



Driving Towards a Reduction of Domestic Violence in Numan Community, Adamawa State

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Abstract

Abuse intended to control or cause harm to a partner is known as domestic violence. One of the main reasons for gender-based violence is the misuse of authority. Domestic abuse can take many different forms, such as financial, emotional, sexual, or physical. While victims can be of any age or gender, it most frequently affects women between the ages of 18 and 34. The goal of the research was to promote a decrease in domestic violence in Adamawa State's Numan community. Since the study's population was so big, it was limited to domestic abuse survivors who attended Hope Center Numan. From this group, a Simple Random Sampling (SRS) was used to choose a capable responder who would serve as a representative sample for the total population. The study's conclusions showed that the main factor contributing to domestic violence in the community is poverty. Because there are so many unemployed people in the town, alcoholism and a lack of income can occasionally result in domestic violence inside the family. Therefore, it is advised that in order to lessen domestic violence, both men and women should have more influence in the community. To lessen the prevalence of domestic violence in society, the community should be educated on its impacts and ways to prevent it.

Keywords: reduction, survivors, family, gender-based violence, abuse, and domestic violence.



Introduction

One of the major global issues is violence against women, which has an impact on women's health in all facets. Although violence can take many various forms and occur in many contexts, domestic violence is thought to be the most common type. Domestic abuse affects women's economical standing in addition to their health. Research demonstrates that women who have experienced violence are less productive in the labor market, more likely to lose their jobs, and more likely to become unemployed (Lloyd, 1997; Tolman and Hui-Chen Wang, 2005). Even though the amount and quality of the statistics on domestic violence have increased, many countries still lack useful information to comprehend the causes and effects of the crime and to properly address public policies that target the well-being of women. Apart from the deficiency of current data on DV, there is a regrettable global shortfall of high-quality longitudinal data.

Despite the advantages of longitudinal studies for research on crime, violence, and the social and economic sciences, as noted by Rose (2002), there is a dearth of empirical support for this claim. Therefore, it is impossible to evaluate domestic violence without taking into account the dynamics and context of the family's interactions. The importance of gender and power disparities is highlighted by feminist thought. Structural barriers prevent women from participating equally in public life in patriarchal nations, and as a result, family dynamics perpetuate these disparities. Men take advantage of women's voluntary domestic work, and they resort to violence as a way to establish and perpetuate their dominance (Giddens, 2004). In addition to their diversity and ability to examine the issue from various perspectives, all theories of domestic violence also have some things in common. It is acknowledged that domestic violence has only lately received the proper attention it deserves as a significant social issue. Because of its complexity, little can be done to address the issue as long as domestic violence is still seen as a socially acceptable behavior (Wolfe, Jaffe, 1999). With an emphasis on the Numan community in Adamawa State, this study attempts to examine strategies for reducing domestic violence and provide potential solutions and directions for further research.

Problem description

One of the problems impacting our community is gender-based violence, but domestic abuse which is one of the subtypes of gender-based violence, has recently become quite concerning and has a significant impact on families. The majority of those who have survived

domestic abuse are women and children. In order to lower the number of domestic abuse cases in the community, action must be taken. The purpose of this study is to examine strategies for reducing domestic violence, with a focus on the Numan community in Adamawa State.

Research Objective

The study's specific goal is to identify strategies for lowering domestic violence in Adamawa State's Numan community. Additionally, to ascertain the course of action and solution

Methodology

The study's geographical location and time period was the town of Numan in Adamawa State, and the time frame was between June 2022– September 2023. The primary data was collected through in-depth interviews with women in the Numan community, focus groups discussion, and one-on-one interviews with over thirty women who assess service in Numan Hope Center and are survivors of domestic abuse. Secondary data was consulted from journals, articles, books, and documentaries published by the Numan Hope Center.

Domestic abuse and the causes behind it

One type of abuse that results from the misuse of power is domestic violence. Men and women of both genders are susceptible to it. According to the sixth edition of the Oxford Advance Learners Dictionary, it is defined as violence within the same family. Abuse can take many different forms, such as financial, digital, sexual, emotional, or physical. Domestic abuse can affect people of any gender, although it most frequently affects women between the ages of 18 and 35. In addition, adult bisexual, gay, and lesbian people are nearly twice as likely to experience maltreatment.

Even though the exact causes of domestic violence are unknown, action is obviously needed. Numerous ideas exist to account for the occurrence and scope of domestic violence. Abuse happens when one of the domestic partners tries to dominate, hurt, or control their partner physically. A lack of healthy relationships and role models, a history of seeing domestic violence, emotional and social isolation, exposure to abuse oneself, and a lack of nonviolent social skills can all contribute to abusive conduct, in addition to a desire for control.



Theoretical Framework

According to feminist theory, man's drive to dominate women, particularly in patriarchal society, leads to domestic violence (Ali and Naylor, 2013). According to evolutionary theory, male sexual monopoly behavior and violent proclivities toward their partners are a result of natural selection, as violence and threat serve as a deterrent to sexual rivalry and a restriction on female autonomy (Buss and Duntley, 2011).

According to economic theory, the threat or use of violence can be seen as a component of the "punishment strategy" in a non-cooperative game or as a component of the "threat point" in a cooperative bargaining model, which favors male control over the distribution of household resources (Tauchen and Witte, 1995; Lundberg and Pollak, 1993; 1994; 1996; Eswaran and Malhotra, 2011). Therefore, factors such as a wife's employment status, her earning potential, or the allure of her non-marital options can influence the prevalence of domestic violence. According to this paradigm, a number of researches have demonstrated that, at least over the medium to long term, improved economic standing for women (e.g., employment status, wages, dowries, etc.) inhibits partners' abusive behavior (Farmer and Thiefenthaler, 1997; Zhang and Chan, 1999; Srinivasan and Bedi, 2007; Aizer, 2010; Bhattacharyya et al., 2011). According to the same logic, women who receive extra funding in the form of food transfers, cash, or vouchers are less likely to experience controlling behavior or emotional, physical, or sexual abuse at the hands of their spouses (Bobonis et al., 2013; Hidrobo and Fernald, 2013; Hidrobo et al., 2016).

A brief review of domestic violence literature

One form of abuse that has an impact on women's productivity in the workforce is domestic violence. According to Aizer (2010), policies aimed at closing the gender wage gap between men and women have the potential to decrease violence against women and the associated costs. Specifically, these policies may account for 9% of the decline in women being hospitalized for assault over the past 13 years in California (US). But in the UK, economic downturns made women more vulnerable to violence from partners, particularly for those who were more likely than men to be unemployed (Anderberg et al., 2015).

However, when the wife's income is comparatively higher than the husband's, misaligning spousal preferences for the intrahousehold



allocation of time might lead to the husband's sabotage in the form of economic abuse (Anderberg and Rainer, 2013). Conversely, even women's fluctuating preferences to end violent relationships over time may contribute to an increase in spousal violence (Aizer and Dal Bó, 2009). However, in patriarchal communities, men may feel threatened in their conventional gender role by women's higher economic standing, which could lead to an increase in domestic violence (Koenig et al., 2003; Eswaran and Malhotra, 2011; Heath, 2014; Cools and Kotsadam, 2017). Studies that examine the male backlash theory are criticized by Aizer (2010) for ignoring women's rationality constraint, i.e., the possibility of quitting the relationship. However, in some situations, conservative social values make divorce or separation an unfeasible alternative for women; hence, when women's economic standing rises, the number of abusive relationships may grow (Koenig et al., 2003).

The marriage market may interact with domestic violence in addition to family efficiency and labor market position. According to Pollack (2004), the likelihood that violent husbands will marry women who are more likely to stay in violent marriages, particularly if they experienced domestic abuse as children, will have an impact on the prevalence of domestic violence. According to Bowlus and Seitz (2006), men who engage in violent conduct are more likely to have witnessed violence as children, while women who have experienced abuse are 1.7–5.7 times more likely to file for divorce in Canada. Furthermore, marital conflicts between married and single couples in Spain have decreased from 27% to 36% as a result of changes to the divorce law that permit unilateral divorce and lower associated expenses (Brassiolo, 2016).

Various forms of abuse that is included in the category of domestic violence.

Verbal and Emotional Abuse

Domestic violence and abuse have ambiguous definitions. Physical violence that results in bodily injury has been the major criterion employed by many researchers. However, it is evident that psychological and emotional abuse is just as damaging, if not more so, than physical abuse for a large number of victims of domestic violence. Lenore E. Walker describes an interview she conducted with an abuse survivor in her book *The Battered Woman*:

"A woman recounted experiencing potentially fatal physical attacks, wherein she suffered a fractured cervical vertebrae. After this beating,



she suffered from physical discomfort for several months. She claimed, however, that her husband's instruction to get on her knees and make animal noises was the most agonizing battering event. The psychological degradation she experienced was considerably more painful and humiliating than the physical violence she endured. Whether or whether they have ever experienced physical violence, battered women frequently list psychological humiliation and isolation as their worst experiences with abuse.

Sometimes it's more difficult to identify and categorize emotional abuse than physical assault. Undermining or undermining the victim's sense of self-worth is a component of emotional abuse. Name-calling and unceasing criticism are examples of emotional abuse. The victim's relationship with their children may suffer as a result of the abuser. An abuser may impede the victim's progress.

Here are a few instances of emotional abuse:

- Disregarding a spouse's emotions
- Making fun of or disparaging women in general
- Making fun of or demeaning important values, religion, race, culture, or class
- Withholding praise, gratitude, or affection as a form of discipline
- Never stopping to berate, curse, or yell at partners
- Humiliating partners in a public or private setting
- Refusing to interact socially with those that are significant to your partner
- Removing the cell phone, auto keys, or other communication device
- Frequently stating or threatening to leave
- Denying people access to necessities like hygiene and medication
- Leaving someone in a hazardous situation
- Threatening to harm or murder relatives
- When upset, punishing or depriving the kids
- Threatening to take the kids hostage
- Cruelty, torture, or euthanasia of animals
- Berating spouses over alleged indiscretions
- Using inconsistencies and lies to trick partners
- Destroying appliances, piercing holes in walls, and destroying furnishings
- Brandishing a weapon in a menacing manner

Physical Maltreatment or Abuse

When people hear the term "domestic violence," one of the first types of violence they typically associate with it is physical abuse. Since



physical abuse is more obvious and difficult to conceal than mental abuse, it is somewhat easier to identify. When actions are obviously meant to weaken the victim and take control of the relationship, physical abuse takes place. According to research, men commit this type of violence at a higher rate than women, and when women do commit acts of this magnitude, it's usually in self-defense against a violent partner.

Here are a few instances of physical abuse:

- Slapping, hitting, clawing, pushing, or kicking
- Tearing or pulling hair
- Strangling
- Biting
- Spitting at or near partner
- Throwing objects at or near partner
- Subjecting someone to reckless driving
- Using household objects as weapons
- Threatening partner with weapons
- Rough play that isn't consented upon (such as self-defense tactics or martial arts)
- Maltreatment that causes wounds, fractures, internal damage, or miscarriages

Domestic abuse is sometimes fatal. It is always conceivable for the violence to unintentionally result in death. It might also be a deliberate result. Physical abuse encompasses any aggressive actions or bodily harm committed onto the victim. It might involve abusing a victim's child. Physical abuse might include depriving someone of medical care and making them use drugs or alcohol against their will.

Sexual Abuse

One of the more challenging aspects of domestic violence to talk about and, at times, recognize is sexual assault. It is anticipated that women will experience a great deal of sexual violence throughout their lifetimes, and many will find it difficult to recognize sexual abuse for what it is. Abusers utilize sexual violence for the same purpose as they employ physical violence: to maintain power.

Here are a few instances of sexual abuse:

- Subversion of birth control
- Coercion for reproduction

Using a name that is offensive to women
Making a spouse strip off
Forcing a spouse to work as a prostitute or sex worker
Accusing a spouse of being unfaithful
Making an abusive partner watch porn or forcing them to have sex with someone else
Putting the spouse through unwelcome physical contact
Forcing a partner to engage in unwelcome sexual activity of any kind
Using things to bite, pinch, or injure a partner during sexual activity
Assaulting a partner sexually
When an abuser forces a victim to engage in sexual activity or contact without permission, it is referred to as sexual abuse. This frequently manifests as physical abuse followed by forced sex, sexually insulting remarks made about the victim, assaults on intimate body parts, and even marriage-related rape.

Financial Abuse

One extremely widespread, although frequently unrecognized, type of domestic abuse is financial abuse. It happens when one partner has influence over the other partner's financial autonomy and independence. When an abuser attempts to financially depend on their victim, it is considered financial abuse. Financial resource abusers frequently aim to keep complete control over their finances. They might not allow the victim to access money or forbid them from attending job or school.

Here are a few instances of financial abuse:

Naming the abuser as the owner of every bank account
Regulating the where, when, and how of money spent
Providing a stipend (usually insufficient to cover the irrational cost of living)
Denying a spouse the ability to support the family financially or work outside the house
Having total or near total financial control
Using a partner's name improperly for financial gain
Forcing a spouse to sign vital documents against their will, such as tax or immigration paperwork

Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse is when the perpetrator uses intimidation to create fear. Threats to harm oneself, the victim, kids, the victim's friends or relatives, or the victim's pets are examples of this. It could

entail trespassing on property or causing property destruction. Pets may sustain injuries at the hands of abusers. The victim of abuse may be kept apart from family members and forbidden from attending job or school by the abuser. Psychological abuse includes threats to strike, harm, or use a weapon.

Technological abuse

Abuse of technology refers to any action or series of actions intended to intimidate, harass, follow, or spy on another person. Utilizing computers, smartphones, cameras, GPS, internet-enabled devices, GPS, or location-tracking devices may be necessary for this.

Coercive control

Domestic abuse takes the form of coercive control, which is the continuous or recurrent habit of dominating someone else's behavior. In order to isolate, manipulate, threaten, and control a person, this kind of abuse frequently takes the form of emotional or mental strategies rather than physical ones.

These behaviors can be difficult to spot and subtle at times, but they are just as harmful as any other type of domestic abuse. Coercive control is more prevalent in romantic relationships, but it can also exist in other types of relationships, such as platonic or familial ones, where an imbalanced power dynamic eventually develops.

The use of force, whether it is financial, emotional, or physical, is referred to as "coercive." Even while these actions might not seem like much on their own, over time they can build up and become detrimental to one's mental health. Because the goal of such oppressive, menacing behavior patterns is to minimize and control someone's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, they are typically hard to identify right away.

Impacts of abuse

Those who have experienced abuse may have a difficult time building and sustaining relationships, as well as difficulty trusting others.

People who have experienced abuse may lose faith in others when they ask for assistance. This may affect how easily they are able to obtain services in the future. "For people who have fought very hard to feel safe via independence, having to contact with Centrelink—or in later life, consider aged care placement—can be highly triggering and frightening," adds Elisabeth.

It can be extremely intimidating to enter public facilities, such as police stations, at times. According to her, those who lack confidence



and hope that getting help will be beneficial tend to put off getting family members' needs met, including health care, counseling, or other services, until a crisis arises.

Increased rates of anxiety, depression, and personality disorders, coping mechanisms that might result in addiction, trouble controlling emotions and behaviors, trouble establishing and sustaining close relationships, chronic health concerns, and worse general health are a few examples of these effects. Naturally, all of these can have additional effects on survivors' lives in regards to housing, work, and education.

Methods for lowering domestic violence

Recognize the indications: Educating the public and people about the potential warning signs and symptoms of domestic violence is the first step towards taking appropriate action. Because domestic violence is not merely restricted to physical attacks like beatings, these indicators can vary and are not always accompanied by physical symptoms. It encompasses a wide range of abusive actions meant to exert control over the victim, such as verbal, physical, and emotional abuse. Despite the misconceptions, there is no typical victim of domestic abuse because it affects all social classes and demographics in society.

Educate your neighborhood and community on domestic violence: It's critical to inform residents about the effects of domestic violence, how to properly intervene when it occurs, and how to work toward its eradication from society. This can be carried out in cooperation with your neighborhood domestic violence shelter, women's organization, or police community outreach officers. These individuals can work with the neighborhood, nearby businesses, and local schools to plan and carry out town hall meetings and other gatherings where people can discuss this problem.

Organize your community: When stepping in to stop an abuser or declaring that domestic violence is not acceptable, there is safety and power in numbers. In order to prevent crime, just as many areas have neighborhood watches, so too should you establish a network of people who are willing to step in and help victims of domestic abuse escape their abusers safely and offer a community support system for survivors.

Using technology, expand the support system in your community: If the victim and you both own smartphones, think about downloading



a safety app specifically for women. Many of these apps can be set up to notify your support network immediately if you find yourself in danger. If the victim doesn't already have a smartphone, think about saving up some cash with some friends and neighbors to buy her one, then pre-install a safety app on it so all of your phones are linked to it and you can operate as a de facto safety net for her.

Be ready: Offer to be on call or available by text for your friend, coworker, employee, or family member in case of an emergency if you think that they are victims of domestic abuse. Keep your phone close to you at all times, fully charged and on. Domestic abuse can be lessened with prompt reporting of the incident to the relevant authorities.

Plan your intervention: Make a strategy to start an intervention operation and keep the following phone numbers handy: The national hotline for domestic abuse (if your country has one) The victim or survivor should contact the local domestic violence shelter helpline from their location. Wherever the victim or survivor may be, contact the local police. The one stop center and hope centers' toll-free number In the event that you receive an urgent call from a victim or survivor, or if you hear about or see violence starting, make sure to get in touch with all of these agencies right away. In many situations, violence can escalate very fast.

Offer some relief: If you know of a victim or survivor of domestic violence who is being kept at home alone, offer to do a random act of kindness for her. For example, offer to watch the kids while the abuser is away for a few hours so she can get a break. You could also offer to pick up groceries for her when you go grocery shopping. Each little act of kindness relieves the sufferer and increases their confidence to finally ask for (or accept) your assistance.

Check in frequently: Give your friend, coworker, classmate, or family member a call or text once a day at a random time to check on her if you are concerned about her safety. If it's your neighbor, watch the house closely and pay close attention to any indications or noises of violence.

Be a resource: Serve as a resource by assisting her in locating the support she requires, be it legal information, nearby domestic abuse programs, or locating a safe haven through a battered women's shelter. The hardest part for women in these circumstances is usually getting away, therefore it might be important to find a safe spot. While being aware of this information in advance could be useful, helping

her with the research and even placing calls on her behalf will expedite the process.

Accessing help

Abuse is one of those things that, no matter how long ago it happened, may have a lifelong effect. Public reporting and inquiries into cases of institutional abuse may bring up memories for the survivor. Healing from abuse is not an easy or fast process; however there are support options available in hope centers, one stop centers, safe space for women and girls, etc. In Adamawa State, one stop center , hope centers and social welfare office providing help to individuals who have experienced forced adoption in the past, care throughout their childhood, or child sexual abuse. This secure area is accessible from Monday through Friday, and phone and internet support are also offered. Counseling and assistance in applying to the National Redress Scheme are among the free services that are offered; no referral is necessary.

According to Elisabeth, creating a history of good experiences and honing self-confidence-boosting abilities can both aid in the healing process. "It can mean being open to something being different and having some good people in your corner who encourage you to give things a try," she explains. Wattle Place works with victims and survivors at their pace, towards their goals and hopefully to experience a sense of safety, understanding, and connection. "That can be a lot to ask of someone, especially when they have been let down so horrifically before, but there can be other, better experiences out there."

Discussion of the findings

The major finding from this research shows that; Poverty is one of the main causes of domestic violence in the Numan community; most incidences of domestic violence occur among those who live in substandard conditions. Due to their lack of resources and unemployment, both men and women in the community experience high rates of domestic violence.

The women are currently experiencing physical, psychological, mental, and emotional effects from domestic abuse. It has psychological effects on their kids as well. Married couples experience disagreement while domestic abuse continues. In the Numan community, both men and women need to feel more empowered. This will boost their economies and enable them to better support their families.



In addition to empowering the populace, educating the public about domestic abuse is a critical task. This can be carried out in cooperation with the local women's organization or domestic abuse shelter, as well as NGOs that can work with the communities and local schools to plan and carry out talks, town hall meetings, and other group sessions to discuss this topic.

Conclusion

One of the problems that families are currently facing is domestic violence. The number of domestic violence cases is rising daily, so it is important for these studies to examine strategies for reducing domestic violence in communities. Therefore, this study concludes that in order to reduce domestic violence, considerable action must be made. The public needs to be made aware of it, and we must all work together to combat both domestic abuse and violence against people in general.

Recommendations

The suggestions that have been made are as follows:

It is important to educate the Numan community on the effects of domestic abuse and how it impacts families.

Give both men and women in the community equal power so they can find productive jobs and a means of subsistence.

Let's reduce poverty in the neighborhood because it is a major contributing factor to domestic violence, as so many individuals live below the poverty line.

Allow the government and non-governmental organizations to work together to combat domestic abuse.

Families should receive trainings and awareness-raising about domestic abuse by so doing, domestic violence can be reduce in Numan community

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