

Patterns of Domestic Violence as Expressed By Married People in Ilorin Metropolis Nigeria: Implications for Marital and Health Counsellors

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Abstract

Domestic violence is taking a different dimension in various societies. This study appraised the patterns of (and brief examination of the causes of) domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis. Variables of age, gender, religion and socio-economic status were considered. The descriptive research design was adopted for this study. Simple Random Sampling Technique was used to select 200 respondents for the study. The instrument for the study was a researcher-developed questionnaire entitled "Patterns of Domestic Violence Questionnaire"(PDVQ). The instrument was validated by five experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest method and a coefficient of 0.59 was obtained. The null hypothesis formulated for the study was analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test at 0.05 level of significance. It was observed that poor sexual relationship, poverty, poor conflict resolution skill, lack of respect for other spouses' personality, infidelity are the causes of domestic violence. The result however, revealed that denying one's spouse access to money and other basic resources at home, deliberately hitting him/her, deliberately doing something to make him/her feel diminished or embarrassed among others are the patterns of domestic violence. There were significant differences in the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by

married people in Ilorin metropolis on the bases of gender and religion. In view of the findings, it was recommended that marriage and health counsellors should educate married people on the actions/inactions which constitute patterns of domestic violence. They should also encourage couples who are experiencing one form of domestic violence or the other to seek help with counsellors so that appropriate measures could be recommended.

Key words: Causes, patterns, domestic violence, married people, marriage and health counsellors.

Introduction

Marriage is a dynamic association engaged in by adults; it represents an important point of personal-social re-organization that has attracted the attention of many social scientists. Marriage involves the coming together of a man and a woman to raise a family, and to meet the satisfaction of security and of an ensuring affection and companionship (Nwobi, 2000). According to Nadir (2003), marriage is a particular contract for the purpose of legalizing sexual intercourse and procreation. Marriage normally, is suppose to be based on the peaceful coexistence of husband and wife. In recent years, domestic violence seems to be gaining ground in many homes. In the opinion of Adeoye (2006), violence between couples has constituted a great problem for the family and the society at large. Nowadays, there is a great upsurge of rape, wife battering, wife beating and sexual harassment (Davies, 2005). Domestic violence is a pattern of behaviour which involves violence and other abuse by one person in a domestic context against another in marriage. Shipway (2004) submitted that domestic violence (DV) in marriage is violence by a spouse or partner against the other spouse or partner. Domestic violence can take a number of forms including physical, emotional, verbal, economic and sexual abuse. Domestic violence can range

from subtle coercive forms to marital rape and to violent physical abuse that could result in disfigurement or death (Gabriele, 2009).

Traditionally, domestic violence was mostly associated with physical violence; however recently, domestic violence is broadly defined as "all acts of physical, sexual, psychological, or economic violence (Gersheff, 2008). According to Ann (2000), domestic violence could occur in form of one or the two spouses calling themselves degrading names, insulting themselves. In the opinion of Gabriele (2009), discouraging one's spouse from going to school or work, discouraging one's spouse from seeing friends and family members, controlling the spendings of spouse and seizing communication gadgets are forms of domestic violence. Patterns of domestic violence could appear in form of insulting, sexual abuse, controlling spending and movement of spouse; acting jealously and blaming spouse at all time (Follingstad & DeHart, 2000).

Globally, a wife is more commonly the victim of domestic violence though the victim can also be a male partner, or both partners may engage in abusive or violent behaviour, or the victim may act in self-defense or retaliation (Ann, 2000). Victims of domestic violence may be trapped in domestic violent situations through isolation, power and control, insufficient financial resources, fear, shame, or the need to protect children. As a result of abuse, victims may experience physical disabilities, chronic health problems, mental illness, limited finances and poor ability to create healthy relationships. Victims may also experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Buttery, 2012). Children who live in a household with violence show dysregulated aggression from an early age that may later contribute to continuing the legacy of abuse when they reach adulthood (Herring, 2014).

Women in developed world who experience domestic violence are often openly encouraged to report it to the authorities. However, in Africa, domestic violence historically has been viewed as a private and family matter that does not need the involvement of government or law enforcement agency. Police officers are often reluctant to intervene in such matters, the same way the courts are also reluctant to impose any significant sanction on those convicted for domestic violence largely because, it is viewed as a misdemeanor. Domestic violence may or may not constitute a crime depending on local status, severity and duration of specific acts and other variables (Ogunjuyigbe, Akinlo & Ebigbola, 2005).

One would wonder what causes violence between couples who in the first place came together based on love; who agreed to stay together with each other till ordained death do them part. According to available literature substance (including alcohol) abuse, low levels of education, limited economic opportunities, the presence of economic downturn, educational and employment disparities between couples etc., are factors likely to cause domestic violence. In a study that was carried out by Murty (2007), it was revealed that witnessing or experiencing abuse as a child (associated with future perpetration of violence for boys and experiencing violence for girls); male control over decision-making and assets; attitudes and practices that reinforce female subordination and tolerate male violence (e.g. dowry, bride price, child marriage); and lack of punishment (impunity) for perpetrators of violence; were found to influence gender perception of the respondents. Domestic violence induced by the victim or perpetrator being older, or younger, being from a non-English-speaking background, and in the case of female victims, having a disability, being pregnant, and being on a low income (Angus, 2015). Furthermore, DV could be due to monetary

problems, alcoholism, illiteracy, extramarital affairs and dowry are the major causes of domestic violence (Sanjay *et al.*, 2013). Furthermore, in a study conducted by Jura and Bukaliya (2015), 72% of the respondents argued that domestic violence has its roots in the upbringing of children through observation of abused parents, 64% of participants expressed that stress and frustration are causes of DV and that these frustrations could come from unemployment, lack of finance to support the family and even the environmental factors.

Low socio-economic status was indicated as a cause of domestic violence in men. This got support from 3% of the participants, the remaining 97% of participants argued that domestic violence sees no economic boundaries (Jura & Bukaliya, 2015). In the study by Sanjay *et al.* (2013) the most common pattern of domestic violence faced is physical (80%) followed by mental (8%), social (8%) and sexual (4%). The common patterns of DV are physical, sexual, psychological and emotional. Physical abuse is the most commonly reported type of domestic violence according to police statistics from 2009 to 2011 (Police report). Sexual abuse involves any kind of forced sexual contact without partner consent (Domestic Violence Act Chapter 5:16). The subtle forms of suffering victims of domestic violence have had to endure include feeling helpless, depression, low self - worth and self-esteem, and these have been classified as defamation of character and as such legal intervention is expressly excluded (Domestic Violence Act 5:16). Other forms of domestic violence include financial abuse, such as withholding money from the victim, controlling the entire household bills and expenditure. Social abuse, where the perpetrator isolates the victim from friends, family and support services are also commonly reported during interview sessions. Harassment and stalking are included as forms of domestic violence, as these behaviours induce unequal power relations and

harmful consequences to the victim (Domestic Violence Act Chapter 5:16). The most clear and consistent factor influencing pattern of domestic violence is gender. While 15% of women have experienced intimate partner violence, only 4.9% of men have. However, of the men who experienced domestic violence it is likely that around half were perpetrated by a male partner (The Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland, 2015). Moreover, when the details of the crimes are broken down by gender, other patterns emerge that further disprove the claim that a quarter of victims is a man at the hands of a woman.

For example, women are far more likely to have been using violence against men in self-defence: Seventy five percent (75%) of women who have used violence against intimate male partners say they only ever did so in self-defence, and more than half of their partners agreed with this (Sutherland & Paul, 2015). This compares to only 8% of males who used violence against their female partners claiming it was in self-defence (Braaf & Meyering, 2013). Men are also far more likely to use sexual and economic violence against women than women are against men; research conducted by Hickling, Taylor and Woollacott (2003) suggested that women are six times more likely to experience sexual violence from an opposite-sex partner than men are, and more than three times more likely to experience economic violence. While it seems that women are more likely to use weapons when they use physical violence against their male intimate partners, men's acts of violence against their female partners are nevertheless more serious or severe, as judged by the perpetrators and survivors themselves, and by others (Dobash and Dobash, 2004). Other factors which can influence the causes and patterns of domestic violence are religion, age and socio-economic status of the couples. It has been documented that the level of a partner's religious belief would

determine how well he/she can manage and handle disputes (Sanjay *et al.*, 2013). Age could influence the causes and pattern of DV as age could hinder perceptions of issues (Jura & Bukaliya, 2015); this may spring up or subdue anger. In the same vein, socio-economic status of couples may influence or impact domestic violence (Sahu, 2003; Swain, 2002; Gerstein, 2000; Jejeebhoy, 1998).

Domestic violence among couples impact their physical and psychological well being and as such, it seems to be eroding the position of couples both at home and in the society at large. Similarly, exposure of couples to violent attack has been found to significantly negative impact on the development of their children. Children reared in the family setting where physical violence such as hitting, shoving, restraint, kicking, or use of a weapon is frequent, might end up to become violent in life (Ann, 2000). Such children could display depression, anxiety, trauma symptoms, anti-social behaviour and lower social competence. The family which is a microcosm of the society would also be impacted as peaceful families bring about peaceful society; the society filled with domestic violence is a violent society. It is therefore the hope of the researchers that this study would be an eye opener for couples, marriage and health counsellors, the Government and the society at large. Thus, there is need for further research to reveal the patterns of domestic violence among married adults therefore, this study examines the specifically, the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis. The following question was raised for the study:

1. What the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis?

Based on the above research question, the following hypothesis was generated:

1. There is no significant difference in the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis on the bases of age, gender, religion and economic status.

Materials and Methods

The descriptive research design was adopted for this study since the purpose of this study was to investigate the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis. The respondents that participated in this study were randomly selected from ministries, churches, mosques, educational institutions in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara state. Respondents who can read and write were randomly selected from each of the above places to give a total of two hundred (200) married people that participated in the study.

The instrument used for the collection of data for this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire entitled "Patterns of Domestic Violence Questionnaire" (PDVQ). The items of the instrument were drawn based on the review of related literature. The instrument consist of two sections; A and B. Section A requires the respondents to give personal data e.g. age range. Section B has consist of 20 items was meant to elicit information on Patterns of Domestic Violence as expressed by married people.

For the purpose of this study, the instrument "PDVQ" was given to five (5) experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria for validation. The experts made some corrections and suggestions, which were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was established using the test-retest method. The instrument was administered twice over an interval of three (3) weeks to the same set of married people. The two set of scores obtained from the questionnaire were correlated using the Pearson's Product Moment

Correlation. After the calculation, a coefficient value of 0.59 was obtained, which implies that the instrument is reliable enough for use in the study. The questionnaire was scored using four-point likert type rating scale through: Strongly Agree (1), Agree (2), Disagree (3) and Strongly Disagree (4). The mean score, which is the threshold of making decision/ interpreting the result is 2.5 $(1 + 2 + 3 + 4/4)$ therefore, any item with mean score ranging from 2.5 and above was adjudged to indicate the prevalent patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin Metropolis. The Researchers administered 200 copies of the instrument to the respondents.

The demographic data showed that 35 (17.5%) of the respondents were between ages 18- 27 years, 55(27.5%) of the respondents were between ages 28-37 years, 65(32.5%) of the respondents were between ages 38-47 while, 45(22.5%) 48 years and above, while 25 (12.5%) of the respondents were 41 years and above. The data also showed that 71 (35.5%) of the respondents were male while, 129 (64.5%) of the respondents were female; 11 (5.5%) of the respondents practiced African Traditional Religion (ATR), 78 (39%) respondents were practicing Christianity, and 111 (55.5%) respondents were practicing Islam; 102 (51%) of the respondents were earning less than N50,000 per month, 54 (27%) of the respondents were earning between N50,000-N100,000 per month while 44 (22%) of the respondents were earning more than N100,000 per month. The data collected were subjected to Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and t-test at 0.05 level significance using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17.0 statistical software.

Results

Table 1: Mean and Ranking Order of Respondents' Expression on the Patterns of Domestic Violence

S/N	In my own view, domestic violence could take any of the following pattern. A partner:	Mean	Rank
4	denying his/her spouse access to money or other basic resources at home	3.40	1 st
1	deliberately hitting his/her spouse	3.27	2 nd
2	deliberately doing something to make his/her spouse feel diminished or embarrassed	3.17	3 rd
3	isolating his/her spouse from friends and family	3.17	4 th
18	monitoring his/her spouse where about	3.16	5 th
5	deliberately passing on sexual transmitted disease to the spouse	3.15	6 th
7	deliberately committing intimacy rape against the spouse	3.14	7 th
8	deliberately depriving his/her spouse of sexual intercourse	3.12	8 th
15	giving degrading remarks about his/her spouse's sexuality	3.10	9 th
6	deliberately causing physical pain during sex to his/her spouse	3.08	10 th
20	using obscene languages on his/her spouse	2.98	11 th
16	threatening his/her spouse by brandishing a weapon	2.97	12 th
14	deliberately refusing to use contraception in order to cause unwanted pregnancy	2.95	13 th

9	controlling what the spouse can do	2.93	14 th
10	forcibly extorting money from the weaker spouse	2.91	15 th
17	mocking and calling his/her spouse names	2.90	16 th
11	deliberately interfering with his/her spouse's work	2.88	17 th
13	removing his/her spouse communication devices	2.84	18 th
19	taking the children away without notice of his/her partner	2.82	19 th
12	forbidding his/her spouse from maintaining a personal bank account	2.71	20 th

Table 1 shows that married people in Ilorin metropolis expressed that denying spouse's access to money or other basic resources at home, deliberately hitting one's spouse, deliberately doing something to make the spouse feel diminished or embarrassed and isolating a spouse from friends and family, removing one's spouse communication devices, taking the children away without notice of one's partner, forbidding one's spouse from maintaining a personal bank account are the patterns of domestic violence.

Table 2: Means, Standard Deviation and t-value of the Respondents' Expression on the Patterns of Domestic Violence based on Age, Gender, Religious and Socio-Economic Status

Age Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Calc. F	Crit.F
Between group	180.015	3	60.050		
Within group	22737.78	197	115.420	0.52	3.00
Total	22917.795	199			

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Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal.	Critical t-value t-value
Male	71	55.30	12.93	198	5.62*	1.96
Female	129	63.59	17.94			

Religion						
Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Calc. F	Crit. F	
Between group	2127.065	2	1063.532			
Within group	20970.730	197	105.537	10.08*	3.00	
Total	22917.795	199				

Socio-Economic Status						
Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Calc. F	Crit. F	
Between group	134.565	2	67.282			
Within group	22783.230	197	115.651	0.58	3.00	
Total	22917.795	199				

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviation and t-value of the respondents' expression on the patterns of domestic violence based on age, gender, religious and socio-economic status. Based on age, the cal. F value of 0.52 is less than the critical F. value of 3.00. Based on gender, calculated t- value of 5.62 is greater than a critical t-value of 1.96. based on religion, the cal. F value of 10.8 is greater than the critical F. value of 3.00. Based on socio-economic status, the cal. F value of 0.58 is less than the critical F. value of 3.00. The hypotheses which stated that there is no significant difference in the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis on the bases of age and economic status are accepted while the hypotheses are rejected based on gender and religion.

Table 3: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Output for Differences in the Patterns of Domestic Violence as Expressed by Married People in Ilorin Metropolis Based on Religion

Religion	Group	Mean	NO	Duncan's Grouping
Christianity	1	62.12	78	A*
ATR	2	67.02	11	B
Islam	3	66.96	111	C

Table 3 shows the Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) output for significant difference in the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin Metropolis based on religion. The findings show that respondents who are adherents of the christian faith had 62.12 as the mean score which is significantly different from the mean scores of those respondents who are of African Traditional Religion and Islamic faiths with mean scores of 67.03 and 66.96 respectively. However, group 1(Christianity) i.e., respondents who practice christianity expressed more patterns of domestic violence than those who practice the other two religions.

Discussion

Based on literature review and interview checklist, it was noted that poor sexual relationship, poverty, poor conflict resolution skill, lack of respect for other spouses' personality, infidelity, negative family background, differing religious beliefs, wide gap in age differences, difference in ethnic group, lack of respect for the other spouse's personality, lack of appropriate sanction for abusers among other factors, are the causes of domestic violence. This observation is consistent with the findings of Jura and Bukaliya (2015) who noted that ineffective communication skills was the root cause of domestic

violent behaviour in spousal relationships. This finding was also supported by the research finding of Furnham (1988) in which it was revealed that domestic violence is caused by poor communication.

Similarly, Sutherland and Paul (2015) assert that just one factor is not enough; it is not just being exposed to society's prejudices, use of alcohol, witnessing violence as a child, or individual predisposition that leads to domestic violence, but an interplay of all of these crystallized by the choice to use violence. But the interaction of these factors is clearly not random. The findings of this study showed that married people in Ilorin metropolis expressed that denying spouse's access to money or other basic resources at home, deliberately hitting one's spouse, deliberately doing something to make the spouse feel diminished or embarrassed and isolating a spouse from friends and family, removing one's spouse communication devices, taking the children away without notice of one's partner, forbidding one's spouse from maintaining a personal bank account are the patterns of domestic violence.

This corroborates the finding of Coker and Smith (2006) in which it was noted revealed that patterns of domestic violence include economic abuse; putting the victim on a strict allowance, withholding money at will and forcing one's spouse to beg for money until the abuser (husband/wife) gives him or her some money. This finding is also consistent with the finding of Buttery (2012) which showed that verbal abuse and physical abuse (such as hitting, beating and slapping) are forms of domestic violence. The respondents are able to identify aforesaid patterns of domestic violence because domestic violence appears to be common occurrence in many homes and it takes different patterns such as highlighted in the study. Age did not have significant difference in the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in

Ilorin metropolis. This implies that married people did not view the patterns of domestic violence differently based on age. This finding negates the findings of Ogunjiyigbe, Akinlo and Ebigbola (2005) who found that age could be a strong determinant of respondents' expression regarding patterns of violence. The finding however, tallies with that of Adeoye (2006) who equally found that age does not influence the expression of participants on domestic violence.

This findings could be a reflection of the age differential in the emotional will power between old and young spouses in term of ability to handle domestic challenges including domestic violence. It is probable that why the former belief that they can control their spouses the way they want; (by using their age long knowledge of each other to have their needs met) the younger spouses may feel they lack equal ability to get their spouses to do their biddings the way the more elderly are doing.

Gender have significant difference on the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis. This implies that married people in Ilorin metropolis differ significantly in their expression on the patterns of domestic violence on the basis of gender. This finding corroborates the finding of Murty (2007) who found a significant difference in the expression of married people as regards domestic violence. The reason for this finding may be that males and females have different perception about themselves and what connotes domestic violence. Significant difference exists in the expression of the respondents on patterns of domestic violence based on religious affiliation. The implication of this is that married people in Ilorin metropolis differ on the basis of religious affiliation with reference to patterns of domestic violence. This difference was however hieghtened by the expression of christian respondents. One

of the reasons for the difference could be the inherent difference in the ideological orientation and doctrines of the three religious beliefs and diverse personality disposition of their followers. These difference in ideology tends in turn to influence how each individual relate with his fellow being (wife or husband as the case may be) and even God their creator. This finding is in line with the finding of Rodriguez (2007) which revealed that there was a significant difference in the patterns of domestic violence as perceived by married persons on the basis of religion.

Rodriguez argued that that all the major world religions historically taught the dominance of men over women, In christianity and Islam for instance, women are enjoined to submit to their husbands in totality, that they have no right over their own body, life or even opinions. Quite often, this conception is further entrenched by advice from clergymen, church elders, Imams and other members of the religious congregation (Johnson, 2006).

It must be stated, however, that the exception granted by Islam for a woman to disobey her husband is when the husband instruct her to disobey God, then at such juncture she is not obliged to obey him. Socio-economic status of the respondents did not influence their expressions on the patterns of domestic violence. This indicates that the expression of respondent who earn below N50, 000 and those who earn above N100, 000 did not differ. This finding did not tally with the finding of Khan *et al.* (2002); Martin *et al.* (2002) who found that respondents with lower economic status differ in their opinion on what constitute domestic violence. The reason for this finding could be linked to the social standing of the respondents which is likely to influence their general perception of life and what domestic violence would imply based on their exposure and life experience.

Conclusion

Poor sexual relationship, poverty, poor conflict resolution skills, lack of respect for other spouses' personality, infidelity, negative family background, differing religious beliefs, wide gap in age differences, difference in ethnic group, lack of respect for the other spouse's personality, lack of appropriate sanction for abusers are some of the causes of domestic violence. Denying a spouse access to money or other basic resources at home, deliberately hitting one's spouse, deliberately doing something to make the spouse feel diminished or embarrassed and isolating a spouse from friends and family, removing one's spouse communication devices, taking the children away without notice of one's partner, forbidding one's spouse from maintaining a personal bank account are some of the patterns of domestic violence. There were significant differences in the patterns of domestic violence as expressed by married people in Ilorin metropolis on the bases of gender and religion but no significant difference exist in their expression on the what constitute domestic violence based on age and socio-economic status.

Implications of the Findings to Marriage and Health Counsellors

The findings of this study has a number of implications for marriage and family life counselling and counselling practice. Foremost amongst these is the fact that marital counsellors with this knowledge would have to assist in restructuring the married couples' cognition about the concept of domestic violence. This could be achieved by organising seminars, family discussion forum, Focus Group Discussion, public lecture and marital counselling on continual basis on the different causes and patterns of domestic violence and how to guard against them. In culture where the perceived male dominance is a predisposing factor for domestic

violence by men against women, the marriage counsellors should persuade and/or encourage husbands to perceive their spouses (wives) as their partners and treat them with more humane disposition.

Marriage counsellors would have to lead the advocacy for the entrenchment of pre-marital and marital counselling as part of courtship and honeymoon activities for would-be and newly married couples as a way of reducing incidences of domestic violence occasioned by lack of adequate understanding or undue assumption about the role of each partner in the marriage union. Marriage and health counsellors should orientate the entire populace which include religious leaders on the need to preach the words of God in such a way that they wont be misconceived.

Health counsellors should educate married people on the implications of each pattern of domestic violence. Health and marriage counsellors should encourage couples who are experiencing one pattern of domestic violence or the other to seek help with couensellors so that appropriate measures could be taken. Health counsellors should provide those that are victims of domestic violence with apprpriate rehabilitation counselling to enable them overcome the emotional trauma. Health counsellors should inquire about physical, sexual, and psychological abuse especially among women, as part of counselling information so that appropriate referral could then be made. Marriage and health counsellors should lead the advocacy for criminalizing domestic violence as a way of reducing its prevalence among the populace.

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