

AN APPRAISAL OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMONG FAMILIES OF IDEMILI NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIO-MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract

This study was on appraisal of Domestic violence in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State: Implications for socio-moral development of adolescents. Six research questions guided the study and a descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of the study was 6200 and the sample size was 800 students obtained through simple random and purposive sampling technique. The reliability of the instrument was established using split half method and the result analyzed using Cronbachs' alpha which yielded a reliability co-efficient of 0.74. Mean and standard deviation scores were used for the study and it revealed that domestic violence (physical, social, psychological and economic) were prevalent among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State because all the items that accessed the prevalence of violence in the area were scored above the acceptable mean mark. The study further revealed that domestic violence has social and moral influence on the adolescents. Based on the above, the following recommendations were made and they include: empowerment of Guidance Counsellors, organization of seminars, rehabilitation of victims among others.

Keywords: Domestic violence, family, Adolescents, Implications, Socio-moral development.

INTRODUCTION

The family is the primary and foremost socialization agent for an adolescent. Scholars defined adolescence as the phase of transition between childhood and adulthood when values are formed. However, value deterioration, corruption, greed and bad governance are vices lived out globally in the contemporary family society environment. (Ifejiofor, 2019; Ifeakor, 2018). These have led to various negative acts exhibited by individuals that seem apparently to be direct recipients of the worrisome situations. Among the various numerals acts these worrisome situations pose is violence.

Violence according to Jacquin (2023) is an act of physical force that causes or is intended to cause harm. The damage caused by these acts may be physical, psychological or both. Violence is usually seen as an interpersonal phenomenon whereby physical power or force is used to stimulate response from the inter reactant.

Based on the above, the World Health Organization (2015) defined violence as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm and mal-development. Many literatures view violence as the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage or cause destruction. Yet others see it as an instance of violent treatment or procedure. It can also be described as an outrage or an injury by distortion, infringement or profanation. Violence can exist in various forms. Among the various forms violence could exist include, the domestic violence.

In line with the United Nations, Kelsey Hegarty (2022) views domestic violence as domestic abuse or intimate partner violence and defined it as pattern of behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner.

In a simpler term, it is an abusive relationship and Herring (2014) described abuse as physical, sexual, emotional, economic and psychological actions or threats or of action that influences another person. It includes behavior that frightens, intimidates, terrorizes, manipulates, hurts, humiliates, blame, injures or wound someone.

Generally, victims of domestic violence cuts across all walks of life and defy race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender. (Jacquin, 2023, Kelsey Hegarty, 2022, WHO, 2015). In other words anyone can suffer domestic violence (abuse). Hence victims of domestic violence includes children, spouses, household members, relatives or external persons and these victims could experience domestic violence from different angles (Katz Elizabeth . D, 2018). The following are the examples of domestic violence and they include; physical violence, social violence, economic violence, psychological violence, sexual violence and stalking.

Stuart Dunn et al (2023) presents physical violence as characterized by the following namely culmination of threats, intimidation, restriction of victims self determination, isolation, manipulation, restriction of victims self determination, isolation, manipulation, deny medical care, sleep deprivation, forced alcohol or drugs, inflicting injury, strangulation, battering and acid throw. Apart from the above the WHO (2015) on gender right and equality further stated

that physical violence could take the following discrete forms namely; assault of any kind, ranging from murder, choking, stabbing, punching, pushing, hitting and slapping etc.

Concerning social violence, it refers to any type of violence committed by individuals or community that has social impact (Tremblay; 2023). According to Tremblay, social abuse/violence can occur through any of the following, namely, isolation, control of social activities, deprivation of liberty, deliberate creation of unnecessary dependence, embarrass you in front of your friends, make fun of you in front of his friends, make you feel there is no way out of the relationship, prevent you from spending time with your friends, tell you that you are worth nothing, abandons you in dangerous and unfamiliar places etc.

Psychological/Emotional violence is any intentional conduct that seriously impairs another persons' psychological integrity through coercion or threat. The following were seen as ways such violence could occur and they include; undermining self worth, threats, isolation, public humiliation, unrelenting criticism, constant personal devaluation, coercive control, repeated stone walling and stalking, frightening victim, and reduced ability to act freely (Bonanigo Va..., et al 2022).

Concerning economic violence, Ohlam (2021) stated that it represents a state of control over an individual capacity to obtain, utilize and keep up economic assets. Stylianou (2018) presents the following as ways economic abuse could be perpetrated and they include; prevention from acquiring resources, diminishing capacity to support oneself, increases dependence on perpetrator, reduces access to education, reduces employment opportunity, frustrates career development, denies acquisition of assets, forcing family members to sign documents, sells belonging or property at will, monitoring spending.

Above all that has been mentioned, domestic violence has implications for family development. According to Katz (2015), the negative effect of domestic violence permeates every facets of human existence however this study is interested in the socio-moral implications of domestic violence.

The term socio-moral is a complex term derived from two concepts namely social and moral. The literal presentation views it as relating to society and morality. In order words, it is what ought to be done among a social group. When viewed from the context of pre-fix, the term "socio" refers to the behavior of people including the way they interact with one another while "moral" derived from the Latin root "more" stipulates what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. Giving the above context, therefore, socio-moral will refer to the standard of behavior of a group of people.

Concerning domestic violence, researchers such as Dunn et al (2023), Trembly (2023), Ohlam (2022) all noted that domestic violence has implications for adolescents' development which includes factors such as malnutrition, abusive relationship, nervousness, instills depression, eating disorders etc.

PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

The prevalence of domestic violence in our country Nigeria is so alarming as such that it is seen in the recent time as a household object. It has become an indispensable part of most homes just as some homes cannot do without furniture. Also not only that it has become an indispensable part of most homes but that it has outrageous effects in these homes. Within these homes are experienced family instability, fighting, disharmony and sometimes death. This domestic violence brings unbearable hardship not only to the immediate family but to the extended family and society at large.

Giving the above background therefore, the researchers set out to appraise and to find out the socio-moral implications of domestic violence among adolescents from Idemili North local government area of Anambra State.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this study is appraisal of domestic violence among families of Idemili north local government of Anambra State: Implications for social moral development. The study sought to determine the various ways domestic violence is executed among families in Idemili North Local Government area of Anambra State and to look at the social and moral implications of such acts on the adolescents. Hence the following constitute the purpose of the study;

1. Ways physical violence is perpetrated in families in Idemili North local government area of Anambra State.
2. Ways social violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government of Anambra State.
3. Ways psychological violence is carried out among families in Idemili North local Government Area of Anambra State.
4. Ways economic violence is carried out among families in Idemili Local Government area of Anambra States.
5. The moral implications of domestic violence among adolescents from Idemili North Local Government area of Anambra State.
6. The social implications of domestic violence among adolescents from Idemili North Local Government area of Anambra State.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are they ways physical violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State?
2. What are the ways social violence is executed among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State?
3. What are the ways psychological violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State?
4. What are the ways economic violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State?
5. What are the social implications of domestic violence among families in Idemili North local government area of Anambra State?
6. What are the moral implications of domestic violence among families in Idemili North local Government area of Anambra State?

METHOD

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The area of study comprises all the public senior secondary school students in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State also known as Ogidi Zone. The population of the (Idemili North Local Government Secretariat) study was 6200 students. Selected using purposive sampling techniques. The reliability of the instrument was established using split half method and the result analyzed using Cronbach’s Alpha which yielded reliability co-efficient of 0.74. three briefed research assistants were used to distribute the 800 questionnaires which were also collected. The questionnaire was a researcher developed instrument which had six clusters to appraise domestic violence and socio-moral implications among families of Idemili North local government by their adolescents. Six research questions guided the study and the data collected from the research was answered using mean scores and standard deviation. Scores that were found below the acceptable mean mark was said to have negative violence index while scores above the mean mark were all accepted as factors in violence.

RESULTS

The data collected from the study were presented in table form as follows:

Research Question One: what are the ways physical violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State?

Table One: mean and standard deviation scores on physical violence among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

S/N	Items On Physical Violence	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Makes you feel isolated in the family	2.89	0.61	
2	Restriction of self determination	2.82	0.68	
3	Denies you medical care	2.69	0.72	
4	Inflicts injuries on you	3.02	0.63	
5	Threatens you always	3.04	0.61	
6	Deprives you sleep	2.68	0.76	
7	Subjects you to intimidation always	2.72	0.69	
8	Forces alcohol/drugs on you	2.62	0.72	
9	Subjects you to battering	2.89	0.65	
10	Enjoys/attempts strangulating you	2.59	0.74	

n = 800

Table one above revealed the students rating of physical violence in their homes. The table further indicated that all the items recorded above were scored above the mean mark of 2.50 therefore were seen as factors in physical violence in the families of Idemili North Local Government are of Anambra State.

Research Question Two: what are the ways social violence is experienced among families in Idemili North Local Government area of Anambra State?

Table Two: mean and standard deviation table on violence among families in Idemili North local government are of Anambra State.

S/N	Items on Social Violence in the Family	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Embarrasses you in front of your friends	3.02	0.61	
2	Controls your social activities	2.92	0.72	
3	Makes fun of you in front of his friends	3.04	0.63	
4	Deprives you liberty	2.89	0.74	
5	Makes you feel there is no way out of the relationship	2.72	0.69	
6	Deliberate creation of unnecessary dependence	2.82	0.72	
7	Prevents you from spending time with your friends	2.72	0.63	
8	Makes you feel worthless	2.69	0.71	
9	Abandons you in dangerous and unfamiliar places	2.68	0.72	
10	Subjects you to isolation	2.84	0.63	

n = 800

The table two above reveals the rating of the adolescents from Idemili North local government area of Anambra State on the execution of social violence in their homes. All the items in the table were rated above the average mean score by the adolescents therefore were factors of social violence in the family.

Research Question Three: what are the ways psychological violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Table Three: mean and standard deviation table on the ways violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

S/N	Items on Psychological Violence	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Threatens you always	3.02	0.76	
2	Unrelentingly criticizing you always	3.03	0.67	
3	Subjects you to treat	2.89	0.75	
4	Forcefully controls you	3.99	0.73	
5	Frightening you always	2.89	0.68	
6	Reduces your ability to act freely	3.01	0.63	
7	Subjects you to constant personal devaluation	2.82	0.69	
8	Undermines yourself worth	2.69	0.70	
9	Uses abusive language on you	3.06	0.72	
10	Harasses you always	2.89	0.65	

n = 800

The table three contains items in psychological violence and were all rated by the adolescents above the average mean score.

Research Question Four: what are the ways economic violence is carried out among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Table Four: mean and standard deviation table on the ways economic violence is perpetrated among families in Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

S/N	Items on Economic Violence Perpetration	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Prevents you from acquiring resources	3.02	0.61	
2	Diminishes your capacity to support yourself	3.01	0.72	
3	Increases your dependency on your perpetrator	3.24	0.63	
4	Reduces access to education	2.98	0.68	
5	Reduces employment opportunity	2.96	0.76	
6	Frustrates career advancement	3.06	0.69	
7	Denies acquisition of assets	3.24	0.74	
8	Monitors your spending	3.36	0.61	
9	Sells properties at will	2.87	0.79	
10	Forcing family members to sign documents.	2.69	0.65	

n = 800

The table four revealed the items on economic violence and were all found to be above the average mean score.

Research Question Five: what are the moral implications of family domestic violence among adolescences from Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Table Five: mean and standard deviation scores on moral implications of domestic violence among adolescents from Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State

S/N	Items on Moral Implications of Domestic Violence on Adolescents	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Makes you scrupulous	2.87	0.69	
2	Makes you spiteful	2.72	0.71	
3	Makes you develop dead conscience	2.74	0.73	
4	Interferes with your ability to make right judgment	2.81	0.68	
5	Makes you lose compassion	2.69	0.72	
6	Makes you unfriendly	2.92	0.73	
7	Instills hatred on you	3.01	0.68	
8	Makes revengeful	3.04	0.71	
9	Emulates acts of violence	3.05	0.68	
10	Hinders your integrity	2.92	0.74	

n = 800

The table five above revealed the adolescents rating of moral implications of domestic violence. The table also indicated that all the items listed were found to be factors in domestic violence with respect to implications because they were all rated above the average mean score of (2.50).

Research Question six: what are the social implications of (family) Domestic violence on adolescents from Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Table six: mean and standard deviation scores on the social implications of domestic violence among adolescents from Idemili North Local Government Area of Anambra State.

S/N	Items on Social Implications of Domestic Violence Among Adolescents	\bar{x}	SD	Decision
1	Leads you to depression	2.98	0.69	
2	Causes nervousness on you	2.79	0.71	
3	Reduces yourself esteem	2.86	0.72	
4	Instills fears on you	3.02	0.66	
5	Causes malnutrition	2.89	0.74	
6	Makes you emotionally instable	2.72	0.68	
7	Leads to death	3.01	0.79	
8	Leads to suicide	2.89	0.76	
9	Causes grave mutilation	2.79	0.61	
10	Causes accident	2.82	0.60	
11	Leads to pregnancy	2.69	0.72	
12	Hinders your self confidence	2.84	0.63	
13	Leads to diminished academic behavior	2.82	0.64	
14	Leads to deviance/truant behaviors	2.96	0.65	
15	Causes distraction	3.01	0.71	

n = 800

The table six above which revealed the adolescents rating of social implication of domestic violence on them indicated that all the items found to be above 2.50 mean score. Here were seen as factors resulting from domestic violence.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study were discussed under the two major fames that constitute the purpose of the study namely: to appraise the ways domestic violence is practiced in homes in Idemili North local government area of Anambra and secondly, to find out its implications on adolescents.

Concerning the ways domestic violence is practiced in families from Idemili North local government area of Anambra State, the study examined four different types of domestic violence, namely; physical, social, psychological and economic violence. On physical violence, table one of the study revealed that all the items rating the practice of domestic violence in Idemili north local government area of Anambra State were held above the acceptable mean score of 2.50, and they include feeling of isolation (2.89), restriction of self determination (2.82), strangulation (2.59), sleep deprivation (2.72) etc. this was in line with the views of Stuart Dunn et al (2023) and the WHO (2015) that presented physical violence with such characterization.

On social violence, the table further indicated that the items were all scored above the average mean score using variables such as, controlling social activities (2.92), deprives liberty (2.59), embarrasses you in front of friends (3.02) etc. Tremblay (2023), Hargety (2022), Jacquin (2023) all noted that social violence includes all violence committed by individuals or society that has social impact on the psychological aspect of violence, the items variables were all scored

above the acceptable mean mark of 2.50 using the following; criticizing you always (3.03), subjects you to treat (2.89), frightening you always (2.89) etc. (Bronamego v.g et al, 2022).

Concerning economic violence, the students in rating the items scored the variables above the acceptable mean mark of (2.50) using the following; denies acquisition of assets (3.02) increases dependencies on perpetrators (3.24) reduces education (2.98), reduces employment opportunity (2.96) etc. Ohlam (2021) and Stylinanou (2018) all viewed economic violence as ability to control individuals' capacity to own and keep assets.

With respect to the socio-moral implications of domestic violence among adolescents from Idemili North local government area of Anambra State, table five (5) and six (6) indicated that the adolescents rated all the items in the table above the acceptable mean score implying that they are factors in the socio-moral implications. This was in line with the views of Dunn (2023), Tremblay (2023) and Ohlam (2022) that were in agreement that domestic violence has implications.

CONCLUSION

The study was on domestic violence among families in Idemili North Local Government area of Anambra state and its socio-moral implications on Adolescents from the same area. It looked at physical violence, social violence, psychological violence and economic violence as well as the socio-moral implications it had on adolescents from Idemili North local area government of Anambra State. All the items used for the study were found to be rated by the students above the acceptable mean score thereby indicating that domestic violence is practiced among families from Idemili North local government area of Anambra State. The study also revealed that such practices impacts negatively on the social and moral lives of adolescents from the state.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create awareness on domestic violence
2. Empowering Guidance Counsellors
3. Creating Counselling centers in Local Government levels.
4. Organizing seminars/workshops
5. Assisting victims through rehabilitation.

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