

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT: *This study examined the prevalence of domestic violence in the socio-economic and political context in Ghana. The study conveniently sampled 200 women within Kumasi metropolis as participants. Data for the study came from both primary and secondary sources. Structured questionnaires were face-to-face administered to the respondents. The data were analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) for windows. The study revealed that the prevalence of Cultural factors had been agreed by respondents as scourge of domestic violence. Acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict ($M=4.7$), bride price and dowry ($M=4.2$), Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles ($M=4.25$), Belief in the inherent superiority of males ($M=4.3$). Prevalence of economic factors were agreed by respondents as follows: Women's economic dependence on men ($M=5.0$) limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors (4.26) discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands (4.2). Prevalence of Political factors were agreed by respondents as follows: Under-representation of women in power, politics, media and in the legal and medical profession ($M=4.17$), Risk of challenge to status-quo/religious laws ($M=4.35$). Legal factors included: laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance ($M=4.31$) insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary ($M=4.91$). More than half of the respondents indicated that they have even been assaulted by men. The study revealed a significant association between ever been assaulted and employment status ($X^2=76.9$, $p\text{-value}<0.05$, $df=6$). Again there is a significant relationship between ever been assaulted and education attainment ($X^2=35.25$, $p\text{-value}<0.05$, $df=8$). There are relationship between females ever been assaulted and age $X^2=21.13$, $p\text{-value}<0.05$, $df=8$). Policy intervention and reinforcement of the existing legislation is imperative in the civility of these findings.*

KEYWORDS: Domestic Violence, Women, Socio-Economic, Political, Prevalence, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

The domestic violence scourge has remained a poignant obstacle towards the total liberation of all women from all forms of abuses. This has particularly challenged the attainment of Millennium Development Goal three (3), thus to Promote Gender equality and Empower Women. Several attempts have been made to ensure that women are treated just like their male counterparts. In Beijing china, Paris France, New York America to Johannesburg South Africa the mantra had been the same (Antle et al., 2007; Gwazane, 2011)

Various studies (Antle et al., 2007; Envuladu & Chia, 2011; Payne, & Wermeling, 2009) had been carried out with the aim to outline the major determinants of domestic violence. For instance Gwazane (2011) conducted a study to determine factors associated with domestic violence among concordant and discordant couples in Zimbabwe. The author found out that demographic characteristics have strong association with the domestic violence incidence. High house hold economic status has lesser rate of violence than the low rate of socio economic status. The author is of the view that when people are empowerment economically this could reduce the incidence of domestic violence. Some studies have linked domestic violence to child neglect.

Antle et al. (2007) studied the relationship between domestic violence and child neglect and found that there is an association between domestic violence and child neglect. There further asserted that this could be more serious when there is evidence of previous unreported forms of abuse. Other writers also focused on domestic violence and why the victims mostly stay. As reported by Payne, & Wermeling, (2009) many victims were reported to have strong affections for their husbands and partner, others do this due to the presence of children. Moreover cutting tie in marriage is both socially and religiously forbidden.

The authors concluded that criminal justice and social welfare workers should be up and doing to find a lasting solution to the situation. The role of the professional women can't be disputed in this regards. There are also available incidences of domestic violence involving pregnant women. According to Envuladu & Chia (2012) the incidence of domestic violence is high in most developing areas. There major causes of this abominable act include multiple partners, alcoholism, low educational level, unskilled labor and unemployment including HIV positive. Galvani (2006) also posted that alcohol and rate of domestic violence are related. However, the author asserted that the women should hold their husband responsible for their actions but rather not the alcohol.

Beel (2013) studied domestic violence and related it to gender and counseling. The author recommended based on his observation that the councilors who work on domestic violence related cases should maintain integrity and ethical code of their practices. Males have also suffered some forms of domestic violence from their female partners. Shuler (2010) conducted a review of critical and theoretical perspective and concluded that males equally suffer some forms of abuse from their partners. This comes in the form of female aggression and through gang affiliation. The general objective of this paper is to access the socio-economic and political context in which domestic violence occurs in Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The table below presents recent related work on the study. The argument herein relates to the socio-economic and political context of domestic violence.

Table 1: Empirical Review of Literature on Domestic Violence

Author (s) Year	Focus of Study	Major Findings
Gwazane (2011)	A study to determine factors associated with domestic violence among concordant and discordant couples in Zimbabwe	Gwazane (2011) found out that demographic characteristics have strong association with the domestic violence incidence. The author concluded that people are empowerment economically this could reduce the incidence of domestic violence.
Antle et al., (2007)	The Relationship between Domestic Violence and Child Neglect	Antle et al. (2007) found that there is an association between domestic violence and child neglect. They further asserted that this could be more serious when there is evidence of previous unreported forms of abuse.
Alokan (2013)	Domestic Violence Against Women: A Family Menace	Alokan (2013) studied domestic violence against women and concluded that offenders mostly husband adequately punished to deter others
Payne, & Wermeling, (2009)	Domestic Violence and the Female Victim: The Real Reason Women Stay!	Payne, & Wermeling, (2009) reported that victims have strong affections for their husbands and partner; others do this due to the presence of children. moreover cutting tie in marriage is both socially and religiously forbidden The authors concluded that criminal justice and social welfare workers should be up and doing to find a lasting solution to the situation.
Envuladu & Chia (2012)	Domestic violence among pregnant women attending antenatal clinic in a PHC facility in Jos north LGA Plateau State Nigeria	Envuladu & Chia (2012) reported that the incidence of domestic violence is high in most developing areas. There major causes of this abominable act include multiple partners, alcoholism, low educational level, unskilled labor and unemployment including HIV positive.
Galvani (2006)	Alcohol and Domestic Violence Women's Views	Galvani (2006) asserted that the women should hold their husband responsible for their actions but rather not the alcohol.
Beel (2013)	Domestic violence, gender, and counseling: Toward a more gender-inclusive understanding	Beel (2013) that the councilors who work on domestic violence related cases should maintain integrity and ethical code of their practices.
Shuler (2010)	Male Victims of Intimate	Shuler (2010) reported that males equally

	Partner Violence in the United States: An Examination of the Review of Literature through the Critical Theoretical Perspective	suffer some forms of abuse from their partners. This comes in the form of female aggression and through gang affiliation
Ehrensaft (2003)	Intergenerational Transmission of Partner Violence: A 20-Year Prospective Study	Ehrensaft, (2003) the childhood behaviour of a child has a predictive effects on them to commit violence against a partner.
Davis (210)	Domestic violence related Deaths	Davis (2010) reported that domestic violence sometimes lead to deaths. And concluded that some homicide could have been prevented if the media had properly reported the incidence.
Dobash & Dobash (2004)	Women's Violence To Men In Intimate Relationships	Dobash & R. Dobash (2004) The author reported that aggression and abuse are exhibited towards each partner.
Swanberg & Logan (2005)	Domestic Violence and Employment: A Qualitative Study	This study illuminates the consequences that domestic violence may have on women's employment.

Source: Authors Compilation

METHODOLOGY

This study was conducted was assess the socio-economic contest in which domestic violence mostly occur in Ghana. The study targeted 200 women within Kumasi metropolis of Ghana. Respondents were conveniently selected using a structured questionnaire. Data for the study came from both primary and secondary sources. The data were analyzed with the aid of Statistical Package for social sciences (SPSS) for windows. 5-point Likert scale was employed in this survey with the highest point being 5 and the least being 1. The variables in the questionnaires were obtained from previous researchers (Galvani, 2006; Saraswat and Mehrotra, 2016) and modified to address the study objectives. These included; cultural factors, economic factors, political factors and legal factors. The results were presented using frequencies, percentages means, standard deviations and relative important index (RII). Respondents were adequately informed about the objectives of the study and their consents fully sought.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographics

The survey results revealed that majority (26.5%) of the respondents were within the age blanket of 20-29 and 30-39. Moreover, 20% were within age group 40-49, and also 16% were 50 years and above meanwhile, 11% were below 20 years. Education wise, majority (32%) were

undergraduates' students, other 27% were in primary school and 21% were also in senior high school. Moreover, 1.5% of the females were post graduate students and 18.5% had had no formal education. Regarding employment status, majority (49.5%) were employees, other 7.5% were self-employed, besides, 33% were unemployed and 10% were students. The females were assessed whether they have ever been assaulted by men, it revealed that, majority (48%) strongly agreed that, they have ever been assaulted by men; moreover, 43.5% agreed that, they have ever been also assaulted by men, however 8.5% have never experienced any assaulted from men. This affirm that domestic violence is predominates in our society since approximately 91.5% females have ever been assaulted in their entire life. It was very surprising that, majority (40%) of the respondents stated that they have been highly assaulted. Another, 35.5% of the respondents affirmed that they have been also assaulted very highly by men and 5.5% were moreover been moderately assaulted. Meanwhile, 14.5% have been lowly assaulted as 4.5% have never been assaulted.

Table 2: Cultural factors

Cultural factors	S.A:F/%	A:F/%	N:F/%	D:F/%	S.D:F/%	X
Gender specific socialization	100/50	51/26	49/24	-	-	4.25
Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles	-	155/77	17/9	28/14	-	3.63
Expectations of roles within relationships	82/41	33/17	68/34	-	17/8	3.81
Belief in the inherent superiority of males	96/48	87/44	-	17/9	-	4.31
Values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls	84/42	88/44	-	17/9	11/5	4.08
Notion of the family as a private sphere and under male control	97/48	103/52	-	-	-	4.48
Customs of marriage (bride price and dowry)	131/65	33/16	25/13	11/6	-	4.42
Acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict	169/85	17/9	0	14/7	-	4.70
Unweighted Mean						4.21

Source: Field Data, 2016. *S.A=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, S.D=Strongly Disagree, X=Mean score, F=Frequency and %=Percentage*

The study explored the culture factors that influence domestic violence in the society. It was found out that; majority (50%) of the respondents strongly agreed that, gender specific socialization contributes greatly to the domestic violence among females in Ghana, other 24% also agreed, meanwhile 24% neutrally agreed with the mean of 4.25. Majority (77%) agreed that, Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles influences domestic violence against females in Ghana, other 9% neutrally agreed meanwhile 14% disagreed that Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles influences domestic violence with the mean 3.63. Additional, 41% of the respondents strongly agreed that Expectations of roles within relationships causes domestic violence, likewise 17% agreed and also 34% neutrally agreed, notwithstanding 8% strongly

disagreed that Expectations of roles within relationships inspires domestic violence with a mean of 3.81. Majority (48%) strongly agreed that Belief in the inherent superiority of males causes domestic violence other 44% agreed, however, 9% disagreed that Belief in the inherent superiority of males causes domestic violence in our society with mean 4.31.

Furthermore, majority (44%) of the respondents agreed that, Values that give men proprietary rights over women and girl's causes' domestic violence, other 42% strongly agreed meanwhile 9% disagreed and 5% strongly disagreed also that Values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls causes' domestic violence with mean 4.08. Again 52% agreed that Notion of the family as a private sphere and under male control contributes to domestic violence in Ghana, and also 48% strongly agreed with mean 4.48. Majority (65%) strongly agreed that, Customs of marriage (bride price and dowry) contributes to domestic violence, likewise 16% agreed. another 13% neutrally agreed however, 6% disagreed that Customs of marriage (bride price and dowry) contributes domestic violence with mean 4.42. In conclusion, majority, (85%) strongly agreed that Acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict causes domestic violence, 9% also agreed, meanwhile 7% disagreed with mean 4.70.

Table 3: Economic factors

Economic factors	S.A:F/%	A:F/%	N:F/%	D:F/%	S.D:F/%	X
Women's economic dependence on men	200/100	-	-	-	-	5.00
Limited access to credit and cash	33/17	45/22	73/36	15/8	34/17	3.14
Discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands	67/34	122/61	-	11/5	-	4.22
Maintenance after divorce or widowhood	17/9	161/81	11/5	11/5	-	3.92
Limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors	73/37	116/58	-	11/5	-	4.26
Limited access to education and training for women	33/17	152/76	15/8	-	-	4.09
Unweighted Mean						4.11

Source: Field Data, 2016. S.A=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, S.D=Strongly Disagree, X=Mean score, F=Frequency and %=Percentage

The study examines the Economic Factors that influence domestic violence in Ghana. The address the issues raised in this study 5-point Likert Scale was employed to rate participant's views where 5-implies very strong agreement with the statement and 1-implies very strong disagreement with the statement. The study discovered that all (100%) the respondents unanimously strongly agreed that to the statement that women's economic dependence on men inspires domestic violence showing a mean of 5.00. Again, 17% strongly agreed that limited access to credit and cash instigates domestic violence, 22% also agreed and 36% neutrally agreed. Another 17% strongly disagreed and 8% also disagreed that, limited access to credit and cash transpires domestic violence with mean 2.14. Better still, 34% strongly agreed that

discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands entices domestic violence in Ghana, (61%) majority also agreed; however, merely 5% disagreed with mean 4.22. Furthermore, 9% strongly agreed that, maintenance after divorce or widowhood causes domestic violence economically, majority (81%) also agreed. Other 5% neutrally agreed however, 5% disagreed with 3.92. In addition, 37% strongly agreed that limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors leads to domestic violence, (58%) majority agreed; nevertheless, 5% disagreed with mean 4.26. Finally, 17% strongly agreed that, limited access to education and training for women motivates domestic violence, 76% agreed however, 5% neutrally agreed with mean 4.09.

Table 4: Political factors

Political factors	S.A:F/%	A:F/%	N:F/%	D:F/%	S.D:F/%	X
Under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical profession	109/54	32/16	42/21	17/9	-	4.17
Domestic violence not taken seriously	122/61	36/18	17/9	11/5	14/7	4.21
Notions of families being private and beyond control of the nation	110/55	28/14	-	17/9	45/22	3.71
Risk of challenge to status-quo/religious laws	84/42	101/50	15/8	-	-	4.35
Limited organization of women as a political force	-	155/77	17/9	28/14	-	3.64
Limited participation of women in organized political systems	82/41	22/11	68/34	-	28/14	3.65
Unweighted Mean	3.96					

Source: Field Data, 2016. S.A=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, S.D=Strongly Disagree, X=Mean score, F=Frequency and %=Percentage

The study reviews the political factors that inspired domestic violence against females in Ghana. It was revealed that, majority (54%) strongly agreed that Under-representation of women in power, politics, and the media and in the legal and medical profession resulted in domestic violence, similarly 16% agreed and 21% neutrally agreed meanwhile 9% disagreed with mean 4.17. In addition, 61% strongly agreed that Domestic violence is not taken seriously in Ghana, likewise 18 agreed and 9% neutrally. Other 5% agreed and 7% strongly disagreed with mean 4.21. Majority (55%) strongly agreed that Notions of families being private and beyond control of the nation results in domestic violence, 14% agreed also, conversely, 9% disagreed and 22% strongly disagreed with mean 3.71. Furthermore, 42% strongly agreed that Risk of challenge to status-quo or religious laws resulted in domestic violence, 50% majority also agreed, meanwhile 9% neutrally agreed with mean 4.35. Consequently, 77% agreed that Limited organization of women as a political force inspires domestic violence, 9% neutrally agreed however, 14% disagreed with 3.64. To conclude 41% strongly agreed that Limited participation of women in organized political systems causes domestic violence, 11% also agreed and 34% neutrally agreed however, 14% disagreed with mean 3.65.

Table 5: Legal factors

Legal factors	S.A:F/%	A:F/%	N:F/%	D:F/%	S.D:F/%	X
Lesser legal status of women either by written laws and/or by practice	96/48	87/43	-	17/9	-	4.31
Laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance	84/42	73/37	-	32/16	11/5	3.93
Legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse	144/72	56/28	-	-	-	4.72
Low levels of legal literacy among women	131/65	33/16	25/14	11/5	-	4.42
Insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary	183/91	17/9	-	-	-	4.91
Unweighted Mean						4.46

Source: Field Data, 2016. *S.A=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, N=Neutral, D=Disagree, S.D=Strongly Disagree, X=Mean score, F=Frequency and %=Percentage*

The study determines the legal factors that stimulate domestic violence against females in Ghana. The study revealed that, majority (48%) strongly agreed that lesser legal status of women either by written laws and/or by practice inspires domestic violence, 43% agreed while as 9% disagreed with mean 4.31. Also 42% strongly agreed that laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance influences domestic violence, 37% agreed further, meanwhile, 16% neutrally agreed and 5% strongly disagreed with mean 3.93. Adding, (72%) majority strongly agreed that legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse is not clear to citizens, other 28% agreed with mean 4.72. Furthermore, 65% strongly agreed that low levels of legal literacy among women gives room for men to abuse them, other 16% agreed; also 14% neutrally agreed nevertheless 5% disagreed with mean 4.42. At the end, (91%) majority strongly agreed that insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary inspires domestic violence in Ghana, and also 9% agreed with mean 4.91

Table 6: Relationship between been Assaulted by men and Socio-demographic characteristics

Demographics	Been assaulted by men			Total
	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Age				
<20	0	11	11	22
20-29	11	22	20	53
30-39	3	23	27	53
40-49	0	22	18	40
50+	3	9	20	32
Education				
No formal Edu.	8	18	11	37
Primary	0	13	41	54
SHS	3	19	20	42
Undergraduate	6	34	24	64

Post graduate	0	3	0	3
Employment				
Student	0	3	17	20
Self employed	0	6	9	15
Employee	17	23	59	99
Unemployed	0	55	11	66

Source: Field Data, 2016.

Testing the hypothesis: H_o : *there is no relationship between females ever been assaulted and Age*. The study revealed that, there is a significant (p -value = 0.007) relationship between females ever been assaulted and age at 95% confidence interval since the Cal-value = 21.137 is greater than the T-value = 15.507 with $df = 8$.

Testing the hypothesis: H_o : *there is no relationship between females ever been assaulted and education*. It was discovered that, there is relationship between females ever been assaulted and education since the T-value = 15.507 is less than the Cal-value = 35.250 at 95% confidence interval with $df = 8$ however the relationship is significant ($p = 0.000$).

Testing the hypothesis: H_o : *there is no relationship between females ever been assaulted and employment status*. The study disclosed that, there is a significant (p -value = 0.000) relationship between females ever been assaulted and employment status at 95% confidence interval since the Cal-value = 76.970 is greater than the T-value = 12.592 with $df = 6$.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This study examined the prevalence of domestic violence in the socio-economic and political context in Ghana. The study revealed prevalence of Cultural factors as follows: Acceptability of violence as means to resolve conflict ($M=4.7$), bride price and dowry ($M=4.2$), Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles ($M=4.25$), Belief in the inherent superiority of males ($M=4.3$). Prevalence of economic factors included: Women's economic dependence on men ($M=5.0$) limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors (4.26) discriminatory laws regarding inheritance, property rights, use of communal lands (4.2). Prevalence of Political factors included: Under-representation of women in power, politics, media and in the legal and medical profession ($M=4.17$), Risk of challenge to status-quo/religious laws ($M=4.35$). Legal factors included: laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance ($M=4.31$) insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary ($M=4.91$). More than half of the respondents indicated that they have even been assaulted by men. The study revealed an association between females ever been assaulted and employment status ($X^2=76.9$, p -value<0.05, $df = 6$). Again there is there is relationship between females ever been assaulted and education attainment ($X^2=35.25$, p -value<0.05, $df = 8$). There are relationship between females ever been assaulted and age $X^2=21.13$, p -value<0.05, $df = 8$). Policy intervention and reinforcement of the existing legislation is imperative in the civility of these findings.

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