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Perceived Sociocultural Factors Associated with Violence Against Men and Preventive Strategies for its Reduction among Married Men in Ibadan, Nigeria

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Abstract

Domestic abuse against males is prevalent yet often undetected due to societal silence and stigma; this paper explores the sociocultural factors and preventive strategies for addressing Violence Against Men (VAM) among married men in Ibadan, Nigeria. This study employed a descriptive mixed-method approach in Ibadan's five LGAs, administering 600 semi-structured questionnaires to married men and conducting 20 FGDs with community gatekeepers, with data analyzed using NVivo 10 for qualitative data and SPSS for quantitative data. Respondents, aged 23-64 with a mean of 45.07 years, mostly had secondary education (47.7%), were artisans (47.2%), Muslims (61.2%), and Yorubas (95.3%). Among them, 90.7% believed heavy alcohol and drug use by women could lead to abuse, 69.8% felt financial superiority could cause abuse, and FGD participants identified factors like social and educational status, cultural beliefs, employment, and lack of home training as contributors to domestic violence against men. Preventive strategies for reducing the violence against men mentioned by the respondents include public enlightenment using mass and social media and the provision of counselling services, including premarital counselling. Legal provisions should be introduced to protect men from violence or threats of violence directed against them by their abusive partners.

Keywords: *Domestic Abuse, Preventive strategies, Socioeconomic factors, Violence Against Men.*

Introduction

The Nigerian Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act of 2015 defines domestic abuse as any act, omission, action, or behaviour of the respondent that qualifies as domestic violence [1] as harasses, injures, or endangers the aggrieved person to force her or any other person connected to her to comply with any unlawful demand for any dowry, other property, or valuable security; or harasses, harms, injures, or endangers the aggrieved person to cause physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, or financial abuse or otherwise harms or injures the offended party, whether physically or mentally [2]. As intimate partners commit 38 percent of all female homicides globally, 35 per cent of women have experienced either physical or sexual intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual violence, compared to 28.5 per cent of men who have also experienced physical/sexual intimate partner violence [3, 4].

Men are also the victims of a variety of situations and forms of violence. Although it is less frequently discussed and reported, sexual abuse, violence, and crime against men are not nonexistent. Men are more frequently forced into unintentional sexual acts to advance professionally, get promoted, avoid being lazy at work, or win the wife's approval. Additionally, several males have disclosed that they were sexually abused and/or harassed as kids or teenagers by both men and women who were either their family members or who were (molested) in public [5]. As a result of the excessive focus on female victims, it is necessary to profile those who commit

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domestic violence against men to comprehend better the special problems that surround the act in urban patriarchies. Women would hit their male partners with objects, throw objects at them, hit them with cars, bite them, and use weapons like knives and guns against them. However, this means that males will frequently suffer injuries because women typically employ a weapon or item while men normally damage their female partners solely with their bodies [6]. Victims, in general, are wary of reporting it due to a variety of reasons. Young [7] notes that the discourse on male victims of domestic abuse is relatively new and that there were many disputes when Gelles and Straus first reported in 1975 that males were just as likely as women to report being hit and that women were just as likely to hit their spouses. When the term "domestic violence" is brought up, the age-old and pervasive beating, molestation, and brutalisation of women by their spouses immediately comes to mind. According to McKeown and Kidd [8], men who experience domestic abuse must contend with a culture that views wives as the only victims and husbands as the perpetrators. The numerous media campaigns against the mistreatment of women in intimate relationships and the sympathy and assistance they receive in contrast to the complete incredulity shown to male victims serve to strengthen this broad idea [9]. Although domestic violence against women is common in Nigeria, where many women have been killed, brutalised, or permanently disabled by their violent male partners [10], domestic violence against men is also common, albeit it has mostly gone unreported. Domestic violence is nearly universally underreported, and Watts and Zimmermann [11] speculate that this may be because the topic is so delicate. Thus, this paper presents the sociocultural factors associated with Violence Against Men (VAM) and its preventive strategies among married men in Ibadan, Nigeria.

Methodology

Study Design

A descriptive mixed-method approach was used for this study.

Study Area

The study was carried out in all five Local Government Areas (LGAs) in the Ibadan metropolis, Nigeria: Ibadan-North, Ibadan South-East, Ibadan South-West, Ibadan North-East, and Ibadan North-West.

Study Population

The study population comprised married men and community gatekeepers (traditional and community leaders) between 18 years and above.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Men living in Ibadan who were married or in cohabitation (aged 18 years and above)
2. Eligible men residing within the study area are available in the house during the time of study.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Men who were not married or in cohabitation
2. Men who were not available in the house during the time of study.

Sample Size

The sample size n was determined using the Leslie Fischer's formula;

$$n = \frac{Z^2 pq}{d^2}$$

Where n = minimum sample size

P (Prevalence) = 11% (*Prevalence and correlates of intimate partner violence among men in a rural community of Oyo State, South-West Nigeria* [12]

q = 1-P (1 - 0.11) = 0.89

Z = confidence limit (95%) = 1.96

d = level of precision (5%) = 0.05

$$n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.12 \times 0.89}{(0.05)^2}$$
$$= \frac{3.842 \times 0.11 \times 0.89}{0.0025}$$
$$= \frac{0.3761}{0.0025}$$
= 150

The sample size was increased to 600 for the generalization of findings and to account for the no-response.

Sampling Technique

For the quantitative study, six hundred consenting respondents were used, and the following five-stage sampling technique was adopted in selecting the respondents.

Stage 1: One out of five LGAs in the Ibadan metropolis was randomly selected by balloting, and Ibadan North was chosen.

Stage 2: The twelve wards in the selected LGA were stratified into rural and urban wards.

Stage 3: Four out of twelve wards in Ibadan North were randomly selected for this study (two each in rural and urban strata).

Stage 4: Three communities were randomly selected from each ward.

Stage 5: Respondents were chosen from every other household until the required respondents were obtained.

For the qualitative study, one Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted in all the 20 selected wards, and the number of participants in each FGD was 6 participants. The FGD discussants were selected using a non-probability sampling technique involving purposive sampling. This implies that the FGD discussants were chosen because of their position as either community and/or traditional leaders in their community.

Method for Data Collection

Both quantitative (semi-structured questionnaire) and qualitative (Focus Group Discussion) methods were used for data collection.

Validity and Reliability of instruments

The instruments were pre-tested among a population in Akinyele's local government area that is similar to the sample population to allow the researcher to make any necessary corrections and determine how reliable and consistent the questions were. The dependability of the instrument was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha Model method. As a result, the coefficient reliability was assessed using SPSS computer software, and the result showing a correlation coefficient greater than 0.05 was deemed reliable. This involved giving the questionnaire to 10% of the research population once.

Data Management and Analysis

All the data collected through the audio recordings was transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were checked regularly to ensure completeness of the transcription. The analysis was done by reading through the transcribed interviews, and Nvivo 10 software was used to analyze the results. For the questionnaire, the data were exported from the electronic database (KoboCollect), validated, and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis. Results were presented in frequency tables, and some variables were cross-tabulated.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval was obtained from the Oyo State Ethical Review Committee at the Ministry of Health, Oyo State. Oral informed consent was obtained from all the quantitative respondents before administering the questionnaire, while written consent was obtained from the qualitative participants. The participants were informed that their participation was optional and that abstaining from it had no adverse effects. Privacy and confidentiality were ensured as serial numbers, not the names of the respondents, were used. The respondents were assured that their

responses would be kept confidential as the questionnaire would be stored in a place where only the research team had access.

Results

Socio-demographic Variables

The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1 below. The respondents ranged from 23-64 years, with a mean age of 45.07+11.34 years. Most (79.8%) practiced monogamous marriage, 78.2% have had only one marriage, and 85% reported providing the family's main source of income. Almost half (47.7%) of the respondents had secondary education, 47.2% were artisans, 61.2% were Muslims, and 95.3% were Yorubas.

Perceived Sociocultural Factors Associated with Violence Against Men

Table 2 shows the perceived sociocultural factors associated with violence against men. Majority (90.7%) of the respondents agreed that heavy alcohol and drug use by women could influence them to abuse their husbands, 69.8% agreed that a woman would abuse her husband if she has more money than him, 65.3% agreed that a woman would abuse her husband if she is more educated than him, 88.2% agreed that low self-esteem of a man could make his wife be abusing him, and 81.7% agreed that a woman whose mother is abusing her father would also abuse her husband. In addition, 35.8% agreed that a woman getting married at a younger age (less than 25 years) would not abuse her husband, and 13.3% agreed that a history of physical or emotional abuse in childhood would not make a woman abuse a man. The FGD participants mentioned social status, educational status, cultural belief, employment status, contentment and covetousness, and lack of home training as the sociocultural factors associated with the violence some men faced in their homes from their wives.

Table 1. Respondents' Socio-demographic Variables (n= 600)

Socio-demographic Variable	Frequency	%
Age (years)		
23-33	86	14.3
34-44	220	36.7
45-55	203	33.8
56 and above	91	15.2
Religion		
Christian	228	38
Islam	367	61.2
Traditional	5	0.8
Ethnicity		
Yoruba	572	95.3
Igbo	27	4.5
Hausa	1	0.2
Type of marriage		
Monogamous	479	79.8
Polygamous	121	20.2
If polygamous, the number of wives		
1	1	0.2
2	86	14.3

3	24	4.0
4	9	1.5
6	1	0.2
Education		
No Formal	20	3.3
Primary	130	21.7
Secondary	286	47.7
OND/NCE	70	11.7
HND/BSc	80	13.3
Postgraduate	14	2.3
Occupation		
Civil servant	107	17.8
Unemployed	1	0.2
Artisan	283	47.2
Retired	5	0.8
Trader	164	27.3
Driver	22	3.7
Professional	9	1.5
Company Executive	9	1.5
Age of first marriage		
12-22	76	12.7
23-33	452	75.3
34 and above	72	12
Years of Marriage		
1-11	216	36.0
12-22	212	35.3
23 and above	172	28.7
Number of Children		
0-2	211	35.2
3-5	330	55.0
6 and above	59	9.8
Average Monthly Income (#)		
Less than 35,000	135	22.5
35000 and above	460	76.7
Number of marriages		
1	469	78.2
2	94	15.7
3	28	4.7
4	8	1.3
5	1	0.2
Description of how they came to marry their current or most recent wife		

Chose each other	577	96.2
Marriage was arranged	23	3.8
Provides the main source of income in your home		
Self	510	85.0
Partner	10	1.7
Both	80	13.3

Mean Age 45.07+11.34

Social Status: Majority of them mentioned that if a woman is in a higher position than the husband or influential in society, it would pose a difficult situation in the family because of the pride that will come with it from the woman. Some participants added that such a woman would find it difficult to subject to her man, which would threaten the peace in their home. One of the participants specifically said;

> *"If a woman has higher status than her husband, their pride is always too much. To the extent that some won't listen to their husband again, there is nothing the husband can do, and there is nothing he can say; she will be looking at him as if it is not God that created him; she will be looking at him as if he has not been one doing things right from the beginning before God did his things but if the husband then sees that this woman, the way she is doing it can cause fight between them, it causes malice that doesn't make them relate again."*

However, a participant mentioned that most of the violence from women to men due to social status is sometimes caused by the irresponsibility of the men. He pointed out that some men leave most of the responsibilities to their wives once they see they are financially capable. In addition, another participant mentioned that when a woman is financially dependent on a man and the man is unable to meet financial expectations, this can lead to changes in behaviour and mistreatment.

Educational status: Some of the participants reported that a woman who is educated is liable to perpetrate violence against her husband, especially if the husband is not educated at all or not as much as she is. They further mentioned that such a woman would be abusive and would lack respect for her husband because she would see herself as a better person than the man and would start to behave as if she did the man a favour by marrying him. A participant specifically said;

> *"Regarding educational status, it gets a man angry, the women also normally abuse the privilege, in the sense that the way they will be talking to their husband at home can make a woman proud of her husband since she knows that those she is controlling at work have more standard compared to her husband. Anyways, it causes it when a woman is more educated than the husband."*

Employment status: Few of the participants reported that the employment status of a woman could make her violent toward her husband at home, especially if the husband is unemployed or what he is doing is not bringing in enough money. It was said that such a woman would be proud, and it would be difficult for the man to have a say in the house. One of the participants said;

> *"In this discussion, love is paramount in it all. But nowadays, many children don't remember the cultural belief that husbands are the head of their wives. Once they have more money than their husbands, they will abuse the men; in fact, what he is not supposed to do in the house, they will be pushing it on*

him. Once he fails at that, they will mock him, so if they are in a position, people will know he is no longer her husband because she will take the husband as the driver or take him as her servant; so in all, God should put love between the husband and the wife and then children of nowadays should walk with the elderly so that in one or three advice given by them, at least they can make use of one because it has been long that they say the husband is the head of a wife even till now. Still, the children of nowadays no longer use that, everyone is doing what they like."

Cultural belief: Above half of the participants reported cultural belief as one of the major sociocultural factors causing violence against men in their homes. They mentioned that having a different cultural or religious background should be taken seriously because some women who are idol worshippers tend to be more violent compared to those other religions. Further, they stated that their level of violence depends on the kind of ancestral God in her family, and it takes a lot of patience on the part of the man and even some sort of sacrifice to appease them when they get angry. A participant specifically said;

"You see on that cultural belief, yes, it is, some families are always aggressive, the gods they are worshipping may be powerful ones, if the gods enter into some women's life against their husband, that is what makes some women cut their husband with something because devil, may he not use us, some gods are being worshipped in a family that could cause that but some women when they see it is like that, it is important to be patient on her dealings with her husband at home."

Other mentioned sociocultural factors associated with domestic violence perpetrated against men, as noted by participants, are the fight for gender equity, peer pressure, and lack of love.

Contentment and Covetousness: Majority of the participants reported that the factors associated with violence against men are the bad habits the women have, like not being contented with little things and covetousness; one of them specifically said that;

"Some of the things, lack of contentment, lack of submission for someone, makes someone carry out violence. Part of endurance is when a husband does not have money today and doesn't know what will happen the following morning; then she sees her friend who has a car. Covetousness part of violence, and maybe that is what is causing it; maybe she sees that this one has money, that this one just spoke to her once that she gave her Five Naira; she will think because her husband doesn't have, she can follow him, covetousness led her there. Another one that causes it again, she will be like, "I will do whatever I wish to do." after all, I own my body, let me live my life, is also part of what causes it."

Lack of Home Training: A participant said that lack of home training from childhood also causes it when the woman is not properly trained well; he specifically said that;

'Why women perpetrate violence against men, some people, he has said the other time, it starts from the foundation of the house if the child is not well trained at home once she gets married, she will be doing the wrong things. Number two, when a woman is growing up, there are some things that she could have seen, because part of the violence we are talking about, I saw a movie yesterday, so that movie is on what you have come to ask, she later frustrated the husband till the husband eventually died because of what the

husband had done to her before they got married, but what the husband did for her that she saw, that he did for her, they have not started dating, they didn't know each other at all, but it was what she started doing when the husband eventually got married to her that she frustrated the husband. So, what she has seen out there or what she has seen about girlfriend/boyfriend that they were doing before, whatever she sees outside is what makes some women carry out violence. So, home number one and also what they have experienced and even between their father and mother, maybe there is a way their mother behaves to their father, it is the training that causes it."

Table 2. Respondent' Perceived Sociocultural Factors Associated with Violence Against Men

Statements	**Agreed (%)**	**Undecided (%)**	**Disagreed (%)**
A woman will abuse her husband if she has more money than him	419 (69.8)	47 (7.8)	134 (22.3)
A woman will abuse her husband if she is more educated than him	392 (65.3)	59 (9.8)	149 (24.8)
Heavy alcohol and drug use by women can influence them to abuse their husbands	544 (90.7)	13 (2.2)	43 (7.2)
Low self-esteem of man can make his wife to be abusing him	529 (88.2)	18 (3.0)	53 (8.8)
A woman whose mother is abusing her father will also abuse her husband	490 (81.7)	33 (5.5)	77 (12.8)
A history of physical or emotional abuse in childhood will make a woman abuse a man	473 (78.8)	47 (7.8)	80 (13.3)
A woman who believes in strict gender roles (female dominance) will abuse her husband	482 (80.3)	37 (6.2)	81 (13.5)
A woman getting married at a younger age (less than 25 years) will abuse her husband	315 (52.5)	70 (11.7)	215 (35.8)

A perceived cultural belief that a man is the head of the household and can never experience abuse from his wife does not allow men to speak out about their abuse experience	469 (78.2)	50 (8.3)	81 (13.5)

Preventive Strategies for Reducing the Violence Against Men

Table 3 shows the preventive strategies for reducing the violence against men among the respondents. The preventive strategies for reducing the violence against men, as mentioned by the respondents, include public enlightenment using mass and social media (53.5%), provision of counselling services, including premarital counselling (13.7%), provision of employment opportunities to men (11.3%), the establishment of programme by religious organisation (9.8%), good home training (9.8%), provision and enforcement of the law against violence (3.2%), economic support from the government (5.2%) and creating an educational platform (0.8%). The FGD participants mentioned the role of family, religious leaders, government, community leaders, those in authority (police, the judicial system, etc), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), provision of law against women, and establishment of support group systems as strategies to reduce VAM.

Family role: Some of the participants mentioned that the role of family in reducing violence against men is that parents should give their girl child proper home training while growing up so that she can behave well when married. Some also added that love conquers all, and if couples can love each other, then violence can be prevented within the family. Finally, a few participants reported that prayer is the key because no matter how hard a situation is, prayer can solve it.

Role of religious leaders: Some of the participants mentioned that a religious leader must have good behaviour that can be emulated by their followers, which could reduce women being violent to their husbands because they tend to attend religious houses more than men. One of the participants said;

> *"The roles of religious leaders are many in society to reduce violence against men. Firstly, you will see that in this community, we have many mosques, as well as many churches, but what they can be telling her will be the things that the religious leaders are also doing, that the followers will emulate, such that they are teaching them what they are also doing. It is from there that we see in the church that they will mix both men and women. Still, this one will make them separate them so that violence can be reduced in our society because once men and women roll together in the church, or whenever they are seen, there is a possibility there will be violence there because they will see each other there, this will make the violence in our society to reduce."*

However, a few of the participants mentioned that the religious leaders are parts of those causing violence in the family because some women, instead of staying at home to take care of the family, would prefer to go to Prayer Mountain instead, and the religious leaders won't caution them.

Role of community leaders: Most of the participants reported that the role of the community leader in curbing violence perpetrated against men by their wives is mainly monitoring and cautioning. It was said that a community leader should be able to follow up on the residents and know which of the houses is facing family crises and warn them. They added that part of their role is to call the couple, talk to them, and help them settle their differences amicably. A participant said specifically;

> *"The role of the community leaders like the chairman of a community, like a leader or elders in the house, once they see that a particular couple always fight, they have the opportunity to call both of them and ask them what is causing the problem, it could be a little thing that they will say "you husband listen to your wife, you wife listen to your husband," it could be that that is what they will say and if we see that the fights you don't stop it, you fight every day, you will be sent away from the community, maybe that is what they will tell them that will make them not to fight again, they have the role to play to monitor them."*

Role of those in authority (Police, the judicial system, etc.): Some of the participants implore those in authority to be fair and honest in their dealings and stop supporting women when it comes to domestic violence because some men have been wrongly accused just because their wives reported them. Further, they mentioned that authorities should be able to call the couples involved and advise them to solve their issues amicably among themselves, outside of court or police station. One of the participants said;

> *"In addition to what our judicial system and police officers can do, this one is common, in the sense that it is rampant in Yoruba land; we would love that they reduce it a bit; they should have it at the back of their minds that we don't go to court come back and still be friends, if they let them understand this among husband and wife that brings their case, they should let them know that they want to resolve the issue between them, peace can reign between them. They won't see it that the wife was the one who reported the husband and then locked up the husband; rather, they should call both of them; they should resolve it amicably."*

In addition, another participant recommends the establishment of stipulated punishments for extreme acts such as killing or maiming their husband to deter others from engaging in violent behaviour.

Role of Government: Some of the participants mentioned that the role of government includes organizing seminars or lectures for both men and women on how to relate with each other as a family; organizing counselling sessions for intending couples before getting married, and putting men in a high position at the workplace so that they can easily take care of their responsibilities as this will prevent been bullied by their wives, among others. A participant reported that once the government can help the citizens eradicate poverty and also the creation of more jobs violence will reduce.

Role of NGOs: Many of the participants mentioned that NGOs should be giving public enlightenment on the dangers of violence in the homes because they are the ones that move around the society and relate with people the most; they also said they should give feedback back to the government because they are believed to be closer to them. Few participants indicate that NGOs can contribute to addressing the root causes of domestic violence by focusing on societal issues such as poverty, lack of education, and inadequate healthcare.

Provision of law against women: When the participants were asked if they think there should be a law against women who are violent

to their husbands, most of the participants reported that if it's going to be a working law, and won't just be used then it is okay because if there is the law that punishes perpetrators, it will reduce the rate of violence in the homes. A participant said;

> *"If the government makes a law for the women, it will be immediately she does it, they will monitor it, without monitoring it, the law will not stand, laws that you make without doing an investigation that once you beat another woman on the road, you know you are in trouble when someone is not mad, may God not make us mad. The government can punish any male or female who goes against the law."*

However, a participant said no law can stand in the aspect of violence going on in homes and that the only solution is if the individual is ready to change because most of the women who violate their husbands are majorly those of high social status.

Establishment of support group system: Some of the participants mentioned that a support group system should be established in the community such that experienced women like older people can come around to share their stories and inspire them; this will lead to the reduction of violence among the women. A respondent said;

> *"Ha, but we are human; if they get there, they will hear this person's story, hear this person's story, so when you say your own is hard, if you hear another person's story, you will know that this your own is not anything at all when she even gets home she will think, that what she is fighting over does not even worth fight, that there are others issue that is more serious than her own, so that can reduce the problem, that is still okay, that can still bring reduction."*

Table 3. Preventive Strategies for Reducing the Violence Against Men among the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	%
Public enlightenment using mass and social media	326	54.3
Provision of counselling services, including premarital counselling	82	13.7
Provision of employment opportunity	68	11.3
Establishment of programme by religious organisation	59	9.8
Good home training	59	9.8
Provision and enforcement of law against violence	19	3.2
Economic support from government	31	5.2

Discussion

This study aimed to determine the socio-cultural factors associated with violence against men and strategies for its reduction in Ibadan, Nigeria. The majority of this study's respondents agreed that heavy alcohol and drug use by women can exert a substantial influence, leading to abuse against their husbands. This aligns seamlessly with Deshpande's seminal work in 2019, where the author identified alcohol as a significant risk factor contributing to violence against men [13]. The intricate nexus between substance abuse and domestic violence is reiterated across various studies, emphasizing the pervasive impact on intimate partner dynamics [14].

As regards socioeconomic status, this study unfolds a significant finding, as many of the respondents perceive a heightened likelihood of abusive behaviour when a woman holds a higher income than her husband. This alignment resonates with the findings of Malik and Nadda [15], who established a linkage

between unemployment, low family income, and the manifestation of gender-based violence [15, 16]. This association underscores economic factors as critical contributors to domestic violence, highlighting the imperative need for targeted interventions addressing the stressors embedded within financial disparities. Moreover, regional and sociocultural disparities emerge as pivotal considerations in understanding domestic violence perpetration. Drawing insights from Nwanna and Kunnuji's [17] study, our findings emphasise that highly educated, divorced, separated, and employed women in specific zones exhibit a higher likelihood of perpetrating violence against their partners [17]. This underlines the influential role played by regional and sociocultural factors in shaping the dynamics of domestic violence. The nuanced variations underscore the need for region-specific interventions to acknowledge and address diverse sociocultural landscapes.

Another factor reported by this study is the history of physical abuse, which is similar to a survey by Alsawalqa [16] that stated that their wives were exposed to childhood trauma by their parents, including physical, psychological, and emotional abuse and neglect. Additionally, suffering from bad parenting led to their negative self-perception, low self-esteem, feelings of inferiority, and deprivation. A few others stated that their wives witnessed violence in childhood and adulthood, which was reflected in their attitudes, goals, values, roles, and priorities in their marital life.

This study showed the preventive strategies for reducing the violence against men, as mentioned by the respondents, is public enlightenment using mass and social media. This is in accordance with Ademuson et al. [18] study which stated that to curb the issue of domestic violence against men, there should be a campaign to enlighten the public that domestic violence is not gender specific, but it can go both ways. Dealing with this stigmatized topic in an open and supportive way is a mandatory prerequisite to identifying victims of domestic violence in routine clinical practice [14]. In agreement with these findings, Adebayo [19] mentioned that there should be greater advocacy to enlighten the public about the existence and reality of the evil of domestic violence against men by government agencies, religious groups, and civil rights organizations. This will help in balancing the gender discourse on domestic violence and bring about better families in Nigerian society. To this end, more training measures for physicians should be made available to raise awareness of the subject. Hospital staff have a key role in setting the course and should thus be supported by targeted training measures [20].

The under-reporting of domestic violence against men due to embarrassment or fear of ridicule is a major challenge in Nigeria because of the sensitive nature of the subject. The victims are often in self-denial. Male victims are frequently disbelieved due to the patriarchal nature of Nigerian society, wherein it is believed that men are usually spouse abusers [21]. Battered husbands cut across all ages, educational levels, and socioeconomic classes. Male victims of domestic violence deserve the same recognition, sympathy, support, and services as female victims [19].

This study also mentioned other preventive strategies, which include the provision of counselling services, including premarital counseling, employment opportunities to men, the establishment of programmes by religious organisations, good home training, provision and enforcement of the law against violence, economic support from the government, and creating educational platform. In addition, Karimi (2018) stated that existing campaign programs need to be strengthened and sustained for awareness creation on the issue of domestic violence against men. This will give the phenomenon equal weight in the media and general society to that of violence against women. The program would also break gender stereotypes that provide fertile grounds for the

perpetration of violence against men. Social networks for men need to be strengthened through welfare and support groups. These would give the men the capacity to not only air their marital problems but also provide a source for better coping mechanisms [22].

This study also mentioned that a religious leader has a role to play in reducing women being violent to their husbands because they tend to attend religious houses than men. Thomas [23] found that religious leaders play vital roles in handling domestic violence issues. Still, the problem is that most of them do not have the needed skills and capacity to deal with the issue and mostly rely on the teachings of the Bible, Quran, and other religious book, which are patriarchal. It is recommended that they be given some form of education to enable them to do their counselling according to the constitution. In most societies, religious leaders play an influential role in constructing gender norms. The premarital or couples counselling course is one setting in which they exert their influence [24]. Faith, religion, and spirituality are frequently cited as helping survivors of domestic violence to recover from trauma [25]. Engagement with religious leaders, especially faith leaders, is of critical importance as they are understood to be gatekeepers to local communities, with considerable influence on their communities' beliefs and behaviours [26].

This study reported that the role of the community leader in curbing violence perpetrated against men by their wives is mainly monitoring and cautioning. It was said that a community leader should be able to follow up on the residents, know which of the houses is facing family crises, and warn them. They added that part of their role is to call the couple, talk to them, and help them settle their differences amicably. The study stated that policymakers, development practitioners, and researchers are to address violence adequately; a useful starting point is to build on community leaders' perspectives, attitudes, and responses to violence as a collective issue. By building on these, it will be easy to challenge and deconstruct the multiple ways in which community leaders' approaches to addressing violence are reinforcing gendered [27].

In this study, it was seen that the role of those in authorities (Police, the judicial system, etc), government, and NGOs are important in the prevention of violence against men. Aboderin et al. [28] emphasised the need for the reorientation and re-socialisation of members of society on the need to see abuse as gender-neutral through various media channels, and initiatives are recommended. Government agencies such as the National Orientation Agency, as well as other non-government agencies and civil and religious associations, are implored to raise awareness of the dangers of human abuse, irrespective of gender. In contrast, relevant security agencies get requisite training on how to handle male victims of abuse and as well cater for the protection of human rights irrespective of gender biases or appeal. Muia et al. [29] stated that there is a need to equally implement gender-based violence laws and policies to challenge the held societal perceptions of domestic violence against men (DVAM). An action that will see female perpetrators brought to due process of law. There is a need to advocate for change in gender and alcohol abuse lifestyle that expose men to victimization and stigmatization at various levels in society. Police and society response must be objective to facilitate reporting, protection, and prevention of DVAM [29].

Conclusion

In conclusion, preventive strategies for reducing the violence against men identified in this study include public enlightenment using mass and social media, provision of counselling services, including premarital counselling, provision of employment opportunities to men, provision and enforcement of the law against violence, etc. Domestic violence can even trigger suicide attempts. Consequently, male victims should be listened to and cared for.

Based on the findings, the following are recommended: Legal provisions should be introduced to protect men from violence or threats of violence directed against them by their abusive partners. Future research should focus on a comparative approach where the occurrence of domestic violence among men in rural households is compared with the same in urban areas. This would help identify patterns and differences in the occurrence and experience.

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