

KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PERCEPTION ON GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AMONG NIGERIAN SECURITY AND CIVIL DEFENCE CORPS (NSCDC) OPERATIVES, PLATEAU STATE COMMAND

BY

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Abstract

This study examined the knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions (KAP) of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) among 217 NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command using a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design, comprising a quantitative survey and 20 in-depth interviews. Findings revealed moderate knowledge (mean=2.76/4), but critical gaps: only 22.6% were familiar with the VAPP Act (Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015) and 41.9% knew reporting procedures. Attitudes were ambivalent, accountability support (mean=3.41) coexisted with justification of GBV (mean=2.85) and victim-blaming (mean=2.92). Perceptions were overwhelmingly negative: 93.5% feared retaliation for reporting senior officers, only 25.3% believed procedures were clear, and 38.2% would report a colleague. Qualitative themes inadequate training, culture of silence, and distrust in mechanisms revealed that KAP gaps are embedded in organizational culture rather than individual deficiencies. The study recommends establishing an independent confidential reporting mechanism, enforcing whistleblower protection, mandating annual GBV training, and increasing female recruitment to 35%.

Keywords: Knowledge, Attitude, Perception, Gender-Based Violence, Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps

Background to the Study

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) remains one of the most widespread human rights violations globally, affecting nearly one in three women worldwide, with rates significantly higher in conflict-affected settings (WHO, 2022). In Nigeria, 31% of women aged 15–49 have experienced physical violence (NPC & ICF, 2019). The Violence Against Persons Prohibition (VAPP) Act (2015) provides a legal framework for GBV response, but implementation remains weak (Amnesty International, 2021). Security operatives, including the Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), are first responders to GBV. Their ability to recognize GBV, respond appropriately, and support survivors depends on their knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions (KAP). Despite NSCDC initiatives such as gender desks and the N-Alert platform (Channels Television, 2023; Guardian Nigeria, 2024), no systematic KAP assessment has been conducted among its personnel in Plateau State a conflict-affected region with decades of ethno-religious crises and farmer-herder conflicts (Mercy Corps, 2021). This study fills that gap.

Statement of the Problem

Despite legislative progress, GBV remains pervasive in Nigeria, and the response of security agencies has been criticized as inadequate (Amnesty International, 2021). The NSCDC has a dual responsibility: to protect civilians from GBV and maintain internal discipline. However, operatives are sometimes perpetrators, and survivors avoid reporting due to fear of retaliation and distrust in the system (Human Rights Watch, 2019; Frontiers, 2024).

Three key gaps exist. First, there is limited empirical data on what NSCDC operatives know about GBV, including the VAPP Act and reporting procedures. Existing studies focus mainly on the police or military (Duru & Ogbonnaya, 2018). Second, even when knowledge exists, attitudes may be unsupportive victim-blaming and cultural justifications for violence are common (Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). Third, perceptions of institutional response matter greatly; operatives who fear retaliation will not report (Stellenbosch University, 2021). In Plateau State, these challenges are exacerbated by high operational demands and communal

conflict. Most previous studies used only quantitative surveys, missing the lived experiences that shape attitudes. A mixed-methods approach is needed to quantify KAP levels and explore the reasons behind the findings. This study addresses these gaps.

Objectives of the Study

1. Assess the level of knowledge of NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command regarding the forms, causes, and consequences of Gender-Based Violence.
2. Examine the attitudes of NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command towards Gender-Based Violence, victims, and perpetrators.
3. Investigate the perceptions of NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command concerning the effectiveness, accessibility, and fairness of existing policies, reporting mechanisms, and institutional responses to Gender-Based Violence within the NSCDC.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of knowledge of NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command regarding the forms, causes, and consequences of Gender-Based Violence?
2. What are the attitudes of NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command towards Gender-Based Violence, victims, and perpetrators?
3. What are the perceptions of NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command concerning the effectiveness, accessibility, and fairness of existing policies, reporting mechanisms, and institutional responses to Gender-Based Violence within the NSCDC?

Significance of the Study

Academically, it contributes to the growing body of literature on GBV in security institutions, an area that remains under-researched in Nigeria, particularly regarding the NSCDC. By applying the KAP framework, the study provides a holistic assessment that goes beyond simple awareness surveys.

Practically, the study directly benefits NSCDC leadership and training units by identifying specific knowledge deficits (e.g., lack of familiarity with the VAPP Act, misunderstanding of psychological and economic abuse), problematic attitudes (e.g.,

victim-blaming, cultural relativism), and negative perceptions (e.g., fear of retaliation, distrust in reporting channels). Based on these findings, targeted training modules can be developed, reporting mechanisms can be redesigned to be survivor-centered, and whistleblower protection policies can be strengthened.

For policy, the study provides evidence that can inform amendments to the NSCDC Act and the development of national standards for GBV response within paramilitary institutions. The recommendations are grounded in empirical data, making them more persuasive for policymakers and funding bodies. Ultimately, improved KAP among NSCDC operatives enhances the protection of both internal personnel and the civilian population, contributing to safer communities in Plateau State and beyond

Scope of the Study

This study focused on assessing the Knowledge, Attitude, and Perception (KAP) of Gender-Based Violence among active personnel of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC) specifically within the Plateau State Command. Geographically, the study was delimited to NSCDC formations and units operating within Plateau State, including urban and rural divisions. The thematic scope was confined to the concepts of knowledge, attitude, and perception as they relate to various forms of GBV (physical, sexual, psychological, and economic), its causes, consequences, and institutional responses. Demographic factors such as gender, age, rank, years of service, and educational level were considered as potential influencing variables. The study did not extend to other security agencies (e.g., police, military, and immigration) or to other forms of violence beyond GBV (e.g., general workplace bullying unrelated to gender). The findings and recommendations are specific to the NSCDC Plateau State Command, though they may offer transferable insights to similar contexts with careful adaptation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Definitions and Core Elements

Gender-based violence has been defined by international bodies in ways that emphasize harm to women, but contemporary scholarship recognizes that GBV affects all

genders. The United Nations defines GBV as "any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life" (UN General Assembly, 1993, Article 1). While this definition is foundational, it explicitly focuses on women. However, a growing body of evidence demonstrates that men can also be victims of GBV, particularly psychological abuse for failing to conform to masculine norms (Johnson & Scott, 2021; Morrell & Jewkes, 2011). Consequently, a gender-inclusive definition is adopted for this research.

The literature consistently identifies four primary forms, though they often overlap in practice. Physical violence includes bodily harm such as hitting, slapping, beating, or the use of restraints or weapons. In security settings, physical violence is frequently justified as "disciplinary correction" (Human Rights Watch, 2015). Sexual violence encompasses non-consensual sexual acts, including rape, attempted rape, unwanted touching, and sexual coercion through unwelcome advances or requests for favors in exchange for promotion or favorable postings (Oyekan, 2022). Psychological violence involves emotional harm through verbal abuse, threats, humiliation, isolation, gas-lighting, and persistent belittling. This is the most underreported form because it leaves no physical evidence and is often dismissed as "just words" or "office politics" (Duru & Ogonnaya, 2018). Economic violence refers to deprivation of economic resources or opportunities, including discriminatory pay, denial of training or promotion, withholding allowances, unequal assignment of duties, or forcing victims to pay for transfers (Eze & Okonkwo, 2020).

Theoretical Framework

This study was underpinned by three complementary theoretical perspectives that collectively provide a robust lens for examining Knowledge, Attitude, and Perception (KAP) of GBV within security organizations. Each theory addresses a different level of analysis and together they explain how individual cognition, social

environment, and institutional power dynamics shape KAP among NSCDC operatives.

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1977, 2001)

Social Cognitive Theory posits that human behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and modelling. In the context of GBV within the NSCDC, operatives' knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions are not solely based on formal training but are significantly influenced by observing the behaviors, attitudes, and responses of their colleagues and superiors. If senior officers normalize certain forms of violence or harassment, or if reporting mechanisms are perceived as ineffective, junior operatives may internalize these observations. Self-efficacy, an individual's belief in their capacity to execute behaviors is crucial. For instance, an operative's belief in their ability to intervene safely and effectively in a GBV situation will influence their action. SCT therefore helps explain how abusive institutional cultures are transmitted and maintained.

Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991)

The Theory of Planned Behavior provides a framework for understanding and predicting human behavior, including intentions related to reporting or addressing GBV. TPB posits that an individual's intention to perform a given behavior is the most immediate determinant of that behavior. This intention is, in turn, influenced by three main constructs: attitude towards the behavior (positive or negative evaluation of reporting), subjective norms (perceived social pressure from colleagues and superiors), and perceived behavioral control (ease or difficulty of reporting, including fear of reprisal).

Feminist Theories

Feminist theories, particularly those focusing on patriarchy and power dynamics (Walby, 1999; Connell, 1987), offer a critical lens to understand the root causes of GBV and its perpetuation within hierarchical institutions. These theories argue that GBV is not merely individual deviance but a manifestation of systemic gender inequality, where power imbalances are often institutionalized. Within male-dominated security forces, hegemonic masculinity can be reinforced, leading to

attitudes that normalize aggression, denigrate women, and resist gender-sensitive reforms (Shepherd, 2014).

Integration of Theoretical Perspectives

Collectively, these theories provide a comprehensive framework: SCT explains how behaviors and attitudes are learned and reinforced within the NSCDC environment; TPB helps predict the intention to act based on individual beliefs, social pressures, and perceived control; and Feminist Theories expose the deep-seated power dynamics and systemic inequalities that underpin GBV, influencing the very formation of knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions within a security institution. This integrated framework guides the development of the questionnaire items and interview schedules, the interpretation of findings, and the formulation of recommendations..

METHODOLOGY

The research employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, beginning with a quantitative phase to survey 217 NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command determined via Krejcie and Morgan's formula from a population of approximately 1,000 followed by a qualitative phase involving 20 purposively selected participants for in-depth interviews to elaborate on the quantitative

findings. Multi-stage sampling (stratified, simple random, and systematic random) was used for the quantitative sample, while purposive sampling ensured diversity in rank, gender, GBV experience, and policy involvement for the qualitative subset. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire (NSCDC-GBV-KAPQ) with four sections on a 4-point Likert scale and a semi-structured interview guide, both validated through expert review and pilot testing, with reliability confirmed by Cronbach's alphas of 0.78, 0.82, and 0.85 for knowledge, attitude, and perception respectively. Questionnaires were administered during roll calls and training over four weeks (March–April 2026), followed by private, audio-recorded interviews lasting 30–60 minutes post-quantitative analysis. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS v26 with descriptive and inferential statistics (t-tests, ANOVA, Tukey's HSD at $p < 0.05$), while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-phase process. Ethical clearance was obtained from the University of Jos and NSCDC authorities, with informed consent, confidentiality, the right to withdraw, and counselling referrals provided to all participants.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the 217 Respondents Who Completed the Questionnaire

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	152	70.0
	Female	65	30.0
	Total	217	100.0
Age	20–29 years	48	22.1
	30–39 years	97	44.7
	40–49 years	58	26.7
	50 years and above	14	6.5
	Total	217	100.0
Marital Status	Single	42	19.4
	Married	165	76.0
	Divorced/Widowed	10	4.6
	Total	217	100.0
Rank	Assistant Cadre	98	45.2
	Inspectorate Cadre	56	25.8
	Officer Cadre	41	18.9
	Senior Officer	22	10.1
	Total	217	100.0

Years of Service	0–5 years	61	28.1
	6–10 years	79	36.4
	11–20 years	52	24.0
	21 years and above	25	11.5
	Total	217	100.0
Educational Qualification	SSCE	31	14.3
	OND/NCE	73	33.6
	HND/B.Sc.	89	41.0
	M.Sc./PhD	24	11.1
	Total	217	100.0
Unit/Department	Administration	45	20.7
	Operations/Patrol	78	35.9
	Intelligence	32	14.7
	Anti-Vandalism	41	18.9
	Others	21	9.7
	Total	217	100.0

Source: Field work, 2026

The sample was predominantly male (70%), reflecting the gender composition of the NSCDC. The majority were aged 30–39 years (44.7%), married (76%), and held Assistant or Inspectorate ranks (71%). Years of service were concentrated between 6–10 years (36.4%), and most had tertiary education (HND/B.Sc. or higher, 52.1%). Departments with the highest representation were Operations/Patrol (35.9%) and Administration (20.7%).

Quantitative Findings on Knowledge of GBV (Objective 1, RQ1)

Descriptive Statistics of Knowledge

Table 2: Knowledge of GBV (N = 217)

Item	Statement	Mean (SD)	% Correct
B1	I understand what constitutes GBV	3.21 (0.64)	82.5
B2	GBV includes physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse	3.04 (0.71)	74.2
B3	NSCDC officers are trained on GBV	2.35 (0.89)	31.8
B4	GBV can occur in public and private settings	3.33 (0.58)	91.2
B5	I am familiar with VAPP Act (2015)	2.12 (0.92)	22.6
B6	I know proper reporting procedures	2.48 (0.85)	41.9
	Overall Knowledge Mean	2.76	(0.77)

The overall mean knowledge score was 2.76 (SD = 0.77), slightly above the midpoint of 2.5, indicating moderate knowledge. Most respondents correctly understood GBV definitions (B1: 82.5%) and that GBV occurs in both public and private settings (B4: 91.2%). However, significant gaps exist: only 31.8% agreed that NSCDC officers receive adequate training on GBV; only 22.6% were familiar with the VAPP Act; and only 41.9% knew proper reporting procedures. These findings suggest that while basic awareness is high, specific legal and procedural knowledge is inadequate.

Quantitative Findings on Attitude towards GBV (Objective 2, RQ2)**Table 3: Attitudes towards GBV (N = 217)**

Item	Statement	Mean (SD)	Interpretation
C1	Some acts of GBV can be justified	2.85 (0.94)	Moderate agreement (problematic)
C2	Reporting may damage organizational image	3.12 (0.81)	Agreement (fear-based)
C3	Women sometimes exaggerate GBV cases	2.92 (0.88)	Moderate agreement (victim-blaming)
C4	Officers who commit GBV should be punished	3.41 (0.67)	High agreement (positive)
C5	Men cannot be victims of GBV	2.18 (0.95)	Disagreement (positive)
C6	Culture/religion should determine response	2.78 (0.91)	Moderate agreement (problematic)

Table 3 shows that positive attitudes were evident on accountability (C4: 3.41) and recognition of male victimization (C5: 2.18). However, problematic attitudes persisted: respondents moderately agreed that GBV can be justified (C1: 2.85), that reporting damages image (C2: 3.12), that women exaggerate (C3: 2.92), and that culture/religion should determine responses (C6: 2.78).

Quantitative Findings on Perception of GBV Reporting and Response (Objective 3, RQ3)**Table 4: Perceptions of GBV Response (N = 217)**

Item	Statement	Mean (SD)	% Agree
D1	GBV is underreported	3.32 (0.61)	88.5
D2	Female officers are more vulnerable	3.45 (0.58)	91.2
D3	Junior officers fear retaliation	3.51 (0.54)	93.5
D4	Clear and accessible procedure exists	2.21 (0.87)	25.3
D5	I would confidently report a colleague	2.45 (0.91)	38.2
D6	GBV is a private issue	2.05 (0.94)	19.8

The most striking finding: 93.5% fear retaliation for reporting senior officers, while only 25.3% believe the command has clear procedures, and only 38.2% would confidently report a colleague

Table 5: ANOVA Summary for Knowledge Scores by Rank

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F-value	p-value
Between Groups	18.45	3	6.15	5.67	< .01
Within Groups	231.20		213	1.09	
Total	249.65		216		

Source: Field work, 2026

The results show a statistically significant difference in knowledge scores by rank, $F(3, 213) = 5.67$, $p < .01$. This indicates that rank significantly influences respondents' level of knowledge on GBV. Given that the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of no difference is rejected. A post-hoc test such as Tukey HSD is recommended to determine which specific rank groups differ significantly from each other.

Table 6: Post-Hoc Comparison by Rank (Tukey's HSD)

Rank Comparison	Mean	Difference	p-value Significance
Senior Officer vs. Assistant Cadre	0.57	< .01	Significant
Senior Officer vs. Inspectorate Cadre	0.41	< .05	Significant
Senior Officer vs. Officer Cadre	0.28	.05	Not Significant
Officer Cadre vs. Assistant Cadre	0.29	< .05	Significant

Source: Field work, 2026

The results in table 6 show that Senior Officers had significantly higher knowledge scores than Assistant Cadre (MD = 0.57, $p < .01$) and Inspectorate Cadre (MD = 0.41, $p < .05$). Officer Cadre also had significantly higher knowledge than Assistant Cadre (MD = 0.29, $p < .05$).

However, there was no significant difference between Senior Officer and Officer Cadre (MD = 0.28, $p = .05$).

Table 7: ANOVA Summary for Knowledge Scores by Years of Service

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F-value	p-value
Between Groups	16.23	3	5.41	4.89	< .01
Within Groups	235.42		213	1.11	
Total	251.65		216		

Source: Field work, 2026

Table 7 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA conducted to determine if there is a significant difference in knowledge scores on GBV based on years of service.

The results show a statistically significant difference in knowledge scores across years of service groups, $F(3, 213) = 4.89$, $p < .01$. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis of no difference is rejected.

This indicates that years of service significantly influence respondents' level of knowledge on GBV. A post-hoc test such as Tukey HSD is recommended to identify which specific service-year groups differ significantly from each other

Table 8: ANOVA Summary for Knowledge Scores by Educational Level

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F-value	p-value
Between Groups	21.87	3	7.29	6.12	< .001
Within Groups		253.78	213	1.19	
Total	275.65		216		

Source: Field work, 2026

Table 8 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA conducted to examine differences in GBV knowledge scores across educational levels.

The results show a statistically significant difference in knowledge scores by educational level, $F(3, 213) = 6.12$, $p < .001$. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected.

This indicates that educational qualification significantly influences respondents' knowledge of GBV. The effect appears stronger than

that of rank and years of service, given the larger F-value and smaller p-value.

A post-hoc test such as Tukey HSD is recommended to determine which educational groups differ significantly from each other.

Qualitative Findings (Thematic Analysis)

Following the quantitative survey, in-depth interviews were conducted with 20 purposively selected NSCDC operatives. Three dominant themes emerged:

Theme 1: Inadequate Training and Knowledge Gaps

Interviewees consistently reported that their formal training on GBV was either non-existent, superficial, or long-forgotten. Many expressed confusion about the VAPP Act (Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015) and admitted they did not know the correct steps for reporting.

Theme 2: Culture of Silence and Fear of Retaliation

The most powerful theme to emerge was the pervasive fear of retaliation. Interviewees described an unwritten rule that "what happens in the command stays in the command." Reporting a senior officer was described as "career suicide."

Theme 3: Distrust in Reporting Mechanisms

Interviewees expressed deep distrust in the existing Gender Desks and complaint channels. Many described these mechanisms as "window dressing" existing on paper but non-functional in practice.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings (Triangulation)

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings through triangulation provided a comprehensive understanding of KAP, with qualitative data explaining and contextualizing the statistical patterns.

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Quantitative Finding: 22.6% familiar with VAPP Act; 41.9% know reporting procedures

Qualitative Explanation: "We were told about GBV during a one-day sensitization workshop three years ago." (P007)

Integrated Interpretation: Quantitative gaps are explained by superficial, one-off training. Operatives lack operational competence.

Quantitative Finding: 93.5% fear retaliation

Qualitative Explanation: "If you report a senior, you will be transferred to a remote village (P004)

Integrated Interpretation: Fear of retaliation is validated and explained by institutional punishment of complainants.

Quantitative Finding: 25.3% believe procedures are clear; 38.2% would report a colleague

Qualitative Explanation: "There is a Gender Desk. I have seen the sign. But the officer socializes with commanders." (P015)

Integrated Interpretation: Lack of independence and confidentiality renders mechanisms functionally useless.

Quantitative Finding: Support for accountability (3.41) coexists with victim-blaming (2.92)

Qualitative Explanation: "I know GBV is bad, but sometimes you have to look at the situation." (P009)

Integrated Interpretation: Ambivalent attitudes reflect tension between formal values and informal norms.

Discussion of Findings

The finding that NSCDC operatives have moderate general knowledge (mean = 2.76/4) but very low familiarity with the VAPP Act (22.6%) and reporting procedures (41.9%) is consistent with previous studies in Nigerian security agencies. Duru and Ogbonnaya (2018) found that only 8% of police officers in Anambra State knew the correct procedures for handling GBV cases. Similarly, Nnadozie and Ugwu (2020) reported that only 12% of NSCDC operatives in the FCT Command were aware of the internal complaint procedure.

The study also found that while most operatives support accountability (C4: mean = 3.41) and recognize male victimization, problematic attitudes persist – justification of GBV (C1: mean = 2.85), victim-blaming (C3: mean = 2.92), and cultural relativism (C6: mean = 2.78). These findings mirror those of Aluko (2015) in Nigeria and Morrell and Jewkes (2011) in South Africa, where hegemonic masculinity was linked to tolerance of violence.

The most striking finding is the severe distrust in reporting mechanisms: 93.5% fear retaliation for reporting senior officers, only 25.3% believe the command has clear procedures, and only 38.2% would confidently report a colleague. This is far worse than the already low trust levels documented by Oyekan (2022) among Nigerian policewomen (where 65% feared retaliation) and by Nwadinobi (2017) among NSCDC officers in Enugu (where 80% would never use formal channels).

Conclusions

This study concludes that NSCDC operatives in Plateau State Command possess moderate general knowledge of GBV but exhibit significant deficiencies in legal and procedural knowledge, particularly regarding the VAPP Act (Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015) and reporting protocols. Their attitudes

are ambivalent: while accountability is broadly supported, problematic beliefs justification of violence, victim-blaming, and cultural relativism persist, especially among male, older, and junior-ranking personnel. Most critically, perceptions of institutional response are overwhelmingly negative: operatives recognize the problem and the vulnerability of female officers, but they distrust existing reporting mechanisms, fear retaliation, and believe the system protects perpetrators rather than victims. This perception gap is reinforced by a pervasive culture of silence and weak accountability. Nevertheless, the desire for reform is genuine, and younger operatives demonstrate more progressive attitudes, indicating that targeted training and institutional changes can shift norms. Without urgent action to establish independent, confidential reporting mechanisms, enforce whistleblower protection, and provide mandatory, sustained GBV training, the NSCDC will continue to struggle with internal GBV and will be ill-equipped to fulfill its public mandate of protecting citizens from violence.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made in line with the three objectives:

1. Strengthening Knowledge and Awareness of GBV Among NSCDC Operatives

The NSCDC should mandate comprehensive and annual GBV training for all operatives. The training should cover: (a) all forms of GBV including physical, sexual, psychological, and economic abuse; (b) the provisions of the VAPP Act (Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act, 2015) and other relevant legal frameworks; (c) proper reporting procedures and protocols; and (d) the physical, psychological, and social consequences of GBV on victims and communities. Additionally, the NSCDC should develop and distribute a simplified GBV reporting handbook to all operatives and integrate GBV education into the basic training curriculum for new recruits.

2. Transforming Attitudes Towards GBV Victims and Perpetrators

The NSCDC should institutionalize mandatory gender sensitivity and attitude change

programs for all operatives. These programs should include: (a) gender sensitivity workshops to challenge cultural norms that justify violence and promote gender equality; (b) anti-victim-blaming campaigns using real-life case studies and survivor testimonies; (c) engagement with traditional and religious leaders to address harmful cultural practices; and (d) promotion of male champions for gender equality within the Corps to serve as role models and change agents. The NSCDC should also develop and enforce a zero-tolerance policy on GBV with clear disciplinary measures for perpetrators.

3. Reforming Institutional Response and Mechanisms

The NSCDC should establish an independent, confidential, and survivor-centered reporting mechanism outside the chain of command. This should include: (a) an anonymous hotline managed by an independent third party with guaranteed confidentiality; (b) a whistleblower protection policy with dismissal penalties for any form of retaliation; (c) simplification and wide publication of reporting procedures through posters, handbooks, and digital platforms; and (d) creation of an external oversight body to receive and investigate GBV complaints involving NSCDC personnel. Additionally, the NSCDC should increase female recruitment to 35% to improve gender balance and victim confidence in reporting.

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