

Perceptions Of Undergraduate Students Of University Of Ilorin On The Causes Of Domestic Violence Against Women

Dr. BADA, Steve Olusegun
Department of Psychology
Federal University of Education, Kano
bdolusegun@gmail.com
+2348068063806

Abstract

This study investigated the perceptions of undergraduate students of the University of Ilorin on the causes of domestic violence against women. A total of 200 students comprised of 114 males and 86 females from two faculties (Humanities and Sciences) of the University of Ilorin were sampled. The t-test and analysis of variance statistics were adopted to compare the perception of the undergraduate students by faculty, sex, religion and marital status @ 0.05 level of significance. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The findings of the results indicates there was no significance differences in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by male and female undergraduate students; different religious affiliations; humanity and Science faculty as well as married and single undergraduate students of university of Ilorin. Also, the findings indicated that domestic violence against women is being caused by disobedience on the part of the wife, jealousy, drug usage, poor home background, lack of proper guidance, uncontrolled sexual desire, consumption of alcoholic drinks, marital incompatibility, forced marriage and so on. The following recommendations were made: that there should be researches on this widen topic to enable have horizon knowledge of domestic violence against women, it should involve all parts of the country to make generalizations possible for the Nigerians. Awareness should be raised to prevent domestic violence against women by all and sundry. Parents should create time to show love to their wards to make home less burdensome and violent among others.

Keywords: Perception, Rape, Sexual Harassment, Violence, Wife battering

Introduction

Violence against women in Nigeria is gradually assuming a high dimension. Psychologists, counselors and social workers are greatly concerned about this problem and several questions have been raised as to the reason for domestic violence against women. The high rate of violence has generated an interest in exploring the potentiality of non-violence and non-violent techniques in reducing violence in human society. At the physical level, violence entails a high degree in terms of destruction of life and property with their attendant hatred and malevolence. At the psychological level, violence and crime have led to the destruction of people's psychic resistance emotion of stability and other personality qualities. Violence and crime have therefore become important social issues both at national and domestic levels and have formed the subject of researches, conferences and seminars. Reputable scholars as far back as the 1950s, such as Coser (1959), Gregg (1966), and Ardrey (1966) have conducted studies on violence. In this regard, therefore, discussion on violence against women in general, and in Nigeria in particular, appears necessary, such discussions are useful because of the crucial role of women in contributing effectively and efficiency to national development. An understanding of the African cultural perspectives of violence against women appears equally necessary because such knowledge may be useful in determining the limit of violence within a cultural environment. On this, depends the

understanding, control and prevention of violence against the female folk particularly in the Nigerian environment.

Women are crucial to the growth and development of any nation and the world in general. In their multiple roles as mothers, educators, food gatherers, health cleaners, inter-generational links, transmitters of values and emotional anchor as they have always carried the major burden of the family (Davies 1989). Women are sometimes the family breadwinners and they work outside the home to support their families. Also, women give compassion to family members, and they provide health care for the family members. The United Nations (1975) report indicated that women in Africa supply seventy percent in animal husbandry and sixty percent in marketing. The report noted that women constitute half of the world's population and they are homemakers and custodian of social, cultural and fundamental values of the society and permanent change is often best achieved through them. According to the United Nations (1978) reports, full community development is impossible without their (women) understanding, co-operation and effective participation. Women occupy an essential position in the life of any nation but they are subjected to different forms of domestic violence which seems to hinder their effective contributions to the national development.

Some of various forms of violence which have been identified are wife battering, rape, acid attack, female circumcision and sexual harassment. These attacks on women affect their physical and psychological wellbeing and as such they seem to be eroding the position of women both at home and in the society at large. Domestic violence against women therefore deserves to be studied in order to provide possible solution. The most serious and powerful aspect of domestic violence against women are some cultural practices which put women behind the men some of the traditional practices degrade women and subject them to all forms of manipulations. There is also the problem of ignorance of individual right, which has kept people away from discussing the problem of domestic violence against women. Considering the importance of women as mothers, breadwinners, teachers, guardians and teachers they deserve respect, recognition and better treatment but the opposite is usually the case. Women are enslaved in a circle of poverty and they suffer from neglect, discrimination and exploitation. They are also subjected to different forms of violence by their male counterparts (Davies 1989).

Adeoye (1996) defined violence as the use of coercive or subtle pressure and unrestrained action in the pursuance of an objective. He noted that the Nigerian newspapers are replete with news of violence on the highways, in private home, in offices and even in church and mosques. The various forms of violence against women include wife battering, denial of self-expression, female child-labour, childhood marriage, female genital mutilation, exploitation, violence by law enforcement agents, negative cultural attitudes and degrading traditional practices e.g. widowhood rites and nutritional taboos and denial of female education. Of these various form of violence, the researcher is interested in examining the causes of domestic violence against women with particular reference to wife battering, rape and sexual harassment which are the most rampant forms of domestic violence against women. Rape is an unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman or girls without her consent or by force or with consent by means of threats or intimidation of any kind, by fear of harm or false and fraudulent representation (Essen, 1989). Thompson (1974) also described rape as any intimacy forced on one person by another. Rape is most commonly understood to mean forcing a woman to have sex against her wishes by using physical or psychological force, threats of force, drugs, deception, or any combination of these. Rape is a serious crime punishable by law up to thirty years imprisonment in some states and death penalties in others. According to Essen (1989), rape is one of the violent crimes which subject its victims to physical, emotional and psychological trauma.

Another major violence against women is wife battering. Wife battering is an exposure of an individual (e.g. a married woman) to a serious beating or repeated injury (Scott 1974). Rounsaville (1976) described a battered wife as a woman whose intimate sexual partner has used violence and physical force upon. Field and Field (1973) observed that there is an official acceptance of violence between "consenting" adults, and that people perceive domestic violence as a private affair. The American National Commission on the causes and

prevention of crime or violence found in large representative samples that between one-fourth and one-fifth of the adults questioned felt that it was acceptable for spouse to hit each other under certain circumstances (Stark d, Mc Envy, 1970). Victims of wife battering are reported to suffer from physical and psychological pains.

Domestic violence against women constitutes a great problem of the family and the society at large. In recent years, there seems to be a great upsurge of rape, wife battering and sexual harassment. Domestic violence against women occurs at home, in public like street, parks, familiar places like home of friends and relatives, offices involving highly placed executive and also in churches. The offenders are either adolescent males or adult males or someone in position of authority. Stranratz and Gelles (1980) explained that both husband and wife engage in act of violence but the husbands' rate was higher and far more harmful form of violence, such a battering, and the use of knives or guns. Domestic violence against women has deep root in many cultures and religion and supported even institutionalized by patriarchal values in most societies. Public responses to acts of violence range from pride to denial or tacit conceit or wife battering may happen in thirty percent of families but not recognized in the public eyes (Davies 1987). Violence is a global problem that can no longer be ignored or permitted to remain hidden (Davies 1989). Women and young girls too perpetuate violence by remaining silent, excusing violence, blaming themselves and accepting cultural and rationalized.

Domestic violence however also includes psychological or mental violence consisting of constant verbal insults, harassment, denouncement by spouses of one another, confinement, and child abuse or neglect etc. some issues that give rise in Kano to wife battering, a prominent feature of domestic violence, have been partly elucidated in our earlier discussions. Domestic violence is one of the most difficult problems to investigate in the field of urban violence as it is a hidden problem. Women get openly beaten by their spouses. In some cases, the half-naked woman has to be chased all about with firewood, horse whip etc. yet, researchers; who want to study this type of thing have to wait to witness one themselves; otherwise no woman will tell them she was beaten. Women hardly confess that they are assaulted by their spouses since such matters are supposed to be a private problem of the concerned couples. Police records could contain data on assaults. The nature of such assaults are not usually stated, neither do the records indicate the sex of the victims of assault.

In view of the negative influences of violence on physical and psychological wellbeing of womanhood, this study investigated the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students of University of Ilorin. The study is based on the assumptions that once people are aware of the causes of the problem and its effects, the problem is also solved.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by the undergraduate students of University of Ilorin. Specifically the purpose of the study is to investigate whether:

1. The male and female undergraduate students are significantly different in their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women.
2. Undergraduate students of different religion affiliations (Christianity, Islam and others) are significantly different in their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women.
3. Undergraduate students from humanities and science faculties are significantly different in their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women.
4. Married and single undergraduate students are significantly different in their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the conduct of the study:

1. What are the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by the undergraduate students of University of Ilorin?
2. Is there a significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by male and female undergraduate students of University of Ilorin?
3. Is there a significant difference in the perception of the cause of domestic violence against women as perceived by the undergraduate students of different religious affiliations?
4. Is there a significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students from humanity and science faculties of the University of Ilorin?
5. Is there a significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by married and single undergraduate students of University of Ilorin?

Research Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were formulated based on the research questions.

The hypotheses are:

1. There is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by male and female undergraduate students of University of Ilorin.
2. There is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by the undergraduate students of different religious affiliations?
3. There is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students from humanity and science faculties of the University of Ilorin?
4. There is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by married and single undergraduate students of University of Ilorin?

Scope of the Study

The focus of this study is to investigate the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students from the eight faculties in the University of Ilorin. The choice of undergraduate students is based on the fact that they constitute the future leaders (mothers or fathers) of tomorrow who require adequate knowledge on violence against women.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was the descriptive survey method. According to Kerlinger (1973), survey research method is considered adequate, because it focuses on people and their beliefs, opinions, attitudes, perceptions, motivation and behaviours. Two hundred students were selected from the population of University students. This comprises 100 students from humanity and 100 students from sciences. The department of Linguistics, Religions, English Language and History and International Studies were purposefully selected to represent humanities while department of Statistics, Biochemistry, Microbiology and Industrial Chemistry were selected to represent Sciences. Thus, twenty five students were purposefully selected from each of the departments listed where to obtain from each of the required two hundred respondents. The researcher ensured that the questionnaires were given to students of different sex, religions and marital status to take care of the different variables of interest. The instrument used for the collection of data for this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed personally by the researcher and named causes of domestic violence against women questionnaire (CDVAWQ). The instrument consists of two parts the first part requires the respondent to give personal information such as sex, class levels, age, faculty, marital status and religion

affiliations The second part is meant to collect information on causes of domestic violence against women.

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the instrument (CDVAWQ) was given to experts in the departments of Sociology and Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin for validation. Reliability is defined as the consistency of test scores when it is administered in number of times. In establishing the reliability instrument, a pre-test method was adopted with an interval of four weeks, using the Pearson Product Moment of Correlation Co-efficient, a reliability index of 0.79 was obtained indicating strong reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire is made up of statement on a 4 point likert scale and the respondents are to respond by ticking () any of the items based on their agreement and disagreement with the statements. For example SA (Strongly Agree) = 4, A (Agree) = 3, D (Disagree) = 2, SD (Strongly Disagree) = 1. The hypotheses generated were tested using t-test statistics.

Results

Testing of Hypotheses

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students of University of Ilorin. Hence four hypotheses were used and tested with the use of T-test and Anova.

Hypothesis One: There is no significance difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by male and female undergraduate students of University of Ilorin.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations and t-test of male and female undergraduate students perception of causes of domestic violence against women

Sex	No of cases	X	SD	df	Cal t- value	Critical t-value
Male	114	62.1140	6.082	198	.69	1.96
Female	86	61.5000	6.378			

NB: NS= Not significant $p > 0.05$

Table 1 presents the results of t-test analysis on the undergraduate students' perception of cause of domestic violence against women. The results show a calculated t-value of .96. Since the calculated t-value (.69) is less than the critical t-value (1.96), the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by male and female undergraduate students of University of Ilorin is accepted.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significance difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students from humanity and science faculties of University of Ilorin.

Table 2: Means, standard deviations and t-test value for undergraduate students of humanities and science on their perceptions of causes of domestic violence against women

Group	No of cases	X	SD	df	Cal t- value	Critical t- value
Humanity	114	1.5175	.502	198	1.39	1.96
Science	86	1.4186	.496			

NB: NS= Not significant $p > 0.05$

The result on table 2 is on the causes of domestic violence against women. It indicated that the calculated t-value of 1.39, while the critical t-value (1.96). Since the critical t-value is greater than the calculated t-value, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students from Humanity and Science faculties of University of Ilorin.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significance difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by married and single undergraduate students of University of Ilorin.

Table 3: Means, standard deviations and t-test value for married and single undergraduate students on their perceptions of causes of domestic violence against women.

Group	No of cases	X	SD	df	Cal t- value	Critical t- value
Married	114	1.3070	.463	198	.61	1.96
Single	86	1.2674	.445			

NB: NS= Not significant $p > 0.05$

Table 3 indicates that the calculated t-value is .61, and the critical t-value is 1.96. Since the critical t-value is greater than the calculated t-value, consequently the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by married and single undergraduate students of University of Ilorin is accepted.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significance difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived undergraduate students of different religious affiliation.

Table 4: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) Comparing undergraduate students of different religious affiliation perceptions of causes of domestic violence against women.

Sources of variation	Sum of square	df	Ms	Calculated f-value	Critical value
Between sample	10.5636	2	5.2818	.1361	3.0
Within sample	7644.9364	197	38.8068		
Total	7655.5000	199			

NB: NS= Not significant $p > 0.05$

Table 4 presents the result of analysis of variance of undergraduate students of different religious affiliations perception of the causes of domestic violence against women. The result shows an F-value of .1361, and the critical f-value is 1.96. Since the calculated f-value is lesser than the critical F-value, the null hypothesis four which states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students of different religious affiliation of University of Ilorin is accepted.

Discussion

The findings of the study were based on the distribution of respondents by faculty, sex, religion and marital status. From the distribution of respondents by sex, the proportion of female who responded to the questionnaire was 43% while that of male was 57%, the percentage of students from humanities equals 52.5% and that of science 47.5%. The distribution of the respondents by religion indicates that Islam religion records 40.5% while Christianity has 51.3% and other religion has the remaining 8.5%. The distribution of respondents by their marital status indicates that the married undergraduate students constitute 29% of the respondents while single students are 71%.

The first hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by male and female undergraduate students of university of Ilorin. The hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that both male and female undergraduate perceived the causes of domestic violence against women in a similar manner. This may be as result of living together in the same environment or sharing the same similar attitude and beliefs.

The second hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students from humanity and science faculties of University of Ilorin. This hypothesis was accepted on the basis of the findings of this study. This means that there was no significant difference in the perception of the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by both male and female in the faculties of science and humanity. Both groups viewed the problem in a similar way.

The third hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by married and single undergraduate students of University of Ilorin. The hypothesis was also accepted. This means that both the single and married undergraduate students view the causes of domestic violence against women in a similar manner. This finding may be due to the enlightenment and interpersonal relationship among the respondents.

The fourth hypothesis states that there is no significant difference in the causes of domestic violence against women as perceived by undergraduate students of different religious affiliations. This hypothesis was also accepted on the basis that they view the causes of domestic violence against women in a similar way and may as well be due to the enlightenment and interpersonal relationship among the respondents.

The descriptive data tables revealed that domestic violence against women is caused by traditional or cultural beliefs. This was expressed by 109 (54.5%) of the respondents. This indicates that traditional or cultural beliefs cause domestic violence against women. In most African countries people believed that men are more valuable and superior to women and as such they are given more opportunities than women. Women are expected to accept male domination and control without questioning. The finding also shows that domestic violence against women was perceived to have been caused by improper view of sex. This view was supported by 114 (57%) of the respondents.

Consumption of alcoholic drinks, forced marriage, involvement in extra-marital affairs, the desire of men to dominate women, availability of violent video programmes and exposure of children to violent actions at home, uncontrolled sexual desire, disagreement in sexual matters, disobedience on the part of any of the spouses, disagreement on mode of disciplining the children were among the factors identified as one of the causes of domestic violence against women.

Conclusion

The study therefore concluded that difference in sex of undergraduate students does not influence their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women; the beliefs and practices of undergraduate students do not influence their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women difference in marital status of undergraduate students does not influence their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women; the difference in the faculties of undergraduate students of University of Ilorin does not influence their perception of the causes of domestic violence against women.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Domestic violence can be reduced to the lowest minimum by proper training from the very early days of the child, even before the nursery school age.
2. The home can be organized in such a manner that the child-rearing practices are geared toward attempting to interest a child in constructive and peaceful activities.
3. There should be an improved mass media: In Nigeria, especially the video cassettes and films of various kinds have brought into our homes series of violence where guns are freely used.
4. There should be campaigns by members of the community and governmental agencies on domestic violence against women. For instance, social welfare agencies should be established to prevent sexual abuse and all other forms of domestic violence against women.
5. Parents should create time to show love in their various homes, interact and listen to their wards to make home less burdensome and violent.
6. Attention should be directed to educate the masses for a change of behaviour. They should develop positive attitude towards their fellow human beings as this will minimize the issue of ritual practices and acid attack.
7. There should be seminar or conferences for women to make them aware of some causes of violence such as wearing of provocative dresses, disobedience and other forms of bad behaviour.
8. There should be enlightenment campaigns in the world at large on the effects of domestic violence against women to prevent them from indulging in such actions. Those who violated women's rights should be publicized to serve as deterrent to others.
9. There should also be an improved education system.

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