

PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, EMOTIONAL AND ECONOMIC INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE: PREVALENCE AMONG FEMALE CIVIL SERVANTS IN YENAGOA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF BAYELSA STATE.

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Abstract

This study investigated the prevalence of physical, sexual, emotional and economic intimate partner violence among female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State. Survey design was adopted. Four research questions guided the study. The population of the study was seven hundred (700) female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State. Convenience sampling technique were adopted. The sample of the study was two hundred and forty-five female civil servants. A questionnaire titled “Intimate Partner Violence against Women” (IPVAW) was used for collection of data. A pilot study was conducted and a reliability coefficient of .96 was obtained using Cronbach alpha procedure. The findings of the study verified that 42.5% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State have suffered physical intimate partner violence, 30.2% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State have suffered sexual intimate partner violence, 30.6% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State have suffered emotional intimate partner violence and 24.5% have suffered economic intimate partner violence. Some recommendations were thus made: regular family counselling sessions should be organized for couples and government and non-governmental organizations should organize seminars and intimate the society of different forms of intimate partner violence and interventions on how to prevent it.

Keywords: Female civil servants, physical, sexual, emotional, economic, intimate partner violence.

Introduction

Domestic violence against women in recent times has been on the increase; this is in line with the report of World Health Organisation (2020) stating that there is a high prevalence of violence against women and intimate partner violence being the most common form of violence against women.

Many women in our society treated violently by their male intimate partners suffer in silence. Domestic abuse in most cases have led to serious health challenges and even death of women.

Adebowale (2018) reported a recent significant increase in intimate partner

violence in Nigeria, and the women being victimized suffer different health challenges including premature death. Intimate partner violence (IPV) as asserted by Mitchell et al. (2013) is prevalent worldwide and constitute a devastating public health issue. Junson and Junson in Jahromi et al. (2016) asserted that violence against women is mostly perpetrated by people who are very intimate with them, such as their husbands. Intimate partner violence against women has gone on for far too long, without much being said or done to reduce the rate at which it occurs. The increasing rate of violence against women in Nigeria can be linked to our patriarchal nature, known to support male dominance over women, which have emboldened those who violently abuse women to continue the dastardly practice. World Health Organization (2017) reported that as many as thirty-eight percent (38%) of women killed were killed by intimate male partners. The recurrent reports about intimate partner violence creates a kind of fear and it becomes needful to ask if women are safe in intimate relationships anymore. These fears are confirmed by Adeyemo and Bamidele (2016) who opined that violence has become a repeated experience of most Nigerian women and that the home is now a place that puts fear and trembling into women rather than serving as a haven of succor and rest. The assertion of Adeyemo and Bamidele was further confirmed in Norris (2018) where it was reported that the most dangerous place to be a woman is the home.

Investigating the prevalence of intimate partner violence against women will not only throw light on the different forms of violence experienced by female civil

servants, but it will also go a long way to provide government, ministry of women affairs, and other stakeholders valuable insights on the prevalence of intimate partner violence against women, so as to plan strategies and interventions on how to handle the phenomenon. Intimate partner violence against women can take physical form (by way of beating, slapping, hitting or by way of inflicting bodily injury), sexual form (causing the woman to go through sexual performances of any sort against her wish, such as rape, anal sex, intercourse with animals through coercion or under influence of drugs), emotional form (act of yelling at someone to frighten her, humiliate her, label her to make her lose self-worth) and economic form (depriving a woman from being gainfully employed or having free access to family fund).

The U.S. Department of Justice in Hayes (2018) enumerated five types of domestic violence. These include:

Physical violence: Involves the application of physical force against someone, such as: hitting, shoving, grabbing, biting, restraining, shaking, choking, burning, and forcing the use of drug/alcohol, and assault with a weapon.

Sexual violence: Sexual assault, including forceful sexual act, rape and prostitution, also any form of unwelcome sexual behaviour (sexual harassment).

Economic abuse: This involves a situation where the abuser makes the victim to be financially dependent on him; such as preventing or refusing an intimate partner to work or be educated, controlling the financial resources and refraining her from having access to economic resources.

Emotional abuse: This involves the act of diminishing an individual's sense of self-worth. It includes constant criticism, name-calling, embarrassing, mocking and humiliating.

Psychological abuse: This involves the act of intimidating the victim, threatening the victim of harm and isolation, instilling fear in an intimate partner through the exhibition of threatening behaviors, such as damaging properties, constantly supervising the victim or controlling the activities of the victim.

Intimate partner violence has numerous effects on its victim, and some of such include physical injury, psychological trauma and also mental health problems. Office of Women's Health (2019) opined that "violence against women can cause long-term physical and mental health issues. Violence does not affect the women involved alone but also their children, families, and communities. The harm affects the health of the individual, and can also have a long-term harm on the children".

Domestic violence (intimate partner violence) constitutes any type of mistreatment meted on a heterosexual or homosexual romantic relationship between adults or adolescents Dryden-Edwards (2019). Many women have been observed to suffer intimate partner violence and suffered injuries (black eyes, broken hands, broken legs, knife cuts) and have been observed to see themselves in the neighbourhood as inferior to others, live a life of fear of the partners. Irrespective of the disturbing prevalent state of intimate partner violence against women in our present dispensation, there seem to be shortage of research examining prevalence in the different forms of intimate partner violence suffered by

women, particularly within the context of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State of Nigeria.

This study is thus set out to ascertain whether female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area experience intimate partner violence, and to verify the different forms of intimate partner violence they may be suffering and the extent to which they suffer them.

Many theories of violence abound, however, for the purpose of this study, the researchers' reviewed resource theory. Power is the basic organizing concept in resource theory. (Jasinski in Basile et al, 2013). Resource theory opines that male violence against an intimate partner is especially likely to be used as the ultimate resource to gain power and control if there is a perceived lack or an imbalance in key resources, such as income, educational attainment, occupational prestige, that favours the other partner. According to Gelles in Basile et al.(2013), it is opined that, for instance if a male partner who wants to gain control in a relationship realizes that he lacks the educational attainment, financial and occupational standing, he may resort to violence to achieve his desire to maintain control over his partner. This theory implies that lack of social resource and its attendant social stress can increase a partner's risk for violence. Hence, due to inability to maintain control because of lack of material and cultural sources of power and control, male partners resort to the use of intimate partner violence (IPV) to control their female partners. The theory implies hence that when the resources of a wife are greater than her husband's and he believes he should rather have had more than her, there is the possibility of a conflict

arising which may eventually lead to violence against his wife.

Studies vary in their findings on experience of physical form of intimate partner violence against women. Makayoto et al. (2013) investigated the prevalence and factors associated with intimate partner violence among pregnant women attending Kisumu District Hospital, Kenya. It was a cross-sectional study and systematic random sampling was used. The sample was three hundred (300) pregnant women and the study confirmed that 10% of the women have experienced physical violence. Tadesse et al. (2020) investigated the prevalence and associated factors of intimate partner violence among married women during COVID-19 Pandemic Restrictions. They adopted a community-based cross-sectional study. The sample was 617 married or cohabited women. They verified that 11% had experienced physical violence. Tumwesigye et al. (2012) carried out a study titled “Problem drinking and physical intimate partner violence against women: evidence from a national survey in Uganda”. The study adopted two-stage cluster sampling technique, and found out that forty-eight percent (48%) of the women had suffered physical intimate partner violence.

Varying studies in their findings on experience of sexual form of intimate partner violence against women exist. Ashenafi et al. (2020) investigated the prevalence and associated factors of intimate partner violence during pregnancy in Eastern Ethiopia. Community-based cross-sectional study was adopted and the sample was 3015 postpartum mothers. They established that 11.0% experienced sexual violence. Nmadu et al. (2022) carried out a study on “Cross sectional study on knowledge,

attitude and prevalence of domestic violence among women in Kaduna, Northwestern Nigeria”. The study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional study with a sample of 170 women. The study verified that 22.9% had experienced sexual violence. Umana et al. (2014) investigated “prevalence and correlates of intimate partner violence towards female students of the University of Ibadan”. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey and a four-stage sampling technique was used. 1,100 undergraduate and 255 postgraduate female students from the University of Ibadan made up the sample. The study found out that 6.6% participants had suffered sexual violence.

Findings on experience of emotional form of intimate partner violence against women vary. Nmadu et al. (2022) verified that 44.1% of the study women had experienced emotional abuse. Ou et al. (2021) investigated prevalence of intimate partner violence against women in Republic of Benin. The study verified that 35.4% of the participants had suffered emotional violence. Studies vary in their findings on experience of economic form of intimate partner violence against women. Kutin et al. (2017) investigated economic abuse between intimate partners in Australia: prevalence, health status, disability and financial stress. It adopted a cross-sectional study with a population of 17,050. The study confirmed that 15.7% of female participants had suffered economic violence. Nduka et al. (2023) investigated prevalence and correlates of economic abuse among married women. Survey design was adopted with a sample of 480 women. The study ascertained that 64.2% of the participants had suffered economic violence.

Research Questions

1. To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer physical intimate partner violence?
2. To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer sexual intimate partner violence?
3. To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer emotional intimate partner violence?
4. To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer economic intimate partner violence?

Methodology

The study adopted survey method, which is one of the descriptive studies. Survey method according to Ponto (2015) is "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions." The population of this study was made up of seven hundred (700) female civil servants in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State, which is the total number of female civil servants in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State; under the government's payroll. (Source: Yenagoa City Council 2019 Verification Exercise Report). The Yenagoa City Council is made up of the following departments: Administrative Department, Department of Health, Department of Finance, Department of Budget, Department of Works, Department of Agriculture, and Department

of Education. The sample size was two hundred and forty-five female civil servants. Taro Yamane's method for sample size was adopted to determine the sample size; two hundred and fifty-five (255) was attained. However, two hundred and forty-five workable questionnaires only were finally retrieved and used for analysis.

Convenience sampling technique was adopted for the study. Convenience sampling technique is a non-probability sampling technique in which samples are chosen from the population based solely on their accessibility to the researcher. The convenience sampling technique was adopted because only female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area who willingly accepted the questionnaires, constituted the sample. McCombes (2019) asserted that when population consist of individuals who happen to be most accessible to the researcher during a study, it can be referred to as convenience sampling.

A questionnaire titled "Intimate Partner Violence against Women" (IPVAW) was adopted for data collection. It contains two sections; Section A contained demographic variables, while section B comprises 15 items to elicit responses on experience of different forms of intimate partner violence. The respondents were required to respond to the items of the questionnaire (IPVAW) on a four-point scale, ranging from, strongly agree to strongly disagree.

In determining rate of experience of intimate partner violence against women in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State, percentages and mean were applied to make decisions; in measuring experience of intimate partner violence. Criterion mean as 2.5, hence 2.5 and above will be high

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intimate partner violence while 2.4 and below will be termed low intimate partner violence.

The instrument was validated by two Measurement and Evaluation experts. The instrument titled “Intimate Partner Violence Against Women” (IPVAW) was subjected to a pilot study in order to provide a

preliminary assessment of the test. The instrument was administered to thirty women in Ogbia local government area which is identical to Yenagoa local government area. A reliability coefficient of .96 was established using the Cronbach alpha with the aid of Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS). Percentages and mean were applied to answer the questions.

Results

Research Question One: To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer physical intimate partner violence?

Table 1: Descriptive for Physical Intimate Partner Violence

	Items	N	Mean	Agree	Disagree	Rank
PHYSICAL VIOLENCE	My husband/partner slaps me	245	2.20	104(42.5%)	141(57.5%)	Low physical intimate violence
	He has pushed me or thrown something at me before	245	2.0	77(31.4%)	168(68.6%)	
	My partner has kicked me, dragged me, beaten me	245	1.89	67(27.4%)	178(72.6%)	
	My partner tried to choke me or burn me on purpose	245	1.72	44(17.9%)	201(82.1%)	
	My partner punched me with his fist or with something that could hurt me	245	1.81	54(22%)	191(78%)	
	My partner has twisted my arm, pulled my hair	245	1.85	64(26.1%)	181(73.9%)	
	My partner threatened, attacked me with a knife, gun, or any other weapon	245	1.63	36(14.7%)	209(85.3%)	

Table 1 reveals that 103 (42.5%) have been slapped, 77 (31.4%) have been pushed, 67 (27.4%) have been kicked, 44 (17.9%) have suffered being choked or burnt, 54 (22%) have been punched, 64 (26.1%) have had their arms twisted or hair pulled and 36 (14.7%) have been threatened or attacked with knife. Hence it is taken that 42.5% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State can be

said to have suffered physical intimate partner violence. And the mean attained for the items revealed that; have been slapped (2.20), have been pushed (2.0), have been kicked (1.89), have suffered being choked or burnt (1.72), have been punched (1.81), have had their arms twisted or hair pulled(1.85) and have been threatened or attacked with knife (1.63).

Research Question Two: To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer sexual intimate partner violence?

Table 2: Descriptive for Sexual Intimate Partner Violence

	Items	N	Me an	Agree	Disagre e	Rmk
SEXUAL VIOLEN CE	My husband/partner has physically forced me to have sexual intercourse with him against my wish	24 5	1.9 7	74(30.2 %)	171(69. 8%)	Low sexu al viol ence
	My partner has forced me to perform sexual acts I detest	24 5	1.9 6	72(29.4 %)	173(70. 6%)	

Table 2 shows that 74 (30.2%) have been physically forced to have sexual intercourse against their wish and 72 (29.4%) have been forced to perform sexual acts they detest. Hence, it is taken that 30.2% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area

of Bayelsa State can be said to have been sexually abused by intimate partners. I have been physically forced to have sexual intercourse against their wish (1.97) and I have been forced to perform sexual acts they detest (1.96)

Research Question Three: To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer emotional intimate partner violence?

Table 3: Descriptive for Emotional Intimate Partner Violence

	Items	N	Mea n	Agree	Disagree	Rmk
EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE	My husband/partner abuses me to humiliate me in front of people	24 5	1.88	62(25.3 %)	183(74.7 %)	Low emotional violence.
	My partner calls me names to make me feel bad about myself	24 5	2.04	75(30.6 %)	170(69.4 %)	
	My partner has threatened to hurt or harm me or those close to me	24 5	1.71	46(18.8 %)	199(81.2 %)	

Table 3 shows that 62 (25.3%) have been humiliated in front of people, 75 (30.6%) have been called names by their intimate partners to make them feel bad about themselves and 46 (18.8%) have been threatened to be hurt or get those close to them hurt. Hence, it can be asserted that 30.6% female civil servants in Yenagoa

local government area of Bayelsa state have been emotionally abused by their intimate partners. I have been humiliated in front of people (1.88),I have been called names by their intimate partners to make them feel bad about themselves(2.04) and I have been threatened to be hurt or get those close to them hurt (1.71)

Research Question Four: To what extent do female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State suffer economic intimate partner violence?

Table 4: Descriptive for Economic Intimate Partner Violence

	Items	N	Mea n	Agree	Disagre e	Rmk
ECONOMIC VIOLENCE	My partner makes me hand over my salary to him	245	1.84	54(22%)	191(78%)	Low economic violence.
	My partner completely controls our joint account	245	1.81	52(21.2%)	193(78.8%)	
	I only buy things for myself when he approves	245	1.84	60(24.5%)	185(75.5%)	
	Valid N (listwise)	245				

Table 4 shows that 54 (22%) hand over their salaries to their intimate partners, 52 (21.2%) have their joint accounts controlled solely by their intimate partners and 60 (24.5%) buy things for themselves only when approved by their intimate partners. Hence it can be agreed that 24.5% female civil servants in Yenagoa local government

area have suffered at least one form of economic intimate partner violence - Hand over their salaries to their intimate partners (1.84), have their joint accounts controlled solely by their intimate partners (1.81) and buy things for themselves only when approved by their intimate partners (1.84).

Discussion of findings

Prevalence of physical intimate partner violence

The present study revealed that 42.5% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State have suffered physical intimate partner violence. This contradicts the findings of Makayotoet.al (2013) who found only 10% of the women suffered physical violence and Tadesse et.al (2020) who verified that only 11% had experienced physical violence. However, it is within the range of Tumwesigye et al. (2012) who verified that 48%of the women had suffered physical intimate partner violence.

Prevalence of sexual intimate partner violence

The present study showed that 30.2% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State have suffered sexual abuse. This is higher than

Ashenafi et.al (2020) who verified only 11% to have suffered sexual abuse and Nmadu et al (2022) who confirmed only 22.9% and Umana et al (2014) who verified that only6.6% participants suffered sexual violence.

Prevalence of emotional intimate partner violence

The study verified that30.6% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa state have been emotionally abused by their intimate partners. The percentage is lower than Nmadu et al (2022) who verified that 44.1% of the study women had experienced emotional abuse and also lower than Ou et al (2021) who verified that 35.4% of the participants had suffered emotional violence.

Prevalence of economic intimate partner violence

The present study found that 24.5% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area have suffered at least one form of economic intimate partner violence. The findings revealed that the percentage is higher than Kutin et al (2017) who confirmed that 15.7% of female participants had suffered economic violence and lower than Nduka et al (2023) who confirmed that 64.2% of the participants had suffered economic violence.

Conclusion

The study confirmed the following; that 42.5% of female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa state have suffered physical intimate partner violence; 30.2% have suffered sexual intimate partner violence, 30.6% have suffered emotional intimate partner violence and 24.5% have suffered economic intimate partner violence. The mean for items indicating physical, sexual, emotional and economic intimate partner violence were all below mean of 2.5, hence it can be concluded that physical,

sexual, emotional and economic intimate partner violence against female civil servants in Yenagoa local government area of Bayelsa State is low.

Recommendations

Despite the low prevalence as ascertained, violence remains a serious issue, as it can still have a significant impact on the victims, families and communities. Hence, the researchers made the following recommendations:

1. There should be continuous awareness and education by government and non-governmental agencies; as low prevalence does not indicate zero cases. Awareness about intimate partner violence, its signs and impacts should be raised.
2. Domestic violence education should be integrated into the school curricula, to promote healthy relationships and prevent future cases.
3. The public should be educated on how to safely intervene whenever they witness violence or the signs.

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