

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BENIN: A STUDY OF EKOSODIN COMMUNITY
IN BENIN CITY, EDO STATE OVIA NORTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT
AREA, EDO STATE**

BY

Perpetual Ukamaka EZE

SSC2010956

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK,
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY.**

JANUARY, 2025

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CERTIFICATION

We the undersigned, certify that this research work was carried out by EZE PERPETUAL UKAMAKA with Matriculation Number SSC2010956 in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Sciences Degree (B.Sc Hons) in Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria.

Dr. Mrs, J. E. Isenmila
(Supervisor)

Date

Bar. S. Yesufu (Ph.D)
(H.O.D)

Date

DECLARATION

I, EZE PERPETUAL UKAMAKA testify that this dissertation is my original work and has not been presented wholly or partially for the award of degree elsewhere. I am ready to take responsibility for the thesis.

Sign _____

Date. _____

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to the Almighty God for giving me the strength and grace throughout the course of this work. I also want to dedicate it to my Mother Mrs. Eze Regina and to my lovely husband, Mr. Anieze Gilbert

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ABSTRACT

*This project examined Domestic violence in Benin: A study of Ekosodin community in Benin City, Edo State. The objectives of the study are to identify the concept of domestic violence in Ekosodin, with a focus on understanding the scope and nature of the problem, examine the social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to domestic violence in the area, and how they impact victims, perpetrators, and the community, assess the effectiveness of existing interventions, policies, and programs aimed at preventing and responding to domestic violence in Ekosodin, develop evidence-based recommendations for improving prevention and response strategies, and enhancing support services for survivors of domestic violence in the area, as well as find out the role of social workers in domestic violence in Ekosodin. The survey research method was used which consist of frequency, percentage means and a cross-abulation method was also used to test the structured hypothesis in the study. A total number of 400 questionnaires was distributed to women ranging from those who are single to those in relationships, to the married, separated, divorced and widowers. The statistical analysis was used with the goal of performing the empirical analysis and obtaining estimated coefficients, SPSS was used as statistical package in this study. From the findings, it was revealed that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences. The study also, revealed that the nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and psychological abuse being less common. It was also revealed that patriarchal social norms and gender inequality significantly contributes to the persistence of domestic violence. It can be concluded that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impact families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences. Also, victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin often faces challenges in reporting the abuse dues to cultural and stigma and fear of social judgement. Also, the economic dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin are unable to leave their abusers. Substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) is often a major factor contributing to violent behavior in domestic relationships. And also the current legal frameworks in Ekosodin, such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), are effectively enforced to address domestic violence. It can also be concluded that providing economic empowerment programs for women in Ekosodin, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners. It was recommended that **there is a need to enhance community education and awareness campaigns** to address cultural stigma and encourage victims to report abuse. Public education should focus on challenging patriarchal norms and informing people about available support services. **There is a need to promote economic empowerment for women** through job training programs and microfinance initiatives. This will reduce women's financial dependence on abusive partners and give them the means to leave violent situations. **There is a need to strengthen law enforcement training** to improve their response to domestic violence cases. Officers should be trained to handle such cases with sensitivity and ensure that victims feel safe when reporting abuse. And also **there is a need to increase access to legal support services** for victims of domestic violence. with sensitivity and ensure that victims feel safe when reporting abuse. And also **there is a need to increase access to legal support services** for victims of domestic violence.*

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Domestic violence (hereinafter referred to as domestic violence) is a global problem that crosses cultural, geographic, religious, social and economic boundaries and is a violation of human rights. Violence against women amongst others deprives them of their right to fully take part in social and economic life. It causes a myriad of physical and mental health issues and in some cases results in loss of life. A lack of understanding of the magnitude of domestic violence, its causes and consequences, and the trends and patterns across cultures, hinders the development of efforts to address it.

Very little has been known about the prevalence of domestic violence in Nigeria and there has been a real need for evidence to learn more about the prevalence, causes and consequences of domestic violence, and in particular to inform policy directions. Domestic violence is a complicated and difficult issue to study and the research findings are inconsistent (Khan, 2015). Domestic violence against women which this paper emphasizes on, encompasses physical, mental, financial, sexual and spiritual abuse that disproportionately impact on women, is a violation of women's fundamental rights with respect to dignity, equality and access to justice. Its impact stretches beyond those women who are themselves victims of violence, since it affects families, friends and society as a whole.

Over the past 30 years, surveys indicate that 10-58 percent of women have experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner in their life time (Khan, 2015). Also, Preliminary results from a World Health Organization (WHO) multi-country study on women's

health and domestic violence indicated that “in some parts of the world as many as one-half of women have experienced domestic violence. Although the degree differs from community to community and society-to-society, women have been preponderantly at the receiving end in approximately 95% of known cases.

Shija reports that here in Nigeria, an average of 300-350 women are killed every year by their husband, former partners, boyfriend, or male relations. Most times, the incidence is considered family feuds, which should be treated within the family. Most police refuse to intervene and a domestic violence ice the victims to go back and settle “family matters”. It has become a thing of abnormal occurrence to go through the local newspaper or other news medium or outlets without coming across one domestic violence story or the other, either shared by a destined survivor or the relative of a not so lucky victim pushed into the arms of death by the cold heart of domestic abuse. And as if the gravity of its consequences is not enough pile to swallow, you come across all sorts of comments about how he devil is trying to break the home, or how the man must have been manipulated by some unforeseen forces, some even go as far as blaming it on the woman to have provoked the man.

Domestic violence affects women in Nigeria irrespective of age, class, educational level and place of residence. Women are more at risk from violence than men; this is because of the differential access to prestige, power, control of material resources, freedom to obtain knowledge and other basic need of life among the gender. Gender based violence is perhaps one of the most terrifying illustrations of inequality between male and female. There exist immeasurable number of governmental and non- governmental organizations, public awareness group, campaign bodies etc. that are dedicated to creating awareness

about domestic violence and fighting this epidemical sin. Still yet, domestic violence in Nigeria and the world at large is on the up and up the statistics are daunting. Protection against violence now exists on paper, in many if not most countries of the world. Yet, violence remains pervasive and enforcement weak. In many countries, legislations against domestic violence is relatively recent like the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act 2015 in Nigeria which is still only applicable in the Federal Capital Territory though some states have on their own, taken up the mantle to enact laws on domestic violence and abuse.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

The majority of husband's attitude that abused their wives is a very sad phenomenon. The reasons of this violent behaviour include lack of harmony and understanding between partner, different family backgrounds, financial problems, extreme jealousy, mental disorders and lack of religion (WHO, 2013; Isgandarova, 2017; Khan, 2015). Although various steps have been taken by governmental and enforcement agencies as well as nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), the problem of domestic violence is still at its most serious level.

Hence, what causes domestic violence? Why the percentages of domestic violence rising despite the various campaigns, awareness programs and enforcement of the act have been carried out? What are the psychological effects faced by victims as a result of domestic violence? The question arises as how victims of this violence are still able to survive in this tragic life environment? Are most victim's fulltime housewives that are too dependent on men in terms of financial and emotional support? Do these women have no support chain other than their husbands? Does this woman have a personality problem,

psychology or mental illness so willing to let herself being abused? There are many more questions that cannot be answered and resolved even though the issue of violence against women has long been widespread.

However, the increase in the reported cases does indicate that women as well as men are developing an awareness of their right to be free from violence. Shipway (2004) cited the following reasons for under-reporting: “(1). Fear of further or escalating violence should the victim report an incident; (2). Hopes that the relationship can be salvaged; (3). Mistrust of agencies; and, (4). Lack of knowledge about what most agencies could do to help”. Furthermore, only physical or sexual assaults are recognized as domestic violence by law. Those who do not report and those who suffered emotional, psychological and financial abuse do not appear in any record. Not only are they hidden by not appearing in the statistics, they are also hidden from family, friends, and other social networks. Thus, it is believed that clearly identifying the causes of domestic violence against women can provide a more specific picture of the psychological impact the victim receives. Moreover, the form of effective and efficient support that the victim needs in facing the problem of domestic violence can also be identified.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study is to find out the domestic violence in Benin. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify the concept of domestic violence in Ekosodin, with a focus on understanding the scope and nature of the problem.

2. examine the social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to domestic violence in the area, and how they impact victims, perpetrators, and the community.
3. assess the effectiveness of existing interventions, policies, and programs aimed at preventing and responding to domestic violence in Ekosodin.
4. develop evidence-based recommendations for improving prevention and response strategies, and enhancing support services for survivors of domestic violence in the area.
5. Find out the role of social workers in domestic violence in Ekosodin

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guides this study;

1. What is the concept of domestic violence among households in Ekosodin, and what are the most common forms of violence experienced by victims?
2. How do societal norms, cultural beliefs, and economic factors contribute to the perpetuation of domestic violence in Ekosodin and what are the implications for victims and perpetrators?
3. What are the gaps in existing interventions, policies, and programs addressing domestic violence in Ekosodin, and how can they be improved to better support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable?
4. What are the most effective strategies for preventing domestic violence and providing support services to survivors in Ekosodin?
5. What the role of social workers in domestic violence in Ekosodin?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will be significant to the general public. It will enlighten victims of domestic abuse on the importance of speaking up without shame when they are abused. This study will also heighten the awareness of the judiciary and legislature of the need to enact effective laws against domestic violence against these victims. This study will enable Human Right Activists to know that a lot of people go through abuse, but because society does not believe them, they die in silence. Thus, there is a need for massive agitation for support and justice for men, women and children going through abuse. Finally, this study will contribute to the general body of knowledge, serving as a reference material and giving room for further research on this field.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study focuses on the prevalence of domestic violence in Ekosodin community, Benin City, Edo state. However, the study encompasses women ranging from those who are single to those in relationships, to the married, separated, divorced and widowers. Hence, the scope of study is limited to Ekosodin community, Benin City, Edo State.

1.7 Definition of terms

Domestic: Domestic means relating to the home, intimate, the household, household affairs, or the family.

Domestic Violence: Refers to the range of sexually, physically and psychologically coercive acts used against women, men or children by intimate members or individuals. Domestic violence is often used as a synonym for intimate partner violence, which is committed by one of the people in an intimate relationship against the other person.

Violence: Refers to the use of physical force so as to injure, abuse, damage, or destroy. Other definitions are also used, such as the World Health Organization's definition of violence as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation.

Woman/women: Refers to an adult female human being as opposed to a man.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Previous studies have found that domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of gender, in which both women (Afifi, AlMuhaideb, Hadish, Ismail, & Al-Qeamy, 2011; Olorunsaiye, Brunner, Laditka, Kulkarni, & Boyd, 2017; Unal, Koc, Unal, Akcan, & Javan, 2016) and men (Caetano, Vaeth, & Ramisetty-Mikler, 2008; Reingle, Staras, Jennings, Branchini, & Maldonadomolina, 2013) have the potential to become victims of abuse. In fact, some studies also found that the victim of abuse also involved pregnant women (Coutinho et al., 2015; Ergönen et al., 2009; Felker-Kantor, Wallace, & Theall, 2017; Janssen et al., 2003; Ludermir, Lewis, Valongueiro, De Araújo, & Araya, 2010). Thus, the current study posed question that focus on dissecting the concept, causes, effects, consequences and potential characteristics shared by all victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. However, this study will discuss specifically on female victims only.

2.2 OVERVIEW OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

2.1.1 Concept of Domestic Violence

According to an Amnesty International report on Nigeria, on a daily basis, women are beaten and ill-treated for supposed transgressions, raped and even murdered by members of their family. In some cases, vicious acid attacks leave them with horrific disfigurements. Such violence is too frequently excused and tolerated in communities, and not denounced. Husbands, partners, and fathers are responsible for most of the violence.

Domestic violence refers to any form of abusive behavior perpetrated within a domestic or intimate relationship, typically involving one partner exerting power and control over the other (Ezelote, Eleanor, Ezeonyi, Rita, Martin-Remy, & Mary, 2021). According to Igbolekwu, Arusukwu, Nwogu, Rasak, Asamu, and Osueke (2021), it involves various forms of physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse, and can occur between spouses, partners, family members, or household members. This behavior often occurs repeatedly and escalates over time, creating a cycle of violence that can have devastating consequences for victims.

One common form of domestic violence is physical abuse, which involves acts such as hitting, punching, kicking, or using weapons to inflict harm on the victim (Edegbe, Okani, Uzoigwe, & Amagwu, 2020). For example, a husband who repeatedly hits his wife during arguments or a parent who physically punishes their child excessively may be engaging in domestic violence. Another prevalent form is emotional abuse, which includes tactics such as verbal threats, insults, manipulation, and controlling behavior aimed at undermining the victim's self-esteem and autonomy (Titiloye & Peluola, 2021). An example of emotional abuse is a partner who constantly belittles their spouse, controls their finances, or isolates them from friends and family. In addition to physical and emotional abuse, domestic violence can also manifest in the form of sexual abuse. This includes coerced sexual activity or any unwanted sexual contact within an intimate relationship. For instance, a partner who forces their spouse to engage in sexual acts against their will or disregards their lack of consent is perpetrating sexual abuse. Moreover, economic abuse is another insidious aspect of domestic violence, where one partner exercises control over financial resources to exert power and control over the

other. Examples of economic abuse may include withholding access to money, preventing the victim from working or accessing education, or sabotaging their efforts to achieve financial independence. Furthermore, domestic violence can occur in various types of relationships, not just between romantic partners. It can occur between parents and children, siblings, or other family members living together in the same household. For instance, a sibling who bullies and physically assaults their brother or sister is perpetrating domestic violence within the family dynamic. Additionally, domestic violence can also occur in same-sex relationships, contrary to stereotypes that it only happens in heterosexual partnerships.

Sexual abuse is another aspect of domestic violence, involving unwanted sexual contact or coercion within a relationship. This can include rape, sexual assault, or other forms of sexual harassment perpetrated by an intimate partner. Sexual abuse within domestic violence can manifest in various ways beyond physical force, such as emotional manipulation or exploitation. For example, a partner may coerce their spouse into sexual activity by threatening to withhold affection or financial support, creating a situation where the victim feels they have no choice but to comply. Furthermore, sexual harassment, such as making lewd comments, unwanted domestic violence, or using explicit language to degrade or intimidate the victim, can also constitute sexual abuse within a relationship. In these cases, the power dynamics within the relationship are exploited to maintain control over the victim's body and autonomy. Similarly, economic abuse extends beyond simply controlling finances and can encompass a range of tactics aimed at undermining the victim's financial independence and security. For instance, a partner may prevent their spouse from pursuing education or job opportunities, sabotage

their attempts to save money or accumulate assets, or force them to relinquish control over their own income or assets. In extreme cases, economic abuse can escalate to the point where the victim is entirely dependent on the abuser for their financial survival, leaving them trapped in the relationship due to fear of economic hardship or destitution if they were to leave.

2.2.2 Forms of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is perpetrated in different ways. Susanne Hamm noted that domestic violence can take different forms and degrees ranging from physical, emotional, sexual, and financial abuse.

1. Physical Abuse

Physical abuse, a prevalent form of domestic violence, involves the use of physical force or violence to cause harm or injury to another person within an intimate or familial relationship (Adeyemo, Olaitan, & Bamidele, 2016). In Nigeria, physical abuse within domestic settings often takes various forms, including hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, or using objects to inflict harm. For example, a husband may physically assault his wife during arguments or disagreements, leaving visible bruises or injuries. Similarly, parents may resort to physical punishment as a means of discipline, resulting in harm to their children. In addition to direct physical violence, physical abuse can also involve deprivation of basic needs, such as food, water, or medical care. In Nigeria, common practices of physical abuse may include withholding food or denying access to medical treatment as a form of punishment or control. For instance, a husband may refuse to provide financial support for household expenses, leaving his wife and children without essential resources for survival. Similarly, parents may neglect the health needs of their

children, such as refusing to seek medical attention for illnesses or injuries, thereby causing harm through omission.

The impact of physical abuse in Nigeria extends beyond immediate physical injuries, often resulting in long-term psychological and emotional trauma for victims. Fear, anxiety, and low self-esteem are common consequences experienced by survivors of physical abuse, affecting their overall well-being and quality of life. Moreover, physical abuse can perpetuate cycles of violence within families and communities, as children who witness or experience violence may grow up to replicate similar behaviors in their own relationships.

2. Emotional Abuse

According to Agboola, Bayode, and Ojo, (2022), emotional abuse is a form of domestic violence that involves the use of psychological tactics to control, manipulate, or demean an individual within a relationship. It encompasses a wide range of behaviors aimed at undermining the victim's self-worth, confidence, and emotional well-being. In Nigeria, emotional abuse within domestic relationships is sadly prevalent, although it may often go unrecognized or unreported due to societal norms and stigma surrounding discussions of intimate partner violence. Common practices of emotional abuse in Nigeria may include verbal insults, threats, and constant criticism aimed at eroding the victim's self-esteem and confidence. For example, a husband may constantly berate his wife, belittling her appearance, intelligence, or abilities, making her feel inadequate and powerless. Additionally, emotional abuse can take the form of manipulation and control, where one partner uses tactics such as gas lighting or withholding affection to exert power and dominance over the other. For instance, a wife may be made to doubt her own

perceptions and reality, leading her to question her sanity or judgment, while the abuser maintains control over the relationship dynamics.

Furthermore, emotional abuse in Nigeria often intersects with cultural and gender norms, exacerbating its impact on victims. For example, societal expectations of women as submissive and obedient may be used to justify controlling behavior by male partners, further perpetuating the cycle of abuse. Additionally, religious beliefs and practices may be exploited to maintain control over victims, with perpetrators using scripture or religious teachings to justify their abusive actions. Overall, emotional abuse can have severe and long-lasting effects on victims, including anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and even suicidal thoughts.

3. Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is a grave form of violence that involves coercive or non-consensual sexual activity inflicted upon an individual (Ogunleye & Katherine, 2019). According to Aina-Pelemo, Deborah, and Olujobi, (2024), in Nigeria, sexual abuse occurs within various contexts, including domestic relationships, workplaces, educational institutions, and communities. Common examples of sexual abuse in Nigeria include rape, sexual assault, molestation, and harassment. For instance, instances of marital rape, where a spouse forces sexual intercourse upon their partner without consent, are unfortunately prevalent in many parts of the country. Additionally, sexual abuse can occur within families, with children being particularly vulnerable to exploitation by relatives or guardians. Such abuse often goes unreported due to cultural taboos and fear of stigma.

Another widespread form of sexual abuse in Nigeria is sexual harassment, which occurs in both public and private spheres. In workplaces, for example, individuals in positions of

authority may demand sexual favors from subordinates in exchange for job opportunities or career. This creates a hostile and intimidating environment for victims, who may feel powerless to resist due to concerns about losing their livelihoods. Similarly, in educational settings, students may be subjected to sexual domestic violence or inappropriate behavior from teachers or peers, affecting their academic performance and emotional well-being. Despite legal provisions against sexual harassment, enforcement mechanisms remain weak, leading to underreporting and impunity for perpetrators.

Furthermore, sexual abuse is exacerbated by socio-cultural factors such as gender inequality, patriarchal norms, and harmful traditional practices. In many Nigerian communities, women and girls are often viewed as subordinate to men, leading to systemic discrimination and violence against them. Harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage perpetuate the cycle of sexual abuse and exploitation, robbing girls of their autonomy and subjecting them to lifelong trauma. Moreover, societal attitudes that blame victims and justify perpetrators' actions further contribute to the prevalence of sexual abuse in Nigeria.

4. Financial Abuse

Financial abuse, a form of domestic violence, occurs when one partner exerts control over the financial resources and economic independence of the other, thereby limiting their ability to make financial decisions and maintain financial stability (Postmus, Hoge, Breckenridge, Sharp-Jeffs, & Chung, 2020). In Nigeria, common practices of financial abuse often involve one partner controlling the household finances entirely, including income, savings, and expenditures, leaving the other partner with little or no access to money or financial information. This control may manifest through various tactics such

as withholding money for basic needs, preventing the victim from obtaining employment or education, or coercing them into signing over assets or financial documents.

In many cases, financial abuse in Nigeria is intertwined with cultural norms and gender dynamics, where the male partner is typically expected to be the primary breadwinner and decision-maker regarding finances within the household. This power dynamic can exacerbate financial abuse, as the controlling partner may use societal expectations to justify their control over the household finances and restrict the other partner's financial autonomy. Additionally, economic disparities and lack of legal protections for financial rights further contribute to the prevalence of financial abuse, particularly among women who may face barriers to accessing financial resources independently.

Examples of financial abuse in Nigeria also include denying the victim access to bank accounts or credit cards, forcing them to hand over their salary or earnings, or manipulating them into taking on debt or loans in their name. Moreover, the lack of awareness and stigma surrounding domestic violence often perpetuates financial abuse, as victims may feel ashamed or helpless to seek assistance or assert their financial rights.

Domestic Violence and Women

Violence against women is one of the world's most prevalent human rights violations, taking place every day, many times over, in every corner of the globe (Mbadugha, 2016). It has serious short- and long-term physical, economic and psychological consequences on women and girls, preventing their full and equal participation in society. The magnitude of its impact, both in the lives of individuals and families and society as a whole, is immeasurable. Conditions created by humanitarian, health and environmental crisis such as the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, and climate change have further

intensified violence against women and girls, exacerbated existing challenges and generated new and emerging threats (Omorogiuwa, 2021).

Types of Violence Against Women

Intimate-partner violence: Intimate partner violence refers to behavior by an intimate partner or ex-partner that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviors. This is one of the most common forms of violence experienced by women globally (Adegoke, Niyi, & Durojaye, 2021). Intimate partner violence is one of the manifestations of domestic violence. Domestic violence is violence that occurs within the private, domestic sphere, generally between individuals who are related through blood or intimacy. Domestic violence is not confined to women, for example it also includes child abuse and elderly abuse in the domestic sphere. Intimate partner violence can include acts of physical violence such as slapping, choking or burning, sexual violence including spousal rape, psychological violence such as fear by intimidation or forced isolation, and economic violence by maintaining total control over financial resources, withholding access to money, and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment, among others (Omorogiuwa, 2021).

Sexual Violence: Sexual violence is any sort of harmful or unwanted sexual behaviour that is imposed on someone. It includes acts of abusive sexual contact, forced engagement in sexual acts, attempted or completed sexual acts with a woman without her consent, sexual harassment, verbal abuse, threats, exposure, unwanted touching, incest, and others (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021). Sexual violence can include the following:

Sexual harassment may involve any conduct of a verbal, nonverbal or physical nature, including written and electronic communications. Sexual harassment can take a variety of forms – from looks and words through to physical contact of a sexual nature (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021). Examples of sexual harassment include sharing sexual or lewd anecdotes or jokes; unwelcome touching, including pinching, patting, rubbing, or purposefully brushing up against another person, repeatedly asking a person for dates or asking for sex and making sexual comments about appearance, clothing, or body parts, among others.

Rape is any non-consensual vaginal, anal or oral penetration of a sexual nature of the body of another person with any bodily part or object, including through the use of physical violence and by putting the victim in a situation where they cannot say no or complies because of fear. This can be by any person known or unknown to the survivor, within marriage and relationships, and during armed conflict.

Corrective rape is a form of rape perpetrated against someone on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is intended to force the victim to conform to heterosexuality or normative gender identity.

Sexual violence in conflict: Acts of violence against women include violation of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict, such as systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy, as well as forced sterilization, coercive/forced use of contraceptives, female infanticide and prenatal sex selection.

Femicide: Femicide is a term used to describe the intentional killing of women and girls because of their gender. It represents the most extreme form of gender-based violence and is often rooted in systemic sexism and misogyny. Femicide can occur within various contexts, including intimate partner relationships, familial settings, or broader societal

contexts, and it reflects a deeply ingrained disregard for the lives and autonomy of women and girls (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021).

One example of femicide is intimate partner femicide, where women are killed by their current or former intimate partners. This can occur in situations of domestic violence, where escalating abuse culminates in lethal violence. For instance, a woman who is repeatedly subjected to physical or emotional abuse by her partner may ultimately be killed by them in an act of extreme control and power. Another example is honor killings, where women are murdered by family members as punishment for perceived violations of social or cultural norms, such as refusing an arranged marriage or engaging in relationships deemed inappropriate by their families or communities (Adegoke, Niyi, & Durojaye, 2021).

Femicide also involves broader societal patterns of violence against women and girls, such as serial killings or mass murders targeting women specifically. These acts are often fueled by misogyny and a sense of entitlement to control and dominate women's bodies. For example, the targeting of women in mass shootings or terrorist attacks, as seen in incidents such as the École Polytechnique massacre in Canada or the Pulse nightclub shooting in the United States, reflects a pervasive societal devaluation of women's lives and a desire to exert power and control over them (Adegoke, Niyi, & Durojaye, 2021).

Female Genital Mutilation: Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a harmful practice that involves the partial or total removal of external female genitalia for non-medical reasons. This procedure is often performed on young girls, typically between infancy and adolescence, and is deeply entrenched in cultural and social norms in certain

communities. FGM is widely recognized as a violation of human rights and poses serious physical and psychological health risks to those who undergo it. Examples of FGM procedures include clitoridectomy, where the clitoris is partially or entirely removed, and infibulation, where the vaginal opening is narrowed by sewing or cutting and repositioning the labia (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021).

The practice of FGM is often justified based on cultural beliefs surrounding femininity, purity, and marriageability. In some communities, FGM is considered a rite of passage into womanhood and is believed to preserve chastity and control female sexuality. However, the consequences of FGM can be severe and long-lasting. Physical complications may include chronic pain, infection, urinary problems, and complications during childbirth. Moreover, FGM can have profound psychological effects, including trauma, anxiety, depression, and a diminished sense of self-worth (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021). Despite increasing awareness of its harmful effects, FGM persists in many parts of the world due to social pressure, tradition, and the perception of FGM

Domestic Violence and the Girl Child

Domestic violence against the girl child is a distressing reality that persists globally, including in Nigeria (Igbolekwu et. al., 2021). This form of violence involves a range of abusive behaviors perpetrated against girls within familial or intimate relationships, often with devastating consequences for their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. In Nigeria, cultural norms, patriarchal structures, and socioeconomic factors contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence against girls, perpetuating harmful practices and inhibiting their ability to seek help or escape abusive situations.

One common form of domestic violence against the girl child in Nigeria is physical abuse, which can include acts such as corporal punishment, beating, or even harmful traditional practices like female genital mutilation (FGM). For instance, in some communities, girls may be subjected to FGM as a cultural rite of passage, despite its significant health risks and violation of their bodily autonomy. Additionally, corporal punishment in households and schools is still widely practiced, with girls often bearing the brunt of such discipline, leading to physical harm and emotional trauma (Igbolekwu et. al., 2021).

Emotional abuse is another prevalent form of domestic violence against the girl child in Nigeria, encompassing behaviors such as verbal insults, humiliation, and manipulation designed to undermine the girl's self-esteem and agency. For example, girls may experience emotional abuse from family members who belittle their aspirations, criticize their appearance, or impose unrealistic expectations on them. Furthermore, girls may face emotional abuse in intimate relationships, where partners use tactics like gas lighting or threats to control and manipulate them, perpetuating cycles of fear and dependency (WHO, 2018).

Sexual abuse is a grave concern for girls in Nigeria, with instances ranging from incest and child marriage to rape and sexual exploitation. Child marriage remains prevalent in some regions of Nigeria, despite legal prohibitions, robbing girls of their childhoods and subjecting them to early pregnancy, limited education, and heightened vulnerability to domestic violence. Moreover, cases of rape and sexual assault against girls, both within and outside the home, often go unreported and unpunished due to cultural stigma, fear of reprisal, and systemic failures in the justice system (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021).

Economic abuse also affects girls in Nigeria within domestic settings, where they may experience financial exploitation and dependency on abusive caregivers or partners. For example, girls may be denied access to education or economic opportunities, forced into child labor, or exploited for domestic work without fair compensation. Additionally, girls may face economic abuse in the form of financial control by family members or partners, limiting their ability to make independent decisions or access resources to escape abusive situations (Johnson, Chen, Stylianou, & Arnold, 2022).

2.3 Causes of Domestic Violence

The causes of domestic violence are many, complex and varied depending on the types of violence. The widespread poverty and the political, cultural and religious marginalization of women in Africa, make the African woman more vulnerable to domestic violence. Traditional attitude towards women all over the world help perpetuate the violence. Stereotypical roles in which women are seen as subordinate to men constrain a woman's ability to exercise choices that would enable her end the abuse.

According to UNICEF, causes of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) of which domestic violence is part, can be categorized into four broad categories as being: Socio-cultural causes; Economic causes; Legal causes; and Political causes.

Socio-cultural causes

Social-cultural causes include gender-specific socialization, cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles, expectations of roles in relationships, belief in the inherent superiority of males; values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls; notion of the family as the private sphere and under male control and acceptability of violence as a means to resolve conflict.

Economic causes

Economic causes include women's economic dependence on men, limited access to cash and credit; discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands and maintenance after divorce or widowhood; limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors; and limited access to education and training.

Legal causes

Legal causes include lesser legal status of women either by written law and/or by practice; laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance; low levels of legal illiteracy among women.

Political Causes

Political causes include limited organization of women as a political force; and limited participation of women in political system.

2.4 Consequences of Domestic Violence

The consequences of domestic violence are profound and far-reaching, affecting victims physically, emotionally, socially, and economically (Adegoke, Niyi, & Durojaye, 2021). At a physical level, victims may suffer from injuries ranging from bruises and broken bones to more severe injuries requiring medical intervention. Chronic exposure to physical violence can lead to long-term health problems, such as chronic pain, migraines, gastrointestinal disorders, and even traumatic brain injury. In extreme cases, domestic violence can result in death, with intimate partner homicide being a significant cause of mortality among women globally.

Emotionally, victims of domestic violence often experience a range of psychological effects, including anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and low

self-esteem (Cirici, Soler, Cobo, & Alberti, 2023). They may struggle with feelings of shame, guilt, and worthlessness, compounded by the emotional manipulation and gas lighting tactics commonly employed by abusers. These emotional scars can persist long after the abuse has ended, impacting victims' ability to trust others, form healthy relationships, and maintain a sense of self-worth.

Socially, domestic violence can isolate victims from their support networks, as abusers often seek to control their victims by limiting their contact with friends, family, and community resources (Nolet, Morselli, & Cousineau, 2021). This isolation can further exacerbate feelings of loneliness, helplessness, and dependence on the abuser. Victims may also face stigma and judgment from others who may blame them for the abuse or question why they stay in abusive relationships, leading to further social withdrawal and alienation.

Economically, domestic violence can have devastating consequences for victims' financial stability and independence (Johnson, Chen, Stylianou, & Arnold, 2022). Economic abuse, such as controlling access to finances, sabotaging employment opportunities, or forcing the victim to quit their job, can leave victims financially dependent on their abuser and unable to support themselves or their children if they choose to leave the relationship (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021). This financial dependence can act as a significant barrier to seeking help or leaving an abusive situation, trapping victims in cycles of abuse and economic hardship.

Furthermore, children who witness domestic violence in their homes are also profoundly impacted, experiencing a range of emotional, behavioral, and developmental problems. They may struggle with issues such as anxiety, depression, aggression, and academic

difficulties, and are at increased risk of perpetuating or becoming victims of violence themselves later in life (Adegoke, Niyi, & Durojaye, 2021). The intergenerational transmission of trauma perpetuates the cycle of abuse, underscoring the urgent need for interventions that address the needs of both victims and their children.

2.5 Effects on Women, Children, Men and the Society

People who have exposed to domestic violence often experience physical, mental or spiritual shifts. This is because abuse can have a serious impact on the way a person thinks and interacts with the world around them. The chronic exposure to domestic violence—and the stress fear resulting from this exposure—can cause not only immediate physical injury but also mental shifts that occur as the mind attempts to process trauma or protect the body.

In women the most common effect of domestic violence is Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). This is a mental health condition that is triggered by a terrifying event. Common symptoms associated with PTSD are flashbacks, nightmares, severe anxiety and uncontrollable thoughts about the event. These symptoms can also be found among children that have been exposed and can persist till adulthood.

Depression and dissociation is another symptom exhibited by survivors of domestic violence. Coping with the effects of domestic violence can be overwhelming, often because the survivor's control over the situation has been taken away by the perpetrator. When this happens, a survivor may have the need to self-medicate or use drugs or alcohol to help him or her cope with the overwhelming feelings.

Effects of this include prolonged sadness, feelings of hopelessness, unexplained crying, changes in appetite with significant weight loss or gain, loss of interest and pleasure in

activities previously enjoyed etc. in extreme cases of depression, people may even experience suicidal thoughts and/or attempts. Children of abuse feel isolated and vulnerable. They are starved of attention, affection and approval. Because Mom is trying to survive she is often not present for her children. Because Dad is so consumed with controlling everyone, he also is not present for his children. These children become physically, emotionally and psychologically abandoned.

Domestic violence is also the most common factor contributing to homelessness among women and their children. They may be forced from their homes in order to escape violence, disrupting social support networks as well as children's schooling and social networks which can be a major factor in hindering development in the society.

Health Effects

The main stream of domestic violence research is related to the consequences on the violence survivors. This issue is more discussed by medical researchers with the scope of their study were more focused on the impact of violence on the victims' health consequences (Flury, Nyberg, & Riecher-Rössler, 2010; Hamberger et al., 1998; Mukashema, 2014; Ramsay, Richardson, Carter, Davidson, & Feder, 2002; Rodriguez, Quiroga, & Bauer, 1996; Sukeri & Man, 2017; Tetikcok et al., 2016). Some researchers found that continuous occurrences of domestic violence might affects victims' health such as bleeding, miscarriage, dizziness, vaginal bleeding, unwanted pregnant, having problems in their movement, suffering from various illnesses, losing alot of weight and sexually transmitted diseases including HIV (Afifi et al., 2011; García-moreno, Claudia; Jansen, Henrica; Ellsberg, Mary; Heise, Lori; and Watts, 2005; Kapoor, 2000; Naved, 2013; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015). However, some researchers have identified this

kind of unwanted behaviour as short-term effect of domestic violence in which the effect would gradually disappear as the physical wound heals. This commonly occurs when both husband and his wife insist to demonstrate the power when troubled.

Consequently, physical fight occurs, and the physically fit partner runs the show. The outcomes include bleeding from cuts and bruises, dislocated joints and, in the worst case, fracture of the bone (Ergöner et al., 2009; Kapoor, 2000; MacGregor et al., 2016; Özçakar, Yeşiltepe, Karaman, & Ergöner, 2016; Özçakar et al., 2016). At this point, the domestic violence constitutes of a criminal act and should be referred the relevant law authority. When the induced injury case is severe and need hospitalization, it also causes financial burden to the family. Nevertheless, the short-term effects gradually disappear as the physical wound heals. Apart from the impact on physical health, previous researchers also reported that female survivors of domestic violence were also affected in terms of mental health such as depression, fear, anxiety, low self-esteem, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Kapoor, 2000; Leonardsson & San Sebastian, 2017; Pickover et al., 2017). These effects are known as longterm effects that are more severe and affect the victim, their children and the close family members. The verbal abuse, executed either through excessive intonation, threatening statements and/or vulgar remarks could easily induce psychological trauma (Golu, 2014; Kapoor, 2000; Lancet, 2016). Such behaviour indicates the lack of respect and inability to manage anger and stressful state of mind. The effect is manifested in emotional distress leading to sadness, feeling inferior and loss of motivation

2.6 Strategies to the Eradication of Domestic Violence

Eradicating domestic violence requires a different approach that addresses the root causes of the issue and provides comprehensive support to victims. One crucial strategy is raising awareness and promoting education about healthy relationships and the dynamics of abuse. This includes implementing programs in schools, workplaces, and communities that teach individuals to recognize the signs of domestic violence, understand its impact, and learn how to access support services (Egharevba & Omorogiuwa, 2021). Another key strategy is strengthening legal protections and improving access to justice for victims of domestic violence (Beqiraj, Julinda, & McNamara, 2015). This involves enacting and enforcing laws that criminalize abusive behavior, provide legal remedies for victims, and ensure swift and effective prosecution of perpetrators. Additionally, measures such as restraining orders, emergency shelters, and specialized courts can offer immediate protection and support to those at risk (Omorogiuwa, 2021). By holding abusers accountable for their actions and providing avenues for recourse, the legal system can empower victims to seek help and break free from abusive situations.

Furthermore, community-based interventions play a vital role in addressing domestic violence and supporting survivors (Oyediran & Kolawole, 2021). This includes establishing local support networks, helplines, and crisis centers where victims can access counseling, safety planning, and practical assistance. Community organizations, faith-based groups, and grassroots initiatives can also provide valuable resources and aDomestic violenceocacy efforts to raise awareness, challenge stigma, and mobilize community action against domestic violence. By building networks of solidarity and

support, communities can create safe spaces where victims feel empowered to seek help and heal from the trauma of abuse (Oyediran & Kolawole, 2021).

Moreover, collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and social service organizations, is essential for a coordinated response to domestic violence (Chukwuma & Josephine, 2020). By working together, these entities can streamline services, share information, and coordinate efforts to identify and intervene in cases of abuse more effectively. Interdisciplinary approaches that integrate legal, medical, psychological, and social support services can ensure that victims receive comprehensive care and assistance tailored to their needs. Additionally, partnerships with employers, housing providers, and other institutions can help create environments that are supportive and responsive to the needs of those affected by domestic violence (Chukwuma & Josephine, 2020)

Victims of Domestic Violence

a) Victim Characteristics

The core characteristics of domestic violence victims detected by many researchers is that they have low level of education (Coutinho et al., 2015; Naved, 2013; Shuib et al., 2013) and have low participation in income generating activities (Naved, 2013; Pickover et al., 2017). Some researchers agree on the status of housewives has been equated with female powerlessness (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986). In other words, a housewife and a man who solely breadwinner may reflect male dominance (Caetano et al., 2008). On the other hand, there are also researchers who find that the victim is made up of those who attended or completed college (Pickover et al., 2017) and have high income (Khawaja, Linos, &

ElRoueiheb, 2008) or at least have permanent employment status (MacGregor, Wathen, &MacQuarrie, 2016).

There is also a study that identifies victims traits by taking into account the body mass index (BMI) before pregnancy. The study found that the majority of the victims were comprised of those with low / normal weight, followed by those who were overweight and obese (Coutinho et al., 2015). In terms of age of the victim, older individuals are less likely to be victims (Caetano et al., 2008; Khawaja et al., 2008; Shuib et al., 2013; Unal et al., 2016). Domestic violence is also said to be related to rural community (Devries et al., 2011; Ghimire, Axinn, & Smith-Greenaway, 2015; Kaur & Garg, 2010; Naved, 2013; Speizer, 2011; Tetikcok et al., 2016). However, there are also studies who found that domestic violence happens regardless of place of residence either rural or urban (Leonardsson & San Sebastian, 2017; Naved, 2013; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015). More interestingly, there are studies that found women who have positive attitude toward wife beating (Khawaja et al., 2008; Speizer, 2011). A study done by Khawaja and colleagues (2008) woman show a positive attitude towards the behavior of wifebeating if women who are deliberately disobeys what the husband asks of her, disrespecting his family, goes out in public alone, behaves in a way he dislikes, and speaks in a hostile way to him. A recent study done by Leonardsson and San Sebastian (2017) explained that witnessing violence between parents while growing up is an example of a personal history that may affect women's accepting attitude toward wife-beating. These findings has received widespread support from most scholars (Devries et al., 2011; Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986).

Many researchers also claim that victims of domestic violence often comprised of those who have poor communication skills (Gangoli, Razak, & Mccarry, 2006; Ludermir et al., 2010; Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015; Shuib et al., 2013; Walker, Bowen, Brown, & Sleath, 2015). No or little interspousal communication significantly increases the likelihood of becoming a victim of violence (Semahegn & Mengistie, 2015). Ineffective communication can lead to confusion, disagreements and provocation (Khan, 2015). This is in line with researches conducted by scholars (Eigenberg & Garland, 2003; Pavlou & Knowles, 2001) who found that provocation by a wife (victim) towards a husband (perpetrator) would lead to less sympathy for the wife whereby verbal abuse begins and increase the risk of physical abuse. This weak communication problem also caused the victims of the violence to refuse to seek help (Ahmad, Driver, McNally, & Stewart, 2009; Hamberger, Ambuel, Marbella, & Donze, 1998; Khan, 2015; Leonardsson & San Sebastian, 2017; Loke, Emma Wan, & Hayter, 2012; Oon et al., 2016). Some other researchers (Ahmad et al., 2009; Loke et al., 2012) highlighted that women with experiences of domestic violence delay help-seeking or reluctant to seek help because of social stigma, marriage obligations, loss of social support and afraid of being ridiculed or ignored. Some scholars believe that women tend to share information about their partners' behaviour with individuals who are close with them because this problem is consider as a private matter (Oon et al., 2016).

b) Perpetrator Characteristics

In most cases, the main causes of domestic violence are hot tempered attitude among perpetrators (Johari, 2017). Moreover, this act of physical aggression tends to be more severe and more likely to lead to serious harm when the perpetrator is drunk. Besides, the

psychological characteristics (e.g., jealousy, attitudes toward violence, etc.), psychopathology relationship characteristics (eg, marital satisfaction) also associated with the characteristics of domestic violence actors (Cools & Kotsadam, 2017; Kernsmith & Tolman, 2011; Stith, Smith, Penn, Ward, & Tritt, 2004). Specifically, low marital satisfaction was identified as a risk factor for domestic violence (Stith, Green, Smith, Ward, 2008).

Other features for perpetrators of domestic violence are those under the influence of alcohol (Caetano et al., 2008; Duke, Pettingell, McMorris, & Borowsky, 2010; Gonzalez, Connell, Businelle, Jennings, & Chartier, 2014; Kaur & Garg, 2010; Mahapatro, Gupta, & Gupta, 2012; Reingle et al., 2013), and drug or marijuana abuses (Fergusson, John Horwood, & Ridder, 2005; Gonzalez et al., 2014; Stith et al., 2004; Zinzow et al., 2009).

Some studies linking violent behavior by perpetrators are due to the fact of them being exposed to parental violence while growing up (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986; Stith et al., 2004). If parents handle stress and disappointment with anger and aggression, children who have grown up in such an environment are at higher risk to exhibit the same behavior as witnessed (Mihalic & Elliott, 1997) which could lead to mental instability. This finding is supported by Kapoor, (2000) who highlighted that violence can be learned as a way of resolving conflict and affirming the fairness of children who have witnessed such conflict resolution patterns. Individuals suffering from mental instability have a higher risk of abusing their partners (Eckhardt, 2011, Birkley & Eckhardt, 2015).

A perpetrator's level of education seems to have an impact on victim's experiences of violence. A metaanalysis of perpetrator characteristics for domestic violence against women showed that younger, less educated, and less affluent men were more likely to

abuse their partners than were older, more educated, and more affluent men (Stith, Smith, Penn & Ward, 2004). The pattern of this trend is consistent across education groups in which the higher the perpetrator's education, the lower the prevalence of violent behavior.

Empirical Reviews

Joy and Nkechi (2022) conducted a study in Egor, Benin City, focusing on socio-cultural factors influencing domestic violence among women. The study aimed to identify these factors within the specified area, adopting feminist theory as its theoretical framework. Respondents consisted of married women and men residing in Egor Local Government, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. Data collection involved the personal administration of 100 questionnaires, selected through purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, resulting in valid responses. The analysis revealed several key findings: cultural dynamics significantly influence domestic violence among women, physical dynamics do not have a significant effect on domestic violence, and patriarchal leanings have a significant impact on domestic violence (Joy & Nkechi, 2022). Recommendations stemming from the study include urging social workers to consider the influence of cultural dynamics and patriarchal leanings, aligning professional services to protect the girl child, and advocating for increased investment by practitioners, government, and non-governmental organizations in empowering and meeting the needs of the girl child (Joy & Nkechi, 2022).

Ifeoma (2020) conducted a study on the influence of domestic violence among Senior Secondary School Girls in Itesiwaju Local Government Area of Oyo State. The research design adopted was ex-post facto. The population comprised all Senior Secondary School Students of Itesiwaju Local Government in Oyo State, with a target population of 1,280

individuals. Thirty-two respondents were selected from 40 Senior Secondary Schools used for the study. Simple random sampling was employed to select the schools, while purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. The questionnaire on the Influence of Domestic Violence among Senior Secondary School Girls (DVASSG) was utilized to gather information, which underwent validation, resulting in a test-retest reliability of 0.74. Chi-square was applied to test the hypothesis at a 0.05 level of significance (Ifeoma, 2020).

The findings indicated a high level of domestic violence among secondary school students in Itesiwaju Local Government Area, Oyo State, and particularly impacting girl-child academic performance significantly. Based on these results, it was recommended that awareness campaigns on the dangers of violence against the girl-child should be conducted to educate and sensitize the community, aiming to eradicate such violence (Ifeoma, 2020). Additionally, promoting coping mechanisms among students to address social vices associated with violence, especially among the girl-child, was advised. Furthermore, the society should assume responsibility for reporting suspected abusers to child protection agencies or the police to mitigate the prevalence of violence. Finally, the formulation of strict laws to protect female children from domestic violence was suggested as a preventive measure (Ifeoma, 2020).

Christiana (2012) conducted a study in Taraba State to assess domestic violence against women and its impact on family relationships. The literature review emphasized that victims of sexual abuse often come from marginalized groups such as those with low economic status, underage individuals, those with illnesses or disabilities, or those under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Domestic violence, regardless of race or education level,

persists in homes, perpetuating the societal view of women as second-class citizens (Christiana, 2012). The study focused on married couples in four selected local government areas of Taraba State, with a total population of 266,244, utilizing a descriptive survey research design. Four research objectives were formulated, each corresponding to four research questions and null hypotheses. A sample of 500 participants was selected using sampling techniques, and data collection relied on a 33-item questionnaire. The researchers, were, assisted by three trained research assistants from the study areas, collected data. The findings revealed a significant relationship between domestic violence against women and family relationships (Christiana, 2012). Specifically, the study found a pronounced effect of spousal abuse on family relationships, as evidenced by partners giving threatening looks when disagreements arose, instilling fear. The recommendation was made for religious and community elders in Taraba State to promote discussions on fostering healthy homes, advocating for mutual respect among partners, and encouraging joint decision-making to strengthen family relationships (Christiana, 2012).

Helen (2012) conducted a study in Zaria Communities of Kaduna State, Nigeria, focusing on exploring perceptions of domestic violence against women and its effects on their health. The research was carried out in four communities within Zaria, aiming to identify and describe the forms of domestic violence experienced by women, examine its prevalence and nature, explore factors contributing to its occurrence, identify its effects on women's health, investigate coping strategies adopted by victims, and suggest ways to mitigate its incidence (Helen, 2012). The study adopted the Liberal Feminist Theory as its theoretical framework, based on the assumption that men, as the dominant class, have

differential access to resources, leading to the devaluation of women and the normalization of intimate partner abuse within families. Data collection involved surveying 186 respondents aged 10 to 30 years and above, conducting four in-depth interviews, and facilitating three focus group discussions (Helen, 2012).

The findings indicated the presence of domestic violence in the community, with the most common forms being Sexual Assault (30%, 55 cases) and Spouse Battering (22%, 41 cases). Victims experienced various effects such as bruises/injuries (54%, 100 cases) and stress-related injuries (52%, 96 cases). Factors contributing to domestic violence included the age of marriage, marriage customs, and socioeconomic status (Helen, 2012). Reasons cited for its existence and its a domestic violence impact on women's health included poverty, spouse attitudes, and disobedience within couples. Coping mechanisms identified among respondents included interactive relationships with children, isolation, depression, acceptance, and turning to religious faith for solace. Recommendations from respondents included legal consequences for perpetrators, seeking spiritual intervention, implementing counseling and dialogue initiatives, and timely reporting of domestic violence cases to parents and community leaders (Helen, 2012).

The reviewed literature on the impact of domestic violence on women and girl child underscores the pervasive nature of abuse within intimate relationships and families. Various forms of domestic violence, including physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuse, inflict significant harm on victims, leading to long-term physical, psychological, and emotional consequences. However, despite the extensive research conducted in this field, there remains a notable gap in understanding the intersecting factors contributing to domestic violence, particularly within the Nigerian context. While existing studies

provide valuable insights into the prevalence and nature of abuse, there is a need for more comprehensive examinations of the cultural, socioeconomic, and institutional dynamics that perpetuate violence against women and girls.

The current study aims to address this gap in the literature by adopting a multidimensional approach grounded in the Ecological Systems Theory. This theoretical framework recognizes the complex interplay between individual, interpersonal, community, and societal factors in shaping experiences of domestic violence. By examining the micro-level dynamics within family units, mezzo-level influences of community and institutional support systems, and macro-level impact of legal and social norms, the study seeks to provide a holistic understanding of the root causes and consequences of domestic violence. Through this comprehensive analysis, the study aims to identify targeted interventions and strategies for the eradication of domestic violence, with a particular focus on empowering women and girls to seek help and break free from abusive situations.

Theoretical Framework

Domestic violence has been approached within various frameworks and viewpoints. These frameworks provide knowledge as well as understanding regarding violence problems. Many. Some researchers focus on biological factors such as genetics or brain functioning, while others examine the socialization and cultural factors, stating that it may be learned from the culture or the family. Still others contend that it is the patriarchal structure that both maintains and promotes violence against women.

No one theory can fully explain the causes of domestic violence and also provide a reason for battered women continuing with the relationship. We need to acknowledge and

accept that domestic violence has a multiplicity of causal relationships. The general consensus among researchers seems to indicate that no one theory can adequately describe the dimension and the phenomena of this problem.

There are two general theoretical levels that underpinned this study; the first is the Gendered Resource Theory and the second is from the perspective of sociocultural.

Gendered Resource Theory

Understanding the predictors of domestic violence (DV) is the longstanding goal of macro social research. This stream of research has several key components. Drawing on Atkinson, Greenstein, and Lang (2005) work, there are three general versions of theories on how resources affect the prevalence of domestic violence against women. Two social structural views generally used to describe domestic violence against women are resource theory and relative resource theory. The level of resources has been identified as the primary predictor of domestic violence against women. According to these authors, resource theory refers to married men who have few resources to offer while for relative resource theory refers to those married men who have fewer resources than their wives.

Specifically, both theories reflect the possession of resources as the primary predictor of domestic violence against women, which is typically operationalized as education, earnings, or employment. The perpetrators use violence to gain obedience and compliance in the absence of resources (Atkinson, Greenstein, & Lang, 2005) as they view it as a power base, as an alternative to material resources. Relatively more women resources could increase violence due to the stress caused by status instability (Heise, 2011; Gracia & Merlo; 2016). On the other hand, scholars have recently argued that relatively less women resources could lead to more violence due to marital dependency

(Davis & Greenstein, 2009). Extending this logic, resource theory has been refined to maximize the prediction that husbands' gender ideologies are critical, where the degree to which men hold breadwinner ideals is important. Gender ideologies are how one identifies oneself with regard to marital status which range from „traditional“ (viewed by the belief that husbands should be primary breadwinners and wives should remain at home) to egalitarian“ (viewed by the belief that women's share in total household income is crucial). Thus, gender ideology acts as a lens whereby individuals view their social world and make decisions. In keeping with these views, Atkinson et al. (2005), who observed the husband's gender ideology and its relationship with women's share of household earnings, found that the women's share in total household earnings is positively related to risk of violence only when husband is traditional. From the view of gendered resource theory, women who are primary breadwinners and who have traditional husbands are at the highest risk of violence. Structural explanations of women abuse from these resource theories namely, resource, relative and gendered resource theory emphasize violence as compensation for husbands' shortage of resources. These theories have received wide support (Gracia & Merlo, 2016). From a social point of view, these theories say that men are the head of the family and have the power to maintain dominance in the family (Davis & Greenstein, 2009).

On top of that, gendered resource theory has been widely applied to study how economic related to gender roles increase women's risk for domestic violence. Naved (2013) investigates the magnitude and nature of domestic violence against women and the factors related in urban and rural Bangladesh. He found that women with fewer resources become economically dependent on their partners, which in turn limits their negotiating

power and their ability to diminish physical violence. This argument showed the relationship between resources and violence need not be linear as increased resources could also lead to more domestic violence against women (Cools & Kotsadam, 2017; Gracia & Merlo, 2016). This statement is in line with (Rahman, Hoque, & Makinoda, 2011), that found women's empowerment does not guarantee reduction in the risk of domestic violence against women. Findings show that domestic violence, especially physical and sexual violence, is increasing despite the fact that the wife has fulfilled all her husband's requests. From the previous researches mentioned above, it is clear that domestic violence is a complicated issue to study and this research requires comprehensive approaches from community for some valuable implications. Therefore, this research deserves further investigation.

Socio-cultural Perspectives

Violence is not a single kind of activity, generally, it involves socially category of activities that share some common features. Violence has been described as social phenomenon. Rather than look inside the perpetrator for the causes of violence, social-cultural perspectives look in the social situation for factors that may explain why violence varies in frequency and intensity (Lawson, 2012). This study is intended to help prevent violence by highlighting the understandings of the social-cultural perspective and its implication and integration influences that could contribute in combating domestic violence Individual experiences become social when they are shared or communicated. It is the combined experiences of many individuals, shared in these ways that makes up a culture or a society. Within cultures and societies shared experiences are organized into categories of events referred to variously as concepts, constructs, and schemas (Blume, 1996).

The social approach to domestic violence includes both formal and informal understandings whereby it values on the common compared to the individual experience. Because of this emphasis on shared experience in social groupings, social theories are most useful in suggesting ways in which behaviour change can be accomplished by addressing social phenomena rather than by attempting to alter the individual (Dobash & Dobash, 2015). Violence is a result of power differences between social groups (gender, social class, age). Social norms provide society with guidelines as to how people should act and how their emotions should be expressed. Therefore, social norms control the power distribution within society that examines violence in terms of socially structured inequality, and social cultural norms and attitudes.

Social Learning Theory is come under socio cultural perspectives which views that children who either experience violence themselves or who witness violence between their parents are more likely to use violence when they grow up (Bandura, 1971; Mihalic & Elliott, 1997). As mentioned earlier, family institution is a crucial foundation in the whole framework of the construction and continuity of the social development in community. The destruction of this institution means the destruction of the community itself. It is the place where people learn the roles of husband and wife, parent and child, learn how to deal with various stresses, frustrations and where a person first experiences violence as well. The socio-cultural perspectives also examine the cultural systems which influence every aspect of society.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Preamble

This chapter discusses the systematic plan for conducting research. It presents the plan that was adopted for this study. This chapter is treated in the following subheadings

3.1 Research Area

The research area for this study is Ekosodin, a community located in Ovia North East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria. Ekosodin is situated in the northern part of Benin City, the capital of Edo State. The community has a population of around 45,000 people. The primary language spoken in Ekosodin is Bini because they are not all Edo origin, although many residents also speak English and other Nigerian languages. The majority of the population practice Christianity, with a significant number of residents also practicing traditional religion.

3.2 Research Design

A research design according to Andrew B. Kirumbi (2018) is the set of method and procedures used in collecting and analyzing measures of the variables specified in the research problem. This study adopted a descriptive survey method. Adeyemo (2006), cited in Olowe (2011), describe descriptive survey research design as a design that critically examines opinions, attitudes, subjects or ideas with the aim of providing accurate information about the phenomenon being studied. This design was appropriate for this study as it enabled the researcher to objectively describe the opinion of the participants on the issues related to domestic violence and strategies that can be used to effectively militate it.

3.3 Population of the Study

As of the 2006 census conducted by the National Population Commission, Ekosodin community was estimated to have a population of 7,000 people. This population has been projected to grow by 543.2% using a geometric method, reaching an estimated 45,000 people by the year 2022 (Ogeah and Ajalaye, 2011).

3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The total population for the study consist of residents of Ekosodin, Benin City. This entails a total of 45,000 people. The sample for the study however is 400 people. The Taro Yamane formula was utilized in arriving at the sample size to be used. The formula is given as follows:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Population Size

e = Margin of error (0.05)

Thus, our sample size used in the study is given below:

$$n = 45,000 / (1 + 45,000 * 0.05^2) = 400 \text{ people}$$

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The main instrument that was used is the questionnaire to get responses from the respondents. The first part was designed to gather demographic information from the respondents while the second part contain questions that related the subject matter.

3.6 Validity of the Instrument

To ensure validity of the questionnaire a test and pre-test carried out. The research instrument was checked by calculating its content validity index (cvi). The questionnaire was first given to an expert to perform a pilot test.

3.7 Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure reliability of the instrument and to build confidence that the instrument yield good results, Cronbach's alpha test was performed on the Likert scales instrument. To ascertain whether the items are reliable in measuring the same dimension, a test for Cronbach's alpha was used. The Cronbach's alpha test is usually applied to test the consistency and stability of the questionnaires which measure latent variables.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

A vigilant analysis of the research was conducted using the Likert scale method. The Likert scale are anchored by (SA- Strongly agree, A-Agree, U- Undecided, D- Disagree, SD- Strongly disagree). This was related to the aim of the research. The primary data collected through the questionnaire was designed for this project, was analyzed with descriptive statistics. In this vein, well computed frequency distributions, averages, modes, range and percentages. These percentages enable us draw inferences on the degree of occurrence of the variables measured within our study sample. Also, the inferential statistics was adopted in testing the hypothesis of the data generated for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR
DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the data collected for the purpose of which this study developed. The analysis therefore involves the use of statistical methods in order to provide a rich background for the investigation. The statistical tool employed is the descriptive statistics which are used to provide the initial characterization of the data. The statistical analysis was use with the goal of performing the empirical analysis and obtaining estimated coefficients which are valid enough to test the hypotheses in the study. As explained in the previous chapter SPSS was use as statistical package in this study. 400 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents but only 395 were correctly attended to and returned for analysis.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis
Frequency Sex

Table 4.1.1: Gender

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	125	31.65	31.65	31.65
	Female	270	68.35	68.35	100
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From the above sex distribution table, 125 respondents representing 31.65% were male, and 270 respondents representing 68.35% were female. In the above, it can be seen that the respondents consist of both male and female.

Table 4.1.2. Age

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 30 Years	40	10.13	10.13	10.13
	18-20 Years	175	44.3	44.3	54.43
	21-25 years	70	17.72	17.72	72.15
	26-30 Years	85	21.52	21.52	93.67
	31-years and above	25	6.33	6.33	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On the age distribution table above, 40 respondents representing 10.13% were less than 30 years, 175 respondents representing 44.3 were between the age of 18-20 years, 70 respondents representing 17.72 were between the age of 21-25 years, 85 respondents representing 21.52 were between the age of 26-30 years, and 25 respondents representing 6.33 were between the age of 31-years and above. it can be deduced that respondent were matured and adult people because majority of them were 31 years and above.

Table 4.1.3: Marital Status

Response Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Single	141	35.7	35.7	35.7
Married	254	64.3	64.3	100
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On the marital status of the respondents, 141 respondents representing 35.7 were single men and women, 254 respondents representing 64.3 were married men and women, none of the respondents were widow separated and other. Base on the above it could be deduced that most respondent were married men and women.

Table 4.1.4: Religion

Response Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Christianity	203	51.39	51.39	51.39
Muslim	109	27.59	27.59	78.98
African Traditional Religion	64	16.2	16.2	95.18
Other	19	4.81	4.81	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On the religion, 203 respondents representing 51.39 are Christian, 109 respondent representing 27.59 are Muslim, 64 respondents representing 16.2 are into African

traditional religion, while 16 respondents representing 4.81 are other option. The above statement deduced that respondent at representing Christianity religion are higher.

SECTION B: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN BENIN: A STUDY OF EKOSODIN COMMUNITY IN BENIN CITY, EDO STATE.

Table 4.2: Domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences.

Response Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	60	15.19	15.19	15.19
Disagree	40	10.13	10.13	25.32
Undecided	30	7.59	7.59	32.91
Agree	115	29.11	29.11	62.02
Strongly Agree	150	37.97	37.97	100.00
Total	395	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most of the respondents asserted that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences. On the above table 60 respondent representing 15.19% strongly disagree, 40 respondents representing 10.13% disagree, 30 respondent representing 7.59% were undecided, 115 respondents representing 29.11 agree, 150 respondents representing 37.97 strongly agree. On the above respondent opinion, it can be seen that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences.

Table 4.3: Victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin often face challenges in reporting the abuse due to cultural stigma and fear of social judgment.

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	55	13.92	13.92	13.92
	Disagree	20	5.06	5.06	18.98
	Undecided	5	1.27	1.27	20.25
	Agree	115	29.11	29.11	49.36
	Strongly Agree	200	50.63	50.63	100
	Total	395	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

When respondents were asked if victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin often face challenges in reporting the abuse due to cultural stigma and fear of social judgment, 55 respondents representing 13.92 strongly disagree, 20 respondents representing 5.06 disagree, 5 respondents representing 1.27 were undecided, 115 respondents representing 29.11 agree and 200 respondents representing 50.63 strongly agree. On the above statement it can be deduced that victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin often face challenges in reporting the abuse due to cultural stigma and fear of social judgment.

Table 4.4 The nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and psychological abuse being less common.

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	22	5.57	5.57	5.57
	Disagree	48	12.15	12.15	17.72
	Undecided	67	16.96	16.96	34.68
	Agree	94	23.80	23.80	58.48
	Strongly Agree	164	41.52	41.52	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most of the respondents reviewed that the nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and psychological abuse being less

common. In the above table 22 respondents representing 5.57 strongly disagree, 48 respondents representing 12.15 disagree, 67 respondents representing 16.96 were undecided, 94 respondents representing 23.80 agree, 164 respondents representing 41.52 strongly agree. It can be deduced that the nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and psychological abuse being less common.

Table 4.5: Domestic violence in Ekosodin affects both men and women equally, with a growing number of male victims emerging in recent years.

Response Category	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	35	8.86	8.86	8.86
Disagree	50	12.66	12.66	21.52
Undecided	75	18.99	18.99	40.51
Agree	105	26.58	26.58	67.09
Strongly Agree	130	32.91	32.91	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents believe that domestic violence in Ekosodin affects both men and women equally, with a growing number of male victims emerging in recent years. In the above table 35 respondents representing 8.86 strongly disagree, 50 respondents representing 12.66 disagree, 18.99 respondents representing 18.99 were undecided, 105 respondents representing 26.58 agree, 130 respondents representing 32.91 strongly agree. It can be concluded from the respondent responses that domestic violence in Ekosodin affects both men and women equally, with a growing number of male victims emerging in recent years.

Objectives 2: Social, Cultural, and Economic Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence

Table 4.6: Patriarchal social norms and gender inequality in Ekosodin contribute significantly to the persistence of domestic violence.

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	18	4.57	4.57	4.57
	Disagree	35	8.86	8.86	13.43
	Undecided	82	20.76	20.76	34.19
	Agree	96	24.34	24.34	58.53
	Strongly Agree	164	41.52	41.52	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents representing 4.57 and 18 respondents representing strongly disagree and disagree to the assertion that patriarchal social norms and gender inequality in Ekosodin contribute significantly to the persistence of domestic violence. 82 respondents representing 20.76 were undecided, 96 respondents representing 24.34 agree, and 164 respondents representing 41.52 strongly agree. The above statement reviewed that patriarchal social norms and gender inequality in Ekosodin contribute significantly to the persistence of domestic violence.

Table 4.7: Economic dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin are unable to leave their abusers.

Category Response		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	42	10.63	10.63	13.67
	Disagree	12	3.04	3.04	3.04
	Undecided	58	14.68	14.68	28.35
	Agree	74	18.73	18.73	47.08
	Strongly Agree	209	52.89	52.89	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents reviewed that economic dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin are unable to leave their abusers. From the above, 42 respondents representing 10.63 strongly disagree, 12 respondents representing 3.04 disagree, 58 respondents representing 14.68 were undecided, 74 respondents representing 18.73 agree, 209 respondents representing 52.89 strongly agree. The above statement reviewed that economic dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin are unable to leave their abusers.

Table 4.8: S Limited access to education and awareness about domestic violence in Ekosodin makes it difficult for victims to recognize and report abuse.

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	53	13.42	13.42	15.70
	Disagree	9	2.28	2.28	2.28
	Undecided	77	19.49	19.49	35.19
	Agree	101	25.57	25.57	60.76
	Strongly Agree	155	39.24	39.24	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On if limited access to education and awareness about domestic violence in Ekosodin makes it difficult for victims to recognize and report abuse, 53 respondents representing 13.42 strongly disagree, 9 respondents representing 2.28 disagree, 77 respondents representing 19.49 were undecided, 101 respondents representing 25.57 agree, 155 respondents representing 39.24 strongly agree. From the above analysis of the respondent opinion it was agree that limited access to education and awareness about domestic violence in Ekosodin makes it difficult for victims to recognize and report abuse.

Table 4.9 Substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) is often a major factor contributing to violent behavior in domestic relationships in Ekosodin

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	63	15.94	15.94	27.58
	Disagree	39	9.87	9.87	11.64
	Undecided	7	1.77	1.77	1.77
	Agree	92	23.28	23.28	50.86
	Strongly Agree	194	49.11	49.11	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents reviewed that substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) is often a major factor contributing to violent behavior in domestic relationships in Ekosodin. In the above table 63 respondents representing 15.94 strongly disagree, 39 respondents representing 9.87 respondents disagree, 7 respondents representing 41.77 were undecided, 92 respondents representing 23.28 agree, 194 respondents representing 49.11 strongly agree to the view. It can be concluded base on the analysis of the respondent opinion that substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) is often a major factor contributing to violent behavior in domestic relationships in Ekosodin.

Objective 3: Effectiveness of Existing Interventions, Policies, and Programs

Table 4.10: The current legal frameworks in Ekosodin, such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), are effectively enforced to address domestic violence.

Response Category		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	69	17.47	17.47	26.08
	Disagree	28	7.09	7.09	8.61
	Undecided	6	1.52	1.52	1.52
	Agree	104	26.32	26.32	52.40
	Strongly Agree	188	47.68	47.68	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A very high number of the respondents strongly uphold to the opinion that the current legal frameworks in Ekosodin, such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), are effectively enforced to address domestic violence. In the above 69 respondents representing 17.47 strongly disagree, 28 respondents representing 7.09 disagree, 6 respondents representing 1.52 were undecided, 104 respondents representing 26.32 agree, and 188 respondents representing 47.68 strongly agree. Base on the above respondent opinion analysed, it could be concluded that the current legal frameworks in Ekosodin, such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), are effectively enforced to address domestic violence.

Table 4.11: Existing community-based programs in Ekosodin, such as awareness campaigns and workshops, are effective in educating the public about domestic violence and available support services.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	56	14.15	14.15	25.54
Disagree	30	7.59	7.59	11.39
Undecided	15	3.80	3.80	3.80
Agree	95	24.06	24.06	49.61
Strongly Agree	199	50.38	50.38	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On if existing community-based programs in Ekosodin, such as awareness campaigns and workshops, are effective in educating the public about domestic violence and available support services, 56 respondents representing 14.15 strongly disagree, 30 respondents representing 7.59

disagree, 15 respondents representing 3.80 were undecided, 95 respondents representing 24.06 agree, and 199 respondents representing 50.38 strongly agree. From the above analysis of the respondent opinion, it could be deduced that existing community-based programs in Ekosodin, such as awareness campaigns and workshops, are effective in educating the public about domestic violence and available support services.

Table 4.12: The police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and responsive to domestic violence cases, ensuring victim safety and justice.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	72	18.23	18.23	27.09
Disagree	25	6.33	6.33	8.86
Undecided	10	2.53	2.53	2.53
Agree	87	22.03	22.03	49.12
Strongly Agree	201	50.88	50.88	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents reviewed that the police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and responsive to domestic violence cases, ensuring victim safety and justice. In the above, 72 respondents representing 18.23 strongly disagree, 25 respondents representing 6.33 disagree, 10 respondents representing 2.53 were undecided, 87 respondents representing 22.03 agree, 201 respondents representing 50.88 strongly agree. The above analysis reviewed that the police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and responsive to domestic violence cases.

Objective 4: Evidence-Based Recommendation for Improving prevention and responses strategies

Table 4.13: Strengthening local law enforcement training and increasing the availability of legal support are critical steps for improving the response to domestic violence in Ekosodin.

Category Response		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	67	16.96	16.96	28.86
	Disagree	42	10.63	10.63	11.90
	Undecided	5	1.27	1.27	1.27
	Agree	88	22.28	22.28	51.14
	Strongly Agree	193	48.86	48.86	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On if the police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and responsive to domestic violence cases, ensuring victim safety and justice, 67 respondents representing 16.96 strongly disagree, 42 respondents representing 10.63 disagree, 5 respondents representing 1.27

were undecided, 88 respondents representing 22.28 agree, 193 respondents representing 48.86 strongly agree. The above statement reviewed that the police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and responsive to domestic violence cases, ensuring victim safety and justice.

Table 4.14: Community-based education programs that raise awareness of domestic violence, legal rights, and available support services are essential for prevention and early intervention in Ekosodin.

Category Response		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	34	8.61	8.61	10.64
	Disagree	8	2.03	2.03	2.03
	Undecided	79	20.00	20.00	30.64
	Agree	92	23.28	23.28	53.92
	Strongly Agree	182	46.07	46.07	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Most of the respondents agree to the assertion that community-based education programs that raise awareness of domestic violence, legal rights, and available support services are essential for prevention and early intervention in Ekosodin. In the above none of the respondent strongly disagree and disagree to the assertion, 79 representing 20.00 were undecided, 56 respondents representing 92 agree, and 182 respondents representing 46.07 strongly agree. The above respondent opinion showed that community-based education programs that raise awareness for domestic violence, legal rights, and available support services are essential for prevention and early intervention in Ekosodin.

Table 4.15: Providing economic empowerment programs for women in Ekosodin, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	61	15.44	15.44	28.34
Disagree	37	9.36	9.36	12.90
Undecided	14	3.54	3.54	3.54
Agree	91	23.04	23.04	51.38
Strongly Agree	192	48.61	48.61	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents asserted that providing economic empowerment programs for women in Ekosodin, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners. In the table above 61 respondents representing 15.44 strongly disagree, 37 respondents representing 9.36 disagree, 14 respondents representing 3.54 were undecided, 91 respondents representing 23.04 agree, 192 respondents representing 48.61 strongly agree. From the above respondent opinion, it could be deduced that providing economic empowerment programs for women in Ekosodin, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners.

Table 4.16: Collaboration between traditional leaders, religious groups, and legal institutions in Ekosodin is necessary to create a holistic approach to preventing and responding to domestic violence.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	73	18.49	18.49	28.62
Disagree	33	8.36	8.36	10.13
Undecided	7	1.77	1.77	1.77
Agree	90	22.78	22.78	51.40
Strongly Agree	192	48.61	48.61	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Very high number of the respondents agree that collaboration between traditional leaders, religious groups, and legal institutions in Ekosodin is necessary to create a holistic approach to preventing and responding to domestic violence. In the above 73 respondents representing 18.49 strongly disagree, 33 respondents representing 8.36 disagree, 7 respondents representing 1.77 were undecided, 90 respondents representing 22.78 agree and 192 respondents representing 48.61 strongly agree. From the analysis, it can be deduced that there is collaboration between traditional leaders, religious groups, and legal institutions in Ekosodin.

Objective 5: The Role of Social Workers in Domestic Violence in Ekosodin

Table 4.17 Social workers play a critical role in providing immediate crisis intervention and long-term support for victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	66	16.84	16.84	27.47
Disagree	31	7.85	7.85	10.63
Undecided	11	2.78	2.78	2.78
Agree	97	24.49	24.49	51.96
Strongly Agree	190	48.10	48.10	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From the analysis, respondents asserted that social workers play a critical role in providing immediate crisis intervention and long-term support for victims of domestic. from the above table, 66 respondents representing 16.84 strongly disagree, 31 respondents representing 7.85 disagree, 11 respondents representing 2.78 were undecided, 97 respondents representing 24.49 agree, and 190 respondents represent 48.10 strongly agree to the viewed that social workers play a critical role in providing immediate crisis intervention and long-term support for victims of domestic.

Table 4.18 Social workers in Ekosodin are instrumental in advocating for the rights of victims and helping them navigate the legal system to ensure protection and justice.

Category Response		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	70	17.72	17.72	30.13
	Disagree	36	9.12	9.12	12.41
	Undecided	13	3.29	3.29	3.29
	Agree	87	22.03	22.03	52.16
	Strongly Agree	189	47.87	47.87	100.00
	Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Respondents reviewed social workers in Ekosodin are instrumental in advocating for the rights of victims and helping them navigate the legal system to ensure protection and justice. In the above table 70 respondents representing 17.72 strongly disagree, 36 respondents representing 9.12 disagree, 13 respondents representing 3.29 were undecided, 87 respondents representing 22.03 agree, 189 respondents representing 47.87 strongly agree to the view. It can be concluded base on the analysis of the respondent opinion that social workers in Ekosodin are instrumental in advocating for the rights of victims and helping them navigate the legal system to ensure protection and justice.

Table 4.19: Social workers in Ekosodin collaborate with law enforcement, healthcare providers, and NGOs to offer a coordinated response to domestic violence cases.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	60	15.19	15.19	26.33
Disagree	40	10.13	10.13	11.14
Undecided	4	1.01	1.01	1.01
Agree	98	24.82	24.82	51.15
Strongly Agree	193	48.86	48.86	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

A very high number of the respondents strongly uphold to the opinion that social workers in Ekosodin collaborate with law enforcement, healthcare providers, and NGOs to offer a coordinated response to domestic violence cases. In the above 60 respondents representing 15.19 strongly disagree, 40 respondents representing 10.13 disagree, 4 respondents representing 1.01 were undecided, 98 respondents representing 24.82 agree, and 193 respondents representing 48.86 strongly agree. Base on the above respondent opinion analysed, it could be concluded that social workers in Ekosodin collaborate with law enforcement, healthcare providers, and NGOs to offer a coordinated response to domestic violence cases.

Table 4.20: Social workers' role in community education and prevention programs is crucial in changing attitudes toward domestic violence and promoting healthier relationships in Ekosodin.

Category Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Disagree	61	15.44	15.44	26.58
Disagree	35	8.86	8.86	11.14
Undecided	9	2.28	2.28	2.28
Agree	80	20.25	20.25	46.83
Strongly Agree	210	53.16	53.16	100.00
Total	395	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2025

On if social workers' role in community education and prevention programs is crucial in changing attitudes toward domestic violence and promoting healthier relationships in Ekosodin, 61 respondents representing 15.44 strongly disagree, 35 respondents representing 8.86 disagree, 9 respondents representing 2.28 were undecided, 80 respondents representing 20.25 agree, and 210 respondents representing 53.16 strongly agree. From the above analysis of the respondent opinion, it could be deduced that social workers' role in community education and prevention programs is crucial in changing attitudes toward domestic violence and promoting healthier relationships in Ekosodin.

4.3 Discussion of Findings

The result from the analysis of the respondents' responses show that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences. Domestic violence is not merely a private issue but a societal one that affects families and communities at large, often leaving deep emotional and physical scars" (Agboola, Bayode, & Ojo, 2022). Also, it was discovered that most of the respondents reviewed that the nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and psychological abuse being less common. Physical abuse often dominates the conversation on domestic violence, but the subtler emotional and psychological forms of violence can often go unnoticed, though they are deeply harmful. Literature has reviewed that domestic violence affects both men and women equally, with a growing number of male victims emerging in recent years. Domestic violence is not limited to women; men also

suffer from domestic violence, though they are often less likely to report it" (Agnihotri et al., 2016).

Also, patriarchal social norms and gender inequality was also pointed out that it significantly contributes to the persistence of domestic violence. According to Jewkes (2002) reviewed that patriarchal social norms and entrenched gender inequality are at the root of many domestic violence cases, enabling abusive behavior to persist unchecked. Respondents reviewed that economic dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence are unable to leave their abusers. Also, it was discovered that limited access to education and awareness about domestic violence makes it difficult for victims to recognize and report abuse. "Without proper education and awareness, victims often fail to recognize abuse in their relationships, leaving them powerless to seek help (Agboola et al., 2022).

It was also reviewed that existing community-based programs in Ekosodin, such as awareness campaigns and workshops, are effective in educating the public about domestic violence and available support services. Community-based programs are key to raising awareness about domestic violence and providing necessary resources and support for victims (Tenuche, 2011).

Respondents reviewed that the police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and responsive to domestic violence cases, ensuring victim safety and justice. "The role of law enforcement in addressing domestic violence cannot be overstated; their

ability to respond effectively can significantly impact victim safety and access to justice (Amnesty International, 2005). It was also reviewed that community-based education programs that raise awareness of domestic violence, legal rights, and available support services are essential for prevention and early intervention in Ekosodin. Community education programs are a vital component in preventing domestic violence, as they empower individuals with knowledge of their rights and available support services (Bhandari & Diebold, 2010).

From the analysis, it was discovered that providing economic empowerment programs for women, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners. Economic empowerment, through initiatives such as job training and microfinance, can help women gain financial independence, reducing their vulnerability to abusive relationships (Oluremi, 2015). Also, it was reviewed that social workers play a critical role in providing immediate crisis intervention and long-term support for victims of domestic violence. Social workers are indispensable in the immediate crisis response to domestic violence, providing not only urgent support but also long-term advocacy and resources for victims. Finally, it was reviewed that social workers are instrumental in advocating for the rights of victims and helping them navigate the legal system to ensure protection and justice. According to Brodwin & Siu, (2007). Social workers play a pivotal role in advocating for victims' rights and assisting them in navigating the legal system to ensure justice and protection.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDING, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Summary of Findings

This work focused on domestic violence in Benin: A study of Ekosodin community in Benin City, Edo State. The study specifically identify the concept of domestic violence in Ekosodin, with a focus on understanding the scope and nature of the problem, examine the social, cultural, and economic factors that contribute to domestic violence in the area, and how they impact victims, perpetrators, and the community, assess the effectiveness of existing interventions, policies, and programs aimed at preventing and responding to domestic violence in Ekosodin, develop evidence-based recommendations for improving prevention and response strategies, and enhancing support services for survivors of domestic violence in the area, Find out the role of social workers in domestic violence in Ekosodin. In this study, descriptive statistics method was use which consist of frequency, percentage means and a crostabulation method was also used in the study. A total number of 400 questionnaires was distributed to women ranging from those who are single to those in relationships, to the married, separated, divorced and widowers.

Based on the analysis of the respondent responses it was discovered that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences. The findings support the view of Agboola, Bayode, & Ojo, (2022), that domestic violence is not merely a private issue but a societal one that affects families and communities at large, often leaving deep emotional and physical scars. The study also, reviewed that the nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and

psychological abuse being less common. Physical abuse often dominates the conversation on domestic violence, but the subtler emotional and psychological forms of violence can often go unnoticed, though they are deeply harmful. (Bograd & Mederos, 1999). Literature has reviewed that domestic violence affects both men and women equally, with a growing number of male victims emerging in recent years. Domestic violence is not limited to women; men also suffer from domestic violence, though they are often less likely to report it" (Agnihotri et al., 2016).

5.2 Conclusion

Issues of domestic violence in Benin have been researched on by several literatures. The work of Caetano et al., (2008), shows that substance abuse, including alcohol and drugs, can significantly exacerbate violent behavior in domestic relationships, making it more difficult for victims to escape the cycle of abuse.

Based on the analysis of the respondents in this work the following findings were made:

1. Domestic Violence in Ekosodin: Scope and Nature of the Problem. It can be concluded that domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impact families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences. Also, victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin often face challenges in reporting the abuse due to culture and stigma as well as fear of social judgement.
2. Social, Cultural, and Economic Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence. Patriarchal social norms and gender inequality in Ekosodin contribute significantly to the persistence of domestic violence. Also, the economic

dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin are unable to leave their abusers. Substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) is often a major factor contributing to violent behavior in domestic relationships. And also the current legal frameworks in Ekosodin, such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), are effectively enforced to address domestic violence. Also, Policies, and Programs. Existing community-based programs in Ekosodin, such as awareness campaigns and workshops, are effective in educating the public about domestic violence and available support services.

3. Evidence-Based Recommendations for Improving Prevention and Response Strategies. Strengthening local law enforcement training and increasing the availability of legal support are critical steps for improving the response to domestic violence in Ekosodin. It can also be concluded that providing economic empowerment programs for women in Ekosodin, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners.
4. The Role of Social Workers in Domestic Violence in Ekosodin. It can be concluded that Social workers play a critical role in providing immediate crisis intervention and long-term support for victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin. Also, that social workers in Ekosodin are instrumental in advocating for the rights of victims and helping them navigate the legal system to ensure protection and justice.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations were made:

- There is a need to enhance community education and awareness campaigns to address cultural stigma and encourage victims to report abuse. Public education should focus on challenging patriarchal norms and informing people about available support services.
- There is a need to promote economic empowerment for women through job training programs and microfinance initiatives. This will reduce women's financial dependence on abusive partners and give them the means to leave violent situations.
- There is a need to strengthen law enforcement training to improve their response to domestic violence cases. Officers should be trained to handle such cases with sensitivity and ensure that victims feel safe when reporting abuse. And also there is a need to increase access to legal support services for victims of domestic violence. More free or affordable legal services should be made available to help victims navigate the legal system and take full advantage of laws like the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP).
- There is a need to support and expand the role of social workers in domestic violence cases by providing them with more training and resources. This will enable them to offer effective crisis intervention, long-term support, and advocacy for victims seeking protection and just

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APPENDIX

Department of Social Work
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Benin
Benin City

Dear Respondent,

APPEAL FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am a 500 level student of the Department of Social Work, Faculty of Social Sciences. I am conducting a research on **“Domestic Violence in Benin: A Study of Ekosodin Community in Benin City, Edo State”**.

I request that you please assist as one of my respondents by providing information on the following questions. This research is strictly for academic purpose and the information supplied will be treated strictly as confidential.

Thanks for your understanding

Yours Sincerely,

Eze Perpetual Ukamaka

Please tick (✓) in the column that best suit your opinion

SECTION A

1. Sex: Male [] female []
2. Age: 18- 20 [] 21- 25 [] 26- 30 [] 31and above
3. Marital Status: Single [] married [] others []
4. Religion: Christianity [] Muslim [] African Traditional Religion [] others []

SECTION B

SN	ITEMS					
	The Concept of Domestic Violence in Ekosodin: Scope and Nature of the Problem	SD	D	U	A	SA
5	Domestic violence is a widespread issue in Ekosodin that significantly impacts families and communities, often leading to long-term physical and psychological consequences.					
6	Victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin often face challenges in reporting the abuse due to cultural stigma and fear of social judgment.					
7	The nature of domestic violence in Ekosodin primarily involves physical abuse, with emotional and psychological abuse being less common.					
8	Domestic violence in Ekosodin affects both men and women equally, with a growing number of male victims emerging in recent years.					
*	Social, Cultural, and Economic Factors Contributing to Domestic Violence	SD	D	U	A	SA
9	Patriarchal social norms and gender inequality in Ekosodin contribute significantly to the persistence of domestic violence.					
10	Economic dependence on an abusive partner is one of the main reasons victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin are unable to leave their abusers.					
11	Limited access to education and awareness about domestic violence in Ekosodin makes it difficult for victims to recognize and report abuse.					
12	Substance abuse (e.g., alcohol or drugs) is often a major factor contributing to violent behavior in domestic relationships in Ekosodin.					
	Effectiveness of Existing Interventions, Policies, and Programs	SD	D	U	A	SA
13	The current legal frameworks in Ekosodin, such as the Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), are effectively enforced to address domestic violence.					
14	Existing community-based programs in Ekosodin, such as awareness campaigns and workshops, are effective in educating the public about domestic violence and available support services.					
15	The police and law enforcement in Ekosodin are adequately trained and					

	responsive to domestic violence cases, ensuring victim safety and justice.					
	Evidence-Based Recommendations for Improving Prevention and Response Strategies	SD	D	U	A	SA
19	Strengthening local law enforcement training and increasing the availability of legal support are critical steps for improving the response to domestic violence in Ekosodin.					
20	Community-based education programs that raise awareness of domestic violence, legal rights, and available support services are essential for prevention and early intervention in Ekosodin.					
21	Providing economic empowerment programs for women in Ekosodin, such as job training and microfinance initiatives, will help reduce their dependency on abusive partners.					
22	Collaboration between traditional leaders, religious groups, and legal institutions in Ekosodin is necessary to create a holistic approach to preventing and responding to domestic violence.					
		SD	D	U	A	SA
	The Role of Social Workers in Domestic Violence in Ekosodin					
23	Social workers play a critical role in providing immediate crisis intervention and long-term support for victims of domestic violence in Ekosodin.					
24	Social workers in Ekosodin are instrumental in advocating for the rights of victims and helping them navigate the legal system to ensure protection and justice.					
25	Social workers in Ekosodin collaborate with law enforcement, healthcare providers, and NGOs to offer a coordinated response to domestic violence cases.					
26	Social workers' role in community education and prevention programs is crucial in changing attitudes toward domestic violence and promoting healthier relationships in Ekosodin.					

Thank you.