



Prevalence, Pattern and Risk Factors of Dating Violence among Undergraduate Students of a Tertiary Institution within Sokoto Metropolis of Sokoto State, Nigeria

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. Authors HA and OMO conceived the initial idea for the manuscript. Authors MAI, SAM and AA took part in the design of the questionnaire, supervised the data collection and wrote the first draft of the manuscript under the supervision and guidance of authors HA and OMO. All the authors contributed to the revision of the manuscript and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aim: To determine the prevalence, pattern and risk factors of dating violence among undergraduate students of Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto (UDUS).

Methodology: It was a descriptive cross-sectional study involving 340 undergraduate students, selected via multistage sampling technique. A structured self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents, and data were analyzed using IBM SPSS version 26.0 and Microsoft Excel 2016.

Results: The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 29 years, with mean of 22.4±2 years; 218(66.9%) were males, 214(65.6%) were Hausa/Fulani and 266(81.9%) were Muslims. Majority of the respondents have been in a dating relationship for more than one academic year; 106(37.3%) of

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the dating partners were students of the university, of which 26(24.8%) were class mates. Current and lifetime prevalence of dating violence were 56% and 59.5% respectively. Form of dating violence experienced mostly by respondents was emotional/psychological violence [44(22.4%)], physical violence was the least experienced [27(14.04%)]. Up to 93(48%) of the dating violence took place on campus and 68(35%) of the perpetrators were current partners. Factors associated with dating violence included feeling overburdened by partners' demands, and spending too much on partner.

Conclusion: Current and lifetime prevalence of dating violence were high and emotional violence was the commonest form of dating violence experienced by respondents. There is need for school authorities to put in place mechanisms to identify victims of dating violence and come up with measures aimed at stemming the tide of dating violence in university campuses.

Keywords: Dating violence; experience; students; university; Sokoto.

1. INTRODUCTION

Dating is an acceptable social phenomenon among students in most campuses. It is however, often associated with violence, which can be perpetrated by either a male or female partner. It has been reported that up to 22% of college students become victims of dating violence (DV) each year, often with severe consequences [1]. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), dating violence refers to any "behavior in an intimate relationship that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm, including acts of physical aggression, forced sexual intercourse or psychological abuse, including controlling behaviors" [2,3]. Dating violence is behavior used by one partner that represents an attempt to control, dominate or harm the dating partner physically, sexually or psychologically [4]. Dating is a central activity in the social lives of adolescents and university students, [5] and it has also been defined as a relationship in which two individuals share an emotional, romantic, and/or sexual connection beyond a platonic friendship [6].

Youths are in an exploratory period when romantic relationships are first initiated and the risk of abuse by a partner first appears and the university environment provides an avenue for such social interaction. The transition from childhood to adulthood leads to rapid change in behavior and strong emotions, such as having an intimate or close relationship. Conflict handling skills is very important in maintaining a healthy relationship which is often lacking among adolescents; many of them are not patient enough to learn. Growing up in environments where there is constant violence coupled with the lack of conflict handling skills can lead to unhealthy and even violent relationships among adolescents [7]. Violence in dating relationships

is a significant social problem worldwide; in one of the earlier studies conducted on dating violence, nearly one-third of dating couples reported at least one violent episode in their relationship [8].

Dating violence is a common problem affecting both male and female students of different age categories. For instance, in most Nigerian Universities, students are not only victims but also perpetrators of violent behaviors, thus reflecting the rising incidence of violence in the Nigerian society as a whole, with more people experiencing one form of violence or the other in the relationships [9]. Understanding the prevalence, types and associated risk factors of dating violence are the first steps towards uncovering the severity and complexity of the problem in our society. Furthermore, effective interventions may be required to prevent the menace of violence in dating relationships [10].

An international survey conducted in 31 universities across 16 countries revealed that 29% of students reported being violent towards a dating partner within the past year. The survey also reported a bidirectional phenomenon in that male and female students were remarkably similar in the proportion of those who physically assaulted a partner (25% for men and 28% for women) [1].

In the USA, 10-20 % of college students reported physical abuse and 33% reported other kinds of abuse. The form of dating violence that had the highest prevalence was psychological/emotional violence (76%), followed by physical violence (10-40%), while sexual violence was the least reported (3- 11%) [11]. In Spain, 31.3% and 37.4% of males and females respectively have experienced physical violence from their dating partners; verbal aggression was experienced by

up to 92.3% and 93.7% of male and females respectively [12]. In Portugal however, only 5.9% of the adolescents reported dating violence³ and in Italy, 25% to 50% of adolescents reported DV [13]. In south Korea, 60.9% of college student reported DV more than once in the past year; similarly, 55.8% have perpetrated DV against their partners [14]. In South Africa, studies show that 20%–50% of young people have perpetrated violence against their boy or girlfriends and 4%–11% (females/males) have forcibly involved their partners in a sexual act [15,16]. In Nigeria, it was reported that 46.5% of undergraduate students at Obafemi Awolowo University experienced dating violence; higher proportions of females (56.4%) than males (37.7%) experienced dating violence in the preceding 12 months.¹⁰ In Benin City, Edo state, lifetime prevalence of all forms of DV among young adolescents was reported to be 52.3% [17]. Another study among undergraduate students at the University of Maiduguri reported physical violence to be 23.8%, controlling behavior to be 8.8%, while emotional and psychological abuse were 41.6% and 25.6% respectively [18].

One major consequence of dating violence is its impact on the mental health of its victims; this ranges from depression, anxiety, and somatic mental health effects [19]. Research has consistently found that victims of dating violence report more mental health problems [20]. Half of the victims of dating abuse have attempted suicide, compared to 12.5% of non-abused girls and 5.4% of non-abused boys [21]. Others include physical injuries, substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, further domestic violence fear as well as decreases in self-esteem, and relationship satisfaction [19].

Nevertheless, the resultant consequences of violence are also an area worth investigating especially among the youths in an undergraduate setting. Dating violence is an unhealthy, unsafe interpersonal problem between two people but its effects can range from poor academic performance, depression, anxiety, unwanted pregnancies, substance/alcohol use and abuse, low self-esteem, rape and sexual assault, sexually transmitted infection (STI), etc. Exploitation has been shown to be connected with adverse mental and physical health problems, including depression, strain, suicide endeavors, injuries, drug use, eating disorders, and hazardous sexual conduct [22]. It is also known that dating violence has negative consequences on the physical and emotional

health of adolescents, and is a risk factor for violence in adult relationship, thus becoming a possible risk factor for intimate partner violence among married couples [23,24]. The severity of this violent phenomenon and its impact on society makes it necessary to identify its prevalence and the most relevant associated risk factors. This study therefore, aims to determine the prevalence, forms and risk factors of dating violence among students of a tertiary institution within the Sokoto metropolis, north-west Nigeria.

2. Methodology

2.1 Study Area

This study was conducted within Sokoto metropolis in Sokoto State, one of the 36 States in Nigeria. The study was conducted in Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto between October–November 2019. The university, which is located in the north-western region of the country was established in 1975. It has a total of 14 faculties, a postgraduate school, six research centers and a number of academic units. The university presently runs 55 undergraduate and 155 postgraduate programs, with a population of 23,454 students and staff strength of 3417 both academics and non-academics. The university presently has three campuses that are geographically separated; the main campus, city campus and Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital campus. The two campuses aside the main campus are located in the main township of Sokoto.

2.2 Study Population

The study population comprised of undergraduate students of Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto who have been students of the university for at least one year (inclusion criteria); students studying on part time basis were excluded.

2.3 Study Design

Descriptive cross-sectional study design.

2.4 Sample Size Determination

The sample size was calculated using the Cochran formula for estimating sample size in descriptive studies: [25]

$$n = z^2 pq/d^2$$

After adjusting for non-response, a minimum sample size of 340 was obtained.

2.5 Sampling Technique

The respondents were selected using a multistage sampling as follows;

Stage 1: selection of four faculties from the institution using simple random sampling by balloting procedure.

Stage 2: selection of one department from each of the selected faculties using simple random sampling by balloting procedure. Proportionate allocation was done to allocate questionnaires to each of the selected departments.

Stage 3: from each department, a one in three number of participants was selected from each level of study using stratified sampling technique until desired sample size is obtained.

2.6 Instrument of Data Collection

Data was collected using a set of pretested structured questionnaire which was uploaded on open data kit (ODK) version 1.23.2. The questionnaire had five sections with a total of 51 stem questions; Section A: contained questions on socio-demographic profile of respondents; section B: prevalence of dating violence; section C: forms of dating violence; section D: risk factors of dating violence and section E: Respondent's behavior following experience on dating violence. The questionnaire was validated for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha, and had a co-efficient of 0.71.

2.7 Method of Data Collection

Data was collected by Questionnaire survey using android devices

2.8 Personnel

Five medical students were used as research assistants for the data collection. They were trained by the Principal Researcher for two days; each training session lasted for 2 hours. The training covered general overview of dating violence, general principles of research, objectives of the study, conduct of research, interpersonal communication skills and administration of research instruments.

2.9 Pretest

The questionnaire was pretested amongst students of Sokoto state Polytechnic located

about 30 kilometers away from the study area. Necessary amendments were made thereafter.

2.10 Data Analysis

Data collected were manually checked for completeness and then entered into the computer. Data was exported from the ODK server to Microsoft excel 2016, and was thereafter transferred to IBM SPSS version 26 for analysis after electronic data cleaning. Continuous variables were summarized as means and standard deviation while categorical variables were summarized as frequency and percentages. Chi-square test was used to test the significance of association between categorical variables and logistic regression was used to test for the risk factors of dating violence. The level of statistical significance was set at 5% ($p < 0.05$).

2.11 Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval was obtained from the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital Research and Ethics Committee. Permission was obtained from the authorities of the university while individual informed consent was obtained from the respondents before the questionnaire was administered. All information sought were handled with utmost confidentiality.

3. RESULTS

Three hundred and forty questionnaires were administered to the participants, 326(95.9%) were found to be satisfactorily filled, 14(4.1%) questionnaires were excluded from analysis because the respondents could not complete the interview, due to time constraints and other competing academic activities.

The mean age of the respondents was 22.4 ± 2 years, with up to 252(77.1%) of them between the ages of 20 to 24 years. Two hundred and eighteen respondents were males (66.9%), 214(65.5%) Hausa/Fulani and 266(81.9%) Muslims [Table 1].

Up to 283(86.8%) of the respondents were currently in a dating relationship and the mean duration of dating was 17.64 ± 12 months, 106(37.3%) of the partners were students of the same institution and 26(24.8%) were classmates [Table 2].

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in Sokoto metropolis

Variables	Frequency(n) N=326	Percentage (%)
Age groups (in years)		
<20	26	7.9
20-24	252	77.1
25-29	49	15.0
Mean age = 22.41± 2		
Gender		
Male	218	66.9
Female	108	33.1
Tribe		
Hausa/Fulani	214	65.6
Yoruba	62	19.0
Igbo	24	7.4
Others	26	8.0
Region		
Islam	266	81.9
Christianity	55	16.9
Others	4	1.2
Department		
Mathematics	68	20.9
Arabic	32	9.8
Primary education	105	32.2
Political science	120	37.1
Level of study		
200	80	24.6
300	140	43.1
400	105	32.3

Table 2. Dating history of respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
Are you currently dating?		
Yes	283	86.8
No	43	13.2
Duration of dating(months)		
<6	57	20.4
6-12	64	22.9
13-24	106	37.9
25-36	38	13.6
>36	15	5.2
Mean duration = 17.64+/-12		
Location of dating partner		
Same institution	106	37.3
Other institution	87	30.6
Outside the educational institution	91	32.1
Who is the dating partner?		
Classmate	26	24.8
Course mate	25	23.8
School mate	39	37.1
Lecturer	1	1.0
Someone else	14	13.3

Source: Author, 2020

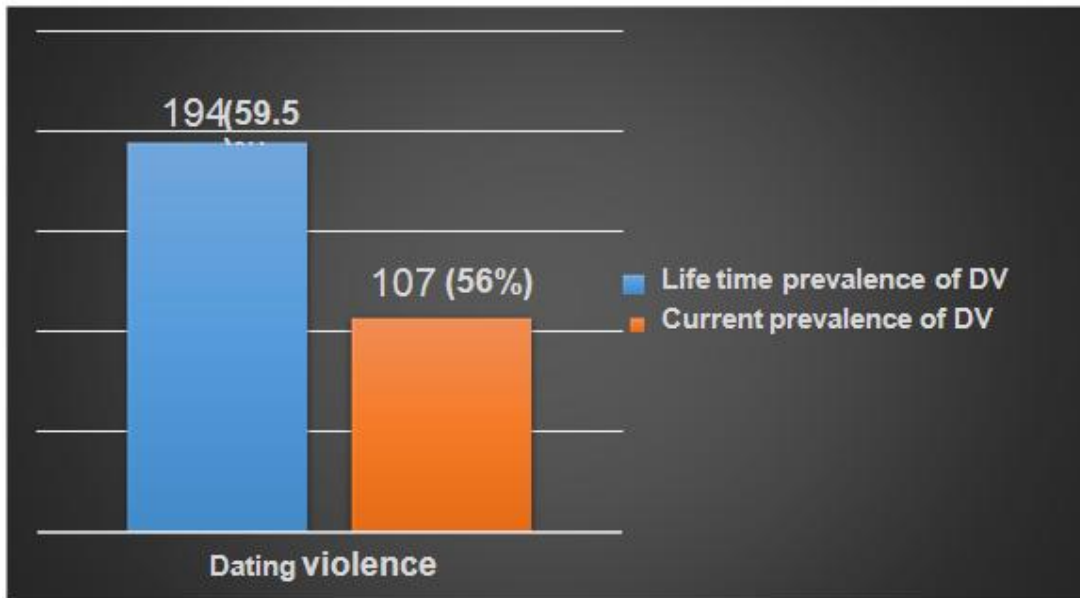


Fig. 1. Lifetime and current dating prevalence of DV among respondents

One hundred and ninety-four (59.5%) of the respondents had experienced DV in their life time, while 107(56%) experienced it in the past 12 months [Fig. 1].

Up to 107(65%) respondents said the violence was perpetrated by their previous dating partners. Regarding perpetration of DV by the respondents, only 74(22.9%) of the respondents had perpetrated violence against their dating

partners; 58(17.9%) of them were males and 16(5.0%) were females.

Among those that have ever perpetrated violence against their partners, 38(52%) of them admitted it was against their previous partners [Fig. 2].

Almost half [93(48%)], of all the dating violence were perpetrated in the campus.

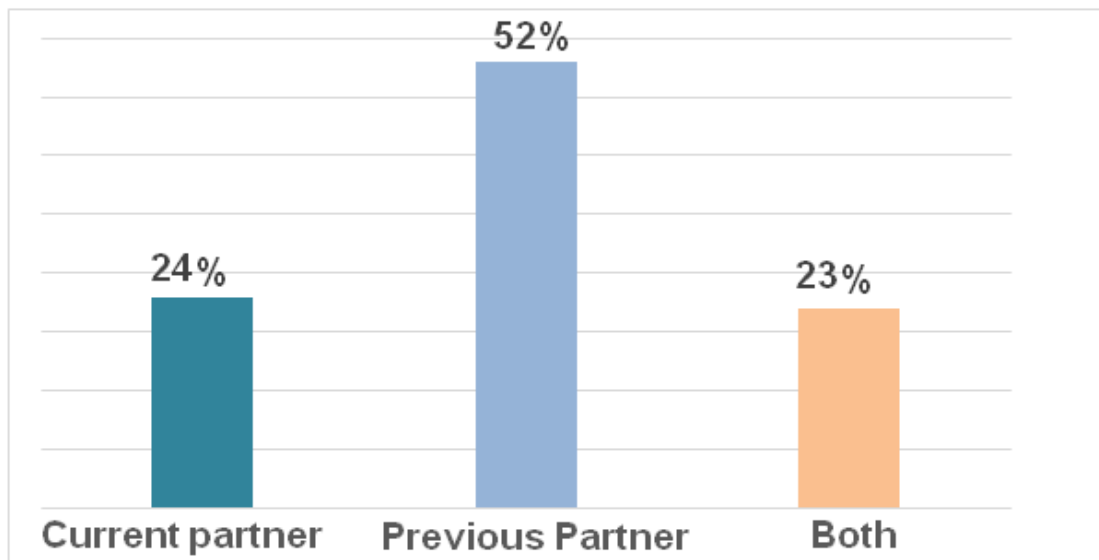


Fig. 2. Victims of DV perpetrated by respondents

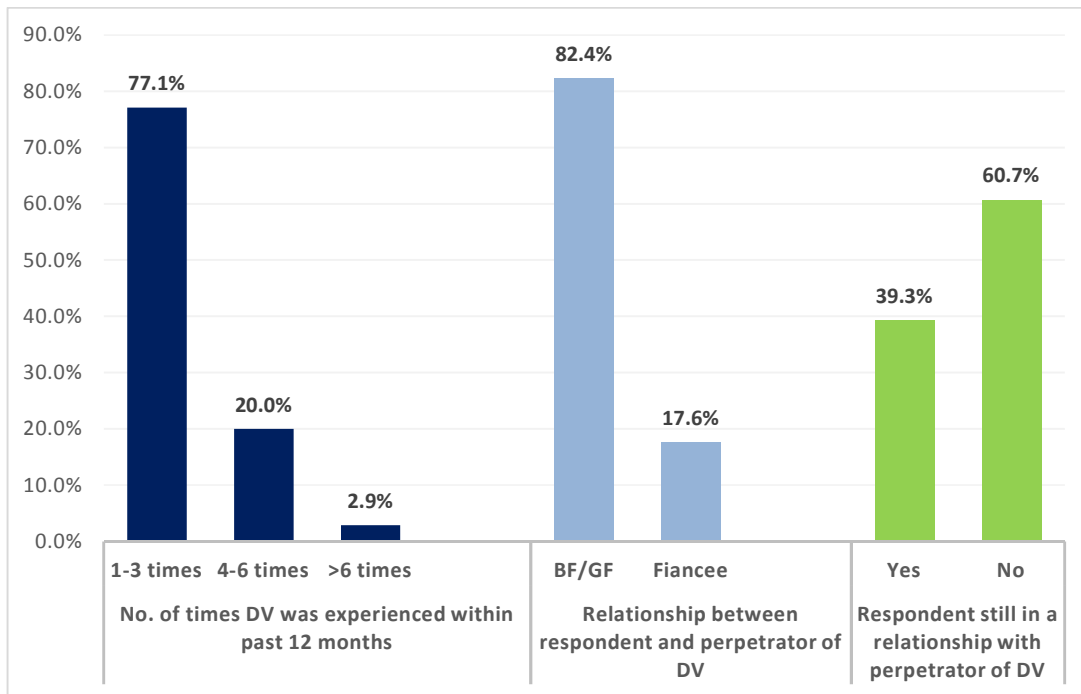


Fig. 3. Frequency of the DV and nature of the relationship between respondent and perpetrator

Table 3. Pattern of DV among respondents

Type of violence	Yes n=326 (%)
Controlling behaviors	
Control my movement	134(54.3)
Control my phone	78(31.6)
Control my finances	43(17.4)
Control the way I dress	95(38.5)
Control the type of people Interact with/hang with	167(67.6)
Physical violence	
Beating	20(16.1)
Slapping	35(28.2)
Kicking	18(14.5)
Throwing objects	39(31.5)
Pushing, grabbing or shoving	59(47.6)
Attack me with a weapon	21(16.9)
Destroy my properties	58(46.8)
Emotional/psychological	
Name-calling	110(55.7)
Low self-worth, humiliates	89(44.3)
Threatens	119(59.2)
Public embarrassments	50(24.9)
Sexual violence	
Forceful sex	19(15.4)
Attempted forceful sex	31(25.2)
Unwanted sexual touch	78(63.4)
Unwanted sexual gestures	85(69.1)
Electronic violence	
Abusive and controlling phone calls	91(50)
Posted pictures I did not approve online	31(17)
Sends humiliating repeated text	124(68.1)

Source: Author, 2020

Among those that experienced DV, majority of them [81(77%)] experienced it 1 to 3 times in the last 12 months and in terms of relationship with the perpetrator, 164(82.4%) of the respondents said they were violated by their boyfriends/girlfriends, 81(39.4%) of the victims were still in a relationship with the perpetrators [Fig. 3].

The most common controlling behavior experienced by respondents was controlling the type of people they interacted with or hung out with [167(67.6%)] and the commonest physical violence was pushing, grabbing or shoving [59(47.6%)], while for emotional violence, threats were the most prevalent forms experienced by respondents [119(59.2%)]. Regarding sexual violence, the commonest form experienced by the respondents was unwanted sexual gestures [Table 3].

Factors significantly associated with DV were gender ($X^2=14.219$, $p<0.001$), tribe ($X^2=8.311$, $p=0.039$), level of study ($X^2=38.016$, $p<0.001$), faculty ($X^2=11.518$, $p=0.009$), respondents feeling overburdened by partner's demands ($X^2=15.320$, $p=0.001$), feeling pressured to keep up good appearances ($X^2=16.899$, $p=0.001$) respondents feeling they spend a lot on their partner ($X^2=17.686$, $p=0.001$) [Table 4a].

Other factors associated with DV include respondent's feeling partner spends a lot on them ($X^2=1.575$, $p=0.001$), partners accusing respondents of making suspicious phone calls, chats ($X^2=7.978$, $p=0.005$) and consumption of codeine containing cough syrups ($X^2=6.625$, $p=0.010$). [Table 4b].

Out of the factors associated with DV, significant predictors of DV were male gender (aOR=2.273, $p=0.004$, 95% CI= 1.292-4.004), being in faculty of sciences (aOR=0.454, $p=0.036$, 95% CI= 0.217-0.949), FAIS (aOR=0.292, $p=0.024$, 95% CI= 0.101-0.851) and feeling overburdened by partner's demands (aOR=0.419, $p=0.028$, 95% CI=0.193-0.909) [Table 5].

Among those that said DV affected them in a way ($n=119$), 70(58.8%) said it affected them psychologically, 33(27.7%) said it affected their academic performance and 20(16.8%) said it led them to substance abuse. Regarding what they did following the violence, 81(41.7%) did nothing, 47(24.2%) reported while 80(41.2%) ended the relationship. Among those that did nothing, 40(49.4%) forgave the partners while 14(17.3%)

were afraid of the consequences of doing so. For those that reported, up to 38(80.9%) reported to their friends, 2(4.3%) to parents/family members, however, none reported to either lecturer or law enforcement agents. Thirty-three (41.2%) of the respondents said they reconciled and continued with the relationship after initial break-up and among the reasons given were that the partner apologized 16(48.5%) and because they loved the partner 10(30.3%). [Table 6].

4. DISCUSSION

The study was conducted among undergraduate students of Usman Danfodiyo University to determine the prevalence, pattern and risk factors associated with dating violence.

The mean age of the respondents was 22.4 ± 2 years which is similar to the findings of some studies conducted among undergraduate students of some universities [1,10]. The similarities in the mean age in these studies may not be unrelated to the fact that this is the age when courtship behaviors are initiated and the university provides youths ample opportunity to go into relationships. Two-thirds of the respondents were Hausa/Fulani and the majority were Muslims and this is not surprising considering the fact that the institution is located in an area that is predominantly inhabited by Hausa Muslims.

In this study, more than half (56%) of the respondents had experienced dating violence in the past 12 months and majority of them (77%) experienced DV 1 to 3 times during the same period. This finding is higher than findings from a study conducted in Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria where it was reported that 46.5% of the respondents experienced dating violence in the preceding 12 months, [10] however, this difference may likely be due to the fact that the study mainly focused on campus-based relationships. The prevalence observed in our study is also on the high side when compared with findings in an international survey on university students which reported the prevalence of between 17 to 45% [1]. The lifetime experience of DV in this study was 59.5% which is higher than the 22% reported in a worldwide survey [1] and the 52.3% reported in a study in Edo state, Nigeria [17]. The high prevalence of DV in this study could have serious implications on the students' academic performance and mental health status. It has also been shown that violence among

adolescents and young adults in dating relationships can lead to severe violence later in life, such as in marital relationships [18]. About a quarter (22.9%) of the respondents have also perpetrated violence against their dating partners; victims of dating violence have also been shown to perpetrate violence in previous studies [1,12,26]. These findings showed that DV is not unidirectional; in fact it is possible that most violence experienced by dating partners occurred as a retaliation for violence perpetrated by the eventual victims of the violence. About half of the DV observed in this study were perpetrated on campus and majority of the violent acts were perpetrated by boyfriends/girlfriends; only a small proportion of the violence was perpetrated by fiancé/fiancée, which suggests that there is less violence in relationships where marriage is the ultimate goal.

Regarding the pattern of DV, this study revealed that the most predominant forms of violence experienced by respondents were emotional/psychological (22.4%), controlling behaviors (21%), electronic violence (21%) and the least form was physical violence (14.04%). The proportion of respondents who experienced emotional violence in this study is much lower than what was observed in a study conducted in University of Maiduguri, where emotional violence was reported to be up to 41.6%; the study however, reported lower figures for controlling behaviors and physical violence [18]. This is probably because of a possible difference in the mental health status between students of University of Maiduguri and the study center (UDUS), since Maiduguri is the epicenter of "Boko Haram" insurgency and the university has been under sporadic attacks which could affect the mental health of the students, thus, making them more vulnerable to emotional violence. The findings of sexual and physical violence were consistent with findings in Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife Nigeria, where physical violence was reported to be 12% and sexual violence 21.5% [10]. The relatively low prevalence of physical violence in these studies could be due to existing laws in Nigerian universities where zero tolerance to sexual and physical abuses is the norm whether it is between dating partners or not, therefore, students are more careful in ensuring that they do not indulge in any of these abuses. The most common controlling behavior experienced by respondents was controlling the type of people they interacted with or hung out with (67%). This could limit the ability of dating partners to participate in academic group

discussions with colleagues of opposite sex, thus impacting negatively on their academic performance. The commonest physical violence observed in this study was pushing, grabbing or shoving (47.6%), however, it is much lower than what was reported in a study conducted in Edo state, Nigeria, where up to 71.7% of those that experienced physical violence said their partners either pushed or shoved them away [17]. Although these forms of violence are often considered as mild, they could ultimately result in some injuries to the victims. About 43% of the respondents experienced sexual violence in the form of unwarranted sexual gestures and unwanted sexual touch, however, 15% were forced to have sexual intercourse. The proportion of those forced to have sexual intercourse is almost in keeping with the 12% observed in a study in Ile Ife, south-west Nigeria [10]. A study on DV conducted among young persons in Benin city, Nigeria however, reported that up 84(93.3%) of those who experienced sexual violence (n=90) were forced to have sexual intercourse [17]. The very high proportion of victims of forced sex observed in the study in Edo state could be because the study was conducted among young persons in the community, which could have included people with aberrant behaviors in dating relationships. It has been shown that sexual violence can threaten the physical and psychological well-being of the victims and may result in physical, mental, behavioral, and social consequences, depending on the circumstances and gravity, the consequences of which may be severe and long-lasting [27].

Factors significantly associated with DV include gender, tribe, level of study, faculty, respondents feeling overburdened by partner's demands, feeling pressured to keep up good appearances and respondents feeling they spend a lot on their partner, partners accusing respondents of making suspicious phone calls/chats among others. On multivariate analysis using step-wise logistic regression, the strongest risk factor of DV was feeling overburdened by partner's demand followed by gender. Those who felt overburdened by their partners' demands were found to be three times more likely to experience DV (aOR=3.072, $p<0.001$). The fact that feeling overburdened by partner's demands was a predictor of DV suggests that dating relationships where sexual demands are exceptionally high are more likely to result in violence. This is probably because once a partner feels overburdened by the demands of his/her partner, he/she may likely reject further demands from

Table 4a. Factors associated with dating violence

Variable	Experience of DV		Statistical test/ p-value
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
Age (years)			
<20	65(55.6)	52(47.4)	$\chi^2=2.778$
20-24	112(60.2)	74(39.8)	p=0.253
25-29	17(73.9)	6(26.1)	
Gender			
Male	114(52.3)	104(47.7)	$\chi^2=14.219$
Female	80(74.1)	28(25.9)	P<0.001
Tribe			
Hausa/Fulani	116(54.2)	98(45.8)	$\chi^2=8.311$
Yoruba	44(71.0)	18(29.0)	p=0.039
Igbo	18(75.0)	6(25.0)	
Others	16(61.5)	10(38.5)	
Faculty			
Sciences	46(67.6)	22(32.4)	$\chi^2=11.518$
FAIS	26(81.3)	6(18.8)	p=0.009
Education & Extension	58(55.8)	46(44.2)	
Social Sciences	63(52.1)	58(47.9)	
Level of study			
200	47(58.8)	33(41.3)	$\chi^2=38.016$
300	60(43.2)	79(56.8)	P<0.001
400	86(81.9)	19(18.1)	
Location of dating partner			
Same institution	61(57.5)	45(42.5)	$\chi^2=3.303$
Other institutions	51(58.6)	36(41.4)	p=0.194
Outside of educational institution	63(69.2)	28(30.8)	
Is your partner the jealous type?			
Yes	163 (89.6)	19 (10.4)	$\chi^2=1.175$
No	30 (83.3)	6 (16.7)	p=0.278
How many people have you ever dated?			
1-3	131 (61.5)	82 (38.5)	$\chi^2=3.737$
4-6	27 (67.5)	13 (32.5)	p=0.291
7-9	3 (75)	1 (25)	
>9	4 (100)	0 (0)	
Do you currently have more than one dating partner?			
Yes	51 (68.9)	23 (31.1)	$\chi^2=2.593$
No	129 (58.4)	92 (41.6)	p=0.107
Do you think your partner has more than one dating partner?			
Yes	62 (63.3)	36 (36.7)	$\chi^2=0.240$
No	117 (60.3)	77 (39.7)	p=0.624
Have you ever felt overburdened by your partner's demands?			
Yes	68 (78.2)	19 (21.8)	$\chi^2=15.320$
No	125(54.1)	106 (48.6)	p=0.001
Have you ever felt pressured to keep up appearances?			
Yes	71(87.7)	20 (12.3)	$\chi^2=16.899$
No	121(53.1)	107 (46.9)	p=0.001
How will you rate your financial status compared to your dating partner?			
I am richer than my partner	58 (54.2)	49 (45.8)	
My partner is richer	83 (67.5)	40 (32.5)	$\chi^2=4.253$
We are equal	51 (60.7)	33 (39.3)	p=0.119
Do you feel you spend a lot on your dating partner?			
Yes	59 (81.9)	13 (18.1)	$\chi^2=17.686$
No	135 (54.3)	113 (45.7)	p=0.001

Source: Author, 2020

Table 4b. Factors associated with dating violence

Variable	Experience of DV		Statistical test/p- value
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
Do you feel your partner spends a lot on you?			
Yes	45 (67.2)	22 (32.8)	$\chi^2=1.575$
No	148 (58.7)	104 (41.3)	p=0.001
Does your partner feel he/she spends a lot on You?			
Yes	43 (75.4)	14 (24.6)	$\chi^2=6.480$
No	150 (57.3)	112 (42.7)	p=0.011
Has your partner ever accused you of Multiple dating?			
Yes	85 (75.2)	28 (24.8)	$\chi^2=2.244$
No	85 (66.4)	43 (33.6)	p=0.137
Has your partner ever accused you of excessive mingling with the opposite gender?			
Yes	68 (71.6)	27 (28.4)	$\chi^2=0.082$
No	102 (69.9)	44 (30.1)	p=0.775
Has your partner ever accused you of making suspicious phone calls, chats?			
Yes	110 (77.5)	32 (22.5)	$\chi^2=7.978$
No	60 (60.6)	39 (39.4)	p=0.005
Has your partner ever caught with Multiple dating?			
Yes	26 (70.3)	11 (29.7)	$\chi^2=0.035$
No	102 (71.8)	40 (28.2)	p=0.851
Has your partner ever caught you with excessive mingling with the opposite gender?			
Yes	49 (67.1)	24 (32.9)	$\chi^2=1.163$
No	79 (74.5)	27 (25.5)	p=0.281
Has your partner ever caught with making suspicious phone calls, chats?			
Yes	77 (76.2)	24(23.8)	$\chi^2=2.544$
No	51 (65.4)	27 (34.6)	p=0.111
Does your partner consume alcohol?			
Yes	13 (81.3)	3 (18.7)	$\chi^2=1.561$
No	18 (94.7)	1 (5.3)	P=0.312
Does your partner consume codeine?			
Yes	2 (100)	0 (0)	$\chi^2=0.274$
No	29 (87.9)	4 (12.1)	P=1.000
Does your partner consume marijuana?			
Yes	4 (100)	0 (0)	$\chi^2=0.583$
No	27 (87.1)	4 (12.9)	P=1.000
Does your partner consume hashish pipe?			
Yes	8 (100)	0 (0)	$\chi^2=1.33$
No	23 (85.2)	4 (14.8)	P=0.553
Does your partner consume other drugs?			
Yes	13 (92.9)	1 (7.1)	$\chi^2=0.423$
No	28 (90.3)	3 (9.7)	Fischer's Exact= 0.635
Do you consume alcohol?			
Yes	14 (93.3)	1 (6.7)	$\chi^2=1.562$
No	22 (78.6)	6 (21.4)	p=0.211
Do you consume codeine?			
Yes	5 (55.6)	4 (44.4)	$\chi^2=6.625$
No	31 (91.2)	3 (8.8)	p=0.010
Do you consume marijuana?			
Yes	9 (100)	0 (0)	$\chi^2=2.213$
No	27 (79.4)	7 (20.6)	p=0.137
Do you consume hashish pipe?			
Yes	9 (90.0)	1 (10)	$\chi^2=0.377$
No	27 (81.8)	6 (18.2)	p=0.53
Do you consume other drugs?			

Variable	Experience of DV		Statistical test/p- value
	Yes (%)	No (%)	
Yes	17 (89.5)	2 (10.5)	$\chi^2=0.827$
No	19 (79.2)	5 (20.8)	$p=0.363$

Source: Author, 2020

Table 5. Logistic regression showing risk factors of dating violence

Risk factor	p-value	aOR	95% CI for aOR	
			Lower	Upper
Gender				
male	0.003	0.436	0.252	0.752
Feeling overburdened by partner's demands?	0<0.001	3.072	1.663	5.677

Source: Author, 2020

Table 6. Respondent's behavior after experience of DV

Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
Did the violence affect you in any way?	119	61.3
If yes above, how?	70	58.8
It affected me psychologically	33	27.7
It affected my academic performance	20	16.8
It affected my physical health	7	2.1
I abused and misused drugs	0	0
Suicidal thoughts	32	26.9
Others		
If you have experienced dating violence before, what did you do?		
Nothing	81	41.8
Reported	47	24.2
Ended the relationship	80	41.2
If you did nothing following the violence, why? (n=81)		
I was afraid (of what he/she might do, what others will say)	14	17.3
I forgave them	40	49.3
He/she has done a lot of good things to me	23	28.4
They have changed their attitude	23	28.4
If you reported the abuse, to whom? (n=47)		
Parents or family member	2	4.3
Friend	38	80.8
Lecturer	0	0
School authority	1	2.1
Law enforcement	0	0
Do you think dating should be banned to prevent dating violence?	49	25
If you separated from your partner following the violence, did you reconcile and continued with the relationship? (n=80)	33	41.2
If you have reconciled following the violence, why? (n=33)		
He/she apologized	16	48.5
I love him/her	10	30.3
Don't know	3	9.1
Others	2	6.1
If you have not reconciled following the violence, why? (n=47)		
We/she never apologized	13	27.7
I don't love him/her	11	23.4
He/she has no right to violate my rights	24	51.1
Don't know	9	19.1
Others	16	34.0

Source: Author, 2020

the partner and this may likely lead to frustration on the part of the partner; the frustration will most often than not, result in violence even from mere misunderstanding that can easily be resolved

without violence. This underscores the need for dating partners to as much as possible refrain from excessive demands from their partners. Male students were found to be about two times

less likely to experience DV compared to female students (aOR=0.463, p=0.003). This might be explained by the patriarchal nature of our society where men tend to dominate women in terms of some social roles and privileges; [28] this likely explains why the female students are at higher risk of experiencing DV. Although the use of alcohol and other drugs such as codeine containing cough syrup were not significant risk factors of DV in this study, other studies observed their significant association with DV. For example, a study conducted by Luthra and Gidyez among college men and women showed significant association between men's use of alcohol and partner violence [29]. Also, in a study conducted by Watkins et al., drugs and alcohol abuse were found to be significant predictors of intimate partner violence [30]. These varying observations might be due to the sociocultural differences between respondents in the two studies.

Regarding the behavior of respondents following their experiences of dating violence, up to 41.8% of them did nothing about it; only 24.2% reported or sought some help from someone and this is lower when compared to the findings of a study conducted by Ijadunola et al, who reported that 90% of the males and over 40% female respondents actually sought for help [10]. Underreporting of violence observed in this study could be attributed fear of retribution, shame and general lack of awareness among respondents and possibly general population. Among those that did nothing, about half of them said it was because they had forgiven the perpetrators while 28.4% said it was because the perpetrators did a lot of good things for them in the past and would not want to abuse that benevolence. Additional reasons for doing nothing following experience of DV could also be that, partners in a relationship whether as dating partners or intimate partners probably see violence in such relationships as normal, especially when the violence is mild, thus they feel there is no need to do something about it. A study conducted by Oche et al., also observed that up to 61.3% of victims of intimate partner violence did nothing following their experience of violence [31]. The higher proportion observed in their study could probably be due to the fact that their study was conducted among intimate partners in marital relationships, who traditionally are encouraged to remain in such abusive relationships without disclosing their experiences to anyone. It has also been observed that victims of DV or intimate partner violence fail to report to police because the police

often dismiss the case and urge the partners to go and settle it quietly within the family cycle [32]. This behavior of not doing anything after experiencing DV further predisposes the victims to greater risk of being violated the more, which might eventually lead to injuries, depression, suicidal ideation etc.

In this study, most respondents disagreed with their partners having right to violate them and over one-third did not reconcile with their partners because they believed they had no right to violate them. Most of them also opined that school authorities should do something about DV before it gets out of hand.

5. CONCLUSION

The findings from this study revealed that the prevalence of dating violence among the study population was high. Emotional violence was the most common form of violence, followed by sexual violence with physical violence being the least common. Significant risk factors of DV were female gender and making excessive demands from dating partners. The majority of the respondents had positive attitude towards dating violence.

The high prevalence of DV observed in this study underscores the need for university authorities in the country to mount vigorous awareness campaigns in our campuses on the dangers inherent in DV. There is also the need for university authorities to institute interventions that promote reporting of dating violence, especially to break down barriers to reporting sexual violence. Some limitation encountered included shyness among female respondents due to the socio-cultural milieu of the study area and the fear of been looked down. Further research on same topic more awareness should be created about dating violence as social health talk before research should be conducted.

CONSENT

All authors declare that 'written informed consent was obtained from all study participants. A copy of the consent form is available for review by the Editorial office/Chief Editor/Editorial Board members of this journal.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

Ethical approval was sought from research ethics committee of the Usmanu Danfodiyo University Teaching Hospital, sokoto.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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