

## THE ROLE OF EDUCATION, RELIGION AND CULTURE ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG WOMEN IN KADUNA

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### Abstract

*Domestic violence is a human rights violation with psychological consequences that affects women, families, and the society in general. This study examined the influence of Education, Religion, and Culture on Domestic Violence amongst women in Kaduna State. Participants for this study included One hundred and twenty(110) women who were of varying legal status with their age ranging from 18 to 55 years. The general objective of the study was to establish the influence of these three variables on domestic violence in the state. The design for this study was cross sectional descriptive design and a 3 part, 33 item questionnaire was used to collect data that was analyzed. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested using multiple regression analysis. The key findings of the study were that, education, religion and culture has a joint influence on domestic violence among women in Kaduna (  $p= 0.726 < 0.01$  )The study concluded that factors affecting domestic violence were multi-dimensional and varies and that to reduce the rates of domestic violence, victims must encouraged seek help and be assured of their safety when they do so. It was recommended that deliberate efforts must be made on the part of the government to put in place laws and policies that can adequately address the issue of domestic violence and to equip the law enforcement agencies to improve prosecution of cases of domestic violence. Also, more helping professionals such as psychologists, social workers, etc should be employed and trained on how to detect, manage and support victims and also rendering social intervention services to victims will go a long way in curbing the menace.*

**Keywords:** Domestic Violence, Education, Religion, Culture

### INTRODUCTION

Domestic Violence is a menace that has ravaged families and societies from time immemorial, regardless of their educational qualifications, religious affiliations or even cultural backgrounds. In Nigeria especially, it is expected that any woman suffering from such should bear it stoically because revealing it to the society will lead to more scorn and castigation for her lack of endurance. Although domestic violence has always been known to be violence from man inflicted on woman, it has recently been discovered that domestic violence can be suffered by either partner in a relationship regardless of gender. It is often accompanied by emotionally abusive or controlling behaviour which is a part of a systemic pattern of dominance and control which leads to several consequences such as physical injury, psychological trauma and even death.

Recently, it has begun to be viewed as a criminal problem and as such there have been some enforcement benefits of recent laws prohibiting all forms of violence such as The Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act 2015 (VAPP ACT). this law aligns with the Convention of the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) 1979 to which Nigeria is a signatory. The Violence Against Person (prohibition) Act 2015 is an act enacted by the National Assembly of the Federal Republic of Nigeria of Nigeria, to eliminate violence in private and public life, prohibit all forms of violence against person and to provide maximum protection and effective remedies for victims and punishment of offenders; and for related matters. Section 19(1) of the Act provides spousal battery thus a person who batters his or her spouse commits an offence and is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment or a fine not exceeding N200,000 or both. Section 19(2) provides that a person who attempts to commit the act of violence provided for in subsection (1) commits an offence and is liable to on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or a fine not exceeding N100,000 or both. Also section 19(3) provides for the fine of N200,000 or an imprisonment of not exceeding 1 year for a person who incites, aids, or abets another to commit any offence against another while Section 19(4) provides for an imprisonment of not less than 1 year or fine of N200,000 or both against anyone

who receives or assists a perpetrator of violence against other. However only 13 states inclusive of the FCT out of the 36 states have domesticated the VAPP ACT after 6 years of it being signed into law despite it being monumental and progressive towards addressing the issue of domestic violence and protection of victims. This lack of adoption and implementation of by the states has resulted to the fact that with the rise in gender based violence enabled by the COVID 19 lockdown and subsequent economic crunch and inflation being experienced in Nigeria, perpetrators are able to walk away without paying for their crime thereby hindering the victim from getting justice.

There are numerous factors contributing to domestic domestic violence, although each country has unique factors that contribute to the nature of its own in that particular area(Walker, 1999). it could be social factors such as acceptance of domestic violence, low social status of women, oppressive political structures, oppressive fundamental religious beliefs that devalue women, civil conflicts, and the existence of states of war contribute to the existing prevalence rates of domestic violence in other countries (Walker, 1999).

Domestic Violence research has begun to identify a variety of factors associated with involvement in and protection from domestic violence. In international studies, stress related factors, such as poverty; poverty, lack of education, lack of financial resources, level of jealousy, excessive drinking, substance abuse, and living in a large family have been associated with increased risk of domestic violence (Martin et al., 1999; Xingjuan, 1999). The most documented form of Domestic violence include psychological violence, physical violence, and sexual assault (WHO, 2012) Apart from the fact that its perpetration threatens women's societal freedom, dignity and infringes on their fundamental human rights( Sokoloff and Dupont, 2005; McCloskey, et al., 2005), domestic violence is also associated with physical, mental and reproductive health challenges that affect the lives of many women. It is estimated that one-third of women worldwide are at risk of experiencing physical and/or sexual coercion and rape from a male domestic partner (WHO, 2013)

Traditionally, in Nigeria, as in many African countries, the beating of wives and children is widely sanctioned as a form of discipline (UNICEF,2001). in beating their children, parents believe they are instilling discipline in them, much the same way as in husbands beating their wives, who are regarded like children to be prone to indiscipline which must be curbed. The society is basically patriarchal and women's place within the scheme is decidedly subordinate and Domestic Violence therefore functions as a means of enforcing conformity with the role of a woman within customary society.

Nigeria is one of the countries recording high incidence of female domestic abuse in Sub Sahara Africa, where two-thirds of women are found to be suffering from male partner violence (Amnesty International, 2012). According to a 2019 NOI polls, it is indicated that domestic violence has a prevalence rate of 82% amongst Nigerians with 75% being among women, 16% men and 9% children Women are traditionally obliged to surrender their entirety to their husbands, in addition to being domestically available to gratify male partner's psychological, physical and sexual desires. Thus, women's transgressions of these expected roles lead to their beating, and coercion, in an attempt to restore traditional gender order and male power ( Amoakohene, 2004; Tenkorang & Owusu, 2013). Being a multicultural society with various ethnic groups, Nigeria witnesses different cultural and gender norms as well as diverse traditional attitudes towards domestic violence. The Hausas who predominantly occupy Northern Nigeria and are known to practise Sharia or Islamic law have a low level of female domestic abuse when compared with ethnic groups such as the Igbos and the Yoruba who occupy southern Nigeria (Linos, et al., 2013) Among the Tiv speaking people of Nigeria in the middle belt, wife beating is even regarded as a sign of love which women have been socialized to accept and sometimes even encourage and justify (Odimegwu, 2010 )

In many cultures among Nigerians, women have inadequate legal protections because issues involving husbands and wives are culturally considered "private" and hence no one would like to interfere in the private affairs of homes (Mutanga, 2006). This sometimes lead to violence, disfigurements, abuses, lost opportunities and interference with confidence of women in the society at large. Many women may come to even think that men are meant to dominate and control women (Kratcoski, 2003). Cultural factors such as gendered expectations, male privilege and boy preference in childbirth have been consistently reported as contributing to women's experiences of violence (Kalunta-Crumpton, 2015)

The effect of a woman's education on the likelihood of domestic violence has been found to be contingent on her husband's level of education( Bazargan-Hejazi et al., 2013). this highlights the importance of creating measures of power differentials in marriage. For example it may not be just the level of education a woman has nor the differences in years of education between a husband and a wife but the interactions between a wife's education and her husband's education that can be important for understanding the likelihood of domestic violence in the marriage. Results from prior studies range from increased education for women acting as a protective elements against domestic violence to increased education for women acting as a risk factor for domestic violence (Conroy, 2014; Bonnes, 2016)

Religion is an integral part of our lives as Nigerians and it has been noted that although religious institutions are monolithic, they still shape cultural norms, social rules, and behaviours that affect gender roles and expectations (Para-mallam, 2006; Inglehart & Norris, 2003). The religious belief of wifely submission was reflected through religious interpretations of the two major religions in Nigeria. For example the application of Ephesians 5 verses 15-24 in the bible provides that women must submit themselves completely to their husbands just as the Church submits itself to Christ. This then suggest that refusing sex is a form of deviance on the part of the woman and women ought to stick to their husbands, be subordinate to them and be patient and endure everything so as to save their families. In Islam, there is a Quaranic provision and specified ways of disciplining a recalcitrant wife as stated in Quaran chapter 4 vs 34, "...as to those women on whose part you see ill conduct, admonish them first, (next), refuse to share their beds, (and last) beat them (lightly, if it is useful)...."

This verse has been largely misunderstood and misused just like the Biblical provision stated above and feminists have argued that such beliefs and submissions embedded in the holy books are contributing factors to Violence Against Women (Dobash & Dobash, 1979) and have become a critical weapon to enforce subordination of women (Igbelina-Igbokwe, 2013).

This research is hinged on the Learned helplessness theory and the Social Learning theory to explain the concept of domestic violence as a violent behaviour from the angle of both perpetrator and the victim. The Social Learning Theory believes that human aggression is a learned conduct like other forms of social behaviour and is under stimulus, reinforcement, and cognitive control. The theory opined that family violence arises due to many contextual factors which include individual/couple characteristics, Stress, or an aggressive personality; and situational factors which include substance abuse and financial difficulties. The theory also extends these factors onto the influence of children growing up in families in which these external forces exist (Domestic Violence Group Action Project). The strongest risk factor for males who become perpetrators of domestic violence is witnessing violence between one's parents or caretakers (Break the Cycle, 2006) and boys who witness domestic violence are twice as likely to abuse their own partners and children when they become adults.

The Learned helplessness theory explains domestic violence by dealing with the unresolved question of why women stay in abusive relationship. This Classic theory by Seligman (1975) was originally proposed to explain the loss of will that accompanies repeated barriers to escape from an aversive situation. Seligman discovered that sometimes Dogs would "learn" that their behaviours did not bring about the expected or desired outcome in situations where barriers (electric shock) were present. As a result, dogs would stop engaging in the behaviour even once the barriers were removed. Women who are victims of domestic violence may experience similar feelings of helplessness and powerlessness and may prompt them to continue to endure and manage the situations.

Research into the Culture, Education and Religion in the domain of domestic violence is rather scarce, therefore this study aimed at unraveling the influence of culture, education and religion on domestic violence among married women in Kaduna and also to provide additional material to this important but under researched social phenomenon.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study;

1. Education will predict domestic violence among Women in Kaduna State
2. Religion will predict domestic violence among Women in Kaduna State
3. Culture will predict domestic violence among women in Kaduna state
4. There will be a joint prediction among Education, Culture and Religion on domestic violence among Women in Kaduna State.

## **METHOD**

### **Participants**

A total of 110 respondents drawn from a population of women in Kaduna metropolis of Kaduna state using convenience sampling technique participated in the study. It included women who are married, seperated, widowed or divorced regardless of education, religion, and cultural background within the Kaduna metropolis. Their ages ranged from 18 to 55 years with a mean of 33.3 years and standard deviation of 0.27.

### **Instruments**

A 2 part self developed questionnaire with 33 items was employed for data collection in this study. Section A consist of demographic information such as age, Religion, educational level, cultural affiliation, occupation of both respondents and partners. It also ask questions about duration of relationship/marriage. Section B

explored the experiences of the respondents based on previous or present domestic abuse and their perception of these abuses and their abusers coupled with the frequency and extent of these abuses.

### Procedure

The research was conducted by distributing the questionnaire through Google form links on various Whatsapp platforms of women in Kaduna State. The Whatsapp platform was chosen as a medium of choice so as to easily narrow down participants to Kaduna State alone. The participants were briefed through the various group Admins on the purpose of the research and the google form link was sent to the group to be accessed by interested members who filled the forms and submitted anonymously. The form was designed in such a way that you could only fill once and of all the 120 forms filled, only 110 were duly and completely filled and found suitable for analysis. This represents a 91.67% response rate.

### Data Analysis

The data gathered from respondents were analyzed by using the SPSS. Analysis was carried out with the generation of descriptive statistics for the demographic variables. The hypotheses were tested using multiple regression analysis

## RESULTS

**Table 1: Showing the Descriptive Characteristics of Respondents**

Variables	Categories	F (N=110)	Percentage %
Age	18-25	13	11.5
	26-35	50	50.6
	36-45	34	33.3
	46-55	3	4.6
Religion	Muslim	80	73
	Christian	30	27
Educational level	Primary	0	0
	Secondary	1	1.1
	OND/NCE	8	6.9
	Degree/HND	71	64.4
Relationship Status	Masters	30	27.6
	Single	25	23
	Married	72	65.5
	Engaged	6	5
	Divorced	4	4
Occupation	Widowed	3	2.5
	Employed	80	73.6
	Self employed	24	20.7
	Unemployed	4	4
Cultural belief	Housewife	2	1.7
	Not culturally inclined	32	28.7
	Culturally inclined	71	64.4
	Highly Culturally inclined	7	6.9
Total		110	100

Table 1 presents results of demographic information of participants in this study. The table showed that as regards the age of the women in this study, most of the respondents are between the 26 and 35 years old which accounts for 50.6% of the population, 13(11.5%) were between 18 and 25 years, 34(33.3%) were between 36 and 45 years while the other 3 (4.6%) indicated to be between 46 and 55 years old. Religion distribution revealed that 80 (73%) of the women were muslims while the rest 30(27%)w were of the Christian faith. Majority of the respondents which accounts for 71(64.4%) reported to having a Degree/HND educational level, 30(27.6%) with post graduate Masters level, 8(6.9%) have OND/NCE while the remaining 1(1.1%) have a secondary school level educational background. Regarding the relationship status of the respondents of this study, 25(23%) women reported to be single, 6(5%) were engaged, 4(4%) were divorced , 3(2.5%) are widowed while majority of the women 72(65.5%) reported to being married at the time of this study. On

cultural inclination, 32 women accounting for 28.7% of the respondents described themselves as not culturally inclined, 71(64.4%) are culturally inclined, while 7(6.9%) reported being highly culturally inclined.

**Table 2: Summary of Standard Multiple Regression of Education, Religion, and Culture on Domestic Violence among Women of Kaduna State**

Variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>P</i>
<b>Constant</b>	<b>0.92</b>	<b>0.81</b>	<b>.726</b>	-	<b>6.89</b>	<b>0.001</b>
<b>Education</b>				<b>-.368</b>	<b>-2.87</b>	<b>0.05</b>
<b>Religion</b>				<b>-.207</b>	<b>-1.374</b>	<b>0.05</b>
<b>Culture</b>				<b>.232</b>	<b>1.601</b>	<b>0.05</b>

The table above shows that education, religion, and culture jointly predicted domestic violence among women in Kaduna State ( $R = .92$ ,  $R^2 = 0.81$ ,  $F(3, 86) = .726$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). The result support the hypothesis of joint prediction of domestic violence among women.

The Independent contributions of the variable in the joint prediction shows that education had the highest contribution but in a negative way ( $\beta = 36.8\%$ ,  $t = -2.87$   $p < 0.05$ ) indicating that the higher the level of education, the less they experience domestic violence. The next contributing factor is religion which is significant but also negative ( $\beta = 20.7\%$ ,  $t = -1.37$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It means that the more religious a woman is, the less she experiences domestic violence. However, the contribution of culture was positively significant ( $\beta = 23.2\%$ ,  $t = 1.60$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that the more culturally orientated a woman is, the more a woman is likely to experience domestic violence. Therefore all the hypotheses were accepted.

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study confirmed a relationship between the variables under study and domestic violence. The first hypothesis posits that Education will predict domestic violence. The result was significant but in a negative way which means that the higher the level of education of women, the less they experience domestic violence. This confirms other studies that show that women with less education experience domestic violence at higher rates than women who have achieved a higher level of education. In the simplest of terms, those individuals with less than a college education are at a higher risk of being victims of domestic violence than those with a college degree. This does not mean that people with higher levels of education cannot be victims of domestic violence; it simply means that the risk of being a victim of domestic violence is greater for those with less than a high school or college education. Lack of education is also a risk factor associated with perpetrators of domestic violence. Most research that has focused on education as a risk factor has indicated that males with lower levels of education than their partners are more likely to be domestic violence offenders than those with an equivalent level of education. Most research indicated that these offenders were primarily male, although females are certainly not exempt. The common belief is that communication skills are sharpened with added levels of education; those with lower levels of education may resort to violence due to the inability to properly communicate anger or frustration (Jeyaseelan, Sadowski, Kumar, Hassan, Ramiro, & Vizcarra, 2004).

The second hypothesis states that religion will predict domestic violence. The result shows that religion predicted domestic violence but also in a negative way. This implies that the more religious a woman is, the less she experiences domestic violence. According to Tomato, 2004 as cited in Krob & Steffen (2015), religious value serve as a great force in the symbolic and subjective sphere and the assumed inferiority of women is sometimes enabled by religion in the form of symbolic violence which is further enforced through social representations. In a religious country like Nigeria, Christianity and Islam are the two main faiths and both are rooted in patriarchy which often allows for violence against women. Women are taught and admonished to be submissive to their husbands and to lower their voices. Thus the more religious a woman is, the more abiding she is to all of these religious admonitions and thus may be in the good books of her husband and not provoke what may lead to domestic violence.

The third hypothesis states that culture will predict domestic violence among women in Kaduna . The result was positively significant and this means that the more culturally oriented a woman is, the more she is likely to experience domestic violence. According to literature, culture has been found to legitimize patriarchy and preserve male supremacy through embracing and promoting hegemonic masculinity, a configuration of gender practices which guarantees the dominant position of men and the subordination of women (Tonsing

and Tonsing, 2019) . Despite the fact that the protection of women through various policies has improved over the years, domestic violence continues to be a persistent problem, especially in contexts where culture and traditions are dominant (Akangbe Tomisin, 2020; Mshweshwe, 2018) The findings of this study shows that domestic violence is not only a consequence of men's desire to demonstrate power over women but also a result of the complex interplay of culture and the masculinity construct central to patriarchy.

Hypothesis four posits that there will be a joint predictions of the variables on domestic violence among women in Kaduna State. The hypothesis was confirmed in this study as the result support the hypothesis of joint prediction of domestic violence among the participants. Independently education had the highest contribution but in a negative way. The study highlighted the strength of education as a viable tool to reducing or curbing domestic violence.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study examined the role of Education, Religion and Culture on domestic Violence among women in Kaduna. Domestic violence is a human right violation with psychological consequences that is so alarming that there has been interest in factors that influences it from both the victims and perpetrators angles. The factors affecting domestic violence are multi dimensional and varies greatly. This study was able to provide empirical evidence that Education, religion and culture influences domestic violence experience among women in Kaduna. Religion however was found to be negatively significant. It was therefore recommended that Domestic violence is the most common form of violence and its consequences pervades many areas of a victim's life and therefore should be recognized as a crime. It should be treated as a political, and public problem and not just considered to be a private matter that is treated with levity. Also, victims must be encouraged to seek help and be assured of their safety when they do so. Furthermore, deliberate efforts must be made on the part of the government to put in place laws and policies that can adequately address the issue of domestic violence and to equip the law enforcement agencies to improve prosecution of cases of domestic violence. More helping Professionals such as Psychologists, social workers, etc should be employed and trained on how to detect, manage and support victims and also rendering psycho-social intervention services to victims. This will go a long way in curbing the ugly menace.

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