

THE SINS AND THE PUNISHMENTS: TOWARDS THE INCIDENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ITS EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES IN GHANA

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ABSTRACT: *This paper was carried out to examine the prevalence of domestic violence and possible extenuating circumstance in the Kintampo South District of Ghana. The target population of the study was predominately women. 200 of these women were selected purposively to participate in the study. Structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data. Secondary data were obtained from academic research data bases including EBSCO, Google Scholar and Cross-Ref. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the field data. Respondent's participations were purely voluntary. The study revealed forms of domestic violence as follows: Rape, Torture, Molestation, Battering, Forced Labor, and feticide. Extenuating Circumstances were discovered as follows: Medical response, Counseling Law enforcement, Public education, Media blitz, Role of Gender Activists and psychologist. Also it was found that there is a significant ($X^2 = 98.19$, $df = 8$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) association between women educational level and rape experience. Moreover, the study revealed a significant association between women age and rape experience. Again, there is a significant ($df = 16$, $X^2 = 248.14$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) association between women educational level and force marriage experience. There is a significant association between women age and forced marriage experience. It is concluded that nobody should ever think that the blight of domestic violence is over neither in Ghana nor many other developing countries. The domestic violence scourger still lives. The proposed extenuating measures should be taken serious by policy maker to avert the situation. Development psychologists are also needed to aid behavioural studies.*

KEYWORDS: Domestic Violence, Incidence, Women, Extenuating Circumstances, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

The Millennium Development Goal Three (Thus to Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women) would be a nightmare if effort towards the prevalence of domestic violence is not doubled in underdeveloped world. Increasingly forms of women abuse are recorded on daily, weekly and monthly bases. Previous studies discovered the following as the most common form of women abuse: Foeticides, Infanticides, Torture, Rape, Molestation, Battering, Trafficking, Prostitution, Forced marriage, Sterilization and Dowry death. Rapes, molestation, torturing were mentioned as most common in Africa (Alokan, 2013) Antle et al., 2007). In Ghana the populations of women (51%) outweigh the men (49%). Meanwhile 33% of these women are physically abused, 27% are sexually abused, 15% suffer female genital mutilation. Other forms of abuse include, economic, psychological and emotional (Gender Studies and Human Right Documentation Centre, 1995-2016)

Greenberg (2012) conducted a study on Trans-women and domestic violence and concluded that the recent reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and the impact that proposed changes may have for trans women victims of domestic violence. Milner (2010) focused on children and young people living in the context of domestic violence. Milliner

established that the theories and practice both support the view that domestic violence has detrimental effects on the socio, economic and psychological wellbeing of the child. This affects the child behaviour including schooling.

Tracy (2007) linked her study to patriarchy and domestic violence. Tracy reported that patriarchy should be well defined since the term comes in categories. Namely authoritative patriarchy, soft patriarchy and shared patriarchy. This study illuminates the consequences that domestic violence may have on women's employment. Dobash & Dobash (2004) assessed women's to men in intimate relationship. The author reported that aggression and abuse are exhibited towards each partner. However, there are variations in the form of the abuse in terms of frequency, severity; consequences and the victim's sense of wellbeing were reported.

Various studies 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.

Various coping strategies have been proposed by many writers as the surety to reduce the incidence of domestic violence against women. These include: Medical response, Counseling, Law enforcement, Counseling for offenders, Public education, Media blitz, role of Community Leaders, Non-Governmental Organizations, Role of Gender Activists and Chauvinists, Empowering social welfare staff.

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. This paper was carried out to examine the prevalence of domestic and possible extenuating circumstance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The relationship between domestic violence and death had been studied. Davis (2010) conducted his study on domestic violence related to deaths. This author reported that some homicide could have been prevented if the media had properly reported the incidence. In this case the role of the media is instrumental in reducing homicide rate. Implying the negligence of the media can escalate the prevalence of women abuse. The intimacy of abusive relationship and why partners stay had also been investigated. Dobash & Dobash (2004) assessed women's to men in intimate relationship. The author reported that aggression and abuse are exhibited towards each partner. However, there are variations in the form of the abuse in terms of frequency, severity; consequences and the victim's sense of wellbeing were reported.

These findings had been corroborated by Payne, & Wermeling (2009) who asserted that many victims were reported to have strong affections for their husbands and partners; 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.

The role of house hold leadership and associate forms of violence had vigorously been researched. Tracy (2007) linked her study to patriarchy and domestic violence. Tracy reported that patriarchy should be well defined since the term comes in categories. The effects of domestic violence on young people and children had been studied. Milner (2010) focused on children and young people living in the context of domestic violence. Milliner established that the theories and practice both support the view that domestic violence has detrimental effects on the socio, economic and psychological wellbeing of the child. This affects the child behaviour including schooling. There is also available incidence of domestic violence involving pregnant women.

The high incidence of domestic violence in the developing countries had long received research attention. Envuladu & Chia (2012) the incidence of domestic violence is high in most developing areas. There major causes of this abonable act include multiple partners, alcoholism, low educational level, unskilled labor and unemployment including HIV positive. Greenberg (2012) conducted a study on trans-women and domestic violence and concluded that the recent reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act and the impact that proposed changes may have for trans women victims of domestic violence.

According to international transmission partner violence as reported by Ehrensaft, (2003) the childhood behaviour of a child has a predictive effects on them to commit violence against a partner. Domestic violence involving males had been investigated. And do not take different from those involving women. The only differences include; low frequency, less severity and low coverage. 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. Other writers also focused on domestic violence and why the victims mostly stay.

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. It is argued that domestic violence is a form of family menaces that needed to be nipped in its bud. Alokian (2013) studied domestic violence against women and concluded that offenders mostly husband s of the victims should be introduced to the community to deter others from committing similar offense in the future. From the above, it can be concluded that domestic violence comes in difference forms. These include; aggressions, battering, death threat, molestation, sexual abuse among other.

METHODOLOGY

This paper was carried out to examine the prevalence of domestic violence and possible extenuating circumstance in the Kintampo South District of Ghana. The target population of the study was predominately women. 200 of these women were selected purposively to participate in the study. Structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data. Secondary data were obtained from academic research data bases including EBSCO, Google Scholar and Cross-Ref. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the field data. Both categorical and ordinal scales of measures were used in this study. Ethics were given consideration in this study. Respondent's participation were purely voluntary.

RESULTS

Demographic

The study examines the forms of domestic violence and mitigating tendencies to curb its existence. Overall, 200 sample was selected which revealed that, majority (41.5%) were self-employed, other 12% were teachers and housewives respectively. Another, 11.5% were students and 11% were retired staffs meanwhile 6% were Nurses and other staff respectively. Age wise, majority (53%) were within the age group 40-49, other 23% were in age 30-39. Moreover, 18% were within the age group 50-59 however, 6% were in age 18-29. With regards to education, majority (42%) were in middle school, 28.5% were uneducated. Again 17.5% were training college graduates and 6% were polytechnic and university students respectively. Furthermore (40.5%) earn less than GHc 500.00 a month, likewise, 36% earn between GHc600.00-1500.00 meanwhile 23.5% earn GHc1600.00 and above. In all, majority (35.5%) of the respondents have 1-3 children other 23% have 4-6 children 18% of them have children 7 and above meanwhile 23.5% have no child.

Forms of domestic violence

Items	X score	Std. D.	Std. Error Mean	X score ranked
Foeticides	4.8800	0.32578	.02304	2 nd
Infanticides	4.8300	0.37658	.02663	3 rd
Physical Torture	4.7600	0.73833	.05221	4 th
Rape	4.6600	0.74645	.05278	5 th
Molestation	4.9450	0.22855	.01616	1 st
Battering	3.2700	1.22253	.08645	9 th
Trafficking	3.3850	1.50269	.10626	8 th
Prostitution	2.7150	1.74614	.12347	12 th
Forced marriage	2.7200	1.12603	.07962	11 th
Sterilization	3.1550	1.20342	.08509	10 th
Dowry death	3.9400	0.63909	.04519	7 th
Custodial violence	4.2350	0.73654	.05208	6 th
Unweighted Mean	3.9597			

Source: Field Data, 2015 X=Mean, Std. D=Standard Deviation

The study explored various forms domestic violence among females in Ghana. It was discovered that feticide was among the major forms of domestic violence in Ghana with 4.8800 and standard deviation of 0.32578. Infanticide was other form domestic with mean 4.83300 and standard deviation 0.37658, torture also was among the domestic violence act with the mean 4.7600 and standard deviation 0.73833. Again rape was a form domestic violence with mean 4.6600 and standard deviation 0.74645, Molestation indicated a form domestic violence act with mean 4.9450 and standard deviation 0.22855. Custodial violence was a form of domestic violence with mean 4.2350 and standard deviation 0.73654. Battering shows a form of domestic violence with mean 3.2700 and standard deviation 1.22253. Also trafficking revealed a form of domestic violence with mean 3.3850 and standard deviation 1.50269 and prostitution showed a form of domestic violence with mean 2.7150 and standard deviation 1.74614. Furthermore, forced marriage indicated a form of domestic violence with mean 2.7200 and standard deviation 1.12603. Sterilization was also among the forms of domestic violence with mean 3.1550 and standard deviation 1.20342. Other domestic violence acts include dowry death with mean 3.9400 and standard deviation 0.63909.

One-Sample Test on forms of domestic violence

	Test Value = 1					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Foeticides	168.433	199	.000	3.88000	3.8346	3.9254
Infanticides	143.834	199	.000	3.83000	3.7775	3.8825
Torture	72.020	199	.000	3.76000	3.6570	3.8630
Rape	69.342	199	.000	3.66000	3.5559	3.7641
Molestation	244.105	199	.000	3.94500	3.9131	3.9769
Battering	26.259	199	.000	2.27000	2.0995	2.4405
Trafficking	22.446	199	.000	2.38500	2.1755	2.5945
Prostitution	13.890	199	.000	1.71500	1.4715	1.9585
Forced marriage	21.602	199	.000	1.72000	1.5630	1.8770
Sterilization	25.325	199	.000	2.15500	1.9872	2.3228
Dowry death	65.057	199	.000	2.94000	2.8509	3.0291
Custodial violence	62.115	199	.000	3.23500	3.1323	3.3377

Source: Field Statistics All t-values are Significant ($P\text{-value} < 0.05$)

Measures to prevent domestic violence

Items	X score	Std. D.	Std. Error Mean	X ranked
Medical response	4.4150	.49396	.03493	5 th
Counseling	4.8200	.38515	.02723	3 rd
Law enforcement	4.7000	.96679	.06836	4 th
Counseling for offenders	3.4850	1.75361	.12400	9 th
Public education	4.8800	.32578	.02304	1 st
Media blitz	4.8250	.38092	.02694	2 nd
The role of community leaders	3.5900	1.29626	.09166	8 th

Non-governmental organizations	4.2350	.93496	.06611	6 th
Role of gender activists and chauvinists	3.6550	.67695	.04787	7 th
Empowering social welfare stuffs	3.5900	1.29626	.09166	8 th
Unweighted Mean	4.2195			

Source: Field Data, 2015 X=Mean, Std. D=Standard Deviation

The study examined various measures to curb domestic violence among females in Ghana. It was discovered that, medical response was a major means to curb domestic violence with mean 4.4150 and standard deviation 0.49396. Counseling also prevents domestic violence with mean 4.8200 and standard deviation 0.3855. Law enforcement facilitates the prevention of domestic violence with mean 4.7000 and standard deviation 0.96679. Counseling for offenders aid the prevention of domestic violence in our society with 3.4850 and standard deviation 1.75361. Public education also enhances the prevention of domestic violence with mean 4.8800 and standard deviation 1.75361. In addition, media blitz curbs domestic violence to extent with mean 4.8250 and 0.38092. The role of community leaders contributes to the prevention of domestic violence with mean 3.5900 and standard deviation 1.29626 finally; non-governmental organization contributes to the curb of domestic violence with mean 4.2350 and standard deviation 1.29626.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 5					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Medical response	-16.749	199	.000	-.58500	-.6539	-.5161
Counseling	-6.609	199	.000	-.18000	-.2337	-.1263
Law enforcement	-4.388	199	.000	-.30000	-.4348	-.1652
Counseling for offenders	-12.218	199	.000	-1.51500	-1.7595	-1.2705
Public education	-5.209	199	.000	-.12000	-.1654	-.0746
Media blitz	-6.497	199	.000	-.17500	-.2281	-.1219
The role of community leaders	-15.383	199	.000	-1.41000	-1.5907	-1.2293
Non-governmental organizations	-11.571	199	.000	-.76500	-.8954	-.6346
Role of gender activists and chauvinists	-28.098	199	.000	-1.34500	-1.4394	-1.2506
Empowering social welfare stuffs	-15.383	199	.000	-1.41000	-1.5907	-1.2293

Source: Field Statistics

All t-values are Significant (P-value<0.05)

Relationship between Rape and Education

Education	Rape			Total
	Not frequent	Frequent	Most frequent	
University	0	12	0	12
Training College	0	0	35	35
Polytechnic	0	0	12	12
Middle School	0	12	72	84
Uneducated	11	11	35	57
Pearson Chi-Square	98.192 ^a			
Likelihood Ratio	90.892			
Linear-by-Linear Association	4.968			
P-value	.000			
Degree of freedom	8			

Source: Field Statistics

The Karl Pearson chi-square revealed that there is a significant association between respondent education and rape experience. The calculated value (98.19) is greater than the table value

(15.507). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between women educational level and rape experience ($df = 8$, $X^2 = 98.19$ $p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Relationship between Rape and Age

Age	Rape			Total
	Not frequent	Frequent	Most frequent	
18 – 29	0	0	12	12
30 – 39	11	23	12	46
40 – 49	0	12	94	106
50 – 59	0	0	36	36
Pearson Chi-Square	95.964 ^a			
Likelihood Ratio	95.835			
Linear-by-Linear Association	28.534			
P-value	.000			
Degree of freedom	6			

Source: Field Statistics

The Karl Pearson chi-square revealed that there is a significant association between respondent age and rape experience. The calculated value (95.96) is greater than the table value (12.592). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between women age and rape experience ($df = 6$, $X^2 = 95.96$ $p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Relationship between Forced marriage and Education

Education	Forced marriage					Total
	Never	Not frequent	Sometimes	Frequent	Most frequent	
University	0	0	0	12	0	12
Training College	11	0	12	12	0	35

Polytechnic	12	0	0	0	0	12
Middle School	0	48	24	12	0	84
Uneducated	11	0	34	0	12	57
Pearson Chi-Square	248.142 ^a					
Likelihood Ratio	249.332					
Linear-by-Linear Association	.132					
P-value	.000					
Degree of freedom	16					

Source: Field Statistics

The Karl Pearson chi-square revealed that there is a significant association between respondent education and forced marriage experience. The calculated value (248.14) is greater than the table value (26.296). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between women educational level and force marriage experience ($df = 16$, $X^2 = 248.14$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

Relationship between Forced marriage and Age

Age	Forced marriage					Total
	Never	Not frequent	Sometimes	Frequent	Most frequent	
18 – 29	0	0	12	0	0	12
30 – 39	11	12	23	0	0	46
40 – 49	23	12	23	36	12	106
50 – 59	0	24	12	0	0	36
Pearson Chi-Square	113.596 ^a					
Likelihood Ratio	131.124					
Linear-by-Linear Association	.001					
P-value	.000					
Degree of freedom	12					

Source: Field Statistics

The Karl Pearson chi-square revealed that there is a significant association between respondent age and forced marriage experience. The calculated value (123.596) is greater than the table value (21.026). Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. There is a significant association between women age and forced marriage experience ($df = 12$, $X^2 = 113.59$ $p\text{-value} < 0.05$).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study had revealed forms of domestic violence as follows: Rape $M=4.7$, Torture $=4.7$, Molestation $M=4.9$, Battering $=3.3$, Forced Labor $M=2.7$, Feticide $=4.8$. Extenuating Circumstances were discovered as follows: Medical response $M=4.4$, Counseling $M=4.8$, Law enforcement $M= 4.7$, Public education $M=4.8$, Media blitz $M=4.8$, Role of Gender Activists $M=4.2$. Also it was found that there is a significant association between women educational level and rape experience ($df = 8$, $X^2 = 98.19$ $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Moreover, the study revealed a significant association between women age and rape experience ($df = 6$, $X^2 = 95.96$ $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Again, There is a significant association between women educational level and force marriage experience ($df = 16$, $X^2 = 248.14$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). There is a significant association

between women age and forced marriage experience ($df = 12$, $X^2 = 113.59$ p -value < 0.05). It is concluded that nobody should ever think that the blight of domestic violence is over neither in Ghana nor many other developing countries. The domestic violence scourger still lives. It is suggested that all the above proposed domestic violence extenuating circumstance be considered in any preventive policy initiative. Further study can also be conducted in other part of the country to assess the variances apropos form of women abuse.

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