

**AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG MARRIED MARKET WOMEN IN AYETORO EPE, LAGOS STATE**

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**Abstract**

*The study investigated the domestic violence among married market women in Aiyetoro market, Epe, Lagos State with more focus on prevalence of domestic violence, its knowledge, and negative attitude towards reporting of domestic violence. A descriptive research design was adopted for this study while convenient sampling technique was used to select the participants of this study. A self-designed questionnaire was used for data collection, which was pre-tested through test-re-test and yielded a reliability coefficients (index) of .850. Four research questions were formulated and tested. Analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and t-test fixed at the .05 significant level. A total of 350 participants were included in the study, their ages ranged from 16-56 years with a mean age of 35.780. About half (53.2%) of the respondents had secondary education; 238 (71.5%) reported that their spouse were fully employed. In relation to marriage duration, 181 (54.4%) were in the first five (5) years. The market women with negative attitude towards reporting of domestic violence has a beta value of .220 and t-value of 3.513 significant at .000 alpha level ( $f = 2.610, P = 0.00$ ). Also, study showed a significant difference between the knowledge of domestic violence and educational level of the market women ( $F_{(4, 333)} = 3.230, p = .007$ ); and no significant difference between attitude towards reporting of domestic violence and experiencing domestic violence ( $t = 1.109; P = .156$ ). The study concluded that the inability of the women to detect abuse from a distance and lack of empowerment with the right set of knowledge and information may be part of the reasons why the occurrence is not curtailed. Based on the outcome of this study, it was recommended that increasing women's knowledge about the recognition of warning signs of domestic violence is necessary.*

**Keywords:** Attitude, Domestic violence, Identification, Knowledge, Market women, Perceived warning signs, Prevention.

**Introduction**

An impression of the essence of marital/conjugal relationship is an attempt at creating a heaven, a world of companionship, friendship and mutual benefit where life is a bed of roses with couples of thorns which the two partners should harmoniously combine effort together to remove. The Office of Violence against Women (2007) characterized domestic violence as a form of offensive conduct in any relationship that one partner exploits to gain or maintain supremacy and control over the other partner. The description further explains that anybody can be a victim of domestic violence irrespective of ones tribe, sex-related knowledge,

age, believe or sex. It can as well be in diverse forms such as physical, sexual, financial, emotional and mental.

Amnesty international (2007) revealed that around 33.3% and in some cases as high as 70% of women folk had been exposed to physical, sexual and mental savagery basically by their spouses. Worldwide the victims of domestic violence are overwhelmingly women and they tend to experience more severe forms of violence. Mcquigg and Ronagh (2011) explained that this inhuman act is usually justified especially when it pertains to the woman being promiscuous. There is evidence that there exists a direct and significant correlation between country's level of gender equality and actual rates of domestic violence. Equivel, Esteban, Teri and John (2013) highlighted domestic violence against both sex as part of crimes that are inadequately reported in the globe by both party. In a study by World Health Organization (2012) on the prevalence of violence by a close partner as well as abuse by other people, it shows the following striking facts: thirty five per cent (35%) women globally have encountered either physical or sexual abuse by intimate partner or from other individuals other than family members. Although there are numerous types of violence that ladies might be subjected to, intimate partner's violence occupies a large proportion. Globally about thirty percent (30%) of women that have had relationships have been abused violently by their partners. Amnesty International (2007) further pointed out that thirty eight percent (38%) females have faced abuse by close partner; of the total women murder-case globally, thirty eight percent (38%) of the cases are perpetrated by sexual partners.

In addition women who have been abused experience various types of critical health challenges. For instance, their probability of delivering under-weight infants is sixteen percent (16%). They are more than twice as likely to have an abortion, almost twice as likely to experience depression, and, in some regions, are 1.5 times more likely to acquire HIV, as compared to women who have not experienced partner violence; globally, 7% of women have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner (Amnesty International 2007). As reported by the World Health Organization (2013) women who have been through domestic violence have 2.3 times tendency of being alcoholics and are 2.6 times more likely to experience depression or anxiety. Concannon (2013) pointed out that like women, men also face the problem of domestic violence, but are constraint to report it by the stigma that is attached to it. As such the abuse against men is on the increase while there is tendency of such cases being ignored by health care givers. As reported by Schechter, Daniel, Annette et al (2007), in an abusive relationship, there is likelihood of various phases of abuse which results in increased tension, violent acts, reconciliation and tranquil. Those suffering domestic violence may be constrained by loneliness, authority and domination, cultural permission, poverty, anxiety, embarrassment or children's safety.

Intimate partner abuse is among the recurrent crimes that are not given adequate publicity. There is high degree of stigma attached to abuse by an intimate partner. Domestic violence is recurrent in our community as identified by various statistics presented; it cuts across every culture, tribe including socio-economic groups and sex. It has been empirically established that a number of factors are responsible for this sort of violence which are the signs that would be noticed before the actual act of violence is perpetrated, examples of such signs could range from individual signs like a history of juvenile abuse, sexist character concerning duty of male and female; to family signs such as desire to control solely the family resources with others been dependant, and to community signs such as association with peers that uses violence as their standard (Mitchell & Anglin, 2009; Nigeria Social Institutions and Gender Index. 2016). Other cautionary signs of Domestic abuse are psychological signs such as depression, nervousness, outburst of outrage, strange hypervigilance and general signs such as decision hiding from partner, stalking e.t.c all this signs are pointers to the potential victims if noticed early that an abuse is brooding and could be prevented.

Since there is no sufficient study in Nigeria especially amidst the market women population, this research study sought to study domestic violence among market women in Ayetoro Epe, Lagos State with a major focus on the prevalence, knowledge and attitude.

### **Research Questions**

The research gave answer to the following questions.

1. What is the prevalence of domestic violence among market women in Aiyetoro Market, Epe, Lagos State?
2. Will there be any significant difference between the knowledge of domestic violence and educational level of the market women?
3. What is the negative attitude of market women towards reporting domestic violence?
4. Will there be any significant difference between attitude towards reporting of domestic violence and experiencing domestic violence?

### **Methods**

**Research Design:** A descriptive research design was adapted for this research to examine the respondents' recognition of warning signs and their perception about the prevention of domestic violence among market women in Ayetoro Epe Lagos State.

**Sample size and sampling Technique:** The sample size was determined using Leslie Kish formula. The sample for the study consisted of 350 market women who had stalls in thirteen (13) locations of the market. All the thirteen sections have large concentration of women selling (a) Perishable goods (vegetables, meat, fruits, etc); (b) Staple food stuff (rice, beans, millet, corn, yam, etc); (c) Provisions (can food, soup seasoning, juice drinks, wine, etc); (d) Cosmetics (body cream, soap, detergents, etc); and (e) Cloth and clothing material. The stratified random technique was used to stratified the population of the women in the market into strata as each section was large, so they were subdivided into different strata as (a) Perishable goods; (b) Staple food stuff; (c) Provisions; (d) Cosmetics; and (e) Cloth and clothing material. Simple random technique was used to select 27 women from each stratum. A convenient sampling technique was used to administer the questionnaire to the participant in around Ayetoro market area of Epe local government area. As the population cannot be gathered at any specific time for the study hence, the respondents were chosen on contact up till the required sample size was attained.

**Research Instrument:** The instrument used for this study was a well-structured self-structured survey questionnaire. The research instrument was divided into six sections. Section A: This section elicited responses on demographic variables of participants like such as age, educational background, monthly income, among others. Section B: elicited information on the respondents' knowledge of domestic violence. The items were measured on 2 continuum scale ranging from 0 to 1 (Yes = 1, and No = 0). Its a 17 item scale. Section C elicited information on the participants' attitude towards prevention of domestic violence. The items are measured on 4 continuum scale ranging from 0 to 3 (Very likely of me = 3, Likely of me = 2, Not likely of me = 1, and Not Very likely of me = 0). Higher score refers to positive attitude towards prevention of domestic violence while lower score signifies negative attitude towards prevention of domestic violence.

The instrument was subjected to a pilot testing among thirty-five (35) Falawo market Sagamu, Ogun State. This was to test and improve on the proposed questionnaire to be used for the study. All the thirty-five (35) copies distributed were recovered, where a section by section reliability test results yielded the following value: Section B- 0.80, Section C- 0.77, Section D- 0.81, Section E- 0.73, and Section F- 0.85 as represented in the Table 3.1.

**Method of Data Analysis:** In this study, the data analysis tools that was adopted include descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics of frequency distribution of simple percentages were used to analyze the data and provide answers to the research questions 1, 2, 3, and 4. Independent t-test was used to test hypotheses 1 and 2. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 significant level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) using the SPSS 21 version software.

### **Results**

Table 1: Respondents Demographic Characteristics

N	Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	
1	Age	16-25yrs	43	12.9
		26-35yrs	131	39.3
		36-45yrs	103	30.9
		46-55yrs	38	11.4
		56yrs above	18	5.4
		Total	333	100.0
Mean age = 35.780; Std. Dev. = 11.651				
2	Educational level	No formal educ.	52	15.9
		Primary educ.	66	19.8
		Secondary educ.	177	53.2
		Tertiary educ.	38	11.4
		Total	333	100.0
3	Spouse's Employment	Unemployed	65	19.5
		Employed	238	71.5
		Retired	30	9.0
		Total	333	100.0
4	Years of Marriage	1-5years	181	54.4
		6-10years	101	30.3
		11-15years	33	9.9
		16-20years	11	3.3
		21years above	7	2.1
		Total	333	100.0
5	Monthly Income	50,000 or less	108	32.4
		51,000-150,000	52	15.6
		151,000-250,000	96	28.8
		251,000 above	77	23.1
		Total	333	100.0
6	Spouse's Monthly Income	50,000 or less	83	24.9
		51,000-150,000	199	59.8
		151,000-250,000	51	15.3
		251,000 above	-	-
		Total	333	100.0
7	Family Type	Nuclear	80	24.0
		Extended	176	52.9
		Polygamous	77	23.1
		Total	333	100.0

In Table 1, the age bracket reveals that a little above one third 131 (39.3%) of the respondents were within the ages 26-35 years, 103 (30.9%) were 36-45 years of age, 43 (12.9%) were 16-25 years of age, 38 (11.4%) were 46-55 years, and 18 (5.4%) were 56years above. About half (53.2%) of the respondents had secondary education; 238 (71.5%) reported that their spouse were fully employed. In relation to marriage duration, 181 (54.4%) were in the first five (5) years. The participants' monthly income revealed that 108 (32.4%) earned #50,000 or less while 199 (59.8%) of their spouses earned between #51,000 and #150,000 monthly.

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 women	333	1.00	6.00	4.541	.811	75.7

The overall prevalence of domestic violence was 75.7% as shown in Table 4.2 above. The market women have a mean score of 4.541 which is equivalent to 75.7%, thus it could be said that the extent at which the market women experience domestic violence is about 76%. It could then be said that the market women that participated in this study experienced one form of domestic violence or the other.

Table 3: Prevalence of domestic violence among the respondents

Prevalence		Freq.	%
Feel afraid of your partner much of the time?	Yes	215	64.6
	No	118	35.4
Avoid certain topics out of fear of annoying your partner	Yes	256	76.9
	No	77	23.1
Feel that you cannot do anything right for your partner	Yes	187	56.2
	No	146	43.8
Believe that you deserve to be hurt or maltreated?	Yes	-	-
	No	333	100.0
Wonder if you are the one who is crazy	Yes	243	73.0
	No	90	27.0
Feel emotionally numb or helpless?	Yes	211	63.4
	No	122	36.6
Weighted prevalence percentage = 75.7%			

In Table 3, majority of the respondents 215 (64.6%) were afraid of their partners much of the time; 76.9% avoid certain topics out of fear of annoying partners; and 56.2% felt they cannot do anything right for their partners. Also, 333 (100%) participants believe that they don't deserve to be hurt or maltreated, while 73% wondered if they are the one who are crazy, and 63.4% felt emotionally numb or helpless.

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
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	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	8.001	.380		10.945	.000
Negative attitude of DV	.037	.083	.420	3.513	.000

  

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	11.987	1	11.987	2.610	.000
Residual	909.420	198	4.593		
Total	921.410	199			

a. Dependent Variable: Negative attitude towards reporting of DV  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Earlier experience of DV

The market women with negative attitude towards reporting of domestic violence have a beta value of .220 and t-value of 3.513 significant at .000 alpha level. The calculated value of  $f = 2.610$  significant at .00 alpha level indicated that earlier experience of domestic violence influenced the negative attitude of market women towards reporting of domestic violence. The implication of this result is that the market women with negative attitude towards reporting of domestic violence must have had earlier experience of domestic violence from either their partners or during their upbringing.

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	.290	4	.071	3.230	.007
Within Groups	7.240	329	.022		
Total	7.530	333			

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

Educational qualification	N	Mean	SD	Mean Difference			
				No formal education	Primary education	Secondary education	Tertiary education
No formal	52	11.613	.186				

education							
Primary education	66	11.799	.119		.186		
Secondary education	177	15.180	.154			3.201	
Tertiary education	38	18.381	.102				3.381
Total	333	14.326	.191				

\*The mean is significant at the 0.05 level

The result in Table 5 and 6 shows a significant difference between the knowledge of domestic violence and educational level of the market women ( $F_{(4, 333)} = 3.230, p = .007$ ). Results also showed a significant difference between market women with primary education and those who had obtained tertiary education. Market women with tertiary education exhibited more knowledge of domestic violence. Therefore, the hypothesis that there is no significant difference between the knowledge of domestic violence based on educational level of the market women cannot be sustained.

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	333	3.429	1.765				
Experience	333	3.881	1.201	331	.460	1.109	.156

The outcome of this study revealed no significant difference between attitude towards reporting of domestic violence and experiencing domestic violence ( $t = 1.109; P = .156$ ). Going through the mean score it was revealed that respondents attitude towards the reporting of domestic violence had a mean score of 3.429 while experiencing domestic violence had a mean score of 3.881. This shows that earlier experience of domestic violence may not be significantly differ from the attitude of market women towards reporting of domestic violence.

## Discussion

The market women had a mean score of 4.541 equivalent to 75.7% prevalence of domestic violence. It could then be said that the market women that participated in this study experienced one form of domestic violence or the other. This study is similar to prior studies of Mcquigg and Ronagh (2011) who explains that this inhuman act is usually justified especially when it pertains to the woman being promiscuous. Adeogun, (2017) furthered pointed out that at least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her. The outcome of this study is in line with the evidences from World Health Organization (2012) on the prevalence of violence by a close partner as well as abuse by other people, it shows the following striking facts: thirty five per cent (35%) women globally have encountered either physical or sexual abuse by intimate partner or from other individuals other than family members. Although there are numerous types of violence that ladies might be subjected to, intimate partner's violence occupies a large proportion. Globally about thirty percent (30%) of women that have had relationships have been abused violently by their partners. Amnesty

International (2007) further pointed out that thirty eight percent (38%) females have faced abuse by close partner; of the total women murder-case globally, thirty eight percent (38%) of the cases are perpetrated by sexual partners. Also, Amnesty International (2007) revealed that around 33.3% and in some cases as high as 70% of women folk had been exposed to physical, sexual and mental savagery basically by their spouses. Worldwide the victims of domestic violence are overwhelmingly women and they tend to experience more severe forms of violence.

The study revealed that majority of the respondents will never report violence if partner force them to sex. This outcome is not too surprising as many failed to report violence when threatened by partner. The findings therefore revealed that respondents' opinion about reporting domestic violence was very poor. It could be said that there is a wide range of countries demonstrate that domestic violence especially wife beating is normative in many settings, with women as well as men expressing support for partner violence under certain circumstances. Implicit support for violence is frequently couched in terms of men's need to 'discipline' women for various infractions, generally related to gendered expectations regarding female behaviour or deference to male authority. Thus, making it difficult for women to make an official report against such act especially in Africa. This was in line with the findings of Jeejebhoy et al. (2013) and (Adebusuyi & Ayodele, 2018) that women and men appear to make finely grained distinctions as to what 'justifies' domestic violence, with individuals accepting some but rejecting other reasons among a list of possible circumstances where abuse might be justified. The acceptability of violence appears strongly linked to both the nature of the perceived transgression and the severity of abuse. Violence that is viewed as 'without just cause' or is perceived as excessive is more likely to be condemned by women themselves and by others.

The result indicates a statistical difference between the knowledge of domestic violence and educational level of the market women. Results also showed a significant difference between market women with primary education and those who had obtained tertiary education. Market women with tertiary education exhibited more knowledge of domestic violence. Though, the protective effect of education does not appear to take hold until women complete secondary school or enter university. It may be that at this level, women's exposure to new ideas, broader social networks, and new skills are sufficient to shift the balance of power in relationships to reduce risk of violence. This corroborates the findings of Cools and Kotsadam (2014) that high educational attainment is associated with lower levels of both perpetration and victimization of partner violence due to its individual's ability to recognize warning signs of domestic violence.

The result of the study indicated a no significant difference between attitude towards reporting of domestic violence and experiencing domestic violence. This shows that earlier experience of domestic violence may not be significantly differ from the attitude of market women towards reporting of domestic violence. This result is in line with Cools and Kotsadam (2014) who found that women who believe that wife beating is justified, are 7.9 percentage points more likely to be physically or sexually abused by a partner than those who reject the legitimacy of such violence.

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## **Conclusion**

Findings of the study show the overall prevalence of domestic violence among the market women to be 76% while all the participants believe that they don't deserve to be hurt or maltreated. In order to increase some women's knowledge about the recognition of warning signs and perception about the prevention of domestic violence, it is necessary to incorporate this information into general education health classes curriculum taken by students right from primary school. It is concluded that the inability of the women to detect abuse from a distance and lack of empowerment with the right set of knowledge and information may be part of the reasons why the occurrence is not curtailed.

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