

Age and Marital Status on Domestic Violence on Women in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area

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Abstract

The study investigates the effects of age and marital status on domestic violence on women in Obio/Akpor. The cross-sectional descriptive survey design was employed. A sample of 244 respondents mainly women who or currently in such a relationship were sampled. The cluster sampling technique was used. Findings revealed that domestic violence is prevalent in Obio/Akpor, and the results showed that 125 (51.8%) of the respondents showed moderate to severe domestic violence which underscores the seriousness of domestic violence in the area. The finding showed that age and marital status significantly influence the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area. The distribution reveals that younger age groups (20–29 years) have the highest prevalence of domestic violence (86.8%), and the prevalence of domestic violence decreases with age. Furthermore, Cohabiting women had the highest prevalence at 100%, followed by separated women at 76.5%, and divorced women at 70.8%. Among others, the study recommends that awareness programmes should be targeted at younger women (ages 20–39) to help them recognize, prevent, and report domestic violence.

Keywords: Domestic Violence, Women, Health, Obio-Akpor, Rivers State.

Introduction

Throughout the globe, attacks against women have been acknowledged as a malaise, permeating cultural, regional, religious, socio-economic boundaries (Orji, 2016). Women have encountered several substantial medical obstacles, such as chronic and acute physical injuries, auditory or visual impairments, miscarriage, depression, physical disfigurement, pelvic discomfort, anxiety, cardiovascular disorders, contusions, fractures, and others. Complex problems often stem from domestic violence, which is linked to women's economic dependence on men. This issue is particularly pronounced in Nigeria, where a patriarchal system and differential socialization practices prevail. Domestic violence manifests in various forms, including intimate partner abuse, maltreatment, torture, coerced commercial sex work, and trafficking (Human Rights Dialogue, 2017). Attacks against women can be regarded as the most pervasive type of maltreatment, a global malaise that cuts across class divisions, ethnic affiliations, region, religious beliefs (Omand, 2018). The usual form of domestic violence is found within the home, where many men maltreat or abuse their wives/girlfriends/fiancées (Watkins, 2019). The predominance of domestic violence has a serious effect on the biological, mental and social demeanour of many women, both young and old, and this is a profound cause of disastrous outcomes for women (WHO, 2017). A large number of the female sex are wounded bruised and murdered yearly due to the domestic violence (Hart, 2016). Domestic violence is not just a pioneering factor for concern to general health but is a direct and invariably a form of abuse on women that is not welcomed (Nwankwo, 2017).

According to World Health, domestic violence has permeated society and is not a malaise but given cultural excuses, especially, as it seen as a way of flexing the male muscles and superiority, victims of domestic violence are afraid to speak up for fear of stigmatization and public backlash. In addition, many media houses do not report domestic violence constantly,

since many are interested in commercials and other programmes that will help foot their ever-increasing expenditure (WHO, 2016).

Famakinwa (2016) opines that the Nigeria Police Force could do more in the prevention and management of domestic violence. When matters of domestic violence reach police stations, most of these police officers throw out the complaints of the female victims, citing such matters as internal family issues that must be settled with the family or relationship. In addition, many Human Rights Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations have been active in the fight against the increasing domestic violence but more is needed to be done. The insufficient fight against this scourge has made it, especially against women, a serious cause for concern, locally and globally. The women in Nigeria are prone/vulnerable to abusive and violent attacks, especially the uneducated ones in the rural and urban areas from their partners since they are seen as second fiddle or inferior to their partners. Consequently, women face a range of health repercussions stemming from domestic violence. In pursuit of this objective, one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5) focusses on the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, particularly in the developing nations of Africa (Nweke, 2017). Domestic violence is a style of aggressive attitude in any friendship employed by a partner to have an upper hand unduly and dictate things to the other domestic. Domestic violence is seen also as an attack at home where the female spouse suffers beatings, kicking, battering from her husband. It is a style of aggressive behavior that is growing unabated and many young men are growing up to believe this is the norm in order to keep the females in check. Sadly, some fathers teach their boys how to be masculine physically so as to get fear out of the women. The cultural settings of the Nigeria society are creating daily room for the perpetuation of domestic violence on the women (Oviedo, 2017).

Literature Review

Concept of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence refers to the deliberate and ongoing mistreatment of individuals within a household, resulting in pain, distress, or injury. It denotes any abusive treatment of one family member by another, thereby infringing upon fundamental human rights. It encompasses domestic violence, child sexual abuse, marital rape, and harmful traditional practices affecting women. Domestic violence is a global issue (Dahlberg and Krug, 2016; UNICEF, 2018). Domestic violence is experienced by families across diverse social, racial, economic, educational, and religious backgrounds in various forms. Djaden and Thoenes (2016) reports that in the United States, women experience approximately 4.8 million domestic-related physical assaults and rapes annually, while men endure about 2.9 million domestic-related physical assaults. Similarly, domestic violence is pervasive in many developing regions, particularly in West Africa, where it is often justified or condoned within certain cultural contexts. For instance, a survey conducted in Senegal revealed that 56% of women justified wife-beating for reasons such as poor cooking, disrespecting in-laws, bearing more daughters than sons, or leaving home without prior notification. The prevalence of violence against women is notably high in Nigeria. Amnesty International (2020) estimates that between one-third and two-thirds of Nigerian women have experienced physical, sexual, or psychological violence, predominantly at the hands of husbands, partners, or fathers. Additionally, young girls are frequently coerced into early marriages and often face punitive measures if they attempt to leave these unions. Cultural factors contribute to significant underreporting and inadequate documentation of domestic violence cases (Oyediran and Isugo, 2016).

In Nigeria, as in many African countries, physical punishment of wives and children is widely regarded as an acceptable disciplinary method (UNICEF, 2016). Parents who physically discipline their children often perceive it as analogous to husbands physically disciplining their wives, whom they view as undisciplined and in need of correction. This perception is

particularly pronounced in patriarchal societies where women are economically dependent on men, reinforcing their subordinate role. Domestic violence is thus employed as a means to enforce societal expectations of women's roles, with the culture of silence perpetuating stigma against victims rather than holding perpetrators accountable (Bashins, 2018).

Ademola (2019) surveys violence against women by interviewing women employed in markets and workplaces, as well as female students in secondary schools and universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Among 45 women interviewed in the workplace, 64.4% reported having been beaten by their partners, while 56.6% of 48 market women admitted experiencing similar violence. Comparable findings were reported in Oyo State and other regions. A study on domestic violence in Southeast Nigeria found that 70% of respondents reported experiencing family abuse, with 92% of victims being women and only 8% men. Common abuses included verbal aggression (93%), physical acts like slapping or pushing (77%), and more severe violence such as punching or kicking (40%). Alarming, many women expressed uncertainty about whether they had experienced abuse, likely due to the normalization of certain behaviors (Olanikan, 2017). Research by Obapitan (2015) on perceptions of wife-beating in Nigeria revealed that 64.4% of married women and 50.4% of unmarried women considered the practice acceptable. Media reports highlight the severity of domestic violence, including acid attacks, rape, and fatal physical assaults. Many victims refrain from reporting these incidents due to fear of retaliation or skepticism regarding the effectiveness of law enforcement and the judiciary. Law enforcement often dismisses domestic violence complaints as private matters, further exacerbating the issue.

Forms of Domestic Violence

Physical abuse encompasses deliberate actions involving physical contact aimed at causing pain, injury, intimidation, physical discomfort, or harm to the body. This includes behaviors such as punching, hitting, and pushing, which can lead to physical injuries. Obilade (2016) defines physical violence as the application of brute force against an individual, resulting in significant wounds or injuries. It represents the most basic manifestation of behavior identified as violence.

Emotional violence is defined as psychological or mental abuse, which can occur through both verbal and non-verbal methods. It often includes isolating the victim from social interactions with friends and family, public or private harassment and humiliation, exerting control over the victim's actions, and intentionally provoking the victim to induce anger or feelings of diminishment and embarrassment (National Coalition against Domestic, 2019).

Sexual violence encompasses various forms of abuse, including marital rape, which refers to non-consensual sexual acts within a marriage. This issue raises significant legal and ethical considerations regarding consent and the rights of individuals within intimate relationships.

Sexual violence refers to circumstances where coercion or intimidation is employed to secure involvement in non-consensual sexual acts. Sexual abuse often leads to physical violence through coercion into sexual activities (Beanett, 2015). Abayo (2017) defines sexual abuse as an effort to secure a sexual act, unwanted sexual remarks or advances, or actions aimed at trafficking or otherwise targeting an individual's sexuality through the use of force, irrespective of the nature of the relationship. Marital rape refers to the coercion of an individual to participate in a sexual act without their consent. Marital rape is defined as a situation in which one partner engages in a sexual act without the consent of the other partner.

Economic violence refers to the use of economic means to harm individuals or groups, often manifesting through deprivation of resources, manipulation of economic systems, or exploitation. This form of violence can significantly impact social structures and individual

well-being. Economic violence occurs when one partner exerts control over the other's access to financial resources. Numerous studies indicate that the majority of perpetrators of this abuse are men, particularly in many developing countries such as Nigeria. Economic abuse can manifest as the restriction of a partner's access to resources or the exploitation of the victim's economic assets (Brewster, 2016). Men often restrict their spouses from obtaining resources to diminish women's ability to achieve financial independence, thereby ensuring their reliance on men for survival. This behavior hinders women's employment opportunities, career advancement, and asset acquisition. These findings pertain to the control and abuse of women's rights (Adeniran, 2018).

Verbal abuse involves the use of language to dominate or belittle another individual, often for personal satisfaction, to enforce one's perspective, or to achieve an unjust benefit in conflict resolution (Olsen, 2018).

Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence

Domestic violence has various underlying causes.

Psychological: Psychological research explores the personality traits and mental characteristics of offenders. Traits such as sudden outbursts of anger, poor impulse control, and low self-esteem are often identified. Scholars have linked factors like psychopathology and other personality disorders to violent behavior, suggesting that exposure to or experiences of abuse during childhood may predispose individuals to violence in adulthood (Obi, 2016). The proposed a psychological profile of abusive men, arguing that they often exhibit borderline personality traits developed early in life.

Jealousy: Domestic violence against women is frequently linked to jealousy, particularly in situations involving suspected infidelity or the partner's intent to leave the relationship. From an evolutionary psychology perspective, such violence is seen as an attempt by men to control female reproductive behavior and ensure sexual exclusivity through the use of violence or the threat of violence (Goetz, 2016).

Social Stress: Stress levels may rise when an individual resides in a family environment characterized by heightened pressures. Violence is not invariably a result of stress; rather, it may represent one of the responses some individuals exhibit in reaction to stress (Seltzer & Kalmuss, 2018). Couples experiencing poverty are at a heightened risk of domestic violence, attributed to elevated stress levels and conflicts related to financial issues and other factors (Jewkes, 2016).

Social Learning: Observation of violent behavior increases the likelihood of imitation. In the absence of negative repercussions and with the victim's acceptance of the violence through submission, it is probable that the behavior will persist. Violence frequently perpetuates across generations in a cyclical pattern (Crowell & Sugarman, 2017).

Power and Control: Abusers engage in abusive behavior to establish and sustain control over their partners. The efforts of abusers to exert dominance are linked to factors such as low self-esteem, unresolved childhood conflicts, poverty-related stress, misogyny, personality disorders, genetic predispositions, and sociocultural influences (Alaro, 2018). There is a consensus among authorities that abusive personalities emerge from a combination of multiple factors, each contributing to varying extents.

Social Works and Domestic Violence

Social workers in Nigeria have implemented strategies to prevent domestic violence over the years. They posited that prevention of the scourge is more effective than treating patients. This explains the utilization of three preventive processes. There are three processes for the prevention of violence: primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention aims to decrease the incidence of intimate partner violence and sexual violence by implementing

interventions prior to the occurrence of any violent acts. Primary prevention of domestic violence aims to alter societal behaviors and beliefs regarding domestic violence, thereby preventing its occurrence and the initial perpetration of such acts. Primary intervention programs encompass dating violence prevention initiatives aimed at enhancing knowledge of domestic violence and promoting changes in beliefs and behaviors. Media campaigns utilize radio spots, television, and posters to raise awareness of domestic violence. Secondary prevention refers to the actions taken following the occurrence of violence. This process aids in managing immediate consequences and mitigating future perpetration and victimization. Secondary intervention programs posit that couples counseling, substance abuse counseling, and screening for domestic violence-where social workers employ structured questions to identify victims-are necessary interventions implemented after instances of violence to prevent recurrence. Victim support services encompass transitional housing, advocacy for social and emotional support, as well as police and judicial responses (Williamson, 2019). Tertiary prevention of domestic violence refers to the long-term interventions implemented following instances of domestic violence. This process addresses the consequences of enduring violence and provides intervention treatment for both victims and perpetrators. Tertiary prevention of domestic violence encompasses counseling, correctional facilities for women, and legal advocacy (Aderonke, 2019).

Methodology

A research design is the pattern the researcher intends to adopt in collecting and collating data. In this research work, a cross sectional design was adopted. The design is quantitative and employed questionnaires in collecting and collating data. Obio-Akpor Local Government Area is found in Rivers State. Obio-Akpor is the capital city of Rivers State. It shares boundary with Aluu, Emohua, Port Harcourt. Obio-Akpor has a long history of marital and relationship violence. In 2020, the Federation of International Women Lawyers (FIDA) reported over 400 cases of domestic violence between 2015 and 2019; an issue further heightened by the lockdown during the corona virus era in 2020. The area is an industrious one where men and women are into formal jobs, pushing aside the traditional roles of men and women to a larger extent, and these changes in the traditional roles of many women have become problematic for them, as many have suffered violent attacks and maltreatment from their spouses, lovers, etc. The population of the study included single and married women. The population size of these localities put together is 72,000 according to the Rivers State Bureau of Statistics (2019). A sample represents a smaller, manageable component of a larger population. It represents a smaller, manageable component of a larger entity. It represents a subset that takes into account the characteristics of a larger population. A total of 244 respondents were sampled from four localities within the study area: Alakahia, Choba, Rumuosi, and Rumuekini. The sample size was calculated employing the Taro Yamane formula. The study's sample is suitable as it surpasses the minimum estimated requirement for the population.

Table 1: Sample Size Determination

Taro Yamane	Population
$N = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$	$N = 72,000$
	$(e)^2 = .05 \times .05 = 0.0025$
	$0.0025 \times 72,000 = 180$
	$1 + 180 = 180.1$
	180.1
	$=180$

A sampling technique refers to the specific process used to select the entities within the sample. This study will employ the cluster sampling technique. In addition to the cluster sampling technique, simple random sampling was employed to allow the researcher to randomly select respondents, as it is not feasible for everyone to participate in the study. Data used in this research work are got from questionnaires, interviews, articles, journals, the internet, etc. The questionnaire will be divided into parts. Part A will be on the personal features of respondents. Part B will be on the meaning of intimate violence. Part C will be on the causes of domestic violence. Data collected was analysed using quantitative statistics. Research questions were analysed using frequency counts and percentages while chi-square bivariate statistics was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Features of Respondents

Category	Subcategory	Frequency	Percent
Marital Status	Married	165	68
	Divorced	24	10
	Widowed	16	7
	Separated	17	7
	Cohabit	22	9
	Total	244	100
Age	20-29 years	38	16
	30-39 years	78	32
	40-49 years	87	36
	50-59 years	30	12
	60 years and above	11	5
	Total	244	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 2 summarizes respondents by marital status and age, highlighting frequencies and percentages. Most respondents are married (68%, 165 individuals), while smaller groups include divorced (10%), widowed (7%), separated (7%), and cohabiting (9%), totaling 244 individuals. In terms of age, the largest group is 40-49 years (36%), followed by 30-39 years (32%). Younger respondents aged 20-29 years make up 16%, while those aged 50-59 years account for 12%. The smallest group is 60 years and above, comprising 5%.

Research question one: What is the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of prevalence of Domestic Violence against women in bio-Akpor Local Government Area

Response	Frequency	Percent
No (Never/Rarely)	119	48.8
Yes (Moderate/Severe)	125	51.2
Total	244	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2023

Table 3 provides an analysis of the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, addressing Research Question One. The responses are categorized based on the frequency and severity of domestic violence experienced by the respondents.

Out of a total of 244 respondents, 119 individuals, representing 48.8%, reported no or rare experiences of domestic violence. In contrast, 125 respondents, accounting for 51.2%, indicated experiencing moderate to severe domestic violence.

These findings highlight that a slight majority of women surveyed (over half) have encountered significant levels of domestic violence. This prevalence underscores the seriousness of domestic violence in the area, indicating that it is a widespread issue requiring targeted interventions to support victims and address underlying causes.

Research question two: What is the influence of age on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Hypothesis one: Age has no significant effect on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 4: Age-Based Analysis of the Prevalence of Domestic Violence Against Women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

Age	Prevalence of Domestic Violence			X ²	Df
	P-value	Cramer V	No	Yes	Total
20-29yrs	Count	5	33	38	4
	Expected Count	18.5	19.5	38	61.53
	% within Age	13.2%	86.8%	100%	
30-39yrs	Count	23	55	78	
	Expected Count	38	40	78	
	% within Age	29.5%	70.5%	100%	
40-49yrs	Count	56	31	87	
	Expected Count	42.4	44.6	87	
	% within Age	64.4%	35.6%	100%	
50-59yrs	Count	25	5	30	
	Expected Count	14.6	15.4	30	
	% within Age	83.3%	16.7%	100%	
60yrs - above	Count	10	1	11	
	Expected Count	5.4	5.6	11	
	% within Age	90.9%	9.10%	100%	
	% within Domestic Violence	8.4%	0.80%	4.50%	
Total	Count	119	125	244	
	Expected Count	119	125	244	
	% within Age	48.80%	51.20%	100.00%	

Source: Field work, 2023

Table 4 above examines the influence of age on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The distribution reveals that younger age groups (20–29 years) have the highest prevalence of domestic violence (86.8%), while the prevalence decreases with age. For example, 70.5% of respondents aged 30–39 years and 35.6% of those aged 40–49 years reported experiencing domestic violence. Conversely, older age groups (50–59 years and 60 years and above) reported the lowest prevalence at 16.7% and 9.1%, respectively.

The Chi-Square analysis ($X^2 = 61.53$, $df = 4$, $p = 0.000$) indicates a significant relationship between age and domestic violence, with a Cramer's V value of 0.502 showing a moderate association.

Research question three: What is the influence of marital status on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Hypothesis Three: Marital Status has no significant effect on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Table 5: Marital Status-Based Analysis of the Prevalence of Domestic Violence Against Women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

			Prevalence of Domestic Violence						
Marital status			No	Yes	Total	X2	Df	P-value	Cramer V
	Married	Count		69	165	39.266		0.000	0.401
		Expected Count	80.5	84.5	165				
		% within marital status	58.20%	41.80%	100%				
	Divorced	Count	7	17	24				
		Expected Count	11.7	12.3	24				
		% within marital status	29.20%	70.80%	100%				
	Widowed	Count	12	4	16				
		Expected Count	7.8	8.2	16				
		% within marital status	75.00%	25.00%	100%				
	Separated	Count	4	13	17				
		Expected Count	8.3	8.7	17				
		% within marital status	23.50%	76.50%	100%				
	Cohabit	Count	0	22	22				
		Expected Count	10.7	11.3	22				
		% within marital status	0.00%	100.00%	100%				
Total	Count	119	125	244					
	Expected Count	119	125	244					
	% within marital status	48.80%	51.20%	100%					

Source: field work, 2023

Table 5 examines the influence of marital status on the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. Cohabiting women had the highest prevalence at 100%, followed by separated women at 76.5%, and divorced women at 70.8%. Widowed women reported the lowest prevalence at 25%. The chi-square test indicates that marital status has a statistically significant effect on domestic violence prevalence (p -value = 0.000), with a moderate association (Cramer V = 0.401). Among married women, 41.8% reported experiencing domestic violence.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from research question one indicates that a slight majority of women surveyed have experienced domestic violence. This aligns with the empirical review, which highlights its widespread nature globally and in Nigeria, particularly in patriarchal and culturally permissive societies. Studies such as Obi and Ozumba (2016), which found 70% of respondents in Southeast Nigeria reporting abuse, and Ademola (2019), which documented significant violence

against women in workplaces and markets, corroborate these findings. These agreements reflect shared societal factors, such as patriarchy, economic dependency, and cultural silence, that perpetuate domestic violence.

However, some differences exist between the findings and the empirical review. While the empirical review reports higher rates of explicit abuse, such as verbal abuse (93%) and physical violence (77%) in Obi and Ozumba's study, this study suggests slightly lower but still significant prevalence. These variations could result from differences in methodology, sampling, or definitions of abuse. Additionally, cultural normalization of abusive behaviors, as noted by Olanikan (2017), may lead to underreporting, contributing to the lower prevalence in this study. Geographic and demographic differences may also explain the variation.

The findings from research question two and hypothesis one revealed that domestic violence prevalence is highest among younger age groups, with 86.8% of respondents aged 20–29 years affected. This prevalence decreases progressively with age, with 70.5% for those aged 30–39 years, 35.6% for ages 40–49 years, 16.7% for 50–59 years, and 9.1% for those aged 60 years and above. These findings align with the empirical review in several respects. According to Oyediran and Isugo (2016), domestic violence in Nigeria is pervasive, particularly among populations where cultural norms perpetuate the abuse of women. This aligns with the observed trend of higher prevalence among younger age groups, as younger women may be more susceptible to patriarchal control and societal pressures that normalize abuse. Bashins (2018) also highlights how a culture of silence reinforces such violence, particularly affecting women in their economically formative years, further supporting the observed pattern in younger groups. The findings further agree with Ademola's (2019) study, which reported high incidences of violence among women in active societal and economic roles, aligning with the age groups most affected in this study. However, there are areas of divergence between the findings and the empirical review. The review emphasized general high prevalence rates across diverse populations but does not specifically discuss age as a determining factor in domestic violence. In contrast, the findings of this study establish a clear, statistically significant relationship between age and violence prevalence, with younger individuals being disproportionately affected and older groups reporting much lower rates. This specific focus on age-related trends is underexplored in the empirical review, which tends to emphasize broader systemic and cultural contributors rather than nuanced age-related differences. Furthermore, the lower prevalence among older respondents in the findings may be influenced by generational norms that discourage older individuals from reporting abuse, a point noted by Olanikan (2017) in the context of underreporting due to societal stigma. While this dynamic is implied in the empirical review, it is not explicitly addressed, contributing to some degree of disagreement.

The findings from research question three and hypothesis two, which show that divorced women have the highest prevalence of domestic violence at 70.8%, followed by separated women at 76.5%, and cohabiting women at 100%, align with several aspects of the empirical review. The review highlights that domestic violence disproportionately affects women in various marital statuses, particularly those who are economically dependent or socially marginalized. It suggests that marital breakdowns, such as divorce or separation, leave women more vulnerable to abuse, exacerbated by power imbalances in patriarchal societies (UNICEF, 2016). The finding that cohabiting women experience the highest prevalence mirrors the review's reference to intimate partner violence in relationships with pronounced power imbalances (Bashins, 2018). However, there is some divergence between the findings and the empirical review. The review does not focus on a specific pattern linking marital status with domestic violence prevalence, whereas the findings clearly distinguish between marital statuses, with widowed women experiencing the lowest prevalence. This lower prevalence among widowed women could be influenced by factors such as a lack of exposure to intimate partner

violence or underreporting due to cultural stigma, which is not extensively addressed in the review (Oyediran & Isugo, 2016;).

Conclusion

The study focusses on effect of age and marital status on domestic violence on women in Obio Akpor LGA. The finding revealed that slight majority of women in Obio Akpor experienced domestic violence, therefore, there is higher rate of explicit abuse. Nevertheless, the domestic violence is prevalence and high among younger age groups. Besides, women who divorced had the highest prevalence of domestic violence. Thus, women domestic violence is highly prevalence in Obio Akpor Local Government Area.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommends that:

1. Policymakers, educational institutions, and NGOs should collaborate on awareness programmes for younger populations (ages 20–39), using platforms like social media, youth centers, and schools to educate on domestic violence and its unacceptability.
2. Government bodies, social workers, and NGOs should establish accessible support services for younger victims, including shelters, counseling, and legal aid, with partnerships from educational institutions and workplaces.
3. Government officials, community leaders, and civil society organizations should implement programmes challenging patriarchal norms and engage men and boys in advocacy to reduce violence against women.
4. Local authorities, law enforcement, and the judicial system should strengthen reporting systems, ensuring victims, especially older individuals, come forward without fear, while police and judicial officers receive training to handle domestic violence cases efficiently.

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