

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AND INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN SELECTED STATES OF THE NIGER DELTA REGION OF NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of socio-economic factors on intimate partner violence (IPV) in selected states of the Niger Delta of Nigeria. As an empirical study, the predictor variable: socio-economic factors were operationally measured using two dimensions: household income and unemployment; while the criterion variable was examined directly through its manifest variables. A total of 354 married and divorced participants were drawn from the target states using appropriate sampling methods. The instruments used for data collection was the structured questionnaire and the survey was premised on the quantitative methodology. All the copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved and analysed. The Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was used to test the two hypotheses for the study. The findings revealed significant relationship in both instances implying that socio-economic factors was strongly linked to intimate partner violence (IPV) in the selected states. Based on these findings we concluded that socio-economic factors such as income and educational level have a significant effect on intimate partner violence as manifested in physical, emotional, economic and sexual abuse. It is recommended that intimate partner relationship should be restricted to only those with high socio-economic factors.

Keywords: household income, unemployment, socio-economic, intimate partner violence (IPV).

INTRODUCTION

A critical look into other scholarly literature on violence against women shows that an extensive study has been done evaluating the link between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence (Igbokwe, 2013, Matseke et al, 2012, Ashimolowo and Otufale, 2012, Adekeye et al, 2011). However, the focus of these studies typically centred on the narrow definition of domestic violence and gender based violence which is socially accepted in African societies (Abayomi, 2014, UNICEF, 2000). Thus, only very few studies ascertained the connection that exist between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence. Besides, most of the studies conducted were in developed and developing countries excluding Nigeria and specifically the Niger Delta (Uwayo, 2014, Semghegn et al, 2013, Gonzales – Brenes 2004). However, some of these studies showed contradictory evidences regarding the link between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence.

Between 1992 and 1995, three global documents were made public specifically addressing states obligations under International Human Rights Laws to prevent and respond to violence against women. Such documents are: Convention on the Elimination of violence against women (CEDAW) 1992, The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against women, 1993 Beijing Platform Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) of 1995. The Beijing Platform which is also related to CEDAW requested that states parties to CEDAW submit information on action taken in relation to the twelve critical areas of concern to BPFA, including Violence against Women VAW in their report to CEDAW (<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/Platform>). Nigeria being a signatory to CEDAW and having domesticated the African Charter to read Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act (VAPP) in 2015, accepted to ensure legislation on gender based violence, provide adequate protection to all women and respect for their integrity and dignity, agreeing to take all legal and other measures to provide effective protection of women against gender based violence, including effective legal measures, panel actions, civil remedies and compensations to protect women against all forms of violence (Onyemelukwe, 2016, UN, 2010).

In spite of the said conventions and treaties, globally, 10-69% of women have been abused by their intimate partners, 1000-1600 die due to partner abuse, one out of three women suffer physical abuse, 15-59% suffer physical and sexual violence while 7-68% suffer psychological/emotional violence and 7% experienced economic violence from their intimate partners (UNFPA, 2013, Abayomi, 2014). In Nigeria, studies show that the prevalent rate range from 3% in the North West and South West to 12% in South East and 3% in the North West and South West to 12% in South East and 13% in South- South. This trend confirms earlier studies in Nigeria which put South West prevalence data at 21%, West, 31% and Niger Delta having the highest prevalence rate with Edo,79%, Imo, 79%, Cross River, 65%, Akwa Ibom,59% and Bayelsa, 56.1% (Antai &Antai, 2009).The implication of this is that intimate partner violence is more pronounce in the Niger Delta region.

Causes of violence against women ranges from cultural, economic, legal, societal and community to individual perceptive. The root cause of violence against women arose from patriarchy. “A system of social structure and practices in which men dominates, oppressed and exploit women”. The most consistent and dangerous trend is the health implications associated with violence against women. Studies have consistently identified the following health implications: unwanted pregnancies, urinary tract infections, emotional and behavioural problems, disability, stress, sexual dysfunction, elevated blood pressure, depression etc. (Alokan, 2013). In spite of all the conventions and treaties, violence against

women still persists, thus questioning the goal/objectives of CEDAW, the Beijing Platform and the VAPP.

However, considerable literature on domestic violence and its health implication has been documented (Osuorah, 2012, Abasiubong, 2010). Thus, only very few studies specifically examined the link between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence.

This study therefore examines the relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. The study seeks to narrow the existing literature gap in the study area as the work nature of intimate partner violence especially with reference to socio-economic factors such as household income and unemployment.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence in selected states in the Niger Delta, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are put forward to give a guide to the study.

- i. What is the relationship between household income and intimate partner violence?
- ii. What is the relationship between unemployment and intimate partner violence?

Research Hypotheses

This research is guided by the following hypotheses:

Ho₁: Low household income significantly contributes to intimate partner violence.

Ho₂: Unemployment significantly contributes to intimate partner violence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)

WHO (2013) revealed that the prevalence of IPV was found in Africa, Eastern Mediterranean and South East Asia region with 37% reported to have experience physical and/or sexual intimate partner violence. The same report showed that America has the next highest prevalence with 30% of women having experienced abuses by their intimate partner. The lowest came from the high income region with 23% in European and 25% in Western Pacific Regions. By age group, it fell under age 19 years.

In Nigeria, nearly three (3) in ten (10) Nigerian women have experienced physical violence at age fifteen, one (1) in four (4) married women experience physical, sexual or emotional abuse by their husbands or partners (IRB, 2015). Moreso, Project Alert, on average receives eight (8) cases of domestic violence per week, 50% are settled with counselling, 25% settled by family members, and the remaining 25% are situations of separation or divorce (IRB, 2015).

Household Income and Intimate Partner Violence.

A cross sectional survey design has been adopted in this study on the relationship between household income and intimate partner violence in Nigeria, Bangladesh, India, Ethiopia, Zimbabwe and Pakistan (Chandrasekaran et al, 2011, Semaghegn et al, 2013, Balogun and Akinola-John 2014, Bamimuyi and Odimegu 2014). Findings of these studies indicated positive and negative association between household income and intimate partner violence (Chandrasekaran et al, 2011, Hove and Gwazane, 2011). These authors argued that wealth has an association with intimate partner violence, meaning that the richer the couples, the lesser intimate partner abuse and women with lower income experience violence more than women with higher income.

On the contrary, household income does not in any way reduce intimate partner violence (Bamimuyi and Odimegu, 2014). In six of the countries surveyed, experience of violence is significantly higher among women from rich households than those from the poor and middle household; in Kenya and Zimbabwe, women from poor household experience violence more than those from the rich households. In Nigeria and in Cameroun, women from the middle class suffer abuse from their partner and husbands than those from the poor and rich households. With these variations, household poverty, wealth, may not give a substantive explanation that household poverty facilitates intimate partner violence (Bamimuyi and Odimegu 2014).

Studies had shown a strong relationship between financial status of women and intimate partner violence, these studies indicated that increase in financial status of a family, reduces intimate abuse. It further showed that as the ratio of household income increases, partner abuse reduces. Bates M. L, Schuler R. S, Islam F and Islamk (2004) carried out quantitative and qualitative study in Bangladesh to examine women's social and economic positions and violence in marriages. The qualitative findings showed that women with more education and income did not experience violence unlike women with poor educational income status. The research has several weakness, the rural Bangladesh was not randomly selected therefore generalizing the findings is limited, again the study used a cross-sectional study design, no cause and effect relationship could be established. In the same study area Toufique and Razzaque (2007) carried out a survey of households to explore the determinants of domestic violence against women as well as its implications for the resources allocated to women. The findings revealed that the higher the education of women and that of their husbands and better socio-economic status of households the lower the rate of domestic violence.

Employment and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV).

Researches using a cross-sectional study design and whose aim is to evaluate the relationship between employment and intimate partner's violence showed that there is a positive relationship between employment and intimate partner violence (Etuk et al, 2012, Heath, 2012, Onuoha et al, 2014). Etuk et al. (2014), in his study in Cross River State, a State in Niger Delta Region, Nigeria, to examine the link between employment and intimate partner violence indicated that educational and occupational status of the participants were possible factors responsible for intimate partner violence in the region. Similar studies in other part of the world also showed a positive relationship between employment and intimate partner violence.

However, despite the fact that most studies indicated a positive relationship between employment and intimate partner violence, there are contrary opinions to these results. This

school of thought argued that some men see women that engage in gainful employment as a threat to male traditional dominance role; hence a woman employment can increase the risk of violence (Aizer, 2010).

Socio-Economic Variables and Intimate Partner Violence.

Studies in Africa (Kenya, Malawi, Ethiopia, Nigeria and South Africa) have found intimate partner violence higher in women and also showed that women have higher odds of reporting physical, sexual, emotional /psychological and economic abuses. Uwayo, 2014; Antai and Antai 2009; Adekeye, 2011; Ashimolowo and Otufale, 2012 and Igbokwe (2013), in their work to evaluate the relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence using cross-sectional study design; these studies established relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence in their respective studies. They asserted that poverty is the major cause of intimate partner violence especially in eastern part of Africa. The studies also revealed that ownership and control of property with strong socio-cultural factors contribute to intimate partner violence. Among the identified major forms of violence perpetrated against women include physical, sexual and economic violence. Women suffer economic deprivation, forced sexual transactions and they are also denied entry into formal business transactions. Recent finding also indicate a positive relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence. This study show that women with higher/formal education are less likely to agree with a husband beating his wife if she goes out without his consent, neglect the children, refuses sex or burnt the food. However, women with formal education are less likely to experience violence.

Dalal et al, (2007) found out in their studies in Kenya that women with only primary six or secondary education experience violence in all forms than those with post-secondary education. Also women with equal or higher level of education than their partners are more likely to experience abuse. In addition women with some degree of autonomy over health issues are also at risk of intimate partner violence when compared to women with no health related issue. Moreso, women with higher occupational status than their partner are able to contribute more economically to the household upkeep, invariably reducing economic stress that leads to intimate partner violence. Similarly, women with higher occupational status learn to be submissive in the context of social-cultural insecurity and tolerate men's dominance in the home.

While most investigations are in agreement that there is an association between socioeconomic factors and intimate partner violence, some studies showed contrary outcome. Pambe et al (2013) argued that women who work for pay and women who have personal earnings face high risk of marital violence than women who do not work. Again, some studies indicated that poverty is a strong predictor of intimate partner violence; other showed that poverty is an insignificant factor (Pambe et al, 2013). In Ghana qualitative and quantitative studies neither revealed that education, nor paid employment prevent women from intimate partner violence. However, since these studies by Pambe et al was conducted in developed countries, using single data collection method (Questionnaire), the result cannot be generalized to developing countries, thus the need for further research on socioeconomic factors and its relationship to intimate partner violence in different part of the world, specifically in developing regions like Nigeria to assess in details the level of relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence.

METHODS

Research Design

This study adopts a cross-sectional survey design. The research design comprised of the quantitative approach in gaining insight of the essence of the issues under investigation. Data for the study was generated through the administration of structured questionnaire.

Population of the study

The population of this research consists of a total number of (4267) married men and women, as well as divorced men and women (as sourced from the marriage registry as at 2010) from the four (4) selected states in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria

Sample and sampling technique

The sample size for the study was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan 1970 sample size table. A population of (4267) with a benchmark sample size of 354. Therefore 354 respondents selected using the simple random sampling method comprised the sample size and representative portion for this study.

Variables

The study examines the distribution and relationship between two main variables namely: socio-economic factors (predictor) and intimate partner violence (criterion). Socio-economic factors are further examined based on two dimensions: household income and unemployment. Each variable is scaled on a 4 – point Likert scale structured as follows: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

Results and Discussions

The result of the analysis on the variables (socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence) is presented in this section. Analysis is based on quantitative tools and variable distributions are assessed using frequencies, central tendencies and standard deviations. Presented in table 1 below is the result for the reliability analysis on the instruments for each variable examined

Table 1: Reliability results

Variables	No. of Items	Alpha Coefficient
Intimate Partner Violence	4	.760
Household income	5	.711
Unemployment	4	.723

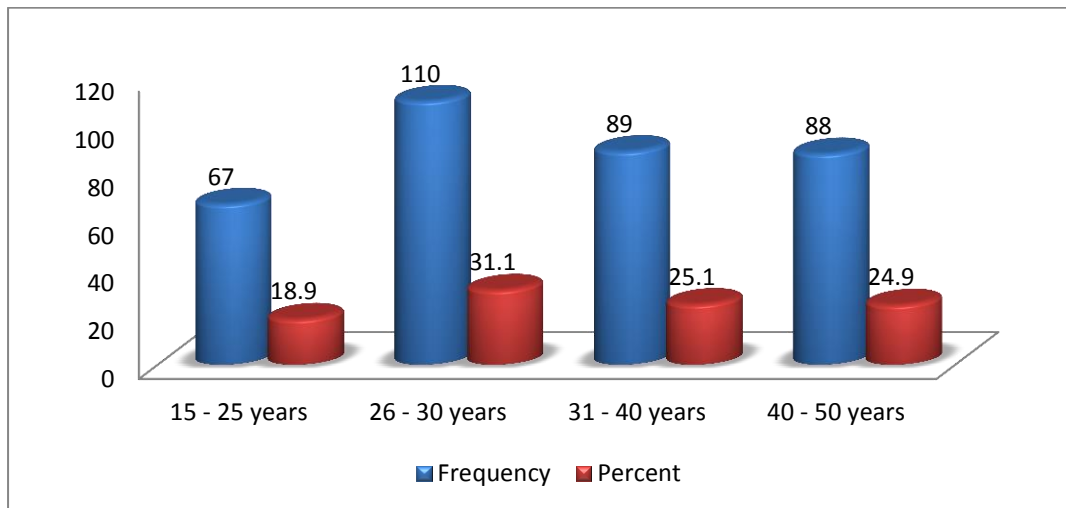
DATA PRESENTATION

The results obtained from the analysis of the data for the study are as seen below, using frequency and percentage charts.

The distribution for the respondents based on their age is presented in figure 1. The chart reveals that most of the respondents fall within the age category of 26 – 30 years (31%); followed by the frequency for respondents who fall within the age category of 31 – 40 years

(25%); then the frequency for respondents who fall within the age category of 40 – 50 years (25%), while the frequency for respondents within the category of 15 – 25 years accounts for 19%.

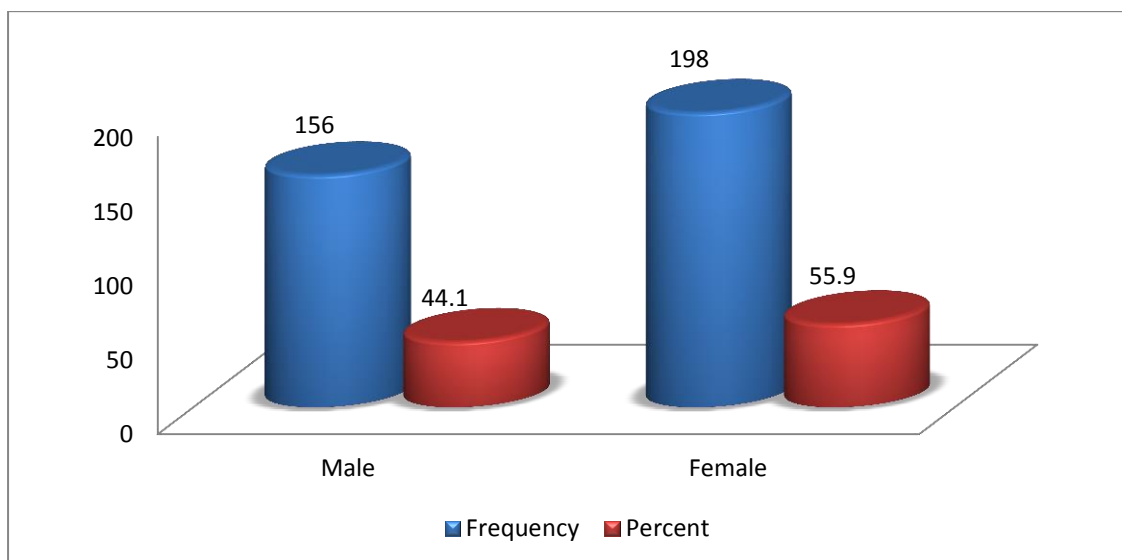
Figure 1: Age Distribution of Respondents



Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

The distribution of the respondents based on their gender as presented in figure 2 reveals that a higher proportion of the respondents are female accounting 56% while the frequency for the male participants account for only 44%.

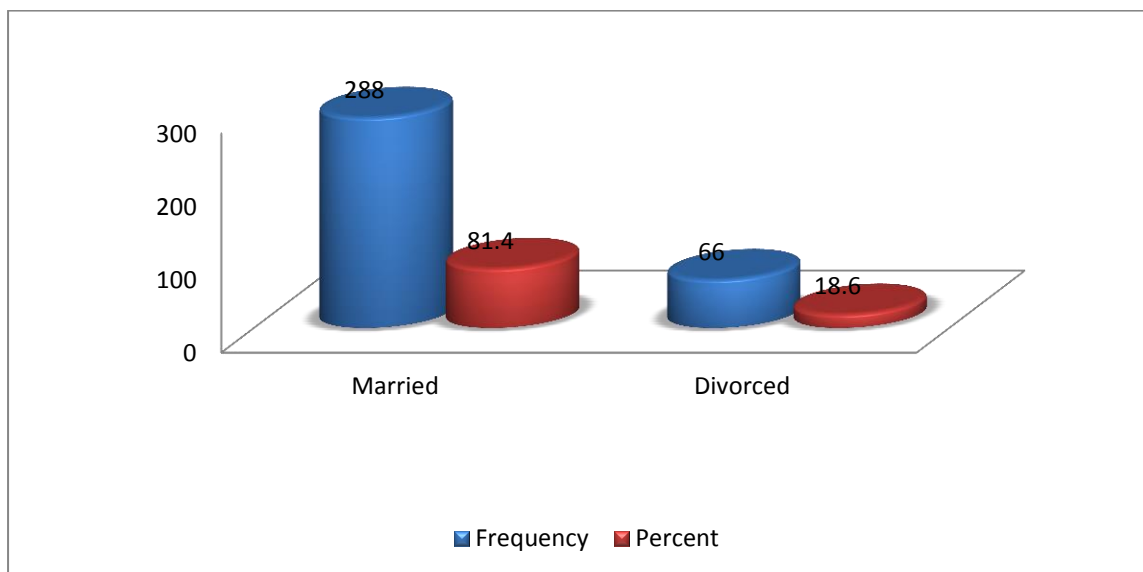
Figure 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents



Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

Figure 3 below illustrates the distribution for the respondents based on their marital status. The data reveals that most of the participants are married (81%) while the frequency for participants who are divorced is 19%.

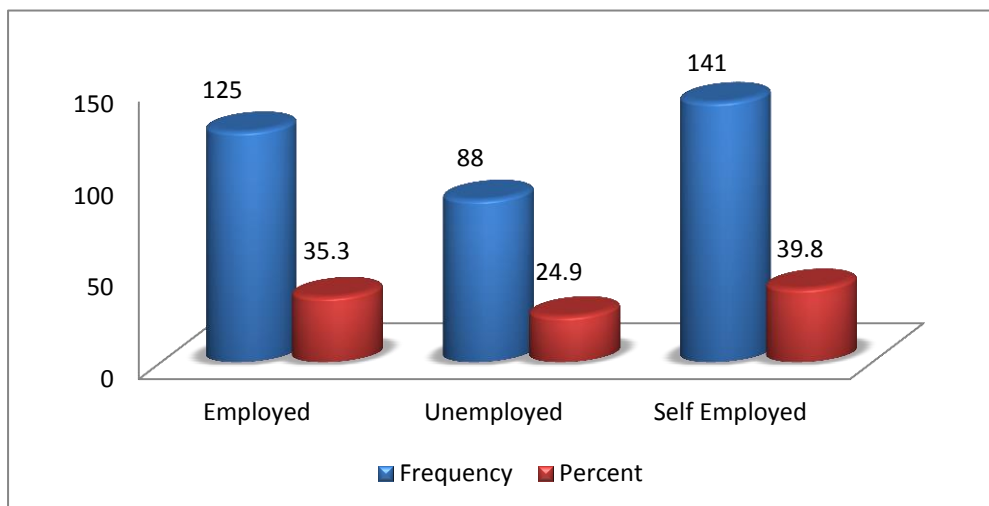
Figure 3: Marital status of the Respondent



Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

Figure 4 above illustrates the analysis for the distribution of the respondents based on their employment status. The results reveal that most of the respondents fall into the self-employed category (40%) followed by the frequency for respondents in the employed category (35%) and frequency for the unemployed respondents (25%).

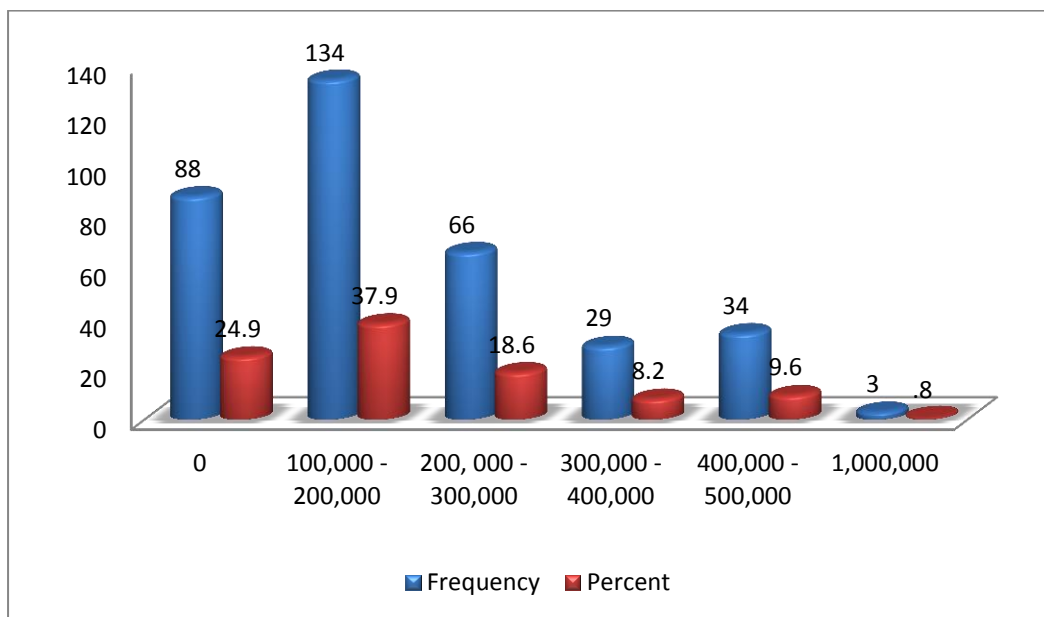
Figure 4: Employment Distribution of Respondents



Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

The distribution of income of the respondents as illustrated in figure 5 reveals that most of the respondents as categorized by the study, earn between 100,000 – 200,000 (38%); followed by those that earn between zero and 90,000 (25%); followed by the frequency for those who earn between 200,000 – 300,000 (19%); then the frequency for those who earn between 400,000 – 500,000 (10%); while the frequency for those who earn between 300,000 – 400,000 (8%) and then the frequency for those who earn 1,000,000 and above (1%).

Figure 5: Income Distribution of Respondents

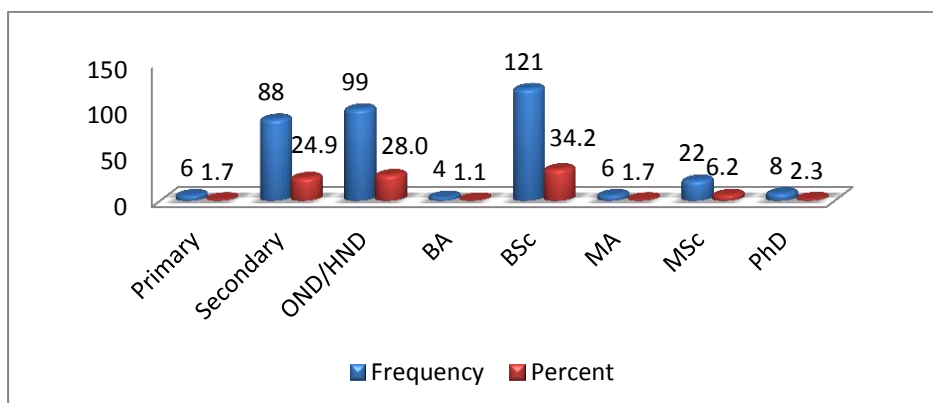


Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

The distribution for the qualification of the respondents as depicted in figure 6 reveals that a majority of the respondents have obtained B.Sc degrees (34%); followed by the frequency for respondents that have obtained OND/HND certificates (28%); frequency for respondents who have obtained secondary school certifications (25%); respondents who have obtained MSc degrees (6%), category for Ph.D (2%), the category for MA and First school leaving certifications (2%) while the frequency for the BA degree (1%).

Figure 7 shows the measures for the criterion variable which is intimate partner violence. The variable is also operationalized using four measures namely: physical violence, sexual violence, economic violence and emotional violence. Each measure is further examined based on corresponding manifest variables or indicators.

Figure 6: Qualification of Respondents



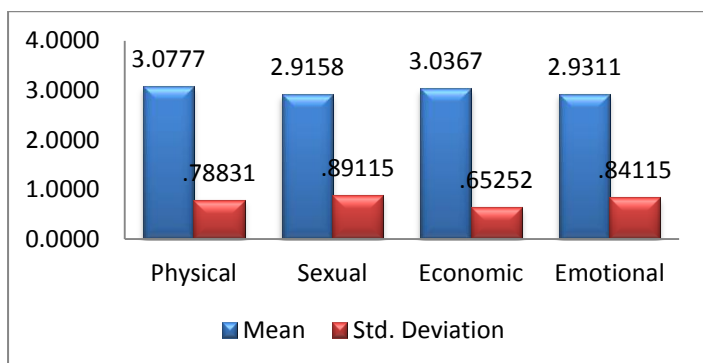
Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

The results of the analysis reveal that all four measures of intimate partner violence (physical, sexual, economic and emotional) have significant implications for the respondents. The

evidence reveals substantial manifestations of the variables based on their mean coefficients where y_1 (physical violence = 3.0777); y_2 (sexual violence = 2.9158); y_3 (economic violence = 3.0367) and y_4 (emotional violence = 2.9311). The data supports evidence of the substantial manifestations of all four variables as experienced or observed by the respondents.

Presented in figure 8 is the summary distribution and central tendencies for the main subject matter constructs: socio- economic factors and intimate partner violence. Each variable distribution is based on the summarized (mean) values of their respective dimensions as well as measures and serves to illustrate the average positions of the respondents as regards the constructs.

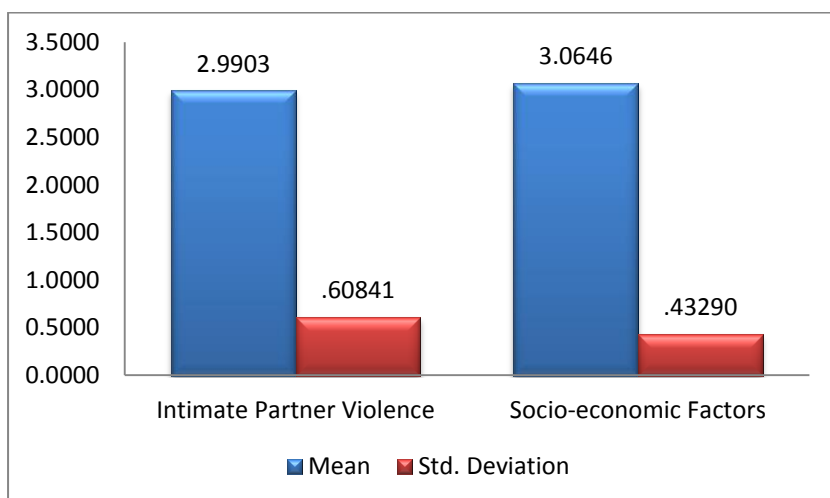
Figure 7 Distributions for intimate partner violence measures



Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

The study (figure 8) indicates that both variables are significantly manifested as experienced and observed by the respondents in the study area. The result of the analysis supports evidence for the distribution of both variables as being substantial based on the results of their central tendencies where Y (intimate partner violence = 2.9903) and X (socio-economic factors = 3.0646). Thus both criterion and predictor variables, within the time frame covered by the study, can be considered as comprising as the life experiences and observations of the respondents included in the study.

Figure 8 Indicating summary distributions for the variables of the study



Source: Author's Fieldwork (2016)

Hypotheses Testing

Two hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Coefficient at 95% confidence interval implying 0.05 error chance. The tests assessed the significance of the relationships between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence (physical, sexual, economic and emotional violence). The decision rule for the acceptance or rejection of the hypothetical statements is based on a P value criterion where the tests are considered as one-tailed. Therefore where $P > 0.05$ the hypothesis of significant influence or association is rejected, but where $P < 0.05$ the hypothesis of significant influence or association is accepted. Presented in table 2 is the result for the test on hypothesis one:

H₀₁: Low household income significantly contributes to intimate partner violence

H₀₂: Unemployment significantly contributes to intimate partner violence

Table 2: Household income and Intimate Partner Violence

			Household	Unemployment
		Correlation Coefficient	.721**	.563**
Spearman's rho	Intimate	Sig. (1-tailed)	.000	.000
		N	354	354

Source: Authors Fieldwork (2016)

Household income and intimate partner violence

The quantitative result indicates that there is a significant relationship between household income and intimate partner violence, given the evidence shown by the correlation coefficients. This finding is in line with the assertions put forward by previous researches (Aizer, 2010; Albanisi & Sahin, 2013; Pollack, 2004) which link similar factors such as pay, compensation, wages and nature of job to the stability of intimate relationships. The finding indicates that household income holds substantial implications for intimate partner violence, therefore, household income can be considered as contributing to intimate partner violence. Based on the results (where $P = 0.000$ and $Rho = .721$), the hypothesis is accepted

Unemployment and intimate partner violence

The quantitative analysis on the relationship between unemployment and intimate partner violence indicates that at a confidence level of 95% and a significance level of 0.05, there is a relationship between both variables. The data indicates that there is a positive association where increased rates of unemployment would most likely result in higher cases or incidences of intimate partner violence. The findings further reiterate the argument put forward by previous researches (Aizer, 2010; Albanisi & Sahin, 2013) about the relationship between unemployment and intimate partner violence. The evidence provided by this study further corroborates and affirms the assertions of Whitaker and Lutzker (2009) that unemployment can be credited for both crime and domestic violence. Aizer (2010) argued that the idleness accorded by unemployment can be emotionally devastating with most men constantly feeling the need to re-assert themselves and their positions as head of the family, unfortunately in some cases, through violence and aggression. Based on the observed correlation (where $P = 0.000$ and $Rho = .721$) between the variables, the hypothesis is accepted.

Recommendation and Conclusion

The assertions put forward by this study with regards of the relationship between socio-economic factors and intimate partner violence are based on the empirical evidence provided by the quantitative results of the study. The conclusions were drawn from the research questions and tests of hypotheses.

Household income is significantly associated with intimate partner violence in the target states in the Niger Delta, Nigeria. The results of the study offer substantial support for the argument that low household income contributes significantly to outcomes which reflect intimate partner violence such as economic, sexual, emotional and physical violence. Therefore, this study asserts that household income is a significant factor of intimate partner violence and therefore the lower the household income, the higher the tendency for actions or occasions which can be regarded as reflecting intimate partner violence. Also, unemployment of the male gender is significantly associated with intimate partner violence. The results of the analysis reveal that occasions of unemployment of the male has been linked to outcomes of intimate partner violence especially towards the female. The evidence shows that male unemployment contributes to higher levels of strive, frustration and aggression towards female counterparts in intimate relationship and therefore constitute one of the primary factors which instigates intimate partner violence

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