

**PREVALENCE AND PATTERN OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG OBSTETRICS PATIENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT TEACHING HOSPITAL.**

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**ABSTRACT**

A study on prevalence and pattern of domestic violence among obstetrics patients in University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital were carried out among pregnant women who attended the antenatal clinic. The aim of the study is to find out prevalence and pattern of domestic violence among obstetrics patient of University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital. A cross section descriptive study using the purposive cluster sampling technique was adopted. The research was conducted with the aid of a self-structured Questionnaire and data analyzed using the statistical package for social science version 23. The result revealed a prevalence rate of 34.9%. The patterns of domestic violence were: shouting (35%), abusive words (15%), financial denial (14%), keeping late night (10%), forced sexual intercourse (3%), driving out of the house (2%) and throwing objects (1%), slapping (7%), beating (4%), extramarital affairs (4%). Husbands who drink alcohol or have two social habits had a significant odd to abuse their wives. Health promotion and provision of laws against domestic violence were recommended to help reduce the incidence of domestic violence and its associated complications.

**KEYWORDS:** Prevalence, Pattern, Domestic, Violence, Patient.

**INTRODUCTION**

In a study on the prevalence and predictors for domestic violence among pregnant women in a rural community North East Nigeria, using a descriptive cross-sectioned study with aid of an interviewer administered semi structured pretest questionnaire on 314 respondent's results showed that 34.3% had experienced at least one form of domestic violence. The perpetrators were the current husband in 37%, co-wives in 30.6% and in-laws in 23.1% and 50% of domestic violence were never reported. Polygamy was considered to be the major contributing factors to domestic violence.<sup>[17]</sup> According to the study on prevalence, pattern and consequence of intimate partners' violence during pregnancy at Abakiliki south East Nigeria, using a cross-section survey of pregnant women attending antenatal clinic between April and June 2011 at the Federal Medical Centre Abakiliki. A total of 321 respondents participated and result showed that 44.6% have had domestic violence in the index pregnancy. Socio-demographic factors, parity and

social habits of their husbands were noted to significantly influence domestic violence. It was recommended that attitudinal change is paramount in eliminating domestic violence.<sup>[12]</sup> Following the study conducted on prevalence and pattern of domestic violence among pregnant Nigerian women, carried out on 418 respondents attending the antenatal clinic in two private clinic in Lagos between January and June 2003 using a structured questionnaire. It revealed that 47.1% of women had had domestic violence and 11.7% experiences abuse for the first time during current pregnancy. The perpetrators of the abuse were husband and boyfriends (78.7%), in-laws (31.5%) and other relatives (6.1%). 90% of the abuse women were not ready to report incidence. Hence empowerment of women is encouraged to help reduce this menace on women.<sup>[13]</sup> Based on the study on prevalence of domestic violence among antenatal women attending a Nigerian Hospital in Jos, using a cross sectional descriptive survey and structured questionnaire on 340 pregnant women.

Domestic violence prevalence was 12.6% in current pregnancy and 63.2% in previous pregnancy.<sup>[14]</sup>

A retrospective study on prevalence of domestic violence in a pregnant military population, presenting for prenatal care to a Naval Hospital from January 2007 to March 2008 where Participants were screened anonymously for domestic violence using the abuse assessment screen. 14.5% screened positive for abuse (either in index and past pregnancy) and 1.5% respondents reported current pregnancy abuse.<sup>[15]</sup> The study on prevalence and risk factors for domestic violence among pregnant women in Northern Nigeria using a cross sectional descriptive study with the aid of an interviewer administered questionnaires on 392 respondents it was noted that 7.4% experienced domestic violence during the current pregnancy. Women with Higher Educational attainment and those with economic activities outside the home were associated with decreased risk of domestic violence. There is therefore a need for preventive, protective and redress mechanism to guard against domestic violence in Nigeria.<sup>[7]</sup> In the study on prevalence and pattern of domestic violence against pregnant Nigerian women carried out on 418 respondents attending antenatal clinic in two private clinic in Lagos between January and June 2003 using a cross-section descriptive survey and structured questionnaire revealed that pattern of domestic violence were, verbal abuse 52.3%, economic deprivation 30%, physical abuse 25%, threat of violence 11.8% and forced sex- 14.2%.<sup>[19]</sup> Based on the study conducted on the prevalence and risk factors for domestic violence among pregnant women in northern Nigerian, using an interviewer-administered questionnaire on 392 respondents. The pattern of violence was: physical assault 58.6%, sexual assault 13.8%. Financial and domestic issues were the major triggers of domestic violence.<sup>[7]</sup> In a similar study on

prevalence, pattern and consequence of intimate partners violence during pregnancy at Abakiliki Southeast Nigeria using semi-structure questionnaire was designed for cross-sectional survey of pregnant women attending antenatal clinic between April and June 2011 at the Federal Medical Centre Abakiliki on 321 respondent. Result gotten revealed that the pattern of domestic violence was; verbal abuse 60.1%, emotional and physical injury 21%.<sup>[12]</sup> A study on pattern and determinants of domestic violence among antenatal clinic attended in a referral centre South-East Nigeria; a cross-sectional descriptive survey using an interviewer administered questionnaire on 500 respondents and result analyzed by the Epi Info statistical software package version 3.3.3 of 2005. It was noted that verbal abuse insult was the commonest form male engendered violence. Others were sexual abuse, financial deprivation, threats and physical harm. Financial and domestic issues were the major source of disagreement.<sup>[16]</sup>

#### MATERIALS AND METHOD

A cross sectional descriptive study was adopted for the study and the sample populations were pregnant women who attended antenatal clinic at the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State.

The participant's includes pregnant women who attended the antenatal clinic between January 2017 to May 2017 and those who gave consent for the study. Pregnant women who were in very ill states were excluded from the study. A structured questionnaires were used to obtain data.

The data collected was collated, keyed into Microsoft excel sheet and analysed using statistical package for social science (S.P.S.S.) version 23.

#### RESULTS

**Table 3: Husbands' social habits.**

Type	Characteristics	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Cumulative
Single	1	5	1.2	127 (30.4%)
	2	63	15.1	
	3	3	0.7	
	4	47	11.2	
	5	9	2.2	
Other habits to be specified		-	0	0
Combination	1,2	7	1.7	44 (10.5%)
	1,2,3	3	0.7	
	1,3	1	0.2	
	1,4	1	0.2	
	2,3	1	0.2	
	2,3,4	3	0.7	
	2,4	24	5.7	
	3,4	4	1.1	
None		247	59.1	247 (59.1%)

**Note:** 1=Smoking, 2=Alcohol, 3=keep late night, 4=Eating outside, 5=Extramarital affairs.

Table 1 represents the social habits of the husbands of the pregnant women. For the men with single habits, 15% were involved in drinking alcohol, while 11.2% eat out more often. However, about 4% of the men were engaged in extramarital affairs. In observing the

combination of these social habits, the largest proportions were those involved in drinking and eating out (5.7%). More than 50% of the women claimed that their husbands were devoid of any form of the stated social habits.

**Table 4: Frequency and Types of Domestic Abuse.**

Frequency and Prevalence of Abuse among Participants		
Abuse	One forum	More
Frequency	146 (34.9%)	272 (65%)
Distributions of various forms of abuses		
Forms of Abuse	Frequency	
Shouting	118 (35%)	
Oral Abuse used	51 (15%)	
Financial demand	48 (14%)	
Beating	36 (11%)	
Keep late night	34 (10%)	
Extramarital Affairs	12 (4%)	
Forced sex	11 (3%)	
Other forms	10 (12%)	
Threat to life	9 (3%)	
Driving out of House	7 (2%)	
Throwing Objects	5 (1%)	

**Table 5: Husbands' age and abuse.**

Abuse	<20	20-24	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	=>50	X <sup>2</sup> -value	P-value
	No	3 (1.1)	1 (0.4)	14 (5.1)	75 (27.6)	74 (27.2)	82 (30.1)	17 (6.3)		
Yes	0 (0)	3 (2.1)	7 (4.8)	31 (21.2)	39 (26.7)	42 (28.8)	16 (11.0)	8 (5.5)		

**Table 6: Husbands' level of education and abuse.**

Abuse	No formal education	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	X <sup>2</sup> -value	P-value
No	1 (0.4)	3 (1.1)	67 (24.6)	201 (73.9)	5.924	0.115
Yes	1 (0.7)	7 (4.8)	37 (25.3)	101 (69.2)		

**Table 7: Husbands' occupation and abuse.**

Abuse	Unemployed	Farmer	Artisan	Business	Civil servant	Others	X <sup>2</sup> -value	P-value
No	2 (0.7)	0 (0)	14 (5.1)	109 (40.1)	143 (52.6)	4 (1.5)	4.075	0.253
Yes	1 (0.7)	1 (0.7)	14 (9.6)	57 (39.0)	73 (50.0)	0 (0)		

**Table 8: Husbands' social habits and abuse.**

Abuse	Smoking	Alcohol	keep late night	Eating outside	extramarital affairs	None of the above	At least 2 of the habits	X <sup>2</sup> -value	P-value
No	3 (1.1)	33 (12.1)	3 (1.1)	28 (10.3)	5 (1.8)	176 (64.7)	24 (8.8)		
Yes	2 (1.4)	30 (20.5)	0 (0)	19 (13.0)	4 (2.7)	71 (48.6)	20 (13.7)		

**Table 9: Chi-square analysis and odd ratio for the association of social habit and abuse.**

Groups (For Abuse)	None of the habits (OR)	95% C.I		P-value	Inf.
		Lower	Upper		
Eating outside	1.682	0.883	3.204	0.08	Not Sig.
Alcohol	2.254	1.279	3.969	0.004	Sig.
Combination of at least any two habits	2.066	1.074	3.974	0.023	Sig.

Note: OR=Odds ratio, C.I=Confidence interval, Inf=Inference

Table 9 represents the odd that a husband having one of the above significant social habit will abuse their wives. The odd that a husband eating outside, taking alcohol, or involving in a combination of at least of the two social habits, will abuse his wife is 1.68, 2.25 and 2.066 respectively when compared to the husbands not without any of the stated social life.

## DISCUSSION

Findings from this study revealed that majority of the participants were young people, civil servants and business women with good education, in monogamous family and mostly multiparous. Their husbands had similar characteristics and their most common social habit was alcohol consumption. These are couples that are well positioned in terms of social mile stone, married early, have jobs, children and majorly in monogamous setting; one begins to wonder. The known predictors of domestic violence are not the issues in this circumstance. Could it be a generational decay in morals or social influence?

From this study, the prevalence of domestic violence among the participants is 34.9% and this is similar to 21%<sup>[1]</sup>, 30%<sup>[4]</sup>, 34.3%<sup>[11]</sup>, 44.6%<sup>[12]</sup> and 47.1%<sup>[13]</sup> but dissimilar to 12.6%<sup>[14]</sup>, 14.3%<sup>[15]</sup> and 7.4%<sup>[16]</sup>. This variation is attributed to the large number of sample size used in this study as compared to cited studies and the assertion that there is an increasing rise in the domestic violence rate in Nigeria as reported by the Nigeria demographic health survey of 2013<sup>[4]</sup> as most of the studies with higher prevalence rate are more recent studies compared to those with lower rates. Zonal variation also affects the prevalence of the study as most of the studies whose results were similar (higher prevalence rates) with this studies' result were from the southern part of Nigeria while those with dissimilar (lower prevalence rates) were from the northern part of Nigeria and this can be possibly linked to the varying cultural and social beliefs in these two zones. Furthermore, Port Harcourt where this study was done is a metropolitan city filled with people of different cultural and socio-economic background which is similar to the conditions in Lagos, Abuja and abakiliki with very close domestic violence prevalence rate. This shows that population size, religion, cultural variation, socio-economic status and environment strongly affects the occurrence of domestic violence among women.<sup>[1, 3, 4, 6-10]</sup>

The patterns of domestic violence gotten from this study were, shouting 35% and Abuse 15% among others. This pattern of domestic violence were noted in other studies.<sup>[1-10,12,13,16]</sup>, however the distributions of the patterns of domestic violence are not exactly the same as the findings in this study.<sup>[7,12,16]</sup> This variation is attributed to the fact that the studies were conducted in different environment with varying socio-cultural belief and influences, unemployment rate, poverty levels, educational levels, health challenges, alcoholic and

substance abuse levels and other domestic violence trigger or influencing factors.

It was also noted from this study showed that there was a significant odd that husband who drink alcohol or have two of the listed social habits will beat their wife. This agrees with the accounts documented in other studies.<sup>[1-10,12]</sup> This goes to emphasize that social factors are the main predictors of domestic violence currently and not necessarily affluence or literacy.

## CONCLUSION

Domestic violence is a common practice among married people. It is considered a menace to the entire society especially with its rising prevalence of 34.9% as noted in this study. Addressing risk factors such as alcoholism, Smoking, extramarital affairs, keeping late nights and substance abuse will go a long way in taming this situation.

## Recommendations

1. Marriage counselling in various religious organizations should be encouraged.
2. Re-engineering our socio-cultural values in our society may reduce societal, moral and social decay.
3. Social vices must be discouraged at home and in school by parents and teachers
4. Enlightenment campaign on effects of domestic violence be carried out by the print, electronic or social media and in all gatherings.
5. Stringent and implementable laws against domestic violence should be enacted by the government which will bring offenders to book and serve as a deterrent to others.
6. Medical personnel should embark on health education and adequate management of pregnant women who are victims of domestic violence to prevent its adverse complications.

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