



## A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED REPORTED CASES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN ELECTRONIC NEWSPAPERS

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### Abstract

Discourse analysis is a polymorphous concept that investigates all forms of discourses such as domestic violence. Domestic violence is very rampant today; and one of the major causes is the misuse of verbal and non-verbal discourses among the couples. This study analyses selected reported cases of domestic violence among the couples in Nigeria. The Simple Random Sampling Technique was used to gather data from Nigeria's online newspapers, *The Guardian*, *Punch*, *Nigerian Tribune* and *Daily Trust*. This is a qualitative descriptive research that adopts an ex post facto design because data are not manipulated at all. The theoretical frameworks were *Family System Theory* and *Symbolic Interactionism*. One of the major findings was that domestic violence among the couples in Nigeria is a product of seemingly enduring and unexposed verbal abuses or batteries of either couple (in abused marriages). The resultant effects of domestic violence are enormous. They range from physical assaults to battery; and sometimes, untimely death. The study therefore, recommends that appropriate communication strategies, love speeches and tolerance should be expressed often by couples. And if it is difficult to get these, separation is therefore recommended. This may minimize or curtail incessant domestic violence among couples.

**Keywords:** Discourse Analysis, domestic violence, *Interactional Symbolism*, Newspapers, abuses, communication strategies

### Introduction

Discourse (language used functionally and structurally) is a powerful tool in managing, controlling, eradicating and fueling domestic violence. In other word, discourse has both positive and negative effects depending on how it is utilized by couples. According to Sharma & Sharma (2010) discourse is the creation and organization of the segments of a language above as well as below the sentence level. Where couples do not understand how to use discourse appropriately, it may result in altercation, abuses, injuries, death and regrets. In many cases, victims of domestic violence also feel that such has not and should not have happened if certain things were put into their normal places. The regret here is orchestrated by improper use of discourse (verbal and non-verbal), Azzariti & Joaquim (2015) at all contexts.

Improper use of discourse is always occasioned by either progressive or instant provocations. This is based on emotional immaturity of couples whose marriages are mostly microwaved). Microwaved marriages are marriages that are rosy based on only outward affluences (that their expirations terminate such marriages). Davin (2023) identifies 14 signs of emotional immaturity of couples and these include among others



trauma and abuse. Also, some people do not even marry but co-habit without the consents of their parents. Indecent carnal comparison of one couple's life-style with others is some causes of domestic violence. Most importantly misused discourse is the major cause of this global menace.

Domestic Violence or gender-based violence has resulted in countless cases of abuses among all classes of people, both educated and uneducated, literate and illiterate, rich or poor, young or old, beautify or ugly. There is no class or status limit that can prevent gender-based violence where there are inappropriate applications of discourse among spouses. From law makers to those expected to observe the law, to common people who are ignorant of law, domestic violence has continued to soar very high on daily basis. It seems that domestic violence actually started from the pre-industrial age, and spun through industrial, technological and post-industrial eras. From the birth of man till death, domestic violence has continued and may continue to be prevalent in societies where people do not understand the proper use of discourse.

An analysis of discourse of domestic related-violence is very germane in today's Nigeria as a result of its prevailing harsh economic conditions, traditional norms that naturally permit men dominance over women, poverty, and the like which necessitate a lot of people almost everywhere to speak and behave anyhow. If this violence is not checked, there may be uncontrollable cases of domestic violence in the country in the next two years. Already, many cases of unthinkable occurrence of killings due to minor quarrels between people in families have been recorded in our daily news and some buried without records.

Domestic violence (DV) is as old as human race; Mascicolo (2023) observes that it has existed throughout the world for centuries. It is a global abuse at homes and families; and particularly in Nigeria it has received a lot of attentions recently because there are countless cases of domestic violence that result in either permanent injuries or death. *Nigerian Tribune* of January 13, 2017 reports that a man stabbed his wife in her private part after an argument; and in 2013 in Delta State, an argument between a Middle-aged woman named as Ndidi Emaka Mordi and how her husband Chukwudi led to her death. Again, *Nigerian Tribune*, (2021, August, 24) reports that DV is on all-time high. Gebrewahd, et al.(2020) lament that there is an increase in assaults against housewives and unmarried women. In Zamfara State for example, 366 cases of sexual abuse were recorded in 3 years (Nwanna 2021).

Although few cases of DV are mentioned here, it should be noted that there is no State in Nigeria that has not recorded increase in domestic violence. In fact, some States such as Borno, Anambra, Lagos, Oyo, Sokoto and many others have been identified as States with high number of domestic violence.

In short, ninety five (95) per cent families in Nigeria experience one form of domestic violence or the other. This can be verbal and non-verbal. Verbal domestic violence includes, both oral and written abusive discourses that go on in the family, while non-verbal are neglects, cheating, stealing, fights, and other forms of abuses without words or texts. The outcomes of these violence are always disastrous hence the need to

minimize or eradicate these. This work is an attempt to investigate how DV can be minimized through appropriate communicative strategies.

Appropriate communication entails clarity of purpose, thinking before talking, listening before judging, considering signs and body languages critically, using constructive criticism, empathizing with others and choosing the right words in communication. Kapur (2020) identifies verbal messages, non-verbal messages (as eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, postures and body language); and further explains that they should be added to make communications significant and meaningful. Kapur explains that clarity of thoughts and expressions, precision and appropriateness, conciseness, conducive environment, channel, feedback, completeness, context are elements of communication. Kapur also, states that speaking clearly and fluently, clarity of thoughts, listening, making use of decent words and communicating in a friendly manner are necessary for verbal communication.

It is therefore necessary that couples understand themselves and discourses. They are also expected to know how discourses should be applied on daily basis in order to communicate effectively and avoid or minimize gender-based violence. Again, it becomes necessary to investigate a subject of this global interest with a view to suggesting how DV can be minimized or avoided through appropriate discourse use.

### **Discourse Analysis**

Discourse Analysis (DA) is a multidisciplinary field that analyses oral, written and sign language based on context or “used in any semiotic events (*Wikipedia, research. ncl.*). It is a discourse method that examines communication so as to “gain new insights” (Hewitt 2009). Various disciplines develop “different modes of discourse analysis independently” or they borrow from other disciplines (Slembrock 2006 as cited in Hewitt 2009). It investigates language in use and as a “sociopolitical method” (*sagepub.com*). DA is a blanket term for a range of qualitative research approaches (*delvetool.com*). DA investigates what people say and how they say it in face-to-face, document non-verbal interaction or images (*delvetool.com*). It explores language beyond the sentence in order to understand its functionality in a social context (*delvetool.com*).

Some approaches of DA are *Pragmatics, Ethnography of Communication, Conversational Analysis, Critical Discourse Analysis, Multimodal Discourse, Post-structuralism, Discursive Psychology and Speech Act Theory*. The list seems endless. Analyzing discourse involves an evaluation or investigation of daily language use in communication situation. Therefore, everything said, written or acted can be analyzed as discourse; hence, political, social, religious, financial, educational, etc. discourse. Discourse is not just a mere analysis of all sort but meaningful, production, and creative. Chia (2000 as cited in Grant 2005) observes that discourse works to create stability, order, and predictability which produce a sustainable, functioning and livable world.

### **Family Systems Theory**

Family Systems Theory (FST) was propounded by a psychiatrist, Dr. Murray Bowen from 1946 to 1959 (*Study.com*). It is based on the fact that everybody in the family is interrelated and not isolated. Interactions, transactions and relationships are the connective factors that generate adherence to one another. This means that anything

that affects one person in the family affects everyone and vice versa. It is a framework that allows people to understand the “general characteristics of human relationships, individual functioning within” (Hyde-Nolan & Juliao 2012) the family. Within a nuclear family, emotional problems can be transferred from one generation to the next generation. According to (Johnson & Ray 2016) FST as a theory that centres on the patterns of interactions between family members; it calls forth, “maintain, and perpetuate both problem and non-problematic behaviour” of people within the family. The aspect of FST that is suitable to our work is that one that concerns interactions, transactions and connectivity based on problematic behaviours such as domestic violence. Once this happens, all members of the family will be affected. Domestic violence therefore is a contagious problem.

### **Symbolic Interactionism**

Symbolic Interactionism (SI) is particularly derived from an American philosopher and pragmatist, George Herbert Mead in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It focuses on the society as the product of daily interactions of people; and how society is preserved and created through constant interactions between people. Mead’s SI concentrates on the pragmatic method of decoding social interactions; and it specifically hinges on the assumptions that individuals construct meaning through communication process; self-concept, and relationships between individuals and society (*Wikipedia encyclopedia*). Positive and negative behaviours, attitudes and activities (such as gender-based violence) are products of societal assumptions.

### **Domestic violence**

Domestic Violence (DV) is any form of abuse as it relates to children, parents, spouses and relations in the family. It is household or intimate relation abuses that occur all over the world on daily basis. Mascolo (2023) identifies seven types of domestic violence as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, economic abuse, psychological abuse, technological and stalking abuse (which means the combination of any six types of abuse he mentions). Mascolo further stresses that DV involves spouses and former spouses, intimate partners who have lived together, parents with children in common, children and related cohabitants.

According to (WHO as cited in Adu & Randle 2022), DV is a household or family behaviours that would cause a normal person to feel “traumatized, frightened, intimidated, threatened, harassed or assaulted.” It is a form of gender based violence said to be the shadow epidemic (*Nigerian Tribune*, 2021, August, 24). It is the act of body assaults inflicted in the household and these include spouses, children and domestic workers (*Daily Trust*, 2022, May 5). According to Jimba (2021) DV is all-encompassing; it applies to any physical abuse directed at one’s spouse, children, guardians and neighbours (*Nigerian Tribune*, 2022) They are said to cover physical, emotional, financial, social, and all forms of verbal and non-verbal intimidations such as abuses, rape, acid throwing, and the likes (*Daily Trust*). Section 18(g) of (2007)’s *Protection Against Domestic Violence Law of Lagos State* reports that DV is any type of physical, mental, psychological or other abuses that include but not limited to sex, rape, incest, emotion, verbal, economic, etc. abuses (Adu & Randle 2022).

Although, normally everyone knows that abuses of any kind are bad and Section 1 of Nigerian constitution states that no person should commit this violence against anyone under the law, (Adu & Randle 2022), this is not applicable anywhere, even in Lagos

State. People take law into their hands at any slightest provocations, and unleash injuries and sometimes deaths on their victims.

Cases of domestic violence span through all States in Nigeria, Africa (Bowman 2003) and the world. In the past 6 years, (for example), the Lagos State government (for instance) had observed that 1108 men had reported cases of domestic violence to Domestic and Sexual Violence Agency (*Punch* 2023 June 1). Ayeni (2021) opines that 329 women, men suffered domestic violence in Lagos State alone between January, 2023 to April, 2023. Chukwu (2022) reports that there were 2334 cases of domestic violence in Lagos within four months which is quite worrisome. Salau (2022) observes that 11 women died from domestic violence in 20 months in Lagos State alone. Also, *Nigerian Tribune* (2022) reports that there were 4,860 cases of domestic violence, rape and sexual assaults reported in Lagos alone in 10 months.

Also, in Gombe State, *Nigerian Tribune* (2019) maintains that sometimes in a day, six cases of domestic violence and more on weekends are reported ; and that out of 7 to 10 cases reported in a day, four or five are violence against women. In a similar case, Anwar (2023) observes that in Yola, the State capital of Adamawa State, the homicide detectives at the Criminal Investigation Department is struggling to cope with a high number of horrifying cases involving members and intimate partners

Women are said to be the worst hit group when it comes to being victims of domestic violence. According to Rolle, et al. (2019), although men experience DV, but the rate of DV among women is much higher than men. *Daily Trust* observes that DV is not restricted to any part of the country and reports that in the first half of 2022, a total of 51 spouses were killed through DV in Nigeria

Many factors have been identified as root causes of domestic violence. These include poverty, Nigeria as a patriarchal society (*Nigerian Tribune*, 2021, August 24), lack of money for celebrations (*Nigerian Tribune*, January, 13, 2017), poor mind sets and the like.

Although many researchers have carried out studies on domestic violence, there is no study so far (to the best of my knowledge) that has considered misuse of discourse as the major cause of domestic violence like this present one, hence an attempt to fulfil an existing gap.

### Methodology

The research adopts a qualitative, descriptive design. Data were collected through online newspapers (*The Guardian*, *Punch*, *Daily Trust* and *Nigerian Tribune*). Randomly selected extracts from reported cases of violence (from January 2017 to January, 2023) were presented and analyzed using FST and SI. A total of twelve (12) cases were presented and analysed as follows: three (3) from e-*TheGuardian*, three (3) from e-*Punch*, three (3) from e-*DailyTrust* and three (3) from e-*Nigerian Tribune*.

### Data Presentation and Analysis

Data are presented in four (4) groups; Group A, based on the e-*TheGuardian* newspaper, Group B, based on e-*Punch* newspaper, Group C, based on e-*Daily Trust* and Group D, based on e-*Nigerian Tribune*. Data Analysis for all Groups are presented as Cases one (1) to twelve (12); these are followed by their analyses. Three (3) cases are selected from e-*TheGuardian* Newspaper. Three (3) are gathered from e-*Punch*, Three (3) from e-*Nigerian Tribune* and three (3) from e-*DailyTrust*. FST and SI are applied in all the analyses in this work.



## Data Presentation 1, Group A: Data from *e-The Guardian* Newspaper

### Case 1

*“Civil rights advocacy group, Human Rights Writers Association of Nigeria (HURIWA) has called on the Inspector General of Police (IGP) to directly take charge of the investigation of the circumstances surrounding the unexplained death of the wife of the now suspended Chairman of Nnewi North Local Council*

*The group said it was approaching the IGP following the possibility that Anambra State Police Command may compromise the required professional and efficient investigation of the case, which has now become a national affair”.*”(The Guardian, August 16, 2022)

### Analysis of Case 1

The transferable effects of the communicative imports of the Chairman of Nnewi North Local Council in *Case 1* is climactic as it goes beyond the family, extended family members to HURIWA. This group is propelled to invite the IGP to investigate the case. This suggests that the family's action is not just exerting effects on the immediate family but the society; and that the action of one member affects the whole family and vice versa. There are implications of this statement, the said chairman might have uttered hate-speeches and arguments; and the wife too would have responded before she was killed. This denotes that domestic violence can be orchestrated by arguments and hate speeches.

*The second paragraph* suggests that there have been cases of corruptions through compromise on cases of national affairs by the Anambra State Police Command before; and that HURIWA has no confidence on the capability of the IGP in handling this case. Again, this demonstrates that domestic violence is a collective, societal and a national affair as deduced from this report. It is not only the family of the deceased that is aggrieved but the nation; hence, the existence of prominent paralinguistic interactions and influence inserted by domestic violence on everyone in the society and the nation.

### Case 2

*“On Wednesday, February 17, 2021, the Ondo State Police Command arrested one Queen Beatrice for allegedly killing her husband, Emmanuel Ikujuni, at Omotosho town, in Okitipupa local council of the state”.* (The Guardian, February 27, 2021)

### Analysis of Case 2

There is no gender favouritism; victims of domestic violence in Nigeria can be either a man or a woman. Here, a woman is alleged to be the killer of her husband, Emmanuel Ikujuni. The arrest done by the police has shown the contiguous nature of domestic violence; from the family (that actually nurtures such inhumanity) to the society (that accommodates it). Again, the report does

not indicate that Ikujuni's family took action against the society but the police(who are the products of the society).

Again, both families suffer from this abuse. The family of the man may not take it easy with the woman or her family. Also, the society may distant herself from the family of the woman. As seen here, it was even the Ondo State Police Command that arrested the culprit. By inference we know that someone from the family might have reported the case because Nigerian police are not so concerned about cases that are not reported in their stations. The outcome of this abuse therefore shows that domestic violence has transferable negative effects on families and society at large.

It worth adding that the phrases, "alleged domestic violence related to killing" and "call for probe" (so as to arrest the suspended transition committee chairman MbazulikeIloka) suggest that the pragmatic approach adopted by the society to ensure that equity is achieved and peace is maintained through interactions is unanimously welcomed and acceptable. This collective approach indicates how individuals interact with the society with a view to eradicating gender-based violence.

### **Case 3**

*"Also on the same day in Lagos State, the police arrested one David Idibie for the death of his 42-year-old wife, Juliana Idibie, who was found dead in their apartment.(The Guardian, February 27, 2021)*

### **Analysis of Case 3**

Juliana Idibie was killed by her husband due to domestic violence. It can be inferred from here that this was not the first time; the accused had possibly and properly beaten his wife. This could not have been done without its accompanying verbal abuses. Juliana might have also thought about the stigma that the society would have labelled her as a divorcee; and rather decided to endure the violence till the time she was killed by her husband. The family is actually producing these people who make up the society that is characterized by spousal killing.

## **Data Presentation2: Group B: Data from e-Punch Newspaper**

### **Case 4**

*"Sex starvation made me plan husband's abduction- Wife  
"A 40-year-old woman, Mrs Joy Sunday, arrested by the police for conspiracy over the kidnap of her husband in Akwa Ibom State, said on Friday that she partook in the act because her husband starved her of sex and money for too long" (The Punch 2022, April 16)*

### ***Analysis of Case 4***

Case 4 is a typical case of sexual abuse. Here, the wife narrated that she was starved and instead of taking the right step of either communicating appropriately with the husband and other agencies, she decided to take laws into her hands. The only option she realises was a non-verbal abuse of abducting the husband. Domestic abuses have progressive and generational vices in the society. It is indeed the outcome of the family that gives birth to the society of abnormalities.

### ***Case 5***

*“The news that the popular gospel singer, Osinachi Nwachukwu, who died recently might have died from injuries inflicted on her by her husband has brought to the fore again the issue of domestic violence. Some people who knew the late musician vowed that her husband had been abusing her. Curiously they all kept quiet until the worst happened to her”.* (The Punch 2022, April 16).

### ***Analysis of Case 5***

Osinachi Nwachukwu is believed to have died as a result of continuous injuries she received from her husband's beating. All the parties, husband and wife, family members and the society violated the collective duties of the family and these were transcended into the society. The family had taught that the best thing to do is to protect its name (due to the popularity of the singer); but the outcome of it was tragic. This affirms Rolle, et al. (2019)'s observation that domestic violence has a significant impact on the abused and family members, and people within the social networks of both the abuser and the victim.

The long-lasting effects of this may be grievous to the progression of man's society. Singles may be discouraged from marrying properly as they may think that marriage is a gateway to untimely death; and may not have interest in it. If many of them consider marriage this way, it may have a terrible consequence; as many people may no longer be getting marriage. Those that may want children can just adopt it or just get pregnant somewhere and get their children. If the society continues this way, sanctity may be eroded from it. And once this is done, all sorts of vices may accompany it. Spouses should speak out and involve third parties when they are abused and jettison pretense because it is very dangerous and deadly.

### ***Case 6***

*Moji said, “My two kids were there as the beatings persisted and there was a time my ex-husband threatened to break a bottle on my head. He told my eldest child of eight years then to pour a prepared pot of soup on my clothes carefully arranged in a box”* (The Punch 2022, April 16)



### ***Analysis of Case 6***

This is a direct speech from the woman who killed her husband during the fight between them. From the word of Moji, her ex-husband, (“ex”) used here may possibly mean that they were no longer husband and wife even before death or that he is dead.

Again, the combination of both verbal and non-verbal abuses (with an assistant) on her is appalling if what she claimed is true (because the accused is dead now). According to her, he also mandated one of their children to pour a pot of soup on her arranged clothes in a box. These might have infuriated her, urged and energized her to take law into her hands. The whole family now will suffer; the children will have no father and mother as she may be sentenced to death. The society is also affected; if these children are not taken proper care of, they may become miscreants.

### **Data Presentation 3, Group C: Data from e-DailyTrust**

#### ***Case 7***

*“Caroline stabbed her husband, BarkaMalgwa, a bricklayer and vigilante member, in Madagali with a knife following a heated argument that resulted in a physical struggle between the couple.”*

*“I am here (in detention) because I fought with my husband and he died in the course of the fight. He was drunk. He returned one night and fell on top of our child and I was afraid he could injure the little child, so I challenged him”. (DailyTrust Sunday 1 January, 2023)*

### ***Analysis of Case 7***

The first paragraph here indicates majorly the non-verbal information that resulted in the death of the man in question. The woman (Caroline) was said to have stabbed the man (the deceased) with a knife.” This was precipitated by a heated argument that resulted in the physical struggles between the couple, hence the application of inappropriate use of discourse.

The second paragraph also indicates a non-verbal message of drunkenness which resulted in the man’s uncoordinated action of falling on their child. The woman claims that she was provoked by the man’s action and “challenged” the man which led to his death. Her provocation and disapproval of the deceased’s disposition led to her retaliation, and the act of fighting her husband to death. Every member of this family has a share of this abuse as well as the society.

**Case 8**

*“I was married at the age of 13 without my consent. He abandoned me nine days after the marriage, and returned after seven months. When he came back, he started beating and I sustained injuries. The beating and dehumanizing treatment continued for years(DailyTrust, September, 22, 2021)*

**Analysis of Case 8**

The victim here went through tough times in this toxic marriage. Non-verbal communication, lack of consent, abandonment, beating and dehumanization characterized this marriage. Based on the cultural norms of the people (especially in the Northern Nigeria), this underage girl was forced into marriage because the society in which she found herself allowed it. Of course, there is no how she could have enjoyed such a forced marriage. The communicative effect of this can be traumatic as the family of the victim will ever have soured relationships between every member of their in-law. Again, the people may consider the barbaric act as generational and may not want their children to get marriage to such a family. This may also expose the two families to unnecessary destructive criticism of all sorts. The negative interactions here are products of the society.

**Case 9**

*“On June 3, 2023, Mr and MrsOkhiria reportedly engaged in an argument over food. Rather than talk it out, as two adults who consented to living together as a husband and wife should do, the former chose violence. He was said to have rushed into the room and brought out a gun and fired in the direction of his wife, hitting her left arm. It was so bad that the hand had to be amputated in a hospital”.(Daily Trust, January 23, 2023)*

**Analysis of Case 9**

Arguments, which are expected to be integral parts of communication, are used here as the major cause of domestic violence. This has left Mrs. Okhiria permanently disfigured. Beyond this, the whole family would be directly suffering from this amputation as the mother of the house may no longer be able to carry out her primary duties as a housewife. Also, the society frowns at the despicable act of Mr. Okhiria. These families may no longer relate amicable as a result of this incidence; hence, the contiguous negative and transmittable influences of domestic violence on the family and the society. If these couples had understood and applied the techniques of counterarguments (the ability to point out the weakness of the opponents without belittling them), and concessions (admitting the opposing viewpoints) and, show respects, this domestic violence would have been minimized or avoided.

#### **Data Presentation 4: Group D: Data from e-Nigerian *Tribune* Newspaper**

##### ***Case 10***

*“Lawrence Itakpe, a 49-year-old man, was recently arraigned before a Yaba Magistrates’ Court, Lagos State, for allegedly killing his wife, Rebecca, at their house in the Ajah area of the state over a disagreement about a sachet of water” (Nigerian Tribune, January 16, 2023)*

##### ***Analysis of Case 10***

This is a typical case of verbal attacks that resulted in death. One can infer that Rebecca might have used such callous expressions that highly infuriated Lawrence Itakpe to act abnormally. It could have been that she cursed him using derogatory comments about his family background of poverty.

Up till now a sachet of water ( in Nigeria) is not up to N50 naira, so one could see that it is not just poverty but the misconstruction and misused of words that led to Rebecca’s untimely death. Automatically these two families have become enemies because of the transferable outcomes of this altercations and demise. Nigerian society too has a lot of questions to answer. Why has it not been favourable for people to get what they want at ease? What was the responsibility of their neighbours when they started exchanging hate-speeches? Even though there might have been language barrier, quarrelling can be understood due to its tone.

##### ***Case 11***

*“Ndubuisi Uwadiegwu from Enugu State was alleged to have beaten his wife, OgochukwuEnene, to death over a loaf of bread. In his case, it was allegedly an innocuous request from his wife for money to buy a loaf of bread for their child that reportedly got Ndubuisi so incensed that he launched a hideous attack on his wife.” (Nigerian Tribune January 16, 2023).*

##### ***Analysis of Case 11***

Here, the society may epitomize the name “Ndubuisi Uwadigwu” to that of the devil who is known for evil. This bread might not have been up to a thousand naira; therefore, one might be forced to think that poverty is one of the major causes of domestic violence. If this woman had got money, maybe, she would have used it to buy bread for their child. The questions that beg for answers are: Is Ndubuisi not expected to feed his child? Is he actually normal or is being controlled by either alcohol or some other powers? These and many more might have been responsible for his unexpected barbaric act.

Besides this, verbal and non-verbal communications, perhaps, the acerbic choice of words and the disposition of the deceased, OgochukwuEnene might have been responsible from the hate-speeches that finally led to her untimely death. Looking critically at the wife’s name, Ogochukwu Enene, this may suggest that

proper marriage had not been conducted as the deceased did not adopt her husband's name. This may be so, because in Nigeria, once a woman is married she drops her father's name or adds it to her name; but most importantly, married women are proud to bear their husbands name.

### **Case 12**

*"In Oyo State, 28 years Yetunde Oyediran (Nee Fatoki) a lawyer with the Oyo State Ministry of Justice in February, 2016 alleged unlawful causing the death of Lowo Oyediran, her 38 years old husband." (Nigerian Tribune, January, 12, 2017).*

### **Analysis of case 12**

This lawyer who is alleged to have killed her husband in Oyo State is a public figure and might have thought that with her status in the society (which does not expect negative behaviour from her), the best option was to cover the crime. Here, both the family and the society contributed to the violence she meted on her husband. Now that she is a murderer and a widow, who is going to marry her? What will happen to her children that would automatically become orphans if the law takes its course? This shows that what affects one member of the family affects all and has transferable effects on the society.

### **Finding, conclusion and recommendations**

Having analysed excerpts of data gathered from four online newspapers, the researcher has found that verbal and non-verbal abuses are the root causes of domestic violence. The art of concealing facts that should prevent domestic conflicts are intentional and have negative impacts on the family and the society. Most arguments lead to untimely death of victims of gender-based violence. Domestic violence has transferable and has long-lasting negative effects on families and the society. Domestic abuses have progressive and generational vices in the society. All hated arguments and mismanaged counterarguments lead to domestic violence.

Language use in daily interactions and transactions among members of the family are very important. Choice of words and how they are used are capable of fuelling or reducing domestic violence. This study centres on the discourse analysis of reported cases of domestic violence on e-Nigerian newspapers, and the researcher discovered among other things that improper use of discourse contributes maximally to domestic violence (which is endemic in the family and the society).

The researcher therefore recommends that language should be used effectively in the family and the society. People should learn how to be silent or purge their emotions before responding to hated and heated arguments. They should learn to walk away from scenes of toxic home and, keep quiet at the right time. Both language and paralanguage should be applied in minimizing or avoiding domestic violence.

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