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**SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES ASSOCIATED WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
AGAINST ADOLESCENTS IN RIVERS STATE.**

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Abstract

The study investigated Socio-demographic variables associated with domestic violence against adolescents in Rivers State. Cross sectional and co-relational designs were used for the study. Three research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. The population for the study was 93,076 adolescents in Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools. A sample size of one thousand six hundred (1600) was drawn from the study population using a multistage sampling procedure. The instrument for data collection was self-structured/adapted and validated 59 item questionnaire titled Domestic Violence Prevalence and Perpetrators Questionnaire (DVPPQ) The research instrument was validated by five experts in the department and adjudged to be valid for the study. The instrument was administered and data generated were subjected to statistical analysis using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions while ANOVA and Z-test were used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 alpha level. The findings from the study revealed that domestic violence against adolescents is prevalent in Rivers State with grand mean of 2.63 (26%). Guardians, siblings and parents were the major perpetrators of physical, verbal, economic and emotional abuses while relatives, friends and neighbors were the perpetrators of sexual abuse against adolescents. Findings also revealed that age, parents'/guardians' educational/occupational status had no significant influence on the perpetration of domestic against adolescents but gender did. Based on the findings, the study recommended among others that integrated approaches be adopted to curb the menace of domestic violence in the society, particularly in Rivers State.

Introduction

Domestic violence (DV) has been recognized as a global public health problem affecting various individuals including adolescents with its attendant negative effects. According to Alvarez Davidson, Fleming and Glass (2016), the phenomena has attracted careful attention

from numerous National and International establishments, yet its prevalence is increasing on a daily basis and has continued to be a persistent social problem cutting across religious, racial and cultural borders. London School of Tropical Medicine and South African Medical Research Council, Stöckl et al, (2013), Sullivan (2018) and World Health Organization [WHO] (2017) revealed that domestic violence against adolescents progresses to domestic violence in adult relationship hence the need to break the cycle.

DV prevalence varies globally as shown by various studies. For instance, WHO (2017) reported that domestic violence against adolescents is on the rise as 1.6 million adolescents have been anguished from one form of ill treatment within the family settings.

In Africa, Abayomi, Kolawole and Olabode (2013) found out homicides associated with domestic violence were reported to be six times higher for females than males. Femi-Ajao, (2018) observed that Sub Saharan Africa remains the most affected as confirmed by previous research studies which revealed up to 51% prevalence. WHO (2016) also reported that 84million female adolescents have been abused emotionally, physically or sexually by someone within the family cycle. In Nigeria, the prevalence of DV is on the increase as 25-30% adolescents experienced DV from age 15-19 years (Musawa, 2016; Nigeria Demographic and Health Survey, 2008). Similarly, Foundation for Partnership Initiatives in the Niger Delta (2018) also pointed out that Rivers State recorded the highest prevalence of domestic violence in the South-South geo-political zone during the first quarter of 2018 and that fifty percent of cases of violence in the state are associated with domestic violence.

The Advocates for Human Rights [AHR] (2013) defined domestic violence as an array of abusive or threatening behaviour with the purpose of exerting power and maintaining control over the victim and occurs commonly within the family setting hence the term domestic violence is sometimes interchanged with family violence. It includes any attempt by any person in an intimate relationship to manipulate, dominate or use his or her position to exercise control over any person using fear, threats, intimidation and other forms of abusive behaviours and actions (Segal, Smith, Robinson, & Segal, 2018). They noted that DV is still violence even if it occurs just once because of its tendency of being repeated. In the context of this study, domestic violence is any abusive behaviour or action taken against an adolescent by a close partner or anyone in the family cycle which is harmful to the wellbeing of such individual. Those who exhibit any form of abusive behaviours towards others are commonly called perpetrators. In relation to domestic violence, a perpetrator is anybody within the family setting who causes physical, emotional, verbal, economic or sexual abuse to another person (who in the context of this study is adolescents).

According to European Union Agency for Fundamental Human Rights (2014), the effects of domestic violence are overwhelming as it affects the victim's physical, mental, emotional, social and reproductive health including exposure to life threatening diseases like HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B, unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions among others. These are contributors to increased morbidity and mortality rates which call for stringent actions and targeted interventions by relevant government and non-governmental agencies. It is against this background that the researcher sought to investigate the prevalence and perpetrators of domestic violence against adolescents in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Adolescents form about twenty five percent of the Nigerian population and are future adults with great potentials of becoming productive members of the society who can contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of the country. The family is a micro system and agent of socialization which inculcates values, morals, skills and positive behaviours that enable adolescents progress into successful adulthood yet many adolescents experience violence in the hands of perpetrators within the family setting which impact negatively on their physical, social and emotional wellbeing. This is worsened if they lack knowledge and necessary psychosocial competence to discern the nature, forms of domestic violence and factors that trigger its performance and the preventive skills needed to forestall its occurrence.

Presently, the proportion of adolescents who experienced domestic violence was reported to be highest in south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria and Rivers State ranked highest as fifty-fifty per cent of victims of sexual abuse (a form of DV) were reported to be adolescents between the ages of 11-17 years. Sadly, adolescents who are deficient in personal, interpersonal and social skills are vulnerable to diverse negative behaviours and social vices that increase their vulnerability to domestic violence. European Union Agency for Fundamental Human Rights (2014) pointed out that domestic violence has devastating effects on the general wellbeing of young people as well as expose them to life threatening morbidities. On the other hand the cycle of generational perpetration of domestic violence may not be broken if adolescents who are future adults experience violence in the home setting. This has serious implications not only on their quality of lives but also on the peace and cohesion of future family lives as well as the socio-economic development of the entire state. Therefore, there is need to explore the prevalence and perpetrators of domestic violence against adolescents in Rivers State and possible ways of tackling this societal menace hence the need for this study.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the prevalence and perpetrators of domestic violence against adolescents in Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Establish the prevalence of domestic Violence among adolescents in Rivers State.
2. Identify perpetrators of domestic violence against adolescents in Rivers State.
3. Ascertain the prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents based socio-demographic variables of age, sex, parents/guardians' educational status and parents/guardians' occupation.

Research Questions

To guide the study, the following research questions were posed;

1. What is the prevalence of domestic Violence among adolescents in Rivers State?
2. What is the prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents based socio-demographic variables of age, sex, parents/guardians' educational status and parents/guardians' occupation?

Hypothesis

A null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 alpha level.

There is no significant difference in the prevalence of DV among adolescents in Rivers State with regards to socio-demographic variables of age, sex, parents/guardians educational status and parents/guardians' occupation.

Delimitation of the Study

The study was delimited to Socio-demographic variables associated with prevalence of domestic violence against adolescents in Rivers State. The major focus was on adolescents from ages 14-19 years of both sexes in six senior secondary schools drawn from the three senatorial districts in Rivers State. The study incorporated age, sex, parents/guardians educational status and occupational status as socio-demographic variables likely to influence the study.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey and correlation research designs. The population of the study consisted of 93,076 secondary schools adolescents draw from senior secondary schools in the 23 Local Government Areas (LGA) of Rivers (Rivers State Senior Secondary School Board; Planning, Research and Statistics Department (RSSSB), 2019). A sample size of 1,600 students in senior secondary school was used for the study. A multi-stage sampling procedure was applied. At first stage, stratified random sampling technique was used to group the existing three geographical zones to get three strata with each geographical zone forming a stratum. At stage two, cluster sampling techniques was used to select six LGA’s. At stage three, proportionate sampling techniques was used to select one secondary school from each LGA hence, a total of six secondary schools were used for the study. The instrument for data collection was self-structured/adapted questionnaire titled domestic violence prevalence questionnaire (DVPQ). The instrument was validated by four experts from the department of human kinetics and health education, University of Port-Harcourt. The completed questionnaires were coded and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions, while ANOVA and Z-test was used to test hypothesis at 0.05 alpha levels.

Results and Analysis

Research Question 1: What is the prevalence of domestic Violence among adolescents in Rivers State?

Table 1: The prevalence of physical violence against adolescents in Rivers State (N=1512)

S/N	Prevalence of Physical Abuse	Always (A)	Sometimes (S)	Rarely (R)	Never (N)	Mean x	SD	Decision
1	Hitting	987	447	45	33	3.58	.66	
2	slapping	609	633	70	200	3.09	.99	
3	flogging	781	367	299	65	3.23	.91	
4	Kicking	89	199	655	569	1.87	.85	
5	Pushing	883	231	197	300	3.19	1.10	
6	Dragging	779	651	3	79	3.41	.75	
7	Suffocation	211	59	369	873	1.74	1.05	

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8	Putting pepper in the eyes	107	59	256	1090	2.18	.54	
9	Bites	211	99	296	906	1.75	1.08	
10	Burns	188	190	344	790	1.85	1.06	
11	Pull of hair	90	258	283	881	1.71	.95	
Grand mean and standard deviation.						2.47	0.90	Sometimes abused.

Legend: 0-1 (never), 1.1-2 (rarely), 2.1-3(sometimes) and 3.1-4 (always)

Data in table 1 show that the overall mean for physical abuse was 2.47 which mean that adolescents in Rivers State were sometimes physically abused.

Table 2: The prevalence of verbal abuse among adolescents in Rivers State.(N=1512)

S/N	Verbal Abuse	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean	Std	Decision
1	Shouting	912	456	23	121	3.42	.87	
2	Making shameful remarks about me	886	334	132	160	3.29	1.01	
3	Accusations/blaming	997	112	123	280	3.21	1.19	Always
Grand mean and Standard Deviation						3.31	1.02	

Legend: 0-1 (never), 1.1-2 (rarely), 2.1-3 (sometimes) and 3.1-4(always)

Data in table 2 had a grand mean of 3.31which showed that there is always verbal abuse of adolescents in Rivers State.

Table 3: Prevalence of emotional/psychological violence among adolescents in Rivers State (N=1512)

S/N	Prevalence of Emotional/Psychological Abuse.	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean	Std	Decision
8. i	Locking me up in a room	865	212	200	235	3.13	1.14	
ii	Intimidation	744	244	274	250	2.98	1.16	
iii	Hatred/malice	655	434	300	123	3.07	.98	
iv	Preventing me from visiting my friends.	223	29	583	677	1.87	1.02	
v	Preventing my friends from visiting me	156	211	354	791	1.82	1.02	
vi	Threaten to disown me	861	122	279	250	3.05	1.19	
vii	Refusal to provide my basic needs	917	199	76	320	3.13	1.22	
Viii	Making jest of me	779	402	312	19	3.28	.83	
Grand mean and Standard deviation						2.79	1.07	Sometimes abused

Legend: 0-1 (never), 1.1-2 (rarely), 2.1-3 (sometimes) and 3.1-4(always)

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Table 3 shows that making jest of respondents was the most common emotional abuse (3.28) followed by not providing their needs (3.13), locking respondents up (3.13), hatred/malice (3.07), threaten to disown respondents (3.05) and intimidation (2.98). The emotional abuse, respondents never experienced were preventing them from seeing their friends (1.87) and preventing their friends from seeing them (1.82). Summation of the item means gave a grand mean of 2.8 implying that emotional abuse was sometimes prevalent among respondents.

Table 4: Prevalence of economic abuse among adolescents in Rivers State (N=1512)

S/N	Economic Abuse	A	S	R	N	x	SD	Decision
11.i	Hawking in the street	688	412	111	301	2.88	1.15	
ii	Selling in the shop during school hours	711	256	211	334	2.98	1.22	
iii	Going to farm during school hours	209	312	367	627	2.07	1.08	
iv	Refusal to pay my school fees	790	412	10	300	3.12	1.14	
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation					2.76	1.15	Sometimes

Legend: 0-1 (never), 1.1-2 (rarely), 2.1-3 (sometimes) and 3.1-4(always)

Table 4 revealed that refusal to pay respondents' school fees had the highest mean response; 790 (3.12) followed by selling in the shop during school hours 711 (2.89), hawking in the street 688 (2.98) while going to farm during school hours attracted the lowest mean response (2.07). The grand mean for economic abuse was 2.76 which indicated that the students were sometimes economically abused.

Table 5. Prevalence of sexual abuse among adolescents in Rivers State (N=1512).

S/N	Sexual Abuse	Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Mean	Std	Decision
1	Unpermitted touches/hugs/caressing	211	222	198	881	1.84	1.11	
2	Teasing	219	200	278	815	1.88	1.11	
3	Kissing	321	187	160	844	1.99	1.24	
4	Attempted rape through the offering of money	266	167	339	740	1.97	1.14	
5	Forcing me to touch his/her private part.	176	190	423	723	1.88	1.03	
	Grand Mean and Standard Deviation					1.84	.12	Rarely

Legend: 0-1 (never), 1.1-2 (rarely), 2.1-3 (sometimes) and 3.1-4(always)

Table 5 revealed that majority of the respondents never experienced sexual abuse like unpermitted touches/ hugs/caressing 881 (1.84),kissing 844 (1.99), teasing 815 (1.88), attempted rape 740(1.97) and 723 respondents (1.88) never experienced being forced to touch someone’s genitals (private part). However, some respondents accepted having experienced sexual abuse as shown in the table above even though the grand mean (1.84) reflected that they rarely experience sexual abuse. Summarily, verbal abuse had the highest mean score (3.31) followed by emotional/psychological abuse (2.79), economic abuse (2.76), physical abuse (2.47) and sexual abuse (1.84) with a grand mean of 2.63 indicating that domestic violence is prevalent among adolescents in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: What is the prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents in Rivers State based on socio-demographic variables of age, sex, parents’/guardians’ educational and occupational status?

Table 6: Mean and standard deviation on prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents based on age, sex, parents educational status and parents occupational status

S/N	Prevalence of Domestic Violence among Adolescents in Rivers State	Age		Sex		Educational status of mother				Educational status of father				Mothers Occupational status		Fathers Occupational status			
		14-16yrs mean	15-19yrs	M= x	F= X	NF=x	P=x	S=x	T=x	NF=x	P=x	S=x	T=x	JL= x	SE= x	GE= x	JL= x	SE= x	GE= x
1.	Sexual Abuse	2.42	2.49	2.53	2.62	2.33	2.39	2.36	2.35	2.33	2.45	2.45	2.42	2.42	2.34	2.44	2.33	2.36	2.41
2.	Emotional Abuse	3.18	2.91	3.1	3.00	2.91	3.10	3.11	3.07	3.03	2.98	2.99	3.05	3.07	3.07	3.00	3.04	3.01	3.01
3.	Verbal Abuse	3.37	3.02	3.48	3.11	3.71	3.59	3.59	3.08	3.47	3.28	3.21	3.13	3.43	3.19	3.06	3.20	3.05	
4.	Physical Abuse	2.40	2.33	2.434	2.35	2.33	2.26	2.39	2.43	2.36	2.30	2.25	2.31	2.43	2.33	.243	2.39	2.131	2.38
5.	Economic Abuse	3.00	3.10	3.27	3.16	3.25	3.37	3.47	3.53	3.37	3.38	3.42	3.49	3.30	3.39	3.30	3.16	3.36	3.16

Test of null Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents in Rivers State with regards to socio-demographic variables of age, sex, parents/guardians educational status and parents/guardians’ occupation.

Z-test was used to test the variables of age and sex while One Way Analysis of Variance was used to test the variables of parents educational status and parents/guardians’ occupation.

Table 7: z-test on the prevalence of domestic violence based on age

Age	N	mean	SD	df	z-cal	p-val.	Alpha level	Decision
14-16years	1169	3.40	0.08	1510	1.25	0.58	0.05	Not significant
17-19years	343	3.39	0.15					

Table 7 showed that students between the ages of 14- 16 years had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.40 and 0.08 while those within the ages of 17 years to 19years had mean and standard deviation scores of 3.39 and 0.15 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 1510, the calculated z-test value of 1 .25 is not significant because the probability value of 0.58 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, there age does not significantly influence the prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents in Rivers State.

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Table 8: z-test on the prevalence of domestic violence based on sex

sex	N	mean	Std	df	z-cal	p-val.	Alpha level	Decision
Male students	823	3.79	0.29	1510	6.00	0.02	0.05	Significant
Female students	689	3.73	0.28					

Table 8 showed that male students have mean and standard deviation scores of 3.79 and 0.29 while female students have mean and standard deviation scores of 3.73 and 0.28 respectively. With a degree of freedom of 1510, the calculated z-test value of 6.000 is significant because the probability value of 0.02 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05.

Therefore, there sex significantly influenced the prevalence of domestic violence among adolescents in Rivers State.

Table 9: ANOVA on the prevalence of domestic violence based on mothers/guardians' education

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Alpha level	Decision
Between Groups	9.870	3	3.290	.351	.789	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted
Within Groups	14150.130	1508	9.383				
Total	14160.000	1511					

Table 9 showed that the sum of squares for between groups and within groups are 9.870 and 14150.130 while the mean squares for between and within groups are 3.290 and 9.383 respectively. The degrees of freedom are 3 and 1508 with F ratio of 0.351 which is not significant because the probability value of 0.789 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, mothers' education does not significantly influence prevalence of domestic violence in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 10: ANOVA on the prevalence of domestic violence based on fathers' education

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-value	Alpha level	Decision
Between Groups	8.940	3	2.980	.318	.813	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted
Within Groups	14151.060	1508	9.384				
Total	14160.000	1511					

Table 10 showed that the sum of squares for between groups and within groups are 8.940 and 14151.060 while the mean squares for between and within groups are 2.980 and 9.384 respectively. The degrees of freedom are 3 and 1508 with F ratio of 0.318 which is not significant because the probability value of 0.813 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, fathers' education does not significantly influence prevalence of domestic violence in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 11: ANOVA on the prevalence of domestic violence based on mothers/guardians' occupation

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P-val.	Alpha level	Decision
Between Groups	2.450	3	0.817	.131	.878	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted
Within Groups	14157.550	1508	9.388				
Total	14160.000	1511					

Table 11 showed that the sum of squares for between groups and within groups are 2.450 and 14157.550 while the mean squares for between and within groups are 0.817 and 9.388 respectively. The degrees of freedom are 3 and 1508 with F ratio of 0.131 which is not significant because the probability value of 0.878 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, mothers' occupation does not significantly influence prevalence of domestic violence in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 12: ANOVA on the prevalence of domestic violence based on fathers' occupation

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-val.	Alpha level	Decision
Between Groups	5.890	3	1.963	.197	.731	0.05	Hypothesis is accepted
Within Groups	15054.010	1508	9.983				
Total	15059.900	1511					

Table 12 showed that the sum of squares for between groups and within groups are 5.890 and 15054.010 while the mean squares for between and within groups are 1.963 and 9.983 respectively. The degrees of freedom are 3 and 1508 with F ratio of 0.197 which is not significant because the probability value of 0.731 is greater than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, fathers' occupation does not significantly influence prevalence of domestic violence in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Prevalence/socio-demographic variables associated with Domestic Violence against Adolescents in Rivers State.

The findings of the study in tables 1-5 showed that domestic violence is prevalent among adolescents in Rivers State with a grand mean of 2.63 (26%) which include physical abuse (2.47) verbal abuse (3.31), emotional abuse (2.79), economic abuse (2.76) and sexual abuse (1.84). Socio-demographic variables did not significantly influence the prevalence of domestic violence against adolescents but gender did. However, this study revealed that verbal abuse had the highest mean score (3.31) among other forms of domestic violence experienced by adolescents. This is sad because, this type of abuse may not be recognized as an abuse yet it has devastating effect on the adolescents who may choose to endure and withdraw to themselves thereby suffering emotional trauma and low self-esteem. The finding that verbal abuse is the commonest form of domestic violence against adolescents is contrary to that of Ozumba (2007) who found physical abuse to be the highest (83%) form of domestic violence. The nature of physical abuse experienced by adolescents as found in this study include hitting, slapping, dragging and pulling of hair among others. This finding is not surprising because similar studies conducted by UNICEF (2017) showed that adolescents are exposed to various forms of domestic violence. NDHS (2013) and Musawa (2016) found out that domestic violence experienced by young people especially those between 15-19 years in Nigeria ranges from 20-30% prevalence.

These findings corroborated with that of Agala, Adebisi and Nkem (2018) which found prevalence of physical abuse to be 33.5% and sexual abuse (13%). However, the findings varies with of Meinick, Cluver and Loening-Voysey (2017) who found out a lifetime prevalence of 68.9% for physical abuse and 32.3% monthly prevalence among adolescents in South Africa. The findings also agreed with that of Oluremi (2015) and Ebhohimen (2015) who posited that adolescents and women are exposed to various forms of domestic violence. This is a source of concern because adolescents are future adults whose potentials can be harnessed for the benefit of their families and society.

WHO (2017) lamented that domestic violence against adolescents progresses to domestic violence in adult relationship hence the need to break the cycle. Even though the present showed a slight reduction in the prevalence of domestic violence against adolescents as compared to previous findings, it is still worrisome because Smith and Segal (2018) opined that domestic violence is still a

threat to societal peace even if it involves only one person. This is not surprising because an adolescent has an interwoven relationship between his/her family and the society through the process of observation, imitation and modelling of behaviours as shown by social learning theory.

The finding that economic abuse is the second to the least form of domestic abuse experienced by adolescents with mean score of 2.37 in this study is not surprising because most respondents (51%) lived in urban areas and 57% of their parents/guardians had secondary/tertiary education.

The findings also showed that adolescents in Rivers State also experienced emotional abuse (grand mean -3.20) with the commonest being use of derogatory statements (3.28), refusal to provide basic needs(3.13), being locked up in the room(3.13) malice (3.07) and intimidation (2.98) while prevention friends from visiting them was rare (1.82). This may not be a surprise due to the fact that it is convenient for adolescents' to visit them under the supervision of their parents/guardians than being allowed to go out to socialize which may expose them to external influence. However, the result of this study is line with that of Pietriangelo (2018), Gordon (2019) and Patricelli-Ma (2019) which showed that, such abuses are dangerous because it is often not easily recognized as abuse, and therefore it can go on for prolonged periods, causing severe damage to victim's self-esteem and self-worth.

The study also found out that sexual abuse was the least common (mean score- 2.21). This finding agreed with previous finding made by Eke, Agala, Adebisi and Nkem (2018) which revealed a prevalence rate of 13% being the least compared to other forms of domestic violence in Rivers State. However, this finding disagreed with that of Manyike, Chinawa, Aniwada, Udechukwu, Otutola and Awoere (2015) which found out a prevalence rate of 40%. This difference may be related to age difference of respondents. In their study, majority of their respondents (70%) fell within the ages of 15-19years while in this study, majority of the respondents (77%) fell within the ages of 14-16 years. Also, this study had more male adolescents (54%) than females (46%) hence the finding is not surprising as confirmed by reports made by WHO (2016) and UNICEF (2017) that more females within the ages of 15-19 years experienced sexual violence than their male counterparts.

Conclusion

Domestic violence is prevalent among adolescents in Rivers State with physical, verbal, economic and emotional abuse being the highest and sexual abuse being the least form of domestic abuse experienced respectively.

The major perpetrators of domestic violence were parents/guardians, relatives, intimate friends and siblings. Adolescents were abused physically, emotionally and verbally irrespective of their age and sex as well as their parents/guardians' educational status, and parents/guardians' occupation in secondary schools in Rivers State.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

1. Comprehensive life skills education programmes should be incorporated in the primary and secondary school curriculum as a stand-alone subject to ensure early inculcation and practice of these skills before they face the larger society.
2. Training and re-training of teachers and peer educators on life skills should be conducted regularly to ensure that pupils/students are impacted with the right kind of knowledge and skills.
3. Government and other policy making bodies should ensure the implementation of stringent measures against perpetrators of domestic violence especially with regards to young people who are future adults.
4. Community based sensitization programmes should be aggressively carried out to target socio-cultural norms that favour domestic violence against adolescents in Nigerian communities.

5. Adolescents should be encouraged to speak out and report perpetrators of any form of DV against them as underreporting helps to continue the cycle of DV perpetration.
6. Parents/Guardians and other family members should model appropriate behaviors for adolescents to emulate hence they need re-orientation and training.
7. Attitudes that condone or tolerate violence against adolescents and victimization should be discouraged by individuals, Communities, institutions and laws/policies in all parts of the country.
8. There is the need for integrated approach where all stakeholders including religious organizations join hands in creating a safe environment for young people in the home setting which will gradually diffuse to the larger society.

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