

# Covid-19 Pandemic, Socio-Economic Status And Anxiety As Correlates Of Domestic Violence Among Married Couples In Oyo Town, Oyo State

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**Abstract:** Domestic violence among married individual is a variable that has been researched on over time. Despite this, factors that really influence the above variable have not reached agreement among researchers. In order to clarify some of these concerns, this study, which adopted a descriptive survey, was designed to investigate the effects of COVID-19, socio-economic status and anxiety on domestic violence among married individual in Oyo town, Oyo State. Three hundred participants were chosen from the selected organizations through accidental sampling. Their ages ranged between 25 and 55 with mean of 33.14 years (SD= 7.11). Three research questions were tested using multiple regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A structured questionnaire consisting of demographic section, and measures COVID-19 pandemic, anxiety and socio-economic status) was used to collect data. The findings revealed that there was significant positive relationships between socio-economic status ( $r = 0.510, p < 0.05$ ); anxiety ( $r = 0.212, p < 0.05$ ); COVID-19 ( $r = 0.425, p < 0.05$ ) and domestic violence among the participants. The three variables jointly accounted for 83.1% variance in predicting domestic violence among the married individual. The independent variables made positive relative contribution to domestic violence in the following order: socio-economic status ( $\beta = 0.410, t = 5.537, p < 0.05$ ) followed by COVID-19 ( $\beta = 0.229, t = 4.561; p < 0.05$ ), Anxiety ( $\beta = 0.136, t = 2.578; p < 0.05$ ) had relative contribution to domestic violence of the married individual. Based on this, Comprehensive and extensive premarital counselling should be given to intending couples on how to manage their marital relationship. Youths should be encouraged and taught to detest and not imitate brutish treatment of their spouse. Young couples planning to get married should be guided on how to avoid violence in their marriage. There should be a wide range of public enlightenment through the mass media on the negative effects of domestic violence against women, especially wife battery.

**Keywords:** Domestic Violence, Socio-economic status, COVID-19 pandemic and Anxiety

## INTRODUCTION

In the present day society, violence could be seen occurring on daily bases. It occurs among family members, friends, religious groups, ethnic groups, peer groups, inter-country, etc. A violent situation can be described to be a situation where different forms of abuse take place e.g physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological etc. One of the most pervasive forms of violence in all Africa-societies that exists on a continuum is the one perpetrated by an intimate partner in the home among couples between husband and wife (Grown, 2005). The act of violence between family members, most especially between the couples is known as domestic violence. Domestic violence is also known as spousal abuse, battering, family violence and intimate partner violence. It is a pattern of abusive behaviours by one partner against another in an intimate relationship such as marriage, dating, family or cohabitation. Domestic violence, so defined, has many forms, including physical aggression or assault (hitting, kicking, biting, shoving, restraining, slapping, throwing objects), or threats thereof; sexual abuse, emotional abuse; controlling or domineering; intimidation; stalking; passive/covert abuse otherwise known as neglect; and economic deprivation (Seimeniuk, Krentz, Gish & Gill, 2010).

Overtime, there has been a burgeoning interest in understanding domestic violence among intimate male and female partners. Although, men continue to contribute the vast majority of domestic violence offences, it has increasingly become recognized that women can and do behave violently (Dullack & Davis, 2005). Hence, incidence of domestic violence among men and women has become a universal problem in both developed and developing countries. Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner (Fareo, 2015). Domestic violence occurs when a family member, partner or ex-partner attempts to physically, sexually, economically or psychologically dominate another. Amnesty International (2007) reports that a third (and in some cases two-thirds) of women are believed to have been subjected to physical, sexual and psychological violence carried out primarily by husbands, partners. More pathetic is the revelation of gross under reporting and non-documentation of domestic violence due to cultural factors (Oyediran & Isugo, 2005).

The Nigerian society is basically known to practice patriarchy and women's place within this patriarchal system is that of a subordinate (Henry, Oyaziwo, & Wilson, 2009), Domestic violence therefore functions as a means of enforcing conformity with the role of a woman within customary society. It therefore does not matter if the woman is economically dependent or not, her position, like that of the children is subordinate (Henry, Oyaziwo & Wilson 2009). Most victims of domestic violence do not speak out about violations of their rights due to lack of positive response from the society.

Domestic violence is so entrenched in the society to the extent that victims condone such violations of their rights, claiming it is a sign of love and domestic violence at home get increasing as a result of government policy where parent are ask to stay indoors due to advent of infectious disease. Domestic violence occurs globally (Dahlberg & Krug, 2002; UNICEF, 2005). Families from all social, racial economic, educational and religious backgrounds experience domestic violence in different ways (Djaden & Thoennes, 2002). In parts of the third world generally and in some West Africa in particular, domestic violence is prevalent and reportedly justified and condoned in some cultures, traditionally in many African countries, the beating of wives and children is sanctioned as a form of discipline. Thus, in beating their-children, parents believe they are instilling discipline in them, much the same way as in husbands beating their wives, who are regarded like children to be prone to indiscipline which must be curbed. This is especially so when the woman is economically dependent on the man (Basu & Pratishtan, 2002)

According to Abrahams (2007) childhood exposure to maltreatment refers to behaviour towards a child that is outside the norms of conduct and entails substantial risk of causing physical or emotional harm. Each day, the safety and wellbeing of children are threatened due to their exposure to domestic violence. A wide range of studies revealed that children who witness adult domestic violence suffer considerably from a host of greater behavioural, social, emotional and cognitive difficulties when compared to those not so exposed (Hughes & Rosenberg, 2007). The negative consequence may manifest in later life in form of perpetrating violent behaviour which continues into early adulthood for some exposed children. Ghosh (2001), reported that early childhood exposure to parental domestic violence has been shown to have demonstrable long-term consequences for youth violence, adult violent behaviours and other forms of criminality. Children's involvement in violent situations has been shown to vary from their becoming actively involved in the conflict, to distracting themselves and their parents, or to distancing themselves by leaving the room (Garcia O'Hearn, Margolin & John, 2007). Increased aggression has been found to be a long-term correlate of exposure to family violence (Forsstrom-Cohen & Rosenbaum, 1985 as cited in Bevan, 2002), and psychological maltreatment (Bevan, 2002), and a short-term correlate of physical abuse (Bevan, 2002), exposure to family violence and neglect during childhood (Henning, 1997).

In most part of the world, socio-economic status has also been pointed out to be one of the factors that could breed domestic violence especially during coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Socio-economic status (SES) can be defined as an economic and sociological combined total measure of a person's work experience and of an individual's or family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education and occupation. Socio-economic status varies in different married couples. Domestic violence against women occurs in all social and economic classes, but women with low socio-economic status are more likely to experience violence (Adekeye, 2008). Married men in difficult economic circumstances (e.g. unemployment, little job autonomy, low socio-economic status or blocked advancement due to lack of education) may result to violence out of frustration, and a sense of hopelessness. According to Birdsall, Nancy, Graham and Sabot, (2004) women who experience violence may have fewer resources to escape violence in the home. Married men who have the ability to cater for their wife psychological need tend not to be violent to their wife, because they are able to provide all the necessary amenities for their wife. Married women experience to domestic violence when their husband's socio-economic status is very poor, the husband gets frustrated when he is unable to provide the necessary care for his family and out of his frustration and anger, it result to physical assault or violence to his wife and his children so as to get over this frustration. It is important for a couple to have a stable and minimum income to cater for their family so as not to be frustrated as this would result in a physical or domestic violence in the home.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has also been pointed out to be one of the factors that could breed domestic violence among married couples in Oyo town. The World Health Organization has reported several types of viral infections, and millions of people are at risk for these diseases in various ways worldwide (Al-hazmi, 2016). The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) epidemic is known as a general health crisis that has caused challenges for mental resilience and has been the biggest outbreak since the severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003 (Wang, Pan, Wan, Tan, Xu & Ho, 2020). COVID-19 was initially reported by China in late 2019 and had spread to 13 countries by January 24, 2020 (Nishiura, Jung, Linton, Kinoshita, Yang & Hayashi, 2020). COVID-19 as an emerging infectious disease was first identified in Wuhan (Yang & Duan, 2020). Its impacts have not yet been determined, as the observations and testing results are changing rapidly, leading to a high mortality rate. Among prevalent symptoms of this disease, cough, fever, shortness of breath, and sometimes diarrhea can be mentioned. Bats are thought to be the natural host of the virus (Paules, Marston & Fauci, 2020). In addition to endangering human health and consequently their deaths, COVID-19 imposes irreversible psychological impacts on married couples and human societies. For example, complete quarantine and commuting restrictions that prevent people from going out, fear of suffering from the disease, anxiety about losing loved ones, and more importantly, depression following losing friends and family are some of the issues people should deal with. The world has witnessed several widespread outbreaks of acute respiratory illnesses. The COVID-19 outbreak creates anxiety among married couples, especially in Nigeria, and the media have huge impacts on increasing mental distress (Al-Rabiaah, Temsah, Al-Eyadhy, Hasan, Al-Zamil & Al-Subaie, 2020). For instance, some media have been using the term "end of the world" since the spread of the disease, leading to increased concern (Rubin & Wessely, 2020). Some countries' social stability has seriously been affected by COVID-19 (Chen, Zhang, Ju & He, 2020). The consequences of the disease outbreaks affecting all aspects of humans' lives have continued (Makamure, Makamure, Mendiola, Renteria, Repp & Willden, 2013). The current epidemic of COVID-19 is serious resulting in a pandemic (Xu, Cai, Shen, Ni, Chen & Hu, 2020).

Anxiety is generally experienced by all human beings. It can transpire due to many reasons and different people will experience different kinds of anxiety. The feeling of anxiety can ensue at anytime and anywhere and thus, there may be times where it could be spotted by others especially if the anxiety reactions are physical. McCulloch and Spielberger (2011) believe that “the presence of signs such as tremor in the limbs, sweating of the hands and forehead and flushing of the neck and face, is deemed to be an indication of anxiety”. The physical reactions mentioned by McCulloch and Spielberger (2011) are some of the common anxiety indicators, but there are many other obvious indicators such as fidgeting or stuttering that are exhibited by anxious people. Kimberly and Jacob (2012), have identified two types of anxiety reactions. The first type is emotionality which involves physiological reactions such as the racing heart and behavioural reactions which include stammering and fidgeting.

The second type of anxiety reaction is worry which signifies a cognitive reaction. An example of this is self-deprecating thoughts or task irrelevant thoughts. The feeling of worry in this context is normally related to what the anxious person thinks of him or herself. The thoughts that are playing in the mind of the anxious person could be negative ones which then result in the high level of anxiety. On the other hand, there are also occasions where anxiety may not be noticeable as the anxious person might have only physiological reactions which are only known by the person experiencing it. Some of the physiological reactions that could arise from anxious or stressful situations are increased heart rate and blood pressure. These physiological reactions could only be identified in more controlled laboratory situations (McCulloch and Spielberger, 2011).

Anxiety generally could be identified through “such signs as pacing around the room, inability to sit in a chair for any length of time, chain smoking and inability to relax” (McCulloch and Spielberger, 2011). When a person becomes nervous, the anxiety reactions could give good or bad effects to the anxious person. If the reactions are obvious, they can appear in the form of “restlessness, tenseness of posture, increased rate of speech and general distractibility” (McCulloch and Spielberger, 2011). These reactions may not only occur during public speaking, but they could also happen in everyday conversations between people. According to Kubrin, Stucky and Krohn (2010), “anxiety is a complex concept, dependent upon not only one’s feelings of self-efficacy but also appraisals concerning the potential and perceived threats inherent in certain situations”. People who experience anxiety often have low self-esteem and even low confidence level. Thus, several different types of anxiety have been categorized by psychologists (Adegbite, 2011).

In the same vein, Woolfork (2015) observes that an anxious person may experience perceptual distortions of non-psychotic proportions, which may reflect in attention processes and thereby critically affect the cognitive performance and information processing. According to Cicchetti (2010), anxiety involves feelings of apprehension, self-consciousness and emotional distress in anticipated or actual social evaluative situations. Such anxiety occurs in situations where student want to make a favorable impression but have doubts about their abilities to do so. They believe that such situations involve scrutiny or evaluation by others, and that negative evaluation is a possible and likely outcome. In addition, they fear harm and rejection from these negative consequences. Furthermore, Leitenberg (2010) points out that anxiety have been studied under various forms. Among these are shyness, performance anxiety, social phobia, social withdrawal, public speaking anxiety and social inhibition.

The fourth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV; American Psychiatric Association, 2010) defines anxiety as a marked and persistent fear of social and performance situations in which embarrassment may occur. The fear must be excessive and unreasonable, and the feared social situations are endured with great anxiety and distress or are avoided altogether. Alternatively, social anxiety can be categorized by the extent to which it is generalized across different social situations. Some social anxieties involve only one very limited type of social event, such as public speaking, whereas others involve a variety of social situations (Clare, 2010).

Anxiety can be expressed in several ways: physiologically, behaviourally, and cognitively (de Bruyn, 2012). Though it is possible for an individual to experience anxiety in a given situation without indication of all three of these types of symptoms, it is likely that the majority of individuals exhibit symptoms from each of these three realms. Physiological symptoms of anxiety include excessive sweating, racing heart, blushing, trembling, stomach distress, numbness, and dizziness. Behavioural signs are also quite variable, and include avoidance or escape from the situation, and less extreme behaviors such as procrastination, minimal eye contact, stammering, fidgeting, and social inhibition. Leitenberg (2010) points out that while some of these behavioural symptoms may suggest poor social skills, it is often the case that the socially anxious individual possesses adequate skills but that these skills are inhibited by their anxiety. It is difficult to conceive of social anxiety without certain characteristic cognitions, such as self-consciousness, preoccupation with perceived scrutiny and evaluation, hyper-vigilance, and self-deprecating thoughts. In addition, socially anxious individuals tend to have a cognitive bias toward negative feedback.

#### **Statement of Problem**

For some decades now, the issue of domestic violence among married people has been a debate among various researchers, family, government, legal practitioners, guidance counselor etc. The prevalent rate of domestic violence among married people in different parts of the world has led to a great concern, because it is not an issue that should be treated with levity. In Nigeria, domestic violence could be said to be promoted as a result of the operation of patriarchal system. This is the system where male is seen and expected to be superior, as a result of this, male usually treat their female partner as he deems fit. Majority sees their female counterpart as inferior to them and that they should only be seen and not be heard. This usually led to the maltreatment of the females most especially the ones that are their wives, children and even sisters. Some men see the beating of their wives and children as a means of correcting them and enforcing them to what they think is right, with this, the children are being maltreated.

The present female emancipation and gender equality campaign is serving as a form of debriefing to the females and thus they are no longer seeing themselves as object to be abandoned, made jobless, restricted to the kitchen and home alone or sit at home and only bear children. They strive to be both seen and heard, to be mother that can educate their children, contribute financially to the upkeep of the home and also to be seen as relevant in the development of the economic system. This to the men is seen as challenging their position and authority and is usually not welcomed, the adventure of COVID -19 pandemic which make parent stay indoors and increasing anxiety among families and thus leads to domestic violence in families.

Also, some women who see themselves as superior to their husband usually fight and even beat-up their husband whenever they have misunderstanding. Low socio-economic status by some family most especially the husband has also been discovered to increase the feeling of insecurity and thus elevate the rate of aggressive behaviour which makes them to react to their family members in a violent way. 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. Among victims who are still living with their perpetrators still experience high amounts of stress, fear and anxiety as this would affect the psychological functioning and mental health of the victims.

#### **Purpose of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of (COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety) on domestic violence of married people in Oyo town, Oyo-state, Nigeria. Specifically the objectives of the study are to:

- i. examine the relationship that exists among the above independent factors (COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety) and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married people in Oyo town.
- ii. investigate the joint contribution of COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety on domestic violence of married people in Oyo town.
- iii. find out the relative effect of each of COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety on domestic violence of married people in Oyo town.

#### **Research Question**

- i. What pattern of relationship exist between independent variables (COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety) and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married people in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the joint contribution of the COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married people in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the relative contribution of the COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married people in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria?

#### **METHODOLOGY**

##### **Research Design**

This study will adopt the descriptive survey research design of the ex-post facto type to achieve the purpose of the study. This is used because the researcher is not interested in manipulating the variables

##### **Population**

The population of the study comprised all married couples in Oyo town. The populations under this study are married couples in Oyo town in Oyo state, Nigeria and as such will provide the opportunity to study a heterogeneous population.

##### **Sample and sampling technique**

The participants for this study consisted of three hundred young and old married men and women who were selected using accidental sampling by visiting organizations, churches, mosques and houses in Oyo town. The purpose of selecting this technique is that it would make it easier for the researcher to reach the participants of the study with ease. It is assumed that the sample that would be used for the study would have similar characteristics or elements. Based on the findings of this study, an inference was drawn and generalization were made on the population of the study

##### **Instruments**

The questionnaire used in this study is divided into six sections:

Section A contains bio-data, which sought information on personal data of the respondents. These data ranges from age, gender, marital status, number of children responsible for, level of education.

##### **Domestic violence scale (DVS) – Burt (1980)**

This scale was developed by Burt (1980) to measure the frequency and intensity of violence within an individual and family as an institution. It contains 18 items which would be adopted for the study. It has a 5 point Likert scoring scale which include; Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagreed, Strongly Disagree. It has an internal reliability of 0.65. The instrument was re-validated by the researcher and it has a Cronbach alpha of 0.85.

##### **Socio-economic status scale (SES) - Zimet, Powell, Farley & Berkoff (2006)**

The scale was developed to measure how the socio-economic status of couples and its influence on their daily living. However, this scale contains 10 items. And each item was rated using 5- points Likert scale. Ranging from strongly Agree=SA, to Strongly Disagree=SD. Two samples of the items are: My spouse can easily provide for my personal needs.” and 2). My spouse cannot afford



to attend to most of my needs at home. The developers yielded an internal reliability of 0.87. The instrument was re-validated by the researcher and it has a Cronbach alpha of 0.89.

**COVID 19 Scale- Wang et'al (2020)**

COVID-19 Questionnaire (COQ) was developed by Wang et'al (2020). It consists of ten (10) items, this deal with the varieties of infectious disease awareness exhibited among peoples. The 10 questions were answered on the scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “never” and 5 being “very often”.

**Anxiety Scale- Kendall and Finch (1976)**

This section of the questionnaire deals with anxiety developed by Kendall and Finch, (1976). This consists of 20 items with a response format ranging from Strongly Disagree = SD to Strongly Agree = SA. The author reported an internal reliability co-efficient (alphas) ranging from .78 to .93. For this study, the researcher reports a split-half reliability of .93 and .47 were observed for part 1 and 2 respectively, with a Cronbach alpha of .92.

**Procedure of Data Collection**

The researcher gets the consent of each participant in the study. Explanations were made on the essence of the research and the procedure of administration. The researcher further assured participants of the confidentiality of the information provided. Questionnaires were distributed and collected immediately after participants responded.

**Method of Data Analysis**

Pearson product moment correlation was used to test the relationship among the independent variables and the dependent variable while Multiple Regression Analysis was used to analyse the joint contribution and the relative effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

**RESULTS**

**Research Question One:** What pattern of relationship exist between independent variables (COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety) and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married people in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics and Inter-correlations among COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety on the domestic violence of married people in Oyo town**

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Domestic violence	43.14	7.11	1.000			
Socio-economic status	85.22	7.19	.510**	1.000		
Anxiety	34.12	7.09	0.212**	-.041	1.000	
COVID-19	37.10	7.32	0.425**	.082	-.146	1.000

\*\* Correlation significant at 0.05 level

Table 1 above reveals there was significant relationships between each of the independent variables: socio-economic status (r = 0.510, p < 0.05); anxiety (r = 0.212, p < 0.05); COVID-19 (r = 0.425, p < 0.05) and domestic violence among the participants.

**Research question Two:** What is the joint contribution of the COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married people in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Multiple Regression Analysis on joint contribution of the variables**

Multiple R	= 0.913				
Multiple R <sup>2</sup>	= 0.833				
Multiple R <sup>2</sup> (Adjusted)	= 0.831				
Standard Error of Estimate	= 3.71435				
Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean of Squares	F-Ratio	P
Regression	23761.043	4	5940.261	430.579	.000
Residual	4759.746	295	13.796		
Total	28520.789	299			

The table 2 above shows that there was joint effect of the independent variables (COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety) and domestic violence of married individual in Oyo town, Oyo State (R = 0.913, p < .05). The combination of the independent variables accounted for 83.1% (adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.831) of the total variance in the prediction of domestic violence of married individual in Oyo town. The analysis of variance of the multiple regression data yielded an F-ratio value which was found to be significant at 0.05 Alpha level (F = 430.579, p < 0.05). This shows that the independent variables jointly contributed to domestic violence.

**Research Question Three:** What is the relative contribution of the COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety and the dependent factor (domestic violence) of married individual in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria?

**Table 3: The relative contribution of each of the Independent Variables to domestic violence of married people in Oyo town, Oyo state, Nigeria**

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Remark
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	4.449	3.314		1.343	.000	Sig
Anxiety	.433	.099	.136	2.578	.004	Sig
COVID-19	.322	.041	.229	4.561	.000	Sig
Socio-economic status	.545	.067	.410	5.537	.000	Sig

a Dependent Variable: domestic violence

Table 3 indicates the contributions of each of the independent variables to the prediction of domestic violence of married individual in Oyo town, Oyo state. In terms of magnitude of the contribution: socio-economic status contributed most to the prediction of domestic violence of the married individual ( $\beta = 0.410$ ,  $t = 5.537$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) followed by COVID-19 ( $\beta = 0.229$ ,  $t = 4.561$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ), Anxiety ( $\beta = 0.136$ ,  $t = 2.578$ ;  $p < 0.05$ )

### Discussion of the findings

In response to the research question one which asks what pattern of relationship exists between the independent variables (COVID-19, Socio-economic status, anxiety) and the domestic violence among married individual in Oyo town, Oyo state. Which states that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and domestic violence among married individual in Oyo town, Oyo state was rejected. It was found that there was significant relationship between socio-economic status and domestic violence. It is also important to note that domestic violence rates are five times higher among families below poverty levels, and also twice as likely to be committed by unemployed men than by men who are working full time (Matthews, 2004). However, without controlling for socio-economic status, domestic violence occurs equally in urban, suburban, and rural areas (McCue, 2008), study shows that socio-economic status was the most potent predictor of domestic violence. The higher the socio-economic of the family, the lower is the incidence of domestic violence. Ezeah (2013) found that women who have substantial income have the risk of violence more than those that contribute minimally to the household income. In essence, women's economic resources increase the risk of violence when men perceive their authority and gender roles threatened. Again, lack of financial resources in the family can precipitate violence (Heise, 2002).

The second variables found that there was significant relationship between anxiety and domestic violence. This is consistent with an assertion by Finney (2004) found that there is a dearth of Nigeria research on the links between domestic violence and anxiety (Finney, 2004). However, studies across the world have consistently found a significant correlation between men's violence to partners, including aggression, and their anxiety level, both at the time of the incident and generally. These relationships have been found using self-reports, partner reports and anxiety measures. Associations have remained significant with effects attributable to aggression levels, and perceived fear relationship controlled (Hotaling & Sugarman, 2006). Bennett and Williams, (2003) found that victims have higher rates of anxiety and aggression than non-victims (both male and female) and that increased risk is associated with level of domestic violence among married individual (Mirrlees, 1999). Hotaling and Sugarman, (2006) found evidence to suggest violent incidents occurred more frequently on occasions when married individual had been experiencing high level of anxiety and aggression. McCulloch and Spielberger (2011) found that some of the common anxiety indicators, but there are many other obvious indicators such as fidgeting or stuttering that are exhibited by anxious married individual. In the same vein, Woolfork (2015) found that anxious couples may experience perceptual distortions of non-psychotic proportions, which may reflect in attention processes and thereby critically affect the cognitive performance and increasing level of domestic violence at homes.

The third variables found that there was significant relationship between COVID-19 pandemic and domestic violence. This is consistent with an assertion by Brennen (2011) and Tant (2013) strongly believe that due to fear of COVID-19 most couples or married individual not allowing their partner sex poses a lot of domestic violence to those who engage in it. Akpede (2007) found that sex has created and is still creating problems for many of our married individual due to fear of COVID-19 in which some husband and wife ignored themselves due to fear of infected.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, it was observed from the result of findings that there was significant relationship between COVID-19 exposure and domestic violence. Also, socio-economic status was also found to have positive relationship with domestic violence. There was also

significant relationship between anxiety and domestic violence. Also, there is a positive joint contribution of the independent variables (anxiety, socio-economic status and COVID-19) on domestic violence among married couples in Oyo town. The three independent variables had relative contribution to the prediction of domestic violence.

It was concluded that the financial strength of a family could trigger violence between and exposure to COVID-19 pandemic could enhance domestic violence. When the husband finds it difficult to meet the needs of the family due to lack of finance, it could prompt domestic violence. Also, married individual who was exposed to infectious disease and the least of all high level of anxiety, such individual could also exhibit some violent behaviour when he/she gets married later in life. Nonetheless, there is need for replication and refinement of this work in the future.

### Recommendations

In order to reduce the rate of domestic violence among married people, the following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

- There should be a wide range of public enlightenment through the mass media on the negative effects of domestic violence against women, especially wife battery.
- Comprehensive and extensive premarital counselling should be given to intending couples on how to manage their marital relationship. Youths should be encouraged and taught to detest and not imitate brutish treatment of their spouse. Young couples planning to get married should be guided on how to avoid violence in their marriage.
- The government should establish and fund counselling centres at the community and Local Government levels where professional counsellors and social workers would be employed to help victims and perpetrators of domestic violence.
- There should be strict restriction of couples to follow state guidelines on COVID-19 pandemic so as to stay healthy among couple as this would however reduce the rate of misunderstanding and domestic violence.
- Churches and mosques should organize seminars and outreach programmes where professional social workers and counsellors are invited to enlighten the people on the need for a violence free society with the home as the cradle.

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