

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: PERSPECTIVES OF
COHABITING AND MARRIED WOMEN ON MARRIAGE
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE ATWIMA KWANWOMA DISTRICT,
ASHANTI REGION**



2022

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REGION**



**A thesis in the Department of Social Studies Education,
Faculty of Social Sciences Education, submitted to the School of
Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Philosophy
(Social Studies Education)
in the University of Education, Winneba**

JANUARY, 2023

DECLARATION

Student's Declaration

I, Fatima Bintu Salifu, hereby declare that this thesis, with exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole for another degree elsewhere.

Signature:

Date:

Supervisor's Declaration

I, hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

Supervisor's Name:

Signature:

Date:



DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my mother Mad. Fulera Sulemana To my husband Mr. Salifu Dari and my children Farida, Mustapha, Abdul-Basit, Zaid and Jamaldeen.



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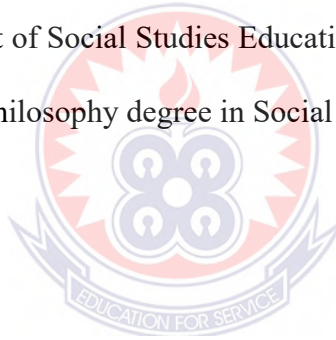


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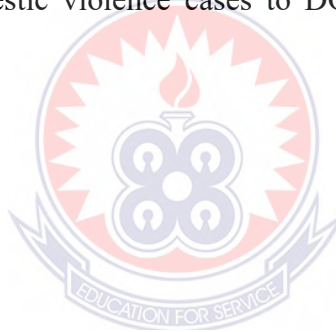


GLOSSARY

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience
C.S.O	Civil Society Organisation
CCV	Coercive Controlling Violence
CEDAW	UN Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHRAJ	Commission for Human Rights and Administrative Justice
DEVAW	Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DOVVSU	Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit
FIDA	International Federation of Women Lawyers
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
IVAWS	International Violence Against Women Survey
MASLOC	Micro Finance and small loans centre
MOGCSP	Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PEP	Post Exposure Prophylaxis
UN	United Nations
VAWA	Violence Against Women Act
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

The study explored the perspective of women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District on domestic violence. The study employed the qualitative research approach hence the case study design was used to explore the issue based on its context. The target population included all matured married and cohabiting women who are in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region. The study employed an interview guide for collecting data from the participants. Qualitative data obtained were analysed thematically. The study found that too much intake of alcohol by men causes them to abuse their wives and the fact that these women were not economically independent and to make ends meet makes them more vulnerable to be abused by their husbands. The study also found again that cohabiting women and married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District stay in this abusive relationship due to factors such as the children, childlessness, social status, marital gains, helplessness and vulnerability of these women. Based on these findings, the study was recommended that organizations such as the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the local council of chiefs, and Non-Governmental Organizations like The Ark Foundation should intensify their campaign against men who put women in danger. The study also recommended that cohabiting and married women should be educated to be aware of the Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU) to enable them report domestic violence cases to DOVVSU officials for pre-emptive appropriate intervention.



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Domestic violence is a worldwide problem affecting men and women of all races, ages and religion. Domestic violence is defined as an abuse against another in an intimate relationship including marriages, cohabitation, dating or relation in the family. It is one of the most common forms of gender- based violence in the world. (Abromsky et al., 2013) Domestic Violence is also referred to as an intimate Partner Violence (IPV). The World Health Organization (2010) defines Intimate Partner violence as a “behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm including act of physical aggression, coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviour.”

Globally, as many as 38% of all murders of women are committed by intimate partners, 6% percent of women are reported to have been sexually assaulted by someone other than a partner. According to the World Health Organization,(2021) domestic violence is a global phenomenon affecting millions of women. A 2018 analysis on prevalence or violence against women across 161 countries revealed that worldwide nearly 1 in 3 or 30 percent of women have been subjected to physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner non partner or both. In another study in 2005 on women health and domestic violence the WHO as cited by Kamani (2012) found that 56 percent of women in Tanzania and 71% of women in Ethiopia rural areas are beaten by their partners. They reported beating and other forms of violence by a husband or an intimate partner. Domestic abuse does not affect only women who are married but single mothers in relationship with a boyfriend or a former husband. Numerous studies have been conducted on prevalence of abuse in marriages. (Ferrara,

(2007). However, the perspectives of married or cohabitating women in abusive marriages have not received attention. Globally, most of the victims of domestic violence are women. According to the WHO 2017 report, one in three women 35% globally has been a victim of domestic violence. According to the report, 24%, 23.5%, and 10.1% of women were emotionally, physically and sexually abused by their partners respectively. The finding is in line with WHO prevalence estimate of IPV for African countries. This high prevalence suggests that domestic violence continues to be the main social and public health problem in the country. In Africa, the incidence is reported to be around 46% for women who are subjected to lifetime intimate partner violence (IPV) and 12% to sexual violence (McCloskey et al., 2016).

Different people have different perspectives about domestic violence against women are not reported. According to Shipway (2004) most domestic violence cases are underreported as a mistrust of agencies and tact Different people have perspectives about domestic violence against women. Most of the victims lack of knowledge about what these agencies could do to help. The situation in Ghana is not different from other countries as a survey conducted by the Demographic and Health Survey in 2008 found out that 38.7 percent of ever-married women between the ages of 15 and 19 years reported having experienced physical psychological or sexual violence by a husband or partner at some point in their lives. A careful review of various publication in Ghana on domestic violence between the year 2010 and 2012 made evidence of 52 published articles on murders of spouses, 46 of those reported cases were registered against women (HRDA, 2012) Domestic violence or intimate partner violence is a violation of the fundamental human rights of those who are abused. The constitution of the Republic of Ghana extensively outlines the fundamental human rights and freedom for all citizens of Ghana and the specific

rights to be enjoyed by all, including women. Ghana first legislation effort against domestic violence reflected the global momentum in pushing for women rights to be recognized as human rights (Cook, 2011). It is therefore not right for women to be discriminated against because of their gender. Women should be provided with facilities for the care for their children below school-going age to enable them to realize their full potentials and guaranteed equal rights to train and promotion without any intimidation from any corner (1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana).

Domestic violence has a long history but it's was only (uncovered) in 1970 when the women's movement highlighted the problem and pushed for it to be addressed. This is because innocent lives were being lost in silence simply because women have refused to talk about it. Ghana, like many other countries has made a lot of effort aimed at reducing the incidence of domestic violence. The country has also signed a number of international conventions and legal reforms to help address domestic violence in the country. Typical examples include the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) ratified by Ghana in 1986, the creation of the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) in 2001.

Ghana has made significant efforts over the years to reduce violence against women which were promoted by advocacy from Civil Society Organizations (C.S.O), women rights groups, and other international bodies like Violence against Women and girls (VAWG) the Domestic Violence and Victims Support Unit (DOVVSU) of the Ghana Police Service. The Declaration on the elimination of violence against women (DEVAW) solidifies these efforts. These actions resulted in the Government of Ghana enacting national laws to protect women and then to outlaw violence against women. A typical example is a provision in the 1992 constitution of Ghana that

prohibits discrimination based on sex. In February 2007, the Parliament of Ghana enacted the Domestic Violence Act (ACT 732) of 2007. This came as a relief to those who were fighting the course of women. The enactment and subsequent passage of this act, therefore, ended the long process of advocacy and civil action. The publication of the Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, researches in violence against women and children by Coker-Appiah, and Cusack (1999) supported measures aimed at curbing the menace. The act was established to provide protection from Domestic Violence particularly for Women Children and for connected purposes.

All these efforts, however, are not enough as there is still under-reporting of domestic violence cases, Osam (2004), noted that since such acts are often confined to the “Privacy and Sanctity” of the home they are predominantly treated as private, natural, and not deserving public attention. So, the victims often remain silent just to protect the family’s name but suffer inwardly. If women are encouraged to speak up on issues of domestic violence against them then, awareness could be created about violence against them. According to Adjei (2018), however, most people in Ghana do not support the idea that domestic violence should be reported to authorities. This has accounted for the increasing number of domestic violence cases in the country.

Every culture has its own norms which the society has to follow. Ghana is no exception as the cultural practices require women to be submissive to their husbands or partners to be considered as good wives in the family (Brown, 2018). Adjah and Agbemafie (2016) also mention in their report that domestic violence abuse exists in Ghana due to our culture and our mind-set. It can be deduced that culture seems to support the abuse of women and this makes women vulnerable in the society.

The consumption of alcohol came up as a major cause of domestic violence in a study conducted by Kinyodo and Joseph. Women with male partners who drink alcohol are more likely to experience abuse from their partners (Kinyodo & Joseph, 2021). According to them, women whose partners or husbands drink before sex experience risk of violence five times higher than women with non-drinking partners. The effect of domestic violence is one that is devastating and dehumanizing to women. In Gambia, about 62% of women who are pregnant experience at least one form of domestic violence by an intimate partner or a husband. Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) has severe health implication on a woman. A study was conducted at a health facility in The Gambia and it revealed that out of the 373 women who avail themselves for the study 67% had been violated, 43% of them came up with psychological violence (Jatta, Baru, Fawole & Ojengbede, 2021).

Despite all these studies by researchers and interventions made by the government and other C.S.O, the problem persists, especially among women. Some victims lose their lives leaving their children behind. A report revealed that at least one in seven homicide and over one third of all female homicides worldwide are perpetrated by an intimate partner (Stockl et al., 2013). What encourages these women to stay in abusive marriage despite their predicament is what this study seeks to unravel. This study, therefore, seeks to examine perspective of women on domestic violence and sustainability of their marriages in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The increasing number of domestic violence cases in the country should be of worry to every stakeholder. According to Interpol, Ghana is one of the countries where women are sexually abused in the world (Gyan, 2013). According to the statistics available at the Accra Regional Office of the Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU), as of August 2021, 31.9% of Ghanaian women had faced at least one form of Domestic Violence such as Physical, emotional, economic, psychological, social or sexual or the other. Most people in Ghana do not support the idea that domestic violence should be reported to the authorities (Adjei, 2018). There are still unreported cases of violence in Ghana. Many people consider domestic violence as normal as such should remain in the family. Hayes and Van Baak (2017) reveal that it is a shame to discuss with others the matrimonial issues as sexual abuse.

However, the increase in the reported cases does not show that women are developing awareness of their rights to be free from violence. The case of Lilian Dedjoe, a victim of domestic violence reported to have been beaten by the husband to death still pending at the court (Graphic Online, 2021). A handful of women appeared in court with placards expressing their views and that was the end. Recently in Asuofia in the Ashanti Region, a lady was killed by her husband after a misunderstanding between them (GH News Report, 2021). Domestic violence needs to be dealt with cautiously because some of the women who are victims do not know that it is criminal to abuse someone. According to Prah (1999) as cited by Osam (2004), women and girls in Ghana accept and tolerate violence as a legitimate and normal method of resolving everyday conflict in Ghanaian society.

For example, assaulting one's wife is seen as normal and as such there is no need to make news out of it. If a husband or partner sexually abuses the wife, who would she report to? (Havris & Landis, 2016). This points to the fact that the intimate partner is usually the culprit of sexual violence. A woman whose husband constantly abuses her with evidence of swollen cheeks, eyes stained with blood may still defend the husband with the excuse. Again, cases of gender-based violence only get reported in the media mostly because they attracted the attention of the law enforcement agencies (Osam, 2004). A study conducted by (Osam, 2004) revealed that most of the gender-based violence cases that were reported were made by the victim's parents, friends, or neighbours but not the victims themselves. However, there is hope that one day the issue will be reduced to the barest minimum. There are several interventions which include the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (DEVAW), passage of the domestic violence Act 732, and other groups like the Ark Foundations which seek to address issues of gender based abuse.

The literature on domestic violence is replete with evidence of prevalence, causes and effects of domestic violence on the individual (IDS, 2016; Ackah, 2012; Dery, 2014; Mann et al., 2014; Esaaba, 2019). Even though some of these studies have been conducted on domestic Violence against women in Ghana, the studies have focused on various forms of domestic violence. There is a gap of knowledge on a critical area that appears not to have caught the attention of researchers. This critical area is the reasons married women still stay in abusive relationships even though they are being abused in their marriages. This study is to explore the reasons married or cohabitating women still stay in their abusive marriages irrespective of being abuse in such marriages in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of the study were to;

1. examine the perspectives of cohabiting and married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of Ashanti Region on what constitutes domestic violence.
2. examine the causes of domestic violence against cohabiting and married women in Atwima Kwanwoma.
3. ascertain the motivating factors that make (women) stay in domestically abused marriage.
4. assess the effects of domestic violence on cohabiting and married women in Atwima Kwanwoma.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What are the perspectives of married and cohabiting women in Atwima Kwanwoma on what constitutes domestic violence?
2. What are the causes of domestic violence against cohabiting and married women in Atwima Kwanwoma?
3. What are the motivating factors that make cohabiting and married women stay in domestically abused marriages?
4. How does domestic violence affect married and cohabiting women in Atwima Kwanwoma District?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Domestic violence dehumanizes most women in the world, so in order to reduce its occurrence, there is the need for policy makers to understand the extent to which women suffer in their marriages.

The findings of this study when published in journals would create the awareness for policy intervention by Atwima Kwanwoma District Assembly to assist these women to cope in their marriages. This study would be helpful to governmental organization like Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MoGCSP), and non-governmental organisations (NGO) that have an interest in domestic violence issues. These NGOs can create public awareness and generate understanding on the need to assist these victims.

This study about women who go through all forms of abuse in their marriages would provide insight into these experiences. Knowledge gained will be utilized to assist women in sustaining their marriage. The finding would provide an in-depth understanding of women's experience of the abuse they endure and what has kept them in their marriages over the years.

The study would enable people to understand the complexity associated with living in abusive marriages. It will also provide the platform for women to tell their stories and possibly raise concerns about women who are abused and possibly give help to those who need help. Sharing their stories might encourage other women who are still in abusive relationships to consider having professionals who can listen to them and protect them. It is hoped that abused women who are abused and still stay in their marriage can be helped before it becomes too late. As an academic exercise it can serve as a basis for further research. And also add to existing literature on domestic violence against women.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The study focuses on domestic violence against cohabiting and married women and the sustainability of their marriages. It is limited to only women who married or cohabitating and currently staying with their husbands and suffers abuse in their marriages in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region. This study intends to focus attention on married women who have suffered domestic violence in the Atwima Kwanwoma District.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Abuse- to insult, hurt, injure, rape or molest another person. Such behaviour may include physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse.

Abuser- a person who uses abusive tactics and behaviour to exert power and control over another person.

Advocate- a trained professional or volunteer working for a non- profit or governmental based domestic violence agency.

Batterer- a person who uses coercive and abusive tactics and behaviour to establish and maintain power and control over another person.

Physical abuse- when a person uses his or her body or object to cause harm to another person.

Intimate partner violence (IPV)- is the physical, sexual, economic or emotional abuse by a current or former spouse or partner .

Sexual violence- is any act in which one person uses force to carry out sexual act against another person's will. Perpetrator is a person carrying out domestic violent behaviours.

Stalking- when one follows one against his or her wish.

Threat- an expression that demonstrates one's intention to inflict pain or injury on another person.

Victim- a person who is abused, harmed or killed by another person.

Intimate Partner Violence refers to violence between two people involved in an intimate relationship.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study is structured into five chapters. Chapter one provides an introduction to the study. It focuses on the background to the study, defining the problem, the objectives of the study and research questions, delimitation and the significance of the study, organization of the study. Chapter Two presents the literature review on domestic violence. Issues discussed include theoretical framework, the concept of domestic violence or abuse, incidence and determinant of domestic abuse, consequences of domestic violence Chapter Three is devoted to the methods used for data collection and the measures followed in gathering primary data and method of analysis. Chapter Four discusses the results, and Chapter Five presents the summary, conclusion and the recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with a review of related literature. This literature review covers issues including theoretical framework, the concept of domestic violence, cause of domestic violence and effects of domestic violence against cohabiting and women.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The study adopted the feminist theory specifically radical feminism, the theory of learned helplessness, and the Duluth Model. Severe actions of domestic violence include violent actions that are likely to induce injury such as, beating, hitting and use of weapons. For this research, domestic violence refers to an act that is unlawful and results in negative consequences on the victim.

2.1.1 Feminist theory

Feminism came into the English language from the French language la – femme meaning woman. Feminism was first used in 1989 by Auclert to advocate the political right of women (Scott, 1979). Feminism theories attempt to describe women's oppression, explain its causes and consequence, and prescribe strategies for women's liberation (Tong, 2009). There are various forms of feminist theory but for this study, a radical feminist approach would be adopted.

Feminist is a diverse, competing, and often opposing collection of social theories, political movements, and moral philosophies largely motivated by or concerning the experiences of women especially in terms of their social-political, and economic inequalities (Adam et al., 2001). Feminist theories attempt to describe

women's oppression, explain its causes and consequences and prescribe strategies for women's liberation (Tong, 2009).

The radical feminists believe in revolution. The term "radical" as used in feminism has a Latin root and it is an adjective meaning about the root or going to the root. They locate the root cause of women's oppression in patriarchal gender relations as opposed to the legal system or class conflict. They see the problem of inequality between the sexes as emanating from patriarchy- a whole system of male power over women.

The socialization process begins from the family and into other sectors of society like religion, the economy, politics, and education. According to Kambarami (2006), radical feminists define patriarchy as any system of power whereby men appropriate all social roles and keep women in subordinate positions on the assertion of male supremacy. He also reports that patriarchal practices bring about gender inequality that makes women not have full control over their sexuality, which leads to the control of female sexuality by males.

Radical feminism is a feminist theory, which starts from the idea of conflict between the sexes as a fundamental conflict, and oppression against women as a direct implication of patriarchy. This theory rests on the assumption that all social activity is the result of certain restrictions and coercion. Although every social system contains specific forms of interactive constraint, they do not have to cause repression.

Radical feminism is founded on the attitude that society is based on patriarchal grounds, because of which women are marginalized and discriminated against. Rape and violence, are also methods through which men have secured and maintained their power over women (Duorkin, 1981). According to a British crime survey, domestic violence accounts for a sixth of all violent crimes, and nearly 1 in 4 women have

experienced domestic violence at some point in their lifetime and women are more likely to experience this than men.

The majority of cohabiting and married women in my area of study that is Atwima Kwanwoma are not highly educated and are limited in finance. Hence, most of them depend on their husbands for their basic needs. Men seem to use economic abuse to gain power and control over these women. This theory fits well into the context of this study because of men in their case assume power over women. The structure of power describes certain restrictions and oppression against women. (Bowman et al., 2003) posit that power inequality among African marriages generates violence in relationships. What makes married women not interested to reporting domestic violence cases is the procedure one has to follow and delays associated with these cases. some are even afraid of being abandoned by the Police. Akerman (2012) testifies to this when “offenders usually are not punish severely as I’ve seen too many cases that starts with thump and many procedures do not come to a good end. This is because not all witness were questioned and evidences were sometimes forged, or the process failed because of procedural defects. This led to the next model that is the Duluth model.



Figure 2.1: The Duluth Model, power and control wheel

Source: www.duluth-model.org

The researcher, therefore, adopted the Duluth model commonly known as “The Power and Control Wheel”. To illustrate the dynamics of domestic violence. The power and control wheel is an analytical model of a domestic abuse intervention project. Duluth Minnesota, used The United States of America (U.S.A) to illustrate the power dynamics of domestic violence. It constitutes the pattern employed to illustrate the traditional power of a male-dominated society. This does not only make it easy to violate women but facilitates the ability to use a range of controlling strategies rarely available to them. The examples in the wheel illustrate the wide range of abusive behaviour men use to control their female partners including physical and sexual assault, intimidation, emotional abuse, isolation, denying and blaming, using male privileges, using children, and economic sanctions.

2.1.2 Power and control

In Ghanaian culture, the family is highly valued and comes first in any relationship. The family in Ghana is undergoing a tremendous change. This has resulted in growing urbanization and rapid rural-urban migration. Despite these transformations, Ghanaian culture continues to emphasize patriarchal values and reinforce traditional gender roles in the context of the family (Shahrazad, 1996). The culture emphasizes the characteristics of males. Wives bear the responsibility for household chores. Men are valued and expected to govern with great authority in all aspects of life, while women are viewed as inferior to men and must obey men in general during their lifetime (XU, Campbell & Zlin, 2001). Ghana is an example of a patriarchal society where men are considered superior and the patriarchal of masculinity still valued (Ampofo, Okyere & Pervarah, 2009; Ofei Aboagye, 1994) Felix and Paz-Ingonte (2003) maintain that both men and women have been considered to think and behave within the “patriarchy” context. Throughout history men are taught to be aggressive, dominate, and exercise authority over women while women are taught to be submissive dependent upon men, and to sacrifice for the family’s welfare.

Gelles (1990) adds that under English common law, a husband had a right to correct their wife’s behaviour and they were allowed to chastise their wife with a stick no bigger than a thumb. This according to him was where the rule of thumbs was got from. In the projected perspective regarding the theoretical assumptions of the feminist theory on domestic violence. It can be said that domestic violence exists in most societies despite the level of human rights education programs and policies that abounds. Some women continue to stay in violent marriages. The reasons for staying in such a risky environment remain a gap that has necessitated this study. Charles and

Hughes-Freeland (2013) suggest that power concerning male partner violence implies an emphasis on male domination and control, male authority, and superiority. Generally, African traditional norms recognize men as household heads and breadwinners and women procreate and are domestic caretaker. In this view, male supremacy must be carefully situated. The power and control wheel used to illustrate the power dynamics of domestic violence is a clear view of how society recognizes male superiority in the home and thus makes the woman vulnerable to her male counterpart. Giocolea (2012) argues in support of the illustration of the power and control model by the Duluth model. Giocolea et al (2012) argue that systems of male supremacy, male power, sexism male domination, and control can be understood as a predator of intimate partner violence. Power and control are carefully situated to understand the politics of domestic violence and marital abuse. Miller shares the same view. Miller (2003), is of the view that traditionally, power is unidirectional, that is it is exerted from above, against people's interests Foucauldian (1982) opposes Miller's view and states that power is multi-directional, that it exists in a network of relational bodies (Miller, 2003). The assumption has therefore made it convenient that women must accept the view that men have the power to control the house as such they should learn to accept and live by it. This assertion forms the basis of the theory of learned helplessness.

2.1.3 Theory of learned helplessness

The theory of learned helplessness developed by Seligman (1975), has helped to understand how women respond to abuse. This theory states that when an organism experience situation that cannot be controlled the motivation to respond to such repeated events will be impaired. After being conditioned, if the organism can make

appropriate responses that do control the outcome, the organism will continue to have trouble believing that the responses are under its control.

Walker's (1979) adaption of "learned helplessness" proposed that women stay in an abusive relationship because they eventually lose all hope in having any ability to leave, after becoming depressed and beaten down emotionally and physically. However, learned helplessness does not explain the behaviour of women who stay for other reasons such as economic dependence, their realistic fear of homicide, or more simply those who are still in love and committed to their partner. It also does not explain why or how some abused women eventually leave their marriage. Again, Walker (1984) used the term "learned helplessness" to discuss why women found it hard to leave an abusive relationship. It refers to battered women's inability to either end the violence or stay away from these violent relationships. The women see abusive events as occurring without their control, and thus learn to endure the abuse (La Violette & Barnett, 2000). Walker proposed learned helplessness as the result of the cycle of violence where it "taught" women to be helpless and passive. This theory was chosen to guide this study because in spite of being abused they stay in their cohabiting and marriages. They have accepted it as normal way of life, just as the theory proposes these women who are abused have learned to endure the abuse because of the cycle of abuse to and endure the pain of this abuse.

2.2 The Concept of Domestic Violence

All over the world, a large number of women suffer several forms of violence in silence, as domestic violence is considered a private issue. This perception has led to an increase in cases of domestic violence against women being given attention in the media (GH NEWS, 2021) since the victims do not come out to report. Physical

and sexual violence against women is a global health epidemic that has victimized approximately one-third of women throughout the world (Garcia et al., 2013).

Definitions of domestic violence are culture-specific. Laing (2002) posits that domestic violence is often used in an attempt to control another to get one's wishes fulfilled. Tulloch, (1993) suggests that this type of violence refers to abuse towards a married or de-facto, unmarried but living together for six months or more, partner which happens in the home. According to Dutton (1995), severe actions of domestic abuse include violent actions that are highly likely to induce injury including beating, hitting and use of weapons. The same author argues that the term “domestic” has been used to reduce spousal violence both in its seriousness and extent. The researcher acknowledges the seriousness and criminality of domestically violent behaviour. However, the study focuses on domestic violence directed at adult married women. Dutton (1995) goes further to suggest that for domestic violence to exist, it must involve unequal grounds of power between a couple where the victim is afraid of being hurt.

Domestic violence can be summarized as an abuse of power in a relationship displayed by exertions of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological, and emotional control. This type of behaviour is argued to repeat itself in a cycle of events that, in the absence of professional intervention, could spiral out of control in time. This domestic violent behaviour has ramifications well beyond the domestic walls of the home into the greater community and beyond. In this regard, domestic violence becomes a communal if not a universal concern.

Smith (2001) posits that a relationship where domestic violence occurs includes all types of partners, whether they are heterosexual, gay, lesbian; living together or cohabiting, separated, or dating. According to the US Dept. of justice on

violence against women, the definition of domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain control over another intimate partner. Many types of abuses are included in the definition of domestic violence, and these are physical: hitting, slapping and, pushing. Sexual abuse is an attempt to coerce the victim into having sexual contact with the victims without their consent. Another form of abuse is emotional abuse, include name calling, unnecessary criticism, threat, stalking. In the united states, a study conducted by a division of the Centre for disease control found that more than one in three women have “experienced rape, physical violence and/or stalking by an intimate partner” (Black et al., 2011). Intimate partner violence (I.P.V.) refers to violence between two people involved in an intimate relationship, and it exists in all countries, cultures, and societies (Ellsberg et al., 2014).

The UN defined violence against women “as any acts of gender-based violence that result in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women including the threat of such act coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or in private. The rate of violence on women alarming that needs urgent attention. The situation is no different in Ghana as a review of some publication in Ghanaian newspapers between the period of 2010 and 2012 revealed that out of the 52 published articles on spousal murders, 46 of those reported cases were perpetrated against women (Human Rights Advocacy Center, 2012). In the United Nations Declaration, on the elimination of violence against women (1993) as cited by Osam (2007) the term “violence against women” means 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 the threat of such acts of coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private.

It also states that violence against women encompassed, but is not limited to the following.

Physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring in the family including battering, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation, and other traditional practices harmful to women non-spousal violence and violence related to prostitution. Physical, sexual, and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual harassment, and intimidation at work, in the educational institution, and elsewhere trafficking in women and forced prostitution.

2.3 Types of Domestic Violence

2.3.1 Intimate partner violence

Intimate partner violence goes beyond merely physical. It may take many forms, often combining emotional, psychological, sexual, and financial abuse. Though domestic violence differs in terms of forms and severity within each relationship, it is still violence against women. It can happen to anyone, regardless of one's social status, race, religion, and culture (Zlatka, 2014).

2.3.2 Physical violence

Physical violence refers to the use of physical suffering to the victim, slapping, beating, kicking, punching, biting, pushing, shoving, dragging, stabbing, spanking, snatching, hitting with a fist, or something else that could hurt, burning, choking, threatening or using a gun, knife or any other weapon are examples of physical violence (Garcia Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise & Watts, 2005).

According to Osam (2007), physical assault by intimate partners include pushing, biting, twisting arms, shoving, hitting, kicking, slapping, pulling off a woman's hair, throwing her down, and using a weapon. She went further to state

many are assaulted each day but only a few of them gather the courage to report such cases. The rest of the women stay and live under such conditions for a long time hoping for relief one day. There is evidence that some women tolerate violence for long period before making a report (Prah, 1999:99) as cited by Osam (2007). According to Prah (1999), other women experience death at the hand of their intimate partners sometimes through the use of weapons such as guns. This happens would usually happen after a long period of abuse. A lot of women endure the pain of violation for a long time before cases are made public. An extensive review of the literature highlights various kinds of violence that some women are subjected to in their marriages.

2.4 Psychological and Emotional Violence

Psychological violence refers to the use of various behaviours intended to humiliate and control another individual in public or private. Examples of psychological violence include verbal abuse, name-calling, constantly critiquing, blackmailing, saying something, or doing something to make the other person feel embarrassed, threat to beat women or children monitoring and restricting movement, restricting access to friends and family, restricting economic independence and access to information, assistance. Psychological violence leads or may be familiar to emotional abuse is that takes place within an intimate or family-type relationship and that forms a pattern of coercive and controlling behaviour. This form abuse is the Coercive Controlling Violence (C.C.V) refers to a pattern of emotionally abusive intimidation, coercion, and control combined with physical violence perpetrated against an intimate partner (Kelly & Johnson, 2008, p .478). This is where a partner under strict surveillance keeps the partner under control. The victims have little or no

breathing space to do whatever he or they like doing. The partner tries to manipulate the victim into accepting the situation as normal. This is done not to allow the victim to have friends or interact with others. She lives under strict conditions. Many forms of violence, as shown in the power and control wheel include emotional abuse, isolation, intimidation, minimizing, denying and blaming, use of children, asserting male privilege economic abuse, and coercion and threat (Pence & Paymar, 1993).

Again, Johnson maintains that the abuser may use one or a combination of several tactics to keep the victim under control. Johnson (1993) again uses the term “Patriarchal Terrorism” for this type of violence. From Patriarchal terrorism which was later called Coercive Controlling Violence (C.C.V). According to him, this is more severe and occurs more frequently, and escalates over time (Johnson & Leone, 2005; Lloyd, 2004). CCV is the type of intimate partner violence LPV that is mostly encountered in an agency setting degradation, fear, objection deprivation overburden of responsibility and distortion of subjective reality.

Degradation occurs if the woman is constantly given the message that she is of lesser value through verbal abuse or forced to perform sexual acts against her will. Women may be degraded by being labeled stupid, worthless, or incompetent in all that they do. Kirkwood writes that such degradation has a destructive effect on women’s sense of self-worth. The women eventually allow their abuses to determine their will.

Abuse women experience fear. They may be constantly worried about safety, not only that of their own but also of their children. They have to constantly be on the lookout for a potential explosion of violence. Moreover, “the unpredictability and unpreventable nature of further assault created an atmosphere of continual danger and

thus continual anxiety and fear”. Living in this kind of condition can be very nerve-shattering for women.

Objection takes place when the woman is treated as an object rather than a human being. Ways that violent men objectified their partners are by denying the women their ideality. They were forced to change their outward appearance to conform to the abuser’s liking. Excessive possessiveness expressed through men’s desire to control the women’s social network single-handedly implies that a woman is just an object owned by a man.

Kirkwood has mentioned two main forms of deprivation namely economic and social deprivation which in turn keeps women in a violent relationship as their material and personal resource are limited. The woman was deprived of basic human needs and often has a sense of intense isolation. Marriage ideally entails an equal responsibility. However, in an abusive relationship, women find that responsibility for shared concerns weighs more on them. There was no “give and take” in the relationship and it was the women’s responsibility to maintain the relationship to take sole responsibility for the care of the children and to make ends meet.

This kind of emotional is a abuse is described by Kirkwood as “the constant shedding of doubt and women’s perceptions by their partners or abusers and the forceful and continual presentation of conflict ones”. By constantly doubting and questioning women’s subjective reality, the abusers may succeed in getting the woman to mistrust their perceptions and make them more vulnerable to their partner’s suggestions.

2.4.1 Sexual violence

“Sexual Violence refers to any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comment or advances or acts of traffic or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, any setting, including but not limited to home and work” (Sen & Garcia Moreno, 2005, p.149). This is most common to both married and unmarried couples. Women who are subjected to this sort of violence mostly keep quiet because evidence of the type of violence is very difficult to produce. A married woman may also find it difficult to report rape.

The problem has to do with describing what constitutes rape under marriage. The issue is doing you report your husband of marital rape and stay under the same roof with the person or do you report and leave the marriage? Women are mostly put under this difficult situation of decision but would rather prefer to keep quiet. Sexual violence is a violation of human rights and has been a worldwide epidemic affecting millions of people. Most of the victims are women. An international report by the World Health Organization (WHO, 2013) reports says that 35.6% of women experience sexual or physical violence globally, at least once in their lifetime. It is estimated that one in four women will experience at least one incident of sexual violence during their lifetime. Sexual abuse in the context of intimate partner violence refers to physically forcing a partner to have sexual intercourse, who did not want it forcing a partner to do something that she found degrading or humiliating (Garcia-Moreno et al., 2005) harming her during sex or forcing her to have sex without protection. WHO (2012) a nationwide study conducted in Ghana by Adomako and Prah (2009) forced sex was found to be prominent among married women which was

not reported because the culture does not recognize it as an offense for a man to force his wife to have sex if she does not spontaneously submit.

“Sexual Violence refers to any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comment or advances or acts of traffic or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person, regardless of their relationship to the victim, any setting, including but not limited to home and work” (Sen & Garcia Moreno, 2002, p.149). This is most common to both married and unmarried couples. Women who are subjected to this sort of violence mostly keep quiet because evidence of the type of violence is very difficult to produce. A married woman may also find it difficult to report rape.

2.4.2 Economic violence

Economic violence (denial of household money for expense even if enough financial means are available, unsolicited taking of money, control of belonging and spending decision, damage to or destruction of someone’s property, right to denial to work, forcing someone to work against their will, or denial of food and other basic needs. Women living in sub-Saharan African countries including Ghana do not usually get access to credit, and job offers whether informal or informal organization (UNICEF, Brent et al., 2006). When most women are faced with the severe problem of not having money to provide for their needs leaves the women in a financially helpless state as pointed (Fox & Benson, 2006).

Social violence (the act of controlling behaviour such as preventing someone from seeing friends or family, stopping someone from leaving the house, requiring to know where someone is at all time, stalking spreading false information such as videos or photos without permission or forcing women to have an abortion.

2.4.3 Marital violence

Marital violence can be referred to as spousal violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, family violence, battering, and partner (Anderson, et al; (2007). It is worth noting that the definition of intimate partner violence varies across cultural contexts (Devries, et al., 2013). In some cultures, as in North America, the term is used about violence between same-and opposite-sex ever-married and dating partners (Rennison, 2001), while in Ethiopia, it refers to violence committed against ever-married and co-habiting males and females (Garcia-Moreno, et al., 2005) in the Ghanaian society, the term is strictly applied to formal or informal marital unions between a man and woman (Domestic Violence Act, 2007). For this study, I concentrate on violence among heterosexual couples (Man and Woman relationship). The WHO's progress report on intimate partner violence notes that one-third of women worldwide are at risk of experiencing physical and/or sexual coercion and rape from a male domestic partner (WHO, 2013). Finally, an analysis of Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) from Latin American and Caribbean countries found that most women, 61-93 percent of those who reported experiencing physical partner abuse indicated an experience with emotional or psychological violence (Boh et al., 2012).

The knowledge that violence against women transcends cultures, nationalities social backgrounds, ethnicities, and socioeconomic status (Kimmel, 2002; Jewkes, 2002 Kishor and Johnson; (2004) and Anderson, et al, (2007) note that no form of violence directed to any woman should be ignored whether it takes place in the developed or developing nations. Brownridge and Hallie (2001) state that violence against women is pervasive in Canadian society, despite Canada's rank as a wealthy and highly developed country (United Nations, 2011). In addition, Simister (2010)

notes that there is a high prevalence of gender-based violence in Kenya, whilst Canada is considered a developed country, have reports of violence against women. Kenya is in a similar situation as a developing country they also have issues of violence against women.

However, because of the sensitivity of violence against women across the globe, it remains under-reported worldwide (WHO, 2013). For instance, a comparative analysis published in 2013 of 141 studies in 81 countries shows that a partner assault is highest for women in sub-Saharan Africa, where a proportion of about 66 percent of women have been subjected at some point in their lives to physical and sexual assault WHO (2013) using Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data from nine countries around the world, Kishor and Johnson (2004) indicate that the percentage of sever-partnered women subject to violence was highest in Zambia, where 48 percent was recorded for physical violence and 17 percent was noted for sexual violence.

A 2002 South African survey found that 40 percent of females between the ages of 13-23 were at risk of experiencing intimate partner violence (Swart et al., 2002). Additionally, Obi and Ozumba (2007) report that 78.8 percent of Nigerian women are at risk of experiencing domestic violence in Igbo communities in Southern Nigeria. The reasons for the pervasiveness of marital violence in the African sub-region include the strong or high presence of patriarchy on the other hand (Dolan, 2001) and high poverty levels on the other hand (Amoakohene, 2004). Women's experiences in sub-Saharan African are shaped by social expectations of subordination to men, where it is expected that males dominate and control to assert manhood (Ampofo, 1993; Ofei-Aboagye, 1994). At the end of it all, the link between marital violence, patriarchy, and poverty is circular (Simister, 2010). It is important to

acknowledge that African societies are deeply heterogeneous (Linos et., al 2013) and this applied to Ghanaian society as well. In Ghanaian society, women's social, economic, and political positions differ along kinship lines (Opong, 2011). The lens is focused on Ghana as the rate of marital violence is not different from other sub-Saharan African countries.

The then Women and Juvenile Unit (WAJU) of the Ghana Police Service (now DOVVSU) reported 360 cases of wife-beating in 1999, 385 in 2000, 648 in 2001, 3622 in 2002 (Amoakohene,2004). In 2010, the domestic violence and victim support unit reported 109,784 cases of domestic violence (Ghana News Agency, 2010).

Legally, intimate partner violence in Ghana is understood through the Domestic Violence Act which was passed into law on February 22, 2007. This act is supposed to protect victims of domestic and marital violence. This act clearly defines areas of domestic violence and it is in line with that of the World Health Organization which was earlier on mentioned' (Manuh, 2007). The act came as a relief to those who advocated for its passage, saw it as a step in the right direction but the exemption on the portion that sought to address the issue of marital rape that would repeal Ghana's criminal code 1960, Act 29.

2.5 Determinants of Domestic Violence

In discussing issues of domestic violence it is important to discuss factors that determine domestic violence. The study found that a number of factors are associated with different forms of violence including patriarchy, age and exposure to violence, incidence of violence attitude towards violence and violence in the family.

2.5.1 Patriarchy, power and gender-based domestic violence

The term patriarchy primarily came into being and was used by feminist theories to describe the perpetuation of male dominancy in contemporary societies in the 1960s and 1970s (Hadi, 2017). Becker's (1994) discussion of patriarchy outlines how women are asking for equal payment and equal treatment as workers which tells of the unfair treatment women get from the society, they live in. Becker (1994) argues that the communal structures and the people within the confines of the structures make and replicate disparities related to sex, descent, rank, religion, ethnicity, and other variations. Stated differently, women are treated as objects by males, and society expects them to fill roles that were meant for subordinates from the beginning of time. It is the societal values and norms that have nurtured us to see it so, and even at that, it is more evident in African countries and with less of it experienced in the Western countries as mentioned earlier. Another problem is that the tolerant attitude towards domestic violence has given society a domino effect, which has caused adults to suffer psychological trauma as a result of childhood experiences that their fathers often abused their mothers. Ghanaian women now need economic empowerment, but they also need cultural empowerment. This is not only beneficial to women but also to the whole society.

Dobash and Dobash (1979) developed the theory of patriarchy to explain family violence, especially domestic violence, which has been consistently directed towards women throughout history. They understand the cause of wife-beating and other abuse of the feeble or helpless in the family as the patriarchal structure of the family in the social system. According to Human Rights Monitor, the patriarchal attitude strengthens customary values, which are used by men to manipulate women's sexuality (Green, 2001).

There have been different explanations of patriarchy by different scholars, in the theoretical argument of the Dobash's their central claim is that patriarchy results in the subjection of women and generate a historical pattern of systematic abuse directed towards women. Kambarami (2006) argued that radical women activists explain patriarchy as any system of power whereby men assume all social responsibility and put women in subordinate positions on the assertion of male supremacy. The study, in addition, indicated that patriarchal practices bring about gender inequality that makes women not have full control over their sexuality, which leads to the control of female sexuality by males.

The feminist approach to domestic violence asserts that the majority of all male-on-female abuse is dependent primarily on the patriarchal beliefs of our society, and "that these values are endorsed by a culture in which male domination of women is both secretly and strengthened" (Lawson, 2000, p. 20). Thus, the patriarchal perspective asserts a principle of male dominance over women as indisputable within a vast society as well as in the family leading to the abuse and oppression of women.

Rydstrom (2010, p. 79 as mentioned by Ajayi & Soyinka-Airewele 2018) describes patriarchy as being inculcated in societal culture and viewed as those structural relations and cultural constructs that favors the initiative of the masculine gender in controlling the existence of others. Other scholars have also defined patriarchy as a system of social connections and establishments that give men the power of supremacy and advantages that women are refused.

Foucault (1982, as mentioned in Mikkola, (2018) on the theory of power, when discussing power, issues such as capacity and instruments of power become questionable. This theory fits well into the context of this study because of the structures and mechanisms of power described here, but only in cases when it can be

assumed that there are individuals exercising power over others using a certain kind of knowledge which in this context is, women being submissive to their husbands. Foucault's theory serves the purpose of this thesis in the sense that patriarchy works as a mechanism of power exercised over women – because the characterization of power entails a relationship between individuals, or between groups. In this sense, domestic violence towards women is an extreme form of men holding the title of superiority to the detriment of women.

Bowman et al. (2003) noticed that the power inequality evident in customary African marriages generates an exclusive platform for conjugal violence. What is more tragic is that in a society where the legal system is not perfect, women are more afraid of being abandoned by their husbands than of fear of domestic violence. The political scientist Amanda Gouws of the University of Stellenbosch, which belongs to the South African Commission for Gender Equality, stated: “offenders usually are not punished severely as I've seen too many cases that started with a thump, and many procedures do not come to a good end because not all witnesses were questioned and evidence was forged, or the processes fail because of procedural defects” (Akerman, 2012).

2.6 Incidence of Violence

The Ministry of Gender and Social Protection (2016) conducted a survey on incidence of violence against women. The study provided an in-depth analysis of incidence attitude and determinants and consequences of domestic violence in Ghana. The main results showed that 27.7% of women and 20% of men in Ghana have experienced at least one tripe of domestic violence 12 months before the survey. The most common form of domestic violence reported by women in the 12 months before

the survey was economic (12.8%) followed by social violence (11.6%), psychological violence (9.3%), physical violence (6.0%), and sexual violence (2.5%). In addition, the incidence of domestic violence was generally lower among men than among women. The most common form of domestic violence experienced by men was psychological violence (7.9%) followed by social violence (7.7%), economic violence (7.3%), physical violence (2.1%), and sexual violence (1.4%).

2.6.1 Attitude towards domestic violence

In a report by Institute of Development Studies (IDS), Ghana Statistical Services (GSS) and Associates (2016), many of the acts mentioned in the study were viewed as acceptable social norms, a defense mechanism, or ways of solving disputes. Only physical violence between partners was considered as violence. Psychological violence between partners was considered as violence. Psychological violence, in particular, was generally perceived as a means of defense and coping strategy – for women in particular towards of physical violence or to claim some autonomy or agency in a context where they may not have the ability to exert much power.

Additionally, women were on the average more likely than men to condone forms of domestic violence: 23.1% of women and 13.8% of men found a wife-beating acceptable while 65.3% of women and 56.2% of men fully agreed that women were to blame for rape if they were revealing clothes. These findings suggest that domestic violence in Ghana may persist due to harmful social norms that hold women responsible for the violence they experience.

2.6.2 Age and exposure to violence

Age was found to be one of the key determinants of domestic violence in Ghana. Young women and men (15-19 years old) were substantially more likely to have experienced domestic violence than other age groups. Women aged between 15-19 years were between 1.3 and four times more likely to experience any form of domestic violence than for instance, women aged 30-39 years. Differences in incidences of domestic violence across age groups were similar for men, except for sexual violence, which was more prevalent among men aged 20-24 years.

Again, the study also indicated that exposure to violence during childhood was found to be strongly related to the likelihood of an individual being a victim or perpetrator of violence in adulthood. Women who witnessed any form of domestic violence as children were between 1.5 and three times more likely to report domestic violence than women who did not witness violence during their childhood. Men who witnessed social, psychological, or economic violence in their homes as children were between 1.2 and 2.2 times more likely to have experienced these forms of violence in adulthood than other men.

In addition to age, socio and economic factors were found to be among the most important determinants of domestic violence in Ghana. Low asset levels were found to be a strong determinant of psychological and economic violence among women, but high asset level were associated with higher levels of social and sexual violence among them.

Tension and fights over money or property were found to be leading determinants of all forms of domestic violence in Ghana. Women with no education were generally between (0.5 and 2.5 times) less likely to experience domestic violence than women with some level of education. More educated men were around

three times more likely to experience economic or sexual violence than less-educated men. This may be as a result of the fact that women and men with more education may also be more likely to report domestic violence.

2.6.3 Violence in the family

The phenomenon of domestic abuse is evident in all social strata, even though low-income families are more vulnerable to violent behavior. In the last 50 years, the phenomenon of domestic violence has become part of the social and scientific awareness, thanks to Kempe et al's article, contributing significantly to the emergence and recognition of domestic violence as a social problem by breaking the barrier of privacy and the myth that the family is always a peaceful and protective environment for its members.

According to McGuigan, Vuchinich and Pratt (2000) official statistics confirm the view that family members are much more likely to be killed and/or abused in the home by partners or relatives than by a stranger. The inclusion of certain family members' behaviour patterns in the concept of domestic violence depends on the prevailing perceptions in society to which the family belongs, a fact which, as will be mentioned below, creates problems in defining it. Domestic violence as a socially objectionable or punishable behaviour by law is not a universal concept but instead corresponds to and depends on each particular society's cultural achievements. Thus, in societies, there is a degree of tolerance towards some types of domestic abuse, whether physical, psychological, or sexual (forced sex by an intimate partner), that is considered acceptable behaviour as opposed to more serious injuries such as vicious beating and homicide attempt which are addressed as unacceptable violent behaviors (Prifti, 2020). In the context of gender inequality and power imbalances between

sexes, the concept of violence is based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes and practices based on concepts of inferiority or subordination. This distinction applies to all forms of victimization and is more difficult to be identified.

2.7 Causes of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is also known as domestic abuse, intimate partner violence, or abuse. According to Walker (1999), the factors that contribute to domestic violence differ from country to country and area to area. The author added that there are some social factors, which promote domestic violence in various countries. These factors include oppressive fundamental religious beliefs that devalue women, therefore, giving men the right to dominate their wives at home. The low social status of women and oppressive political structures are also contributory factors.

According to Martin et al. (1999) and Xingjuan (1999), when one lives in a large family, there is a high risk of that person being violent. They also report that lack of financial resources, excessive drinking, levels of jealousy, lack of education, and substance abuse are also contributory factors of domestic violence. When women do not have any financial resources and lack education, they tend to depend on their spouse for everything, therefore, are more likely to suffer economic abuse at the hands of their spouse in their various matrimonial homes.

Also, excessive drinking and substance abuse increase the plight of women because such men get offensive with little things when they get home drunk and when that happens, they resort to either abusing their wives sexually or physically. In a research in Botswana, it is reported that factors that are associated with violence against women are alcohol, drug abuse, and lack of respect for women (Phorano et al.,

2005). It was found that the bride price paid for women in marriage is mostly used as an excuse for violence.

Martignoni (2002) in her research conducted in Zambia on violence against women reports that traditional beliefs which privilege men as the holders of authority within the family are a contributing factor to the high level of domestic violence experienced by the women in Zambia. She also reports that malobola (lobola) or bride price in marriages in Zambia is also a contributing factor to domestic violence because payments of the pride price expose the women to violence by their husbands since they are entitled to treat them as virtual slaves.

2.7.1 Substance abuse

Research has revealed that there is a direct link between alcohol consumption and violence against women; this is because the one who takes alcohol sense of judgment is impaired or affected because of its psycho-physiological consequence (Hamilton & Collins, 1981; Cervant, 1992). This is because when one drinks alcohol, he loses his senses thus, tends not to understand anything or accept anybody's view except his. The consumption of alcohol came up as a major cause of domestic violence. Women whose partners often drink before sex experience a risk of violence almost five times higher than women with non-drinking partners.

One of the most common risks found in several cases of domestic violence is that the perpetrators were tested positive for drugs or were under the influence of alcohol. Duke, Pettingell, McMorris and Borowsky (2010) some studies found that there is a strong correlation between alcohol addiction, drugs, and marijuana during the act of violence (Gonzalex et al. 2014; Ozcan, Gunaydun, & civil, 2016; Reingle et al., 2013). These findings were supported by the research done by Hand (2014) who

found that from all the cases involving body impaired and psychological violence 61.9% of the perpetrators turned out to be abusing drugs. This, therefore, means the study predicts that the abuse of substances such as Heroin, Marijuana, and alcohol is a determinant of domestic violence against women.

There are conflicting claims as to whether there is a direct link between alcohol consumption and gender-based violence. For example, Gelles (1990) argue that some men intentionally get drunk to hit their spouses and use the excuse of being drunk to violate their partners. The authors¹¹ further argue that in this instance, alcohol is not a cause but a function of deviant behaviour.

However, despite these claims, other authors¹² research findings revealed that there is a direct link between alcohol consumption and gender-based violence because an alcohol abuser's sense of judgment is impaired because of its psychophysiological consequences (Hamilton & Collins, 1981; Cervantes, 1992). Phorano et al. (2005), report that there is a positive correlation between alcohol and domestic violence. They report that alcohol abuse and related violence increase during weekends and month-end when working men receive their wages and salaries.

Other authors have looked at the link between alcohol and violence from another perspective. They argue that women who consume alcohol are highly likely to be victims of marital violence. Miller et al. (1989), in their research, compared the rate of spousal violence between women who consume alcohol and women who do not consume alcohol and found out that women who consume alcohol had experienced higher levels of marital violence. However, Leonard and Senchak (1996) report that alcohol use by wives is not a contributing factor to their being violated by their spouses even though it is highly correlated with husbands¹³ alcohol use. They are of the view that the perpetrator's alcohol and drug use plays a much greater role.

2.7.2 Patriarchal institution

The patriarchal system teaches men and women from infancy how to conduct themselves and socialize themselves into accepting the role of submissiveness. Patriarchy prescribes roles and power which legitimizes the use of violence (Ajaji & Soyinka- Airewele (2018). Feminist theories describe the perpetuation of male dominance in contemporary society (Hadi, 2017).

Socialization is the acquisition of customs, values, norms, and traditions in the society he or she lives. These customs hurt women making them invulnerable in their marital homes. But women accept these traditional roles. According to a survey conducted by Amoakohene (2004) with 50 women, 86% of these women (that is 43 women) accepted the fact that a woman should be 'submissive', 'be respectful' 'be patient' and 'be dutiful and serviceable' to her husband as traditions demands. This has placed the woman in a subservient position to the man. All these start from childhood. A girl is asked to help the mother in the kitchen while the boy goes to play football with his friends. This is because it is believed that a woman will one day get married and live the family while the boy's role will be to stay with the family and help extend the family size (Human Rights Monitor, 2001).

Again, the male child is considered the eldest in the family even if the female child is biologically the eldest in the family in most of the African countries. The patriarchal advantage is only enjoyed by men in Ghanaian society further complicating women's appraisal of domestic violence. Marriage is considered a contract between families (Adomako & Prah, 2009; Ofei-Aboagye, 1994). In this contract of marriage, the responsibility lies with women to keep their families together (Mitchel, 2011) certain in the Ghanaian culture passed on to women from generation to generation emphasize the importance of marriage and the need to keep

this union intact. An example of this is “for any marriage to succeed one partner should be a fool” the fool has to be the woman.

For this reason, even if the woman is suffering she has to stay with the family and keep the family going “a woman should hold her nose and stay in a marriage for the sake of the children” (Adomako et al., 2005, p.231.) one of the advantages enjoyed by men as a result of patriarchy is an issue of forced sex in marriage. When marital rape was going to be added to the clause in the draft of Ghana domestic violence bill some parliamentarians, chiefs argued that the bill was bringing “Foreign ideas” which tends to threaten Ghanaian culture beliefs and practice, in particular, the sanctity of marriage and men’s rights within it (Mann, 2007). Adomako and Prah (2009) note that though some participant in the 1998 nationwide study in Ghana acknowledged that forced sex in marriage does happen it is not reported because “culture does not recognize it as an offend for a man to force his wife to have sex if she does not spontaneously submit” From all of the above, it is clear how societal norm has defined gender role therefore encouraging women to stay in their abusive marriages.

2.7.3 Education

Women all over the world are less privileged to have access to education, Empirical studies have shown that factors associated with intimate partner violence include women with a low level of education are more likely to experience violence from their male partners (Adjah & Agbemfie, 2016; Mckloskey et al., 2016., Kinyondo & Joseph, 2021). Studies do not agree on whether a woman’s educational level or that of their partner has an impact on their exposure to domestic violence this notwithstanding there is a high consensus that education is an efficient means to

reduce the risk of domestic violence amongst women initiative (Dalal, 2011; Dalal, Dahlstorm & Timpka, 2013, Hidrobo & Fernald, 2013; Vyas & Watts, 2009).

Women are empowered through education. It gives them the ability to gather and assimilate information, manipulate and control the modern world, secure and protect themselves from any form of violence (Malhotra, 1997; Kishor & Johnson, 2004). Kishor and Johnson (2004) hypothesized that women with more education have greater abilities to protect themselves in times of need, such as when dealing with a violent partner. It is also anticipated that women with higher levels of education experience less violence. According to Kishor & Johnson (2004), it can be hypothesized that the relationship between a husband's education and violence is negative.

However, this association is also subject to fluctuation and inconsistencies. For example, research conducted in Haiti revealed that there is a positive relationship between education and violence (Kishor & Johnson, 2004). Men with higher educational status than women having both higher ascribed (based on gender) and achieved (based on higher educational attainment) status are more likely to assert unequal, and even violent power in the relationship (Hornung, 1981). It has also been suggested from various studies that when women have greater achieved status than their husbands do, there is a greater possibility of marital disagreement to occur (Hornung, 1981; Daga, 1998., INCLEN, 2000).

2.7.4 Lack of effective communication

A lot of studies have also been conducted on the claim that the lack of effective communication could be a factor in domestic violence against women. The absence of effective communication between husband and wife significantly increases the likelihood of becoming a victim of domestic violence (Semalegn & Mengiste, 2015). A study done by Choi and Hynn (2016) found that dysfunctional communication may act as an intervening variable in the relationship between a risk factor and domestic violence. This means that an improvement in communication skills can significantly reduce conflict and discrepancies and it may encourage mutual respect and equality in marriages. This can reduce the possibility of domestic violence (Ghimine, Axinn & Smith-Greenway, 2015). This was further supported that better communication techniques are one of the strategies for meaning and triggers associated with domestic violence, most married women live in constant fear with their husbands, as such find it difficult to have good communication with their husbands or partners.

2.7.5 Economic dependence

Economic reasons were the most often reported for why women stay in abusive relationships. If a woman is cut off socially and not allowed to work, her partner may be her only means of support (Matthews, 2004; Salber & Taliaferro, 1995). In terms of economic reasons for staying in abusive relationships, rural farm families are often one-come families, most or all of their income coming from the farm. This is the case of women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti region. In a 2010 census conducted by Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) two-thirds (2/3) 68.4% of persons of 15 years and order in the district are economically active

and 31.6% (1/3) are economically not active. Out of those who are economically active, 94.8% are male with females being 92.8%. The proportion of the population who are unemployed in the district for both sexes stands.

A study in 1981 by Martin found that when an abused woman leaves her abuser, there are 50% chances that her standard of living will drop below the poverty line. According to (Martin, 1981), women who were most likely to return to their abusive relationship were those who had been married for long or had fewer skills or less work experience than those who were less likely to return home. In addition, Bornstein (2006) opines that economic dependency is “the degree to which one person relies on another for financial support, and is used to describe situations in which one member of a dyad has control over financial resources”. Economic dependency can occur if one person is the sole provider in the family and denies his/her partner access to a resource or limit the resources the partner is supposed to have to take care of the family.

Additionally, about 37 to 96% of abused women in relationship have been reported to be impacted at work as a result of the abuse (Wettersten et al., 2004). Most of these women who have had time keeping a job or getting promotions may miss work due to victims visiting the hospital or being denied to work to earn some income. The abuse can lead to poor performance at work which can lead to them losing their job or their source of income. Bornstein (2006) points that the relationship between economic dependency and domestic abuse women go through high economic dependency may lead to women tolerating physical abuse but continuous abuse may lead to top economic dependency.

2.7.6 Employment status

When it comes to women's empowerment, economic dependency is a contributing factor. According to Malhotra (1997) and Garcia (2000), the relationship between women's „work status and their risk to experience domestic violence can be conceptualized to have a say over their financial and household matters in their marriages when they are engaged in paid employment than women who are not active in the markets (Malhotra, 1997; Garcia, 2000). Thus, women who are currently employed are at lower risk to experience domestic violence. However, due to the transition phase towards autonomy, the changing economic control from men to women could also lead to more incidents of violence for women.

2.7.7 Age difference between spouses

A wide difference in spousal age, in which the husband is much older than the wife, is hypothesized to imply power imbalances in the relationship. The combination of seniority (achieved) and masculinity (ascribed) in many cultures puts wives younger than their husbands at a comparative disadvantaged position (Kishor & Johnson, 2004). However, there is little evidence in the empowerment literature regarding the effect of converse situations where the wife is older. Kishor and Johnson (2004), in their multi-country profiling of domestic violence, thought that it may be more likely that because relationships in which women are older than their husbands are so contrary to the normative marital arrangement in most societies, they may be at greater risk for marital disharmony.

2.7.8 Stress and frustration

When a man is faced with challenges such as bad economic conditions, low wages, poor working conditions, and unemployment, it can lead to the man being desperate which is likely to lead to violence at home (UNR, 1989). The man tends to put his frustration on the woman. The woman who has played no role in what has brought about this hardship he is going through is made to face the frustrations that men face in their work are often bore by their partners but these partners have played no role in bringing these hardships he is going through.

2.7.9 Financial stress

Early findings on the relationship between financial stress and violence were mixed. Hotaling and Sugarman (1986) examined 97 risk markers drawn from 52 studies on the husband to wife violence conducted between 1970 and 1985. Three of four studies in their review that examined the relationship between violence and income found that income was negatively related to violence. Two of three studies that examined the effect of (the husband's) unemployment on violence found it to be positively associated with intimate partner violence. Seven of nine studies that examined the effect of family income/social class found it to be inversely related to violence. A subsequent meta-analysis by the same authors (Hotaling & Sugarman, 1986) cast some doubt on whether socioeconomic status remained a significant correlate of violence but Straus and Gelles (1990) reported a strong association between the rate of marital violence and social and financial stress (Gelles, 1990, p. 192).

More recent studies have found a relationship between measures of financial stress and violence, even after controlling for a wide range of other important violence predictors (Benson et al., 2003; Cunradi et al., 2002; Fox, Benson, DeMaris, & Van Wyk, 2002; Lauritsen & Schaum, 2004; MacMillan & Gartner, 1999; Spriggs, Halpern, Herring & Schoenbach, 2009; Van Wyk et al., 2003). The relationship, however, has not always been clear or consistent.

MacMillan and Gartner (1999) found that women's labor force participation lowered the risk of spousal abuse when their male partners were also employed but increased the risk when their male partners were not employed. Johnson and Ollus (2008) found that low income predicted violence but the effect disappeared in a multivariate analysis controlling for respondent age, heavy drinking by male partners, partner's use of violence outside the home, partner's controlling or emotionally abusive behavior, and victim experience of physical abuse as a child. Julian and McKendry (1993) found no relationship between household income and violence when comparing a sample of 42 male 'wife batterers' with a sample of 50 non-violent men. Mouzos and Makkai (2004) using Australian data from the International Violence against Women Survey (IVAWS) found no relationship between violence and either (victim or offender) unemployment or household income. Johnson and Ollus's (2008) analysis of the full IVAWS data set revealed that the association between household income and violence held for some countries and not others.

In summary, while the bulk of evidence suggests a strong link between violence against women and financial stress, the evidence is neither clear nor consistent enough to put the issue beyond doubt.

2.7.10 Social stress

Compared with financial stress, the research literature examining the effects of personal stress on violence against women is comparatively small. Straus and Gelles (1990) used a stressful life event scale to examine the relationship between the level of personal stress in a relationship and the marital assault rate. Their scale was based on questions dealing with a large range of potential stressors, including disagreements with work colleagues; longer working hours; problems finding or keeping employment; death, illness, and disability; problems with childrearing; and troubles with police and/or courts. They found a significant association between personal stress and marital violence. The association was much stronger in relationships where men had either experienced violence as a child, saw violence as legitimate, or believed husbands should 'have the final say. The marital assault rate by men who believed the husband should have the final say, for example, was four times higher than among men who did not believe the husband should have the final say (Straus & Gelles, 1990, p. 183).

2.7.11 The family

Children are trained in ways girls and boys are supposed to behave by parents and family members they live with. Domestic roles are differentiated right from childhood concerning girls' "roles and boys" roles. In some societies, a girl's place is the kitchen while the boy must be educated. It is common in Ghanaian society to see a boy playing football while his sister is in the kitchen with the mother cooking because of the wrong perception that cooking is done by women and not men. Most times, the boy child is preferred to the girl child in some ethnic groups in Ghana as well as West Africa because of the notion that the girl child will one day be married to

a different family. For the male child, the belief is that he will surely stay in the family, marry and give birth which will add up to the size of his extended family, therefore, maintaining the family name (Human Rights Monitor, 2001).

The male child is considered the eldest in the family even if the female child is biologically older in the family in most of the African countries. An example of such an African country is Zimbabwe (Kambarami, 2006). The male child is mostly automatically considered as the head of the household and his responsibility is to protect and look after his sisters. Sometimes even the toys parents buy for their children also aid the socialization process. A typical example is that most often parents buy dolls or cooking utensils for the girl child to play with whilst cars, puzzle games, and all toys that require physical energy or mental ability are given to the boy child. Such practices socialize the girl child to become a mother, soft, emotionally sensitive, and to have all motherhood features (Kambarami, 2006). Girls are taught from childhood to be gentle, submissive, and passive whereas boys are taught to be energetic, breadwinners and dependent.

According to Charvet (1982), the consequence of such segregation is the reason why women are seen by society as sex objects instead of human beings. In the Shona culture in Zimbabwe, when a girl reaches her puberty stage, most of the training she receives is geared toward the satisfaction of her future husband. She is taught to use her sexuality to please her future husband (Kambarami, 2006). The author also shares in the view that these cultural teachings promote a dependency syndrome and that is why most African women depend greatly on their husbands for support. The socialization process in the family, which instills patriarchal practices into the young does not end within the family but infiltrates into the other social institutions like marriage, religion, education, politics, and the economy.

Domestic violence has many names, including ‘intimate partner violence. Additional terms that are or have been used include ‘spouse abuse’, ‘domestic abuse’, ‘domestic assault’, ‘battering’, ‘marital discord’, ‘woman abuse’, ‘dysfunctional relationship’, ‘intimate fighting’, ‘mate beating’, and so on. Intimate partner violence is a relatively recent term introduced in an attempt to include all violence against an intimate partner, regardless of marital status, and to exclude other forms of violence, such as child abuse, elder abuse, sibling abuse, and violence between roommates who are not intimate partners (WHO, 2010).

First of all, the people who experienced family violence in their childhood were exposed to violence in their homes. They cannot raise their voice against the beater. The more frequently a woman was struck as a child, the more likely she is to become a victim of violent process. Conflict and violence can result when there is no process in place that allows for a sharing of this responsibility. To be in ‘charge’ is a masculine concept. If a man loses his status and his peers find out, he can lose his public reputation. Who has the right to say something in the family is often an essential component of this particular emotional masculine code of pride and reputation. Consequently, this shows that to be in charge is an important matter to humankind.

It is the beater’s selfishness to show the power to control and gain authority over the victim as well as sustain his or her pride. While the victim disregards the authority of the beater, the beater feels discarded. He or she also feels a loss of power, control, and self-dignity. The beater intentionally chooses to impose control over the victim to bring back his or her authority. Thus, the beater is the only one responsible for his or her violent behavior. Anger, stress, marital or financial problems, and drug

or alcohol addiction do not cause domestic violence; however, they may play a supportive or sustaining role (Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996).

Therefore, these problems need to be addressed separately. Our views of the world and beliefs determine our behaviour. The directly contributing factor is the beater's belief in the use of force to control his or her spouse or partner. This shows that the issue of controlling somebody by force is associated with the beater's psychology. According to Johnson and Ferraro (2000), to understand the nature of a person's use of violence, you have to understand his/her role in that relationship. Some people get violent to take whole control of their partner. Others may use violence to defend themselves against their partner's attempts to control them. Johnson and Ferraro divided individual violence into four types: in intimate terrorism, the beater uses violence to control his or her partner but the partner does not resist. In violent resistance, the partner is violent and controlling and the resister's violence arises in reaction to that attempt (Johnson, 2010). In mutual violent control, either of the couple uses violence to take control. In the fourth type of intimate partner violence, situational couple violence, the beater is violent; however, neither of them uses violence to attempt to exert general control. In conclusion, controlling somebody by force is one of the basic reasons for family violence.

Culture plays a very important role in domestic violence. The family values commonly found in traditional societies increase the risk of domestic violence. Traditional values include the belief that the man alone should financially support the family and make important decisions. Such beliefs devalue others in the household, making it more likely for men in these societies to become abusive toward their wives and children (Cefrey, 2010). Some theories that examine the connection between culture and abuse claim that battering is a result of cultural values, rules, and practices

that afford men more status and power than women. These values predominate in patriarchal societies (Kasturirangan, Krishnan & Riger, 2015). The patriarchy theory of domestic violence, also called the feminist theory, suggests that male battering of female intimate partners is an outgrowth of the structure of society, which provides greater power to men than to women, and that battering is one of the methods by which women remain subordinate to men in both societal and relationship terms (Malik & Lindahl, 2019).

As a result, patriarchal societies believe that men are superior to women and they are the masters of the household. The causes of family violence are complex. However, two factors seem to be necessary for a sense: the unequal position of women in a particular relationship (and in society) and the normative use of violence in conflict. These factors interact with a web of complementary factors to produce intimate partner violence (Jewkes, 2002). The ideologies of male superiority legitimize disciplining of women by men, often for transgressions of conservative female gender roles, and the use of force in this process. Violence against women is a demonstration of male power juxtaposed against the lesser power of women. Where women have a low status they often lack the necessary perceptions of self-efficacy and the social and economic ability to leave a relationship and return to their family or live alone and thus are severely curtailed in their ability to act against an abuser (Ibid).

Marriage

In most African countries, marriage is considered sacred and a married woman is treated with respect in the society in which she lives. The marriage women of Ghana are found to be more vulnerable because of their sacredness towards their family. Women find it very difficult to discuss such sensitive issues with anyone as a

sign of failed femininity when they tail their husband (Hayes & Van Baak, 2017). It is not therefore appropriate to discuss matrimonial issues such as sexual abuse. When such a scenario happens, however, the wife is blamed for failing to satisfy her husband or for failing to curb his desire to do so. In addition, married women are ordinarily expected to be sexually passive and submissive to their husbands, men are the initiators of sex and set the conditions for the sexual encounter (Kambarami, 2006).

All men are the same is a favorite phrase of older women as they try to make young women accept the inevitable (male infidelity). On the other hand, it is taboo for married women to have extramarital affairs with another man. However, if it so happens that a married woman engages in an extramarital affair, she is not spared, she is labeled as „loose“ and has to be sent back to her parents so that they can instill some discipline into her or she is divorced straight away. On the same note, Messer (2004) states that women are expected to satisfy the sexual desires of their husbands. As a result, when a husband wants sex, the wife should comply because that is part of the marriage contract (Leclerc-Madlala, 2000). This scenario has seen HIV and AIDS spread because women cannot insist on safer sex measures as men control the sexual encounter (Kambarami, 2006).

Cohabitation

Hiekel et al. (2014) define cohabitation as a phrase in the marriage process, that is an introduction to marriage, a testing marriage cohabitation for financial reasons, to plan to marry, in the face of adverse attitude towards the institution of marriage. For the purpose of this study, I define cohabitation as a living arrangement

between a man and a woman recognized by both family without any marriage being performed.

Women's Perspectives on domestic violence

In the view of Anderson (2008) the perspectives of North American feminist scholars in the area of domestic violence have been framed around three main themes: gender, power, and patriarchy. Domestic violence cannot be analyzed without delving into the issues of power and patriarchy. North American feminist scholars understand intimate partners as being gendered. With this, it means that violence is mostly against women because they are sexed females and gendered as women (Johnson, 2011; Pallito & O'caupo, 2005). Also Boonzaier (2008), also argues that the sexed nature of domestic violence can be understood in the context of the social construction of gender. Socially women are expected to be submissive and the man to be strong and aggressive to show his masculinity. Societal expectations support a man's use of aggression to assert masculinity, and not femininity (Kimmel & Messner, 2013). Additionally, Butler, Oskala (2012) also view men violence in domestic violence relationships could be regarded as performance of masculinity men perform this masculinity to assert power, this is further reinforced by social forces such as income and employment (Boonzaier; 2008). This leads to the next theme which is power.

Power

Men weigh muscular powers which give them the edge over women when it comes to strength. This as a results makes some men abuse their partners violently, these behaviours are often justified using men's domestic violence against women. These gender norms are seen as a way of the male partner fulfilling societal

expectations of instilling discipline in the house. In the view of Charles and Hughes Freeland (2013) male partner violence implies an emphasis on male domination and control, male authority, and supervisory. These three themes are closely related because gender will show whether a person is sexed as male or female. Male exert their power on female to show their masculinity and eventually shows male domination over females. The views of the North Americans differ. Whilst others are of the view that domestic violence against women is gendered leading to domination of power by males being patriarchal others see it otherwise. Crenshaw (1989) was known to have formally introduced the term “intersectional” in her works in 1989.

Stride, Walby, and Armstrong (2013) have also highlighted intersectional analysis into domestic violence against women by noting that it is important to analyze the interlocking working of multiple systems of vulnerability within structural, historical contexts. Like their counterparts in North America, women of African descent in the works of male domestic gratifications are seen as a “right” and women will go at any length to satisfy their male partners (Amoah, 2007). The African women’s perspectives on domestic violence are that the argument that woman’s experiences in the domestic sphere are shaped by sociocultural feminine expectations of sterility and humility, whereas masculine traits such as bravery and domination are attached to and expected of women. These feminine and masculine values are mediated and supported through cultural performance such as marriage.

The perception of women in Ghana is no different from that of their counterparts from North America. A study by Amoakohene (2005) that domestic violence is approached in Ghana from a multidimensional perspective by examining the multiple facts of violence against women: socio-economic, sexual culture, religion, and mental torture. This study sought to answer the question about Ghanaian

women's perception of violence perpetrated against them by their husbands. They view physical assault as normal. Culturally this makes the women shy away from reporting such happening. Also, sexual abuse among married couples, including rape within marriage is not considered an offense because such concepts are alien to Ghanaian cultures. These are educated women who responded to the interview conducted.

In her study, Amoakohene (2004) explored women's perspectives regarding formal domestic abuse and the civil society response through the activities of non-governmental organizations. The policy responses to domestic violence are also examined among the 50-respondent interviewed, all of them said they are aware of the Commission of Human Rights and Administrative Justice (CHRAJ) international Federation of Lawyers (FIDA), (DOVVSU), The Ark Foundation. According to some of the women, they did not report because they did not want to be ridiculed since their ethnic group justified wife-beating as “a demonstration of a husband's love and affection for his wife” abuse in the home were not to be reported to “the outside world to avoid ridicule, blame for crimes committed against them, to avoid unduly exposing” their husband and families, and to avoid “social stigma”, family disgrace. Following from the above, it is no doubt that a lot of women are aware of a state institution that is involved in handling domestic violence cases and the vast majority of a non-governmental organization that helps but refuses due to cultural attachment.

Gender-based domestic violence

Becker's (1994) discussion of patriarchy outlines how women are asking for equal payment and equal treatment as workers which tells of the unfair treatment women get from the society they live in. Becker argues that the communal structures and the people within the confines of the structures make and replicate disparities related to sex, descent, rank, religion, ethnicity, and other variations. In other words, women are regarded as objects, and society from them expects to play subordinate roles never existed from the onset of creation. It is the societal values and norms that have nurtured us to see it so, and even at that, it is more evident in African countries and with less of it experienced in the Western countries as mentioned earlier. Another problem is that the tolerant attitude towards domestic violence has given society a domino effect, which has caused adults to suffer psychological trauma as a result of childhood experiences that their fathers often abused their mothers.

Ghanaian women now need economic empowerment, just as they also need cultural empowerment. This is not only beneficial to women but also to the whole society. They understand the cause of wife-beating and other abuse of the feeble or helpless in the family as the patriarchal structure of the family in the social system. According to Human Rights Monitor, the patriarchal attitude strengthens customary values, which are used by men to manipulate women's sexuality (Green, 2001). There have been different explanations of patriarchy by different scholars, in the theoretical argument of the Dobash's their central claim is that patriarchy results in the subjection of women and generate a historical pattern of systematic abuse directed towards women.

Kambarami (2006) argued that radical women activists explain patriarchy as any system of power whereby men assume all social responsibility and put women in subordinate positions on the assertion of male supremacy. The study, in addition, indicated that patriarchal practices bring about gender inequality that makes women not have full control over their sexuality, which leads to the control of female sexuality by males. Rydstrom (2010, p. 79 as cited by Ajayi & Soyinka-Airewele 2018) describes patriarchy as being inculcated in societal culture and viewed as those “structural relations and cultural constructs that favors the initiative of the masculine gender in controlling the existence of others. Other scholars have also defined patriarchy as a system of social connections and establishments that give men the power of supremacy and advantages that women are refused.

2.8 Effects of Domestic Violence

Domestic violence induces damaging effects including depression, low self-esteem, worthlessness, low self-efficacy, and loss of opportunities for the victims and at the same time generates a feeling of remorse and shame within the perpetrator. Such feelings could be either short-lived, given timely or appropriate professional intervention or they could be a permanent feature of the spousal relationship with potentially dire consequences. While this is the case this study will not dwell on effects rather than the causes of domestic violence.

2.8.1 Social and public health

According to the 2017 WHO report, one in three women 35% of women globally have been a victim of domestic violence. According to the report 24%, 23.5%, and 10.1% of women were emotionally, physically, and sexually abused by their partners respectively. These findings are in line with WHO's prevalence estimate

of intimate partner violence for African countries. This high prevalence suggests that domestic violence continues to be the main social and public health problem in these countries.

2.8.2 Effects on children

Domestic violence within families is associated with direct and indirect effects on children. Carrel and Hoekstra (2010) have shown that children who suffer social and emotional problems which are related to the exposure of domestic violence also experience lower academic achievement. The effect of domestic violence can be traumatizing for children, especially the younger ones. Gandy 2009 describes the Rihanna and Chris Brown case in which Rihanna had experienced stress relating to her parents, marital problems. Gandy reported that children who witness domestic violence are at higher risk of perpetrating violence in a future intimate relationship. Other studies on the effects of violence on children who witness it conducted by (Mettzer, Dooz, Vostamis, Ford & Goodman, 2009; Nguyen & Larsen, 2012) utilized logistic regression with a sample of 7,865 children and their families in Great Britain. The result consisted of a theft witnessing domestic violence was the most frequently reported trauma, and there were certain characteristics of groups who were more likely to witness domestic violence were 11 and 13 years old. Children with mixed racial identity, children in a single-parent household, children living in a rented apartment, and the mother's emotional state and physical capacity (Meltzer et al., 2009).

Additionally, the likelihood of a child experiencing domestic violence was one in 25 (Meltzer et al., 2009). The finding of these studies suggests that domestic violence can be learned and continued. Another effect on children is their health

consequences. A study conducted by Nguyen and Larsen (2012) on the prevalence of children witnessing violence with parents. Such children according to the study is the emotional effect of depression of the 150 children from the Dallas/Fort Worth area who were recruited for the study, 25% of the children who witnessed domestic violence were identified as compared to 7% of the children who did not witness domestic violence over the year.

The attention given, emotions felt, and memories imprinted onto a child's brain in moments of stress become inextricably linked together and forever taint or else filter feelings, beliefs, and choices in relationships and so many other facets of life. These children are not merely innocent bystanders. They are victims. Although they may be unintended victims, living within a climate of chronic emotional volatility and near acute incidents of aggression has a way of searing a neurophysiological muddle—painful and isolating emotions existing alongside ongoing and frequently unmet needs for affection and attachment.

Parents who are themselves batterers are more irritable, less involved in child-rearing, more likely to use severe and erratic physical punishment, and less able to distinguish their children's needs from their own. Both parents, regardless of culpability, risk poor emotional attunement with their children and, consequently, a decreased capacity to recognize stress and danger—protective factors which might increase a child's resiliency. Compared with other kids, those who have witnessed domestic violence experiences far greater incidence of insomnia, bed-wetting, verbal, motor, and cognitive issues, learning difficulties, self-harm, aggressive and antisocial behaviors, depression and anxiety, as well as, most troubling, adult domestic violence, with boys often becoming offenders, victims, or both, and girls more likely to become victims (Brown & Bzostek, 2003).

A growing body of literature has revealed that children who have been exposed to domestic violence are more likely than their peers to experience a wide range of difficulties, from anger and oppositional behaviour, to fear low self-worth, and withdrawal, to poor sibling, peer, and social relationships. Studies have found evidence of much higher rates of pro-violence attitudes, rigid stereotypical gender beliefs involving male privilege, animal abuse, bullying, assault, property destruction, and substance abuse. A study by Kilpatrick, Litt and Williams (1997) concluded that witnessing domestic violence is an experience in and of itself sufficiently intense to precipitate posttraumatic stress in children.

Children who are exposed to domestic violence and are also physically or sexually abused are at a higher risk for emotional and psychological problems than those who witness such violence and are not physically or sexually abused. In so many cases, it is difficult for those outside of these family systems to know with sufficient clarity what is going on, and it is often difficult to know how best to intervene (Teicher, Samson, Polcari & McGreenery, 2006). And unfortunately, the reality is that in many cases, meaningful intervention occurs only after a child has endured direct and continuous exposure to DV. Thank goodness there are protective factors that can mitigate the worst impacts, including a child's literacy and overall intelligence, the extent to which the child is outgoing and socially competent, and whether the child has safe and supportive relationships with at least one influential adult (Carlson, 2000; Hughes et al., 2001; Edleson, 2011).

The opportunity and responsibility to inject resiliency through academic, emotional, and social support. We must all grapple with whether there are ways we might more effectively intervene within our families, schools, and communities to instigate help and healing.

2.8.3 Health effects

Women who are abused suffer some effects and these may include various health risks. Some of the health consequences identified include chronic pain, gastrointestinal disorder, psychosomatic symptoms, and eating problems (Stop Violence Against Women, 2003). Mental health problems include but are not limited to anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, and depression (Stop Violence Against Women, 2003). Other health problems such as cardiovascular problems, Vaginal discharges, Eyesight and hearing problems were also risking for having experienced domestic violence (Toxton et al., 2006). In the Gambia, about 62% of pregnant women experience at least one form of violence on an intimate partner.

Intimate partner violence has severe physical and mental health on these women. The consequences on a woman range from minor bodily injury to death. A health facility based on a cross-sectional study design was carried out to assess the magnitude of factors associated with intimate partner violence among pregnant women seeking antenatal care in rural Gambia (Jatta, Baru, Fawole & Ojengbede, 2021). The study was conducted among 373 pregnant women. This study revealed that the prevalence of intimate partner violence in the Gambia is 67% with psychological violence of 43% being the commonest among the intimate partner violence this clearly shows that all forms of intimate partner violence in the rural Gambia are frequent (Jatta, Baru, Fawole & Ojengbede, 2021). The prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) remains a major public health issue that affects women and, a violation of their human rights (Cambel, 2002; Krug et al., 2002). The statistic indicates that violence against women by their male partners is alarmingly high with physical violence affecting between 10% and 69% of women (Adjah & Agbemfie, 2016). In Africa, the incidence is reported to be around 46% for women

who are subjected to lifetime intimate partner violence and 12% to sexual assault (Mc Closkey et al., 2016).

Stress is another health problem resulting from domestic violence Eby (2004) examined how domestic violence impacted the level of stress by women who were identified as living in poverty. In examining 107 women, the sample was based on two groups; women who had experienced recent abuse and women who had not experienced recent abuse. The findings out of this study were three. The first group included women who reported experiencing abuse had higher levels of stress than women who did not report abuse. The second group was women who experienced abuse had more frequent physical health symptoms. The third was that there was an increase in alcohol and drug use by these women who experienced abuse. Post-traumatic stress disorder PTSD was a symptom associated with harassment and emotional and verbal abuse, which were indicators of depression (Mechanic et al, 2008). Again Humphreys & Williams (2007) explored the interrelationship of sleep and domestic violence in a sample of 17 domestic violence survivors, the study was based on lack of sleep. As a result, of this, the women reported health concerns such as physical problems relating to migraines, headaches, digestive problems, and elevated blood pressure (Lowe et al, 2007).

2.8.4 Physical and mental health

Garcia-Moreno et al. (2013) reported that women who had experienced physical and sexual abuse by their partners were 16 persons more likely to give birth to low-weight babies than women who did not experience intimate partner violence. Additionally, three other studies from Ghana showed harmful effects of domestic violence on taking pregnancy to full term and the health of babies (Pool et al., 2014).

Adu Gyamfi (2014) reported similar non-physical side effects of domestic violence, such as an erosion of a person's sense of dignity, self-esteem, confidence, and respect, particularly when injuries make it difficult for victims to go out in public for fear of being "found out". Domestic violence includes damaging effects including depression, low self-esteem, and worthlessness.



CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the philosophies, approaches and assumptions that guide this research. Thus, it presents the philosophical worldview, research approach, (research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments for data collection, data collections procedures, data analysis) and ethical consideration.

3.1 Philosophical Worldview of the Study

Philosophy is the belief or idea that one has which influence the practice of research. Research philosophy is a set of belief that guides the study of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). The interpretist philosophical stand is what the researcher seeks to adopt. According to Creswell (2014), the philosophy suggests that researcher collect and analyze data from the view point of respondents taking into consideration their views, experience and the interpretation they make of their views. These meanings are varied and multiple leading to interpretation of views from the respondents. Individuals develop subjective meaning of their experience to phenomena. These meaning are varied and multiple, leading to interpretation of view from the respondents. The researcher therefore believes that the nature of truth or reality is subjective and thus, is seen as multiple depending on the individual point of view.

Consequently, the nature of true or reality as identified by the researcher is relative to the one holding it or the perception of truth. The epistemology addresses the question of how can I know the reality or truth. It further shows how one can examine and know reality. Reality or truth can therefore be known when it is

interpreted to discover the underlying meanings. The researcher therefore seeks to use the interpretist epistemology.

3.2 Research Approach

The study employed the qualitative research approach. According to Creswell (2014) in using qualitative research the researcher creates meaning of a phenomenon based on the respondents understanding of the social problems groups gives to a social problem. A qualitative approach is appropriate when one seeks to present a detailed and in-depth view of phenomena. The qualitative research approach is a non-statistical analysis that does not use numbers in analyzing data. Qualitative approach has been explained by Denzin (2016) as a manner to undertake and explore the meaning that groups and persons related to a social or human difficulty. Qualitative research involves procedures and emerging questions. The collection of data are normally within the setting of the participants and the data is analyzed through an inductive approach, which builds themes from the particular to the general information.

Qualitative research process involves an interaction of both the researcher and the social actors (Houe & Murphy, 2017). The approach, therefore, offers the researcher the opportunity to have detailed research on the topic and collect data from different people with different perspective on domestic violence against cohabiting and married women and the sustainability of marriages in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of Ashanti Region.

3.3 Research Design

Hutter and Bailey (2011) asserts that a research design is a framework of strategies or methods of inquiry uniquely designed to fit the nature of the research and guide the conduct of the study. The case study design was used to explore the issue based on its context thus, the issue of married women who are domestically abused but still stay in those marriages in the Awima Kwanwoma District of Ashanti Region. Case studies collect and study detailed information from a single or few cases. According to Yin (2009), a case study studies present day issues within its real-life context, principally when differences between issues and context are not clearly defined. The intrinsic worth of a case study approach is that it offers an enormous amount of description and detail about a specific case. This helps to build the foundation for further research. Again, Stake (2000) contends that case study method is responsible for intensive study of a unit. It is a thorough and deep investigation and exploration of an event.

Notwithstanding the numerous advantages of using case study design, it is coupled with some disadvantages as illustrated by Stearn (2009). He opined that case study research is susceptible to bias when the researcher's personal opinions and preferences interfere with the collection and analysis of data. For example, the researcher may think people of a certain age group will not provide quality information and may not include them when conducting interviews. Alternatively, when making observations or analyzing documents, the researcher might only look for evidence that supports their hypothesis, rather than a wide variety of data.

3.4 Study Setting

The study was conducted in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. Atwima Kwanwoma District is one of the forty-three (43) districts of the Ashanti region. It was originally part of the Bosomtwe Atwima Kwanwoma District. Many reasons accounts for the choice of this research setting. The incidence of domestic abuse is common and becoming rampant in the Atwima Kwanwoma District. This inspired me to explore the experiences of cohabiting and married women who suffer from domestic violence and how they are sustaining their marriages.

3.5 Population of the Study

The population of a research comprised married or cohabiting women who are victims of domestic violence or abuse. They included all matured married and cohabiting women who are in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region. The target populations include married women who suffer domestic violence and were still staying in those marriages.

3.6 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Providing enough and credible data is important for any empirical study. Varied literature exists with no distinct rules for sampling in qualitative study (Creswell, 2009). Out of the targeted population 15 participants who had suffered domestic violence and still lived with their partners in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of Ashanti Region were selected. The principle of point of saturation was employed in selecting the participants. There are many married women in the district but only those who had suffered domestic violence and still lived in their marriages were selected.

3.7 Instruments for Data Collection

The study employed an interview guide for collecting data from research participants. This instrument gave the researcher the opportunity to get detailed views from the perspectives of the research participants.

Interviews: The interview can be seen as a data-gathering technique involving verbal communication between the researcher and the research participants. Interviews are commonly used in exploratory and descriptive studies. There is a range of approaches to interviewing, from completely unstructured in which the subject is allowed to talk freely about whatever they wish, to highly structure in which the subject responses are limited to answering direct questions (Fox, Mathers, & Hunn, 2000). Many scholars have proposed different types of interviews (situational, one-on-one, job-related, etc.). Fox, Mathers, and Hunn (2000) grouped interviews into three types. In the view of Fox, Mathers, and Hunn, (2000) interviews can be structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

Structured interviews enable the interviewer to ask each respondent the same questions in the same way. A tightly structured schedule of participants is used, very much like a questionnaire, and often intention is to use a quantitative method of data analysis. Semi-structured interviews are similar to structured interviews in that the topics or questions to be asked are planned, but instead of using closed questions, semi-structured interviews are based on open-ended questions. Unstructured or in-depth interviews (also sometimes referred to as qualitative interviews they have very little structure at all. The interviewer approaches the interview to discuss a limited number of topics, sometimes as few as one or two, and frames successive questions according to the interviewee's previous response (Fox, Mathers & Hunn, 2000). The

interview guide was employed as an instrument for data collection throughout the implementation of the interview method.

In this study, the researcher adopted an in-depth semi-structured interview guide. An interview is a very vital tool in qualitative research designs (Abomah, 2005). Mason (2002) pointed out that one of the most commonly used forms of research instrument in qualitative research is interviews. According to Abomah (2005), an interview is posing questions to respondents for answers in a face-to-face situation or by phone. Patton and Cochran (2002) also asserted that “interviews resemble everyday conversations, although they are focused on the researcher’s need for data”. They are different from everyday conversations because they are conducted in a rigorous manner that ensures reliability and validity (Patton & Cochran, 2002).

Semi-structured interview uses few question guides and gives room for the interviewer to follow up or probe further questions to the participants for an in-depth understanding of the issue/phenomenon under study. Semi-structured interviews are conducted based on the topic guide which contains open-ended questions that define the appropriate areas to be explored (Patton & Cochran, 2002). More so, Mason (2002) reiterated that the qualitative interview usually involves in-depth, semi-structured, or loosely structured forms of interviewing.

According to Gill et al. (2008), in-depth semi-structured interviews are made up of many questions that assist in identifying the research areas to study. It gives leverage to the interviewer or interviewee to diverge for details. The use of this data collection instrument helped the researcher to further use probing questions to elicit an understanding of the issue under investigation. The researcher chose in-depth semi-structured interview because, the researcher’s ontological position suggests that the respondents’ views, knowledge, understanding, experiences, and interpretation (Gill

et al., 2008) are vital to the social reality in which the research questions are intended to discover (Mason, 2002). Again, in-depth semi-structured interviews helped the researcher to provide a detail understanding of social topic better than questionnaires. Using a semi-structured interview is useful (Creswell & Path, 2018).

Therefore, the researcher adopted this research instrument in other to explore the experience, perspectives of cohabiting and married women on marriage sustabiliby in the Atwima Kwanwoma district of the Ashanti Region. The motivation behind the adoption of in-depth interview by the researcher was the appropriate time afforded by the participants at the comfort of their busy schedules and work. It is on this that Adhabi and Anozie (2017) asserted that in general, time is major determinant to encounter in a face-to-face interview. The primary merit of in-depth interviews is that it gave detailed and comprehensive information which would not have been gotten from other research instruments (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Moreover, it was a flexible and relaxed way of collecting data at the comfort of the participants (Boyce & Neale, 2006).

Again, the use of this instrument offered opportunity for the interviewer (researcher) to interject where appropriate in order to understand the subject matter of the question under exploration and also, gave the interviewer (researcher) the penchant to use her skills to explore important issues the participants raised (Adhabi & Anozie, 2017). Another advantage of in-depth interview was its ability to gather enough data at very short period (Wallace Foundation, 2009).

However, its main challenges were biases in data interpretation and it is time consuming from interview time to transcription (Boyce & Neale, 2006). Adhabi and Anozie (2017) also posited that in-depth interviews are limited to one geographical area which pin respondents to provide instant responses. Again, developing the

questions for in-depth semi-structured interviews can become time-consuming (Creswell & Path, 2018).

The in-depth semi-structured interview guide had two sections: Sections A and B. Section A had questions that focused on demographic information of participants. For example, age, marital status occupation, educational level, number of years in marriage and number of children. Section B had questions that focused on gathering data on perspective of married and cohabiting women in Atwima Kwanwoma, what constitute domestic violence, the cause of domestics violence against cohabiting or married women, motivating factors that me cohabiting or married women stay in domestically abused marriage and how does domestic violence affect married and cohabiting women in Atwima Kwanwoma district.

3.8 Procedure for Data Collection

Qualitative data was collected for the study. The researcher, through snowballing located women who suffered violence in their marriages. Participants were informed and their consent was sought on the need to participate in the interview at their convenience. Based on key determinants in the research questions, the researcher developed an interview guide for the study. The researcher recorded participants' responses with the aid of an electronic voice recorder during the interview. The participants were allowed to freely respond to questions. After the interview sessions, with participants, the researcher informed respondents about the need to hold a discussion.

3.9 Trustworthiness

In qualitative study the question of rigour or trustworthiness arises. The trustworthiness rest on establishing the credibility transferability, dependability and confirmability of the data gathered (Maxwell, 2005). Pilot and Beck (2014) argued that trustworthiness is essential to ensuring confidence in data collected, analysed and interpreted. For this study all the aspects of trustworthiness were adhered to through establishment of credibility dependability transferability, confirmability and the positionality of the researcher.

3.9.1 Credibility

Lincoln and Guba (1985) deemed that credibility is one of the important factors in ensuring trustworthiness in a qualitative study. To ensure that credible findings were produced, there should be lengthy or prolong engagement with participants as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Under his study triangulation of method of data was also used to ensure the credibility of the study. Triangulation involves using different methods, investigation and sources of data. (Merriam, 2001). In this study triangulation of different source of data was used namely interview and focus group discussion. After the interview participants were given the opportunity to fill the gaps and verify or clarify statements during the discussions. Shanton (2001) posited that the use of a wide range of informants is one way of triangulation via data source. He argued that individual view points and experienced can be verified against others and ultimately a rich picture of the phenomena can be obtained based on the contribution of a range of respondents. In this study participants were from different background. These include different tribes, religion, educational and social background.

3.9.2 Transferability

Ellsberg and Heise (2005) believed that in qualitative research, the “researcher and the participants are ultimately related and their interaction shapes the research process.” In this study the in-depth interviews gave the participants who have endured the experience of staying or living in an abusive relationship or marriage share their experience and allow their voice to be heard. The events and feelings each participant had were all recorded along with field notes taken during the interviews made an attempt to let these women feel they were important to their families, their communities and the country as a whole. Transferability was adhered to in the quest to ensuring trustworthiness of this study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) posit that transferability generalizes study findings and attempts apply then to another situation and context. Transferability therefore refers to the degree to which the research study can be transferred to the other context. In ensuring transferability I considered the specific detail of the research study and methods such that the finding can be compared to similar explored with similar methods and techniques.

3.9.3 Dependability

This has to do with extent to which the researchers can describe and account for the data collected. This deals with the consistency of the findings of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This means that as the process of the research were conducted in a similar context, the findings would be similar. Since the same interview guide was used for all the participants in analyzing the data the researcher conducted according the views of the participants. Again, the rules and principles of the methods of data collections and analysis were strictly adhered to religiously. If

anyone was to conduct a study with the same method and instruments, similar results could be obtained.

3.9.4 Confirmability

As a basis of trustworthiness, confirmability has to do with the degree to which the findings of the research is supported by the data collected. The findings of the research must be independent of conscious and unconscious biases (Devault, 2019). Under this study, I adhered to confirmability by presenting and interpreting the data collected from the participants to establish credibility of the research findings. The researcher kept a field note to keep track of event in order to avoid being bias. This enabled the researcher to present findings that were true reflection and representation of the data collected from the participants.

3.9.5 Positionality

I am a married woman with five children. I have not been abused and I have not experienced that type of relationship. However, I do respect and appreciate the women who have been abused and still stay in those marriages. All of them have made one sacrifice or the other for the sustainability of their marriages. I therefore consider myself as an outsider. The participants appreciated the fact that they have been given the opportunity to share their experience. The researcher was also aware of the sensitive nature of the issue of domestic violence especially against women. The researcher stayed focused and avoided all biases.

3.10 Data Analysis

Miles and Huberman (1994) have posited that when working with text one can find recurrent themes which pull together many separate pieces of data. It is important

to note that these patterns are not casual. They are ways to find similarities and differences within the context of the interview conducted. In line with this assertion the thematic approach was used.

Examining the transcripts, the researcher listened to the audio recorded during the interview. A transcription was done for a better understanding and then the data was coded. The transcription was done looking for meaning in units, and examining themes that involves comparing and contrasting the participants' experiences.

Maxwell (2005) recommended that the "researcher begins data analysis immediately after finishing the first interview or observation and then continues to analyze the data as long as he or she is working on the research." Following Maxwell's recommendation analysis of the data began as soon as data was collected from the first participants till all the data was collected. Transcription of the audios was done for the data collected to be coded. Themes were drawn from the data collected. The themes were discussed in details. The experiences of participants, the ideas, and themes generated were linked with the excerpts to bring some connection and differences, from the participants view to support the finding. Hence, the process of data analysis established, coded the data collected.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality and anonymity were very crucial to the study. All the participants were assured of their confidentiality (Ghani, 2014). This was achieved as individual interviews were conducted in safe places. The researcher remained neutral and non-judgmental during the interview process Jewkes et al. (2000) notes that both the participants and the researcher stand at risk of an abuser becoming aware of the nature of the interview.

Ethical considerations in the study such as confidentiality, anonymity, access, non-betrayal, informed contents were critically addressed. During the study, high ethical standards were maintained to ensure that no harm was caused to any of the respondents. Steps were taken to keep information provided confidential and anonymous, seek participant's consent.



CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study on perspectives of cohabiting and married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region on domestic violence against cohabiting and married women. The finding of the study sought to answer these research questions: What are the perspectives of cohabiting and married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District on what constitute domestic violence? What are the causes of domestic violence against cohabiting and married women? What are the motivating factors that make women stay in abusive marriages? Finally, How does domestic violence affects cohabiting and married women in Atwima Kwawoma District?

The data was collected through face-to-face, one-on-one interview sessions with the women. The findings were presented in two sections. The first section focuses on the background information on participants. The second section presents the findings based the themes that emerged from the study.

4.1 Background Information on Participants

Age of participant:

Marital status:

Occupation:

Educational Level:

Number of years married:

Number of children:

Table 4.1: Demographic data of participants

Ages	Frequency	Percentage
30-35	3	20
36-40	6	40
41-45	3	20
46-50	3	20
Total	15	100
Number of years Married/ Cohabiting		
5-10 years	2	13.3
11-15 years	3	20
16-20 years	6	40
21-25 years	1	6.7
Not sure	3	20
Total	15	100
Nature of Occupation		
Formal	2	13.3
Informal	10	66.7
Unemployed	3	20
Total	15	100
Educational Background		
Basic	4	26.6
Junior high school	7	46.8
Secondary/ vocational	2	13.3
Tertiary	2	13.3
Total	15	100
Number of Children		
2-5	12	80
6-10	1	6.7
None	2	13.3
Total	15	100

Source: Fieldwork data (2022).

Table 4.1 shows the age distribution of participants. In the table 3 (20%) were between the ages of 30-35, 6 (40%) was also between the ages 36-40, 3 (20%) were between the ages 41-45 and 3 (20%) were between the ages 46-50.

Table 4.1 further show the number of years participants had been married. Out of the total of 15 participants 2 (13.3%) have been married between 5 -10 years, 3 (20%) have been married for between 16-20 years, 1 (6.7%) have stayed in their marriage or co-habiting and 3 (20%) are not sure of the years they have been cohabiting. This has been classified as formal and informal. The formal includes teaching and nursing and the informal include, farming. Trading hair-dressing, sewing and unemployed.

Table 4.1 also indicate the occupation of the participants which were categorized into formal, to include a teacher and a nurse, they were two (2) representing 13.3%, 10 (66.7) of the participants were in the formal category 3 (20%) of the participant were unemployed.

Table 4.1 shows the level of education of the participants. They were categorized into Basic, Junior High School (J.H.S), Senior High School (S.H.S) or Vocational School and Tertiary. For the Basic School Level, it's up to primary six these were 4 (26.6%) of the 15 participants. Out of the 15 participants 7 (46.7%) have had Junior High School education. 2 (13.3%) have attended secondary or vocational school and finally 2 (13.3%) have had tertiary educational and were nurse and a teacher.

Finally, Table 4.1 indicates the number of children the participants had. Of the 15 participants 12 (80%) had between 2-5 children, 1 (6.7%) of them had between 6-10 children. 2 (13.3%) of the participants representing have never had any children.

4.2 Perspectives of Cohabiting and Married Women on Domestic Violence

This study had the objective of examining the perspectives of married woman on what constitute domestic violence. The perception of individuals on an issue reflects their understanding of that issue. There is the need to examine the views of cohabiting and married women on domestic violence. Societal expectation is that married women are to be submissive to their husband and to be when are strong and aggressive to show their masculinity (Butler & Oskala, 2012). These societal expectations inherently endorse certain behaviour as normal. It is therefore important to examine what constitute domestic violence in their context.

4.2.1 Knowledge on domestic violence

Respondents were asked question on their view on what constituted domestic violence. They were to explain the concept of domestic violence in their own words. Some of the participants shared various views on domestic violence such as verbal abuse, physical abuse and psychological abuse. They used their situations to explain their perspectives on domestic violence. The following were some of the views expressed by the participants.

A married woman shared that:

When you say domestic violence it is when your husband tries to make life uncomfortable for you in your marriage. He yells at you at any little thing (Interview data, 2021).

Participant 4

I understand domestic violence as when your husband beats you and insult you as if you are nothing to him". (Interview Data, 2021).

Participant 6

“hmmm! Violence against women is not good. A man you are married with and have several things with you can say things to you for you to cry and even loss interest in yourself. He can say for instance “if not for me who would marry someone like you”. (Interview Data, 2021).

Participant 7

If your husband constantly beat you and he does not care where you are ,it is domestic violence.(InterviewData,2021)

Participant 8

Domestic Violence is when husbands beat their wives and at times even kill them likes the one that happened in Mampong (Interview, Data 2021).

The views expressed by the cohabiting and married women indicated that their perspectives on domestic violence largely focus on acts that displease them and have effects on them. Interestingly one participant extends domestic violence to husband's refusal to eat food cooked by the wife.

Another married woman said that

“It is quiet shameful when your husband refuses to eat your food and does not talk to you or insulting you before people in your community” (Interview Data, 2021).

This data shows that the women have different views on what domestic violence entails. The perceptions of the participants on domestic violence were revealing because of the way they responded. The perspectives were varied based on experiences. It was observed that the explanations given by participants regarding domestic violence can be summarized as “Acts such as physical, emotional, psychology, and financial abuse suffered by cohabiting and married women.” The participants stated that, acts such as beating, insulting and the use of offensive words and denial of financial support were considered as domestic violence. These opinions

give credence to the fact that despite societal views that a man should be masculine, assertive and strong, they were not expected to misuse these qualities at the detriment of their wives and other women. The cohabiting and married women were able to identify acts that constitute domestic violence.

Apart from physical abuse that was mentioned by participants emotional abuse was used to describe domestic violence. A good number of them supported the idea that it was the most occurring abuse. In their view it is done to make people feel unwanted and disturbed. Most of the women admitted the acts included coming home late, not eating their food, not talking to them, leaving home early for work without leaving any money at home. Studies conducted on domestic violence established that emotional abuse is a form of domestic violence which has a more lasting impact on the victim as compared to being physically abused (Davis et al., 2016). The findings of this study revealed that emotional abuse could cause sleeplessness and depression. According to the study men and women can be the culprit and the sufferers of domestic violence, however women were mostly the victims.

4.2.2 Common forms of violence experienced by married and cohabiting women

Another sub-theme, was the common form of violence these women suffer from their husband. The participants gave varying answers based on the forms of violence they were subjected to. These are the response given, to the question, what form violence do you normally suffer from your husband?

Participant 2

As for me, my husband beats me a lot. Whenever we have small misunderstanding he tries to fight with me because he thinks he can beat me. But now I have also device some means to hurt him. Anything I get, I will also use it to hit him in order to protect myself. (Interview data, 2021)

Participant 7

Hmmm..... when you ask this community about anyone whose husband abuses her much they will point to my husband. My husband punches me, beat me and insults me and sometimes even rapes me. One day he tried to hit me and I also wanted to protect myself so fortunately there was cutlass nearby so I used the cutlass to hit his head and blood started coming out. I became scared and started shouting, so people came and help me take him to the hospital. They treated him and we came home the police patrol team was around, they heard of the issues and took us to the police station at Foase. But because we have been to the police station several times they did not do anything to me or him. They asked us to settle the matter at home (Interview data, 2021)

Participant 12

As for me, my husband can insult me and the words that he would use will make me loss yourself respect. I do not like that, I would rather prefer beatings than his insults (Interview Data, 2021).

The views expressed by the cohabiting and married indicated that the common form of violence they experience were beating and insults. They indicated that out of frustration they sometimes resort to violence for defence.

4.2.3 Frequency of violation

The participants were asked to indicate how often they were violated in order to. The responses given include;

Participant 7

eh! in this town if you asked people they will tell you about my husband and my issue. We fight most of the time. Whenever he wants to fight, he will bring some issue up for us to argue then through the argument we fight. I have become used to it. We fight all the time (Interview Data, 2021).

Respondent 3

My case is different from the others. In my case, mostly we fight when he gets some issues at work. These days I have realized it so whenever he is coming from his work. I look at his facial expression if I see that he is not smiling I quickly get a place to hide. I do not get closer to him until he is calm (Interview Data, 2021).

Respondent 15

Most often when he goes out with his friends, he get totally drunk and seems to understand nothing at all. Whenever my husband only fights me when he is drunk. There are some particular groups this happens he can hit me with anything he gets and insult you even when I am with my friends or other people. I have told his friends not get him drunk but they do not listen. (Interview data, 2021)

These views expressed by the participants indicate that married or cohabiting women in Atwima Kwanwoma go through series of domestic violence in their various homes.

4.3 Causes of Domestic Violence

The next objective is what causes domestic violence amongst married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District. With this objective most of the answers given to this question were similar. Some of the responses given by respondents 15, 7, 1 and 10 were similar but varying situations.

4.3.1 Substance abuse and alcoholism

Excessive alcohol intake affects one's judgement as it makes people behave abnormally substance abuse and alcoholism were known to have been a major cause of some of these domestic violence abuse women suffer. Most of the men take alcohol during funerals which eventually get them drunk. When these perpetrators get drunk or take in substance like marijuana they use that as an excuse to abuse their wives or partners. This is evident in some studies conducted by (Gonzalex et al., 2014) that there is a strong correlation between alcohol addiction, drugs and marijuana during acts of domestic violence. According to Oyunbiley et al. (2009), McCloskey et al. (2016), and Kinyodo and Joseph (2021), women whose husband or male partners drink alcohol are most likely to experience violence in their marriages than women whose partner do not drink.

Participant 15

My husband misbehaves when he gets drunk. Whenever there is a funeral in town some of his friends come to town for the funeral. It is these friends that sponsor the alcohol he drinks. As for him he cannot buy to drink but when his friends come they buy enough for him to drink. Because the drink is for free he drinks as much as he can (Interview Data, 2021).

Participants

“ah! My husband does not normally misbehave until he takes alcohol”. She also gave a similar view about her husband and his friends getting drunk during funeral rites with friends. She said:

hmmm, my husband normally insults me whenever he gets drunk. He gets agitated about any little thing in the house. He will tell me to cook food he knows very well that I cook at a particular time for him. Because he wants to have problem with me he tells me to cook fufu for him. If I do not do it for him, he abuses me verbally with hush words” (Interview Data, 2021).

Participants 7

She said her husband virtually abuses her verbally whenever he gets drunk;

“Madam, my husband is always drunk. So our fighting does not end. We always fight. His problem is the drinking and he cannot stop drinking. Until he stops this fighting will not end. (Interview Data, 2021).

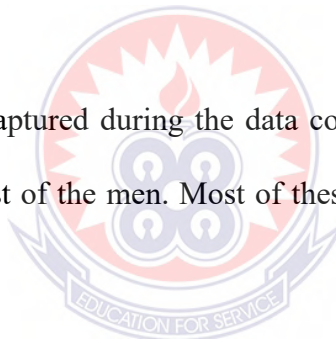
Respondent 10

“My husband drinks and smokes as well. This has created a lot of problem for him at work. Our children are even scared to stay with him. Most of the time they are always with their grandmother. (Interview Data, 2021)

These views expressed by these cohabiting and married indicated that the cause of domestic violence is alcohol consumption by the perpetrators.

Infidelity

One main issue captured during the data collection was the issue of adultery and infidelity among most of the men. Most of these men were involved in an extra-marital affair.



Respondent 12 says;

Things were okay until he went in for another woman and things have become soar between us such as cheating and waking me foolish”. Participant 4 says “when your husband starts seeing other women, he does not accept your view, he does come home early and at times you don’t see him for days and he does not give you money for upkeep.

Respondent 6 observes cheating by men. To them, all this womanizing life leaves you thinking a lot as a married woman. Which can lead to depression causing you stress and even leading to some miscarriages.

4.3.2 Economic dependence

Another cause of domestic violence as indicated by the participants was economic dependence on their perpetrators. This is evident by the responses given by the cohabiting and married women on the causes of violence in their homes. Other literature supports or disputes the assertion of dependence and independence of women on men. Whilst UNICEF (2000) is of the view that domestic violence does not exist solely because of financial and the employment of people in a living area, other factors also accounts for it. However, Doku and Asante (2015) contradicts this assertion that poverty cannot be ruled out in the problems of domestic violence

Participant 1

My husband and I have a way of living harmoniously. For instance, if he has money, he gives me the bulk sum of money to keep. I will then use portion of it to cater for the family. This money only comes when the tomatoes season is due. When I use the money and the money fall short he gets angry and the abuses start. Because I do not have work doing but only depends on him so, he does whatever he want to do with me. If this money that he gives is about to finish he comes for the rest to buy chemicals for his farm. When we do not have money I depend on my mother who is also a farmer. (Field Data 2021).

Respondent 14 was of the opinion that depending on her husband for financial and other material needs has made her vulnerable to the husband.

She said:

“My husband does not give enough money for housekeeping because of his adulterous life. If you advice him he doesn’t take it. Upon all the little money he gives me I manage to feed the family with it and take care of the children as well.”

Participant 4

This participant said because she has not been working for the past few days and only the husband work to provide for the needs of the family has made him take advantage of her vulnerability to insult her at the sighted opportunity given.

She had this to say:

He uses that as an excuse and abuse me. I sew people's things in the house but this does not come regularly an even at times you will finish sewing and the person will not come for it. This does not give much money so I merely depend on him. As he will go to work and come home late but he will tell you he didn't get any construction work to do. This means we have to go begging or sleep on an empty stomach.

According to Bornstein (2006), there is a connection between domestic violence experienced by women and economic reliance. While some abuse may cause women to tolerate physical abuse, ongoing abuse may cause them to quit being economically dependent. This is also linked to the theory power and control by men. This theory is linked to the power that men have of being gainfully employed. Charles & Hughes-Freeland (2013) suggest that power concerning male partner violence implies an emphasis on male domination and control.

Generally, African traditional norms recognize men as domestic heads and bread winners while women procreate and act as domestic caretakers. This theory makes the African man superior because it makes women to depend on the man on sustenance. She is supposed to stay at home and give birth and take care of the children. The woman staying at home and not working has made her depend on the man. Financial dependence wives on husbands make cohabiting and married women to succumb to their husbands' wishes.

4.3.3 Lack of effective communication

With this sub-theme, few of the participants gave their views on communication with their partners. Those who responded said since the relationship between them and their husbands was not cordial how then can they communicate effectively. Studies that have been conducted on this particular theme clearly attest to that. The absence of effective communication between husband and wife significantly increases the likelihood of women becoming a victim of domestic violence (Semalegn & Mensgate, 2015).

Participant 10

Madam paa... how can you communicate effectively with someone who is drunk. If we can sit down and talk like husband and wife we would not be in this place by now. My husband does not listen to advice. He is leading his life and am also leading mine. I have got to know better so I will also know how to stay with him. (Field Data, 2021).

Participant 4

My husband is a pastor who advises people but he does not want people to advise him. He feels he knows better. Although he is a pastor he is also an adulterer. He uses the excuse that he is pastor and that has no money to give me and yet when I cook he eats. We cannot have any good communication unless he changes.

Participant 7

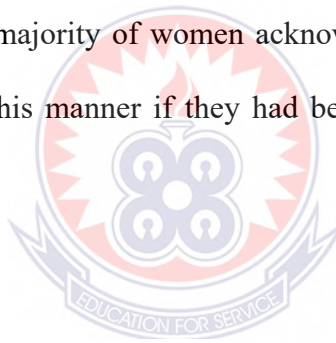
Shiaa!.. how can you have effective communication with someone who forces you to have sex with. Wherever you see him you get annoyed. Because he drinks, he does not look attractive at all. When you were entering this house he was the one you met, how does he look like? Can you sleep with someone like him? He is always smelling like alcohol hmmm.

Effective communication can bring about understanding between married couples. When husbands come home drunk there's no way any good discussion can take place. The data obtained indicates that women who experience domestic violence do not attempt to sit down with their spouses for a talk; instead, they opt to argue with

their partners on a regular basis. This affirms the views of (Semalegn & Mensgate, 2015) that the absence effective communication between husband and wife can significantly increase the likelihood of women becoming a victim of domestic violence.

4.3.4 Religion and marriage

Based on the information gathered from these ladies, the majority of them identified as married, despite not being legally wed. Some people have been together for 13–21 years. They have not been subjected to any traditional rituals or ceremonies. According to Gyekye (1996), religion permeates every part of African life to such an extent that it is difficult to separate it. Marriage and religion are almost inextricably linked. The majority of women acknowledge that their husbands would not be treating them in this manner if they had been legally married before having children.



Participant 3:

This respondents holds the view that she had been married for the past twenty (20) years but no proper marriage rites had been performed on her by her husband.

She said:

I have been staying with this man for the past twenty years and have five children but he has not performed my marriage rites. Anytime I confront him we end up quarrelling over the issue. He has no money to perform the rite but has money to take other women.

Most at times, domestic violence is said to be associated with the power of the perpetrator to control his victim. This is evident in the works of Foucault (1982) as mentioned in (Mikkola, 2018) on the theory of power and control. The theory fits the context of this study because of the mechanism of power described. In Ghana, men

hold a dominating position and these are transformed to the life in the home. Any attempt by wives to disobey their husbands or their partners is perceived to be a sign of arrogance.

This work is in line with the works of Okyere-Manu (2015) when he said” a number of scholars have argued that most women in cohabiting union are at a disadvantage and face a number of challenges. According to the data collected most of the married women have been living with their partner between 5 and 17years without any legal marriage. For these women they see these as the reasons for the abuse they suffer from their partners. Another cause of domestic violence was alcohol consumption by the perpetrators against their victims

4.4 Motivating Factors that make (Women) stay in domestically abused Marriages

Motivation is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors. It is what causes one to act. Motivation provides the reasons why people do the things that they do based on observable behaviours. The participants were asked why they still stay in a domestically abused marriage. They indicated that their children, material gains, social status, helplessness, childlessness. motivating factors that compel them to remain in abusive marriage.

4.4.1 Children factor

Participant 2 said:

It is because of my children. What if I get married to another man and my old husband is better than the new one. Sometimes, he gives me money and I continue to support provide for my children. Some of the people can sacrifice their lives on the grounds of children. Nowadays, men do not really like stepdaughters and sons because some of them are very bad. (Interview Data, 2021)

4.4.2 Childlessness

It came up from the study that a woman had married for 12 years without a child and decided to stay in the marriage. She has estate with her husband. After giving the husband permission to marry another woman, the man became so close to the second wife that he started abusing her verbally, economically, and physically.

Participant 8 shared her experience and said:

hmm after the woman conceived, she virtually does nothing, I do everything in the house simply because I cannot get pregnant. My husband does not even visit me in my room anymore". She said, "I have suffered, and made so many sacrifices that I cannot leave them for another woman to come and enjoy the fruit of my labour (Interview Data, 2021)

Participant 4 shared her views and indicated that the motivating factor that makes cohabiting and women stay in domestically abused marriages. she stated:

There is a saying that suggest that when women give birth with different men are not good. For me, I have already given birth to three children before I met my husband. I don't have a mother and a father so if I decide to divorce my husband of whom I have three making them six children have problems. I do not want to have any children with a different man again so no matter what he does to me, I prefer to stay for the sake my children even though sometimes he says awful things to me in the public. (Interview Data, 2021)

Another participant said that the motivating factors that make cohabiting and married women stay in domestically abused marriages was the fear of raising children in broken homes. She had this to say:

Participant 3

"I am in this marriage because of my children, I do not want my children to become recalcitrant broken homes can make them stubborn so due to poor parental control but I want my children to have a better future. Some time ago I quarrelled with my husband and my eyes were seriously affected. My parent made him to pay some money me and later on he apologized which brought us together. (Interview Data, 2021)

Another participant also indicated that the motivating factors that made her stay in domestically abused marriage was her children

Because of my children I am in this relationship. Sometimes, he disciplines them as I go out to work for money. But I want to divorce him so that I can take care of my children without pressure from him. Most times he accuses me of cheating on him when I go out to work for money". (Participant 5, Interview Data,2021)

Another participant shared her experience and said;

Participant 6

Well, because of the kids not experiencing a broken home especially with the fact that I am an orphan too .I may not get any family to help me cater for the kids if we get separated. My reason for coming back is because of the kids but he repeats his actions. Yes, but my main reasons for being with him still is because of the kids. A family house, there is a room to shelter my kids and I, when I leave it will be difficult to come by accommodation. (Interview Data, 2021)

Marriage is a life-long journey one has to embark upon. It is a journey with a lot of problems. The findings give credence to the to the fact that some cohabiting and married women endure violence which is not an easy task for them. The findings reveal that married women who do not have children have difficulty leaving abusive marriage because of the support they receive from their partners.

4.4.3 Material gains

In African society marriage is priority for women. Women are socialised to believe that without a man's support they are nothing. It is believed that a woman needs a man's help to make it in life. This is evident in the saying that "The hen knows daylight but waits for the cock to crow". Women are expected to rely on men in so many ways. During the interview with the participant 13, she said:

I married when I was 20 years, I stayed with him for 10 years without giving birth to a child. We made a big cocoa farm popularity known as "Dɔ̃ Mayɛ Kyɛ". Because of my inability to give him a child, I permitted him to marry another woman perhaps she might be able to

give him a child. At first, he resisted but I persisted. The day the woman entered the house that was the day my woes started. They both made life miserable for me. He stopped me from entering the cocoa farm. He physically assaulted me and never entered my room to have any contact with me. So, I went into charcoal burning to get some money, one day he came pouring water on the charcoal I was burning. With all these hardships I stayed because I can't leave what I have labored for.

This finding is also evident in the works of Matthews (2004) Salber and Taliaferro (1995). who stated that economic reasons were the most reported reasons why women stay in abusive relationships. In the view of another woman interviewed, women should get something doing before thinking of marriage, other than that the men will take them for granted.

She said;

I think every woman should have something doing before entering into marriage". Participant 9 also said, "The taking care of the kids as a single mother is something I cannot bear alone.(Interview Data,2021)

Another woman also indicated that she has been married for almost fifteen years and has helped the husband to set up a business and even build a big house so she will not leave for another woman to come to enjoy the fruits of her labour she said:

..... hmmm I have suffered a lot from this man. When I married him, he had nothing no woman even liked him, but look at him today. He has gotten money so he thinks he can befriend any woman and treat me like trash for me to leave for his girlfriend to come and enjoy. (Interview data, 2021)

The data show that the reason for the women staying in an abusive marriage is the fact that they also deserve part of the wealth their husbands have acquired. In their opinion, whatever they have gained today is the result of their help they have given them. So, why should they leave when things have gotten better. To these women, they will feel cheated if they leave their marriages. Again, to them, these men want to

leave them for other women to come and enjoy the fruits of their labor. This is critical issue that needs to be considered in the context of the legal system of Ghana. Whatever the outcome, it is better to live than to die in abusive marriage awash with wealth.

Social Status

Another motivating factor that is keeping these cohabiting and married women in their relationship is status in their community. Marriage in the African context is considered as a contract between families (Adomako & Prah, 2009). In this contract of marriage, the responsibility is with the woman to keep their family together (Mitchel, 2011). In Ghanaian culture, especially in the Akan community which is mostly matrilineal the woman needs to keep the union intact. An example of this is a saying that “for any marriage to succeed, one partner should be a fool” the fool has to be the woman most of the time. So, in this regard even if the woman is suffering, she has to stay with her family and keep the family going. From the data collected, some of the women are of the view that women who are not married are considered worthless.

Participant 10 stated that:

“In this community, if people get to know that you are not married, they just propose to you or just have sex with you,” (Interview Data, 2021)

Married women are highly respected in the Zongo community that is why there are always marriage ceremonies going on every Sunday in this community. We adore women who are married. If you are not married, some even see you as someone who has bad character that is why you are not married (Interview Data, 2021).

From this finding, it is clear that societal norms show what makes a woman accepted in society even if she is suffering, has to stay in her abusive marriage. Participant were of the view that women are more respected when they are married.

They prefer staying with their husbands as they endure pain of abusive marriage until they die. Participant 1 says she is still in the marriage because she is hoping that with prayers the husband can change his ways to be a better person. This is because, if he gets money, he gives all his money to her to keep for him to be used whenever the needs arise.

Helplessness of women

During this study one issue that came to light was the helplessness of women as a result they choose to stay in such relationships because they do not have any place to go. This is also linked to theory of helplessness. This is evident in the work of Walker (1979) who purposed that women stay in abusive relationships because when the series of abusive occur and help seems to be far, they eventually lose hope and decide to stay in the relationship because they do not have anywhere to go. During the interview, Participant 2 said:

Madam I'm an orphan and if I decide to leave, where do I take all these children to. I once decided to leave when my husband physically assaulted me. my grandmother brought me back because she said I cannot stay with her with all these children.

Participant 9 said:

I have complained about these issue to my father's family. They called my husband and the whole family to settle the matter. My husband promised them that he wouldn't do that again but he continues to engage in extra marital affairs and verbally assaults me. I again complained to my mother. My mother and her sister came to talk to him but he continues to do whatever he is doing. I reported him to some elders in my community but he still does it. They have advised me to ignore him and take care of the marriage. What is worse is that whenever I complain he say "are you the only one with marital problems that you complain to everyone as if you are a child" I have taken it as my fate and trust in God that he will change one day.

It is obvious that women who suffer abuse in their marriage at certain point become helpless and decide to stay because it is as if they have exhausted every available means to solve the problem. Most of the women interviewed at a point wished they could leave and some even made attempts to leave but to them they do not have support to be independent.

4.5 Effects of Domestic Violence on Married Women in Atwima Kwanwoma

The effect of domestic violence in Atwima Kwanwoma was determined by the cohabiting and married women. The participants indicated that domestic violence has diverse effects. They revealed that it affects their health and wellbeing and effects on education if their children. The participant indicated that domestic violence affects the performance of children.

4.5.1 Health effects

Participants were asked to speak about the effects of domestic violence in their relationship or marriages. Various effects were given by the married women. Some of the participants revealed that domestic violence makes one become old and prone to health challenges including high blood pressure.

A married woman shared her experience as

Madam, look at me, I am forty-four years but I look like someone who is sixty years. This is due to the problem in my marriage. Recently, I went to the hospital and I was told that I have blood pressure so I should frequently go the hospital for treatment.. Hmmm, this man will kill me ooh. I am happy you are doing this work, you have to let the government do something about it because we the women in Atwima Kwanwoma District are suffering.(Interview Data,2021)

Participant 11 stated:

“I have severe pain and headache, which used not to be so, but since my husband started misbehaving.”(Interview Data, 2021)

Participant 12 is also of the view that the effect of domestic violence in marriage can make a woman to be under pressure which can lead to madness she said.

Another participant affirmed that domestic violence affects the health of women.

She share her experience and said:

He hurt my eye during a fight and sometimes I feel some pains all over my body which is unbearable .I recently went to the hospital and was diagnosed high blood pressure. I had High Blood Pressure due to this marriage issue. It is my prayer that God will touch someone's heart to help me to take care of my children so that in the future they will also help me. I am going to show you a woman whose husband is violating her rights, she is always talking even if you don't talk to him. I nearly got to that stage thanks to God I didn't get to her stage. (Interview Data, 2021)

Another participant also said she recently had a miscarriage because of domestic violence. She said her husband ones hit her when she was pregnant and she lost the baby due to that. She said she bled a lot and the husband got scared that she was going to die. According to a WHO (2017) report, 35% of women globally have been victims of domestic violence. This high prevalence suggests that domestic violence continues to be a social and public health problem in African countries. Some of the cohabiting and women involved in the study did showed signs of being abused of physically. One had a swollen forehead which she said was a result of one of the fights with her husband. One also showed pictures of some physical injuries she suffered in the hands of her husband in one of their fights. One also showed a scar she got as result of the metal the husband used to hit her in one of their fights. These findings gives credence to the fact that domestic violence has affected a lot of women but these cases go unreported and are normally dealt with at the family level. One finds it difficult to get accurate statistics on domestic violence. The statistics indicate

that violence against women by their male partners is high with physical violence affecting about 10% to 69% (Adgan & Agbenfie, 2016).

A married woman has this to say:

Before I married him, I was a healthy person but after two years of marriage I started suffering pains frequently. I complain to him about the way he treats me. Later I was admitted to the hospital and I was diagnosed with diabetes. Less than a week after I was discharged from the hospital, he humiliated me in the presence of his mother to a point the mother lost hope in me. This time, I wanted a divorce so I went to see my grandpa since he is the only one I have and talked to him about but he advised me to be patient with him. (Interview Data, 2021)

The health consequences of violence can be immediate and acute, long-lasting and chronic, and/or fatal. Research consistently finds that the more severe the abuse, the greater its impact on women's physical and mental health. In addition, the negative health consequences can persist long after the abuse has stopped. The consequences of violence tend to be more severe with women than men.

Women are far more likely than men to experience physical injury as a result of physical violence by intimate partners. In the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence, between 19% (Ethiopia) and 55% (Peru) of women who had ever experienced physical violence by their intimate partner reported being injured as a result.

In most settings, women who have experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner at any time after age 15 are significantly more likely than other women to report overall poor health, chronic pain, memory loss, and problems walking and carrying out daily activities. Studies have also found that women with a history of abuse are more likely than other women to report a range of chronic health problems such as headaches, chronic pelvic pain, back pain, abdominal pain, irritable bowel syndrome, and gastrointestinal disorders.

Abortion/unsafe abortion

Girls and women who become pregnant as a result of sexual abuse often terminate their pregnancy, whether or not safe abortion is available. Intimate partner violence, rape by non-partners, and transactional sex are all associated with higher rates of termination of pregnancy. For example, the WHO multi-country study found that, in nearly all settings, women who had experienced physical or sexual violence by an intimate partner also reported significantly higher rates of induced abortion than other women. For example, in Ghana, where abortion is often unsafe, young women who had experienced transactional or sexual abuse were significantly more likely than other women reported ever having an abortion. One participant shared her story and said her husband forced and had sex with her after six weeks of delivery.

She became pregnant again and this is what she had to say:

When I became pregnant he sensed that I was pregnant he told me find a way to deal with that thing as he cannot feed another mouth and because I also did not have money to get rid of it. I took some herbal concoction that made me nearly lose my life. (Participant 7, Interview Data, 2021)

4.5.2 Effects on children

Another effect that came up, was the effect on children. The participants indicated that some husband do not give money for the upkeep of their households. Some of the participants use their money to take care of the children especially their education. One participant said “because of this lack of concern from my husband one of my sons has become a truant and became a mate (bus conductor). This youngster does not understand why he should attend a school where no one can meet his educational demands, given that he occasionally earns between C30.00 and C50.00 each day. My child has high academic standing and might be a valuable asset to the nation. A large number of kids who witness domestic violence also experience

physical abuse. Children who witness domestic violence or are victims of abuse themselves are at serious risk for long-term physical and mental health problems. Children who witness violence between parents may also be at greater risk of being violent in their future relationships.

Participant 4...stated If you are a parent who is experiencing abuse, it can be difficult to know how to protect your child. (Interview, Data, 2021)

Children in homes where one parent is abused may feel frightened and anxious. They may always be on guard, wondering when the next violent event will happen. This can cause them to react in different ways, depending on their age: show signs of terror, such as stuttering or hiding; and show signs of severe separation anxiety.

Children in school-going age range may feel guilty about the abuse and blame themselves for it. Domestic violence and abuse hurt children's self-esteem. They may not participate in school activities or get good grades, have fewer friends than others, and get into trouble more often. They also may have a lot of headaches and stomach aches. Participant 6 indicated ...

Sometimes with the little money left on him, he would use it to stake lotto instead of dividing it into two for the kids to get something to eat, he squanders everything on staking of lotto. (Interview Data, 2021)

Misunderstanding and lack of peace between us have affected the academics of the children because it has become a burden on me alone of which one of them who wrote the just-ended BECE could not continue with her schooling since there is no money to care for her needs such provisions and others. The children have to stop schooling due to poor performance and truancy since there is no money. I am not well and I am not able to walk for a long distance. I'm not able to carry a lot of the maize to the market to sell for money (Interview Data, 2021)

Children are known to be very emotional and lack of care affects them in school. Carrel and Hoekstra (2010) have shown that children who suffer social and emotional problems are related to the exposure of domestic violence also experience lower self- esteem. This evident in the power and control model. The power exerted by men does not affects women but children of school-going age. Miller (2003) is of the view that traditionally, power is unidirectional that is, it is exerted from above against people's interest. These include children of school- going age .This why it is important for children to be given the needed attention they need .Studies of child abuse and neglect generally find that the risk of maltreatment is attenuated when caregivers have strong support.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the summary of the main finding, conclusions, and recommendations. It also core the limitations of the study and areas for further studies.

5.1 Summary

This study looked into the causes of domestic violence and the reasons why some married and cohabiting women in the Ashanti Region's Atwima Kwanwoma District choose to stay in their marriages in spite of abuse at the hands of their partners. Four main goals were identified for the study: first, to determine what domestic violence means to cohabiting and married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District of the Ashanti Region; second, to investigate the reasons behind domestic violence against these women; third, to identify the driving forces behind women's decision to remain in abusive marriages; and, finally, to evaluate the impact of domestic violence on these women. Fifteen ladies made up the sample size for this research. The study used snowball technique to select the fifteen participants for study. The research tool used by the study was interview guide. The data was analysed thematically. From the study, it emerged that some of the women perceived that domestic violence as any physical, emotional, psychological, sexual and financial abuse. They explain it as physical abuse, which is engaging in fighting or being beaten by the husband. Emotional abuse involving insults or using word against victims. Financial abuse was seen as being denied access to money they have worked for and not giving money to their wives for home keeping. The study found that most

of the participants admitted that alcohol consumption by their husbands influenced them to be abusive. Another factor of domestic violence was the dependence of victims on their perpetrators. The fact that these women were not economically independent on their own and relied on their husbands to make ends meet makes them vulnerable to be abused by their husbands. The men see themselves as masters of the home. Most of the misunderstandings experienced by married or cohabiting women in the Atwima Kwawoma District are lack of effective communication between husband and wife. Religion was another factor that made these women experience violence.

The study revealed that cohabiting and married women in the Atwima Kwawoma District stay in this abusive relationship due to many factors. The factors include the children factor, childlessness, social status, marital gains, helplessness of the women and the vulnerability of these women.

Most of the women who were interviewed did not want to leave their children to be raised by other people except themselves. Some of them did not want to have children with different fathers neither do they want their children to grow up not having the love of a father. Marital gains also motivated some of the women to stay in their marriages all these years. The reasons given by the cohabiting and married women are that, they have helped their husbands over the years to make big projects, of which they were not prepared to leave, to it for other women to enjoy the fruit of their labour. It was also revealed that social status was what made some of the cohabiting and married women stay in abusive relationship. They find themselves in a society where a woman who is not married is called by all sorts of names.

The findings from the study collected shows that the effects were truancy on the part of the children especially school-age children unsafe pregnancy and abortion,

fear, isolation and depression. The health effects also included chronic pains, headache and abdominal pains.

5.2 Conclusions

The study concluded that the cohabiting and married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District had different perspectives of what constitute domestic violence. Generally, the perception was that domestic violence included physical, sexual, emotional and financial abuse. The financial dependent cohabiting and married women regularly experience domestic violence from their husbands.

The causes of domestic abuse in the Atwima Kwanwoma District were alcohol abuse, lack of effective communication, women dependence on their husbands for financial supports and religion.

Again, the motivating factor that made married women in the Atwima Kwanwoma District stay in their abusive marriage were for the sake of their children, childlessness, social status, marital gains, helplessness of women and the vulnerability of the women. Domestic violence was seen as a normal occurrence within marital homes.

The effects of domestic violence in abusive relationships included truancy of children, depression, headaches, isolation and lack of confidence on the affected victims.

5.3 Recommendations

- (i) It is recommended that, the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE), the local council of chiefs, and non-governmental organizations should intensify their campaign against domestic violence. This will go a long way to minimize the cases of domestic violence against women children.
- (ii) The study recommends that women should be educated to be aware of the Domestic Violence Victim Support Unit (DOVVSU). This will enable them to report domestic violence to DOVVSU officials for appropriate intervention. The Atwima Kwanwoma District Assembly should sensitize people on, domestic abuse. The government should make every effort to establish DOVVSU units in the Atwima Kwanwoma towns. From the study, the rate at which women were being abused is alarming, therefore; the presence of the unit in the district will serve as a warning sign to men who engaged in abusing women. The unit can also increase public education and sensitization on the effect of domestic violence and the need to refrain from such acts. Their presence alone is not enough to achieve results but they should learn to mobilize women's groups and offer public education to them especially on their rights and how to channel their grievances to the appropriate authorities in cases of abuse. This will go a long way to help reduce the incidents of domestic violence against women.
- (iii) Health practitioners should develop and implement strategies for consciousness-raising regarding DV intervention so that women who suffer abuse can seek health assistance.
- (iv) In order to lessen the degree of reliance that married and cohabiting women have on their spouses, the Atwima Kwanwoma District Assembly may also

work with organizations such as MASLOC to provide financial support to women in the district so they may participate in other income-generating activities.

5.4 Limitation of the study

Even though the study was generally successful, there were other challenges encountered during the study.

The first challenge has to do with the unwillingness of most respondents to respond to the questionnaires for lack of time due to the tight schedules. Due to the sensitivity of domestic violence, most of the respondents were not willing to share their side of the issues being discussed.

Despite the evidence of the few challenges encountered, users or beneficiaries of this research material are assured that the challenges did not in any way compromise the validity and the reliability of the outcome of this work.

5.5 Areas for Further Studies

Further research can be carried out in other areas of the Atwima Kwanwoma district to monitor the rates of violence and suggest the best solutions to resolve it. Another area of further studies in connection with my work will be violence against alleged witchcraft and trauma their families go through in their various communities.

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APPENDIX

Interview Guide for Participants

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES

This interview guide is designed to gather information for research at the university of Education, Winneba. The interest of the researcher is to explore domestic violence against women: the perspectives of cohabiting and marriage women on marriage sustainability in Atwima Kwanwoma District in Ashanti Region.

I would be grateful if you open-up appropriately and frankly answer to the equations/statements. This research is purely for academic purposes and your responses will be treated with utmost confidentiality. In this regard, your name or any form of identification is not needed.

Demographic characteristics of respondents

1. Age of participant
2. Marital status
3. Occupation
4. Educational level
5. Number of years married
6. Number of children

INTERVIEW GUIDE

7. What is domestic violence?
8. Do you problem/issues with your husband?
9. In your opinion, what causes domestic violence?

10. What forms of violence have you suffered from
11. When your husband abuses you, do you report to the police?
12. Why do you still stay with your husband/partner though he abuses you?
13. What are the effects of domestic violence?
14. Have you experienced any effects from domestic violence?

