

Research Article

Socioeconomic Determinants of Domestic Violence Against Women in Nigeria: Empirical Evidence from National Demographic and Health Survey Data

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Abstract

Many Nigerian women experience various forms of domestic violence, most of which was carried out by their spouses. This abuse occurs across all socioeconomic groups and strata. Women's human rights are violated when they are subjected to violence. This study analysed the socioeconomic determinants of domestic violence against women in Nigeria with empirical evidence from secondary data which were sourced from the National Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2018. The cleaned data comprised 6,603 ever-partnered women aged 15-49 years. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and binary logistic regression. Results show that high proportion (35%) of women in Nigeria have ever experienced domestic violence which is higher than the 30% globally acceptable level of violence. Emotional abuse is the most prevalent in Nigeria as it was experienced by about one-third (33.64%) of the respondents. At $p < 0.01$, having higher education, religion (Islam), being in the rich and richest wealth quintile, and being in the North West, South East and South West zones were significantly and negatively related to (reduced) domestic violence in Nigeria. Also, at $p < 0.05$, having urban residence reduced the likelihood of domestic violence. However, being employed ($p < 0.05$), and at $p < 0.01$, partners' alcoholism, women having history of violence, husband/partner's jealousy, household head being male, as well as being in the North East zone were significant and positively related to (increased) domestic violence. In conclusion, domestic violence, especially emotional violence, is prevalent in Nigeria. Thus, human rights activists and NGOs fighting violence against women in Nigeria should intensify their efforts to eliminate domestic violence. Also, gender awareness programmes should be incorporated in school curriculum from primary to higher education levels so that children will be sensitized on the implications of violence, especially against women, and this would bring about reduced level of violence in the future.

Keywords

Emotional Violence, Sexual Violence, Women, Geo-Political Zones

1. Introduction

Domestic violence is a worldwide problem regardless of race, ethnicity, or social status [31]. Violence against women

can technically refer to any abusive action taken solely towards women. The Convention on the Elimination of all

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forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) referred to violence against women as an act of gender-based aggression or threat which occurs publicly or privately in women's life and has the potential to hurt women physically, sexually, or mentally [10]. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 30% of women experienced sexual or physical abuse, or both, as a result of an intimate relationship, a non-partner, or both [29]. Worldwide, intimate partner violence caused about 38% of women's suicides, compared to non-partner violence's 6% of the total [29].

Domestic violence is a problem that often affects Nigerian women because it is linked to traditional African patriarchal communities that construct a gendered power structure [1]. Many Nigerian women experience various forms of abuse, most of which was carried out by their spouses. Additionally, young girls were forced into early marriages and viciously punished if they try to leave their husbands [2]. Traditional practices harm women, especially female genital mutilation and "wife inheritance", which is the act of transferring a widow's assets to the brother of her deceased husband [1]. Although women are economically dependent on men in traditional Nigerian society, intimate violence is used to demand submission and obedience [8].

Culture authenticates this behaviour of intimate violence even though culture is never static, domestic violence against women is considered as a part of culture [3]. Other cultural elements that are essential to the prevalence of intimate partner violence in Nigeria include gender-specific socialization, cultural definitions of sex duties, roles expectations in relationships, the idea that women are inferior when it comes to inheritance, men's proprietary rights over women and girls, the idea that family issues are a private phenomenon under men's control, marriage customs (like dowry/bride price), and more [8]. Due to the aforementioned cultural and economic disadvantages, domestic abuse affects the majority of women in Nigeria and is a major public health concern [28]. In every Nigerian society, it occurs across all socioeconomic groups and strata [19].

Women's human rights are first and foremost violated when they are subjected to violence [23]. Due to gender norms, limited public services, the gender pay gap, and overt discrimination, women are economically disadvantaged [18]. Women do additional unpaid domestic work in addition to caring for children and the elderly. They thus have lower incomes, fewer possessions, and are more likely to require help. Therefore, women are more likely to rely on others or their abusers for financial support [20]. In addition to violating human rights, domestic violence against women is associated with a multitude of poor newborn health outcomes, such as low birth weight, premature birth, placental injury, fetal trauma, preterm labor, *et cetera* [9]. Victims of direct or indirect impacts may commit suicide, suffer from mental illness, have physical or mental impairments, commit homicide, or have other unfavorable results.

Domestic abuse is also linked to poor reproductive health

conditions such as unauthorized pregnancies, abortions, irregular bleeding, HIV, and other sexually transmitted illnesses [15]. Violence is frequently committed by people who go unpunished and uncondemned [14]. Also, Nigeria has not yet enacted domestic violence legislation that is applicable across the Federation. Women are protected against a number of forms of abuse, including domestic violence, by the Violence against Persons Prohibition Act (VAPP), which was passed in 2015. However, it is only applicable to the Federal Capital Territory, and unless states adopt it, it does not apply to many women nationwide [22]. Because of this, domestic violence in Nigeria has persisted, and spread throughout the different geo-political zones of the nation.

Making the economy work for women is crucial to making women safer since it plays a significant role in men's violence against women. To do this, a robust social security system is essential. Although studies have been carried out on domestic violence, the rising incidences of all forms of violence against women generally, particularly in Nigeria as a developing nation, where many women were forced into dangerous bonds without assistance, calls for a redress. This study therefore aimed at investigating the socioeconomic determinants of domestic violence against women in Nigeria. Specifically, it:

- 1) examined the forms of domestic violence in Nigeria.
- 2) ascertained the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Nigeria.
- 3) Investigated the socioeconomic determinants of domestic violence against women in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Framework

The theories underpinning this study include feminist theories and social theories of family violence.

2.1.1. Feminist Theories

The feminist theory was proposed by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1794 and it postulated that the main reason for the occurrence of domestic violence was the outcome of residing in a society that encourages aggressive behaviour perpetrated by men, while socializing women to be non-violent [21]. The theory also noted that women possess some innate powers to abuse men through some physical abuse, denial of sex and other disturbing words rendered on men. The two main feminist theories examined are the radical and the black feminist theory.

Radical Feminist Theory: Radical feminist theory was developed on masculine notion which causes the relegation and discrimination of women by Bonnie Kreps in 1972 [27]. Radical feminists affirmed that the root of female oppression is the social roles and institutional structures being constructed from male supremacy and patriarchy. The theory traced the root of patriarchy to women dependency on men

due largely to child bearing and the responsibilities associated with child bearing. Therefore, men deliberately oppress women mostly because they are also supported by institutions like mass media and other institutions [16].

Black Feminist Theory: Black feminist theory was proposed by Kimberle Crenshaw in 1989, it is of the opinion that, black women's experiences result to a certain comprehension of their stance or status in relation to oppression, racism, and sexism [17]. According to this theory, non-black cannot easily understand the experiences of being black women through sociocultural structure and the inter-section of the race [26]. In addition, the black feminists are focused on the configuration of power around the maintenance of the categories of race, gender, class and sexuality that are socially constructed by the system [26].

2.1.2. Social Theories of Family Violence

Social theories of family violence emphasize the interactions between individuals or groups of individuals in interpersonal or group settings. As applicable to this study, these include theory of control, resource theory, and exosystem theory.

Theory of Control: According to control theory, family conflict is based on an individual's desire to acquire, and maintain power and control in a relationship [7]. The main basis for perpetrator's behaviour is the power and control he or she wants to exercise on others within or outside the family. Such a perpetrator or more powerful member of the family or group (husband, parent, leader, *et cetera*) usually use threat or violence to gain control over the less powerful members of the family or group [18]. Additionally, violent behaviour may be displayed in order to make sure that desired behaviour occurs or to exert control over what other family members think or feel, using various forms of intimidation, including coercion, isolation, and economic abuse, among others. As a result, the victims develop coping mechanisms for dealing with intimidation, and they might start to alter their own behaviour and gradually relinquish control in an effort to stay alive and stop further abuse [7].

Resource Theory: Resource theory proposed that, forces and violence can be used as resources to resolve conflict and these resources are usually used as last resort in a modern society. This theory examined the relationship between wealth and violence. For instance, high income and social class men have access to various resources including violence, which they use to control the behaviour of their wives while those with little or no wealth or resources usually and easily adopt physical assault [1].

Exosystem Factor Theory: Exosystem factor theory integrated the idea of resources usefulness by concentrating on life stressors, which are regarded as particular life events or experiences that an individual perceives as surpassing his or her resources [12]. The life events or stressors can serve as predictors of family or domestic violence and may include loss of job, extramarital affairs, *et cetera*. This theory con-

tends that stress, in addition to some factors like experience of violence from childhood stage, social isolation and low marital status, can influence violence [12].

2.2. Empirical Review

A study examined intimate partner violence (IPV) against women in Nigeria as a multilevel study of investigating the effect of women's status and community norms [5]. According to statistics, 63 percent of women lived in rural areas, 22 percent lived in the poorest households, and 32 percent of women were middle-class. Also, 87 percent of the respondents resided in communities where men justified beating their wives. Women aged 25 to 34 who reside in rural communities and are in the medium income quintile frequently experience intimate partner abuse, especially in the Northeast. About 25% of the women reported having experienced IPV in some way, and 20% said, in the year prior to the poll, they experienced IPV. According to the results of the multilevel logistic regression, if males support violence against women at the community level, IPV was favourably influenced by contextual factors (men's attitude toward IPV) and negatively by individual factors (women's status).

From 1998 to 2017, throughout the Americas, estimates of population-based national intimate partner violence (IPV) were thoroughly examined and reanalyzed [6]. Women reported ever having engaged in physical and/or sexual IPV at rates that ranged from 14 percent to 17 percent of women in Brazil, Panama, and Uruguay, to roughly 58.5 percent in Bolivia. IPV prevalence in the previous year ranged from 1.1 percent in Canada to 27.1 percent in Bolivia. The findings also suggested that there may be a decrease in the prevalence of some types of intimate partner violence in the eight countries studied. Despite this, the reported prevalence for the previous year increased noticeably in the Dominican Republic.

In a study which focused on domestic violence against women in a rural setting in Nigeria [8], findings showed 82.3 percent of respondents agreed that one of the main factors contributing to domestic violence is women's economic dependence on men. In addition, 52.3 percent of respondents believed that communities encourage and tolerate verbal abuse, and 61.5 percent said that traditional and religious beliefs also contribute to domestic violence. Additionally, the majority of responders (84.6%) concurred that children who grow up in violent families will emulate those behaviour. It was found that domestic abuse causes harm to the rural women at physical and psychological levels. Lack of authorities to report incidences of assault to, and the fear of the consequences of such reports also prevented many of the victims from seeking help when they were abused.

From 2000 to 2014, elements related to domestic violence against women in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia were extensively analyzed [24]. Domestic violence by spouses or other intimate partners against women has been reported to occur anywhere between 20 and 78 percent of the

time over the course of a lifetime. Physical violence by their husbands or intimate partners is more common than sexual abuse, with prevalence rates ranging from 19.2 percent to 59 percent and 31 to 76.5 percent, respectively. Domestic emotional abuse was present in households on average 51.7 percent of the time. Violence against pregnant mothers was a common occurrence. Alcohol use, chewing tobacco, family history of violence, religion, and place of residence, all significantly correlated positively with domestic violence against women while negatively correlating with decision-making authority, educational attainment, and occupation of women.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

This study examined the socioeconomic determinants of persisting domestic violence against Nigerian women. Domestic violence may be influenced by women's characteristics, partner characteristics as well as community characteristics, which in turn influences women's productivity and contributions to economic development. Women that are much younger than their partners, reside in the rural area, having many children and low level of education, and have witnessed violence as children are much likely to experience domestic violence and engage in any form of violence act. Perpetrators being much older than their female partners, having low educational and employment levels, engaging in drug and alcohol abuse, and have witnessed violence as children, may result into any form of domestic violence act as well.

Community beliefs that encourage women violence, belief that domestic violence is a private family problem and absence of support services for abused women can also contribute to domestic violence. Violence against women is of various types, severity and frequency. It may be physical, emotional, sexual and/or psychological in nature. Irrespective of the forms, severity, and frequency of the violence, it may have a long term or short term implications on women's productivity.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Study Area

The study area is Nigeria. It is located on the western coast of Africa bordered to the south by the Gulf of Guinea of the Atlantic Ocean, to the west by the Benin, to the north by Niger, and to the east by Chad and Cameroon. The current live population of Nigeria is 225,976,496, which is equivalent to 2.28 percent of the world population, according to the latest Worldometer elaboration [30]. Women account for about 111,375,440 million (49.4% of Nigerian population) and the density of the population is 246 per km² as of November 28, 2023. Domestic violence is predominant in developing countries such as Nigeria wherein culture is one of the enabling factors for violence act against women as it assigned some

gender roles that make women depend on their abusers, hence vulnerable to abuse [5].

3.2. Sources of Data

Data used for this study were obtained from the National Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) 2018. The NDHS 2018 is the sixth round of Demographic and Health survey implemented by the National Population Commission to provide up-to-date information on demographic and health indicators. The data required for the study are based on domestic violence and the socio-economic characteristics of the households. Data on domestic violence include the forms of domestic violence (physical violence, emotional violence, psychological violence, and sexual violence), and the factors influencing domestic violence (respondents' place of residence, level of education, employment status, women's autonomy, respondents' husband age, educational attainment, alcohol drinking habit, joint property possession, and *et cetera*). Also, the socio-economic characteristics include age, level of education, marital status, husband's age and level of education, household size, geopolitical zone, and place of residence (rural/urban), *et cetera*. The data were cleaned to a total of 6,603 respondents who answered questions on domestic violence.

3.3. Methods of Analysis

The data extracted were analyzed using descriptive statistics, domestic violence index, and logistic regression model. Stata 16 software package was used to run the analysis.

3.3.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics such as the frequency count, percentage, and mean were used to analyze the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, respondents' husband's socio-demographic features, various forms of domestic violence against women in Nigeria, as well as respondents' socioeconomic features by forms of domestic violence (objective 1).

3.3.2. Domestic Violence Index

To ascertain the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Nigeria (objective 2), domestic violence index was generated using the four main forms of violence established by the NDHS dataset; physical violence, sexual violence, emotional violence, and psychological violence. Response categories for all variables are dichotomous (1=yes and 0=no). The index was generated using the following formula:

$$DVI = \frac{1}{V}(\sum N)$$

Where, DVI = domestic violence index
 $\sum N$ = sum of possible responses (where yes=1)
 V = number of variables used

Where;

- DVI= 0, no experience of domestic violence
- DVI = 0.25, low prevalence of domestic violence
- DVI = 0.5, fair prevalence of domestic violence
- DVI = 0.75, moderate prevalence of domestic violence
- DVI = 1, high prevalence of domestic violence.

3.3.3. Binary Logistic Regression Model

Binary logistic regression model was adopted to investigate the socioeconomic determinants of domestic violence against women in Nigeria (objective 3).

$$\text{Log}\left[\frac{P}{1-P}\right] = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \beta_5 X_5 + \beta_6 X_6 + \beta_7 X_7 + \beta_8 X_8 + \beta_9 X_9 + \beta_{10} X_{10}$$

- Where P; Probability that Y = 1 given X's
- Y = Domestic violence against women (dependent variable; yes=1, no=0),
- β_0 = Intercept,
- $\beta_1 - \beta_{10}$ = Parameters of the model
- $X_1 - X_{10}$ = Independent variables
- X_1 = Employment status (employed = 1; unemployed = 0),
- X_2 = Residence (urban = 1; rural = 0),
- X_3 = Educational attainment (no formal education, primary education, secondary education, higher education),
- X_4 = Religion (Christianity, Islam, Traditional),
- X_5 = Wealth status (poorest, poorer, middle, richer, richest),
- X_6 = Sex of household head (male = 1; female = 0),
- X_7 = Jealousy (yes= 1, no =0),
- X_8 = Alcoholism (yes =1; no = 0),
- X_9 = History of violence (yes=1, no = 0),
- X_{10} = Geo-political zone (North Central, North East, North West, South East, South West, South South)

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents and Their Husbands/Partners

The socio-economic characteristics of the respondents (women) are presented in Table 1. Most (48.27%) of the respondents were aged between 26-35 years with an average of 29.88 ±(6.96). Majority (92.25%) were married and lived in male headed households (87.79%) and had household sizes of 1-10 (93.18%). More than half (59.39%) of the women lived in the rural areas and about half (50.81%) were Muslims. The results show further that about 37.35% of the respondent had secondary education while 36.70% had no formal education. Majority (70.13%) of the Nigeria women were employed while low proportion (20.82%) were richer and about 22.96% resides in the North West geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

In Table 2, the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents' husbands/partners are presented. Most (59.11%)

of the respondents' partners were between the age range of 31-45 years. About 38.68% of respondents' partners had secondary education while 32.26% had no formal education. With regard to occupation, most (34.77%) of the respondents' husbands/partners engaged in agricultural self-employed occupation while only few (6.59%) were not working. Lastly, almost one-quarter (24.26%) of the respondents declared that their husbands consume alcohol.

Table 1. Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents.

Variables	Frequency (n=6603)	Percentage
Respondents' age		
15 – 25	2036	30.83
26 – 35	3187	48.27
≥ 36	1380	20.90
Mean 29.88 ±(6.96)		
Marital status		
Never married	365	5.5
Married	6091	92.25
Divorced	53	0.80
Widowed	94	1.42
Sex of Household head		
Male	5797	87.79
Female	806	12.21
Household size		
1 – 10	6153	93.18
11 – 20	433	6.60
≥ 21	17	0.2
Mean 5.86 ±(2.86)		
Religion		
Christian	3205	48.54
Islam	3355	50.11
Traditional	43	0.65
Respondents' level of education		
No formal education	2423	36.70
Primary education	1070	16.20
Secondary education	2466	37.35
Higher education	644	9.75
Current employment status		
Employed	4631	70.13
Unemployed	1972	29.87

Variables	Frequency (n=6603)	Percentage
Wealth status		
Poorest	1308	19.81
Poorer	1324	20.05
Middle	1295	19.61
Richer	1375	20.82
Richest	1301	19.70
Place of residence		
Urban	2675	40.51
Rural	3928	59.49
Geopolitical zone		
North Central	1184	17.93
North East	1141	17.28
North West	1516	22.96
South East	883	13.37
South South	731	11.07
South West	1148	17.39

Source: Author's Computation from 2018 NDHS

Table 2. Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents' Husbands/Partners.

Variables	Frequency (n=6603)	Percentage
Respondents' partners/husbands' age		
≤ 30	1299	20.41
31 – 45	3762	59.81
46 – 60	1111	17.46
≥ 61	192	3.02
Mean 39.17 ± (9.48)		
Husbands/partners' level of education		
No formal education	2130	32.26
Primary education	912	14.33
Secondary education	2554	38.68
Higher education	1007	15.82
Occupation		
No occupation	435	6.59
Professional and technical related work	746	11.30
Administrative work	114	2.18
Sale and related work	1189	18.01

Variables	Frequency (n=6603)	Percentage
Services	447	6.77
Agricultural self employed	2296	34.77
Skilled manual	252	3.82
Unskilled manual	1075	16.28
Others	19	0.29
Alcoholism		
Yes	1602	24.26
No	5001	75.74

Source: Author's Computation from 2018 NDHS

4.2. Forms of Domestic Violence Against Nigerian Women

The various forms of domestic abuse against Nigerian women are presented on Table 3. Results show that emotional abuse is the most prevalent in Nigeria as it was experienced by about one-third (33.64%) of the respondents while 7.84%, 7.03% and 7.00% experienced sexual violence, psychological violence and physical violence, respectively. The prevalence of emotional violence in Nigeria may be due to the fact that it is not apparent and cannot be easily mitigated, unlike other forms of violence. Lower prevalence of physical and sexual abuse in Nigeria can be traced to the strong national response and support for domestic violence issues in Nigeria by the Nigerian government, and some non-profit organizations and NGOs that try to provide protection for the victims. Some of these organizations are Women and Child Watch Initiative that trains female lawyers to defend the right of the victims [13]. The "Unite to End Violence Against Women Campaign" initiated to create awareness on the effect of cruelty against women, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) that works purposely to eliminate discrimination against women, Women Center for Peace and Development (The Wellbeing Foundation), *et cetera* [20, 10].

Table 3. Forms of domestic violence in Nigeria.

Form of violence	Frequency (n=6603)	Percentage
Emotional violence	2221	33.64
Sexual violence	518	7.80
Physical violence	462	7.00
Psychological violence	464	7.00
No violence	2938	44.50

Source: Author's computation from 2018 NDHS

4.3. Forms of Domestic Violence by Socio-economic Characteristics of Women in Nigeria

The forms of domestic violence against Nigerian women across their socioeconomic characteristics are presented in Table 4. Results show that emotional violence was common across all the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents. The four forms of violence were very high among women that were between the age of 26-35 years, but lower among women that were above 35 years old than those between the age of 15-25 years. This implies that domestic violence increases with women age overtime and then decline when it reaches certain level. This may be because younger women are likely to be submissive to gain the hearts of their husbands and in-laws even when abused, while older women may have experienced married life and adjusted to the situation to avoid disagreement. Also, older women may have acquired status and have a say in household decision making [5].

Results further show that women whose husbands/partners aged between 31-45 years experienced higher level of domestic violence compared to women whose husbands aged below or above the range. This means domestic violence against women in Nigeria reduces as their husband/partners grow older, which may be because husbands/partners' domineering attitude decreases as they become older. This is consistent with the opinion that younger people possess worse attitude than the elders, most especially, the men [4].

With regards to women education and domestic violence in Nigeria, all forms of domestic violence were mostly experienced by women who had secondary education, followed by women who had no formal education and was least experienced by those with higher level of education. Women with higher level of education in Nigeria experienced low violence compared to others due to the fact that they know, understand, and are ready to claim their rights at any point in time. Also, women whose husbands had higher level of education experienced low violence when compared to others. This may be attributed to the fact that an educated fellow is expected to be rational enough and understand the fundamental human right, that any form of violence act is a crime, especially against women.

Physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual violence were experienced more by Nigerian women whose households were headed by male compared to women whose households were headed by female. This implies that domestic violence of various forms would likely be prevalent in male headed than female headed households. This may be because of the domineering attitude exhibited by men, which was strictly encouraged by African culture and religion, and

many (32.26%) of the husbands/partners had no formal education (Table 2) and did not understand the gravity of their offence as an abuser.

Majority of Nigerian women that had jobs experienced all forms of domestic violence than those that were unemployed. This may be because the unemployed women have seen their perpetrators as their gods and they complied with any given instruction. Also, it may be because they are financially dependent on the perpetrators. While increased violence among women that are working may result from complaints on domestic chores forgone for work place or when women try to gain some autonomy, and may be because most women work in the informal sector where there is little or no basic social or legal protection as well as employment benefits which make them not so much different from their unemployed counterparts [9].

Larger proportions of Nigerian Christian women experienced physical (5.04%), emotional (18.40%), and psychological violence (4.84%) compared to women who practice other religions while sexual violence (3.95%) was mostly experienced by the Muslims. About 4.0%, 12.33%, 3.65%, and 2.77% of women whose husbands consumed alcohol experienced physical, emotional, psychological, and sexual violence, respectively, compared to women whose husbands did not consume alcohol at all. Concerning the wealth status, physical violence was highly experienced by women that are richer than women of other classes. Emotional violence and sexual violence were more experienced by the poorest women than others, while women in the poorer category were psychologically abused than other women in Nigeria. Women within richer class of wealth may experience more physical violence because wealth index is directly related to the degree of autonomy an individual will possess, and a rich woman will surely gain certain level of autonomy which may be contrary to the domineering attitude of most culture oriented men, and in turn, result in any form of violence, especially in a male headed household.

Most Nigerian women who reside in the rural areas experienced all forms of violence than those who reside in the urban areas. This may be because most rural people still believe in the old culture which supports violence against women, especially by their partners. It may also be because they have little or no orientation on how essential the contributions of women are to households, community, and economy at large, and lastly because they are far from the reach of both the government and non-government organizations that enlighten and sensitize people on the evils of domestic violence against women. Physical (1.89%), psychological (1.86%) and sexual (1.2%) violence were common among women in the South East geopolitical zone while emotional violence (8.21%) was highly experienced by women from North East geopolitical of Nigeria than those from other geopolitical zones.

Table 4. Domestic violence across Socioeconomic variables in Nigeria (n=6603).

Variables	Physical violence	%	Emotional violence	%	Psychological violence	%	Sexual Violence	%
Respondent's age								
15-25	133	2.01	671	10.16	135	2.05	175	2.65
26-35	233	3.53	1092	16.54	250	3.79	237	3.59
≥ 36	96	1.45	458	6.94	79	1.20	106	1.61
Partners/husbands' age								
15-30	80	1.21	418	6.33	75	1.14	99	1.50
31-45	252	3.79	1246	18.46	258	3.91	282	4.27
45-60	70	1.06	369	5.59	66	1.00	87	1.32
≥ 61	15	0.23	71	1.08	19	0.29	14	0.21
Level of education								
No formal	116	1.76	819	12.40	134	2.03	215	3.26
Primary	92	1.39	407	6.16	90	1.36	87	1.32
Secondary	236	3.57	845	12.80	212	3.21	191	2.89
Higher	18	0.27	150	2.27	28	0.42	25	0.38
Partners/husbands' education								
No formal	134	2.03	734	11.12	150	2.27	212	3.21
Primary	84	1.27	345	5.23	76	1.15	75	1.14
Secondary	212	3.21	891	13.49	198	3.00	188	2.85
Higher	28	0.42	251	3.80	40	0.62	43	0.65
Sex of Household head								
Male	383	5.80	1918	29.02	391	5.92	451	6.83
Female	79	1.20	303	4.59	73	1.11	67	1.02
Employment status								
Unemployed	120	1.82	604	9.15	122	1.85	163	2.47
Employed	342	5.18	1617	24.49	342	5.18	355	5.38
Religion								
Christian	333	5.04	1215	18.40	319	4.84	256	3.88
Islam	128	1.94	993	15.04	144	2.19	261	3.95
Traditional	1	0.02	13	0.20	1	0.02	1	0.02
Marital status								
Not married	71	1.08	163	2.47	58	0.88	44	0.67
Married	376	5.69	2000	30.29	385	5.83	457	6.92
Divorced	7	0.11	21	0.32	8	0.12	8	0.12
Widowed	8	0.12	37	0.56	13	0.20	9	0.14
Alcoholism								
No	198	3.00	1407	21.31	223	3.38	335	5.07
Yes	264	4.00	814	12.33	241	3.65	183	2.77

Variables	Physical violence	%	Emotional violence	%	Psychological violence	%	Sexual Violence	%
Wealth status								
Poorest	97	1.47	486	7.36	99	1.50	141	2.14
Poorer	100	1.52	482	7.30	104	1.58	112	1.70
Middle	84	1.27	430	6.51	82	1.24	104	1.58
Richer	108	1.64	446	6.75	98	1.48	90	1.36
Richest	73	1.11	377	5.71	81	1.23	70	1.06
Residence								
Rural	248	3.76	1416	21.45	255	3.86	334	5.06
Urban	214	3.24	805	12.19	209	3.17	184	2.79
Geopolitical zone								
North Central	60	0.91	467	7.07	55	0.83	79	1.20
North East	116	1.76	542	8.21	88	1.33	199	3.01
North West	19	0.29	367	5.56	55	0.83	50	0.76
South East	125	1.89	342	5.18	123	1.86	80	1.21
South South	76	1.25	303	4.59	87	1.32	75	1.14
South West	66	1.0	200	3.09	56	0.85	35	0.53

Source: Author's computation from 2018 NDHS

4.4. Prevalence of Domestic Violence Against Nigerian Women

Table 5. Prevalence of the four main forms of domestic violence in Nigeria.

Domestic violence index	Frequency (n=6603)	Percentage
0	4264	64.61
0.25	1451	21.97
0.50	529	8.01
0.75	268	4.06
1	88	1.33
Mean 0.14±(0.23)		

Source: Author's computation from 2018 NDHS

Using domestic violence index (DVI), about 21.97% of Nigerian women experienced one form of violence (DVI=0.25) which may be any of the four forms of violence, while 8.01% of the women experienced two forms of violence (DVI=0.5) which may be any of the following six possibilities;

physical / emotional, physical / psychological, emotional / psychological, emotional / sexual, physical / sexual, physical / emotional, and psychological / sexual. Also, 4.06% experienced three forms of violence (DVI=0.75) which may be any of the following two possibilities; physical / emotional / psychological violence and physical / emotional / sexual violence, while 1.33% of Nigerian women experienced all the four forms of violence (DVI=1.0).

The global lifetime prevalence of violence is 30%, However, results show that 35.39% of the women experienced at least one form of domestic violence [5]. This implies that domestic violence in Nigeria is above the globally acceptable violence prevalence. Therefore, it can be deduced that domestic violence against women is highly prevalent in Nigeria.

4.5. Factors Influencing Domestic Violence Against Women in Nigeria

Results of logistic regression model are presented in Table 6. The model is significant at 1% and all the observations of 6603 were used. The results explain the socioeconomic determinants of domestic violence against women and the extent to which a unit change in the independent variables contributes to the likelihood of women to be victims of violence in Nigeria (dependent variable). The variables that were found to be statistically significant are; employment status, place of residence, education,

religion, wealth status, sex of household head, husband jealousy, alcoholism, history of violence, and geopolitical zone.

Employment Status: Women’s employment status had significant positive effect at 5% level with 0.0265 marginal effects. This implies that, been employed increases the likelihood of domestic violence against Nigerian women by 2.65%. This conformed to the findings where source of income (being employed) increased the occurrence of domestic violence in marriages in Western Kenya. Increased violence among women that are working may result from complaints on domestic chores forgone for work place, or when women try to gain some autonomy [25].

Place of Residence: Place of residence was negatively significant at 5% level with a marginal effect of -0.0283. This means that residing in an urban area decreases the likelihood of women been victims of violence by 2.83%; those residing in the urban areas are less likely to experience domestic violence compared to those that reside in the rural areas.

Level of Education: Higher level of education was significant and negatively related to domestic violence at 10% with -0.0460 marginal effect. This implies that higher level of education decreases the likelihood of domestic violence by 4.6%. Therefore, women with higher levels of education are less likely to be domestically victimized compared to those with no formal education in Nigeria.

Religion: Islamic religion was significant and negatively related to domestic violence at 1% level, and marginal effect of -0.0550. This implies that women who practice Islamic religion were likely to experience less domestic violence than those who practice Christian religion in Nigeria. This finding is corroborated with the results on Table 4 where three of the four forms of domestic violence (physical, emotional, and psychological) were more prevalent among the Christians than it was among those who practice other religions. This conforms to the findings that the majority of the studied population agreed that religion and culture contribute to the prevalence of domestic violence as they preach absolute submission, even when women have genuine cases to be heard, and regardless of its negative impact on women [8].

Wealth Status: With regard to wealth status, being in the middle class, richer and the richest wealth statuses were nega-

tively significant at 5%, 1%, and 1%, having marginal effects of -0.0377, -0.0477, and -0.0729, respectively. A percent increase in wealth index will lead to 3.77%, 4.77% and 7.29% decrease in the likelihood of domestic violence against the middle class, richer and the richest women, respectively, compared to the poorest quintile women in Nigeria.

Sex of Household Head: The sex of household head had a significant positive effect on domestic violence at 5% with a marginal effect of 0.0409, meaning that having a male household head increases the likelihood of domestic violence by 4.09%, when compared with having a female household head.

Jealousy: Jealousy was found to be significantly positive at 1% with a marginal effect of 0.2141, implying that being a jealous husband/partner increases domestic violence by 21.41%.

Alcoholism: Alcoholism was significant at 1% level and positively related to domestic violence against women with a marginal effect of 0.1879. Increased consumption of alcohol increases the likelihood of domestic violence against women whose husbands consume alcohol by 18.79% compared to those whose husbands do not consume alcohol; alcohol strongly induces violent acts [11].

History of violence experience: Having experienced domestic violence at childhood stage positively influenced domestic violence against women at 1% (p=0.000) with a marginal effect of 0.0237. This indicates that history of domestic violence increases domestic violence against women by 2.37%, when compared with women with no domestic violence history.

Geo-political Zone: With respect to geopolitical zone, compared with those in North Central, being in the North West, South East, and South West Nigeria were negatively significant at 1%. These mean that women in the North West, South East, and South West are significantly less likely to be victims of domestic violence by 8.38%, 5.59%, and 19.44%, respectively. While being in the North East zone was positively significant at 1% with 0.0735 marginal effect, meaning that being in the North East increases the likelihood of domestic violence by 7.35%. Therefore, women who reside in North East are likely to experience domestic violence than those who live in the North central.

Table 6. Socioeconomic Factors Influencing Domestic Violence in Nigeria.

Independent variables	Coefficient	Marginal effect	Standard error	P value
Employment status (b: unemployed)				
Employed	0.1407**	0.0265**	0.0656	0.032
Residence (b: rural)				
Urban	-0.1496**	-0.0283**	0.0712	0.036
Level of education (b: no education)				
Primary education	0.0957	0.0181	0.0935	0.306

Independent variables	Coefficient	Marginal effect	Standard error	P value
Secondary education	0.0216	0.0041	0.0936	0.817
Higher education	-0.2437*	-0.0460*	0.1398	0.081
Religion (b: Christian religion)				
Islam religion	-0.2913***	-0.0550***	0.0928	0.002
Traditional	-0.5921	-0.1118	0.3688	0.108
Wealth status (b: poorest)				
Poorer	-0.07290	-0.0137	0.0889	0.413
Middle	-0.1997**	-0.0377**	0.0929	0.031
Richer	-0.2530***	-0.0477***	0.0974	0.009
Richest	-0.3863***	-0.0729***	0.1117	0.001
Household head sex (b: female)	0.2171**	0.0409**	0.0899	0.016
Jealousy (b: no)	1.1337***	0.2141***	0.0584	0.000
Alcoholism (b: no)	0.9953***	0.1879***	0.0765	0.000
History of violence experience (b: no)	0.1257***	0.0237***	0.0159	0.000
Geopolitical zone (b: North Central)				
North East	0.3893***	0.0735***	0.0986	0.000
North West	-0.4437***	-0.0838***	0.1012	0.000
South East	-0.2959***	-0.0559***	0.1109	0.005
South-South	-0.1386	-0.02612	0.1117	0.251
South West	-1.0295***	-0.1944***	0.1086	0.000
Constant	-1.3306		0.2079	0.000
Log likelihood = -3688.022				
Pseudo R ² = 0.14				
P > chi ² = 0.0000				
Log Likelihood Ratio Chi ² = 1204.61				

Source: Author's computation from 2018 NDHS

Note: *** p<0.01=1%, ** p<0.05=5%, and * p<0.1=10% levels of significance.

5. Conclusions

There are four forms of domestic violence in Nigeria and emotional abuse is the most prevalent. Physical, psychological and sexual forms of violence are common among women in the South East geopolitical zone while emotional violence is highly experienced by women from North East geopolitical zone than those from other geopolitical zones. It can be concluded that emotional violence is mostly encountered by Nigerian women. Domestic violence is prevalent in Nigeria as 35% experienced is higher than the 30% globally acceptable level of violence. From the empirical evidence from National Demographic and Health Survey data, the socioeconomic determinants of domestic violence against women in Nigeria

include women being employed, having history of domestic violence, being in male headed households and living in the North East zone, which increase the incidence of domestic violence. Also, husband/partners' alcoholism and jealousy increase domestic violence against women in Nigeria.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) Every state in Nigeria needs to adopt the national gender policy purposely to relieve women from violence actions.
- 2) There should be massive campaign to create awareness and orientate citizens on the effect of violence against women on women production capability, community

and economic development.

- 3) Human rights activist and the NGOs fighting violence against women in Nigeria should intensify their effort to bring domestic violence to bearable level.
- 4) Gender awareness program should be incorporated in school curriculum from primary to higher educational level as this could bring about reduced level of violence in the future.

7. Suggestions for Further Studies

This study focused on domestic violence against women using secondary cross-sectional data. It is suggested that further studies should focus on domestic violence against women as a case study using primary data and do in-depth analysis at each geo-political zone.

Abbreviations

NDHS	National Demographic Health Survey
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
WHO	The World Health Organization
VAPP	Violence Against Persons Prohibition Act

Author Contributions

Olubunmi Olanike Alawode is the sole author. The author read and approved the final manuscript.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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