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Married Men as Victims of Spouse Abuse: A Case Study of Igbesa Community in Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The problem of spouse abuse is over concentrated on women as victims not as perpetrators. This paper, therefore, investigated spouse abuse suffered by married men in order to uncover ways through which they were abused by their wives in Igbesa community of Ogun State. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Quantitative method was used to gather data for the study. This involved the administration of questionnaire to thirty-six respondents who eventually participated in the study. The study was guided by combination of conflict theory and feminist theory. The study area was selected through convenience sampling method under non-probability technique but accidental sampling method under the same non-probability technique was used to select the respondents. The findings show that 30.6% of respondents were between 40-44 years, 69.4% of them were Christians, 44.4% of them were Master degree holders, 39.5% of respondents contracted their marriages in court/registry and 33.3% of them had spent between 11-15 years in marriage. Further findings show that 31.3% of respondents had been denied sex in the part by their wives, 21.8% had been verbally assaulted by wives, 10.9% of them had been threatened in the past by wives, 4.7% had their money stolen by wives and another 4.7% of them had their characters assassinated by their wives. A total of 14.7% said their wives abused them because of finances at home, 12.6% because of misunderstanding on family decision, 11.6% because of overgenerosity of the husbands, 8.4% because of husband's aggressiveness and 7.4% because of religious/spiritual matters. In resolving the abuses, 20.2% of respondents sought for personal reconciliation, 16.3% ensured safety measures against abusive wives and 14.4% regulated their relationships from abusive wives. The study concluded that men also suffer abuse from their wives. More researches on men as victims of abuse,

public sensitization on men as victims of spouse abuse, counselling and therapy for victims and government intervention were recommended in the study.

Keywords: Spouse abuse, victims, wives, husbands and home.

Introduction

The problem of spouse abuse is a general social problem throughout the world (Fang and Corso, 2008). There is no a single nation it has not been identified as a critical social problem (Knutson; Lawrence; Taber; Bank and De Garmo, 2009). Women are usually considered as victims of this social problem because of the patriarchy nature of every society of the world. (Bailey; Eisikovits and Buchbinder 2012). Hence, men are usually seen as perpetrators of this crime and women as victims.

However, the recent events in the society show that women are becoming more aggressive than the past. Hence, there is a paradigm shift from women being victims of spouse abuse to the perpetrators of this crime. (Hill, Woodson; Ferguson and Park, 2012).

. The literature on spouse abuse generally lay emphasis on women as victims. Literature which examined men as victims are generally scarce.

This study, therefore, was an attempt to investigate spouse abuses suffered by married men, using a semi-urban Igbesa community of Ogun State as study area. Various abuses men experienced from their spouses were investigated and how the married men that were victims reacted to the abuses.

The general objective of the study was to investigate the experience of married men as victims of spouse abuse. However, the followings were the specific objectives:

(1) To find our various forms of spouse abuse experienced by married men.
(2) To investigate what caused the abuse as alleged by their spouses
(3) To investigate how married men reacted to the various forms of spouse abuse experienced by them.

The following research questions were tailored along with the objectives of the study:

(1) What were the various forms of spouse abuse experienced by married men?
(2) What caused the abuse as alleged by their spouses?
(3) How did married men react to the various forms of spouse abuse experienced by them?

Literature Review and Theoretical Frame Work

Meaning and Definition of Spouse Abuse

Spouse abuse which is a form of Intimate Partner Violence is a global problem affecting millions of adults each year (Fang and Corso, 2008). It is a highly prevalent and severe problem in societies where it has been studied (Knutson; Lawrence; Taber; Bank and De Garmo, 2009).

Spouse abuse between heterosexual partners affects a considerable number of people each year (Macy, Ermentrout and Rizo, 2012). Intimate Partner Violence (Spouse abuse) is the use of actual or threatened physical, sexual and psychological violence by a

current partner (Nouri; Nadrian; Yari; Bakri; Ansari and Ghazizadeh, 2012). It is a form of domestic violence which occur in all countries and socio-economic groups (Tartakovsky and Mezhibovsky, 2012). It is a forceful tactic intentionally employed by a perpetrator to cause physical and / or psychological harm to the victim (Aysa – Lastra; Rojas; Dillion; Duan; and De la Rosa, 2012). It is a spectrum of harmful acts within family (Smith and Ireland, 2001). Intimate Partner Violence (Spouse abuse) has been socially constructed as a predominantly masculine deviance, whereby males use their power and control gain through socialization to dominate women (Bailey; Eisikovits and Buchbinder 2012). However, there have been multiple studies conducted on female perpetrators of intimate partner abuse too which have typically, focused on hetero-sexual relationships (Hill, Woodson; Ferguson and Park, 2012).

Causes and Forms of Spouse Abuse (Intimate Partner Violence).

Causes of spouse abuse (Intimate Partner Violence) are numerous and well documented in literature. The cultural and social norms accept the use of violence with children and women as a kind of discipline (Al-Badayneh, and Tartakovsky, 2012 and Mezhibovsky, 2012). Hence, cultural and social norms cause spouse abuse.

The educational level and religious commitment of spouses are other causes of spouse abuse. The spouses who are not educated and also lack religious commitment are prone to engage in spouse abuse (Nouri et.al, 2012). The same are spouse's smoking, addiction to drugs and mental illness (Nouri et.al. 2012). In the same way, is abuse of alcohol as argued by Valetine, Oehme and Martin (2012). School aggression has also been identified as a cause of spouse abuse or Intimate Partner Violence. O'Donnell; Stueve Myint –u; Duran; Agronick and Wilson-Simmons (2006) argued in their study that middle school aggression is a significant risk factor for partner victimization and perpetration. Another factor is intergenerational transmission of violence. There is empirical transmission of physical violence accross generation (Dankoski; Kelley; Thomas; Choice; Lloyd and Seery, 2006). Evidences prove that when a child experiences violence as a child, it increases the likelihood of violence in one's adult intimate relationship. Hence, children who experience physical or sexual abuse are at higher risk for a variety of emotional, behavioural, psychological and relational problems (Whiting; Simmons; Havens; Smith and Oka, 2009)

Many forms of spouse abuse exist: physical violence, verbal abuse, controlling money and isolating a partner from friends, family and the outside world are forms of spouse abuse (Cares and Cusick, 2012). Intimidation and coercion are other forms of spouse abuse (Hill; Woodson, Fergusion and Parks, 2012)

Effects of Spouse Abuse (Intimate Partner Violence)

The effects of spouse abuse are very numerous and very monumental. Spouse abuse can lead to intergenerational transmission of violence where such act continues from parents to children and from children to ground children. Children who witness marital violence tend to practice the same when married (Dankoski et.al, 2006).

Spouse abuse has also been identified as potential cause of depression and anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (Margolin; Vickerman; Ramos; Serrano; Gordis; Iturralde; Oliver

and Spies, 2009). Researches have shown negative impacts of depression as a result of spouse abuse and the negative influence of it on parenting (Murray, Bair - Merritt, Roche and Cheng, 2012). Spouse abuse causes poor interpersonal family environment which leads to the development of depression (Miller, McCllough and Johnson, 2012).

Spouse abuse has also contributed to health problem in all societies and culture throughout the world (Al-Badayreh, 2012). The epidemic of this violent act has been highlighted as a public health tragedy (Valentine, Oehme and Martin, 2012). Victims of spouse abuse are confronted with negative attitudes and in-effectual doings which land them in criminal justice system (Letourneau, Duffy and Duffett-Leger, 2012).

Children from homes where spouse abuse is being perpetrated receive the bulk of the monumental effects. Spouse abuse affects the psycho-social and academic wellbeing of children (Knutson et.al, 2009). It causes adjustment problem during childhood and adulthood for children (Margolin et al, 2009). Intimate Partner Violence or spouse abuse is significantly related to the abuse of children in the home (Whiting et-al, 2009). Spouse abuse is also a risk factor for children's delinquency and other anti-social behaviour (Smith and Ireland, 2009). Such anti-social behaviours occur in adolescence and adulthood and serve as predictors of crime (Ireland and Smith, 2009). Children who witness abuse at home have also directly experienced child abuse (Moylan, Herrenkohl, Sousa, Tajuma, Herrenkohl and Russo 2010). Herrenkohl and Herrenkohl (2009) also gave the same argument. They discovered that there is association between child maltreatment (physical and sexual abuse, neglect) and exposure to domestic violence i.e. spouse abuse. Even, infants tend to be more negatively affected by violence exposure than older children (Tailor and Letourneau, 2012). The present study has also examined the association between family conflict like spouse abuse and adolescent suicide (Miller, Cullough and Johnson, 2012). Spouse abuse also causes depression, anxiety, aggression and suicide for the children of the abused spouse (Hooven, Nurius, Logar-Greene and Thomson, 2012). It causes health problem to pre-school children who live with abusive spouses (Howell, Miller and Graham-Bermann, 2012)

Solving the problem of spouse Abuse or Intimate Partner Violence

The problem of spouse abuse calls for drastic solution. There should be and early interventions that help adolescents learn non-violent strategies for resolving conflicts in cross-gender relationship (O'Donnell et.al, 2006). There should be incorporation of violence prevention into a range of programs and services for youth and adults (O' Donnell et.al, 2006). Another solution is the encouragement of family member closeness as a protective factor in spouse abuse (Aysa- Lastra et.al, 2012). The perpetrators of spouse abuse should be counselled to stop and re-consider their behaviours (Rasanen, Holma and Seikkula, 2012). Group counselling interventions that include both structured activities and play therapy can also be implemented as solution to the problem. Finally, there should be increase in services provided for the victims of spouse abuse and the children who suffered as a result of it (Renner, 2012).

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on conflict theory and feminist theory. The conflict theory was used to explain that spouse abuse was as a result of conflict in marriage and feminist theory, to explain that abuses from female spouses was as a result of feminist liberation movement.

Conflict Theory

Conflict theory generally holds that power holds a society together and that conflict is society's natural state. According to the theory, inequality is the major source of conflict (Teevan and Hewitt (1995). According to Teevan and Hewitt (1995), conflict, competition and exploitation are said to shape society. Although the theory admitted that consensus and cooperation occur in the family but this agreement results from coercion and domination. Conflict theory recognized the importance of economic conditions in producing the inequality and conflict in the society. However, power and prestige are other sources of inequality (Kendall, 2007).

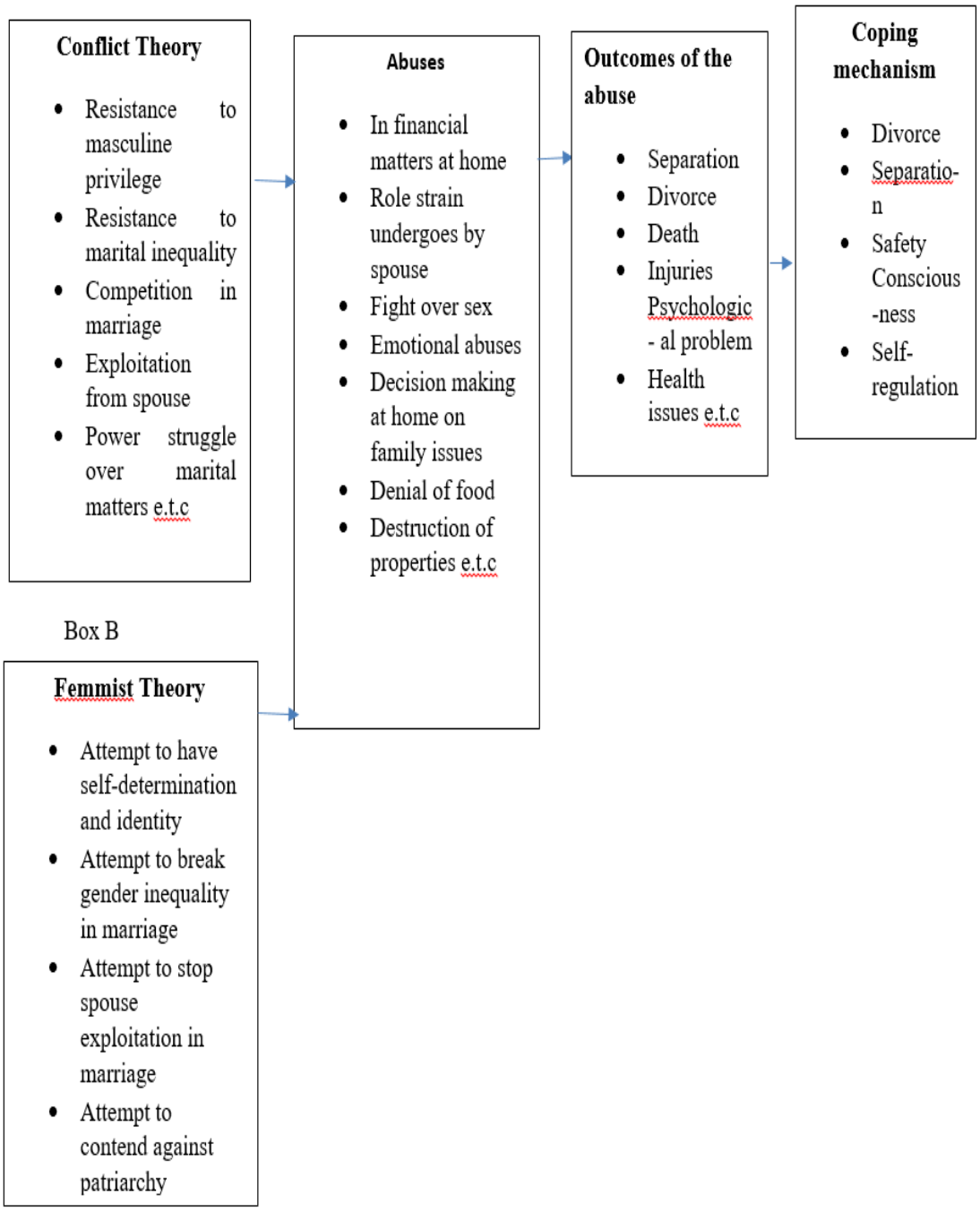
According to Kendall (2007), conflict perspective explains that groups in society are engaged in a continuous power struggle for control of scarce resources. Conflict may take the form of politics, litigation, negotiations or family discussion about financial matters. Conflict theory shows how major patterns of inequality in society produce social stability in some circumstances and social change on others. It stresses how members of privileged groups try to maintain their advantages while subordinate groups struggle to increase theirs. Hence, social conditions at a given time are the expression of an ongoing power struggle between privileged and subordinate groups (Brym, Lie, Nelson, Guppy and Mc Cormick, 2003).

Feminist Theory

The concept of feminism rests on the argument that men and women are born equally and should always be treated so. There should be no sexual discrimination. Hence, treating women as inferior is not fair (Rao, 2012). Providing equal rights, opportunities and statuses to women on par with men is essential and morally mandatory (Rao, 2012). Feminist theory looks at the world from the vantage points of women, with an eye to discovering the significant but unacknowledged ways in which the activities of women subordinated by gender and variously affected by other stratificational practices like class, race, age, heterosexuality and geo-social inequality (Ritzer, 2008). Feminism is a doctrine suggesting that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and advocating equal opportunities for men and women. It is a social movement that seeks equal status with men and freedom to decide their own careers and life - partners. It is a holistic theory concerned with the nature of woman's global oppression and subordination to men (Rao, 2012)

There are three basic feminism's question: (1) and what about the women? (2) why is all this as it is? (3) how can we change and improve the social world so as to make it a more just place for all people? (Ritzer, 2008). However, because this paradigm highlights inequality and division, it glosses over how shared values or interdependence generates unity among members of a society (Macionis and Gerber, 1999). Wherever women are subordinated and they have been subordinated - almost always and everywhere - they seem to have recognized and protested that situation in some forms (Ritzer, 2008). One of the forms is to resist, violently, the male domination which this study investigated.

The diagram below is the emerging theoretical framework from the two theories which anchored the study.



In the above figure (emerging theoretical framework), box A contains what can lead to conflict among couples. Conflict can ensue when married women want to resist the masculine privileges their husbands have over them, especially when those privileges are assumed to be ones which they are not comfortable with. The same is the resistance to marital inequality

between husband and wife. The inequality may manifest in the affairs of the marriage and within the family. Competition is another factor which can spark off conflict from married women. Competition can take different forms. For instance, married women may compete power and control over the affairs in marriage with their husbands. They may also compete the love from the children or the attention from co-wife.

Exploitation by husbands can also make married women to pick up quarrels or conflict with their husbands. Husbands may attempt to exploit the financial resources of their wives or other material resources which their wives may resist and consequently lend to conflict. Finally, power tussle over other marital matters or family matters may also cause married women picking up conflict with their husbands. Hence, all the above mentioned can cause married women to abuse their husband.

In box B, the likely concepts under feminism that can cause conflict between husband and wife were also listed. For instance, attempt by wives to have self-determination for themselves and 'procure' self-identify can make them to abuse their husbands. Attempt to break gender inequality which exist between men and women is another factor. Spouse abuse by married women can be as a result of their efforts to gain gender egalitarianism between them and their husbands.

Attempt to stop exploitation by husbands is another factor. Married women, in an attempt to stop their husbands from exploiting them financially, materially and otherwise can make them to abuse their spouses. Finally, attempt to contend against patriarchy nature of our society can also cause married women to abuse their husbands as a retaliation against men supremacy in the society.

In box C, conflict and feminism manifestations will cause abuses between husband and wife. For instance, abuses from married women may come from financial matters at home. Married women may abuse the finances of their husbands. They may mismanage the finances of their husbands deliberately. Many may squander their husband's money or other material resources. Role strain is another way of abusing spouses by married women. Some married women may intentionally withdraw supporting roles in the family, thereby causing role strain for their husbands. Such married women may deliberately withdraw help hand financially, and in general running of the home affairs including cares for the children. This may create role strain for their husbands and this is an abuse.

Another area of abuse by married women is denial of sex. Some married women may withhold sex from their husbands to punish or abuse them whenever there is a conflict. Denial of sexual intercourse by married women is a form of abuse. In addition, some married women may deny their husband food. They may use starvation to punish or abuse their husbands. Some may not cook food for their husbands as at well due. Some may also withhold cooking of delicious and nutritional food for their husbands as a way to punish them or abuse them, especially their husbands' favourite meals.

Married women can also abuse their husbands emotionally. They may toy or play upon the emotion of their husband or subject their husbands to emotional torture. Married women may abuse their husbands verbally or call them names or use Vulgar words to cause emotional problems for them. Some may even threaten their husbands with divorce or desertion of children or care of the house. All these and some other emotional abuses may cause monumental psychological problems for their husbands.

In addition, some married women may cause damages or destroy their husband's properties when there is conflict at home. Such destruction or damages of husbands' properties is a gross abuse. Finally, some married women may also abuse their husbands in the process of decision making at home. They may refuse to take part in decision making at home by remaining adamant or silent. Some may even give decision that has serious negative implication at home. Some married women may even keep malice with their husbands and sometime children as a way to get back at their husbands. All these and others are spouse abuses

In box D, spouse abuse by married women has outcomes. It may lead to separation between them and their husbands and in more serious cases, even divorce. Some married women may even cause the death of their husbands as a result of their abuses or at least cause physical injuries to their husbands. The abuses of husbands by their wives can also cause psychological problems to the husbands. Anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress are good examples of such psychological problems. Finally, the health of the husbands may be impaired permanently or temporarily as a result of the abuses suffered from wives.

Finally, box E contains the coping strategies or mechanisms the affected husbands may put up. For instance, divorce and separation and living with the realities of these and life adjustment after divorce and separation may serve as coping mechanisms. Safety consciousness from abusive wives can also serve as coping strategy or mechanism as well as self-regulation in relationship with abusive wives.

Methodology Applied

Research Design

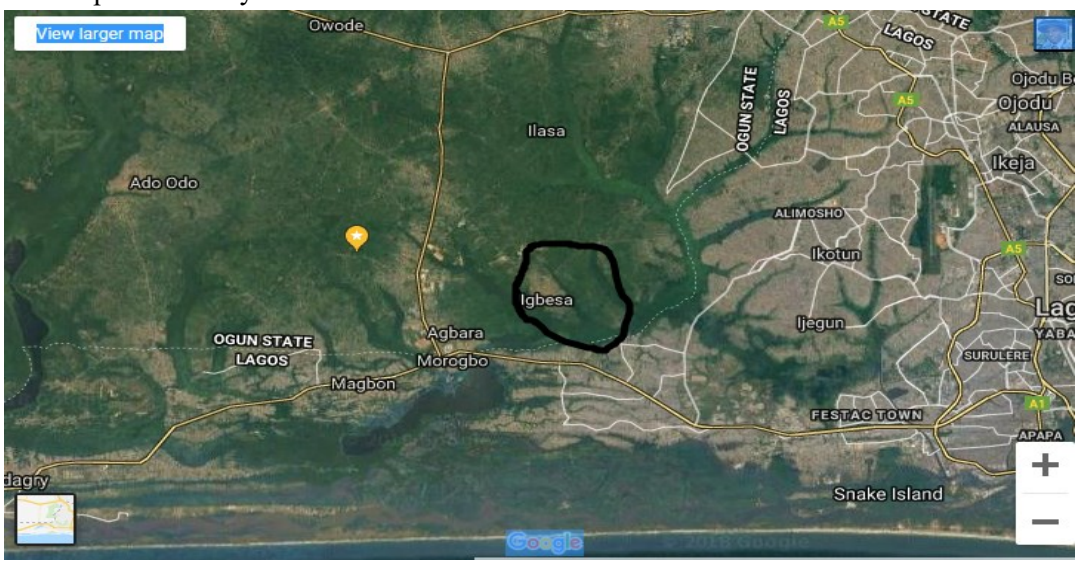
The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Survey involves the collection of information from individuals (Schutt, 2004). It is a well-organized way of gathering data to assist in solving research task. Quantitative method was used in this study

Study area. Igbesa municipal was the study area. It is a semi-urban community in Ado-Odo (Otta Local Government Area of Ogun State. It is located on latitude 6.5336a^{o} and longitude 3.13416^{0}. The GPS coordinates of this community are: 6^{0} 32' 0.9672' N and 3^{0}8'2.9796'T.

The community elevators are 19 metres high or 62 feet above the sea level. It is 8 miles away from the western part of Lagos. There are about 7,000 people residing in the town. Igbesa Community is an industrial hub of Ogun State. There are over forty various industries cited in different parts of the town. The largest among these industries is Ogun – Guangdong Industrial

Zone, established during the tenure of Chief Gbenga Daniel (the former governor of Ogun State).

The map of the study area.



Sampling technique, method and size

Igbesa community was selected through convenience sampling method under non-probability sampling technique. They are called available subject sample that are readily accessible to and therefore, convenient for the researcher.

Accidental sampling method under non-probability sampling technique was implemented to select community dwellers that formed the respondents (Adler and Clark 1999 and Neuman, 2013). Forty (40) respondents were eventually sampled to take part in the study. Rules of thumb by Hill (1998) and Vanvoosh and Morgan (2017) were used to arrive at the sample size. However, thirty-six (36) copies of the questionnaire administered were returned to the researcher.

Data analysis

Copies of the questionnaire administered were sorted out. In order to minimize errors, data from the questionnaire were coded for effective editing of data before the use of SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The analysis of the data was anchored on comparative and relative frequencies. Univariate analyses were implemented to interpret socio-demographic of the respondents, using frequency and percentage tables likewise the responses which related to the subject matter of the study.

Ethical Issues

All the respondent took part freely in the study, having obtained their verbal consent to participate in the study. The study observed ethical rule of anonymity. The questionnaire does request for any information that will reveal the identities of the respondents. The information

supplied were kept confidential and only used for the purpose of the study. The analyses of the data and information were done in aggregate and do not link to any particular respondents.

Data Presentation, analyses and interpretation

The analyses for the study were based on thirty-six (36) copies of the questionnaire returned by respondents. The interpretation of data analysed was done within the socio-cultural context which shapes the problem of spouse abuse in Nigeria.

The socio-bio data of respondent were presented, analysed and interpreted as shown in the table below. This started with age. Sex of respondent was excluded because all respondents were male, for the study centred on married men only.

Table 1: Socio - bio data of respondent

S/N	Socio-bio data	Frequency	Percentage
1	**Age**		
	20 – 24 years	NIL	NIL
	25 – 29 years	NIL	NIL
	30 – 34 years	6	16.7
	35 – 39 years	3	8.3
	40 – 44 years	11	30.6
	45 – 49 years	8	22.2
	50 years and above	8	22.2
	Total	**36.0**	**100.0**
2	**Religion**		
	Islam	10	27.8
	Christianity	25	69.4
	Traditional Religion	1	2.8
	Total	**36.0**	**100.0**
3	**Educational Qualification**		
	SSCE	NIL	NIL
	ND	1	2.8
	NCE	1	2.8
	HND	2	5.6
	Bachelor Degrees	16	44.4
	Master Degrees	16	44.4
	PhD	NIL	NIL
	Total	**36.0**	**100.00**
4	**Types of marriage contracted (multiple ones included)**		
	Church	12	27.9
	Mosque	5	11.6
	Court / Registry	17	39.5
	Church and Court/Registry	4	9.3
	Traditional	2	4.7
	Traditional and Court/Registry	3	7.0
	Total	**43**	**100**
5	**Years of Marriage**		
	1 – 5 years	6	16.7
	6 – 10 years	11	30.5
	11 – 15 years	12	33.3
	16 – 20 years	6	16.7
	20 years above	1	2.8
	Total	**36**	**100.0**

The first variable examined in the study among respondents was the age. Age plays an important factor in marriage. The age of individuals determines when to get married and

whether they are matured for marriage or not. The above table shows 16.7% of respondents were between age brackets of 30-34 years, 8.3% were between 35-39 years, 30.6% were between 40-44 years which was the highest in the distribution. Those that were between 45 - 49 years was 22.2% the same percentage (22.2%) was those from 50 years and above.

The analyses show that all respondents who participated in the study were adults who were old enough to be in marriage, going by the socio-cultural context which shapes marriage contract in Nigeria.

The next variable considered in the study was the religion of respondents. Item number 2 in the table shows analyses on it. The analyses show that 27.8% of respondents were Muslims, 69.4% of them were Christians while 2.8% (1 respondent) was an adherent of traditional religion. The analyses show clearly that more Christians participated in the study than other practitioners of other religions. This was not least expected because Igbesa community was not too far from Badagry Community where Christianity entered Nigeria.

Religion is very fundamental in marriage. It determines how marriage is contracted. It also plays important role in marriage stability and how crises can be resolved in marriage. (Nori et.al, 2012). The educational qualifications of respondents were also considered in the study. The table 1 shown above shows the analyses of respondents according to their educational qualifications.

From the analyses, 2.8% of respondents possessed National Diploma Certificates, another 2.8% of them possessed National Certificate in Education, 5.6% had Higher National Diploma Certificate, 44.4% of them had Bachelor degrees in various disciplines and another 44.4% of respondents possessed Master degrees in various fields of studies. The analyses show that majority of respondents were well educated (Bachelor degree and Master degree holders). Education is expected to play prominent roles in ways people handle life challenges. Hence, educated people are very likely to handle marital crises successfully than illiterates. (Nori - et al, 2012).

The study also investigated the types of marriage contracted by respondents. The analyses show that some of them contracted their marriages in more than one institution. These were also included in the analysed. Hence, we had 43 marriage contracts instead of 36 which was the number of respondents who participated in the study.

The table 1 shown above reveals that 27.9% of respondents contracted their marriages in church, 11.6% contracted theirs in mosque, 39.5% contracted their own marriages in courts/registry. However, 9.3% of respondents contracted their marriages in both church and court/registry and 7.0% contracted their marriages in traditional way and court/registry at the same time.

Finally, 4.7% performed their marriage rites in traditional way. The analyses reveal that majority of respondents contracted their marriages in court/registry. The awareness to fortify marriage through legal system is rising among intending couples, especially among women. They believe this is the only way to ensure their marriages are secured and can be given legal backing. It also gives them the opportunity to press for legal redress whenever things go wrong in their marriages and also to press for some legal rights over children and properties.

Finally, the years respondents have spent in marriage was also taken into consideration. The table 1 above shows that 16.7% of respondents had spent between 1-5 years in marriage,

30.5% of them had spent between 11-15 years, 16.7% of respondents had spent between 16-20 years and finally, 2.8 of them had spent 20 years above.

The analyses reflect that many of respondents had spent considerable high number of years in marriage as shown in the numbers of years. Years spent in marriage is an important factor to be considered in marital experience. It determines whether there is going to be stability in marriage or not. For instance, divorce and separation are common in first few years of the beginning of the marriage because of irreconcilable differences among couples and because of inexperience of the couples involved. However, couples who have spent considerable high number of years in marriage may not consider separation or divorce as options to settle marital crises.

The study considered the main theme of the study which were the abuses suffered in the past by the respondents. Table 2 below shows the abuses suffered by respondents.

Table 2: Abuses Suffered by Married Men from their Spouses/Wives.

S/N	Abuses	Frequency	Percentage
1	Beaten by wives	1	1.6
2	Verbally assaulted by wives	14	21.8
3	Attack with hot water/oil/food/acid/object	1	1.6
4	Denial by wives of sexual intercourse	20	31.3
5	Money stolen by wives	3	4.7
6	Property destroyed by wives	2	3.1
7	Finances exploited by wives	4	6.3
8	Food denied by wives	2	3.1
9	Threatened by wives	7	10.9
10	Denied access to children by wives	1	1.6
11	Converted husband property to own	NIL	NIL
12	Character assassinated by wives	3	4.7
13	Attempted murder by wives	2	3.1
14	Denied husbands access to relatives/ parents by wives	2	3.1
15	Obstructed religious/spiritual activities of husbands by wives	2	3.1
	Total of abuses	**64**	**100.0**

Note: Multiples abuses were included

Table 2 shown above portrays the analyses of forms of abuse suffered by married men from their spouses/wives. The analyses show that 1.6% of respondents had been beaten by their wives in the past. This is a form of physical violence as argued by Cares and Cusick, (2012). These involved offenders beating their spouses with object or with hand. Verbal assault came next in the table with 21.8% of respondents being verbally assaulted in the past by their wives/spouses. Cares and Cusick (2012) identified verbal abuse as one of the commonest forms of abuse in relationship. Women may not be physically capable of assaulting their husbands but their words are more powerful than their physical strength in assaulting their

husbands. It has been established in psychology that women are more extrovert than men and by nature, they are good in talking than exercising their physical strength and power. Hence, more women engage in verbal abuse than physical abuses as reflected in our findings in this study.

In the above table 2, 1.6% of respondents had been physically attacked by hot water/oil/food, acid or object in the past. It is a form of physical violence which Cares and Cusick (2012) mentioned. Attacking spouse with hot water, oil, food, acid or with objects like stick, iron etc. is a common phenomenon in spouse abuse.

Denial of sexual intercourse by wives was another area respondents had suffered abuse from their spouses/wives. The analyses show that 31.3% of respondents had been denied sexual intercourse by their wives in the past. Sexual intercourse has been identified here as a potential 'tool' of abusing husbands by wives. It is a commonest way of taking revenge against erring husbands. It inflicts emotional and psychological attacks on husbands. Wives may deny their husbands sex, for months and even years.

However, consenting to marriage under law also means consenting to sexual intercourse. Hence, wives who deny their husbands sexual intercourse are denying them their conjugal rights under law. It is a ground many married men had sought for divorce in the past. It is a cause of infidelity in marriage.

The analyses show that 4.7% of respondents said their wives had stolen their money in the past. When wives steal their husbands' money, it is an abuse on such husbands. Many of the husbands who suffered this abuse may not report the incidents to law enforcement agents because it is usually considered as a family affair not a legal one.

Stealing money from husbands is a common phenomenon and usually women who engaged in it do defend their actions by claiming that their husbands are stingy.

The analyses from the table also show that 3.1% of respondents said their wives had destroyed their properties in the past. Destruction of husbands' properties by wives was a form of aggravated assaults. Wives may engage in destruction of husbands' properties during fights at home. Properties like electronics, furniture, clothes, certificates, and other valuable may be destroyed during marital misunderstanding.

Among the respondents, 6.3% of them said their wives had exploited their finances in the past. Exploitation of finances is another common form of abuse suffered by married men from their wives. Wives may exploit the finances of their husbands' businesses. Some wives are often found in the habit of inflating the costs of material things bought in the market for their husbands and children or for home uses. If is another form of exploitation of finances. Some wives are also found in the habit of wasteful spending which is another form of financial exploitation of their husbands. Hence, financial exploitation of husbands by wives is a form of spouse abuse.

Denial of husband, food, is another form of abuse featured in the study. The analyses on this show that 3.1% of respondents said their wives had denied them food in the past as a result of misunderstanding at home. Starvation is often used by some wives to punish their husbands. Some may not cook the favourite meals of their husbands. In some cases, husbands who are on special diets as a result of their health conditions may have such diets denied by their wives. Whatever the way it takes, such is an abuse from the wives involved.

Threat is another form of abuse suffered by married men in the past. The analyses in the table show that 10.9% of respondents said their wives had threatened them in the past, one way or the other. Such threats may be in form of intimidation and coercion according to (Hill, Woodson, Fergusion and Parks, 2012).

Husbands may be threatened by their wives by divorce, reporting to parents, in-laws or religious leaders, by refraining from sex, by stopping or engaging in cooking or running the affairs of the home etc. Whatever the form it may take, threating husbands by wives is a form of abuse.

Wives may also deny their husbands access to children, especially during separation or divorce. Among respondents, 1.6% of them said their wives had denied them access to their children in the past. Denying or isolating partner from family members is a form of abuse according to Cares and Cusick, 2012). Husbands, when their wives denied them access to their children, suffered abuse. Wives often take the love, affection and emotional bonds between their husbands and children as a way of revenge or a way of punishing their husbands for offending them.

In the analyses, no respondent said his wife had converted his property to her own in the past. However, 4-7% pf respondents said their wives had assassinated their characters in the past among family members, relatives and the public. Wives, when assassinated the characters of their husbands through defamation or libel, is a form of abuse. Some wives can go as long as tarnishing the images and integrities of their husbands, thereby damaging their reputation within and outside the family. Some wives often painted the images of their husbands, black before the children. Hence, such children may see their fathers as worthless and irresponsible fathers.

Attempted murder was another form of abuse considered in the study. Among the respondents, 3.1% of them alleged that their wives had attempted to kill/murder them in the past. Attempted murder is a serious spouse abuse from wives. Some wives may attempt to poison their husbands or kill/murder their husbands in other ways. Cases of wives poisoned their husbands to inherit their husbands' properties are common. Attempt murder may also involve using dangerous weapons on husbands especially during a fierce fight.

Wives may also deny their husbands from access to their (husbands) family members and relatives. Among respondents, 3.1% said their wives had blocked them in the past from having access to parents and relatives. Cares and Cusick (2012) argued that abuse may involve isolating a partner from friends, family members and the outside world.

Religious and spiritual activities were also taken into consideration. According to the analyses, 3.1% of respondents said their wives had abused them in the past by obstructing their religious or spiritual activities. Exploiting the religious or spiritual activities of the husbands is another way of abusing husbands by wives. Forcing or coercing husbands against their religious/spiritual activities is an abuse. Likewise, are the wives preventing their husbands in engaging in religious/spiritual activities.

The study also investigated the reasons wives alleged, for abusing their husbands. Table 3 below shows the presentations, analyses and interpretations of data on this

Table 3: Reasons alleged by wives for abusing their husbands according to respondents.

S/N	Reasons alleged by wives	Frequency	Percentage
1	Finances at home	14	14.7
2	Drunkenness of the husbands	4	4.2
3	Infidelity by husbands	8	8.4
4	Not respecting the wives	6	6.3
5	For hating wives' parents/relatives	3	3.2
6	Misunderstanding on family decisions	12	12.6
7	Aggressiveness of the husbands	8	8.4
8	Laziness of the husbands	4	4.2
9	Husbands being over bearing	3	3.2
10	Husbands lack self-control	6	6.3
11	Not caring for children	4	4.2
12	Religious/spiritual matters	7	7.4
13	Cowardliness of husbands	3	3.2
14	Over generosity of the husbands	11	11.6
15	For being too lenient	1	1.0
16	Not sensitive to things	1	1.0
	Total	**95**	**100.0**

Note: multiple reasons were included.

The analyses from table 3 show that 14.7% of respondents said that their wives abused them because of the finances at home. Finances (money) is one of the commonest reasons couples engage in fight at home. Unemployment and underemployment experienced by married men have compounded the family crises at home, especially in area of finances. To make the matter worse, recent fuel subsidy removal by Federal Government of Nigeria has plugged many families into financial crises which has caused severe strain in relationship between husbands and wives at home.

Another reason alleged by the wives of the victim husbands was drunkenness of their husbands (4.2%). Husbands who engage in alcoholic drinks may have their wives abused them. This corroborated the study of Valetine, Oehme and Martin (2012). Drinking beers into stupor is disliked by some women. Women may hate their husbands because of drunkenness and therefore may abuse them because of this. The same was for smoking and drug addiction according to Valetine, Oehme and Martin (2012). Drunkenness by husbands depletes the finances available for family uses. It may also cause irritation to wives and children especially because of the odour, vomit and noises from the drunkard husbands. Hence, wives may abuse husbands because of this, especially, by denying them sexual intercourse and other marital rights.

Infidelity was another reason given by respondents for suffering abuses from their wives. Analyses show that 8.4% of them said their wives abused them because of the allegation that they engaged in extra-marital affairs with other women outside. Infidelity by husbands can lead to serious marital discords and crises. Engaging in extra-marital affairs will affect

finances at home because men who engage in it will spend money on their concubines, therefore, depleting money available to cater for wives and children at home. Another reason is the fear of contacting sexually transmitted diseases from unfaithful husbands. Hence, wives may abstain from having sex with such infidel husbands which is an abuse of the husbands involved.

Wives of some of the respondents abused their husbands because they alleged their husbands did not respect them as women. From the analyses in table 3, 6.3% of respondents said their wives abused them because they alleged that they do not respect wives. Women like that men should show love, affection, and respect to their womanhood. When husbands fall short of these, it may trigger misunderstanding at home and abuse from wives. This is where the issue on feminism comes in. Feminism gives equally rights for women, giving them equal status with men and freedom to decide their own careers and life (Rao, 2012). It involves providing the same rights, opportunities and statuses to women on par with men (Rao, 2012). Hence, feminism seeks those women be treated with respect even by their husbands. Hence, when this is not met, wives may engage in abusing their husbands to have their statuses and rights protected.

Hatred for the parents and relatives of wives was another reason alleged by the wives of the victims in this study. A cursory look at analyses in the table 3 show that 3.2% of respondents said their wives abused them because they alleged them of hating their parents and relatives. Women always like their husbands to treat their (wives) parents and relatives with respect and care. When husbands do not fulfil this courtesy, it may lead to conflict between husbands and their wives. Hence, wives may abuse their husbands because of this.

Next in the table is misunderstanding on family decisions. From the analyses 12.6% of respondents said their wives abused them in the past because of misunderstanding on family decisions. Decision making at home is a very crucial matter. When decisions are made by husbands without carrying wives a long, it can lead to conflict at home. It is an indication that wives are not significant in running the affairs of the family. Wives may be offended by this and consequently abuse such erring husbands.

Aggressiveness of the husbands was another reason wives abused their husbands. Analyses from table 3 show that respondents who said their wives abused them because they alleged, they were aggressive was 8.4%. Anger is a prominent factor of conflict. Husbands that are aggressive may end up offending their wives, children and neighbours. Angry husbands may be abused by their wives as a payback for not being cool headed. It may cause discord and malice between couples which may cause abuse from wives who are usually at the receiving end.

Laziness or unproductivity of husbands can also cause wives to abuse them. A glance at the table 3 shows that 4.2% of respondents said their wives abused them in the past because they alleged, they were lazy or unproductive. It is the obligation of husbands to provide for the needs of wives and children at home. However, when husbands are find wanting in performing this obligation, conflict may ensue in the family. Hence, wives may abuse their husbands because of this. For instance, by not cooking food for their husbands or denying them of eating food at home. Hence, the principle of no food for lazy husbands may be applied.

Overbearing of the husbands was another reason for being victims of abuse from wives. Analyses show that 3.2% of respondents were abused because their wives alleged them of being overbearing. Being overbearing may anger wives at home. Hence, it is advisable that husbands be cautioned in all their deeds at home and outside.

Lack of self-control was also alleged as reason respondents suffered abuse from their wives. From analyses, 6.3% of respondents said they suffered abuse from their wives because of lack of self-control as alleged by wives. Self-control is an important thing that should be imbibed by individuals. Self-control will encourage good relationship between husbands and wives and with other people outside homes.

Caring for the needs of the children is the responsibility of husbands at home. In a situation husbands fail to do this; the family may experience conflict and other relational crises. Analyses from table 3 show that 4.2% of respondents were abused by their wives because they did not take care of children at home. Wives always want their husbands to be providing for the needs of children at home. Husbands are expected to be the bread winners of the family. Although, wives may be supportive in this regard. When husbands are failing in this crucial responsibility, wives may abuse their husbands because of this.

Wives can also abuse their husbands on the ground of religious/spiritual matters. Analyses in table 3 show that 7.4% of respondents had been abused in the past because of this. Wives may abuse husbands because such husbands are too religious or spiritual in some matters. When husbands are trying to be rigid in their religious/spiritual beliefs or try to force the same on wives and children, conflict may ensue. Husbands, hence, should be liberal at home when it comes to religious/spiritual matters. Otherwise, it may be an avenue for their wives to abuse them at home.

Cowardliness of husbands also featured in the study. Analyses in table 3 show that 3.2% of respondents were abused by their wives because they were alleged of being coward. Wives and children at home are expected to be protected by their husbands/fathers. Protection is one of the responsibilities of husbands/fathers at home. Failure to do this will not earn such husbands/fathers respect at home. Hence, wives may abuse their husbands because they are not bold and protective at home. Being overgenerous also featured in the study. Percentage of respondents abused in the past by their wives for being overgenerous was 11.6%. When husbands are overgenerous to members of extended family or people outside, at the expenses of immediate family needs can attract resistance from wives. Overgenerosity can push wives into abusing their husbands at home.

Being lenient is a factor similar to being overgenerous. Analyses in table 3 shows that 1.0% of respondents suffered abused in the past from their wives because they were alleged to be too lenient. Being lenient or soft in handling the issue of child discipline at home may not go down well with some wives at large. Part of child discipline at home rests with the fathers, especially grown-up male children that may be hard for wives to handle. When husbands are found to be lenient, it may cause their wives to abuse them at home.

Finally, not too sensitive to issues was another reason respondents suffered abuse from their wives. Analyses in table 3 show that 1.0% of respondents had been abused in the past because of this. Insensitivity to things going around at home or outside home may create problem for

the members of the family, especially when those events or persons are quite inimical to peace, protection and good relationship at home.

The study investigated from respondents how they reacted to abuses suffered from their wives. Table 4 below shows different ways they reacted to the abuses. Their reactions were in multiples and were accordingly recorded in the study.

Table 4: How respondents reacted to the abuses suffered from their wives

S/N	Mode of reaction	Frequency	Percentage
1	Separation from abusive wives	6	5.8
2	Divorce the abusive wives	2	2.0
3	Abstain from intimate relationship with abusive wives	8	7.7
4	Ensured safety measures against abusive wives	17	16.3
5	Regulated self from abusive wives	15	14.4
6	Sought legal redress	5	4.8
7	Called for relatives' intervention	7	6.7
8	Called for religious leaders' intervention	6	5.8
9	Ignored the abuses	17	16.3
10	Sought for personal reconciliation with abusive wives	21	20.2
	Total (multiple choices included)	**104**	**100.0**

A cursory look at table 4 shown above shows that 5.8% of respondents separated from their abusive wives after suffered abuses from them. Separation can serve as an avenue for reconciliation. It may be a period the abusive wives can be counselled to stop abusing their husbands and reconsider their behaviours (Rasanen, Holma and Seikukula, 2012). During separation, further abuse will not be carried out. Hence, it is a moment of peace between the warring couples. Divorce was another way respondents reacted to their abusive wives. Analyses from the table show that 2.0% of respondents divorced their abusive wives in the past. Period of separation usually precluded divorce. When reconciliation is not reached during separation, it may lead to divorce between couples. Abuses in marriage is a lead cause of divorce in the countries of the world.

Another reaction is abstinence from abusive wives. A total of 7.7% of respondents had abstained from their abusive wives in the past as a reaction to such abuses. Abstinence from relationship with abusive wives may provide a temporary succor in abusive relationship. It may provide an opportunity for personal reconciliation with abusive wives. Ensuring safety measure was another reaction to abusive wives. A total of 16.3% of respondents said they ensured they followed safety measures during the abuses suffered from their wives. Safety measures may involve husbands keeping quiet during the abuse, especially during verbal assault. Husbands may also walk out from home during the time of the abuse. Husbands may ensure they keep dangerous objects away from their abusive wives and many other forms of ensuring safety may be carried out by husbands.

Regulation of self from abusive wives was also considered in the study. A total of 14.4% of respondents said as a reaction to abuses suffered from their wives, they regulated themselves

from their abusive wives. Self-regulation may involve defining carefully what to say during the abuse or caution one's action to prevent altercation with abusive wives. It is also called self-restraint.

Seeking legal redress was also considered in the study. A total of 4.8% of respondents had sought legal redress because of the abuses they suffered from their wives. Legal redress may involve making official reports to the police on the abuses suffered by such husbands or initiating court action against such wives. Seeking for legal redress is usually considered as last option because abuses from spouses are usually viewed as personal matters between couples which is not usually the 'business' of any law enforcement agents, unless serious injuries or death is involved.

Another reaction which featured in the study was calling for the intervention of the relatives of the husbands or the wives involved. A total of 6.7% of respondents said they had sought for the interventions of relatives to mediate with their wives when they were abused by their wives. In African societies, the elderly people play prominent roles in stabilizing the marriages of younger people in the family through prompt mediations during marital discords. As a result of this, marriages in African societies are more stable than those in the western societies.

Religious leaders also play crucial roles to ensure peace in marriages of their members. A total of 5.8% of respondents said they had sought for the interventions of their religious leaders when their wives abused them in the past. Religious leaders have influences over their members and therefore, are in a better position to mediate in marital crises of their members.

Ignoring abusive wives was another reactive measure to abuse as recorded in the study. A total of 16.3% of respondents said they ignored their abusive wives in the past when they abused them. This involves not counting on the abuses suffered or deliberate intention to forgo the abuses. Finally, personal reconciliation was another reaction. Analyses show that 20.2% of respondents said they sought for personal reconciliation when their wives abused them in the past. It was the highest in the distribution. Personal reconciliation after abuses is an indication that couples involved are matured enough to settle individual differences at home without the help of any family members, religious members or legal redress. It is considered the best way of settling abuses at home.

The only open-ended question in the study requested respondents to comment briefly on spouse abuses suffered by married men. The responses were grouped together and the following are the highlights of their responses:

1. Married men do not only suffer abuses from their wives but also from their in-laws.
2. Couples need to study each other's behaviours very well in marriage to curb problem of abuse.
3. Spouse abuse is increasing the rate of divorce and broken homes, of recent.
4. Couples should not allow third party to mediate in their marital affairs, but always seek for personal reconciliation.
5. Spouse abuse against men leaves financial and emotional scars on them. Abuse at home should be refined to include men vulnerability.
6. Bad mood is a major cause of abuse from wives.
7. Financially incapacitated men are usually the victims of abuse from their wives. It happens on

daily basis.

8. Extra marital affairs by married men will cause their wives to abuse them.
9. Married men experiencing abuses from their wives always find it difficult to say it out. They should be encouraged to voice it and laws should also be put in place to protect men.
10. Affected couples should be encouraged to go for counselling and psychotherapy.

Summary of findings, conclusion and recommendation.

Summary of findings

Nigeria society is a patriarchal society. Men rule the affairs of the society. The society is dominated by masculinity. It is difficult to hear that women maltreat men. Hence, problem of women abusing men is not heard of. When it happens, it is not discussed outside or in open. Yet, trend has changed. Married men, for instance, are suffering from abuses meted out to them by their wives.

This study was carried out to investigate those abuses suffered in silence by married men from their wives. The study was an eye opener. Men also suffer abuses from women, the study discovered that the highest form of abuse suffered by married men from their wives was denial of sexual intercourse. A total of 31.3% of respondents had been denied sex by their wives in the past. Hence, sex is a great weapon of abuse that women can make use of, to punish/abuse their husbands. Verbal assault came next with 21.8% of respondents verbally assaulted in the past by their wives. Women are considered to be more extrovert than men. Women do more of the talking than actions. Hence, verbal assault is a common abuse among women than men. Threatening came next with 10.9% of respondents been threatened in the past by their wives. This was followed by exploitation of finances (6.3%). Women are considered as best manager of resource, finances included. However, some use the opportunity of being in the care of home finances to abuse their husbands, who in most cases are the bread winners of the family. Stealing husband's money came next with 4.7% of respondents experiencing this in the past. Many women may not consider it as abuse of husband because they always have reasons to defend their actions. However, it is a form of economic abuse. Assassination of husbands' characters also share the same percentage (4.7%). It is not unusual of some women, painting the images of their husbands, black within the family and outside the family without taking into cognizance, the reputational damage this may bring to their husbands. A total of 3.1% of respondents had been denied food in the past by their wives. These were the same with attempted murder, denied, husbands' access to parents and relatives, obstructing husbands' religious/spiritual activities and destruction of husbands' properties. A total of 1.6% of respondents had been beaten in the past by their wives, the same was with attack with hot water/oil/food/acid/objects. A total of 1.6% of respondents had also been denied in the past by their wives, access to their children.

These findings established that men also suffer abuses from their wives. It is another way of looking at the issue of spouse abuse in our society.

Conclusion

We conclude that spouse abuse can also be carried out by married women not married men alone. The problem is that when married men were victims it is not something that will be at

the knowledge of the public and the entire society. However, men also suffer abuses from their wives. Hence, we wish that there should be paradigm shift from women as victims of spouse abuse to women as perpetrators of spouse abuse. We believe there are more to the problem of spouse abuse that the one we have in public domain and in academic researches.

Recommendation

Recommendations for this study were based on the findings and conclusion. We recommend that researches should be intensively carried out be sociologists, criminologist, and psychologists on spouse abuse, majorly on women as perpetrators not as victims. It is believed that more shall be revealed in the process.

The study also recommended public sensitization regarding spouse abuses suffer by men in our society. There should be public outcry on it. Furthermore, men should be encouraged to voice out abuses being suffered from their wives.

There should be counselling and therapy services for men who are victims of spouse abuse the same way they were offered for women that are victims. Government also needs to take pro-active measures to protect married men from spouse abuse like they do for women. Equal measures should be applied for both men and women. Hence, this will ensure gender egalitarianism in our society.

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