rounding and weighting.

Table 2 **Percent males aged 12-19 years who used a condom at sexual debut according to willing at sexual debut, National Survey of Adolescents, 2004**

	Coerced	Not Coerced
	%	%
Burkina Faso	30	31
Ghana	23	28
Malawi	13	18
Uganda	25	28

Table 3: Odds ratios of coercive first sex among sexually experienced males aged 12-19 in Burkina Faso, Ghana, Malawi, and Uganda, National Survey of Adolescents, 2004

Characteristic	Burkina				Pooled
	Faso	Ghana	Malawi	Uganda	
Current age of respondent					
12-14	2.05	2.64	1.02	1.97+	1.45+
15-19	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Relationship with first partner					
Girlfriend/Live-in partner	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Casual acquaintance ^a	1.82	1.81	2.62***	2.47*	2.33***
Other	-	-	-	-	2.78**
Schooling status at first sex					
Not in school	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
In school	1.29	3.07+	1.77	1.52	1.65*
Urban/rural residence					
Urban	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Rural	0.78	0.65	0.71	0.67	0.73
Country					
Burkina Faso	-	-	-	-	1.00
Ghana	-	-	-	-	1.97*
Malawi	-	-	-	-	1.33
Uganda	-	-	-	-	0.64

^a Combined with 'Other' in individual country models due to small numbers.

+ p-value < 0.1; * p-value < 0.05; ** p-value < 0.01; *** p-value < 0.001

Table 4 **Percent males aged 12-19 years who have ever been forced to have sex⁺, National Survey of Adolescents, 2004**

	12-14		15-19		Total	
	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>
Burkina Faso	2.8	680	3.7	811	3.3	1491
Ghana	2.5	589	7.1	756	5.1	1345
Malawi	2.4	581	4	655	3.2	1236
Uganda	4.2	575	8.9	638	6.7	1213
Overall	3.9		7.9		6.1	

+ Only one adolescent per household was interviewed and only if no one older than 3 years is within hearing range.

Table 5 Relationship of person to respondent (males 12-19 years of age) among those forced into having sex, National Survey of Adolescents, 2004

	Burkina Faso %	Ghana %	Malawi %	Uganda %	Total
Girlfriend	[5.1]	34.3	[17.5]	20.0	20.5
Other friend	[42.1]	22.4	[25.6]	21.3	23.1
Schoolmate	[5.1]	8.8	[15.4]	27.8	15.6
Acquaintance	[7.9]	20.9	[12.5]	4.9	11.3
Stranger	[20.5]	4.5	[17.9]	20.0	15.4
N	49	67	40	81	

Multiple responses possible

[] = N <= 49