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Positionality and Knowledge Production on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence against Men and Boys in (Counter-) Terrorism

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Abstract: What happens to knowledge production when African-based researchers studying intersections between terrorism and wartime sexual violence interrogate prevailing heteronormative socio-norms? As the influence of socio-political bias in reflexive methodology in international relations (IR) continued to be discussed, critics argue that reflexive discourses have yet to address their entrenched racial and colonial logic, which centers on Western voices. Thus, African-based researchers' fieldwork experiences in the research process are poorly reflected in IR or terrorism studies. We reflect on our experiences studying fellow nationals on issues of sexual violence victimization of men and boys in areas affected by terrorism. We argue that irrespective of shared national/ethnic identity, researcher–researched relations are strained when researchers pose vexing questions that interrogate heteronormative social norms. This leads to researchers' feelings of vulnerability, anxiety, and physical harm as their gender and sexuality become open to social scrutiny. We also argue that study participants strategically silence ethnographic encounters, demonstrating their power when researchers disregard existing social norms and study participants' sense of existential security. Our study embodies the Feminist-Informed Researchers' Commitment to IR, which addresses the politics of field research, nuances the methodology of uneasiness concept

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on wartime sexual violence, and advocates flexibility to mitigate method-
ological messiness.

Resumen: ¿Qué sucede con la producción de conocimiento cuando los
investigadores afincados en África que estudian las intersecciones entre
el terrorismo y la violencia sexual en tiempos de guerra cuestionan las
normas sociales heteronormativas prevalecientes? A medida que se sigue
debatiendo la influencia del sesgo sociopolítico en la metodología reflex-
iva en las Relaciones Internacionales (RRII), los críticos argumentan que
los discursos reflexivos aún no han abordado su lógica racial y colonial
arraigada, la cual se centra en las voces occidentales. Por lo tanto, las ex-
periencias de trabajo de campo en el proceso de investigación por parte
de los investigadores con sede en África se encuentran poco reflejadas
en los estudios de los campos de las RRII o del terrorismo. En este es-
tudio, reflexionamos sobre nuestras experiencias estudiando a nuestros
compatriotas en lo relativo a temas de victimización de violencia sexual
de hombres y niños en áreas afectadas por el terrorismo. Argumentamos
que, independientemente de la identidad nacional/étnica compartida, las
relaciones entre investigadores e investigados se tensan cuando los inves-
tigadores plantean preguntas desconcertantes que cuestionan las normas
sociales heteronormativas. Esto causa sentimientos de vulnerabilidad, an-
siedad y daño físico en los investigadores, a medida que su género y sexual-
idad quedan abiertos al escrutinio social. También argumentamos que los
participantes del estudio silencian estratégicamente los encuentros etno-
gráficos, demostrando, de esta manera, su poder cuando los investigadores
ignoran las normas sociales existentes y el sentido de seguridad existencial
de los participantes del estudio. Nuestro estudio encarna el compromiso
de los investigadores influidos por el feminismo con las Relaciones In-
ternacionales, el cual aborda las políticas de la investigación de campo,
matiza la metodología del concepto de inquietud sobre la violencia sexual
en tiempos de guerra y defiende la flexibilidad para mitigar el desorden
metodológico.

Résumé: Qu'advient-il de la production de connaissances quand des
chercheurs basés en Afrique et étudiant les intersections entre terror-
isme et violences sexuelles par temps de guerre s'intéressent aux normes
sociales hétéronormatives dominantes ? Le débat sur l'influence du bi-
ais sociopolitique dans la méthodologie réflexive en relations interna-
tionales (RI) se poursuivant, les critiques affirment que les discours réflex-
ifs doivent encore traiter de sa logique raciale et coloniale bien ancrée et
centrée sur des voix occidentales. Aussi l'expérience de terrain du pro-
cessus de recherche des chercheurs basés en Afrique apparaît-elle peu
dans les RI ou les études sur le terrorisme. Nous réfléchissons à notre ex-
périence d'étude de concitoyens vis-à-vis de problématiques de victimisa-
tion des hommes et garçons dans le cadre de violences sexuelles dans des
zones touchées par le terrorisme. Nous affirmons qu'indépendamment du
partage d'une identité nationale/ethnique, les relations entre chercheur
et sujet de recherche sont tendues quand les chercheurs posent des ques-
tions difficiles, qui remettent en cause les normes sociales hétéronor-
matives. Ainsi apparaît un sentiment de vulnérabilité, d'anxiété et de
préjudice physique chez le chercheur, car son genre et sa sexualité peu-
vent subir un examen social. Nous affirmons par ailleurs que les partici-
pants à l'étude passent stratégiquement sous silence les rencontres ethno-
graphiques, ce qui démontre leur pouvoir quand les chercheurs ignorent
les normes sociales existantes et étudient le sentiment de sécurité existen-
tielle des participants. Notre étude incarne l'engagement des chercheurs
renseignés sur le féminisme envers les RI, qui traite de la politique de la
recherche sur le terrain, nuance la méthodologie du concept de malaise

quant aux violences sexuelles par temps de guerre et défend une certaine flexibilité pour atténuer le désordre méthodologique.

Keywords: practice, feminist international relations, wartime sexual violence, reflective methodology, terrorism, gender and sexual violence, Nigeria, Boko Haram

Palabras clave: Práctica, Relaciones Internacionales Feministas, violencia sexual en tiempos de guerra, metodología reflexiva, terrorismo, violencia sexual y de género, Nigeria, Boko Haram

Mots clés: pratique, relations internationales féministes, violences sexuelles par temps de guerre, méthodologie réflexive, terrorisme, violence genrée et sexuelle, Nigéria, Boko Haram

Introduction

The field of international relations (IR) is experiencing a "reflexive turn" (Hamati-Ataya 2013; Alejandro 2021; Krystalli et al. 2021; Gani and Khan 2024), as scholarship continues to debate issues of positionality, intrinsic power dynamics, and socio-political or personal biases that influence their theoretical assumptions in IR theorizing (Eagleton-Pierce 2011; Hamati-Ataya 2013; Alejandro 2021; Krystalli et al. 2021; Gani and Khan 2024). Reflexivity acknowledges power inequalities and structures in knowledge production and is crucial for maintaining rigor, validity, accuracy, legitimacy, self-accountability, and transparency in research (Finlay 2002; Gani and Khan 2024). However, positionality statements in reflexive IR methodology have been criticized for not addressing the relationships between power and knowledge and intrinsic racial and colonial logic (Gani and Khan 2024). The lack of critical self-awareness perpetuates power imbalances "between researchers hegemonically racialized as 'white,' and research subjects or fellow researchers who are racialised as 'people of color'" (Gani and Khan 2024, 2). Similar patterns emerge in international security, particularly terrorism studies, where the reflexive methodology debate is "rare" (Cohn 2011; Allam 2019; Schmidt 2021, 314). The paucity of studies stems from the difficulty of accessing the study populations and ethical dilemmas amongst scholars, as certain field activities may have legal consequences and could impact the reputation of scholars (Pearson Nagarajan 2020; Schmidt 2021, 314; Njoku 2022). Moreover, while Africa has been at the center of terrorist violence for decades, most of the few works on reflexive methodology in terrorism studies in the continent have been written by Western researchers (Adebayo and Njoku 2023) who serve as gatekeepers in the field (Njoku 2021). Even with the coming of the "Thirdworlders," "diasporic researchers," or academics who return home to Africa to study international security (Oriola and Haggerty 2012; Oyawale 2022; Vlavonou 2023), they come with distinct positionality known as betweenness where they are neither insiders nor outsiders. Thus, we know little about the voices of African-based researchers with shared national/ethnic identity and socio-norms with study participants and gatekeepers.

Therefore, we explored what happens to knowledge production when African-based researchers studying intersections between terrorism and conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) interrogate shared heteronormative socio-norms with study participants and gatekeepers. In doing so, we examine the ramifications of heteronormativity and social stigma on data access and knowledge production related to sexual violence victimization in (counter-) terrorism context. We argue that, in heteronormative and violent contexts where same-sex relationship is criminalized, questions that probe this socio-norm are often vexing. Researchers lose shared

national/ethnic identity privileges and become predisposed to social scrutiny, emotional discomfort, or fear of physical harm. This also happens when researchers do not recognize extant heteronormative social norms that could hamper study participants' sense of existential security. As a result, study participants silence field interactions strategically, irrespective of their shared national/group identity with the researchers. Also, study participants demonstrated power through strategic silence or silence as a form of resistance during ethnographic encounters. Thus, our study speaks to the debates on emotions and IR, which Baaz and Stern (2016) referred to as the "methodology of unease" or "discomfort." In doing so, it advances the argument that self-reflection can aid in recognizing and mitigating the emotional responses or trauma and entrenched power dynamics and narratives that render sexual violence victims powerless or reinforce their psychological harm. It has the potential to mitigate the intense sense of anxiety when studying wartime sexual violence (Pillow 2003; Enloe 2016, Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2016, 126, 258).

Furthermore, our research embodies a novel understanding of the "Feminist-Informed Researchers' Commitment," conceptualized by Ackerly and True 2008, 695). These refer to the need for researchers to pay attention to their situatedness in the research process, the entrenched power that influences knowledge production, and the marginalization of subject's epistemologies. If needed, researchers must draw from the strengths of interdisciplinarity to understand and mitigate how social-political institutions create and sustain disciplinary boundaries that silence specific knowledge (Ackerly and True 2008, 695). In light of the above, our study draws from both CRSV and the terrorism field to break the disciplinary boundaries on the discourse of CRSV against men and boys. In doing so, it interrogates the "uncomfortable" questions on the drivers of male sexual violence victimization and the role of society and political institutions in silencing or, at best, filtering these experiences. By taking this approach, we remain mindful of our biases and the limits of extant epistemologies on CRSV discourses that focus on the binary explanation, such as the weaponization of sexuality and opportunistic rape. In the process, we integrated and theorized victims' perspectives on drivers of CRSV as part of Feminist theories of wartime sexual violence victimization.

Our study offers original and nuanced insights from the reflexive accounts of African scholars who are based in Africa and share national and ethnic identities and socio-cultural norms with study participants and gatekeepers. In doing so, it advances scholarship on the influence of power, gendered dynamics, emotions, identity construction, and deployment when African-based scholars study CRSV against men and boys in heteronormative and violent contexts. In effect, our study will provide insights to scholars and students studying wartime sexual violence against men and boys in heteronormative and violent contexts. Through continuous self-reflexivity and a flexible approach to fieldwork, researchers can navigate what Billo and Hiemstra (2013, 314) conceptualized as methodological "messiness" that often defines studies in challenging contexts.

Mapping the Literature on Reflexive Methodology in IR

In IR, the critique of positivist and empiricist claims of objectivity as the "only theoretical and scientific framework in the social sciences" contributed to the emergence of the concept of reflexivity (Guillaume 2002; Hamati-Ataya 2013, 1). Reflexivity became "the way different kinds of linguistic, social, political and theoretical elements are woven together in the process of knowledge development during which empirical materials are constructed, interpreted and written" (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000, 5). According to Gani and Khan (2024, 3), there are four goals of reflexive methodology in IR, which include "truth gathering, self-accountability, mitigation of power imbalances, and multivocalism." First, reflexivity departs from the "objective gaze, free from personality" (Eagleton-Pierce 2011, 809) toward

recognizing and reflecting on the influence of positionalities or inherent subjectivity in knowledge production (Finlay 2002; Gani and Khan 2024). Doing so ensures more claims to truth and research that are ethically implemented, rigorous, and valid (Gani and Khan 2024). Second, being reflexive of one's positionality, conjectures, and epistemologies in the process of knowledge production shows that researchers are not only "self-aware" but "accountable" (Ackerly and True 2008; Pillow 2010; Gani and Khan 2024). Third, such accountability recognizes the intricate link between power and knowledge production and, to some extent, mitigates the power imbalances in the researcher–researched relations (Pillow 2010; Gani and Khan 2024). According to Gani and Khan (2024), reflexivity's final goal is multivocalism, like Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's question, "Can the subaltern speak" (Spivak 2010); it underscores that the voices of study participants are recognized and represented. Multivocalism ensures the articulation of "multiple subjective views" in IR discourses as opposed to the universalization of ideas (Gani and Khan (2024).

While positivist scholars have pushed back or dismissed reflexivism, restating that research should stand alone and away from social-political biases (Patai 1994), critics of reflexive methodology in IR highlighted its various risks, including researchers' emotional vulnerability (Amoureux and Steele 2016). Additionally, positionality statements have been criticized, as they have become a "self-absorption" ritual by Western scholars who do nothing to address the inherent power imbalances, gender, and racial hierarchies in the global knowledge division of labor, and researcher–researched relations (Alatas 2003; Pillow 2010; Enloe 2016; Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2016, 118, 133). For Gani and Khan (2024), reflexive discourses on positionality gloss over the entrenched colonial logic where whiteness is often centered. Moreover, positionality statements have become a norm where Western scholars redeem themselves from the guilt of pervasive hegemonies or power hierarchies over Global South scholars, including women of color in the field of IR (Gani and Khan 2024).

However, despite the reflexive turn in IR and the ongoing criticisms, there is a noticeable lack of reflexive methodology within terrorism studies. Thus, questions about positionality, identities, power and gendered dynamics, ethical engagement with informants, and how they impact knowledge production in the fields of (counter-) terrorism are yet to be fully answered. Such tendencies are also evident in the lack of representativeness of African voices on reflexive methodology (counter-) terrorism studies and IR more broadly, as most of the works on (counter-) terrorism in Africa have been written by Western researchers (Adebayo and Njoku 2023). For Njoku (2021, 503), the underrepresentation of African scholars in these fields could be partially attributed to the predominance of Western scholars who serve as the "gatekeepers." African researchers located in the West are returning to their home continents to research topics related to international security. The literature refers to these researchers as "Thirdworlders," or "academic homecomers," or diasporic researchers (Ite 1997; Mandiyanike 2009; Behl 2017; McFarlane-Morris 2020; Adebayo and Njoku 2023). These returning academics, who are few, have done exceptional works reflecting on their identity, positionality, insiderness in data access, and knowledge production about global security issues, including (counter-) terrorism and other conflict and security issues. These include the works of Oriola and Haggerty (2012), Oyawale (2022), Vlavonou (2023), and Fosu (2024). Regardless, Thirdworlders or academic homecomers acquire distinct positionality and set of experiences referred to as "betweenness"—they exist in a state where they are not entirely insiders or outsiders, and this positionality influences their fieldwork and the production of knowledge in unique ways (Mandiyanike 2009; McFarlane-Morris 2020; Olumba 2023). It is worth noting that the field research experiences and perspectives of African scholars who are resident in Africa are not adequately represented in the current discourse in reflexive methodology (Mandiyanike 2009; Mwambari 2019; McFarlane-Morris 2020; Adebayo and Njoku 2023).

This article draws from the reflections of African-based scholars and their inter-actions with gatekeepers and study participants to examine the ramifications of het-eronormativity and social stigma on data access and knowledge production related to CRSV in (counter-) terrorism context. It leverages the experiences of African-based researchers studying the intersection of (counter-) terrorism and sexual vio-lence victimization of men and boys. In doing so, it underscores power dynamics, emotions, identity construction and deployment, and agency in the researcher–subject relations in heteronormative and violent contexts.

Thus, our study is novel and innovative as the first to exemplify Feminist Re-search Ethics or Feminist research commitment, drawing from the experiences of both researchers and study participants on the hardly discussed topic of wartime sexual violence of men and boys in Nigeria. In this way, our study serves as a model for critical reflexivity regarding the "uses to which research findings are put; set of well-defined research ethics and a normative commitment to an emancipatory po-litical praxis" (Jackson 2007, 244). Valuable insights can be obtained by studying the experiences of African scholars with shared identities, positions, and social-cultural norms with the research participants and gatekeepers. This is so given that our study can serve as a helpful guide for scholars and students, offering practical insights and guidance on approaching and analyzing issues surrounding wartime sexual vi-olence against men and boys and navigating the methodological "messiness" (Billo and Hiemstra 2012, 314). Despite the challenges associated with studying this sensi-tive and challenging topic, our work catalyzes further reflexive research in the fields of (counter-) terrorism, gender, and sexuality.

The Study and the Researchers

This section briefly reflects Emeka Njoku's research trajectory, from studying the intersections between counter-terrorism and civil society to studying the effects of counter-terrorism on gender and sexual minorities with the support of two re-search assistants, Idris Mohammed and Joshua Akintayo. In reflecting on our ex-periences, we use the first-person pronoun or Emeka when referring to the princi-pal researcher and Idris and Joshua when referring to the research assistants. With Joshua's assistance, Emeka conducted and transcribed interviews in Abuja, the Fed-eral Capital Territory, and Lagos State, the commercial hub of Nigeria. Abuja and Lagos are the central offices of numerous Nigerian security agencies, CSOs, and NGOs, although Abuja has had sporadic terrorist operations since 2009. Idris, un-der the supervision of Emeka, conducted the interviews in Adamawa and Borno states during the heat of the terrorist violence by Boko Haram and the Islamic State of West African Province in Nigeria and the Lake Chad region—comprising coun-tries such as Niger, Chad, Cameroon, and parts of the Sahel. Idris also reviewed transcribed interviews for quality assurance after professional Hausa and Kanuri language experts completed the translation and transcription.

During Emeka's doctoral research on how counter-terrorism operations have af-fected civil society organizations (CSOs), after completing an interview with a fe-male CSO executive on a scorching afternoon in late February 2015. Her wealth of knowledge and experience impressed him. In Emeka's view, the interview went well. However, when he stopped the recorder and prepared to take his leave, Emeka noticed her frowning, which confused him. At long last, she spoke up: "You did not ask me questions about gender issues; are you unaware that women experience more hardship than men in counter-terrorism operations?"[1] Emeka was surprised by the question because, in his engagement with literature on counter-terrorism and CSOs, he had not encountered the gendered interactions between both con-cepts. Feminist scholars have all stated the absence of theoretical, empirical, and

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[1]Excerpts of Emeka's interview with executive director who promotes women's rights (Lagos, February 20, 2015).

contextual studies on the gendered and sexual dynamics of terrorism (Hudson 2009; Gentry 2016; Banks 2019; Bloom and Lokmanoglu 2020; Phelan 2023). The preceding is in addition to the scarcity of reflexive methodology studies that highlight the gendered interactions of fieldwork experiences in terrorism research (Schmidt 2021). However, after hearing her, Emeka realized the need for a more nuanced understanding of the effects of counter-terrorism. Therefore, after completing his PhD in 2019, Emeka started looking into the intersections of gender, sexuality, and (counter-) terrorism, focusing on women (Njoku 2019; Njoku and Akintayo 2021). While researching sexual violence against women, however, the sexual victimization of men in conflict situations also became apparent, but with critically significant differences in how interlocutors were willing to engage with male-related sexual violence.

In 2020, Emeka veered off course once more toward the sexual and gender-based victimization of males during counter-terrorism operations. The study was part of the African Humanities postdoctoral fellowship program, generously funded by the American Council of Learned Societies in New York. This study delves into the exploration of masculinities and CRSV, aiming to provide a more nuanced and critical understanding of CRSV that goes beyond gendered assumptions and stereotypes and prevailing notions surrounding innocence, victimhood, and the vulnerability of specific bodies (Njoku and Dery 2021, 2023; Njoku 2022; Njoku et al. 2022, 2024).

Before conducting fieldwork, Emeka had to obtain ethical clearance. Any study involving human subjects in Nigeria must undergo a two-stage process for ethical clearance. First, one must register for courses that address various facets of research ethics. Afterward, one must successfully finish and pass online examinations for these courses. The second phase entails the application process, during which you must submit your proposal and comprehensively answer various ethical questions. Furthermore, the certifications obtained from the completed courses are part of the documents to be submitted. The certification has a validity period of only 2 years. Fortunately, Emeka obtained accreditation in 2019 while studying CRSV for women and girls. Consequently, he proceeded directly to the second stage by applying to the National Health Research Ethics Committee of Nigeria and the Department of Health Planning Research and Statistics of the Federal Ministry of Health in Abuja, Nigeria. Ethical approval was given to Emeka in October 2020.

The study's thirty-one participants included male victims of sexual violence, some of whom are young boys, security agencies, NGO staff, legal practitioners, and a community leader. The interviews lasted between 5 and 65 min, depending on the quantity of information that the study participants were willing or comfortable sharing. They were interviewed using ethnographic style interviews. While victims of CRSV are a hard-to-reach population and we had difficulty getting access initially, we were able to reach out to male victims of sexual violence through two NGOs. These NGOs have been providing humanitarian support to the female victims, including men and young boys. Not only did these NGOs provide access, but they also offered psychosocial support both before and after interviews with male survivors, which was crucial. To safeguard the male victims' anonymity and protect them from social stigma, Emeka and Idris ensured that they were taken to locations where they could not be identified when conducting interviews, with the help of the NGOs.

The Researchers

Emeka, Idris, and Joshua's identity, positionality, and pre-existing relationships shaped the research in many ways. While they are all well-educated Nigerian men, Emeka was a postdoctoral fellow at the time of the fieldwork. He is also from the Igbo ethnic group and a Christian man. Idris is a lecturer and a Muslim fluent in Hausa-Fulani and Kanuri languages who plans to study for his PhD in the United Kingdom or the United States. Joshua is a Yoruba Christian man and first-year PhD

student studying Nigeria's counter-violent extremism measures. Hence, our ethnic and religious identities cover the three major ethnic and religious groups in Nigeria: Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa-Fulani, and Christianity and Islamic religion. This is necessary to navigate both cultural and language barriers to reach out to victims who are predominantly Muslims and Hausa-Fulani. Moreover, NGOs, government security agents, and legal practitioners cut across all ethnic and religious groups, hence mitigating any barriers that ethnic and religious divisions can cause. However, as discussed later in this article, other intersecting identities and positions adversely influenced field interactions despite the shared nationalities, identities, and positionalities.

In addition, our male gender contributed to creating barriers, as reflected in the hesitation and awkwardness between us and the potential and actual gatekeepers and study participants we approached. First, male victims were initially hesitant because of their experience of abuse by fellow men. Some in the Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps were trafficked for sex under the pretext or false promises of providing them with education (Njoku et al. 2022). Study participants, such as NGOs, security agents, and legal practitioners, questioned our motives for doing "this type of research" to borrow their words. There was some form of awkwardness and discomfort with study participants who were men. In Nigeria, due to heterosexism[2] and homophobia, broaching a topic around same-sex issues amongst men is often misinterpreted as being a closeted gay man and the conversation a prelude to sexual advances. It is also interpreted as a way of assessing if the other party is open to such discussions or at least not homophobic (Mapayi et al. 2016; Makanjuola et al. 2018). Hence, while some participants declined despite many attempts, we eventually interviewed others. We were successful in interviewing thirty-one of the study participants. However, in reflection, we wondered whether heterosexism and homophobia influenced the quality of information we got or what participants were comfortable sharing.

Emeka's pre-existing relationship with Idris and Joshua helped remedy many of the envisaged socio-cultural norms, logistics, and research challenges. Emeka is friends with Idris and Joshua and serves as their mentor. Idris and Joshua were studying terrorism and had shared curiosity about the CRSV against men and boys in counter-terrorism operations in northeastern Nigeria. Their knowledge and experiences helped further revise the research instruments to align with existing socio-cultural norms. The pre-existing relationship also contributed to their not backing away from the project as they faced social scrutiny about their sexualities or perceived sinister intentions. Irrespective, in the reflexive methodology debate, the zeal that research assistants bring may, amongst other factors, be tied to their interests, including professional advancements and, as such, pressured or feel coerced to continue in the project despite the social risks (Naufel and Beike 2013; Büyükgöze and Gün 2017). However, regarding the research, Emeka observed tensions between himself and Idris. For instance, Idris has empirical knowledge of the violence in northern Nigeria and the socio-norms. However, Emeka's position as a postdoctoral fellow and his mentor, conversant with the literature on the intersections between (counter-) terrorism and gender and sexuality, led to skepticism by both of them on who knows better. Also, it influenced Emeka's acceptability of Idris's contributions in reviewing the research instruments and co-authoring journal articles from the project. Moss and Hajj (2020) captured the contention between researchers and assistants in a conflict context, arguing, "Local research assistants are keepers of local know-how in conflict and are thus in several settings simultaneously the expert *and* the assistant." Considering that Emeka, too, is a Nigerian and thus local, this led to further tensions. In reflection, Emeka's dispositions may have also affected vital

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[2]heterosexism," which is defined as "an ideological system that denies, denigrates and stigmatizes any nonheterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship or community" (Herek 1992, 89).

information that Idris and Joshua were willing to share with him about the research so that they do not sound stupid or lose Emeka's confidence in their ability and knowledge of the (counter-) terrorism studies field.

Furthermore, Emeka, who faced challenges as an early career researcher in the Global South, provided academic support to Idris and Joshua for their career advancement. He ensured Idris's competitiveness in his PhD applications while guiding Joshua's PhD research. On completion of the project on CRSV, Emeka collaboratively published some of the research findings with Idris and Joshua in academic journals. The preexisting relationship, shared national belongingness, and sociocultural norms between Emeka, Idris, and Joshua helped mitigate challenges and ensure professional growth despite the tensions. However, there were moments of awkwardness, discomfort, and anger during Emeka, Idris, and Joshua's interactions with study participants and gatekeepers, particularly when they asked questions interpreted as not respecting shared socio-cultural norms.

Heteronormativity, Stigma, and Fieldwork in CRSV against Men and Boys

In October 2020, Emeka phoned a police officer in Lagos, Nigeria's commercial hub. The police officer had just returned from a 3-year tour conducting counter-terrorism operations in Borno and Yobe states, northeastern Nigeria, and parts of Cameroon's border communities. When Emeka first started talking to him, and wanted to know his thoughts on sexual violence against men in counter-terrorism operations. The police officer's disdain was palpable over the phone as he repeatedly exclaimed, "Eeeeee!" "Ha!" "How can you imagine such! You have manhood, and you're going after someone who has manhood like you, claiming you want to lie down with him through his anus—it doesn't make sense." The reaction reveals his perception that sexual violence can only occur through sexual intercourse between a man and a woman. It also showed the hatred of the police officer toward rape; the response further reveals the disapproval of men who have sex with men. Such a view relegates the likelihood of sexual violence against men into the background. In addition, the belief that men cannot be victims of sexual violence is partly driven by ingrained heteronormative attitudes, which color perceptions of sexual violence and the larger sociocultural environment where victims are ostracized and their experiences invalidated (Njoku and Dery 2021, 2023). Precisely, homophobic responses to questions of same-sex violence, social stigma, and behavioral and institutional silence in society capture its heteronormative conditioning (Njoku and Dery 2023).

Heteronormativity refers to the ways in which cultural and institutional norms construct and thus shape acceptable and abhorrent sexualities in society. It was influenced by the scholarly contributions of Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Eve Sedgwick, who engage in a post-structuralist critical analysis of human sexualities. They challenge the prevailing notion of heterosexual dominance over homosexuality. They argued that our understanding of sexuality was not fixed but instead constructed by society, culture, and language. Thus, heteronormativity has become an important concept used in understanding the embodied sociocultural and spatial configuration of gender identity and sexualities to illuminate the privileging of heterosexuality in social relations (Mkhize and Mthembu 2023). Heteronormativity displays its hegemony through the stigmatization of other perceived non-normative gender and sexualities (Namaste 1994; Butler 1995). The enthroning of heterosexuals and the policing, stigmatization, and repression of homosexuality or other non-normative genders and sexualities in Nigeria and Africa is a vestige of colonialism (Pierce 2007; Adebanjo 2015; Mhkize and Mthembu 2023). Normative and non-normative sexualities co-exist in pre-colonial Africa (Pierce 2007); however, through agenda setting of the revivalist move of Christian and Muslim faiths, homosexuality was dethroned and termed "un-African" (Mutua 2012; Olaoluwa 2018). Specifically, Mutua (2012, 452) stated that "the subject of sexual

orientation, as understood in all its complexity, is extremely charged in Africa because of the deeply socially conservative landscape and the domination of the political space by Christianity and Islam, the two prevalent messianic faiths in the region."

These socio-religious constructs have had an impact on societal stigma, discrimination, and collective homophobia that is evident in social interactions, legislation, and policies. Non-normative sexuality is viewed and treated as disgusting or, at worse, evil (Njoku and Dery 2021). These stigmatizing narratives empowered perpetrators and others to infringe upon the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals, including condemning, bullying, blackmailing, restricting, criminalizing, prohibiting, prosecuting, detaining, and executing in some political contexts (White and Carr 2005; Strömdahl et al. 2019; Njoku and Dery 2023). The Nigerian government enacted the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act of 2014 in response to extensive advocacy by religious groups against what they perceived as the influence of Western culture on the country. The laws exacerbate the socio-legal persecution of not only LGBTQ+ individuals but also victims of same-sex violence while simultaneously granting more power to perpetrators of sexual violence (Njoku and Dery 2023).

As demonstrated in the introductory anecdotes of this section, the reaction of the police officer mirrors and symbolizes the broader cultural attitudes toward same-sex violence and the complexity that surrounds them. Expectedly, victims' visibility is limited, posing a considerable obstacle for researchers attempting to explore and address their struggles. This reflects Emeka's experiences alongside Idris and Joshua. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, access to male victims of CRSV is difficult, as non-normative sexualities are not often open to everyday public conversations. Thus, we encountered resistance from both study participants and gatekeepers. It appears that this resistance arose due to a combination of toxic masculinities, heterosexism, and homophobia, which continues to undermine and dismiss the experiences of male victims of sexual violence because of the belief that men and boys should always be strong, invulnerable, and impenetrable.

Furthermore, other factors contribute to the hesitancy of gatekeepers and participants, such as the cultural or collective secrecy surrounding non-normative sexualities and the unease of discussing male sexual violence with another man. The discomfort of study participants speaks to Enole's (2016) and Eriksson Baaz and Stern (2016, 126, 258) arguments for the need for researchers' continuous self-reflection in the study of sexual violence in a conflict context. Notably, they argue that certain narratives or portrayals of victims who are participants could either empower or reinforce their marginalizations. According to Enloe, Baaz, and Stern, in researcher–researched relations, it is essential to recognize and mitigate through self-reflexivity the challenges of trauma, representation, and entrenched power dynamics or how researcher's bias and positionality can cause further harm to victims of sexual violence (Billo and Hiemstra 2013; Enloe 2016; Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2016; Aroussi 2020).

Heteronormativity, Masculinity, Power Dynamics, in Researcher–Researched Relations on CRSV Fieldwork

Amidst the fieldwork, Emeka, Idris, and Joshua encountered three significant obstacles: First, the location is severely affected by acts of terrorism, and second, the subject of our investigation is culturally sensitive, with non-normative sexual orientation being exclusively deliberated in private or through coded language. Secrecy about non-normative sexualities is often seen as good behavior in northern Nigeria (Pierce 2007; Njoku 2022; Njoku and Dery 2023). Furthermore, society usually stigmatizes those who speak about male sexual violence. This influences victim silence as they fear that speaking openly leads to further victimization, including their being stigmatized and labeled as gay (Njoku and Dery 2023). Although Emeka Idris and Joshua are insiders because they share the same nationality, they do not all

share a similar ethnic identity. All of the above created difficulties in the quantity and quality of data, reinforcing the claim made by Adebayo and Njoku 2023 on the issue of national belongingness and its influence on the researcher's insider positionality.

Thus, to mitigate these security challenges, Emeka ensured the research assistant conducted the interviews in IDP camps and in the capital cities of Borno and Adamawa states, where there is a high-level military presence. Traveling across states was by Air and not by land to prevent issues of kidnapping by both terrorists and bandits.[3] Secondly, Emeka hiring Idris, who shares cultural, language, and religious identity with the study participants and gatekeepers was strategic to alleviate the abovementioned challenges, was strategic. Ferdoush (2023) and Hoogendorn and Visser (2012) argued that identity deployment in qualitative research is essential to access vital and valuable data. Engaging in fruitful partnerships with fieldwork actors is critical to obtaining reliable data, as Chereni (2014, 1) highlighted when discussing the importance of "influencing the processes of positionality." However, we encountered other unique challenges that shared national groups/identities and productive collaboration could not resolve. In our conversation with gatekeepers and participants, we saw elements of toxic masculinities at play, leaving us feeling powerless.

Idris, who conducted the interviews in Borno and Adamawa states, recounted his experiences when he first approached a gatekeeper. "In November 2020, I was conducting interviews in Teacher Village, an IDP camp in Maiduguri, Nigeria, when I raised the subject of male sexual violence with a potential gatekeeper.[4] My question triggered an angry reaction: *Can you leave this place! Where on earth did you ever hear a man rape another man?*"[5] The gatekeeper's outrage, his doubt about the reality of male sexual violence, and the subsequent order that Idris leaves his presence exemplified the deeply ingrained stigma and discomfort surrounding research on sexual violence against men. However, another gatekeeper admitted, "Boys are also vulnerable, but the issues are not in public."[6] Similarly, when Idris met a staff of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre in Borno, she was skeptical and suspicious of him. The staff asked him about his profession further and where he studied. It was only when she learned that Idris had attended the same university as her that she was more receptive. She, however, queried why he got involved "in this kind of research" and that "a lot of people would prefer not to answer questions on male sexual violence."[7] After minutes of long, hard, uncomfortable stares and awkwardness, she began to share information about the reported cases. She insisted that people are only interested in sexual violence against women and girls than male children or men. They hide the stories of male sexual violence rather than reporting it due to stigma and other socio-norms.

Joshua related a similar experience when trying to reach out to potential study participants for Emeka, the principal researcher. He stated that study participants and gatekeepers were scrutinizing his motives and questioning his sexualities after disclosing the topic of the study was male sexual violence in counter-terrorism operations. In his words: "At first, study participants appeared to be open to discussions around CRSV; however, when I informed them that it was about male sexual victimisation in conflict-affected northern-eastern Nigeria, there seemed to be

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[3]Bandits are groups of individuals who perpetuate various forms of armed violence against citizens and the state at large. Their intention is less about challenging the legitimacy of the state but more about drawing attention to perceived socio-economic inequalities and marginalization by the state (Ejiofor 2024).

[4]By potential gatekeepers, I mean people whom we contacted to provide us access to study participants. Still, they declined or refused to pick up our calls when we informed them about our research on male sexual violence victimization in conflict.

[5]Gatekeeper One, Borno, October 28, 2020.

[6]Gatekeeper Two, Borno, October 28, 2020.

[7]Staff of Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Borno, November 4, 2020.

a shift in their countenance." He further stated that "some showed surprise, scepticism, or unease during the conversation. Other participants queried his interest in the topic: "Why are you interested in this?" or "Do you now support this gay thing people abroad do because of your education?" These participants felt that Joshua's Western education has now made him a champion of perceived Western ideals about human sexuality or shaped his awareness or lack of cultural norms that such conversations are better left unspoken. Despite trying to avoid responding to these rhetorical questions and what Research Assistant Two felt were unwarranted, he observed that participants' initial shock and disbelief quickly gave way to a noticeable discomfort with his physical and virtual presence, prompting them to end the conversation.

Furthermore, when study participants agreed to share such information, they first rationalized it as mental health issues or a ritual to absolve themselves as a form of absolution for engaging in "such conversation" and creating a sense of detachment. For instance, when Emeka asked an NGO staff member about the rationale of CRSV against men, she stated: "So, there's no cause or justification other than that someone has mental health challenges." Unfortunately, there are many of them (mentally challenged) in Nigeria who are doing this (same sex). So, in families, people are not well psychologically."[8] Similarly when Emeka interviewed another study participant, a security agent, he told him that: "most of these people engaged in these acts; they have spiritual (ritual) connotations. Those that left it come out to say that there are spiritual issues involved."[9] Implicitly embedded in these responses by participants is a conscious attempt at pathologizing practices of male sexual violence and reifying what Sivakumaran (2007) describes as the nexus between power, dominance, and masculinity in wartime sexual violence. The representation of masculinity in the Nigerian socio-cultural context is often closely tied to heteronormativity, which reinforces the idea that only heterosexual men can embody true masculinity. Dery (2020) argues that rhetorical representations of masculinity are firmly grounded in heteronormativity; this connection between masculinity and heteronormativity is reflected in the way that men are expected to perform certain gendered behaviors, such as being aggressive and dominant.

In articulating the research findings, we followed feminist research ethics and critical terrorism commitments against marginalizing the epistemologies of the subject or victims as it were (Jackson 2007; Ackley and True 2008). In doing so, we acknowledged how study participants make sense of or rationalize sexual violence victimization of men and boys as a ritual or diabolical and integrated it into debates on wartime sexual violence (Njoku and Dery 2021). We further argue that such perspectives are also necessary to develop trauma-informed humanitarian interventions or programs for victims' support or healing (Njoku and Dery 2021). Thus, much like Ackerly and True (2008, 695–99) on the need for researchers to pay attention to "the power of knowledge" and "the limits of our epistemology" and situatedness of the researcher', we adopted the victim's epistemological standpoint or "subject" rationalizations of (in)security in IR theories.

In addition, we argue that the heteronormative views of study participants and gatekeepers align with arguments that underpin how societal expectations of masculinity (being tough and unemotional) prevent male victims of sexual abuse from getting social care attention (Chan 2014). For instance, there was some form of power dynamics at play in the response of the angry gatekeeper and other fieldwork actors we interviewed that is reflective of societal dispositions toward conversations of the same sex, including male rape. Such discourses, in a heteronormative context where the same sex is criminal, open the discussants to social scrutiny depending on their views in such conversation. In other words, if you believe male

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[8]Study participants survivor one, Borno, October 28, 2020.
[9]NGO program officer, Abuja, October 12, 2020.

sexual violence happens or are supportive of same-sex relations broadly, your sexuality is automatically being questioned. Put simply, by acknowledging the reality of male sexual assault, you risk being seen as questioning traditional masculinity or even implying your sexuality is non-heterosexual. Ndasi et al. (2022, 20) stated that "cultural schemas of sexuality are projected towards sex researchers, thereby sexualising them."

Within the context of our study, the researchers lost the power, respect, and privilege of their shared national/group. Therefore, it created emotional discomfort or fear of physical violence. In the debates on emotions and IR, Baaz and Stern (2016) referred to the researchers' feelings of anxiety when studying wartime sexual violence as "methodology unease" or "discomfort" (Pillow 2003; Enloe 2016; Eriksson Baaz and Stern 2016, 126, 258). Specifically, in their study of wartime sexual violence against women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Baaz and Stern (2016) described the "entailed lingering in our uncomfortable questions, fears, distress and apprehension" that researchers face or questions that challenged their existing beliefs or assumptions.

Furthermore, we wondered if the angry gatekeeper and participants would have been kinder to us if we had shared a different nationality or were outsiders. We reflected on whether the angry disposition or dismissal of male sexual violence victimization was rooted in the belief that we (insiders) ought to know the socio-norms more than outsiders and thus not ask vexatious questions about male sexual violence. Fonow and Cook (1991) had noted that outsiders could be seen as neutral actors and be provided with privileged information compared to insiders who share national or group identities. Additionally, what these all showed in our interactions with gatekeepers and study participants is that researchers are not always in positions of power during ethnographic encounters (Dery 2020; Njoku and Dery 2023) but are, in fact, "displaced persons" in an unfamiliar environment (Ferdoush 2023). Hence, study participants and gatekeepers have agencies that they often deploy, which ultimately influences the data accuracy or quality and the entire research process.

Trust, Culture of Silence, Stigma, and Access to Data on CRSV against Men in the Field

Access to male victims was made possible by NGOs that provide psychosocial care to victims and survivors of sexual violence in the Northeast. However, we had to deal with the challenge of gaining trust and cultural sensibilities surrounding conversations on sex, particularly male sex, including rape. Moreover, we also faced the challenge of the stigma felt by participants when they admitted to or shared their experiences of being sexually violated by another man. For instance, Idris shared his experience during the initial interactions with victims in a group before the individual interview: "One teenage victim of CRSV initially rejected my handshake. However, after spending some minutes with him, he felt comfortable and explained his initial hesitation. According to Idris, the victim stated that: "*At the beginning, I was so scared because of how you wanted to touch me. The person that raped me started by shaking my hand.*"[10] One of the gatekeepers, an NGO staff member who was around to monitor the interview with boys, noticed the victims were still trying to figure out whether Idris was a Boko Haram terrorist. She convinced them by asking Idris to reintroduce himself and the nature of the research. The strategy aimed to build trust and bonds between him and the victims. Idris also used humor while interacting with the victims to connect with them further. These approaches were practical, as he noticed a change in the study participants' demeanor. They started greeting him in their local language (Kanuri) despite knowing how to speak Hausa fluently.

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[10] Study participants survivor two, Borno, October 28, 2020.

Furthermore, when Idris asked questions on male sexual violence in the first or second person, including the mention of the word, sex, study participants quickly deviated, or intentionally lost interest. Idris was frustrated and shared this experience with Emeka, who then decided to revise the interview guide with the support of Idris. Hence, they both revised the questions to align with cultural precepts and conventions, ensuring sensitivity to these aspects during the interviews of victims and survivors. In doing so, Emeka and Idris incorporated the use of the third-person pronoun and used codes or phrases such as "the thing" or "the act" to ask questions on "rape or "sex" during the interviews. This was per societal norms, where same-sex relationships were frequently discussed using coded language rather than being openly acknowledged (Pierce 2007; Gaudio 2011; Njoku and Dery 2023).[11]

This change in approach can be said to have created a psychological distance that allowed participants to engage in more open and honest conversations. Some study participants felt comfortable enough to share with us that they find it difficult to relate with the male gender because of fear of re-victimization. For others, their hesitation stems from admitting to being sexually assaulted due to past experiences with the community members within the IDP camps. For example, Idris stated, during my interview, victims reported that people would look at them as weak or they enjoyed the moment with their abusers even though they were fully aware it was rape. Some other victims were hesitant to discuss their sexual violence experience due to a feeling of vulnerability and because of the need to shield themselves from further socio-legal persecution. Therefore, the readjustment in our approach reflects our adaptability and understanding of the complexities involved in researching this sensitive topic. This underscores the importance of field research flexibility skills and adaptability to field settings and advances the methodological messiness concept (Billo and Hiemstra 2013).

In addition, the lack of trust, despite sharing national, ethnic, and religious identity with study participants, demonstrates what Chakravarty (2012, 251) calls "partial trust." This is a case in which participants located in violent sociopolitical contexts affect their lack of trust in researcher–researched relations. Although partial trust can be limiting, researchers can still get valuable data if they can negotiate these constraints. Furthermore, Idris's use of humor to connect with study participants builds on Kaaristo' (2022, 743) argument on "everyday power dynamics" in researcher–researched relationships, as humor allows the researchers to "negotiate interpersonal dynamics" to bring about a degree of equality in the social hierarchy and changes strict adherence to socio-norms.

Our experience showed that positionality is fluid (Glas 2021), the limits of national belongingness (Adebayo and Njoku 2023), and that the insider status of the researcher is ever-changing. The fluidity of the researcher–researched relationship stems from the social location of the study participants or the heteronormative, volatile, and violent context, as our study has shown. Social stigma, shame, and coding on sex discourses emerge as important factors in shaping field interactions and access to rich data. Another takeaway from our experiences is that, even though the study participants were young boys, this did not place them entirely as objects of the researcher. Participants exercise power by silencing field interactions when the researchers deviate from current socio-norms, social coding in sexuality discourse, or activities that violate cultural sensibilities. As a result, regardless of their young age, these study participants are not subjects or objects but have agency in the research process. The boys were strategic in what they were willing to share and withhold based on the direction of the conversation. Thus, our efforts at "active reflexivity," which entails recognizing the challenges of positionality and making changes on the go (Glas 2021, 54), aided in our ability to get study participants who are victims of sexual violence to feel comfortable enough to share informa-

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[11]For example, see Appendix Table A1, which captures differences in questions to victims of CSRV.

tion about their violent experiences during the study. It also speaks to the "Feminist Research Ethics or Feminist-Informed Researchers' Commitment" on continuous self-reflexivity, understanding and mitigating entrenched power dynamics, centering the views of the subject in the researcher–researched interactions (Ackerly and True 2008, 695, 699).

Conclusion

This study contributes to the reflexive methodology debate in terrorism studies and IR more broadly through a critical reflection of our experiences as African-based scholars studying the intersection between (counter-) terrorism and CRSV. In doing so, it responds to the critique of positionality statements that prioritize white researchers' experiences and positionality statements as a means of redemption from Western hegemonies in knowledge production. Our study embodies the methodology of unease in the researcher–researched relations and commits to the feminist research ethics and critical terrorism study's critical reflexivity commitment for emancipatory praxis.

First, we nuanced the methodology of "unease" or "discomfort" described by Baaz and Stern (2016, 126) and Enloe (2016, 258) in their reflection on wartime sexual violence of women and girls by providing our experience as African-based scholars studying male sexual violence victimization in conflict and post-conflict settings. We argue that, regardless of shared national or ethnic identity, interactions between researchers and study participants can become tensed when questions that probe extant heteronormative social norms, such as male CRSV, are posed. Researchers become exposed to social scrutiny, vulnerability, and physical violence, causing them to lose their assumed position of power. In addition, study participants strategically silence ethnographic encounters where researchers fail to pay attention to existing socio-norms and the ontological security experienced by their study participants in heteronormativity and violence. Hence, much like Baaz and Stern (2016) and Enloe (2016), our study provides a valuable empirical contribution to the methodology of unease by underlining the need for self-reflexivity during field research. This ensures mitigating how certain accounts or depictions served to either empower or re-enforce the victimization or marginalization of the study participants.

Secondly, our research exemplifies the "Feminist-Informed Researchers' Commitment" for reflexivity, which enables researchers to recognize their epistemological limits in IR theorizing. It ensures "revisiting epistemological choices, boundaries and relationship throughout the process or the politics of every stage of the research process" (Ackerly and True 2008, 699). Therefore, in articulating the findings of our research, we were not only observant of male victims' rationalization of sexual violence victimization but integrated them into an existing debate on wartime sexual violence in feminist IR theories. We also suggested incorporating victims rationalization into the development of programs aimed at addressing CRSV. In other words, we admitted the limits of our epistemologies or imaginations on CRSV by focusing on epistemological perspectives of the subject, or "subject thoughts and incorporating them into IR theories. Additionally, echoing Ackerly and True (2008), our study disrupts disciplinary boundaries that continue to reinforce the silences and marginalization of certain voices by sustaining prevailing heteronormative institutional norms that shape "acceptable" epistemologies. Disciplinary boundaries, according to Ackerley and True (2008, 696–7), "reveal how the political boundaries of the state system shape our knowledge about it and continue to render women invisible or as international subjects or actors." Thus, by studying CRSV against men, we challenge extant orthodoxy, particularly in contexts where such conversation or even research is considered uncomfortable, awkward, and embarrassing.

Thirdly, our work contributes to methodological advancements by offering nuanced, reflective methodology from the viewpoints of African researchers' fieldwork

experiences. In doing so, it serves as a model for scholars and students interested in studying (counter-) terrorism, gender, and sexuality. It emphasizes the methodological messiness (Billo and Hiemstra 2013) that drives fieldwork in wartime sexual violence. While the above point does not undermine the significance of prefieldwork planning and preparation, it underscores the importance of researcher flexibility and reflexivity in response to the contextual and cultural challenges that may arise during field interviews. Relatedly, the article also reinforces the argument by scholars that doing research in war zones can be incredibly impactful, but only if researchers address power imbalances, navigate safety and ethical concerns, and honestly evaluate their role in the process (Cronin-Furman and Lake 2018; Gordon 2021). In conclusion, the article points to the importance of focusing more on the agency of research participants during fieldwork and dispensing with the commonplace assumption that research participants are passive subjects. Notably, the article calls for a more nuanced understanding of the role of researchers' identity and positionality in African contexts. It emphasizes the need for more African scholars to engage in research on wartime or CRSV against men while acknowledging the ethical and methodological challenges they face. By openly reflecting on these challenges, researchers can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of sexual and gender-based violence in the context of war, conflict, security, and violence and advocate for better support for victims and survivors. These reflections and findings are valuable for researchers in various contexts in Africa and beyond, where similar norms around heteronormativity and social stigma underlie fieldwork on wartime and peacetime sexual violence against men and boys.

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Appendix

Table A1. Table with the differences in questions to victims of CSRV. Below are some of the questions in the interview guide and an idea of how they were asked to the respondents; it is essential to note that these are simply guides, so the questions were asked in several ways in Hausa or Kanuri for clarity and sensitivity to the social norms. Secondly, not all respondents were uncomfortable with the third-person narrative. Thus, our active reflexivity, as advanced by Glas 2021, let us interact with each study participant or victim, depending on the advice from the NGOs through which we got access to them and their initial reactions when we informed them about our research. Therefore, this information we got on the go influenced our questioning approach. In other words, the method of questioning depends on the victims' study participants.

S/N	Original questions	Reframed questions
1	Can you describe your experience of sexual violence?	Can you describe their experience of persons that are sexually violated?
2	Where did this happen? In the prison, community	Where did the incident occur? Was it in the prison, community, or another location?
3	Were you been threatened with acts of sexual violence if you do not cooperate with security agents?	Was the person threatened with acts of sexual violence if they did not cooperate with security agents?
4	How did you feel after the experience?	How did the person feel after the experience?
5	Did you experience any physical pains/challenges as result of your experience?	Did the person experience any physical pain or challenges because of their experience?
7	Did the person who violated you sexually threaten you? If yes, what did the person say to you and what was your response?	Did the person who violated the individual sexually threaten them? If yes, what did the perpetrator say, and how did the individual respond?
8	Do you feel like leaving home or the community to another place after the incidence?	Did the person feel like leaving their home or community and moving elsewhere after the incident?
9	Did you tell anyone about your experience? If yes, how long did you take you to share your experience?	Did the person tell anyone about their experience? If yes, how long did it take for them to share their experience?
10	If no, why did you not tell anyone about your experience?	If the person did not tell anyone, what were the reasons for not sharing their experience?
11	Did you report or not the incidence to security agents? If yes what did they do or how was the case handled?	Did the person report the incident to security agents? If yes, what actions were taken or how was the case handled?
12	If not, why did you not report it?	If the person did not report the incident, why did they choose not to?
13	Do you think by telling anybody or report to security agents they will stigmatize/shame you or treat you like you are no longer a man because of the incidence?	Does the person believe that by telling anyone or reporting the incident to security agents, they will be stigmatized, shamed, or treated as though they are no longer a man?
15	Do you think that by telling anybody or report to security agents they will treat see you as a homosexual or treat you as suspect?	Does the person fear that reporting the incident will cause others to view them as homosexual or treat them as a suspect?