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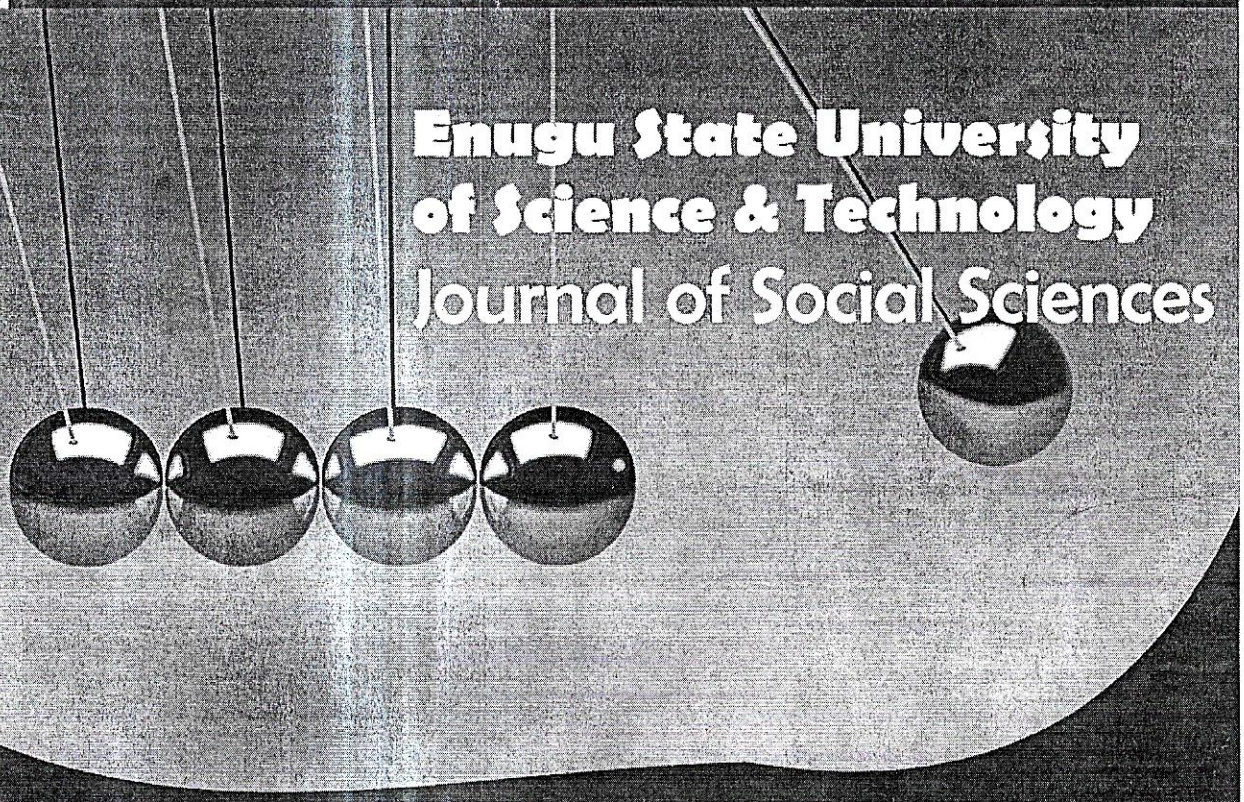

TECHNOLOGY FOR SERVICE

Journal of Social Sciences

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Information

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For Authors

For Librarians

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Information

For Readers

For Authors

For Librarians

Make a Submission

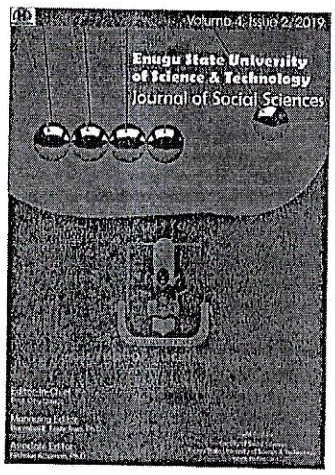
Browse

Current Issue

ATOM 1.0

RSS 2.0

RSS 1.0



Published: 2019-11-03

Articles

Nigeria's Economic Development Process and the Challenges of Corruption
An Assessment of Global Collaboration on the War Against Corruption 2007 - 2015

Benjamin, Eneasato, Netchy Christian Mbaeze

VIEW PDF

Impact of Non-Oil Export on Economic Growth in Nigeria

Chigozirim Florence Awoke, Jude Iwuoha, Chukwuemeka Awoke

VIEW PDF

National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA) and Disaster Management in South East 2009 – 2016

Netchy Christian Mbaeze, Benjamin Eneasato

VIEW PDF

Influence of Religious Orientation on Altruistic Behaviour

Tobias Obiora Ozor

VIEW PDF

United Nations and Challenges of Resettlement and Reintegration of IDP's in South Sudan, 2011-2018

Victor Chidubem Iwuoha, Clifford Nwagu

VIEW PDF

Influence of Self Efficacy and Level of Education on Test Anxiety among Adolescents

Boris Ejike Eze, Ejike H. Mgbenkemdi

VIEW PDF

Evaluating Quality of Life among Parents of Children living with Cerebral Palsy in Enugu State, Nigeria

Obuna Adaoga, Chioma Nvene, Nelson Ifedili Nwankwo, Rita Ozorgwu, Paul Okoli

VIEW PDF

Attitude of Nigerian Students Towards Death Anxiety

Emmanuel C. Ogbodo, Solomon A. Agu

VIEW PDF

Fear of Negative Evaluation and Self Efficacy as Correlates of health Seeking Behaviour among Adolescents

Uche. J. Aboh, Solomon A. Agu, Nelson. I Nwankwo, C.A.F Okoye

VIEW PDF

Stigma, Personality and Social Support as Predictors of Psychological Well-being among Undergraduate Students

Uche. J. Aboh, Nelson. I Nwankwo, C.A.F Okoye, Henry Oraetue, Solomon Agu, Henry Ogonwa

VIEW PDF

Socio-Economic Impact of Recession and Youth Unemployment

the Nigerian Experience

Chukwujekwu Charles Onwuka, Sunday Evaristus Abonyi

VIEW PDF

Cyber Crime and Underdevelopment of Tourism Industry in Nigeria

M. John Agomoh, Ifeoma Louisa Eze, Ngozi Nwokoro

VIEW PDF

Domestic Violence against Women in Ebonyi State Rural Communities, Southeast, Nigeria

Sunday Evaristus Abonyi, Christian Igwebuike Ezeh, Charles Onwuka Chukwujekwu

VIEW PDF

Homesickness and Friend-sickness as Predictors of Loneliness among Year One Students of Enugu State University of Science and Technology

Raphael U. Anike, Valentina C. Marire-Nwankwo

VIEW PDF

When Culture plays a Determinant Role in the Adoption of Family Planning amongst Families

Stella Abel Ugwu

VIEW PDF

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Domestic Violence against Women in Ebonyi State Rural Communities, Southeast, Nigeria

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Abstract
Domestic violence against women in rural communities especially in Sub-Saharan Africa has continued to thrive despite its global condemnation. The study tried to assess the multifarious nature of domestic violence metted against women in Ebonyi State rural communities, Southeast, Nigeria. The multistage sampling techniques were adopted and 360 respondents (females of 18 years and above) formed the sample representative using the questionnaire. Qualitative data were also generated using the Indepth Interview Guide (IDI) with 30 participants that were not part of the questionnaire. Psychoanalytic feminist theory and status expectation theory were adopted as the theoretical framework. Data collected were analyzed using the descriptive statistics; frequency tables and percentages. Study findings revealed that in addition to physical torture/battery, women in Ebonyi state rural communities were subjected to economic neglect, psychological/emotional distress, spiritual abuse, social degradation and others. 30.6% of respondents expressed the widespread socio-cultural belief in the area that women are holistically subordinate and property of the husband as it constitutes an abomination to take a husband to the police for his actions. Consequent to this, chronic injuries or untimely death of mothers and behavioural problems of children which all culminates in marring the pride of family in Africa become inevitable. Nevertheless, the study made some recommendations which if implemented will go a long way in reinventing Nigeria as the stability of a nations starts from the family.
Keywords: Violence, domestic violence, women, rural, rural community.

Introduction

Domestic violence against women seems to be one of the most pervasive, yet the least recognized human right abuse in the contemporary world. In other words, it remains a largely

hidden problem that few countries, communities or families openly confront. It could also be seen as a universal reality existing in all societies regardless of geography, ethnicity, income, class or status in general. According to Godwin (2005), domestic violence against women has been a part of human history and human societies have lived with it without feeling that it was anything wrong. As the author further noted, domestic violence being a global epidemic tend to kill, torture and maim physically, psychologically/emotionally and equally deny women of their security, equality, dignity, self-worth or right to enjoy fundamental freedom.

Zadding (2012), and Ehichoya et al (2019) also stated that domestic violence is a manifestation of historically unequally power relations between men and women which have led to domination over or discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of full advancement of women. Domestic violence is not a new phenomenon, nor the consequences to women's physical or mental health but what is new is the growing recognition of domestic violence becoming a pattern of behaviour that violates the rights of women.

Benebo, Schumann and Vaezghasemi (2018) observed that beyond women's status, community norms or cultural belief system toward the woman may result to domestic violence. This implies that almost every society in the world seems to have social institution that legitimizes domestic violence especially against women. In such circumstances one tend to ponder why the same act that will be punished if directed at an employer, a nieghbour or an acquaintance often go unchallenged when men direct them at women, especially within the family. What it means is that there are some laws in many societies that tend to curtail women's right relative` to their husbands.

Ehichoya et al (2019) noted that in many countries around the world, not less than 10-69% of women tend to report domestic violence by their husbands at one point or another in their lives. This almost aligned with the results of a multi-country study undertaken by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations (UN) in 2013 which revealed that between 15% and 75% of women aged between 15-49 in Africa and other parts of the world have at certain points in their lives involved in both physical and sexual violence by an intimate partner. This situation had posed a profound health problem, sapping women of their energies and eroding their self esteem (Oladeji, 2013).

The various forms of domestic violence against women according to Alokan (2013) include; wife battery, denial of self-expression, violence for sexual relationship, antagonism

because of sex of new-born child, exploitation, negative cultural attitude and degrading traditional practices. In many areas of Pakistan and Middle east, women are seen as personal property which can be sold and purchased (Malik, 2013). In these places according to the author, women are beaten up, raped, tortured or even killed at home. This implies that the number of women of all ages and background who are killed in the name of marriage cannot be determined as majority of these cases are unreported and only in the rarest cases are perpetrators brought to justice.Similarly , in india , oluremi (2015) reported that 56% of women interviewed justified wife beating on ground like bad cook , disrespectful to in laws , producing more girls , leaving home without information among others.

In Nigeria, cases of domestic violence against women have been on the increase. According to Benebo, Schumann, and Vaezghasemi (2018), nearly one in every four women in Nigeria are reported to have experienced violence from the husband at certain points in time. The prevalence of this violence according to the authors ranges from 42% in the north, 29% in the south, 78.8% in the south east to 41% in the south south. This revelation seems to be related to the reports carried out by 'This Day Newspaper' in 2011 which showed that in Nigeria, about 50% of married women were battered by their husbands while 65% of more educated ones (women) were in this terrible situation compared to their low income counterparts. It is likely that most of these women try to endure, believing that they have no where to go and equally believing for good reasons that the law will not protect them as a staggering percentage of this group fail to report their cases to the police. This may also be related to the views of many Nigerians where marriage is seen as a prized attainment with a powerful social stigma resulting from reporting domestic violence or leaving one's husband. Melissa and Stiles (2002) on the other hand argued that domestic violence against women may obviously affect the children born to the family by undermining their sense of self-esteem and their confidence in the future. In other words, these children are more likely to have a fatalistic view of the future resulting to an increased rate of risk taking and anti-social behaviours such as school truancy, early sexual activity, substance abuse and delinquency.

Udobang (2018), further observed that about 48% of women in Nigeria believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife for some reasons such as going-out without telling himor neglecting the children. The author also noted that despite the high level of violence within relationship in Nigeria, wedding vows are regarded as sacred and women are regularlyurged to

stay with bullying husbands. This seems to provide one of the obvious illustrations of the low position and status that women are accorded in many cultures in Nigeria. In other words, domestic violence against women in most societies may be condoned by some infrastructures of cultural beliefs and legal status.

Domestic violence has made women's situation difficult to participate fully on issues concerning them in the home and in the society. As such, women in Nigeria appear to have no freedom to speak for themselves because of fear of punishment from their husbands. Men think women are meant only for giving birth, taking care of children and doing some domestic chores. The recent attack by the Nigerian president, General Mohammadu Buhari on the first lady; Aisha in 2017 stressing that women's role centres in the kitchen and bedroom testifiers to instances of violence against the rights of women.

Most studies tend to give primacy to physical acts or injuries inflicted on the intimate partner by the other with less significance generally attached to injuries that are psychological/emotional, economic, social and spiritual (Rand & Strom, 1997, Kalgo, 2000, Melissa & Stiles, 2002, Ehichoya et al., 2019). It is against this backdrop that this study attempted to explore or assess the nature of domestic violence metted against women in rural communities of Ebonyi State, southeast Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the nature of domestic violence experienced by women in rural communities of Ebony State, Southeast Nigeria.
2. To identify the socio-cultural practices/beliefs underlying domestic violence against women in Nigerian rural communities.
3. To find out the extent to which domestic violence against women has affected family stability in Nigeria rural communities.
4. To make some recommendations or suggestions

Conceptual Issues

For a proper and meaningful discussion of domestic violence against women in rural communities, there is the need to have a clear explanation of some key concepts.

Domestic Violence:

Domestic violence is a global problem of enormous proportion. According to Ashimolowo, and Otufale (2012), domestic violence can be described as any harm that is perpetrated against a person, as a result of power of inequalities that are based on gender roles. This concept is all encompassing, as it is not only limited to physical, sexual and psychological violence, but include threats of violence, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty. Similarly, Akpan and Usoro (2005) defined domestic violence as violence in intimacy which can be physical, sexual, psychological/emotional or threats of physical or sexual assault that are inflicted on women. Genyi (2005), added that domestic violence is a very serious social, economic and psychological problem that has no cultural or social, economic and psychological group inhibition. In other words, beyond the absence of any unknown barrier not even legal, its occurrence has profound and destructive consequences which ranges from physical, emotional and financial effects on the inhabitants of the home, be it the women, children or men.

Booth (2003) on the same note stated that domestic violence is orchestrated as a desire of one party in relationship to dominate and control the other partner. It may be power breakdown or distortion of an intimate relationship. This implies that relationships that are characterized by violence may be distorted but may not be broken down. In the view of Zarga-Azhar et al (2012), domestic violence is a term used for the people who are bounded through law, blood or personal relationship. According to the author, it refers to such violent behaviours in any relationship by one or both partners to keep power and control over another. The various instances of domestic as the author reiterated include physical aggression like hitting, biting, restraining or threats like sexual abuse, authoritarian and emotional abuse, stalking or passive/covert abuse. Domestic abuse may or may not be classified as a crime, depending on the local rigorousness and extent of specific acts.

The United Nations World Conference on women, section 113/114 also defined domestic violence as that physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family including battering and dowry related violence, marital rape and other traditional practices harmful to women. Equally, UNICEF (2000), include such physical abuse as slapping, beating, arm twisting, assault, asphyxiate burning, choking, lash out, threats with objects or weapons and murder as what makes up domestic violence.

In conclusion, domestic violence simply refers to physical, emotional or psychological and other harmful acts metted to women in the home by the husband or intimate partner. It is an ongoing experience of physical, psychological, and/or sexual abuse in the home that is used to establish power and control over one another.

Rural Communities

This simply refers to areas set outside of the city and towns. According to Mundi (2006),rural communities are remote areas or places far away from the seat of government and having no verified or infrastructural facilities, that is, the countryside and the people living in the villages. It also refers to areas with low population density, small size, and relative isolation, where the major economic activity is largely agricultural production and where the people are relatively homogenous in their values, attitudes and behaviours. In other words, rural communities are principally peasant in nature, with subsistence agriculture as the main form of sustenance combined with various levels of dependence on forests, fresh water or wide life (Abdullateef et al, 2017).

Rural population in Nigeria was reported at 51.4% in 2016 according to the World Bank Collection of development indicators. Mohatt et al (2005) noted that Nigerian rural communities tend to share higher rate of poverty compared to urban areas. This implies that poverty persists in these areas and is evident in the difficulty experienced by many in satisfying their basic needs of food, water, shelter, health and education. Indeed, it is estimated that between 70 -80% of residents in Nigeria rural communities are living in poverty with limited infrastructural and social facilities. Abdullateef, et al, (2017) also noted that poor educational system is quite apparent in nearly all rural communities in Nigeria. This implies that education seems to have become a delusion to majority of poor rural dwellers in Nigeria with emphasis placed more on traditional family preservation.

Theoretical Framework

The Psychoanalytic Feminist theory and the Status Expectation theory were adopted as the theoretical framework of the study. According to Hudson, Ayensu, Ogdley and Patocchi (2002), psychoanalytic feminist theory is one of the variants of feminist perspective which provide a template for making sense of the diverse ways in which women experience inequality in many facets of their lives – at home, at work and in the wider community. In other words, it is one of the oppression theories that see patriarchy as a system in which males subjugate women, a

universally persuasive system, durable overtime and steadfastly maintained in the face of occasional challenges. The theory also looks at the socio-emotional environment in which the personality of the young child takes form, positioning in both the plot and image of the male as dominant over the female. Women are therefore left without an equivalent source of energy to resist domination and violence in the family inflicted by the husbands. This theory therefore offers the root of domestic violence against women especially in rural communities of Ebony State.

The Status Expectation theory on the other hand explains how gender is related to power and influence in a mixed-sex goal oriented groups. According to Chafetz (2006), the theory assumes that males enjoy higher social status than females. In other words, as both men and women enter a mixed-sex group with expectations, men are bound to behave more competently than women in moving the group towards task achievement. This may result to a reduction in women's self-confidence, prestige and power in group interactions. Moreover, such expectations are usually accepted by group members as legitimate and an individual woman's attempt to counteract them will be rejected as inappropriate by members of both sexes. Domestic violence against women in Nigeria rural communities appears to be a norm and the rights of men which accounts for reluctancy in reporting such cases to law enforcement agents. As Benebo, Schumann and Vaezghasemi (2018) noted, addressing domestic violence against women calls for community-wide approaches aimed at changing norms among men alongside improving women's status.

Methodology

The study was conducted in three rural communities (Onueke in Ezza North Local Government Council, Ekoli-Edda in Afikpo South and Amoffia-Mgbo in Ohaukwu Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, South East Nigeria. Ebonyi state is one of the six states created in 1996 by late General Sani Abacha administration when it was carved out of the old Abakaliki division of Enugu state and old Afikpo division of Abia State. The state is predominantly dominated by the Igbos with other minority ethnic groups from neighboring states. Ebonyi state has 13 local government councils contained in the three senatorial zones (Ebonyi North, Ebonyi South & Ebonyi Central) with a projected population of 2,927,753 as at 2018 (using 2.5% of annual growth rate) and a land mass of 5,533km^2. Economically, Ebonyi

state is primarily an agricultural region. It is a leading producer of rice, yam, potatoes, maize, beans, and cassava. The state also has several solid mineral resources and is called 'salt of the nation' for its huge salt deposit at Okposi and Uburu. Ebonyi state also host six educational institutions including Ebonyi state University, Abakaliki, Dr. Alex Ekwueme Federal University, Ndufu-Alike, Ikwo, Federal college of Agriculture, Ishiagu amongst others.

The multi-stage sampling technique was adopted in the selection of respondents. Firstly, three local government councils that are far from the capital city (Abakaliki) were purposively chosen, that is; one from each of the senatorial zones. These local government councils were found to share boundary with neighbouring states. Thereafter, three rural communities (ie one from each of the chosen local government councils) were randomly selected using balloting with 360 respondents (ie. 120 respondents from each of the selected communities). The respondents were restricted to married women of 18 years and above resident in these communities for not less than 5 years.

Questionnaire were distributed to these respondents by the researcher assisted by six trained research Assistants (i.e two for each community). In addition, indepth interview was conducted with 30 participants (i.e 10 participants for each of the selected communities) who were not part of the questionnaire. Data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics; frequency tables and percentages. Moreso, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed to aid the analysis of data.

Findings

The results or findings of the study are presented below.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by socio-demographic characteristics (n = 360)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	-	-
Female	360	100
Age (in yrs)		
18 – 28	68	18.9
29 – 39	112	31.1
40 – 50	100	27.8
51 – 61	60	13.9
62+	30	8.3
Marital Status		
Single	-	-
Married	270	75.0
Widowed	66	18.3
Divorced	24	6.7
Educational Qualification		
None	135	37.5
Primary school	96	26.7
Secondary	79	21.9
Tertiary	50	13.9
Religious Affiliation		
Christianity	248	68.9
Islam	-	-
ATR	112	31.1
Others	-	-
Occupation		
Farming	146	40.6
Business/trading	92	25.6
Artisan	50	13.9
Civil servant	72	19.9

As presented in the above Table (Table 1) 100% of the respondents were females. In other words, the study was restricted to females only. However, a greater percentage (31.1% and 27.8%) of the respondents were within the ages of 29-39 and 40-50 years respectively while respondents within the ages of 51-61 or 62 years and above constitutes 13.9% and 8.3%

respectively. This implies that as the individual is ageing, the more she becomes acquainted with the challenges of family lives. similarly, 75% of the respondents were found to be married while 18.3% and 6.7% were widowed/divorced or ever married. The educational levels showed that majority of respondents (37.5%) did not have formal education at all, whereas 26.7% had primary education, 21.9% with secondary certificate and then 13.9% with tertiary educational experience. This implies that the educational level of the individual is a potent factor in restoring domestic violence especially in rural communities as only small proportion of respondents with high education were found to experience domestic violence in the study area. The religious affiliation of respondents equally shows that a greater percentage (68.9%) were Christians while 31.1% belongs to the African Traditional Religious faith. None of the respondents indicated belonging to the Islamic faith. In other words, the study was conducted in a Christian dominated area. Finally, the occupational distribution of respondents' showed that majority (40.6%) were farmers. This implies that the study area was predominantly agricultural zone. However, 25.6% and 19.9% were engaged in business/trading and civil service while only 13.9% were found to be artisans.

Table 2: Respondents View on the nature of domestic violence against women prevalent in the area (n = 360).

S/No	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Physical abuse		
	(a) Battery/kicking	142	39.4
	(b) Eviction from the house	105	29.2
	(c) Throwing of dangerous objects	28	7.8
	(d) Marital rape /sexual coercion	85	23.6
2	Economic abuse		
	(a) Neglect/starvation	170	47.2
	(b) Forceful joint bank account	92	25.6
	(c) Restriction from taking financial decision	98	27.2
3	Spiritual abuse		
	(a) Restriction from church attendance	113	31.4
	(b) Restriction from prayer/night Virgil	69	19.2
	(c) Restriction from financial donation/offering	90	25.0
	(d) Restriction from attending crusade and other church programmes	88	24.4
4	Psychological/emotional abuse		
	(a) Frequent molestation	105	29.2
	(b) Threat to life & Intimidation	70	19.4
	(c) Denial of full expression	96	26.7
	(d) Exclusion from partaking in family decision	89	24.7

Information emerging from Table 2 above reveals that women especially in Ebonyi state are subjected to different forms of abuse by their intimate partners ranging from physical torture, economic, spiritual to psychological/emotional upset. This means that domestic violence against women is very common in these areas. From the above table, a greater percentage (39.4% & 29.2%) mentioned battery/kicking and eviction from the house as major forms of physical violence metted on the intimate partner while 23.6% and 7.8% respectively cited marital rape and throwing of dangerous objects as other forms of physical violence. On the other hand, 47.2% of respondents see neglect/starvation as economic abuse or violence that women are still subjected to in the area while 27.2% and 25.6% identified restriction from taking financial decision and forceful operation of joint bank account as other forms of economic abuse. On the issue of spiritual violence that women continues to experience in the study area, as portrayed in the above table, 31.4% and 25% of respondents mentioned restriction from church attendance and financial donations/offering while 24.4% and 19.2% mentioned restrictions from attending crusades/church programmes and prayers/night vigil by the intimate partner. Finally, respondents reaction to psychological/emotional violence on the part of intimate partner shows that 29.2% and 26.7% cited frequent molestation and denial of expression while 24.7% and 19.4% mentioned constant threat to life and intimidation respectively. This finding corroborates the view of Kalgo (2000) who emphasized that the forms of domestic violence against women in Nigeria are multifarious in which all affect the physical, social, economic and psychological well being of the victims. Corroborating this view, in one of the IDI held, a participant had this to say:

> *I am used to my husband's beating, if you see me, you will see several marks on my body which my husband inflicted on me. In addition, I live in fear because of my husband's intimidation. I lack that sense of being loved and valued by my husband. I equally don't have control of the money I earn in my business.*

Table 3: Respondents view on the socio-cultural beliefs/practices underlying domestic violence against women in rural communities (n = 360).

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Women are subordinate and men's property	110	30.6
The blessing of children is the key to marriage	72	20.0
Marriage is not a one man affair	26	7.2
Marriage attracts favour and prosperity	70	19.4
Men are like oracles	62	17.2
Marriage is for the better and for the worst	20	5.6

Data from the above Table (Table 3) reveals that there are some socio-cultural practices or belief system associated with domestic violence against women including those in the rural areas. Respondents view shows that a greater percentage (30.6%) of respondents were of the opinion that there is the socio-cultural belief that women are men's property such that they have every right over their lives. 20% of the respondents were however, of the view that there is a general belief that the blessing of children is the essence of marriage which if it fails marital relationship is bound to attract violence, while 19.4% were of the opinion that there is the belief that marriage attract favour and prosperity which if not attained is expected to generate chaos. Again, 17.2% of the respondents maintained that men are like oracle whose decisions cannot be queried by the intimate partner. Finally, 7.2% revealed the belief that marriage is not a one man affair and has to do with the significant others whereas 5.6% of respondents maintained the belief that marriage is both for the better andfor the worst.

Lateru-Olgbaje and Afolabi (2013) noted that some of these socio-cultural beliefs have been practiced for so long that they are embedded in the societal perception almost as a legal norms.Most of the IDI participants equally confirmed that there exist some socio-cultural practices or beliefs in their communities that tend to sustain domestic violence against women by their husbands.One of the participants stated thus:

> *My husband wouldn't like me to greet male neighbours, let alone to have any meaningful discussion with them, he would allegedly become enraged, accusing the man of having sex with me. I am very careful because I have not gotten a child with him since our marriage.*

Commenting further, another participant stated, 'it is an abomination to take my husband to police station, we serve as properties of our husbands'

Table 4: Respondents view on the extent to which domestic violence against women has affected family stability in rural areas.

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Anxiety and depression of family member	62	17.2
Terminal injuries/untimely death	85	23.6
Divorce/separation	66	18.3
Delinquency/behavioural problems of children	82	22.8
Reduce love for one another	65	18.1

Information from the above table (Table 4) reveals that more respondents (23.6) were of the opinion that domestic violence against women had resulted to terminal injuries and untimely death of mothers whereas 22.8% stressed that delinquency and behavioural problems of children seems to be the immediate results. Similarly, almost an equal percentage (18.3% & 18.1%) of respondents mentioned divorce/separation and reduction in the degree of love of partners as other implications while 17.2% of respondents said the situation could lead to anxiety and depression of family members. These consequences as Arisi and Oromareghake (2011) observed may be attributed to the Nigerian women's belief that their identity is subsumed or attached to that of men and that they can't have dignity of their own. An IDI participant who toed the same view said '*we have no option, some husbands are so wicked that theyput their partners into serious depression. They do not care what happens to their wives. For two weeks or more they do not ask about their wives welfare. Is this not enough to kill the woman?*

Discussion of Findings

Domestic violence against women has been a global issue which has had a severe impact on our marital system and family stability. Results presented above reveals that this social malice especially in Nigerian rural communities cut across all people irrespective of socio-economic, political and religious status or ethnicity and geography. This takes the forms of physical harms which according to respondents' opinion include battery/kicking, eviction from the house, throwing of dangerous objects and marital rape/sexual coercion, starvation/denial of economic resources, psychological/emotional harms and others. The development may have confirmed the views of Odimegwu and Okemgbo (2003) that in Nigeria, women are brought up in an

atmosphere where they are expected to obey established social norms such as how they should view and orient themselves and what kind of attitude they should take on various occasions.

Most of the participants in the interview sessions also corroborated this finding. One of the participants had this to say, '*the case of most of us is everyday beating by our husbands; we have no option, my next door neighbor lost one of her eyes in this mess'*. Another participant equally said, '*it is not up to two months when my elder sisters husband punched her mouth and knocked out two of her teeth'*. Similarly, one other participant commented thus, '*among most of our women, their husbands wouldn't like them to greet another man, be he a neighbor or to let alone having any meaningful discussion with the man'.* The participants opinion were also in tandem with the submission of Ehichoya et al (2019) that domestic violence forms a pattern of behaviour that violate the rights of women.

Findings of the study also showed that some socio-cultural practices or beliefs in most of the Nigerian rural communities tend to promote domestic violence against women. 30.6% and 20% of respondents revealed that there is a spread belief in Nigeria that the blessing of children is the key to marriage and that women are subordinate and men's property. This finding confirms the submission of Arisi and Oromareghake (2011) that many fallacious beliefs are rooted in most African cultures and African women born and raised in these disquieting cultures know nothing other than the system and way of life they are used to. Similarly, the responses from the IDI sessions further buttressed the above statement by Arisi and Oromareghake (2011). One of the study participants stated,*'our culture strictly restrict women to the stereotyped role of home-keeping, child bearing and child rearing*'. Another participant also stated thus, '*it is an abomination to take my husband to police station' or any other authority, he has the right over everything concerning me, that was a part of our wedding vow'*.

Finally, the study affirmed that domestic violence against women especially in Nigerian rural communities have recorded serious consequences on the stability of families. A greater percentage (23.6%& 22.8%) of respondents revealed that terminal injuries/untimely death of the woman and delinquency/behavioural problems of children respectively becomes inevitable, while 18.3% and 18.1% indicated divorce/separation and reduction in love for one another as consequences. Equally, 17.2% indicated anxiety and depression of the intimate partner. All the participants in the IDI sessions also upheld the above findings.

Conclusion

The findings of the study have clearly demonstrated that domestic violence against women has been a common phenomenon in Nigeria especially in Ebonyi state rural communities. This ranges from physical threats in the forms of battery, eviction from the house, sexual coercion to emotional or psychological distress such as denial of full expression and economic neglect such as forceful operation of joint bank account, restriction from taking financial decision in the family by the woman, restriction from church activities amongst others. All the study participants in the IDI sessions equally aligned to the above revelation.

The study further revealed that domestic violence against women in Ebonyi state rural communities is deeply rooted in the masculine idea of male dominance, power relation and economic power imbalances. 30.6% and 20% of respondents identified the widespread belief in the area that women are subordinate or property of the man and that having a child is the only essence of marriage. One of the IDI participants corroborated the finding as she stated, *'it is an abomination to take my husband to the police station, he has every rights over my life'*. Finally, findings of the study showed that domestic violence against women could result to untimely death or chronic injuries, divorce or separation, delinquency/behavioural problems of children, anxiety or depression on the life of the woman amongst others.

Recommendations

In view of the study findings, the following recommendations were made.

1. There is the need for intensification of public enlightenment of the community, local government, state and national level with major emphasis on the dangers associated with domestic violence against women especially among the rural dwellers. This will enable the people to make an informed decision to ensure family stability.
2. The concept of domestic violence and family stability should form part of the curriculum of social studies at the basic levels of primary or junior secondary schools.
3. Comprehensive and extensive pre-martial counseling should be given by social workers and sociologists especially those specializing in the area of women studies. This will help intending couples grasp preliminary knowledge on how to manage marital relationships.
4. Equally, there is the need to teach and educate the people on the need to do away with some customary norms or beliefs that promote domestic violence against women in Nigeria.

5. Finally, it is necessary that punishment given to offending husbands should be published in the social media to serve as a deterrence to others.

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