

Domestic Abuse (*Al-Adrār*) towards Ijebu Muslim Women and Its Implications for Marital Stability and Sustainability in Ijebuland, Ogun State

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Abstract. Domestic abuse is a global phenomenon which transcends national, cultural, racial, class and religious boundaries. There are three dimensions of it- spousal (a combination of wife and husband abuse), child and elder abuse. Its acts include beating, stabbing, acid bath, outright killing, denial of sex, marital rape, denial of housekeeping allowance, cursing among others. Despite global and local efforts at preventing it through advocacy, law enactment and prosecution, the menace is on the increase. These acts often lead to marital instability in many Muslim homes, especially in Ijebuland. Therefore, this study seeks to identify the acts of domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār* in Islamic terminology) being experienced by the Ijebu Muslim women, the reason(s) why they are victims of such acts, its implications for their marital stability and way(s) of curbing such societal menace in Ijebuland in particular, and the nation in general. The study adopts the descriptive research design of the survey type. Its target population consists of Ijebu Muslim women in Ijebuland out of which three hundred (300) constitute the sample of the study. A self-developed questionnaire is an instrument used for data collection. Of the 300 copies of the questionnaire administered at various *Juma'at* mosques, 283 copies were properly filled and returned and these were quantitatively analysed.

Keywords: Domestic Abuse, (*Al-Adrār*), Ijebu Muslim women, Ijebuland

1. Introduction

Assault, battering, abuse, violence, family violence, and domestic violence, are the terms that attract different definitions according to the context in which they are used. The term *violence* most often refers to all forms of physical aggression, while the term *abuse* refers to those physical and non-physical acts that cause physical and emotional injuries (Stordeur and Stille, 1989). Josolyne (2011:6) submits that ‘the well-known term, *domestic violence*, is used by the United Kingdom Government as an official umbrella term for partner abuse, family abuse and child abuse’. He argues further that, despite the fact that the term is used in official documents such as the Home Office British Crime Survey (HOBSCS), it is not defined in legal contexts for it came as a consensus without consideration for legal implications. The implication of this, as reflected in the criminal legislation, is that only crimes of physical domestic violence or threat will be prosecuted under section 47 of the offences against the British Person Act, 1861. In other words, cases of emotional or psychological abuse that do not include physical contact are not punishable by Law. Interestingly, Josolyne (2011) explains further that the same Home Offices of the United Kingdom Government later noticed this great omission and then re-defined or modified domestic abuse to mean ‘any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or

emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’.

Having reviewed various definitions and usages of the terms *abuse* and *violence*, this work considers the term *domestic abuse* more appropriate for it covers both physical and non-physical (emotional/psychological and economic) acts that cause physical and emotional injuries. It is on this note that this study defines domestic abuse as all forms of abusive acts physical and non-physical (but injurious) perpetrated within the family unit or by an individual family member against another (i.e husband to wife/wives and vice-versa, parents to children or children to elders, including maltreatment of domestic workers by their employers and vice-versa).

Several efforts had been made by various governments internationally and nationally to prevent the menace of domestic abuse globally and locally. Such efforts include Declaration of the Elimination of Violence Against Women adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1993, the 1979 Beijing Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), among many others (Abayomi and Olabode, 2013). Also, some Nigerian States like Ebonyi, Jigawa, Cross Rivers, and Lagos States have enacted domestic abuse laws that prohibit and criminalise acts of domestic abuse while some other states (Enugu, Edo, Bayelsa, Delta, and Ogun) have also passed laws against female genital mutilation (Abayomi and Olabode, 2013). In addition to that is the 2015 ‘Violence against Persons Prohibition Bill’ by the Federal Government, which prohibits female circumcision or genital mutilation, forceful ejection from home and harmful widowhood practices, abandonment of spouse, children and other dependents without sustenance, battery and harmful traditional practices, economic abuse, forced isolation and separation from family and friends, substance attack, depriving persons of their liberty, incest, indecent exposure, among others. (The Vanguard, May 2015:1).

Despite all the above-mentioned efforts, rather than incidences of domestic abuse being reduced, it is on the increase. This necessitates its study from the Islamic perspective with particular reference to acts of domestic abuse (*Al-Adrar* in Islamic terminology) towards Ijebu Muslim women in Ijebuland, Ogun State with the view to identifying those acts of domestic abuse being experienced by Ijebu Muslim women, its causes and implications for their marital stability and sustainability and to suggest Islamic ways of curbing this societal menace in Ijebuland in particular, and the nation in general

2. Domestic Abuse in Human History

Domestic abuse is a global issue that transcends national, cultural, racial and class boundaries. It is a menace that is deeply rooted in the society and has claimed the lives of many women, children, elders and men across the globe (Olabode and Abayomi, 2013). Domestic abuse has three dimensions spousal abuse (i.e husband or wife abuse), child abuse and elder abuse. Its effects on the victims could be physical, psychological or emotional, economic and spiritual (Adeniji, 2009). In the United States of America, each year, women are said to experience about 4.8 million intimate partner-related physical assaults and rapes while men are victims of about 2.9 million partner-related physical assaults. In Africa, domestic abuse is prevalent, justified and condoned in some culture (Olabode and Abayomi, 2013). In Ghana for instance, spousal assault tops the list of domestic abuse (Osam, 2007). Also in Nigeria, beating of wives and children is widely sanctioned as a form of discipline (Olabode and Abayomi, 2013). Although it has been argued that the statistics of victims of domestic abuse in Nigeria are unclear, the fact remains that the menace of domestic abuse in Nigeria is a reality. Ajie(2011) for example, argues that five million members of the Nigerian womenfolk are molested yearly including septuagenarians and sometimes, older women are victims of various acts of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse is termed to be a kind of gender-specific abuse for its victims are women, more often than not. It has been estimated that one in

every three women suffers domestic abuse from the hands of their husbands or those who claimed to love them (Adeyemo, 2011). Various acts have been identified by sociologists as being the causes of domestic abuse. For instance, Oladeji (2009) identifies factors such as economic, socio-cultural, religious, legal and political factors that make women to be vulnerable to domestic abuse generally in Africa and in Nigeria in particular. He argues that the patriarchal society reinforces women subjugation by men and the custom of the payment of bride price equally legalizes women subjugation by men for it symbolizes the sale of the girl, and ownership by her husband and family. The implication of this customary law, as he argues, is that a woman is regarded as the property of the man who is entitled to discipline her as he deems fit. Other causes of domestic abuse he identifies are addiction to alcohol and drug as well as lack of political will to implement international instruments that protect women's right.

Adeniji (2009) shares the same view but identifies other factors which include financial problems, illiteracy, ignorance of human/legal rights, women's attitudes such as refusing sex, nagging or challenging the man's behaviour (most especially when a man takes a second wife), disrespecting the husband's family, having too many engagements outside the home, paying too little attention to cleaning of the home or failure to prepare meals on time, being suspected of having sexual relationship outside marriage or being accused of witchcraft.

Erinosho (2004), in his opinion, attributes the incidence of domestic abuse to include failure on the part of wives to be submissive to their husbands, sexual misconduct by the wife, husband's inability to meet normal social responsibilities, interference by in-laws, conflict between work and the domestic roles of women, religious conflict and flirtation by male partners with other women or taking more wives.

For Aina (2004), the major factor that could be responsible for incidences of domestic abuse is the structural relationships of power domination and privilege that exist between men and women in different socio-cultural contexts. He stresses further that poverty, cultural background, socio-

economic status, education; occupation, and religion are among other factors that cause domestic abuse. Sanni, in his own submission, identifies the causes of domestic abuse to include attempt by one partner to control and dominate the other due to self-esteem, extreme jealousy, inability to regulate anger, inferiority complex, arranged marriage, indiscriminate practice of polygamy, social and economic incompatibility, religious and cultural incompatibility, sexual incompatibility, infertility, infidelity etc. Lawal (2004), in his findings, submits that causes of domestic abuse include lack of care by couples, parents and children, barrenness, starving and poor dishes preparation for the husband, problem with in-laws and friends, infidelity on the part of either of the spouses, long periods of abandonment, superstition, and use of charm e.t.c.

Abayomi and Olabode (2013) argue that causes of domestic abuse include cultural and societal factors, dependence on the husband for sustainability, political factors, religion, addiction to drug and alcohol, gender-insensitive criminal justice system, ethnic factor, low level of education, among many others. Omorogbe, Obetoh and Odion (2010) in their findings conclude that, causes of domestic abuse include revelation of concealed pre-marital history, wives' attitude towards in-laws, infidelity, mismanagement of spouses' income, dispute on number and sex of children, participation of spouse in politics e.t.c.

The study adopts the descriptive research design of the survey type. Its target population consists of Ijebu Muslim women in Ijebuland from which 300 respondents have been selected as the sample of the study. A self-developed questionnaire is the instrument use for data collection. It selects a total of fifty (50) participants from each of the six (6) Local Government Areas in Ijebuland which are Ijebu North, Ijebu North-East, Ijebu East, Ijebu Ode, Odogbolu and Ogun Waterside. Of the 300 copies of the questionnaire administered at various *Juma'at* mosques, 283 copies which were properly filled and returned were quantitatively analysed using the percentage statistical analysis.

3. Results and Discussion of Findings

Question 1: What constitute acts of Domestic Abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families?

Table 1: Acts of Domestic Abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families

VAR. No.	Variables Descriptions	Agreed	Disagreed
Q1i	Beating/battering constitutes act of domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families.	227(80.2%)	56(9.8%)
Q1ii	Using insulting words constitutes act of domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families.	237(83.8%)	46(16.2%)
Q1iii	Cursing constitutes act of domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families.	187(66.1%)	96(33.9%)
Q1iv	Husband denying wife/wives financial support is an act of domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families.	233(82.2%)	50(17.8%)
Q1v	Partiality among wives constitutes an act of domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim Families.	236(83.3%)	47(16.7%)

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Majority of the respondents, 227 (80.2%) are of the opinion that beating/battering from their husbands or in-laws while 56 (9.8%) of the respondents disagreed. Also, 237 (83.8%) of the respondents submitted that the use of insulting words by husbands and in-laws constitutes acts of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) towards Ijebu Muslim women while 46 (16.2%) of the respondents disagreed. In the same vein, 187 (66.1%) of the respondents agreed that cursing constitutes an act of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) while 96 (33.9%) of the respondents disagreed. These findings corroborate the earlier submission by Lawal (2004), Abdulahi(2001), Omorogbe and Odion (2010) who all identify wife's battering, cursing and blackmailing, slandering, raining abuse on spouses' parents and families as being among causes of domestic abuse. These acts are totally prohibited in Islam. The Almighty Allah in Qur'an 49:11 condemns believers ridiculing one another, abusing, cursing or passing insulting words at one another for these are attitudes which are capable of creating rancour, not only among family members but also in the larger society. It is an evil practice when spouses address each other in an insulting manner. Children in such relationships will also be morally corrupt. The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.A.S) also attests to the negative effects of these acts as he said 'he who attacks, curses, scolds, spreads obscenity and uses foul language is not a true believer' (The Islamic Charter on family 2007: 296-297). In another related Hadith, Aishah (R.T.A) reported that Prophet (S.A.A.S) said, 'O A'ishah, Allah

does not love obscenity and those who use foul language' (Islamic Charter on Family, 296-297)

However, despite all these moral injunctions in the Holy Qur'an and *Sunnah*, there are still numerous cases of wife battering even among Muslim couples. There are husbands who take delight in beating and punching their wives over little misunderstanding. These attitudes cause disintegration in so many Muslim and non-Muslims homes. This could be attributed to the ignorance of those Muslims about Allah's injunctions or their unwillingness to obey Allah's commandments. An empirical example is a matrimonial dispute case brought before the Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA), Ogun State, Ijebu Ode seeking for dissolution of marriage. One Muslim woman (the complainant) accused her husband who also happened to be a Muslim (respondent) before the Council that he was of the habit of beating her for no reason. She also complained that he had failed to take good care of her and the children financially and educationally. She portrayed him as an adulterer who went to the extent of fornicating in their matrimonial home. Added to these was his inability to take care of her in terms of feeding, comfortable shelter and proper medical attention. Above all, she described him to be a syncretic Muslim. She then asked for the dissolution of their marriage. The husband in his response declared all the accusations leveled against him by his wife as lies and also described her to be an obstacle to his life. He also asked for the dissolution of the

marriage which the council granted after thorough consideration of the case (Nigeria Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs Report, Ogun State, 2014).

Majority of the respondents, 233 (82.2%) agreed that they are often being denied financial supports by their husbands while 50 (17.8%) disagreed. This kind of attitude, they said, has not only thrown the affected Muslim women into untold hardship, the children have equally been made to suffer from their mothers' misconducts. The finding also confirms the reality of similar cases brought before the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) unit of Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC) sitting in Ijebu-Ode, Ogun State. A Muslim woman complained before the panel that her husband had failed in discharging his financial responsibilities towards her and her children. However, the Panel was able to settle the dispute between them amicably and the husband promised to pay the arrears of his children's school fees. He also pledged to give ₦3,000 (three thousand naira only) as weekly allowance, and provide better accommodation for his family (Alternative Dispute Resolution meeting 9/4/2015).

Islam's position on *Nafaqah* (maintenance) is that the husband must be responsible for the upkeep of his wife. This, according to the Almighty Allah, makes them to be in charge of their wives. In other words, any husband that fails in discharging his financial responsibilities is not a responsible husband. Allah says in Qur'an 4:34: 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one more (strength) than the other and because they support them from their means'. Furthermore, Allah says in Qur'an 2:233 'Upon the father is the mothers' provision and their clothing according to what is acceptable...'

Majority of the respondents, 236 (83.3%) agreed that partiality among wives is an act of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) often experienced by many Ijebu Muslim women. This agrees with the Islamic principle of equity among wives mentioned in Qur'an 4:129 which attests to the fact that justice among wives may not be humanly possible but one must be able to deal equitably among them and be impartial. Abandoning one wife and inclining to the other(s) is an act of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse). Whoever does that is inviting the wrath of Allah not only in this world but also in the hereafter. This is clearly stated in the Hadith reported on the authority of Abu Hurairah (R.T.A):

That Allah's Messenger (S.A.A.S) said, whosoever has two wives, inclining to either of them against the other will come on the day of Resurrection while one of his sides is fallen". (Ansari, 2003: 181)

The generality of Muslim Jurists (i.e four Islamic schools of thought) agree that the husband must deal equitably among his wives in terms of feeding, clothing and sheltering, according to his means. They equally have consensus opinion on the fact that the background of each wife would determine what and what they need. Furthermore, scholars agree that it is not humanly possible to have equal love and equal sexual performance among wives (Al-Juzaery, 1989: 238-241). This agrees with the submission of the Prophet (S.A.A.S) when he declared his incapacitation to share equal love among his wives and then supplicated to the Almighty Allah to pardon him for that. There are cases of a husband accommodating two or three wives in a single room and having conjugal relations with one even in the presence of other wives and his children. This kind of attitude is totally un-Islamic and is a way of inflicting hardship on such wives and their children.

Question 2: What are the causes of Domestic Abuse among Ijebu Muslims?

Table 2: Causes of Domestic Abuse among Ijebu Muslims

VAR. No.	Description of Variables	Agreed	Disagreed
Q2i	Noncompliance with the Islamic Laws on marriage could ignite domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim families.	235(83%)	48(17%)
Q2ii	Religious difference among Ijebu Muslim couples could lead to domestic abuse.	219(77.4)	64(22.6%)
Q2iii	Later discovery of problems associated with genotype among Ijebu Muslim couples could result into domestic abuse.	224(79.2%)	59(20.8%)
Q2iv	Communication gap between Ijebu Muslim couples could engender domestic abuse.	257(90.8%)	26(9.2%)
Q2v	Problem of barrenness/childlessness among couples can lead to domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim families.	231(81.6%)	52(18.3%)
Q2vi	Infidelity among Muslim couples could cause domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim families.	247(87.1%)	36(12.9%)
Q2vii	Alcoholism and drug addiction may cause domestic abuse in Ijebu Muslim families.	278(98.2%)	5(1.8%)

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Results of the findings in Table 2 above show that majority of the respondents 235 (83%) agreed that noncompliance with the Islamic law on marriage often leads to domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) in Ijebu Muslim families. This opinion corresponds with the submission of Akanni (2009) on his discussion on cultural and civilisation challenges to Islamic marriages in southwestern Nigeria. He explains that adherence to Islamic marital laws will bring an end to the incessant problems of divorce and all forms of family or domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*). In his view, the failure of Yoruba Muslims of South-western Nigeria to comply with the Islamic regulations on marriage has manifested in their belief that the introduction of a new religion is just an addition to their old cultural practice and not a substitution for it (Akanni, 2009). This reflects in the manner of contracting marriage among Yoruba Muslims, a situation in which marriages are contracted following the Yoruba culture, the European culture, western civilization, and the Islamic system at the same time. Furthermore, the negative effects of the Yoruba cultural practices on Islamic marriages are noticed in practices such as consultation of the Ifa oracle before getting married. This act in Islam is known as *Shirk* (polytheism). Islam teaches that whatever a Muslim wants to embark upon, he should consult his Creator, Allah through prayer known as *Istikhara* (special prayer for seeking divine guidance).

The effect of this on Islamic marriages is that many couples have been misled to marry against their choice and this has led to series of marital failure and *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse). There are cases of tribal sentiments among Yoruba Muslims in Ogun State which will not allow, for instance, an Ijebu native to marry an Egba native, or a Remo woman to marry an Awori man. The modernity brought to marriage engagement among Ijebu Muslims, which include the practice of engaging middle women known as *Alága Ìjòkó* and *alága idúró* as deviations from the Islamic mode of conducting marriage impedes the officiating Imams in discharging their spiritual responsibilities by delivering sermons that address reasons for marriage in Islam, its objectives, rights and obligations of couple, mechanism for conflict resolution among couple and many more. Also, registration of marriage in the registry according to western patterns and exchange of rings as a symbol of a covenant between the couple that the husband will never marry another wife are all deviations from the Islamic Marital Law which allows limited polygamy (maximum of four wives) if there is need for it, and exchange of ring between the couple as a symbol of love rather than a symbol of covenant.

The results of the study also indicated that majority of the respondents 219 (77.4%) submitted that religious differences among couples (i.e a situation in which the husband is a Muslim and the wife is non-Muslim or vice-

versa) often cause *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) in Ijebu Muslim families, while 64 (22.6%) disagreed with the view. The reason for the majority submission can be justified by the rate at which difference in religion among couples causes marital conflict. Though it could be said that there is religious harmony among the Ijebu people as adherents of the two major religions (i.e Islam and Christianity) mutually relate with one another, it cannot be denied that there are several cases of religious conflict among couples, especially when they are adherents of different religions (i.e Islam and Christianity). Such conflict is much felt when both are devoted to their individual religions (Islam or Christianity). This kind of seriousness about one's religion ought to have guided the couple in their choice *abinito*.

Findings also revealed that majority of the respondents, 224 (79.2%) agreed that the discovery of problems associated with genotype after marriage, among couples could result in *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) in Ijebu Muslim families while 59 (20.8) of them disagreed. This opinion is the same as that of Omran(1992) who recommends pre-marital test as one of the ways of good family planning in Islam. He cites the prophetic tradition which advises Muslims to be selective of the women in whom they will deposit their sperms. One can infer from this prophetic submission that he recommends pre-marital medical test for prospective couples so as to ascertain if they are genetically compatible or not. One could attest to the fact that even in this age of modern technology, series of medical tips are given on the necessity of having pre-marital tests with regard to serious health-related diseases such as HIV/AIDS viruses, STD (Sexually Transmitted Diseases) such as Gonorrhea, Syphilis, Staphylococcus etc., and genotype incompatibility which will eventually result in a couple with the AS genotype giving birth to SS children. This will not only create problem for the couple who will give birth to children with abnormalities but is also an act of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) towards the children of such homes.

Findings also showed that majority of the respondents-257 (90.8%) agreed that

communication gap between Muslim couples could cause *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) in Ijebu Muslim families while 26 (9.2%) of the respondents disagreed with the view. This majority opinion is right in the sense that the husband and the wife are described by the Almighty Allah as garments to each other. Therefore, there is need for the body to have contact with the garment at all times. When there is a gap or vacuum between the two, the body becomes exposed to nakedness, shame, diseases etc. This is the similitude of the effect of ineffective communication between a couple. A Yoruba adage expresses the negativity of this attitude when it says: "*omori odó kii gbé inú ilé kí iyá rẹ̀ o gbé ita*" (a mortal will be of no value when it is not with the pestle) (Delano, 1983:91). This Yoruba axiom is usually applied to describe the importance of effective communication between the husband and the wife for it will foster love, peace and tranquility between them and prevent suspicion of one by the other. From the Islamic perspective, couples are enjoined to live together and communicate together effectively. When there is true love, they hide nothing from each other. Therefore, the attitude of the husband abandoning his wife/wives in a place while he lives far away is not supported by Islam. Even when the husband deserts his wife's bed as a form of disciplinary action towards an erring wife as recommended by Islam, he is not to go out of the home. In other words, such disciplinary actions should be applied within the home they both live in.

Results of the study also indicated that majority of the respondents totaling 231 (81.6%) agreed that barrenness/childlessness can cause *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) in Ijebu Muslim families while 52 (18.3%) respondents disagreed. It is a known fact that Yoruba people attach great importance to child bearing to such an extent that a marriage without children is considered to have failed. This view is expressed in the Yoruba adage that says - *omọ niyi omọ ni de, omọ nií wolé deni bí a kò bá sí mọ* (having a child is valuable and precious for one's child succeeds one when one is no more) (Delano, 1983:102). Because of the importance of child bearing to the Yoruba, the groom in an infertile marriage is always

encouraged by his family to take another wife who will bear him children.

Contrarily, Islam teaches that it is Allah who gives male or female children to whoever He wills and He renders whoever He wishes barren. Allah says in Q42:49-50:

To Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth. He creates what He wills. He bestows female upon whom He wills, and bestows male upon whom He wills. Or He bestows both males and females, and He renders barren whom He wills. Verily, He is the All-Knower and is Able (to do all things).

However, it is important to note that Islam also values a marriage blessed with children. In an Apostolic tradition Muslims are advised to marry women who would bear them children (Omran, 1998). However, when child bearing is delayed or becomes impossible, Islam acknowledges it as part of God's plan except the delay is man-made such as one resulting from abortion etc. While hoping in God however, the husband is allowed to take another wife and the barren one remains in his custody as a loving wife. It is an act of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) to chastise a woman for not having children as Islam allows such wife to seek divorce if she cannot cope with the situation.

Findings revealed that majority of the respondents-247 (87.1%) acknowledged that infidelity among Muslim couples could lead to *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse) in Ijebu Muslim families while 36 (12.9%) of them disagreed with the opinion. This opinion of the majority is right when one observes the rate of infidelity in the society and its consequences as reported in court judgments. An example of this is the judgment of the Ogun State High Court, Ijebu-Igbo on the matrimonial dispute between a Muslim couple who had their marriage solemnised at the Marriage Registry of Ijebu North Local Government, Ijebu-Igbo, Ogun State on 2nd July, 2005. The husband accused his wife of infidelity as he saw her on the 14th of February, 2007 with another man at a hotel located in Lagos State. When the wife came

home two hours later, the husband queried her movement but she replied him arrogantly as she told him that he did not have the right to monitor her movement. In her attempt to sneak out of her matrimonial home, she slipped and fell down from the two-storey building apartment in which they lived. She sustained injuries and was hospitalised. Eventually, the court ordered the dissolution of their marriage and granted the husband custody of the only child from the marriage (Ijebu-Igbo Judiciary Division, 2011, Suit No: HCB/03/2010).

Islam however warns against infidelity in marriage in al-Qur'an 17:32 which reads:

Do not come nearer to adultery for it is a shameful (deed) and an evil, opening the road (to other evils)

Going by this Qur'anic verse, it is evident that infidelity is an evil which opens door for other evils such as enmity between couples, hatred of the children in such relationship, as their father will doubt their paternity etc. which could engender acts of *Al-Adrār* (domestic abuse).

Findings also indicated that majority of the respondents-278 (98.2%) admitted that alcoholism or and drug addiction may ignite domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) while 5 (1.8%) of the respondents disagreed with the view. It is quite important to note that while alcoholism and drug addiction are not categorically prohibited in some religions and societies, Islam makes a categorical prohibition of any intoxicating substance. Islam does this in order to save the individuals and the community from the evils that may arise from the consumption of such harmful substances. The Holy Qur'an 5:90-91 attests to it. The Holy Prophet Muhammad (S.A.A.S) tagged drinking of any intoxicating substance as *Umm al-khabaith* (mother of all evils), and whoever consumes alcohol will not have his prayers for forty days acceptable before Almighty Allah and if he dies as a drunkard, he dies in the state of *kufr* (disbelief) (Doi, 1994:263).

Question 3: What are the Implications of Domestic Abuse for Marital Stability and Sustainability among Ijebu Muslim Families?

Table 3: The Implications of Domestic Abuse for Marital Stability and Sustainability among Ijebu Muslim Families

VAR. No.	Variable Descriptions	Agreed	Disagreed
Q3i	Incessant occurrence of Domestic Abuse could lead to divorce	252(88.9%)	31(11.1%)
Q3ii	The children brought up in a family experiencing domestic abuse have tendency of being violent	271(95.8%)	12(4.2%)
Q3iii	Domestic abuse can cause everlasting hatred and disunity among the two families (bride and groom)	229(80.9%)	54(19.1%)
Qiv	Domestic abuse can cause death of either of the spouse	269(94.9%)	14(5.1%)
Qv	Domestic abuse can cause permanent physical and emotional injuries on the victim	252(89%)	31(11%)

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Findings also revealed that majority of the respondents, 252 (88.9%) agreed that incessant occurrence of domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) in a Muslim marriage can lead to divorce while 31(11.1%) of them disagreed. This view by the majority could be justified by the press release the by President, Abeokuta Customary Court Grade 1 sitting in Ake, Ogun State, Mrs Christiana Olaleye who submitted that her court had dissolved 266 marriages in 12 months (The Punch, March 17, 2011). Examples also abound in the cases already cited in this work. One fact worthy of note here is that the failure of the couple to address spousal disputes as laid down in Islam as well as the failure of the members of the family of the couple to play their roles as good arbiters as stated in the Holy Qur'an, account for why most cases of domestic abuse end up in marriage dissolution among Ijebu Muslims couples. The Yoruba adage says *Ìjáfara léwu* (i.e. a stitch in times saves nine) (Delano, 1983:122).

Result of the findings also revealed that majority of the respondents, 271 (95.8%) of the respondents submitted that children brought up in a family experiencing domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) have the tendency of being violent while 12 (4.2) of the respondents disagreed with it. This opinion is correct when one observes happenings in the contemporary Yoruba society, especially in Ijebuland. Majority of the criminals, hoodlums, and touts in the society are products of broken homes and homes with empty shell marriages. From the Islamic perspective, If Muslim parents could emulate Prophet Luqman (A.S) in impacting comprehensive moral teachings on monotheism, kindness to parents, accountability, importance of worship (*Solat*), enjoining what is good and

forbidding what is bad, patience and perseverance, humility and respect for elders, moderation in walking and in speech as revealed in Qur'an (31:13-19), there will be peace and orderliness in the society.

Findings revealed that majority of the respondents, 229 (80.9%) agreed that domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) may cause an everlasting hatred among the two families of both the bride and the groom while 54 (19.1%) of the respondents disagreed. This opinion is right based on the fact that marriage is a union not only between two individuals (husband and wife) but also between two families. This explains why the two families must ensure that the couple co-exists peacefully as a Yoruba axiom says *irorun igi ni irorun eye* meaning "when a tree is comfortable with no wind blowing it, definitely, birds will dwell on it comfortably". When a couple lives in peace and tranquility, their in-laws would also have peace of mind. But when a couple's life is characterised by hatred, enmity, battering, chaos, the two families will also be at logger heads and an inter-family crisis will ensue. There are cases of spousal conflict that degenerated into in-laws fighting and beating one another. Some even went to the extent of instituting court cases against one another. Situations like these often cause everlasting hatred and disunity between the couple who may only keep an empty-shell marriage or seek divorce while both families may cease to be united.

Findings revealed that majority of the respondents 269 (94.9%) agreed that domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) can cause the death of either of the spouses (i.e through beating, battering, nagging, and throwing of sharp objects while14

(5.1%) of the respondents disagreed with the view. This opinion is right as cases of *Al-Adrār* reported on daily basis on the pages of the Nigerian dailies attest to this. There are numerous empirical cases of such to be cited, among which is the case of a 31-year-old man who was convicted for killing his wife (a banker), on 24th June, 2011. Justice Lateefat Okunnu of a Lagos High Court sitting in Ikeja sentenced the man to death having found him guilty of the murder charge pressed against him. According to the result of a five-and-a-half-hour postmortem examination on the corpse of the deceased on July 6, 2011, at least 76 wounds from stabbing were found on the corpse resulting from the use of tremendous force on the chest, heart, lungs, liver, diaphragm, hands and other parts of the deceased's body (short URL:<http://www.osundefender.org> accessed 22nd August, 2014).

Findings equally revealed that majority of the respondents, 252 (89%) agreed that domestic abuse (*Al-Adrār*) could cause permanent physical injury on either of the spouses while 31(11%) of them disagreed. This opinion is right with evidence of physical injury sustained by victims of domestic abuse. The example of this is the case of a 35-year-old housewife who had her face stitched 26 times as a result of battering by her husband, for taking a piece of fish from the pot to break her fast. (<http://leadership.ng/news/3825011/domestic-abuse-women-end-sight> accessed 3rd September 2014).

4. Conclusion

The study has been able to establish that few of Ijebu Muslim women suffer domestic abuse by their husbands or in-laws. The major reasons for this include; noncompliance of many Muslim couples with Islamic regulations on marriage, economic situation of the country, influence of the Yoruba culture and western civilization on the lives of many Ijebu Muslim couples and the effects of drug abuse on the contemporary society.

5. Recommendations

The study offers specific recommendations based on the responses gathered through investigation.

Muslim couples should have better understanding of their responsibilities as husbands and wives as dictated by Islam before going into marriage. Couples' parents should have better understanding of the roles to play in the sustainability and stability of their children's marital life as laid down by Qur'an and *Sunnah* (prophetic traditions). Similarly, Muslim clerics should intensify efforts at organising pre-marital counselling for Muslim couples to educate them on their rights and responsibilities in Islam. Furthermore, every mosque and Islamic organisation should establish a Reconciliation Centre or a Domestic Abuse Centre for Muslim couples whose marriages are threatened due to one problem or another.

Finally, Government should approve the establishment of Islamic courts where Muslims' marital disputes will be settled according to the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.

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