

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

One of the remarkable features of the present day Imo State is that women and children constitute the most vulnerable group that undergo violence in different spheres of life. Also, excluding them from the socio-economic development of their immediate milieu is a worry. Although this exclusion is currently strong and widely upheld, there has been a relative silence on how to liberate women from these cultural practices. The people of Imo are culturally endowed, and a good grasp of their religious, cultural anthropology and cosmology show the pride with which they uphold their distinctive ways of life. Some of these cultural practices have been observed, according to Chukwu (2006), to be very archaic, dangerous, harmful and damaging to the psyche of women and children. Corroborating this trend earlier, Ebirim (2005) argued that the situation was even worse, for women who have low literacy level. In a similar strand, Ritzer (1996) averred that women's situation was centrally that of being used, controlled, subjugated, and oppressed by men. Elucidating further, Ritzer (1996) concluded that women's oppression was basically by a system of particularly cultivated for the deliberate purpose of commandeering women to achieve the intents of the so-called power structure. Nmah (2003) affirms the above statement by saying: though patriarchy takes different forms in different cultures, its fundamental belief is the same. The man is Superior by nature, born to rule in all works of life; the woman, inferior, born to be ruled and to serve the man" (P. 21).

Violence against women and children in Igboland, especially in Imo State has been a very problematic issue over the decades and has continued to linger irrespective of concerted efforts to bring it to the barest minimum. It is one of the most widespread violations of human rights and includes physical abuse, sexual, psychological, social, political, religious, and economic abuse. It cuts across geographical boundaries and culture. Violence against women and children takes place in the home, on the streets, in schools, in places of worship, work, markets, refugee camps, farm fields and many more.

Igbo culture has religious and social norms that have placed women and children in an unfavorable position which demeans and dehumanizes them. A position, that hinders their effective contributions to the sustainable development of Imo State. It is no longer fashionable to accept a situation or culture that relegates women and children to the background. In corroboration to this, Salami (2000) asserts that, in spite of the Beijing declaration on affirmative action, women in Africa, (Imo State inclusively) are not yet in the mainstream of the political, social, economic as well as peace and conflict related issues when compared with women of Western background. Thus, women and children in Igboland are sometimes regarded as inferior beings who deserve inferior positions, hence the saying that a woman's place is in the kitchen. This goes on to explain what Leith-Ross (1965) posited, that a Nigerian man;

Will probably, and often unconsciously make out that the woman is of little account, that her whole life is in his hands, that she has no will, no means, no property, no power. He upholds the view that the husband is Lord and Master and that the woman is his property. (p.21).

This mentality is still strong and despite the changes in religious, social, political, economical and spiritual spheres of life, women and children have remained the most vulnerable group that undergoes violence in physical, psychological, spheres of life in Imo State in particular and Igboland in general.

Ijere (1982) believes that Igbo women have been exploited in the traditional pre-colonial era. Colonial and post colonial situations have even worsened this exploitation in Igboland, because a wife is seen as the husband's property. The man paid a certain amount as bride-price and the woman becomes his. She bears his name, and her children belong to him. If for any reason she divorces him, she or her people will have to pay back the bride-price in full, in spite of the fact that she may have spent the best part of her life in the man's service and may have raised children for him. Igbo women are victims of inequality in the political, educational, social, religious, economic and cultural spheres.

The researcher is very much worried about these canker worms that go to destroy the dignity and equality of women and children in Imo State in particular and Igboland in general. Iwe (1985) stated that:

Splendor of womanhood, which is based on human personality, the prerogative and quality of every human being, man or woman, is fundamentally, essentially and unquestionably equal to the dignity of man. Furthermore, he affirmed that the truth of this statement is unassailable in spite of sex differences, for human dignity rests not on sex but on personality; and personality as such has no sex (p.47).

Accepting this position therefore, there is an urgent need to change such violent, cultural practices against women. These ugly trends also prompted a research on this topic so as to proffer possible solutions on these maladies.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The above background to the study reveals that despite the stand of fundamental human rights on the equality of all humans, it could be observed that there persists the problem of discrimination based on gender. There are lots of socio-religious problems that women and children encounter in Imo State where human rights are not fully observed. These problems have caused a great havoc among women and children and are generally detrimental to their health, psychological and social well-being. Unfortunately their fundamental rights are been violated by these obnoxious practices. Such violent practices are widespread among most Igbo ethnic extractions where these cultural harmful practices are usually considered normal part of life. There is therefore, no gain saying that all these anomalies threaten the self actualization of our women and children since these problems are not dealt with, rather they are seen as conventions. The@@@@ to be tackled in this research work are as follows:

1. What is violence against women and children?
2. What are the causes of violence against women and children?
3. What are the effects of this violence on the stakeholders?
4. What are the possible solutions to these obnoxious practices in Imo State?
5. Finally, the role of the church in tackling the issues of violence against women and children.

Answers to the above questions will form the purpose of the study.

1.3 Aims of the study

The aims and objectives of this study are as follows:

- i. To examine the general concept of violence against women and children in Imo State.
- ii. To critically examine the socio-religious analyses on violence against women and children in Imo State.
- iii. To analyze how these harmful practices aggravate the problems of gender inequality in Imo State.
- iv. To evaluate general awareness of violence on women and children, community leaders, government, non-governmental organizations, and health workers on the implications of these violent practices against women and children in Imo State and the society at large.

1.4 The Scope of the Study

The scope of this work is embedded on the title “A Socio-religious Analyses of Violence against Women and children in Imo State”. The research topic is a contemporary one and the research is centered specifically on some practices that violate the rights of Nigerian women and children, especially that of Imo State, Nigeria.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This research work benefits all and sundry especially the following:

- i. **Children:** This study will make children identify challenges based on cultural violence that make them one of the most vulnerable groups in Imo State. The finding of the study will offer hope in the face of indignities and suggest their predicament.

- ii. **The Family:** This work will serve as an eye opener to couples and families at large on the need for family stability, through respect for human rights. It also provides information their roles in promoting peace and harmony for the well being of the society.
- iii. **Women:** This research work will serve as a liberating tool for women and children from the bondage of harmful traditional, political, religious, economic and social practices against them. When women and children are liberated and made to actualize their full potentials, the entire society will also, no doubt, benefit from that.

Finally, research institutions, universities, colleges of education, ministries and the Church will find this work very useful as it will serve as a reference material for scholars and preachers of the good news.

Human rights and religious organizations while propagating the good-news and benefits of human equality, using every means of litigation; persuasive, educating and preaching methods, in addressing these issues of violence against women and children in Imo State, would find this work useful.

1.6 Methodology

This research is guided by premise that “the nature of a research problem is determined by the choice of method”. The data used in this study is obtained from primary and secondary sources.

1.6.1 Primary Sources of Data Collection

Data from primary sources were gathered through interview, questionnaire and observation. A little of these primary methods will make for improved understanding of their importance to this research.

1.6.1.1 Interview

Interview refers to question and answer thrown and answered by key informants or resource persons to the research topic being investigated. The controversial nature of research topic has made this research to rely heavily on structured and unstructured interview of selected knowledgeable and well-informed respondents on violence against women and children in Imo in particular and Igbo in general.

Interview was considered adequate for collecting data relating to historical origin, development, characteristics and persistence of violence women and children in Imo state. The flexibility of interview method was useful in accessing the attitudes relating to violence against women and children in Imo state. The interview dealt with controversial, complicated and sensitive issues of violence against women and children in Imo state. The role the government, Christian Churches and non-governmental organizations are playing in dealing with violence against women and children is not left out of data the interview was set to provide.

Oyefeso (1987) premise is relevant in the use of informal interview in this research. Interviews were conducted informally to boost enough confidence in the respondents so that reliable response could be tapped therein. This informal interview has the advantage of discovering interviewee's hidden motivation and unacknowledged attitudes.

Although interview method has been criticized for centering more on emotions than conscious ideas, it shows little tendency to follow a set pattern. The study

believes that it made the key informant response according to the demands of their positions. Interview guidelines were designed to give a focused discussion on the contents specified in the research objectives. In spite of the interview biases, respondent's unavailability and interview – respondent perception, the informants were fully in accord with the research. It was observed that respondents were willing to make honest contributions.

This clarification has become necessary in bringing out the importance of interview in a sensitive research topic as religious and social analyses of violence against women and children in Imo state, Nigeria.

1.6.1.2 Questionnaire

The nature of these research variables made for a strong feeling that any method that would promote anonymity would yield reliable information for this research. Questionnaires were used as an efficient and cost effective method for obtaining a quantifiable and qualitative data from, according to Haralambos and Herald (1980) relatively large number of people who meet this research need. The questions were systematically and descriptively framed to cover religious and social dimensions of violence against women and children in the state under review and Nigeria generally. The questions which were relatively open ended. This enabled the respondents to be less bored and unable to suppress or distort their basic views on religious and social view points of violence against women and children in the state.

Self-administration of copies of questionnaire used in this study enabled the researcher to have a wider spectrum of the scope of the study. The questionnaire method saved considerable time and effort when compared with other research methods and solved the problem of unavailability of interviewees. Questionnaire

covers wide geographical areas, fast at first sight but delay abound, ideal for certain personnel that demands confidentiality and it has no problem of non-contact. It complimented the data gathered using interview and observation methods.

The copies of questionnaire were administered to different groups of people in Imo state. The groups of people include: Women, children, Church, non-governmental organizations (NGO), the Government, Women Organizations, Associations, Human Rights Activists and Traditionalists. Research Assistants were employed to compliment the self administration of questionnaire mentioned above.

Out of the thousand questionnaires administered, 712 were retrieved out of which 600 were useable. The low or under response rate of 600 usable responses might be due to high illiteracy, independent answers, vagueness, poor postal services and lack of telephone in many houses for verification of data. Similarly ambiguity made some of the questionnaires unstable especially where the purpose takes good deal of explanation. Such answers and responses seemed rechecked, so opportunity to probe beyond the given answers, to clarify ambiguity, overcome unwillingness and non-responses, the researcher had to drop those that were in appropriate, answers that could not be independent and not seem that the right persons completed or no opportunity to supplement the answers by observational and interview methods.

The questionnaire is designed to obtain required information from the respondents understudy. The primary purpose of this research was considered and to a great extent the questions were open ended and logically related to our research central problems. The contents of the questionnaires were classified into four (4) bread area for easy identification. The first 1-7 questions referred to respondents biographical data such as sex, age marital status, geographical area, educational attainment, occupation and religious affiliation. Question 6-16 elicited the existence

of violence against women and children in Imo state. Question 17-32 shade light on the nature of violence against women and children in Imo state, Nigeria were not left out as they covered number 32-35.

1.6.1.2.1 Method of Data Analyses and Interpretation

In this qualitative research, the data indicate the compatibility of one finding with another. The use of descriptive research technique was employed. The results of the descriptive research were used in discussing the historical origin, nature features or characteristics, development and attitudes towards violence against women and children in Imo state, Nigeria.

Much of the information on the characteristics, persistence, abolition efforts and all religious and social discriminatory attitudes of women and children collected through written sources, discussion, chats, observation and interviews have been assimilated and applied in the report. Those data collected from the questionnaire have been analyzed and presented in simple percentages and in most cases in tables. The tabulation is based on responses to each option for each question. The computation of the variables with “Agreed and Disagreed” questions and the open-ended questions used in the questionnaires were calculated and interpreted to buttress certain points and claims in the work or to draw conclusions. Although 600 copies of the questionnaires were used, women respondents made total of 220 while government and non-governmental organization made a total of 300 and the religious group and children stood at 80 respondents. This has shown the overall result and position of the respondents with regards to religious and social analyses of violence against women and children in Imo state, Nigeria being investigated. The formula below was adopted thus:

% (percentage) – $N \times 100$

$$\frac{\quad}{TN} \quad 1$$

N stands for the number of the respondents per question, TN represents the total number of the respondents. The above methods of analysis in the humanities has been found useful because of the religious, social, emotional and psychological attitudes associated with violence against women and children in Imo state, Nigeria. The above methods of analysis of data remain useful in analyzing, presenting and drawing conclusions from the overt and covert inferences. The description and the interpretation of tables helped to prevent ambiguity and misinterpretation on the part of our readers. However, unquantifiable data were inserted in their raw form as they were collected by mean f direct quotations and paraphrased as referenced.

This study shares the view of Sulltiz (1976) on analytical utility of such raw materials as bringing out the neglected aspects of the survey; help verify the statistical material as presented in the work and considerably enriches the researcher's conclusion.

The religious and social analyses of violence against women and children in Imo state are not left out in the complimentary role of descriptive and interpretive techniques from a deep insightful analyses. In making the analyses, it is observed that the important theoretical and conceptual development that emerged from the research data.

1.7 Definition of Terms

It is of immense importance to define some of the key terms used in this work. This is to make for easy understanding and interpretation of information contained in the work. The selected terms are:

Social

In this dissertation social refer to articulating and dealing with the issues relating to individuals, groups, institution and relationships in the society under review.

Violence

This according to Hornby (2007) means involving actions that are intended to injure or kill people, by hitting them, and so on. Violence equally means showing very strong angry emotions or opinions, an action that breaks a law, agreement, principle and so on. It equally means something that causes harm or damage by treating someone or their possessions without respect. .

Igbo

The word 'Igbo' may be used in three senses, namely, to refer to Igbo territory, to the domestic speakers of the language and to the language spoken by them. Uchendu (1965) asserts that Igboland is located in South Eastern part of Nigeria between latitudes 5 and 7 degrees north of the equator, and longitude 6 and 8 degrees east of the Greenwich meridian where they occupied an area of about 25,280 square kilometers (15,800). The Igbo occupy the South-Eastern Nigeria. This comprises of Anambra, Enugu, Imo, Abia and Ebonyi States, coupled with some parts of Akwa-Ibom, Cross-River, Benue and Rivers State. Nmah (2006) also explains that Igbo is among the largest ethnic groups in Nigeria.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Violence against women or gender-based violence has been the concern of many authors, religious and social critics. It is therefore not entirely a new concept. In that regard, there are previous works of reputable scholars on the field of human rights deprivations based on one's gender, especially as it affects Nigerian women, especially of Igbo extraction. This chapter therefore, is an attempt to examine the observations or the discoveries made by other authors, with a view in identifying unfilled gaps which this work may contribute in filling. The researcher carries out this review in three sections: conceptual framework, theoretical framework and empirical studies.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

A number of concepts from the title of the dissertation are reviewed under violence, domestic violence, and violence against women.

2.1.1 Violence

Violence carries with it varied definitions, depending on the definer and the situation in which it is defined. Violence connotes rough treatment, use of bodily force on others, especially unlawfully, to hurt or harm. It is also regarded as an act of human inflictions, deprivations and discrimination resulting in or likely to result in unlawful physical, sexual and psychological harm, suffering or deprivation. Violence according to Arinze (2008) is the use of physical force, accompanied by fury or outrage.

Violence against women (abbreviated VAW) is a term used to collectively refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women. This type of violence targets a specific group with the victim's gender as a primary motive. This type of violence is gender-based, meaning that the acts of violence are committed against women expressly because, they are women, or as a result of patriarchal gender constructs. To sustain the above claim on patriarchal structure as agent of gender-based violence, Nmah (2003) averred that:

Though patriarchy takes different forms in different cultures, its fundamental belief is the same. The man is superior by nature, born to rule in all works of life; the woman inferior, born to be ruled and to serve the man. (p.1).

Nmah went on to stress that the above statement could be the beginning of gender discrimination. It shows how patriarchy expands sexism and classism, which underlie all forms of oppression where one set of human beings see themselves as the norm and evaluates others as existing only for self. This sets the cosmological belief in man's innate superiority and woman's innate inferiority, which resulted in the exclusion and marginalization of women in all works of life. Harvey and Gow (1994) however did not hesitate in confirming that violence against women is tied to the history of women being viewed as property and a gender role assigned to be subservient to men and also other women in the same vein, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) equally confirmed the above views by stating that:

Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women. And that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with the men folk. (p.4).

They went on to define violence against women as:

Any act of gender-based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to woman, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. (p.3).

Furthermore, Bloom (2008) asserts that violence against women is the general term used to capture violence that occurs as a result of normative role expectations associated with each gender, along with the unequal power relationships between the two genders, within the context of a specific society. By this, in Igboland, gender-based violence could equally be used to depict violence against women, because women are basically the victims of gender-based violence, but, this is not to say that gender-based violence against women does not exist. However, it has been widely acknowledged that the majority of persons affected by gender-based violence are women and girls, as a result of unequal distribution of power in society between women and men.

UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993), in its Article I, affirms that VAW and GBV have to do with physical sexual and psychological forms of violence. That is, in the family (such as battery, marital rape, sexual abuse of female children, dowry related violence, female genital mutilation/cutting and other traditional practices harmful to women. In the general community (such as rape, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in school and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution), and violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs. The Beijing Platform for Action (1995), further expanded the definition of violence against women to include: violations of the rights of women in situations of armed conflict, including systematic rape, sexual

slavery and forced pregnancy, forced sterilization, forced abortion, coerced or forced use of contraceptives, prenatal sex selection, and female infanticide. In addition, Onwuka (ND) states that violence against women is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can include physical, enslavement, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It takes place in the homes on the streets, in schools, the workplace, in farm fields, refugee camps, during conflicts and Crises.

For Onwuka, violence against women has many manifestations ranging from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy and so on. It is equally an off-shoot and most times a demonstration of power by men as they struggle to assert their acclaimed position as heads. It mostly comes into play when men use physical discipline against their female counterpart. To sustain the above statement, UNFPA (2003) argued that one out of three women has been beaten, coerced into sex, or abused in some other way. This is mostly carried out often by someone she knows, including her husband or a mate relative. In the same vein, Macionis (2006) opined that violence against women also occurs in casual relationships. To him, most rapes involved known men and often trusted by their victims. Also, the US office of Violence Against Women (2007) adds that violence against women can also be seen as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over another. The definition adds that this violence can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional, economic and psychological abuse. Violence against women is a technical terms used to collectively refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women.

Furthermore, violence against women is equally built into other cultures in many different ways. One case in point is the practice of female genital mutilation, a painful and often dangerous local surgical procedure. With this, Giddens, Duneier and Appelbaum (2005) stated that between 100 and 130 million girls and women worldwide have been subjected to “general mutilation”, while an unequal number are “missing” partly as the result of female infanticide in cultures where boys are more highly valued than girls. Basically in almost all the cultures in Nigeria, women are looked upon as inferior or second class citizens.

This is why Otite and Ogionwo (2006) affirmed that "women were culturally expected to accept their subordinate position, and even now some women, especially in the rural areas still uphold their women’s traditional roles as wives, mothers and house-keepers, not minding when their rights are infringed upon. Hosken (1981) in his own view, defines violence against women as, any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women irrespective of their marital status on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field.

Violence against women or gender-based violence reflects and enforces inequalities between men and women and compromise the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims. It encompasses a wide range of human rights violations, including sexual abuse of children, rape, domestic violence, sexual assault and harassment, trafficking of women and girls and several harmful traditional practices. Any of these abuses can leave deep psychological scars in women and girls, damage their reproductive and sexual health, and in some instances can even result in death.

Anaeme (2012), asserts violence against women and gender discrimination are contrary to fundamental human rights, equity, natural justice and good governance. In affirmation to Anaeme's view, WHO (2002) confirms that violence is an intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation. The above definition denotes that women are entitled to human rights, freedom from violence and entitlements pertaining to human beings without discrimination or deprivation. In addition, violence against women, according to Onyeukwu (2004) is the most acute form of gender inequality. Also, Ine (2012) reiterates, that violence against women is a worldwide malaise, eating deep into the fabric of society.

It has become common to see women violated in different aspects of life by their male counterparts, be it their fathers, brothers, husbands or worse still, strangers. Unfortunately, women bear the brunt of a lot of violence in our society and silently cover them up so as to avoid stigmatization or protect their families. Violence against women is a phenomenon that is common in many societies of the world. The subordination of women from birth, knows no barriers in over segment of the life of women, whether educated, uneducated, rich or poor. Gender inequality (VAW) is experienced by women and is manifested in almost all aspects of human endeavour in Igbo society. Olateru (2007) adds that the truth is that violence against women is one of the most ubiquitous violations of women's human rights. This menace involves physical, economical, psychological, social and sexual abuse, and affects all state irrespective of age, race, culture or status.

In the same vein, Abana and Kwaja (2011) view violence against women as a prevalent harm to the basic rights, freedoms, health and welfare of women. Nworah (2010) in his own view sees VAW as an age-long psycho-social issue, deep rooted in world societies; developed, developing or third world countries. Violence against women which is also known as gender-based violence according to Commins (2010) is an endemic but culturally sensitive outrage perpetuated against women by both private individuals and state actors.

At this point, it is worthy to note that not all acts against women are necessarily gender-based violence, neither are all victims of gender-based violence are women. There are situations where men become victims of sexual violence and also where men are beaten or even killed by women in acts of violence.

Similarly, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (Resolution 48/104) states that VAW is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which has led to domination over and, discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women. This definition gives an insight into what was prevalent in society in the beginning of creation where women were seen not to be equal to their male counterparts and this notion was firmly upheld by the Roman era. It is to be noted that because violence is not only physical, it could mean with reference to a woman or girl, the use or display of excessive physical emotions towards her which she resents.

In discussing VAW, Aniekwu (2006) observed thus: “violence against women is one of the physical consequences of the economic, social, political, religious and cultural inequalities that exists between men and women. It is perpetrated by legal and cultural systems that have historically discriminated against women” (p.105). Violence against women is an age long vice, it has existed from the beginning of

Creation and has remained unabated to this time despite all efforts to eliminate these obnoxious practices. In support of the above claim, Lee (2013) asserted that:

I can just say that the problem itself is not a new one. Even though we have been writing on it for a long time, it is probably as old as mankind when we think of Cave man with their clothes dragging women by their hair from the Cave. (p.6).

In summary, VAW according to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution, 48/104 containing the declaration on the elimination of violence against women (1994), violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not limited to the following:

The declaration, went on to conclude that women are entitled to the equal enjoyment and protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field. These rights include

- a) The right to life,
- b) The right to equality,
- c) The right to liberty and security of persons,
- d) The right to equal protection under the law,
- e) The right to be free from all forms of discrimination,
- f) The right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health,
- g) The right to just and favorable conditions of work,
- h) The right not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (P. 1052).

Violence can be seen in this context as an intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or

community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury; death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation. This definition associates intentionality; with the committing of the act itself, irrespective of the outcome it produces. Generally, though, anything that is turbulent or excited in an injurious, damaging or destructive way, or presenting risk accordingly, may be described as violent or occurring violently, even if not signifying violence by a person and against a person.

Violence has many causes, including frustration, exposure to violent media, violence in the home or neighborhood and a tendency to see other people's actions as hostile even when they are not. Certain situations also increase the risk of aggression, such as drinking, insults and other provocations and environmental factors like heat and overcrowding. Non physical violence includes those acts that result from a power relationship, such as threats and intimidation, neglect or acts of omission, in addition to more obvious violent acts. Violence has a broad range of outcomes - including psychological harm, deprivation and mal-development. Violence may not necessarily result in injury or death, but nonetheless poses a substantial burden on individuals, families, communities and health care systems worldwide. Many forms of violence against women, children and the elderly, for instance, can result in physical, psychological and social problems may do not necessarily lead to injury, disability or death. These consequences can be immediate, as well as latent, and can last for years after the initial abuse.

Intimate partner violence refers to behaviour in an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours. Population-level surveys based on reports from victims provide the most accurate estimates of the prevalence

of intimate partner violence and sexual violence in non-conflict settings. A study conducted by WHO (2006) in 10 mainly developing countries found that, among women aged 15 to 49 years, between 15% (Japan) and 70% (Ethiopia and Peru) of women reported physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner. Intimate partner and sexual violence have serious short- and long-term physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health problems for victims and for their children, and lead to high social and economic costs. These include both fatal and non-fatal injuries, depression and post-traumatic stress disorders, unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

Factors associated with the perpetration and experiencing of intimate partner violence are low levels of education, past history of violence as a perpetrator, a victim or a witness of parental violence, harmful use of alcohol, attitudes that are accepting of violence as well as marital discord and dissatisfaction.

2.1.2 Domestic violence

There has been a growing literary interest on the issue of domestic violence against women and children in Imo State, Nigeria. A cultural look at the concept will no doubt shed light on meaning, nature, type and effects on women and children.

Domestic violence, is a pattern of behaviour which involves the abuse by one person against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, cohabitation, dating or within the family. It can be experienced by persons in heterosexual or same-sex relationships. Forms of domestic violence include physical, emotional, verbal, economic, and sexual abuse, which can range from subtle, coercive forms of abuse to violent physical abuse that result in disfigurement or death.

According to Shipway (2004):

Domestic violence often occurs because the perpetrator believes that abuse is acceptable. This is particularly insidious within intergenerational cycles of abuse and cultural systems that condone violence. Extreme forms of abuse include various forms of homicide, including honour killings where individuals, generally women, are killed for the perceived dishonour that they brought upon their family, such as for refusing an arranged marriage or having been perceived as violating traditional gender expectations, especially with regard to sexuality; or dowry killings where the victims are killed due to conflicts related to dowry, as well as violent assaults such as acid attacks, where acid or a similar substance is thrown on the body of another, usually the face. Thus disfiguring the victim. (p. 3).

Awareness, perception, definition and documentation of domestic violence differs widely from country to country, and from era to era. Individuals may be trapped in domestic violent situations through isolation, power and control, insufficient financial resources, fear and shame. As a result of abuse, survivors may experience physical disabilities, chronic health problems, mental illness, limited finances, and poor ability to create healthy relationships. Victims may experience post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Children who live in a household with violence may continue the legacy of abuse when they reach adulthood. Domestic violence often happens in the context of forced and child marriage.

Traditionally, domestic violence (DV) was mostly associated with physical violence. For instance, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, domestic violence is: the inflicting of physical injury by one family or household member on another; also, a repeated habitual pattern of such behavior. Domestic violence is now more broadly defined to include all acts of physical, sexual, psychological or

economic violence that may be committed by a person who is a family member or a person that has been an intimate partner or spouse, irrespective of whether they lived together.

Domestic violence consists of a pattern of coercive behaviors used by a competent adult or adolescent to establish and maintain power and control over another competent adult or adolescent. These behaviors, which can occur alone or in combination, sporadically or continually, include physical violence, psychological abuse, stalking, and nonconsensual sexual behavior. Each incident builds upon previous episodes, thus setting the stage for future, violence. Domestic violence may be associated with physical or social isolation (eg, denying communication with friends or relatives, or making it so difficult that the victim stops attempting communication) and deprivation (eg, abandonment "in dangerous places, refusing help when sick or injured, prohibiting access to money or other basic necessities).

All through the ages, various authors and scholars have understood the concept of domestic violence and why women are the most affected. This attempt more or less divided many authors and writers into various camps. Hence, Ose, (2002), maintains that domestic violence is the intentional and persistent abuse of anyone in the home in a way that causes pain, distress or injury. For him,

It refers to any abusive treatment of one family member by another, thus violating the law of basic human rights. It includes battering of intimate partners and others, sexual abuse of children, marital rape and traditional practices that are harmful to women. (p. 6730).

From the view of Ose above, female genital mutilation is a form of domestic violence. This involves the removal of part or all of the external genitalia (clitoris,

labia minora, and labia majora) and stitching or narrowing of the vaginal opening leaving a very small opening, about the size of a matchstick to allow for the flow of urine and menstrual blood. The girl or woman's legs are generally bound together from the hip to the ankle so she remains immobile for approximately 40 days to allow for the formation of scar tissue. In Nigeria, reports reveal shockingly high level of violence against women (Afrol News, 2007). Amnesty International (2007) reports that a third of women are believed to have been subjected to physical, sexual, and psychological violence carried out primarily by husbands, partners, and fathers while girls are often forced into early marriage and are at the risk of punishment if they attempt to escape from their husbands. Oyediran and Isugo, (2005) say that such violence are under reported and in most cases not documented due to cultural factors.

For Nosike, (1992) marriage and fertility which formally are principal sources of women's source of esteem have been abused by culture and religion, notably through the age of marriage, family size and sanctions. It is culturally a great misfortune for a woman to remain single. Parents are very anxious to get all their daughters married as early as possible. For Nzewi, (1992), it is believed that early marriage prevents promiscuity and sometimes poor parents mostly the uneducated give their very young daughters away in marriage to rich men of questionable characters. The implications of the above are that such early marriages severely restrict the range of options available to these "child brides" and often trap them prematurely within the web of amalgamated poverty, illiteracy, repeated child bearing and social misfits.

For Koffi Anam, a one time secretary general of the United Nations, violence against women and girls is a problem of pandemic proportions. In a report posted on the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) website, Annan

(2006), declared that at least one out of every three women around the world has been beaten, coerced into sex, or otherwise abused in her lifetime with the abuser usually someone known to her. This view was corroborated by Mayo (2014) who maintains that domestic violence, also called ultimate partner violence, occurs between people in an intimate relationship. For her, domestic violence can take many forms, including emotional, sexual and physical abuse and threats of abuse. Men are sometimes abused by partners, but domestic violence is most often directed toward women (Mayo 2014). Since domestic violence could be emotional, physical or threats to abuse as Mayo stated above, it might not be very easy to identify domestic violence at first. While some relationships are clearly abusive from the outset, abuse often starts subtly gets worse over time. One might be experiencing domestic violence if she is in a relationship with someone who calls her names, insults or put her down, prevents or discourages her from going to work or school, prevents or discourages her from seeing family members or friends, tries to control how she spends money, where she goes, what medicines she takes or what she wears, acts jealously or possessively or constantly accuses her of being unfaithful, gets angry when drinking alcohol or using drugs, threatens her with violence or a weapon, hits, kicks, shoves, slaps, chokes or otherwise hurts her, her children or her pets, forces her to have sex or engage in sexual acts against her will, blames her for his violent behaviour or tells her that she deserves it Mayo (2014).

Although the exact rates of domestic violence are widely disputed, especially within some nations, there is a large body of cross-cultural evidence that women are subjected to domestic violence significantly more often than men Azad (2009). In addition, there is broad consensus that women are more often subjected to severe forms of abuse and are more likely to be injured by an abusive partner and the

situation can be worse if the woman is dependent on the offender economically, socially or as regards her right to residence Dujton (2007). The two views above were strengthened by various reports on violence. For instance, The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against women (1993), (cited in Compton, M. 2010) states that:

Violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which has led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women, and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men. (p.245).

This Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women classifies violence against women into three categories: that occurring in the family, that occurring within the general community, and that perpetrated or condoned by the State. Furthermore, Domestic violence in Nigeria is a problem as in many parts of Africa. There is a deep cultural belief in Nigeria that it is socially acceptable to hit a woman to discipline a spouse (Sara, 2000). Domestic violence is widespread and shows no signs of lessening in Nigeria. The Centre for Law Enforcement Agency (CLEEN) Foundation reports that one in every three respondents admitted to being a victim of domestic violence. The survey also found a nationwide increase in domestic violence in the past 3 years from 21% in 2011 to 30% in 2013 (CLEEN, 2014). Taylor blames the above report on widespread domestic violence on institutions that fail to support victims and laws that protect perpetrators. Reporting on domestic violence: the problem pervading Nigeria, Tylor (2012), noted that between half and two thirds of Nigerian women are subject to domestic violence in their homes.

Domestic violence affects all social groups and can consist of physical, sexual and psychological abuse. Although men can also be affected by domestic violence, women suffer disproportionately. This trend occurs across much of the world, but Nigeria's discriminatory laws and dismissive police compound its particularly high rates of domestic violence. Most potently, its prevalent culture of silence and stigma for the victims of domestic violence hinders public acknowledgment of the problem.

2.1.3 Sexual Violence

Sexual violence is any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting. It includes rape, defined as the-physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration of the vulva or anus with a penis, other body part or object. Population-level surveys based on reports from victims' estimate that between 0.3-11.5% of women reported experiencing sexual violence (Moreno, 2007). Sexual violence has serious short- and long-term consequences on physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health for victims and for their children as described in the section on intimate partner violence. According to Ford (2011) "If perpetrated during childhood, sexual violence can lead to increased smoking, drug and alcohol misuse, and risky sexual behaviours in later life. It is also associated with perpetration of violence and being a victim of violence" (pp. 188-193).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

A theory is a contemplative and rational type of abstract or generalizing thinking, or the results of such thinking. Depending on the context, the results might

for example include generalized explanations of how nature works. The word has its roots in ancient Greek, but in modern use it has taken on several different related meanings. A theory is not the same as a hypothesis. A theory provides an explanatory framework for some observations, and from the assumptions of the explanation follows a number of possible hypotheses that can be tested in order to provide support for, or challenge, the theory.

Since the social and political world is full of uncharted and undiscovered terrain, the social scientist engaged in the analysis of data needs a point of entry and a direction, a guide or a mental map, before stepping out of his private world into scientific world of enquiry. Hence, theories could be described as frameworks, a mental map and or lenses for identifying, analyzing, researching and describing social or political phenomena. It is a general strategy, a conceptual scheme and above all a grand model for studying any phenomena. In this sense, the terms theory, approach and model could be used interchangeably as analytical lenses in data analysis. Faleti (2012) made allusion to this when he maintained that “a theory is an idea or belief about something arrived at through assumption and in some cases a set of facts, propositions, or principles analyzed in their relation to one another and used, especially in science to explain phenomena” (p.37).

It is true that the idea and notion of domestic violence against women is a universal phenomenon, but its prevalence varies. It is pertinent therefore to discuss the various theories used in the discourse. The theories what will be treated are:

2.2.1 Social Learning Theory

The Social Learning Theory is one of the most popular explanatory perspectives in the marital violence literature. Oladeji (2009). Hence, the social learning theory as enunciated by Bandura (1997) is a guiding framework for this study. Social Learning Theory is a perspective that states that people learn within a social contexts . It is facilitated through concepts such as modeling and observational learning Omrodu (2009). People, especially children, learn from the environment and seek acceptance from society by learning through influential models. Social Learning Theory is a perspective that states that social behaviour (any type of behaviour that we display socially) is learned primarily by observing and imitating the actions of others. The social behaviour is also influenced by being rewarded and/or punished for these actions.

According to Bandura (1997), observational learning can occur in relation to three models: Live model: this is the process in which an actual person is demonstrating the desired behaviour. Verbal instruction-in which an individual describes the desired behaviour in detail, and instructs the participant on how to engage in the behaviour. Symbolic-in which modeling occurs by means of the media, including movies, television, internet, literature, and radio. This type of modeling involves a real or fictional character demonstrating the behaviour Bandura (1997).

Bandura is known for his 1961-1963 experiments utilizing an inflatable clown known as a Bobo doll in order to test modeling behaviours in children. Children were divided into three groups-one of which was exposed to an aggressive adult model, one which was exposed to a passive adult model, and a control group, which was not exposed to an adult model. Adults in the aggressive group were asked to verbally and physically attack the doll, while those in the passive group were asked to play peacefully. Once the children were given the opportunity to play, results showed that

those exposed to the aggressive model were more likely to imitate what they had seen, and to behave aggressively toward the doll. It was found that boys were four times more likely than girls to display physical aggression, but levels of verbal aggression were about the same. The results of Bandura's studies provided support for the influence of modeling on learning. Further, a later study in 1965 showed that witnessing the model being punished for the aggressive behaviour decreased the likelihood that children would imitate the behavior Shuttleworth (2011).

The theory proposes that criminal and delinquent behaviour is acquired, repeated and changed by the same process of conforming behaviour. This means that as children grow up in the society, they learn criminal tendencies which includes violence against women, and they also grow up to replicate such behaviour as adults. As regards the family, boys grow up to witness the subjugation and brutalization of women by their husbands. As a result of its frequent occurrence and giving no clearly celebrated deterrence, they grow up to believe that violence against women which they learn as they group is a normal and acceptable phenomenon in the society.

The Social Learning Theory has many strengths on close examination. Human behaviour is learnt in different ways from other animals' behaviour, due to the fact that Humans have the ability to store what they have seen and humans are also able to think ahead as to when to copy a behaviour. One of its key strengths is the fact that Bandura verified the first concept. His findings were that children do copy aggression, this was confirmed in his case study of 1977. This study revolved around vicarious reinforcement as he would have a child watch an adult bash and play aggressively with the Bobo inflatable doll. Afterwards the child would also repeat the same thing he/she had been shown as long as the role model was not punished for his/her action.

The experiment is the most rigorous method in psychology and the best by which to establish cause and effects relationships.

Learning by trial and error, as in operant conditioning, can be dangerous for survival. Bandura wrote that most people would never survive their formative years because mistakes often results in fatal consequences'. The social Learning Theory appears to be less deterministic and reactionist than the behaviourist approach. Bandura tended to talk more about an interaction between behaviour and the environment; he called this reciprocal determinism: 'behaviour partly creates the environment and the resultant environment, in turn influences the behaviour'.

Another strength of the Social Learning Theory was that many acts of aggression or tragedies (e.g. shootings, murders, homicide, suicide etc) were linked to violent television shows (most shocking, CSI NY etc and video games (e.g. Call of Duty, Grand Theft Auto, Ninja Gaiden Sigma and Demon Souls etc). this links back to all three concepts of the theory, as the first concept states that it is learnt from watching others, in other words violent acts can be learnt from these video games and T.V shows. The second concept states that it is an internal mental state, in other words it's at the back of our mind but we never really consciously think about it.

One interesting point brought up by Bee (1992) is that this kind of theory can easily handle inconsistencies in the child's behaviour (reinforced at school, not at home well-behaved at school, not at home). This view of behaviour is extremely optimistic: it suggests that given the right environment, any behaviour can be changed: you would never write anyone off if you agreed with this theory. Another strength is that it gives an accurate picture of the way behaviours are learned: clearly, children (and adults) do copy other's behaviour's behaviour. A further strength is the

cognitive element of Bandura's theory because it might offer a way to eventually integrate the learning theory and cognitive development approaches.

The Social Learning Theory also carries many limitations, one of these weaknesses is that it cannot explain why some children watch these violent T.V. shows and play these games yet they never copy it. This is one weakness as many people today are exposed to all sorts of violence yet there is not a problem of mass terrorism everywhere around the globe each day. The Social Learning Theory is not very good at explaining the learning of abstract ideas, such as the moral principles of justice and fairness; these are hard to learn simply by observing another's behaviour and copying it.

Another problem is that there are some people or children who are naturally aggressive even if they play violent games or watch gruesome T.V shows. This clearly defies the concepts of Social Learning Theory as it states that violence or any other behaviour can only be learnt through either experience or watching another person experience it. Cumberbatch noted experimental weaknesses that encouraged the children to be aggressive towards the 'Bobo doll'. The demand characteristics of the experiment made it clear to the children of what was expected, and the 'Bobo doll' was a temptation to be hit as it always bounced back up therefore only continuous aggressive behaviour took place for the three minutes of filming. The novelty of the 'Bobo doll' would increase aggression scores.

Although there may be some reference towards the cognitive processes in the Social Learning Theory, however, the theory does not specify how the observed behaviour is stored or reproduced. The cognitive approach tends to concentrate more on explaining the internal processes. Again, too much emphasis placed on what happens to the child rather than what the child does with the information he/she has.

Secondly, such theories do not take into account the actual development changes (physical and mental) that occur as the child matures.

2.2.2 Conflict Theory

This is a theory propounded by Karl Marx that claims that society is in a state of perpetual conflict due to competition for limited resources. Conflict theory holds that social order is maintained by domination and power, rather than consensus and conformity. According to conflict theory, those with wealth and power try to hold on to it by any means possible, chiefly by suppressing the poor and powerless. Conflict theory also ascribes most of the fundamental developments in human history, such as democracy and civil rights, to capitalistic attempts to control the masses rather than to a desire for social order Onwuzurumba (2012). Conflict theory proponents view the financial crisis as the inevitable outcome of the inequalities and instabilities that plague Western societies, since the present structure of the global economic system enables the largest banks and institutions to avoid government oversight and take huge risks that only reward a select few. For Dahrendorf, cited in Ritzer, and Stepnisky, (2014), “once conflict groups emerge, they engage in actions that led to changes in social structure. When the conflict is intense, the changes that occur are radical. When it is accompanied by violence, structural changes will be sudden” (p.270). conflict theorists tend to agree that the existence of groups with different interest does not mean that they will be in conflict all the time. There may be periods of truce, or it may be that some social groups are persuaded that their interests are not different from those of other groups. Nevertheless, periods of harmony do not last forever, and eventually conflict will return.

Conflict is used as a theoretical framework in this study. As children experience some social changes being brought about through violence, they grow up with the idea that violence is the best way to bring about desired changes and they carry this into their later relationships.

Conflicts theories differ from each other in important respects. Some theories stress conflict between particular social groups. Marxist conflict theories see society as divided into classes, with owners and workers having opposing interests; feminist conflict theories see society as divided by gender, with women generally being less privileged than men; anti-racist conflict theorist emphasize conflict across racial lines; anti-imperialist conflict theorist emphasize global conflict between wealthy and poor nations; etc. in this discourse however, we will expose the positions of various proponents of conflict theory.

Marx's theories about society, economics and politics-collectively known as Marxism-hold that human societies was a two-class system; bourgeoisie (owners of the means of production and proletariat (workers) and progress through call struggle: a conflict between an ownership class that controls production and a dispossessed laboring class that provides the labour for production. He called capitalism the "dictatorship of the bourgeoisie", believing it to be run by the wealthy classes for their own benefit; and he predicted that, like previous socioeconomic systems, capitalism produced internal tensions which would lead to its self-destruction and replacement by a new system: socialism. He argued that class antagonism under capitalism between the bourgeoisie and proletariat would eventuate in the working class' conquest of political power in the form of a dictatorship of the proletariat and eventually a classless society, socialism or communism, a society governed by a free association of producers. This class has a lot to do with possession of personal

property. And it is believed that the exploited would become conscious and unit leading to communism; elimination of class struggle.

Max Weber, writes Haralambos and Holborn (2008) rejected the view that division between owners and non-owners of property was the only significant division between groups in society. Social structure is much more complex than Marx's work suggests. It consists of many different groups, not just two classes with different interest which are not just economic. For example a particular group might strive for greater prestige rather than greater economic power.

Ralph Dahrendorf proceeds to develop a conflict theory based on authority. According to Haralambos and Holborn (2008) authority for Dahrendorf is legitimate power attached to positions, that is the occupation of a particular social role within an organization. For example, the manager in a company or teacher in a classroom has the right to take certain decisions regardless of the wishes of the work force or pupils. Organizations and associations have positions of domination and subjection. In the post-capitalist society Dharendorf recognized that some are able to take decisions and issues commands while others are not which forms the basis of conflict.

The reality of dominant and subordinate positions a situation in which individuals have different interests. Those occupying dominant position have an interest in maintaining a social; structure that gives them more authority than others while those in subordinate position have interest in changing it. Consequently, there are many different quasi-groups or potential groups that could be in conflict with each other. Some of these quasi-groups will join together and act to pursue their common interest. Individuals may belong to a whole variety of different groups, and they are not necessarily confined in all areas of life to subordinate or dominate group as society is composed of "imperatively coordinated group". Thus a person who is in a

position of authority in a company will tend to act to maintain that authority; but if, the person has a subordinate position in a religious organization, they may try to change the organization to increase their own authority. Conflict arises as a result of such clash of interest. Hence Ritzer and Stepnisky (2014) declared. “to the conflict theorists, society is held together by ‘enforced constraints’”, thus some positions in society are delegated power and authority over other the differential distribution of authority invariably becomes the determining factor of systematic social conflict (p.267).

George Simmel wanted to develop a mathematic of society and made a collection of statements about human relationships and social behaviour. He disagreed with Marx that social classes are formed theory and saw society as the sum of individual interaction. The most important relationship is between leaders and followers, superior and subordinates. Super-ordinate and subordinate have a reciprocal relationship yet social action always involves harmony and conflict and love and hatred. Some groups are formed around secrets and are known as secret societies, initiation creates hierarchy. In assessment of Simmel’s conflict theory Coser and Rosenberg (1976) insist that just as the universe needs “love and hate”, that is, attractive and repulsive forces, in order to have any norm at all, so society, too, in order to attain a determinate shape, needs some quantitative ratio of harmony and disharmony, of association and competition of favourable and unfavourable tendencies. For Simmel, society as we know it, is the result of both categories of interaction and conflict is designed to resolve this dualism as a way of achieving unity or consensus since there is no social unit in which divergent and convergent currents among members are not interwoven inseparably, a totally pure harmonious social group is not possible in human society.

Lewis Coser Conflicts also serve a communication function. Prior to conflict, groups may be unsure of their adversary's position, but as a result of conflict, positions and boundaries between groups often become clarified, leaving individuals better able to decide on a proper course of action in relation to their adversary. Conflicts between inter-groups and intra-groups are part of social life. It is part of relationships and is not necessarily a sign of instability. Conflict serves several functions of: (a) leading to social change (b) stimulating innovation and (c) increasing central power during times of war threat. Lewis Coser explored sixteen propositions of conflict through functions and thought that conflict sets boundaries between different groups, brings about unity between individual members of that group and determines boundaries of power. Lewis Coser insists that in a society which seems to be disintegrating, conflict with another society, inter group conflict, may restore the integrative core. Conflict with one groups. Conflicts within a society, intra-group conflict, can bring some ordinarily isolated individuals into an active role. For example, the protest over the Vietnam War motivated many young people to take vigorous roles in American political life for the first time.

For Collins, people live in self-constructed subjective worlds. Other people may have the power to affect, or even control, an individual's subjective experience. Other people frequently try to control the individual, who opposes them. The result is likely to be interpersonal conflict.

In spite of their differences however, all have a model of society as a whole. Conflict theory assumes that human interaction results in conflict, and conflict and change are normal and inevitable in society. Competition over scarce resources (e.g. money, leisure, sexual partners, etc) is part of all social groups. Competition rather than consensus is characteristics of human relationships as resentment and hostility

are constant elements of society. Competition puts society off balance until dominant group gains control and stability through power. If everyone had the resources they needed, conflict would not exist. Inequalities in power and rewards are built into all social structures. Resources are scarce and groups will always compete over these resources. This inequality exists in varying degrees with people having different amounts of resources; hierarchies exist. Macro changes occur as a result of conflict between competing interests rather than through adoption. It is often abrupt and revolutionary rather than evolutionary.

Conflict perspectives use, in one form or another, the notion that there are groups in society that have different interest. In this respect they believe that social arrangement will tend to benefit some groups at the expense of others. Because of the existence of different interest, the potential for, and social groups are persuaded that their interests are not different from those of other groups. Nevertheless, periods of harmony do not last forever and eventually conflicts will return.

By strength here, we mean the benefits, relevance and functions of the conflict theory to humanity in general; and to decision makers and scholars in particular. The strength of the conflict theory is briefly discussed as follows:

The conflict theory helps to ensure collective peace and progress in the society. This is because under the consensus assumption, the powerful and bourgeoisies make use of the laws and rules to exact control over the poor and proletariats. But with the conflict theory, this oppressive status quo would be dethroned while change occurs for collective peace and progress in the society.

In the same vein, the social conflict theory which upholds the inevitability of change in human society maintains that though these theories differ on the nature change envisage; and the processes leading to such change, they all agreed on the

assumption that change is the only route to development or progress in human society. Also, following the fact that in every society, there is always the problem of limited valued good. Scarce resources and their attendant competition over these limited resources, then the conflict theory becomes very relevant as it will ensure the best for the society and the individuals out that scarce valued good.

Conflict theory can be seen as a development that took place, at least in part, in reaction to structural functionalism and as a result of many of the criticisms discussed earlier. It equally provided an alternative to structural functionalism.

Similarly, conflict with one group may serve to produce cohesion by leading to a series of alliances with other groups. For example, conflict with the Arabs has led to an alliance between the United States and Israel. Lessening of the Israeli-Arab conflict might weaken the bonds between Israel and the United States. Also, within a society, conflict can bring some ordinarily isolated individuals into an active role. Conflict also serves a communication function. Prior to conflict, groups may be ensured of their adversary's position, but as a result of conflict, positions and boundaries between groups often become clarified. Conflict also allows the parties to get a better idea of their relative strengths and may well increase the possibility of rapprochement, or peaceful accommodations.

In the words of Anugwom (2009), "The basic problem with conflict theory is that it never succeeded in divorcing itself sufficiently from its structural functional roots. It was more a kind of structural functionalism turned on its head than a truly critical theory of society. (P. 49). Though it attempted to be entirely independent, but it is not.

Also, conflict theory has been attacked for ignoring order and stability. It has also been criticized for being ideologically radical and it is still under developed. As

conflict theory, especially that of Dahrendorf is closely associated with structural functionalism, conflict theory equally suffers from many of the same inadequacies as structural functionalism. They equally suffer from the conceptual and logical problems like vague concepts, tautology, etc.

Another obvious weakness of the conflict theory is that is almost wholly macroscopic, and as a result has little to offer to our understanding of individual thought and action, though this was the major area Randall Collins labored earnestly on. The conflict theory is also weak as it will continue to look out for human faults in order to bring about replacement. This may not ensure stability and continuity as people will always look out for a new pattern even when that new one may not be better.

2.2.3 Functionalism

Functionalism was a dominant social theory in American sociology. It was developed by Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and refined by Talcott Parsons (1902), Haralambos and Holborn (2008). Functionalism views society as a system, that is, as a set of interconnected parts which together form a whole. The basic unit of analysis is society, and its various parts are understood primarily in terms of their relationship to the whole. The early functionalists often drew an analogy between society and an organism such as the human body. They argued that an understanding of any organ in the body, such as the heart or lungs involves an understanding of its relationship to other organs and, in particular, its contribution towards the maintenance of the organism. In the same way, an understanding of any part of society requires an analysis of its relationship to other parts and, most importantly, its contribution to the maintenance of society. Continuing this analogy, Haralambos and Holborn (2008),

held that “functionalist argued that, just as an organism has certain basic needs that must be satisfied if it is to survive, so society has basic needs that must be met if it is to continue to exist” (p. 856). From the above views of Haralambos and Holborn, social institutions such as the family and religion are analyzed as a part of the social system rather than as isolated units. In particular, they are understood with reference to the contributions they make to the system as a whole. For Emile Durkheim, society has a reality of its own over and above the individuals who comprise it. According to Durkheim, (cited by Haralambos and Holborn, 2008):

Members of society are constrained by social facts, by ways of acting, thinking and feeling, external to the individual, and endowed with a power of coercion, by reason of which they control him. Beliefs and moral codes are passed on from one generation to the next and shared by the individuals who make up a society. (p. 858).

From this point of view, it is not the consciousness of the individual that directs behaviour, but common beliefs and sentiments that transcend the individual and shape his or her consciousness. The functionalists have some assumptions which they termed the postulate of functional unity of society. This assumption states that “any part of the social system is functional for the entire system” (Haralambos and Holborn, 2008, p. 861). This implies that all parts of the society are seen to work together for the maintenance and integration of society as a whole. Merton however has a different view. He argued that, particularly in complex, highly differentiated societies, this functional unity is doubtful. He provided the example of religious pluralism to illustrate this point. In a society with a variety of faiths, religion may tend to divide rather than unite. He suggested that functionalist analysis should proceed from the assumptions that any part of society may be functional, dysfunctional or non-

functional. In addition the units for which a particular part is functional, dysfunctional or non-functional must be clearly specified. These units may be individual, groups or society as whole. Thus, poverty may be seen as dysfunctional for the poor, but functional for the non-poor and for society as a whole.

Functionalism begins with the observation that behaviour in society is structured. This means that relationships between members of society are organized in terms of rules which stipulates how people are expected to behave. Rules can be formal (for example, laws) or informal. Informal rules are known as norms. Norms are specific guides to action, which tell you, for example how you are expected to dress and behave at a funeral or at a party. Social relationship is patterned and recurrent because of the existence of rules. Values provide general guidelines for behaviour they provide the overall beliefs about what is good or bad, desirable or undesirable in a society. For example, in Western societies values such as honesty, privacy, ambition and individual achievement are important. Values are translated into more specific directives in terms of norms. The values of privacy turns to a consideration of how the relationship between the different parts of the structure and their relationship to society as a whole. This examination reveals the functions of institutions. At its simplest, function means effects. Thus the function of the family is the effect it has on other parts of the social structure and on society as a whole. In practice, the term function is usually used to indicate the contribution an institution makes to the maintenance and survival of the social system. For example, function of the family is the socialization of new members of the society. This represents an important contribution to the maintenance of society, since order stability and cooperation largely depend on learned shared norms and values.

In determining the functions of various parts of the social structure, functionalists are guided by the following ideas. Societies have certain basic needs or requirements which are sometimes known as functional prerequisites. For example, a means of producing food and shelter may be seen as a functional prerequisite, since without food and shelter members of society could not survive. A system for socializing new members of society may also be regarded as a functional prerequisite, since assumed a number of basic requirements for the survival of society, the next step is to look at the parts of the social structure to see how they meet such functional prerequisites. Thus a major function of the economic system is the production of food and shelter. An important function of the family is the socialization of the new members of the society.

From a functional prerequisite, society is regarded as a system. A system is an entity made up of interconnected and interrelated parts. From this viewpoint, it follows that each part will in some way affect every other part and the system as a whole. It also follows that, if the system is to survive, its various parts must have some degree of fit or compatibility. Thus a functional prerequisite of society involves at least a minimal degree of integration between the parts. Many functionalists argue that this integration is based largely on values by members of society. Thus if the major values of society are expressed in the various parts of the social structure, those parts will be integrated. For example, it can be argued that the value of materialism integrates many parts of the social structure in Western industrial society. The economic system produces a large range of goods, and ever increasing productivity is regarded as an important goal. The educational system is partly concerned with producing the skills and expertise to expand production and increase its efficiency. The family is an important unit of consumption with its steadily rising demand for

players and microwaves. The political system is partly concerned with improving material living standards and raising productivity, to the extent that these parts of the social structure are based on the same values, they may be said to be integrated.

Functionalists try to explain how social life is possible. The theory assumes that a certain degree of order and stability is essential for the survival of social systems. Functionalism is therefore concerned with explaining the origin and maintenance of order and stability in society. Many functionalists see shared values as the key to this explanation: value consensus integrates the various parts of society, it forms the basis of social unity or social solidarity, since individual will tend to identify and feel kinship with those who share the same values as themselves value consensus provide the foundations for cooperation, since common values produces common goals. Members of society will tend to cooperate in pursuit of goals that they share.

Thus social institutions such as the family and religion are analyzed as a part of the social system rather than as isolated units. In particular, they are understood with reference to the contributions they make to the system as a whole.

The fundamental question is; how does functionalism 'function' in the philosopher's and psychologist's respective logical space? Functionalism sought to fill that gap without dragging in the phenomenal/subjective, which sometimes seems to the objectively-minded (other people besides you, for instance) to be what Fodor, in a slightly different context, calls "Christmas in Dickens, ontologically speaking". Functionalism stated that mental states cause action. The mental state that propositions its respective owner with the information that it is raining will cause the behaviour of reaching for his Rain coat. Linking the causal role of mental states in the individual's mental economy with his behaviour allows a foothold into solving

Bermudez's interface problem; commonsense psychological explanations are a species of causal explanation. The distinction between personal and sub personal, beloved of the autonomy theorist, is collapsed. At least for the philosophical functionalist. For the philosophically-minded theorist, the causal link of mental states with behaviour is explanatory.

For the psychological functionalist, things do not go so easy. One 'realizer' may not be enough. It seems too simple. Bermudez quotes William Lycan who contrasts our scientific way understanding of nature to that of philosophy, which tends to stick to the very abstract. A philosopher may be happy with monism (or may not), but even a prior gift of monism, should it be under our Christmas trees this year, does not give us a scientific understanding of nature; we still need recourse to multiple levels of explanation (physical, chemical, biological, etc) long before we get up the chain to the animal that psychology studies. Explanations may need to nest within nests at many levels within the nervous system (from the molecular to the atomic or perhaps even subatomic, for example). He or she may point, in fact, to the dearth of laws within the discipline of psychology itself. Further, a cognitive scientist may not even be interested at the level of human behaviour, so to speak. He or she is likely to be more interested in how hut the brain qua brain behaves, in the basic structure of cognition proper. (in articulating this distinction, Bermudez may be unaware of the ideological implications; to play develops advocate, so to speak, the disembodied immortal soul of Karl Popper might use this somewhat Kantian distinction against its inventors to argue that all the empirical work at the 'psychological' level can never equate with metaphysically identifying neural states with mental states: that metaphysical work is the job of the philosopher-ontologist upon which the psychologist has no methodological right to trespass.

So the psychological functionalist will tend to be more skeptical about the nature of the laws of common-sense psychology and how they ‘translate’ or ‘realize’ in the human nervous system. Perhaps to counter this sort of criticism, Cummins goes after the Deductive Nomological model of sub-sumption under natural law posited by the logical positivist in the 20th Century. Cummins argues that laws in psychology tend to be more like *explanandum* that explains, that they are things that need to be explained, rather than the things that do work of explanation. In psychology, such laws are there almost conceived of, and even called, effects. Scientific or cognitive psychology or neuroscience tend not to produce laws, per se, but effects and to study psychological ‘capacities’ such as imagination or reason by breaking them down into their functional parts. How is imagination or reason built or structured in the brain? Cummins sees these faculties as kinds of complex dispositional properties that can be further broken down or taken apart at the psychological level into their constituent parts-which may not be wholly linear or compatible. Here Cummins gives the example of solving a multiplication problem in tow very different ways; Bermudez gives the example of a gyroscope in an aircraft that can be constructed in a very different manner yet produce the same effect. It is interesting, to me at least, that Cummins’ example deals with abstract concepts that take place in the mind (addition, multiplication) while Bermudez cites a physical object that can literally be taken apart in physical space; the concepts of number and multiplication admit of no physical decomposition. I think we are tempted to say it is the capacity of reason that solves mathematical problems, but here it seems like it would always be more reasonable to take the shorter path (standard partial products algorithm) as opposed to the path of successive addition, which functions just as well when we look at the results, but

expends more time at least, if not mental energy, in the process. Cummins thinks this is to confuse the concepts of 'effects' and 'capacities'.

One of the strengths of functionalism as a social theory in this research is that it asserts that there are purposes for social conditions or facts. For example, under a functionalist view point, the newspaper deliverer and the sewer worker all contribute to the function of the entire unit-without serving these purposes, the social structure would not function properly.

Another strength of functionalism is that it looks at the whole society in other words it's a macro level structural theory. It doesn't just look at parts of society as an action theory does. Also strength is that as it uses the body as a means to describe the different parts of society. For example the brain would be the politics and the family the heart etc. this further gives weight to the fact that it looks at the whole of society but makes it easier to understand sociologically and shows visually how all the different functions of society link and work together. Functionalism therefore is considered vital for the smooth running of the state.

The central weakness of functionalism as a sociological theory after the end of the Second World War became its inordinate emphasis on order and stability. The world had become characterized by conflict and instability and the functionalist view of all things as serving some positive purpose was widely discredited. In addition, functionalism was rooted in a strong positivist tradition, which existentialist thought and, later, post-modernism called out of order. Thus, at both epistemological, ideological and methodological levels, functionalism went into decline and disrepute in the 21st century. Its main strengths are found in the Parsonian school, which incorporated three of the four main theoretical tendencies in sociological theory: i.e. constructionist, systems and authoritarian perspectives. This incorporation of so many

elements made it strong and applicable to diverse social situations. Despite Merton's attempts at bringing in "dysfunctions", however, the central weakness of functionalism remains its inability to grapple effectively with the idea and reality of conflict.

Another weakness of this perspective, however, is that some could arguably assert that poverty serves a function in such a society. You can make this argument, but as Durkheim saw "function", he was much more optimistic and may have argued that poverty was more a product of "anomie" than actually serving a function.

Also, functionalism assumes that there is consensus: that everyone in the structure holds the same norms and values; that we all essentially believe in and work for the same thing. Many theorists take issue with this component and argue that Western society is more accurately characterized as groups of people in a society competing for resources, wealth, and power. More importantly, these groups do not all believe the same thing (in fact, many are counter-culture) and are thus in conflict with each other. Many conflict theorists would take the pessimistic view expressed earlier that poverty serves a function in a society.

Again, functionalism is a macro level theory. For example as it doesn't look at small groups or individuals in society that it may miss crucial factors that cause sociological points of interest. Also as functionalism is also known as the consensus theory that it doesn't look at the inequalities that Marxism looks at such as exploitation, conflict between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat the two main classes according to Marx. Functionalism looks at consensus and harmony in society and doesn't look at the other side of the coin.

With regard to this study, the researcher argues that domestic violence against women plays both functional and dysfunctional roles. It could serve as a way of

making women obey, respect and submit to their husband. It could also make women detest their marriage and seek for divorce. Therefore Robert Merton's theory is *ad rem* in this study.

2.2.4 Anomie

A French sociologist, Emile Durkheim introduced the concept of anomie in his book *'The Division of Labour in Society'*, published in 1893. He used anomie to describe a condition of deregulation that was occurring in society. This meant that rules on how people ought to behave with each other were breaking down and thus people did not know what to expect from one another (Onwuzurumba, 2012). Anomie, according to online dictionary, is a state where norms (expectations on behaviours) are confused, unclear or not present. It is normlessness, Durkheim felt, that led deviant behaviour. Anomie thus refers to a breakdown of social norms and it is a condition where norms no longer control the activities of members in society.

For Robert Merton cited by Haralambos and Holborn (2008), when rules cease to operate, a situation of normlessness or anomie results. In this situation of 'anything goes', norms no longer direct behaviour, and deviance is encouraged. He maintained however that individuals will respond to a situation of anomie in different ways, their reaction will be shaped by their position in the social structure. From the above view of Merton, the researcher noted that Merton links anomie with deviance and thereby is arguing that disjunctions between culture and structure have the dysfunctional consequences of leading to deviance within society.

Furthermore, Ritzer and Stepnisky (2014), said that anomie occurs "when there is an acute disjunction between the cultural norms and goals and the socially structured capacities of members of the group to act in accord with them" (p.258).

That is because of their positions in the social structure of society, some people are unable to act in accord with normative values under such circumstances, anomie can be said to exist, and as a result, there is tendency toward deviant behaviour. In this context, deviance often takes the form of alternative, unacceptable, and sometimes illegal means of achieving economic success. For instance, becoming a drug dealer or a prostitute in order to achieve economic success is an example of deviance generated by the disjunction between cultural values and socio-structural means of attaining those values.

Children who are formed or trained under this state of anomie will grow up thinking that it is the normal way of doing things and such children are likely to perpetuate domestic violence against their wives or partners.

Of all the above theories, the researcher sees conflict theory as most appropriate in analyzing domestic violence against women in Nigeria. Central to the idea of violence is the fact that various positions within society have different amounts of authority. Authority does not reside in individuals but in positions Ritzer and Stepnisky (2014).

Authority always implies both super ordination and subordination. Those who occupy positions of authority are expected to control the subordinates, that is, they dominate because of the expectations of those who surround them, not because of their psychological characteristics. Since authority resides in position, a person of authority in one setting does not necessarily hold a position of authority in another setting. Similarly, a person in a subordinate position in one group may be in a super ordinate group in another. In a family setting, the view of Dahrendorf that authority within each association is dichotomous is correct. A woman of super ordinate position in her area of livelihood, may be office or market place is subordinate to her husband

in the family. The husband may even be a subordinate to his wife in the work place. When this is obtainable, the inability to manage the conflicting positions will always lead to conflict which in most cases culminate in violence against women.

2.2.5 Patriarchal Theory

The word patriarchal literally means the rule of the father or the patriarch, and originally it was used to describe a specific type of 'male-dominated family' - the large household of the patriarch which included women, junior men, children, slave, and domestic servants, all under the rule of this dominant male. Bhasin (2006) averred that, now it is used more generally to refer to male domination, to the power relationship by which men dominate women, and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways.

Patriarchy refers to the male domination both in public and private spheres. Patriarchy is a social system in which males hold primary power; males predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property, and in the domain of the family, fathers or father - figures hold authority over women and children. It implies the social institution of male domination or superiority and entails female subordination of inferiority.

The concept of patriarchy is defined by different thinkers in different ways. Miitchell (1997) uses the word patriarchy to refer to "kingship system in which men exchange women" (P. 24). Walby (1990) also sees patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women. Walby explains patriarchy as a system because it helps us to reject the notion of biological determinism (which says that men and women are naturally different because of their

biology or bodies and, are, therefore assigned different roles) or “the notion that every individual man is always in a dominant position and every woman in a subordinate one.

Patriarchal theory in its wider understanding, means the manifestation and institutionalization of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance over women in society in general. It implies that “men hold power in all the important institutions of society and women are deprived of access to such power. Thus, Jagger and Rosenberg (1984) add that patriarchy describes the institutionalized system of male dominance. To this, one can carefully understand patriarchy as a set of social relations between men and women, which have a material base, and which, through hierarchical, establish or create independence and solidarity among men that enable them to dominate women. Patriarchal ideology exaggerates biological differences between men and women, making certain that men always have the dominant or masculine roles, and women always have the subordinate or feminine ones. This ideology is so powerful that men are usually able to secure the apparent consent of the very women they oppress. In sustaining the above claim, Millett (1977) asserts that they do this “through institutions such as the academy, the church, and the family, each of which justifies and reinforces women’s subordination to men” (p.35). Patriarchal theory is characterized by power, dominance, hierarchy and competition.

Regarding the existence and origin of patriarchy, the Igbo Cosmology holds that men are born to dominate and women to be subordinate. This is why Nmah (2003) writes that:

Though patriarchy takes different forms in different cultures, its fundamental belief is the same. The man is superior by nature, born to rule in all works of life; the woman inferior, born to be ruled and to serve the man. (p.1).

From the above, one can deduce that violent acts against women in Nigeria, Igboland in particular could have emanated as a result of patriarchal theory. This goes on to confirm what Lim (1997) sees patriarchy as, to him, it is the system of male domination and female subordination in economy, society and culture that has characterized much of human history to the present day. Patriarchal institutions and social relations are responsible for the inferior or secondary status of women.

It is very sacrosanct to write at this juncture that religion (the church) which is the main focus of almost every Igbo society in regards to cultural way of life, has also in its teachings propagates patriarchism. There is no gain-saying that these teachings of the church have almost shaped the patterns or structural ways of living or existence among the Igbo people.

The church in its teachings extols patriarchism in the following ways, which in turn have uphold patriarchism in our present society. These are some of the tenets of Biblical patriarchy:

- ❖ God reveals Himself as masculine, not feminine.
- ❖ God ordained distinct gender roles for man and woman as part of the Created Order.
- ❖ A husband and father is the head of his household, a family leader, provider and protector.

- ❖ Male leadership in the home carries over into the Church, only men are permitted to hold the ruling office in the Church. Therefore, a God honouring Society will likewise prefer male leadership in Civil and other spheres.
- ❖ Since the woman was created as a helper to her husband, as the bearer of children and as a “keeper at home”, the God-ordained and proper sphere of dominion for a wife is the household and that which is connected with the home.
- ❖ From the above biblical observations, biblical patriarchy has in one way or the other has structured the status and position of women in our present society, which in turn has not gone down well to the dignity and personality of women in the Igbo Society.

In conclusion, patriarchy is a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways. The subordination that are experienced at daily level, regardless of the class we might belong to, takes various forms; discrimination, disregard, insult, control, exploitation, oppression, violence-within the family, at the place of work, in society. For instance, a few examples are illustrated here to represent a specific form of discrimination and a particular aspect of patriarchy. Such as, son preference (male chauvinism), discrimination against girls in food distribution, burden of household work on women and young girls, lack of freedom, wife battering, male control over women and girls, sexual harassment at work place, lack of inheritance or property rights for women, male control over women’s bodies and secularity, no control over fertility or reproductive rights.

Finally, the norms and practices that define women as inferior to men, impose controls on them, are present everywhere in our families, social relations, religious laws, schools, textbooks, media, factories, offices. This patriarchy is called the sum of

the kind of male domination we see around women all the time. This is the reason Andersen and Taylor (2004) opined that patriarchy is the main cause of violence against women, especially in Igbo Society.

2.2.6 Feminist Theory

The term feminist theory is an invention of the academic branch of the mid and late twentieth century feminist movement. In the words of Edgar and Marie (1992), feminism refers to systematic ideas that define women's place in society and culture, including the depiction of women. The theory is concerned to understand and explain the subordinate position of women in society by reference to gender differences and specifically in term of a theory of patriarchy. This theory according to Nicholas, Stydon and Bryan (2000) point out that women are systematically disadvantaged in modern society and advocates equal opportunities for men and women. In the words of Pence and Paymar (1993), Feminist theory focuses on the societal messages that sanction a male's use of violence and aggression throughout life, and the proscribed gender roles that dictate how men and women should behave in their relationship to one another. They see the root cause of intimate partner violence as the outcome of living in a society that condones aggressive behavior perpetrated by men, while socializing women to be non-violent.

Feminist theory was used in this research to demonstrate clearly violence against women, especially in Igboland. This theory has placed women to accept a position given to them by their male counterpart. For instance, Nmah (2003) says that in Igbo Cosmology:

A girl's life is essentially a preparation for marriage, which she receives through informal education. Mothers have to remind their daughters that

certain types of behavior cannot be tolerated from them. “You are not a boy but a girl. You must marry one day!” (p.116).

In the other way round, feminist theory according to Andersen and Taylor (2004) refers to analyses that seek to understand the position of women in society for the purpose of bringing about liberating social changes. Also, Giddens, Duneier and Appelbaum (2004) add that men are responsible for and benefit from the exploitation of women. According to them, the analysis of patriarchy, that is, the systematic domination of females by males is of Central concern to feminist theory. Radical feminists think that change cannot come about through the existing system because the system is controlled and dominated by men. Radical feminists see the state as male and it cannot be the source of change on women’s behalf. To this, almost every traditional Igbo society is patriarchal, and a woman’s place within this scheme decidedly subordinate. Institutionalization of this inequality remains common in African Customary Law. For example, under most African Systems (Igbo) of Customary Law, women have no right to inherit from their husbands, are not regarded as sharing ownership of marital property, are excluded from ownership of land, and almost without remedy upon divorce.

Although there is no one answer to this dilemma, changing the social order which teaches a woman that she is incapable of even small decision and confines her to waiting for her husband to lead the way in all that she does, must be our primary focus. Finally, it’s the view of the researcher that change will eventually come and will start gaining grounds, but will be evolutionarily carried out.

2.2.7 Socialization and Learning Theory

This theory according to Jasinski (2001), asserts that individuals learn how to behave through both experience of and exposure to violence social learning theory deals with the intergenerational transmission of violence. A large body of research extending across academic disciplines has documented the importance of childhood socialization in the development of family-violent offenders. Dunlap, Golud, Johnson and Wesley (2002) echoed that abusive parents provide children with a classroom for learning specific forms of abusive behaviours, particular attitudes, and distinct cognitions that justify violence against women. Over the years, researchers have expanded application of basic learning principles to a broad repertoire of behaviours.

The following paragraphs explain and provide examples of the principles of modeling (social imitation) and conditioning (modification of behavior), including the overarching principles of reinforcement and punishment. A widely accepted account of how socialization plays a role in family and social violence against women hinges on social learning principles. To this, Bandura (1977) averred that the core of this theory is a process called modeling, in which people learn social and cognitive behaviours by simply observing and imitating others.

The popularity of social learning theory rests on two major lines of evidence to this, Bandura and Ross (1961) add that first, a wealth of laboratory experiments with humans lends strong validation to the claim that aggression can be learned through modeling. The second research according to Widom and Maxfield (2001) also has shown that violence tends to be perpetuated from one generation to the next. With the above findings or observations, Carr and VanDeusen (2002), Green (1998), and Miller and Bukva (2001), all attested that abuse during childhood is associated

with later dating violence, marital violence, and the abused person's eventual abuse of his or her own children. The models of both victim and perpetrator's behavior provide social learning opportunities. As applied specifically to family violence, the observation of violence example, father hits mother for mouthing off") and reinforcement of violence within a social context (that is, mother "shutting up") teaches children exactly how to be abusive and how to be victims.

Furthermore, in addition, to social learning theory, a third type of learning, operant conditioning involves the individual's understanding of the relationship between his or her actions and their consequences. Some scholars theorize that individuals learn to be violent through operant conditioning (which shapes their behavior in a step-by-step fashion). An obvious application of operant conditioning is a perpetrators use of violence (actions) to coerce a victims compliance (consequences).

Victim's compliance reinforces (rewards) the perpetrator's aggression. To this Felson (1992) said that when abusive persons get what they want by mistreating others. They are likely to become even more violent. Similarly, when abusive persons are not punished for their violent behavior, they gain further opportunities to hone their aggressive skills. From the social learning perspective, children observe the consequences of the behavior of significant others and learning which behaviours, even socially inappropriate ones, achieve desired results without drawing a negative sanction. When inappropriate behaviours are modeled for young children especially if reinforced elsewhere such as in the media-these patterns of interaction can become entrenched and will be replicated in other social interactions.

Although the social learning theory explanation for family violence and violence against women, has many proponents, some skeptics find this explanation to be overstated or too narrow, and others believe that the research thus far has had methodological shortcomings to sustain the above assertion, Mihalic and Elliot (1997) averred that; also counting against this theory is the fact that many, if not most, individuals exposed to violent family models do not go on to emulate abusive behaviours later in life.

Interventions based upon the social learning perspective are, therefore, rooted in efforts to prevent the exposure of children to negative role models and the promotion of skill development in those who have been so exposed. To some extent, the researcher sees social learning theory as one of the reasons for VAW.

2.2.8 Deterrence Theory

From a social control stand point, deviant behavior is common when it does not engender many social or legal cost. According to Hirschi (1969), humans are held in check by their stakes in conformity, that is, by their commitments to conventional goals, involvement in conventional activities, attachment to significant others, and beliefs that violence is wrong. Sherman, Smith, Schmidt and Rogan (1992) applied a deterrence framework to interpret their distinctive finding that arrest reduced wife assault only in men who were employed (that is, men who had a stake in conformity).

Deterrence theory is the backbone of the criminal justice system. According to this theory, intensifying the legal consequences for a given “anti-social behavior” should lessen its frequency. Many logicians argue that the reason violence against women is so common is that the potential Costs of Committing a gender based violent

act are almost non-existent. Arrest and prosecution are unlikely, and incarceration or other punishments are even less probable.

Contradicting deterrence theory, Gondolf (2000) opined that, research evidence has shown that criminal justice interventions with batterers are not necessarily effective.

2.3 Empirical Studies

There are various studies on domestic violence against women in Nigeria. In his study on African women sentenced by tradition, Chikezie (2012) observed that:

There is no blanket approach fighting violence against women. What works in one country may not lead to desired results in another. Each nation must devise its own strategy. But universal truth applicable to all countries, cultures, and communities is that violence against women is never acceptable, never excusable and never tolerable. (p. 15).

He concluded that violence against women and girls is a major obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of gender equality, development and peace. violence against women both violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. Gender based violence such as domestic violence, sexual abuse and exploitations, international trafficking in women and children, forced prostitution and sexual harassment, as well as violence against women resulting from cultural prejudice, racism, and racial discrimination, xenophobia, pornographic cleansing, armed conflict, foreign occupation, religious extremism and terrorism are in compatible with the dignity and worth of human person and must be combated and eliminated. (Chikezie, 2012). In a similar studies,

Angelou, (1989) cited by Udo, (1999) in a forward to "I Dream a World". Revealed the understanding and aspirations of all black women thus:

They knew the burden of feminine sensitivities suffocated by masculine responsibilities. They wrestled with the inescapable horror of bearing pregnancies which could only result in issuing more chattels into the rapacious maw of slavery. They knew the grief of enforced separations of mates who were not theirs to claims, for the men themselves did not have legal possession of their own bodies. (p.40).

It is interesting to note from the above, women's sensitivity to their children is a rail hand; a band in which the men are included. One wonders therefore whether the Nigerian feminine gender does not detect the frailty. It seems to the researcher that a change is better fostered not by muscle power tussle but by effective female power of persuasion.

Similarly, Lenore Walker (cited by Gama, 1991), who has conducted research on the battered woman, proposed that the theory of learned helplessness describes why women remain in abusive relationship. Her theory is that the battered woman's response to her abuse comes out of a sense of helplessness or a sense that has no control over the abuse, even though in reality she may have control. Her belief or her expectation that she has no control is the crucial factor in the learned helplessness response to abuse. According to walker, (cited by Garma, 1991), "Once we believe we cannot control what happens to us, it is difficult to believe we can ever influence it, even if later we experience a favourable outcome" (p.130). from Walker's research above, the researcher observes that a sense of helplessness is learned when the woman comes to believe that no matter what she does to try to avoid the battering or to control the batter's anger, the battering still occur. The women may attempt to initiate

problem-solving techniques to assuage the batterer's anger, but to no avail. With each failure, subtle changes occur in the woman's psyche until all motivation to avoid the battering seems to disappear, and the woman becomes more passive in her response to the batterers' anger. Case studies of domestic violence carried out by Gender and Development Action (GADA) show that the abuser often believes that there is a justifiable reason for his or her action. This belief in "righteous anger" is usually strong in cases of domestic violence, especially wife battering. And the bad news is that many law enforcement agents tend to share the view that women invite physical violations by what they do or fail to do as daughters, wives and mothers whose behaviour must at all times mirror societal values. In other words, there is always the tendency to blame the victim, as it is the case in many other aspects of discrimination or suppression of women. Corroborating the above, Amnesty International (2005) report on Nigeria (cited by, Abayomi, A., Kolawole, and Olabode, 2013) indicates that:

On a daily basis, women are beaten and ill-treated for supposed transgressions, raped and even murdered by members of their family. In some cases, vicious acid attacks leave them with horrific disfigurements. Such violence is too frequently excused and tolerated in communities and not denounced. Husbands, partners and fathers are responsible for most of the violence against women. (pp. 53-60).

In Nigerian society, violence against women and girls cannot be ignored though it is being ignored. One out of three of all women and girls aged 15-24 have been a victim of violence. Women both married and unmarried have been subjected to vicious attacks from men. Rape, sexual insult and assault, brutalization and victimization, domestic violence on girls and women have in recent time been on the

increase in Nigeria, with victims embarrassed to report such incidences to the right agencies for justice. Buttressing the amnesty report, the Deputy Director of Amnesty International's Africa Program, Stephane Mikala, (cited by Abayomi, A., Kolawole, and Olabode, 2013) once said:

On a daily basis, Nigerian women are beaten, raped and even murdered by members of their families for supposed transgressions, which can range from not having meals ready on time to visiting family members without their husband's permission. Husbands, partners and fathers are responsible for most of the violence (pp.53-60).

Records have shown that between 50 percent and two thirds of Nigerian women are subjected to domestic violence in their homes. In Nigeria, sixty-five percent or more educated women are in this horrible situation as compared to their low income counterparts, (55 percent). Unfortunately, a staggering 97.2 percent of the abused women do not report the crime to the authorities (Olorounbi, 2012). A similar research carried out in 2013 to assess domestic violence among women in Ogun State, although this was not under our scope of study however, it showed that women experienced incidence of violence with property. According to Villarreal (2000), access to productive resources such as land, credit, technical know-how, knowledge, technology transfer is strongly determined along gender lines, with men frequently having more access to all these than women but with the death of the man, the wife may be left without the access she has gained through her husband's clan; and her livelihood can be immediately threatened. According to Himanshu and Panda (2007), it is estimated that one in every five women faces some form of violence during her lifetime and, in some cases leading to serious injury or death. Violence against women and the girl-child at home and at work place has taken alarming trend and

different dimensions. It is equally a major threat to social and economic development (UN, 2000). It is also the most widespread and socially tolerated way in which women and girls are denied their basic right DFID (2007). The preliminary report of the special reporter on violence against women UNIFEM (1994) argues that women's vulnerability to violence is determined by their sexuality, resulting for example in rape, or female genital mutilation (FGM). This arises from their relationships to some men and from membership of groups where violence against women is a means of humiliation directed at specific groups (e.g. mass rape in conflict situations). Violence against women is reinforced by doctrines of privacy and the sanctity of the family, and by legal codes which link individual family or community honour to women's sexuality. However, the greatest cause of violence against women is government tolerance and inaction. Its most significant consequences is fear, which inhibits women's social and political participation (UNDP, 1997 as cited by Watch and Reeves (2000) violence against women and girls occur on a vast scale, with sexual violence playing a prominent role. Sexual violence often appears in literature but its definition is broad and the terms is used to describe rape by acquaintance, or strangers, by authority figures (including husband), incest, child sexual abuse, pornography, sexual harassment and homicide Gordon and Crehan (1998). Sexual violence describes the deliberate use of sex as a weapon to demonstrate power over, and to inflict pain and humiliation upon another human being. Therefore, sexual violence does not only include direct physical contact between perpetrator and victim, it may also include threat, humiliation, and intimidation Gordon and Crehan (1998). The loss of homes, income, families, and social support deprives women and girls the capacity to generate income as a result of which they may be forced into transactional sex in order to maintain certain level of livelihood/comfort (or those of their husband

or children), escape to safety, or gain access to shelter or services (including the distribution of food).

Again, World Health Organization (WHO, 2014) multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women, report findings revealed the prevalence of intimate partner violence and its association with women's physical, mental, sexual and reproductive health. Data are included on non-partner violence, sexual abuse during childhood and forced first sexual experience. Information is also provided on women's responses to: whom do women turn to and whom do they tell about the violence in their lives? Do they leave or fight back? Which services do they use and what response do they get? Data from the report show that violence against women is widespread and demands a public health response.

2.4 Summary of Literature Review

Violence against women is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. It can include physical, enslavement, sexual, psychological and economic abuse, and it cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It takes place in the home, on the streets, in schools, the workplace, in farm fields, refugee camps, during conflicts and crises. It has many manifestations ranging from the most universally prevalent forms of domestic and sexual violence, to harmful practices, abuse during pregnancy and the so-called honour killings etc. it is equally an off-shoot and most times a demonstration of power by men as they struggle to assert their acclaimed position as heads of their households.

This review has been able to trace the meaning of domestic violence from the point of view of various scholars. The review also discussed the various sociological theories that are used in the study. It x-rayed the various studies and works carried out to establish the existence and the prevalence of domestic violence against women in Nigeria. From the views of scholars and reports reviewed, there are various forms of domestic violence against women and they include any act of gender based violence that results in or likely to result in physical, sexual, or psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in public or private life.

CHAPTER THREE

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IMO STATE

Violence against women takes many different forms, manifested in a continuum of multiple interrelated and sometimes recurring forms. It can include physical, sexual, psychological/emotional violence, and economic abuse and exploitation, experienced in a range of settings, from private to public and in today's globalized world, transcending national boundaries. Adewole (2002) undoubtedly argues that Nigerian (Igbo) women and girls are no doubt marginalized as a result of traditional and religious practices, which impinges on their development. He went on to say that in spite of various moves by government, Non-governmental organization, churches and programmes enunciated by the UN for their empowerment and social upliftment, women are still greatly disadvantaged in many respects. Davies (1999) corroborates Adewole by saying that women are enslaved in a circle of poverty and they suffer from neglect, discrimination and exploitation. They are also subjected to different forms of violence by their male counterparts.

For the sake of this research work, forms of violence against women in Igboland shall be discoursed in four forms, namely: cultural violence, Domestic violence, religious violence and finally, socio-economic cum political violence.

3.1 History of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

History of violence against women and children in Imo State is difficult to trace. Some say they are culturally induced. This may not be totally correct because

every society is culturally homogeneous and do everything to promote peace, unity, progress and development in the society.

Our historical resume will be analytical so as to bring out reality of the harmful cultural practices that have negative effects on people, institutions, and relationships in Imo State in particular and Nigeria in general.

The consensus among scholars such as Lee (2003), Anderson and Taylor (2004), Giddens (2004) and Nnadi (2012) see the origin of violence against women and children lies in men's control over women's bodies. Men see violence against women in the form of sexual assault, rape, wife beating, and other forms of abuse as mechanism that men use to assert their power and authority in society.

According to Davies (1999), women are enslaved in a circle of poverty and they suffer from neglect, discrimination and exploitation. They are also subjected to different forms of violence by their male counterparts. Some historians believe that the history of violence against women is tied to the history of women being viewed as property and a gender role assigned to be subservient to men and also other women (Harvey and Gow, 1994). The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) states that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.

3.2 Types of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

There are different forms of violence against women in Igboland. Of specifics include cultural violence, widowhood practices, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), harmful delivery practices, food taboo and early girl child marriage.

3.2.1 Cultural Violence

In some parts of Imo State, there is a thriving tradition of abuse of women and denial of their fundamental human rights. To this, Onyeukwu (2004) asserts that gender imbalance permeates every facet of Nigerian Society and comes in several forms especially through Culture. All these forms of violence against women deprive them of their fundamental human rights, which Rocha (1998) explained as:

It does not matter what race you are. It does not matter whether you are a man or woman. It does not matter what language you speak, what your religion is, what your political opinions are, what country you come from or who your family is. It does not matter whether you are rich or poor. It does not matter what part of the world you come from, whether yours is a Kingdom or a republic. These rights and freedoms are meant to be enjoyed by everyone (p.5).

Rocha's understanding of human rights is in sharp contrast when scrutinized on Nigerian Women, Igbo women and girl child in particular. These rights, to some extent are not fully given and enjoyed by Igbo women, and these are as a result of some traditional or cultural beliefs that deny them these rights or privileges.

In Igbo Society for instance, there is this thought that every woman is supposed to consider motherhood as the principal purpose of her existence. She is supposed to produce Children, cook, mend, wash clothes and take care of men and be subordinate to male authority. Nwakaeze (2010) corroborates the above view by

saying that “even in the face of modernization, most people still hold on to the view that the woman’s place should be in the kitchen and therefore it is nontraditional for women to engage in paid jobs outside the home” (p. 499). In the same vein Oganwa (1996) echoes that in Igboland, by culture, women are expected to play second fiddle, take low status jobs. She is excluded from positions of authority and infact relegated to the background as Second Class Citizen. She is further brain washed by a culture of superior male dominance. This is why Gerda (1986) had upheld in her study that women were socialized, indoctrinated and coerced into co-operating with the patriarchal system.

In addition, Okemgbo (2002) reiterates that among the Igbo of Imo State, Nigeria, the position of women predisposes them to various acts of gender based violence. The Igbo socio-cultural environment degrades womanhood and exposes them to the control of the men. The family authority structure clearly favours men who take major decisions affecting the household without much reference to the women. He concluded by saying that the socio-cultural dynamics of the Igbo expose their women to a lot of abuse by their male counterpart.

In order to elaborate on the traditional forms of violence against women in Nigeria, especially the Igbo women, there is need to discuss some of the harmful cultural practices’ as promulgated by the tradition. These include, widowhood practices (WP), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), child marriage, Harmful Delivery Practices (HDP), land tenure system and right to inheritance, male chauvinism.

3.2.2 Widowhood Practices

Okodo (2006) sees widowhood as the state of a man or woman whose spouse has died. So widowhood concerns both the man and the woman. This research work studies the widowhood of women as it regards to their human rights. In Ine (2012), a

widow is a married woman who becomes single as a result of the death of her husband.

A woman becomes in widow (*isi mkpe*) when her husband dies. As a result, she is addressed as *nwanyi isi mkpe* (a woman without a head, the deceased husband being the head, and this labeling justifies her widowhood status. At her husband's death, the rites of passage associated with widowhood practices begin. For example, the ritual practices accorded the dead varies according to the status of the male deceased, but culture demands, irrespective of the status of the deceased that the wife goes into traumatic wailing immediately, beating her chest, flinging around her arms and falling down, and only to get up to repeat the cycle again and again until other women surround her immediately and restrain her and force her to sit down on the ground where they sit around her to commiserate with her.

Among the Igbo, this kind of bitter wailing is expected to go on until the deceased is buried. Sustaining this observation, Basden (1966) held that, the wife is expected to enact a wail or two every morning between the hours of 5:00 and 6:00 am for upwards of four days or more. In addition, Basden averred that she was also compulsorily expected to wail every morning of a feast day and recount to the hearing of her neighbours what her husband usually did for her on an occasion such as this. Okoye (1995) describes the mood of the bereaved person as "grief". The bereaved woman suffers insurably because of the loss and the addition of the responsibilities of the dead one to those being shouldered by the living persons.

Widowhood practices are meted out against women in various parts of Igbo societies. There are diverse cultures in Igboland as a result of differences in cultural backgrounds, but none of these cultures makes the life of the widow pleasant. Once the man dies, various relatives and non-relatives now have the audacity to trespass on

the land and other inheritances left by the man for his wife and children. Writing also on the plight of widows, Obioma (2011) observed the pathetic state of Mrs. Getrude Melo, a widow. According to Obioma, Melo was discriminated against and subjugated to all kinds of ill treatments even by her deceased siblings. The siblings sold everything they had in Lagos thereby rendering Melo with her two sons homeless.

In sustaining the above statements, in regards to the de-humanization meted out to widows, in an interview, (Tell, October 10, 2005) Bismar Adah, a widow of late Major Adah of the ill-fated C-10 Jet that crashed at Ejigbo (Lagos, Nigeria) in 1993 remarked thus: widowhood is not something any woman would pray for. It is a terrible thing; it is a terrible stigma. The first shocker of my life after my husband's death was from my in-laws. When it happened, people were going to look for their relations, their children's children in the barracks. But my own in-laws went to Lagos to look for property to inherit. Thereafter, many things happened. I was taken to the highest authority in my place where I was told that women are not supposed to inherit property. To this, Ezekwesili (1996) asserted that women were harshly treated and unfairly labeled.

Corroborating, Charles Ogueri, a Pastor with the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) at a suburb in Lagos, also contended in Obioma (2011) that:

It is crazy out there in Igboland because the kinsmen of the deceased jumped at these widows and take everything that belongs to them and their children without a second thought on how they will cope. Today, landlords are trying to sleep with some of these widows in exchange for house rent. Recently, overheard a widow saying her landlord wanted to sleep with her in exchange for her rent, but who knows if she has not succumbed. (p. 79).

To the above observations, National Commission for Women (1992), asserts that harmful widowhood practices are regarded as infringement of the fundamental human rights of women, and a reflection of the existence of gender structures of domination and inequality. Widows in Igboland are subjected to a number of cultural taboos and practices, which are overwhelmingly oppressive and dehumanizing. In related development, Obioma (2011) argued that widows are forced to marry their husband's brothers (widow inheritance). In affirmation, Pitting (1983) adds that for a young woman whose husband is late a remarriage is practically mandatory or to marry a husband's brother or a co-wife's eldest Son or any other inlaw.

The widow may also be required, to sleep on bare floor, eat from broken dishes, assume uncomfortable and unnatural sitting postures and neglect some personal and body hygiene. Among some parts of Igbo ethnic group, a widow is forced to shave hair, sit in a position where she would be looking at the body of her husband laid in state; overnight, until it is taken away for burial; not to sleep on bed throughout the mourning period, drink and eat in secrecy; not to eat from food items provided for her husband funeral ceremonies; to accept a substitutes husband, if still of child bearing and not to become pregnant otherwise during the period of mourning; not to talk aloud or travel beyond a certain distance during the mourning period. These discriminatory practices are not applied to men at all. In fact men have it very easy. They have a field day. Some have actually confessed of spotting their subsequent wives from among the girls who came to sympathize with them on the bereavement of their wives.

In addition to the ills of harmful widowhood practices in Igbo Society, Okodo (2006), stated that once a man dies, his wife stops stepping outside the compound. The widow, Ajadu nwanyi, stays in the house as women stay with her. She would be

accompanied if she wants to go out for an important issue. She cries a lot, she puts on white sackcloth if she is a Christian. She does not go out in the night for fear of being raped because she is not supposed to have anything to do with any man until the period of mourning is over.

In the case of African traditional religionists, the sackcloth is black. Their period of mourning is one year. The funeral is done with different traditional ceremonies as demanded by the culture in consideration with the status of the dead-man. The funeral ceremonies of a titled man, for an example, must be different from the that of a non-titled holder. Okodo concludes by saying that there could be minor changes from place to place for an example, in Awka and Enugu-Agidi, the widow will sleep with the priest of some deities before she completes the cleansing else any man that sleeps with her would die.

In conclusion, Ine (2012) sees widowhood practices as those customary rites that a widow is made to undergo on the death of her husband by members of the husband's family, or community. Widowhood practices differ from one community to another and are practices that are obnoxious, dehumanizing, and diminish the dignity of the women and also violate their human rights. Ine summarizes the widowhood practices in the following assertions; widowhood rites includes:

- i. Being locked up with the corpse for days or hours.
- ii. Being forced to sit on the bare floor for the duration of the mourning period.
- iii. Isolating the widow from other people for some period.
- iv. Shaving the hair on the head, pubic and armpit, mostly with an unsterilized blade, scissors or a piece of glass.
- v. Eating meals from dirty unwashed plates.

vi. Denial of right to inherit husband's properties; most often when the widow has no Son.

vii. Drinking of the water used in washing the corpse of the dead husband to prove her innocence (p.51).

Conclusively, widowhood practices differs according to communities. It should be noted in this work that these practices should be discarded in this century for they are obnoxious and devastating.

3.2.3 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Female genital mutilation (FGM) otherwise known as female circumcision is one of the most serious forms of cultural/traditional violence against women. Adebayo (1992) described it as a traditional practice in which a person, sometimes unskilled or a health worker cuts off parts or whole organs of the female genitalia usually using the knife or razor which for most part unsterilize as a cutting instrument. In the view of this, Ine (2012) female genital mutilation can also be seen as “female genital cutting, female genital circumcision, female genital modification or simply cutting”. (p.52). this practice has been variously defined.

Chukwu (2006) sees it as an unnecessary gruesome and crude surgery that involves partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to female genitalia organs of women as a prerequisite to earn respect, and recognition in Igboland. Chukwu further stated that, during the makeshift surgical procedure, or the ritualistic sexual mutilation, sharp objects such as razors and knives, which are most often than not sterilized, are used by non-medical practitioners in the home or other non-clinical settings to cut young women (removing the sensitive little soft knob at the front of the vaginal) in the name of initiating them into womanhood. This

practice is often deeply rooted in traditional understandings of purity and chastity. In the views of Mohammed, Ali and Yinger (1999), female genital mutilation is a traditional practice that involves cutting or altering the female genitalia as a rite of passage or for other socio-cultural reasons. In the words of Onwuka (2010) this practice is a total or partial removal of the external female genitals. He went on to say that:

Female genital mutilation forms an important part of the rites of passage ceremony for some communities, marking of female's genital organs, her sexuality will be controlled, but above all, it is to ensure a woman's virginity before marriage and chastity thereafter (p. 463).

This practice, according to UNICEF (2013), over 125 million women and girls in Africa have experienced it. To sustain this claim, Ahmed (1996) asserted that, more than eighty million women in Africa and around the world had undergone the practice, and many more are expected to do same to be accorded respect in their respective rural communities. This practice according to World Health Organization (NID) states that:

The procedure has no health benefits for girls and women and the procedures can cause severe bleeding and problems in urinating, and later Cysts, infections, infertility, as well as complications in child birth, increased risk of newborn deaths, and FGM is recognized internationally as a violation of the human rights of girls and women (p.82).

In addition, Dawit (1995) stated that, there are three known conventional types of FGM. The first type is referred to as Sunna or Clitoridectomy. This type is the least severe forms of the practice. It involves the removal of the prepuce or the head of the Clitoris, leaving the clitoris itself and the posterior larger part of the minora. The

second type of FGM is referred to as excision and is the removal of the Clitoris along with parts of the labia minora or all of it. The third type referred to as infibulations or pharonic circumcision, which is considered the most severe form of the practice. It involves the removal of the Clitoris, the labia minora and the adjacent medial part of labia majora in their anterior two-thirds. What makes it infibulations is that the two sides of the vulva are their stitched together (generally using thorns, catcuts or a paste of egg, sugar and gum Arabic), leaving an opening just the size of a pin head to allow for the flow of urine and the menstrual blood. Dawit went on to say that the prevalence of FGM is estimated to be about 50% with indications that Clitoridectomy is much the norm among Yoruba compared with the Urhobo, Bini, Ukwani, Ijaw, and Esan who perform excision of the more severe form.

There are undoubtedly variations in type and prevalence between regions. In recently concluded study in Ile-Ife a Yoruba area, Okonotua (1995), observed that the prevalence rate was about 90%. Among the Igbo and Edo, excision is recorded as been the most prevalent type. Adebayo (1992) said that infibulations, which is less common, is practiced by about 30% of Igbo in Imo State and 35% among, the Edo. The age at which girls and women are circumcised varies from region to region; usually, from infancy to puberty or young adulthood, sometimes even after the birth of the first born. Among some ethnic groups in Nigeria, for example, in most cases, it is an important rite of passage and sometimes, it is regarded as a religious requirement.

Female Genital Mutilation is practiced for varied reasons. Some consider it a good tradition and a sign of maturity. Others conceive its main purpose as to diminish sexual appetite in order to maintain a girls virginity and thus her marriage ability. Adebayo (1992) provided other reasons, apart from the prevention of promiscuity, it

is also feared that uncircumcised women harbour evil spirits or that they are unclean and should therefore be avoided. In her study of female circumcision in Ubiaja, Bendel State, Nigeria, it is observed that the practice is sometimes seen as a way of stopping waywardness. A girl is usually circumcised after it has been discovered that she is no longer a virgin. One particularly interesting method of determining this, is the insertion of a roll of native white chalk into the orifice or the use of big toe. It gives in easily then the girl is immediately circumcised.

At this point, it is worthy to note that the practice of FGM is still on in Nigeria and also in some parts of Igboland. But it basically takes place in rural areas, where such practices are still observed. This harmful traditional practice is very dangerous to one's health as it could lead to the spreading of the dreaded infection called HIV and AIDS among the people for mostly using an unsterilized cutting materials, this is because, most people that are doing it, if not all are ignorant of the dreaded HIV and AIDS epidemic. In addition, according to Ngouakam (2008) and Onuzulike (2006), female genital mutilation fringes on the physical and psycho-sexual integrity of women and girls, a form of violence against the women; which the damages inherent in the practice are enormous and irreparable, if not fatal.

In summary, Lips (2003), says that FGM can be seen as a separation, in which the Clitoris is cut away, is usually performed on girls, and frequently results in pain, infection, and latter complications associated with sexual intercourse and child birth. Even more seriously, it is associated with high mortality. The Surgery is intended to make girls acceptable later as brides by guaranteeing their chastity. The effect is to underline the notion that women are property and must be kept "in good condition". Brady (2001) corroborates the above by saying, many women who undergone female genital cutting have serious health consequences which include shock, pain,

infections, injury of the adjacent tissue and organs, urinary retention and tetanus. Long term effects may include Cysts and abscesses, urinary incontinence, psychological and sexual problems and difficulty during child birth, obstructed labour may occur if a woman is infibulated. All these damage a girl's life time health.

3.2.4 Harmful Delivery Practices

In Nigeria, particularly in Igboland, practice some harmful delivery practices that are not healthy among the people. These exercises are normally seen among the people as a way of life. These practices are harmful to the core and they are capable of prolonging labour, and in extreme cases it can kill pregnant women.

However, in the course of this research work, the researcher observed with regret the pains that women go through because of these practices. Traditional Igbo women in the first stage of labour are asked to undertake strenuous exercises such as going to distant murkiest or places, or carrying heavy loads. The belief is that such exercises activate the uterine muscles to work harder to expel the fetus and sometimes to take the mind of the pains. However, such exercises make for total exhaustion during labour and in the case of heavy load carriage, premature separation of the placenta erupted. In breech delivery cases, where the foot sometimes appears first, an impatient wives may pull on the leg causing permanent physical disability or damage to the birth Canal. The mother may be traumatized leading to the swelling of the Cervix, pain from the tear or excess bleeding. After delivery, the umbilical cord is sometimes, cut with a curved knife or other unsterilized instruments leading to infection by germs or some squeeze all the blood from the Cord causing severe jaundice some hours after birth.

Hot bath is another harmful delivery practice that endangers the health of women and girls. This is the traditional bathing of a newly delivered women in a very hot water. This practice which is prevalent in some parts of Imo State, requires that a boiling water with a temperature that is intolerable to human tissue be mixed with special local leaves. She is then made to sit over the almost boiling water without complaining and expression of pain. The reason for this practice is the erroneous belief that hot water scares away any incoming disease, keeps the woman warm and also aids in the involution of the uterus. However, Adebayo (1992) asserts that what happens in reality is that many women end up with bad burns or scalds, it could equally make the woman gets her blood pressure up, just by thinking of the ordeal.

Other harmful delivery practices include the insistence on total privacy, show of bravery and forced squatting. Ezumezu (1993) reports that most Igbo women in labour are not expected to cry out or complain. The show of bravery means that Igbo women go through the pains of giving birth with no analgesia to reduce pains. It is widely known that if pains become too severe, they may lead to psychotic problems. Sometimes in the process of giving birth, a woman kneels or sits on a low stool while others are asked to squat with two other women holding her down or other semi-recumbent positions. Delivery is usually carried out in the backyard with the risk of infection.

Under this category of harmful delivery practices falls the use of charms or herbs to control fertility. The use of such fertility control methods is widespread, and has been practiced for ages. There is this widespread use of local spermicides such as common salt or potash. These substances which are very corrosive and dangerous are either taken orally or used for douching after sex. Ojengbede (1991) believes that the socio-cultural background of a society is a major factor of induced abortions in

Nigerian Igboland. He argues that the use of alternative treatment forms from herbalists, spiritualists, diviners and prayer houses, delays the time consultation of modern health care providers and leads to death.

While some of the harmful delivery practices observed have been identified for certain cultural/ethnic groups, common knowledge suggests that they are more widespread than hitherto documented and are major determinants of the high rates of maternal morbidity and mortality rate in most Nigerian (Igbo) cultures.

3.2.5 Food Taboos

Health and nutrition are closely related. Therefore, the third category of harmful traditional practices to be examined are food taboos during pregnancy, childbirth, lactation and puerperium. Kianti (1978) defines food taboos as beliefs that forbid the ingestion of certain foods by a particular group of people usually due to age or sex. Food taboos are maintained by factors such as culture, beliefs, religion, customs and socio-economic status of specific groups, food production and purchasing power. The negative influence on the health and nutritional status of the deprived, usually women and girls has made them important issues in gender research. The major threat is inadequate weight loss during pregnancy, a leading cause of low birth weight and nutritional anemia.

The WHO estimates that the incidence of low birth weight in developing countries is 17% compared with 7% in developed Countries. To this, Ghassemi (1990) said that maternal malnutrition is a constraint to child survival and development. According to him, in Africa, about two thirds of pregnant women are anemic, thus underscoring the need to understand their food habits. In Igboland, the risks of poor nutritional status are rife for the mother and child and recently have been

estimated. National Planning Commission (1999) asserts that food taboos during pregnancy, and lactation are believed to contribute to poor health status of mother and child. CGSPS (1998) states that some foods are forbidden during pregnancy in some cultures as a result of what they believe in; such foods items include okro soup and snails for fear of excessive salivation of the baby, plantain for fear of delayed ossification of the anterior fontanelle, garden egg for fear of impaired speech, fish for fear of the child getting an extra finger, certain fruits for fear of neonatal jaundice. It should be noted that most of these foods items contain essential proteins, carbohydrates and vitamins which are needed by the body for the proper growth and development of the foetus and the general well being of the mother.

National Planning Commission (1996) adds that some people forbid breast feeding after delivery because it is believed that the first Cream Coloured Milk called Colostrum is poisonous. The baby is therefore fed for two or more days with water. The implication of this practice is obvious. The child is denied the pro-lubricated milk, which actually contains antibodies that protect the body from certain diseases, and is therefore exposed to infections. And if the child died, they will say it is Ogbanje-born to die.

Food taboos have health and nutritious implications, but they are another dimension of female subordination. The invisible hands of patriarchy and the hold on women's sexuality and reproduction are quite powerful. The delivery and nutritional practices identified in this study show the magnitude of the problems Created by these practices for maternal and child health among some ethnic groups in Nigeria. While it is relevant to improve service delivery, for improved maternal and child health, it is also evident that there is the dire need for behavioural change.

3.2.6 Early Girl Child Marriage

Marriage is the beginning of a legitimate family. In essence, marriage is a universal institution that contributes considerably to holding of the Igbo society together and providing continuity and stability to it. Coleman (1988) defined marriage as a socially approved sexual and economic relationship between two or more persons that are assumed to be permanent and includes maternal rights and obligations. This definition highlights amongst others, one fundamental aspect; it provides the regulation of sex and childbearing. From this perspective, marriage is the vehicle through legitimate reproduction is sanctioned. Marriage is, thus, for reproduction and childbearing is seen as an indicator of the attainment of “marriage woman status”. Nwosu (2008) averred that, for reproduction to occur, the girl child was given out at a very young age; she was not allowed to mature fully to understand her desires and goals in life before being forced to marriage. In addition, child marriage involves the forced to marriage of a young girl who is extremely vulnerable to sexual activities and other family related activities.

Child marriage is a serious problem of violation of women in Igboland. Many little girls are sent off in marriage to men old enough to be their fathers and grand fathers, and their consents are hardly sought. This is why Nandita, Manisha and Deepti (2007) opined that early marriage is common nationally, and usually the decision to marry is made by the family not the girl to be married. And this according to Bruce and Clark (2003) has placed the roles and responsibilities of adulthood and motherhood on adolescents, adversely impacting on their physical health and well-being. The repercussions of early marriage and physical violence can compound distress for young married women.

Most of the girls betrothed this way become pregnant at the very onset of their puberty, and on account of child marriage, many of such girls and their babies die from fistulas and other complications. It is also to be noted that some of these young girls delivered of healthy children. But Chukwu (2006) observed that the consequences of early child marriage were tragic because most of them felt frustrated and worthless after being diagnosed with Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF). From this perspective, it is obvious that early marriage is fundamentally an assault on women. According to Murphy (1981), Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF) is a direct pathological communication between the urinary bladder and the vagina resulting in the uncontrolled leakage of urine into the vagina from the bladder. In a study by Talizib (1983), the study showed that 5.5% (80) of VVF sufferers were less than 13 years of age. In other words, children beget children. The high rate of Vesico-Vaginal Fistula (VVF) amongst these girls during child birth was attributed to their young ages.

Furthermore, Mustafa and Rushwan (1971); Harrison (1985) and Murphy (1981), all observed that VVF caused many serious problems, especially with respect to inability to bear any more children despite the young ages of these girls. Murphy further averred that the fear from the contractions of the pelvic muscles resulted in a leakage between the legs, which invariably emitted a terrible odour causing bad odour in gathering. Finally, it is a known fact that the plight of these unfortunate victims could be so devastating and dehumanizing that even when cured after surgery, some of them never regained their self-esteem and as such shunned social life.

Summarily, that the Igbo allow the practice of childhood marriage to go on when the girls are not physically and biologically developed for procreation is a crime against Igbo women and against humanity.

3.3 Domestic Forms of Violence

Violence against women in Igboland and the world at large takes a variety of forms, all of which are violations of the fundamental rights of women as in most cases, it debases them. However, the most common violence experienced by women and girls globally and particularly in Nigeria from birth is domestic violence. This form of violence involves wife battery and other aspects of intimate partner violence like marital rape, sexual violence, child abuse/neglect and many more. Domestic violence occurs in situations where a family member or an intimate partner, physically, sexually or psychologically dominates the woman or inflicts violence on the woman.

In Igboland, violence within the home on both wives and children has cultural backing. UNICEF (2000) asserts that domestic violence in most cases is perpetrated by a father, husband, boyfriend, father inlaw, step-father, brother, uncle, son or other male relation in the house. This sort of violence inflicted on the woman or girl is not discriminatory on grounds of age, class, or even social status, for a woman, whatever her status in life and however old she may be, can be subjected to violence by her partner, brother or other male relative. As a matter of fact, domestic violence is so entrenched in the society that some violated women see such acts of beating as a sign of love from the men violating them.

In essence, domestic violence refers to physical and sexual attacks in the home within a family or an intimate relationship. It includes intimate partner violence, marital rape, assault and battery, and sexual abuse of children in the household. Mooney (1994) labeled domestic violence a physical violence that results in actual bodily harm, such as bruising, black eyes, and broken houses, grabbing, pushing and so on. Domestic violence is an intentional and persistent abuse of anyone in the home

in a way that causes pain, distress or injury. It refers to any abusive treatment of one family member by another, thus violating the rights of basic human rights.

According to Maxime (1993), domestic violence or violence in the family encompasses a range of phenomena; physical assaults of varying degrees of severity on children, sexual partners and older people, rape and other forms of sexual coercion of women and sexual abuse of children. In the same vein, Uzuegbunam (2003) says that domestic violence includes any aggressive behaviour or maltreatment among intimate partners which occurs in privacy of home, family or Clan. These include all hostile acts committed by any family members against another, spouse, parents, child, siblings, grandparents, in laws, and so on. It can be in form of aggressive behaviours by which the victims are physically or emotionally disturbed or harmed. Thus any threat or indecent assault, personal or economic intimidation, undue curtailment of freedom, any expression that reduces a person's dignity, any physical assaults, blows, beating, strangulations that are complete or incomplete, jabs with sharp or blunt objects, slaps, kicks, sexual abuse of any kind, in ordinate sexual demand and or refusal, and so on, constitute manifestations of violence within the home, household or family clan and so on.

In addition, the National Network to end domestic violence (2011) view domestic violence as an endangerment, criminal coercion, kidnapping, unlawful imprisonment, trespassing, harassment and stalking. It is a known fact that domestic violence can affect anyone both male and female, but this work centers on examining domestic violence as it regards to women who are the most common victims of these violence. In sustaining this, Sawyer (2001) averred that domestic violence in most cases is from the husband to the wife, but there are so many dimensions of it. The one that we know of and which is most common is that of husband against wife or parents

against children. In affirmation to the above statement, Okemgbo, Omideyi and Odimegwu (2002) stated that over 95% of domestic violence, the man is the assailant. Nevertheless, violence in the home is overwhelmingly by men against women. Ine (2012) adds that this kind of abuse are mostly perpetrated by a husband, a boyfriend, a brother, or any other relative against woman or girls, such abuse will include physical, psychological or economic abuse intended to harm, intimidate or coerce to the woman to submission.

In conclusion, victims of domestic violence are reported to suffer from physical and psychological pain. To this, Essien (1999) said that these violence against woman constitute a great problem to the family and the society at large.

3.3.1 Wife Battery

Wife battery is an anti-human rights. Therefore, wife battery contradicts Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which runs thus: all human beings are born free and equal dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Battery according to the Advanced Dictionary (1988) is a term in law which involves the unlawful beating of another person or any threatening touch to another person's cloths or body. The definition connotes great force or intensity; the use of excessive physical force that ultimately results to injury to that (person or animal) which the great force is being applied upon.

Battery against women constitutes an oddity because women are the direct targets, even though the entire society indirectly shares in its effects in the long run. Burns (1997) submitted that every day, women are slapped, kicked, beating, humiliated, threatened, sexually abused and even murdered by their partners. Mary

and Scott (2000) echoes that wife battery or women battery or assault are used interchangeably to refer to a range of behaviour that includes hitting, kicking, choking, and the use or threatened use of weapons or objects. Woman assault has several dimensions. Those most commonly discussed in the literature is wife battery. Battering, in fact, is the single-most common cause of injury to women-more frequently than automobile accidents, muggings, burglaries and rape combined. Most experts agree that woman battery is probably the most common and one of the most under-reported in this country.

Wife battery is an exposure of a married woman to serious beating or repeated injuries. Violence by the husband or male partner or relative is higher and far more harmful form of violence. Wife battery is not a type of violence that is publicly known or witnessed, that is why many do not know its prevalence in the society. To sustain the above claim, Davies (1999) says that wife battery may happen in 30% families, but is not recognized in the public eyes. This practice is very injurious to the health of women and girls and is very prevalent in Igboland. It cuts across socio-economic classes, although data with which to determine its prevalence among the upper class is not always available.

However, its prevalence among the lower class is high. Many observations studied by Omorodion (1991) revealed that women sustained all kinds of injuries, facial bruises, cuts in the mouth, loss of one tooth or more. In a statement released by (Vanguard, May 15, 2014); it reported that a woman Shehi said she was regularly subjected to violence by her husband. After one assault, she was left permanently blind in her left eye. Her husband reportedly suspected her of having a sexual relationship outside their marriage. In the same vein, Lips (2003) narrated an ordeal of a teacher;

Agnes, a teacher whose husband was also a teacher, said the violence began few years after she got married. When she caught her husband in bed with a teenage girls. He began to beat her every evening. He forced her to give him her pay check. He called her his slave. For about two years, the violence eased, but alcoholic rages and financial irresponsibility again became the norm, and the beatings got worse. Nonetheless, Agnes did not tell anyone about the beatings, even those closest to her because, she said “I was so scared, and I was feeling so embarrassed. I did not want people to know about it”. (p.425).

Where in this world did this happen? In what country or society are women so vulnerable to violence from their husbands that they bear it for years without leaving and without telling anyone about it? This is a very common story in almost every society of the world. In many cultures, Igbo culture inclusive, men have traditionally claimed the right to beat their wives as a matter of authority, superiority and control over property.

In the history of humanity, Owan and Aniuзу (2002) averred that, man had been known to Lord it over the woman with power and authority as he used tradition as the camouflage. In addition, Bradley (1994) also submitted that the practice of wife beating is not just hidden and invisible, but hard to tackle because many traditional and transitional cultures have a blind-spot about it. Dwyer (1996) viewed the invisibility of marital violence, especially as it affected women as stemming not necessarily from the fact that society regarded the problem as normal and therefore not a problem. Research on battery Dwyer (1996), and Okolo (2004), revealed that due to the private and hidden nature of the problem it was somewhat difficult for the law enforcement agencies and similar bodies to have reliable documented and

quantifiable information about it. This, in turn, made it difficult for the intensity of the problem to be known in order to ascertain how much effort to put towards addressing the problem.

Amongst the Igbo, battery against women is not seen as a ‘problem’ but a ‘normal’ social occurrence. Okolo (2004) further observed many women who faced battery were reluctant to let even the closest person known, and even when their experiences were those of severe pains, they would simply wear guise that all was well, all for the purpose of concealing their bitter and heart-rending experiences, according to the researcher were due to; women’s fear that society would blame them for such happenings, homes where battery is frequent are often stigmatized as unsuccessful homes and because no woman would want her marriage to be stigmatized, in the event of battery, most women would rather keep the matter concealed than disclosed it; women would never want the public to know that their husbands have abusive tendencies because it is ‘criminal’ for them to disclose to an ‘outsider’ that their spouses were women batterers, and any attempt to go against this would mean more battery. Burns (1997) also ‘observed that most women stayed on in battered homes because they had no other place to go to. Furthermore, Bannett (1993) observed that a number of women saw their marital homes as the only home they had and, did not know where else to go to if they left them. As such, to avoid the difficulty of having no home of their own or for fear of becoming homeless most women simply accepted the only option open was to stay.

It is also worthy to mention that in traditional Igbo Society, women were blamed and also condemned for all the wrongs that went on in their families. Women’s inability to remain and manage their homes were always “the topic of discussion” in different drinking spots, and the fear of becoming the ‘talking talk’

often made women remain with their partners in spite of the battery. In addition, the researcher argued that the issue of social conditioning inculcated into women from childhood that, irrespective of their other interests, they would never be fulfilled unless they were married and had children. In the words of Brown (1997) when women accepted this social conditioning, leaving an abusive husband meant failing not only as a mother or wife, but as a woman. This from all sound arguments rested on a disastrously premise that kept women in battered homes from this, we could say that women stayed in abusive homes in order not to be branded as 'failure's, stigmatized and shamed as unsuccessful wives. In addition, Brown (1997) observed that women were told that love conquered all and as such, in the event of being battered, they were urged to remain in the hope that the men would change positively in no distant time for the wonderful times they once had during courtship to occur again.

3.3.2 Marital Rape and Spousal Sexual Assault

Marital rape, also known as spousal rape, is a non-consensual sex in which the perpetrator is the victim's spouse. Sexual assault is a broad term that incorporates any behaviours, either physical or verbal, intended to coerce an individual into sexual activity against his or her will. Sawyer (2001) sees marital rape as a type of domestic violence whereby the husband insisting on having sexual intercourse with the wife at all cost, not minding her state of health or otherwise Oladepo, Yusuf and Arulogun (2011) also see marital rape as any unwanted sexual act, such as forced sex, meted on the woman by her husband.

How common is marital rape? It is a general truth that some women who are in marriage have in one way or the other witnessed marital rape. Whatley (1993) in

affirmation, asserts that other studies generally find that the prevalence of marital rape in the general population of women in a particular geographical area is between 7 and 14%. However, in the words of Mary and Scott (2000) the limited available information suggests that marital rape is widespread. As with other forms of intimate violence, the majority of victims are females. Victims of marital rape are often referred to as “hidden victims”, because they seldom report their experiences. This act infringes on the rights of women, and should be criminalized.

3.3.3 Child and Sexual Abuse

Throughout the history, children also have frequently been victims of domestic violence and abuse, including sexual assaults. Violence against children is linked to cultural values and attitudes that have defined children as the property of families. Child/sexual abuse is a major problem today in our society, and public concern about this issue has been heightened by numerous reports by adult survivors of its impact on their lives. The term child/sexual abuse according to Mary and Scott (2000) refers to “the use of a child for the sexual gratification of an adult” (p. 346). According to Mary and Scott, such abuse can be divided into two basic categories depending on who the abuser is: familial abuse and extra-familial abuse. Familial abuse is generally referred to as “incest”. The sexual abuse by a blood relative who is assumed to be a part of the child’s family. Because most child sexual abuse is perpetrated by family members, also, to note, the scope of this sub-heading is on family child abuse; thereby making the discussion focus on familial child abuse other than extra-familial child abuse.

In continuation, World Health Organization (1999), averred that child abuse constitutes all forms of physical or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or

negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power. Infanticides; killing of infants and young children appears to have been widely practiced in our society without questionings, this is because of the invisible nature of the crime; it is done in homes.

In some societies, like Igbo society infants would be killed if they were too sick or deformed, or in a situation where a male child is very much in need, and the mother continues giving birth to a female child, (female infanticide). Although such treatment is not generally acceptable today, Mary and Scott (2000) said that, "some level of violence against children by parents continues to be condoned or certainly tolerated" (p.322). In Lips (2003) "it is clear from international data that the sexual abuse of young children is prevalent world wide" (p. 443).

In Nigeria, Igboland in particular, it has become common to see girls as young as 12 or 15 being pregnant for either their fathers or male relatives. Some are seen to have contracted HIV infections or other sexual transmitted diseases due to rapes by their fathers, uncles, or neighbours; believing that having sexual intercourse with a virgin is not only safer but can bring mystical powers or even a cure for AIDS. According to Wisdom (1992) as cited by Mary and Scott (2000) recent research has documented the adverse effects of domestic violence on the mental and development of children, including early child victimization and later involvement in violent crime, whether a victim or perpetrator. However, it is clear that more research in this area is needed in order to fully understand why some abused or neglected children become violent while the majority does not.

3.3.4 Male Chauvinism

Male child preference is the highest manifestation of patriarchal ideology. It is therefore very resistant to change in Nigeria, especially in Igboland, where the family structure is patriarchal. Among most cultural groups in Igbo societies, male preference is expressed in various reasons, male child education is preferred to that of female children. There is this belief that female child would go into marriage in another family. To sustain the above claim, Nmah (2003) asserts that in Igbo Cosmology:

A girl's life is essentially a preparation for marriage, which she receives through informal education. Mothers have to remind their daughters that certain types of behavior cannot be tolerated from them. "You are not a boy but a girl. You must marry one day!" (P.116).

In Nigeria, the girl-child is enmeshed in Socio-cultural moves that deprive her of educational empowerment. To this, Nwankwo (1997) posits that there is gender disparity on primary school curriculum. In terms of enrolment in secondary schools, males have higher percentage point against females. Another measure of male preference is in the distribution of property rights or inheritance. Generally, it is said that daughters have no inheritance rights, as inheritance is the exclusive rights of sons. In the words of Ibhade (2003) female children are considered inferior and discriminated against contrary to natural law and human law of equality of all human irrespective of sex.

Thus, the Igbo woman is born into a culture of male supremacy, as exacerbated in the general preference for a male child. Sons were believed to provide more economic support and also the source of continuity if the family name. girls were supposed to leave home at marriage and reunite with her husband's family.

Thus, it is not unusual for marriages to break down on account of the lack of a male child in the family. While the arrival of the first son strengthens the position of the wife in the family. This is why Aina (1998) noted that among the Igbo Eastern Nigeria:

A woman who has three boys in a quick succession is honoured by her husband by killing a goat to celebrate the feat. On the contrary, the birth of female children in succession leads to anxiety and sometimes shame for the mother (p.9).

3.4 Social Violence

In Nigeria, particularly Igbo society, women's rights are being infringed upon by their male counterparts in the areas of political and social lives, and some of these violent acts are being treated or seen with a lesser concern. And this, to some extent, has adversely affected the wellbeing of women towards their positive contributions to the sustainable development of our society. It is worthy to note that every human being is endowed with some gifts (talents) irrespective of sex. These talents are fully put into use when one is in a stable condition.

3.4.1 Sexual Harassment

Nigerian women (Igbo women) face various forms of sexual assaults daily. Rape, indecent assault, incest and defilement are some common sexual assaults that women in Igbo Society are confronted with. Gartner and Macmillan (1995) said that women are much more likely to be assaulted by the people that they know, while assaults by known assailants are much less likely to be reported to the police than those by strangers. This prevalence of sexual violence led Rhonda (2009) to assert

that one in three women worldwide will experience sexual violence in her life time. In the same vein, Anaba (2006) in explaining sexual violence, Sees it as any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, or other act directed against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting. Sexual harassment or assault is any unwanted sexual contact that stops short of rape or attempted rape.

Onwuka (N.D) adds that sexual harassment is a growing concern for women especially in their workplace. Employers abuse their authority to seek sexual favours from their female co-workers or subordinates, sometimes promising promotions or other forms of career advancement or simply creating an untenable and hostile work environment. Women who refuse to give in to such unwanted sexual advances often run the risk of anything from demotion or dismissal. In affirmation with Onwuka's assertions. Janet (2000) echoes that sexual harassment is an unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. She went on to say that;

- i. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement.
- ii. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as basis for academic or employment decision, affecting that individual.
- iii. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive working or educational environment.

To this, Nosike (1996), concludes that sexual harassment constitutes a crime, and it may also constitute a civil wrong.

3.4.2 Rape

In the words of Walby and Andrew (2001) rape is the crime women are more worried about than any other in a society. Tekayinka (N.D.) sees rape as forcing anyone into sexual intercourse against her will. It is a violent, terrifying and humiliating assault. Rape is considered a crime against a person. Rape happens to all ages, educational levels, religious, sexual orientation and physical descriptions. In sustaining the above claim, according to Population Reference Bureau (2000), victims of rape range from a few months old to their 90s. By this, rape knows no borders as it affects females in every country in the world. It has even been perpetrated on girls as young as 2 years old, and against women as old as 90 years.

Rape not only violates a woman's dignity and integrity, but also her sense of safety and control over her life. Rape can affect the productivity of women. A raped girl can be sick, hospitalized and be unable to go to school or work. She can become pregnant without anybody to take care of her and the pregnancy. Her academic career can be ruined and if she is a working class type, she may not be able to cope effectively with her equals. With this in mind, Sooth and Walby (1991) added that it would be hard for a woman who has been raped to identify with the images presented to her in popular-culture as representing rape. A raped woman is a degraded status.

Conclusively, Giddens, Dunreier and Appelbaum (2005) see rape as an act of violence rather than purely sexual act. To them rape is often carefully planned rather than performed on the spur of the moment to satisfy some uncontrollable sexual desire. In addition, Koss (1994), following current laws in many states, states that rape is a non-consensual oral, anal or vaginal penetration, obtained by force, by threat of bodily harm or when the victim is incapable of giving consent. The crucial point is

that the activity is non-consensual, that is, the victim did not consent to it. When this act is done on a woman, it leads to what Burgess and Holmstrom (1974) termed “rape trauma-Syndrome” which refers to the emotional and physical effects a woman undergoes following a rape or attempted rape, which are very hazardous to the human person.

Finally, rape is a human right abuse against any woman, because such act is perpetuated against her wish. Many rapes involves beating, knifings, and even murder. Even when rape leaves no physical wounds, it is a highly traumatic violation of a woman’s person that leaves long-lasting psychological scars.

3.4.3 Trafficking and Forced Prostitution

In some parts of Nigeria, Igboland inclusive, some girls are made to prostitute under the guise of sex tourism. Sex tourism according to UNICEF Document happens when rich men travel during holidays from the advanced countries to have sexual dealings with children of between 13 and 17 years. For instance, Salami (2000), asserts that in Edo State of Nigeria, the business of sexual exploitation of girls is transacted with parents’ approval in a bid to get rich quickly. To this, Onwuka (N.D.) adds that many women are forced into prostitution either by their parents, husbands or boyfriends or as a result of the difficult economic and social conditions in which they find themselves.

They are also lured into prostitution, sometimes by “mail-order bride” agencies that promise to find them a husband or a job in a foreign country. As a result they very often find themselves illegally confined in brothels in slavery-like conditions where they are physically abused and their passports withheld. Most women initially victimized by sexual trafficking have little inkling of what awaits

them. They generally get a very small percentage of what the customer pays to the pimp or the brothel owner. Once they are caught upon the system, there is practically no way out, and they find themselves in a very vulnerable situation. Since prostitution is illegal in many countries like Nigeria, it is difficult for prostitutes to come forward and ask for protection if they become victims of rape or want to escape from brothels.

Trafficking in women and girl children has reached alarming proportions especially as it regards to Nigerian women, which Igbo women are inclusive. Many women and girl children are trafficked across borders, often with the complicity of border guards. Onwuka (N.D.), in one incident asserts, that five young prostitutes were burnt to death in a brothel fire outbreak, because they were chained to their beds. Similarly, recently, 30th November, 2012 to be precise, it was announced on air that a prostitute was discovered in a hotel room in Enugu, dead with hanging rope on her neck. What could have led her to this? The researcher is of the view that she could have taken her life as a result of forced prostitution or trafficking.

Ine (2012) adds that trafficking in women and girls is the contemporary form of violence against women, which is very disturbing in Nigeria. (Igbo Society) Trafficking in women and girls involves involuntary servitude and is therefore often synonymously referred to as 'modern day slavery'. This form of violence diminishes the status of women and brings low reputation and stigma on the victims. Around the globe, trafficking in girls and women is a serious problem. Lips (2003), averred that an estimated 4 million girls and women are bought and sold nationwide, either into marriage, prostitution, or slavery. Lips went on to say that:

Clearly, the impact on women of these trafficking practices is severe in terms of health issues such as AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections, pregnancies, injuries from violence, depression, and anxiety. Even women

who are not themselves trafficked may reap costs in forms of insecurity, Sinicism, and low self-worth. (p.447).

In conclusion, Human trafficking/forced prostitution refers to the acquisition of persons by improper means, such as force, fraud or deception with the aim of exploiting them. Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, if abduction of fraud, of deception, of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over other person, for the purpose of exploitation.

Forced prostitution is a prostitution which takes place as a result of coercion by any third party. In forced prostitution, the party/parties who force the victim to be subjected to unwanted sexual acts exercise control over the victim. All these constitute violations to girls' rights and thereby affect the persons of women adversely.

3.4.4. Violence against Women in Custody

Women who find themselves in custody often times complain about custodial violence in police cells, prisoners, immigration detention centers and other state institutions. United Nations (2006), averred that, sexual violence, mainly rape that is perpetrated against women in detention is considered to be a particularly egregious violation of the inherent dignity of the woman and of her right to physical integrity and that of all human beings and therefore it is considered to constitute torture. Women and men who go to the police to report cases of violence against women, including rape and physical assault are often met with a patronizing and discouraging attitude.

In vanguard (May 15th, 2014), it reported of a police spokesperson in Lagos who told Amnesty International that they did not take violence in the family seriously, unless it is a case of rape of a child or the husband kills his wife. Few cases of this nature are reported to the police because of the social stigma attached to the victim and the difficulty in obtaining medical evidence. Social tolerance of gender based violence especially in the family is replicated among Nigeria's law enforcement officials. The police frequently dismiss complaints of domestic violence on the grounds that the state has no right to interfere in private or family matters. Far from providing protection from crimes of violence, police officers often advise complainants to go home and sort out the problems themselves. However, failure to react to threats and violence against women until there has been a serious injury can cost lives. To sustain this, Vanguard reported that:

Late Blessing, a Ph.D holder and an appointee to the then newly established Anti-Corruption Commission, ICPC, reported threats to her life by her husband and her two sisters to the Enugu State Police Commissioner who, instead of acting immediately, asked her to come back in today's time. She did not live to keep that appointment as she was murdered at night in her home on the eve of her appointment. (p.45).

However, there is no gainsaying that women are the most vulnerable as regards to seeking redress in any law enforcement agency. Okereafor (2010) corroborates the above statement by saying that women in the society continue to face violence at the hands of state agents and some local community law enforcers with impunity whilst in custody. Inappropriate surveillance during showering or when a woman is undressing, strip searches conducted by or on the presence of male officers and verbal sexual harassment is some forms of violence suffered by women in

Custody. Okerefor also asserts that, reports are also available to show huge amounts of control wielded by correctional officers over lives of women in custody through constant demands for sexual acts in exchange for privileges, goods or basic necessities. Amnesty international, Human rights watch (1999) in affirmation, asserts that it is now common to see female inmates getting pregnant in police and prison custodies due to sexual harassment. This is why Lips (2003) states that:

Women who are subjected to violence while they are in custody are in a particularly difficult and dangerous position. They run the risk of being treated even more harshly if they complain or try to report the abuse. They are unlikely to be believed, and their reports may well not even be investigated. And in some cases, they may simply be unable to get word out to anyone of what is happening to them. Violence against women in custody, as in situations in which women are under the control and authority of abusers is often invisible to the general public and carried out with impunity (p. 417).

Ibhade (2003) concludes by saying that in Nigeria (Igbo Society), the problems of domestic violence against women and other violent behaviours do not attract the attention of the society, let alone, enacting of laws against them. Instead, wife battery is usually dismissed by the police and other law enforcers as a family matter that does not warrant police intervention. And this goes on to affect women negatively.

3.5 Religious Violence

Violence against women is a phenomenon that is common in many societies of the world. The subordination of women from birth, knows no barriers in every

sequent of the life of women whether educated, uneducated, rich or poor. Olateru (2011) in affirmation asserts that gender inequality is experienced by women and is manifested in almost all aspects of human endeavours. The truth is that living free from violence is a human right, yet millions of women and girls suffer disproportionately from violence both in peace and in war, at the hands of the state, in the home and community. There has been a long history of protest against gender-based violence within the religious and political spheres. The fourth World War Conference on women in Beijing in 1995 was a watershed moment in the history of women's movement, which aimed at achieving greater equality and opportunity for women. Unfortunately, since the Beijing conference, we have seen an intensification of violence against women globally.

3.6 Political Violence against Women and Children

Nigerian women in general and Igbo women in particular have encountered numerous problems, while venturing into politics. They have experienced a large scale of discriminations from the men folks, both in voting for candidate, and in allocating of political officers. They have been denied of equal opportunities with their male counterparts on the formation of legal policy framework for the nation, despite the fact that they constitute half of the Nigerian population. The reasons are that if we look closely at records while we go down the memory lane of political history in Nigeria (Igboland), it will be fool hardy to say that women have been successful in politics.

A look at these national leaders reveals that the Igbo women are yet to make any appreciable inroad into the male-dominated political scene, because of gross misconception of their roles in politics and even so. This is why Ogauwu (ND) averred that women are secluded from positions of authority and in fact relegated to

the background as Second Class Citizens. He went on to say that they are “further brainwashed by Culture of Superior male dominance” (p.30). Most important is that men’s attitude had scared women from participating in politics. It was unfortunate for some to have divorced or punished their wives severely for holding different political views with them. This is so because, men too, tend to think women in power have a kind of pull-down complex. They believe women in top political offices are generally aggressive, troublesome, and belligerent in their approach to governance, in a vain effort to prove their manliness.

Political harassment is another area of violence against women in Igboland. It is the act or series of acts of pressure, threats, harassments, or persecution, committed by a person or group of persons directly or through a third party against a humans candidate elected or incumbent in the public or political function. Furthermore, exerting pressure on candidate family to prevent the candidate by act on omission from discharging her rights and duties is also covered by the act. The definition of political violence encompasses actions conduct or assault causing bodily harm, psychological or sexual abuse against a woman on her family, and at preventing her from or restricting her in exercising her duties or causing her to take decision against her will, principle or law.

In 2007, UNIFEM looked at the different challenges facing women participating in community level politics. These included the exclusion from male dominated decision making forums, their lack of access to funding, their exclusion from formal peace-building processes, the resistance amongst initiatives that challenge cultural traditions and a risk to their personal security traditions, and a risk to their personal security. There is no gainsaying that a vast body of literature shows

the effect of patriarchy just as other structures of society do, such as kinship and family, class, religion, ethnicity, and educational institution.

In summary, in Igboland, women are marginalized in political realm because of the persisting cultural stereotype, abuse of religious and traditional practices, patriarchal societal structures in which economic, political and social power are dominated by men, and the perpetration of women's traditional role as the followers of male political leaders.

3.7 Causes of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

A number of causes of violence against women and children in Imo State are identified. They include: rigid religious tradition, patriarchy, unemployment, financial hardship, illiteracy, selfishness, alcohol and drugs. Others include feelings of financial strain and neighbourhood characteristics.

3.7.1 Rigid Religious Tradition

The rigidity in religious tradition of men and women is responsible for the persistence of violence against women and children in Imo State in particular and Igboland in general. The rigid attitude of men is not unconnected with the assumption that women are inferior persons and weak not because of their criminal records or biological build up, but because of the ascribed cultural tracts.

Similarly, women social attitudes are not or do not seem in line with the contemporary social and psychological expectations, the perception of their problems shows that they are victims by their own convictions and do not seem to improve their lot by taking meaningful positive steps.

3.7.2 Psychological Cause

Psychological theories focus on personality traits and mental characteristics of the offender. Personal traits include sudden bursts of anger, poor impulse control, and poor self-esteem. Various theories suggest that psychopathology and other personality disorders are factors, and that abuse observed or experienced as a child lead people to be more violent in adulthood-who abuse life. However, these psychological theories are disputed by Steel (1974) and Strains (1980) who suggest that psychological theories are limited. They argue that social factors are important, while personality traits, mental illness or psychopathy are less factors.

3.7.3 Jealousy

Goetz (2010) identified jealousy as one of the causes of violence against women and children. Many cases of violence against women and children occur due to jealousy when the spouse is either suspected of being unfaithful or is planning to leave the relationship. An evolutionary psychology explanation of such cases of domestic violence against women are¹"that they represent to male attempts to control female reproduction and ensure sexual exclusivity for himself through violence .or the threat

3.7.4 Patriarchy

Patriarchy is another is another cause of violence against women and children in Imo State. It is both a system and a theory which according to Anderson and Taylor (2004) explains the main cause of violence against women and children. This is systematic domination of females by males is of central concern to this research.

3.7.5 Unemployment

The period of unemployment is another cause of violence against women and children because in domestic violence against women and children, attackers exert authority by violence. They feel they have no other means of control over a situation. When a man has no job that yields him money for the family upkeep, he is always or often aggressive and the nearest person to lay his aggression is on his wife, thus making the woman always afraid of even talking to him.

3.7.6 Financial hardship

The feelings of financial strain increase the likelihood of violence against women and children in Imo State. According to Ukachi (personal communication, 22-7-2014) poverty is another cause which is related to women's inability to escape violence due to their financial predicament. Miss Dike (personal communication, 8-4-2015) maintained that many women and children depend on the financial rescue of their husband or families. This probably explains the domination for fear of the withdrawal of this envisaged financial backing.

This factor could be found effective in the families where actually the man is employed but his wages are not often paid and so there is no sufficient money for his needs and that of his family. That man could be aggressive and tempted to be beating the wife when she requests for money.

3.7.7 Social Stress

Social stress is not left out of the causes of violence against women and children. Stress may increase when a person is leaving in a family situation, with increased pressures. Seltzer and Kalmuss (1988) were of the view that violence is not

always caused by stress, but may one way some people respond to stress couples in poverty may be more likely to experience domestic violence, due to increased stress and conflicts about finances and other aspects.

3.7.8 Illiteracy

This factor could as well cause violence against women and children. Some studies detected trend among abusers; they tend to be young (in their 30s or younger) and have not been educated beyond secondary school level. So such people do not know much about caring for women and children and could have learnt this from his parents. Domestic violence also occurs among middle class, educated people (Encarta Encyclopedia, 2002).

3.7.9 Selfishness

This occurs often in families where the man practices the use of power or authority on his wife and children, stressing that after all, he is the head of the family and therefore, his wife and children has no say other than to act in line with command of the head of the family whether they like it or not. This happens in a family where the man does not see his marriage as a companionship but always as a property that he can always command at his own will.

3.7.10 Alcohol and Drugs

A man who is addicted to drugs (hemp or cocaine) is likely to beat his wife when he is under the influence of alcohol or drug. It has been estimated that violence is twice more likely in families with alcohol problems than in those without (Encarta Encyclopedia, 2002). When a man is drunk, any little thing done by the wife irritates him and the only way to express his irritated mood is by beating his wife (wife battering).

3.7.11 Neighbourhood Characteristics

The influence of neighbourhood characteristics is another violence against women and children in Imo State. Of specifics in this, Mmeregini (personal communication, 17-4-2015) says that neighbourhood characteristics are indoctrination, intolerance, feminist dogma and ignorance of the social reality on ground.

3.7.12 Power and Control

Power and control are responsible for violence against women and children. Abusers abuse in order to establish and maintain control over the partner. Abusers' effort to dominate have been attributed to low self-esteem or feelings of inadequacy, unresolved childhood conflicts, the stress of poverty, hostility and resentment toward women (misogyny), personality disorders, genetic tendencies and social cultural influences (Wikipedia, 2012). Most authorities seem to agree that abusive personalities result from a combination of several factors, to varying degrees.

3.7.13 Social Learning

Crowell and Sugarman (1996) saw social learning as a cause of violence against women and children. If one observes violent behaviour, one is more, likely to imitate it. There are no negative consequences victim also accepts the violence with submission; then the behaviour will likely continue. Often, violence is transmitted from generation to generation in a cyclical.

3.8 Persistence of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

There are observed reasons why violence against women and children have persisted in Imo State in particular and the large societies in general. Violence against women and children is an age-long vice and its existence against women and children is rooted in antiquity. Violence against women and children has existed from the beginning of creation and remained unabated despite all efforts to eliminate man's inhumanity to man. It takes a variety of forms which are culturally induced.

Ignorance of the causes and effects of violence against women and children remain a factor for persistence. Closely related to ignorance is lack of mobilization, enlightenment and moral education.

This research strongly agrees with Cronwell and Burgess (1996) that in understanding violence against women the precursor to preventing violence against women is understanding its causes. Better insight into the Sources of violence, the panel argued, is "useful in designing both prevention programs and interventions with offenders" (p. 89). The panel also stated that understanding the consequences of violence "is necessary for planning and implementing interventions to deal with those consequences" (p. 74).

The importance of understanding both the antecedents to and consequences of violence against women and family violence remains a priority for the research practitioner communities. The two issues are especially salient as researchers and practitioners partner to plan, design, and implement prevention programs and interventions with perpetrators and to address the consequences of violence. Much researcher practitioner attention has been shaped in part by two considerations: increased recognition of a multitude of interrelated antecedents to being victimized and to offending; and the realization that the consequences of violence extend well

beyond the lives of the women victims into the lives of their children and other family members, friends, and society as a whole.

Gaps still exist, however, in what is known about identifying and understanding the interrelationship between antecedents to and consequences of violence against women and family violence. The panel made the following three recommendations about how to fill those gaps.

More studies especially on violence against men need to be undertaken based on the following:

- i. More substantive knowledge is needed regarding precursors to violence, including socioeconomic factors and cultural and ethnic differences among demographic subgroups.
- ii. Methodological issues directly related to the advance of substantive knowledge should be addressed, such as the limitations of using general population surveys, and cross sectional datasets.
- iii. The direct and indirect consequences of violence for women, their families, and society as a whole, including lost productivity, should be explored in order to address the gaps neither to identified.

The contributions in section II address the gaps identified by the panel in understanding violence against women. Intertwined with the authors' substantive contributions are methodological innovations in research design, sample composition, and measurement of key concepts that set these works apart from past methodological strategies. First, the authors present an updated understanding of the antecedents to violence. Their work examines a number of antecedents and demonstrates how they contribute to the likelihood of committing violence against another person or experiencing violence as a victim.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IMO STATE

4.1 Gender and Children Situation in Imo State

The history, causes, types and persistence of violence against woman and children in chapter three has thrown insight into gender and children situation in Imo State. Literature review in chapter two, especially conceptual framework is not left out of helping in exploring types or forms of violence against women and children. It is observed that above prevailing circumstances are prevalent in Imo State. It would be a repetition starting them again in this chapter except for emphasis. The Animasaun and Animasaun (2013) were of the view that the issue of Gender Based Violence (GBV) has been an issue in academic and social discourse, thus, it has been defined variously by different authorities. However, the 1993 United Nation General Assembly's definition at the declaration of elimination of violence against women in serving as high point of the discourse. What the apex body condemned is still prevalent in Imo State. Gender Based Violence is defined from the effect of that interaction that results in physical, psychological, moral, social and cultural discomfort of women and children. These discomforts might have arisen out of threats, fear of ostracism, and act of coercion and deprivation of liberty in different spheres of life.

Gender Based Violence (GBV) contrary to erroneous impression either by the UN that only women are vulnerable to forms of violence as they are perceived by the victims of realities, incest, harmful cultural practices, battering, psychological abuse and their attendant trauma on women, children and their families. Animasaun and

Animasaun (2013) succinctly demonstrated that Gender Based Violence (GBV) extended to violence against men in Nigeria. Imo state is no exception in this act.

A number of respected respondents who claimed anonymity explained their predicament in the hands of their wives. Gender Based Violence (GBV) in Imo State therefore, not gender or location specific, that gender based violence are not limited to feminine issues alone and that beyond physical demonstration of violence against women are the physiological violence which are built in cultural, social and dietary attributes that men tent to flaunt over women.

Women and Girls still suffer great harm from men and boys who indulge in violence against them even though the same men depend on them for the continuity and growth of their family and the stability of the community and country. The contribution of women is present all people and levels of society including commercial, political and decision making aspects.

Violence against women and girls has far-reaching adverse consequences. It harms families, communities and society. It has severe physical and mental consequences for women and girls involved. Relationships and families, relatives, friends and co-workers are affected. It promotes the tradition that runs very deep on inequality between men and women. It hinders sustainable growth and development. It has enormous social and economic costs. It undercuts the contribution of women to development human rights, peace and security. Not only does violence against women prevent the raising of healthy children, it also hampers the economic development and stability of the country. Violence against women and girls poses serious threats to cultural norms as well as the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable Development at the grassroots.

The above predicament made Igbo women under the umbrella of Women and Family Affairs Committee of World Igbo Congress. And United Nations Representative of World Igbo Congress presented the plight of Igbo women and children. The presentation was made by Dr. Ada Okika.

The First Resolution of Women and Family Affairs Committee of World Igbo Congress:

1. Recalled the commitment of our forefathers in overall protection of Igbo women by the men.
2. Recognized the importance of girl child rearing practices according to Igbo norms and values.
3. Urges World Igbo' Congress to ensure the participation of women in affairs of Igbo development and growth.
4. Emphasizes the collective responsibility and collaboration of WFAC with Traditional Rulers Wives. In the Seven Igbo speaking states of Nigeria in reaching out to Igbo families on violence against women and children.
5. Noted the significant importance of Igbo culture and resolved to revisit the values and norms of the Igbo in their efforts to end violence against Igbo women and children.
6. Emphasized the significant need for Social Protection Floor for Igbo women and families
7. Called on World Igbo Congress to establish World Igbo Congress Information Center on Violence against Women and Igbo Families in Diaspora to assist on issues of violence among and within Igbo families in Diaspora

8. Emphasized the need for more discussion Forums and research to enable WFAC obtain and strengthen good statistical data on violence against Igbo women and girl child.
9. Recognize the urgent need to hold WIC-WFAC Traditional Rulers Wives Retreat in Nigeria to discuss further on Violence against Igbo women and children.
10. Call on women organizations to form strong coalition and recommend measures, ways and means at all levels to end violence against women and children.
11. Recognize the need to adopt a comprehensive and universal approach to ending all forms of Violence against Igbo women and girls.
12. Considers the significant need to have Specialized Service Centers for women and girls who are victims of various forms of violence.
13. Understand the social and economic hierarchies that between women and men and among women as roots to family and gender violence.
14. Decide that the Future Igbo Women Want is for government and those involved with law and decision making to strongly condemn all forms or acts of violence against women, call for elimination of forms of violence based issues against Igbo women and girl child from grassroots and enact Family and Women Protection Bill for Igbo Families.
15. Call for the support of World Igbo Congress, its Board of Directors and Executive Council to enable WFAC reach out to Titled Igbo Women and Wives of Traditional Rulers of the Seven Igbo States and form WIC Rural Council of Titled Igbo Women to facilitate and develop strategic framework on "Back to Igbo Cultural Norms and Values" for families and Child Rearing Practices.

16. Considered the significant need on Re-orientation of Igbo young ones on family value system.
17. Breaking of culture of silence among Igbo families and communities on issues of violence against women.
18. Training and Education of our children in school at all levels in our south east Zone, working towards curriculum of schools in our Igbo states to include gender law issues.
19. Create awareness on need for effective communication between mothers and their children.
20. Considered the need for Igbo people to revisit the traditional system of female marrying and wife inheritance.
21. Called for the Abolition of baby factory (selling) in Igbo community.

The Second Resolution of Women and Family Affairs Committee of World Igbo Congress:

1. Deliberated on the outcry of various forms of violence against Igbo Women and Girls.
2. Recognized the numerous negative impediments on the communal and societal development.
3. Noted concerns over the continued occurrence of various forms of violence especially domestic violence and sexual violence at home, community, work place, schools and colleges, Churches and politics.
4. Noted various neglects on youths, including employment search, low standard of education, .sexual abuse and parental neglects rooted on poverty.

5. Recognized the uproar on Baby Selling most of which occurred as a result of sexual abuse on the girl child.
6. Identified significant need to partner with men and boys to address gender equality.

The Third Resolution of Women and Family Affairs Committee of World Igbo Congress:

1. Igbo Culture has strong Protective and Security practices for Women and girls.
2. Igbo culture holds women and children in High esteem.
3. Igbo culture empowers women to resolve unresolved conflicts within the family, kindred and community.
4. Igbo culture maintains Sustainability between maiden and marital families of Igbo women which is the key to development and progress in traditional Igbo religion.
5. The "'Ani" or "Ala" is a goddess, the most revered, respected and feared and any crime against any woman is considered an abomination and must be appeased.

The Fourth Resolution of Women and Family Affairs Committee of World Igbo Congress:

1. Establish Center for Women and Family Education in all the Institutions of Higher learning in the Seven Igbo Speaking States. The Institution will also have Distant Learning programs for Igbo Children born in Diaspora.
2. Develop Advocacy Manual and curriculum for pre and primary institution.

3. Hold Traditional Rulers Wives and Titled Igbo Women Retreat on Gender Equality, MDGs and Works of UN Women.
4. Establish Collaboration and networking Opportunities with Agencies, Civil Societies. Women Organizations, Institutions of Higher learning, Centers for African Studies. Women Education Institute and Hotline Education Discussion (HED) Series on Strengthening Families.
5. Resolved to hold rotational Post CSW every year within the States of United States of] America, Nigeria and other parts of the Diaspora to advocate adequately for positive communal-living existence of Igbo families.
6. Establish Better Woman Better Family Initiative Club in schools in all the Seven Igbo speaking states of Nigeria and Historic Black Schools in Diaspora to educate and create awareness on Igbo Cultural Norms and Practices in agreement to these resolutions the Outreach Director, Women and Family Affairs Committee, Barrister Dame Unoaka Ekwegbalu called on World Igbo Congress Member States to sign this| resolution.

The consensus among people was that Women Based Violence received more reportage as against Men Based Violence. Women and children are seen. According to Jekayinfa (2012) to be objects of abused at the home or family, the community through patriarchal and cultural practices and at the State level through political legislative and administrative inhibitions. World March of Women (2000) said that the above three levels are extended areas of sexual harassment, forced treatments and abusive medication, commercialization of women contraception due to forced labour and selective abortion of fetuses.

4.2 Background to the Analyses of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

A close look at the background to implications of violence against women would be helpful in identifying, exploring and analyzing data from questionnaire on religious and social analysis of violence against women in Imo State, Nigeria. In doing this, the research descriptive approach in analyzing data corroborated by the responses of the respondents, who agreed, disagreed and those who expressed no opinion or indifferent to the social and religious implications of violence against women in Imo State.

Table 1: Respondents' Opinion on whether Violence against Women has Negative Implications on Women Themselves.

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Agreed	386	64%
Disagreed	173	29%
No opinion	41	7%
Total	600	100%

In order to establish the religious and social implications of male-female or wife-husband dichotomy, there was need to test whether male-female or wife-husband repulsive relationship has negative effects on the affected spouses. Table 1 show that 386 respondents (64%) agreed that it affects the spouse negatively. 173 respondents (29%) disagreed to the above view while 41 respondents (7%) had no opinion or were indifferent as to whether violence against women affects them negatively. The wide gap between those who agreed, disagreed and who maintained neutral stand is wide

enough to suggest that wife-husband or male-female dichotomy raises moral questions if we consider critically its nature and effects on the affected spouse. Honest, moral integrity and objective assessment of all the issues involved in the social relationships with women and required by the respondents, but they seem lacking in the 173 respondents (29%) and 41 respondents who disagreed and expressed no opinion respectively. It follows that contravention of this principle in violence against women question is an immoral act because it suggests a sign of moral failure. There is substance in maintaining that the complimentary role of each research method is needed to check the socially contradicting expression based on double consciousness.

Table 2: Respondents' answer to the question: from which of the following forms of Violence do Women Suffer?

Opinions	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
Cultural form of Violence	149 (25%)	70 (12%)	10 (2%)
Social form of Violence	55 (9%)	42 (7%)	7 (15%)
Political form of Violence	43 (7%)	20 (3%)	17 (3%)
domestic form of Violence	83 (14%)	31 (5%)	11 (2%)
Religion forms of Violence	18 (3%)	15 (2.5%)	5 (1%)
Psychological forms of Violence	9 (1%)	11 (2%)	4 (1%)
Total	357 (59.5%)	189 (31.5%)	54 (9%)

Table 2: shows that the first in the series of violence women suffer is culturally related. The weight of cultural forms of violence against women explains the highest response of 149 (25%) and 70 (12%) for respondents who agreed and

disagreed respectively. Cultural forms of violence against women has caused, fuelled and compounded marital problems in the family in particular and the society in general. Although 10 respondents or 2% expressed no opinion, the number cannot be ignored as insignificant. Their silence is an unacceptable attitude to violence against women in Imo State, Nigeria. The complimentary role of interviews and observation may be adopted for a deeper insight into their view points.

Social forms of violence against women in Imo State attracted 55 (9%), 42 (7%) for respondents who agreed, disagreed and expressed no opinion respectively. The nature and weight of social forms of violence against women were sought through interview, chats and observation.

Political forms of violence were not left out of problems women face in Imo State, 43 (7%) agreed to this problem while 20 (3%) disagreed, 17 (3%) respondents shared no opinion. Similarly, domestic form of violence against women in Imo State made the second highest response of 83 (14%) for respondents who agreed. However, 31 (5%) respondents disagreed that women face domestic violence in Imo State. The irony of this mute indifference is that social forms of violence made the third highest responses, 11 (2%) respondents who expressed no opinion made the second highest response on table 2 above. Apart from constituting a persistent factor, it points to the rigid attitude of those who refer to violence against women in Imo State.

Table 2 (5) shows those 18 respondents or 3% who agreed to the religious forms of violence against women in Imo State, Nigeria 15 respondents or 2.5% who disagreed to the violence against women in Imo State cannot deny the dignity and respect associated with cultural association. Similarly, the women who do not face violence 5 respondents or 1% who expressed no opinion could not close their eyes to

the indignities battered women face in Imo State. The above positions call for clarifications using other methods.

Similar to cultural association is 9 respondents or 1% agreed that women suffer psychological form of violence, while 11 or 2% disagreed. Reasons for these positions were sought from women and their spouse through interviews and observation. It is equally important to write that 4 respondents or 1% were indifferent to the question.

Table 3: Respondents' view on whether violence against women affects men in Imo State

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Agreed	303	50.6%
Disagreed	170	28.3%
No opinion	127	21.1%
Total	600	100%

Item 23 in the questionnaire sought to find out whether violence against women also affects men in Imo State, Nigeria. From table 3, it is evident from 303 or 50.6% of our respondents who openly agreed that violence against women affects men. There is need to go beyond the above response to articulate various ways men in particular and wife-husband division affects the people of Imo State. What is at the back of the 170 respondents or 28.7% who disagreed played down on the various weight of the male-female dichotomy as it affects the people. In the same vein, the 127 respondents or 21.1% who expressed no opinion point to conflicting claims made in order to cover some of the truth about gender hostility in Imo State.

Table 4: Respondents' opinion on cultural forms of Violence against Women in Imo State

Opinions	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
Gender imbalance	136 (22.7%)	45 (7.6%)	5 (.8%)
Female Genital Mutilation	92 (15.3%)	10 (1.75%)	3 (.5%)
Widowhood Practices	169 (28.1%)	30 (5%)	6 (1%)
Harmful Delivery Practices	80 (13.3%)	16 (2.6%)	8 (1%)
Total	477 (79.5%)	101 (16.9%)	22 (3.6%)

Question 24 sought to identify specific forms of violence against women in Imo State. In spite of the perceived rigid and uncompromising stand on gender dichotomy, 136 respondents or 22.7% were of the view that it makes for gender imbalance of the people in Imo state. The above reality did not seem to appeal to 45 respondents or 7.6% who disagreed to the gender imbalance. However, 5 respondents or 8% who expressed no opinion needed to be reminded that men have been negatively affected by gender dichotomy, 92 respondents or 15.3% indicated that another area of view. Similarly, the 3 respondents or 5% who expressed no opinion were either ignorant of the effects of gender crisis on mutual respect and dignity of the human persons and decided to play down on the realities of male-female dichotomy in Imo State.

Social amenities are basic necessitates of life, which gender dichotomy might not have promoted in Imo State. This was probably what informed the highest response of 168 or 28.1%. 30 respondents or 5% did not share the above view. Similarly, 6 respondents or 1% expressed no opinion. The implications of these attitudes were sought through chats, interviews and observation.

Another effect of violence against women is social discontent. The stereotypes for the continued recognition of people as women victims have given rise to ill feeling. Table 4 shows that 80 respondents or 13.3% who agreed that gender stereotypes have caused social discontents to women group were in minority. Their critical stand is responsible for casting aspersion on the integrity of the larger group who favour gender division. 16 respondents or 2.6% denied this fact. Their reason coupled with that of 8 respondents or 1.3% who expressed no opinion called for clarifications through other methods.

Table 5: Respondents' opinion on whether violence against women affects the family

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Agreed	363	43.9%
Disagreed	198	33%
No opinion	39	23.1%
Total	600	100%

Table 5 was designed to test respondents' opinion on whether violence against women in Imo State affects the family. There is a strong indication from 263 respondents or 43.9% that wife-husband dichotomy, affects the family. This number may not be convincing enough going by the 198 respondents or 33% who disagreed. This dilemma is further compounded by the 39 respondents or 23.1% who expressed no opinion. Were they truly ignorant of the effects of the social dichotomy on the family? Or could it be that they decided to remain silent on the implications of

violence against women? Their opinion would also be verified through interviews, charts and observation.

Table 6: Respondents' opinion on which of the following Ways is Violence against Women a Domestic Violence

Opinions	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
Women discrimination	19 (15%)	35 (6%)	5 (.8%)
Wife battering	63 (10.5%)	29 (5%)	2 (.3%)
Child sexual abuse	42 (7%)	33 (5.5%)	4 (1.6%)
Marginalization	37 (6.1%)	21 (5%)	-
Marital rape	54 (9%)	31 (2.5%)	-
Spousal sexual assault	47 (7.8%)	20 (3%)	1 (0.1%)
Male Chauvinism	50 (8.3%)	32 (5%)	5 (.8%)
Total	312 (63.7%)	201 (32%)	16(3.6%)

Question 18 was designed to ascertain the domestic problems which violence against women has caused in Imo State. Respondents' opinion contained in table 6 shows that 91 respondents or 15% agreed that women discrimination makes religion in Imo State lack prophetic role. Although it is the highest response, among options respondents agreed upon, 35 respondents or 6% and 5 respondents or .8% that disagreed and expressed no opinion respectively seriously challenged it. In spite of these views, the prophetic role of religion is capable of bringing about transformation in people and institution in Imo state. Gender dichotomy affects the membership of the religious institutions. 63 respondents or 10.5% shared this view, while 29

respondents or 5% and 2 respondents or .3% disagreed and expressed no opinion respectively.

In a related development, 42 respondents or 5.5% agreed that women membership of the religious institution is a problem. Although 33 respondents or 5.5% disagreed, the fact remains that gender dichotomy does not encourage some Christian men and women to aspire to the highest religious commitment to God and humanity. 4 respondents or 1.65 who kept mute indifference could not deny the fact that violence against women made some Christians' lapse in religious enthusiasm.

Table 6(4) shows those 37 respondents or 6.1% who agreed to the problem of victims of violence against women in the leadership of religious institution. 21 or 3.5% disagreed while none expressed any opinion. Violence against women dichotomy affects women and men religious training and the subsequent ordination. Respondents who agreed to this view made the third highest number -54 or 9% while 31 or 5.6% disagreed. There was no respondent that expressed no opinion. Male-female involvement or lack of participation in religious sacraments is another effect of male-female division in Imo State. 47 respondents or 7.8% agreed to this problem, while 20 respondents or 3% disagreed. Their reasons for disagreeing need to be revisited in the analysis of religious implications of gender crisis for religion. A respondent or .1% expressed no opinion.

Finally, respondents saw humanitarian services as capable of making a positive transformation, but gender dichotomy does not allow it. This was what informed 50 respondents or 8.3% to agree to the problem. 32 respondents or 5.6% did not share this 4th highest response. Similarly, 5 or .8% expressed no opinion.

Table 7: Respondents' view on wife-husband dichotomy is a factor for the underdevelopment of Imo State.

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Agreed	423	70.5%
Disagreed	119	19.8%
No opinion	58	9.6%
Total	600	100%

Item 25 in the questionnaire was designed to test the assumption that violence against women remains a factor for the under development of Imo State. Table 7 reflects the interest shown by 427 respondents or 70.5% who agree that gender dichotomy is a factor for the underdevelopment of Imo State. If they had gone beyond mere expression, it would have been a better way of ending the discrimination. However, this desire was short lived by the 119 respondents or 19.8% and 58 respondents or 9.6% who disagreed and expressed no opinion to the above question respectively. They have challenged this study to find out what is at the back of their mind through other methods.

Table 8: Respondents' View on Political forms of Violence against Women.

Opinions	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
Campaign of Calumny	57 (9.5%)	31 (5%)	11 (2%)
Exclusion from men dominated decision making body	73 (12%)	20 (3.3%)	6 (1%)
Political Harassment Support	70 (12%)	23 (4%)	9 (1.5%)

Lack of Grass root Support	61 (10%)	31 (5%)	-
Political marginalization	77 (13%)	10 (2 %)	20 (3.3%)
Violence against women in custody	99 (16.5%)	2 (.3%)	-

Table 8 reflects the various areas of economic problems based on gender dichotomy has brought on Imo State. 57 or 9.5% agreed that lack of land ownership is the basic economic problem. Although 31 respondents or 5% disagreed, they needed to explain why land ownership is a persistent factor of gender discrimination. The least response of 11 or 2% may not be objective by their indifference. They seem to pretend that gender problems are no longer here, but they turn round to call women strangers (*obia*) in order to deny them land inheritance.

Inadequate farming was agreed upon as an economic problem, which made the third highest response of 37 or 12% lack of land ownership is responsible also for inadequate farming in Imo State. The 20 respondents or 3.3% and 6 or 1% who disagreed and expressed no opinion respectively probably forgot that these land problems implied poverty and rejection of women in Imo State.

The fourth highest response on table 8 shows that 70 respondents or 12% agreed that insufficient agricultural produce is an area of economic problem caused by gender dichotomy. The reasons for this answer were further sought for clarification through interviews, chats and observation. This position did not go down well with 23 respondents or 4% who disagreed that wife-husband crisis contributes to insufficient food production. This is not a small number to ignore. Overlooking the abject poverty as if it does not induce economic problems may not be a far assessment of the economic situation in Imo State. Similarly, 9 respondents or 1.5% who expressed no opinion may have done so based on their rigid stand on gender stereotypes.

Wife-husband dichotomy is also responsible for poor membership of cooperatives in Imo State. The weight of this problem made 61 respondents or 10% to agree, while 31(5%) disagreed. No respondent was indifferent to the question.

Gender hostility does not make the spirit of mutual help and joint ventures between wives and husbands to be tapped for developmental purposes. 77 respondents or 13% shared this view. However, 10 respondents or 2% disagreed while 20 respondents expressed no opinion. Their position could be categorized as attitude of exclusives, which might indicate that the truth about discrimination is not yet told. Gender dogma cripples economic efforts aimed at making the people of Imo State self-reliant.

The overall effect of gender dichotomy is identified according to table 8(5) as lack of employment or difficulty in obtaining scarce work in competition with the women victims. According to table 8, (5) 99 respondents or 16.5% strongly agreed to the above view. 2 respondents or .3% who disagreed does not affect this highest response. The inability of 20 respondents or 3.3% to express no opinion points to the premise that unequal rights affect the working spirit of the people of Imo State.

Table 9: Respondents' view on whether Violence against Women affects Children

Responses	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Agreed	330	55%
Disagreed	186	31%
No opinion	84	14%
Total	600	100%

Item 29 in the questionnaire was used to test the various faces of the political enemy gender dichotomy has made in Imo State. Table 9 above shows that 33 or 55% agreed that there are a number of political problems caused by discrimination against women victims. The premise that attitude dies hard is brought out in the 186 respondents or 31% who disagreed that gender division is responsible for the political problems. The reality of political problem being caused by women isolation is further compounded by 84 respondents or 14% whose indifference do not help in finding the true nature of the problem. It makes people not to speak with one voice and the matter is not solved.

Table 10: Political problems arising from Violence against Women include which of the following?

S/N	Opinions	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
1	Denied legitimacy in their constituency	45 (7.5%)	52 (9%)	21 (5.5%)
2	Gender Feud	36 (6%)	67(11%)	3%
3	Gender dichotomy	72 (12%)	37(6%)	2%
4	Gender Dogma	51 (8.5%)	54 (9%)	15 (2.5%)
5	Male-female hostile relationship	89 (14.9%)	28 (5%)	3 (.5%)

Item 30 in the questionnaire tried to identify specific areas of political challenges in Imo State in particular and Igbo land in general. Table 10 contains opinions of our respondents and 10 (1) shows that 45 respondents or 7.5% agreed that

the thrust of the political problem is that women victims are denied legitimacy in their constituencies. It was revealing that 52 respondents or 9% and 21 respondents or 5.5% disagreed and expressed no opinion respectively. Their view or position might suggest political insensitivity, which does not favour constructive political engagement.

Similarly, gender feud has made a particular social group to lack political affiliation. 36 respondents or 65 shared this view, while 67 respondents or 11% disagreed. 18 respondents or 3% expressed no opinion. Table 10 (4) shows that 72 respondents or 12% saw gender dichotomy as an instance of violation of human rights in Imo state. This number is second highest political problems identified by respondents. 37 respondents or 6% disagreed that women victims are denial of political rights or marginalized. 12 respondents or 2% expressed no opinion to the question of denial of political rights.

Another political problem which 51 respondents or 8.5% agreed as caused by gender dichotomy, is campaign propaganda, gender dogma is used and made politics the dirtiest game, by scaring committed people away. In spite of the cumulative force of the above reality 54 respondents or 9% disagreed with the view. Silence as a passive method of resolving gender problem probably contributed in making 15 respondents or 2.5% to express no opinion on the political problem.

One effect of the political propaganda is the non-inclusion of social group in political appointments. Table 10 (5) shows that 89 respondent or 14.9% agreed that male-female hostile relationship effects political appointments in Imo State. Details of the effects of the denial of political appointments were sought through face-to-face interview, observation and chat. Apart from being the highest response, a respondent maintained that lack of political appointments is responsible for the apparent lack of

political will to address gender problems. In the light of this position, it is difficult to establish what is at the back of 28 respondents or 5% who disagreed the non-inclusion of women social group in political appointments. Similarly, the reason of our 3 respondents or .5% who were indifferent to segregation, which affects social life had to be sought. This is necessary to move the problems of gender dichotomy.

Table 11: Respondent's view on noticeable educational problems caused by gender dichotomy in Imo state.

S/N	Opinions	Agreed	Disagreed	No Opinion
1	Gender Dogma	83 (14%)	50 (8.3%)	37 (6.1%)
2	Ideological orientation	46 (8%)	33 (5.5%)	30 (5%)
3	Lack of intellectual situation	89 (15%)	12 (2%)	25 (4.1%)
4	Poor funding	100 (17%)	6 (1%)	-
5	Education unable to go far correcting the danger	75 (12.5%)	12 (2%)	3 (.5%)

Is it true that gender is a fundamental element of the mental heritage of the Igbo? Item 28 of our questionnaire tests areas gender dichotomy affects negatively educational development in Imo State. Table 11 (1) shows that 83 respondents or 14% agreed that gender dogma influences educational development through misrepresentation of women victims. Although the above response is the third highest. 50 respondents or 8.3% disagreed without considering that misrepresentation weakens people, institutions and relationships. Indifference to the excruciating pains of misrepresentation has kept gender dichotomy alive 37 respondents or 6.1% had reasons for their reservations but passivity does not seem a functional contribution in

abolishing gender discrimination in Imo State. There is a strong indication, therefore, that ignorance and a prior decision to maintain the status between women and men made 30 respondents or 5% to express no opinion to what is grouped ideological orientation as educational problem.

33 respondents or 5.5% who disagreed to ideological orientation complicates this second largest response. Even 46 respondents or 8% who agreed to the above problem made the least response in table 11. The dilemma was partly resolved by explaining what ideological orientations means and examples of ideological orientation such as communicative modes of behaviour and symbolic signs of expression. We sought through interviews and charts to explore various ways women dilemma is recreated through communicative modes of behaviour and symbolic signs of expression.

There is no doubt that misrepresentation of women and ideological orientations were responsible for the next educational problem grouped lack of intellectual stimulation. This explains the second highest response of 89 or 15% and 25 respondents or 4.1% for those who agreed and expressed no opinion to the educational problem of lack of intellectual stimulation respectively.

Table 11 (4) shows that a total of 100 respondents or 17% agreed that poor founding is an educational problem caused and compounded by gender division in Imo State. Although the number is the highest in table 11, however 12 respondents or 2% disagreed with them. They did not seem to consider the standard variety used by the male children affect negatively women children.

Respondents were of the view that the above educational problems made education in Imo State not to go far in correcting the danger posed by gender

dichotomy. 75 respondents or 12.5% agreed to this view while 11 respondents or 2% disagreed.

We verified their positions through observation, interview and chats. The problems of poor socialization are glaring in Imo State. To accept as an objective view 3 respondents or .5% who expressed no opinion to poor socialization is like supporting the persistence of repulsive attitude. A passionate and objective look at the religious and sociological implications of gender dichotomy for male, female, Non-Igbo, religion and Imo State would bring out the overt and covert effects of gender dichotomy. It is hoped that this approach may be more effective in abolishing problems in Imo State in particular and Igbo society in general.

4.3 Implications of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

In this dissertation, the implications of violence against women and children in Imo State are discussed under Religious Implications of Violence against Women and Children Imo State and Social Implications of Violence against Women and Children Imo State

4.3.1 Religious Implications of Violence against Women and Children Imo State

Religion is dynamic in promoting cohesion, social integration and peaceful co-existence in the society. Scripture and traditions of all the religious system in Nigeria talks about peace, love and unity of its members, societies and relationships.

However, contrary to the above cultural norms and values which religion promotes in Imo State in particular and Nigeria in general, the types, characteristics

and persistence of violence against women and children seem to be a large extent negate the above religious ideals, norms and values.

For instance, the Christian religious teaches the oneness of God. It goes to talk about unity in Christ Jesus. There is no Jew or Gentile, slave or free born, etc. (Galatians 3:28), women and children constituting the most vulnerable group that undergo all sorts of violence is not Christian in nature and character. Love your neighbour as yourself, love covers a multitude of sins and seek peace with all men without which no man can see God.

Children are said to be the heritage of God. In line with the Christian principle, subjecting children into all forms of abuse, stress, indignities and cruelty constitute a challenge to the Christian Church and humanity.

In the words of action call on Elimination and Prevention of Violence against Women and Girls by Secretary General of United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki Moon at the closing session of Women and Family Affairs Committee of World Igbo Congress noted that "violence against women is a heinous human rights violation, global menace, a public health threat and a moral outrage. No matter where she lives, no matter what her culture is, no matter what her society, every woman and girl is entitled to live free of fear. She has the universal human right to be free from all forms of violence so as to fulfill her full potential and dreams for the future".

Violence against women and children is a universal problem that requires, and has now received, a universal response. Violence occurs in multiple forms in all countries and settings; it harms women and their families and communities, impedes development, and costs countries billions of dollars annually in healthcare costs and lost productivity. In 2003, when the Commission took up violence against women and human rights, Member States were unable to reach agreement.

The Christian Church is challenged to re-echo its beliefs, teaching on love of God for women and children. Do not stop the children from coming to me because the kingdom of God is theirs. Matt. 9:14, Luke,18:16. The handicapping and perilous situation children are forced to operate, negates these basic Christian teachings.

The leadership and fellowship of the Christian Church should rise to the occasion. Liberation of children is imperative as future leaders of the Church. The spiritual, moral and political sources of the Christian Church should be put into effective use. The spiritual resources are there, however, the will seems to be dampened. The church should be alive to its responsibilities in addressing violence against women and children in Imo State.

4.3.2 Social Implications of Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

There are a number of social implications of violence against women and children in Imo State. They are discussed under punishment, divorce, poor upbringing of children, and child abuse. It debases women, children and close relations of the victims of the obnoxious act. Domestic violence which includes battering and other aspects of intimate partner violence like marital rape, sexual violence, threats etc.

The overall consequences of violence against women and children. Some of these women victim according to S. Anozie (personal communication, 5-4-2015) seem to have developed greater stress over time. Similarly, poor women who had experienced recent intimate partner violence were likely to maintain employment than poor women who were not abused.

Furthermore, the economic consequences of being a victim of violence against women and children but they can stop with victimized women and children but they can extend to economic mental, physical and social wellbeing of children in Imo State in particular and Nigeria in general.

4.3.2.1 Financial Effect

Once victims leave their perpetrator, they can be stunned with the reality of the extent to which the abuse has taken away their autonomy. Due to economic abuse and isolation, the victims usually have very little money of their own and few people on whom they can rely when seeking help. This has been shown to be one of the greatest obstacles facing victims of domestic violence, and the strongest fact that can discourage them from leaving their perpetrators (Stop Violence Against Women, 2010). In addition to lacking financial resources, victims of domestic violence often lack specialized skills, education, and training that are necessary to find gainful employment, and also may have several children, to support.

4.3.2.2 Punishment

Women are asked to drink the water which is used to bath the corpse of the husband because she is accused of killing is only being a victim of violence and could develop one or more type of sicknesses. Again, mutilation of female genital organ places women at risk of infection and chronic/painful complications of their gynecological and genitanirary tract. These infections could range from HIV, AIDS etc. this affect growth and the development of the family in the sense that the money which could have been used for the up keep of the family will now be used for treatment of these sicknesses.

Physical effects of punishments associated with violence against women and children include bruises, broken bones, head injuries, lacerations and internal bleeding are some of the acute effects of a domestic violence incident that require medical attention and hospitalization. Some chronic health conditions that have been linked to victims of domestic violence are arthritis, irritable bowel syndrome. Victims who are

pregnant during a domestic violence relationship experience greater risk of miscarriage, pre-term labour, and injury to or death of the foetus.

4.3.2.3 Divorce

A man may inflict violence on his wife by wanting to make love to her even when she is ill or when she has just been delivered of a baby. If the woman refuses and the man insists, the woman may run away from the house and this may eventually lead to divorce. Again, when a man forces his wife to have sex with other men to produce children for him due to the reason that he is impotent, and the woman would not want to comply, such could lead to divorce and hence retard the growth of the family.

4.3.2.4 Poor Upbringing of Children

Psychologists have pointed out that upbringing plays a crucial role. People who were mistreated in childhood or who witness violence between their parents are more likely to mistreat their own offspring than people from non-violent homes. In addition, women who witness spouse abuse in childhood are particularly likely to become victims of it in later life.

For children and youth, violence in the family often has traumatic effect, causing their behavior to change. It is typical for them to be afraid, upset and angry. Even if they seem to be coping well, children need extra attention and care. Regardless of their age, children from violent homes are at increased risk of behavioural and developmental problems. They often suffer from anxiety and depression and they may exhibit more aggressive, antisocial, inhibited or fearful behaviors. Even if they have not been assaulted, themselves physically abused.

Children who witness violence at home often have a persistence fear of their own safety and the safety of brothers, sisters and battered parent. They may also blame themselves for not being able to stop the violence (for example, by behaving better). For these children, feeling of self blame, guilt, anger, fear about being different from the other children may be acute. They need help to understand that they did not cause the violence and could not have stopped it. They need to know that it is okay for them to feel angry and sad about losses that have resulted from the violence. Many children who are brought up in a violent home may have criminal records for violence outside the family. A violent home has less time for proper upbringing of their children.

Psychological Effect: Among victims who are still living with their perpetrators, high amounts of stress, fear and anxiety are commonly reported. Depression is also common, as victims are made to feel guilty for 'provoking' the abuse and are frequently subjected to intense criticism. Barnett (2001) reported that 60% of victims meet the diagnostic criteria for depression, either during or after termination of the relationship, and have a greatly increased risk of suicidality. This statistical figure does not reflect the percentage of this research. However, the most commonly referenced psychological effect of violence against women and children is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). According to Vitanza, Vogel and Marshall (1995), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as experienced by victims is characterized by flashbacks, intrusive images, exaggerated startle response, nightmares, and avoidance of triggers that are associated with the abuse. These symptoms are generally experienced for a long span of time after the victim has left the dangerous situation. Many researchers state that PTSD is possibly the best diagnosis for those suffering from psychological effect of domestic violence, as it accounts for the variety of symptoms commonly experienced by victims of trauma.

4.3.2.5 Long-term Effect

Long term effect of violence against women and children is observed. Domestic violence can trigger many different responses in victims, all of which are very relevant for a professional working with a victim. Major consequences of domestic violence victimization include psychological/mental health issues and chronic physical health problems. A victim's overwhelming lack of resources can lead to homelessness and poverty.

4.3.2.6 Child Abuse

Child abuse refers to situation in which a child is suffering serious physical injuries inflicted other than accidental means, is suffering harm by reason of neglect, malnutrition or sexual abuse, is going without necessary basic physical care or is growing up under conditions which threaten his or her physical or emotional survival (UNICEF, 2001).

In a household where there are only female children, the (i.e the father) may want one of the girls to stay to bear more children so that there could be the chance of getting male child. This is a form of violence and child abuse and any such child who agrees to do that will not gain any respect from the community/people as she sleeps from one man to another. Also such female child has the tendency of suffering later in life because her father who introduced her to such life will die one day leaving her to carry the responsibility of training her children alone without any husband. Not only that, she could equally be exposed to some sexual transmitted diseases as she sleeps with different men. In the case of women trafficking or prostitution, this is violence on women and children and such has no respect in the society. They are not regarded

anywhere even though they may have money because they don't have any right for the fact that they are not married.

There has been an increase in acknowledgement that a child who is exposed to domestic abuse during his upbringing will suffer in his development and psychological welfare. Some emotional and behavioural problems that can result due to domestic violence include increased aggressiveness, anxiety, and changes in how a child socializes with friends, family and authorities. Problems with attitude and cognition in schools can start developing, along with a lack of skills such as problem-solving. Correlation has been found between the experience of abuse and neglect in childhood and perpetrating domestic violence and sexual abuse in adulthood. Additionally, in some cases, the abuser will purposely abuse the mother in front of the child to cause a ripple effect, hurting two victims simultaneously. It has been found that children who witness mother-assault are more likely to exhibit symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

CHAPTER FIVE

SOLUTIONS TO VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IMO STATE

Solutions to Violence against women and children are considered under the following headings:

5.1 The Role of the Church as a Panacea for Change

The focus of this chapter is to discuss various roles of the Church in solving the problems associated with harmful traditional harmful practices against the rights of women among the people of Imo State and beyond. However, it is common knowledge that the church is not comfortable with these practices. The role of the Church in bringing about positive change is discussed under the following sub-headings: Motivation from the catholic social teaching, Advocacy, A call on Christian Women Organization (CWO) in Imo State by the Church and Gender equality in the society and in the Church. Other include: The Church speaks, through practical demonstration and through preaching.

5.1.1 Motivation from the Catholic Social Teaching

Christians need to become more aware of the two internal dimensions to doing justice; the two feet of justice, Justice and peace. Stoutzenberger (1998). One is direct Christian service [charity], which we are more familiar with; and the other, is indirect Christian service [action for social justice]. The former is concerned with the immediate relief of the poor, the needy oppressed; while the latter calls for questioning of the unjust social structure which generate these problem. It is the

nicely forgotten aspect, social action, the questioning of unjust social structures that the 1971 synod of Bishop' document, Justice in the world is calling Christian to, and not charity which has always been present from earliest time.

Action on behalf of social justice... is central to being Catholic. It is neither new nor is it optional. It is an essential"... dimension of the preaching of Gospel, or, in other words, the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation Justice in the such as poverty, for example by asking question as to why people are hungry in the first place, and have to go to soup kitchen. Social action deals with the root cause of issues, which dig up the root causes of women's subordinate. Thus, social action calls for both structural and cultural analysis of women' subordination as has been done in chapter five. In the case of women, the unjust social structure has been identified in the dissertation as the male headship model gender relations, which keeps women subordinate to men.

It is important to note that the concept of social justice as different from works of charity is a fairly new phenomenon in the church as evidence in the long years of supporting slavery and women's subordination. Many Christians are still unaware of the catholic social teaching. Some of those who already know it have not tried to implement it. Perhaps, if they do, God's reign mighty come too soon, and they might lose their personal privilege and advantage which the present unjust situation guarantees them for Gods reign, as portrayed in Jesus' parables, is characterized by justice, inclusion and equity; and upset those who have special privileges. For if everybody, both lowly and the mighty, lived by those same principles of the social teaching of the church, there would be a real difference in the world.

Perhaps, the most probable reason why people who know about the Catholic social Teaching do not act on them is that it is dangerous business. People have been

known to lose their jobs when the sinful social structures requiring to be analyzed involve the same organization, which promote advocacy and social justice; and denial run rife.

As things are, it is quite possible that many people who would uphold the principles of justice embedded in this inspiring document do not see women's subordination as unjust. Long years of accustomed presumed understanding of women's place in the order of creation and the next to man's need for "a helper" may block the possibility of seeing these text as providing a vision for a way out of the cultural and theological morass which at present characterizes theology and anthropology with respect to women both in the Igbo culture and in the church. The difference in view may include a number of concepts in the paragraph under consideration, such as, social justice, gospel, liberation, as well as oppressive situation. Yet, no one is in a better situation to define what is oppressive than those who know what oppression tastes like but a fact of life which women continue to lament and protest is that they are excluded from the decision-making platforms where these definitions are formulated both in the Igbo culture and the church.

The church also serves as a solution to these practices by doing the following:

1. The welfare of women in general.
2. Promoting the welfare of the child and initiating actions for the development of the child within the meaning of the International Convention of the rights of the child.
3. Promoting the full utilization of women in development resources and bringing about their acceptance as full participants in every phase of national development with equal rights and obligations promoting responsible motherhood and maternal and child health.

4. Promoting intervention therapy in family instability
5. Promoting the course of the disabled and stimulating public awareness and responsibilities on this segment of the society.
6. Working towards the total elimination of all social and cultural practices that discriminate against women sorting and collaborating with Non-governmental organizations and playing a coordinating role between government and the Nigerian women organization
7. Encouraging the essence of cooperative societies and activities among women and children in the rural and urban areas and stimulating their creative entrepreneurship in the field of cottage and small-scale industries.

It is obvious from the foregoing that the church dedicates to the implementation of strategies and policies that impact directly on the most vulnerable in the society. Besides, the church steeped directly and deeply in the management of human angle cases. It is to be expected that failure to deliver effectively will lead to the immediate suffering and personal injury to some of their target beneficiaries.

Other Specific ways the church helps in solving the problems associated with these harmful traditional practices include:

5.1.2 Advocacy

The church is trying her best by letting the traditional rulers realize the need for change, lobbying the Government to have legislation on the subject in particular and other harmful traditional practices (HTPs) in general, encouraging litigation under existing laws by affected widows, for instance, under Fundamental Human Rights provision. Empowering the widows and women generally by discouraging early marriages, having access to credit, encouraging formal and informal education,

encouraging the women to invest in better things other than clothes. The micro credit summit held in 1996 in Washington DC and the innovation of FEAP are all efforts geared towards this by world bodies and the Nigeria Government respectively. All these are laudable strategies which if given adequate machineries and attention will go a long way.

5.1.3 A Call on Christian Women Organization (CWO) in Imo State by the Church

The question still remains how effective these groups can be and how long will this take to fully materialize. The church has no doubt that the CWO given its numerical strength and the unity of purpose, the church that is one, holy, Catholic and Apostolic can within a very short space of time eradicate the widowhood practices and indeed harmful traditional practices. Currently, the concept of self adversely affect such ventures of you are well to do and have strong grip on your family or belong to a 4 or 5 members of NGO, there is that tendency not to bother in the real sense about what is happening to the majority less unfortunate members. On the part of the individual members, the conflict we allow in minds between our religion and culture make us not to realise that we have an option in most of the actions widows indulge in (because it what others have been doing). We apt to put our belief and faith into a cooler toll such and such a time e.g. not being able to receive our lord or visit him for one month. When the reverse should be the case. TO liberate the majority of our women there is need for the powers that be in this noble Organization to map out what and what is expected of a Catholic Women when her husband dies.

Other specific ways the church uses in fighting against these practices e.g. cutting down the period of confinement allowing the women to bath and change clothes, not doing the widowhood run and the like.

Other roles of the church in solving the problems associated with these practices include- a letter by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) in 2004 has asked for collaboration between men and women in the church and in the world. This letter acknowledges that there is an uneasy rivalry between men and women and this situation does not need to be. It emphasizes that men and women are different and for a purpose. The differences serve to attract and respect the other sex in a reciprocal self-giving, not in a slave/master relationship. The church would do well to examine the difficulties experienced by men and women in our society and teach ways to achieve this much-needed collaboration in the interest of peace and progress. Failure to do this would result in more problems and distractions confronting the church. The church can bring about improvement by campaigning against such maltreatment, and instituting rewards for exemplary behaviour.

5.1.4 Gender Equality in the Society and in the Church

With the number of researches on gender equality now available, and with the ever increasing number of women who excel in their places of work, the question should no longer be whether women are equal to men. Gender equality is indisputable. The question should rather be what is being done to make people, men and women, recognize the fact and importance of gender equality. The first major step in the society was taken by the United Nations General Assembly on 10th December, 1948, when it adopted what is known today as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Thanks to the Fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing (China) in 1995, which assessed the progress of gender equality so far, more women are now waking up gradually to the demands of all the declarations in favours of women's rights.

The Church has also been awake by championing the campaign for gender equality. She is bidding farewell to her past; a past full of ungodly discrimination against women. Earlier on, the Church was in the forefront of the patriarchal project to discredit women. She interpreted history and the Bible solely from the point of view of men-centered ideology. In the attempt to come to terms debased and bedeviled women in the name of God, denied them the right to claim that they are also created in the image of God, and burnt them on the stake.

The Church's first step to reinstate women began with the Second Vatican Council, which in its closing message, addressed women as follows: "The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of women is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved." (8 December 1965, AAA 58, 1996, 13-14). This message re-echoed what was already mentioned in two documents of the Second Vatican Council: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et Spes*, 8,9,60) and Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 9). So women, as they rightly read the signs of times. Pope plus XII in his many addresses to women. Pope John XXIII in his Encyclical *Pacerm in Terris* and Pope Paul VI in his discourses. The 1971 and 1987 General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops both encouraged, among other things, the recognition of the dignity of women.

We cannot deny the fact that many a time these Papal and Episcopal declarations remain theoretical: the oppression of women In the church continued. But the

Ponificate of Pope John Paul II seems to have made a difference: he showed more commitment to the cause of women. He spoke at length about the welfare of women in his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (Christian Family in the Modern World, 1981) and in *Mulieris Dignitatem* (Dignity And Vocation of Women, 1988). Over and above these publications and other letters, Pope John Paul II initiated two concrete steps that approach to gender equality in our time.

First, he took pains to reinterpret those biblical passages that are often being used to advance the subjugation of women, such as Gen. 2: 18-25. He reestablished the fact that the Genesis creation account should be reinterpreted to illuminate the divine image in women. He also subtly corrects St Paul's teaching on women subordination in his letter to the Ephesians 5:21-33, which states that wives should be subject to their husbands in 'a very patriarchal way. Making reference to Eph. 5:21, John Paul II argues that all the rest of the points made on women subjection of man and woman to one another out of reverence for Christ. His view endorses what many scholars have been saying about the need to reinterpret the bible, isolation the socio cultural context in which the authors lived in, in order to shift the patriarchal colorations that blur the sharpness of divine revelation contained therein.

Secondly, in his *Letter to Women* on the event of the fourth World Conference of Women in Beijing China, published in 1995, Pope John Paul asked women pardon, for all that the Church has done to them to rob them of their dignity; and he went further to instruct that provision should be made to allow women participate in decision-making processes, especially in matters which concern women. With his decisive action, Pope John Paul II was calling on all Christian's men and women to do something concrete to redress the ills done to women and to translate gender equality into actions of justice and fair play. It should be clear that gender inequality is not

supported by human biology (nature) or by the creator. Nature made male and female to be complimentary and interdependent beings of the one human species, such that each is indispensable for the survival of humanity. In terms of importance and indispensability, therefore, all genders are equal; but they may differ in terms of functions. Also in terms of common origin, God created male and female, each to mirror his (God's) image in creation, according to the priestly account of the origin of creation. Jesus Christ himself defended gender equality and reminded people (Mat. 19: 3-10; Gen. 1:27). In the beginning was gender -equality, but inequality was introduced along the line due to the patriarchal quest for power and privileges, and sustained by erroneous interpretations and false ideologies.

Furthermore, other ways the church can fight against these practices is through preaching against it in their sermon. It will help conscientize the people on the evil effects of harmful traditional practices against women in our contemporary society. The church can also so ahead to take the bull by the horn in order to ensure that these practices are stopped.

The church can also fight against these practices by organizing seminars/workshop in a public places where a good number of people can be seen in their numbers. It can only be in the market place or village square. The most important thing is that such workshop must attract crowd which is the target of the church.

5.1.5 The Church Speaks

The Church shares in the plight of women quest for emancipation. Rooted in the Sacred Scripture and collaborated by her Sacred Tradition, the Magisterium of the Church underscores the quality of men and women, since both were created in the

image and likeness of the personal God (Gen. 1:26-26). This equal dignity as person is realized as physical, psychological and ontological complementarily, giving rise to a harmonious of 'uni-duality'. In the course of history, however, women's dignity has often been of the society and even reduced to servitude. They were frequently at disadvantage, excluded from equal educational opportunities, underestimated, ignored and not given credit for their individual contribution (cf. John Paul IPs Letter to Women at the 1995 Beijing Conference).

In effect, the Church identifies with the womenfolk and calls for the realization of real quality and the protection of human quality, as well as availing women of the quality to fully employ their peculiar femininity, what John Paul prefers to call 'genius of women', in all aspect of the family and social life. Nevertheless, the Church frowns at the tendency to emphasize the subordination of women in such a manner that women are positioned as adversaries to men; as well as the deliberate down-play of the distinction between men and women, such that their differences are viewed as mere effects of historical and cultural conditioning.

Such tendencies mostly witnessed avowed feminists, coming especially from the West, lead gross individualism that makes them men-haters incapable of permanent partnership with men. • Some shun the privileges of motherhood, and rather advocate for the so-called woman's right-over-body, including the right of abortion and artificial reproduction for women. There is also the case of blind pursuit of artificial male mannerism, the vying for male-fitting jobs, and the resultant denial of femininity, even at the expense of motherhood. It is indeed such erroneous conception of emancipation that ignited the quest for the ordination of women to the priesthood.

Paul II admonished that the secret of making speedy progress in achieving full respect for women and their identity involves more than simply the condemnation of discrimination and injustices, necessarily though this may be. It does not call for antagonism or denial of sexual difference, but rather, active collaboration. He maintained that "woman and man are marked neither by a static and undifferentiated quality nor by irreconcilable and inexorably conflictual difference. Their most natural relationship, which corresponds to the plan of God, is the 'unity of the two', a relational individuality, which enables each to experience their interpersonal and reciprocal relationship as a gift which enriches and which confers responsibility (Letter to Women, no. 8). In other words, womanhood expresses the 'human' as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary fashion.

The Church has continued to enjoin women to make their impact felt in the life of the Church and in the society at large. They can do this by bringing their femininity to bear in all they engage in. In this regard, Mary the Mother of Christ, stands out as a model and the highest expression of the feminine genius'. She realized what responsible womanhood means, and thus put herself at the service of God and humanity by means of her fiat: "I am the handmaid of the Lord . (Lk V38). Thus, she plunged herself into the work of salvation, fully aware that doing the work of God is a privileged position of service.

In line with Mary, women who are mothers should appreciate the nobility of the duty they render to Christ in the Church and the society as chief caretakers of homes and children. They should be able to galvanize their motherly instincts, feminine intuition and added experiences in the nurturing and in the inculcation of good morals and Christian principles in their children. All other women ought to bring such feminine sensitivity and intuitiveness to bear on their respective homes, places of work, the

Church and the society at large. In the same vein, consecrated women, should plunge themselves to the work of salvation of souls and service to humanity in obedience and fidelity, in ready appreciation of a certain diversity of roles in mankind and in the Church that is in no way prejudicial to women. Factually, there is no better feminist or emancipation manifesto than that which establishes the irreplaceable role of women in making their peculiar genius evident in the Church and society, without denying the basic gender roles in humankind.

Seen in the light, women would better live above that proclivity of a "cult of victimhood" that usually ignite ill-conceived antagonisms in the name of emancipation struggles. They would then realize that such imaginary "male chauvinism", like the reservation of priestly ordination, solely to men, for instance, do not., hamper in any way women's access to the heart of the Christian life. Other specific ways the Church can fight against these practices include -

5.1.6 Through Practical Demonstration

It is the duty of the Church to mobilize women whose fundamental human rights are violated by these harmful traditional practices and embarked on peaceful demonstration against it. This demonstration can take them to the local government headquarters, state government house or even the presidential villa (Aso-Rock). Circumstances under which the church in Nigeria is called to witness to the truth and carry on the work of evangelization and pastoral care. Millions of people who fill our churches are putting up with sub-human conditions. In Nigeria the good news of Christ must be preached to the people who have lost almost completely their national pride. This message of liberation must be preached to the people on the fringe of human existence. It must be preached not only to the people in purple robes but to the

multitude of people including men and women, young and old, who live and sleep on the road side in our towns, live and sleep under the overhead bridges, those who complete with vultures in scavenging for food. We must preach to Nigerians detained in prisons without trial for long periods. We must preach to the unemployed graduates who are on the verge of despair, the battered house wives, the exploited labourer, the defenseless victims of police brutality and military repression. The church must preach to the distressed.

The historical experience of the people to whom we must preach is that poverty, disease, oppression, widespread abuse of human rights, injustice, dictatorship corruption, ignorance, violence and death. The Nigerian environment in which the Gospel of Christ is preached is one that is thoroughly depressed. It is an environment in which there is little confidence in the present and no hope in the future. Such an environment frustrates the youths and makes many take to drugs and crime out of frustration. We of the Nigerian church are confronted with the task of explaining the hope that is in us in the midst of people held under siege by exploitative and fraudulent elite. The Christian must proclaim salvation that is not merely rhetoric. It must be a dynamic proclamation. We must act armed with the Gospel of Christ. Our church must challenge the status quo and those who love and are satisfied with it. Our church must be committed to the interest of the poor, the oppressed, and those who struggle for justice. Our church must come to the aid of those who hunger for bread and justice. Our church must be a church of service ministering to the needs of the people including moral, spiritual., and material needs. Our church must minister to the ideals of the kingdom which Christ preached and for which the church was set up/established. We need a church that shines out as the beacon of light in the midst of darkness of sin. Welfare much more than it was challenged *by* stages as an

evangelization strategy. In the midst of the situation of shattered hopes, shattered dreams, shattered earner, shattered country with shattered individuals, with much public feeling of disenchantment at the nonchalance ('shying away') of the Government at all area of its operation, especially in the discharge of its civic, public and social responsibilities, all eyes are focused on the Church as the only bastion of hope for survival. A failure of the Church to solidarity with the people and to give a sense of belonging and direction in this dimension especially in this moment of austerity would definitely spell really a total failure for the Church in her mission. One has only to recall that.

Listening to the cry of those who suffer violence and are oppressed by unjust systems and structures, and hearing the appeals of a world that by its perversity contradicts the plan of its creator, we have shared our awareness of the Church's vocation to be present freedom to the oppressed, and joy to the afflicted. The hopes and forces which are moving the world in its very foundation are not foreign to the dynamism of the Gospel, which through power of the Holy Spirit frees men from personal sin and from its consequences in social life. (Justice in the World, no. 90). Church herself is aware of the enormous challenges facing her and hence sets herself at both national, provincial, diocesan, parish and station levels to tackle these problems.

The present situation of the world, seen in the light of faith, calls us back to the very essence of the Christian message, creating in us a deep awareness of its true meaning and of its urgent demands. The mission of preaching the gospel dictates at the present time that we should dedicate ourselves to the liberation of man even in his present existence in this world. For unless the Christian message of love and

justice shows its effectiveness through action in the cause of justice in the world, it will only with difficulty gain credibility with the men of our times.

It is the full consciousness of this fact that aroused the soul-searching question of Cardinal Thiandoum to the African Church during the African Synod; "Church in Africa, what must you now become so that your message may become relevant and credible?" Obiora Ike re-emphasizes this same point when he insisted in one of his lectures that "we must first of all ensure and secure the basic needs of our people, the fundamental right to life, health, basic training, work and befitting human standard of living before one can be said to evangelize to a people. That is why the Church is much committed in various social work such as the establishment of effort to improve the structural arrangement for delivering social services to the people.

The fundamental mission of the SODEJUPE is identified in the overall mission of the Church. The commitment of the Church to Justice and Peace, (which two values are most fundamental in the proclamation of the Good News even from the message of the angels; Glory to God in the highest, and peace to men of goodwill) stems from the Magna Charta of the Evangelizing Mission of Christ-true spirit of the Lord has been given me etc. (Cf. Lk 4; 18). The two concepts of Justice and Peace are twin concepts so intertwined in each other that one cannot talk of Peace where injustice exists. Peace is the fruit and product of love and justice. Justice and Peace should be seen as the main focus of evangelization rather than being seen as a mere link. Human promotion is not just an incidental aspect of evangelization but its backbone. Therefore, the mission of SODEJUPE is aligned with the Church's mission and commitment to evangelization. As Bishop T.G. Mpundu rightly points out.

The commitment on the part of the Church to promote justice and peace as integral to evangelization in Africa is not a commitment to a project or to a programme, but a way of life. It is a commitment of love that follows upon a conversion to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.-(Bishop T.G. Mpundu, *Commitment and Witness for Justice and Peace*, Excerpts from the African Synod).

The Church even teaches that 'action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world is constitutive to the preaching of the Gospel'-(Synod of Bishops, *Justice in the World*, 3971.) In other words, action for justice and peace cannot be viewed as merely optional but should be considered as an important aspect of evangelization to the extent that without any active involvement commitment to Justice and "Peace, as Bishop Mpundu would add, we have no Christian community. In other words, it is to be a way of life, and not just a project executed and ended. It is for this reason that a commission is charged with its responsibility as an action-oriented group within the life of the diocesan community and Need for SODEJUPE Commission

It is clear that social work in the diocese is not a responsibility only of the diocesan Bishop or the coordinators. That is why the synod Fathers recommended that Justice and Peace Commissions be set up and made operational at all levels to address injustices and to promote and defend the right of everyone to life and human fulfillment. It should be a responsibility of the entire people of God in the Diocese. It is no wonder that we draw the membership of this commission to touch the grassroots in all the nooks and corners of the diocese. Every individual in the stations and parishes and religious congregation is supposed to be represented in the action and programme for justice and peace, just as we all as Christians are compelled by the call and mission of Jesus to go forth to proclaim the good news to the poor, liberty to

captives, set prisoners free, give succor to the afflicted, oppressed and the abandoned. The SODEJUPE Commission in fact, was set up to act as a group of animators who would act as leaven within the diocesan community to ensure effective coordination and execution of the ideal contained in the Magna Charta of justice and peace. The SODEJUPE Commission is very much aware and committed to the prophetic call of Micah:

5.1.7 Through Preaching

The spirit of the Lord has been given to me for he has anointed me. He has sent me to bring the good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives to set the downtrodden free, to proclaim the Lord's year of favour.

This citation from the Bible is in a nutshell the Magna Charta of all the challenges of the Justice and peace in the whole world. It is the honest effort to take the wordings of this passage seriously and concretely after the example of Christ that gave birth to what we refer today to as the Office of Justice and Peace, which was defined by the Synod of Africa as an integral and constitutive element of evangelization. Justice and Peace Actions are efforts to answer in one way or another. The basic, concrete questions confronting the poor, oppressed, down-trodden, and the marginalized members of our society in the face of the insensitive attitude of our governments and political authority, the topmost in priority of which is the social and economic consequences of our present day Nigerian situation. One must accept that the Church is challenged now more than ever in the field of social welfare much more than it was challenged by education at the initial stages as an evangelization strategy.

At the occasion of Prayers of the 1995 World day of Peace, the Holy Father himself points out that many women, especially as a result of social and cultural conditioning; do not become fully aware of their dignity.

Others are victims of a materialistic and hedonistic outlook which views them as mere objects of pleasure, and does not hesitate to organize the exploitation of women, even of young girls, into despicable trade.

Special concern needs to be shown for those women who, thanks to their own upbringing and sensitivity, are able to help them discover their own inner worth and resources. The theme addresses us as women to consider the implications of the words of the Old Testament which Christ saw himself as fulfilling, in the context of our existential situation today as Nigerians. It calls us to look deliberately and act as women, in the face of so many de-humanizing life situation and social structure, discrimination, injustice, in the service of Justice at all levels (-ailed to be messengers of Peace, in the pursuit of right of women in the face of hostile husbands, especially on account of childlessness, no male child, not even a single daughter but a battlefield of soldiers-situations, in the defense of widows and their right to their husbands property, in the provision for the poor and the underprivileged, in the structural rectification and provision for the future hopes of girls of today, in situations of exploitation of women and taking action against prostitution, in the service of the Church, responsibility for the Church's ongoing Mission, in the fight for the liberation of women today and tomorrow, playing their roles towards their children, themselves, their husbands, neighbours, in Nigeria in distress.

In the midst of the present-day situation of shattered hopes, shattered dreams, shattered economy and even shattered country, with the public feeling of disenchantment over the roles played by the Government at all levels of its operation, especially in the discharge of its civic responsibilities, we should try to think about Jesus who helped the people both in a spiritual way and a human way. He prayed,

preached and fasted, but he also helped the people with their human problems to realize the reason for their being created as well as their destiny. This introduces the idea development.

Development is a sort of gradual unfolding of what already exists in a nutshell and should help us to acquire attitudes of self-determination, self-reliance, dignity, achievement, maturity, relationships, sharing, unity and community building. It should help us to build a stronger community, (cf Mission of Christ-Liberation, Justice and Peace. Lk. 4:18, In. 18:37, Jn. 10:10, Jn. 8:32). We as Christian women must try to imitate Christ by liberating ourselves and others from all those things which prevent us from making progress. The greatest of all these is ignorance with its sister-illiteracy.

Ignorance has been the biggest obstacle in all honest efforts to improve the standard of living of our people. All the efforts to entrench the dictates of human rights, or to lead the people to a sort of life of economic buoyancy and all actions towards the political awareness for an eventual exercise of a democracy will all mean nothing unless the literacy factor is given some priority. It is a fact that up to 85% of our population especially in the rural area and mostly women are illiterate. Some are illiterate through no fault of their own. So many adults today were virtually denied the opportunity to read and write on account of so many factors: pecuniary, cultural, subjugatory, economical etc.

For instance, on account of poverty arising from the large family structure of the traditional community, it was impossible to especially in our ambient, where much is spent at the time in going to school Our people never enjoyed free primary education as one finds in the western part of Nigeria. It had been a preserve of only the rich and the well-to-do. Therefore, the poor ones were elbowed out of education.

Also, for cultural reasons some people were not allowed to go to school. Some of the females were married out very early in life such that they had to forgo the idea of going to school. Some parents forced their children to be engaged with them in the farm work or other allied business which they deemed and considered a priority at the time, such people simply lost their golden opportunity for going to school, which later became for them something to regret about. Some had to look after their peers-being active participants as early as that in their society and culture.

It is an indubitable fact that women generally in our traditional society were denied education out of a false conception and a mentality that considered their training and education as a waste or rather to do so for another who would marry out the women to another family. According to this mentality, the money spent in training such females were considered lost or thrown away. It is only recently that our people began to realize the values and the gains of training women, especially after they had seen women being accorded some high state functions and being given places of authority even in the government. They now realize that it is lucrative. This realization is responsible for the present population of females in our schools. But those who bore the brunt of the false conception are already adults who even feel ashamed with the idea of adult education now. One feels therefore that giving them an opportunity now to read and write as adults should be considered very necessary for them to recuperate the-lost opportunity. That is one reason why we become involved in the work of education and development seminars to make the people more aware of the importance of self development and that of their communities, so that they will be liberated from oppression, bribery and fear of witchcraft.

I would see this topic as challenging and charging the women to think out ways and equip themselves with the responsibility of playing roles that would

ultimately lead to providing for the indigent population of the villages, with such basic necessary amenities as water boreholes, basic healthcare centres along with their equipment and medication; carrying out some agricultural activities that can even lead them into the need for the provision of cassava processing and rice milling machines; building of nursery and primary schools and skills centres for the teeming younger generation; sponsoring poor, indigent and handicapped children in the schools and colleges, provision and repair of some thatched grass huts for old and

As our efforts to discourage the subordination of women in the area, which is largely as a result of poverty, ignorance and lack of in Egypt, are suffering under merciless task masters, in our own case-our rulers.

Our faith will take flesh and cease to be a pie in the sky i.e., happiness in heaven/unrealistic hope. Our faith will have practical dimensions and the follow up will be greater justice and community solidarity. Otherwise our faith will become irrelevant and provoke anger and resentment. We do not improve the lost of the hungry reading aloud kitchen recipes to their hearing. We do not speak to the world out casts about prayers, heaven and the rest. They will not listen, but speak to them about justice and labour with them for reforms and Christianity will have meaning for them.

When the Church acts as we have discussed about, the poor, the humiliated, the oppressed, and the marginalized will get what they have been yearning for-a religion that is consoling, re-assuring and promising. They want to hear about a religion that teaches about an all powerful Almighty God that is capable and willing to remove from their shoulders the burden of their oppressors that crushes them. They want to hear about God who breaks loose the slave master's chains. They want to hear about God that dethrones the powerful despots and elevates the lowly victims. They

want to hear of a loving God that provides food for the hungry, health for the sick, deliverance for those under bondage, job for the sorrowful and peace for the trouble.

Christian religion will be recognized as the one that helps the poor in their quest for bread and dignity. Our people will see us as one that helps them obtain freedom from unjust socio-political order that condemns them to marginal existence. They will see Christian religion as one that liberates them from bad customs, habits, attitudes, values and devalues that give rise to and glorify oppression. Christian religion will be seen as one that helps people be free from poverty, joblessness, homelessness, insecurity and disease, Christian religion will be seen as a religion that transforms social structures that create poverty and power abuse for Nigerians. They will see Christian religion as the embodiment of the values of the kingdom of God such as love, justice, forgiveness, brotherhood and unity. The above values will operate in our societies, lives and hearts of individuals. Nigerian will see that Christian life is not a matter of private piety only Christians will now integrate social action with personal piety. Christianity will raise that consciousness of its adherents to their responsibility for the creation of a better world in the service of God

The Christian church will, whenever it sees social evils created or perpetuated by individuals or governments, show fidelity to the Gospel of Christ and take a clear stand on the side of the victim of oppression. They church will not play safe but champion the cause of freedom.

Christians will begin to practice sermons rather than just hear them in their sojourn here on earth. Christians will begin to show concern for their unfortunate neighbours. People will recognize Christ's visitation to our earth as a never to be forgotten event to overhaul power structures in our societies in which some have too much tilling of this life while others suffer abject poverty and want. If our Christians

heed this seminar we will have become prepared to alleviate the pain of our neighbours who suffer.

Finally, the fundamental of the Church is the salvation of souls (*salus animarum*) made in the image and likeness of God. The human person here concerned is primarily the product of human family, which in turn is the cradle of the Church's substance. It is in the family that individual person come to birth, and find the first school of the social and moral virtues. Therefore, as *ecclesia domestica* (Church in miniature), the family as the ecclesiastical task of service in the building of the kingdom of God by participating in the life and mission of the Church (cf. Familiaris Consortio of John Paul II. No, 49). Women are called in a special way to participate in this life and mission of the Church by placing themselves at the service of others in their every day lives, especially in the family. By this singular contribution, the genius of women would be able to build formidable families, which will form the springboard for the growth of the Church.

5.1.8 Counseling for Person Affected by violence against Women and Children.

Since marital violence is major risk factor for serious injury and even death, and women in violent marriages are at much greater risk of being seriously injured or killed; counseling intervention is much needed. Initial assessment of the potential for violence in a marriage can be supplemented by standardized interviews and questionnaire which have been reliable and valid aids in exploring marital violence more systematically. Counselors and therapists should also make the distinction between situations where battering may be a single, isolated incident or an ongoing pattern of control.

If it becomes apparent to the therapist that domestic violence is taking place in a client's relationship, the therapist must explore options with the client; and also

refrain from blaming the partner or telling the client what to do. It is unreasonable for the therapist to expect that a victim will leave her abusive spouse solely because she disclosed the abuse. Lawson (2003) says the therapist should respect the victim's autonomy and allow her to make her own decisions.

Therapists must be aware that supporting assertiveness by a battered wife may lead to more beatings or even death. Even in few cases, when the wife leaves because of life-threatening situation, therapists should not relax their vigilance after a battered wife leaves her husband. Some data suggest that the period immediately following a marital separation is the period of greater risk for the women. Many men will stalk and batter their wives in an effort to get them to return or punish them for leaving.

The main goal of counseling for offenders of domestic violence is to minimize the offender's risk of future domestic violence, whether within the same relationship or a new one. Treatment for offenders should emphasize minimizing risk to the victim, and should be modified depending on the offender's history, risk of re-offending and criminogenic needs.

The majority of offender treatments are conducted in a group setting with groups not exceeding 12 participants. Groups are also standardized to be gender specific (Colorado Domestic Violence Offender Management Board, 2010). According to Roberts (2002), anger management alone has not been shown to be effective in treating domestic violence offenders, as domestic violence is based on power and control and not on problems with regulating anger responses.

5.2.1 Enactment of Law Prohibiting Violence against Women and Children in Imo State

There should be a law prohibiting against women and children violence, so that there will be enough legal ground to prosecute anyone that goes against the law. Notable human right organizations should champion campaigns aimed at pushing for the enactment of the domestic violence Bill, women and children trafficking Bill and prostitution Bill into law at the National Assembly. The overall goal of these Bills will be the provision of adequate legal framework for the protection of women and children from violence at home, women and children trafficking, other traditional practices and also raise awareness on the problem so as to encourage victims to seek redress under the law.

Law enforcement; a study was conducted by Lawrence Sherman in 1982, The Minneapolis Domestic Violence Experiment, to evaluate the effectiveness of various police responses to domestic violence calls in Minneapolis, Minnesota; including sending the abuser away for eight hours, giving advice and mediation for disputes, and making an arrest. Arrest was found to be the most effective police response. Maxwell Garner and Pagan (2001) say the study found that arrest reduced the rate by half of re-offending against the same victim within the following six months.

In the replication studies which were more broad and methodologically sound in both size and scope, arrest seemed to help in the short run in certain cases, but those arrested experienced double the rate of violence over the course of one year Schmidt and Lawrence (1993). Generally, it has been accepted that if the understood victim has visible (and recent) marks of abuse, the suspect is arrested and charged with the appropriate crime.

5.2.2 The Activities of Non-governmental Organization

There are some non-governmental organizations whose activities help to create awareness on different forms of violence against women and children and also, on the measures to empower women and children. There is this project called women trafficking and child's labour eradication foundation (WOTCLEF), a pet project of Chief (Mrs) Titi Abubakar, the wife of the former Vice President of Nigeria. According to her, part of the aim of her project is to enlighten people on the right of women and children, human dignity, dignity of labour, patriotism and responsible citizenship and family value. There is also non-governmental organization known as 'Project Alert'. According to its founder Dr. Mrs Effah Chukwuma, the aim of her pet project is to show people the level of violence against women's optimum development foundation with the aim of breaking the silence surrounding violence against women and children, and bringing about an expose of what should be considered as crime against women and children.

5.2.3 Medical Response

Sugg and Inu (1992) say medical professionals do not see themselves as being able to play a major role in helping women in regards to domestic violence. Injuries are often just treated and diagnosed, without regard for the causes. Many doctors prefer not to get involved in people's "private" lives.

Health professionals have an ethical responsibility to recognize and address exposure to abuse in the patients, in the health care setting. For example, the American Medical Association's code of medical ethics states that "Due to the prevalence and medical consequences of family violence, physicians should routinely inquire about physical, sexual and psychological abuse as part of the medical history."

5.2.4 Creating more Awareness about Violence against Women and Children

More Awareness should be created by the government, non-governmental organizations, schools, Churches, Mosque, individuals about the ills and dangers of women and children violence in Imo State. Lecturers, workshops seminar, documentaries on television and radio stations etc are some of the ways to create awareness.

5.2.4 Anger Management

Anger management is recommended as a part of an offender treatment curriculum that is based on accountability, along with topics such as recognizing abusive patterns of behaviour; it also requires a great deal of personal change and the construction of a self-image that is separate from former abusive while still being held accountable for it. Any corresponding problem should also be addressed as part of domestic violence offender treatment, such as problems with substance abuse or mental illness.

5.2.5 Empowerment of Women and Children

Women and children should be empowered so that they can fight for their rights. Programmes which will empower women and children educationally, economically, politically and socially, should be created, so that the women and children will have access and opportunities of protecting their rights against abuse.

5.2.6 The Activities of Government

Government should allow Human Rights Activist to:

1. Establish programme of engagement with the government for protection of human rights, especially for women and children.
2. Implore human rights activists to monitor all the elections conducted in the country especially where women are involved.
3. Mandate and support special reporter on violence against women and children who must do a fact finding mission and support the efforts of community, grassroots and other organizations living in a culture of fear, survivor of violence and abuse.
4. Mandate and support special reporter Human Rights Defenders who must put in place ways of ensuring safety and protection for women human rights advocates and activities.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Summary

This dissertation has tried to explain a religious and social analyses violence against women and children in Imo State and how the society arid "religious view of violence against women and children in Imo State. Violence against women and children is an aberration because it negates both the biblical description of woman as a help mate and the societal understanding of woman as a life partner and a child as blessing from God. Violence against women and children can happen anywhere, on the street, in the work place, at home or at school. There is also systemic violence in which certain acts of violence against women and children are accepted as part of cultural or traditional practices. Patriarchy made man the centre of society right from the level of family unit to the larger public sphere; consequently authority is derived from the male. Violence against women and children is evident in many forms, including domestic, verbal and physical abuse, rape and sexual assault, early and forced marriages, incest, female genital cutting, acid baths and outright killing.

Women and children are crucial to the growth and development of any nation and the world at large. Women and children constitute greater number of the world's population and they are homemakers, custodians of social, cultural and fundamental values of the society and permanent change is often best achieved through them. Full community development is impossible without their understanding, cooperation and effective participation. Considering the importance of women and children as mother, sometimes breadwinners, teachers and guardians, they deserve respect, recognition and better treatment but the opposite is usually the case.

According to Davies (1999), women are enslaved in a circle of poverty and they suffer from neglect, discrimination and exploitation. They are also subjected to different forms of violence by their male counterparts. Harvey and Gow (1994) see some historians as believing that the history of violence against women and children is tied to the history of women and children being viewed as property and a gender role assigned to be subservient to men and also other women. The UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (1993) states that violence against women is a manifestation of historically unequal power relationship between men and women, which have led to domination over and discrimination against women by men and to the prevention of the full advancement of women and that violence against women is one of the crucial social mechanisms by which women are forced into a subordinate position compared with men.

Violence against women and children is a pattern of physically, sexually and/or emotionally is even abusive behaviour used by one individual to assert power or maintain control over another, in the context of an intimate or family relationship. Physical abuse occurs when the abuser intentionally inflicts physical pain on the victim with the intention of gaining the victim's submission. Physical abuse characterized "by excessive and unprovoked attacks on the victim and can lead to the death of the victim in extreme cases. Sexual abuse occurs when the abuser has intimate knowledge of the victim without her consent using force, coercion, or manipulation of any kind. Sexual abuse can occur even in a marriage. Some people argue that a husband cannot rape or sexually abuse his wife. In fact under Section 282(2) of the Penal Code which is applicable in Northern Nigeria, sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife is not rape if she has attained puberty. However, there are instances where the wife is in no position mentally or physically to administer to her

husband's sexual need. In such an instance where he coerces by whatever means, sexual abuse has occurred. Psychological abuse occurs when the abuser makes the victim feel worthless and erodes his/her self-esteem to the point where he/she only believes negative things about him/herself. This type of abuse is not as obvious as physical abuse as the victim will bear no obvious scars yet it is just as dangerous as physical abuse. Economic abuse occurs when the abuser uses his position as the higher income earner or the only income earner in the relationship to intimidate and humiliate the victim. This occurs when as chief or only income earner, he withholds necessary finances and claims it is a form of discipline for some wrong doing or in order to ensure that the victim cannot be financially independent thus preventing the victim from leaving the abusive situation. Money is given as at when the abuser feels like giving it and not when it is needed thus forcing the victim to grovel and beg before attending to the need.

A combination of factors contributes to the high rates of violence against women and children in Imo State in particular and Nigeria in general. In general, violence against women and children is seen as a private matter to be dealt with by the family, typically a domain of male authority. Women and children are expected to behave with subservience to the man who is the head of the family and violence against women and children is often accepted as a part of family. According to Amnesty International, many believe that a woman is expected to endure whatever she meets in her matrimonial home, and to provide sex and obedience to her husband, who has the right to violate and batter her if she fails to meet her marital duties. For some victims, violence against women and children is seen as a sign of love. Violence against women and children in Imo State is often viewed as a necessary corrective tool for women and children, at best a part and parcel of family life.

Two key factors help to perpetuate violence against women and children in Imo State. The first is the inability of many women and children to escape violence due to their disadvantages; economic status. Many women and children depend on the financial resources of their husband, father or families. This forces them to put up with domination for fear of the withdrawal of this financial support. According to Taylor (2012), in Nigeria, female adult literacy is below the national average at 54.6% and the number of women below the poverty line is 65% compared to that of men at 35%. Yet even for educated women and children violence poses a serious threat to their safety and wellbeing. According to a recent study by the Global Press Institute, 65% of educated women and children have been beaten by their husband, boyfriend, father or families.

A second crucial factor is a culture of silence that stigmatizes the victims of violence against women and children rather than the perpetrators. Osuji (personal communications, 14-2-2015) claims that women were told to go home and be a good wife when they brought complaints to the police, making women fear the label of being a bad wife. This reinforces the need for raising awareness about women's political rights and to educate women that they are not to blame for the physical, sexual or psychological abuse to which they are subjected.

Violence not only causes physical injury, it also undermines the social, economic, psychological, spiritual and emotional well being of the victim, the perpetrator and the society as a whole. Witness (2005) asserts that violence against women and children is a major contributor to the ill health of women and children. It has serious consequences on their mental and physical health, including their reproductive and sexual health. These include injuries, gynecological problems, temporary or permanent disabilities, depression and suicide, among others. For Agnes

(2005), many forms of verbal and psychological abuse appear relatively harmless at first, but expand and grow more menacing over time, sometimes gradually and subtly. As victims adapt to abusive behavior, the verbal or psychological tactics can gain a strong foothold in victims' minds, making it difficult for them to recognize the severity of the abuse over time. These physical and mental health outcomes have social and emotional consequences for the individual, the family, the community and the society at large. These consequences not only affect the quality of life of individuals and communities, but also have long-term effects on social order and cohesion. The physical health consequences of violence against women and children are often obscure, indirect and emerge over the long term.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher adopted various theories with greater emphasis on Mertonian theory on functionalism. Merton maintained that not all the parts of the social system perform functions essential for the survival of the system, and violence against women and children plays dysfunctional role in the family. The data employed were both primary and secondary data. Primary data come from simple observation and personal communication while secondary data come from text books, journal and internet materials.

Based on the analysis the following principal findings were made; that high rates violence against women and children are due to cultural factors, social factors, political factors, addiction to drugs and alcohol, low level of education among other things. That violence has a tremendous influence on the formation of children. It influences the child educationally, religiously, economically, psychologically, and socially. From data analysis, it was discovered that social stigmatization hinder some women and children from making official report against violence and that the law

provides little punishment for the perpetrators of violence against women and children.

The work revealed that the practice of Female Genital Mutilation and Harmful Delivery practices inhibit women and restrict them as mere tools in the hands of their male counterparts. The dissertation also revealed that Child Marriage, Teenage Pregnancy and Harmful Widowhood practices perpetually place the victim in agony and penury.

The research also established that it was ignorance and the desire to protect the culture and traditions among the people that made them perpetuate these harmful traditional practices which are dehumanizing.

The work also showed that when this intractable problem has defied every available human solution, that Church's contributions have no doubt shaken it at its roots and restored sanity and peace in our society.

6.2 Conclusion

The effects of violence can be devastating and long lasting especially on children and adolescents. Aihie (2009) asserts that children are often principal victims of violence against women and children. Witnessing abuse and living in an environment where someone else, usually a care giver is a victim of abuse, can be psychologically devastating for a child. Straus (1994) reports that children who are hit by parents have higher rates of depression than those whose parents "disciplined in other ways and are more likely to think about suicides. Aihie (2009) says some researchers have also found that children whose mothers were abused by their partners have intelligence quotients (IQs) lower than usual.

Men who have been physically abusive before marriage became more and more violent afterward. Such women encourage young women not to get trapped by mistakenly thinking she could change the already dangerous boyfriend. Such women have been physically harmed and emotionally upset; it is observed that violence occurs when the relationship is somehow threatened through jealousy, dating others, suspicion of sexual infidelity, or a discussion about ending the relationship.

Violence against women and children is a pervasive, widespread problem that cut across culture; women and children are the most vulnerable group or are often the targets of physical, psychological, social, emotional abuse in relationships by those who are suppose to be intimate partners. Women and children suffer cultural violence and the climax is the murder of women by their husbands because of dowry dispute, wives and daughters are also victims of murder by male relatives especially of their husband and father to preserve 'family honour'. It has been difficult to ascertain whose 'family honour' is implied here. However, females including women and girls have been at risk of violence from the beginning of human existence. Beside sexual violence, rape, sexual harassment, substance abuse, abuse of women and girls in custody, female genital mutilation, unlawful and indefinite detention and other harmful cultural practices, women and girls are also vulnerable to sex selective, abortion, infanticide, and systematic neglect of female children.

Changing views regarding parental and societal view of discipline have also had an effect on today's children. Assault from the powerful influence of the media is not left out of what women and children pass through.

6.3 Recommendation

Since violence against women and children is both a consequence and a cause of gender inequality, primary prevention programs that address gender inequality and tackle the root causes of violence are all essential. Public health workers have a responsibility to build awareness by creating and disseminating materials and innovative audio-visual messages, which project a positive image of children and women in the society. An integrated media campaign covering electronic, print and film media that portrays violence against women and children as unacceptable is the need of the hour. The role of increasing male responsibility to end violence against women and children needs to be emphasized.

Concerted and co-ordinated multi-sectoral efforts are key methods of enacting change and responding to violence against women and children at local and national levels. The Millennium Development Goal regarding child's education, gender equality and the empowerment of women reflects the international community's recognition that health, development, and gender equality issues are closely interconnected. Hence the responses to the problem must be based on integrated approach. The effectiveness of measures and initiatives will depend on coherence and co-ordination associated with then-design and implementation. The issue of violence against women and children must be brought into open and examined as any other preventable health problem, and best remedies available be applied.

People who want to choose a life partner should seek God's direction to choose a right partner. They should bear in mind that God created and ordained marriage, and that no one is perfect, so they should tolerate and forgive each other.

Parents should know that children learn faster by observation, therefore they should cultivate a high sense of endurance and self control in the presence of their

children. There is need for stiffer penalties against those who perpetrate violence against women and children. This will go a long way in protecting women and children against violence in general.

In addition to the resolution of the United Nation in article 4, this joins Obiagwu and Uzoezie (2012) in recommending the following as possible solution to violence against women and children

1. The federal government should formulate and implement clear policies and laws with strong enforcement mechanisms and work closely with the society at large to establish effective processes that would cut across all sector of governance.
2. The support of women and children is need to ensure safer, more equitable law enforcement and courts and higher quality support for victims.
3. Public discussion on violence, particularly with men and boys, can help foster recognition that violence is a violation of the rights of women and children.
4. United Nation (2007) asserts that all stakeholders, including women and children themselves should be educated on their rights to be free from violence and discrimination.
5. The rights about violence should be exploded. People should be told why women find it hard to leave a violent relationship. People should be told that violence against women and children happens, regardless of age, race or ethnic background and that an individual's opinion will make a difference in changing people's attitude to domestic violence.
6. Justice should be made more accessible and safer for victims. The government, at all levels, must take steps to protect the victims and shield their privacy when they are reporting violence and during court proceedings.

7. Investigation and reporting process, including rules of procedure and evidence must be non-discriminatory and financial assistance should be available to those who require it to obtain legal representation.
8. Attitudes towards violence against women and children must also be changed. Campaigns to raise awareness could be intensified to increase public sensitivity to the vulnerabilities of women and children, to promote the rights and principles of the Declaration on Elimination of violence against women and children.

There are dimension of general based violence against women and children which Animasaun Animasanu (2013) labeled the common and induced violence, should be further investigated. Violence against men seems to be ignored. This makes it difficult to receive national or international or universal attention, studies on violence against men should be embarked upon with emphasis on psychological implications. It would not create dichotomies but should create harmonious co-habitation.

6.4 Suggestions for Further Research

In the course of this research, certain observations were made but because of the scope of the research, those observations could not be delved into. It is believed that subsequent research could be done on those observations. Based on those observations, it is suggested that further research could be done to investigate the following.

1. The place of law in curbing violence against women and children.
2. The role of culture in the control of violence against women and children.
3. Effects of violence on the formation of children.

4. Violence against women and children in spite of the long history of missionary activities and western civilization.
5. The reasons why violence against women and children are on the increase and persisted.
6. The problems and prospects of harmful traditional practices among the Imo people.
7. The Church and violence against women and children in Nigeria.
8. The problems associated with women inhibition in Nigeria
9. The roles of the church in fighting against women and children inhibition in Imo State.

In conclusion it is clear that the concept of the equal dignity of all men and women is not a pious illusion, not a mystical nonsense, and not a courteous concession by calculating gentlemen to cultured high society ladies. It is the dictate of common sense, reason and logic. Men and women are fundamentally equal in personality and dignity. In consequence, women and children are equal in rights and responsibilities, in privileges and prerogatives with men folk. Women and children must first of all be regarded as personalities and accorded the rights and respect, freedom and responsibility that go with personal dignity without any unjustifiable distinction. As free human persons in equal enjoyment of human dignity with the men folk - women and children should never be under any disability or incapacitating inhibitions of harmful traditional practices of any kind based purely on sex or any other unjustifiable ground.

Women and children must have a free hand to plan their lives without any disabling or de-personalizing social pressures or prejudice or taboo. They should, like the men folk, freely and responsibly give orientation to their Jives - with free and full consent - in marriage, in civic and ecclesiastical roles. In society, women and children

must enjoy equal responsible freedom of action and equal opportunity, equality in law and before the law. That much is implied in the equal dignity of men and women which while it acknowledges the distinction of role between men and women asserts fundamental equality in personality, rights and duties in the various fields of human life and endeavours.

APPENDIX I**LETTER OF INTRODUCTION**

**DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION AND HUMAN RELATIONS
FACULTY OF ARTS
NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY, AWKA
PMB 5025, AWKA,
ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter is intended to introduce my supervisee, **ANOSIKE, MARTIN AZUBUIKE**, Ph.D research student with Registration Number **2012077007F** from the Department of Religion and Human Relations, Faculty of Arts, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, His research topic is entitled: **RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL ANALYSES OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IMO STATE, NIGERIA**. The research is purely an academic exercise and your anonymity is guaranteed.

We solicit your sincere co-operation.

Remain blessed.

Dr. Uche, O.O.C

08038048088

APPENDIX II**INTERVIEW SCHEDULES FOR THE PEOPLE OF IMO STATE**

1. Personal Data

(a) How old are you?

(b) What is your marital status?

Married ()

Single ()

Divorced ()

(c) What is your residential address?

(d) What is the name of your Local Government Area?

(e) To which ethnic group do you belong?

2. Information about the origins, development and persistence of gender dichotomy.

(a) What do you consider the origins of violence against women in Imo State

(b) Are there different schools of historical origins? If yes which of them do you consider as more important and why?

(c) How did gender dichotomy develop?

(d) Who are the principal actors in its development?

(e) What factors favoured the development of gender dichotomy?

(f) Why has gender dichotomy persisted in spite of education, western civilization and Christianity?

(g) How is gender recreated in Imo State today?

3. Gender relationship in Imo State

4. Implications of gender dichotomy in Imo State

- (a) How does gender dichotomy affected the Imo State?
- (b) What are the implications of gender practice for the women?
- (c) What are the implications of women for the men
- (d) How does gender practice affect religion in Imo State?
- (e) Are non-Igbo affected by the gender dichotomy? If so give details
- (f) Gender dichotomy has a negative impact for the development of Imo State
- (g) How does gender dichotomy affect the economy, politics, education, judicial and social life of Imo State?

5. Recommendations to gender dichotomy

- (a) What were the previous recommended efforts to end the gender dichotomy?
- (b) Why did they fail?

What new recommendations do you make in order to end gender dichotomy?

APPENDIX III
INTERVIEWED PERSONS

S/N	Name	Address	Date of Interview	Age
1.	T.C Oguamanam	9, Oguamanam Street, Umuoyeche, Owerri	14-12-2014	65
2.	Organ, Dike	24, Okigwe road, orlu	11-5-2014	72
3.	D.C, Chukwueke	Awka-Owerri	18-4-2014	55
4.	M.C. Acholonu	Acholonu's Compound, Egbu, Owerr	6-7-2014	65
5.	Nze, E.N. Nkwopara	6, Njeribeako Street. Owerri	18-6-2014	42
6.	Dan Osuji,	1, Ama J.K. Owerri	22-7-2014	53
7.	C.Ukachi	9, Umuororojo Str. Owerri	22-7-2014	52
8.	John Amadi	Orji-Uratt, Owerri	20-4-2015	67
9.	S. Opara Sunday	10, Ekeonuwa str. Owerri	24-3-2015	65
10.	Osuji Ben	Nsu-Okigwe	14-3-2015	68
11.	Cyril Lunanze	21, Onitsha Road, Control- Owerri	15-8-2015	52
12.	Raph Azuako	Otokoto Ave. Amakohia, Owerri	6-8-2015	72
13.	Luke Amadi	Orjii-Uratia, Owerri	21-6-2015	57
14.	Agu Agoha (JNR)	56, Mbaise Road, Owerri	14-4-2015	73
15.	Nnadi (Mrs.) Raphael	Emeke Obibi, Owerri	23-4-2015	65

16.	Onwulezi, Mark	21, Njen beko str. Owerri	19-4-2015	47
17.	Emereole, Lawrence	41, Wetheral Road, Owerri	20-12-2015	62
18.	Chukwukere, R.A	Awaka-Owerri	16-7-2015	61
19.	Njoku, Timothy	8, Okigwe Road, Owerri	15-2-2015	63
20.	Duruaku, D.N	53, Mbaise Road, Owerri	14-2-2015	54
21.	Dr. Okwu Edwin	Department of English, Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri	26-1-2015	64
22.	Dr. Okere T.	Witheral road Owerri	9-4-2015	50
23.	Ezeala Jude	36, Royce Road, Owerri	10-01-2015	75
24.	Mmere Gini E.	Umueze I, Ethime- Mbano	17-4-2015	
25.	Osuala E.M.I.	Amarabio, Orlu	12-7-2015	40
26.	Nkechi Njoku	Osu-Isiala Mbano	3-4-2015	60
27.	Anozie Shadrach	10 Awka Road, Dikenaifai	5-4-2015	45
28.	Clement Orji	Umuelemai, Isiala Mbano	6-4-2015	48
29.	Miss. Ebere Dike	Onuimo, Okwe	8-4-2015	42
30.	Iheanacho Charlse	College Road, Nkwerre	12-5-2015	51
31.	Adolphus Nwabuko	Nwaorieubi, Mbaitolu	3-5-2015	56
32.	Sunday Opara	Mcc Road, Owerri	3-5-2015	58
33.				
34.				
35.				
36.				

APPENDIX IV

FIELD WORK: QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Religion and Human Relations,

Faculty of Arts,

Nnamdi Azikiwe University,

Awka, Anambra State.

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is intended to collect information from the people of Imo State about violence against women in Imo State. It is purely an academic exercise and your anonymity is guaranteed. We solicit your sincere cooperation. Thank you.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

Please complete the following blank spaces or put a tick () where necessary

1. What is your sex? Male Female
2. What is your age bracket? 25 – 30 () 31 – 40 () 41 – 50 () 51 – 60 ()
3. What is your marital status? Married () divorced () widow () widower ()
4. State your Local Government area _____
5. What is your religious affiliation? African traditional religion Christianity () Islam () others please specify _____
6. Please state your qualification(s) _____

Primary () Secondary () Teachers () Certificate ()

NCE/Diploma () Degree () M.A/M.Sc ()

Ph.D ()

7. Please state your occupation:_____

SECTION B: THE EXISTENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN IMO STATE

8. Are you aware of the existence of violence against Women? Yes ()

No () No Opinion ()

9. Which of the following is the origin of violence against women?

(a) Human sacrifice ()

(b) Dedication of persons ()

(c) By birth ()

(d) By marriage ()

(e) By choice ()

10. Does Islam recognize violence against women?

Yes () No () No Opinion ()

11. Violence against women has persisted because of the following

(a) Traditional Igbo Religion ()

(b) Igbo Culture ()

(c) Lack of Government concern on gender problem ()

(d) Church has no interest ()

(e) Men discrimination against women ()

12. Please state which of these ways Male-Female Dichotomy is recreated through symbolic signs.

- (a) Shaking of left shoulders ()
- (b) Making a sound with two fingers ()
- (c) Mouth whistling ()
- (d) Expression of dog hand (*Aka Ikpa*) ()
- (e) Left handed person (*Aka ekpe*) ()
- (f) Strangers (Ndi Obia) ()
- (g) Others please specify _____
13. Have the following names: Nwoesu, Osuala, Osuji, Osueke, Osu Chukwu, Osunawu, Osuigwe, any relation to gender
Yes () No () No Opinion ()
14. The names in question no. 13 above have no relation to gender because of which of the following reasons:
- (a) They are not members of Women group ()
- (b) Prefix indicates the strong religious and social feelings of Igbo ()
- (c) They indicate positive values of gender in pre-Christian ()
- (d) They are called bad names in order Igbo society ()
- (e) They misrepresent facts, distort history and justify suspicion ()
15. What is the attitude of the following churches to gender dichotomy?
- (a) Orthodox church
- (b) Pentecostal
- (c) African independent churches

16. Do you consider the male-female relationship cordial?
- (a) Yes
- (b) No
- (c) No opinion

SECTION C: THE NATURE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN IMO STATE

17. The following problems arise from the

	Option	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
A	Religious problem			
B	Cultural problem			
C	Marital problem			
D	Educational problem			
E	Economic problem			
F	Political problem			
G	Legal problem			

18. Religious problems may include which of the followings:

	Option	Agreed	Disagreed	No opinion
A	Prophetic role			
B	Religious institutions			
C	Handling important positions of responsibility			
D	Involvement in the leadership of the religious institutions			

E	Religious training and ordination to priesthood			
---	--	--	--	--

19. Marital problems associated with gender dichotomy abound in Imo State: Yes

() No ()

20. The gender problems relating to the marital problems are

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	Choice of spouses			
B	Courtship			
C	Marital union			
D	Divorce			
E	The status of children			
F	Property ownership			

21. In most cases the women as a social group do not receive fair legal justice in

Imo State. Do you agree? Yes () No ()

22. Areas of legal problems include:

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	Taking diala to court			
B	Receiving a fair hearing in courts			
C	Getting justice from court			
D	Receiving injustice from court			

E	Penalized unjustly			
F	Ignorance of the law			

23. The abject poverty of the Gender Based Violation women can be attributed to economic problems Yes () No ()

24. Gender Based Violation suffer from which of the followings?

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	Lack of land ownership			
B	Lack of adequate farming			
C	Lack of agricultural produce			
D	Lack of membership of cooperatives			
E	Lack of business enterprises			
F	Lack of employment opportunities			

25. Violence against women and children is one of the major political problems in Imo State. Do you agree? Yes () No ()

26. In politics, women are discriminated against in areas of:

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	Denial of legitimacy in their constituencies			
B	Denial of political affiliation			
C	Denial of political rights			

D	Campaign propaganda			
E	Political appointment			

27. The level of Educational Development is affected by gender discrimination

Yes () No ()

28 The noticeable education problems are

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	Indoctrination			
B	Ideological orientation			
C	Lack of intellectual stimulation			
D	Poor funding			
E	Poor socialization			

29. Imo State Government has not provided basic amenities to end violence against women and children Yes () No ()

30. The communities are denied the following basic social amenities.

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	School			
B	Medical facilities			
C	Pipe-borne water			
D	Housing			
E	Electricity			
F	Roads			

G	Lack of frontal attack			
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**SECTION D: ABOLITION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND
CHILDREN IN IMO STATE**

31. Is it true that only death removes the status stigma victims of violence against women and children suffer in Imo State? Yes () No ()
32. Are you aware of the previous efforts aimed at abolishing violence against women and children? Yes () No ()
33. Why did these abolition efforts fail?

	Option	Agree	Disagree	No opinion
A	Lack of mobilization			
B	Individualistic efforts			
C	Lack of political will			
D	Lack of political will			
E	Church insensitivity			
F	Lack of close monitoring			
G	Lack of frontal attack			

34. Do you agree that the abolition of gender dichotomy will bring about cohesion, integration, stability and development in Imo State? Yes ()
No ()
35. What new approaches do you suggest to gender problems, please specify
- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (c) _____

(d) _____

(e) _____

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Appendix I shows: Letter of Introductory (To whom it may concern)

Appendix II shows: List of Interviewed Persons

Appendix III shows: Field Work (Questionnaire)

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

UNICEM – United Nations Development Fund for Women

VAW – Violence against Women

CLEEN – Center for Law Enforcement Agency

CEDAW – Conventions on the Elimination of all forms of
Discrimination Against Women.

MIP – Male Involvement Project

WRAPA – Women’s Right Advancement and Protection Alternative

FEMNET – African Women Communication Network

UN – United Nations

FEM – Female Genital Mutilation

GADA – Gender and Development Action