

1 Domestic Violence Against Men: Prevalence and Risk Factors in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

2 Abstract

3 **Background:** Domestic violence against men is globally under-reported because of social
4 stigma and/or the patriarchal nature of our society. Men are seen as stronger persons,
5 hence domestic violence against them has not been receiving enough attention. The objective
6 of this study was to assess the prevalence of domestic violence against men and their
7 associated factors in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

8 **Methods:** This study was of cross-sectional design. A total of 430 respondents were selected
9 through a multistage sampling technique. A semi-structured, adapted, self-administered
10 questionnaire was used for data collection. Analysis was done with IBM SPSS Statistics
11 version 25.0. Univariate variables were presented in form of tables and charts while bivariate
12 variables were presented as cross tabulations. Association between independent and
13 dependent variables were determined using chi-square statistics and p-value was set at 0.05.

14 **Results:** Prevalence of violence against the men in this study was 209 (50.7%). Prevalence of
15 physical, psychological, sexual and economical abuse was 107 (51.2%), 73 (34.9%), 62
16 (29.5%) and 47 (22.5%) respectively. The following factors: drinking, smoking by the wife,
17 wife getting angry easily and coming from background where the parents fight were found to
18 be significantly associated with violence against men.

19 **Conclusions:** Prevalence of violence against men was high and wife smoking, drinking,
20 being angry and coming from background where parents fight have been associated. Hence
21 adequate family and social history should always be considered for early diagnosis. The
22 healthcare providers and policy makers need to come up with an effective and efficient
23 therapeutic program that is culturally acceptable to reduce the prevalence.

24 **Keywords:** Domestic violence, Men, Prevalence, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

25

26

27 Introduction

28 Domestic violence, also known as domestic abuse, spousal abuse, battering, family violence,
29 dating abuse, and intimate partner violence (IPV) is a pattern of behaviour which involves the
30 abuse of one partner by another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation,
31 dating or within the family.¹ It is defined by United State national domestic violence hotline
32 as a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or
33 maintain power and control over another intimate partner. Domestic violence can be physical,
34 sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, or technological actions or threats of actions or
35 other patterns of coercive behaviour that influence another person within an intimate
36 relationship. This includes any behaviours that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate,
37 frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.²

38 Domestic violence caught across all ages, sex, race and socioeconomic status though varies in
39 degree.³ It is underreported globally, especially among men as victims and women as
40 perpetrators. This is under reported among men due to the patriarchal nature of our societies,
41 battered male ego, the social stigma and their perception of being weak attached to it.^{4,5}
42 Patriarchy is a system of social stratification and differentiation based on sex. It enables men
43 to dominate women due to structural and social relations based on masculinity that manifests
44 in the relationship between male and females, especially as it relates to ownership of
45 economic power.^{5,6} Domestic Violence against men has not been receiving enough attention,
46 and this greatly reduce access to intervention, with limited legal framework focus. This is
47 because men are viewed as stronger physiologically by the society, and hence they can't be
48 abused. The general belief is that only women are victims of domestic violence.⁷

49 The demographic health survey reported prevalence of violence against men as 2.2% in 2008
50 and 2.1% in 2013. This varies across regions in Nigeria with southwest having the least
51 compared with south-south, southeast and northwest.⁷ In hospital-based research done by
52 Deinye et al, out of the 48 incidence of domestic violence recorded, 5 (10.4%) of them were
53 against the men.³ Life time prevalence of 51.5% and 10.5% in the last 12 months was
54 documented in India.⁸ In every 14.6 seconds, a male is being abused by his female partner.⁶

55 Forms of domestic violence against men include physical, psychological, sexual, financial
56 emotional and stalking. Out of all these, the most common is the emotional abuse followed
57 by physical.⁹ Based on previous documentation on emotional abuse 85% reported criticism,
58 29.7% reported insults in front of others and 3.5% reported threats or hurt.^{8,9} Physical
59 violence includes slapping; pushing; hitting by wife, her parents, or relatives; or throwing
60 objects like utensils, and cell phones at the husband.⁸ In Nigeria, this had been evidenced by
61 nail scratches on the face of the man, bites on his body and in extreme situations, injuries on
62 his head or legs.⁷ Some women deny their partners sex on the pretence that they were not
63 feeling fine or tired, some even went to the extent of asking 'if sex is food,' insinuating that if
64 it is not food why were they desparate.⁷

65 Rate of female perpetrating violence against their intimate partner is increasing. There are
66 different reasons attached to this. The patriarchal society allowed men to have dominance
67 over their female counterparts, but females are now more empowered, being aware of their
68 rights. Some of these perpetrators of violence against men were females previously abused by
69 their partners as documented. They attacked in self defence and their continuation in the
70 relationship resulted in the pattern.⁴ The reasons why these females perpetrate violence can be
71 societal, family or individual based. Some of the individual factors are use of alcohol and
72 drug/smoking, witnessed abuse in their early age, high level of education and economic
73 stability on the part of the female. The females sometimes become violent to express their
74 displeasure about the misbehaviour of the partners and sometimes are just being
75 troublesome.¹⁰

76 All forms of violence for whatever reason are condemned, it is violation of basic human
77 right. Even when violence against men is not reported, it can lead to denial in accepting the
78 family, depression, divorce or suicide in extreme cases.⁹ The children from these homes also

79 suffer lack of self-esteem and with the possibility of being a victim or perpetrators in the
80 future.

81 Violence between men and women in intimate relationship is a social issue that caught across
82 different age, race and culture debatable among scholars and practitioners. Most time men are
83 seen as the perpetrators rather than victims of violence. The experiences of men as victims
84 are not spoken due to the patriarchy society and their masculinity.^{11, 12} This study would like
85 to add to the body of knowledge by bringing to the limelight that men are also victims of
86 violence.

87 There is need for an effective and efficient intervention to reduce the prevalence of domestic
88 violence in our environment. Research had been conducted on the prevalence and societal
89 and individual associated factors especially among women.^{13,14} There is dearth of knowledge
90 on the prevalence of domestic violence against men and the associated factors in Ekiti state
91 which could serve as base line for intervention. Hence this study aimed to determine the
92 prevalence of domestic violence against men and identify the associated factors.

93

94 **Materials and Methods**

95 **Study Area, Design and Population**

96 The study was conducted in Ado Local Government Area (LGA), is one of the 16 LGAs in
97 Ekiti State. Ado is one town LGA, the capital of Ekiti State. Predominant occupation are civil
98 servants, farmers, commercial road transport workers and traders. The indigenous ethnic
99 group are Yoruba, which constitute the major population; others include Igbo, Hausa, Ebira
100 and Igala. There are three major religions practiced, which include Christianity, Islam, and
101 traditional religion. This study was of descriptive cross-sectional study design. All married
102 men within the age groups of 25-69 years who lived in the selected wards of study were
103 included in the study. Those who were away during the research period and those who were
104 sick were excluded from the study.

105 **Sample Size Determination**

106 The sample size for this study was determined using Fischer's formula for estimation of
107 independent proportions for a population greater than 10,000. Prevalence of 55% for
108 psychological violence against men¹⁴ was used which gave a total of 413 with the 10% non-
109 response. A total number of 430 respondents were interviewed.

110 **Sampling Technique.**

111 Multistage sampling method was used to recruit participants into the study.

112 Stage 1: There are 13 wards in Ado LGA Ekiti, out of which 50% were selected using simple
113 random sampling method by balloting.

114 Stage 2: A list of all the streets in each ward was obtained. From each of the selected wards,
115 six streets were chosen using simple random sampling by balloting.

116 Stage 3: From each of the selected streets, all the shops and workplaces identified were
117 numbered. This was because samples were collected during working hours, and the men were
118 at work. Shops were selected through systematic random sampling using proportional
119 allocation.

120 Stage 4: From each shop and place of work, one respondent was chosen. If there were more
121 than one eligible respondent in any shop, simple random sampling method by balloting was
122 used to pick the respondent.

123 **Data Collection Instruments**

124 The study was carried out using semi-structured, adapted questionnaires which were self-
125 administered by those who were literate but were interviewer administered for those who
126 were not literate. The questionnaire was translated into Yoruba and back translated into
127 English to ensure content validity. It was pre-tested among 40 men in those wards that were
128 not selected for the study and changes was made on the questionnaire where necessary.

129 The questionnaire consisted of three sections: section 'A' elicited information about the socio-
130 demographic characteristics of respondents, section 'B' elicited information about the
131 experience of domestic violence among respondents while section 'C' elicited information
132 about the factors influencing domestic violence among the respondents.

133 **Data Analysis:**

134 The questionnaires were properly vetted manually by the lead researcher for errors. All data
135 were manually entered into a computer and analysis was done with the IBM SPSS Statistics
136 version 25.0. Univariate variables were presented in form of tables and charts while bivariate
137 variables were presented as cross tabulations. Association between the socio-demographic
138 characteristics and the outcome variables were determined using chi- square statistics. The
139 outcome variable was the experience of domestic violence. Level of significance was set at p-
140 value less than 0.05.

141 **Prevalence of domestic violence**

142 To determine the prevalence of domestic violence, a single point question (Have you ever
143 experienced domestic violence?) from section B of the questionnaire was used. Those who
144 had ever experienced domestic violence were scored one, while those who had never
145 experienced it were scored zero.

146 **Community Entry**

147 The community leaders of the selected wards were visited and permission to conduct the
148 study in their wards was obtained.

149 **Ethical Considerations**

150 Ethical clearance was obtained with protocol number "EKSUTH/A67/2024/12/036" from
151 Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital Ethics and Research Committee. Participation in the
152 study was voluntary. A verbal informed consent was obtained from each of the respondents.
153 The questionnaire was anonymous, and a high level of confidentiality was maintained during

154 data collection, collation and analysis. The collected data were securely stored in locked
155 cabinets that were only assessable to the researchers. The study did not cause any form of
156 psychological, social or physical harm to the respondents.

157

158 **Results**

159 Four hundred and thirty (430) questionnaires were administered out of which 412 were
160 retrieved giving a response rate of 95.8%.

161 **Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of married men in Ado LGA, Ekiti**

Sociodemographic characteristics	Frequency(n=412)	Percentage
Age group		
25-34	95	23.1
35-44	143	34.7
45-54	119	28.9
55-69	55	13.3
Religion		
Christianity	328	79.6
Islam	75	18.2
Traditional	5	1.2
Others	4	1.0
Ethnicity		
Yoruba	344	83.5
Igbo	50	12.1
Hausa	9	2.2
Others	9	2.2
Total	412	100.0
Educational level		
None	7	1.7
Primary	29	7.1
Secondary	125	30.3
Tertiary	251	60.9
Occupation		
Civil servant	123	29.9
Artisan	118	28.6
Unemployed	13	3.2
Trader	79	19.2
Farmer/manual labourer	31	7.5
Professional	23	5.8
Others	25	6.1

162

163 Table I shows the sociodemographic characteristics of married men. One hundred and forty-
164 three (34.7%) of the men were aged 35-44. Three hundred and twenty-eight (79.6%) of the
165 men were Christians. Three hundred and forty-four (83.5) of the men were of Yoruba ethnic.
166 Two hundred and fifty-one (60.9%) of the men were educated up to tertiary level

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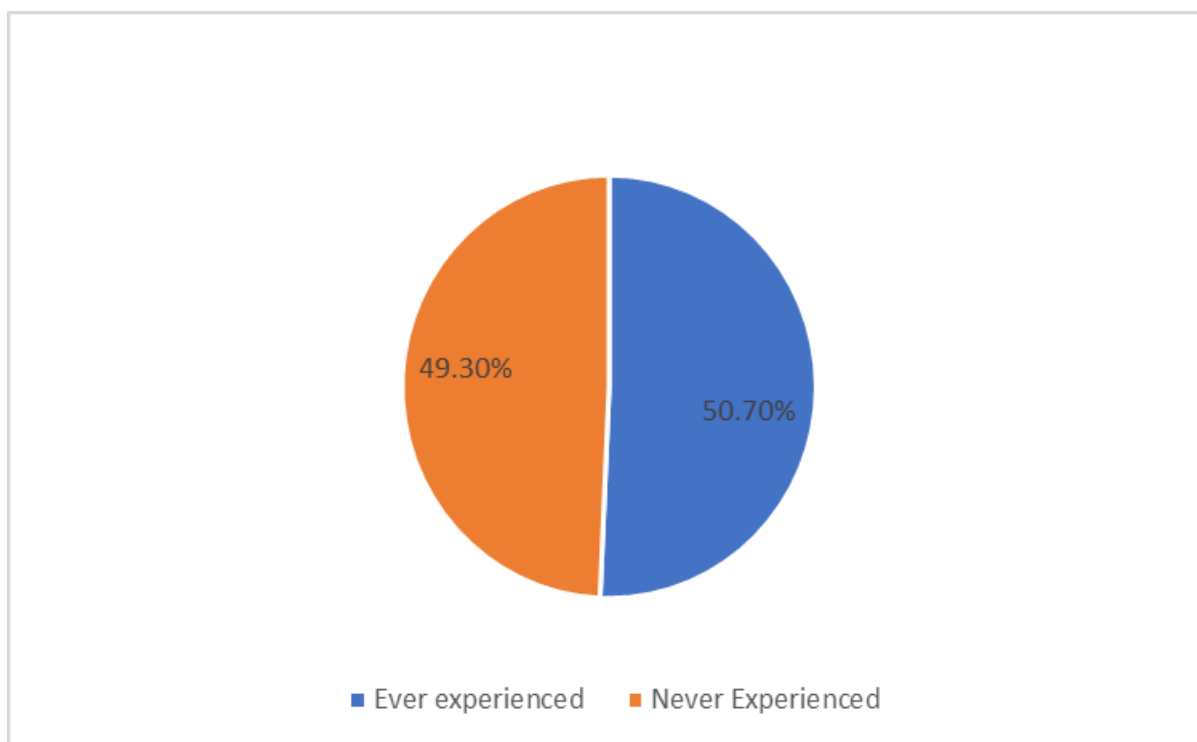
170 **Table 2: Marital and family characteristics of married men in Ado LGA**

Sociodemographic characteristics	Frequency(n=412)	Percentage
Type of family		
Monogamous	393	95.4
Polygamous	19	4.6
Age at marriage		
≤25	71	17.2
≥25	341	82.8
Length of marriage		
1-10	221	53.6
11-20	123	29.9
> 21	68	16.5
Main provider for family		
Self	211	51.2
Partner	7	1.7
Both	194	47.1
Type of marriage ceremony		
Cohabitation	101	24.5
Traditional marriage only	81	19.7
Church/mosque/registry	220	53.4
None	10	2.4
Type of accommodation		
Single room face me I face you	24	5.8
Room and parlour face me I face you	45	10.9
Self-contained apartment	42	10.2
≥2-bedroom flat	301	73.1
Ownership of house		
Self	187	45.4
Landlord	209	50.7
Parent	10	2.4
Wife's parent	6	1.5

171

172 Table 2 shows the marital and family characteristics of married men in Ado LGA. Three
 173 hundred and ninety-three (95.4%) were married in a monogamous setting. Three hundred and
 174 forty-one (82.8%) of the men got married above twenty-five years of age. Two hundred and
 175 twenty (53.4%) of the men got married to their partners in church/mosque/registry. Three
 176 hundred and one (73.1%) of the men lived in two or more-bedroom flat.

177



178

179 **Fig 1: Prevalence of domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA**

180 Figure 1 shows the experience of domestic violence among married men. Two hundred and
 181 nine (50.7%) had experienced one or more forms of domestic violence while two hundred
 182 and three (49.3%) had never experienced any form of domestic violence

183

184 **Table 3: Types of domestic violence against men in the last 12 month and in the lifetime**

Patterns of abuse	Lifetime experience	Last 12 months
	Freq (%) (n= 209)	Freq (%) (n= 209)
Physical abuse	107 (51.2)	48 (23.0)
Psychological abuse	73 (34.9)	33 (15.8)
Sexual abuse	62 (29.7)	19 (9.1)
Economic abuse	47 (22.5)	27 (12.9)

185

186 Table 3 shows the experience of domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA. One
 187 hundred and seven (51.2%) married men had a lifetime experience of physical abuse while
 188 forty-eight (23.0%) married men have experienced physical abuse in the last 12 months.
 189 Seventy-three (34.9%) married men have a lifetime experience of psychological abuse while
 190 thirty-three (15.8%) married men have experienced psychological abuse in the last 12 months

191

192 **Table 4: Risk factors associated with domestic violence against men.**

193

Risk factors	Frequency	Percentage
Wife gets angry easily	118	28.6
Expressed suspicion/accused her of unfaithfulness before wife drinking alcohol?	65	15.8
Wife coming from a family where her parents fought a lot	46	11.2
Wife involving herself in fights regularly	34	8.3
Wife smoking regularly	27	6.6
Wife getting drunk regularly	8	1.9
	3	0.7

194

195 Table 4 shows the risk factors of domestic violence against married men in Ado LGA. The
 196 most identifiable risk factor is wife getting angry easily 118 (28.6%). While the least
 197 identifiable risk factor is wife getting drunk regularly 3 (0.7%).

198 **Table 5: Association between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and**
 199 **prevalence of domestic violence (n=412).**

Socio-demographic characteristics	Ever Experienced Freq (%)	Never Experienced Freq (%)	χ^2	P value
Age group				
25-34	40 (42.1)	55 (57.9)	5.71	0.127
35-44	75 (52.4)	68 (47.6)		
45-54	60 (50.4)	59 (49.6)		
55-69	34 (61.8)	21 (38.2)		
Religion				
Christianity	168 (51.2)	160 (48.8)	1.64	0.650
Islam	35 (46.7)	40 (53.3)		
Traditional	3 (60.0)	2 (40.0)		
Others	3 (75.0)	1 (25.0)		
Ethnicity				
Yoruba	179 (52.0)	165 (48.0)	7.25	0.064
Igbo	23 (46.0)	27 (54.0)		
Hausa	1 (11.1)	8 (88.9)		
Others	6 (66.7)	3 (33.3)		
Educational Level				
None	3 (42.9)	4 (57.1)	67.50	0.087
Primary	21 (72.4)	8 (27.6%)		
Secondary	81 (64.8)	44 (35.2)		
Tertiary	104 (41.4)	147 (58.6)		

200

201 Table 5 shows the association between socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and
 202 their experience of domestic violence.

203

204 **Table 6: Association between risk factors and prevalence of domestic violence among**
 205 **men.**

Risk factor	Ever Experienced Freq (%)	Never Experienced Freq (%)	χ^2	P value
Alcohol intake				
Wife drinks alcohol	33 (71.7)	13 (28.3)	10.23	0.006
Wife does not drink alcohol	175 (47.9)	190 (52.1)		
Getting drunk regularly				
Wife gets drunk regularly	3 (100.0)	0 (0.0)	2.94	0.087
Wife does not get drunk regularly	206 (50.4)	203 (49.6)		
Regular Smoking				
Wife smokes regularly	7 (87.5)	1 (12.5)	4.41	0.036
Wife doesn't smoke regularly	202 (50.0)	202 (50.0)		
Regular fights				
Wife fights regularly	25 (92.6)	2 (7.4)	20.27	<0.001
Wife doesn't fight regularly	182 (47.8)	199 (52.2)		
Anger				
Wife gets angry easily	91 (77.1)	27 (22.9)	46.08	<0.001
Wife doesn't get angry easily	118 (40.1)	176 (59.9)		
Parents fight				
Wife comes from family where parent fought regularly	28 (82.4)	6 (17.6)	32.04	<0.001
Wife comes from family where parent doesn't fight regularly	147 (44.0)	187 (56.0)		

206

207 Table 6 shows the association between the risk factors in respondents' partners and their
 208 experience of domestic violence. The factors that significantly influenced domestic violence
 209 were wife taking alcohol and smoking, wife coming from a family where parents fought
 210 regularly, wife getting angry easily and involving in fights ($p < 0.05$).

211

212

213 Table 7 shows the association between marital and family characteristics and experience of
 214 domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA. There was no significant association
 215 between marital and family characteristics and experience of domestic violence except in the
 216 type of accommodation where those living in a room apartment with experience of domestic
 217 violence were 70% compared with those in two or more-bedroom apartment with 47.4%
 218 prevalence of domestic violence with p value of 0.041.

219

220

221 **Table 7: Association between marital and family characteristics and experience of**
 222 **domestic violence among married men in Ado LGA**

Marital and family characteristics	Ever Experienced Freq (%)	Never Experienced Freq (%)	χ^2	P value
Type of marriage ceremony				
Cohabitation	57 (60.6)	37 (39.4)	6.56	0.087
Traditional marriage only	34 (45.3)	41 (54.7)		
Church / mosque/ Registry	106 (49.1)	110 (50.9)		
None	6 (75.0)	2 (25.0)		
Main provider for family				
Self	113 (53.6)	98 (46.4)	1.64	0.441
Partner	4 (57.1)	3 (42.9)		
Both	92 (47.4)	102 (52.6)		
Type of accommodation				
Single room face me I face you	17 (70.8)	7 (29.2)	8.27	0.041
Room & parlour face me I face you	21 (46.7)	24 (53.3)		
Self-contained apartment	27 (64.3)	15 (35.7)		
≥2-bedroom flat	144 (47.8)	157 (52.2)		
Ownership of house				
Self	88 (47.1)	99 (52.9)	4.70	0.195
Landlord	112 (53.6)	97 (46.4)		
Parents	4 (40.0)	6 (60.0)		
Years of marriage				
1-10yrs	102 (46.2)	119 (53.8)	4.39	0.111
11-20yrs	71(57.7)	52 (42.3)		
>20yrs	36 (52.9)	32 (47.1)		

223

224

225 **Discussion**

226 Violence between men and women in intimate relationship is a social issue that caught across
 227 different ages, race and culture. Most times men are seen as the perpetrators rather than
 228 victims of violence. The experiences of men as victims are not usually spoken due to the
 229 patriarchal society and their masculinity.^{11,12} This study sought to add to the body of
 230 knowledge bringing to the limelight that men are also victims of domestic violence.

231 In this study the prevalence of violence against men is 50.7% and the most common factors
 232 associated with it are wife getting angry frequently 28.6%, infidelity on the part of the man
 233 15.8%, wife that take alcohol 11.2% and wife from background with domestic violence
 234 8.3%. Half of the male in this study had ever experienced one form of violence or the other
 235 perpetrated against them by their partners at some point in their relationship. This is similar to
 236 the finding by Malik et al in India.⁸ The similarity is most likely because they were both
 237 community-based study unlike the finding from Dienne et al where the prevalence was lower
 238 because the study was hospital-based.³ Domestic violence against men by their intimate

239 partners has been on the increase in Africa. ^{10,15} The increase witness now might be the
240 consequence of the awareness being created by the feminist theorist of men dominating their
241 partners. Men have political, social, economic power and they use this to gain and maintain
242 dominance. ¹⁵ In a patriarchal society like ours where men perpetrate violence against their
243 intimate partners, it is worthy to know that some men are equally being victimised. There is
244 need to understand why different gender perpetrate violence against their partner and find a
245 lasting solution to this social menace.

246 About a quarter of the men in this study experienced physical abuse, this is less compared
247 with some of the prevalence documented by Kolbe et al ¹³ and high compared with the result
248 of Malik et al. ⁸The prevalence here being urban community is higher than malik result which
249 was conducted in a rural community in India where the patriarchal control is more entrenched
250 and where most of the women were not educated and could not fight for their right. The
251 psychological abuse against the men in this study compared with the study from Kolbe and
252 higher than Malik et al finding. This might be so because the women in the rural community
253 most likely are not bold to perpetrate physical violence and rather chose the part of
254 psychological abuse. This has more effect on the men (depression, stress, psychosomatic
255 complaints etc) and the likelihood of increasing the risk of suicide.

256 The real time prevalence of violence against men is not yet known because some men that are
257 victims don't talk about it for many reasons. Nigeria like most African countries is patriarchal
258 in nature where men are supposed to be in control of their wives. Men don't report because
259 they don't want to be seen as weaklings, ¹⁶and as a result, many adopt coping strategies. Other
260 don't report because there is no support from the existing institution, and some because they
261 love their family so they will rather stay and endure the suffering. ^{12,17} There is need to create
262 more awareness of this social menace in our society and appropriate intervention that will cut
263 across both male and female. On the other hand, there is a claim that over twenty percent of
264 the cases of domestic violence against men were never proven with evidence with the police
265 and at the court of law. ¹⁸

266 The following factors had been found to be significantly associated with violence against
267 men in this study: wife smoking, drinking alcohol and being drunk, wife that gets angry
268 easily, fighting and coming from family where the parents fight. These are similar to Busari et
269 al findings in Ibadan southwest Nigeria where aggression, background of the wife, substance
270 and alcohol use by the wife were also found to be significantly associated to violence against
271 men. ⁵ The similarity might be because both works are from the same region in the country
272 and therefore, they are culturally similar. Use of alcohol and being drunk by the wife having
273 significant association to violence against men has been documented by other researchers. ^{3,8}
274 Khosravipoura in Tehran equally reported significant association between anger of the wife
275 and violence against men. ¹⁹ Anger is an individual factor and manifest in people with poor
276 anger management. This can be seen through weak verbal skill, dysfunctional problem-
277 solving style and low impulse control. ²⁰ Such people will benefit from a planned treatment
278 program to be able to help the relationship.

279

280

281 **Conclusion**

282 Prevalence of violence against men is high and wife smoking, drinking alcohol and being
283 drunk, wife that gets angry easily, fighting and coming from family where the parents fight
284 were the associated factors. This has a psychological effect on the men hence the services
285 require by the men suffering from IPV may be different from that of the women. The
286 healthcare providers need to understand this in order to be able to have an effective and
287 efficient therapeutic program that is culturally responsive to individual needs. Qualitative
288 research is needed in the future to explore other reasons why domestic violence against men
289 is being perpetrated.

290 **Acknowledgements**

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292

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