

Economic Adversities as Factors Threatening Family Wellbeing: A Study of Domestic Violence in Sokoto Metropolis, Nigeria

***¹Sa'adatu Ahmad Ali, ²Shehu Yahaya Tsagem, and ³Rukayya Abdullahi**

*¹Ministry For Basic and Secondary Education Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State, Nigeria **Email:** aahmadasa74@gmail.com

²Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education and Extension Services, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, Sokoto State. **Email:** shehuyahaya@udusok.edu.ng

³Department of Education Waziri Umaru Polytechnic Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State, Nigeria **Email:** raqiyyaskudu1977@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper looks at how incidences of domestic violence in Nigerian increase mainly due to economic difficulties that Nigerians are contending with and how counselling could help in preventing threats to family wellbeing. The present economic challenge has brought attendant trials that threatened peaceful coexistence experienced in many homes in Nigeria. In this regard, 100 household were studied in Sokoto metropolis with the sole aim of finding out how the families are grappling with issues of feeding, clothing, schooling and health. The study uses a qualitative approach and through in-depth interview, was able to found how these factors led to what could be termed as domestic violence by household heads/masters (predominantly, husbands/fathers) mostly when they felt boxed-in or threatened and are unable to meet their obligations as providers for the family. The study concludes that most husbands/fathers in the area of study feel hard-pressed and threatened that they could not meet up with their primary roles. It was recommended among other things that families should diversify by engaging in other activities that will boost their economic earnings, though in doing so, care should be taken not to endanger children's life lest they are economically exploited.

Keywords: Economy, Adversity, Family, Wellbeing, Domestic, Violence

Introduction

Families are the basis upon which societies are built as they laid the foundations that serve as the bedrock of development and survival. For families to function well, there has to be synergy in the aspects of social, psychological, moral and economic workings that ensure continued required well-being. Among these, the most outstanding factors that ensures a family's continued survival and positive contribution is that of economic aspect. As societies are built and thrive upon their economic strengths, so also does families; economic strength is the livewire and epicenter around which family's survival rotates. Thus, it is easy to associate a family's strength on factors like health, social status, psychological and emotional well-being etc., on its economic standing. Consequently, when a family's economic fortune gets overturned, not only did the family loose its standing, but the well-being of the members of that family gets affected as well.

So, is the case with most families in Nigeria because of the attendant hardship due to the Federal government's recent removal of fuel subsidy and the floating of the Naira. All socio- economic aspects of life in Nigeria are struggling to cope up now and family, being the smallest unit of them all, notably suffers too; because of the reduction in the economic strengths of the providers for the families, rising cost of living, financial crisis, debt etc. Usually, when family crisis started to rear its head, especially notable is the issue of domestic violence. Which refers to violence or other forms of abuse that occur within a domestic setting, such as a marriage or cohabitation. Domestic violence can manifest in different ways, including physical, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse (Schoon *et al.*, 2003). Its consequences are both physical and psychological, impacting victims and their families. The family unit itself can suffer, leading to disintegration. Thus, the whole idea behind family wellbeing is threatened.

Conceptual Framework

This part presents insight into the meaning and all what the important concepts of the study entails. In this regard (Wantchekon, & Zhang, 2024). economic adversity could be viewed as the challenges and difficulties faced by individuals, communities or businesses as a result of hard financial and economic conditions. On the other hand, family wellbeing could be referred to as the overall health, happiness, and affluence of a family unit. Furthermore,

domestic violence implies viciousness or other forms of mishandling that occur within a living setting.

- i. Economic Adversities
- ii. Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviour in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain control over another intimate partner. Also known as domestic abuse or intimate partner violence (Radwan, 2018). it refers to violence or other forms of abuse that occur within a domestic setting. Economic adversities refer to hardships or difficulties experienced by individuals, businesses, or economies as a result of financial challenges or unfavourable economic conditions. These adversities can manifest in various forms and impact people's ability to meet their basic needs, pursue opportunities for growth, and achieve financial stability. This can include factors such as high unemployment, inflation, recession, poverty, inadequate access to resources or opportunities, as well as other economic uncertainties that hinder growth, stability, and prosperity. Coping with economic adversities often requires effective financial management, strategic planning, and support systems to overcome the challenges and improve economic well-being.

Examples of economic adversities include unemployment, poverty, indebtedness, income inequality, lack of Education, rising cost of living, and financial crisis (American Heart Association, 2023). Economic adversities can have various root causes that contribute to financial hardship. Thus, some common factors that can lead to economic challenges include chronic illness and physical or mental disabilities which can impact one's ability to work and earn a stable income, caring for family members who are ill or have special needs that can strain financial resources, income loss, unemployment, job instability, and economic insecurity that can all contribute to economic hardship, fluctuations in the stock market, housing prices, and other assets which can lead to economic instability, and lack of marketable skills, job availability, low IQ, and drug addiction which can also be factors in economic difficulties.

iii. Family Well-being

Family well-being refers to the overall health, happiness, and prosperity of a family unit. It goes beyond just physical health and includes various aspects that contribute to a fulfilling family life. It encompasses various aspects of a family's life, including physical and mental health, financial stability, emotional connections, social relationships, and quality of life. Brewster, M. (2002). Factors that contribute to family well-being include secure and stable housing, access to education and healthcare, positive family dynamics, effective communication, emotional support, and a sense of community and belonging.

Key components of family well-being include emotional health for maintaining positive relationships, open communication, and emotional support within the family, and physical health in ensuring access to healthcare, nutritious food, and a safe living environment for all family members. Others are financial stability in having the resources to meet basic needs, plan for the future, and weather financial challenges, and social connections in building strong bonds with extended family, friends, and community members for social support and networking. Others also include effective communication by encouraging open, honest, and respectful communication among family members to address conflicts and share feelings, and work-life balance in striking a balance between work obligations and family time to prevent burnout and maintain quality relationships, and parenting support in providing a nurturing and supportive environment for children's growth and development. Furthermore, the key components also include shared values and goals in aligning family members' values, beliefs, and goals to foster unity and collaboration within the family, conflict resolution skills in developing healthy ways to resolve conflicts, manage disagreements, and strengthen relationships, and finally, resilience and coping strategies for equipping family members with skills to cope with challenges, setbacks, and stressors.

Promoting family well-being involves a combination of individual efforts, family dynamics, community support, and access to resources that can enhance the overall quality of family life and relationships, such as a marriage or cohabitation. It can occur in various forms, including physical violence, emotional abuse, psychological manipulation, sexual assault, financial control, and verbal threats. Domestic violence can affect individuals of any gender, age, race, or socioeconomic status, and it can have serious and long-lasting

effects on individual victims and their families. Domestic violence used to include psychological or mental violence, which can consist of repeated verbal use, confinement, harassment, and deprivation of financial, physical and personal resources. Domestic violence can happen in families from any class, economically disadvantaged or lower group or age group (Sule *et al.* as cited in Abubakar *et al.*, 2023).

As noted earlier, domestic violence can manifest in different ways, including physical, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse. Its consequences are both physical and psychological, impacting victims and their families. The family unit itself can suffer, leading to disintegration. Recognizing the signs of domestic violence is crucial to providing support and assistance to those affected. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, it is important to seek help from support services, such as hotlines, shelters, counseling, and legal resources, to ensure safety and protection from further harm. Likewise, to address this societal challenge, relevant stakeholders should consider developing stiffer laws to combat domestic violence.

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical framework provides a lens through which to understand the intricate relationships between economic factors, family dynamics, and violence within the family unit. Thus, the work was hinged upon ecological systems theory and family stress theory. This is crucial in addressing the complex interactions between economic adversities, family well-being, and domestic violence.

First, ecological systems theory, developed by Bronfenbrenner (1977, 1979, 1986, 1997) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how various environmental systems influence human development. The theory posits that an individual's development is influenced by multiple layers of environmental systems that range from immediate surroundings to broader societal contexts. This theory was applied to explain how economic adversity and domestic violence impact family well-being through multiple interconnected micro-, meso-, exo-, and chronosystems. The microsystem includes the immediate environments that individuals interact with daily, such as family, school, and peers. Economic adversity can lead to increased stress within the family, affecting relationships and interactions. Domestic violence directly disrupts the family environment, leading to emotional and

psychological harm to all members, particularly children. The mesosystem involves the interconnections between microsystems. Financial difficulties may strain relationships with extended family and friends, reducing social support. For example, economic hardship can strain relationships between parents and schools, limiting parental involvement in children's education. Domestic violence can further isolate families from social support networks, exacerbating the negative impacts on family well-being. The exosystem includes broader social systems that indirectly affect individuals, such as parents' workplaces and community resources. Economic adversity might result in job loss or reduced income, leading to financial instability and increased family stress. Domestic violence can limit access to community resources and support services, further hindering family well-being. The chronosystem considers the dimension of time, including life transitions and historical events. Economic downturns or prolonged exposure to domestic violence can have long-term effects on family dynamics and individual development. Changes in family structure, such as divorce or relocation due to economic hardship, also impact family well-being over time. By examining the interplay between these systems, the theory highlights how economic adversity and domestic violence create a complex web of influences that affect family well-being. Interventions aimed at improving family well-being must consider these multiple levels of influence to be effective.

Secondly, family stress theory highlights the importance of resources and perception in determining how families respond to stressors like economic adversity and domestic violence. Family stress theory particularly the ABC-X model developed by Hill (1949, 1958) provides a structured way to understand how families respond to stressors like economic adversity and domestic violence. Thus, the theory was applied to explain their impact on family well-being. In this respect, let us consider "A" (Stressors) as events or conditions that cause stress within the family. And "B" (Resources) refers to the family's ability to cope with stressors. This includes both internal resources (e.g., family cohesion, communication skills) and external resources (e.g., social support, financial assistance). Families with strong resources are better equipped to handle economic adversity and domestic violence. And "C" (Perception) involves how the family interprets the stressor. And, finally, "X" (Crisis) is the outcome of the interaction between the stressor, resources, and perception. In relation to economic adversity, the theory may imply situation like when job loss or financial instability are significant stressors (A). Families with strong internal and external resources (B) are better equipped to handle

these challenges. How the family perceives the economic hardship influences their resilience. If resources are insufficient and perceptions are negative, a crisis (X) can occur, affecting family well-being. In relation to domestic violence, the theory may imply situation like where domestic violence is a severe stressor (A) that disrupts family dynamics. Access to resources (B), such as social support and legal assistance, is crucial. The family's perception of the violence influences their response. Insufficient resources and negative perceptions can lead to a crisis (X), impacting the entire family's well-being.

Interconnectedness of the Variables

The relationship between economic adversities, domestic violence, and family well-being is complex and interconnected. Economic challenges can contribute to stressors within a family, leading to a higher risk of domestic violence and negatively impacting overall family well-being. These factors are interrelated in leading to financial strain such things as job loss, poverty, or financial insecurity, can create tension and conflict within a family due to the inability to meet basic needs or financial obligations. This strain can increase the likelihood of domestic violence as individuals may use violence as a means of exerting control or coping with stress. The interrelation could also be viewed as leading to domestic violence where, in its various forms, can have a significant impact on family well-being by eroding trust, communication, and emotional health within the family unit. Children exposed to domestic violence are at higher risk of experiencing negative outcomes, affecting their overall well-being and development. Likewise, the relationship could be viewed as a cycle of violence where economic adversities can perpetuate a cycle of violence within families, where stressors related to financial difficulties contribute to tension, conflict, and abusive behaviors. This cycle can create a toxic environment that hinders family well-being and perpetuates harmful patterns of behavior. Finally, the interconnection could be seen as barriers to seeking help when economic adversities can also act as barriers to seeking help for domestic violence. Financial dependence on an abusive partner or lack of resources to access support services can prevent individuals from escaping abusive situations, further compromising family well-being.

Domestic Violence in the Area of Study

Domestic violence is a pressing issue in Sokoto affecting many women and children. Domestic violence in Sokoto is synonymous with Gender-Based

Violence (GBV) and Intimate Partner Violence (IPV). In the Sokoto metropolis, women often suffer silently from various forms of violence within their homes. The most common form is wife battery, which includes verbal abuse, slapping, kicking, rape, denial of financial support, and, tragically, sometimes death. Women, who play crucial roles as homemakers and custodians of culture, deserve respect and honor. However, the reality often falls short of this ideal.

Bello (2021) and Muhammad (2021) reported that in Sokoto state, gender-based violence (GBV) remains prevalent. Records from 2020/2021 indicate that at least 700 individuals experienced some form of GBV. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the situation, highlighting the urgent need for awareness, prevention, and support. Efforts to combat domestic violence are crucial for the well-being of women, children, and society as a whole.

Empirical Studies Reviewed

The study by Adjei *et al.* (2024) investigated the impact of trajectories of income poverty and family adversities, including parental mental ill health, alcohol misuse and domestic violence across childhood developmental stages on young people's relationships with their families and perceived emotional support received. The study analysed longitudinal data on 10,976 children from the nationally representative UK Millennium Cohort study. Results show that children of mothers with lower socioeconomic status (SES) were more likely to report low emotional support, with a clear social gradient. Compared with children exposed to low levels of poverty and adversity, children in the persistent adversity trajectory groups experienced higher odds of low emotional support and low-quality parent-adolescent relationship; those exposed to both persistent poverty and poor parental mental health were particularly at increased risk of experiencing poor family relationships and low perceived emotional support. Low perceived emotional support and poor family relationships in adolescence are more prevalent among socially disadvantaged children and adolescents and those experiencing social adversity. Thus, policies to improve levels of family support for UK adolescents should focus on improving modifiable determinants such as child poverty and family mental health.

A study by Kelly *et al.* (2023) discusses the interplay between family stress theory and domestic violence, emphasizing the impact of stressors on family

dynamics and the risk of violence within familial relationships. It identifies key factors contributing to domestic violence, such as economic strain often exacerbated by job loss or financial difficulties, mental health issues, and social support systems, while also highlighting the necessity for effective interventions that target these stressors to reduce violence risks and promote family resilience.

An econometric analysis by Lanchimba *et al.* (2023) investigates the nexus underlying dynamics influencing domestic violence. Employing econometric techniques, this study examined a range of household-related variables for their potential associations with levels of violence within households. The findings emphasize the importance of considering various household factors when designing effective interventions. Strategies to bolster positive mood, alleviate depression, encourage health consciousness, and regulate social media use could potentially contribute to reducing domestic violence. Additionally, the nuanced role of religious affiliation underscores the need for tailored approaches based on household dynamics, positioning, and gender.

The study by Rees *et al.* (2023) examined the role of single parents in meeting the socio- economic needs of their families, with a particular focus on the well-being of both parents and children. Through a mixed-methods approach encompassing quantitative surveys, qualitative interviews, and an extensive review of existing literature, the provided a nuanced understanding of the complexities and resilience demonstrated by single-parent households. Findings reveal that single parents employ a variety of coping strategies, including meticulous financial planning, seeking education and job opportunities, and building robust support networks. Furthermore, the research underscores the significance of accessible support systems, including government assistance programs, community organizations, and family networks, in alleviating these challenges. In light of these findings, the research proposes strengthening child support enforcement, expanding access to affordable childcare, increasing investments in affordable housing, and enhancing education and job training programs tailored to single parents' unique needs.

Johnson, et al. (2022) conduct a scoping review focused on the impact of economic abuse on survivors of IPV. A total of 14 databases were reviewed, which resulted in 35 peer-reviewed manuscripts for inclusion in the study. Both convenience and population-based samples were included in the review.

Results indicated that studies found significant associations between economic abuse and a range of outcomes, such as mental and physical health, financial impacts, parent-child interactions, and quality of life. Findings of the study highlight the wide-ranging potential impacts of economic abuse on survivors and the need for additional research to better understand potential outcomes and implement and evaluate interventions to address them.

The study by Voth *et al.* (2020) assesses the moderating influence of social support on the association between economic abuse (EA) and economic hardship. Experiencing EA was significantly correlated with economic hardship, even with extent of physical and emotional IPV controlled. Both tangible and appraisal support had significant negative association with extent of material hardship. Significant interactions between forms of social support and economic abuse were observed. For those at high levels of economic abuse, support had less influence on economic hardship. Thus, suggested that a mix of direct economic aid, advocacy, education and support could provide a blueprint for addressing the economic hardship experiences of community-dwelling survivors of economic abuse. Interventions that seek to enhance survivors' access to social support may be necessary but not sufficient to buffer the impacts of violence on survivors' economic outcomes.

The study by Lucero *et al.* (2016) explores the connection between economic hardship and intimate partner violence (IPV) through a family stress framework. It highlights how economic hardship significantly contributes to the prevalence of intimate partner violence, demonstrating a clear link between financial stress and relationship tensions. Poverty is portrayed not only as a risk factor for IPV but also as a consequence of such violence, leading to a cycle of economic and emotional instability. It also demonstrates how diverse socioeconomic predictors, including neighborhood disadvantage, play a crucial role in the manifestations of IPV in different communities. The study recommends that comprehensive efforts addressing economic issues alongside IPV prevention can potentially disrupt the cycle of violence and poverty. It calls for broader public policy initiatives that integrate economic support with domestic violence services to create lasting change.

A study by Fox *et al.* (2002) examines the relationship between economic distress and intimate violence against women by testing family stress and resource theories. Utilizing data from the National Survey of Families and Households alongside U.S. Census data, logistic regression analyses assessed

the predictors of male-to-female violence and highlights how factors such as employment status and financial well-being impact the likelihood of male-to-female intimate partner violence. The findings revealed that job holding and household income can either elevate or reduce the risk of violence thus, emphasized that perceptions of each partner's work performance and overall economic conditions significantly influence the dynamics of intimate violence. The research contributes important insights into the interplay between economic factors and intimate relationship dynamics.

Methodology

This study used the qualitative research design where the in-depth interview technique was employed to obtain relevant data. Analysis of the data was done based on key thematic areas of revelations. 100 low and middle socio-economic households serve as the sample of the study. These were selected through purposive and snow-ball sampling strategies from households in Sokoto metropolis that served as the population of the study. The metropolis was conveniently divided into four sectors and thus, 25 households were covered each sector. However, participants real identities were protected because of confidentiality and rather pseudonyms were used.

Likewise, a combination of a structured and unstructured interview schedule developed by the researchers was used as instrument for data collection. The reason for the use of an interview schedule was because of the perceived low educational level of the targeted respondents in their ability to adequately respond to other printed/written options. Structurally, the questionnaire mainly covered the issues of feeding, clothing, schooling and health. The interview schedule was exposed to experts Sociology, Guidance and Counselling and Sociology in the Faculty of Education and Extension Services and in the Faculty of Social Sciences in Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto where they adjudged both content and face validities for the instrument. Furthermore, the instrument obtained a 78% score from the experts' inter-rater reliability measure. Moreover, the instrument was personally administered on the respondents by the researchers through face-to-face interaction. The researchers being able to fluently communicate in Hausa language of the study area, easily translate and discussed the questionnaire items with the respondents and also interpreted what the respondents communicated to ensure clarity and remove ambiguities. The researchers recorded the interview process by the use of the audio recording applications of their smart phones.

To discuss the findings, a transcription of the interview was analyzed using thematic analysis.

Results

Data analysis was iterative where the interview data was analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) approach to thematic analysis. This approach includes immersion in the data, inductively generating codes, searching for themes, refining themes through thematic mapping, and defining each theme. Codes were generated through an iterative process. Interview transcripts and field notes were first analyzed for each participant, then across participants to understand how themes emerged and connected across the data. Codes were then collated and were refined through the creation of thematic maps. Through the findings presented below, how economic adversities increases the chance for domestic violence and affect family well-being was illustrated. Findings were presented as descriptive narrative from the interviews drawn from the field work.

Characteristically, the participants that are used in the study are majorly male (N = 83) (some of whom are having more than one wife), with some female (N = 17). This is chiefly due that in the area of study female, whether married/divorced, widowed or daughters, are not easily accessible due to practice of culture and religion. Furthermore, the average age of children used is 16 years, that of the wives/mothers is 25 years, and that of the husbands/masters is 37 years.

Accounts of how economic adversity increases domestic violence and their effect on family well being are presented across the main issues of feeding, clothing, schooling and health. When asked about how the households are facing issues to do with feeding almost all respondents indicated a down and fearful trend. Thus, some base line interview like that of Mal. Adamu (a 31-year-old husband) account that:

"I can hardly provide two square meals to my family ... sometimes we eat one time only in a day and nothing much, anything easily accessible to just fill our stomachs

... sometimes for the whole day I cannot get anything to bring home because business is down unlike before and you cannot get anything from anybody now ... not even credit/loan ... I usually felt

anger and easily yell or shout at anybody in the house over any (everyday) request that has been my responsibility ... sometimes I even hit at/beat some family members which has not been my behaviour before ... I don't know what is happening to me but, it is not something good because I can feel my family withdrawing from me ... likewise the respect they so give me before is now waning mostly because I can no longer take care of them adequately...”

Similarly, Malama Hauwa (a 27-year-old wife/mother) has this to say:

“Things are really hard now ... we can hardly eat enough these days ... as a mother, I find it difficult watching my children go hungry ... but, things are also difficult for my husband ... business is not easy and flourishing like before ... we are just trying to make ends meet because, I too am engage in petty trading in the home, selling some simple children niceties and basic food necessities ... though my customers purchasing power has also greatly reduced ... now mostly the buying is on credit/loan ... I find myself easily becoming angry with my children ... even with the husband ... he is now easily given to anger, laugh and joke less with us and easily gets angry over slight, usual things ... the children are gradually becoming apprehensive of him and are withdrawing from him too ... I too am now becoming cautious and afraid of the person he is turning into ... I believed it all has to do with the economic situation of the life we find ourselves in now ...” (Baseline Interview)

Abdul (an 11-year-old boy) observed that:

“We are no longer eating as we used to before ... sometimes just one time per day and mostly not to our satisfaction... and then we used to make do with what we can find ... our parents are no longer caring for us as before ... they are becoming easily agitated and shout, yell and even beat us over small childish things ... they are generally easily angry now ... father seem to always stays outside now ... and sometimes we even don't want to see him in the home because he makes us uncomfortable with all his yelling,

shouting and sometimes hitting/beating ... we can easily hear him arguing and fighting with mama over issues that has to do with feeding ... we find more respite now staying outside the home by giving them a distance ... now we are engaged in petty trading for mother and the more effort you put in it, the more reward you get from her” (Baseline Interview)

When probed about how the households are facing issues to do with clothing the respondents base line interview reveal a fearful trend also. Thus, Mal. Kalla (a 39-year-old husband of two wives) in the baseline interview explained that:

“Eh, who even talk about that now? ... we are only struggling to feed and don’t have time for such luxury ... I can’t remember when I bought clothes for my children, my wives or even myself ... even during the last ‘Sallah’ celebration, my family has to used their old clothes ... it really made me feel dejected, but there was nothing I could do ... look my children are still using their 2 years old school uniforms”

Likewise, Malama Shatu (a 19-year-old wife/mother) accounted that:

“I can’t properly remember when last I get new clothes from our husband ... ‘Tabdijam’ (a Hausa expression of wonder) ... my husband is trying his best before, but now things are not easy ... even during festivities there is no guarantee of getting

... if you see us with new clothes, it is mostly through our personal effort ... we are watching as our children’s clothes are becoming tatters... and when you continue reminding or talking it may become a problem for you” (Baseline Interview)

Abdul (an 11-year-old boy) observed that:

“Yes, I yearn for new clothes but, I don’t think that is a prerogative for my parents now ... most of my clothes are torn and becoming tattered ... I feel ashamed using my uniform because they are tattered and have been mended in many places ... they have seen better days ... my hope is always during festivities when we used to get new clothes but, even then, there is no assurance ... I mostly

feel no shame because most other children I play with dressed the same way that I do now” (Baseline Interview)

When probed about how the households are facing issues to do with schooling the respondents base line interview reveal a awful drift also. Thus, Mal. Mudan (a 24-year-old husband of one wife) in the baseline interview explained that:

“Sometimes my child will be sent to school on an empty stomach because there is nothing to give her ... now I find it hard to buy books and other school essentials for

... sometimes she has to even skip school in order to help her mother’s petty trading

... sometimes she is sent back from the school because I can’t pay for this or that”

Likewise, Malama Lami (a 17-year-old wife/mother) accounted that:

“Our child is finding it difficult to continue schooling ... mostly we can’t meet what the schools are demanding ... we can’t give her the basic things she need for ... she can’t go to school always because she helps in selling some things ... after all, she is a female and she will eventually get married and be taken care of by her husband

...” (Baseline Interview)

Husna (an 11-year-old girl) observed that:

“I find it hard to concentrate at school thus, my performance is not encouraging ... some basic things that I need in the school are not provided by my father ... I sometimes couldn’t come to the school because I help mother with her petty trading

... most of my friend does the same though” (Baseline Interview)

When probed about how the households are facing issues to do with health the respondents base line interview reveal distasteful issues also. Thus, Mal.

Dalha (a 52-year-old husband of three wives) in the baseline interview explained that:

“We only pray that no health issue shall come up because taking care of that is very difficult ... sometimes, I watched a family member suffer because I can’t provide simple medication ... medicines are very costly now and you have to buy almost everything in public hospitals too ... thus, sometimes simple health issues result into serious challenges ... mostly this result to serious relational issues with the mothers and the senior children...”

Likewise, Malama Hassu (a 32-year-old wife/mother) accounted that:

“We are gradually finding it difficult taking care of our sick children ... sometimes you have to ignore simple health issues because we don’t have the money for that ... sometimes we resort to traditional medicines and herbs for treatment ... your effort to inform and remind will mostly result to arguments and even threats from their father ... it is really hectic” (Baseline Interview)

Husna (a 9-year-old girl) observed that:

“Treating simple sickness like malaria is non forthcoming now, thus you have to endure it ... mostly they treat you with herbs now ... whenever you complain about something like that, it will only attract anger and resentment from your parents, sometimes even beatings ... I sometimes cry when it is too much for me ... ” (Baseline Interview)

Summary of Major Finding

Based on the data analyzed, the study majorly found that:

- i. Economic adversity adversely affects parental responsibility of providing feeding to families and this endangers family well-being in increasing domestic violence, destroying familial support.
- ii. Economic adversity badly affects parental responsibility of providing clothing to families and this endangers family well-being in increasing chances of domestic violence, and destroying familial relationships.

- iii. Schooling of the children in the area of study is greatly affected by economic adversities and this create tension in the family especially looking at what the future portends for such children.
- iv. Providing support for health is creating challenges to households by increasing tensions that highly touched on family relationships and also may result to some form of domestic violence.

Discussion

Findings of the study point to problems in issues that has to do with feeding, clothing, schooling and health. This in essence was supported by previous studies like that of Adjei *et al.* (2024) which show that children of mothers with lower socioeconomic status (SES) were more likely to report low emotional support, with a clear social gradient and also that socially disadvantaged children and adolescents and those experiencing social adversity perceived prevalent low emotional support and poor family relationships. This undoubtedly is highly related to the economic characteristics of participants of this study and this explain reasons why the revelation about being incapacitated by such adversities and the attendant intricacies that threatened such families' well-being. That may well a reason why Kelly *et al.* (2023) identified key factors of economic strain often exacerbated by job loss or financial difficulties, mental health issues, and social support systems as contributing to domestic violence. Thus, the study highlights the necessity for effective interventions that target these stressors to reduce violence risks and promote family resilience.

Furthermore, Johnson *et al.* (2022) lent support to the findings as they indicated that many previous studies found significant associations between economic abuse and a range of outcomes, such as mental and physical health, financial impacts, parent-child interactions, and quality of life. This may well be the reason why Voth Schrag, Ravi, and Robinson (2020) conclude that economic hardship led to experiencing economic abuse and leading to even physical and emotional intimate partner violence. This is also corroborated by Lucero, Lim, and Santiago (2016) when they demonstrated that there is a clear link between financial stress and relationship tensions and also explained that consequence of violence may manifest as a result of poverty, setting-off a cycle of economic and emotional instability. Thus, Fox, et al. (2002) show that being engaged in a job and household income can either elevate or reduce the

risk of violence thus, emphasized that perceptions of each partner's work performance and overall economic conditions significantly influence the dynamics of intimate violence. Simply put, favourable household economic condition leads to a stable, preposterous, wellness of a family.

Conclusion

Economic adversities lead to domestic violence which invariable result to a disruption in the well-being of a family. This happen when the household can no longer satisfy the essential needs of its members and when tensions led some members to resort to harming, (physically, emotionally or otherwise) others due to feelings of uncertainty which has been occasioned by a drastic reduction in its economic security. Economic adversities can exacerbate issues related to domestic violence, impacting family well-being in significant ways. Addressing these interconnected challenges requires a holistic approach that considers the social, economic, and psychological factors influencing family dynamics and promotes safety, support, and resilience within families facing adversity.

Recommendations

Escaping from economic adversities, overcoming domestic violence and promoting family well-being should involve:

- i. Economic diversification by families engaging in other activities that will boost their economic earnings and strength.
- ii. Fostering positive relationships, managing stress, and addressing challenges collectively, by prioritizing the needs and interests of all family members to ensure a healthy and fulfilling family life.
- iii. Promoting awareness and education about family dynamics related to stress can contribute to prevention efforts and better outcomes for families.
- iv. Advocating policies that provide financial assistance and protective measures for families facing domestic violence to improve access to mental health services, legal aid, and economic support for affected families.

References

- Abubakar, J. S., Muhammad, U. B. & Usman, A. (2023). Assessing Domestic Violence in Sokoto; Causes and Solutions. *The Beam: Journal of Arts & Science*, 15, (1), 1 – 5. ISSN: 1118-5953 <http://uaspolysok.edu.ng/thebeamjournal/>
- Adjei, N. K., Jonsson, K. R., Straatmann, V. S., Melis, G., McGovern, R., Kaner, E., Wolfe, I. & Taylor-Robinson, D. (2024). Impact of poverty and adversity on perceived family support in adolescence: findings from the UK Millennium Cohort Study. *European Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00787-024-02389-8>
- American Heart Association, (2023). Economic Adversity and Health Care: Synopsis of American Heart Association Scientific Statement. *Circulation*. AHA Journals.
- Bello, M. N. (2021, September 22). The prevalence of gender-based violence in Sokoto State. *Daily Trust*. <https://dailytrust.com/the-prevalence-of-gender-based-violence-in-sokoto-state/>
- Braun, V. & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- Brewster, M. (2002). Domestic Violence Theories, Research and Practice Implications. In A. Roberts (ed.), *Handbook of Domestic Violence Intervention Strategies*. Oxford and New York; Oxford University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1977). Toward an experimental ecology of human development. *American Psychologist*, 32(7), 513–531.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979) *The ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1986). Ecology of the family as a context for human development: Research perspective. *Developmental Psychology*, 22(6), 723–742.

- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1997). Environments in developmental perspective: Theoretical and operational models. In S. L. Friedman & T. D. Wachs (Eds.), *Measuring environment across the life span: Emerging methods and concepts* (pp. 3–28). American Psychological Association.
- Fox, G. L., Benson, M. L., DeMaris, A. A., & Van Wyk, J. (2002). Economic Distress and Intimate Violence: Testing Family Stress and Resources Theories. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 64(3), 793–807. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1741-3737.2002.00793.x>
- Hill, R. (1949). *Families under Stress*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.
- Hill, R. (1958). Generic Features of Families under Stress. *Social Casework*, 39: 139–50.
- Johnson, L., Chen, Y., Stylianou, A., & Arnold, A. (2022). Examining the impact of economic abuse on survivors of intimate partner violence: a scoping review. *BMC Public Health* 22, 1 - 19. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-13297-4>
- Kelly, S., Sessanga, H., Griffith, A.K. (2023). Family Stress Theory and Domestic Violence. In: Shackelford, T.K. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Domestic Violence*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-85493-5_542-1
- Lanchimba C, Díaz-Sánchez JP, Velasco F. (2023). Exploring factors influencing domestic violence: a comprehensive study on intrafamily dynamics. *Frontier Psychiatry*. 14:1243558. doi: 10.3389/fpsy.2023.1243558. PMID: 37743993; PMCID: PMC10513418.
- Lucero, J. L., Lim, S. & Santiago, A. M. (2016). Changes in Economic Hardship and Intimate Partner Violence: A Family Stress Framework. *Journal of Family Economic Issues*, 37, 395– 406. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-016-9488-1>
- Momentum. (2021). Social Norms Exploration on Child, Early, and Forced Marriage, Intimate Partner Violence, and Adoption of Family

Planning in Sokoto State, Nigeria. Washington, DC: USAID
MOMENTUM

- Muhammad, R. A. (2021, August, 12). New anti-rape law: Fresh hope in Sokoto's fight against GBV. *The Guardian*. <https://guardian.ng/new-anti-rape-law-fresh-hope-in-sokoto-fight-against/>
- Radwan, C.K. (2018). Economic adversities and cultural coping strategies; Impacts on identity boundaries among Druzes in Lebanon. *Economic Anthropology*, 5(1), 110-122.
- Rees, E., Beeber, S. N., Sampson, R., & Lietz, J. P. (2023). Empowering Single Parents: Navigating Socio-Economic Challenges and Fostering Resilience in Family Well-being. *Law and Economics*, 17(2), 131-150. ISSN 3026-1929 (Online) | 1829-6688 (Print)
- Schoon, I, & Sacker, A. & Bartley, M. (2003). Socio-economic adversity and psychosocial adjustment; a developmental -contextual perspective.
- Voth Schrag, R.J., Ravi, K.E. & Robinson, S.R. (2020). The Role of Social Support in the Link Between Economic Abuse and Economic Hardship. *Journal of Family Violence*, 35, 85–93. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-018-0019-8>