

Understanding the patterns and drivers of domestic violence against women in Birnin Kebbi Nigeria

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Abstract

Domestic violence against women in Birnin Kebbi remains a persistent social problem, reflecting complex dynamics shaped by power imbalances, patriarchal norms, and family structures. Acts of physical, sexual, verbal, emotional, and economic violence not only harm victims but also undermine social well-being, indicating an urgent need for context-sensitive prevention strategies and empowerment-based interventions. The objective of this study is to analyze the prevalence, forms, and women's perceptions of domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi LGA, while also exploring the socio-demographic, economic, and cultural factors that influence vulnerability to violence. This research employs a quantitative survey involving 259 married women in Birnin Kebbi, combining multi-stage random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and comparative methods. Validity, reliability, and confidentiality were ensured throughout the research process. The findings indicate a very high prevalence of domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis (61.83%), with physical violence (25.1%) and economic violence (23.72%) being the most dominant forms. Cultural normalization is evident, as 41.99% of respondents perceive wife beating as a form of discipline and uphold the belief in the husband's absolute sexual rights. Low levels of education and women's economic dependency further exacerbate victims' vulnerability. This study concludes that domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi is systemic and multidimensional, rooted in power imbalances, patriarchy, and socioeconomic inequalities that perpetuate cycles of violence. This study contributes to strengthening domestic violence theory by identifying education and economic dependency as mediating mechanisms, while also proposing multidimensional interventions.

Keywords:

Domestic Violence, Women Empowerment, Patriarchy, Gender Norms.



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INTRODUCTION

Domestic violence remains a critical global social issue, disproportionately affecting women and persisting across diverse societies (Wake & Kandula, 2022; Torrance et al., 2024). The forms and characteristics of violence vary regionally, necessitating a contextual understanding of its manifestations and dynamics (Bochenkova et al., 2023). Importantly, domestic violence extends beyond intimate partner relationships to include children and other family members (Kiani et al., 2021; Stewart et al., 2020). Studies indicate that nearly one-third of women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner (Kumar et al., 2013; Sardinha et al., 2024; Le et al., 2024). Such violence not only harms victims directly but also adversely affects broader quality of life and social development (Rose et al., 2023; Amir-ud-Din et al., 2024). Ribeiro et al. (2022) further highlight that domestic violence is driven by power imbalances, manifesting as aggression or intimidation within households. Consequently, addressing domestic violence requires preventive measures and empowerment strategies that are grounded in the specific social and cultural context of affected communities.

Violence against women has increasingly gained international attention due to its occurrence across different social groups and age ranges. Research highlights the profound impacts of such violence on women's physical, sexual, psychological, and social well-being (Linn et al., 2024). Violence is characterized by the use of threats or force that may cause injury or harm (Bravo-Queipo-de-Llano et al., 2024). Specifically, gender-based violence results in physical, sexual, or psychological suffering, including coercion, threats, and restriction of personal freedom (Dahie et al., 2023). This phenomenon is a manifestation of unequal power relations between men and women (Londono et al., 2021). In Nigeria, the prevalence of violence against women remains high, with women frequently experiencing humiliation, abuse, and exploitation (Okafor et al., 2023; Zaki et al., 2025). Globally, nearly one-third of women have experienced physical or sexual violence during their lifetime (Bengesai et al., 2024). Understanding these patterns, causes, and impacts is essential to inform effective interventions and promote strategies to prevent and mitigate violence against women.

Previous studies have paid limited attention to domestic violence in LGA Birnin Kebbi, with most research focusing on violence against women at the national level in Nigeria (Ekhaton-Mobayode et al., 2022; Kazibwe & Li, 2025). Approximately one-third of women aged 15 years and above experience physical or sexual violence, with long-term consequences including mental health disorders, unintended pregnancies, and sexually transmitted infections (Baneshi et al., 2025; Musa, 2025). Such violence may take physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, or economic forms (Doyle, 2020; Lanchimba et al., 2023). Therefore, this study addresses this gap by conducting an integrative analysis of demographic and socio-demographic characteristics in relation to the prevalence, types, and perceptions of violence against women in Birnin Kebbi, in order to examine the influence of economic factors, cultural norms, and household structures on the risk of violence.

This study is grounded in the assumption that women's vulnerability to domestic violence is shaped by the interplay of education, economic dependency, patriarchal cultural norms, and victims' perceptions, where access to reporting institutions and the understanding of the boundary between discipline and violence further influence victims' responses. Based on this premise, the study aims to examine in depth the prevalence, forms, and women's perceptions of domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi LGA, while exploring the socio-demographic, economic, and cultural factors that influence levels of vulnerability. Accordingly, this study contributes theoretically by systematically elaborating the interaction

between socio-demographic factors such as age, education level, economic dependency, and religion and patriarchal power structures and socio-cultural norms in shaping women's vulnerability. Practically, the findings provide an empirical foundation for evidence-based policy formulation through strengthening public awareness, gender education, economic empowerment, and improving access to and integration of reporting mechanisms.

METHOD

Research Approach

This study employs a quantitative survey design, which is appropriate for collecting data from a specific population and for systematically describing patterns and trends associated with the phenomenon. A survey approach was chosen because it allows for the efficient collection of information from a large number of respondents while facilitating comparative analysis across subgroups. Furthermore, this method is particularly relevant for research on domestic violence, as it can reduce psychological pressure on respondents and ensure anonymity, thereby enhancing openness in reporting sensitive experiences (Ahmed, 2024; Cash et al., 2022).

Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of married women residing in Metropolitan Birnin Kebbi, with a total sample of 259 respondents. The sample size was determined based on population representativeness, logistical feasibility, and recommendations from similar survey literature (Anderson et al., 2024). The sample was selected using a combination of multi-stage random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Purposive sampling was applied to ensure that each respondent was a married woman who was available and willing to participate, while multi-stage random sampling was used to minimize researcher bias and ensure geographic and socio-economic representation.

Sampling Procedures

In the first stage, 7 out of 15 wards in Metropolitan Birnin Kebbi were randomly selected using a lottery method (Li et al., 2024; Rodrigues et al., 2024). In the second stage, each ward was divided into residential clusters, and 3 locations were randomly selected from each ward using the same method (Schroder, 2025). In the third stage, each selected location was mapped based on road networks, and 5 streets were randomly chosen, resulting in a total of 105 streets (Guevara et al., 2022). In the final stage, from the 105 streets, 2 households were selected using a systematic skip pattern (every fifth house), and one married woman from each household was selected as a respondent through purposive sampling (Jin & Yang, 2020; Alzoubi & Mishra, 2024).

Research Instrument

The primary instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire designed to collect consistent and systematic data regarding experiences of domestic violence (Philip, 2024). The questionnaire was developed with attention to clarity, confidentiality, and cultural appropriateness (Webster et al., 2025). It was pilot-tested on 20 respondents to assess its validity and reliability before being administered more widely.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted by trained enumerators who adhered to research ethics and ensured respondents' comfort, with particular emphasis on anonymity and confidentiality due to the sensitive nature of domestic violence. The collected data were analyzed descriptively and comparatively to identify patterns and trends of domestic

violence experiences across different respondent subgroups, allowing for systematic interpretation of the phenomenon.

Data Analysis and Validity

This study utilizes quantitative data gathered through structured questionnaires on married women’s experiences of domestic violence in Metropolitan Birnin Kebbi. Given the sensitive nature of the topic, the questionnaire was designed to be anonymous and easy to understand, and enumerators were trained to maintain respondents’ comfort and confidentiality to minimize underreporting. Validity was ensured through pilot testing with 20 respondents and data consistency checks.

Descriptive analysis was conducted to present respondents’ characteristics and the distribution of domestic violence using frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Comparative analyses, including Chi-square tests, t-tests, and ANOVA, were employed to examine differences in domestic violence experiences across subgroups based on age, education, socio-economic status, or length of marriage. This approach enables the identification of patterns, trends, and differences in domestic violence experiences in a valid, systematic, and reliable manner, thereby providing a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of domestic violence.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Demographic characteristic of respondents

The demographic characteristics of the respondents indicate a diverse background in terms of age, ethnicity, number of children, and educational qualifications. The majority of participants were between 29 and 38 years old, representing various ethnic groups, including Hausa/Fulani, Zabarmawa, and Yoruba. Most respondents had a secondary education, and a significant portion had between one and three children, reflecting a broad spectrum of socio-cultural and educational experiences.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
Age	29-38	115	43.89
	18-28	53	20.23
	39-48	42	16.03
	Below 18	34	12.98
	49 and above	15	5.73
	Total	259	100.0
Ethnicity	Hausa/ Fulani	72	39.1
	Zabarmawa	77	29.39
	Yoruba	57	21.76
	Fulani	40	15.27
	Hausa	38	14.5
	Igbo	32	12.21
	Lelna	13	4.96
Total	259	100.0	
Numbers of Children	2	70	26.34
	3	49	18.7
	1	35	13.36
	4	31	11.83
	5	20	7.63
	6	17	6.49
	None	14	5.34

	7	10	3.82
	8	6	2.29
	10 above	4	1.53
	9	3	1.15
	Total	259	100.0
Educational Qualification	Secondary education	100	38.17
	Primary education	67	24.43
	Tertiary education	52	19.85
	No formal education	40	15.27
	Total	259	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents (43.89%, n=115) were aged 29–38 years, indicating that Metropolis Birnin Kebbi has a middle-aged population considered mature and exposed to various life realities, including domestic violence. This age group is generally married and faces household challenges, making them vulnerable to the diverse impacts of violence on families and society. In terms of ethnicity, most respondents (39.1%) were Hausa/Fulani, the dominant group in the area, historically associated with the Kabi Kingdom and the expansion of the Sokoto Caliphate by the notable figure Usman Danfodio, reflecting the unique local cultural and social context.

The study indicates that most respondents had between 1 and 3 children, with 26.34% (n=70) having 2 children and 18.7% (n=49) having 3 children, while 5.34% (n=14) had no children and 3.82% (n=10) had 7 children. Although Kebbi is the state capital, 15.27% (n=40) of the population had no formal education and preferred Islamic education, whereas only 19.85% pursued higher education. A total of 38.17% (n=100) had secondary education, and 24.43% (n=67) had only primary education. These findings indicate that the educational level of the population is lower than what might be expected in a metropolitan city.

Socio-demographic characteristic of respondents

This section describes the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, including religion, occupation, income, family structure, and area of residence. The majority practiced Islam and Christianity. In terms of occupation, many respondents were full-time housewives, traders, artisans, or engaged in farming, with most earning low or irregular incomes, reflecting varying levels of economic stability. Most households were headed by husbands, with a small proportion led by wives. Respondents came from various areas of Metropolis Birnin Kebbi, ensuring broad and inclusive representation.

Table 2

Socio-demographic Characteristic of Respondents

Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
Religion	Christianity	113	43.13
	Islam	137	61.87
	Total	259	100.0
Occupation	Full House wife	67	25.57
	Trading	61	23.28
	Artisan	33	10.6
	Crop Production	32	10.21
	Unemployed	31	11.83
	Animal Production	26	9.92
	Civil servant	23	8.78
	Total	259	100.0
Income	No Monthly Income	71	27.58
	6000-10000	47	17.94

	Less than 5000	42	18.03
	11000-15000	28	12.69
	21000-30000	19	7.25
	16000-20000	16	6.11
	31000 -40000	10	3.82
	71000 and above	9	3.44
	41000-50000	8	3.05
	Total	259	100.0
Head of Family	Husband	210	81.3
	Wife	49	18.7
	Total	259	100.0
Ward	Birnin Kebbi Marafa,	44	16.79
	Kola,	43	16.41
	Gwadangwaji,	39	14.89
	Makera,	39	14.89
	Birnin Kebbi	36	13.74
	Nassarawa-1,	31	11.35
	Nassarawa-2,	27	11.07
	Total	258	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2 presents the composition of respondents based on religion, employment status, income level, and perceptions of household leadership. The majority of respondents were Muslim (61.87%), while 43.13% were Christian, indicating that domestic violence occurs within religiously diverse communities. Regarding occupation, 25.57% were full-time housewives and 23.28% were traders, while only 8.78% worked as civil servants in the formal sector. These findings suggest that most women are employed in the informal sector or are not employed, which may increase economic dependence on their partners.

The income distribution shows significant economic vulnerability, with 27.58% of respondents having no monthly income, and the majority earning less than 10,000 per month, while only 3.44% earned above 71,000. This economic inequality reduces women's bargaining power within the household. Furthermore, 81% of households were headed by husbands and 18.7% by wives, reflecting a strong patriarchal structure. Religious, economic, and power structure factors interact, increasing women's vulnerability to gender-based violence in Metropolis Birnin Kebbi.

Prevalence and types of domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi

In this section, the researcher describes the forms of domestic violence experienced by women in Birnin Kebbi. The data indicate that the majority of respondents have faced various types of violence, including physical abuse, emotional intimidation, and neglect of basic needs. The wide range of these forms of violence reflects the complex dynamics within household relationships, where power imbalances and economic dependence often reinforce patterns of abuse. Overall, these findings highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions and prevention strategies to address domestic violence and enhance the safety and well-being of women in the region.

Table 3

Prevalence and Types of Domestic Violence in Birnin Kebbi LGA

Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
Are you victims of domestic Violence?	Yes	162	61.83
	No	94	38.17
	Total	259	100.0
It is going on now?	No	142	55.34
	Yes	117	44.66

	Total	259	100.0
Type of domestic violence were you subjected to	My husband maltreats me	82	30.3
	No regular food to eat	70	23.72
	Husband abuses me Verbally	63	15.7
	My husband batters me	44	13.79
	My husband neglects my children	43	13.41
	Others	14	3.34
	Total	259	100.0
What do you consider as the Domestic violence?	Child-Neglects	79	23.0
	Wife Battery	70	20.0
	Sexual Assault	58	12.0
	Husband having sex without consent	53	10.0
	Fight/Quarrel	34	12.0
	Making wife angry	34	8.0
	Emotional Abuse	30	9.0
	Biting	19	6.0
	Total	259	100.0
Which type(s) of domestic violence do you know is dominant or common in your community?	Wife Battery	92	25.1
	Child-Neglects	75	18.6
	Sexual Assault	53	15.2
	Fight/Quarrel	41	12.5
	Husband having sex without consent	41	12.6
	Making wife angry	35	8.0
	Emotional Abuse	28	6.0
	Biting	11	2.0
	Total	259	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 3 presents a 2024 field survey of 259 respondents in Birnin Kebbi LGA. Domestic violence prevalence is very high (61.83% victims), with 44.66% reporting ongoing violence. The most common forms experienced are husband abuse (30.3%), lack of regular food (23.72%), verbal abuse (15.7%), physical assault (13.79%), and child neglect (13.41%). Regarding perceptions of domestic violence, child neglect ranks highest (23.0%), followed by wife beating (20.0%), sexual violence (12.0%), and non-consensual intercourse (10.0%). The types perceived as most dominant in the community include wife beating (25.1%), child neglect (18.6%), sexual violence (15.2%), and non-consensual intercourse by husbands (12.6%). Overall, the data indicate that physical, economic, verbal, and sexual violence are the main forms of domestic violence occurring and widely recognized within the Birnin Kebbi community.

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents reported being victims of domestic violence; however, fewer than half stated that the violence was still ongoing, indicating a cyclical and intermittent pattern of abuse. The most frequently experienced form of violence is husband-perpetrated abuse, followed by a lack of regular food provision, highlighting a strong link between physical and economic violence. Interestingly, when respondents were asked to identify the dominant types of violence in their community, wife beating and child neglect were perceived as more prominent than economic violence. This discrepancy suggests cultural normalization, where food insecurity may not be recognized as a form of violence and is instead perceived as ordinary poverty. In addition, sexual violence and non-consensual sexual intercourse are widely acknowledged in the community but are rarely reported as personal experiences, indicating potential

underreporting due to shame or social stigma.

Perceptions, awareness, and attitudes on domestic violence Birnin Kebbi

This finding reveals a paradoxical reality: domestic violence is recognized as a serious issue, yet it remains culturally legitimized as a form of discipline within marital relationships. Many women choose silence and endurance for the sake of their children. Limited awareness of protection institutions reinforces this condition, reflecting the normalization of gender-based violence and restricted access to information and support services.

Table 4

Perception and Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence in Birnin Kebbi LGA

Items	Response	Frequency	Percent
How do you rate the level of domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi?	Low	85	32.44
	High	76	29.01
	Very low	68	25.95
	Moderate	30	12.6
	Total	259	100.0
Beating of wives is culturally approved way of instilling discipline in Birnin Kebbi	Strongly Disagreed	114	43.51
	Agreed	58	23.29
	Strongly Agreed	49	18.7
	Disagreed	38	14.5
	Total	259	100.0
Awareness of the Institution(s) specialized in taking care of women who have experienced violence by the husbands/partners in Birnin Kebbi.	No	113	43.13
	Yes	107	34.73
	Doubting/Not sure	50	19.08
	Total	259	100.0
Institutions where domestic violence were reported to.	District Palace	58	22.14
	Counseling Centers	44	16.79
	Ministry of Women Affairs	42	16.03
	Police	42	16.03
	Civil Defense	36	13.74
	Court	35	13.36
	Religious Organization	32	12.21
	Civil society	26	9.92
Total	259	100.0	
Will you be happy if your husband is imprisoned for abusing you?	Strongly agreed	43	16.41
	Agreed	57	21.76
	Disagreed	57	21.76
	Strongly disagreed	102	38.93
	Total	259	100.0
Will you consider your children by not allowing your husband go to prison for domestic violence?	Yes	200	76.34
	No	59	20.61
	Total	259	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 4 presents findings from 259 respondents in Birnin Kebbi LGA regarding perceptions and attitudes toward domestic violence. Results show mixed perceptions, with 32.44% rating domestic violence as low and 29.01% as high, indicating differing awareness levels. Although 43.51% disagree that wife beating is culturally acceptable, around 42% still justify it, reflecting persistent normative contradictions. Awareness of support institutions is

limited, as 43.13% of respondents are unaware of their existence. Reporting is mainly directed to district palaces (22.14%), while courts are less utilized (13.36%). Additionally, 76.34% of respondents prioritize children's well-being when deciding whether to imprison abusive husbands, and 38.93% strongly oppose imprisonment, highlighting that concern for children and stigma associated with incarceration significantly hinder reporting and legal action against domestic violence.

Based on the findings, a paralyzing ambivalence undermines efforts to address domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi. Most respondents reject the cultural justification of wife beating, yet a nearly comparable proportion actively legitimize it as discipline, indicating patriarchal values are actively sustained. A deeper irony lies in institutional awareness: most are unaware of specialized support services, and violence is primarily reported to the district palace rather than courts or police. This suggests reliance on traditional authorities that may perpetuate violent norms. The most fundamental barrier is concern for children, as almost all respondents prioritize protecting husbands from imprisonment over justice for wives. In conclusion, domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi is not merely tolerated but structurally sustained through cultural norms, distrust of formal legal systems, and maternal sacrifice for family cohesion.

Discussion

This study found that the prevalence of domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis is very high, affecting 61.83% of respondents. The most common forms of violence are physical (25.1%), followed by economic (23.72%), as well as verbal, emotional, and sexual abuse. Approximately 41.99% of respondents consider wife beating to be an acceptable form of discipline, and many believe that marriage grants husbands absolute sexual rights. Structural factors, such as low levels of education and women's economic dependency, further increase vulnerability to domestic violence. Women with limited education often struggle to recognize abuse and access justice, while economic dependency enables perpetrators to exert control over victims. These findings indicate that domestic violence is not an incidental occurrence, but rather a recurring pattern rooted in power imbalances, patriarchal norms, and unequal socioeconomic conditions.

These findings are highly relevant to contemporary social issues in many societies, including Indonesia, where violence against women is often treated as a hidden domestic matter. The normalization of violence as a form of discipline, as reflected in 41.99% of respondents (Campbell, 2020; Widanaralalage et al., 2025), illustrates how patriarchal culture continues to legitimize male dominance. In the modern era, despite increasing gender awareness, practices that restrict women's economic access to basic needs remain prevalent, consistent with the finding that 23.72% of respondents experienced economic violence. Psychological impacts such as anxiety, low self-esteem, and social isolation (Bondestam & Lundqvist, 2020; Davis & Williamson, 2022; Bhatt et al., 2023) are also relevant to the conditions faced by domestic violence victims across various contexts. This issue is further complicated by victims' reluctance to report abuse due to social pressure and stigma, as highlighted by Colagrossi et al. (2023) and Le et al. (2024), underscoring the need for serious attention from society and policymakers.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce Winstok's (2007) framework on unequal relationship dynamics, in which domestic violence is understood as an interaction of power relations, economic control, psychological pressure, and social norms that normalize violence. Physical and economic violence represent direct forms of domination used to maintain the perpetrator's superior position (Bergvall, 2024; Goergen & Beaulieu, 2013;

Bright et al., 2020), while verbal and emotional abuse function as long-term pressures that erode victims' psychological resilience. Traditional gender norms that position men as the primary authority act as mediating mechanisms that moderate the effects of violence, making it difficult for victims to resist or report abuse (Abdalla et al., 2024; Le et al., 2024; Huang et al., 2024). The study interprets that low levels of education and economic dependency are not merely risk factors, but structural mechanisms that reinforce cycles of violence (Bhuwania et al., 2024; Khanna et al., 2023), thereby making women's empowerment a key strategy for breaking this cycle.

This study provides the understanding that domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis cannot be separated from the social, cultural, and economic contexts that shape household power relations. The prevalence rate of 61.83% is not merely a statistic, but a reflection of the lived suffering of women in Birnin Kebbi, often left unspoken due to social pressure. Empirical validation is essential to challenge local narratives that normalize violence as "discipline" or a means of "maintaining family order" (Lansford et al., 2020; Dhawan & Bhasin, 2024; Dulhunty, 2025). The internalization of such norms by both genders reinforces power imbalances (Hosny et al., 2023; Hardt et al., 2023; Richardson et al., 2025), indicating that interventions must target victims, perpetrators, and the broader community. The study also highlights that individual behavioral change in this context is unlikely to be sustainable without transforming the social and cultural norms that perpetuate violence, particularly those related to gender roles and marital rights that remain deeply embedded in Birnin Kebbi traditions.

The findings of this study are consistent with prior literature indicating that patriarchal societies tend to justify violence against wives as a form of corrective behavior (Ryu & Pratt, 2025; Namy et al., 2017). However, this study offers novelty by presenting rare quantitative evidence from the Birnin Kebbi context, where traditional norms explicitly legitimize violence and delay intervention (Lansford et al., 2020). Compared to the findings of Novitzky et al. (2023) and Orr et al. (2023), which identify education and economic status as structural determinants of domestic violence, this study advances the understanding by demonstrating how economic dependency and low levels of education function as mediating mechanisms that reinforce power imbalances within households (Khanna et al., 2023; McAlpine et al., 2024). A key distinction lies in the emphasis on misconceptions regarding husbands' sexual rights (Gewirtz-Meydan & Godbout, 2023), an aspect that has received limited attention in previous studies, thereby positioning this research as unique within the existing body of literature.

Based on the findings, this study proposes several practical actions. First, the local government of Birnin Kebbi should integrate legal awareness and women's rights education into primary and secondary school curricula. Second, accessible crisis centers and support services for domestic violence victims should be established, including confidential hotlines and temporary safe shelters. Third, economic empowerment programs such as skills training and access to microfinance specifically for women should be strengthened to reduce economic dependency. Fourth, religious and traditional leaders should be actively involved in social campaigns aimed at transforming norms that justify violence as a form of discipline. Fifth, law enforcement officials need to receive training on gender-sensitive and victim-centered approaches to handling domestic violence cases, along with the provision of reporting mechanisms that protect victims from social stigma. Regular evaluation of these programs is essential to ensure their effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that domestic violence in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis is multidimensional and systemic, rather than merely an individual act. The prevalence reaches 61.83%, with physical (25.1%) and economic violence (23.72%) as dominant forms of direct control, while verbal, emotional, and sexual abuse reinforce long-term pressure. The critical finding that 41.99% of respondents consider wife beating as an acceptable form of discipline, along with the belief that marriage grants husbands absolute sexual rights, demonstrates how cultural norms normalize violence. Furthermore, low levels of education and women's economic dependency function as structural mechanisms that reinforce cycles of violence, rather than merely acting as risk factors. Thus, domestic violence in this context is rooted in power imbalances, patriarchy, and unequal socioeconomic conditions, making a holistic approach targeting social norm transformation and women's empowerment essential.

This study contributes to strengthening Winstok's framework by demonstrating the complex interaction between power, economic control, psychological pressure, and social norms in sustaining domestic violence. Its theoretical novelty lies in identifying low education and economic dependency as mediating mechanisms rather than direct determinants. Practically, the findings call for multidimensional interventions: first, integrating legal awareness and women's rights education into school curricula; second, implementing economic empowerment programs such as skills training and access to microfinance; third, involving religious and traditional leaders in reshaping narratives that justify violence as discipline; and fourth, training law enforcement officials in victim-centered approaches to handling domestic violence cases.

The main limitation of this study is that the sample is restricted to Birnin Kebbi Metropolis, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other contexts. In addition, the use of self-reported data may introduce social desirability bias, potentially affecting the accuracy of domestic violence prevalence measurements. Future research is recommended to adopt longitudinal or mixed-methods approaches, including in-depth interviews and observations, to better understand temporal dynamics and psychological mechanisms of violence. Further studies should also explore the role of men as both perpetrators and agents of change, as well as evaluate the effectiveness of culturally grounded interventions tailored to the local context of Birnin Kebbi for more holistic and sustainable prevention of domestic violence.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

Sanusi Naja'atu Baura: Conceptualization; Methodology; Visualization; Writing Original Draft; Writing Review & Editing. **Abdulmumin Musa Omiya:** Conceptualization; Investigation; Formal analysis; Writing Review & Editing; Investigation; Resources.

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