



## Chauvinism, Marital Obligation, and Traditional Social Orientation as Predictors of Spousal Domestic Violence in Ohaukwu L.G.A, Ebonyi State

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### Abstract

This study investigated chauvinism, marital obligation, and traditional social orientation as predictors of spousal domestic violence in Ohaukwu LGA. Participants were 215 married couples conveniently drawn from different communities in Ohaukwu LGA, Ebonyi State, Nigeria. They were made up of 115 (53.5%) males and 101 (46.5%) females, with the age range of 26-60 ( $M = 33.48$ ,  $SD = 7.30$ ). Four instruments were used to measure the constructs in this study, namely: Male Chauvinism Scale, Domestic Violence Questionnaire, Relationship Commitment Scale, and The General Causality Orientation Scale. Data was analysed using the stepwise multiple regression analyses in SPSS<sup>®</sup> 26. Results of the study showed that chauvinism ( $\beta = .060$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was a significant predictor of spousal domestic violence among couple in Ohaukwu LGA. Marital Obligation ( $\beta = -.305$ ,  $p < .01$ ) was a negative significant predictor of spousal domestic violence among couple in Ohaukwu LGA. Traditional social orientation ( $\beta = .088$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was not a significant predictor of spousal domestic violence among couple in Ohaukwu LGA. One practical implication of the finding is that both chauvinism and marital obligation among couples have been found to be potential factors that explain spousal domestic violence in Ohaukwu LGA of Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study is limited by choice of involving only one study area. It is recommended that further studies interested in same variable may consider adopting mixed method in order to gain more understanding of the links between the IVs and the DV.

**Keywords:** Chauvinism, Marital Obligation, Traditional Social Orientation, Spousal Domestic Violence

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## Introduction

Domestic violence also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence and intimate partner violence (IPV), is a pattern of abusive behaviours by one partner against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family or cohabitation. The US Office and Violence against Women (OVM) defines domestic violence as a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner (Office of Violence Against Women, 2007). The definition adds that domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender, and can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic and psychological abuse (Office of Violence Against Women, 2007). Violence against women is a technical term used to collectively refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women.

Domestic violence against women is a violation of women's human rights beyond geographical, cultural, religious, social, and economic conditions. It is a common problem experienced by women all around the world to varying degrees and types. As an important public health concern, it has strong social, cultural, and psychological basis, and has devastating physical, emotional, social, and financial effects. Despite direct effects on women, it also affects women's children, families, and the society as a whole. Domestic violence against women has received increased attention from academic, clinical, and research communities. Studies in the field revealed high incidence of spousal assault, and reported domestic violent acts among the most frequently committed crimes (Avis, 2012). As one of the most pressing societal problems today (APA, 2002), domestic violence against women represents a serious violation of women's human-rights. It is an important cause of injury, and a risk factor for many physical and psychological health problems among women (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002).

Researches in the field generally labelled domestic violence against women as male violence against women, family violence, intimate partner violence, intimate partner abuse, domestic



abuse, spousal abuse, wife abuse, and the like (WHO, 2015). According to WHO's (2015) comprehensive report on domestic violence, in different regions of the world, the range of

lifetime prevalence of physical or sexual violence, or both, by an intimate partner was 15% to 71%, with estimates in most sites ranging from 30% to 60%. As for emotional abuse and controlling acts, across all countries, between 20% and 75% of women experienced one or more of these acts, most within the past twelve months. Furthermore, according to the results of the most comprehensive national research on domestic violence against women released by Turkish Republic, Prime Ministry, Directorate General on the Status of Women (2009), domestic violence against women is a global widespread problem. While the prevalence of physical and/or sexual violence experienced by married women was 42% nationwide, it varied between 26% and 57% across the regions. Moreover, emotional violence reported by women was 44%. The percentage was 69% when the acts of behaviors that control women's daily activities were considered as emotional abuse (WHO, 2015). Reported economic violence acts like preventing women from working or causing women to quit the job were 23%. The research also revealed that domestic violence has direct and indirect negative effects on physical and/or mental health of women in Nigeria. Regardless of residence and background characteristics, women who had violence history reported negative physical and/or mental health problems two or three times more than women who had no violence history (Akar et al., 2010).

Male chauvinism refers to an individual's belief in the superiority of men over women (Heywood, 2014). It involves attitudes and behaviors that promote male dominance and the devaluation of women. For example, a male chauvinistic person might believe that men are inherently more capable in leadership roles and should make decisions without input from women (Heywood, 2014). Male chauvinism was studied in the psychoanalytic therapy of 11 men (Woods, 1976). It refers to the maintenance of fixed beliefs and attitudes of male superiority, associated with overt or covert depreciation of women. Challenging chauvinist attitudes often results in anxiety or other symptoms (Woods, 1976). Overall, male chauvinism is about individual attitudes of male superiority, while patriarchy is a systemic structure where men, as a group, hold more power and influence in society.



Some husbands carry stereotypical chauvinistic mindsets based on how they were raised and cultural influence (*Heywood, 2014*). For them, there is always a need to hold the superior position with a fight to take the upper hand with all that he does. Dealing with a male chauvinistic husband can be challenging and hurtful. Some main characteristics that help to recognize this behavior (*Woods, 2022*), include. Dominance - Male chauvinistic husbands tend to assert control and dominance in decision-making, often undermining their spouse's opinions or choices. Belief in gender stereotypes - They may hold traditional gender roles and believe that certain tasks or responsibilities should be exclusively handled by men or women, limiting your freedom to choose your roles in the relationship. Lack of empathy - Empathy towards your feelings and needs may be lacking, as they may prioritize their own desires and perspectives. Dismissal of equality - Male chauvinists may resist the idea of equal partnerships and may not fully support your personal and professional aspirations. Insensitive comments - They may make insensitive or derogatory remarks about women or belittle you, which can be emotionally distressing (*Woods, 2022*).

Spouses are more than just a support system for maintaining a family and relationships (*Parlati et al., 2023*). Marriage duties mean you have someone willing to help you with every aspect of your life. They will do it because they love you and care for you. But the most important part is not expecting that to happen, but doing it for the person that you chose to love and care for in return (*Parlati et al., 2023*). In monogamous marriages, spouses have the right to live together as husband and wife, providing mutual support and care. A healthy marriage requires work and effort (*Parlati et al., 2023*). The role of a husband is as important as that of a wife. There are set duties and responsibilities for the husband and wife. It helps make things easier. However, today, a man and woman can take each other's roles and maintain a peaceful marriage (*Parlati et al., 2023*). These include the following obligations: a comprehensive marital relationship, specifically the obligation to live together, faithfulness, respect for one another, and support for one another (*Thomas, Liu, & Umberson, 2017*).

The primary role of a husband in a marriage is to love his wife unconditionally and unselfishly. The husband is often looked at as the rock-solid support in a family and someone a wife can lean



on in her difficult times. No matter the era or age, the husband in the marriage is always the stronger, masculine, and less emotional individual of the two. Nowadays, the roles in a marriage

tend to “mix” somehow. It’s not surprising to see a man doing tasks that traditions and common habits tend to assign to a woman and vice-versa. There is nothing wrong with this. What counts is the balance the partners create within the marriage based on mutual love and respect. Though communication is in integrity, it can turn into obligation when there is a lack of communication, respect, dignity, individuality, honesty, LOVE, gratitude, joy, or sense of freedom. Marriage is an agreement between two people (Thomas, Liu, & Umberson, 2017).

People with traditional worldviews primarily identify with their particular group, often based on their family of origin, religion, ideology, and/or nation (*Morreall, & Sonn 2013*). The traditional worldview is thus oriented towards the community rather than the individual. Traditional worldviews often emerged as response to brutal or chaotic life conditions in which egocentrism dominated (*Morreall, & Sonn 2013*). This worldview therefore brings a sense of order, group loyalty, and higher purpose. It supports people to see beyond their self-interests and take the perspective of others (*Morreall, & Sonn 2013*). Taking care of each other is more important than ‘making it for yourself’. Values like security, solidarity, honesty, decency, modesty, conformity, and service are central. Its inherently social nature is one of the greatest strengths of this worldview.

In the quest for truth, traditions look at the past rather than the future (Vergote, 1996). They often rely on longstanding conventions, revelations, and dogmas, and trust traditional or religious authorities (Vergote, 1996). This worldview is frequently, though not always, religious in nature, with an emphasis on a literal reading of scriptures and doctrines. The traditional view on the nature of reality tends to be *theistic* as well as *dualistic* ~ with a central belief in a Supreme, divine being, who miraculously created the world, yet is *above* and *beyond* that world, rather than *in* it (Vergote, 1996). While nature is considered god-created, it is seen as fundamentally different from humans (whom are created in God’s image). The relationship with nature is often understood in terms of ‘dominion’ or ‘stewardship’: humans can use nature for their own



purposes, but also have to take care of it. Traditionalists gain a sense of meaning and self-worth through their convictions and their contribution to their community. Family, faith, tradition, and service to their community or a sense of a higher calling are often important (Swindal, 2010).

By adapting and conforming to their group's norms, they fulfil their needs for acceptance and achievement. There's an emphasis on law and order. Social roles and rules prescribe how to be, stressing discipline, productivity, and conformity. There is often a black-or-white sense of right and wrong. As so often, this worldview's greatest strength is also its greatest pitfall. The strong identification with the 'in-group' runs the risk of becoming ethnocentric – considering our group best, and better than other groups, the 'out-groups'. This can become 'us against them' (*African Studies Association; University of Michigan, 2005*). It can also result in a sense of coercion, where people don't get to belong when they don't believe "the right" things, or behave in "the right" way. At the same time, the traditional worldview offers many vitally important qualities to the whole, including genuine care for others, a sense of discipline, self-restraint, and order, and a dedication to something bigger or higher (*African Studies Association; University of Michigan, 2005*).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Most people assume domestic violence is a private, family matter and choose not to get involved. However, domestic violence impacts a community in surprising ways. Domestic violence tears the very fabric of a society by dismantling family unit and causing a ripple effect of repercussions that are felt for many years. One of most lasting consequences of domestic violence is the harm it does to family bonds. Children witnessing violence committed against their parent can find it difficult to trust adults in the future. It compromises their attachment to the person that should love and protect them, weakening the family unit. An estimated 3.3 million children are exposed to violence against their mother or a female caretaker. These kids have high higher levels of anger, hostility, disobedience, and withdrawal. They have similar health issues as adults: anxiety, sleep disorders, mental health and behavior health issue. One can imagine the effect this has on the couples and the society. Adult victims suffer from a host of long-term health problems like heart disease, chronic pain, stress disorders, and arthritis,



increasing health care costs for everyone. The effects of domestic violence cut across a wide range of issues and some studies estimated the total annual cost in our society to be huge. This includes health care costs for the victim's body and mind for conditions such as depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and dissociation (Essen, 2009). It is observed that Women have been at

the receiving end of violence in Nigeria. A number of factors are responsible for domestic violence against women: for example, chauvinism, marital obligation and traditional social orientation. The present study aims to investigate their predictive roles in domestic violence in our Nigerian society. In addressing the problem, the following research questions are stated to guide the study;

Will chauvinism significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA?

Will marital obligation significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA?

Will traditional social orientation significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The general objective of this study is to determine the predictive roles of chauvinism, marital obligation and traditional social orientation on spousal domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA. Specifically, the present study investigated whether;

- 1) Chauvinism will significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA.
- 2) Marital obligation will significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA
- 3) Traditional social orientation will significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Chauvinism**

Male chauvinism was studied in the psychoanalytic therapy of 11 men. It refers to the maintenance of fixed beliefs and attitudes of male superiority, associated with overt or covert





depreciation of women (Woods 2024). Challenging chauvinist attitudes often results in anxiety or other symptoms. It is frequently not investigated in psychotherapy because it is ego-syntonic, parallels cultural attitudes, and because therapists often share similar bias or neurotic conflict. Chauvinism was found to represent an attempt to ward off anxiety and shame arising from one or more of four prime sources: unresolved infantile strivings and regressive wishes, hostile envy of

women, oedipal anxiety, and power and dependency conflicts related to masculine self-esteem. Mothers were more important than fathers in the development of chauvinism, and resolution was sometimes associated with decompensation in wives. Men who patronize, disparage, or otherwise denigrate females in the belief that they are inferior to males and thus deserving of less than equal treatment or benefit. The beliefs, attitudes, or behavior of male chauvinists (men who patronize, disparage, or otherwise denigrate females in the belief that they are inferior to males and thus deserving of less than equal treatment or benefit). Factors such as whether a mother is treated as an equal by the father, or is considered a subordinate also play a major role in how the son will later treat his wife and perceive women.” Also, it is believed that chauvinism is inevitable in households where a mother offers her son better educational opportunities.

According to research, male chauvinism is `learnt behaviour` that originates from home and is a direct result of traditional mindsets and certain values that are consciously (and at times unconsciously) inculcated within men from a very early age. As a result of this conditioning, most men living in traditional environments grow up with the `expectation and understanding` that as a rule, women must submit before their husbands and be “obedient wives.” They are also led to believe that in every role, women will always remain inferior to them intellectually, physically and emotionally and under no circumstances can they be treated as equals.

### **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence is 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. Domestic violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, or technological actions or threats of actions or other patterns of coercive behavior that influence another person within an intimate





partner relationship. This includes any behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, sex, or gender identity. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. Domestic violence occurs in both opposite-sex and same-sex relationships and can happen to intimate partners who are married, living together, dating, or share a child.

### Domestic violence

not only affects those who are abused, but also has a substantial effect on family members, friends, co-workers, other witnesses, and the community at large. Children, who grow up witnessing domestic violence, are among those seriously affected by this crime. Frequent exposure to violence in the home not only predisposes children to numerous social and physical problems, but also teaches them that violence is a normal way of life - therefore, increasing their risk of becoming society's next generation of victims and abusers. This discussion of domestic violence is intended to educate the public about the dynamics of abuse in intimate partner relationships, as well as to help victims understand their experience and family and friends of victims to recognize signs of abuse in the relationships of their loved ones.

Domestic abuse, also called "domestic violence" or "intimate partner violence", can be defined as a pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Abuse is physical, sexual, emotional, economic or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviors that frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, injure, or wound someone. Domestic abuse can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender. It can occur within a range of relationships including couples who are married, living together or dating. Domestic violence affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels. Victims of domestic abuse may also include a child or other relative, or any other household member. Domestic abuse is typically manifested as a pattern of abusive behavior toward an intimate partner in a dating or family relationship, where the abuser exerts power and control over the victim. Domestic abuse can be mental, physical, economic or sexual in nature.



Incidents are rarely isolated, and usually escalate in frequency and severity. Domestic abuse may culminate in serious physical injury or death.

### **Theoretical Orientation**

General strain theory suggests that men and women who kill an intimate partner experience different types of strain and emotions, and that homicide occurs in response to these experiences. By putting gender at the forefront of theoretical and empirical enquiry, GST has the potential to account for differences in the experiences of male and female IPH perpetrators. GST further

treats emotional reactions as important mediators between adverse experiences and criminal involvement and recognizes that these emotions differ for men and women. Given the centrality of emotions in partner homicides, GST, thus, has the potential to provide a valuable contribution to the theoretical. According to GST, experiences of strain increase the likelihood of criminal behavior (Agnew, 1992). There are three main categories of strain: experiencing aversive events, losing something positively valued and being prevented from achieving one's goals. GST distinguishes between objective strain, which refers to events or conditions that are considered adverse by most individuals in a given group, and the subjective evaluation of a given strain (Agnew, 2001). For example, relationship. Previous research has identified the validity of using GST as a theoretical framework for explaining non-lethal partner violence (Anderson and Lo, 2011, Katz, 2000).

Moreover, research recognizes the applicability of examining strain in the context of IPH, particularly as they relate to backlash effects of increased accessibility to domestic violence resources (Dugan et al., 2003). Building on the theoretical work of Broidy and Agnew (1997) and the IPH literature this theory offer significant contributions toward understanding how male entitlement and control, lack of access to resources and support, sub-cultural attitudes, and situational characteristics contribute to IPH. The application of GST to IPH provides an opportunity to extend current theoretical knowledge in a number of ways. For instance, it provides gender sensitivity to a phenomenon previously understood as gender-specific or gender-neutral.



## Methodology

Two hundred and fifteen (215) married couples comprising 115 males and 101 females participated in the study. They were drawn from three churches and two markets within Ohaukwu LGA Ebonyi State. Multi-stage sampling was used involving cluster sampling and convenient sampling. Cluster sampling was used to select the churches and the markets while convenient sampling was used to select participants. The choice of selecting participants at the markets is mainly to have participants outside Christian religious belief. Participants' age ranged

from 26-60 year ( $M = 33.48$ ,  $SD = 7.30$ ). Participants' demographics such as age, religion, marital status were obtained.

The General Causality Orientation Scale (GCOS) developed by Deci and Ryan (1985) was used to measure traditional orientation. It is available in two forms (12 and 17 vignettes) both of which are useful. The original scale that is well validated and have been widely used consists of 12 vignettes and 36 items. Each vignette describes a typical social or achievement-oriented situation (e.g., applying for a job or interacting with a friend) and is followed by three types of responses--an autonomous, a controlled, and an impersonal type. Respondents indicate, on 7-point Likert-type scales, the extent to which each response is typical for them. Higher scores indicate higher amounts of the particular orientation represented by the response. Thus, the scale has three subscales--the autonomy, the controlled, and the impersonal subscales--and subscale scores are generated by summing the individual's 12 responses on items corresponding to each subscale. A description of the 12-vignette version of the scale construction appears in Deci and Ryan (1985) along with data that support the instrument's reliability and validity. For example, the scale has been shown to be reliable, with Cronbach alphas of about 0.75 and a test-retest coefficient of 0.74 over two months, and to correlate as expected with a variety of theoretically related constructs. For the present study, the researcher found a reliability coefficient of .76, indicating it is valid for the study in this part of the world.



Male Chauvinism scale developed by Diaz Rodriguez et al., (2018) was used to measure chauvinism. The main variable was “being a male chauvinist”, which was obtained according to the sexual male chauvinist scale created by Díaz Rodríguez et al., (2018). The test consisted of 12 questions, with a maximum of 60 points and a minimum of 12 points, with the highest number indicating a tendency towards male chauvinism. Answers were given using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (from strongly agree to strongly disagree). To generate the analytical part, the upper tertile (which indicates a higher degree of male chauvinism and was taken as an indicator of male chauvinism) was compared with the sum of the two lower tertiles. The developers obtained reliability coefficient of .95 to show its standardization and validity. The researcher obtained .83 for the present study.

The Family Responsibility Index (FRI) developed by Alley (1984) contains 54 items distributed among 10 separate areas of typical responsibilities for families, in which two were used for this study – family care and preparing meal. Respondents are asked to rate on a 5-point summated rating scale the extent of their responsibility for each task during a typical working week, including a response category for items which do not apply. The instrument was standardized and its Cronbach’s alpha coefficient showed .78 according to the developers. For the present study, the researcher obtained .74 indicating that the instrument is valid and reliable.

Domestic violence is a multi-dimensional structure and the considered dimensions of this questionnaire are including as follows: 1) Physical violence, 2) Psychological violence, 3) Sexual violence and 4) Economic violence. This is a self-report tool put together by the researchers. In this research for each dimension several items were designed. In this questionnaire the response of each option is scored on a Likert scale: Not at all true of my spouse (0); slightly true of my spouse (1); moderately true of my spouse (2); very true of my spouse (3), and extremely true of my spouse (4). The highest score of this questionnaire shows the highest level of violence in this study. According to the developers, the instrument is valid and reliable with coefficient index of .92. the researcher obtained .88 for the present study in a pilot study to certify it is valid and reliable.



The researcher obtained permission from the church leaders which enabled her to conduct the study while participants at the markets were approached in their various shops. The researcher recruited the one research assistant who is well trained on the modalities of administering the questionnaires, filling and collection. Before administering the questionnaire, the researcher created rapport with the participant, in which case the participants were told that the exercise is purely for academic research purpose. Participants were equally assured that their responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality and that participation in the study was voluntary. However, each participant before filling the questionnaire signed a consent form to show that the participants accepted voluntarily to be part of the study. The questionnaires were collected back from the participants after they had filled them correctly. Two hundred and twenty (220) questionnaires were distributed in which 54 questionnaires were distributed in each church and

market. Two hundred and eighteen (218) questionnaires were returned. The returned questionnaires were cross checked after they were collected back from the participants. After cross checking the questionnaires, 215 returned questionnaires were properly filled and were used for data analysis. Participants were thanked individually for participating in the study.

Cross-sectional research design was used for the study. Analysis of data was done using regression. Statistical package for the Social Science (SPSS) version 26 software was employed for the data analysis.

## Result

**Table 1: Means, standard deviations, and correlations for demographic variables, Chauvinism, marital obligation, traditional social orientation and spousal domestic violence**

S/N	Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Gender	1.18	.57	-							
2	Age	1.18	.52	.25***	-						
3	Religion	1.39	.49	-.11*	.06	-					
4	Marital Status	27.14	5.96	.54***	.01	.05	-				
5	Chauvinism	1.41	.49	.34***	.09	.19***	.14	-			



6	Marital Obligation	34.70	448.07	-.05	-.06	-.01	.23**	.31***	-	
7	Social Orientation	127.13	5.96	.54***	.01	.05	.08	-.01	.45***	-
8	Domestic Violence	9.88	4.65	-.06*	-.08	.10*	.11*	.07***	.08**	.31***

\*= P <.05; \*\*p<.01(significant) Gender= 1-male, 2-female

Result of correlation table show that spousal domestic violence was significantly related to gender ( $r = -.06$ ,  $p < .05$ ); religion ( $r = .10$ ,  $p < .05$ ); marital status ( $r = .11$ ,  $p < .05$ ), chauvinism ( $r = .07$ ,  $p < .001$ ), marital obligation ( $r = .08$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and traditional social orientation ( $r = .31$ ,  $p < .001$ ); But non-significantly related to age.

**Table 2: Coefficient table of Regression of Chauvinism, marital obligation, traditional social orientation on spousal domestic violence**

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Gender		.011*	-.005
Age		-.054	-.035
Religion		.101*	-.083
Marital Status		.094*	-.002
Chauvinism		.074***	.060***
Marital Obligation			.305**
Social Orientation			.088***
R	.16**	.33***	.34**
R <sup>2</sup>	.03**	.11***	.12**
R <sup>2</sup> change	.03**	.28***	.05**
F value	F(4, 214)=2.68	F(1,213)=14.48	F(2, 212)=13.35

Note: \*\*=p<.01, \*\*\*=p<.001(significant). Gender= 1-male, 2-female

Regression result in table 2 above indicated that the control variables gender ( $\beta = .011$ ,  $p < .05$ ), religion ( $\beta = .101$ ,  $p < .05$ ), and marital status ( $\beta = .094$ ,  $p < .05$ ) significantly predicted spousal domestic violence among married couples in Ohaukwu LGA. Chauvinism ( $\beta = .060$ ,  $p < .001$ ) entered in model one significantly predicted spousal domestic violence among married couples



in Ohaukwu LGA. Thus, couples who practice chauvinism more engage more in spousal domestic violence. It accounted for 16% significant variance together with the control variables as predictors of spousal domestic violence among married couples in Ohaukwu LGA ( $R = .16$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Marital obligation ( $\beta = .305$ ,  $p < .01$ ) entered in model two of the equation significantly predicted spousal domestic violence among married couples in Ohaukwu LGA. It accounted for 28% significant variance as a predictor of spousal domestic violence ( $R^2\Delta = .28$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Social orientation ( $\beta = .088$ ,  $p < .001$ ) entered in model three of the equation significantly predicted spousal domestic violence among married couples in Ohaukwu LGA. It accounted for 5% significant variance as a predictor of spousal domestic violence ( $R^2\Delta = .05$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

## Discussion of Findings

The present study investigated chauvinism, marital obligation, and traditional social orientation as predictors of spousal domestic violence in Ohaukwu LGA. The first hypothesis tested that chauvinism will significantly predict spousal domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA was confirmed. Hence, chauvinism was a significant predictor of spousal domestic violence. This nascent finding implies that the practice of seeing men as stronger than women and giving them much more power over women in everything influence some men to engage more in domestic violence. Some men believe that it is by been in total control makes them man enough. They are always determined to dominate women and not let them take lead in anything. Such men believe that it is a way of upholding the culture and tradition. The finding supports previous studies postulations on this (e.g., Testoni, 2019; Vecina, & Piñuela, 2017) who suggested the idea that male sexism can be a factor responsible for suffering and maladjustment for men and that therefore an education that promotes equality of gender differences can also help prevent the social distress associated with drug addiction and deviance. A male chauvinistic person might believe that men are inherently more capable in leadership roles and should make decisions without input from women (Heywood, 2014). Challenging chauvinist attitudes often





results in anxiety or other symptoms (Woods, 1976) and male chauvinism is about individual attitudes of male superiority, while patriarchy is a systemic structure where men, as a group, hold more power and influence in society.

According to Anderson and Lo (2011) previous research recognizes the applicability of examining strain in the context of IPH, particularly as they relate to backlash effects of increased accessibility to domestic violence resources (Dugan et al., 2003). And the theory offers significant contributions toward understanding how male entitlement and control, lack of access to resources and support, sub-cultural attitudes, and situational characteristics contribute to IPH. The second hypothesis tested in the study was that marital obligation will significantly predict domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA. This hypothesis was confirmed as marital obligation predicted spousal domestic violence. A lack of comprehensive marital relationship, specifically the obligation to live together, faithfulness, respect for one another, and support for one another may cause domestic violence. Spouses are more than just a support system for maintaining a family and relationships (Parlati et al., 2023). The finding supports some previous studies for example Ojibara (2023) found that absence of adequate marital obligation results in domestic violence. Marriage duties mean you have someone willing to help you with every aspect of your life. They will do it because they love you and care for you. But the most important part is not expecting that to happen, but doing it for the person that you chose to love and care for in return (Parlati et al., 2023). In monogamous marriages, spouses have the right to live together as husband and wife, providing mutual support and care. A healthy marriage requires work and effort (Parlati et al., 2023). The role of a husband is as important as that of a wife. There are set duties and responsibilities for the husband and wife.

The third hypothesis was equally confirmed as traditional social orientation significantly predicted domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA. By adapting and conforming to their group's norms, some men may engage in domestic violence. There's an emphasis on law and order. Social roles and rules prescribe how to be, stressing discipline, productivity, and conformity. There is often a black-or-white sense of right and wrong. As so often, this worldview's greatest strength is also its greatest pitfall. The strong identification with the 'in-



group' runs the risk of becoming ethnocentric – considering our group best, and better than other groups, the 'out-groups'. This can become 'us against them' (*African Studies Association; University of Michigan, 2005*).

Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) argued that humans share biological traits and characteristics which form the basis for the development of culture, and that people typically feel their own cultural beliefs and practices are normal and natural, and those of others are strange, or even inferior or abnormal.

### **Implications of the Finding**

The present study has some practical implications for the society. First, chauvinism predicted domestic violence implying that too much emphasis on men's superiority over women causes more domestic violence in our present society. A lot of revolution that has taken place in the society today has closed this gap. Most of what is earlier reserved to be for men alone can equally be for women nowadays. This study calls for advocacies that can change this tenet in our society today.

Marital obligation also predicted domestic violence. The implication of this finding is that couples who do not keep their marital obligation end up having domestic violence. Domestic violence in Ohaukwu is associated more with couples who lack in their marital obligation. Traditional social orientation equally predicted domestic violence among couples in Ohaukwu LGA. Clinging to cultural practices that no longer favour gender equality leads to domestic violence. This implies that the best is for couples to assist each other in family responsibilities.

This research work is not without limitations. The sample size for this study was limited. Larger sample size may be necessary to allow for more generalization and possible conclusions. Another limitation is the choice of involving only couples of Ohaukwu LGA out of numerous couples in our society. Although the study targeted couples as participants of interest for the study; the use of couples of other LGAs and from other locations may be efficient.

### **Conclusion**



Domestic violence is a phenomenon which has caused so much concern in society and generated intense debates among policymakers, civil society activists and scholars. domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender, and can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic and psychological abuse. From the finding, both chauvinism and marital obligation among couples have been found to be potential factors that explain spousal domestic violence in Ohaukwu LGA of Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

### Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations:

- (1) Government should regularly hold programmes that teach couples or families the dangers of chauvinism in our society and its effects.
- (2) Couples should be encouraged to pay attention to things that will boost their marital obligations in order to reduce every form of chauvinism.
- (3) There should be more emphasis in our traditional orientation on how to have peaceful and progressive marriages other than aspects that promote chauvinism.
- (4) Society at large should be oriented on the negative impacts of domestic violence and that it affects every member of the family.

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