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RESEARCH ARTICLE

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN: PREVALENCE AND RISK FACTORS IN
ADO-EKITI, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Background: Domestic violence against men is globally under-reported because of social stigma and/or the patriarchal nature of our society. Men are seen as stronger persons, hence domestic violence against them has not been receiving enough attention. The objective of this study was to assess the prevalence of domestic violence against men and their associated factors in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

Methods: This study was of cross-sectional design. A total of 430 respondents were selected through a multistage sampling technique. A semi structured, adapted, self administered questionnaire was used for data collection. Analysis was done with IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.0. Univariate variables were presented in form of tables and chart while bivariate variables were presented as cross tabulations. Association between independent and dependent variables were determined using chi-square statistics and p-value was set at 0.05.

Results: Prevalence of violence against the men in this study was 209 (50.7%). Prevalence of physical, psychological, sexual, and economical abuse was 107 (51.2%), 73 (34.9%), 62 (29.5%) and 47 (22.5%) respectively. The following factors: drinking, smoking by the wife, wife getting angry easily and coming from background where the parents fight were found to be significantly associated with violence against men.

Conclusions: Prevalence of violence against men was high and wife's smoking, drinking, being angry and coming from background where parents fight were found to be associated. Hence adequate family and social history should always be considered for early diagnosis. Health care providers and policy makers need to produce an effective and efficient therapeutic program that is culturally acceptable to reduce prevalence.

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Introduction:-

Domestic violence, also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence, dating abuse, and intimate partner violence (IPV) is a pattern of behaviours which involves the abuse of one partner by another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, dating or within the family.¹ It is defined by United State

national domestic violence hotline as a pattern of abusive behaviours 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 threat of actions or other patterns of coercive behaviours that influence another person within an intimate relationship. This includes any behaviours that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.² Domestic violence caught across all ages, sex, race, and socioeconomic status though varies in degree.³ It is underreported globally, especially among men as victims and women as perpetrators. This is under reported among men due to the patriarchal nature of our societies, battered male ego, the social stigma and their perception of being weak attached to it.^{4,5} Patriarchy is a system of social stratification and differentiation based on sex. It enables men to dominate women due to structural and social relations based on masculinity that manifests in the relationship between male and females, especially as it relates to ownership of economic power.^{5,6} Domestic Violence against men has not been receiving enough attention, and this greatly reduce access to intervention, with limited legal framework. This is because men are viewed as stronger physiologically by the society, hence they cannot be abused. The general belief is that only women are victims of domestic violence.⁷

The demographic health survey reported prevalence of violence against men as 2.2% in 2008 and 2.1% in 2013. This varies across regions in Nigeria with southwest having the least compared with south-south, southeast, and northwest.⁷ In hospital-based research done by Deinye et al, out of the 48 incidence of domestic violence recorded, 5 (10.4%) of them were against the men.³ Life time prevalence of 51.5% and 10.5% in the last 12 months was documented in India.⁸ In every 14.6 seconds, a male is being abused by his female partner.⁶ Forms of domestic violence against men include physical, psychological, sexual, financial, emotional and stalking. Out of all these, the most common is the emotional abuse followed by physical.⁹ Based on previous documentation on emotional abuse 85% reported criticism, 29.7% reported insults in front of others and 3.5% reported threats or hurt.^{8,9} Physical violence includes slapping; pushing; hitting by wife, her parents, or relatives; or throwing objects like utensils, and cell phones at the husband.⁸ In Nigeria, this had been evidenced by nail scratches on the face of the man, bites on his body and in extreme situations, injuries on his head or legs.⁷ Some women deny their partners sex on the pretense that they were not feeling fine or tired, some even went to the extent of asking 'if sex is food', insinuating that if it is not food why were they desperate.⁷

Rate of female perpetrating violence against their intimate partner is increasing. There are different reasons attached to this. The patriarchal society allowed men to have dominance over their female counterparts, but females are now more empowered, being aware of their rights. Some of these perpetrators of violence against men were females previously abused by their partners. They attacked in self-defense and their continuation in the relationship resulted in the same pattern.⁴ The reasons why these females perpetrate violence can be societal, family, or individual based. Some of the individual factors are use of alcohol and drug/smoking, witnessed abuse in their early age, high level of education and economic stability on the part of the female. The females sometimes become violent to express their displeasure about the misbehaviour of their partners and sometimes are just being troublesome.¹⁰ All forms of violence for whatever reason are condemnable; it is violation of basic human rights. Even when violence against men is not reported, it can lead to denial, depression, divorce, or suicide in extreme cases.⁹ The children from these homes also suffer lack of self-esteem and with the possibility of being a victim or perpetrators in the future.

Violence between men and women in intimate relationship is a social issue that caught across different age, race, and culture debatable among scholars and practitioners. Most time men are seen as the perpetrators rather than victims of violence. The experiences of men as victims are not spoken due to the patriarchy society and their masculinity.^{11, 12} This study would like to add to the body of knowledge by bringing to the limelight that men are also victims of violence. There is need for an effective and efficient intervention to reduce the prevalence of domestic violence in our environment. Research had been conducted on the prevalence and societal and individual associated factors especially among women.^{13,14} There is dearth of knowledge on the prevalence of domestic violence against men and the associated factors in Ekiti state which could serve as base line for intervention. Hence this study aimed to determine the prevalence of domestic violence against men and identify the associated risk factors.

Materials and Methods:-

Study Area, Design and Population:-

The study was conducted in Ado Local Government Area (LGA), is one of the 16 LGAs in Ekiti State. Ado is a one town LGA, the capital of Ekiti State. Predominant occupations are civil servants, farmers, commercial road transport

workers, and traders. The indigenous ethnic group are Yoruba, which constitute the major population; others include Igbo, Hausa, Ebira and Igala. There are three major religions practiced, which include Christianity, Islam, and traditional religion. This study was of descriptive cross-sectional study design. All married men within the age groups of 25-69 years who lived in the selected wards of study were included in the study. Those who were away during the research period and those who were sick were excluded from the study.

Sample Size Determination:-

The sample size for this study was determined using Fischer’s formula for estimation of independent proportions for a population greater than 10,000. Prevalence of 55% for psychological violence against men,¹⁴ was used which gave a total of 413 with the 10% non-response. A total of 430 respondents were interviewed.

Sampling Technique:-

Multistage sampling method was used to recruit participants into the study.

Stage 1: There are 13wards in Ado LGA Ekiti, out of which 50% were selected using simple random sampling method by balloting.

Stage 2: A list of all the streets in each ward was obtained. From each of the selected wards, six streets were chosen using simple random sampling by balloting.

Stage 3: From each of the selected streets, all the shops and workplaces identified were numbered. This was because samples were collected during working hours, and the men were at work. Shops were selected through systematic random sampling using proportional allocation.

Stage 4: From each shop and place of work, one respondent was chosen. If there were more than one eligible respondent in any shop, simple random sampling method by balloting was used to pick the respondent.

Data Collection Instruments:-

The study was conducted using semi-structured, adapted questionnaires which were self-administered by those who were literate but were interviewer administered for those who were not literate. The questionnaire was translated into Yoruba and back translated into English to ensure content validity. It was pre-tested among 40 men in those wards that were not selected for the study and changes was made on the questionnaire where necessary. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: section ‘A’ elicited information about the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, section ‘B’ elicited information about the experience of domestic violence among respondents while section ‘C’ elicited information about the factors influencing domestic violence among the respondents.

Data Analysis:-

The filled questionnaires were properly vetted manually by the lead researcher for errors. All data were manually entered into a computer and analysis was done with the IBM SPSS Statistics version 25.0. Univariate variables were presented in form of tables and charts while bivariate variables were presented as cross tabulations. Association between the socio-demographic characteristics and the outcome variables were determined using chi- square statistics. The outcome variable was the experience of domestic violence. Level of significance was set at p-value less than 0.05.

Prevalence of Domestic Violence:-

To determine the prevalence of domestic violence, a single point question (Have you ever experienced domestic violence?) from section B of the questionnaire was used. Those who had ever experienced domestic violence scored one, while those who had never experienced it were scored zero.

Community Entry:-

The community leaders of the selected wards were visited and permission to conduct the study in their wards was obtained.

Ethical Considerations:-

Ethical clearance was obtained with protocol number “EKSUTH/A67/2024/12/036” from Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital Ethics and Research Committee. Participation in the study was voluntary. A verbal informed consent was obtained from each of the respondents. The questionnaire was anonymous, and a high level of confidentiality was maintained during data collection, collation, and analysis. The collected data was securely

stored in locked cabinets that were only assessable to the researchers. The study did not cause any form of psychological, social, or physical harm to the respondents.

Results:-

Four hundred and thirty (430) questionnaires were administered out of which 412 were retrieved giving a response rate of 95.8%.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of married men in Ado LGA, Ekiti

Sociodemographic characteristics	Frequency(n=412)	Percentage
Age group		
25-34	95	23.1
35-44	143	34.7
45-54	119	28.9
55-69	55	13.3
Religion		
Christianity	328	79.6
Islam	75	18.2
Traditional	5	1.2
Others	4	1.0
Ethnicity		
Yoruba	344	83.5
Igbo	50	12.1
Hausa	9	2.2
Others	9	2.2
Total	412	100.0
Educational level		
None	7	1.7
Primary	29	7.1
Secondary	125	30.3
Tertiary	251	60.9
Occupation		
Civil servant	123	29.9
Artisan	118	28.6
Unemployed	13	3.2
Trader	79	19.2
Farmer/manual labourer	31	7.5
Professional	23	5.8
Others	25	6.1

Table 1 shows the sociodemographic characteristics of married men. One hundred and forty-three (34.7%) of the men were aged 35-44. Three hundred and twenty-eight (79.6%) of the men were Christians. Three hundred and forty-four (83.5) of the men were of Yoruba ethnic. Two hundred and fifty-one (60.9%) of the men were educated up to tertiary level.

Table 2: Marital and family characteristics of married men in Ado LGA

Sociodemographic characteristics	Frequency(n=412)	Percentage
Type of family		
Monogamous	393	95.4
Polygamous	19	4.6
Age at marriage		
≤25	71	17.2
≥25	341	82.8
Length of marriage		
1-10	221	53.6
11-20	123	29.9

> 21	68	16.5
Main provider for family		
Self	211	51.2
Partner	7	1.7
Both	194	47.1
Type of marriage ceremony		
Cohabitation	101	24.5
Traditional marriage only	81	19.7
Church/mosque/registry	220	53.4
None	10	2.4
Type of accommodation		
Single room face me I face you	24	5.8
Room and parlour face me I face you	45	10.9
Self-contained apartment	42	10.2
≥2-bedroom flat	301	73.1
Ownership of house		
Self	187	45.4
Landlord	209	50.7
Parent	10	2.4
Wife's parent	6	1.5

Table 2 shows the marital and family characteristics of married men in Ado LGA. Three hundred and ninety-three (95.4%) were married in a monogamous setting. Three hundred and forty-one (82.8%) of the men got married above twenty-five years of age. Two hundred and twenty (53.4%) of the men got married to their partners in church/mosque/registry. Three hundred and one (73.1%) of the men lived in two or more-bedroom flat.

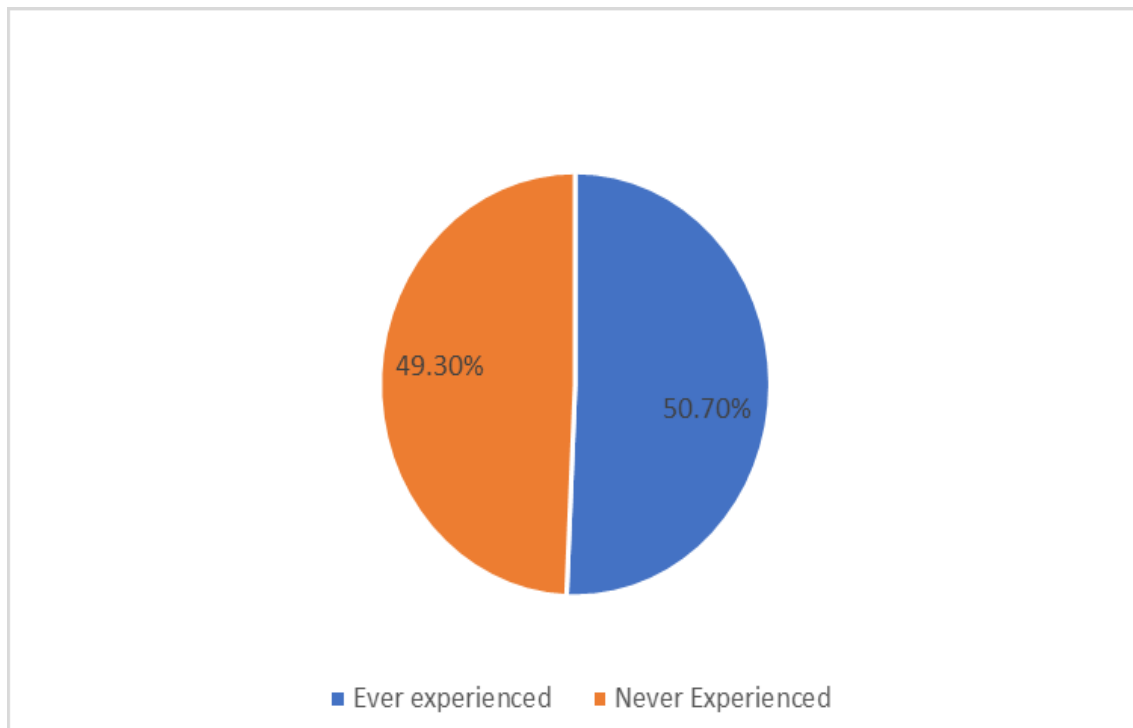


Fig 1: Prevalence of domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA

Figure 1 shows the experience of domestic violence among married men. Two hundred and nine (50.7%) had experienced one or more forms of domestic violence while two hundred and three (49.3%) had never experienced any form of domestic violence.

Table 3: Types of domestic violence against men in the last 12 month and in the lifetime

Patterns of abuse	Lifetime experience	Last 12 months
	Freq (%) (n= 209)	Freq (%) (n= 209)
Physical abuse	107 (51.2)	48 (23.0)
Psychological abuse	73 (34.9)	33 (15.8)
Sexual abuse	62 (29.7)	19 (9.1)
Economic abuse	47 (22.5)	27 (12.9)

Table 3 shows the experience of domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA. One hundred and seven (51.2%) married men had a lifetime experience of physical abuse while forty-eight (23.0%) married men have experienced physical abuse in the last 12 months. Seventy-three (34.9%) married men have a lifetime experience of psychological abuse while thirty-three (15.8%) married men have experienced psychological abuse in the last 12 months.

Table 4: Risk factors associated with domestic violence against men.

Risk factors	Frequency	Percentage
Wife gets angry easily	118	28.6
Expressed suspicion/accused her of unfaithfulness before wife drinking alcohol?	65	15.8
Wife coming from a family where her parents fought a lot	46	11.2
Wife involving herself in fights regularly	34	8.3
Wife smoking regularly	27	6.6
Wife getting drunk regularly	8	1.9
	3	0.7

Table 4 shows the risk factors of domestic violence against married men in Ado LGA. The most identifiable risk factor is wife getting angry easily 118 (28.6%). While the least identifiable risk factor is wife getting drunk regularly 3 (0.7%).

Table 5: Association between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and prevalence of domestic violence (n=412).

Socio-demographic characteristics	Ever Experienced Freq (%)	Never Experienced Freq (%)	χ^2	P value
Age group				
25-34	40 (42.1)	55 (57.9)	5.71	0.127
35-44	75 (52.4)	68 (47.6)		
45-54	60 (50.4)	59 (49.6)		
55-69	34 (61.8)	21 (38.2)		
Religion				
Christianity	168 (51.2)	160 (48.8)	1.64	0.650
Islam	35 (46.7)	40 (53.3)		
Traditional	3 (60.0)	2 (40.0)		
Others	3 (75.0)	1 (25.0)		
Ethnicity				
Yoruba	179 (52.0)	165 (48.0)	7.25	0.064
Igbo	23 (46.0)	27 (54.0)		
Hausa	1 (11.1)	8 (88.9)		
Others	6 (66.7)	3 (33.3)		
Educational Level				
None	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)	67.50	0.087
Primary	21 (72.4)	8 (27.6%)		
Secondary	81 (64.8)	44 (35.2)		
Tertiary	104 (41.4)	147 (58.6)		

Table 5 shows the association between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and their experience of domestic violence.

Table 6: Association between risk factors and prevalence of domestic violence among men.

Risk factor	Ever Experienced Freq (%)	Never Experienced Freq (%)	χ^2	P value
Alcohol intake				
Wife drinks alcohol	33 (71.7)	13 (28.3)	10.23	0.006
Wife does not drink alcohol	175 (47.9)	190 (52.1)		
Getting drunk regularly				
Wife gets drunk regularly	3 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	2.94	0.087
Wife does not get drunk regularly	206 (50.4)	203 (49.6)		
Regular Smoking				
Wife smokes regularly	7 (87.5)	1 (12.5)	4.41	0.036
Wife does not smoke regularly	202 (50.0)	202 (50.0)		
Regular fights				
Wife fights regularly	25 (92.6)	2 (7.4)	20.27	<0.001
Wife does not fight regularly	182 (47.8)	199 (52.2)		
Anger				
Wife gets angry easily	91 (77.1)	27 (22.9)	46.08	<0.001
Wife does not get angry easily	118 (40.1)	176 (59.9)		
Parents fight				
Wife comes from family where parents fought regularly	28 (82.4)	6 (17.6)	32.04	<0.001
Wife comes from family where parent does not fight regularly	147 (44.0)	187 (56.0)		

Table 6 shows the association between the risk factors in respondents' partners and their experience of domestic violence. The factors that significantly influenced domestic violence were wife taking alcohol and smoking, wife coming from a family where parents fought regularly, wife getting angry easily and involving in fights ($p < 0.05$). Table 7 shows the association between marital and family characteristics and experience of domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA. There was no significant association between marital and family characteristics and experience of domestic violence except in the type of accommodation where those living in a room apartment with experience of domestic violence were 70% compared with those in two or more-bedroom apartment with 47.4% prevalence of domestic violence with p value of 0.041.

Table 7: Association between marital and family characteristics and experience of domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA

Marital and family characteristics	Ever Experienced Freq (%)	Never Experienced Freq (%)	χ^2	P value
Type of marriage ceremony				
Cohabitation	57 (60.6)	37 (39.4)	6.56	0.087
Traditional marriage only	34 (45.3)	41 (54.7)		
Church / mosque/ Registry	106 (49.1)	110 (50.9)		
None	6 (75.0)	2 (25.0)		
Main provider for family				
Self	113 (53.6)	98 (46.4)	1.64	0.441
Partner	4 (57.1)	3 (42.9)		

Both	92 (47.4)	102 (52.6)		
Type of accommodation				
Single room face me I face you	17 (70.8)	7 (29.2)	8.27	0.041
Room & parlour face me I face you	21 (46.7)	24 (53.3)		
Self-contained apartment	27 (64.3)	15 (35.7)		
≥2-bedroom flat	144 (47.8)	157 (52.2)		
Ownership of house				
Self	88 (47.1)	99 (52.9)	4.70	0.195
Landlord	112 (53.6)	97 (46.4)		
Parents	4 (40.0)	6 (60.0)		
Years of marriage				
1-10yrs	102 (46.2)	119 (53.8)	4.39	0.111
11-20yrs	71(57.7)	52 (42.3)		
>20yrs	36 (52.9)	32 (47.1)		

Discussion:-

Violence between men and women in intimate relationship is a social issue that caught across different ages, race, and culture. Most times men are seen as the perpetrators rather than victims of violence. The experiences of men as victims are not usually spoken due to the patriarchal society and their masculinity.^{11,12} This study sought to add to the body of knowledge bringing to the limelight that men are also victims of domestic violence. In this study the prevalence of violence against men is 50.7% and the most common factors associated with it are wife getting angry frequently 28.6%, infidelity on the part of the man 15.8%, wife that take alcohol 11.2% and wife from background with domestic violence 8.3%. Half of the male in this study had ever experienced one form of violence or the other perpetrated against them by their partners at some point in their relationship. This is similar to the finding by Malik et al in India.⁸ The similarity is may likely be because they were both community-based study unlike the findings from Dienye et al where the prevalence was lower because the study was hospital-based.³ Domestic violence against men by their intimate partners has been on the increase in Africa.^{10,15} The increase witness now might be the consequence of the awareness being created by the feminist theorist of men dominating their partners.

Men have political, social, economic power and they use this to gain and maintain dominance.¹⁵ In a patriarchal society like ours where men perpetrate violence against their intimate partners, it is worthy to know that men are equally being victimized. There is need to understand why different genders perpetrate violence against their partner and find a lasting solution to this social menace. About a quarter of the men in this study experienced physical abuse, this is less compared with some of the prevalence documented by Kolbe et al¹³ and high compared with the result of Malik et al.⁸ The prevalence here being urban community is higher than malik result which was conducted in a rural community in India where the patriarchal control is more entrenched and where most of the women were not educated and could not fight for their right. The psychological abuse against the men in this study compared

with the study from Kolbe and higher than Malik et al finding. This might be so because the women in the rural community are not bold to perpetrate physical violence and rather chose the part of psychological abuse. This has more effect on the men (depression, stress, psychosomatic complaints etc.) and the likelihood of increasing the risk of suicide.

The real time prevalence of violence against men is not yet known because some men that are victims do not talk about it for many reasons. Nigeria like most African countries is patriarchal in nature where men are supposed to be in control of their wives. Men do not report because they do not want to be considered as weaklings,¹⁶ and as a result, many adopt coping strategies. Others do not report because there is no support from the existing institution, and some because they love their family so they will rather stay and endure the suffering.^{12,17} There is need to create more awareness of this social menace in our society and appropriate intervention that will cut across both male and female. On the other hand, there is a claim that over twenty percent of the cases of domestic violence against men were never proven with evidence with the police and at the court of law.¹⁸ The following factors had been found to be significantly associated with violence against men in this study: wife smoking, drinking alcohol and being drunk, wife that gets angry easily, fighting and coming from family where the parents fight. These are similar to Busari et al findings in Ibadan southwest Nigeria where aggression, background of the wife, substance and alcohol use by the wife were also found to be significantly associated to violence against men.⁵

The similarity might be because both works are from the same region in the country and therefore, they are culturally similar. Use of alcohol and being drunk by the wife having significant association to violence against men has been documented by other researchers.^{3,8} Khosravipoura in Tehran equally reported significant association between anger of the wife and violence against men.¹⁹ Anger is an individual factor and manifests in people with poor anger management. This can be seen through weak verbal skill, dysfunctional problem-solving style, and low impulse control.²⁰ Such people will benefit from a planned treatment program to be able to help the relationship.

Conclusion:-

Prevalence of violence against men is high and wife smoking, drinking alcohol and being drunk, wife that gets angry easily, fighting and coming from family where the parents fight were the associated factors. This has a psychological effect on the men hence the services require by the men suffering from IPV may be different from that of the women. Healthcare providers need to understand this in order to be able to have an effective and efficient therapeutic program that is culturally responsive to individual needs. Qualitative research is needed in the future to explore other reasons why domestic violence against men is being perpetrated.

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