

**INFLUENCE OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE EXPERIENCE IN FAMILY OF ORIGIN
ON FAMILY OF DESTINATION IN SOKOTO STATE, NIGERIA**

FAWOLE, OLUFEMI ADENIYI
Department of Sociology,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria
femifawole.2010@gmail.com

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AKANGBE, TOMISIN ADEDUNMOLA
Department of Criminology and Security Studies,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

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DUROWAIYE BABATUNDE
Department of Sociology,
Landmark University, Omu-Aran, Nigeria

Abstract

This study investigates influence of intimate partner violence in the family of origin on the family of destination with particular reference to Sokoto State, Nigeria. Questionnaires were administered to 255 married women selected from the North Local Government were selected out of which 175 claimed they had experienced intimate partner violence. The study also interviewed 7 married men who had witnessed some form of intimate partner violence in their home of origin. Data was analyzed using regression analysis in SPSS. This study found that incidence of domestic violence affect marital stability in the study area ($p < 0.05$), and individual type of marriage will contribute to incidence of domestic violence ($p < 0.05$). However, the study found no connection between individual level of education and participation in domestic violence ($p > 0.05$) in Sokoto North local government area. Therefore, this study proffers solutions towards eradication of domestic violence as a way of promoting women development, marital stability and reducing gender disparity in the Nigeria society. It was recommended that cultural assumptions that women should be physically abused, perception of women as weaker and needing to be controlled, as well as proper socialization of the children, especially the male child should be increased, thereby reducing the vulnerability of women to intimate partner violence.

Keywords: Intimate partner violence, abuse, spouse, family of origin, dating

Introduction

The marriage institution meant primarily for procreation of children and satisfaction of human and sexual desires. Thus, the role of sex as a major medium of spousal interaction cannot be over emphasized (Johnson 2004). The basic fabrics of marriage institution have been threatened by domestic violence against woman which ultimately affects their potentials and development. Domestic violence is a social problem in the contemporary world with obvious negative effects on woman progress and development. Domestic violence is a criminal act which is described as a kind of violence, in which men control their woman using a variety of coercive techniques and tactics which includes physical emotional and sexual violence. (Johnson 2006).

Violence on woman also means an emotional abuse used by a man in relationship to forcibly control, manipulate or inflict injury on woman (married or unmarried). Thus, domestic violence is the intentional and persistent abuse of anyone in the home in a way that causes pain, distress or injury. It refers to any abusive treatment of one family member by another, thus violating the law of basic human rights. It includes battering of intimate partners and others, sexual abuse of children, marital rape and traditional practices that are

harmful to women. Female genital mutilation is a form of domestic violence. Violence against women is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace. It both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. In all societies, to a greater or lesser degree, women and girls are subjected to physical, sexual and psychological abuse that cuts across lines of income, class and culture. The low social and economic status of women can be both a cause and a consequence of this violence (United Nation, 2005).

Violence against women throughout their life cycle is a manifestation of the historically unequal power relations between women and men. It is perpetuated by traditional and customary practices that accord women lower status in the family, workplace, community and society, and it is exacerbated by social pressures. These include the shame surrounding and hence difficulty of denouncing certain acts against women; women's lack of access to legal information, aid or protection; a dearth of laws that effectively prohibit violence against women; inadequate efforts on the part of public.

Domestic violence occurs globally (Dahlberg and Krug, 2002, UNICEF, 2005). Families from all social, racial economic, educational and religious backgrounds experience domestic violence in different ways. Tjaden and Thoennes (2000a), report that in the United States of America, each year, women experience about 4.8 million intimate partner-related physical assaults and rapes while men are victims of about 2.9 million intimate partner related physical assaults. In parts of the third world generally and in West Africa, in particular, domestic violence is prevalent and reportedly justified and condoned in some cultures. For instance, 56% of Indian women surveyed by an agency justified wife-beating on grounds like –bad cook, disrespectful to in-laws, producing more girls, leaving home without informing, among others (Tjaden and Thoennes 2000b).

There are not so much data on domestic violence in Nigeria. This is primarily due to the stigma and silence surrounding this issue. While there is not as much research as there should ideally be on such a serious social and public health issue due to the fear, shame and silence surrounding domestic violence as well as limited funding to engage in the requisite research, there are clear data generated by reputable organizations. Not quite long, the United Kingdom aid agency, DFID, and the British Council, developed a report Gender in Nigeria, 2012, which contains some of the more recent figures on aspects of domestic violence in the country (George, 1999). Also, studies by the National Demographic and Health Survey (2008) showed that domestic violence cuts across all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. A total 28 per cent of all women, almost a third of all women in Nigeria, have experienced physical violence, a significant number in a country of almost 160 million, where almost half are women. Up to 43 per cent of women thought that wife beating could be justified on the grounds of matters like burning the food, arguing with the husband, going out without asking permission, neglecting the children, and refusal to have sexual intercourse. The research showed that women in the North East were more likely to say that wife beating was justified, while women in the South West were least likely to say that wife beating is justified. Women with no education were more likely to say that wife beating was justified. Rural men were more likely to say that wife beating on any of the above-mentioned grounds is justified. Men with a secondary education were less likely to justify wife beating than men with less education. That study further showed that educated women and who live in urban areas were more likely to have experienced domestic violence.

This study examined the influence of predisposing factors of domestic violence among families in Sokoto North LGA, Sokoto state located in North western part of Nigeria. This is because traditionally in Nigeria, as in many other African countries, the physical abuse of wives and children is widely sanctioned as a form of discipline (UNICEF, 2001). Therefore, in beating their-children parents believes they are instilling discipline in them, much the same way as in husbands beating their wives, who are regarded like children to be prone to indiscipline which must be curbed. This is especially so when the woman is economically dependent on the man. The society is basically patriarchal and women's place within the scheme is decidedly subordinate. Domestic violence therefore functions as a means of enforcing conformity with the role of a woman within customary society. It is within this background that this research sets out to study the domestic violence and marital stability among families in Sokoto North LGA of Sokoto state in Nigeria.

Methods

The study used questionnaires as the main data source. A variety of recruitment methods were employed, including snowballing techniques and community organizations involvement.

These questionnaires were administered to a total of 233 married women of different ages and experiences: ages 35 to 50, who were currently or formerly married. There were all State Government workers (Local Government workers as well as Secondary school teachers) in the Sokoto North Local

Government Area of Sokoto State, Nigeria. Only 175 of the participants had experienced intimate partner violence. The data was then analyzed using regression analysis to examine the influence of evidence of intimate partner violence in family of origin on the family of destination. In addition, a total of 7 married men were interviewed.

Results

The hypothesis tested in this study states that male partners who grow up in families where domestic violence existed will also demonstrate acts of violence towards their spouse.

Table 1: Regression analysis of evidence of interpersonal violence in home of origin and interpersonal violence in home of destination

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.236	1	11.236	11.003	.001 ^b
	Residual	177.674	174	1.021		
	Total	188.909	175			

a. Dependent Variable: Domestic violence

b. Predictors: (Constant), Domestic violence evident in family of origin

From the analysis above, the ANOVA analysis is significant i.e. ($p < 0.05$). Also, the F ratio (11.003) with degree of freedom (1, 174) is greater than the critical F value (3.94). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected while alternative accepted. This means male partners who grow up in families where domestic violence existed will demonstrate acts of violence towards their spouse.

From the interviews conducted with the married men, 4 of the 7 had actually experienced domestic violence while growing up. And they admitted that it probably had contributed to their own violent behaviour towards their spouse.

Male Respondent 4: *I had seen my father beat my mother and the other wives. I would be very afraid then, especially seeing my mother scream and cry. But he (father) would often call me to his room and tell me that unless one 'controls' his women, there would be no peace in the home.....*

Male Respondent 2: *Often times, my father would be beating our mother...mother would then tell us that father does not take nonsense.....over the years, I saw mother grow more quiet, always attending to father respectfully and then beating reduced...and I felt that was a good way to control women indeed....In my own home, my wife knows I don't take nonsense.....*

Male Respondent 1: *I do not consider it domestic violence. You see these women, if one does not take them with a firm hand, show them who the boss is; they will just ruin your home.....they can be quite stubborn and you must not show that you are a weakling...*

The findings of this study showed that married men who had experienced or witnessed domestic violence while growing up in their family of origin also had tendencies to become violent in their of family of destination.

Going with the theory of intergenerational transmission of violence for instance, Mapayi et al. (2011) and Odujirin (1993) were of the view that spousal violence in Nigeria showed that courtship or dating violence is an important matter of concern in Nigeria. Exposure to violence during childhood is also one of the most commonly studied correlates of dating violence. Boladale et al. (2013) also saw dating violence as a growing concern in Nigeria, which appears to be directly related to witnessing of spousal violence, which in turn creates a conducive environment for continued dating violence as children experience and witness violence in the home. To them, perpetual spousal violence creates an environment for continued dating violence as children experience and witness violence at home and thus exposing the children to tendency to develop violence in their future relationships.

Similarly, Fawole and Agboola (2015) found that there was a significant relationship between parental violence and dating violence of male students in intimate relationships. This thus enables them to develop the propensity to exhibit violence in their own future relationships.

According to the former, gender inequality and male domination underlie violence against women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979). It is hypothesized that violence stems from women's traditionally devalued and inferior roles in the family and wider society. There is some research to support this perspective. For

example, it appears that partner abuse is more common in patriarchal societies where cultural values, including social mores and religious beliefs, dictate male dominance in gender relationships, condone violence against women, and create separate codes of conduct for men and women (Sugarman & Frankel, 1996; Yick & Agbayani-Siewert, 1997).

In Nigeria, reports reveal “shockingly high” level of violence against women (Afrol News, 2007). Amnesty international (2007) reports that a third (and in some cases two-thirds) of women are believed to have been subjected to physical, sexual and psychological violence carried out primarily by husbands, partners and fathers while girls are often forced into early marriage and are at risk of punishment if they attempt to escape from their husbands. More pathetic is the revelation of gross under reporting and non-documentation of domestic violence due to cultural factors (Oyediran and Isugo, 2005, afrolnews, 2007).

Psychological theories root violence in individual psychopathology or dysfunctional personality structures that are learned and shaped by early childhood experiences (Dutton & Golant, 1995; O’Leary, 1993). According to social learning theory, children learn aggression from their parents and reproduce this behavior in their own adult relationships (O’Leary, 1988). Couple and family interactions theory suggests that violence is rooted in dysfunctional relationship dynamics, with relationship counseling the proposed remedy (Straus, Gelles, & Steinmetz, 1980).

Limitations

The study is not without its limitations

1. Access to information on intimate partner violence against women is difficult because of the rigid nature of traditional woman of Northern Nigeria which is guided strongly by religion and cultural values; despite being the victims.
2. The study focused only on violence in the family of origin as a factor predisposing married males to intimate partner violence; it did not take other factors into consideration.
3. It was conducted in only one Local Government Area in Sokoto State, Nigeria
4. Since the measures were self-reported, there was bound to be traces of bias in the responses.
5. Only the men were interviewed; none of the women was.

The study, however, is expected to provoke further research of this nature, especially in the area of family studies

Recommendations

As a consequence of the findings of this study, a number of suggestions were made, on the need to develop prevention of intimate partner violence against women. There is the need to adopt prevention strategies in order to attend to the problem of intimate partner violence as well as the common behavioral manifestations in any specific community. The general public should be enlightened and media campaigns should be developed and targeted to the people or communities more directly concerned. Response services as well as organizations capable to accommodate, shelter, and provide support (legal, financial, emotional, medical, etc) and guidance for victims of intimate partner violence. Both individual- and community-level work needs to take place to begin the slow shifting of community values that will result in more egalitarian relationships. Through continued discussion with families, cultural assumptions that women should be physically abused, perception of women as weaker and needing to be controlled, as well as proper socialization of the children, especially the male child should be increased, thereby reducing the vulnerability of women to intimate partner violence.

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