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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE BETWEEN ILLITERATE AND EDUCATED FAMILIES IN ETI-OSA LGA, LAGOS STATE

Keywords: literate, illiterate, domestic violence, non-violent, percentage

ABSTRACT: Universally, men and women suffer in relationships before or after marriage which is detrimental to health. This paper examined the percentage of intimate partner violence in both the highly educated and not educated families to ascertain which one has a higher percentage of violence than the other. It also aimed to investigate variations in causes of intimate partner violence in both family types and to examine the effects of violence on both families. The study adopted purposive sampling among market women and civil servants on Eti-Osa Local Government Area, Victoria Island, Lagos. The techniques of enquiry are questionnaire and interview among these chosen classes of people. The sample size is 200; 100 men and 100 women. The paper concluded that the percentage of domestic violence is higher in the illiterate families, though the causes and effects are slightly different. The paper recommended education to curb domestic violence in the society.

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization defined violence as “The intentional use of force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or group or community, that either result in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation

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(WHO, 2002). While domestic violence means violent or aggressive behaviour within the home, typically involving the violent abuse of a spouse or partner. *This* often occurs when one person in an intimate relationship or marriage tries to dominate and control the other person with the use of force ranging from slaps, punches, and kicks to assaults with a weapon, homicide and sexual violence which also may come in form of forced sex, or forced participation in degrading sexual acts.

Domestic violence are frequently accompanied by emotionally abusive behaviours such as prohibiting a woman from seeing her family and friends, ongoing belittlement or humiliation, or intimidation; economic restrictions such as preventing a woman from working, or confiscating her earnings; and other controlling behaviours. When this happens, the male partner most times have something bad in stock to do to the woman and so does not want anybody to come near them so that they will not hint the unsuspecting woman of his bad intentions. He becomes suspicious of everybody around her because he sees everybody as a potential enemy who might reveal his plans to the woman. He tries to pick on every word, actions or gestures from anybody who is close to the woman, so as to give the woman reasons not to be close to them. Most times the same thing goes to the woman who does not want friends or family relations around her husband. Though the reverse may be the case in women, such actions may be because of greed or personal hatred for the other partners family.

It is pertinent to state also that domestic/ intimate partner violence does not discriminate, it cuts across class, ethnicity, age, race, religion, educational status, economic levels, heterosexual couples and in same-sex partnerships e.t.c. It is also important to note that whereas women are more commonly victimized, men are also abused, especially verbally and emotionally, although sometimes even physically as well. In Nigeria, most often than not, women suffer in relationships before or after marriage which most times result to separation, divorce and death in extreme cases. Ironically the abusers claim rights and don't see anything bad in what they have done while some others claim insanity e.t.c. but the overall and sole purpose of domestic violence is to gain and maintain total control over the woman.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

This paper is set to break the jinx that domestic violence is common among families that have low educational background or illiterates than families that are literates and highly educated. One of the common myths states that only poor, uneducated women are victims of domestic violence. But in reality victims of domestic violence cut across social stratas of the society including age and sex. They can be wealthy, educated, and prominent as well as undereducated and financially destitutes. They either live in rural towns, poorest of the poorest communities, urban cities, high brow areas of the cities, subsidized housing projects, and in gated communities. As such this paper is set to investigate the relationships between families educational background and domestic violence.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this paper include:

1. To examine the percentage of domestic violence among literates and illiterate families
2. To explore the differences in the causes of violence
3. To examine the coping strategies adopted by both types of families

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. Which family type has more of domestic violence than the other?
2. Can the woman's financial capability influence domestic violence?
3. Does the family or church offer a solution to domestic violence?

SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of this paper is strictly restricted to the literate and illiterate families. It is also restricted to Eti-Osa Local Government areas of Lagos State. A high brow area, partly commercial and residential. It houses many of the rich and affluents in Lagos State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was able to identify that all forms of domestic abuses are based on a single purpose which is to gain and maintain control over the victims. The perpetrators use various tactics to gain power over their spouses, partners or victims, this include kicks, slaps, pinching, bites, derogatory statements etc.

The US Office on Violence Against Women (OVW) defines domestic violence as a „pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner”. In the same vain, Chemtob and Carlson, (2004) defined domestic violence and emotional abuse as bebhaviours that are used by one person in a relationship to control the other. This in actual fact explains why the male partners in Nigeria stress the fact that they are the heads of the home and supposed to be in control most times when argument occurs.

However, the review of literature will be smmarised under 3 sub topics which are causes, effects and coping strategies adopted by the victims of domestic violence.

CAUSES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

There are however diverse theories as to the causes of domestic violence ranging from psychological to ecological and sociological theories. The psychological theories consider the sanity and state of mind of the perpetrators, ecological theories consider the environment while the sociological theories consider external factors in the perpetrator’s environment, such as family structure, stress, social learning.

The ecological model, proposes that violence is a result of factors operating at four levels: these are individual, relationship, community and societal factors.

The individual factors are: young age; low level of education; witnessing or experiencing violence as a child; harmful use of alcohol and drugs; personality disorders; acceptance of violence (e.g. feeling it is acceptable

for a man to beat his partner) and past history of abusing partners. On the other hand, a woman's increased likelihood of experiencing violence by her partner(s) across different settings include: low level of education; exposure to violence between parents; sexual abuse during childhood; acceptance of violence and exposure to other forms of prior abuse.

Relationship factors associated with the risk of both victimization of women and perpetration by men include conflict or dissatisfaction in the relationship; male dominance in the family; economic stress; man having multiple partners and disparity in educational attainment, i.e. where a woman has a higher level of education than her male partner. In fact this is a major determinant of domestic violence that has led to many families being separated, divorced and wives killed in Nigeria. It was discovered that in such cases, the women are the financial pillars of the family, had higher degrees than their husbands and perhaps making more progress than their husbands socially and job wise. Most times this leads to inferiority complex in the men and in order to boost the male ego or prove that they are in control, they end up beating, maltreating, or fighting their wives, trying to make her feel she is a nobody/inferior. At this point the issue of love is forgotten or set aside and the challenge of relegating her to the background becomes the order of the day. This corroborates Falana's view that people who suffered from abuse may have low self-esteem if they used to be confident, show major personality change and depressed anxious or suicidal (Falana, 2013).

Community and societal factors are summed up as: gender-inequitable social norms (especially those that link notions of manhood to dominance and aggression); poverty; low social and economic status of women; weak legal sanctions against IPV within marriage; lack of women's civil rights, including restrictive or inequitable divorce and marriage laws; weak community sanctions against IPV; broad social acceptance of violence as a way to resolve conflict; and armed conflict and high levels of general violence in society. In support of this, Narayans (2000) therefore affirms that in many social context, domestic violence whether sexual, physical or psychological is supported by social norms such as cultural ideologies which promotes the primacy of men over the women. Nigeria happens to be one of such countries little wonder most domestic violence go unreported

or perpetrators punished. This was also observed by Esere et al(2009) that women are victimized in Nigeria by the violence they endure and by government not bringing thier abusers to book.

As it is believed also that poverty gives rise to intimate partner violence, it can be estimated that domestic violence between partners is the result of micro-levels rather than macro-level factors (McCarroll *et al.*, 2003). As such one can rightly say that socio-economic status is a reason for explaining the prevalence of IPV. It is further stated that the occurrence of violence between partners cannot be distinguished by “education, employment or medical insurance status of a woman” (Bauer et al., 2000). In the bid to further frustrate the woman or prove male superiority over the woman, the male partners may even go to the extent of exposing female partners’ financial status by harrassing them at work until the latter lose their employment (Zastrows, 2004).

It can also be a way of responding to stress like Seltzer and Kalmus (1998) rightly pointed out by describing violence as one way that some people respond to stress. Stress increases as the pressure from the home increases and this has an adverse effect on the behavior of partners. Jewkes (2002), also opined that couples who live in poverty are more likely to experience domestic violence due to increased stress and inability to meet their daily needs. This is supported in practical terms by daily experinces in the slum areas where couple engage in domestic violence because of inability to provide feeding allowance, children’s school fees and minor expensis in the home. In fact in the slum areas of Nigeria, it is a daily occurence that has become the order of the day and its not new to anyone in the area. They see it as common and nobody’s business. Everybody goes about their duties as if nothing is happening. At this time the husbands may have been able to plead with the woman to bear with him or the members of the family or neighbours would have intervened to settle the issue at hand. Most times issues about money are settled on a promisory note.

EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON THE VICTIMS

The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service defined domestic violence as patterns of behaviour characterized by the misuse of power and control by one person over another who are or have been in an intimate relationship. It can occur in mixed gender relationships and same gender relationships and has profound consequences for the lives of children, individuals, families and communities. It may be physical, sexual, emotional and/or psychological. The latter may include intimidation, harassment, damage to property, threats and financial abuse (Domestic Violence Assessment Policy, 2007).

Unfortunately, research shows that many victims will not disclose the abuse unless they are directly asked or screened for domestic violence by the physician (Bennett, 1997). Notwithstanding, some cases are still reported which gives us insight into some of the effects of IPV. The impact of domestic violence on victims can result in acute and chronic mental health problems. While some victims have histories of psychiatric illnesses that may be exacerbated by the abuse; others may develop psychological problems as a direct result of the abuse. Examples of emotional and behavioural effects of domestic violence include many common coping responses to trauma, such as: emotional withdrawal, denial or minimization of the abuse, impulsivity or aggressiveness, apprehension or fear, helplessness, anger, anxiety or hyper-vigilance, disturbance of eating or sleeping patterns, substance abuse, depression, suicide, post-traumatic stress disorder (Dobash, 1979).

According to Falase (2006), women facing domestic violence often suffer physical and psychological consequences which usually affect their behaviour and productivity. This leads sometimes to loss of pregnancy, high mortality rate among pregnant women and women within the child bearing age. The perpetrator's abusive behavior can cause an array of health problems and physical injuries which may require medical attention for immediate injuries, hospitalization for severe assaults or chronic care for debilitating health problems resulting from the perpetrator's physical attacks (Plichta and Falik, 2001).

Ezenwa 2003, is also of the opinion that children who were exposed to domestic violence and other forms of abuse have a higher risk of developing mental and physical health problems. To Krug et al. (2002) some emotional and behavioral problems in children due to their exposure to doestic violence are increased aggressiveness, anxiety changes in socialization with friends and family, depression, emotionl insecurity, problems with attitude and cognition in schools and lack of skills.

COPING STARTEGIES

As the saying goes, to every problem there is a solution. In Nigeria most women stay in violent relationships because of fear of retaliation, lack of alternative means of economic support; concern for their children; lack of support from family and friends; stigma or fear of losing custody of children associated with divorce; and love and the hope that the partner will change. For this reason, they build up coping startegies which they adopt in living with their violent partners until their children are grown up or they can earn a living on their own. Some of these coping startegies include taking to alcohol, making friends outside their homes, taking up manual jobs, keeping quiet when the partner ststarts shouting, some even go to the extent of keeping relationships with the opposite sex outside the home just to be happy. They believe this will give them succor and joy for the moment, some believe its a way of revenge on their husbands or wives as the case maybe etc.

Although, the potentiality of social institutions such as the famaily, the church and the school to encourage peaceable resolution of conflicts and resist an easy recourse to violence is also frequently disregarded (Hesburg, 1993), some victims also take refuge/solace in the church for the church stands as one of the places where such violent acts are discussed and settled. The church therefore plays the role of a mediator between the wife and husband thereby replacing the family by organising counselling sessions for both couples untill eventual settlement is attained. Nigerian marriages in the recent times are turning towards the western culture of individualism; the husband and wife only, family members are seen as

intruders, so also when problems arise, the family is excluded except for those who have kept the family bond alive in their homes/marriages. But this in most cases happens in families that are not educated, living with the extended families (family compound) or living in the rural areas.

FUNCTIONALISM AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The intellectual basis of functionalist theory in sociology is the concept of a "System". Functionalism is nothing if it is not the analysis of a social pattern as part of a larger systems of behavior and belief (Goulner, 1957). Understanding of functionalism in sociology requires an understanding of the resources of the concept of "system". A process or set of conditions has a function because it either contributes to the maintenance of the system or dysfunctional, in that, it destroys the integration and effectiveness of the system (Mannheim, 1941). It is thus the functional reference of all processes to the state of the total system.

Therefore to understand any part of a system such as the family or religion the part must be seen in relation to the society as a whole (Stewart, 1951). Parson's assumption is that it is impossible to understand adequately any single pattern except by referring it to some larger systemic whole. Consequently, Parson postulated the analysis of total anatomy of social systems in an effort to identify their constituent elements and relationships.

The theoretical strategy in functionalism requires that all the parts of the whole system be constituted in an 'ex cathedra' manner. Radcliffe (1952) opined that the concept of function applied to human societies is based on an analogy between the social life and the organic life. He further recognized the existence of social structures where individuals are the essential units and are connected by a definite set of social roles in the integrated whole. The process of social life maintains the continuity of structures. The social life of the community is the functioning of the social structure, assumed by Radcliffe (1952). Vogel and Bell (1968) saw tension and hostility of unresolved conflicts between the parents being projected on the children as a factor that mars the primary socialization process

which in turn affects the society as a whole since it leaves the children with fear of the unknown among others.

Domestic violence is something that affects the whole family especially the children. The family as a social unit includes the father mother and children and when anything happens to the mother in case of death, separation or divorce everybody suffers. Though the men may hide under the male ego by marrying younger women, but deep down they are not happy but cannot tell anybody. So they suffer with the thought of the loss of the first woman till death or eventual settlement. The woman as well may have such regrets but the situation would have gone too far to be settled or maybe she would have remarried, had children for the new husband and so coming back may be impossible. The most hit will then be the children who cannot change the situation but have to adjust to their present situation or like Krug et al. (2002) observed that some emotional and behavioral problems in children are due to their exposure to domestic violence thereby exhibiting habits such as increased aggressiveness, anxiety changes in socialization with friends and family, depression, emotional insecurity, problems with attitude and cognition in schools and lack of skills.

METHODOLOGY

The targeted population were selected from families at Victoria Island, Lagos State; market women, civil servants and bankers. The questionnaire which was used to gather information from the respondents was divided into sections to determine the demographic characteristics such as age, religion, sex and educational background of respondents.

A sample size of two hundred (200) respondents was used for the analysis. Purposive sampling was adopted and the frequency table, percentage as well as the cross tabulation of variables for necessary relationship validation.

RESULT

Table 1. Research question 1

S/N	RQ	Educated	Uneducated	% E	% U
1	Which family type has a higher percentage of domestic violence than the other?				
	Strongly agree	48	89	24	44.5
	Agree	28	35	14	17.5
	Strongly disagree	70	40	35	20
	Disagree	54	36	27	18
	Total	200	200	100	100

Table 1 revealed that 38% of the educated respondents strongly agreed and agreed that domestic violence is higher in the educated families. While 62% strongly disagreed and disagreed that domestic violence is higher in the educated families... On the other hand, 62% of the respondents from the uneducated families strongly agreed and agreed that domestic violence is higher in uneducated families. While 38% of respondents from the uneducated families strongly disagreed and disagreed that domestic violence is higher in the Uneducated families. This result revealed that domestic violence is higher in uneducated families than the educated families. Even though it did not rule out the fact that domestic violence does exist in the educated families, like has been mentioned before, the percentage is the difference. So many things could be responsible for this, perhaps the availability of finance to carry out most of the expenses that needs to be done, having to spend long working hours in the office, every one want to just get home relax and get ready for the next days work. so there is hardly anytime to argue and fight over trivial issues. Unlike the uneducated family where trivial matters are given priority time because of frustration and non availability of finance to do most things that need to be done.

Table 2. Research question 2

S/N	RQ	Educated	Uneducated	% E	% U
2	Is finance a major determinant of domestic violence?				
	Yes	66	132	33	66
	No	134	68	67	34
	Total	200	200	100	100

Table 2 revealed that 33% of the educated respondents said yes to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence. While 67% said no to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence. On the other hand, 66% of the uneducated respondents said yes to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence while 34% said no to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence. This result shows that the educated families do not see finance as being a major cause of domestic violence probably because they can meet their basic needs and pay their bills which may be the source of their peace. Whereas finance seem to be the major cause of domestic violence to the uneducated families according to the result. Which also shows that their inability to meet their daily needs may likely generate anger and violence within the families.

Table 3. Research question 3

S/N	RQ	Church E	Family U	% E	% U
3	Does the family or church prefer a solution to domestic violence?				
	Strongly agree	70	123	35	61.5
	Agree	58	37	29	18.5
	Strongly disagree	38	23	19	11.5
	disagree	34	17	17	8.5
	total	200	200	100	100

Table 3 revealed that 64% of the educated respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the church prefer solution to domestic violence. While

36% also of the educated respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that the church prefer solution to domestic violence. On the other hand, 80% of the uneducated respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the family prefer solution to domestic violence and 20% of the respondents strongly disagreed and agreed that family prefers solution to domestic violence.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The following conclusions were drawn from the data analysis:

Table 1 revealed that 38% of the educated respondents strongly agreed and agreed that domestic violence is higher in the educated families. While 62% strongly disagreed and disagreed that domestic violence is higher in the educated families. On the other hand, 62% of the respondents from the uneducated families strongly agreed and agreed that domestic violence is higher in uneducated families. While 38% of respondents from the uneducated families strongly disagreed and disagreed that domestic violence is higher in the Uneducated families. This result revealed that domestic violence is higher in uneducated families than the educated families. Even though it did not rule out the fact that domestic violence does not exist in the educated families, like has been mentioned before, the percentage is the difference. So many things could be responsible for this, perhaps the availability of finance to carry out most of the expenses that need to be done, having to spend long working hours in the office, every one wants to just get home relax and get ready for the next days work. So there is hardly anytime to argue and fight over trivial issues. Unlike the uneducated family where trivial matters are given priority time because of frustration and non availability of finance to do most things that needed to be done.

Table 2 revealed that 33% of the educated respondents said yes to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence. While 67% said no to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence. On the other hand, 66% of the uneducated respondents said yes to finance being a major determinant of domestic violence while 34% said no to finance being

a major determinant of domestic violence. This result shows that the educated families do not see finance as being a major cause of domestic violence probably because they can meet their basic needs and pay their bills which may be the source of their relative peace. Whereas finance seems to be the major cause of domestic violence to the uneducated families according to the result. Which also shows that their inability to meet their daily needs may likely generate anger and violence within the families which corroborates Jewkes (2002) opinion that couples who live in poverty are more likely to experience domestic violence due to increased stress and inability to meet their daily needs.

Table 3 revealed that 64% of the educated respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the church proffer solution to domestic violence. While 36% of the educated respondents strongly disagreed and disagreed that the church proffer solution to domestic violence. On the other hand, 80% of the uneducated respondents strongly agreed and agreed that the family proffer solution to domestic violence and 20% of the respondents strongly disagreed and agreed that family proffers solution to domestic violence. This shows that the educated family sort the assistance of churches i.e relying on their pastors and spiritual heads for assistance while the uneducated families prefer the family when the need arises. The introduction and imbibment of western culture of individualism and nuclear family ties could be attributed as the reason for this. The fact that the educated families live in the urban area where they are far from their families and believing that the church is there to settle any dispute in the family could account for this. Whereas the uneducated still stand on that bond of the extended family ties where they believe they could run to the elders in the families whenever the need arises which has been working for them. This is in line with Hesburg's view that the potentiality of social institutions such as the family, the church and the school to encourage peaceable resolution of conflicts and resist an easy recourse to violence is also frequently disregarded (Hesburg, 1993).

CONCLUSION

It can therefore be concluded that as societies move from compound to individualistic, families also draw more apart from the traditional family ties seeking solace in religious institutions which have also been of tremendous help, playing both the roles of religion and families.

RECOMMENDATIONS

With reference to the above findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. The Nigerian Government should enact domestic violence law in all the states of the federation.
2. The domestic violence law should be well publicised and made available to every family
3. The law should be enforced and erring abusers and perpetrators should be sentenced to a term of imprisonment or pay a fine.
4. Government should embark on radio and television campaign and awareness of eradication of domestic violence in Nigeria.
5. Religious leaders in the churches and mosques should preach and teach about the ills and effects of domestic violence in order to put an end to it.
6. Educating a girl child should be paramount in the Nigerian society.
7. Women empowerment programmes should be organized periodically to assist women in violence ridden homes.
8. The citizens in general should be encouraged by the provision of jobs, creation of recreational centers, old peoples homes, and perhaps Nigeria will someday grow to a stage where her citizens will enjoy welfare packages from the government like the western countries.

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