

A PRACTICAL EVALUATION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG FEMALE MARKET TRADERS IN THE NORTH EASTERN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the domestic violence among married market women in North Eastern Nigeria with more focus on prevalence of domestic violence, its knowledge, and negative attitude towards reporting of domestic violence. A total of 664 market women from twelve locations were selected using Leslie Kish formula, employing stratified random sampling for various goods categories and convenient sampling for questionnaire administration. The study utilized a structured survey questionnaire divided into six sections, assessing demographics, knowledge, and attitudes towards domestic violence, with pilot testing confirming reliability across various sections. The study utilized descriptive statistics for research questions and independent t-tests for hypotheses, all analyzed at a 0.05 significance level using SPSS 21 software. The respondents' ages ranged from 16 to over 56, with 39.31% aged 26-35. Most (54.37%) had secondary education, spouses were employed, many (59.79%) earned between #51,000 and #150,000 monthly and most (53.01%) were within extended family. The study found a 75.67% prevalence of domestic violence among market women, with a mean score of 4.541, indicating that approximately 76% experienced some form of domestic violence. In a study, 64.6% of respondents feared their partners, 76.9% avoided topics to prevent annoyance, and 56.2% felt inadequate, while all believed they didn't deserve maltreatment. Market women's negative attitudes towards reporting domestic violence, influenced by prior experiences, show a beta value of 0.220 and t-value of 3.513, significant at the 0.000 level. The study reveals a significant correlation between market women's knowledge of domestic violence and their educational level, with tertiary-educated women demonstrating greater awareness than those with only primary education. The study found no significant difference between attitudes towards reporting domestic violence and experiencing it, with mean scores of 3.429 and 3.881, respectively, among market women. In conclusion the study reveals a 76% prevalence of domestic violence among market women, highlighting the need for education on warning signs and prevention to empower them and reduce abuse.

Keywords: *Attitude, Domestic violence, Awareness, Knowledge, Market women*

INTRODUCTION

The essence of a marital relationship is often viewed as a partnership aiming to create a harmonious life filled with companionship and mutual support, although challenges may arise. Domestic violence is defined by the Amnesty International (2007) as damaging behavior used by one partner to assert control over another. Anyone can become a victim of domestic violence, regardless of demographic or personal factors, and it takes many forms, including physical, sexual, financial, emotional, and psychological abuse. According to Amnesty International (2007) and WHO (2019), approximately 33.3% of women have faced physical, sexual, or psychological violence, primarily from partners, with some estimates as high as 70%. Moreover, there is a notable correlation between a country's level of gender equality and the prevalence of domestic violence. Both men and women experience domestic violence; however, men often hesitate to report their abuse due to stigma. Studies by the World Health Organization (2012, 2019) reveal that 35% of women globally have encountered physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner or others outside their family. Various health challenges are associated with these experiences of abuse, including a higher likelihood of low birth

weight infants and mental health issues such as depression and anxiety (Sudik, 2019). Furthermore, existing statistics confirm that domestic violence transcends cultural and socio-economic boundaries, often remaining inadequately reported. Signs of potential violence can be identified, ranging from individual behaviors to familial and community dynamics. Given the limited research on this topic among market women, the current study focused on understanding domestic violence among this population in North Eastern Nigeria.

Research Questions

This research aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What is the prevalence of domestic violence among market women in North Eastern Nigeria?
2. Is there a significant relationship between the knowledge of domestic violence and the educational attainment of market women?
3. What negative attitudes do market women hold regarding the reporting of domestic violence?
4. Is there a significant relationship between attitudes toward reporting domestic violence and experiences of domestic violence?

Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Assess the prevalence of domestic violence among market women in North Eastern Nigeria.
2. Investigate the relationship between the knowledge of domestic violence and educational attainment among market women.
3. Analyze the negative attitudes of market women toward reporting domestic violence.
4. Examine the relationship between attitudes towards reporting domestic violence and the experiences of domestic violence.

Research Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive research design was implemented to explore market women's awareness of warning signs and their views on preventing domestic violence in North Eastern Nigeria.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was calculated using Leslie Kish's formula, resulting in a cohort of 350 market women operating stalls across thirteen market locations. Each of these sections featured a significant number of women selling (a) perishable goods (vegetables, meat, fruits, etc.); (b) staple food items (rice, beans, millet, corn, yam, etc.); (c) provisions (canned food, soup seasoning, juice drinks, wine, etc.); (d) cosmetics (body cream, soap, detergents, etc.); and (e) cloth and clothing materials as adopted by Ayodele and Ogunsanwo (2020). A stratified random sampling technique categorized the women into groups based on the types of goods they sold, and a simple random technique was employed to select 27 women from each group. A convenient sampling method was used to distribute the questionnaire throughout North Eastern Nigeria, accommodating the challenge of gathering the entire population at once; women were approached until the desired sample size was achieved.

Research Instrument

Data was collected using a well-structured self-administered survey questionnaire divided into six sections. Section A addressed demographic variables such as age, education level, and monthly income. Section B assessed respondents' knowledge of domestic violence using a 17-item scale measured on a binary format (Yes = 1, No = 0). Section C examined participants' attitudes towards the prevention of domestic violence, using a four-point scale (ranging from 0 to 3, with higher scores

indicating a more positive attitude) as adopted by Ayodele and Ogunsanwo (2020). The instrument underwent pilot testing among 35 market women in Potiskum, Yobe State, where reliability for each section was confirmed.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis utilized both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics provided frequency distributions and percentages to answer research questions, while independent t-tests assessed hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05 using SPSS version 25 software.

Results

Table 1: Respondents Demographic Characteristics

N	Variable		Frequency	Percent (%)
1	Age	16-25yrs	86	12.95
		26-35yrs	261	39.31
		36-45yrs	206	31.02
		46-55yrs	76	11.45
		56yrs above	35	5.27
		Total	664	100
		Mean age = 35.780; Std. Dev. = 11.651		
2	Educational status	No formal educ.	103	15.51
		Primary educ.	131	19.73
		Secondary educ.	353	53.16
		Tertiary educ.	77	11.60
		Total	664	100
3	Spouse's Employment	Unemployed	129	19.43
		Employed	475	71.54
		Retired	60	9.04
		Total	664	100
4	Years of Marriage	1-5years -	361	54.37
		10years	201	30.27
		15years	66	9.94
		20years	22	3.31
		21years above	14	2.11
		Total	664	100
5	Monthly Income	₦50,000 or less	215	32.38
		₦51,000-150,000	103	15.51
		₦151,000-250,000	191	28.77
		₦251,000 above	155	23.34
		Total	664	100
6	Spouse's Monthly Income	₦50,000 or less	165	24.85
		₦51,000-150,000	397	59.79
		₦151,000-250,000	101	15.21
		₦251,000 above	1	0.15
		Total	664	100
7	Family Type	Nuclear	159	23.95
		Extended	352	53.01
		Polygamous	153	23.04
		Total	664	100

Table 1: Respondent Demographics. The demographic data shows a considerable portion of respondents (39.31%) were aged 26-35 years, with the majority (53.16%) having a secondary education, and 54.37% of marriages existing for less than five years. Monthly income data indicated

that 32.38% earned ₦50,000 or less. Majority (59.79%) of spouse's monthly income was between ₦51,000-150,000 and most (53.01%) were within extended family.

Table 2: Information on the prevalence of domestic violence among the respondents

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean Std.	Deviation	Overall %
Prevalence of domestic violence among market	664	1.00	6.00	4.541	0.811	75.67

Table 2: Domestic Violence Prevalence. About 75.7% of market women reported experiencing domestic violence, reflecting a high prevalence rate.

Table 3: Prevalence of domestic violence among the respondents

Prevalence		Freq.	%
Feel afraid of your partner much of the time?	Yes	429	64.6
	No	235	35.4
Avoid certain topics out of fear of annoying your partner	Yes	511	76.9
	No	153	23.1
Feel that you cannot do anything right for your partner	Yes	373	56.2
	No	291	43.8
Believe that you deserve to be hurt or maltreated?	Yes	0	0
	No	664	100.0
Wonder if you are the one who is crazy	Yes	484	73.0
	No	180	27.0
Feel emotionally numb or helpless?	Yes	421	63.4
	No	243	36.6
Weighted prevalence percentage = 75.67%			

Table 3: Experiences with Domestic Violence. A significant number of respondents (64.6%) frequently feared their partners, with many avoiding discussions and feeling inadequate. However, all participants believed they did not deserve maltreatment.

Table 4: Summary of Analysis of variance on respondents' with negative attitude towards reporting of domestic violence and their earlier experience of domestic violence

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	T	p-value	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	8.001	0.380	10.945	0.000	
Negative attitude of DV	0.037	0.083	3.513	0.000	
		0.420			
Model	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.987	1.11	987	2.610	0.000
Residual	909.420	198	4.593		
Total	921.410	199			

Table 4: Attitudes toward Reporting Domestic Violence. Statistical analysis showed that negative attitudes towards reporting were influenced by previous experiences of domestic violence.

Table 5: Summary Table of One-way ANOVA showing difference between the knowledge of domestic violence and educational level of the market women

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	0.290	8	0.071	3.230	0.007
Within Groups	7.240	656	0.022		
Total	7.530	664			

Table 6: Summary Table of Tukey Post-hoc Tests Showing the Mean Differences

Educational qualification	N	Mean	SD	No formal education	Primary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education
No formal education	104	11.612	0.186				
Primary education	131	11.698	0.119		0.118		
education	352	15.172	0.153			3.200	
Tertiary education	76	18.374	0.103				3.371
Total	664	14.326	0.191				

Table 5 and 6: Knowledge of Domestic Violence and Education Level. A significant correlation was found between educational attainment and knowledge of domestic violence, with those holding tertiary qualifications showing greater awareness compared to those with primary education.

Table 7: Test of significant difference between attitude towards reporting of domestic violence and experiencing domestic violence

Attitude	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	Mean Diff.	t-cal	Sig.
Attitude	664	3.428	1.766				
Experience	664	3.881	1.201	662	0.460	1.109	0.156

Table 7: Attitude toward Reporting Domestic Violence. No significant difference emerged between attitudes toward reporting domestic violence and personal experiences, indicating a complex relationship.

DISCUSSION

The market women in the study had an average score of 4.541, indicating a 75.67% prevalence of domestic violence among them. This suggests that the women involved in the study experienced various forms of domestic violence. This finding aligns with earlier research WHO (2020), which highlighted that such inhumane acts are often justified, particularly when the woman is perceived as promiscuous. Ayodele and Ogunsanwo (2020) noted that globally, at least one in three women has experienced physical violence, sexual coercion, or other forms of abuse during their lifetime, with the abuser often being someone known to them. This study's results support the World Health Organization's (2012) data on the prevalence of violence by intimate partners and others, revealing that 35% of women worldwide have faced physical or sexual abuse from intimate partners or non-family individuals. While various types of violence can be inflicted on women, intimate partner violence constitutes a significant portion, affecting around 30% of women in relationships. Amnesty International (2007) indicated that 38% of women have experienced abuse from intimate partners, with a similar percentage of global female murder cases involving sexual partners. Moreover, around

33.3% to 70% of women have faced physical, sexual, and psychological abuse primarily from their spouses. The study findings showed that most respondents would not report violence if coerced into sexual acts by their partners, which is unsurprising since many do not report such incidents when threatened. Overall, the respondents exhibited a poor attitude towards reporting domestic violence. Evidence suggests that in many cultures, including parts of Africa, domestic violence, particularly wife beating, is perceived as normal, with both men and women occasionally supporting partner violence under certain situations. This implicit endorsement often revolves around the idea that men need to 'discipline' women for perceived misbehaviors linked to gender norms or male authority, making it challenging for women to officially report such acts. Consistent with the findings of Jeejebhoy *et al.* (2013), there appears to be a nuanced understanding among both women and men regarding what circumstances might justify domestic violence, with the acceptability of violence closely tied to the nature of the perceived wrongdoing and its severity. Acts deemed 'unjustified' or excessive are more likely to be condemned. Additionally, the study found a significant correlation between knowledge of domestic violence and the educational level of the market women, revealing that those with tertiary education demonstrated greater awareness of domestic violence than those with only primary education. The protective influence of education typically emerges once women complete secondary or university education, possibly due to increased exposure to new ideas, wider social networks, and enhanced skills that may empower them and diminish their risk of violence. This observation supports the conclusions of Ayodele and Ogunsanwo (2020) that higher educational attainment is linked to lower rates of both perpetrating and experiencing partner violence, as it enables individuals to recognize signs of domestic abuse.

The study examined the relationship between individuals' ability to recognize warning signs of domestic violence and their attitudes toward reporting such incidents. Results indicated no significant differences in the attitudes of market women towards reporting domestic violence, regardless of their past experiences with it. This suggests that previous encounters with domestic violence do not significantly affect market women's willingness to report it. Supporting this WHO (2019) found that women who justify wife beating are 7.9 percentage points more likely to experience physical or sexual abuse by a partner compared to those who do not condone such violence. The study found that most respondents would not report violence if their partner coerced them into sex, which not surprising is given that many do not report abuse when threatened. Overall, the attitudes towards reporting domestic violence among respondents were found to be quite poor (Cools and Kotsadam, 2014). The findings further indicate that the perception of domestic violence, particularly wife beating, is seen as acceptable in many cultures, with both women and men supporting partner violence in certain situations. This implicit endorsement of violence is often framed as men needing to 'discipline' women, particularly regarding gender norms, which complicates women's ability to file official reports against such acts, especially in African contexts. Jeejebhoy *et al.* (2013) and Adebusuyi and Ayodele (2018) also noted that men and women often have nuanced views on what justifies domestic violence, accepting some reasons while rejecting others. The acceptability of violence appears closely tied to the nature of the transgression and its severity; violence considered unjustified or excessive is more likely to be condemned. The data indicated a statistical association between the knowledge of domestic violence and the education level of market women, with those having tertiary education displaying greater awareness of the issue. However, the protective effects of education seem to manifest only once women complete secondary education or begin university, possibly because this exposure to new ideas and wider social networks empowers them and reduces their risk of violence (Mcquigg and Ronagh, 2011). This aligns with findings from Ayodele and Ogunsanwo (2020), which connect higher educational attainment to lower perpetration and victimization rates of partner violence due to better recognition of domestic violence warning signs.

CONCLUSION

The study surveyed 664 market women in North Eastern Nigeria, revealing a 76% prevalence of domestic violence, highlighting the need for education on prevention and empowerment to reduce abuse

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