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**TOPIC: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE NIGERIAN
SOCIETY**

Domestic violence in Nigeria is a problem as in many parts of Africa. There is a deep cultural belief in Nigeria that it is socially acceptable to hit a woman to discipline a spouse. There is no universal definition of domestic violence. The World Health Organization (W.H.O) has defined domestic violence as the range of sexually, psychologically and physically coercive acts used against women by current or former male intimate partner. The United Nations defines violence against women as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Domestic violence takes many forms including physical, sexual, emotional, and mental. Traditionally, domestic violence is committed against females. Common forms of violence against women in Nigeria are rape, acid attacks, molestation, wife beating, and corporal punishment. Forms of domestic violence include sexual violence, physical violence, emotional violence, psychological assault and economical control. Physical violence can include hitting, biting, slapping, battering, shoving, punching, pulling hair, burning, cutting, pinching, etc. (any type of violent behaviour inflicted on the victim). Physical abuse also includes denying someone medical treatment and forcing drug/alcohol use on someone. Sexual violence occurs when the abuser coerces or attempts to coerce the victim into having sexual contact or sexual behaviour

without the victim's consent. This often takes the form of marital rape, attacking sexual body parts, physical violence that is followed by forcing sex, sexually demeaning the victim, or even telling sexual jokes at the victim's expense. Emotional violence involves invalidating or deflating the victim's sense of self-worth and/or self-esteem. Emotional abuse often takes the form of constant criticism, name-calling, injuring the victim's relationship with his/her children, or interfering with the victim's abilities. Economic control takes place when the abuser makes or tries to make the victim financially reliant. Economic abusers often seek to maintain total control over financial resources, withhold the victim's access to funds, or prohibit the victim from going to school or work. Psychological assault involves the abuser invoking fear through intimidation; threatening to physically hurt himself/herself, the victim, children, the victim's family or friends, or the pets; destruction of property; injuring the pets; isolating the victim from loved ones; and prohibiting the victim from going to school or work.

Some factors are the cause of domestic violence for instance, Abusers may feel this need to control their partner because of low self-esteem, extreme jealousy, difficulties in regulating anger and other strong emotions, or when they feel inferior to the other partner in education and socioeconomic background. Some people with very traditional beliefs may think they have the right to control their partner, and that women aren't equal to men. A partner's domination may

take the form of emotional, physical or sexual abuse. Studies suggest that violent behaviour often is caused by an interaction of situational and individual factors. There are some effects of domestic violence such as emotional and psychological trauma, illness, disability and in some severe cases death.

There are some preventive measures which can be taken to stop the growth of domestic violence in our society. Firstly, by the government encouraged of enforce laws against men who abuse their wives. Secondly, traditional communities should be able to put a stop to men who feel it is traditionally acceptable to abuse their wives at home and lastly, parents should be able to teach their male children to respect their female partners.