

## ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

# Factors Influencing Gender Based Violence among Men and Women in Selected States in Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study determined the factors associated with gender based violence among 3000 men and women in selected states in Nigeria. Respondents who had experienced physical violence were 806(26.9%), comprising 353(11.8%) males and 453(15.1%) females (p<0.001). Respondents who had experienced sexual violence were 364 (12.1%) of which 221 (7.4%) were males and 143(4.8%) were females (p<0.0001). Married female respondents were more likely to experience physical violence than single respondents (OR= 1.71, 95%CI: 1.15-2.53 p=0.008). In addition, lower risk of experiencing sexual violence among males was observed among those who do not drink alcohol. The study has shown that gender based violence still constitutes a problem in Nigeria, affecting women more than men. However, efforts should be geared towards addressing the factors that promote violence among both sexes through increased awareness and education (*Afr J Reprod Health 2011; 15[4]: 78-86*).

## Résumé

**Facteurs qui influent sur la violence basée sur les sexes chez les hommes et les femmes dans les états choisis au Nigéria.** Cette étude a déterminé les facteurs liés à la violence basée sur les sexes chez 3000 hommes et femmes dans les états choisis au Nigéria. Les interviewés qui ont vécu la violence physique comptaient 806(26,9%) y compris 353 (11,8%) mâles et 453 (15,1%) femelles (p<0,001). Les interviewés qui ont vécu la violence sexuelle comptaient 364 (12,1%) dont 221 (7,4%) étaient des mâles et 143 (4,8%) étaient des femelles (p<0,0001). Les interviewés femelles mariées avaient plus la possibilité de subir la violence physique que les interviewées célibataires (OR=1,71, 95%CI : 1,15-2,53 p=0,008). De plus, le risque plus élevé chez les hommes de subir la violence sexuelle a été lié significativement à l'état de fumeur des partenaires, l'état professionnel et la consommation d'alcool chez les mâles. L'étude a montré que la violence basée sur les sexes constitue encore un problème au Nigéria et touche plus les femmes que les hommes. Néanmoins, il faut faire des efforts pour s'occuper des facteurs qui encouragent la violence chez les deux sexes à travers l'intensification de la sensibilisation et l'éducation (*Afr J Reprod Health 2011; 15[4]: 78-86*).

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**Keywords:** Physical violence, Sexual violence, Nigeria

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## Introduction

Gender Based Violence (GBV) is a major public health and human rights problem involving all ages and sexes. Although the term “gender based violence” is widely used as a synonym for violence against women, GBV also occurs among men <sup>1</sup>. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women (DEVW), defines the term “violence against women” as: “Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether

occurring in public or in private life <sup>2</sup>. Physical abuse is a pattern of physical assaults and threats used to control another person. It includes punching, hitting, choking, biting, and throwing objects at a person, kicking, pushing and using a weapon such as a gun or a knife. Sexual violence has been defined as any sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances or acts to traffic women's sexuality, using coercion, threats of harm or physical force by any person regardless of relationship to the survivor in any setting <sup>3</sup>. The scope of this definition has been expanded to include forced sex, sexual coercion, rape and child abuse <sup>4</sup>. In this

study, sexual violence is defined as any unwanted sexual act, such as forced sex.

Current estimates of gender based violence indicate that between 8-70% of women worldwide have been physically and sexually assaulted by a male partner at least once in their lives<sup>5</sup>. In Zambia, DHS data indicate that 27% of ever-married women reported being beaten by their spouse or partner in the past year and about 13% of 15-19 year olds were sexually coerced in the past 12 months.<sup>6</sup> In rural Ethiopia, 49% of ever partnered women have ever experienced physical violence by an intimate partner, while 59% had ever experienced sexual violence<sup>7</sup>. All these variations may be a consequence of underreporting, stigma, shame or other social and cultural factors that deter women from discussing episodes of violence<sup>3</sup>. In another hospital based study in Nairobi, the prevalence of sexual violence was 61.5%, while the proportion of physical assault was 38.5%<sup>8</sup>. This study also reported that majority of the perpetrators of gender based violence were married (72.3%) and alcohol was a significant contributor in 10.1% of determinant cases. In a study of Igbo communities in Nigeria, 58.9% of women reported battery during pregnancy while 21.3% have been forced to have sexual intercourse<sup>9</sup>.

Most investigations of domestic violence have centered on men as the perpetrators of violence; however, this is not to deny that cases of men being victims of domestic violence do not exist. It has been reported that men have their share of adverse consequences of domestic violence.

In the study by Fawole<sup>10</sup> on violence among young female hawkers, 19.7% of women had experienced physical assault, 36.3% had received sexual harassment, while only 7.2% had emotional or psychological violence. Prevalence of wife beating among civil servants in another study was 31.3%; 42.5% of the men had been perpetrators, while 23.5% of the women had been victims.<sup>11</sup> In this study, alcohol consumption and growing up in an environment where parents fight publicly were significantly associated with men beating their wives, while being young, unmarried and domestic violence between parents of the respondents were significantly associated with women being beaten.

In spite of all the studies on violence against women, documentation of violence against men is almost non-existent. This may largely be due to the wide spread tolerance of such acts and lack of appropriate legal framework that protects women and men from domestic gender based violence in Nigeria. Therefore, this study sets out to investigate the factors

associated with gender based violence among both men and women in Nigeria.

## Methods

A descriptive cross sectional study was carried out among men and women in three states (Kaduna, Enugu and Oyo) of Nigeria. Oyo State is a state in south-western Nigeria with its capital at Ibadan. Enugu state is inland in south-eastern Nigeria with its capital at Enugu, while Kaduna state is located at the northern end of Nigeria's high plains which has its capital in Kaduna. Variations exist in these states on certain characteristics (socio demographic, violence and behavioural) especially age at marriage. For example, in northern Nigeria, age at marriage is lower compared to other communities<sup>12</sup>.

A Multi stage cluster random sampling procedure was employed. The 6 geo-political zones of Nigeria were identified as clusters. Stage 1 involved the random selection of 3 geo-political zones from a list of the 6 geo-political zones in the country. This resulted in the selection of south west, north central and south east zones. Stage 2 involved the random selection of one state in each of the selected zones with the selection of Oyo, Enugu and Kaduna states. These three states were selected using a simple random sample from a list of all states in the zones, after which local governments were randomly selected and then communities within the local government areas. In the selected communities, a landmark was identified (e.g. a church, mosque or market place) and a coin was tossed. If it showed a head, the research assistant proceeded in the right direction; if it showed a tail, the left direction was followed. Every consecutive household was visited and respondents who were of reproductive age were selected. One eligible respondent was recruited per household. If there were more than one, they were asked to ballot. To be eligible for interview, the adult man or woman (whether married or single) must have been (previously or currently) in an intimate relationship.

The minimum sample size required to determine level of domestic violence at a 5% level of significance with a 90% power and a 5% error tolerable was calculated and a minimum sample size of 989 was arrived at which was increased to 1000 per state. Structured questionnaires were administered by research assistants who had previous experience in data collection with a minimum of a diploma or post high school experience. They participated with field supervisors in a 1-day training session that focused on the basic skills of data collection and contents of the

questionnaire. The objective and rationale of the study was explained to each respondent and their consent was sought before administration of the questionnaire. Information concerning social characteristics, demographic characteristics, alcohol and smoking status, attitudes and perceptions towards gender and relationships of each participant were collected. Questions were derived from a thorough literature review including the WHO Multi-Country Study of Violence against Women<sup>13</sup>. Two principal domestic violence outcome variables, following conventional definitions, were considered in this analysis: Physical and sexual violence. Physical violence was assessed from the response to questions asking whether the respondents had experienced at least one of the 17 subtypes of physical violence (i.e., slap on the face, throwing something at you, pushing, biting, tying up, pulling your hair, beaten up, hit with an object, burning or acid attack, choking, stabbing, thrown out, kicks on the body, shoving, dragging, knife threat and gun threat) on which information related to physical violence was collected. Sexual violence was assessed from the response to questions asking whether the respondent had experienced at least one of the two subtypes of violence related to sex (i.e., denial of sex and forced sexual intercourse) in the present or past relationship. The choice of variables for the identification of risk factors was based on previous published studies and literature reviews on gender-based violence<sup>14, 15, 16, 17</sup>.

### Statistical Analysis

Frequency tables were generated for all relevant variables. Descriptive statistics such as means, and standard deviations were used to summarize quantitative variables while qualitative variables were summarized by percentages. The chi squared test was used to compare two proportions and also to investigate associations between two qualitative variables. Variables that were significant in the bivariate analysis were then entered into a logistic regression model to investigate the strength of these associations. The goodness of fit of the binary logistic model was assessed using the Hosmer Lemeshow test<sup>18</sup>. Odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals were presented. Prevalence estimates of physical and sexual violence were defined separately. The life time prevalence of physical and sexual violence was defined as the experience of one or more acts of physical or sexual violence (mentioned above) from a current or former male or female partner at any time. Relationships

between the two outcome variables (physical and sexual violence) and explanatory variables were evaluated by sex of respondents. Ninety-five percent confidence intervals (CIs) for prevalence estimates were determined using previously described methods<sup>19</sup>. All analysis was performed using the SPSS at 5% level of significance.

## Results

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The study consisted of 3000 survey respondents; 1496 (49.9%) males and 1504 (50.1%) females. The mean age of the respondents was 34.1 years (S.D = 12.1 years). About a third of the respondents were Igbos (1052, 35.1%), Yorubas were 1030 (34.3%) while Hausas were 418 (13.9%). A total of 1739 (58%) were married, 1057 (35.2%) single, 82 (2.7%) widowed, 53 (1.8%) separated and 43 (1.4%) divorced. About one-third of survey respondents (939, 31.3%) had high school or secondary education, while 380 (12.7%) had primary education. A larger percentage of survey respondents were artisans or traders (1026, 34.2%), 530 (17.7%) were students, professionals were 458 (15.3%) and civil servants were 244 (8.1%) (Table 1).

### Prevalence of different types of Gender Based Violence

Gender based violence was defined by different variables such as verbal abuse, slap on the face, throwing something at one, and pushing among others. Verbal abuse had the highest prevalence (53.4%), followed by slap on the face (12.7%). Three hundred (10.0%) respondents mentioned denial of sex while only 92 (3.1%) reported forced sexual intercourse. Significantly more females than males had experienced verbal abuse – 56.6% vs 50.2% ( $p < 0.001$ ). However, more males than females had experienced denial of sex – 13.1% Vs 7.0% ( $p < 0.001$ ). Also, forced sex was more common among females than males (4.1% Vs 2.0%,  $p < 0.001$ ). Table 2 shows the frequency distribution of the different types of violence experienced by gender.

### Physical and sexual Violence

Respondents who had experienced physical violence were 806 (26.9%) comprising 353 (11.8%) males and 453 (15.1%) females ( $p < 0.001$ ). Respondents who had experienced sexual violence were 92 (3.1%) of which

**Table 1:** Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Characteristic	Male	Female	Total
<b>Age(yrs)</b>			
<29	601(40.2)	695(46.2)	1296(43.2)
30-39	406(27.1)	415(27.6)	821(27.4)
40-49	248(16.6)	256(17.0)	504(16.8)
50-59	145(9.7)	85(5.7)	230(7.7)
60-69	53(3.5)	24(1.6)	77(2.6)
>70	28(1.9)	13(0.9)	41(1.4)
Missing	15(1.0)	16(1.1)	31(1.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1496(100.0)</b>	<b>1504(100.0)</b>	<b>3000</b>
<b>Tribe</b>			
Igbo	520(34.8)	532(35.4)	1052(35.1)
Yoruba	511(34.2)	519(34.5)	1030(34.3)
Hausa	190(12.7)	228(15.2)	418(13.9)
Other Tribes	263(17.6)	202(13.4)	465(15.5)
Foreigners	4(0.27)	17(1.1)	21(0.7)
Missing	8(0.5)	6(0.4)	14(0.5)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1496(100.0)</b>	<b>1504(100.0)</b>	<b>3000(100.0)</b>
<b>Religion</b>			
Christianity	1058(70.7)	1135(75.5)	2193(73.1)
Islam	421(28.1)	355(23.6)	776(25.9)
Traditional/Others	14(0.96)	7(0.5)	21(0.7)
Missing	3(0.2)	7(0.5)	10(0.3)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1496(100.0)</b>	<b>1504(100.0)</b>	<b>3000(100.0)</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>			
Married	817(54.6)	922(61.3)	1739(58.0)
Single	614(41.0)	443(29.5)	1057(35.2)
Widowed	12(0.8)	70(4.7)	82(2.7)
Divorced	16(1.1)	27(1.8)	43(1.4)
Separated	24(1.6)	29(1.9)	53(1.8)
Missing	13(0.9)	13(0.9)	26(0.9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1496(100.0)</b>	<b>1504(100.0)</b>	<b>3000(100.0)</b>
<b>Level of Education</b>			
No formal education	42(2.8)	99(6.6)	141(4.7)
Adult/Quranic	10(0.7)	20(1.3)	30(1.0)
Primary	170(11.4)	210(13.9)	380(12.7)
Secondary/High	459(30.7)	480(31.9)	939(31.3)
College/Tertiary	664(44.4)	648(43.1)	1312(43.7)
Others	7(0.5)	21(1.4)	28(0.9)
Missing	144(9.6)	35(2.3)	179(6.0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1496(100.0)</b>	<b>1504(100.0)</b>	<b>3000(100.0)</b>
<b>Occupation</b>			
Artisans	406(27.1)	620(41.2)	1026(34.2)
Business/trading/Self employed	336(22.5)	158(10.5)	494(16.5)
Professionals	280(17.4)	178(11.8)	458(15.3)
Students	261(17.4)	269(17.9)	530(17.7)
Civil Servants	123(8.2)	121(8.0)	244(8.1)
Applicants	43(2.9)	33(2.2)	76(2.5)
Retiree	5(0.3)	9(0.6)	14(0.5)
Politicians	11(0.7)	1(0.07)	12(0.4)
Missing	31(2.1)	115(7.6)	146(4.9)
<b>Total</b>	<b>1496(100.0)</b>	<b>1504(100.0)</b>	<b>3000(100.0)</b>

**Table 2:** Frequency distribution of the types of violence and the proportion of positive responders

Types of Violence	Female to Male		Male to Female		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Verbal abuse	751	50.2	851	56.6	1602	53.4
Slap on the face or ear	126	8.4	254	16.9	380	12.7
Throwing something at you	38	2.5	79	5.3	139	4.6
Pushing or shoving	116	7.8	127	8.4	243	8.1
No	1380	92.2	1376	91.6	2756	91.9
Biting	46	3.1	28	1.9	74	2.5
Tying Up	10	0.7	7	0.5	17	0.6
Pulling your hair	18	1.2	41	2.7	59	2.0
Beaten Up	63	4.2	217	14.4	280	9.4
Hitting with an object	34	2.3	47	3.1	81	2.7
Burning/Acid Attack	1	0.1	1	0.1	2	0.1
Choking	16	1.1	12	0.8	28	0.9
Stabbing	8	0.5	1	0.1	9	0.3
Thrown out of the house	38	2.5	78	5.2	116	3.9
Kicks/Blows on parts of the body	35	2.3	66	4.4	101	3.4
Denial of sex	195	13.1	105	7.0	300	10.0
Denial of house keeping allowance	31	2.1	153	10.2	184	6.1
Shoving	63	4.2	24	1.6	87	2.9
Dragging	57	3.8	157	10.5	112	3.7
Verbal Threat	174	11.6	157	10.5	331	11.0
Knife Threat	20	1.3	12	0.8	32	1.1
Gun Threat	4	0.3	2	0.1	6	0.2
Forced Sexual intercourse	30	2.0	62	4.1	92	3.1

**Table 3:** Logistic regression results of physical violence against male respondents

Variable	Odds ratio	Standard error	95% CI	P value
<b>Place of residence</b>				
South west	1.79	0.212	1.18-2.72	0.006
South east	1.61	0.215	1.05-2.45	0.028
*North west				
<b>Marital status</b>				
Married	1.82	0.222	1.18-2.80	0.007
Separated	1.17	0.53	0.41-3.37	0.77
Divorced	2.241	0.64	0.64-7.87	0.21
Widowed	1.26	0.721	0.31-5.16	0.76
*Single				
<b>Partners educational level</b>				
No formal Education	2.681	0.49	1.00-7.14	0.048
Primary Education	1.13	0.29	0.64-1.99	0.67
Secondary Education	1.19	0.18	0.83-1.70	0.34
*Tertiary				

\*Reference category

30 (2.0%) were males and 62(4.1%) were females (p<0.001).

**Logistic Regression Models of Physical and Sexual Violence**

*Physical Violence against Male Respondents*

Males who reside in the south west were more likely to experience physical violence than males who reside in the North West (OR = 1.8, 95%CI: 1.18-2.72, p=0.006).

Males who reside in the south east were also likely to experience physical violence than males who reside in the North West (OR = 1.61, 95%CI: 1.05-2.45, p=0.028). In addition, more married males experienced physical violence compared with single males. (OR=1.82, 95%CI: 1.18-1.80, p=0.007). Male respondents who have partners with no formal education were also more likely to experience physical violence than males whose partners attained college or tertiary education (OR=2.7, 95%CI: 1.00-7.14, p=0.048) (Table 3).

**Table 4:** Logistic regression of physical violence against female respondents

Variable	Odds ratio	Standard error	95% CI	P-value
<b>Partner smokes cigarette</b>				
Yes vs. No	2.05	0.183	1.44-2.94	P<0.001
<b>Marital status</b>				
Married	1.71	0.200	1.15-2.53	0.008
Separated	9.71	0.519	3.51-26.86	P<0.001
Divorced	12.92	0.692	3.325-50.17	P<0.001
Widowed	1.645	0.367	0.801-3.378	0.175
*Single				
<b>Partner drinks alcohol</b>				
Yes vs. No	1.521	0.419	1.110-2.084	0.009
<b>Age of respondents in years</b>				
10-30	3.58	0.547	1.23-10.42	0.02
31-50	7.09	0.549	2.42-20.83	P<0.001
51-70	5.41	0.589	1.71-17.24	0.004
*>70				
<b>Place of residence</b>				
South west vs. North west	1.97	0.193	1.35-2.88	P<0.001
South east vs. North west	1.19	0.339	0.830-1.715	

\*Reference category

**Table 5:** Logistic regression analysis of sexual violence against male respondents

Variable	Odds ratio	Standard Error	95% CI	p-value
<b>Occupational status</b>				
Business	0.192	0.239	0.017-2.198	0.185
Professional	1.106	1.183	0.136-9.00	0.925
Artisans	0.381	0.425	0.043-3.383	0.387
Civil servants	0.563	0.700	0.049- 6.449	0.644
Students/NYSC	1.022	1.124	0.985- 0.118	0.085
*Unemployed				
<b>Do you drink alcohol</b>				
No	0.472	0.206	0.085- 0.201	0.085
*Yes				

\*Reference category

*Physical Violence against Female Respondents*

Female respondents who have partners that smoke cigarettes were 2 times more likely to experience physical violence from such partners than female respondents who have partners that do not smoke (OR=2.05, 95%CI: 1.44-2.94, p<0.001). Married female respondents were about 1.71 times more likely to experience physical violence than single respondents (OR=1.71, 95%CI: 1.15-2.53 p=0.0008). Female respondents who have partners that drink alcohol were 1.52 times more likely to experience physical violence (OR =1.52, 95%CI: 1.11-2.08, p=0.009) than female respondents, who have partners who do not drink. Also, female respondents in the age group 31-50 years were about 7 times more likely to experience physical violence (OR= 7.09, 95%CI: 2.42-20.83, p<0.001) than females above 70 years. Female respondents who

reside in the south west were about 2 times more likely to experience physical violence (OR= 1.97, 95%CI: 1.35-2.88, p<0.001) than females who reside in the North West (Table 4).

*Sexual violence against male respondents*

Male respondents who are civil servants were about 2 times less likely to experience sexual violence than unemployed males (OR= 0.562, 95%CI: 0.049- 6.45, p=0.64). However, male students were more likely to experience sexual violence than unemployed males (OR= 1.02, 95%CI: 0.985- 0.118, p=0.99). Male respondents who do not drink alcohol were 2 times less likely to experience sexual violence (OR=0.472, 95%CI: 0.085- 0.201, p=0.085) than male respondents who drink (Table 5).

**Table 6:** Logistic regression of sexual violence against female respondents

Variable	Odds ratio	Standard Error	95% CI	p-value
<b>Place of residence</b>				
*South west				
South east	3.92	1.79	1.596- 9.61	0.003
South south	5.94	4.15	1.51-23.35	0.011
North west	3.71	2.74	0.87- 15.76	0.76
North central	4.58	2.04	1.92- 10.94	0.001
<b>Age of Respondents(yrs)</b>				
*10-30				
31-50	0.075	0.046	0.023- 0.246	>0.001
51-70	1.58	0.568	0.784-3.198	0.200
>70	8.88	4.58	3.22-24.45	>0.001
<b>Income</b>				
*Income not stated/No income				
<5,000	0.64	0.296	0.256- 1.589	0.331
5,000-10,000	0.62	0.259	0.276-1.407	0.255
10,001-15,000	1.22	0.591	0.468-315	0.689
15,000-20,001	1.49	0.718	0.579- 3.83	0.407
20,001-25,000	0.39	0.411	0.049-3.09	0.371
>25,000	1.33	0.627	0.528-3.35	0.546

\*Reference category

### Sexual violence against female respondents

Female respondents who are from the south-south region were about 6 times more likely to experience sexual violence (OR= 5.94, 95%CI: 1.51- 23.35, p=0.011) than females from the south west. Females who have income between 15000 and 20,000 were about 2 times more likely to experience sexual violence (OR= 1.49, 95%CI: 0.579-3.83, p=0.407) than female respondents with no income. Females in the age group >29years were 4 times more likely to experience sexual violence (OR=4.08, 95%CI: 1.39-12.05, p=0.003) compared with females above 70years (Table 6). However, other variables (respondent's education level, respondent's occupation, partner's educational level, marital status and alcohol consumption of partner) entered into the logistic regression did not achieve statistical significance.

## Discussion

### Prevalence of Physical and Sexual Violence

Violence remains a major public health problem all over the world. The prevalence of physical violence in this study was higher than that reported by Anderson<sup>20</sup> but lower than the ones reported by Wijma,<sup>21</sup> Arulogun et al<sup>22</sup> and Fawole et al<sup>10,11</sup>. The prevalence of sexual violence in this study was much lower than the Wijma and Arulogun studies<sup>21,22</sup>. These findings are also consistent with those from the WHO multi-country

study in which the prevalence of physical and sexual violence was between 4% and 54%<sup>23</sup> among respondents.

Our findings revealed that more females experienced physical violence than males. This might be due to cultural permissiveness that justifies men's physical aggression against women. These findings also support the results of the study conducted by Tjaden and Thoennes<sup>24</sup> which indicated that women are more likely to experience violence than men. The rates of physical and sexual violence varied across the geopolitical zones with south east having the highest prevalence. This fairly supports the early studies conducted in Igbo communities in Nigeria which indicated a high prevalence of physical violence<sup>9</sup>. However, the rates in the southwest study site were much lower than those reported in other studies on violence in south west Nigeria<sup>10,11</sup>.

### Factors Associated with Physical and Sexual Violence

Relatively young age, income, being divorced or separated, and prior victimization have been identified as characteristics that are associated with an increased risk for domestic violence from studies conducted by Hotaling<sup>25</sup>. However, considering the peculiarity of this study in exploring the factors for domestic violence against males and females, factors identified for male respondents include informal education of partners of male respondents as a strong correlate for physical

violence. This is similar to the findings of Ghazizadeh<sup>26</sup> in Iran who reported a significant association between husband's education level and violence against their wives. However, this is not consistent with the report from Zambia where those with lesser education were less likely to report physical violence.<sup>20</sup> This difference may be due to the different cultures and populations. Also, male respondents who were married had a higher risk of experiencing physical violence than single males. This is similar to the work of Anderson (2007) who reported that having partners is a risk factor for domestic physical violence. In addition, Anderson et al also showed that partner physical violence increased progressively with number of partners. The study by Ghazizadeh in Iran also reported that married men experienced physical violence. Higher risk of experiencing sexual violence was observed among professional male respondents compared to those that were unemployed. However, this did not achieve statistical significance. In addition, males who did not drink alcohol, had a lower risk of experiencing sexual violence compared to males who drank alcohol even though this also did not reach statistical significance. Even though the exact relationship between alcohol and violence remains unclear, researches have consistently found drinking patterns to be related to intimate partner and sexual violence. These findings are similar to those reported by Saidi<sup>8</sup> and Fawole<sup>30</sup> in which there was an association between alcohol intake, young age and violence. These findings reflect that factors which influence physical violence differ from those that influence sexual violence against men.

Females who had partners who smoke were at a higher risk of physical violence. An additional finding of interest is that physical and sexual violence was more common in young people particularly those less than 30yrs. This is consistent with findings of Hotaling<sup>25</sup>. This may not be unconnected with their active life which may not go well with their partners. Female respondents with low income experienced sexual and physical violence more than those with higher income. Several authors have found results similar to these ones<sup>10, 9</sup>. This is not unexpected as lack of resources can facilitate stressful situation which is a precursor to violence. Behavioural factors of partners were found to greatly influence domestic violence against females which corroborates the findings by Coker<sup>27</sup>. Females who had partners that smoke had a higher risk of experiencing physical violence. In the same vein, females who had partners that drink alcohol experienced sexual violence more than those whose partners do not drink alcohol. In order to determine any real evidence between alcohol and gender based violence, case control and cohort studies are needed.

This is cross sectional study based on face- to- face interviews and limits conclusions about causality. More research is clearly needed to explore determinants of domestic violence against men and women in Nigeria. In addition, the prevalence rates of gender based violence reported in this study could have been underestimated because of beliefs that issues concerning families and intimate relationships should not be discussed flippantly as they are seen as a 'private matter'. Furthermore, there is the need to explore in-depth gender based violence as it relates to men as the victims.

## Conclusion

High prevalence of gender based violence has been reported by this study. Both men and women have been documented to be victims of this act. This has great implications for the general well being as it affects all spheres of lives. Intervention strategies such public enlightenment on the effects of gender based violence on both women and men in all relationships should be carried out. In addition, pre-marital counseling and conflict resolution strategies especially among couples should be strongly intensified to ameliorate the situation.

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