Universiti Utara Malaysia

THE INSIGHT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FEMALE VICTIMS IN EBIRALAND, NIGERIA

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Abstrak

Keganasan rumahtangga telah dikenal pasti sebagai masalah sosial bersifat global dan merupakan pelanggaran hak asasi manusia yang serius. Kajian lepas menunjukkan terdapat kesan berbentuk keganasan yang berbahaya terhadap golongan wanita dan kanak-kanak khasnya, dan masyarakat lain amnya. Masalah keganasan rumahtangga di Ebiraland, Nigeria berada pada tahap yang membimbangkan. Walau bagaimanapun faktor serta kesan keganasan rumahtangga masih belum dikaji secara menyeluruh. Oleh yang demikian, kajian ini bertujuan meneroka persepsi wanita Islam terhadap keganasan rumahtangga dan mengkaji faktor berlakunya keganasan rumahtangga di Ebiraland. Pandangan dan cadangan ini penting untuk memahami kesan keganasan rumahtangga terhadap wanita dan kanak-kanak, dan mekanisme yang diperlukan untuk menghalang keganasan tersebut daripada terus berleluasa. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan metode kualitatif. Data utama diperolehi melalui temu bual mendalam separa berstruktur, pemerhatian dan dokumentasi. Data temu bual diperoleh daripada 20 orang pemberi maklumat yang dipilih daripada empat kawasan kerajaan tempatan bagi negeri Kogi, Nigeria iaitu Adavi, Ajaokuta, Okehi dan Okene. Kaedah analisis data menggunakan pendekatan analisis kandungan bertema digunakan untuk menganalisis tema-tema yang berkaitan menggunakan perisian Nvivo. Kajian menunjukkan kemiskinan, poligami, ketidaksuburan dan penukaran agama merupakan faktor utama keganasan rumahtangga di Ebiraland. Kajian juga mendapati hubungan yang signifikan di antara peningkatan kadar jenayah di Ebiraland dengan keganasan rumahtangga. Selain itu, kajian temubual menunjukkan wanita menganggap keganasan rumahtangga menjejaskan kesihatan fizikal, mental dan reproduktif mereka. Wanita juga merasakan bahawa norma sosio-budaya mendorong berlakunya keganasan rumahtangga di Ebiraland. Kajian ini memberi input yang signifikan kepada perspektif berkaitan faktor dan kesan keganasan rumah tangga khususnya kepada golongan wanita dan kanak-kanak. Kajian mencadangkan suatu bentuk intervensi pencegahan melalui saluran perundangan, pekerjaan dan pemerkasaan wanita bagi memecahkan kitaran keganasan yang berlaku. Peranan pemimpin Islam dalam memberi serta menyampaikan ilmu dan kaunseling kepada pasangan perlu dipertingkatkan untuk memastikan keselamatan wanita.

Kata Kunci: Keganasan rumah tangga, Hubungan suami isteri, Kanak-kanak, Ebiraland.

Abstract

Domestic violence has been recognised as a global social problem and serious human rights violation. Literature has indicated harmful effects of violence on women, children, and the society in general. The problem of domestic violence in Ebiraland is at an alarming rate while the absence of significant studies of its factors and effects has been exhaustive. This study explores the perceptions of the Muslim women about domestic violence and examines the factors associated with it in Ebiraland. The views of Muslim women and suggestions are crucial in understanding the effects of domestic violence on women and children, and the nature of mechanisms needed in preventing the violence. This is a qualitative research. The data were obtained through in-depth semi structured interviews. Twenty informants were purposively selected from Adavi, Ajaokuta, Okehi and Okene Local Government Areas of Kogi State, Nigeria. Thematic content analysis approach was applied in this study where themes that emerged were analysed using NVivo software. The findings show that poverty, polygamy, infertility and change in religion are the main contributors to domestic violence in Ebiraland. The study also established that the elevated level of criminal in Ebiraland is significantly associated with domestic violence in matrimonial relationships. It was further revealed that women had a perception that domestic violence affect their physical, mental and reproductive life. The women also felt that socio-cultural norms gave rise to domestic violence in Ebiraland. This study contributed significantly to the perspectives on factors and effects of domestic violence against women and children. It is suggested that preventive interventions such as legislation, employment and women empowerment are essential in breaking the cycle of violence. Muslim leaders' role of preaching and counselling the couples should be improved to ensure women's safety.

Keywords: Domestic violence, Matrimonial relationship, preventive interventions, Ebiraland.

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List of Abbreviations

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BP	Blood Pressure
COQDAS	Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CPS	Child Protective Services
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
LGA	Local Government Area
NCE	National Certificate in Education
NDHS	Nigerian Demography and Health Survey
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PBUH	Peace Be Upon Him
STD	Sexually Transmitted Diseases
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infections
TV	Television
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	The United Nations Children's Fund
U.S.A.	United States of America
VAWA	Violence Against Women Act
WHO	World Health Organisations

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the Study

Domestic violence has been a major concern in the developed and developing countries of the world. It is a global social ill that cuts across nations, cultures, religions, ethnicity, and class, with varying degrees of prevalence (Afifi, Al-Muhaideb, Hadish, & Ismail, 2011; Amirthalingam, 2005; García-Moreno, Claudia; Jansen, Henrica; Ellsberg, Mary; Heise, Lori & Watts, 2005; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). According to Pataporn (2006), domestic violence has been identified as the most common type of violence against women. Globally, research has indicated that at least one in every three women, in a relationship, has been a victim of one form of gender-based violence or the other (WHO, 2016; Audu et al., 2015; Bekmuratova, 2012). Be that as it were, domestic violence has been recognised as a form of discrimination, human rights violation, as well as an important public health problem that need to be addressed (Dufort, Stenbacka, & Gumpert, 2015; Obi & Ozumba, 2007; Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997).

Domestic violence is referred to as a gender-based act of violence which could be physical, sexual or psychological, that exposes women to suffering or mental harm, by an intimate partner in a relationship, whether is perpetrated in public or in private (WHO, 2016). In the same vein, Saltzman, Green, and Marks (2000) defined domestic violence as any act of verbal or physical force or deprivation of any sort, by one or both partners in an intimate relationship such as marriage, towards the other. The act could cause physical or psychological harm, humiliation, or likely to

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result in physical (Balogun & John-Akinola, 2015), sexual (Oluremi, 2015; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000), or psychological harm (Saltzman et al., 2000), in public or private life of the individual (Redfern, 2015; Almosaed, 2004). Article 1 of the United Nations General Assembly (1993) defines domestic violence as any act of violence towards women, that exposes her to harm. The act is usually carried out by a member of a family against another member (Keeling & Masson, 2008; Slabbert, 2016), and the most common victims of this act of violence are the women and children (Aisyah & Parker, 2014; Meyer, 2012; Almosaed, 2004; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002).

Domestic violence is a broader term which comes in many forms of abuse in a marital relationship. Studies have indicated that the forms of domestic violence include physical abuse, (assault, choking, slapping, pushing), verbal abuse, sexual abuse (rape), emotional abuse (trauma), denial of food, denial of time for relaxation, and controlling behaviours (Fageeh, 2014; Fawole & Hunyigbo, 2008; Koenig, Ahmad, Hossain, & Mozumder, 2003).

The world over, women have experienced domestic violence from their partners or ex-expartners (WHO, 2016; Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005). Even though it was under-reported and often ignored, the statistics from literature across the world confirmed the prevalence and alarming rate of domestic violence (Antai & Antai, 2008). Similarly, studies in Africa have indicated high rate of domestic violence in matrimonial relationships. The patriarchal system in most African traditional society which relegated the women's status to the background accounted for this reality (Koenig, Ahmad, Hossain & Mozumder, 2003; Randall, 2003). The suggestions of

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these studies usually are that unless these social and cultural inequalities are adequately addressed, the prevalence and deleterious effects of domestic violence against women will forever be on the increase.

Many cultural and social norms that are associated with the prevalence of domestic violence, especially in Nigeria, have been identified by various studies. These factors include the belief that men are socially superior to women and as such he can control and discipline her even with force (Adegoke, 2010; Mitra & Singh, 2007; Ilika, 2005). The notion that domestic violence is a private affair and reporting such is termed as a shameful and disrespectful act, also contribute to its prevalence (Othman, Goddard, & Piterman, 2014; Arslantas et al., 2012; Fox, 2007; Busch & Rosenberg, 2004).

The Ebira people of Nigeria have been traced to be from Jukun of Wukari area of Kwararafa Kingdom (Tenuche, 2009). By the mid-19th century, the people settled in their present locations as founded by their ancestors after migration (Audu, 2010). The people share common boundaries with Yoruba speaking people to the West; the Akoko-Edo people to the South and the Hausa and Nupe group to the North (Jimba, 2012). The people are a homogenous group, marked out by a unique culture and they speak the same language called Ebira (Audu, 2010). The word "Ebira" represents three important aspects of the study area: the people themselves, their language, and their geographical location (Okene & Suberu, 2013). The Ebiraland covers an area landmass of 3,426 square kilometres, and consists of some urban areas surrounded by some rural settlements (Tenuche, 2009).

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Ebira constitutes one of the ethnic groups in the Middle Belt Zone of Nigeria and comprises of four Local Government Areas in the Kogi Central Senatorial District; which are Adavi, Ajaokuta, Okehi, and Okene Local Government Areas (Okene & Suberu, 2013; Tenuche, 2009). Thus, Ebiraland is situated in Kogi state, one of the thirty-six states in Nigeria (Edo, 2008). The population of Ebiraland in the 2006 National Population Census stood at 844, 774 people (Segun, 2013; Jimba, 2012).

The people came in contact with Islam in the year 1856 through the Jihad of Sheikh Uthman Dan Fodio of Sokoto Caliphate of Northern Nigeria (Jimba, 2012). Islam became widespread especially of recent times, through the activities of the youth who engage themselves in preaching and converting their parents who were in the past, the adherents of African traditional religion with a system of belief and practice that defined their religion (Bunza & Ashafa, 2010). Though the 2006 Census did not state the percentage of Muslims and Christians, however, literature established that Muslims have the highest population in Ebiraland (Bunza & Ashafa, 2010; Jimba, 2012; Okene & Suberu, 2013; Yoonus, 1993).

Like any other society, domestic violence has negatively affected the physical, social and psychological well-being of women in Ebiraland, with resultant effects of children who are prone to anti social behaviours in the community (Tenuche, 2011). It is therefore important to understand the socio-cultural norms that shape victims' understanding about domestic violence (Ilika, 2005). Because their understanding and reactions towards the violence will have impact on policies and interventions to tackle such violence. This study therefore seeks to explore women's deeper understanding of domestic violence, and risk factors that favour the violence in

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Ebiraland. It also intends to look at the negative effects of the violence on women, children and society, and suggested mechanisms to address domestic violence in Ebiraland were also explored during this research.

1.2   Problem Statement

The features of the marital relationship in Islam are happiness, safety, peace of mind, mutual love, justice and mercy among the couples (Azmawati, Hashim, & Endut, 2015; Laluddin et al., 2014; Nason-Clark, 2004; Tucker, 1994). As such, it is undisputable to state that the purpose of marriage is the attainment of successful union, characterised by moral charity, social integrity, and human feelings through tranquillity and peace of mind to fulfil divine duties to the Creator (Laluddin et al., 2014; Fazaruddin, 2012; Tucker, 1996). Similarly, the various traditions of the Prophet (PBUH), which showcased his relationship with his wives, further explained and demonstrated the requirements of a marital union in Islam. To this Allah says "And among His signs is this, that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquility with them and He has put love and mercy between your hearts, verily in that are signs for those who reflect (Q. 30:21). The Prophet was reported to have advised his companions to be kind to their wives. To this, Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet (PBUH) said "The most complete of the believers in faith, is the one with the best character among them. And the best of you are those who are the best to your women" (At-Tirmidhi, Vol 2, Book of marriage, Hadith 1162). This hadith lucidly elucidates the kind treatment that Islam accords women.

However, in many societies, these benefits and fruits of marital relationship are not attainable. The security of marital harmony of women could be jeopardised by

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violence. It may occur in several forms- physical, emotional, psychological and sexual, from the husbands or their family members. This fact is evident in many studies across the globe (Aisyah & Parker, 2014; Qureshi, Charsley, & Shaw, 2014; Linos, Slopen, Subramanian, Berkman, & Kawachi, 2013; Shuib et al., 2013; Meyer, 2012; Tucker, 1996). The World Health Organization reported that globally, 35% of women have been physically or sexually abused in marital relationships (WHO, 2016). In Iran for instance, a published research has recorded the prevalent rate of domestic violence among the women surveyed to be 49.9%, and the most common form of abuse is emotional, sexual and physical which is shown to be 44.4%, 18.9%, and 16.4%, respectively (Kargar Jahromi, Jamali, Rahmanian Koshkaki, & Javadpour, 2016). In Malaysia, a secondary and primary prevalence study had reported the lifetime rate of domestic violence to be 39% and 8%, respectively (Shuib et al., 2013). Similar studies in Nigeria had reported a high level of domestic violence against women, especially in marital relationships (Oluremi, 2015; Onigbogi, Odeyemi, & Onigbogi, 2015; Balogun, Owoaje, & Fawole, 2012; Jeremiah, Kalio, & Oriji, 2011; Oyediran & Isiugo-Abanihe, 2005). For example, the Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) of 2008 reported that the average lifetime prevalence of domestic violence is 27.7%, with 13.1% in the North and 52% in the Southern Part of Nigeria. To be specific, Balogun et al. (2012) reported the prevalence of domestic violence among the women in the rural and urban areas to be 64% and 70%, respectively. It was found that the common form of violence experienced by women in Nigeria was shouting (93%), pushing or slapping (77%), and kicking (46%) (Obi & Ozumba, 2007). However, it is worthy to mention that surveys, in most cases, only capture the number of women who are willing to be studied, and not the specific cases of abuse in a study area (Janseen, 2005).

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Furthermore, studies have indicated that women in Ebiraland are also victims of domestic violence. For instance, a study of domestic violence in Benue and Kogi states reported a significant rate of physical abuse against women to be 26% and 13% in these states, respectively (Tenuche, 2011). These physical forms of abuse include pushing, shoving, choking and stabbing. Sexual assault, especially denial of sex as a corrective measure against a recalcitrant wife was also reported with a high percentage of 48% and 45% from Benue and Kogi states, respectively.

The harmful effects of domestic violence on the women's health, their children, and the society can never be overemphasized. Research has demonstrated that women in violent relationships are vulnerable to series of health problems such as Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and HIV- AIDS (Rizvi, Khan & Shaikh, 2014; Iliyasu, et al. 2013). Domestic violence diminishes the victims' initiatives to contribute to the family and the society, due to low productivity at work. Literature indicated that countries burden productivity loss due to lateness to work, and/or absenteeism, as a result of psychological trauma faced by women in violent relationships (García-Moreno, Hegarty, & d'Oliveira, 2015; Bekmuratova, 2012). The adverse effect on the pregnant women is directly associated with complication of pregnancy, low birth weight and miscarriage (Hill, Pallitto, McCleary-Sills, & Garcia-Moreno, 2016; Arslantas et al., 2012; Chamberlain & Perham-Hester, 2000; Efetie, & Salami, 2007). In addition, the report of WHO (2016) indicated that domestic violence has the effect of pitiable health status, inferior quality of life and high use of health services on the women. Consequently, studies found that some women take divorce as the alternative measure when all efforts to resolve and reconcile with their abusive partners yielded

no positive results (Aisyah & Parker, 2014; Brinig, Frederick, & Drozd, 2014; Ogido, 2004; Liu, Chan, & Cecelia, 1999).

Furthermore, there is a considerable research evidence that indicated that children who witnessed domestic violence are also victims of the abuse (Khaliq, Siddiqui, & Nasir, 2017; Kotsadam, Ostby, & Rustad, 2017; Turner et al., 2015; Meyer, 2012). Bearing this in mind, Osofsky (1995) found that in sixty to seventy percent of homes where a woman is abused, children are also affected. Keeling & Masson (2008) stated that a significant risk of child abuse is imminent whenever any violence occurs in marital relationship. Children growing up witnessing abusive behaviours from any of the parents have been identified as being vulnerable to anti-social behaviour, violent tendencies in adult, and other criminal behaviours (Idogo, 2011). Other series of behavioural disorder and anti-social elements such as anxiety, depression, physical aggression, and conduct problem, have been associated with children who witnessed traumatic events in their homes (Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997; Osofsky, 1995).

In addition, the consequences of domestic violence on the society are enormous. Cost to health services, legal cost, and other services emanating from the abuse, are the associated effects of domestic violence on the society (Shuib et al., 2013; Gracia & Herrero, 2006; Edleson, 1999). It is found that women in violent relationships usually resort to alcoholism, drug abuse that causes them mental disorder and depression in most cases, and even suicide attempt (Dufort et al., 2015; Busch & Rosenberg, 2004; Henning, Jones, & HoldFord, 2003; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). The combined effect of this is that violence against women, as recognized by the United Nations National

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Assembly of 2008, is a global crime that has cost humanity social and economic development, which needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Nigeria is a signatory and a party to the 1979 "Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women" (CEDAW) (Audu et al., 2015; Madu, 2015; Agbalajobi, 2010). The convention made it a point of duty for all member states to undertake proactive steps to prevent all forms of violence against women. In line with the Convention's mandate, the Nigerian Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) of 2008 included detailed information about the domestic violence and workable solutions for its prevention. Despite all these, Nigeria has not taken a proactive measure to enact laws to address the problem of domestic violence (Madu, 2015). However, recently on the 25th of May 2015, the Violence Against Women (Prohibition) Bill which has been in the National Assembly for over a decade was eventually passed into law, with a slight adjustment. The law is now been referred to as 'Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act'(2015), to address the problem of domestic violence and other cases such child abuse, female genital mutilation, and the protection of disabled persons (Mbadugha, 2016).

Despite all these efforts by the Nigerian government to manage and prevent violence against women, its prevalence in Nigerian society is on the increase and at an alarming rate (Jeremiah, Kalio & Oriji, 2011; Gyuse, Ushie & Etukidem, 2009). Several studies have indicated that failure of the Nigerian government to ratify the protocol to CEDAW, which allows the abused women to seek redress in the court, accounted for this increase in the cases of domestic violence in Nigeria (Oluremi, 2015; Onigbogi et al., 2015; Uzuegbunam, 2013). Moreover, efforts by Civil Society

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Organisations for the ratification of the domestic violence laws by the government yielded no results (Madu, 2015). All these efforts have no positive effects on the incidences of domestic violence in Nigeria. Consequently, virtually on a weekly basis, newspapers' reports of one form of violence against women or the other make headlines in Nigeria (Premium Times, 18th Nov. 2016; Vanguard Newspaper, 19th Nov. 2016). For instance, in a study conducted in Abuja, Nigeria, a woman revealed that her husband hit and beat her all the time, and this abuse had resulted in losing two pregnancies. Another woman of 34 years old narrated her ordeal that she had stitched her face 25 times because of beatings from her husband (Oluremi, 2015).

In the light of the above, this research aims to ascertain the risk factors of domestic violence and suggest suitable intervention facilities to curtail its occurrence, to ensure a violence-free Ebiraland society. This research is therefore justified on the following grounds:

Tenuche (2011), confirmed the prevalence and negative consequences of domestic violence in Ebiraland. Her research also established that patriarchal system in Ebira culture contributed to this development. However, Tenuche's study focused on the middle and upper income groups in Benue and Kogi states. It was clearly stated that the research made use of women who have a University Degrees or its equivalent in Nigeria, as a determinant variable for middle and upper class in these communities. Whereas, the problems of domestic violence affect all women irrespective of their socio-economic status (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). The current study therefore, focuses the Muslim women, regardless of their socio-economic status, to examine the factors and effects of domestic violence in Ebiraland.

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Furthermore, Slabbert (2016), suggested the inclusion of the key players, who deal with domestic violence cases, in the data collection process to achieve the needed information to strengthen the study. Similarly, Levendosky and Graham-Bermann, (2001) argued that focusing women who are already depressed and traumatized in domestic violence research poses some level of inaccuracies to the findings. Because the women respond to the questionnaires or interview questions, viewing themselves as being abused, suffering from the effects of the violence, and this mental state could affect the reflection of the reality. Consistent with Slabbert's suggestion, this research becomes expedient because most qualitative studies on domestic violence usually focus the abused women as informants during data collection. Therefore, the inclusion of the Muslim leaders, who deal with domestic violence cases, in this research becomes necessary. This study has therefore explored the wealth experiences of the Muslim community leaders during interviews, as suggestions to prevent or reduce the incidence of marital violence in Ebiraland.

All these gaps were explored by this research and thereafter confirmed the prevalence of domestic violence in Ebiraland. The socio-cultural practices that favour violence against women and its negative effects on women, children and the society were also established. Though, violence is prevalent in Ebiraland, but it is believed that the suggested mechanisms in this study could go a long way in preventing the occurrence of marital violence in Ebiraland.

1.3 Research Aims and Objectives

This study aims to explore the understanding of domestic violence among the female victims in Ebiraland. To achieve this goal, the thesis will:

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i. Identify the perceived types of domestic violence against women in Ebiraland.

ii. Identify the factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland.

iii. Examine the effects of domestic violence on the women and children in Ebiraland.

iv. Recommend mechanisms to curb violence against women and children in Ebiraland.

1.4 Research Questions

The following are the research questions to be solved:

i. What are the perceived types of domestic violence against women in Ebiraland?

ii. What are the factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland?

iii. What are the effects of domestic violence on women and children in Ebiraland?

iv. What are the mechanisms to curb domestic violence against women and children in Ebiraland?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study of the domestic violence among the women in Ebiraland attempts to explore and analyse the marital abuse against the women in Ebiraland, and proffer solutions to curtail them. The significance of the study is explained as follows:

It is hoped that the findings of the study would provide viable suggestions to the authorities such as Government agencies, Ministry of women affairs and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). These suggestions will enable them to formulate policies and regulations as preventive measures to curb the menace of domestic violence against women in Ebiraland.

Also, the Muslim leaders need to be equipped with the necessary information and required skills about reconciliation, because skilful efforts are needed in reconciling disputes in marital relationships (Cusairi & Zahraa, 2015). The findings of the study will endow the Muslim community leaders with a deep understanding of the causes and effects of domestic violence on women and children in Ebiraland. This will broaden their knowledge base and in turn assist them greatly in their reconciliatory process among the couples in Ebiraland. Because it is observed that lack of adequate information and understanding of the causes and consequences of this violence has an adverse impact on the Muslim Leaders during adjudication processes.

Furthermore, it is expected that the findings of this study will set the pace for future research as a guide about the problem of domestic violence in the area under Study. Therefore, some improvements will be suggested for future researchers in areas not covered by this study.

1.6   Scope of the Study

The concern of this study is the Ebira people of Kogi State in Nigeria. The population of Ebira people stood at 844,774 per 2006 National Population Census. Though, there are Ebira people in other parts of the country. Ebiraland properly consists of Adavi, Ajaokuta, Okehi and Okene Local Government Areas, of Kogi state, in the Northern Nigeria. Therefore, the understanding of the Ebira women (married and divorced) about the factors and effects of violence in marital relationships, is the focus of this research. The focus of this research is justified on the basis that studies (such as Ishola, 2016; Onifade et al., 2016; Balogun, et al., 2015; Nelson, et al., 2015; Oluremi, et al., 2015) have established that women (female victims) are the major

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victims of domestic violence in Nigeria. Similarly, women folk constitute the foundation of the society, as the family depends on their roles as mothers and wives. It is however disheartening that, domestic violence has exposed these women to physical and psychological trauma, thereby making them lack in their responsibilities towards the family. This ugly development, no doubt, have affected the fabric of the society as delinquent and violent children are always associated with exposure to violence in the home. To ensure the society free from violence therefore, there is urgent need to address the problems of domestic violence, as it affects women in Ebiraland. Hence, other forms of violence such as violence against men, elderly and children, are outside the scope of this study.

1.7   Definitions of Terms

For clarity, a clear picture of how some words are used and to be used in this research is needed. These definitions will make them different from other usage or their general usages. The terms are as follows:

Domestic Violence: in this study, domestic violence refers to abusive behaviour that is carried out against a woman in a marital relationship that causes her harm. The harm could be physical, psychological, social and or injury, intimidation, loss of human rights (Keeling & Masson, 2008; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998)

Ebira: In this study, Ebira refers to an ethnolinguistic group of people that settle in the Central Senatorial District of Kogi state in the Northern part of Nigeria (Tenuche, 2009). The people occupy four out of the twenty-one (21) Local Government Areas of the Kogi State.

Physical Violence: In this study, physical violence means the use of physical force intentionally to cause injury or harm, death, or disability. This could be done through

throwing objects, pushing, punching, slapping, and or using a weapon (Fageeh, 2014; Saltzman et al., 2000).

Sexual Violence: In this study, sexual abuse refers to a forceful engagement of a partner into a sexual act by a spouse or family member (Fageeh, 2014; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002).

Threats of Violence: In this study, threats of violence refer to the use of words, gesture or to express the intention to cause death or harm (Saltzman et al., 2000).

1.8   Limitations of the Research

Aside from the sample size of the study, (which is 20 informants), the study only covered the Muslim women in Ebiraland. This became necessary to have the study well explored and considering the time frame for the data collection and analysis. The inability of the study to cover the other members of the society (Christians and Traditionalists) whose views and experiences are as well important when it comes to the issue of domestic violence against women, is believed to have narrowed down the scope of this research, and therefore the result of the study may not be suitable to be generalised.

Another limitation of this study was the fact that the study was qualitative and in-depth interview approach was adopted to obtain the data. The researcher found it difficult to get the needed data from the respondents because of the sensitive nature of the research (domestic violence) which is perceived to be private affairs or issues of individuals in most societies (Arslantas et al., 2012; Fox, 2007). Mixed method; where questionnaires and interviews were used, to complement each other, would have been the best approach, in this type of research.

CHAPTER TWO

WOMEN AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

2.1 Introduction

Violence against women is a research area that attracts global concern. Studies have been conducted by researchers on several aspects of the problem. This chapter seeks to review previous and related studies, observations, ideas, on domestic violence against women in their matrimonial homes, in general. This becomes vital to position this research in a proper context to identify missing gaps in the literature on the scope and focus of this study. The Thematic method will be adopted to review available literature based on the aims and objectives stated above.

2.2 Marital Relationship in Islam

In Islam, the term *nikah* is usually used to mean '*aqd* which is a contract. It symbolises coming together of a man and a woman as husband and wife (Kharofa, 2004). However, Allah refers to the contract of marriage in Q.4:21, as '*mithaqun ghalithun',* a strong covenant, to denote the magnitude nature of the contract (Zahidul Islam, 2014). This is because, marriage is a part of human life and a bond between families and societies. Marriage is a sacrament social agreement between a man and woman who are legally compatible with the aim of establishing a union and procreation (Laluddin et al., 2014; Tucker, 1994). It is a contract because, during the process, an amount is stated as *mahr*, witnesses are mentioned, and the names of the families of the parties are given (Tucker, 1994). The contract is therefore confirmed by the pronouncement of an offer and acceptance from both parties or their agents

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(Kharofa, 2004). These procedures become necessary to educate the parties that marriage should not be taken lightly, because families are actively involved.

Marriage is a natural desirable phenomenon which promotes social harmony, stability, peace of mind, and sexual satisfaction (which is a part of human nature) for every member of a community (Zahidul Islam, 2014; Tucker, 1994). Marriage is among the signs of Allah through which He demonstrated His power by differentiating human beings from Animals. It is stated in the Qur'an: "And among His signs is that He created for you mates from among yourselves, that you may dwell in tranquillity with them, and He has put love and mercy between your hearts. verily in that are signs for those who reflect" (Qur'an, 30:21).

Marriage is an act of *Ibadah* (act of worship) as was established in a *Hadith* of the Prophet which is narrated by Anas bin Malik that the prophet (PBUH) said, "Marriage is part of my traditions, so he who does not follow my tradition in religion, is not from me." (Al-Bukhari, Vol 7 hadith 1, Book of Wedlock). As such, the Prophet (PBUH) encouraged his companions who can shoulder the responsibilities involved, to enter into the contract. As narrated by Abdullah bin Umar, the Prophet (PBUH) said "O young people! Whoever of you can marry should marry, for it will help him lowering and not gazing at women hence, guarding his modesty. And he who cannot should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual power" (Al-Bukhari, Vol 7, hadith 4, Book of Wedlock). Shouldering the responsibilities of marriage is part and parcel of Islamic marriage, therefore, the parties should prepare to enter it with total commitment.

In Islam, once a marriage is consummated, the husband is charged with the responsibility of providing for the wife's *nafaqa* (material support), in the form of feeding, shelter, and clothing; in accordance with her social status (Zahidul Islam, 2014; Tucker, 1994). A consummated marriage, therefore, accords the husband and wife a set of rights and responsibilities that are asymmetrical. The husband is solely responsible for the wife's *nafaqa* (material support) while the wife owes her husband utmost obedience and respect (Tucker, 1996). The fulfilment of these rights and responsibilities is what qualifies a man to be among the best of humans.

Furthermore, the purpose of marriage is the attainment of successful union through tranquillity and peace of mind to fulfil divine duties to the Creator (Laluddin et al., 2014). To achieve this purpose, therefore, the rights of all stakeholders- husband, wife, children and the society in general must be jealously guided, by all the parties involved (Omar, 2014). Once the marriage is contracted, the husband is responsible for supporting his wife, payment of *mahr,* and provision of shelter. The wife on the other hand, should obey her husband, protect his interest and properties, and should not allow anyone into their house without his permission (Kharofa, 2004).

2.3   Islamic Perspectives on Domestic Violence

Islam prohibits all forms of violence against humanity, marital violence inclusive (Kort, 2005). As presented above, the kind treatment of wife is one of the fundamentals of Islamic marriage. There are verses in the Qur'an that highlight this fact. For instance, in surah an-Nisaa, Allah states to the effect that "women are your garments and you are their garments" (Q.4: 187). Similarly, the Prophet's last sermon, *khutbat al-wada'a,* clearly indicated his abhorrence to the maltreatment of

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women. In that speech, he mentioned, among others, that men should be kind and polite towards their wives (Al-Hibri, 2001). Similarly, the Prophet (PBUH) was quoted to have advised against hitting women. As narrated by Abdullahi bin Zam'a that the Prophet said: "None of you should flog his wife as he flogs a slave and then have sexual intercourse with her in the last part of the day" (Al-Bukhari, Vol 7, hadith 132, Book of Wedlock). All these are the practical demonstration of the Islamic teachings regarding husband's relationship towards his wife.

The principle of *qawwama* (authority) and *ta'a* (obedience) which is found in Q. 4:34, which also mentioned beating of wives (daraba) has been a major debate among the exegetes of the Qur'an (Mahmoud, 2006). However, it is worthy to mention that the word 'daraba' has been given different meanings among the exegetes of Qur'an. Meanings such as "gentle symbolic tap' has emerged in the Khan's translation and commentary of the Qur'an (Kort, 2005). This verse is misunderstood to legitimize violence against women, especially the disobedient ones (Hajjar, 2014; Mahmoud, 2006). Some studies indicated an association between this principle and gender inequality which exposes women to domestic violence. The misunderstanding stem from the fact that Islam accords familial roles, rights and duties to females which are different from that of males (Hajjar, 2014).

However, it was argued that Qur'an did not in any way permit beating of wife but rather restricted the practice that was in vogue in *Jahiliyyah* (period of ignorance), by commanding the Muslims to preach to their wives, abandon them in bed, before hitting them minimally (Hajjar, 2014; Omar, 2014). Similarly, Kort (2005) state that this verse should be understood in connection with the fact that before Islam, the

women's condition was pathetic, and abuse towards women was justifiable and acceptable. Therefore, the strike mentioned is a restriction on existing practice and not an encouragement for wife beating. Al-Hibri (2001), concludes that perhaps the patriarchal system in some Muslim cultures have influenced their judgement about the proper interpretations of the Qur'an in relation to dealing with women.

It is worthy to note that there are other verses from Qur'an and Hadith which negate marital violence. For instance, in Q30:21, Allah has described marriage institution to reflect tranquillity, mercy and affection. The notion of marital abuse, therefore, contradicts *Shariah* principles of ideal marital home that is characterised by kindness, stability, happiness, mutual love and harmony (Azmawati et al., 2015).

Furthermore, besides the Qur'anic verses and Hadith which discouraged being cruel towards women, other sources in the Islamic literature also discouraged it. For instance, in Tucker (1994), Khayr al-din was quoted to have referred to a man who hits, harms, and rebukes his wife without cause as an evil man who indulges in acts of disobedience. Khayr al-din further stated that any intentional act of maltreatment towards a wife is forbidden in Islam. Therefore, unstable marital relationship which is typified with violence will not be advantageous to the parties and the society in general (Tucker, 1994).

2.4   Domestic Violence against Women

Domestic violence has been recognised as a serious social, legal and health problem that needs urgent attention (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002; Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997). What constitutes domestic violence has been an argument among the various

studies across the globe. The argument stems from the discrepancies related to differences in cultures, and belief systems of the area under study (Redfern, 2015; Han & Stewart, 2014; Fernandez, 2006; Liu et al., 1999). This explains why studies on domestic violence vary regarding prevalence, the perception of the victims and perpetrators (García-Moreno, et al. 2005; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). However, the consensus among all the studies about domestic violence is that, domestic violence refers to any abusive behaviour, be it physical, psychological, sexual, or emotional, that is directed towards an intimate partner with effect of causing unwarranted harm, pain, injury, suffering or violation of human rights (Slabbert, 2016; Keeling & Masson, 2008; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). It is mostly carried out against women and children (Adegoke, 2010; Sternberg, Lamb, & Greenbaum, 1993; Hughes, 1988). The perpetrators are mostly men, while victims are women (Nelson, 2015; Busch & Rosenberg, 2004; Gelles & Gelles, 1980).

The variations in the definitions of domestic violence is largely due to the differences in the cultural and societal perception of the violence, and the available interventions to address the problems (Nkosi & Daniels, 2014; Buzawa, Buzawa, & Stark, 2012). Although, considerable attempts have been made by researchers to achieve a universally acceptable definition of domestic violence but all to no avail (DeKeseredy, 2000). For achieving uniformity in domestic violence definition, intimate partners, for instance, may include current and former spouse, or dating partners. It may also be either same-sex or opposite-sex partners, some of which may be weird to some cultures and societies (Saltzman et al., 2000).

For instance, in Chile, domestic violence is used to refer to private violence against women and children (Mcwhirter, 1999). In Australia, domestic violence is being viewed from a wider scope which includes physical, cultural and spiritual forms of abuse (Nkosi & Daniels, 2014). Whereas, in African society, domestic violence is a term used to mean an abnormal discipline of a woman and beating of children (Ofei-Aboagye, 1994). In the same token, studies in Nigeria refer to domestic violence as wife battery; women's exclusion from decision-making; sexual abuse and women subordination (Madu, 2015; Nelson, 2015).

Domestic violence has been a major concern among the researchers across the world. Various studies have found that violence against women is a global phenomenon that cuts across all ages, ethnicity, religion, and cultures (Huang, Wang, & Warrener, 2010; Antai & Antai, 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). In a cross-cultural survey about domestic violence, after studying 90 families, Lewinson (1989), found that wife-beating occurred in about eighty-five percent of societies of the world. Furthermore, the lifetime prevalence of domestic violence in the WHO multi-country study, was reported to be between 15% and 71% worldwide with the highest found in rural Ethiopia (Onigbogi et al., 2015; Afifi et al., 2011; Garcia-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2006).

In Africa, the discourse on domestic violence is of recent development; it started around the 1990s (Bowman, 2003; Ofei-Aboagye, 1994). Little or no discussion is known about domestic violence before now, and this has accounted for the dearth of literature on domestic violence in Africa (Tenuche, 2011). In spite of this, considerable researched literature have indicated that African societies recorded the

highest rate of domestic violence in the world as reported by the United Nation's report of 2000 (Oluremi, 2015; Onigbogi et al., 2015; Amina, Ellen, Philip, Duan, & Hamisu, 2009; Bowman, 2003; Gyuse et al., 2009; Yount & Li, 2009; Okereke, 2006; Yount & Carrera, 2006; Krug, Mercy, Dahlberg, & Zwi, 2002).

Furthermore, published studies have established the prevalence of domestic violence in Africa (Sherr et al., 2016; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; Abrahams et al., 2014; Dery & Diedong, 2014; Gass, Stein, Williams, & Seedat, 2010; Antai & Antai, 2009). For example, in South Africa, a data collected between 2011 and 2012 showed the rate of domestic violence to be 40% (Sherr et al., 2016), while Gass et al., (2010), using the Tanzanian Stress and Health (TSA) conducted in 2002 and 2004, reported physical and sexual abuse in Tanzania to be 33% & 23% respectively. In Malawi however, there was a less significant report of violence against women as findings show the lifetime prevalence of the violence to be 28.5%, reporting physical and emotional violence to be 20% and 13%, respectively (Sherr, et al., 2016; Bazargan-Hejazi, Medeiros, Mohammadi, Lin, & Dalal, 2013). Also in Ethiopia, the systematic review of literatures conducted between 2000 to 2014, indicated that the mean life time prevalence rate of the violence was 60.6%. The study reported physical, sexual and emotional abuse to be 47%, 39.6%, and 51.7%, respectively (Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015). Furthermore, studies in Nigeria have reported the rate of marital violence to be 27.7%, ranging from 13.1% in the North to 52% in the Southern part of the country, and recording 64% and 70%, among the women in rural and urban areas, respectively (Oluremi, 2015; Balogun et al., 2012; Amina et al., 2009; NDHS, 2008).

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2.5 Effects of Domestic Violence

The adverse effects of domestic violence on the victims, their children as well as the society, can never be overemphasised. Studies have shown that domestic violence accounts for almost one-quarter of all documented crimes in the world (Afifi et al., 2011; Bazza, 2009; Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh & Lewis, 2000). It was recognised by United Nations as a global major public health and human rights problem and thus declared "to address all forms of violence against women and to design policies and programmes to implementing the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women" (United Nations, 2005). Emma (2009) and Howard, Trevillion and Agnew-Davies (2010), observe that domestic violence is a stumbling block for development and progress in any society, which needs urgent attention. This is because of many difficulties faced by the victims of the violence.

In addition, many studies have shown that domestic violence is always associated with short and long-term adverse effects on the victims, their children and the entire society (Howard, et al., 2010; Tjaden & Thoenes, 2000). Some of the consequences of domestic violence are therefore highlighted under the following:

2.5.1 Effects of Domestic Violence on Women

Domestic violence against women has become an issue of grave concern to many researchers. The report of World Health Organization shows that domestic violence is responsible for one-quarter of every crime committed in the world (WHO, 2016). Evidence from the body of literature have indicated that domestic violence exposes women to physical, sexual, reproductive, psychological and even behavioural health problems (Lopez-Fuentes & Calvete, 2015; Dery & Diedong, 2014; Laeheem, 2014;

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Linos et al., 2013; Shuib et al., 2013). As such, domestic violence has affected the positive contributions of the victims to the development of the society because of low productivity at work and cost of health and legal services on the victims and the society (Fulu & Miedema, 2015).

Another effect of the marital violence on women is the consequences on the pregnancy. Studies have revealed that domestic violence during pregnancy endangers women's life because it leads to problems such as complications in pregnancy, placental abruption, miscarriage, premature labour, fatal fracture (Arslantas et al., 2012; Iliyasu et al., 2013; Jeremiah, Kalio, & Oriji, 2011; Khaironisak, Zaridah, Hasanain, & Zaleha, 2016). The possible reasons for this could be the fact that women at the time of pregnancy need to be free from all sort of physical, emotional and psychological trauma. Therefore, they could be exposed to the above-mentioned problems when faced with matrimonial violence.

In addition, literature had associated domestic violence to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and HIV/AIDS in marital relationships (Iliyasu, et al. 2013; Keeling & Mason, 2008; Suzanne, Jacquelyn, Michael, & Andrea, 2000). In fact, Suzanne et al. (2000) found that in the year 2000, most women living with HIV/AIDs in the United States of America had suffered domestic violence at one time or the other from the previous or past partners.

Furthermore, financial loss and low performance at work have been associated with domestic violence (Lloyd, 1997; Mitchell & Hodson, 1983). For instance, in a study conducted in Chicago, Lloyd (1997) found that women who had experienced

harassment, threats of life and physical aggression from their partners reported lower income than those who were not. This is because, according to the study, their partners' interference with their work schedules and disorganising their children's school arrangements, which leads to having problems with their supervisors, consequently. This could have direct negative impact on their performances at work and deprive them some opportunities such as promotions and rewards and could even lead to loss of jobs. Similarly, the respondents in Ulmestig and Eriksson (2016), described their challenges in coping with emotional abuse and work stress, which usually affect their performance with resultant effect on their financial situations.

On the whole, domestic violence hinders progress and is a major threat to social and economic development in any society (Emma, 2009; Lloyd, 1997). This is so because, victims of domestic violence may suffer isolation, inability to work, loss of wages, and lack of participation in regular activities that could earn them some economic values.

2.5.2 Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Studies have found a significant level of child maltreatment whenever domestic violence, be it physical, or verbal, exist between couples in marital relationships (Richards, 2011; Keeling & Masson, 2008; Edleson, 1999). Literatures have indicated that whenever marital abuse occurs, children in such homes are also affected (Szilassy et al., 2016; Turner et al., 2015; Aisyah & Parker, 2014; Alhusen, Lucea, Bullock, & Sharps, 2013). Bearing this in mind, Oluremi (2015) further stated that in some cases, the abuse is committed in the presence of the children, thereby simultaneously hurting two victims; the mothers and the children. This is to further

establish the fact that witnessing the violence in matrimonial homes is an abuse on the children in such a home.

Literature have indicated that children who witnessed domestic violence are vulnerable to antisocial behaviours, adult violence tendencies and may likely be either perpetrators of violence or victims in future (Kitzmann, Gaylord, Holt, & Kenny, 2013; Meltzer, Doos, Vostanis, Ford, & Goodman, 2009; Evans, Davies & DiLillo, 2008; Coker et al., 2000). Studies have found that domestic violence affects proper parenting; the children will be morally bankrupt and thereby resorting to violence as means of resolving issues (Bazargan-Hejazi et al., 2013; Idogo, 2011; Koenig, et al. 2003; Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 2001; Carter, Weithorn & Behrman, 1999).

Furthermore, children witnessing domestic violence have been associated with poor academic performance (Sherr et al., 2016). At the time of the violence, the parents may be psychologically disorganised, and the payment of the children's school fees may be affected. Similarly, the inability of the parents to dedicate meaningful times for their children; in relation to the children's work, and challenges of emotional disorder and psychological trauma in the school, will greatly affect the children's performance.

2.6   Factors of Domestic Violence

Factors have emerged in the literature as having the risk of exposing women to domestic violence (Alesina, Brioschi, & Ferrara, 2016; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; Colucci & Hassan, 2014; Dery & Diedong, 2014; Stöckl, March, Pallitto, &

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Garcia-Moreno, 2014). These factors vary according to cultures and norms of the societies. The proper understanding of the factors of domestic violence, therefore, requires adequate study of the social contexts in which the violence occurs because it cannot be studied in isolation (Redfern, 2015; Jewkes, Levin, & Penn-Kekana, 2002). These factors are discussed below:

2.6.1 Personal Achievement and Resources

Personal achievement and resources of an individual woman before the marriage have been identified as factors of domestic violence. The resources such as occupational status, the level of education, financial stability, are all contributory factors to domestic violence in both developed and developing countries of the world (Slabbert, 2016; Golu, 2014; Yount & Li, 2009; Yount & Carrera, 2006; Carlson, 1984). The possible reasons adduced by the above studies are that their husbands may feel threatened by their status, as they were economically independent and that could trigger violence in the homes. However, several other studies have indicated that unemployment and low economic standard of women exposes them to violence in marital relationships (Özcan, Günaydın, & Çitil, 2016; Aduloju, Olagbuji, Olofinbiyi, & Awoleke, 2015; Lopez-Fuentes & Calvete, 2015; Linos et al., 2013). These studies found that unemployed women are most likely to depend on their husbands for their daily needs, and this subjects them to violence from their husband. Tjaden and Thoenes (2000), buttressing this point, stated that specifically in the United States of America, women living below poverty level are at the substantial risk of domestic violence than others.

2.6.2 Exposure to Child Abuse

Exposure to child abuse has been reported to have a high percentage of risk to domestic violence in adults (Drinkwater, Stanley, Szilassy, Larkins, & Hester, 2017; Mugali, Chate, Pattanashetty, & Gupta, 2017; Levendosky & Graham-Bermann, 2001; Carter et al., 1999; Carlson, 1984). Schelbe and Geiger (2017) further explain that the likely reason for this is the cycle of violence theory which posits that children who witnessed violence are at higher risk of engaging in violence in adult. It is observed that children whose mothers were abused are more likely to abuse their wives in future (Jewkes et al., 2002). In a study conducted in nine countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, Ethiopia, Japan, Namibia, Peru, Tanzania, Serbia, and Thailand), it was found that witnessing one's mother being beaten by her partner was associated with domestic violence across nearly all the sites, especially in the rural areas (Stöckl et al., 2014). Thus, 19% of the informants in the study stated that their mothers were beaten by their fathers.

2.6.3 Societal Norms and Belief System

Studies have indicated that the societal norms and the belief system, is among the factors that have exposed women to violence in matrimonial relationships. A considerable body of literature has indicated that the cultural and societal norm which socialised women into believing that domestic violence is a private affair which should be treated as such, also contributed to women abuse (Khaironisak et al., 2016; Laisser & Emmelin, 2014; Linos et al., 2013; Colombini, Mayhew, Ali, Shuib, & Watts, 2013; Dalal & Lindqvist, 2012). Besides this, the societal ideals such as loyalty, protecting the family matters, preserving the husbands' good names, have made the women to hide their abuse without disclosing it and seeking for necessary

intervention. For example, a study in Malaysia confirmed that many Malaysian women still regard domestic violence as a private matter which should not be disclosed to outsiders (Othman et al., 2014).

2.6.4 Gender Inequality

The scourge of gender inequality is also identified among the risk factors of domestic violence across the world (Amirthalingam, 2016; Fox, 2007; Koenig, et al. 2003; Merry, 2003). Growing body of literature has indicated that pervasive gender inequality in patriarchal societies which views men as dominant over women has also exposed women to marital violence (Khaironisak et al., 2016; O'Connor & Colucci, 2016; Beyer, Wallis, & Hamberger, 2015; Davies & True, 2015; Linos et al., 2013). This patriarchal system in most societies of the world, according to Kelmendi (2015) has defined the roles of men as the decision makers, givers of orders, who is entitled to all forms of freedom. Women on the other hand, are to take care of the children, respect the husband, fulfil marital duties, and sacrifice their life for the success of the marriage.

Consequently, most studies in Africa revealed that gender inequality accounted for domestic violence more than other factors (Nelson, 2015; Randall, 2003). In fact, Randall (2003), observe that it is always difficult for researchers in Africa to discuss domestic violence without associating it with gender inequality. Researchers, therefore, submit that the problem of domestic violence will forever continue until and unless the cultural and social norms that relegated women to the background are properly addressed. In line with the above, Amirthalingam (2015), suggested that

proper understanding and effective control of the problem must be from gendered perspectives.

2.6.5   Alcoholism Consumption

The consumption of alcohol has also been reported to have a direct link with violence in marital relationships (Brassiolo, 2016; Costa et al., 2015; Nelson, 2015; Kumar, Haque Nizamie, & Srivastava, 2013; Jeremiah, Kalio, & Oriji, 2011; Parish, Wang, Laumann, Pan, & Luo, 2004; Coker et al., 2000). Emphasising the association between alcoholism and domestic violence, Nelson (2015) state that studies use the concept of 'alcohol myopia' which influences individuals to social maladjustment, to explain the relationship between alcoholism and marital violence. This concept posits that when a man is drunk, he resorts to the use of violence and thereby compromise the well-being of his family and perpetrate abuse towards his partner (Nelson, 2015; Carlson, 1984).

2.6.6   Insufficient Legal System

Insufficient legal system to deal with the problem of domestic violence has been identified as supporting violence against women (Boujarian, Ninggal, & Siraje Abdallah, 2016; Chika, 2012). In Iran for instance, the legal system made it difficult for women to seek for divorce, and the custody of children after divorce is bestowed on the fathers, and these have made women to remain in abusive relationships (Boujarian et al., 2016). It was argued that if domestic violence is made a punishable offence and offenders are punished, it will serve as a deterrent to others (Madu, 2015; Chika, 2012). It is disheartening that in some societies, culture dictates that a man's

household affairs should be treated privately, and no one should intervene (Boujarian et al., 2016).

2.6.7   Responsible Parties in Domestic Violence

Concerning the responsible parties in domestic violence, several studies have established that perpetrators of marital violence are men (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2011; Almosaed, 2004; Dobash et al., 2000; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000). While others argued that women also perpetrate violence against their partners (Dutton & White, 2013; Saunders, 2002). In a qualitative study for instance, informants mentioned husbands, wives, and in-laws, as perpetrators of domestic violence in Ghana (Dery & Diedong, 2014).

2.7   Coping Strategies in Violent Relationships

Coping strategies refer to controlling behaviours adopted by women to stay in violent relationships. It could be asked 'despite all these grave consequences enumerated about domestic violence, why women still stay in a violent relationship? Empirical studies have revealed several factors that made women to stay in abusive relationships (Kelmendi, 2015; Ellsberg et al., 2014; Othman et al., 2014; Makama, 2013; Snyder & Fruchtman, 1981). These factors as revealed by studies reviewed are discussed below:

The negative perception about divorce and single parenthood has been reported by studies as making women to stay in abusive relationship (Davies & True, 2015; Linos et al., 2013; Meyer, 2012). In most societies of the world, women tolerate violence because of the society which has viewed divorce as a taboo and have no option than

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to maintain their status. In a qualitative study in Malaysia, Othman (2014) found that stigma about single parenthood and divorcees have made the women to endure and stay in abusive relationships.

Another factor which makes women to remain in abusive relationships is the fear of losing their children to the abusive partners. Literature has indicated that women feel that their children could be exposed to retaliatory abuse if they were left behind with the abusive husbands (Meyer, 2012; Harne & Radford, 2008; Almosaed, 2004; Barnett, 2000; Sullivan & Bybee, 1999). In a study conducted in Indonesia, Aisyah and Parker, (2014), found that fear of leaving the children behind is one of the major obstacles for women to leave abusive relationships. Hence, the women do endure staying in such relationships in order not to expose their children's lives to risk.

Furthermore, lack of personal income and economic dependency has also been indicated as reason why abused women stay. Various studies had reported low social-economic status as having a direct link to coping strategy in marital relationship (Aduloju et al., 2015; VanderEnde, Sibley, Cheong, Naved, & Yount, 2015; Fernández, 2006; Strube & Barbour, 1984). In fact, it is the most common reason why the abused women stay in an abusive relationship (Gharaibeh & Oweis, 2009; Aguirre, 1985). It was found by Gelles and Gelles (1980), that the more financially vulnerable a woman is, the less likely she may leave the abusive relationship. Overall, all these factors have made women to stay in abusive relationships and thereby making them susceptible to marital violence.

2.8   Gaps from the Reviewed Literature

In Nigeria, there is a paucity of literature on prevalence, causes and effects of domestic violence on the victims and their children (Tenuche, 2011). A study was conducted by Tenuche in 2011 in two neighbouring States; Benue and Kogi, to examine the prevalence and causes of domestic violence. However, the study focused the middle and upper income groups in these states. It was clearly stated that the research made use of women who have a University Degrees or its equivalent in Nigeria, as a determinant variable for a middle and upper class in these communities. It is to be noted that the focus of the study (i.e. the middle and upper income groups) in these communities accounted for the low rate of prevalence reported by the study. Whereas, according to most studies globally, the problems of domestic violence affect all women irrespective of their socio-economic status (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002). This study becomes necessary, to fill the identified gap in the literature to explore the perceptions of the Muslim women about marital violence in Ebiraland. Therefore, this research is an in-depth study of a particular group of people, Ebira Muslim women, irrespective of their socio-economic status.

Secondly, most qualitative studies on domestic violence usually focused the abused women as informants during data collection (i.e interviews or focused group discussion). Therefore, Slabbert (2016), suggested that in obtaining the needed information for, and strengthening the study, a qualitative researcher needs to include the key players, who deal with domestic violence cases in the community, in the data collection process. The information gathered from them will go a long way in achieving the desired goals of the study, especially during suggestions and recommendations. This study also addressed this identified problem, by including

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the Muslim community leaders, in Ebiraland, as informants during the data collection.

2.9   Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature on domestic violence as it affects the women, the children and the society in general. It is evident in the literature reviewed that domestic violence is a global phenomenon which has been recognised as such. The most important aspects of domestic violence which was discussed in this chapter ranges from its factors, its negative impacts on women and children, the coping strategies in abusive relationships, to position the study for proper understanding. Literatures on marital relationships in Islam and Islamic perspectives on domestic violence, were also reviewed in this chapter.
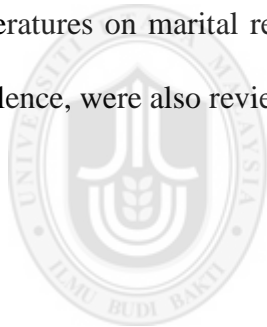
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

3.1   Introduction

According to Babbie (1998), research is an enquiry into an observed phenomenon to be able to describe it and give its detailed explanation. The three most important steps of research according to Creswell (2009), are to: pose a question, gather data to answer the question and present a reply to questions.

This chapter discussed the research approach used in this study. The most important points in this section are research design, sampling, data collection, pilot study, data analysis, ethical and legal considerations and summary.

3.2   Research Design

A research design is a plan that guides an investigator as he or she collects, analyses, and interprets observations. According to Kerlinger (1986), the adequate strategy, effective plan and proper investigations to get the desired outcomes, is the primary focus of research design. It is the detailed map and methods that are followed by the researcher to obtain the information needed. According to Creswell (2009), and Green and Tull (1996), research design is the detailed guideline and systematic procedures of the study that explains the information to be collected, the appropriate sites and the methods to be used in obtaining this information.

Qualitative research method as suggested by Creswell (2009) is therefore used to examine the insight of domestic violence among the female victims in Ebiraland. He suggested the use of qualitative methods to explore the detailed account of particular phenomenological problems, such as beliefs and culture of a group of people which might be difficult to study using other methods.

3.3   Sampling

In this research, purposive sampling technique was employed to select the informants. This is an intentional selection of the informants and the sites to gather the required information for a study. The reason for the selection of the informants and the sites is to obtain the necessary information from the participants' wealth of experience (Creswell, 2009; Patton ,1990).

Be that as it may, a judgement was made to select twenty (20) informants (eight divorced women, eight married women, and four Muslim community leaders) across the study area. Their experiences and involvement in marital relationship cases are the main reason for the choice of these participants.

Therefore, snowball type of purposive sampling technique was also adopted. This is a situation where informants are asked to recommend other individuals whom they believe to have detail information or are willing to inform the researcher about the problem under study (Creswell, 2009). It is the investigators' discretion to either ask for the additional informants at the beginning of or during the interview.

In this study, a 'gatekeeper' was employed to locate the participants for the interview. Because of the sensitivity nature of the research, a gatekeeper is needed to identify and locate individuals who are willing to participate in the study (Creswell, 2009; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). After a brief discussion about the aims of the research, the duration of the interview, and the benefits of the participants, with the gatekeeper, he used his familiarity and influence to identify the participants (2 married, 2 divorced women and 1 Muslim leader), from each of the Local Government Areas, for the researcher. Interview date was later scheduled with the gatekeeper who informed the participants. In this research, a Muslim leader from each of the four (4) Local Government Areas represents the 'gatekeeper'. The perceptions and suggestions of these participants, based on their experiences, greatly contributed to achieve the objectives of this research.

3.4 Sample Size

In qualitative studies, there are no specific rules to determine an appropriate size for the research. However, researchers have suggested useful approaches to follow when determining the sample size in a qualitative study. For instance, Mason (2010) observe that the concept of saturation (a point where new ideas are no longer coming) is always the guiding principle in qualitative research, for achieving an appropriate sample size. Be that as it were, Creswell (1994) suggests approximately 20-30 participants in ethnographic research. Patton (2002) on the other hand, observe that sample size of a qualitative study may be determined by the time allocated, resources available, and the aims of the research.

Therefore, twenty (20) informants were selected across the four Local Government Areas under study which typically is enough to reach saturation point in this study.

3.5   Data Collection Techniques

In this study, triangulation which is the means through which evidences are corroborated by several types of data and data collection methods, was adopted. The triangulation approach according to Creswell (2009) and Decrop (1999), is the use of primary data such as interviews and observations, and secondary data such as textbooks, data from institutional archives, official memos, as means of data collection.

In this study, therefore, primary data such as selected verses of Qur'an and Hadith (principal sources), in-depth interviews and observations were used. In addition, secondary data which includes the library materials such as books, journal articles, documents from National Population Commission were also used. The interviews were conducted within the four Local Government Areas that made up the area under study. From each of the Local Government Areas, one Muslim community leader, two married women and two divorced women were interviewed. The consent of all the informants was sought through the signing of the informed consent forms. The interviews were conducted in the native language (Ebira language) to get the needed information from the informants, as some of the informants were not able to respond in the English language. The interviews were then transcribed into letters and translated into the English language, to produce the necessary data for the research.

The interview protocol (see Appendix C) was designed to capture the deep understanding and perception of domestic violence from the informants' words. The focus of the questions is the meaning, factors, effects of domestic violence and, mechanisms to curb the violence. The rationale for designing interview protocol is that, in semi-structured interviews, the researcher needs to develop or generate questions with appropriate probes, where necessary, to achieve the main objectives of the study (Creswell, 2009; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In this study therefore, all informants were asked the same set of questions and clarifications were sought for, during the interviews, to enable comparison of their multiple views and responses about domestic violence.

3.6 Consultations about the Instruments on the Interview Protocol

The pilot test is a sample used to test-run the materials employed in the study. These include the questionnaires and the interview questions. Those instruments that are not providing useful data are dropped, and the last reviews are done. In this study, therefore, four informants were selected from the Federal College of Education, Okene (because people from these four Local Government areas are present in the College and they have more idea about the problems of domestic violence) to try out the guidelines of the semi-structured interview questions. The feedback of this pilot test was helpful in selecting the choice of words used in conducting the interview with the informants in the local dialect (Ebira language).

3.7   Data Analysis

In this study, the researcher used qualitative data analysis. Qualitative data analysis is the process of organising data, synthesizing it, working with it, classifying it into convenient and meaningful parts, and searching for what is important that must be learned about the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). This study, therefore, adopted thematic content analysis method, which is the process of analysing transcripts (open coding), identifying themes within those data (overlapping or similar categories), then gathering together examples of those themes from the texts to form the main idea and then interpretation.

After the data collection process (through the fieldwork interviews), qualitative content analysis was adopted to systematically analyse the data, in line with Creswell (2012) guidelines. A partial use of NVivo software was employed for thematic content analysis. Once the transcribed interviews were manually coded, the relevant themes, sub-themes and sub-sub themes (in some cases) were loaded into the Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) called NVivo (version 10). This software is used to enhance the process of storing, sorting, coding, and graphical representation of data. The themes generated are divided into five main parts which are: respondents' understanding of domestic violence, its forms, its factors, its effects on women and children, and mechanisms to preventing and reducing domestic violence in Ebiraland.

3.8   Validity and Reliability
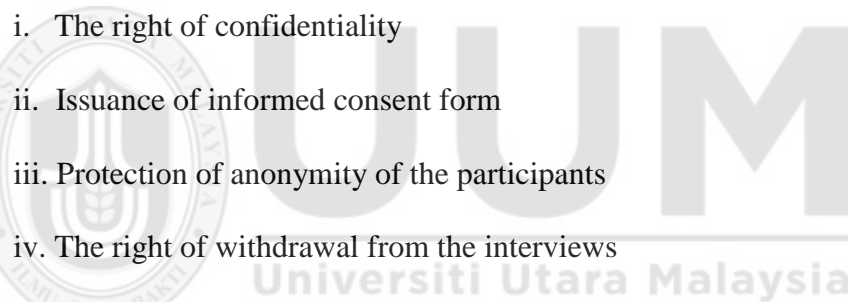
Validity and reliability in quantitative research are treated separately whereas these terms are not viewed separately in qualitative research. Instead, terminology that represents both, such as, credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness, is used. To this, Lincoln & Guba (1985) state: "While the terms reliability and validity are necessary criteria for quality in quantitative paradigms, the terms credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are to be the core criteria for quality in qualitative research".

In this study, data was triangulated to achieve valid and reliable results. The use of triangulation in research is to strengthen a study, and that is usually done by combining methods (Patton, 2002). This process means the usage of several kinds of data collection techniques such as observations, interviews and recordings (Golafshani, 2003). In this study, therefore, the researcher used primary sources such as Qur'an, Hadith, interviews, observations, and secondary sources which includes books, articles, (triangulation), as a means of data collection to ensure the credibility and consistency of the research. Similarly, member checking is another way to ensure trustworthiness of the data collected. Member checking is a situation where some informants are given the opportunity of reading the transcribed report for the authenticity of his or her views (Harper & Cole, 2012). After the interviews were transcribed, four (4) of the informants were given the opportunity to read through their transcribed interviews to make sure that their opinions were indeed recorded. These selected informants confirmed that the transcription was the same views they expressed during the interview process.

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3.9   Ethical and Legal Considerations

As a way of protecting the trust and confidence of participants who may reveal detailed description about their life, feelings and beliefs, it is ethical to consider some principles in the research process (Patton, 2002). Researchers are obliged to be extra careful and prudent with the ethics of study when dealing with potentially sensitive issues in research (Lee, 1993).

Be that as it were, the following are some of the principles and considerations that were observed to ensure the highest standard of integrity and moral trustworthiness, as suggested by Creswell (2009).

     i. The right of confidentiality

    ii. Issuance of informed consent form

   iii. Protection of anonymity of the participants

   iv. The right of withdrawal from the interviews

    v. The right to choose conversations to be recorded and those not to be recorded

   vi. Cautious and meticulous in translating the language in understanding and reporting the study.

Most of these ethical considerations were captured in the informed consent forms which were read (or read and explained to the informants) and signed by the informants before the commencement of the interviews.

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research design and methodology, the data collection method, and a variety of data analysis techniques used for the study. It also revealed the interview process that was applied for data collection. The validity and reliability, as well as the ethical and legal consideration, were also discussed in this chapter. Finally, the methodology of the study was discussed briefly in this chapter by stating each step of the data collection and data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE THROUGH THE LENSES OF FEMALE VICTIMS IN EBIRALAND

4.1   Introduction

This chapter centres on the discussion of the data as obtained through the means of in-depth interviews conducted with twenty (20) Informants across the four Local Government Areas (Adavi, Ajaokuta, Okehi and Okene), in Kogi State. This study explored the participants' deep understanding of domestic violence and suggested possible recommendations to prevent or reduce its occurrence.

The findings are divided into five (5) main parts which are: participants' understandings of domestic violence, forms of domestic violence, factors of domestic violence, effects of domestic violence on women and children and mechanisms to prevent or reduce domestic violence in Ebiraland. Overall, this chapter offered an in-depth analysis of the informants' understandings and experiences about domestic violence, in accordance with the aims and objectives of the study.

4.2   Demography of the Informants

The demography of the interviewees, such as their Local Government Areas, educational level, marital status and their respective occupations was discussed in this section. The demographic information of the informants, such as educational level, marital status, age and occupations, were discovered during the interviews as the researcher has no prior knowledge of them before the interviews.

An in-depth interview was conducted with twenty (20) informants (five informants from each LGAs) from the four Local Government Areas of Kogi State that made up Ebiraland. This was done to get divergent views of the informants about the factors and effects of domestic violence in Ebiraland as well as mechanisms to curb the social menace.
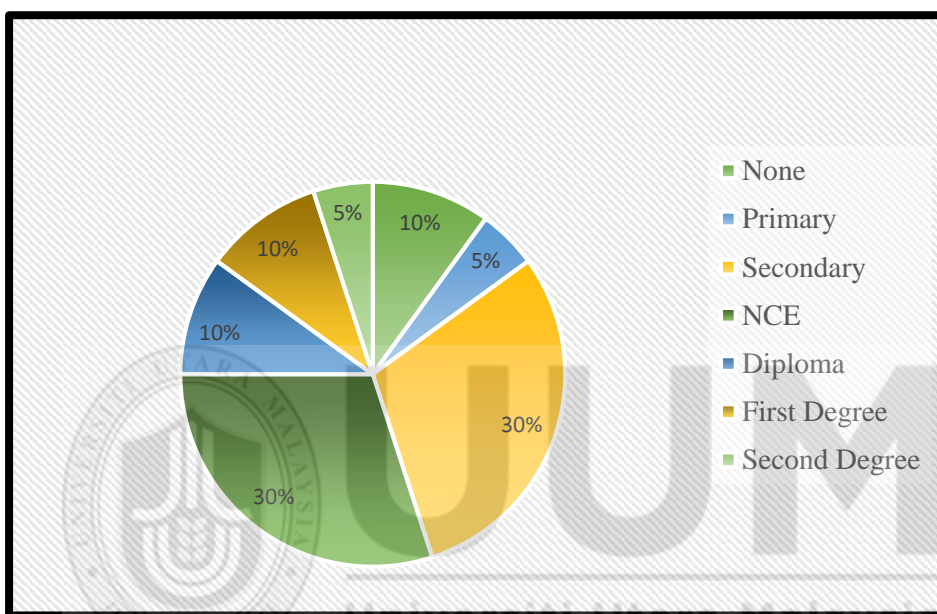
Figure 4.1. Qualifications of the Informants

The above chart shows the academic qualifications of the informants. The informants were of different educational qualifications except two of them, who have none. The qualifications range from primary, secondary, NCE, diploma and degree certificates. The aim was to obtain the data from informants with different academic backgrounds, together with their perceptions and experiences of domestic violence in Ebiraland.
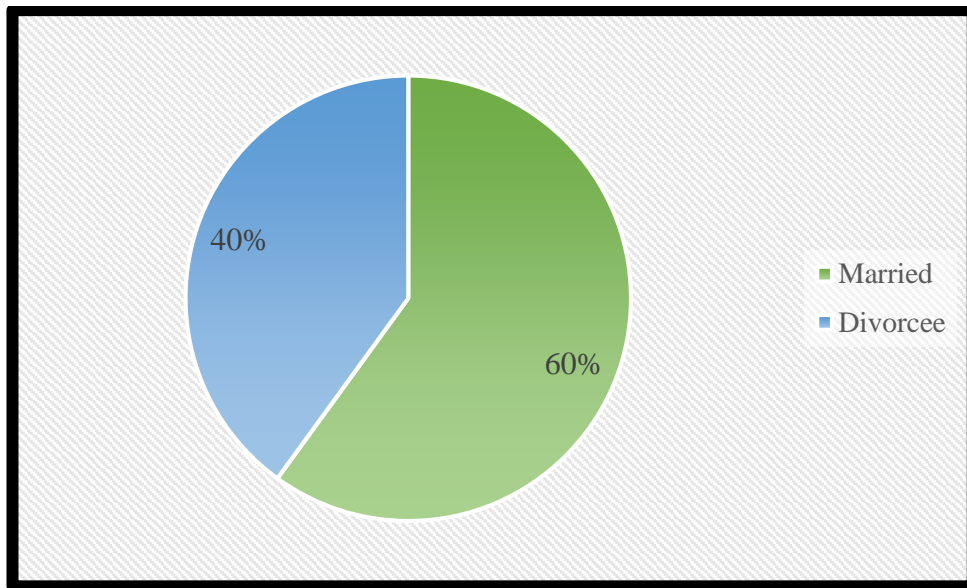
Figure 4.2. Marital Status of the Informants

The data for this study were collected from eight married women, eight divorced women and four Muslim community leaders who are married at the time of the interview, across the four Local Government Areas of the study. The chart above shows the information.
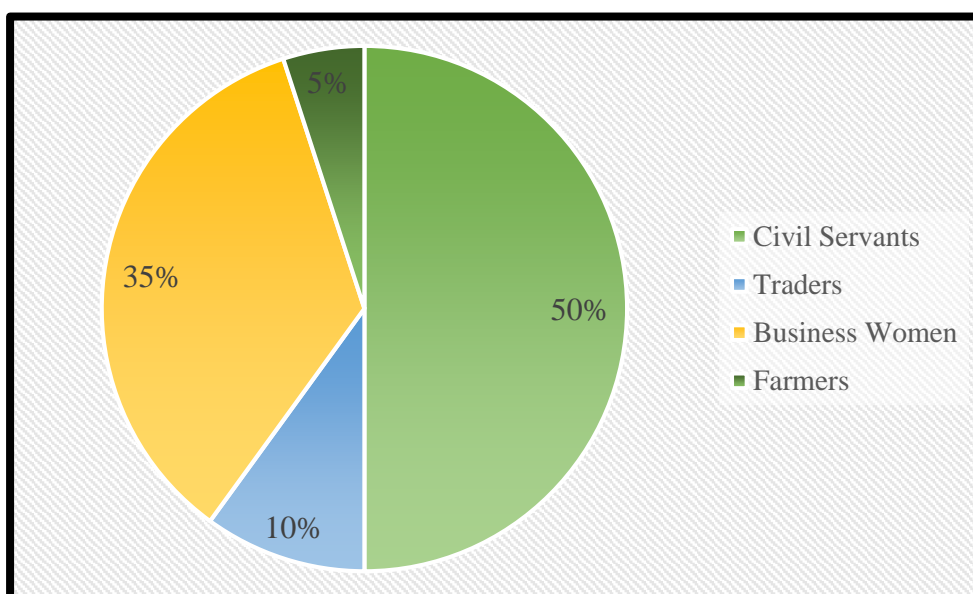
Figure 4.3. Occupations of the Informants

The figure above shows the informants' occupations. The data were obtained from people of different occupations which include teachers, a court registrar, Local Government staff, traders and business women, across the study area. The information about the informants' occupations was also discovered during the interview.
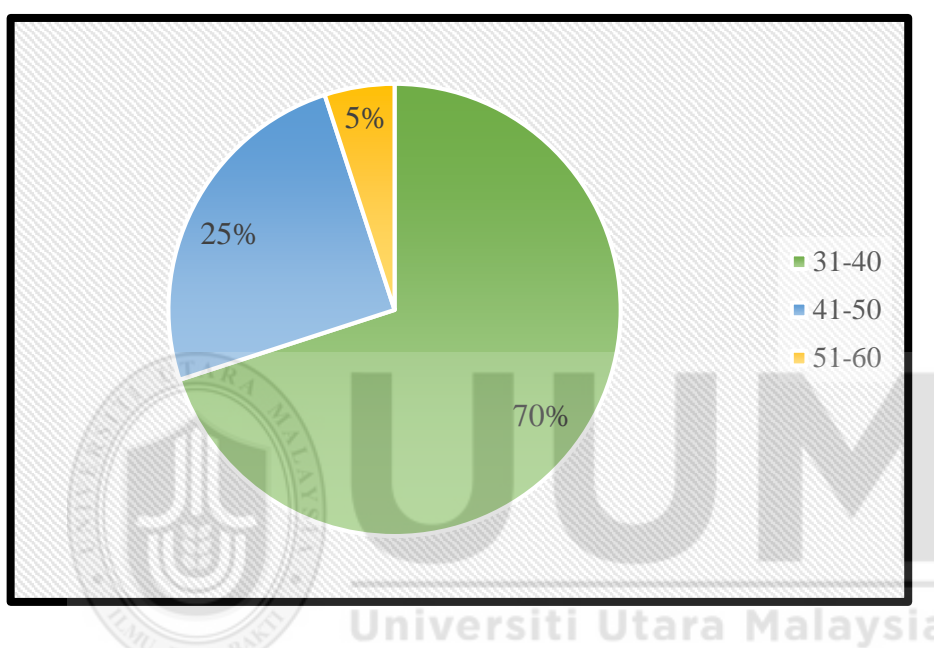
Figure 4.4. Age Distribution of the Informants

The informants in this study were drawn from different age groups. The informants' ages were grouped after the interview into three (3) categories which are: 31-40 years of age, 41-50 years of age and 51-60 years of age. The above chart represents these categories.

4.3   Respondents' Understanding of Domestic Violence

From the fieldwork interviews, it was observed that the understanding of the informants in this study is mostly related to crisis and problems due to discord in the

matrimonial relationship. For instance, informants viewed that domestic violence is a problem and or crisis in the matrimonial relationships that happen due to misunderstanding between the couples. In the words of informants, domestic violence is a form of trouble that emanate in the life of husband and wife (Informants 1 and 11). Informants also narrated that domestic violence is a disagreement between the couples due to lack of understanding and maturity in handling issues (Informant 5). Few of the informants also viewed that marital violence is an act of aggression against one another in the marital relationship which could bring about chaos and crisis (Informants 8 and 14). It was noticed that virtually all the informants mentioned domestic violence as an offshoot of disagreement in matrimonial relationships.

Furthermore, it was noticed that domestic violence does not only affect the couples, but rather, it can also affect the children and in-laws, as expressed by a male informant (a Muslim leader), who highlighted during the fieldwork that whenever the crisis ensues between the couples, other family members are also affected especially the children and in-laws (Informant 9). The rest of the informants also have the same understanding about domestic violence, as expressed above.

From the data collected, it was observed that the informants' understanding of domestic violence are more of physical than any other aspect of domestic violence. The finding is therefore parallel to previous studies such as (Slabbert, 2016; Wallace & Roberson, 2011; Graham-Bermann & Seng, 2005), which stated that domestic violence is any intentional abusive behaviour that resulted in injury to the other partner in a marital relationship. It also consistent with Scruggs, (2004) who argued that consensus meaning of domestic violence in African societies has been a major

challenge faced by researchers. He also highlighted that in Somalia for instance, 25% of the informants in a study mentioned hitting, slapping, pushing, and kicking, as the meaning of domestic violence, while only 15% added not taken care of the family, as domestic violence.

4.4   Forms of Domestic Violence

Difficulties in achieving a consensus definition of domestic violence among the researchers also pose some level of complexities in arriving at the accurate picture of the forms of domestic violence across the globe (Madu, 2015; Saltzman et al., 2000). Efforts have been made by some researchers to broadly differentiate between two levels of violence to mean maltreatment (i.e., moderate forms such as pushing, malice, and hitting) and violence which is more abusive such as physical, psychological, and sexual (Malley-Morrison & Hines, 2004). The fact is that, the history and culture of a society sometimes determine what constitute the forms of domestic violence in that society (Wallace & Roberson, 2011; Donovan, 2004). In the overall, domestic violence is all forms of abuse such as physical, verbal, psychological, economic, and sexual that is aimed at controlling, threatening or exploiting women (Sherr et al., 2016; Jayatilleke et al., 2015; Fernández, 2006).

Consequently, studies have mentioned the forms of domestic violence in accordance with the perception and cultural beliefs of the study area. The most common forms of domestic violence are physical harm (such as beating, punching, hitting), sexual (rape), psychological, verbal abuse (threats), emotional abuse and economical (Nkosi & Daniels, 2014; Saltzman et al., 2000). In the same vein, Fawole and Hunyigbo (2012), includes choking, slapping, pushing, threat with a weapon, intimidating,

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sexual abuse (rape), denial of food, denial of time for relaxation and controlling behaviours as forms of domestic violence.

It was observed that the informants' perception about the forms of domestic violence is mostly related to physical abuse, as fifteen (15) out of the twenty (20) informants mentioned shouting at each other, quarrellings and fighting, beating the wife, and causing bodily injury as forms of domestic violence in Ebiraland. For instance, a female informant (a married woman, a court registrar) expressed that:

> The first form of the violence you will notice is quarrelling. Whenever you are passing by, you hear quarrels between the couple, it is an evidence that there is violence. Fighting and beating each other… throwing stones, chairs at each other are still part of the fighting we are talking about, which sometimes result in injuring themselves! (Informant 13).

Constant fighting whereby neighbours, and passers-by do intervene in separating and calming the couples, is also identified as a form of marital violence in Ebiraland, as expressed by a female informant during the fieldwork (divorcee-Informant 14).

Sexual abuse such as denial of sexual gratification was only mentioned by three informants in the study as a form of domestic violence. For example, a female informant (a divorcee) highlighted during the interview that denial of sexual enjoyment by either of the couples, is one of the forms of domestic violence in Ebiraland (Informant 1).

It was noticed in the study that despite the fact that other forms of domestic violence such as psychological, economic, and emotional abuse were not directly mentioned as forms of domestic violence, the consequences of domestic violence in relation to these forms were narrated by the informants while expressing their feelings about the consequences of domestic violence.

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Therefore, the reality is that the perception of a culture or society regarding the definition of domestic violence also translates into their views about the forms of domestic violence. For instance, in a research conducted by Bezerra-Flanders in (2004), a Brazilian informant mentioned; killing the wife, hitting and cheating on her, husbands taking decisions alone in family matters, and blaming the wife for children's wrong doings, as forms of domestic violence.

The results of this study is consistent with previous studies which mentioned the forms of domestic violence to include physical abuse such as beating, hitting, punching, and choking (Slabbert, 2016; Shah & Shah, 2010; Saltzman et al., 2000). However, it was observed that sexual abuse, as a form of domestic violence, was rarely mentioned by the informants. This was also the case in a published research in Pakistan where only five (0.4%) informants mentioned sexual abuse as a form of domestic violence (Madhani et al., 2015). And in a Malaysian study, 46 (1.7%) respondents reported to have experienced sexual abuse (Shuib et al., 2013). The possible explanation for this culture of silence, particularly about sexual abuse could be largely due to the fact that sexual abuse is considered normal and accepted as part of marital rights of the husbands in some cultures (Zakar, Zakar, & Kraemer, 2013).

4.5   Factors of Domestic Violence

There are factors that exposed women to domestic violence across the human culture of the world. Many studies have identified low-level of education, financial instability, gender inequality, and consumption of alcoholism as factors of domestic violence (Nelson, 2015; Koenig, et al.2003; Carter, 1999; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). These factors vary between cultures to cultures and in accordance with the norms of

the societies. The historical and cultural background of each society affects their perception and the factors of domestic violence in such a society (Bowman, 2003). In this regard, the social context in which the violence occurs need to be properly understood. Generally, and not ruling out some basic commonalities across the world, societies have distinct and diverse cultural context that is likely to give shape to the factors of domestic violence.

This study revealed a range of factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland as observed by the informants in the study. These factors were later formed as themes generated from the data collected and discussed. The factors of domestic violence discovered in this study are: poverty, infertility, polygamy, and change in religion. The discussion of these factors are as follows:

4.5.1 Poverty or Economic Crisis

Poverty is one of the major factors of domestic violence across the globe. A substantial research in the literature have associated domestic violence with poverty or economic crisis in the matrimonial relationships (Nelson, 2015; Dery & Diedong, 2014; Ellsberg et al., 2014). Financial instability and low income are major contributory factors for domestic violence in both developed and developing countries (Slabbert, 2016; Golu, 2014; Parish et al. 2004; Bowman, 2003). Poverty is a phenomenon that describes one's inability to fulfil his needs because of the limited available resources at his disposal (Mani, Mullainathan, Shafir, & Zhao, 2013).

This failure of husbands to cater for their families' needs has exposed families to domestic violence. In fact, in this study, 80% of the informants confirmed the contribution of poverty to the increase rate of marital violence in Ebiraland. The common expression among the informants is that, where the husband cannot take care of the family because of his financial incapacity, there are chances that he gets angry at the slightest provocation with the wife which can lead to domestic violence. For instance, a divorced woman stated:

> To me, the major cause of domestic violence is poverty! You know, poverty sometimes can make somebody become mad! When someone is facing a financial crisis, a little thing can make him angry. What he used to tolerate from his wife will never be tolerated (Informant 11).

Furthermore, providing for family needs is one of the responsibilities of a husband. Hence, where a husband cannot meet up with the family's needs and necessities of life, this can also trigger violence in the home. An informant, (a Muslim community leader), who recognised the social responsibility of a husband as the head of the family, has this to say:

> The causes of domestic violence in Ebiraland include poverty or financial problem. A situation where the home is not properly maintained by the head, there are chances of occurrence of violence. You know, women and children will never listen to you, say, you do not have money [smile], you must provide for them. So, in that situation, one cannot help but receive challenges from his family and this brings violence in the home (Informant 15).

The finding of the current study is parallel to other empirical studies which have indicated that poverty is one of the factors of domestic violence in matrimonial relationships (VanderEnde, Sibley, Cheong, Naved, & Yount, 2015; Bassuk et al., 2006; Yalcinkaya, 2004). For instance, in a study of domestic violence conducted in the United States of America by Bassuk, with 436 homeless and extremely poor women to investigate the factors that contribute to domestic violence, it was found

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that women whose partners are poor or are unemployed are more likely to experience domestic violence compared to others (Bassuk et al., 2006).

4.5.2 Infertility

Infertility is a gynaecological problem that makes one unable to conceive after having regular unprotected sexual intercourse for the period of 12 months (WHO, 2016). Literature indicated that infertility is among the factors of domestic violence in matrimonial relationships (Nelson, 2015; Xia, Wang, Luo, & Wang, 2014). This is because, parenthood in African societies is considered the most important aspect of marriage. Thus, assurance of inheritance rights, offering of social security at old age for parents, sustaining the family name and legacy, and rendering assistance in various capacities to the parents, are among the roles which accord children a high value in African societies (Nelson, 2015; Nkosi & Daniels, 2014; Dyer, 2007). Consequently, women with infertility problems are more likely to be subjected to economic deprivation and social stigmatization (Ameh et al., 2007; Yildizhan et al., 2009). In this case, the most common type of abuse is the psychological violence; in the form of verbal abuse and threats of ridicule from the husbands' family, who blame the woman for the cause of infertility, especially if it has been diagnosed (Aduloju et al., 2015; Yildizhan et al., 2009).

Similarly, the inability of the couple to give birth to children is a serious social problem in Ebiraland. To emphasize this, twelve (12) out of the twenty (20) informants in this study expressed their views in this regard. It was expressed by various informants that immediately after the marriage, most families expect pregnancy, and when that does not happen, violence could ensue. Husbands

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sometimes are advised by family members to remarry and test his fertility or divorce

his infertile wife, and the fear of any of these could cause women psychological abuse

(Informant 15). To emphasize this point, a female (married) informant stated:

> Infertility causes domestic violence a lot. Ebira people are not like the
> Westerners, who usually marry for companionship, they (Ebira
> people) usually marry for procreation. So, some months after the
> wedding, the expectation of every member of the family is that there
> should be pregnancy and eventually childbearing. Therefore, when
> this does not happen, it can cause domestic violence (Informant 13).

The inability of the family members to be patient enough is to further explain the

value the society attached to children, and in a situation where the couple is not able

to give birth on time, the family members especially the sisters-in-law, tend to disturb

and subject the wife to ridicule (Informant 15). In fact, a Muslim leader, who has

witnessed these scenario, has this to say during the fieldwork interview:

> Of course, Ebira people value children more than their wives. So,
> where there is no child after sometimes, this can bring problems,
> especially with the husband's family interference. You know,
> sometimes it is the husband's sisters that will start the problem by
> abusing the wife as being a prostitute! (Informant 7).

This result is consistent with other studies, especially in African societies, which

reported that infertility can cause domestic violence in a matrimonial relationship

(Zabihzadeh, Clement, & Chen, 2015; Ofei-Aboagye, 1994). The inability of the

women to give birth to children is considered as weaknesses on their parts, thereby

triggering violence from the husbands and their families (Ozgoli et al., 2016;

Aduloju, et al., 2015; Madhani et al., 2015; Kumar, Haque Nizamie, & Srivastava,

2013).

Furthermore, desire for male children which is an essential part of gender inequality

in African societies (Bowman, 2003), was among the identified factors for domestic

violence in studies across Africa. For instance, in a study conducted in Kenya by Njue, Rombo, Smart, Lutomia, and Mbirianjau, in (2014), it was revealed that sons are treasured more than daughters in patriarchal societies, and women have been abused because of their inability to give birth to male children. In the same vein, this study revealed that the interest of Ebira people in male children is far above their interest in female children. To this, a female (married) informant spoke of the gender preference in children that Ebira people believe that only males are the source of wealth in the family and when wives are not able to give them, they become violent and subject the women to marital abuse (Informant 8).

Generally speaking, in Ebira culture, male children are regarded as the heads of the family, who will continue to sustain the family's lineage while the female children will surely be married to someone else outside the family. So, where a man did not get a male child who will take over the headship of the family, he may be disturbed and, in most cases, subjecting his wife to verbal abuse and threats of divorce or remarriage.

4.5.3   Polygamy

Polygamy is a type of marriage that is frequently practiced in West and Central Africa (Fenske, 2015; Audu et al., 2008; Bowman, 2003). Charsley and Liversage (2012), argued that even though about eighty-five percent of societies allowed polygamy, the practice remains very low, especially in the developed and developing countries. Polygamy is the concept of marriage in which a man can marry up to four wives if he is able to treat them equally as sanctioned by Islam in the Qur'an 4:3 (Engelking, 2008).

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Studies, especially in Africa, have found that polygamy is one of the factors of domestic violence in a matrimonial relationship (Nkosi & Daniels, 2014; Bowman, 2003). The threat of the husband marrying a second wife and the fear of the family's economic insecurity when the woman comes, are all contributing factors to domestic violence. In this study, it was revealed that polygamy is a factor of domestic violence, as nine (9) out of the twenty (20) informants viewed that it is one of the factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland. It was stated by female (both married and divorcee) informants during the interview that the system of polygamy is one of the factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland (Informants 3 and 20).

However, it was observed that the informants did not perceive polygamy as a problem but the way it is being practiced by the people. To this, Informants admitted that polygamy is a privilege for men who can fulfil its mental and financial conditions as set down by Islam. However, they expressed the unfortunate situations where some men are not capable enough to meet all these conditions but still delve into the practice of polygamy (Informant 3, a married woman).

Concerning the possibility of polygamy to be a factor responsible for domestic violence, it has also been reported by several studies that polygamy has been a risk factor for domestic violence in matrimonial relationships (Asiedu, 2014; Nkosi & Daniels, 2014). However, just like previous studies, the inability of men to properly practice polygamy accounted for violence, and not the polygamy itself. The same was reported in previous study which found that to many Senegalese women, the way in which polygamy is practiced accounted for the problems in matrimonial relationships (Engelking, 2008).

4.5.4 Conversion

Another factor of domestic violence based on the fieldwork interviews is the change in religion of one of the couples. This is a situation where one of the couples leaves the religion of Islam to another, for example, Christianity. In the study area, the three main religions are Islam, Christianity and Traditional religions. It is observed that most cases of conversion are either from Islam to Christianity or vice versa. Conversion from other religions to Traditional religion is very rare. Therefore, leaving the religion of Islam to Christianity could lead to conflict in the matrimony thereby causing domestic violence. A quotation from a female informant highlighted this:

> Another thing that can cause domestic violence is change in religion. For instance, after the marriage, a man or woman may decide to change his or her religion, this has caused problems in many marriages even to the extent of divorce. For example, I am a Muslim now, if my husband changes his religion to Christianity today...it can cause problems between us (Informant 16).

Even though the incidence of conversion was not commonly mentioned by the informants in this study, however, it is a fact that needs to be mentioned because it is an issue that has happened in Ebiraland. Though there is no official statistical number of Muslims and Christians in Ebiraland as National Population Commission of 2006 ignored such aspect, however, studies had established that Muslims outnumber the other religious adherents in Ebiraland (Jimba, 2012). There are cases of people converting from the religion of Islam to another. Therefore, it can cause domestic violence in a matrimonial relationship.

By and large, the above-mentioned situations are factors that expose women to marital abuse in Ebiraland. Thus, when a couple falls a victim of any of these factors,

there are likelihood of the women in such a relationship to be abused by their husbands or husbands' family members.

4.6   Responsible Parties in Domestic Violence

As discussed above in chapter two, there have been arguments among the researchers on domestic violence regarding who is to be blamed for the violence. Some researchers maintained that husbands are the perpetrators of domestic violence, while others insisted that women also perpetrate the violence. A wealth of research such as Zubkov, (2014); Buzawa, Buzawa, and Stark, (2012); Dienye and Gbeneol, (2009); and Busch and Rosenberg, (2004), have found that women too are perpetrators of domestic violence. It was argued that unlike males who usually resort to physical and sexual violence, female use neglect and psychological violence to maltreat their victims. On the other hand, Pritchard, (2001) argued that women's acts of violence are always against the background of reciprocating their partners' act of violence and/ or in self-defence. Some of the informants during the fieldwork, mentioned husbands, while others mentioned the wives as the perpetrators of domestic violence. These views of the informants are discussed below:

4.6.1   The Husbands

In agreement with the above findings, eight informants in this study have the perceptions that in most cases, men are the perpetrators of domestic violence, hence they should be held responsible (Informant 11, a married woman). It was also revealed in the study that the inability of the husbands to maintain and keep their homes in order is the reason why they should be held responsible for domestic violence, as was stated by a female (a divorcee) informant:

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> You know, we are Africans and there is this belief that men are the heads of the family and they must be respected and treated as such. So, men have all that it takes to control and make sure their homes are in peace. Therefore, I believe women relate or deal with men based on the standard the men set down. So, to me, men are responsible for domestic violence (Informant 20).

4.6.2 The Wives

This study also revealed that women are responsible for domestic violence in Ebiraland. In fact, eleven (including males and females) out of the twenty informants in the study stated that, it is the women that are responsible for domestic violence. For instance, a female married informant explained that even though she is a woman, truth need to be told; most violence in marital relationships are caused by women (Informant 12). A Muslim leader during the interview highlighted that women's inability to reject ill advice from friends and family members have made them to be abusive towards their husbands, especially, by neglecting, and verbally abusing them. A quotation from the informant:

> In Ebiraland, 60% of domestic violence cases are from the women, based on our experience! Therefore, the women are usually the cause. They can be easily influenced by family members and friends when it comes to domestic affairs (Informant 6).

4.6.3 The In-laws

Incompatibility with in-laws, especially the mothers-in-law, was found to be responsible for domestic violence in matrimonial relationships (Abdulhamid & Muhammad Sanusi, 2016; Dhar, 2014; Fox, 2007; Pataporn, 2006). This situation becomes worse if the woman is diagnosed to be infertile (Nelson, 2015; Yildizhan et al., 2009). This increases her vulnerability to violence in the form of verbal abuse and threats of divorce. In fact, these in-laws' influence emerged as one of the themes

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in the informants' descriptions of who perpetrate violence. As an illustration, eleven out of the twenty informants in this study agreed that in-laws have influence in domestic violence in Ebiraland. A Muslim leader during the interviews expressed that in-laws, especially mothers and sisters of the husbands could be very problematic. They instigate their sons/brothers against their wives in serious issues such as infertility or decision making (Informant 7).

The current study therefore confirmed previous researches which have indicated that both men and women carry out the act of domestic violence even though the case is higher in men than in women (Hester, 2013; Rapoza, 2004). However, Dutton and Saunders argued that the men's attitudes of not reporting their partners to the police, and one-sided question in domestic violence research; in which researchers do ask only the women about their experiences and perceptions of domestic violence accounted for the underestimation of domestic violence against men in intimate relationships (Dutton & White, 2013; Saunders, 2002).

4.7   Effects of Domestic Violence on Women and Children

The negative impacts of domestic violence on the women in every society of the world can never be overemphasized. A growing body of evidence indicated that domestic violence accounts for nearly one-quarter of all recorded crimes globally, with its deleterious effects on women and children (Lacey, McPherson, Samuel, Powell, Sears, & Head, 2013; Aizer, 2011; Bazza, 2009; García-Moreno, et al, 2005; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Howard, Trevillion and Agnew-Davies (2010) and Emma (2009), observed that domestic violence is a stumbling block for development and progress in any society, which needs urgent attention. This is because of many

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difficulties faced by the victims of the violence. In this regard, Ebiraland is not an exception. The effects of domestic violence on women and children in Ebiraland were explained in detail under three main themes, as generated from the data collected. These themes are the effects of domestic violence on women, the children, and the society in general.

4.7.1   Effects of Domestic Violence on Women

As discussed above, this study discovered some harmful effects of domestic violence on the wellbeing of women in Ebiraland. These effects are discussed as follows:

4.7.1.1 Divorce

The findings demonstrated that divorce is one of the negative consequences of domestic violence in Ebiraland. This study is in agreement with other researches which indicated that in most cases of domestic violence, women resort to divorce as the last option (Hajjar, 2014; Ogido, 2004; Liu & Cecelia, 1999). The rate of divorce arising from domestic violence in Ebiraland is at an alarming rate, as expressed by sixteen informants in this study. For instance, a female informant (a court registrar in Okene Local Government) stated during the interview that the situation is so pathetic, that she used to record at least five divorce cases in a week because of domestic violence (Informant 13).

It is worthy to mention that all informants, especially the divorcees, agreed that women in Ebiraland do regret after the divorce because of the challenges involved in getting remarried and taking care of the children alone. A female informant (a divorcee), who have had the experience stated during the interview:

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> There are a lot of consequences on her! If she cannot manage the crisis, it can lead to divorce and be a regret for her in future! You know the husbands are very scarce nowadays! So, the challenges in getting another home are always there (Informant 17).

What was apparent from many of the informants, especially, the Muslim leaders is that Ebira men are always sceptical about marrying divorced women. For instance, a Muslim leader, during the fieldwork stated:

> Divorce is the worst outcome of domestic violence, where the problem continues without a settlement. You know there is difficulty in getting another husband where there is a divorce. Because Ebira men are always skeptical about marrying divorced women; always asking 'why did they leave their former husbands?'. Some men even prefer widows to divorced women (Informant 2).

In this situation, the divorced women used to live their lives in regret and devoid of the peace of mind they deserve.

This result is consistent with other studies which found that divorce is one of the negative impacts of domestic violence on women (Ruiz-pérez, Mata-Pariente, & Plazaola-Castano, 2006; McDermott & Garofalo, 2004). However, in some cases, some women opt for divorce as an option for relief in violent relationships (Hajjar, 2014).

4.7.1.2 Women's Health

Studies indicated that domestic violence has the implication of causing the victims series of health issues such as depression, psychological trauma, high blood pressure (chronic disease), abortion, anxiety, alcohol and drug abuse and, attempted suicide (Özcan, Günaydın, & Çitil, 2016; Balogun & John-Akinola, 2015; McLaughlin, O'Carroll, & O'Connor, 2012; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Stets, 1991). From the data collected, it was evident that the problem of domestic violence in a matrimonial

relationship has exposed the women to series of mental and physical health challenges in Ebiraland. Out of the twenty informants, seventeen affirmed that women in Ebiraland face a lot of health issues in their matrimonial homes due to domestic violence. The most recurrent problems mentioned by the informants is the issue of chronic diseases. For instance, a Muslim leader explained that:

> There will not be peace of mind in the home and this can lead to thinking, frustration and eventually the common health problem in our land, High Blood Pressure (BP). There can also be a physical health problem, she eats but appears like she is always hungry because she is not at peace with herself (Informant 4).

The Informants spoke of the negative impact of marital violence on women's health. They recognised that a woman suffering from violence will be depressed and this can cause her chronic diseases (Informants 5 and 16).

In contrast, a Muslim leader stated during the interview that chronic disease such as stroke and blood pressure, is not common in Ebiraland. He explained that marital violence is common among the people of younger ages who cannot easily develop these diseases. As for the old couples, they can manage the violence and are therefore not vulnerable to domestic violence (Informant 6).

To explain further, it is expected that, after some years of experience in marital relationships, couples will be used to domestic violence and be able to manage and endure the crisis. This is because, literature has indicated that domestic violence decreases with the increase in the women's age because, as the women grow older, they are more determined to and certain in managing their differences in matrimonial relationships (Rahman, Hoque, & Makinoda, 2011; Kishor & Jhonson, 2004). Similar study in Iran has also found that domestic violence is more common in young

women because of their inexperience in handling marital issues that could lead to the crisis (Kargar Jahromi et al., 2016).

4.7.1.3 Women's Career and Business

The negative effects of domestic violence on the women's well-being have been established to have resulted in low productivity, police and legal cost, and cost for treatment (Shuib et al., 2013). Literature indicated that domestic violence hinders progress and is a major threat to social and economic development in any society (Emma., 2009; Sagot, 2005; Lloyd, 1997). At the time of the violence, the women will loss concentration on their careers and/ or businesses which will, in turn, affect them negatively. The cost of health care services and the absence from work are part of the negative impact of domestic violence on women's economic growth (Nelson, 2015).

In view of this, the expressions of the informants in the study correspond with the above findings. The informants viewed that at the time of the crisis, the woman will lose concentration and time for positive thinking to move her business forward. It was also discovered in this study that marital violence can affect a woman's job due to low productivity at work because of the pains from the battery and, lateness to work (Informants 8 and 15). Bearing in mind that, some of the manifestations of marital violence are torture, denial of freedom, and free movement (Sagot, 2005). As such, the effects of all these on women can have the repercussion on their productive life in general. Similarly, in Tolman and Wang (2005), the result show that physical health problems of women who experience domestic violence accounted for their

reduction in annual work hours by 137hrs. By implication, women who experienced domestic violence work less than those who do not.

4.7.1.4 Women's Pregnancy

One of the negative effects of domestic violence is the problem it poses on women's pregnancy. Studies have established that domestic violence posed a threat on women's pregnancy which could lead to complications, placenta abruption, miscarriage, and premature labour (Iliyasu, et al, 2013; Arslantas et al., 2012; Stets, 1991).

In this study, two informants, male and female acknowledged that domestic violence has caused some women miscarriage and other pregnancy related problems in Ebiraland. For instance, a female (a divorcee) informant stated:

> It can affect it, especially at the initial stage. You know at the initial stage of pregnancy, women need rest and sleep, so, in the event of domestic violence in the home, the woman will lack sleeping and rest and that could cause her to lose the pregnancy (Informant 1).

A Muslim leader during the interview further buttressed this that proper care and maintenance of the pregnancy will be disrupted because of the violence. Hence, the woman will be exposed to hardship as she needs to cater for herself (Informant 2).

This result confirmed other findings such as (Nur, 2014; Salmon, Baird, & White, 2013; Allen & Devitt, 2012), which all reported a significant risk of miscarriage due to domestic violence during pregnancy.

4.7.2   Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

It is evident in many studies that children leaving in violent homes also suffer from

the violence (Richards, 2011 & Edleson, 1999). This is because, at the time of the

violence, the children are sometimes affected by witnessing their mothers being

physically abused. One of the means through which the children witness the violence

is the constant quarrelling and shouting between the mothers and the fathers in the

homes. It was also revealed from this study that children suffer the pains of domestic

violence as well. Based on the fieldwork data, it was established that domestic

violence poses detrimental consequences on children in Ebiraland. These areas are

education, child care and maintenance, behaviour and, prostitution. Further

discussion are as follows:

4.7.2.1   Education

This section provides detailed insight into the extent of damage of domestic violence

on the academic performance of children in Ebiraland. In fact, out of twenty

informants, fourteen emphatically stated that domestic violence has the implication

of affecting the academic performance of children in Ebiraland. It was noticed that

the common reason for this is that in most cases, the fathers stop the payment of their

children school fees, as a means of punishing the mothers (the wives). In this regard,

a female (a divorcee) informant stated:

> The most alarming aspect of it is that in most cases children suffer in
> their educational achievement. Most Ebira men do not care about the
> future of their children, so, in the event of the problems with his wife,
> he can easily abandon the expenses on the children as a means of
> punishing the wife (Informant 19).

Another informant (Muslim leader) further highlighted that most Ebira men believed that children belong to their mothers. So, whenever there is a problem between the couple, the fathers usually abandon the responsibilities. He stated thus:

> There are series of domestic violence cases in which educational progress of the children is affected. This is because Ebira men believe that children are for women. So, where there is a crisis in the home, the father will leave the normal expenses on the children and this can negatively affect the children, especially when divorce occurs. Some of them will end up learning menial jobs for living when they become dropouts from schools (Informant 6).

Furthermore, other informants viewed that even if the couple are still together, the children's educational performance will still suffer setback because the parent will not have time to take the children to school, and to assist them with their home works (Informant 5 and 3). In addition to this, a division of labour in the home will be affected as expressed by a Muslim leader:

> The children's educational progress could be affected because their parents are not in good term. The division of labour among the couple in the home that leads to success on their children will be disorganised. The husband takes care of the children's home works or assignments, while the wife cooks and prepares them for school in the morning. Because of the crisis in the home, this arrangement could be negatively affected (Informant 2).

The results of this study correspond with other literature which stated that children witnessing domestic violence have been adjudged with poor brain development and low-academic performance (Byrne & Taylor, 2007; Nkosi & Daniels, 2014; Sherr et al., 2016).

4.7.2.2 Children's Behaviour

Literature has indicated that children growing in a violent relationship are vulnerable to series of antisocial behaviours and adult violence tendencies (Idogo, 2011 &

Koenig, et al. 2003). The current study revealed that the children will lack proper upbringing and moral training from their parents and thereby take violence as the only means of resolving issues. A Muslim leader interviewed during the fieldwork similarly expressed that children learn the act of violence from their parents. Consequently, this life events influenced their adulthood so much so that violence has always been resorted to when resolving issues (Informant 5). This view is consistent with the findings of Buzawa, Buzawa, and Stark, (2012) which stated that children, especially boys, who witnessed domestic violence tend to develop the feeling of using violence to solve problems and other antisocial behaviours. This problem of moral decadence in children who witnessed domestic violence was mentioned by many of the informants, in different expressions. It was further expressed by a female (a married woman) informant that:

> You know, the children learn very fast by observation or watching. A boy was reported to have told his friend in the class: 'if you are not careful, I will blow you just like the way my father used to blow my mother'. The children will be morally bankrupt (Informant 13).

No doubt, this child learned the act of violence from home where domestic violence is the order of the day. Consequently, this violent behaviour has become part of him which he uses in resolving issues, as established by the findings discussed above.

Furthermore, it was revealed that these children become arrogant and aggressive because of the constant witnessing of the violent acts at homes. In supporting this point, a Muslim leader stated during the fieldwork:

> This is because, parents are the first teachers for the children and you know, children learn very fast. So, whenever the children grow up in this type of homes, they will certainly learn to be aggressive, violent and arrogant. Therefore, it is very important for parents to be very careful in the presence of their children (Informant 7).

This finding is consistent with other studies which found that children who witnessed domestic violence are more likely to be aggressive, to engage in bullying or be victims of bullying (Baldry, 2003; Kernic et al., 2003). In a similar study in a Swedish community, one of the children interviewed stated that, every time he remembers his father's abusive behaviours towards his mother, he used to be aggressive so much so that he feels like going to beat up his father (Overlien & Hyden, 2009).

4.7.2.3 Child Care and Maintenance

Domestic violence has the effect of jeopardising the proper care and maintenance of the children who witnessed the violence. Several literature indicated that whenever there is violence in the home, the parental care and maintenance will be affected (Wolfe, et al, 2003; Peter, et al, 1999). At this point, the parental care of the children will be disorganised because nobody to take care of them. This study revealed several ways in which domestic violence affects the children's proper care and maintenance.

Out of the twenty informants interviewed, eleven maintained that domestic violence affects the child's maintenance and care. For instance, a female (a divorcee) informant expressed that during the violence, the parents' attention will be divided making it difficult for them to properly take care of the children (Informant 20). In the same vein, Informants 8 and 13 (who are both married women) mentioned that at the time of the violence, the fathers usually stop the children's upkeep, and this may directly affect their growth and development. A quotation from one of the informants:

> The children are affected the most because they are too young to distinguish between who is wrong and who is right between their parents. They usually pinch tent with their mothers even when she is wrong thereby causing their fathers to be provoked and stops their upkeep (Informant 13).

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4.7.2.4 Prostitution

Researches have established that domestic violence exposes female children to prostitution and waywardness (Schelbe & Geiger, 2017; Abayomi, 2014; Niaz, 2003). Absence of love and care from parents was claimed as the major contributing factor to this social illness. As a result, when such attention is given to them, they can easily be deceived with the cheapest form of love and care which they did not experience from their parents. This study also confirmed this situation in Ebiraland, as four informants (all females), concurrently spoke about this fact. One of the informants interviewed expressed her concern thus:

> The female children, on the other hand, will become wayward because their mothers lack peace of mind to train them morally. You know female children need extra care and when they do not get from home, they can easily be deceived by young men outside (Informant 5).

Under these circumstances, when their parents are busy quarrelling and fighting, they will not have the time to show the children love and care they deserve from their parents.

It is equally important to note that, when divorce occurs, it paves way for prostitution in female children; as they are forced to resort to prostitution as a means of survival (Chiroma, Kwagyang, & Musa, 2015; Ulmestig & Eriksson, 2016). This is usually the case, especially when there is divorce, and the proper care and maintenance of the children are lacking.

4.7.3   Effects of Domestic Violence on the Society

Domestic violence is recognised as a global crime, which poses a threat to the social and economic development of any society with its short and long term negative effects (Howard et al., 2010; Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005; DeKeseredy, 2000). The

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experience of decline in labour productivity and loss of wages because of depression (WHO, 2016; Alesina et al., 2014), the costs of preventive mechanisms against violence are all part of the concomitant loss on the society (Ellsberg et al., 2014). These mechanisms include provision of health care services, legal costs, costs of organising skills acquisition programs, and social campaign against domestic violence.

Notwithstanding the above, it is important to note that the negative effects of domestic violence on the Ebira society, as revealed by this study, can never be exaggerated. These consequences were so worrying to the extent that all the (20) informants in this study admitted that the peace and comfort needed in the society are always truncated due to fighting and quarrelling by violent couples.

In addition, many of the informants in this study spoke of the ugly situation where the children who witnessed domestic violence become kidnappers, armed robbers and political thugs in Ebiraland. These children are lacked parental care and moral upbringing, as such, they are very easy to engage in criminal activities (Informant 10). This was further elaborated by another female informant, thus:

> The Ebira society, in general, is in a severe problem because of this domestic violence. You know these children are the root of the crisis in Ebiraland particularly, the ethnic/political crisis in 2007/2008, where lives, houses and a lot of properties were lost (Informant 5).

It is worthy to mention that these children are drop outs from schools and unemployed. Therefore, they become tools in the hands of some politicians who will be offering them little financial assistance and use that privilege to misuse them for selfish interest in the electioneering process.

Furthermore, informants also mentioned in this study that domestic violence causes society to be underdeveloped. The society will lack human resources who can initiate meaningful developmental projects. As a result, the society will be backward (Informant 19). Another informant further elaborated this point thus:

> There will be a lack of development in the society. This is because human resources needed to develop the society will be lacking. Instead of them developing the society, donating items to the members of the society, these children will be stealing materials meant for the development of the society (Informant 13).

The above informant narrated an incidence where materials for digging boreholes in their community were stolen by these types of children, and up until now, nobody can get these materials from them. This is to explain the extent of damage that domestic violence has caused in Ebiraland.

The current study therefore, confirmed other studies which found that domestic violence is a threat to the development of any society (Shuib et al., 2013; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997).

4.8 Mechanisms to curb Domestic Violence in Ebiraland

Domestic violence against women and children has been recognised as a serious social, legal and health problems that need urgent attention (Ahmadzad-Asl, Davoudi, Zarei, Mohammad-Sadeghi, & Rasoulian, 2016; García-Moreno, et al, 2005; Watts & Zimmerman, 2002; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000; Campbell & Lewandowski, 1997). Studies have indicated that violence against women is a global phenomenon that cuts across all ethnicity, religion, and cultures (Huang, Wang, & Warrener, 2010; Antai & Antai, 2009; Tjaden & Thoennes, 1998). Be that as it were,

all hands must be on deck to get rid of the problems from our society. This section, therefore, discusses the practical approach towards preventing and eradicating domestic violence from Ebiraland. This study suggests some mechanisms that could be helpful in curbing domestic violence in Ebiraland, as expressed by the informants. In view of this, Han and Stewart (2014) and Bowman (2003), emphasised that mechanisms to curb domestic violence in any society must be in accordance with the cultural and societal context of the said society. Hence, the study gathered that all the key players such as the government, the Muslim community leaders, the couples, and the society, have roles to play in curbing domestic violence in Ebiraland. These roles are discussed as follows:

4.8.1 Responsibility of the Government

The government has a vital role to play in curbing domestic violence in Ebiraland. Virtually all the informants in this study viewed the role of the government as the most important one in curbing the problems of domestic violence. This is because one of the responsibilities of every government is to make sure the lives and properties of its citizens are secured, through good governance and policy-formulations (Oviasuyi, Idada, & Isiraojie, 2010). Therefore, since domestic violence is a threat to the peace and development of the society, as been established above, the informants felt that the government should do its part in preventing the occurrence of domestic violence in Ebiraland. The following are the roles of government in curtailing domestic violence:

4.8.1.1 Creation of Jobs

Previous research has established a connection between poverty and domestic violence. Literature indicated that domestic violence is more common in poor families than rich families (Dhar, 2014; Aihie, 2009; Holt, Buckley, & Whelan, 2008). Poor individuals, according to these studies, will be unable to meet up with their responsibilities, and this can cause conflict in the home. Therefore, employment opportunity for the citizens will enable them to take care of their family and positively contribute to the peaceful coexistence of the couples. To explain the importance of jobs in curbing domestic violence, all the informants in the study suggested that creation of employment opportunities will be an effective strategy towards the eradication of domestic violence. This is also to support the findings in Melorose, Perroy, and Careas (2015), which stressed the need for job creation in achieving a society free of domestic violence.

It was observed that most of the informants viewed that in most cases, it is the inability of the husband to meet up with his responsibilities in the home that trigger violence. A female informant expressed this by saying:

> The Government should make things easy for the citizens. Because in most cases, domestic violence is caused by hardship and inability of the husbands to take proper care of their homes. So, where the husband has something doing, and the needs and demands of the home are met, I believe it will reduce the problem (Informant 3).

This position was also buttressed by another informant (a married woman), that the main cause of domestic violence is poverty and economic hardship which makes it difficult for husbands to discharge their responsibilities. Therefore, the government can help by creating jobs for the qualified citizens (Informant 5).

Furthermore, few informants opined that where the couple are engaged in one form of employment or the other, their minds will be disengaged from little argument that may result into violence. For instance, a female informant highlighted:

> The government should create jobs for its citizens. There are a lot of instances where lack of job has caused domestic violence. When a couple goes out in the morning and comes back in the evening, both will be tired, and they will not have time to ferment troubles! So, if there is a job opportunity for everybody, it will help in curbing domestic violence in Ebiraland (Informant 16).

All these views suggest that creating employment opportunity for the citizens is one of the means through which government can help in reducing the occurrence of domestic violence in Ebiraland.

Previous studies have also confirmed this finding by emphasising the need for the government to create employment to reduce the occurrence of domestic violence (Dhar, 2014; Graham-Bermann et al., 2009; Hines et al., 2013). The possible explanation for this might be that when people are gainfully employed, they will be able to take care of their family and this could improve their standard of living.

4.8.1.2 Women Empowerment

Empowerment for women has been one of the strategies applied by the government to assist the abused women in matrimonial relationships. In South Africa for instance, studies by Nkosi and Daniels (2014) indicated that empowerment such as education, and interest-free loans, have been used to assist women in developing their strength to cope with their circumstances. In the same vein, Jouriles et al, (2016) argued that intervention such as offering the victims assistance such as money, clothing and food could relieve them of the impact of the violence. However, it is worthy to note that the aim of the empowerment for the victims is not to disengage them from the abused

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partners, but to improve their living standard and to achieve self-determination (Kasturirangan, 2008). Therefore, the needs and problems of the women in a particular culture or society where the violence occurs should determine the nature of the empowerment (Fernández, 2006; Bowman, 2003; Ofei-Aboagye, 1994).

In this study, 50% of the informants emphasised that empowerment programmes for women can lead to decrease in domestic violence in Ebiraland. Most of the informants viewed that when women are engaged in a business, their minds will be disengaged from some of their husbands' misbehaviours. For instance, a female informant (a married woman) stated:

> The government should also empower some individuals especially the women for them to engage themselves with something positive. This will surely engage their minds from looking at flimsy issues that could cause domestic violence in their homes. This is because, an idle man, they say, is a devil's workshop! Therefore, the women should be empowered (Informant 12).

A Muslim leader further buttressed that, whatever the women earn from this empowerment will make them happy and feel independent of their husbands. He stated: "There should be economic empowerment for women who are mostly business minded individuals. When these women are engaged and earn little income, it could also reduce the rate of domestic violence cases in Ebiraland" (Informant 6).

Therefore, the result of this study confirmed the findings of previous research which found that empowerment programs have been playing vital roles in curtailing domestic violence (McDonald et al., 2016; Lopez-Fuentes & Calvete, 2015; Ziegler & Weidner, 2006; Rea & Rossman, 2005). On the contrary, few studies found that empowerment such as employment and economic dependence, for women can expose them to domestic violence in matrimonial relationships (Rahman, Hoque, &

Makinoda, 2011; Koenig et al., 2003). The likely reason for this finding might be that working-class women tend to challenge their husbands' authority which is not common in unemployed women.

4.8.1.3 Enactment and Enforcement of the Laws

One of the preventive measures against domestic violence in many countries is the enactment and enforcement of the laws regarding domestic violence. Literature had indicated that in Portugal and Turkey, for instance, domestic violence is a public crime under which women and children are allowed to file charges against a perpetrator of domestic violence (Donovan, 2004; Yalcinkaya, 2004). In Nigeria, the problem of domestic violence is pathetic because there is no serious effort from the government to enact the laws to regard domestic violence as a punishable offence (Madu, 2015; Eswaran & Malhotra, 2011). Even though Nigeria is a signatory to most of international instruments on women's rights such as CEDAW, none of these treaties has been adopted by the National Assembly, and this make them unenforceable in Nigeria (Chika, 2012).

However, in 2007, Lagos state government enacted domestic violence law to protect the rights of women (Madu, 2015; Onigbogi, 2015). Some States House of Assembly such as Cross River, Edo, Enugu, follow suit to enact gender-related laws to address problems such as girl child marriage, female circumcision, harmful traditional practices against women (Madu, 2015). Despite all these, it is disheartening that there is no enforcement of these laws. In 2010 for instance, in one of the South-Eastern states of Nigeria, a traditional ruler physically assaulted his wife to death. Following series of court adjournments, the case was dismissed in 2012. Though the king was

dethroned due to public protest, but he was not jailed or punished for the crime (Ishola, 2016).

Concurrently, six informants in the study expressed that there are courts in the study area adjudicating cases of domestic violence. However, enforcement of these judgements is yet to become a reality. The informants, therefore, stressed the needs to punish some offenders to serve as a deterrent to others. For instance, a female informant stated that government should try to enact laws to make domestic violence a punishable offence, and that will serve as a deterrent to others (Informant 8). Another informant further explained that when people are aware of enforcement of the laws, it will help in reducing domestic violence in Ebiraland. He echoed:

> The government should enact laws to guide and take care of domestic violence cases in the society. The citizens will be careful since they know that when they misbehave, the law will take care of them even if the family members of their victims cannot do anything (Informant 16).

In most cases, husbands abuse their wives because there is no law prohibiting that. Therefore, if domestic violence is made a punishable offence, victims will be able to approach the court and pursue their rights.

This finding is parallel to other findings which also emphasised the importance of laws in preventing domestic violence (Hines et al., 2013; Scruggs, 2004). However, McDermott and Garofalo argued that sometimes, punishing the husbands or partners, turn out disempowering women. Bearing in mind that, some women wish to remain with their partners, and punishing these offenders may expose the women to more abuse (McDermott & Garofalo, 2004). He, therefore, suggested that the intervention programs and laws should be geared towards ensuring the victims' safety and rest of

minds, and not only to punish the perpetrators. The current study therefore is consistent with previous research which established the enforcement of laws as one of the strategies to curb domestic violence.

4.8.1.4 Free Basic Education for the Citizens

Several studies have suggested that the most effective intervention to reduce domestic violence by the government should be education for women and children (Hornor, 2005; Rapoza, 2004). In line with the above literature, the study revealed that one of the ways through which the government can assist in preventing domestic violence is by designing free and compulsory educational policy for the citizens, especially women. Two informants in the study suggested that the children should be enlightened right from the school about the consequences of domestic violence. A Muslim leader stated: "The government should design an educational policy to enlighten the children in schools from the very beginning on the consequences of domestic violence, for them to know the problems and the ways to handle such when they occur" (Informant 2).

Other informants reiterated the importance of free education to equip the women the required qualification for employment for them to be independent of their husbands. For instance, a female informant (a married woman) also suggested that government should make basic education compulsory for girls, for them to have required qualification to engage in meaningful jobs (Informant 10). Another female informant buttressed that adult education for married women should be included (Informant 14). This result is similar to other studies which suggested that women should be educated for self-reliance (Ishola, 2014).

4.8.2 Responsibility of the Muslim Community Leaders

The roles of religious institutions in preventing and reducing domestic violence are very important (Oluremi, 2015; Rozario, 2012; Aihie, 2009). The religious institutions could achieve this through preaching against the drinking of alcohol, social isolation and depression (Ellison, Trinitapoli, Anderson, & Johnson, 2007; Sagot, 2005). It was observed from the fieldwork that the Muslim community leaders have roles to play in preventing domestic violence in Ebiraland. The expressions of the informants in the study pointed to this fact and therefore discussed as follows:

4.8.2.1 Preaching and Counselling the Couples

A study by Ellison, Bartkowski, and Anderson, (1999) in the USA found that men who regularly attend religious sermons are not likely to involve in domestic violence. Programmes such as preaching against the consumption of alcoholism, sermons on different topics, encouraging living a good life, resolving conflicts between couples, and counselling about the risk of psychological trauma, are the targets of most religious institutions (Ellison & Anderson, 2001; Dudley & Frederick, 1990).

In this study, all the informants emphasised the importance of preaching the words of God as method to reduce incidence of domestic violence in Ebiraland. It was noticed that preaching has been an on-going assignment in Ebiraland. The informants suggested that the Muslim leaders should improve on it, by constantly advising the couples on their duties and responsibilities as husbands and wives. For instance, a Muslim leader stated:

> The Muslim leaders have a lot to offer in this regard. Though it has been their role, they can only be encouraged to do more by enlightening couple in various mosques about their duties and responsibilities towards their family. The duties and responsibilities

of the couple should always be analysed especially at marriage receptions thereby instilling in the husbands the zeal and enthusiasm to be dutiful to their family (Informant 7).

In the same vein, a female informant (a divorcee) stated that: "The Muslim leaders can also design programmes on TV and Radios to enlighten the public about the teachings of Islam in relation to domestic violence" (Informant 20).

In addition, many informants suggested that counselling the prospective or newly wedded couple in the society is another means through which the Muslim leaders can assist in preventing domestic violence in Ebiraland. A Muslim leader stated: "The Muslim leaders can also design programmes for intending couples as a counselling system" (Informant 5). Informant 20 further buttressed this point and suggested that married couples should be included in the counselling process.

Furthermore, studies have shown the positive impact of premarital consultations and counselling on the marriage relationships and strength (Saidon, Ishak, Alias, Ismail, & Aris, 2016; Shahhosseini, Hamzehgardeshi, & Souraki, 2014; Omidvar, Fatehizadeh, & Ahmadi, 2009). In Malaysia for instance, a two-day compulsory premarital course is an important requirement for the application of marriage for Muslims (Shiraz, 2009). In this training, issues related to moral, communication in marriage, health issues, conflict management and counselling are discussed (Saidon et al., 2016). Upon completion, a certificate is awarded to the prospective couple. This course has been helpful and beneficial to the marital relationship in Malaysia (Shiraz, 2009). In line with the above, it was suggested that such a programme will also be helpful in training the prospective couple about the marital requirements in Ebiraland.

4.8.2.2 Educating the Youths in the Society

The youth of today are the leaders and husbands or wives of tomorrow. It is always good to get the youth morally and psychologically trained while they are still young. During the fieldwork interview, informants suggested that one of the means through which the Muslim leaders can help in preventing domestic violence is through educating the youths. A female informant highlighted that:

> The Muslim leaders should create an avenue through which the Muslim children can be properly trained and cultured about the norms and values of the society especially as taught by the Prophet (PBUH). You know, the children of today are the fathers or leaders of tomorrow. So, if these children are properly trained morally, it is hoped that they will not involve themselves in domestic violence in the future (Informant 13).

Therefore, the Islamic education should be designed to morally and culturally train and enlighten these children about the problems of domestic violence. This finding is consistent with Haneef and Razak (2017), who stated that moral and ethical values of Islam should be incorporated in the children from the very beginning of their lives.

4.8.2.3 Reconciliation

Conciliation is the settlement of discord between two people with the aim of ending a conflict and create a conducive environment for peace and harmony (Malik & Muda, 2015; Umar, 2015). Dispute between the couple should be settled before it gets out of hand. However, it is important to note that parents or family are the first people required to mediate between the couple to save their marriage (Ahmad, 2016; Malik & Muda, 2015). Where the family's efforts fail, the Muslim leaders need to intervene. Therefore, ensuring that couples resolve their differences and start a new life together is another process through which the Muslim leaders can prevent

domestic violence in Ebiraland. Informants in the study stated that since there is no home without disagreement or misunderstanding, it is therefore suggested that Muslim leaders need to involve themselves in reconciliation process in the community.

In line with the above, informants 14 and 18 (both females and divorcee) emphasised that this should be taken very seriously for couples not to always end their relationships in divorce. It was further buttressed that marriage could be saved if prompt attention is given to this process of reconciliation in Ebiraland (Informant 14).

This result is parallel with the findings of Ellison and Anderson, (2001) and Dudley and Frederick, (1990), who stated that resolving conflicts between couples when it occurs, is one of the means through which domestic violence could be addressed.

4.8.2.4 Proper Management of Zakat

One of the major aims of zakat in Islam is the elimination of poverty and establishment of social welfare for the community (Ibrahim, 2015; Johari, Aziz, & Ali, 2014). In Islam, zakat funds are to be distributed to eight categories of people as mentioned in Qur'an 9:60, among which are poor and needy people (Johari et al., 2014). Bearing in mind that poverty is one of the causes of domestic violence in Ebiraland, as identified earlier by this study, the proper distribution of zakat funds among the people will help in reducing the incidence of violence.

In view of the above point, five informants in the study emphasised the benefit of zakat in preventing domestic violence in Ebiraland. Informants viewed that since most of the cases of violence in Ebiraland happened because of economic crisis, therefore, proper distribution of zakat funds will relief the people of financial hardships in the homes. A Muslim leader highlighted this during interview:

> The zakat management should be strengthened and standardised by distributing it to those mentioned by Allah in Surat Taubah (Q. 9:60). Because most of the domestic violent cases are out of economic hardship and when the couple is assisted financially, they tend to resolve their cases amicably (Informant 4).

It was revealed in the study that some rich individuals used to donate their zakat to Muslim leaders for proper distribution. Informants therefore suggested that the Muslim leaders should establish a foundation for the effective management of these funds for the benefit of poor people in the community (Informant 6).

This finding is consistent with previous studies which showed that proper management of zakat funds will create a prosperous life for the recipients and thereby improve their standards of living (Yusoff, 2015; Johari et al., 2014), and make them economically dependent (Jouriles et al., 2016; Nkosi & Daniels, 2014). Therefore, when these couple are empowered from the zakat funds, they will be able to take proper care of their family thereby preventing domestic violence in Ebiraland.

4.8.3 Responsibility of the Couples

The couples have a greater role to play in preventing domestic violence in their matrimonial homes. During the interview, Informants suggested some strategies which could assist couples in maintaining peaceful relationships. These strategies are discussed as follows:

4.8.3.1 Tolerance

A substantial research literature indicated that altruism, self-discipline, and tolerance are virtues that could assist couples in controlling marital problems (Ellison et al., 2007; Dudley & Frederick, 1990). It is observed that many relationships have broken due to lack of tolerance among the couple. Therefore, one of the roles of the couples in preventing violence as suggested by this study, is to tolerate each other's weaknesses. Concurrently, sixteen out of the twenty informants in the study emphasised the importance of tolerance in preventing domestic violence. It was unequivocally mentioned by most of the informants that for couples to live peacefully they need to tolerate themselves. For instance, a female (married) informant stressed that peaceful marital relationships depend more on tolerance because you are dealing with somebody from a different background, so you need tolerance in your life (Informant 15). This finding is consistent with other previous studies which stated that positive values such as tolerance and harmony are the effective means to achieving a solid marital relationship (Haneef, 2017; Ahmad, 2016).

4.8.3.2 Effective Communication

One of the suggested mechanisms that could be applied by couple in their marital lives is communication between themselves. Communication is said to be a vital foundation for relationship building (Haneef, 2017; Dindia, 2003). During the fieldwork, it was suggested that effective communication between the couple can be helpful in preventing the occurrence of violence in matrimonial homes. Informants highlighted that some issues need to be discussed immediately and resolved, so when such issues are piled up without resolving them, it could lead to violence at the end of the day. Informants (1 and 20, both females), expressed that couples should set out

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days for this purpose; where misunderstanding issues are resolved in the family. Previous research has also confirmed that inadequate communication can lead to conflict and problems among the couples (Hasim, Mustafa, & Hashim, 2015).

4.8.3.3 Living their Lives in accordance with Shariah Principles

There are rules and regulations of marriage in Islam. As discussed in chapter two above, in Islam, it is the husbands' responsibility to provide, among others, material support such as feeding, clothing and shelter for the wife. The wife on the other hand, is to obey and respect her husband in accordance to the teachings of Islam (Zahidul Islam, 2014; Tucker, 1996). It is observed that most of the problems in a marital relationship surfaced because the couple did not follow these rules and regulations set by Islam. It was suggested that couple has the responsibility of living their lives in accordance with the *Shariah* principles of marriage. Four of the informants suggested that if these rules and regulations as demonstrated by our noble Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), are followed, the problems of domestic violence will reduce (Informant 5).

Besides, where the violence has occurred, the couples are encouraged to go back to the root, which is to amend the relationship by being loyal, honest and patient. In line with this, a Muslim leader highlighted:

> The couple should go back to the root which is to live their lives in accordance with the teachings of Islam as demonstrated by the Prophet (PBUH). These rules and regulation among others include patience, tolerance, sincerity, loyalty and truthfulness. If the couple is doing this, it is hoped that there will be peace and harmony in the matrimonial relationship (Informant 7).

Supporting this point, an informant suggested that couple should be sincere to themselves; husbands should not lie to their wives and should not promise what they

cannot do because all these are embedded in the principle of Islamic marriage (Informant 18).

This result is consistent with previous studies such as Haneef (2017), Kharofa (2004), and Tucker (1994)), which also stressed that to achieve success in marriage, couple needs to follow the teachings of Islam in respect to rights and responsibilities of individuals involved.

4.8.4   Responsibility of the Society

The society is a key player in protecting the women and children against all forms of violence in the community. It is the community that accommodates the members and therefore has the vital responsibility of ensuring that there are peace and harmony in the land. Literature indicates that children can easily be influenced by the conditions and happenings of the society in which they live. Therefore, societal indifference to the domestic violence gives it legitimacy in the minds of the children (Sossou & Yogtiba, 2009; Widom, 1989). Some practical measures were therefore suggested to be taken by the community to prevent the violence in Ebiraland.

One of the recurring strategies mentioned by the informants as parts of the responsibilities of the society is reconciliation. It was suggested that reconciliatory processes in the community (which are not formal) should be improved and standardised. For instance, a female informant (a married woman) highlighted that community used to organise conciliation between the couples. She therefore suggested that truthfulness and straightforwardness should be their watchword (Informant 15).

In addition, it was suggested that all the community members should be responsible and responsive to one another's plight and problems by being their brothers' keepers. Vices should be discouraged and abhorred by all, and virtues upheld. To this, a female informant (a married woman) stated:

> For the society members, let every member of the society be his brothers' keepers. They should not instigate one's wife against him because he will never be happy if such is done to him. In some cases, we heard incidences of neighbours instigating couple against each other. And the members should not fornicate with another man's wife because it can cause violence in the home (Informant 13).

Furthermore, where all efforts by the society to prevent domestic violence prove abortive, it was suggested that the community is to report to the appropriate authorities, such as Law enforcement agencies, for necessary intervention. During the fieldwork, a Muslim leader suggested that the community should always draw the attention of the authority when and where necessary. He stressed that there might be cases of domestic violence which are beyond the power of the community members. In such instances, the appropriate authorities should be consulted for necessary actions (Informant 6).

4.9   Contribution of the Study

The findings of this study have provided an elaborate information about the factors and effects of domestic violence against the female victims in Ebiraland. The findings revealed that domestic violence has negative effects on women, children, and the society in general. This information has tremendously contributed to the body of knowledge in the study area. The theoretical and practical contributions of this study were highlighted as follows:

4.9.1 Theoretical Contribution

This study, in exploring the understanding of domestic violence among the women in Ebiraland, considered the findings of previous literature together with their references to relevant theories in this type of research. Among the theories considered that have contributed to the understanding of this study are:

The Feminist Theory- Feminist theory argued that domestic violence is a part of the patriarchal system that is in operation in most societies of the world. Anderson (2013) for instance, insisted that domestic violence is a gender-based phenomenon. Thus, it is a means through which inequality between men and women is established. Domestic violence is a resultant effect of women's relegation and economic dependence on men (Black et al. 2010; Ofei-Aboagye, 1994). This theory also suggested that the solution to prevent domestic violence is to establish programs and social services for the women who are experiencing domestic violence. It also suggested the involvement of the government agencies for the punishment of the perpetrators of domestic violence.

In line with feminist theory, which stated that men abuse women because of their desire to control them (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2011), this study found that domestic violence in Ebiraland is associated with gender inequality. As a result, one of the factors that expose women to marital violence is their inability to give birth to male children, as expressed during the fieldwork by the informants. Therefore, in Ebiraland, the scourge of gender inequality starts right from birth where women are praised for giving birth to male children and they are exposed to series of abuse if

otherwise. This study, therefore, contributed to the proper understanding of feminist theory in relation to domestic violence in Ebiraland.

The Social Learning Theory, on the other hand, linked domestic violence to individual experience and exposure to violence. It is argued that people who involved in perpetrating domestic violence do so because of their experience or exposure to violence. According to Hines, Malley-Morrison, and Dutton (2013), people with whom one relates are likely to influence his or her judgement in being deviant or nondeviant personality. Watching and imitating are the most common means through which children learn. For instance, children learn violent behaviours from their experiences from homes where domestic violence is the order of the day, and they are brought up in such a violent manner.

This study revealed that most of the domestic violent homes in Ebiraland gave birth to the numerous anti-social elements that exist in the society today. The findings of the study revealed that the kidnappers, armed robbers and political thugs in Ebiraland today are the products of domestic violence homes. In this study, virtually all the informants confirmed and expressed their concern that these children are always used by the politicians for ethno-political crisis in Ebiraland, especially, the 2007/2008 crisis in which many lives and millions of properties were lost (Informants 10 and 15). Therefore, this study has complemented this perspectives in relation to domestic violence in Ebiraland.

However, some Social Learning Theorists disagree with social learning theory in associating violence in adolescents with abuse in the family. For instance, Barnett,

Miller-Perrin, and Perrin (2005) argued that there are many children who experienced domestic violence as a child but did not abuse their partners when they become adults. Therefore, to put the whole blame of violence on what is learned in the family is a wrong proposition. External factors such as peer groups and media could also be training grounds for domestic violence in some instances.

Furthermore, reference was also made to the Socio-Cultural Theory, which suggests an association between domestic violence and the social institutions and structures in the society. According to the socio-cultural theory, the economic crisis can cause stress and frustration thereby triggering violent behaviour in the homes (Kiss et al., 2012). Going by this theory, domestic violence is common among the lower-income groups, with low financial resources and unemployed (Hines et al., 2013). Therefore, it was established in this study that one of the major factors of domestic violence is poverty and economic crisis that has bedevilled most families in Ebiraland. Informants viewed in the current study that poverty, and the inability of husbands to shoulder their responsibilities as the heads of the family, are among the factors of marital violence in Ebiraland. The findings, therefore, confirmed this theory which revealed that the genesis of domestic violence in most cases, is the economic crisis in matrimonial relationships.

4.9.2 Practical Contribution

Understanding the suitable intervention programmes to address the problems of domestic violence would serve as an eye opener and way forward for government and non-governmental organizations in Ebiraland. Thus, this study extends the understanding and awareness about the risk factors of domestic violence, as well as

its consequences on women, children and society in general. Largely, the findings of this study would provide necessary information about the various intervention facilities to tackle the scourge of domestic violence in Ebiraland.

In view of the above, government and non-governmental organisations should adopt the Duluth model as a viable solution to prevent domestic violence in Ebiraland. Duluth model is a psycho-educational treatment approach originated in Duluth, Minnesota to address domestic violence. It is a compulsory community-based intervention programme designed to counsel and educate men who have battered their partners (Pence & Paymar, 2003). The core mandate of the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Project (DAIP) has always been that community should restrict the abusers and ensure women's safety (Bohall, Bautista, & Musson, 2016; Shepard, Falk, & Elliott, 2002). Other areas are to identify men abusive behaviours, causes of violence in men, to train men about communication in marriage and effective means of solving spousal problems, and to confront men's violence behaviours in general (Herman, Rotunda, Williamson, & Vodanovich, 2014). Not without critics like any other models though, several studies have evaluated the effectiveness of the model and found it to be helpful in reducing the incidence of marital violence especially for those who completed the whole programme (Herman et al., 2014).

Furthermore, it is important for the Muslim community leaders in Ebiraland, to be equipped with a comprehensive idea about the factors and effects of domestic violence on women, children and the society at large. These leaders have been at the forefront of reconciliation between the couple in the study area. The narrative experiences of the female victims would be useful for them. This study will therefore,

serve as a guide for the Muslim leaders, which will, in turn, assist them during their reconciliatory process.

Overall, the findings of this research will benefit the government, researchers and Muslim community leaders. It will serve as a direction and a road map on the best way to curtail domestic violence in Ebiraland.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Domestic violence is a social phenomenon that affects the lives of millions of women globally. It cuts across all sections of the society, regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion. It is an intentional abuse of women to cause them pain, harm or injury. Women in Ebiraland have been faced with series of health, social and psychological problems resulting from domestic violence in matrimonial relationships.

This study has shown that domestic violence is prevalent in Ebiraland. This is evident in the views expressed by the informants in the study. For instance, an informant stated: "the situation is so pathetic, we record at least, five incidences of divorce on weekly basis" (Informant 13, a court registrar). The women in Ebiraland perceived domestic violence to be crisis and problems due to misunderstanding between the couples in the matrimonial relationships. The most common forms of abuse in the study area are physical such as quarrelling, shouting at each other, fighting and economic abuse i.e. denial of maintenance. However, sexual abuse is not common in the study area as revealed by the study. It was observed that the culture of silence regarding domestic violence accounted for underreporting of violence, especially, sexual abuse, in Ebiraland.

The deleterious effects of domestic violence on women's health and wellbeing can never be overemphasized. Women in violent relationships suffer series of health and psychological problems. It affects their reproductive wellbeing as well as their career

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and businesses. It diminishes the women's status, thereby exposing them to series of health issues such as sexually transmitted diseases. The data demonstrated that negative effects of domestic violence on women in Ebiraland range from divorce, loss of pregnancy and lack of concentration in their careers and businesses. The prevalent rate of divorce cases, resulting from the violence and the difficulties in getting married again after such divorce also contributed to the negative of domestic violence in Ebiraland.

Children who witnessed domestic violence are more likely to be associated with anti-social behaviours such as aggression, anxiety and depression. This study demonstrated that children in violent relationships in Ebiraland have been negatively affected. They are affected particularly in their academic performance, as adequate time needed from the parents are not given. Furthermore, proper care and maintenance and moral training of the child will be lacking, as a result, most of these children become social miscreants like armed robbers, kidnappers, political thugs and prostitutes.

Furthermore, the study has shown that the consequences of violence also extend to the society. The society bears the cost of legal processes and the provision of health services, to the victims of domestic violence. The data collected also revealed that the elevated level of crime in Ebira society are associated with domestic violence. This because, children who witnessed domestic violence become violent adults who employ violence in resolving issues.

The factors that expose women to abuse in matrimonial relationships need to be examined. It will assist the government to design policies to address them. It assists the couples to adequately prepare to tackle or avoid such factors. A range of factors of domestic violence has been identified by studies across the globe. These factors, among others, include gender inequality, alcoholism, poverty, infertility, and polygamy.

Poverty, polygamy, infertility, and gender biased are the identified factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland. However, poverty was discovered to be the major factor in most of the domestic violence cases in the study area owing to the rate of unemployment that permeates the people. Violence occurs in the home due to the inability of the husbands to meet up with the responsibilities of the family as required of him. It is disheartening that a family man cannot shoulder his family's needs especially feeding, clothing and shelter. As such, either the husband will be frustrated for his inability, or the family are in suffering. Either of these cases can cause the family their happiness and little disagreement can trigger violence in the home.

Creation of jobs by the government is one of the means through which poverty is reduced in the society. Employment opportunity will afford individuals with the ability to shoulder their responsibilities as the head of the family. Since the study has shown that the major factor of domestic violence is poverty, government needs to intervene in making sure that citizens are provided with enabling environment to discharge their duties thereby preventing the incidence of violence in Ebiraland.

The data revealed that smooth and violent-free relationship is determined by the couples in such a relationship. As a matter of fact, since there is no relationship without hitches, either from the partners or the in-laws, it is strongly suggested that couples should tolerate themselves to be able to deal with minor issues and misunderstandings that could lead to the incidences of domestic violence. The couples should live their lives in accordance with the principles of *Shariah*; as all the details of rights and responsibilities of the husbands and wives are enshrined in the Qur'an and Hadith, as demonstrated to us by the Prophet (PBUH).

5.2   Suggestions and Recommendations

Premise on the findings of this study, it is important to suggest that the following recommendations should be considered in preventing domestic violence.

i.   Basic and quality education for the women. Women should be educated and thereafter employed. This would enable them to depend on themselves and pursue their cases in courts, making provisions for their children. Furthermore, adult education should be designed for the abused women to equip them with necessary information about their rights and the ways of seeking for help from the relevant authorities. It is disheartening to mention that many women do not know what constitute domestic violence. Therefore, awareness and disclosure of domestic violence should be included in the educational policy to break the culture of silence about domestic violence.

ii.   Short-term empowerment programmes for women especially those who have experienced domestic violence. Programmes such as skills acquisition training, financial support through loans and credit facilities, free emergency shelter for the abused women and their children, counselling, and legal aids, are of paramount importance in this regard. This will greatly enhance the living standard of the citizens which will positively affect their matrimonial relationships.

iii.   Long-term empowerment process such as building of a sense of efficacy, developing the interest in social worlds, and understanding the socio-political phenomena that shape the women's positions, should be emphasized. Through these processes, the abused women's experiences and priorities could reflect their values and realities.

iv.   It is recommended that government should give more attention to policies that focus on health, welfare, and social development, to address the predicament of abused women and their children. These policies should give priority to counselling, rendering legal assistance, and provision of shelter for the victims and their children. Policies should be put in place to address women's unemployment for self-reliance to enable them take care of their children.

v.   The needs for government to create jobs for the citizens. The primary responsibility of every government is to protect the lives and property of

its citizens. Government should alleviate the people's hardship to enable them to take charge of their responsibilities.

vi. It is suggested that government should make sure that laws and regulations on domestic violence is made effective enough to address the plights of the victims. Lack of enforcement of domestic violence laws has increased the level of domestic violence in Ebiraland. When laws are strictly enforced against perpetrators of violence, it will serve as deterrent to others.

vii. The professionals such as the law enforcement officials and court personnel should be equipped with the required training about domestic violence. This will enable them to deal with domestic violence cases with the utmost attention it deserves. In most cases, police officers tend to blame the victims and advise them to return to their abusive husbands, and this discourages victims to report cases of violence again.

viii. Muslim leaders should launch campaigns to sensitize the public about the harm and negative consequences of domestic violence. The various Qur'anic injunctions and Prophetic traditions that deal with the marital rights and responsibilities of the couples should be used to educate the Muslims. This has become inevitable because most of the perpetrators of violence are ignorant of the consequences it has on their wives and children, as well as the religious implications of their acts.

ix.   The study also suggested that Muslim leaders should make premarital course a compulsory requirement for the prospective couples. This training should be well handled by a Muslim scholar and expert marriage counsellors. The Muslim leaders should take a leave from countries like Malaysia and Indonesia which have introduced such training and have been helpful in their marital relationships.

x.   It is suggested that couples should be patient enough to handle the challenges of matrimonial relationships, as there is no marriage without hiccups. The couples should tolerate themselves and understand their differences, for the betterment of the relationship.

xi.   Finally, it is recommended that every member of the society should be law-abiding in their dealings especially with their family members. Perpetrators of domestic violence should always be rebuked, to serve as a deterrent to others in the society.

Lastly, the study recommended two actions for the government: the provision of intervention facilities such as education, and empowerment, for the victims of domestic violence, and the enactment and strict enforcement of domestic violence laws in Ebiraland.

5.3   Direction for Further Research

This study explored the perceptions of Muslim women about domestic violence in Ebiraland. The factors and effects of violence on women, children and society, as

well as mechanisms to prevent domestic violence, are also discussed. However, more can still be added to widen the scope in the future research.

This study centred only on the Muslim women in Ebiraland; who share the same religious belief. It is therefore suggested that future research should as well consider the other groups such as the Christians and the Traditionalists in Ebiraland to gain more perspectives about domestic violence and to understand the complex dynamics of violence in Ebiraland. The consideration stems out of the fact that these people are equally important as far as domestic violence is concerned since it is a global social problem. Therefore, their views and experiences will further enrich the results of future research in the area.

Secondly, this study made use of interview approaches as a means of data collection from the respondents. This made it difficult for the researcher during the fieldwork interviews as some informants were not willing to 'expose' their secret to a stranger (the researcher). It is therefore suggested that further research is needed using mixed-method; where interviews and questionnaires could be used to obtain the needed data. This is because, where informants are not ready to speak directly to the interviewer, the use of the questionnaires could serve.

Lastly, this study analysed the negative impacts of domestic violence on women and children in Ebiraland with the responses of parents (fathers and mothers) during the interviews. The parents' responses and feelings about the effects of domestic violence on their children could raise some level of bias because of the affection for their children. However, trustworthiness could be achieved in future studies by

involving other means of data collection, such as teachers' responses, children's reactions, and researchers' observations at homes or schools, to corroborate the interview data.

5.4   Final Remarks

To sum up, domestic violence, no doubt, has negative effects on women, children and society in general. The physical, mental and psychological wellbeing of women who have experienced marital violence is threatened. Likewise, children's exposure to violence causes them imbalance in their behaviour and academic performance.

The sorrowful experiences of Muslim women in marital relationships indicated that domestic violence is prevalent, and increasing, in Ebiraland. This is particularly so, because there are no intervention programmes to address their plights. The influence of cultural practices on the perspectives of domestic violence also worsen the situation.

As a matter of fact, to attain a matrimonial life that is characterised by peace, happiness, and mutual love in Ebiraland, government's attention is needed to create public enlightenment against these cultural practices. Victims of violence need to be assisted so they can be self-reliant. It is necessary to remind the government that efforts to curtail domestic violence will likely be successful if they are related to poverty-reduction and income-generating programmes.

Effectiveness of Muslim leaders' role in preaching, counselling and conciliation is leading to greater success in Ebiraland. This is highly promising because of the zeal

of the Muslims to practice and uphold the principles of their religion. However, there are sometimes problems in the process of reconciliation or counselling. These problems occur due to some couple's attitudes of being disrespectful towards the Muslim leaders or ill-manners of some Muslim leaders. In this case, it is submitted that these bodies be upgraded and recognized by the government. Trained Muslim scholars and experienced marriage counsellors should be involved in this process for effective service delivery.

More importantly, the process to achieving marital harmony in Ebiraland, depends largely on the government, the Muslim leaders, and the couples themselves. It is therefore suggested that all hands must be on deck to achieve a violence-free Ebira society based on human dignity and peaceful coexistence as enshrined in the principles of Islam.
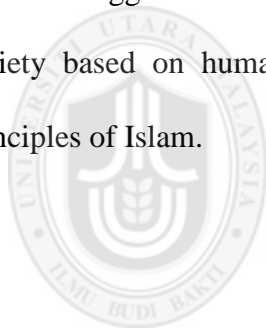
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APPENDIX A

DATA COLLECTION LETTER

AWANG HAD SALLEH
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February 14, 2017

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

DATA COLLECTION FOR PROJECT PAPER/ THESIS

This is to certify that **Mr. Umar Abdullahi (matric number: 819797)** is a full time postgraduate student in Master of Arts (Islamic Studies) at UUM College of Arts and Sciences.
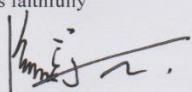
He needs to do his field study and data collection for his project paper/thesis in order to fulfill the partial requirements of his graduate studies.

We sincerely hope that your organization will be able to assist him in the data collection and the distribution of the questionnaires for his research.

Thank you.

**"KNOWLEDGE, VIRTUE, SERVICE"**

Yours faithfully

DR. AZIZI AB AZIZ
Deputy Dean
for Dean
Awang Had Salleh Graduate School of Arts and Sciences
UUM College of Arts and Sciences

Fail do/shakariah

Universiti Pengurusan Terkemuka
The Eminent Management University

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION

Awang Had Salleh
Graduate School
of Arts And Sciences

Universiti Utara Malaysia

TITLE OF STUDY:

Perceptions of Domestic Violence among the Muslim Women in Ebiraland.

PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER:

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Purpose   of   the   Study:

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to explore the factors and effects of domestic violence against the Muslim women in Ebiraland, and to suggest practical ways of curbing the problems, to the government agencies and the Muslim Leaders in the Society.

Study Procedures:

The interview is going to last for one hour or there about. The interview is going to be audio-taped   and   notes   will   be   taken   as   well.

Risks:

No risk of any sort the study will cause you, but you may decline to answer any or all the questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Benefits:

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may form the larger part of the suggestions that will be directed to the authorities and the Muslim Community

Leaders, to formulate policies and regulations to prevent domestic violence in Ebiraland.

Confidentiality:

All information will be kept confidential, this means that your names and answers will be kept secret. I will only label your responses with numbers known to me alone. Your details such as where you work, live, and others will be changed.

Contact   Information:

If you have questions at any time about this study, or you experience adverse effects because of participating in this study, you may contact the researcher with the following contact number: 08036016191.

Consent:

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Informant's Signature_____ Date_____
Interviewer's Signature_____ Date_____

INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

TOPIC: PERCEPTIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG THE MUSLIM WOMEN IN EBIRALAND.

➢ **What are the types of domestic violence against women in Ebiraland?**

1. What is domestic violence in a marital relationship?

2. Mention the forms of domestic violence in matrimonial relationship

➢ **What are the factors of domestic violence in Ebiraland?**

3. Explain the factors of domestic violence in matrimonial relationship

4. Who is responsible for domestic violence in a matrimonial relationship?

➢ **What are the effects of domestic violence on women and children?**

5. What are the effects of domestic violence on the women's well-being?

6. What are the effects of domestic violence on the children's well-being?

7. What are the effects of domestic violence on the society in general?

➢ **What are the workable mechanisms to curb domestic violence?**

8. What can the government do to prevent domestic violence in Ebiraland?

9. What can the Muslim Community Leaders do to curb domestic violence?

10. What can the couples do to prevent the occurrence of domestic violence?

11. What can the society do to prevent domestic violence?

MODELS GENERATED FROM INFORMANTS' RESPONSES

Who is Responsible for domestic Violence

- The Husbands
- The Wives
- The In-laws

Effects of Domestic Violence on Women

- Divorce
- Women's Health
- Women's Career and Business
- Women's Pregnancy

Effects of Domestic Violence on Children

Children's Education — Children's Behaviours — Child's Care and Maintenance — Prostitution in Female Children

Responsibilities of the Government

Job Creation — Enactment and Enforcement of the Laws — Empowerment for Women — Free Basic Education for the Citizens