AN INVESTIGATION TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN RELATION TO WOMEN EMPOWERMENT FROM A PSYCHOTHERAPY PERSPECTIVE

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INTRODUCTION

- Domestic Violence against women is very common in both developing and developed countries.
- Domestic violence can take many forms, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional, economic and psychological abuse.
- However, domestic violence by intimate partners, in particular, is very common in both developed and developing countries
- Violence is a human rights issue, and human rights are important to values of dignity, equality, non-discrimination and noninterference, and these cut across gender, social, cultural, political, class, religious and geographical issues. (Uzuegbunam, 2016).
- Intimate partner violence is an important global health problem that policy makers seek to address by a variety of interventions, Including efforts to promote “women empowerment.
- Empowerment is highly affected by domestic violence.
- Empowerment of a woman is depended highly on the bargaining power that she has in her household, for example, to be involved in the decision making process in a household, for herself or for the whole family

MOTIVATION OF THE STUDY

- Intimate partner violence is a widespread and persistent problem adversely affecting the lives of hundreds of millions of women, and posing a first-order challenge for policy makers worldwide

- Since violence against women is often regarded as a symptom of lack of gender equality, it seems natural to assume that efforts to promote female empowerment will help to reduce intimate partner violence
- One would think that women who are empowered are more able to stand up for their rights. As a consequence, they experience less domestic violence.
- But this conclusion may not be necessarily true. More empowered women may diverge from the traditional gender roles in their relationships/marriage which hurt their men’s ego.
- The men who feel threatened or undermined by this, may use violence as a way relationship to restore their ego, power or dominance in the relationship.

AIM OF THE STUDY

- This study aims to investigate the links between intimate partner violence against women and women empowerment.
- This paper will depict an image of how women empowerment through psychotherapy affects intimate partner violence in the relationship and how different factors may influence intimate partner violence.

METHODOLOGY

- A content analytic approach was employed to understand intimate partner violence in relation to women empowerment and to understand the meaning of results.
- Semi-structured questionnaires, in face to face interviews were used. Interviews were done to obtain the participants perceptions and experiences of the efficacy of psychotherapy/counselling in empowering women who experience intimate partner violence and its impact in intimate partner violence.
- A convenient sample consisted of twenty participants.
- The target population of this study consisted of five clinical psychologists, five counselling psychologists, five social workers and five psychiatrists.

RESULTS

- Women empowerment through psychotherapy can be counterproductive without expressive motives of intimate partner violence
- Psychotherapy creates two common dimensions of female empowerment, that is, economic independence and bargaining power. These may have complex and opposite effects on the prevalence of domestic violence. Specifically, while increasing the bargaining power of women within the household,
- Empowered women become a threat to their partners-bruise their ego
- Reoccurrence of violence to restore their ego
- Violence becomes worse because men feel like they are losing control of their partners

For the Psychologists it raises:

- Uncertainties about empowering the women
- Uncertainties about involving male partners in therapy
- Interventions for couples that have experienced violence have been controversial.
- Some believed that they (psychotherapy interventions) should never be used because of the danger they pose to victims, the message they convey about who is responsible for the violence (both parties)
- It poses the potential for coercing the victim to continue the relationship against her will

CONCLUSION

- Household headship for a woman and woman empowerment will mean more bargaining power for a woman.
- Abused women who have been empowered through psychotherapy experienced more domestic violence.
- Although most abused women do seek help from both informal and formal sources, few interventions for victims of intimate partner violence have been evaluated.
- There is only mixed support for the effectiveness of these interventions in helping women reduce the violence in their lives or improve their well-being, because women have little control over their partners’ violence.
- Research is needed on effective interventions for survivors of intimate partner violence, using larger samples and focusing especially on what is most effective in individual counseling models and couple counselling.