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Influence of Domestic Violence on Marital Relationships and Family Sustainability Among Married People During Covid 19 Pandemic in Ilorin West Local Government, Ilorin, Kwara State

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of domestic violence on marital relationships and family sustainability among married people during Covid 19 pandemic in Ilorin west LGA in Kwara State. Six (6) research questions were raised, and two (2) hypotheses were formulated. Survey research design was adopted. The population was one thousand eight hundred and thirty-three married people (1,833). The sample for the study comprised two hundred (200) respondents selected at random. Domestic Violence and Marital Relationship Questionnaire (DVMRQ) was the instrument used for data collection. Research questions were analyzed using frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation. The Null Hypotheses were tested with t-test and Pearson product moment correlation at 0-05 level of significance. The findings revealed that 54% of the respondents experience physical abuse, while 46% experience emotional/psychological abuse. Causes of domestic violence includes nagging (46%, ($\bar{x} = 2.39$) and devoting longer hours to work (24.5%, 2.48). Domestic violence significantly influences marital relationships as shown with lack of peace in the home (3.17), lack of unity in managing resources (3.01), lack of communication between partners (3.01), and deprivation of family needs (2.71). Emotional instability results in ill-health or mental disorder (2.41) and having difficulty in sleeping, eating and concentrating 35.5%, 2.25). On the influence of domestic violence on work, 39% of the respondents agreed that it was difficult to relate well with colleagues at work due to domestic violence (2.96). Result of hypotheses revealed there is a significant difference in the expressed causes of domestic violence based on gender ($p<0.05$). The study concluded that domestic violence significantly influences marital relationships and family sustainability. The study recommends that married people should train to develop trust. Awareness campaigns should be done by social welfare, NGOs, Home Economists and religious leaders to enlighten married people on how to seek redress in the event of domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Marital Relationships, Child- Upbringing, Communication, COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction

In all culture, there is a particular sanctity attached to this institution of marriage, so much that it is particularly considered to be a building block of any society. Domestic violence is a problem that is entrenched in marriages across the globe and remains a hidden and persistent problem because of the power and control

held by the abuser, the fear, intimidation and humiliation suffered by the victim. Domestic violence is a wide range of physical, sexual, and psychological maltreatment used by one partner in an intimate relationship against the other, (Walker, 2000, APA,2012). The key elements of marital violence are intimidation, humiliation and physical injury. The Covid-19 pandemic poses major challenges to societies all over the world. While efforts to contain the virus are vital to protect global health, these same efforts are exposing married people to an increased risk of family violence. (Pereda & Díaz-Faes, 2020). The social isolation required by the measures taken in the different countries, the impact on jobs, economic instability, high levels of tension and fear of the virus, and new forms of relationships have all increased levels of stress in families. In addition, mandatory lockdowns imposed to curb the spread of the disease have trapped married people in their homes.

Domestic violence is currently recognized as a crime and represents a significant public health problem affecting the health and wellbeing of victims, their families, and communities (Gerino et.al 2020). It often escalates from threats and verbal assault to life-threatening violence, and victims may suffer different forms of abuse and violence simultaneously. Reports of an increase in domestic violence during the pandemic have been emerging worldwide. WHO (2020) observed an increase of 60% of emergency calls from women subjected to intimate partner violence in European member States, France reported a 30% increase in cases of domestic violence. Germany and Spain also recorded increases in domestic violence and need for emergency shelter in contrast, an 8.6% decrease in complaints of domestic violence was registered in Portugal between January and September 2020 compared to the same period in 2019, and a similar trend was observed in Italy Women (Mahase,2020; UN, 2020; Ertan,2020; Graham-Harrison et.al,2020). In the United Kingdom, 27% of women and 13% of men have experienced some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime. (Olson and Defrain, 2006). In the year ending March 2015 in England and Wales, 44% of female murder victims, compared with 6% of male murder victims, died at the hands of their partner or former partner. There is a gender difference in prevalence and impact of domestic violence, but many men do experience domestic violence and, like women, may suffer long term damage to their mental health. Domestic violence and abusive behavior are responsible for poor family relationship, although personality conflicts and troubles within a marriage affect intimate behavior, (Olson and Defrain, 2006).

According to Ojeahere, Kumswa, and Adiukwu, (2021), in Nigeria decreased prevalence of violence were found in the early phase of the pandemic, suggesting that married people can experience less partner violence during periods of confinement. 22.6% of participants reported that the lockdown affected their mental health, Hopelessness, feelings of failure, being irritable, and constantly under strain were psychological symptoms significantly associated with Intimate partner violence (IPV) during the lockdown.

Acording to Arisukwu et.al (2021) in Nigeria, domestic violence is equally a societal problem that affects women and girls in form of rape, maltreatment, deprivations, physical and emotional punishments thus affecting family sustainability. It is often supported by culture and religion, therefore, making

women to suffer in silence. Risk factors for domestic violence may be caused by: Lower education levels, childhood abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, men who view women as inferior, growing up in an abusive environment and females who witness domestic violence as children (Plumptre, 2021).

Sustainable family development focuses on family social development (if family members do not get along well together socially, they are unlikely to be successful economically or environmentally), family economic development (if family members fail together economically, they are less likely to be environmentally friendly), and finally on family environmental development (once families have the skills and the tools and the sense of security to do so). Sustainability is the process of living within the limits of available physical, natural and social resources in ways that allow the living systems in which humans are embedded to thrive in perpetuity (United Nations General Assembly, 2005).

According to the National Centre for Injury Prevention and Control (2005), violent and abusive behavior continue to be a major cause of death, injury, stress and fear in the country. Sexual Assault Survivor Services (1990), added that domestic violence affects every member of the family, including the children. Family violence creates a home environment where children live in constant fear. According to Terry (2008), children who witness family violence are affected in ways like children who are physically abused. Consequently, children show more anxiety, low self-esteem, depression, anger, and temperament problems than children who do not witness violence in the home. Children are unable to establish nurturing bonds with either parent. Child Welfare Partnership (2020) stated that, violence affects the lives of women worldwide, in all socio-economic and educational classes. Bazza (2010) said domestic violence cuts across cultural and religious barriers, impeding the right of women to participate fully in major decision making. Women share a lower status and are not considered equal to men – socially, economically and politically despite the equal rights.

Domestic violence focuses on the structure of the family. It is believed that certain characteristics put a family or a married people at risk for violence. Individuals who have witnessed violence within their own family may be more likely to imitate similar behavior in their relationships as adults (Smallbone & Wortley, 2000). United Nations Children Fund, (2000) postulated that, the convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women adopted in 1979 and the convention on the rights of the child adopted in 1989, affirmed the principles of fundamental rights and freedom of every human being. The strength of these rests on an international consensus and the assumption that all practices that harm women and children no matter how deeply are embedded in culture must be eradicated.

This study's problem on the influence of domestic violence on marital relationships was based on, the researcher's experiences, conversations, and observations on the happenings in families. Through interactions with friends and colleagues, women and men talk about their situations at home, and revealed common forms of abuse by spouses as battering, sexual abuse, giving out female children in marriage at an early age and depriving them neither to participate in the decision of child

marriage nor to take part in family affairs. It is also observed that violation of women at home has made women to be unable to participate fully in issues at home and in the society. As such, women have no freedom to speak for themselves. Based on the above this study is geared to determine the influence of domestic violence on family relationship among married people in Ilorin West Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Research Questions: The following questions were raised for the study

1. What are the types of domestic violence experienced by married people in Ilorin LGA?
2. What are the causes of domestic violence among married people in Ilorin LGA?
3. What is the influence of domestic violence on marital relationships in Ilorin LGA?
4. Does domestic violence influence emotional stability of married people in Ilorin LGA?
5. What is the influence of domestic violence on the work or professionalism of married people in Ilorin LGA?
6. What is the influence of domestic violence on child upbringing in Ilorin LGA?

Research Hypotheses: The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

H_{01}: Domestic violence will not significantly influence marital relationships among married peoples.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between male and female in causes of domestic violence among married people

Methodology

Design of the Study: -The study adopted a descriptive survey research design where data was collected from subjects using a questionnaire. Survey research design was chosen because the researcher collected information from a large population using sample to generalize which can be replicated in other studies.

Population of the study: -The target population for the study consisted of all working-class married people in Ilorin West Local Government with a total of one Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty-Three (,1833) from two wards. (Ilorin West Local Government Area, 2019)

Sample and Sampling Technique

Stratified, purposive and proportionate sampling techniques were adopted for this study. First stage involved stratifying the state into 16 local government areas (LGAs). Second stage involves purposively selecting one LGA which is Ilorin West LGA. Third stage involved using homogeneous purposive sampling techniques in selecting two wards. In the last stage proportionate sampling technique was adopted to select 200 sample respondents.

Instrument for Date Collection

Domestic Violence Questionnaire (DVQ) was developed by the researcher based on the research questions and research hypotheses. Responses of each item was rated on a 4 = point rating scale ranging from (1 = strongly disagree; 2 =disagree; 3 =agree 4=strongly agree) scaled 4 to 1, respectively. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts in Home Economics, from the University of Ilorin, Kwara state.

Data Analysis: Data collected was analyzed with descriptive statistics such as frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Hypothesis one was tested using two tailed (t-test), while hypothesis

two was tested with Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). All null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule was based on the four-point rating scale of 2.50 by which a mean rating of an item by the respondents equal to or above 2.50 was taken as agreed while less than 2.50 was taken as disagreed.

Analysis of Research Questions

Table 1 revealed that respondents experience different types of domestic violence in form of physical abuse which results in ill-health(3.17) or withholding help when sick/injured (3.01) and emotional/psychological abuse such as being afraid of self-expression (3.01) and isolation (2.76).

Table 1:Mean ratings and Rank order on types of domestic violence experienced by married people in Ilorin West LGA Kwara State.

Types of Domestic Violence	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$
Physical Abuse:					
Grabbing and pushing	28.5	13.5	34.5	23.5	2.47
Kicking and Punching	8.0	17.0	18.5	56.5	1.77
Slapping Hitting	28.0	31.5	21.0	19.5	2.68
Stabbing	24.0	19.5	18.0	38.5	2.29
Biting	29.0	35.5	18.0	17.5	2.76
Withholding physical needs such as sleep or food	17.0	19.5	27.0	36.5	2.17
Locking out of the house	29.0	28.0	27.5	15.5	2.71
Withholding help when sick/injured	42.5	26.5	21.0	10.0	3.01
Domestic violence results in ill-health	50.0	25.9	17.5	8.0	3.17
Emotional/ Psychological abuse:					
Domestic violence results in mental disorder	18.0	30.0	27.0	25.0	2.41
Difficulty in sleeping, eating and concentrating	18.0	17.5	35.5	29.0	2.25
Poor emotional health due to humiliation, embarrassment &	18.2	10.6	29.4	41.8	2.01
Isolation	29.0	35.5	18.0	17.5	2.76
Anxiety and depression	17.5	10.0	28.5	44.0	2.08
Being afraid of self-expression	40.5	31.0	18.0	10.5	3.01
Spousal insults	26.5	38.0	19.5	16.0	2.75
Requests and needs are constantly ignored	21.0	29.0	29.5	20.5	2.50
Experience excessive aggression	20.0	26.0	33.0	21.0	2.45

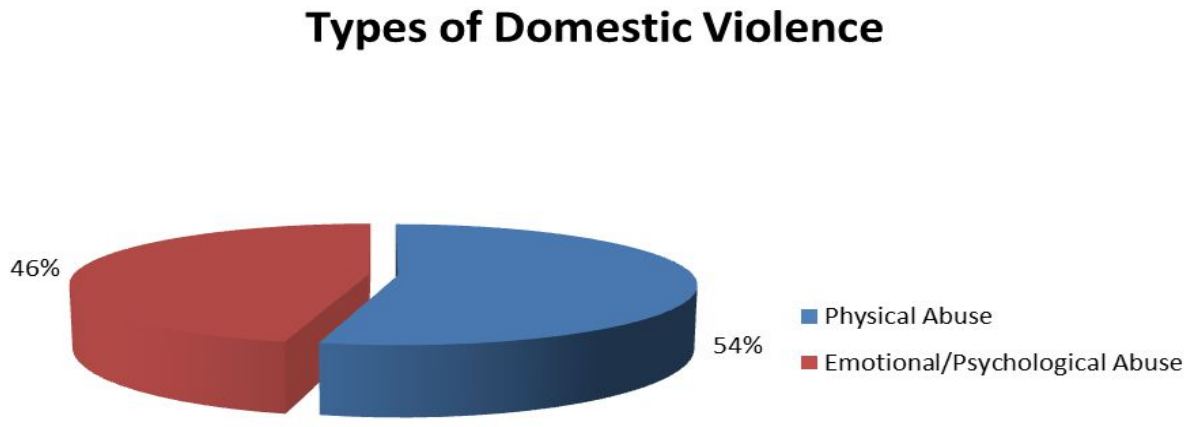


Figure 1: Types of Domestic Violence

Table 2 indicates causes of domestic violence. 46% of the respondents agreed nagging ($\bar{x}$= 2.39) 48.5% states religious beliefs make them to honor their commitment to marriage and stay in an abusive relationship (=2.35), verbal and emotional abuse (=2.35), devoting longer hours to work always cause domestic violence (=2.48). I do not yield to subtle warming signs my partner gives (=1.89).

Table 2:Mean ratings and Rank order of the causes of domestic violence among married people in Ilorin West LGA Kwara State.

Statements	SA (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	SD (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	Remark
Nagging	18.0	28.0	29.0	25.0	2.39	Disagree
My religious beliefs make me honor my commitment to marriage and stay in the abusive relationship	12.5	36.0	26.0	25.5	2.35	Disagree
Culture permits the use of violence to keep partner in line	3.5	5.5	38.5	52.5	1.60	Disagree
Use of alcohol, drugs and other addictive substances	12.0	15.0	23.0	50.0	1.89	Disagree
Verbal and emotional abuse	14.5	32.0	27.0	26.5	2.00	Disagree
I do not yield to subtle warming signs my partner gives	11.0	32.5	35.5	21.0	1.89	Disagree
Devoting longer hours to work than to my marriage	24.5	25.0	24.0	26.5	2.48	Disagree
Loss of job and stress levels at home	(10.5)	17.5	32.0	40.0	1.60	Disagree

Table 3 shows the respondents agreed that domestic violence always leads to lack of peace in the home ($\bar{x}$ =3.17), lack of unity in managing resources (3.01), lack of communication between partners (3.01), reduces love for one another (2.96). 27.5% of the respondents showed that domestic violence leads to deprivation of family needs, (2.71). aggressive sex/rape against spouse (2.45), bodily injury of family members. (2.68), divorce and serial marriages (2.41), makes spousal economy defective (2.50), leads to single headed families, (2.46) and affect other extended family relationships such as in-laws negatively. (2.29).

Table 3: Mean ratings and Rank order of Influence of domestic violence on marital relationships in Ilorin West LGA Kwara State

Items	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	Ranking
Leads to deprivation of family needs	29.0	28.0	27.5	15.5	2.71	5th
Lack of communication between partners	42.5	26.5	21.0	10.0	3.01	2nd
Can lead to aggressive sex against spouse will	20.0	26.0	33.0	21.0	2.45	9th
Reduces love for one another	39.0	32.0	15.0	14.0	2.96	4th
Leads to lack of peace in the home	50.0	25.9	17.5	8.0	3.17	1st
Leads to lack of unity in managing resources	40.5	31.0	18.0	10.5	3.01	2nd
Leads to divorce and serial marriages.	18.0	30.0	27.0	25.0	2.41	10th
Leads to single headed families,	26.5	19.5	27.0	27.0	2.46	8th
Leads to bodily injury of family members.	28.0	31.5	21.0	19.5	2.68	6th
Makes spousal economy defective	21.0	29.0	29.5	20.5	2.50	7th
Affect other extended family relationships such as in-laws negatively.	24.0	19.5	18.0	38.5	2.29	11th

Table 4 indicates that domestic violence often results in ill-health or mental disorder ($\bar{x}$ =2.41), having difficulty in sleeping, eating and concentrating (2.25), insult from spouse, making the other person feel bad about him/herself (2.22). suffering physical and physiological problems because of spouse maltreatment, (2.17). 4 items were ranked below the third position.

Table 4: Mean ratings and Rank order of the Influence of domestic violence on emotional stability of married people in Ilorin West LGA Kwara State.

Statements	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	Ranking
I experience Poor self-esteem resulting from acts of abuse.	17.5	16.0	37.0	29.5	2.22	3rd
My spouse push, kick, slap, punch or shock makes me to be afraid of self-expression	8.0	17.0	18.5	56.5	1.77	7th
I suffer poor emotional health because of humiliation by my spouse	18.2	10.6	29.4	41.8	2.01	6th
Anxiety and depression	17.5	10.0	28.5	44.0	2.08	5th
Difficulty in sleeping, eating and concentrating	18.0	17.5	35.5	29.0	2.25	2nd
ill-health or depression	18.0	30.0	27.0	25.0	2.41	1st
Suffer physical and physiological problems because of spouse maltreatment	17.0	19.5	27.0	36.5	2.17	4th

Table 5 indicates the influence of domestic violence on work. Result shows that it was difficult to relate well with colleagues at work due to domestic violence ($\bar{x} = 2.96$) and they still perform well at work (2.47), they get to work early despite being in an abusive relationship (2.46) and absent at work (2.41). lose concentration at work (2.20).

Table 5: Mean ratings and Rank order of the Influence of domestic violence on work of married people in Ilorin West LGA Kwara State.

Statements	Always (%)	Often (%)	Sometimes (%)	Never (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	Rank
I perform well at work despite being harassed	28.5	13.5	34.5	23.5	2.47	2nd
I get to work early despite being in an abusive relationship	26.5	19.5	27.0	27.0	2.46	3rd
My spouse collects my salary and gives me as needs arises.	7.0	8.5	21.5	63.0	1.60	7th
My spouse deprives me the right to employment	6.0	13.5	17.0	63.5	1.65	6th
I lose concentration at work	17.0	17.5	33.0	32.5	2.20	5th
I find it difficult to relate well with colleagues at work	39.0	32.0	15.0	14.0	2.96	1st
I am sometimes absent at work due to domestic injuries	18.0	30.0	27.0	25.0	2.41	4th

Table 6 shows the mean ratings on the influence of domestic violence on child upbringing. The result indicates that respondents agree to all the items on child upbringing skills except two. This indicate that domestic violence influences child upbringing.

Table 6: Mean ratings and Rank order of the Influence of domestic violence on child upbringing.

Statements	SA (%)	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	SD (%)	Mean $\bar{x}$	Decision
I find it hard to be patient with my child.	24.0	27.0	26.5	22.5	2.52	Agree
I find it difficult to make opportunities for my child to mix with other children.	26.5	38.0	19.5	16.0	2.75	Agree
I monitor my child's social activity on social platforms	21.0	29.0	29.5	20.5	2.50	Agree
I punish my child/children for every rule broken or not followed	29.0	35.5	18.0	17.5	2.36	Disagree
I find time to attend my child's/children's games or events in which they are participating	28.0	31.5	21.0	19.5	2.68	Agree
I do spend time with my child/children during homework, mealtime,	24.0	19.5	18.0	38.5	2.59	Agree
I can deal with my child's /children' emotions	26.5	38.0	19.5	16.0	2.75	Agree
I can make decisions about my child's /children education and health issues	21.0	29.0	29.5	20.5	2.50	Agree
I find it difficult making time for my child	29.0	35.5	18.0	17.5	2.26	Disagree
I encourage my child/children to help me when I am doing jobs in the home	28.0	31.5	21.0	19.5	2.68	Agree
I know when to say no to my child guide his/her behavior and protect him/her.	24.0	19.5	18.0	38.5	2.49	Agree

Hypotheses Testing

T-test was used to analyze the hypothesis postulated for this study

As shown on Table 6, the results of the analysis of the difference in the perceived causes of domestic violence based on gender shows that the calculated t-value was 2.21 while its calculated P-value is 0.03 at alpha level of 0.05. ($p < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This means that there is a significant difference in the perceived causes of domestic violence on the basis of gender.

Table 6: t-test analysis of the difference in the causes of domestic violence based on gender

Gender	No	Mean	Std	Df	Cal.t	P-Value	Decision
Male	88	15.69	4.70				
				198	2.21	0.03	**Rejected**
Female	112	14.27	4.33				

P< 0.05

Table 7 shows the calculated r value of 51.02 and a P value of .000 at an alpha level of 0.05, the p value is less than the alpha level($p<0.05$), therefore, the null hypothesis which states that domestic violence will not significantly influence marital relationships among married people is rejected. This implies that domestic violence significantly influence marital relationships among married people.

Table 7: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on influence of domestic violence on marital relationships.

Variable	N	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Std	Df	r	P-Value	Remark
Influence of domestic violence on marital relationships	200	19.78	5.48	199	51.02	0.000	Rejected

P< 0.05

Discussion

Result of the findings revealed that respondents experience physical abuse and emotional/Psychological abuse and the causes of domestic violence among married people include: nagging, religious beliefs, culture, verbal and emotional quarrels, devoting longer hours to work, loss of job and stress levels at home and not yielding to subtle warning signs given by partners.

The results on influence of domestic violence on marital relationships showed that domestic violence leads to lack of peace in the home, lack of unity in managing resources; creates lack of communication between partners and reduces love for one another. The findings agree with the summation of Sexual Assault Survivor Services (1990) who asserted that personality conflicts and troubles within a marriage clearly contribute to marital breakdown and added that domestic violence affects every member of the family. The Child Welfare Partnership, (2020) revealed that domestic violence leads to women being

neglected in major household decision making. Campbell (2002) reported that domestic violence led to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The World Health Organization (2002) corroborates the findings of this study and asserted that domestic violence or spousal abuse results in physical and emotional abuse and economic costs and death is not uncommon.

Campbell (2002) and AlMajali and Alsrehan (2019) discovered that family violence in the form of physical abuse can cause injuries that can make it difficult to care for children's everyday needs like bathing, changing nappies, or cooking meals for children. Raising Children Network (2020) reports that depression due to family violence can make it harder for one to deal with the challenges of parenting (feeding children, getting them to school and playing with them or be patient and understanding with children). Results of the hypothesis shows that there was a significant difference in the causes of domestic violence based on gender. That is to say that causes of domestic violence is not limited to only to the male nor the female but both partners have a part to play in the prevalence of domestic violence. A UNICEF (2000) report stated that domestic violence is usually perpetrated by men who are, or who had been, in the position of trust, intimacy and power over the women. In most cases, the perpetrators are husbands, boyfriends, fathers, fathers-in-law, stepfathers, brothers, uncles, sons, or other relatives of the victims. UNICEF (2000) reported that women could also be perpetrators of acts of domestic violence though their actions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that domestic violence significantly influences marital relationships and family sustainability and there is no significant difference between male and female in the causes of domestic violence. Based on the result and the conclusion reached, the following recommendations are made: -

1. Comprehensive and extensive premarital counselling should be given to intending married peoples on how to manage their marital relationship.
2. Awareness campaigns should be done by social welfare, NGOs, Home Economists and religious leaders to sensitize communities and enlighten married people on their rights and how to seek redress if these rights are violated.
3. Government, faith based institutions and community based organizations(CBOs) should develop guidelines on domestic violence which may be used by healthcare providers and community workers to assist in the detection, documentation and intervention strategies when cases of domestic violence occur. Laws that protect vulnerable populations during pandemics such as COVID-19 should be strengthened.

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