



PREDICTORS OF WOMEN VIOLENCE AND ABUSE AMONG RURAL COMMUNITIES' WOMEN IN AKINYELE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA.

OLAJIDE, O. E.

*Department of Adult Education
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria
ephraim0307@gmail.com*

ABSTRACT

This study examines predictors of women violence and abuse among rural communities' women in Akinyele LGA of Oyo State, Nigeria. A total of two hundred and fifty women were purposively selected for the study. Data were collected with a set of unstructured questionnaire, key in-depth interview (KII) and available records. Data were analysed using analysis of variance (ANOVA) and chi-square (χ^2) statistics. The results revealed that the combinations of independent variables predicted the dependent variables significantly. The result also indicated that the t-ratio is associated with four variables (poverty, traditional beliefs, men domination, illiteracy) were significant at 0.05 level of confidence while family size, and peer influence were not significantly associated with the dependent variable. Based on the results, the study recommended that the attention of governments at all levels, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious bodies and social workers should be directed toward inculcating best practices among couples to check violence and abuse in our society.

Keywords: *Traditional beliefs, Poverty, Prostitutions, Female Circumcision*

INTRODUCTION

Violence affects the lives of millions of women worldwide, it cuts across cultural, class and religious, and these have impeding on the right of women to participate fully in society. Violence against women takes dismaying forms, from domestic abuse; rape to child marriages and female circumcision all are violations of fundamental human rights. (WHO 2008)

In a statement to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, the United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, said that violence against women is a universal problem that must be universally condemned. He noted that women violence and abuse alone is on the increase. In the same vein, the Platform for Action, the core document of the Beijing Conference, Governments declared that "violence against women constitutes a violation of basic human rights and is an obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace". Literature on violence against women abound, however, prevalence varies from one community to the other, violence against women in the family occurs in developed and developing countries alike. It has long been considered a private matter by all including neighbourhoods, community, and the government, but such private matters have now become public tragedies. In the United States, a woman is beaten every 18 minutes. Indeed, domestic violence is the leading cause of injury among women of reproductive age in the United States. Between 22 and 35 per cent of women who visit emergency rooms are there for that reason. The highly publicized trial of O. J. Simpson, the retired United States football player acquitted of the murder of his former wife and a male friend of hers, helped focus international media attention on the issue of women violence and abuse. Straus, (1999).

According to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, in the 400 cases of women violence reported in 1993 in the province of Punjab, nearly half ended with the death of the wife. The Special Rapporteur's report of 1994 of the United Nations recognizes the importance of protecting victims of abuse and taking action to punish perpetrators. The establishment of structures allowing officials to deal with cases of women violence and its consequences is a significant step towards the elimination of violence against women in the family. (Faruqi, 1996). This Special Rapporteur's report (1994) highlights the importance of adopting legislation that provides for prosecution of the offender. It also stresses the importance of specialized training for law enforcement authorities as well as medical and



legal professionals, and of the establishment of community support services for victims, including access to information and shelters.

Many faces of Women Abuse and Violence in Nigeria communities:

Traditional practices

In Nigeria, women fall victim to traditional practices that violate their human rights. The persistence of the problem has much to do with the fact that most of these physically and psychologically harmful customs are deeply rooted in the tradition and culture of our society for example female genital mutilation. According to the World Health Organization (2008), 85 million to 115 million girls and women in the population have undergone some form of female genital mutilation and suffer from its adverse health effects. In Nigeria for instance, an estimated 2 million young girls undergo this procedure every year, but an increasing number can be found among immigrant and refugee families in Western Europe and North America. Indeed, the practice has been outlawed in some European countries.

In France, a Malian was convicted in a criminal court after his baby girl died of a female circumcision-related infection. The procedure had been performed on the infant at home. In Canada, fear of being forced to undergo circumcision can be grounds for asylum. A Nigerian woman was granted refugee status since she felt that she might be persecuted in her community because of her refusal to inflict genital mutilation on her baby daughter. However, there is a growing consensus that the best way to eliminate these practices is through educational campaigns that emphasize the dangerous health consequences. Several Governments have been actively promoting such campaigns in their countries.

Also, son preference affects women in many communities in Nigeria, particularly in the Eastern and southern part of Nigeria. Its consequences can be anything from foetal or female infanticide to neglect of the girl child over her brother in terms of such essential needs as nutrition, basic health care, inheritance, and education. In the same vein, China and India, women choose to terminate their pregnancies when expecting daughters but carry their pregnancies to term when expecting sons. According to this reports from India, genetic testing for sex selection has become a booming business, especially in the country's northern regions. Indian gender-detection clinics drew protests from women's groups after the appearance of advertisements suggesting that it was better to spend \$38 now to terminate a female foetus than \$3,800 later on her dowry. A study of amniocentesis procedures conducted in Bombay hospital found that 95.5 per cent of foetuses identified as female were aborted compared with a far smaller percentage of male foetuses. The problem of son preference is present in many other countries as well including Nigeria. (Demaris, 1992)

Prostitution and trafficking

Many women are forced into prostitution either by their parents, husbands or boyfriends -- or as a result of the difficult economic and social conditions in which they find themselves. They are also lured into prostitution, sometimes by "mail-order bride" agencies that promise to find them a husband or a job in a foreign country. As a result, they very often find themselves illegally confined in brothels in slavery-like conditions where they are physically abused and their passports withheld.

Most women initially victimized by sexual traffickers have little idea of what awaits them. They generally get a very small percentage of what the customer pay to the pimp or the brothel owner. Once they are caught up in the system there is practically no way out, and they find themselves in a very vulnerable situation and since prostitution is illegal in many countries, it is difficult for prostitutes to come forward and ask for protection if they become victims of rape or want to escape from brothels. Customers, on the other hand, are rarely the object of penal laws.

The extent of trafficking in women and girl children has reached alarming proportions, especially in Africa and Asian countries, many women and girl children are



trafficked across borders, often with the complicity of border guards. In one incident, five young prostitutes burned to death in a brothel fire because they had been chained to their beds. At the same time, sex tours of developing countries are a well-organized industry in several European and other industrialized countries.

Violence against women migrant workers

Female migrant workers typically leave their countries for better living conditions and better pay but the real benefits accrue to both the host countries and the countries of origin, for home countries, money sent home by migrant workers is an important source of hard currency, while receiving countries are able to find workers for low-paying jobs that might otherwise go unfilled, but migrant workers themselves fare badly, and sometimes tragically. Many become virtual slaves, subject to abuse and rape by their employers. For instance, in the Middle East and Persian Gulf region, there are an estimated 1.2 million women, mainly Asians, who are employed as domestic servants.

According to the independent human rights group Middle East Watch; female migrant workers in Kuwait often suffer beatings and sexual assaults at the hands of their employers.(Craven, 1996). The police are of little help, women who report being raped by their employers are sent back to the employer or are even assaulted at the police station. Working conditions are often appalling, and employers prevent women from escaping by seizing their passports or identity papers. In the light of this, this study sought out the predators responsible for women violence and abuse in Akinyele Local Government area of Oyo state with a view of making appropriate recommendations to guide against future occurrence in our society.

Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted to find out factors that facilitate violence and abuse against women in Akinyele local government area of Oyo state. They were; to:

- examine if cultural beliefs and environmental factors could influence violence and abuse against women
- ascertain the relative and composite effects of these factors on women violence and abuse among rural women in Akinyele Local government area

Research Hypotheses

- There is no significant relationship between cultural and environmental factors influencing women violence and abuse in Akinyele Local government area.
- There is no significant relative and composite relationship between cultural and environmental factors influencing women violence and abuse in Akinyele Local government area.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design of ex-post facto type was adopted for the study. The design provided the researcher the chance to illustrate the sampled respondents' attributes based on the information provided. Three communities in Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria were purposively selected for the study. These communities were selected because of reported cases of women violence and abuse. The communities are rural in nature; with traditional problem of patriarchal dominance and gender inequality. A total of two hundred and fifty respondents were purposively selected for the study. An unstructured questionnaire tagged, 'Rural Community Women Violence and Abuse Questionnaire' (RCWVAQ) of three sections was used to elicit information from the respondents. The respondents were assisted to complete the questionnaire through the interpretation of the questionnaire items from English Language into different languages of

the respondents in the communities. This was facilitated by local research assistants. Data obtained were analysed through Analysis of variance (ANOVA), chi-square, and qualitatively method using the content analysis and summaries.

Data Analysis, Findings, and Discussion

Hypothesis 1: is there any significant relationship between cultural and environmental factors influencing women violence and abuse in Akinyele Local government area?

Multiple R = 0.460
 Multiple R-Square = 0.212
 Adjusted R-Square = 0.195
 Standard Error of Estimate = 3.05

Analysis of variance				
Sources of variation	Df	SS	Ms	f-ratio
Regression	4	617.444	123.48886	13.229
Residual	245	2277.5997	9.3344	
Total	249	-	-	

*Significant at 0.05 level of confidence

Table 1 show that the combination of the six independent variables (poverty, traditional beliefs, peer influence, illiteracy, family size, & men domination) in predicting violence and abuse against women in Oyo state with a co-efficient of multiple regressions (R) of 0.462 and a multiple R-Square (R²) of 0.213. The result shows that 21.3% of the variance in the prediction of women violence and abuse is accounted for by the independent variables. The table also indicates that, the analysis of variance of multiple regression data gave an F-ratio of 13.229 significant at 0.05 level of confidence.

Hypothesis 2: Relative contribution of each of these environmental and cultural factors (poverty, traditional beliefs, peer influence, illiteracy, family size, & men domination) to women violation and abuse.

	Variables	B	SEB	Beta	t-ratio	Remark
1.	Poverty	0.102	0.045	0.146	2.283	Sig
2.	traditional beliefs	-0.810	0.378	-0.135	-2.146	Sig
3.	peer influence	-0.112	0.399	0.017	-0.283	NS
4.	Illiteracy	-0.978	0.404	0.143	-2.425	Sig
5.	family size	-1.014	0.411	0.142	-2.461	Sig
6.	men domination	0.194	0.402	0.029	0.485	NS
7.	Constant	40.903	7.633	-	5.357	0.000

Table 2 above shows for each independent variable, the standard regression weight (B), the standard error estimate (SEB), the Beta, the t-ratio, and the level at which the t-ratio is significant. As indicated in the table above the t-ratio is associated with four variables (poverty, traditional beliefs, men domination, illiteracy) were significant at 0.05 level of confidence while family size, and peer influence were not significantly associated with the dependent variable

Research Question 3: Is there any significant relationship between the environmental and cultural factors of women violence and abuse in Oyo state?

Table 3: X^2 Contingency table on significant level of relationship between the Environmental and Cultural factors of Women Violence and Abuse in Oyo state.

	Determinant factors	Response of determinant factors				Total	x^2 cal	x^2 crit.	Df	P
		SD	D	A	SA					
1.	Poverty	15 (7.5)	5 (2.5)	25 (12.5)	12 (6.0)	57	36.7	3.33	9	<.05
2.	traditional beliefs	14 (7.0)	3 (1.5)	40 (20.0)	32 (16.0)	89				
3.	peer influence	4 (2.0)	2 (1.0)	3 (1.5)	6 (3.0)	15				
4.	Illiteracy	4 (2.0)	2 (1.0)	7 (3.5)	22 (11.0)	35				
5.	family size	12 (6.0)	5 (2.5)	8 (4.0)	10 (5.0)	35				
6.	men domination	4 (2.0)	5 (2.5)	4 (2.0)	6 (3.0)	19				
7.	Total	53	22	87	88	250				

$X^2 = 36.7, DF = 9, P < 0.05 = \text{Significant}$

Table 3 revealed that the X^2 calculated value (36.7) at 0.05 level of significance is greater than X^2 critical value of 3.33. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis, that state that there is a significant relationship between the determinant factors (environmental and cultural factors) and Women violence and abuse was accepted. The implication of this is that determinant factors have greater role to play in women violence and abuse in Oyo state.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that the combinations of environmental and cultural factors (poverty, traditional beliefs, peer influence, illiteracy, family size, & men domination) were working against women in Akinyele local government of Oyo state. The observed f-ratio of 13.229, at 0.05 level of significant is evidence that the effective combination of these variables will serve as obstacle to women violence and abuse. This finding is supported by Johnson, (1995) who submitted that women face additional obstacles since lack of experience and illiteracy make it difficult for them to deal with their husband. Furthermore, the coefficient of multiple correlations of 0.462 and a multiple R + square of 0.213 showed the magnitude of relationship between women violence and abuse and the combination of independent variables. The results further attest to the fact that stringent conditions imposed by culture and environment make it difficult for women to express themselves because the t-ratio value associated with each independent variables showed that poverty, traditional beliefs, peer influence, illiteracy contributed significantly to women violence and abuse whereas family size, & men domination did not. This result is in agreement with Bland, & Om, (1986), and Black, (1983). who all submitted that many women are forced into prostitution either by their parents, husbands or boyfriends or as a result of the difficult economic and social conditions in which they find themselves. They are also lured into prostitution, sometimes by "mail-order bride" agencies that promise to find them a husband or a job in a foreign country. As a result, they very often find themselves illegally confined in brothels in slavery-like conditions where they are physically abused.

Based on the above, all the determinants except family and men domination are all important factors contributing to women violence and abuse in Akinyele local government area of Oyo State. The result is in agreement with Bern, Jacobson and Gottman (1999); that poor traditional beliefs is related to violence and abuse during pregnancy in India and China.



Also, findings of this study is at variance with the work of Faruqi (1990) who submitted that peer influence and family size are not major factors influencing women violence and abuse.

Furthermore, the study affirmed that family size and peer influence were not found to be significantly predict women violence and abuse among the sampled respondents, attention of governments at all levels, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious bodies and social workers should be directed toward inculcating best practices among couples to check violence and abuse in our society.

Implications of Findings and Conclusion

National plans of action need to be developed in collaboration with all relevant agencies to ensure that governmental and non-governmental agencies agreed on priorities and objectives so as to be able to define one another's responsibilities, and work towards achieving a violence free society. Plans should include review and reform policy legislation, building data on those that have been violated and abused, strengthening services for victims, developing and assessing prevention responses. To ensure that the plan moves beyond words to action, a specific organisation must be mandated to monitor and report periodically on progress made so far.

Similarly, data for the human, social, and financial costs of violence are important for understanding the issue, setting priorities, and advocating for increased prevention efforts. However, the quantity and quality of data are poor all over the world Nigeria inclusive. Furthermore, data are often not comparable across countries and regions because of differences in definition, data collection methods, and classification systems. Greater efforts are needed to collect data in a standard way and ensure its dissemination most especially as it affect globalization.

Violence prevention efforts need to be integrated into social and educational policies and thereby reduce gender and social inequalities, which are major risk factors for most types of violence. Inequalities can be addressed only by an array of interventions including legal reforms, strengthening of social protection services, education, and advocacy. One area where the public health sector has an important responsibility is in assuring the availability of services for victims of violence. Emergency and long-term care services need to be improved so that they provide a comprehensive response for victims of violence. Common taboos often prevent recognition of, and services for, sexual violence, self-inflicted violence, and abuse of children, women, or elderly people. Furthermore, efforts should be made to provide an integrated medical, legal, and social services for the victims if the need arises.

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