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SOCIOLOGY | RESEARCH ARTICLE

Socio-cultural norms encouraging violence against women (VAW) from a popular ethnic group in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria and the roles of schools in preventing VAW

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Abstract: Existing literature has shown that violence against women (VAW) is still common in Africa. Harmful traditional cultural norms have contributed to VAW. The identification and the awareness of the negative effect of these socio-cultural norms (SCN) will reduce VAW in Nigeria. This work looks at the socio-cultural norms (SCN) that lead to violence against rural and sub-urban Nigerian women. A mixed research approach involving 400 people from Ikaland of different age levels, marital status, and educational attainment was adopted. More than 75% of the respondents agreed that blaming the wife for her husband's angry outburst, not prospering, and his mysterious death are the leading promoters of VAW. Others are; that a woman is not accorded respect if she is not married, and it is not proper for a wife to deed any landed property in her name. Participants suggested that schools could minimise these SCN by using the teaching-learning process, mass media, and professional academic associations to carry out public campaigns. This investigation adds to the current body of information on SCN that promote VAW in the various ethnic groups and provides ways the schools

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

C. O. Alordiah holds a PhD in measurement and Evaluation. She is currently a lecturer at the department of Science Education, University of Delta Agbor Nigeria. Dr Alordiah is a member of many professional bodies at the national and international levels including gender studies association of Nigeria. Her current research focuses are on issues in development and validation of measurement instruments, gender related issues, assessment in early years, ethics in research, and use of technology in the learning environment. Dr Alordiah has a keen interest in the experiences of women, particularly, those that are marginalizes and are currently suffering from physical, emotional, sexual, and economic abuses.

C. O. Alordiah

PUBLIC INTEREST STATEMENT

The study reports for the first time, the socio-cultural norms (SCNs) that encourage Violence Against Women (VAW) among the people of Ika ethnic group, in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This was targeted at helping to increase the awareness of the common SCNs that promote VAW among ethnic groups in Nigeria. Finding from the study shows that the leading socio-cultural norms that promote VAW in Ikaland include blaming wife for husband's furious out-burst, not flourishing, and mysterious death; a woman is not respected if she is not married; and a wife cannot deed landed property in her name. The study suggests public campaigns through teaching-learning, mass media, and academic associations to eradicate these SCNs. We think it will bring researchers, policymakers, and service providers together to discover ways of discouraging VAW. We also encourage educational stakeholders to put the recommendations into practice.

can contribute to combating these norms. Educational stakeholders should implement the recommended school ways of eliminating these identified socio-cultural norms.

1. Introduction

In Nigeria, gender discrimination is mostly due to cultural reasons originating from a patriarchal socio-cultural framework. According to Afro-cultural apologists, what is considered injustice against women in Africa is rooted in African culture. They contend that women's subjugation is inherent in African social morality and that these inequities are beneficial to women (Olayanju et al., 2013). Traditional inheritance patterns, male-child preference, and the traditional marital system have influenced women's societal perspective. Patriarchy and discrimination against women exist in Nigeria due to widespread cultural bias against women and, more importantly, the logic of men's superiority embedded in the people's subconscious. It is practically forbidden to conceive of a woman as the leader of a tribe. Men are allowed to marry many wives as desired. In contrast, women are not allowed to be close to male friends (Essien and Ukpong, 2013). Traditional Nigerian values significantly impact Nigerian social life and gender roles (Para-Mallam, 2010). Several studies have emphasised Nigeria's patriarchal society and its negative repercussions, particularly on women (Bako and Syed, 2018; Owoyemi and Olusanya, 2014). In the patriarchal framework, harmful and customary cultural behaviours contribute to women's suffering and frequently culminate in violence.

Violence against women has exposed women and girls to emotional and psychological trauma with its attendant health challenges. These health issues have led to increased research work on violence against women (VAW). Violence against women in Africa is high (Amoakohene, 2004; Olayanju et al., 2013). Violence against women (VAW) is any physical, sexual, emotional, and economic violence inflicted on a woman's partner. Physical violence includes slapping, kicking, pushing, and threatening with dangerous weapons. Sexual violence includes forcefully having sex with the partner and making a partner perform a sexual act that she disapproves of. Emotional violence includes insult, humiliation, shouting, and damaging things of importance to the woman. Economic abuse includes preventing a partner from getting a job, earning money, taking or controlling her money against her will, and not providing for the partner even when he has enough funds. Discrimination against widows includes harmful ritual practices, disinheritance, inequality, and degradation that widows face (Anitha, 2019; Fulu et al., 2013; National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria], 2019). The most common type of violence found among women in Nigeria are domestic abuse, violence and dehumanised practices against widows, and rape (Ezejiofor, 2011). The national survey carried out in Nigeria by the National Population Commission (NPC) in 2018 revealed that 31% of women aged 15–49 had experienced violence. It further revealed that 36% of all married women experience spousal physical, sexual or emotional violence, with a higher incidence of 31% in 2008 than 25% in 2013. About 29% reportedly had sustained injuries; cuts, bruises, aches, and deep wounds. In addition, 55% of women who had experienced physical or sexual violence never sought external help. Their primary source of help was their families (73%). Furthermore, about 28% of the respondents justified wife-beating. The justification of wife-beating for rural, urban women and women with no education was 38%, 16%, and 43%, respectively (National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria], 2019).

One factor constantly cited as pertinent to VAW is socio-cultural norms (Benebo et al., 2018; Illika, 2005; Mitra & Singh, 2007; WHO, 2009). Socio-cultural norms in places like Nigeria prevent abused women from reporting cases of VAW to the outside world (Amoakohene, 2004; Kasturirangan et al., 2004). Socio-cultural norms have shaped young women's power to exercise

gender equality within their intimate relationships (Davies, 2019). Despite the strong influence of modernity, patriarchy and male dominance are common in Nigeria (Olayanju et al., 2013). Cultural values in an area have been cited as a key impediment to gender equality efforts (Osamor and Grady, 2018; Policy Legal Advocacy Centre [PLAC]). Cultural norms are the most significant obstacle to Nigerian women's empowerment (Sarumi, Faluyi, and Okeke-Uzodike, 2019).

Socio-cultural norms are unspoken rules or expected behaviour that sets social standards of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour in a specific culture or social group. Norms define how people think, which regularly become practices when put into action. External and internal pressures like feelings of guilt or shame, social disapproval, and punishment pressure people to conform to certain norms (Durlauf & Blume, 2008). The patriarchy and male dominance theoretical framework and the feminist theories emphasise that women's subordinate position and male control over females promote violence against women (Jewkes et al., 2002; Okenwa et al., 2009). The cultural theory of violence insists that norms, customs, and traditions provide an enabling environment for VAW to thrive (Jewkes et al., 2002).

Studies have suggested that VAW prevention programs should focus on transforming gender norms and attitudes (Gacia-Mareno et al., 2015). To address VAW, there should be a good understanding of the various forms of violence and the specific cultural beliefs that promote violence in a particular area (Gacia-Mareno et al., 2015). It is so because socio-cultural norms that promote VAW differ by ethnic groups (Nwabunike & Tenkorang, 2015). Hence, intervention addressing cultural and social practices for VAW prevention should focus on sub-groups rather than the whole population (Nwabunike & Tenkorang, 2015; WHO, 2009). Hence, identifying socio-cultural norms that promote VAW based on ethnic groups is crucial.

However, identifying socio-cultural norms that promote VAW at the ethnic level has received minimal attention in Nigeria, even when the country is the most populated in Africa, with about 50% being female. Though problematic behaviours associated with patriarchy and violence against women may be well studied and known in developed countries, such is not the case for socio-cultural norms that promote VAW in the numerous ethnic groups that make up Nigeria. An earlier study identified some Igbo idioms that encourage gender stereotypes in Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria but did not identify socio-cultural norms that encourage VAW (Ezeifeka, 2016). At the global level, the WHO identified some socio-cultural norms on child maltreatment, intimate partner violence (IPV), suicide and self-harm, sexual violence, youth violence, and community violence (WHO, 2009). Balogun and John-Akinola (2014) carried out a study in the Akinyele Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria (a Yoruba speaking people). The study identified the causes, consequences, and coping strategies of women experiencing intimate partner violence (IPV) and recognised social norms as one of the causes of IPV. The norms identified were that women should give full respect and regard to their in-laws, and women should agree with what all their partners say and do. Although some of these studies identified some socio-cultural norms that promote VAW/IPV, these were only mentioned in passing.

Furthermore, the studies did not extend to eliminating the norms in ethnic groups with low literacy levels, like the Ika ethnic group in Nigeria, generally known to comprise rural and or sub-urban communities. Consequently, there is a need for a study that will make available in the literature detailed information on the socio-cultural norms that encourage VAW at the ethnic level. This information should include how individuals and social groups can contribute to the extermination of these norms.

Many education theories have emphasised the link between education and behaviour change. Bandura's Social Learning Theory posits the relevance of social circumstances in how people make sense of the world around them (Bandura, 2001). According to the Social Cognitive Theory, personal, behavioural, and environmental factors interact as people make decisions. Personal characteristics such as knowledge and attitudes influence how a person interprets the world. The type of knowledge an individual has will determine the outcome of his behaviours.

Both theories emphasise the link between a person's cognitive and social realms. Behaviour change can be induced by changing how the individual processes input information from the surroundings. Norms influence how people think, which become behaviour when put into action. Both theories advocated that when individuals acquire knowledge of the evils of these socio-cultural norms (SCN) on women, it will influence their attitude towards gender equality. According to the Behavioral Learning Theory, we can influence people's behaviour by modifying their environment to encourage certain actions while discouraging others, known as conditioning. One of the propounders of the Behavioural Learning Theory, Skinner, believes that teachers can manipulate the environment to create desired behaviour (Jensen, 2018). The education sector can serve as a vehicle to create awareness of the negative effects of these SCNs on women. This measure will reduce VAG greatly.

Delta State is one of Nigeria's 36 states, with three senatorial districts. The people in Delta North Senatorial District (DNSD) are the Aniomas comprising the Aniocha, Ndokwa, Oshimili and Ika ethnic groups. There are nine Local Government Areas (LGAs) in DNSD. The Ika-speaking people occupy two LGAs: Ika South and Ika North-East, of 117.45 square kilometres and 349,879 people (National Bureau of Statistics, 2019). However, there are other Ika speaking people in neighbouring Edo State (Onyeche, 2002). The word "Anioma" means "good land" in the Igbo language. Historically, Anioma people are Western Igbos. The Ika people link their history and culture to Edo, Igala, and Yoruba cultures (Nwaokocha, 2015). The Edo culture has a more significant influence on the Ika culture because they share a geographical boundary. The Ika people bear both Igbo and Edo names but their marriage customs, language, and kingship are deeply rooted in the Edo culture. However, Ika kings are referred to as "Obi", the same title used by the Igbos even though they are culturally attuned to the Edos.

Nevertheless, people believe that the Ika people migrated from the East, possibly Yemen, alongside the Edo people. Violence against women has been linked to high gender and cultural practices in Igbo land (Illika, 2005). We decided to use the Ika nation because it is linked to the Edo, Igala, Igbo, and Yoruba cultures. These four ethnic groups make up three-third of southern Nigeria. Also, we observed that Ika land comprises both rural and sub-rural areas.

We conducted this study to understand VAW in Ikaland, Nigeria, and identify the critical socio-cultural norms that encourage it at the ethnic level. It builds on some of the work on ethnic variation and socio-cultural norms (Illika, 2005; Nwabunike & Tenkorang, 2015; WHO, 2009). Literature has shown what socio-cultural norms are and how they impede gender equality. Still, little study has advocated modifying these anti-gender social-cultural practices. This study was carried out to remedy the anti-gender cultural shift. We believe that changing norms via education can help mitigate the harmful impact of these SCNs on VAW. In terms of methodology, our study differs from past research. The study employed a combination of methods to determine the SCN that favours VAW and how academics can reduce the negative effects of these SCN. The findings of this study are vital for providers of norms transforming educational programs and interventions. It will also be a considerable contribution to the field of VAW, particularly in the Nigerian and African contexts. In this article, we will use violence against women to refer to all forms of discrimination against widows, physical, sexual, emotional, and economic violence against women.

2. Method
This study was in three levels; the preliminary study and the two main studies—the preliminary study aimed at an insight into the socio-cultural norms that promote VAW in Ikaland. The first main study (Study I) identified the socio-cultural norms that encourage violence against women, discrimination, and economic violence/abuse against women. The second main study (Study II) focused on the roles of schools in eradicating these norms.

3. Participants

The population of Ikaland is 349,879 with 173,645 (49.6%) being males and 176,234 (50.4%) as females. The population that falls within 15–65 years is about 210,629 (60.2%; National Bureau of Statistics, 2019).

3.1. Preliminary study

The study was interested in having a general overview of whether norms that encourage violence against women still exist and identifying the norms. It was a qualitative study that used interviews to elicit the participants' views on the issue. We used the quota sampling technique to select the participant used for the preliminary research. We identified ten clusters (five from each of the two local government areas that make up the Ika ethnic group. We purposively selected 20 participants such that two came from each cluster. The people involved were chosen for their familiarity with the local customs, lifestyle, and sense of how things should be. We also considered individuals who have worked with women who have experienced violence recently. However, seven of them declined to participate in the preliminary study. The response rate of 65% brought the sample size to 13. In all, six came from rural areas. Also, eight were females and the remaining males. They were within the age range of 25 to 65 years, consisting of two academics, one medical doctor, one lawyer, two local farmers, two youth leaders, two village heads, two social workers, and one religious leader.

3.2. Study I

The multistage sampling method (National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria], 2019) identified ten clusters (five from Ika North East and five from Ika South). From each cluster, we randomly selected forty people to give 400 participants. The response rate of 91.3% brought the sample size to 365. The participants' ages ranged from 18–65 years, such that 91(25%) participants were from age 18–25, 108 (30%) from 26–35, 103 (28%) from 36–49, and 63(17%) from 50 and above. The sample consisted of 178 (49%) and 187(51%) male and female participants. Also, 206 (56%) and 159 (44%) respondents were from suburban and rural areas, respectively A rural area is characterised by the absence of good roads and some amenities like regular water and electricity supply. It has limited economic activities with a larger percentage of the population not educated and predominantly from the locality. The suburban area has some good roads, and amenities like water and electricity supply are regular to an extent. There is a relatively average level of economic activity, and the population density is slightly high. Based on their marital status, 140(38%), 50 (14%), 54(15%), and 42(11%) of the participants were married, single, divorced, widowed, and married but living separately, respectively. The research also took cognisance of the educational level of the respondents: 73(20%) of the participants had no formal education, 110(30%) had primary education, 87(24%) had secondary education, and 95(26%) had tertiary education. No formal education means the individual did not attend primary school. The participants' occupational status was diverse: 49(13%), 83(23%), 90(24%), 108(30%), 21(6%) and 14(4%) were working with government/private establishments, self-employed, students, unemployed, retired and homemakers respectively. The wealth indexes of the respondents were poorest 120 (32%), poorer 161 (44%), middle 82(23%), and rich 2(1%).

3.3. Study II

We selected three participants from each of the ten clusters in the two local government areas through the purposive sampling technique (Fantahun., & Taa,, 20222022). It gave 30 participants comprising 19 females and 11 males. Sixteen participants were from the sub-urban area, while 14 were from the rural area.

4. Measures

4.1. Preliminary study

We used an unstructured interview schedule to interview the 13 participants that participated in the preliminary study. The interview provides opportunities for the participants to explain

themselves in detail and share personal experiences related to Socio-cultural norms (SCN) that encourage VAW. It contained questions like "can you explain what you know about SCN that promotes violence in Ikaland", "what are the social and cultural norms that encourage VAW and abuse/violence against widows".

4.2. Study one

The instrument for Study 1 was a structural questionnaire with two sections, A and B. While section A was for collecting demographic data (age, employment status, wealth status, educational background, and location), section B contained the socio-cultural norms in Ikaland that we previously identified in the preliminary study and the literature review. They were coded as "yes = 2" when respondents agreed to the question and "no = 1" when they indicated otherwise. The scale's reliability of 0.712 was established by using Cronbach's alpha. (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018).

4.3. Study II

We used a semi-structured interview for Study II. It contained questions like what contributions teachers in primary and secondary schools and lecturers in tertiary institutions make to eliminate these norms? What should be the academic research focus? What can improve the curriculum? What can the academic associations/groups do to eradicate these norms? How can the schools contribute to interventions needed to address these norms?

5. Procedure

5.1. Preliminary study

We conducted a preliminary study using 13 people. We obtained the respondents' consent, and appointments were booked. The interview lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour for each participant. The information from the preliminary study guided the researchers on what items to include in the questionnaire used for Study 1.

5.2. Study I

The researchers and trained research assistants administered the questionnaire to the 400 participants. We told the participants there was no right or wrong statement and that they should respond to each item as honestly as possible. The time required to finish the questionnaire was around 20 minutes.

5.3. Study II

We obtained consent from the institutions, churches, village heads, offices, and organisations/ groups of the participants. Before the commencement of Study II, we summarise Study I findings and discuss the summary with the 30 participants in Study II. After that, we sought their consent, and an appointment was booked. The researchers and two research assistants conducted the interviews. We trained the research assistants for the task. The research assistants were postgraduate students. We organised a training on how to conduct interviews. What to do and what not to do were well discussed.

6. Analyses

6.1. Preliminary study

The qualitative data from the preliminary study were analysed to identify the SCN that promotes VAW in Ikaland. We read through the transcribed materials and picked out the SCN the participants identified.

6.2. Study I

The data from study 1 were summarised with frequency count and percentage estimate (Dim & Elabor-Idemudia, 2018). We accepted an item with a percentage of ≥ 50% as a socio-cultural norm that promotes VAW.

6.3. Study II

The researchers employed thematic analysis (Björktomta, 2019) to analyse the qualitative data from Study II. A tool for finding and analysing patterns in qualitative data is thematic analysis. We read the interview schedule several times to identify patterns in their responses. After that, we coded it. It has three prominent themes: schools' use of the teaching-learning process, mass media and ICT use, and academic association. The researchers presented the quotes in this study following the methods used in the recent literature (Fantahun and Taa, 2022; Issahaku, 2022).

7. Results

7.1. Study I

7.1.1. Physical violence

Table 1 shows that more than 80% of the 365 respondents identified socio-cultural norms that encourage physical violence against women in Ikaland. These norms were "if a woman gets into an argument with her husband and slaps him, society will blame her for provoking him". Society expects her to have kept quiet and should apologise to her husband irrespective of who was wrong. Others were, "If a woman gets angry and slaps the husband, society views her as having no home training, disrespectful, and having done an abominable thing". In addition, a good wife is a silent, calm woman and tolerates all forms of provocation, brutal treatment, and oppression from the husband'. The result also showed that 47% of the respondents agreed that the socio-cultural norm "a wife has no right to express her anger towards her husband" still exists in Ikaland (Table 1)

7.1.2. Sexual violence

The results from Table 1 show that while 313(80%) of the 365 respondents claimed that women are expected to tolerate husbands' infidelity, 300(82%) agreed that a husband's infidelity is normal. Besides, 345(95%) agreed that the wife's infidelity is abnormal and abominable. More than 85% of the 365 respondents agreed that there is no punishment for a husband's infidelity, but there is punishment for a wife's infidelity to the extent that the husband can send his wife parking'. The wife must perform cleansing rites if she must return to her matrimonial home, and the husband must stop eating her food until she is proven innocent or cleansed.

7.1.3. Emotional violence

Table 1 shows that more than 75% of the 365 respondents identified that the following socio-cultural norms still exist in Ikaland. They were "if the husband is not prospering, society largely blames the wife"; "if the wife is not prospering, society blames her"; and "if a marriage does not work, society largely blames the wife". Also, an average of the respondents identified this socio-cultural norm: "if children are not well brought up, society blames the woman". More than 70% of the 365 respondents said these socio-cultural norms: "Whether she works or not, the wife must do housework and care for the children." stills existing in Ikaland.

7.1.4. Discrimination/violence against widows

From Table 2, more than 80% of the 365 respondents identified these norms as still existing in Ikaland: "widowers can remarry as early as possible, but this is not so for widows, and if widows marry early, society concludes that they might have been sleeping around before the death of their husbands". Others are "if a woman dies mysteriously, society views it as being caused by her 'unconfessed' infidelity"; and "if a man dies mysteriously, the wife is the first suspect". Similarly, "widows must pass through some rituals to prove their innocence during husbands" burials' (Table 2).

7.1.5. Economic violence/abuse against women

Table 3 shows that most of the respondents identified these socio-cultural norms as promoters of economic violence/abuse against women. "Young women with a growing business/career are seen

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Table 1. Socio-cultural norms that encourage violence against women			
S/N	Violence against women	Frequency	Percentage
1	If a woman gets into a quarrel with her husband and slaps her, society holds her responsible.	306	84
2	Society expects a woman to remain silent if she has a quarrel with her husband and is slapped.	328	90
3	If a woman slaps her husband after an argument, society/culture expects her to apologise, regardless of who was at fault.	328	90
4	When a woman gets into an argument with her husband and slaps him, society considers her untrained.	338	93
5	If a woman slaps her husband during an argument, society views her as disrespectful.	347	95
6	When a woman gets into an altercation with her husband and slaps him, society considers her to have done something abominable.	321	88
7	A wife has no right to express her anger towards her husband.	173	47
8	A wife who gets angry with outbursts is disrespectful to her husband.	320	88
9	A good wife is silent when provoked by the husband.	330	90
10	A good wife is silent when brutally treated by the husband.	296	81
11	A good wife is calm when being oppressed by her husband.	292	80
Infidelity			
1	Society expects women to tolerate husbands' infidelity.	313	86
2	Husband's infidelity is normal.	300	82
3	Wife's infidelity is abnormal and abominable.	345	95

(Continued)

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Table1. (Continued)

S/N	Violence against women	Frequency	Percentage
Handling of spouse infidelity			
1	There is no punishment for the husband's infidelity.	354	97
2	The husband should send the wife out of the matrimonial home.	323	89
3	The wife must confess to other cases of infidelity.	336	92
4	The wife must perform cleansing rites.	333	91
5	The husband should stop eating her food until evidence shows that she is innocent or cleansed.	313	86
Socio-cultural norms that place blames on women			
1	If the husband is not prospering, society blames the wife.	279	76
2	If the wife is not prospering, society blames her.	301	83
3	If a marriage does not work, society blames the wife.	345	95
4	If a family does not bring up their children well, society blames the wife.	201	55
Duties			
1	Whether she works or not, the wife must do housework and care for the children.	312	86
2	It is not a husband's duty to do domestic chores and take care of the children, whether working or not.	268	73

Table 2. Socio-cultural norms that encourage discrimination/violence against the widow			
S/N	**Discrimination/ violence against widows**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
1	When a widower remarries after a year, society encourages him to move on with his life	341	93
2	When a widow remarries two years later, society sees her as too hasty to forget her husband.	335	92
3	When a widow remarries two years later: society may conclude that she might have been sleeping around before the death of her husband.	330	90
4	If a woman dies mysteriously, society believes that her unconfessed infidelity has caught up with her.	295	81
5	If a man dies mysteriously: the wife is the first suspect.	331	91
6	If a man dies mysteriously: her in-laws may make her drink the bathwater of her husband's corpse to prove her innocence.	231	63
7	If a man dies mysteriously and the wife refuses to drink the bathwater, it would mean that she is guilty.	236	65

as having too much love for money and are not good for wives". Also, a woman is not respected if she is not married no matter her financial/professional success'. In addition, 'it is normal and proper for the husband to deed family landed property in his name but not proper for a wife to deed any landed property in her name, whether the money is hers or not (Table 3)

7.2. Study II
The propounders of Bandura's Learning Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and Behavioural Learning Theory postulated that education could be used to change behaviours formed due to socio-cultural norms. We identified three themes that schools can use to combat the socio-cultural norms that promote VAW. They were the teaching-learning process, mass media and ICT, and academic associations.

7.2.1. Schools use of the teaching-learning process
The majority of the participants suggested that teachers inculcate the negative implications of these norms into the teaching of various concepts, principles, and facts. The curriculum planners should revise the curriculum to reflect the negative effect of these norms. Assessment instruments should contain the harmful effects of these norms. Government should introduce clubs and societies at the primary and secondary school levels. The focus of these clubs/societies should be on how to eradicate these socio-cultural norms from society. Students should carry out short

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Table 3. Socio-cultural norms that encourage economic violence/abuse against women			
S/N	Economic violence/ abuse against women	Frequency	Percentage
1	Society sees a young man with a fast-growing business as hardworking, focused, and successful.	343	94
2	Society sees a young woman with a growing business as having too much love for money and not a good wife "material".	266	73
3	Young unmarried men who are car owners/ successful; are good husband "material".	340	93
4	Young unmarried women who are car owners/ successful are seen as bad wives "material".	305	84
5	Society does not accord a woman respect if she is not married, no matter her financial or/and professional success.	324	89
6	Society treats a man with respect whether he is married or not.	319	87
7	It is proper for the husband to deed family landed properties in his name (not as Mr. and Mrs.).	257	70
8	If the money is hers or not, it is improper for a wife to deed any landed property in her name.	285	78

life dramas on the ills of these norms during the teaching and learning process and social activities in the schools. Textbooks should reflect the ills of these norms such that the stories and passages in English textbooks, exercises, activity sections, and poems reflect the negative implications of these norms. Also, nursery rhythms should equally reflect the harms of these norms on women. Some of the participants said:

'Teachers in secondary schools should follow the strategies they used to integrate reproductive health education into the teaching and learning. The teachers should use concepts and examples that reflect the evil embedded in these norms. They should provide reasons that will make the students decide not to allow these norms to direct their practices. However, this will call for seminars and workshops on how teachers can incorporate these norms into their teaching. The curriculum should reflect the ills of these norms'. (Female, teacher)

'I think that lecturers in the course of lecturing should provide information on the needs to eradicate the norms that promote VAW. They can do it formally or informally during lectures. Assignment and project works of students should sometimes reflect the negative effects of these norms. For instance, the male students could express how they would feel if their sisters were physical, emotional, economically, or sexually abused. It will drive home the dangers of these norms'. (Male, student).

'If schools want to eradicate these norms, they should teach by example to the students by making sure their attitudes, actions, and voice do not reflect these norms. What can we say of a teacher who repeatedly says that a male child is more of a blessing to a family than a female child? I also feel that school management should introduce social clubs to fight against these norms in schools'. (Male, social worker).

7.2.2. Schools use of the mass media and ICT

Some participants stated that schools could use mass media and ICT to eradicate these norms. Schools and their students should design handbills, leaflets, TV and radio slots, billboards, and internet banners and spread these across social and mass media. A male participant has this to say:

'Schools should prepare soft copies of handbills and banners that people can share on some of the most popular social media like WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram. Schools should undertake mass production of leaflets on the ills of these norms. The schools can do the write up while government, NGOs, and other groups can provide finance for the production.'

'The schools can make the students present seminar topics on the ills of these social-cultural norms that promote VAW. The students should present their seminar in the form of songs, short playlets, animation that can be shared on social media.' (Female, teacher)

7.2.3. School association

The participants also suggested that academic associations should act as pressure groups to make the government develop laws that will protect women against violence. They should also ensure that such laws are enforced. Quite a handful of the interviewees believed that academic associations should organise workshops, seminars, and conferences for academic staff with the view of carrying out comprehensive research on how to eradicate each of these norms. It will involve formulating interventions and programs. Schools should also organise workshops and seminars to raise public awareness of the adverse effects of these socio-cultural norms. The respondents suggested that funding agencies should fund research in this area. A village head put it this way:

"What is wrong in the National Union of Teachers (NUT), unions in colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities organising workshops and seminars on the ills of these norms? I know that national associations in education, science, social sciences, humanities, health, and engineering organise conferences yearly. I think that the organisers should organise a conference on the ills of these socio-cultural norms and interventions that will help stop violence against women."

"More research should focus on these norms, and there should be comprehensive studies on identifying and eradicating these norms at various ethnic levels. Funding agencies should focus on funding research in this area." (Male, teacher)

8. Discussion

The study focused firstly on identifying the socio-cultural norms that promote violence against women and secondly on the ways schools can reduce the negative effect of these socio-cultural norms that promote VAW. The research adopted a mixed-method approach to understanding the existing socio-cultural norms that encourage VAW. The study fills a significant research gap by identifying several socio-cultural norms that promote discrimination against widows, physical, sexual, emotional, and economic violence against women in Ikaland, Delta State, Nigeria. The paper further identified several steps schools can take to help in reducing the negative effect of these norms. The socio-cultural norms that encourage husbands to show their frustration while wives keep theirs hidden imply that women in the family and society are subservient to men (Amoakohene, 2004; Ezeifeka, 2016).

It is equally valid when society blames wives for their husbands' angry outbursts against them, whereas the same society does not blame husbands for their wives' outbursts against them. The norms that a man is socially superior to a woman and can discipline female misbehaviour, as

identified by the WHO (2009), are similar to these norms. Such socio-cultural norms can encourage the husband to be violent against his wife because society will not blame him (US State Department, 2015).

Some of the identified norms demand a wife to be silent, calm and tolerate all forms of provocation, brutal treatment, and oppression from the husband. The identified norms were also similar to norms identified in previous studies (Balogun & John-Akinola, 2014; Jewkes et al., 2002). Their studies reported that "women should be submissive to their husband, that a man has the final say in family matters, and if a wife does something wrong, her husband has the right to punish her". This situation implies that a wife who cries out or stands against her husband's brutality, ill-treatment, and oppression is bad. It explains why no matter how hostile most women's homes maybe, they would rather bear it than cry out (Balogun & John-Akinola, 2014; National Population Commission (NPC) [Nigeria], 2019). Another reason why women generally are willing to endure the suffering, pain, and afflictions they receive from their husbands is the existing norm that blames the wife for a broken marriage. This situation can cause heavy psychological pain/stress on the wife.

The husband's infidelity is an acceptable norm that attracts no punishment, but tolerance from the woman (wife) is expected. On the contrary, a wife's infidelity is an abomination, an abominable act that society frowns at, and her in-laws can punish her severely. The findings agree with Sedziafa et al. (2019) study that indicated that the Ghanaian society considers husband infidelity as the wife's fault. It means that husbands are free to have sexual activities anywhere, anytime, and with any person (Anaeme, 2012), and the wife is expected to accept and bear it, no matter how painful. These norms are closely related to the idioms that say that "men's beauty is wealth while women's beauty is physical adornment, and women have limited time to get married, but men's time is unlimited (Ezeifeka, 2016). The relationship between these norms and the idioms is that women do not have a place in business because it will not allow them to marry early. The norms that discourage widows from remarrying early and suspecting the wife of the husband's mysterious death must have contributed to the harmful practices suffered by widows in Nigerian society (Ijekhuemen, 2013). It has led to family and community members perpetrating a range of violence against widows (Sabri et al., 2015). The norms that view women with fast-growing businesses as unsuitable for wives and that wives are not supposed to deed any landed property in their names is a negation of women's economic emancipation and social wellbeing (Anitha, 2019).

The Delta State Ministry of Women Affairs and the Ministry of Information at State and Local Government levels have been at the forefront, sensitising women to report abuses to them, so that such could be handled on their behalf. However, many women still do not report abuses because of the existing norms that prevent them from doing so. Through the Ministry of Women Affairs, the government has provided programmes that will improve the economic status of women (Okeke, 2021).

Violence against women is common in Asia. The need to do a comparative study between the norms we have identified and the norms in Asia will help us understand the cultural perspective of these SCNs that fuel VAW. A study in Hongkong identified that the wife's duty was to obey and be submissive to their in-laws Tonsing & Tonsing, 2017). This norm was not identified in the present study. Other studies in Asia have shown that norms like women are dirty because of menstruation, that being born as a woman is due to bad karma from a past life, and when you have a daughter, it is like having a toilet are known to have encouraged VAW (Norworthy, 2003; Rastogi and Therly, 2006), In Ikaland such norms do not exist. However, others exist, as mentioned in this study. In Pakistan, social-cultural norms dictate honour killings if a custom is violated. Also, if a woman is seen with a man not related to her or married to her, the woman can suffer penalties, including death (Niaz, 2003; Zarar, Bukhsh and Khasheli, 2017). These norms identified in Pakistan do not exist in Ikaland. Women are not penalised for standing or talking with another man, and there is nothing like honour killings in Ikaland. Usually, honour killings (Karo Kari) are done by men who assume that their wives, daughters, and sisters have in some way desecrated norms associated

with the behaviour of women, which harms afi man's honour. Such killings put pressure on other women to conform to existing norms in their environment that could be aiding VAW. In many Asia countries, a woman is expected to remain at home and should not have social contact with others. This type of norm does not exist in Ikaland. The women, married or unmarried, have the freedom to move around and relate with others as long as it does not lead to adultery. Also, in Asia countries, the society disapproves of women's right to remarry (Pakistan). Men can have extra-marital affairs, and their wives must not question them. In addition, the women are blamed if a marriage fails; women are to bear the physical, verbal, and sexual abuses from their husbands. Such issues should be kept within the family, and women are expected to marry early. (Kaur & Gary, 2010; Niaz, 2003; Tonsing & Tonsing, 2017). Our study also identified some SCNs that are similar to these ones. Some of the SCNs we identified are not found in the Asia society. For instance, their women are not made to perform cleansing rites if the husband suspects her to be involved in infidelity. The norms, "if a woman dies mysteriously, society believes that her unconfessed affair has caught up with her, and if a man dies mysteriously, her in-law may make her drink the bathwater of her husband's corpse to prove her innocence" were not mentioned as existing in Asia.

Several considerations emerged from Study II. Schools should ensure that the learning process, materials for learning such as textbooks, instructional materials, rhythms, poems, curriculum, and assessment instruments should contain information that will reduce the negative effect of these norms that promote VAW. Besides, the management of schools should introduce clubs and societies in schools that will teach against these norms. The introduction of gender equity move-ment clubs in schools was also recommended by WHO (2009). This study also suggests that the use of mass media and ICT would aid in eliminating these norms. It agrees with Olayanju et al. (2013) suggestions that mass media will help schools reach a wider audience. A partnership between schools and the mass media will promote the non-acceptability of VAW (Gacia-Mareno et al., 2015). A study in Slovakia strongly supported public awareness about VAW through multi-media methods (Wasileski & Miller, 2010).

The participants of this study advocated that academic associations should act as pressure groups to prevail on the government to pass and sign a legislation into law that will protect women against violence. They should organise workshops, seminars, and conferences. It will provide an avenue for more research on these norms. It will also raise public awareness of the adverse effects of these norms. There is a need for African researchers to conduct more compre-hensive research on VAW issues (Gacia-Mareno et al., 2015; Olayanju et al., 2013). Specific educa-tion programs and interventions need to target boys and men to change their attitudes to promote critical reflections on norms that encourage VAW (Fulu et al., 2013; Jewkes et al., 2014). The family unit can be empowered with information about VAW through educational programs and seminars (Nwabunike & Tenkorang, 2015). Programs that support communities in challenging social norms that promote discrimination and violence are timely (Gacia-Mareno et al., 2015). Outreach to women in religious places, marketplaces, and other places they gather will help the schools raise awareness of the adverse effects of these norms (Kasturirangan et al., 2004).

The previous studies in Africa did not identify some of the norms we found out, such as blaming wives for husbands' angry outbursts and not prospering. Others accept the husband's infidelity but regard the wife's infidelity as an abomination, and widows should not remarry so soon, but widowers can. Also, a woman is not accorded respect if she is not married despite her financial/professional success. It is impolite for a wife to deed any landed property in her name, were other norms identified by this study. Additionally, this is the first study that considered what schools could do to eliminate these norms. One of the study's shortcomings was that it only looked at one ethnic group (Ika speaking people). This study was small-scale in nature and did not represent Nigeria. However, the results are not necessarily unique to the sample but can be generalised to other Nigerian communities with similar features like the Ikaland. This research can be replicated in different ethnic groups in Nigeria. A comparative study on the existing SCN in some ethnic

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groups in Nigeria or globally can also be done. Another limitation is that the women were placed as passive subjects, and the perspective of women's resistance was not addressed. This gap can be filled in subsequent studies. This study only focused on how schools can reduce the negative effect of the SCN that promotes VAW. Further studies can be done on how women's rights movements, religious bodies, and legal foundations can demonstrate an effort to fight against VAW through preventing measures that will reduce the negative effect of these SCN. This study has attempted to capture most of the socio-cultural norms that promote VAW in Ikaland and serve as a call for more commitment from researchers and providers of intervention on VAW/IPV to identify socio-cultural norms that fuel VAW/IPV at the ethnic level.

9. Conclusion

This study cautiously identified some of the socio-cultural norms capable of forming behaviours that would encourage VAW in Ikaland. The study further identified ways the schools can eliminate these identified socio-cultural norms. The research adds to the limited knowledge of socio-cultural norms that promote VAW among ethnic groups. Findings from the study showed no punishment for the husband's infidelity recorded (97%) of agreement from respondents as a norm that encourages VAW in Ikaland. It was closely followed by the norm of the society blaming the wife if a marriage does not work (95%), the wife's infidelity as abnormal and abominable (95%), and widowers being encouraged to remarry so soon (93%) but widows should not (93%). Other norms identified were that a woman is not accorded respect because she is not married and blames the wife for her husband's angry outburst, not prospering and mysterious death. This study has included public health campaigns to eliminate the socio-cultural norms that boost VAW at the ethnic level to make it unacceptable. The finding of this study provides baseline information on the socio-cultural norms that encourage VAW and some tips on prevention measures. This will be useful to researchers, policymakers, and intervention providers in tackling issues bordering on VAW. The study encourages educational stakeholders to implement the recommended school ways of eliminating identified socio-cultural norms.

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Informed consent
The research involved human participants, who were informed about using the data prior to signing a consent form.

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