

**PERCEPTIONS OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH
DATING VIOLENCE BY FEMALE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
NIGERIA**

BY

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ORIGINALITY REPORT

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ABSTRACT

Dating violence has been reported globally as a public health and socio-cultural issue affecting millions of female university students in dating relationships. The serious health implications can affect academic performance and the total wellbeing of the individual and the society. Literature on risk and protective factors for dating violence among students at universities is limited in Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions of risk and protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria, using a case study methodology.

In this study, a sample of 90 participants was recruited to participate in nine focus groups. Data were collected through focus group discussions. Thematic content analysis was employed to analyse the data, which yielded 24 themes. These were grouped according to the four levels of the socio-ecological framework: individual, interpersonal, community and societal level factors regarding risk of and protection from dating violence among female students. Thirteen themes were identified under risk factors for dating violence among female students, while 11 were identified under protective factors.

Individual level risk factors included alcohol and substance abuse, poor interpersonal skills, poor control of emotions, possessiveness and risky sexual behavior. Interpersonal level risk factors included negative childhood experiences, influence from others and clash in belief systems between partners. Community level risk factors included patriarchy and violence in the community, and societal level risk factors included the influence of technology on relationships, absence of regulations to protect women from abuse and poverty.

Individual level protective factors included maturity and self-knowledge/acceptance before dating, self-protective behaviours and control. Interpersonal level protective factors included having elders as good role models, trusting relationships, mutual respect between partners and an open relationship and transparency between partners. The community level protective factors included cultural norms to reduce violence and

the university response, while societal level protective factors included public awareness and laws to protect women from violence.

The findings raise the need for the university management and other stakeholders on campus to develop community awareness campaigns around healthy dating relationships among partners, and to improve the practice of dating violence prevention. Policy makers in Nigeria can use the findings to develop policies and regulations to address dating violence and other forms of violence on Nigerian campuses.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Dating violence is a form of intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual violence that is a global public health and socio-cultural issue affecting millions of female university students in dating relationships (Iconis, 2013). Often it is overlooked and regarded as a normal way of life by most students, who are ignorant of the associated consequences. The scourge is eating deeper into institutions of higher learning (Edwards, Dardis, Sylaska, & Gidycz, 2015; Loeb, Deardorff, & Lahiff, 2014; Shorey, Brasfield, Zapor, Febres, & Stuart, 2015). Many have acknowledged the need to address dating violence in the higher education setting (Lundgren, & Amin, 2015; Martin, Houston, Mmari, & Decker, 2012; Sabina, & Ho, 2014).

University life provides an environment where newfound independence, friends, and learning of both formal and informal issues occur. In the case of adolescent students, the ideal of dating and relationships begins. During adolescence romantic relationships are a normal occurrence, but when there is abnormality due to violence it will disturb the partners' normal developmental process (Smigelsky, Aten, Gerberich, Sanders, Post et al., 2013)

While the problem of dating violence among students in tertiary institutions has received considerable attention in high-income countries, very little has been done to address the problem in low- and middle-income countries, especially in Africa. A contributing factor to this lack of attention is the near absence of policies on dating violence in higher education institutions in most African countries (National Research Council, 2015; Ndenje, 2014; Rani, Bonu, & Diop-Sidibe, 2004; Takyi, & Lamptey, 2016b; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa).

Dating violence is a pattern of assaultive and controlling behaviour that one person uses against the other in order to gain or maintain power in a dating relationship (Iconis, 2013). According to Bowen and Walker (2015) there is no legal definition for a dating

relationship, but they refer to it as a romantic or intimate relationship between two individuals that is determined by factors such as the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the two individuals involved. Its aim is to assess each other's suitability as a partner in an intimate relationship or as a spouse (Bowen, & Walker, 2015).

Studies have described dating violence as controlling, abusive and aggressive behaviour that occurs within the framework of a dating relationship. This occurs when two persons who share a passionate, romantic, and/or sexual connection beyond friendship, but are not married, engaged, or in a similarly committed relationship, have unresolved disagreements and end up fighting or abusing each other (Iconis, 2013; Smigelsky et al., 2013). In addition, dating violence involves the actual perpetration or threat of an act of violence by at least one member of such an unmarried couple on the other member within the context of dating or courtship. Violence can occur in both heterosexual and homosexual relationships. It often includes verbal, emotional, physical or sexual abuse, or an overt exhibition of domineering power and control by one partner over the other, or a combination of these. It may also involve stalking, either in person or by electronic means, by a current or former dating partner (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2012; World Health Organization, 2002) and the abuser intentionally behaving in a way that causes fear, degradation and humiliation to control the other person.

The United States Department of Justice defines dating violence as the perpetration or threat of an act of violence by at least one member of an unmarried couple on the other member within the context of dating or courtship (The United States Department of Justice, 2016). Similarly, the World Health Organization (2010) defined IPV as "behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, and psychological abuse and controlling behaviours".

The National Centre for Victims of Crime (Wasserman, 2004) reported that campus dating violence is one of the forms of violence most often experienced by college and

university students. He defined it as physical violence which consists of acts such as throwing, pushing, grabbing, shoving, slapping, kicking, biting, hitting, beating up, or using (or threatening to use) a knife or gun. It also frequently refers to sexual violence, a general word use to cover sexual assault, abuse, aggression, coercion, and rape. Dating violence also encompasses stalking – willful and repeated harassment that instills fear in the victim. Stalking behaviors may include following the victim, waiting for and watching the victim, showering the victim with unwanted attention or gifts, threatening to hurt the victim, and using technology such as hidden cameras to track the victim's whereabouts (Wasserman, 2004).

Dating violence is a type of IPV that transpires among partners in a passionate relationship, where one of the partners is abusive, controlling the other's behaviour in order to gain power over them (Boladale, Yetunde, Adesanmi, Olutayo, & Olanrewaju, 2015). In Nigeria dating violence has also been defined as the act or threat of an act of violence by one member of a romantic relationship within the context of a dating relationship or courtship. It is a form of conduct used to exert control over a partner and may also be a way of depriving that partner from his or her freedom, which may occur either in public or private life (Boladale et al., 2015; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014).

Dating violence has also been defined as abusive behaviour that occurs between couples who are in a close relationship but are not married, engaged, or in a similarly committed relationship, who share an emotional, romantic and sexual connection beyond friendship. These behaviours may involve stalking, either in person or electronically, and can be by a current or even former dating partner (CDC, 2012; Smigelsky et al., 2013). Dating violence is common in school and university settings, and it has been reported that students are more prone to dating violence due to exposure to face-to-face contact with partners (Boladale et al., 2015).

1.2 Magnitude of Dating Violence

Globally, studies have indicated alarming rate of dating violence (Pengpid, & Peltzer, 2016; Shorey, Cornelius, & Bell, 2008; Straus, 2004; Umana, Fawole, & Adeoye, 2014; World Health Organization, 2013b). Considerable effort has been made to understand

the magnitude of this problem since the first research was conducted. Among students in dating relationships, reports indicated that victims/survivors reported being two times more victimised than those who are not in relationships (Children's Safety Network Education Development Center, 2012; Finkelhor, Vanderminden, Turner, Hamby, & Shattuck, 2014). In addition, they reported being involved in at least with one form of abuse, and two out of three have witness physical fight among family member (Finkelhor et al., 2014; Hamby, & Turner, 2013).

In sub-Sahara Africa, including Nigeria, studies have found similar reports (Boladale et al., 2015; Ijadunola, Mapayi, Afolabi, Ojo, Adewumi et al., 2014; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Jewkes, Flood, & Lang, 2014; Rani et al., 2004; Takyi, & Lamptey, 2016a). For example, in South Africa, alone, cases of murder of girlfriends by their boyfriends has been reported (Nonceba, 2017a, 2017c). currently, there are ongoing court cases of boyfriends who killed their girlfriends and more recently similar cases has been reported in Nigeria (Falayi, 2016). In addition, the media reporting horrifying site of girlfriends whose boyfriends poured acid and are beyond recognition (Duru, 2015; Idio, 2017). The male partners may also be a victim/survivor of similar problem. Other cases include physical and sexual assaults leading to severe injuries, complications or even death (Campbell, Dworkin, & Cabral, 2009; Chepuka, 2013; Duma, Mekwa, & Denny, 2007). The danger is that when it occurs among students, their safety, total health, academic achievements as well as the society is affected.

1.3 Health Implications of Dating Violence

Globally dating violence is one of the major challenging health and psychological issues ravaging young adults in universities and other higher educational institutions, and requires attention (Smigelsky et al., 2013). Females who are victims/survivors of dating abuse may suffer from physical injuries and psychological trauma which may lead to long-term consequences. These include alcoholism and drug addiction, eating disorders, promiscuity and unhealthy sexual behaviours, suicide attempts, body image disruption and low-self-esteem, including future tendencies to engage in violent behaviours (Iconis, 2013; World Health Organization, 2014). These in turn can lead to further

consequences, including body weight imbalance, poor health, as well as behaviours which increase the risk of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), including the human immunodeficiency virus and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (Ybarra, Bull, Kiwanuka, Bangsberg, & Korchmaros, 2012). Mental disorders may arise in cases where students are not properly relieved of stress and trauma following abuse, and long-term health problems such as hypertension and heart diseases (Loeb et al., 2014).

1.4 Types of dating violence

Most existing research on dating violence has dealt with physical violence, but there are other types of dating violence which are abusive behaviours, including stalking and harassment, bullying and psychological abuse, kidnapping and even far worse abuse leading to homicide (Coker, Clear, Garcia, Asaolu, Cook-Craig et al., 2014; DeGue, Massetti, Holt, Tharp, Valle et al., 2013; García-Moreno, Zimmerman, Morris-Gehring, Heise, Amin et al., 2014). However, dating violence can be in the form of physical abuse, psychological abuse, and sexual abuse.

1.4.1 Physical violence

Physical violence includes behaviours such as pushing, shoving, slapping, kicking, choking, pinching, pulling hair and the use of a weapon (for example, a knife, gun, stick, cutlass, or axe) and following and/or sending unwanted messages (Coker et al., 2014; World Health Organization, 2002). Physical dating violence is usually carried out by dating and even non-dating partners; for example, friends, family members and sometimes strangers can repeatedly carry out unwanted stalking or victimisation, which occurs at very high rates on campuses (Edwards, Sylaska, Barry, Moynihan, Banyard et al., 2015; Jozkowski, Henry, & Sturm, 2014; Shorey, Stuart, & Cornelius, 2011). Most researchers believe that adolescents experience these forms of victimisation more than any other age group, and that students – particularly females – are at increased risk of this form of victimisation and do not report it because of fear (Coker et al., 2014; Lehrer, Lehrer, & Zhao, 2010). Psychological, social and academic performance are also

affected by this form of victimisation (Edwards, Sylaska, et al., 2015; Jozkowski et al., 2014; Shorey et al., 2011).

1.4.2 Psychological violence

Psychological violence involves abusive comments, name calling, teasing, gossiping and verbal and emotional abuse which involves using words and gestures with an ulterior motive to run the partner down, or humiliate and threaten the partner. It includes ignoring the partner. Psychological abuse is usually common in verbal attacks in dating violence (World Health Organization, 2002), but includes stalking, sexual harassment, and bullying.

Schools provide one point of socialisation outside of the family unit, and students are exposed to peers' influence (Coker et al., 2014). Adolescent partners have ample time to communicate with one another throughout the period at school, and this can provide numerous opportunities for verbally and emotionally abusive comments to take place, which may increase substantially in an environment where there are no sanctions (Shen, 2014b).

Since dating violence can take different forms, it is important to know the risk factors for dating violence; understanding the various behaviours associated with the different types of dating violence will help to develop prevention and intervention strategies that can be more effective in checking these trends. Knowledge of this information is very important to university health personnel, university management, school counsellors and security personnel on campuses throughout Nigeria and globally, in order to be able to identify such risks and behaviours and develop school-based prevention and interventions geared at reducing such violence (Ames, Glenn, & Simons, 2014; García-Moreno, Hegarty, d'Oliveira, Koziol-McLain, Colombini et al., 2015).

1.5 Prevalence of dating violence

Literature which was reviewed showed that dating violence is a common problem on Nigerian campuses and elsewhere. Studies estimated that 20% to 80% of students are affected by either physical, sexual, psychological and/or emotional violence while in

dating relationship (Ames et al., 2014; Eckhardt, & Crane, 2015; Shorey, Febres, Brasfield, Zucosky, Cornelius et al., 2013), and that females are at high risk of being victims of the various forms of dating violence while males continue to be the perpetrators.

According to Iconis (2013, p. 111). “more than one-fifth of female undergraduate dating populations are physically abused by their dating partners and even greater percentages are psychologically abused”. This makes dating violence among students one of the most common forms of abuse of female students found in tertiary institutions. According to Turchik and Hassija (2014) the most common form of dating violence among students is physical abuse, with a reported rate of 20% to 25%. Psychological dating violence is also a common form of abuse experienced mostly by females, who are also at especially high risk of experiencing various forms of sexual victimisation, where psychological dating violence is the most common (Orchowski & Gidycz,(2012). Recent reports show an increasing rate of IPV, in particular among Nigerian youth and students (Boladale et al., 2015; Fawole, & Agboola, 2015; Umana et al., 2014).

In South Africa studies have shown that females have been victims/survivors of forced or coerced intercourse before the age of 15, and that cases are mostly under-reported (Dartnall, & Jewkes, 2013; Phasha, & Nyokangi, 2012). These findings suggest that dating violence is highest among young individuals. Studies carried out in Nigeria show a similar trend regarding the age group of victims/survivors, with Boladale et al. (2015) reporting that students in Nigerian universities are exposed to dating violence and that IPV affects women in the same age group (18-25 years). In particular, female students at the University of Benin face a major problem with dating violence on a daily basis (Aigbodion – personal observation, 2002-2014). There is, however, limited understanding of the risk factors that contribute to and factors that can protect one from dating violence in Nigeria.

The risk factors for dating violence among undergraduate students have been identified in the international literature as personal attitudes, beliefs and perceptions, behaviour, peer influences, family history, use of drugs and alcohol, psychological and emotional

factors such as low self-esteem, antisocial behaviour, high level of jealousy and anger (Foshee, Reyes, Ennett, Suchindran, Mathias et al., 2011; Iconis, 2013). Other risk factors include multiple partners, and domineering power of males over females – which is a general problem in Africa where males assume the leadership role over females (Boladale et al., 2015).

Violence experienced in early life can initiate dating violence, victimisation and perpetration, and this may be linked with physical violence later in life (Lutwak, Dill, & Saliba, 2013). In addition, relationships with social links such as family, religion and school may influence an individual either positively or negatively (Lutwak et al., 2013). For example, Lehrer et al. (2010) were able to show that students from a stable home were less likely to perpetrate dating violence, while the opposite was shown with those from unstable homes. They concluded that a Christian student who is religiously inclined is not likely to perpetrate dating violence, while those who do not associate with church activities are most likely to engage in violence (Lehrer et al., 2010).

Protective factors for dating violence in higher education include peer education, training of student groups and development of student-friendly centres to meet the reproductive health needs of the students. Training of all health professionals is needed for the delivery of all-round care to victims of dating violence and sexual violence. University management must be held responsible for providing adequate security and safety, especially for the vulnerable female students, and have a stringent policy in place regarding issues of violence and sexual assault (Lutwak et al., 2013). In addition, families should educate their children on respect for others so, as to promote respectful dating relationships, and that any case of abuse must be reported early. Topics on sexual relationships should be included in the University curriculum in the first year of study for all undergraduates (Lutwak et al., 2013).

Research is required to investigate protective factors so that effective measures can be put in place to minimise this scourge. With the increase in such violence and the subsequent disruptive effects on the individuals who are abused, universities need to

understand and identify both the risks for and protective factors against dating violence among university students.

1.6 Problem statement

Over the past 14 years the researcher, who is a nurse in the student Wellness Centre, has observed an increasing number of undergraduate students who report being victims of dating violence at the University of Benin. Some of these students present with immediate physical consequences of dating violence, including injuries, while others report with the emotional and psychological consequences of dating violence. The consequences of dating violence are many and can affect academic achievement. There is a need to identify and describe the risk and protective factors for dating violence, since this is important in order to understand and inform the development of an appropriate dating violence prevention intervention that is relevant for this particular population.

1.7 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the current study was to explore and describe the perceptions of risk and protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

1.8 Research questions

1. What are the female students' perceptions on risk factors for dating violence at the University of Benin, Nigeria?
2. What are the female students' perceptions on protective factors for dating violence at the University of Benin, Nigeria?

1.9 Objectives

In line with the social ecological model (Vezina, Hebert, Poulin, Lavoie, Vitaro et al., 2015), which guided this study (discussed in the theoretical framework below), the objectives were as follows:

- To explore and describe the individual risks factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the interpersonal risks factors of dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the community level risks factors of dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the societal risks factors of dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the individual protective factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin
- To explore and describe the interpersonal protective factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin
- To explore and describe the community protective factors of dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin
- To explore and describe the society protective factors of dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin

1.10 Significance of the study

This research helped to ascertain the awareness, understanding, and experiences of risks for and protective factors against dating violence among students in dating relationships. The findings of the study will inform the university in providing a conducive environment for students on campus to have normal, healthy relationships. The findings may also help to understand and inform the development of an appropriate dating violence prevention intervention strategy that is relevant for this population. In addition, findings may influence policy development in responding to dating violence among students. They may also influence policy makers in formulating and implementing policies that may aid the health personnel and other stakeholders on campuses in responding to dating violence among students at the University of Benin and globally.

This in turn may improve dating relationships, prevent dating violence and provide for healthy relationships among students when dating.

1.11 Operational definitions

The following definitions were used in this study:

Student: The Cambridge learners dictionary defined “Student as a person who is studying at a school, college, or University” (Cambridge academic content Dictionary). A student is learner/or somebody who studies at a school, college or university.

Risk factors: The Cambridge learners dictionary defined “risk as danger or possibility of danger, defeat or loss”, and “factors” as a situation that influences a result”(Cambridge academic content Dictionary). Again, risk factors are features which increase the likelihood of someone becoming a victim and/ or a perpetrator of dating violence (Mathews, Govender, Lamb, Boonzaier, Dawes et al., 2015). In dating violence, risk factors are those features which increases the possibility of one member of the relationship to increase danger, or become a perpetrator or victim.

Victimisation: The Cambridge advance learners dictionary and thesaurus defined “Victimisation as suffering from the effect of violence or illness or bad”(Cambridge academic content Dictionary). Victimisation in this context is therefore to treat dating partner unfairly through punishment or ill treatment by one or the other member in the relationship.

Perpetration: The Cambridge learners dictionary defined “perpetration as an act of committing a crime or a violent or harmful act”(Cambridge academic content Dictionary). In a dating relationship, perpetration is to commit something, usually criminal, evil or morally wrong, against the ones partner.

Protective factors: The Cambridge learners dictionary defined “protective factors as caring ways or things which help to protect someone from criticism, hurt, danger, because you like them”(Cambridge academic content Dictionary). Again, protective factors are things which buffer someone against the likelihood of the risk of becoming a victim and/or perpetrator of IPV (Mathews et al., 2015). In dating relationship context,

protective factors are those things or caring ways that dating partners use to prevent themselves from harm, evil or wrong.

1.12 Theoretical framework

Yin (2014) stated that the use of a theoretical framework is to control the conduct of case study research. This study was guided by the socio-ecological model of violence, which views interpersonal violence as the product of interaction between different factors and different levels, such as the individual, relationships, community and society (CDC, 2014b; Vezina et al., 2015). The model requires attention to be given to how the environment and relationships of individuals influence behaviour. The emphasis is therefore on the question of behaviour, and this is because human development is influenced by its environment. Recent reports show an increasing rate of IPV and dating violence, in particular among Nigerian youth and students (Abama, & Kwaja, 2009; Iliyasu, Abubakar, Aliyu, Galadanci, & Salihu, 2011). Community-based youth orientation on intimate partner and dating violence can help reduce the short-term and long-term consequences. The socio-ecological model also arranges risk factors for and protective factors against violence into four levels of influence, as outlined below.

Individual level: This level identifies personal features or biological factors such as age and gender, and demographic features such as income and education. For example, young females have been found to be more at risk of intimate partner and dating violence than older women (García-Moreno, Jansen, Ellsberg, Heise, & Watts, 2005; Heise, 1998). Also, everyone has a unique personal history and experiences they have been through – for instance, observing violence between parents and personal childhood experiences of abuse. Personal attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, alcohol and drug use, psychological factors and personal behaviour such as aggression may increase the susceptibility to dating violence either as a victim or a perpetrator and how they think or act. Protective factors may involve having high self-esteem, being tolerant, and ability to resolve conflict skilfully.

Relationship level: This is concerned with how the people in one's life affect how individuals act. It could be a close relationship between two people or interaction among

a larger group such as a circle of friends. Relationships may increase the risk of experiencing dating violence either as a victim or perpetrator. For instance, having a friend who is a gang group or cult member can influence the possibility of the individual also becoming a gangster or cultist. Communication within the family of origin, friends, intimate partners, and peer group relationships may influence the risk of dating violence. A person's closest social circle such as religious and other groups that the individual belongs to, partners and family members can influence behaviour.

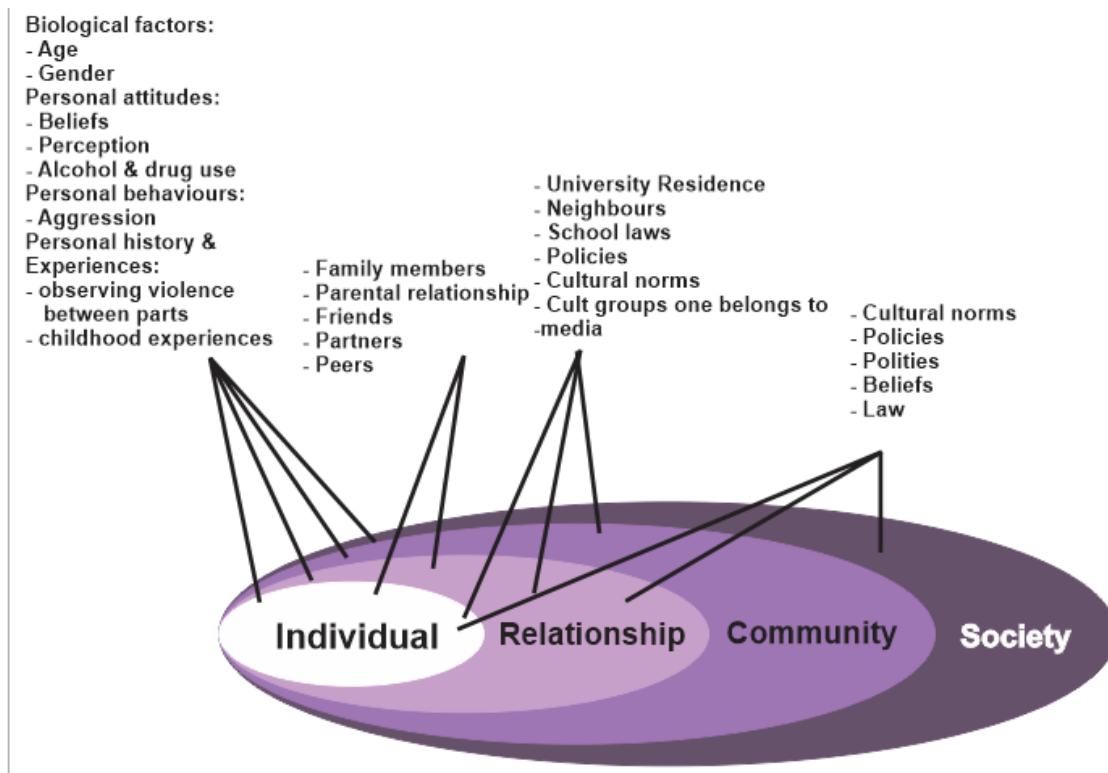
Community level: This involves interaction with the settings in which social relationships occur, and university factors such as the educational system. The university provides such an environment, especially in the residences, where relationships with one's neighbours may also influence violence, either as a victim or perpetrator of dating violence.

Societal level: This involves interaction with the wider environment – the larger societal norms, values and belief system, such as male dominance over women and cultural norms that justify violence as an acceptable method of resolving conflict, may influence dating violence (World Health Organization, 2015). Similarly, health, income and education may influence the individual's level of acceptance of or tolerance for violence. Furthermore, religious beliefs and economic policies, laws and other policies of the wider society may also influence the individuals' behaviour in being a perpetrator or victim of dating violence.

The socio-ecological model (Figure 1) enables the exploration of several factors that put people at risk of violence or protect them from violence. It treats the interaction between factors at the different levels with equal importance as the influence of factors within a single level. This model also recommends that in order to prevent violence, it is important that one acts across several levels of the model at the same time, since this is more likely to sustain preventive efforts over time (World Health Organization, 2015). Therefore, the protective factors which can safeguard individuals against risks of becoming a victim or perpetrator of dating violence need to be known in order to be able

to plan intervention programmes that may protect susceptible individuals from perpetrating dating and IPV of or becoming a victim.

Figure 1: The socio-ecological framework of dating violence.



Adopted and modify from https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sem_framework_a.pdf

Studies have shown that to understand this issue and protect dating partners it is necessary to look at the multi-sectoral factors that put individuals at risk and those factors that protect them from dating violence. The Division of Violence Prevention at the National Centre for Injury, Control and Prevention (2013) used the socio-ecological model to identify the four levels of individual, relationship, community and society factors and identified those that potentially increase the individual's risk as age, gender, low

level of education, beliefs supporting violence, anger or hostility towards others, having few friends or being isolated from others, being unemployed, substance use and history of engaging in violence. Examples of strategies to use at individual level were providing school-based programmes that can help students to develop social, emotional, and behavioural skills which will help build positive relationships; at home level, programmes that will teach parents skills for caring for various ages; after school programmes that can provide teaching to increase academic performance; group discussions geared at increasing knowledge and understanding of healthy dating relationships; and classroom-based health curriculums that will teach ways to cope with loss and disappointment, and how to learn the warning signs of depression.

At the relationship level, it indicated that interaction between two or more persons can lead to risk factors such as fights, tension, or struggling among family members (Control, & Prevention, 2013). Marital instability, divorce or separation, including poor communication between parents, poor parental supervision and monitoring of children, as well as association with peers and emotionally unsupportive family, may potentially increase risk. Protective strategies at this level were education and family support to promote positive child development, a mentoring programme that pairs youth with caring adults, a peer programme that teaches youth how to promote positive norms for dating in their circle of friends, a relationship workshop where partners or couples work with other partners on respectful communication strategies, and an art programme that can increase emotional support to children by elders from a senior centre with children from pre-school programme.

At the community level or setting, such as the institutions in which social relationships take place, the risk factors identified were level of residents' social connectedness, income level of the neighbourhood, rate of residents moving in and out of the neighbourhood, lack of neighbourhood organisation, limited economic opportunities, lack of recreational opportunities as well as poor physical layout of the neighbourhood (Control, & Prevention, 2013).

Protective strategies identified were having residents organise and make physical improvements to their neighbourhoods, development of safe recreational facilities and areas for residents, development of after-school programmes for youth, school authority to create, implement, monitor and evaluate policy to prevent violent behaviours, improve employment opportunities and empower youth, and policy that can change planning procedures for the community (university).

At the society level, factors that either create a level of acceptance of or intolerance for violence includes factors that can create and sustain gaps between different segments of society. Potential risks identified were social norms that it is acceptable to use violence to resolve conflict and that consequences are minimal, cultural norms, health policies, economic policies and educational policies (Control, & Prevention, 2013). The protective strategies that were identified were legislation to encourage employers to offer family leave options and flexible schedules to both men and women, a national media campaign including TV, radio, newspaper, and internet methods of communication to create awareness and change the way people think about violence, the State to sponsor a media campaign designed to reduce the stigma associated with self-directed violence being considered only a mental health problem, and nationwide legislation that provides tax incentives to businesses that partner with schools to provide learning-based technology and other academic resources in disadvantaged communities.

1.13 Outline of the study

Chapter One introduces the background and rationale for the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives, research question, significance of the study and operational definition of terms related to the study. It concludes with the conceptual framework that guided the study.

Chapter Two provides a literature review related to dating violence among youth and students.

Chapter Three contains a full description of the methodology of the study, which includes the study design, study setting and population, sampling method, inclusion and

exclusion criteria, sample size determination, recruitment of participants, pilot study and data collection. The ethical considerations conclude this chapter.

Chapter Four provides the details of data management and a comprehensive description of data analysis methods used in the study. It concludes with details of how trustworthiness was achieved.

Chapter Five provides a presentation of the findings of the study.

Chapter Six discusses the findings, recommendations and limitations, and concludes the report of the study. This is followed by the references and the appendix.

1.14 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the introduction and background of the study, rationale of the study, problem statement and purpose of the study, objectives, research question and definition of basic terms. The conceptual framework used to guide the research was also discussed.

Chapter Two provides a comprehensive literature review.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive review of the literature that was conducted prior to development of the research proposal and data collection and during data analysis. The literature reviewed prior to data collection was used to develop the proposal for the study. It provided the researcher with the baseline information needed to start the research process. This is supported by Burns, Grove and Gray (2011), who said that the literature review provides the researcher with knowledge on what is known and what is not yet known about a phenomenon.

Electronic data bases were used to conduct the literature search from sources between 2000 and 2017, and included Google Scholar, Google, PsychoINFO, CINDHAL, African Wide, PubMed, Medline, Web of science, Science direct, Sage, Sabine, Ebsco, Scopus, Wiley Online Library, World Cat, Libraries Worldwide and the Cochrane Library. In addition, information from printed materials was also accessed.

The keywords that were used were dating violence, intimate partner violence, university students, Nigeria, college students, risk factors and preventive factors.

All retrieved references were imported into Endnote X7 reference management software. The full text of articles was saved in specific folders.

The inclusion criteria for items included in the reference review were peer-reviewed journal articles published in English from 2000 to 2017, which comprised quantitative, qualitative, systematic, metal-analysis, books, summaries, letters, comments, dissertations and empirical studies on dating violence, its prevalence, and risks and protective factors associated with dating violence among youth and students.

Articles were excluded if they were not published in the English language for easy understanding and review.

2.2 Literature review

The literature review is discussed below according to the historical background of research on dating violence and the four levels of the socio-ecological framework that guided the study, including recommendations from other researchers.

2.2.1 Overview of dating violence globally

Dating violence is a form of gender-based violence that has been noted especially over the past 35 years in mankind globally (Iconis, 2013). It is relatively new in most African countries, particularly in Nigeria. The term has been used to describe all types of violent relationship conduct that may occur among couples or dating partners, including emotional, verbal, sexual and physical behaviours. These behaviours are defined using various terminology such as teen dating violence, relationship abuse, intimate partner violence, dating abuse, domestic abuse, and domestic violence (Lundgren, & Amin, 2015), which differ according to their context.

Dating violence is defined differently by various countries and according to the context of the 'dating relationship' (Lundgren, & Amin, 2015). For example, in Europe and the United States of America (USA) it is defined as either a marriage or a long-term cohabiting relationship that occurs during adolescence and young adulthood. These range from casual first contact to longer-term sexual partnerships. In Asia and other parts of the world where marriage often takes place at a very young age, the term 'dating violence' is rarely used but rather the term 'intimate partner violence' is mostly used (Lundgren, & Amin, 2015; National Research Council, 2015).

Globally dating violence exists as a human rights violation and a social challenge (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; García-Moreno et al., 2014). Researchers from all over the world have acknowledged that dating violence is one of the challenging problems that they are attempting to solve in order to bring about healthy dating relationships (Boladale et al., 2015; Martins, Gouveia, Chaves, Lourenço, Marques et al., 2014; Organization, 2013). Many government and non-governmental agencies are working to provide measures to address this problem (CDC, 2014a; WHO, 2015).

In 2013, the WHO at its 67th World Health Assembly identified violence, especially violence against women and girls, as a health problem and priority and issued guidelines to address the issue. The guidelines stated that they aimed “to provide evidence-based guidelines to healthcare providers on the appropriate responses to intimate partner violence and sexual violence against women” (WHO, 2013, p 3). In addition, the aim was to raise awareness among healthcare providers and policy makers of violence against women to better understand the need for an appropriate health sector response to this (Garcia-Moreno, Pallitto, Devries, Stockl, Watts et al., 2013; World Health Organization, 2013a). If the risk factors for dating violence are known and the protective factors are also known and practised, then short- and long-term consequences of dating violence among university students would be averted.

2.2.2 Historical background of dating/relationship violence

The literature reviewed shows that research on dating violence was first published more than 30 years ago by Makepeace in 1981 (Iconis, 2013). Since then several studies have been conducted on various topics bordering on dating partners and dating violence among student groups utilising quantitative, qualitative, systematic reviews and meta-analysis methods. These studies have looked at various aspects of dating violence, such as its definition, prevalence, correlates or predictors of dating violence as well as various risk factors for dating violence and preventive strategies for reducing violence (Foshee, Benefield, Ennett, Bauman, & Suchindran, 2004; Garthe, Sullivan, & McDaniel, 2017; Thompson, 2014; Thongpriwan, & McElmurry, 2009).

Other studies have dwelt on correlates or predictors of teen dating violence as well as the demographic, community-level factors, family-level, individual-level and situational risks. These studies used different theories to explain how dating violence occurs. Study methods used to conduct research on dating violence include longitudinal studies, surveys on various effects of dating violence in both current relationships and future intimate relationships, effective preventive strategies to respond to the challenge of dating violence and the possible laws and legislation that can help to protect partners

from violent dating (East, & Hokoda, 2015; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Foshee, McNaughton Reyes, & Ennett, 2010).

Since 2000 to date research on teen dating violence has been on the increase. Literature conducted from 2000 to date has been geared towards reducing teen dating violence and focusing on ways to prevent and protect teens from this potentially deadly phenomenon. For instance, in January 2010 the US Senate passed a Resolution (S. Res. 373., 2010) and designated February 2010 as National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Following that, in March 2010, the US House of Representatives similarly passed a companion resolution (H. Res. 1081., 2010) to support the National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week and extend it to a month, the aim being to help eradicate teen dating violence. A national call was made to the citizens of the USA, including youth, schools, parents, states and local officials, law enforcement agencies and various groups to observe this month. The aim was to ensure that appropriate awareness and preventive measures to fight the scourge were put in place and adequate implementation was ensured. Communities were encouraged to support and empower teens to develop healthy relationships.

Subsequently, the United Nations General Assembly in 2010 adopted the Millennium Development Goal to fight all forms of violence against women. This goal includes the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women (United Nations, 2010). According to Williams (2014), as at March 2014, 19 states have legally required school boards to include teen dating violence prevention strategies in their curriculum. The aim was to provide and implement evidence-based, culturally acceptable dating violence prevention programmes within the schools, for educators and social workers. Other countries including Nigeria have joined in carrying out such research lately (Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Izugbara, Duru, & Dania, 2008; Olaleye, & Ezeokoli, 2015).

2.23 Magnitude of Dating Violence

Globally, among high-income and low and middle-income countries dating violence is a key problem (Garthe et al., 2017; Miller, & McCauley, 2013; Nonceba, 2017b; Vagi, O'Malley Olsen, Basile, & Vivolo-Kantor, 2015). According to a national sample Vagi et

al. (2015) indicated that among students, dating violence occur at an alarming rate compare to other types of violence, physical aggression accounted for 30% annually and this rate is similar among both sex. Khubchandani, Telljohann, Price, Dake, and Hendershot (2013) reported that almost 3 in 4 (72%) of dating partners are being abused by their partners. Available data indicated that at least 90% of high school and college students have experienced psychological abuse (Harper, Austin, Cercone, & Arias, 2005). Most studies have found high rate of sexual abuse among dating partners with result showing between 20 to 40% of assaults by a partner (Douglas, & Straus, 2006; Oshiname, Ogunwale, & Ajuwon, 2013; Shorey et al., 2008).

A more recent study conducted in the US and reported in South Africa online news indicated that girls and young women between the ages of 16 and 24 experienced the highest rate of intimate partner violence which almost triple the national average. 1.5 million high school students nationwide experienced physical abuse from a dating partner in a year. Date rape accounted for almost 70%, of sexual assaults reported by adolescent and young women where 38% of these women are between the ages of 14 and 17. In addition, 70% of college students reported to have been sexually coerced. Furthermore, average teen are exposed to more than eight hours of mass media daily and over one quarter reported experiencing digital abuse (Nonceba, 2017b). This explains the role of media in relationships specifically dating violence.

World Health Organization (2013b) indicated that Africa is one of the regions with the highest rate of physical/or sexual intimate partner violence. In a study conducted in 22 countries from 23 universities among undergraduate students including Africa, Asia and America, Pengpid and Peltzer (2016) reported a great difference in intimate partner violence among sexually active student by countries. Among countries in Africa, 7.4% in Mauritius to 47.9% in Cameroon and from 6.2% in Venezuela to 22.6% in Grenada in the Americas region, and 1.6% in Indonesia to 45.4% in Kyrgyzstan in the Asian region. These findings disclosed a considerable problem of partner physical and sexual violence among undergraduate university students across 22 low-and middle-income countries.

These findings reveal the gravity of the problems of dating violence and therefore call for action.

2.24 Health Implications of Dating Violence

Numerous studies have identified the huge health consequences of dating violence (Decker, Peitzmeier, Olumide, Acharya, Ojengbede et al., 2014; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Ely, Nugent, Cerel, & Vimbba, 2011; Fayombo, Ogunkola, & Olaleye, 2012; Rizzo, Esposito-Smythers, Spirito, & Thompson, 2010). Most studies have indicated that risk for injury, health risk behaviours as well as adjustment difficulties are experienced by dating partners (Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Silverman, McCauley, Decker, Miller, Reed et al., 2011; Simon, & Hurvitz, 2014; Sullivan, Erwin, Helms, Masho, & Farrell, 2010; van Wijk, & Harrison, 2014). The recognition that intimate partner violence is an important public health concern is increasing and has been supported by the publication of the first WHO clinical and policy guidelines for responding to intimate partner violence and sexual violence (World Health Organization, 2013b).

Females experiencing dating violence are prone to all aspects of health from direct mortality to increasing risk for poor health outcomes. Mortality may be caused through homicide, suicide, injuries and complications (Ogunwale, & Oshiname, 2017; Rees, Zweigenthal, & Joyner, 2014; Shorey, Strauss, Haynes, Cornelius, & Stuart, 2016). In addition, maternal causes like unwanted pregnancy, abortions with its related complications and HIV/AIDS infections (Ogunwale, & Oshiname, 2017; Rees et al., 2014). Furthermore, morbidity can be caused by multiple cases which includes physical trauma, psychological trauma and stress (Rees et al., 2014; Teten, Schumacher, Taft, Stanley, Kent et al., 2010). This may be further compounded by lack of independence in seeking health due to the controlling behaviour of the dating partner (Rees et al., 2014).

Boladale et al. (2015) postulated that dating violence is a pattern of interaction that maybe carry on into adulthood with its physical and mental health consequences. The harmful impact of dating violence victimization and perpetration also includes problem of adjustment. Ijadunola et al. (2014) findings revealed that emotional abuse was the commonest and this could lead to mental problems. The WHO estimated that almost

15% of persons suffer from depression globally at least once in their lifetime (Organization, 2001). It is therefore not unusual among partners in violent dating relationships. Depressive symptoms further increase anxiety, alcohol and drug use (Bitew, 2014; Ohnishi, Nakao, Shibayama, Matsuyama, Oishi et al., 2011; Shorey et al., 2008; Shorey, Zucosky, Brasfield, Febres, Cornelius et al., 2012).

Oshiname et al. (2013), reported a 38% sexually transmitted infections which instituted 38% of the physical effects of date rape, followed by unwanted pregnancy 27.5% and body injuries 13.6%. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) accounted for 30.9% of psychological effects, followed by depression 25% and low-self-esteem 11.6%. Stigmatization 23.2% followed by isolation 25.5% and poor social relationships 16.3% among partners. Other studies have indicated similar findings (Ogunwale, & Oshiname, 2017; Swartout, Koss, White, Thompson, Abbey et al., 2015). There is therefore an urgent need to address this cankerworm destroying partners in relationships.

2.2.5 Prevalence of dating violence internationally

The prevalence of dating violence varies from country to country and from one study to another (Lundgren, & Amin, 2015), but is reported to occur frequently among young females worldwide (Adamo, 2014; Edwards, Dardis, & Gidycz, 2012; Karin, Bindesbøl, & Holm, 2012). The most recent global report of the WHO in 2015, together with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and the Medical Research Council, based on existing data from 80 countries, showed that 35% of women worldwide have experienced either IPV or non-IPV in their lifetime. On average, 30% of women in relationships have reported having experienced some forms of physical or sexual violence by their partner. Globally 38% of murders of women are committed by their intimate partner (World Health Organisation, 2015). Dating violence is also an indication of possible murder episodes if not given adequate attention to address its spread – and this must begin in our schools, families, communities and society at large (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Shefer, Clowes, & Vergnani, 2012).

Researchers have estimated that between 9% and 87% of high school and college students are involved in dating relationships of various types globally (Beserra, da Cruz

Leitão, Fernandes, Scatena, dos Santos Vidinha et al., 2015; García-Moreno et al., 2014; Iconis, 2013; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Kann, Kinchen, Shanklin, Flint, Kawkins et al., 2014). In a study conducted on dating violence among university students globally, across 31 universities in 15 countries, including Asia, the Middle East, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, America and Canada, Straus (2004) reported that 29% of the students had physically assaulted a dating partner while 7% had physically injured a partner.

In a more recent survey of 19 000 Canadians, 6.4% of women reported having been physically victimised by their partners and ex-partners within the previous 5 years (Faulkner, Goldstein, & Wekerle, 2014). The prevalence of dating violence is higher in adolescents and youth between the ages 15 to 25 years who are both victims and perpetrators, with the rate ranging from 10% to 50%. This occurs in the form of physical or sexual violence, psychological and verbal abuse, as indicated by Faulkner et al. (2014).

According to a Canadian police report in 2010, reported by Sinha (2012), young people between the ages of 12 and 14 years represent 1% of cases of dating violence, at a rate of 56 victims per 100 000 members of the population. The report also showed that youth were less likely than other age groups to become victims of dating violence, and that 93% of all victims of dating violence aged less than 15 years were female (Dowden, & Brennan, 2012; Sinha, 2012). These reports reveal that dating violence is still a problem in Canada, despite over 30 years of research and preventive efforts.

In Denmark, a survey conducted and reported in 2011 by the National Institute of Public Health and the University of Southern Denmark indicated that approximately 10 000 women and 5500 men were exposed to dating violence annually. Young females were more exposed to dating violence than males. About 6.5% of females and 3.7% of males were reported to be exposed to physical and psychological sexual violence by a former or present dating partner (Karin et al., 2012).

In Taiwan Shorey, Brasfield, et al. (2015) and Shen (2014a) reported that 58% and 66% respectively of college students had experienced dating violence in the form of physical, psychological and sexual violence. Out of 32 countries Taiwan ranked number six in terms of college students physically assaulting their dating partners.

According to Chan, who reported the prevalence of dating violence among university students in China: “psychological aggression was identified as the most common of which 71.6% of lifetime perpetration occurred while 61.0% was identified for the preceding year” (2011, p. 801). Furthermore, a high prevalence of dating violence among adolescents was also reported by Shen, Chiu and Gao (2012b) who revealed that 27.3% of respondents had perpetrated dating violence while 39% had experienced victimisation.

The literature shows that university students are mostly prone to dating violence due to the young age at which they start to be involved in a relationship. It further suggests that females are more likely to be victims while the males are likely to be perpetrators of dating violence (Shorey, Zucosky, Febres, Brasfield, & Stuart, 2013). Shorey and colleagues (2013) found that 20-30% of female students experienced physical aggression while 70-90% experienced psychological aggression, common forms of dating violence. These studies indicate that the prevalence differs across the world.

2.2.6 Prevalence of dating violence in African countries in general and Nigeria in particular

The literature revealed several studies that have been conducted on dating violence in sub-Saharan Africa (Boladale et al., 2015; Foshee, Benefield, Reyes, Ennett, Faris et al., 2013; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Radzilani-Makatu, & Mahlalela, 2015). Across sub-Saharan Africa 30-65% of women over the age of 15 years have experienced violence at the hands of an intimate partner (Devries, Mak, García-Moreno, Petzold, Child et al., 2013) For example, Phasha and Nyokangi (2012) reported a study in South Africa conducted among learners with mild intellectual disability, where it was reported that dating violence was experienced in their schools. it was also reported that between 1.6%

and 21% of female learners were victims of forced or coerced intercourse before the age of 15, and that such cases were mostly underreported (Phasha, & Nyokangi, 2012).

In 2011 the Government of Liberia, in conjunction with the United Nations Population Development Fund and the United Nations launched a programme to identify the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence. This revealed that 70% of cases of rape and domestic violence were reported among females between the ages of 15 and 25 years. Their report recommended the development of prevention and response strategies to help stop such violence, especially among women in this specific age group (USAID, 2012).

In 2010 an epidemiological survey conducted in Uganda among students revealed a high prevalence of partner violence, with 80% of females reporting verbal/psychological abuse, 71% exposed to at least one type of physical abuse, 52% suffering isolation and 23% falling victim to sexual violence (Saile, Neuner, Ertl, & Catani, 2013). Similarly, in a summary of a joint workshop conducted by the Uganda National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine in 2015, titled Preventing Intimate Partner Violence in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, to determine dating violence among adolescents, they noted that there was a lack of data in the region that focused on IPV among adolescents (National Research Council, 2015). It was reported that spousal violence was most common due to the young age of the couples and early marriage (women get married before the age of 15). This report showed that 24% were teenagers and childbearing and that young women who were experiencing IPV and abuse in a partner relationship may not have been identified (National Research Council, 2015). These findings suggest that IPV is also a problem in Uganda and East Africa.

In Nigeria, the prevalence rate of dating violence differs from one researcher to another and from one study to another, as do methods used and the environment where the studies took place (Boladale et al., 2015). In a study conducted in a primary care facility carried out on personality profiles and psychopathology among students exposed to dating violence at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Boladale et al. (2015) found a prevalence of 37% among students. Umana et al. (2014) reported a prevalence that

range from 9% to 87% in a study on female students' experiences of IPV at the University of Ibadan (Umana et al., 2014). In Ile-Ife the reported rate of sexual abuse of between 13.8% and 19.9% in a study on women's experience of IPV, Fatusi and Alatisie (2006), indicates that this is a problem which needs to be addressed and that the actual rate is still unknown, most likely due to various factors. In another study Aguanunu (2014) reported that gender difference is not a factor that can significantly influence attitude of developing dating violence among students in Nigeria. He further reported that female students were not only victims but were also perpetrators of violence in relationships. These risk factors for perpetrating violence victimisation are similar to those identified in other studies (Boladale et al., 2015; Olaleye, & Ajuwon, 2011; Umana et al., 2014).

Literature reviewed showed that physical violence is very common among intimate partners (Iconis, 2013; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Karin et al., 2012). About 26.9% of respondents on IPV reported experiencing physical violence from their boyfriends (Yusuf, Arulogun, Oladepo, & Olowokeere, 2011). Similarly, 15.1% of females experienced physical violence in their relationship and factors associated with physical violence included young age and poverty (Oladepo, Yusuf, & Arulogun, 2011). A study conducted by Ijadunola et al. (2014), in Ile-Ife, reported that 46.5% of respondents indicated that they had experienced dating violence, the percentages being 56% among females and 37.7% among males. About 60.7% of the females reported that their male partner was the main perpetrator, and emotional violence was found to be the commonest form of violence among both sexes.

In a recent survey carried out at the University of Benin, Benin City, the findings showed a 76.4% prevalence of dating violence; physical dating violence was reported to be the highest type among the respondents at 54.4% (Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016). These studies have recognised that dating violence is a problem in Nigeria and at the University of Benin. According to (Mapayi, Makanjuola, Mosaku, Adewuya, Afolabi et al., 2013): "the prevalence of dating violence in the study utilising previous twelve months was 34%, of partners who indicated witnessing dating violence in which the prevalence

of alcohol use among the respondents was 32% and the prevalence of use of other psychoactive substances (including cannabis, opioids and analgesics) was 20%". This highlight use of various substances as risk factors that contribute to dating violence. A study on the correlates and consequences of dating violence in adolescent relationships reported that the prevalence of dating violence and the implications of the unhealthy behaviour could lead to unwanted pregnancies, STDs and HIV/AIDs, which not only affect the individuals in question but also the family, community and society at large (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016).

In Nigeria cases of dating violence among students at universities and schools, both as victims and perpetrators, have been reported (Boladale et al., 2015; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Izugbara et al., 2008; Okonkwo, 2010; Olaleye, & Ezeokoli, 2015). Okonkwo (2010) reported on males as victims. Students in elementary and secondary schools, as well as vocational schools, apprenticeship programmes, colleges and universities can be victims as well as perpetrators of dating violence. It affects both males and females irrespective of age, race, socio-economic status, health status, educational background, ethnicity, and religion (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016).

Dating violence occurs in various ways; while it may often be perpetrated in person it may also take place through electronic means (Ijadunola et al., 2014; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016). Violence may occur during a date, which can either be in a short or long dating relationship, and the perpetrator can be a current or previous dating partner, or could even be a spouse in a committed relationship (Oshiname et al., 2013).

2.2.7 Risk of dating violence among students in Nigeria

Studies on dating violence among university students in Nigeria are limited because most cases are not reported due to the stigma and general preconceived casual response of law enforcement agents in handling such cases (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Izugbara et al., 2008).

Ekechukwu and Ateke (2014) stated that studies conducted to determine the various factors that contribute to dating violence in Nigeria show that there are more violent

behaviours in dating relationships than in marital and cohabiting relationships. They speculate that this could be due to lack of skills in handling issues among dating partners. Disagreement between partners is a major reason for violence that occurs as a result of their inexperience, and this is more common among young females dating older men (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Etuk, Nwagbara, & Archibong, 2012). Similar findings have been reported internationally (Decker et al., 2014; Lamm, 2010; Miller, & McCauley, 2013; Miller, Williams, Cutbush, Gibbs, Clinton-Sherrod et al., 2013).

The literature has revealed male dominance over females as a contributory risk factor for violence among dating couples. For instance, Aguanunu (2014), concluded that women are intimidated and overwhelmed by male partner dominance. Previous studies reported women's dependency on men for financial support as a risk factor for all kinds of dating and intimate violence (Iliyasu et al., 2011; Masvawure, 2010; Shefer et al., 2012). It was concluded that female students involved in intimate relationships with older men were often susceptible to various types of violence unleashed on them either by these older intimate partners or their family members (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014). Homicide can also result, and such involvement can equally predispose these groups to STDs, including HIV and AIDS and its subsequent effects (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Shefer et al., 2012).

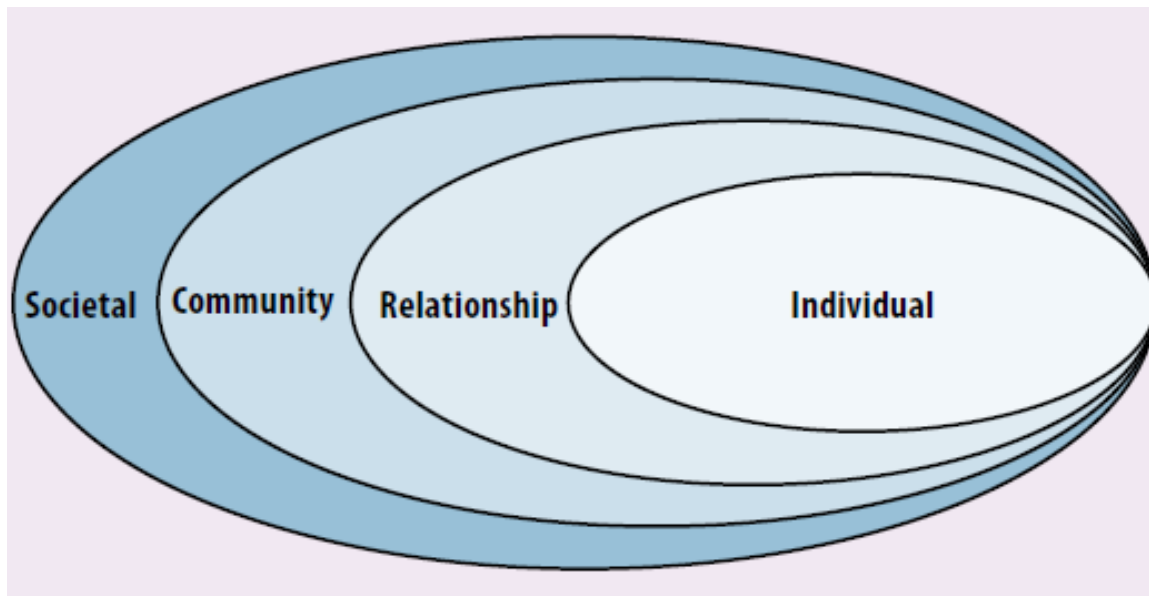
The few studies on dating violence carried out in Africa suggest the existence of strong patriarchal values that encourages Africa males to become sexually, physically and psychologically abusive towards their female partners (Boladale et al., 2015; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Radzilani-Makatu, & Mahlalela, 2015). Because of the headship position that these males occupy in the home, they tend to use that power to intimidate the females, coupled with the belief that they are the owners of the women and children and so can do whatever they like. This suggests why some male students usually engage in violence in dating relationships.

A study conducted by Oshiname et al. (2013) reported that date rape was more common than other types of rape among dating partners.

2.2.8 Using the socio-ecological framework in addressing dating violence

The Centre for Disease Control (CDC, 2014a, 2015) advocates use of the socio-ecological model of violence in addressing intimate partner and sexual violence. Many theories have also been used to describe the risks of and preventive factors in dating violence, such as the social constructivist, behavioural, norm, and feminist theory. However, in line with the framework that guides this study, only literature that utilised the socio-ecological framework is discussed below.

Figure 2: The Socio-ecological Framework of violence



Adopted from https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/sem_framework-a.pdf

2.2.9 Individual level risk factors in understanding dating violence

Family history, including observing violence between parents or having a personal childhood history of abuse, has been reported to negatively influence dating relationships (Gover, Kaukinen, & Fox, 2008; Kim, Kim, Choi, & Emery, 2013; Williams, 2014).

Personal attitude and beliefs that encourage the use of aggression during conflict make it possible to predict dating violence (Iconis, 2013). The literature further highlights hostile attitudes and acceptance of violence against women as a contributory factor to aggression in relationships, because individuals who involve themselves in abusive relationships tend to believe that dating violence is more common than it actually is (Diaz-Aguado, & Martinez, 2015; Lehrer et al., 2010).

Alcohol and drug use are also linked to dating violence in the literature reviewed. Established excessive alcohol and drug use, especially binge drinking, has been associated with partner violence, and usually resulted in sexual assaults and physical abuse (Draucker, Martsof, Stephenson, Risko, Heckman et al., 2010). Studies in the USA, Greenland and Australia showed a reduction in binge drinking after abusers have been treated for alcohol abuse (World Health Organization, 2010). This indirectly supports that alcohol is a major contributing risk factor for dating violence and IPV.

2.2.10 Interpersonal level risk factors in understanding dating violence

Studies suggest that having friends who are victims of dating violence may also predict dating violence. This is true to an extent, and conforms to the accepted adage which states 'Show me your friends and I will tell you who you are'. A review of peer relationships found that students who associate with peers who have personality problems also find themselves becoming more abusive and more likely to have increased aggression towards others (Williams, 2014).

Violence and abuse in the family of origin has also been identified as a contributing factor to dating violence (Williams, 2014). Research has shown that experiencing violence in the family one comes from may influence an individual in dating relationships, either positively leading to healthy relationships or negatively leading to violent relationships (Kim et al., 2013; Lee, Reese-Weber, & Kahn, 2014). Some studies showed that individuals who reported dating violence also stated that they had witnessed violence at home, this of course indicating a relationship between previous violent experience and dating violence (Boivin, Lavoie, Hébert, & Gagné, 2011; Foshee, Reyes, et al., 2011; Radzilani-Makatu, & Mahlalela, 2015). In another study students

who witnessed violence at home reported more aggressive behaviours in their dating relationships (Diaz-Aguado, & Martinez, 2015).

Furthermore, some researchers suggest that previous childhood abuse and maltreatment may contribute to adolescents being involved in dating violence (Coker et al., 2014; Lehrer et al., 2010; Loeb et al., 2014). In addition, problems with parents have been associated with dating violence. Experts have identified unskilled parenting and family instability as a cause of anti-social behaviour, which plays a substantial role in dating violence relationships (Boladale et al., 2015; Fawole, & Agboola, 2015; Gover, Jennings, Tomsich, Park, & Rennison, 2011). Another study reported that dating-violent females were more likely to report that their parents were less concerned about their lives, their whereabouts and their wellbeing than non-dating-violent females (Lutwak et al., 2013).

2.2.11 Community and societal level risk factors in understanding dating violence

Literature reviewed revealed several community and societal level risk factors for dating violence. For instance, Williams (2014) reported that social status could be a contributory factor for dating violence. He suggested that among peers those from a high social status and background could intimidate those from a low social status with different types of violent behaviour including threats to end a dating relationship.

In another study power to dominate among peers just to prove their manhood among males also makes schools a hostile social environment for female students. This may lead to a feeling of shame and isolation which may make them feel intimidated; this leads to them not reporting events of victimisation since they believing it to be the normal way of life or because of fear of stigmatisation (Black, Chiodo, Weisz, Elias-Lambert, Kernsmith et al., 2013; Izugbara et al., 2008; Martins et al., 2014). This has also been identified as a risk factor for dating violence.

Different cultural and social norms were identified in the literature as a risk factor that can also influence all kinds of violence, including dating and sexual violence. For example, the traditional belief that men have a right to control or discipline women

through physical means makes women highly susceptible to violence by intimate partners, and means that female dating partners are more at risk of abuse (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Oshiname et al., 2013).

Similarly, in other studies conducted in South Africa and Nigeria patriarchy, where the males hold onto the headship role with cultural acceptance of violence (including its use in conflict resolution), has also been identified as a risk factor for dating violence perpetration and victimisation (Aguanunu, 2014; Boladale et al., 2015; Radzilani-Makatu, & Mahlalela, 2015). In studies conducted in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Shanghai traditional gender role beliefs and cultural beliefs of gender inequality were found to be risk factors for male partners perpetrating dating violence among young partners (Shen, 2014a; Shen, Chiu, & Gao, 2012a).

Religion and belief systems were also identified in the literature as risk factors for dating violence among dating partners. Lehrer, Lehrer and Koss (2013) indicated that dating partners who are religiously inclined may not perpetrate dating violence or be a victim of dating violence, compared to a partner who is not religious and may be more likely to engage in dating violence or be a victim of dating violence (Lehrer et al., 2013).

Students are exposed to different kinds of music videos and media that perpetuate the use of violence against women as acceptable and sometimes expected. This has also been explored in recent research. Connolly, Friedlander, Pepler, Craig, and Laporte (2010) presented a longitudinal study of 627 male and female Canadian adolescents where the influence of multilevel factors on risk for dating aggression was observed. They found support for a mediation model between violent media exposure, acceptance of dating aggression, and perpetration of dating violence, and noted a relationship between influence of violent media and dating aggression.

Similarly, exposure to explicit music videos of young African musicians on television (for example, 'Give it to me girl', 'Sexy lady I want to hold you tight') and copying these famous young stars' dance steps during parties exposes both male and female students

to violence. They erroneously accept dating violence to be a normal way of life (Bridges, Wosnitzer, Scharrer, Sun, & Liberman, 2010).

The literature also shows that a lot of pornographic films are being watched daily by these students on their laptops, smartphones and other devices. All of this further increases the risk of engaging in various forms of dating violence in relationships (Weitzer, 2011).

Another factor that influences sexual and dating violence is the lack of laws and policies put in place by the school authority and the Government of Nigeria to sanction offenders (Izugbara et al., 2008).

The socio-ecological model provides a framework for understanding the complex nature of all the risk factors that contribute to dating violence.

2.2.12 Literature on protective factors against dating violence

Literature reviewed suggests that the individual should be able to promote resistance to dating violence, and this can be done by engaging in positive self-esteem, self-control, social competence, having a spiritual or religious identity and academic achievement (Lehrer et al., 2010; Lutwak et al., 2013). According to (Peskin, Markham, Shegog, Baumler, Addy et al., 2014) the individual himself must wake up and have a behavioural change towards their attitude that culminates in engaging in risky and antisocial behaviours. The individual should develop respect for others and the ability to communicate without forcefulness, which will encourage trust and belief in one's partner (Adamo, 2014; Ames et al., 2014; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014). In addition, the partner should be able to make constructive decisions and learn how to make adjustments in stressful situations during dating.

2.2.13 Studies on interpersonal level protective factors in understanding dating violence

In the family, parents and guardians must stand up to their responsibilities of good parenting, being good role models worthy of emulation by their children and wards, and

make them realise that relationships are a healthy adventure if they abide by the rules (CDC, 2013). Good home training is needed in respect for another's opinion, non-violent communication and believing and trusting in others, as well as understanding that we all have our rights which must be mutually respected (Lutwak et al., 2013). In addition, family dynamics which involve shared decision making, respect and learning to adjust to stress with appropriate plans are also important in reducing aggressive behaviours (Lutwak et al., 2013). Parents should be able to supervise their children and guide them into making healthy relationship choices, and keep on reminding and encouraging them that others have done it and they too can do better (Foshee, Reyes, & Ennett, 2010; Loeb et al., 2014; Rivera, & Fincham, 2015).

2.2.14 Studies on community and societal level protective factors in understanding dating violence

Very limited literature was identified regarding community and societal level protective factors. However, it was suggested that all schools should participate in the education of students on relationships to ensure respectful dating practice and good communication skills (Lutwak et al., 2013). These authors also suggested that school should make it mandatory that behaviour of abuse be reported and policies be put in place for guiding issues of violence. They further concluded that offenders should be sanctioned. Similarly, Kaukinen (2014) concluded that education, empowering the health givers and social support are protective factors that can buffer partners from dating violence. It was also suggested that awareness and educational programmes on relationships should be carried out periodically by the nurses and other health team members at the university (Ames et al., 2014; García-Moreno et al., 2015). In a meta-analytic study Wincentak, Connolly and Card (2016) concluded that community agencies, educational institutions, partners and frontline workers should give attention to gender, cultural and prevention interventions.

Whitaker (2014) suggested that promoting women's power may protect them against IPV. Friedlander, Connolly, Pepler and Craig (2013) recommended that media awareness training should be included in the curricula as a protective measure for dating

violence among youth. Similarly, Flood and Pease (2006) recommended that media coverage of the high incidence of violence against women can serve as a protective factor, because this can increase community awareness. Furthermore, they added that collective mobilisation of women's movements and organisations can play a key role in protecting women against gender-based-violence.

Flood and Pease (2006) also concluded that criminal justice policies and law reforms be used to address issues of violence against women and girls. Most researchers have suggested that media coverage will serve as a protective measure against dating violence and other IPV. Shen et al. (2012b), in support of this, concluded that at societal level public advocacy through mass media and educational programmes will help to increase public awareness of dating violence and serve as a protective factor. Kettrey and Emery (2010) advocated the use of public intervention through social media. Further, Thompson (2014) concluded that social media technology can be used in violence prevention and intervention efforts.

2.2.15 Studies on recommendations to address dating violence

Literature reviewed suggested that school nurses and other school-based personnel who are involved with student groups need to know the risk factors for dating violence. This will enable them to have tools for working with student groups in addressing the problem of dating violence and providing protective measures in eradicating violence among dating couples (Stephenson, Martsolf, & Draucker, 2013). Stephenson et al. (2013, p. 205) are of the view that "school nurses and other school-based personnel who work with students involved in dating violence as well as their peers need to understand better the multiple ways in which peers become entangled in dating couples relationship." By so doing these personnel will understand the involvement of students in dating violence and have more knowledge to work with these students (Stephenson et al., 2013). Furthermore, the school nurse can use skills of effective communication and other community resources to facilitate protective measures and intervention.

Wasserman (2004) and other authors have made a number of recommendations for addressing dating violence, as outlined below.

Wassaman recommended the following to reduce campus dating violence:

“change of attitudes, increase awareness, holding offenders accountable, and, persuading victims to come forward report and to get help.” He added that community-based victim advocates can be an important resource for those seeking to meet these challenges: “If they foster relationships with campus authorities, victim service providers can help build institutional commitment, improve responses to victims, and protect students from victimization”(2004, p. 20).

In a study conducted in South Africa Ames et al. (2014) recommended improving safety on campus by providing a public safety website containing information on crime prevention and how to report cases, and that students are sent periodic safety reminders, with stickers to identify key areas on campus where students can get information and help. This is supported by Iwemjiwe and Okojie (2016) and Ijadunola et al. (2014) in Nigeria, who recommended that telephone facilities (hotlines) and websites for reporting on-line (email) should be established on campuses by the student affairs division, with guidance and counselling in various faculties and an orientation package in the form of handbills and web details for students on dating violence, indicating the warning signs of abuse in a relationship.

Wasserman stated that

“Campuses may have sexual assault policies in place, yet current programs and practices may nonetheless discourage reporting and fail to adequately help students. If community-based victim advocates foster good relationships with local colleges, they can help educate campus administrators about the wide range of behaviours that constitute dating violence, promote the commitment critical to success, and assist with the development of more effective responses to victims (2004, p. 20)”.

Other researchers (Lutwak et al. (2013); Ames et al., 2014; Ijadunola et al. (2014) Iwemjiwe and Okojie (2016) made similar recommendations on the need for education to practice respectful dating by teaching communication skills; inclusion of the topic in health classes as part of the curriculum, and communities to implement an evidence-based protective approach in schools and places of worship, including public forums.

Further, it was recommended that the school board should implement appropriate protocols. Similarly, Ames et al. (2014) recommended that to mitigate the risk of dating violence on campus, safety and policy statements should be included in the student handbook and students should be given orientation on it.

Wasserman also recommended the need for all

“institutions of higher education to provide new students with sexual assault awareness education; notify students about the availability of campus counselling both on and off campus, medical treatment, or other student services; provide victim-related support services to all students. In addition, he suggested involving victim advocates to educate student populations about dating violence, since active support from friends appears to be a key factor influencing decisions to report violent incidents” (2004, p. 20).

Similar recommendations were made by other researchers (Adamo, 2014; Ijadunola et al., 2014; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Radzilani-Makatu, & Mahlalela, 2015). Wasserman recommended

“training for campus police, security personnel, and others most likely to respond to victims; schools to provide resident hall assistants or student security officers with sexual assault response training; where schools lack their own resources, victim advocates can offer valuable advice on and/or participate in trainings for campus staff and students and help draft protocols; promote peer counselling programs in which students help educate their peers and provide victims with information and support” (2004, p. 21).

Ames et al. (2014) and others recommended training of student groups and staff, especially those involved in the care of students (Adamo, 2014; Iwemjiwe, & Okojie, 2016; Lutwak et al., 2013). Wasserman further recommended the need for

“community-based programs to maintain links with school authorities and other agencies to ensure that students who do not receive assistance through campus based services or would prefer to seek help off campus have a facility to report to for help. In addition, victim advocates can collaborate with campus staff, to local law enforcement, local healthcare providers, and others to develop better-coordination for effective responses to victims, whether dating violence occurs on or off campus. Since much dating violence occurs off campus and may not be treated as the proper concern of campus authorities” (2004, p. 21).

Other studies have also recommended community collaboration to support victims (Adamo, 2014; Aguanunu, 2014; Ames et al., 2014; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014).

The Dating Violence Prevention Project ("The Dating Violence Prevention Project,") recommended the use of peers and community members as bystanders, as was also recommended by Wasserman (2004). Dating partners experience barriers to reporting abuse and violence in relationships. Some young partners are afraid to report abuse to adults because they are afraid of humiliation or condemnation. They may also not want to get their partner 'into trouble' or to disclose their sexual activity or other behaviours to adults. Some may even feel that the behaviours are normal and that the controlling behaviour of their partner proves their love and dedication. Young partners are frequently under pressure from their peers to be in a relationship, and may not want to leave their partner for fear of being alone. These reasons and their lack of knowledge concerning available help and resources contribute to the underreporting of dating violence. Most researchers recommend the use of a bystander (Coker, Cook-Craig, Williams, Fisher, Clear et al., 2011; Etuk et al., 2012; Flood, & Pease, 2009; Foshee et al., 2013; Payne, 2016). Bystander involves peers who are alert of events happening around them and learning how to step in safely or seek help from others as defined by Columbia University (2017). Most high-income and a few low-income countries (such as South Africa) have successfully implemented the use of the bystander (De Villiers, 2016). Adamo (2014) concluded that

“all young people have the right to be safe in their relationships. Dating violence affects young people in a unique way and can have long-lasting negative physical and psychological consequences. Providing young people with the communication and conflict resolution skills, support, and resources to avoid or end unhealthy and violent relationships is key to their well-being. In addition, underlying causes such as poverty, and violence as a social norm, must be addressed to bring an end to relationship violence.”

Aguanunu (2014) and other researchers in Nigeria recommended that more research should be directed towards determining factors associated with attitudes to dating

violence, and that Government should finance more research, workshops and seminars on understanding the implications of dating violence in Nigeria (Aguanunu, 2014).

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed the various literature in both high-income countries and low-income countries, including the historical background of research on dating violence and the four levels of the socio-ecological framework that guided this study, including recommendations from other studies on dating violence.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the: study design, setting, study population, sampling, sampling procedures, inclusion and exclusion criteria, sample size determination, recruitment of participants, data collection process, pilot study and ethical considerations.

The purpose of this study was to explore and describe the perceptions of risk of and protective factors against dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

3.2 Study design

A qualitative, descriptive case study design was employed to explore and describe the perceptions of female students of the risk and protective factors associated with dating violence at the University of Benin, Nigeria. According to Yin (2014) a case study is an observed inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in its real-world context. A case study allows participants to be observed in their natural environment where the information derived provides understanding of a particular issue such as dating violence (Creswell, 2013). Case studies are important when the research demands an extensive in-depth description of a social phenomenon such as dating violence, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and its context may not be clearly evident (Yin, 2014). It allows investigators to focus on a 'case' and to retain a holistic, real-world perspective in studying the behaviour of an individual or a small group of people (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014) . Case studies are important in exploring real, complex and current problems that cannot be treated by one of the other known analytical methods, such as experiment, proof, or survey (Hamilton, & Corbett-Whittier, 2012). A case study design is suitable for studying questions which are multifaceted, and provides a way of probing links and patterns (Hamilton, & Corbett-Whittier, 2012).

In this study, the case was the University of Benin, Nigeria. The single unit of analysis or contemporary phenomenon was female students' perceptions of the risk and protective factors associated with dating violence, the real-life context being that of dating violence.

The female residences within the University of Benin provides the boundaries of the case. The time frame was May to August 2016, the period of in-depth data collection for the study, which formed the confines of the case studied. Source of data were focus group discussions and field notes.

This study investigated the contemporary phenomenon of dating violence among undergraduate female students in its real-world context. This design helped the researcher to obtain an in-depth description of the female students' perceptions of risk and protective factors associated with dating violence at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

The case study design does not focus on the participants but on the case under study and an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of the case itself (Njie, & Asimiran, 2014; Yin, 2014). This methodology permitted the researcher to obtain an in-depth understanding of the female students' opinions, views and ideas on dating behaviours that expose partners to risk factors for dating violence and behaviours that are perceived as offering protection from dating violence.

The socio-ecological theoretical framework was used to guide this study to align it with Njie and Asimiran (2014) assertion that in order to cope with a technically distinctive situation where there are many variables of interest, such as risk and protective factors for dating violence among university students, the case study design benefits from prior developed theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.

3.3 Study setting

This study was conducted in the five undergraduate female residences at the University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria. The University of Benin is located in Benin City, the capital of Edo State, in Ovia North East Local Government Area. Edo State is located in the South-South geopolitical zone of the southern part of Nigeria (Figure 2).



Figure 3. Map of Nigeria showing Edo State. SOURCE: <http://www.blacknaija.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/map-edo.gif>

The University of Benin was founded in 1970 as an Institution of Technology. It became a full-fledged university on 1 April 1975. The institution enrolls undergraduates, postgraduates, diplomates and certificate students in different disciplines, with a total number of student enrolments of over 40 000 annually (Uniben, 2014). The University of Benin is made up of two campuses, Ugbowo and Ekenwan, 10 faculties and 95 departments.

The university has limited accommodation for both staff and students; most of the student population stay in off-campus private housing. The university has a total of 10 single-sex residences for undergraduate students, five for males and five for females. The female residences currently house about 5204 students and the male residences 9796. Four female undergraduate residences are situated on the main campus (Ugbowo) and one at Ekenwan campus. The Dean of Student Affairs is the head of the university residences, and each residence is managed by a residence warden. The Dean of Student Affairs approved the researcher's access to the residences while the residence warden facilitated access to students by negotiating with students and introducing the researcher to them. Data were collected in all five female undergraduate residences from May to July 2016.

3.4 Study population

Study population refers to the total number of individuals who are to be studied in a research study (Burns, Grove, & Gray, 2015). In this study, female undergraduate students residing in the undergraduate university residences were the population. The ages of the participants ranged between 18 and 28 years, the average age of undergraduate students at the University of Benin (ICT - WEB UNIT (2015) where there are three categories of undergraduate students.

The first category is those students who enter the university immediately after the completion of the secondary school certificate examination and meeting the criteria required for the degree of choice. The second category is those students who enter the university after completion of a two-year diploma or three-year higher diploma certificate, and have completed the compulsory one-year National Youth Service Corp. The third category is those students who have a first graduate degree and are registering for a second undergraduate degree programme of their choice. The latter group of students may have completed the National Youth Service Corp and in addition may have work experience. Criteria for admission into Nigeria's universities are guided by the National Universities Commission (National Universities Commission, 2016).

3.4.1 Sampling method

Sampling is the selection of a group of persons from a population, with each person having an equal opportunity of being selected to participate in a study. The objective is to draw a representative sample so that the results obtained from the sample can be applied to the population (Burns et al., 2015). In this study, purposive sampling was used to identify study participants to take part in into the focus group discussions (FGDs).

Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental sampling Burns et al. (2011), is non-probability sampling. The technique is based on the judgement of the researcher regarding participants or objects which are typical of the study phenomenon, or who are exceptionally knowledgeable about the question at hand. It is a method used for selecting information-rich participants for the study (Burns et al., 2011).

The researcher, a nurse at the University of Benin Wellness Centre, had previously observed cases of dating violence in female undergraduate students who had reported to the centre for care and support. She thus identified the University of Benin female student residences as s research setting that was ideal for the research question.

3.4.2 Inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria are those requirements demanded or defined by a researcher which an individual must fulfil in order to be included in a study (Burns et al., 2015). Participants were eligible to participate in the current study if they were:

- Currently in a steady dating relationship, or had been in a relationship that ended in the last six months.
- In a heterosexual relationship. This was important for the protection of students in other types of relationships such as homosexual relationships, because homosexuals and interacting with homosexuals is illegal and prohibited in Nigeria (Onuah, 2014; TVC NEWS, 2014).
- Aged between 18-28 years – the average age reflective of undergraduate students at the University of Benin.

- Registered for undergraduate studies in 2016.
- Resident in the university female residence.

3.4.3 Exclusion criteria

Exclusion criteria are those requirements demanded or defined by the researcher that will prevent an individual from being selected to take part in a study (Burns et al., 2015). Those who were not eligible to participate in the current study were students who:

- Were undergoing counselling at the university Wellness Centre for dating violence or sexual violence at the time of this study.
- Had terminated a violent dating relationship in the past three months.

The exclusion criteria were applied to prevent further emotional and psychological harm to these groups of persons.

3.4.4 Sample size

The sample size is the number of participants who are selected and consented to participate in a study (Burns et al., 2015); Holloway, Wheeler and Holloway (2010) suggested a sample size of between 4 and 40 participants for qualitative research studies, although others suggest that the number can be higher (Burns et al., 2015; Liamputtong, 2011). Liamputtong (2011) states that focus group interviews offer larger amounts of data compared to one-on-one in-depth interviews. Eight focus groups with 10 members in each or 80 female students in all were recruited to participate in the study (eight focus groups from the actual study and the pilot study which was included because the pilot findings did not change from the main study). These were female students who identified themselves as being in a heterosexual relationship and had volunteered to participate in the study. Fifty of these participants were from the main (Ugbowo) campus and 30 from Ekenwan campus.

As stated above, 10 participants were selected for each group. This is supported by Barbour (2014) and Krueger and Casey (2009), who suggest a small sample size of 6 to 12 participants in a group to allow the researcher to monitor the group and also give an

opportunity for everyone to be actively engaged. Initially the researcher had set out to hold five FGDs, but this was increased to eight in order to obtain more in-depth information on the students' perceptions of the risk and protective factors for dating violence. More students indicated their willingness to participate (Baker, & Edwards, 2012), and the increase was also necessary to achieve data saturation (Rueda, Nagoshi, & Williams, 2014). Data saturation occurs when the researcher no longer hears or discovers new information during data collection and analysis (Rueda et al., 2014). Data saturation was reached only after the eighth FGD. The sample size of 80 was considered adequate to answer the research question 'What are female students' perceptions of risk and protective factors for dating violence at the University of Benin?'.

3.5 Recruitment of research participants

Two research assistants with skills in qualitative research and conducting FGDs were employed to assist in the study. In May 2016 meetings were scheduled with the research assistants where the researcher explained the study and provided them with information on the venue and remuneration. The research assistants were trained on how to operate the recorder for audio-recording, how to take notes for the study, keep time and recruit participants.

Other roles of the research assistants included finding and arranging the venue for the FGDs, assuming responsibility for the refreshments and welcoming participants on arrival at the venue. They provided a summary of responses, invited members to ask questions or clarified their answers, recorded the debriefing and provided feedback on the analysis.

Recruitment of participants started in May 2016 and ended in June 2016. The researcher arranged and met with the Dean of Student Affairs for permission to conduct the study at the university. In the female residences, the residence wardens were met to solicit assistance in facilitating access to the students through negotiation. The purpose of the study was explained to all the above and the information sheets (Appendix 1) and university approval letter (Appendix 6) were handed over to them to assist them with

negotiations and to solicit their assistance in facilitating access to the students. The wardens then introduced the researcher to the students.

Once permission was received from all of the above, the researcher met and explained the purpose of the study to the students in each of the five residences separately. The students who were interested in participating and met the inclusion criteria were provided with hard copies of the study information sheet and informed consent certificate (Appendices 1 and 2). They were given time to read the study information sheet and to decide whether or not they would like to participate in the study, in order to ensure that participation was voluntary and that only students who were interested in the study and met the criteria took part, as recommended by Rebar and Macnee (2011).

The contact details of students who indicated interest in participating in the study were collected. This allowed the researcher to follow up on whether or not they would participate in the study. Students who chose to be part of the study were given details of the venue and times and dates for the FGDs. The researcher made telephone calls and visited the interested individuals who could not be reached by phone before the scheduled FGD meeting dates, to remind them of the meeting. One of the research assistants helped at Ekenwan campus to remind interested participants and later gave feedback to the researcher.

3.6 Pilot study

A pilot study is a smaller version of the actual study, conducted to check the instrument for the main study. The aim is to assess the appropriateness of the study instrument, such as the FGD guides, questionnaires or interview guides, before actual data collection in order to check for any deficiencies (Grove, Burns, & Gray, 2013). The pilot study was conducted in the first week of June 2016, with 10 participants from residence A. The pilot study was conducted to determine if the proposed FGD guide would yield data that would answer the research question sufficiently. Clarity of the questions were employed with the participants at the end of the pilot data collection session. The participants agreed that the questions were clear and easy to understand. This was further confirmed through preliminary data analysis.

The transcribed data from the pilot study were shared with the researcher's supervisor, to determine the appropriateness of the FDG guide in answering the research question. The research supervisor acknowledged that the data collected had good responses but advised the researcher to probe further in order to encourage the participants to provide adequate information to answer the research question (Appendix 4).

The analysed data of the pilot study were included in the study as no changes were made to the instrument. According to Duma (2006) the data from the pilot phase of a qualitative study may be used throughout data analysis in cases where there is no fear that the pilot data will contaminate the facts (p. 105).

3.7 Data collection process

Data collection and initial data analysis started during the last week of June and ended in the last week of August 2016. Eight FGDs were conducted on separate days, all by the researcher with the assistance of the two research assistants. FGD sessions were scheduled during weekends (Saturdays). The first five groups took place on the main campus (Ugbowo), in each residence common room. The last three were conducted at Ehenwan campus, in the library extension which is a walkable distance from the residences.

Data were collected through the FGDs and all sessions were audio-recorded by a research assistant while field notes were taken by another research assistant.

Open-ended questions that were developed from related literature and modified using the ecological framework which guided the study were used to collect the data (Appendix 4). The FGDs were conducted in English, although participants were allowed to use their indigenous languages in certain areas to illustrate their experiences or understanding of either the risk or protective factors for dating violence.

3.7.1 Focus Group Discussions

A focus group is a group of people who are asked about their opinion, attitudes and perceptions about a service, issue, concept, idea or relationships (Burns et al., 2015; Liamputtong, 2011). It is defined as interviewing a group of certain people drawn

together by a researcher to discuss and comment, based on their personal perceptions, experience, on a specific topic of interest (Liamputtong, 2011); Watson (2008, p. 289). Participants in this type of data collection are selected on the basis that they will have something similar to say on the topic, they are within the same age group, have similar social characteristics and would be comfortable talking with the interviewer and among themselves (Liamputtong, 2011; Marshall, & Rossman, 2016). In this current study use of the focus group was ideal because the purpose was to obtain undergraduate female students' opinions and perceptions of risk and protective factors for dating violence relationships among university students who were already in dating relationships.

The focus group was also perfect because it exposed participants from different social backgrounds to expressing their opinion on dating violence as they understand it from their day-to-day life experiences (Marshall, & Rossman, 2016). Equally, focus groups are mostly effective for conversation on high-involvement topics (Grove et al., 2013; Liamputtong, 2011). This setting provided an atmosphere in which agreement could take place among individuals with related perceptions, experiences. This generated an empathic and sympathetic situation, which enriched the findings on risk and protective factors for dating violence, a delicate topic (Barbour, 2008; Barbour, 2014; Creswell, 2013). Furthermore, the focus group technique is less invasive than one-on-one interview, because members can decide the amount of individual input or responses they wish to contribute (Grove et al., 2013). Focus groups provide an opportunity for sensitive issues to be discussed in a natural environment (Letendre, & Williams, 2014). They also offer an opportunity for in-depth discussion of the topic in this study, which is considered very sensitive (Letendre & Williams, 2014). Furthermore, it provided data about similarities and dissimilarities in participants' opinions and experiences, rather than the researcher arriving at a conclusion from separate individuals (Watson, 2008, p. 290). The researcher used participants' collective responses to express the opinions of the participants because FGDs provide an opportunity for members to probe each other's views and opinions. The FGDs helped the researcher to obtain first-hand information in a natural environment which gave participant the opportunity to talk freely and to agree or disagree with each other's opinions and views (Liamputtong, 2011).

The FGDs provided valued information when the memories, ideas, and experiences of individual members were stimulated as they listened to others talking about their experiences. However, in an FGD the researcher has less control over the group compared to a one-on-one interview, and thus time can be wasted on irrelevant issues. To avoid this the researcher moderated the sessions for a bit to properly manage time, while giving each participant ample opportunity to express their views, as suggested by (Holloway et al., 2010).

In this study, a total of eight FGDs, plus the pilot group made up the total 90 participants. Each group were made up of 10 female undergraduate students and facilitated by the researcher using the pre-tested FGD guide (Appendix 4). Members were free to talk with other members in the group. The researcher moderated, listened, observed and asked questions (Holloway et al., 2010; Liamputtong, 2011). Sessions lasted between one and a half hours to two hours. The researcher encouraged participants to feel comfortable in expressing their views and opinions on dating violence as well as to actively participate in the discussions. Participants were invited to comment using an open-ended question for discussion.

Each FGD session started with a brief introduction of members and the topic of discussion, followed by ground rules and discussion of questions (Appendix 4). Towards the end of the discussions, the researcher made a summary of the main points for participants to comment on the correct capturing of their responses. Participants were also given an opportunity to ask questions or make comments. The researcher then provided information on where to get help on dating violence on campus for those who shared experiences of being in violent dating relationships or knew someone who was in the similar situation.

3.7.2 Field notes

Field notes encompass all the things that were not captured by the audio recorder, including gestures and facial expressions of the participants during the data collection process (Polit, & Beck, 2014). In the current study the description of the researchers' view of all that happened in the setting were noted down after each FGD. The thoughtful

notes were used to document all the researchers' own understanding, reflections and progress while in the field. This was used as part of data analysis, as suggested by (Polit, & Beck, 2014).

3.8 Ethical considerations

The requirements of the 64th World Medical Association Declaration of Helsinki Ethical Principles for Medical Research (World Medical Association (2013) were applied throughout the study. Research ethics clearance was obtained from the University of Cape Town Health Sciences Human Ethics and Research Committee (Appendix 5) and the Research and Publication Committee of the University of Benin, Nigeria (Appendix 6). Permission was obtained from the Dean of Student Affairs to access the female residences (Appendix 7).

The ethical principles that were observed throughout this study are outlined below.

3.8.1 Autonomy

Autonomy is the right to self-determination (Burns et al., 2015). This principle deals with decision-making capacity (Holloway et al., 2010), and refers to the ability of the participant to have the right to decide whether to participate or not or to withdraw from a study and have the right to information on the study. Amon, Baral, Bayrer and Kass (2012) stated that to give informed consent the individual should understand the purpose, process, risk and alternatives to research and make a free, voluntary decision about whether to participate (Amon, Baral, Beyrer, & Kass, 2012). The participants must understand every step in the research process before agreeing to participate, and that means their free, voluntary consent is required (Franklin, Rowland, Fox, & Nicolson, 2012). The researcher needs to provide correct and adequate information about the study to the participants and maintain the right of autonomy, confidentiality, privacy and fair treatment and protect participants from harm and discomfort (Klopper, 2008). Therefore, the researcher must inform the participants of what the study involves and give them time to make a decision. To observe this principle participants were given an information sheet and written informed consent was obtained from all who volunteered to participate in this study (see Appendices 1 and 2). Potential participants were given

enough time to read the information sheet and make a decision on whether or not to participate. Only participants who provided written informed consent were included in the study.

Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time, and that they were free not to answer any questions that they didn't feel comfortable answering.

3.8.2 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is the researcher's safe management of information shared by participants to ensure that the data are kept private from others. Confidentiality was observed throughout the study (Burns et al., 2015). Participants' information in the group discussions was kept confidential and treated as private. Participants were requested not to share information discussed during the FGD with anyone outside the group or among themselves after the sessions. Although confidentiality cannot be fully guaranteed, participants signed a confidentiality agreement where they agreed that once the FGDs were over they were not going to talk about the discussions with participants and other persons who were not involved in the study. Each group's data were stored in the researcher's personal computer which was protected by a password.

Information collected from the group discussions was kept using pseudonyms and locked up when not in use by the researcher. Each participant's data were reported in such a way that no participant's identity was revealed in the report. Pseudonyms such as participant 1, participant 2, were used throughout in the report. Each FGD's data were coded using group A, group B, and so on.

3.8.3 Beneficence and non-maleficence

Beneficence is treating others well. This principle was maintained throughout the study. The research should benefit the participants as individuals, and the information in the study should help society as a whole and should be able to improve the community (Department of Health, 2015; Federal Ministry of Health, 2007). According to Jelsma and Clow (2005), it is the responsibility of the researcher to make sure that participants are referred to an appropriate facility where they can get help whenever they need such

services. In the current study information about available services such as the university Counselling Unit and Wellness Centre, together with the contact details of personnel were given to participants in case they required such services at any point.

Non-maleficence means that the researcher should reduce or avoid doing harm (Burns et al., 2015). To protect the participants from harm the researcher needs to understand their worries. Harm may take the form of physical injury, emotional stress, and even financial loss. Ethically the researcher must avoid occasions that can cause damage (Jelsma, & Clow, 2005).

Requesting participants to react to questions about prior violent experiences may place them at risk of emotional discomfort. Arrangements were made for referral to the university clinic where all students are registered for care; however, throughout the FGDs no referrals were made as no-one required help. The Wellness Centre at the University of Benin offers comprehensive 24-hour services on a walk-in basis. The centre has trained medical practitioners, a nurse, psychologist and counsellors who are dedicated to helping students.

Participants had the right to withhold information that they weren't comfortable to share. As a result of the sensitive nature of the study, private rooms were arranged and used for the FGDs.

Debriefing was carried out after group discussions to help reduce any anxiety. At the end of the study the findings were communicated to all participants.

3.8.4 Justice

Justice is the right to fair selection and treatment. This requires the researcher to be fair in the conduct of a study by giving equal opportunities to participants to be included in a study. If there are reasons for exclusion, these must be cogent and acceptable. The participants must be those that will benefit from the research, as they bear the risk of participation. Furthermore, the participants should not be exploited. The researcher should distribute any resources equally to every member involved in the research, so that no participant is denied privileges in any study (Department of Health, 2015; Joffe,

Cook, Cleary, Clark, & Weeks, 2001). Participants were treated fairly throughout the current study.

Selection of participants was based on inclusion and exclusion criteria and voluntary participation with agreement on time, venue and incentives.

3.8.5 Risk and benefit

Risk related to the potential of anticipated discomfort following exposure to a study, while the benefit is the gain following the study (Burns et al., 2015). There were no anticipated significant physical risks associated with involvement in this research; however, the researcher anticipated the possibility that discomfort, stressful memories or emotions may arise while thinking about past experiences shared with the group. For example, when asking a question during the FGDs. If the researcher noticed signs of fear, anxiety or discomfort from the participants, she skipped that question and came back to it when she found out the reason for such reactions. At the same time the researcher was able to relieve the participants of their fear and anxiety by answering questions raised, as suggested by the (National Institutes of Health); Polit and Beck (2014, p. 83).

In this study, no participant required referral to the university Wellness Centre. Participants were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their information, and a confidentiality agreement were signed by all members (Appendix 3).

3.8.6 Benefit of participating in the study

There was no monetary benefit of participating in the study. The indirect benefits of participating in this study were that the participants contributed to generalisable knowledge on risk and protective factors for dating violence. Participants gained knowledge from the FGDs about the need to practice safe dating relationships and also where to find help when necessary. Information about services such as the university Counselling Unit, Wellness Centre and clinic together with the contact details of personnel were given to participants in case they required such services at any point.

3.9 Conclusion

In this chapter, all of the study design and data collection procedures were discussed, as were ethical principles and how each was addressed. This serves as part of an audit trail which offers an observable illustration of the path that the researcher followed during data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the processes of data management and data analysis used to analyse and interpret the data generated by the study. It also contains an outline of the means by which the researcher ensured trustworthiness throughout the study.

4.2 Data management

Data management involves reducing large amounts of data into smaller and more manageable fragments (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). In qualitative research data management occurs concurrently with data collection (Burns et al., 2015). Data management involves transcription and organisation of data, and upgrading field notes (Barbour, 2014; Burns et al., 2015).

The researcher transcribed each of the FGDs manually within 24 hours after each group session so that the participants' detailed information was captured and to allow easier detailed verbatim transcription. The process of transcription that was applied started with the researcher reading the field notes, listening to the audio recordings and transcribing verbatim all the data from the FGD sessions. In transcribing the data first, the questions from the interview guide (Appendix 4) were written down and each group's transcription together with their responses was typed out, each sentence word for word, pausing and replaying the audio when required to ensure accuracy. Pauses were written down as [---], laughter was documented as [participants laughing] and exclamations as [!]. When the participants interrupted, this was recorded as [participant 1 or 2 etc. interrupted]. When the participants responded in unison, it was documented as [participants all agreed] and when the voice was not audible enough to capture the word or sentence, it was recorded as [---], with moderator statements as [moderator]. Transcription was done in the researcher's study room where there was minimal distractions, as suggested by Krueger and Casey (2009).

The audio recordings of the focus groups were stored as a file named 'Data'. Transcribed data of each group were saved in Word documents in a folder named

'Transcripts' where each FGD's data were saved and stored in files named Group 1, 2, 3, etc. The Transcripts folder included the files of the eight groups, including the pilot study.

Transcribed data were saved in a folder in the researcher's personal computer with a password for safety. An external hard drive and flash drives were used as back-ups for storage purposes, easy retrieval of data during analysis, and to ensure prevention of possible loss of data in case of any problems such as theft or the files becoming corrupted. According to Creswell and Creswell (2013) data storage and handling includes developing back-up copies.

The data from this research will be kept for five years after the study has been published. Thereafter it will be destroyed to protect the privacy of the study participants in line with the requirements of the University of Cape Town Faculty of Health Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee.

Field notes obtained during FGD sessions were first written in the field note book. These were then typed up and saved as a folder named 'FGDF notes' in the researcher's personal computer with external hard drives and two flash drives as back-ups. The field note book was modified after listening to the audio recordings and was kept under lock and key for security. The contents of the field notes were shared with the research supervisor only during supervision sessions.

4.3 Data analysis

The purpose of data analysis is to organise, provide structure, identify themes and extract meaning from the data (Krueger, & Casey, 2009; Polit, & Beck, 2014). Data analysis was done concurrently with data collection, within 24 hours after each FGD sessions. This was to ensure that areas that needed further probing could be explored in the next FGD sessions with other groups, as suggested by Rothwell (2010).

Manual analysis of data was conducted by the researcher. This involved continued immersion in the data and ensured confidentiality of participants' responses.

Thematic content analysis as defined by Braun and Clarke (2006), was used to analyse data from all of the FGDs; thematic analysis is "a method for identifying, analysing and reporting themes (patterns) within data" (p. 87) and focuses on the content.

The use of thematic analysis allowed the researcher to identify themes which emerged (Braun, & Clarke, 2006) when examining the various FGDs' data for opinions, views and experiences shared by the participants. Thematic analysis further allowed the researcher to develop rich descriptions of the opinions and perceptions of the participants on the risk and protective factors for dating violence.

The researcher considered this method to be appropriate for this study because it provided an opportunity for reviewing the narrative data for words and themes related to the research question. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is made up of six steps, which are described below.

Step 1: Familiarisation with the data: This stage starts during data collection when the researcher notices and looks for patterns of meaning and enquiries of potential interest in the data. This is done by reading and rereading of the transcript data set in order to be familiar with the data, which is also known as data immersion. This stage is also known as the analytic step, reading the words logically and judgmentally by thinking about what the data mean and how the participants make sense of their experiences (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

Step 2: Generating initial codes: Here the researcher identifies the codes and the emerging themes throughout the process of analysis. This involves continuously thoroughly working through the whole data set to identify codes. Similar data with the same meaning are grouped together by highlighting them with different colour markers which are linked to the participants' responses that are of interest. These can also be cut out or copied and pasted accordingly. The purpose is to help reduce the data. This process also requires prior knowledge of any existing theory that will aid in identifying the analytical concepts that the researcher is looking for, by selecting the codes that are of significance to the study and the research question (Braun, & Clarke, 2006). In the current study the four level factors of the socio-ecological framework were useful in

selecting and arranging codes according to each level factor for both risk and protective factors for dating violence.

Step 3: Searching for themes: The researcher put similar codes together where those with similar meaning were grouped together under the same headings to develop categories. These codes are clearly titled and excerpts from the data are identified to indicate where they came from and where they can be found in the transcript (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

Step 4: Reviewing of themes: Here the ideas that make up the categories are examined to formulate potential themes and subthemes by generating a thematic chart. This further helps to remove any data that are not relevant to the research objectives and themes of the study (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

Step 5: Defining and naming themes: From the ideas within the themes and subthemes, the researcher checks for how each relates to each other to determine the final themes. Clear definitions and names are assigned to each of the final themes that emerged, and they are described in one or two sentences (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

Step 6: Producing the report: The final stage is where the themes identified are supported using quotes from the data, which is used to produce the report in a narrative form, describing the lessons learnt from the participants' experiences. Analytical generalisations are then made, as suggested by (Braun, & Clarke, 2006).

The six steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) were applied during data analysis in the current study, as described below.

4.3.1 Familiarisation with the data

To familiarise herself with the data the researcher started by reading and rereading each transcription to allow her to become immersed in the data. This also helped the researcher to double check the transcriptions and field notes to ensure that all gaps in the field note book were modified. The researcher noted and wrote down keywords, trends, ideas, comments, and opinions of importance which captured her attention regarding the research questions, and made a note of these words and thoughts in the

field note book. The researcher further highlighted these with different colours on each printed copy of the transcripts.

4.3.2 Generate initial codes

The researcher began the first step of manual coding using different coloured markers to group common, interesting features of the data that were of significance in relation to the research question. Coding is the process of summarising or describing or identifying aspects of the data that relate to the research question; this usually involves developing codes from the exact language of the text. This was done in order to reduce the data, as suggested by Marshall and Rossman (2016) and Polit and Beck (2014).

This was done systematically across all of the transcriptions from the eight focus groups, by collating and organising relevant data under each code and similar data with each other. Each focus group transcription was first coded and comments were constantly compared by noting code frequencies, identifying codes co-occurrence and relationships between codes. Decisions were further made to identify or understand those comments that had similar meanings and those that had different meanings.

The second stage was the grouping together of codes with similar meanings to form potential themes under the four levels of the socio-ecological framework of the risk and protective factors for dating violence, i.e. individual factors, interpersonal or relationship factors, community factors and society factors. The researcher coded both the major and contradicting features related to the questions and established patterns from the codes. Extracts from the eight FGD transcripts were used to support the data according to the questions asked. Coded data and information were shared with the research supervisor during face-to-face supervision contact sessions and through secure email messages as attached documents for her perusal and advice.

4.3.3 Searching for themes

The researcher searched for themes by putting similar codes together. Themes are dominant ideas that emerge from the data and findings (Marshall, & Rossman, 2016; Polit, & Beck, 2014).

Those codes with similar meanings were grouped together under the same headings. All relevant coded data extracts within the identified themes and subthemes that emerged were collated to develop potential themes and subthemes, and each theme was recorded on a separate page. These were shared with another qualitative researcher colleague to ensure that the themes were coded correctly and to ensure trustworthiness. The themes were also shared with the research supervisor for confirmation.

4.3.4 Reviewing themes

The researcher examined the ideas that made up the themes; any words, phrases, actions, perceptions or views which were used by the FGDs in describing their opinions and experiences of risk factors and protective factors for dating violence were highlighted and categorised. Potential themes were formulated by generating a thematic chart. Those themes that did not have enough data to support them were left out while related data were merged together. This further helped to remove any data that were not relevant to the research objectives and research question of the study.

4.3.5 Defining and naming themes

The researcher checked for ideas within the themes and subthemes and how each related to each other within and across all the FGDs; that is, the group rather than the individual was the unit of analysis. Clear definitions and names were assigned to each final theme that emerged. This was carried out by the researcher and confirmed by the qualitative research colleague, describing the themes in one or two sentences. These were shared with and confirmed by the research supervisor, who initially did not agree with some of the themes and advised that they be revised. This was done by the researcher and once the research supervisor and the researcher agreed with the changes, the researcher moved onto the last stage, which is producing the report.

4.3.6 Producing the report

The themes were grouped according to the four levels of the socio-ecological framework: individual level factors, interpersonal level factors, community level factors and societal level factors of risk and protective factors for dating violence among female

students. Finally, quotes from the FGDs were used to support the developed themes related to the four levels of the socio-ecological framework, and these were used to produce a report in narrative form.

Thirteen themes were identified under risk factors for dating violence among female students, and 11 under protective factors for dating violence among female students.

The 13 themes identified under risk factors were grouped under each level of the socio-ecological framework as follows:

Table 4.1: Summary of themes under Risk Factors

| Themes | Subthemes |
|---|--|
| Level of ecological framework | |
| 1. Individual level risk factors for dating violence | 1.1 Alcohol and substance abuse 1.2 Poor interpersonal skills 1.3 Poor control of emotion 1.4 Possessiveness 1.5 Risky sexual behaviours |
| 2. Interpersonal level risk factors for dating violence | 2.1 Negative childhood experiences 2.2 Influence from others 2.3 Clash in beliefs systems between two partners |
| 3. Community level risk factors for dating violence | 3.1 Patriarchy in the community 3.2 Violence in the community |
| 4. Societal level risk factors for dating violence | 4.1 Influence of technology on relationships 4.2 Absence of regulations to protect women from abuse 4.3 Poverty |

The 11 themes identified under protective factors for dating violence among female students are as follows:

Table 4.2: Summary of the protective factors for dating violence

| Themes | Subthemes |
|---|---|
| Level of ecological framework | |
| 1. Individual level protective factors for dating violence | 1.1 Maturity and self-knowledge/acceptance before dating 1.2 Self-protective behaviours 1.3 Self-control of emotions |
| 2. Interpersonal level protective factors for dating violence | 2.1 Having elders as good role models 2.2 Trusting relationship 2.3 Mutual respect between dating partners 2.4 Open relationship and transparency between partners |
| 3. Community level protective factors for dating violence | 3.1 Cultural norms to reduce violence 3.2 University response |
| Societal level protective factors for dating violence | 4.1 Public awareness 4.2 Laws to protect women against violence |

4.4 Scientific rigour of the study

According to Lincoln and Guba (1986) “trustworthiness of a research study is important in evaluating its worth”. To ensure rigour in this research the researcher adopted the four basic frameworks for ensuring rigour as described by Lincoln and Guba (1986): credibility, conformability, dependability and transferability.

4.4.1 Credibility

Credibility is described as confidence in the truth, value and interpretation of the data (Polit, & Beck, 2014). The management, transcription and initial analysis of the data were carried out within 72 hours after each FGD. The data were all carefully stored and shared with the research supervisor.

Prolonged engagement: The researcher spent 10 months with the data: the eight FGD sessions, including the pilot study, transcription of the data and the data analysis process. Preliminary data analysis was conducted parallel to data collection, but full data analysis started in August 2016 and was completed in February 2017.

Verification of participants' responses to ensure that their points were clearly noted was conducted immediately after each FGD. The researcher summarised the key points and asked participants if they were a correct reflection of their opinions. Where there was disagreement the researcher asked for corrections and additions, which were made before the close of each session.

Peer debriefing was done continuously to validate the findings of the study. The researcher asked another researcher who is an expert in qualitative research to review the raw and analysed data and comment on them. The researcher exposed herself to questions from her research colleague and supervisor who are both experienced in qualitative research. The researcher maintained constant communication with the research supervisor throughout proposal development, data collection and data analysis.

Audit trail: A detailed description of data collection and the processes involved was provided throughout the research report.

4.4.2 Conformability

Conformability refers to the ability of the researcher to represent the data obtained from the participants by interpreting the data correctly and meaningfully, such that the findings reflect the participants' opinions (Polit, & Beck, 2014). The researcher provided her research supervisor with both raw data and emerging themes for her remarks on the

data analysis and interpretations. The supervisor initially disagreed with some of the emerging themes and interpretations, and these were resolved by merging related themes, correcting interpretations and renaming themes until there was mutual agreement on all identified themes between the researcher and her supervisor.

4.4.3 Dependability

Dependability refers to evidence of the constancy of data over time and situation, and whether the researcher has obeyed and followed the steps of the enquiry (Polit, & Beck, 2014). For dependability of this study the researcher documented all the processes of the study in detail, from the proposal development to how the pilot study was conducted. The pilot study was conducted to help the researcher to determine whether the FGD guide was adequate for the data collection. After completion of pilot study the researcher was convinced that the FGD guide was suitable for the data collection and then proceeded to the main study.

The researcher applied the six steps of Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis method of data analysis to explain how the interpretations were derived. This was to enhance reproducibility of the same themes by other researchers if they have a similar sample and data. The researcher's role as a nurse researcher and student of the University of Cape town was explained to the participants to ensure their maximum cooperation and voluntarily decision to be part of the study group.

4.4.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be transferred or generalised to other settings or groups (Polit, & Beck, 2014). The researcher provided transcript audio-recording to a qualitative research colleague who could code, analyse and interpret how themes emerged. The researcher provided thick discussion of risk and protective factors for dating violence among female undergraduate students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. She provided extensive discussions in Chapter Three and Four about the data collection procedures and pilot study process. Information was provided to share the lessons learnt with other researchers in order to permit satisfactory

comparisons with other samples. A detailed description of the sample is provided in Chapter Five.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed how data management was carried out, and the procedures used for analysis and interpretation of the data. Thirteen themes were identified under risk factors while 11 themes were identified under the protective factors for dating violence. The themes were arranged according to the four levels of the socio-ecological framework.

The main themes that emerged from the data analysis are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

Chapter Five presents the findings of the study. This chapter is divided into two sections: Section 1 discusses the demographic data of the participants and Section 2 discusses the findings using extracts from the participants' responses to demonstrate the development of themes. Section 2 is further divided into two parts: the first discusses the findings on risk factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria, while the second discusses the findings on protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.2 Section 1: Description of study participants

The sample consisted of 90 female undergraduate students drawn from the five undergraduate female residences at the study setting as participants. This constituted eight focus groups with 10 participants in each, and an additional 10 participants who participated in the pilot study. The pilot study participants and their data were included in the total sample because according to Duma (2006) the data from the pilot study may be included in a qualitative study if the pilot findings do not differ from the main study objectives (see also sample size for this explanation).

All of the participants were enrolled for studies and university residence for the 2016 academic year. Participants were registered for different undergraduate degrees from the various faculties, including Engineering, Social Sciences, Basic Medical Sciences, Law, Pharmacy, Education, Medicine, Agriculture, Arts, Management Sciences and Sciences. Their level of studies ranged from first year to sixth year (six-year degrees for Pharmacy, Engineering and Agriculture while Medicine is a seven-year degree).

All participants reported having been in ongoing and steady heterosexual relationships for at least six months prior to the study, which was a criteria for participation in the current study. Homosexuality and interacting with homosexuals is legally prohibited in the country (Onuah, 2014; TVC NEWS, 2014). Participants were drawn from the various ethnic groups in the country, namely Ibo, Yoruba and Hausa. Seventy

participants were Christian while 20 were Muslim, these being the predominant religions in the country (Anegbu, 2017).

5.3 Section 2: The findings

Thirteen themes were identified under the risk factors and 11 themes were identified under the protective factors for dating violence among female students in response to the research question: “What are female students’ perceptions of risk and protective factors for dating violence at the University of Benin, Nigeria?”.

The socio-ecological framework, Center; Vezina et al. (2015) which guided the study was used to organise the findings under both the risk and protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

These findings addressed the research objectives, which were:

- To explore and describe the individual level factors among risk and protective factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the interpersonal level factors among the risk and protective factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the community level factor among risk and protective factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.
- To explore and describe the societal factors among risk and protective factors for dating violence as perceived by female students at the University of Benin.

5.3.1 Part 1: Risk factors for dating violence

The 13 themes under the risk factors for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria were as follows:

Individual level risk factors for dating violence among female students

1. Alcohol and substance abuse

2. Poor interpersonal skills
3. Poor control of emotions
4. Possessiveness
5. Risky sexual behavior

Interpersonal level risk factors for dating violence among female students

1. Negative childhood experiences
2. Influence from others
3. Clash in belief systems between two partners

Community level risk factors for dating violence among female students

1. Patriarchy in the community
2. Violence in the community

Societal level risk factors for dating violence among female students

1. Influence of technology on relationships
2. Absence of regulations to protect women from abuse
3. Poverty.

5.3.1.1 Individual risk factors

Individual risk factors, as described by the CDC (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014; Vezina et al., 2015) are those features of somebody's habits, genetic make-up or personal history that increase the possibility of the person's susceptibility to becoming a victim or perpetrator.

Themes under individual level risk factors were alcohol and substance abuse, poor interpersonal skills, poor control of emotions, possessiveness, and risky sexual behavior.

5.3.1.1.1 Alcohol and substance abuse

Abuse of alcohol and smoking of hard substances such as cocaine, Indian hem, Igbo or marijuana were identified by participants in all nine FGDs (including the pilot group) as a

key factor for dating violence, as demonstrated by the following illustrative extracts from the data:

FGD 1: *When the guy start smoking and drinking, when he goes high, as in he is no longer himself and he ask you to do this thing and you don't want to do it because it is not the kind of thing you can do. And you know the kind of person, and you cannot do, the next thing, I say you should do this thing and you are here arguing with me [showing with hands how one slaps the other; participants laugh]. And so, you hardly find a boy who do not smoke and drink. So, when your boyfriend is now a smoker and a drinker, it can lead to dating violence.*

FDG 2: *Imagine a partner now who drinks and anytime he drinks, he become high, okay he is smoking, he is practically high. Maybe you come inside now and everywhere is somehow, smelling weed. Then you are asking him, so, you are smoking weed? The next thing he slaps you. This is followed by a question: Who gave you the authority to be asking me questions about what I can or cannot do?*

FGD 3: *Partners who drink and use drugs are very hostile and aggressive too. When under the influence of drugs or alcohol they will no longer know what they are doing. At that point in time they can cause a lot of violence like beating, slapping, emotionally and sexually molesting their partners.*

FDG 5: *In some relationships, the male partners are drug addicts, they are drug abusers, and when they don't get supplies, as in, when they don't have anything to keep them high as usual, they become restless and unstable and if the girl makes the mistake of doing anything that might annoy him, he might just want to take it out on her, leading to violence in the relationship.*

As demonstrated in the above extracts from the data, alcohol and substance abuse are individual level factors that increased the dating partners' susceptibility to dating violence either as victims or perpetrators.

5.3.1.1.2 Poor interpersonal skills

This theme was derived from the data related to one's character, such as communication skills, that increased the possibility of the person's susceptibility to

becoming a victim or perpetrator of dating violence. The individual's poor interpersonal skills as an individual level factor among risks for dating violence was demonstrated in the following extracts from different FDGs:

FDG6: *Communication is the bedrock of everything; if there is no proper communication between partners, I don't think things will go smoothly apart from violence. There are so many other things that can go wrong because maybe you are doing something that your partner does not like, but without good communication he will not be able to express himself and you will not know how he feels and then you start quarrelling over it.*

FDG 7: *In relationships communication is always a problem. The women take shit. They are always shutting up, unable to talk and so they are there, just gathering and gathering, taking and taking, like a shock absorber, absorbing all the shock there, and there is no allowance for them, until it gets to a point when you see such women spark and do something drastic. Then you think how come? How can a woman do something like that?*

FDG 3: *Lack of communication skills is a problem; if you guys don't understand each other, you might actually start fighting and things like that.*

FDG 2: *Not listening to each other's advice can cause violence among dating couples.*

As confirmed in the above extracts from the data on poor interpersonal skill as an individual level factor, this increased the possibility of the person's susceptibility of dating partners as victims or perpetrators of dating violence.

5.3.1.1.3 Poor control of emotions

Poor control of emotions such as aggression, anger and a quick temper and personal characteristics like pride, lying and lack of self-control emerged as individual level risk factors that contribute to partners fighting and abusing each other in a dating relationship, as demonstrated by the following extracts from participants in the FDGs:

FDG 2: *Like me, I am aggressive, am just this kind of person. I know it is not good oh! When I am, angry I lose control, and start shouting at him, my boyfriend doesn't like it at all, whenever I do that, we always fight, quarrel. I will be like... shouting, this, this, this and then fight.*

FDG 4: *In my own part like she said, if one is aggressive, one have to shut up. When two people are aggressive you find out that you start shouting at each other and fighting.*

FDG 8: *In addition to that I think anger too. When a person let say a partner has anger issue even when trust is there, little things can just trigger off the partner to abuse.*

FDG 3: *Another thing, if someone is aggressive and all that, there is nothing you can do to please that person. That is just the way the person is, the person is just aggressive. Some people can be extremely high tempered. Like, if you say or do any little thing that they don't like, they can just start looking for the nearest bottle or knife or anything. I won't take it lightly and I am also very hot tempered, so the day you slap me, all of us will land in Kirikiri Prison, it is as simple as that.*

As highlighted in the above extracts from the data, poor control of emotions was identified as an individual level factor increasing the possibility of susceptibility to dating a partner as a victim or perpetrator of dating violence.

5.3.1.1.4 Possessiveness

Possessiveness was unanimously identified as a risk factor for dating violence among dating partners in all FDGs, as demonstrated in the following extracts:

FGD1: *Like in my own case, when I was dating my ex-boyfriend, he was kind of very, very, possessive and anytime he saw me with any other guys he would ask me, who is that person? And what does he want from you? I would tell him, he is just a friend. He would go behind my back and threaten that boy. I would notice that anytime when I meet the same boy and greet him, the boy would ignore me and say please go away because I don't want trouble. Like me I didn't take it lightly with my ex-boyfriend and I told him that if he is not ready to stop this thing I would not continue with the relationship. He hit me oh! Most times he saw me with other people we quarrelled. He would end up hitting me.*

Under the theme of possessiveness having an inferiority complex or superiority complex was identified as a reason for possessiveness leading to dating violence, especially when partners felt threatened or feel inferior or superior to the other. This aspect of possessiveness was narrated by a participant in FDG 9 as follows:

Most guys feel more superior and want to always dictate things in your life as a dictatorship, then he starts insulting even though you did not do anything warranting that, just because he feels that you are not doing what he wants. He just takes advantage of that even if you are not doing anything wrong because he just wants to show that he is the man, he is superior to you.

Jealousy was also identified as a reason for possessiveness leading to dating violence, especially when partners felt threatened that some other man wanted to take his girlfriend, as shared by participants as follows:

FGD7: *Mostly it is jealousy because guys and most Nigerian guys, they are Nigerians they are very possessive. Most times when they see you with another guy, especially the way you entice yourself, relate with another guy mostly, this can lead to jealousy. From jealousy, he will develop hatred, frustration and anger. The next thing, before you know, he starts fighting you whenever he sees you with another guy.*

FGD5: *When you have a boyfriend and you know he is the kind of person who likes making friends a lot, both girls and boys and you start asking who is that girl? Who is that girl? The next time you see the girl with your boyfriend because you are jealous, angry and you feel she wants to take over your boyfriend. You will attack her and both of you start fighting. Your boyfriend gets angry and slaps you, beats you up, saying what is wrong with you? I am disappointed in you, that is the end. Before you know or do anything further, you guys break up.*

FGD3: *Another thing that can also cause dating violence is envy, because we ladies we like envying each other too much. You are dating a guy and that guy loves you and takes care of you, envy will come and jealousy will come from your friends, they will look for a way to cause quarrel and enmity between you and your boyfriend, and that kind of thing causes quarrels, physical fighting, emotional and mental stress between you and your boyfriend.*

Monitoring of a partner was identified as a reason for possessiveness leading to dating violence, especially when partners felt threatened by the possibility of losing the partner. This extract from a participant in FDG 9 affirmed this:

Like another girl, she said that her boyfriend like following her anywhere she goes, like the boyfriend doesn't like to give her space, and she doesn't like it. The thing was making the girl feeling uncomfortable whenever that happened. Then they ended up quarrelling about it.

As indicated in the above extracts from the data, possessiveness was an individual level factor that increased the possibility of susceptibility to being a victim or perpetrator of dating violence.

5.3.1.1.5 Risky sexual behaviours

Having multiple sex partners, cheating on one another and distrust were identified as a major factor for dating violence under this level by participants in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group), as demonstrated by the following examples of extracts from the data:

FDG2: *My boyfriend started dating other girls, having sex with other girls, having another relationship with another girl, from one girl to another [other participants laugh]. I told him I am not going to continue with the relationship because he was cheating on me. Before I could leave that relationship, it was war. He locked me up in his room and kept the key in his pocket and said, no, you are not going anywhere. He seized my phone. The next morning, he said if I should step further, he was going to hit me. I thought he was joking, I just said please, you cannot do this thing to me. I have not even completed my statement; the boy just gave me a slap on my face.*

FDG1: *I had a friend who was a final-year student and was double-dating. She had a man outside school whom she wanted to marry and another guy, a student in school, who was her boyfriend. In no time the guy got to know that the girl was cheating on him because sometimes when the guy met her with the fiancé, she will lie to the guy that the fiancé is her uncle. The guy confronted her of cheating on him and was very angry and told the girl that neither he nor the fiancé will marry her. The guy shot her dead.*

Under this theme, the unmet sexual desires of partners was identified as a reason for risky sexual behaviour leading to dating violence, especially when one partner does not trust the other.

FDG4: *Normally, what really cause fight in a relationship is sex, whereby, the guy wants to have sex with the girl and the girl does not want it or the other way around. Maybe the girl wants to have sex with the guy, and the guy will not want to have sex with the girl, the girl will just start insulting the guy, 'you are impotent;...' and the guy may not take it from the girl, which can lead to fighting.*

FDG2: *Most times I feel is sex. Most guys they love sex very much. Like I know of a person if he doesn't have sex with her, in fact the girl is finished [all participants laugh]. There was a day she came to our house and she said she is tired of the relationship, every time is gba-gba-gba [sex, sex, sex]. I was like what is happening? She was now like if I don't have sex with him today, it looks as if he takes cocaine he wants to kill me and everything. So, there was a day she couldn't take it anymore, she said she doesn't want to have sex that day, the boyfriend beat her black and blue.*

Infidelity/accusation of infidelity by partners was also identified as a reason for risky sexual behaviour leading to dating violence, particularly when partners felt threatened that the other partner is not loyal:

FGD: *I feel infidelity is one of the causes of violence in a relationship especially when the partner has someone who has a bad background or someone who has issues with anger. So, when one partner cheats on the other, and he finds out, the guy may beat up the girlfriend.*

As indicated in the above extracts from the data, risky sexual behaviour was identified as an individual level factor that increased the possibility of susceptibility to being victims or perpetrators of dating violence.

5.3.1.2 Interpersonal risk factors

Interpersonal risk factors are relationship-related factors such as friends, peers, family and neighbours that predispose an individual to being susceptible to dating violence either as a perpetrator or victim (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014). At this level three themes emerged: negative childhood experiences, influence from others, and clash in belief systems between two partners.

5.3.1.2.1 Negative childhood experiences

Negative childhood exposure such as poor family upbringing, exposure to family violence and past self-exposure to violence emerged as interpersonal level risk factors that contribute to violence in dating relationships, as demonstrated by the following extracts from several participants in the FDGs:

FDG1: *Violent home upbringing can cause violence in dating couples. The way the person was brought up, and the experience the person had. Like when the child is not brought up in a proper way, like when the parents are always fighting, the child will tend to pick that character, because the family or parents are the first teacher to the child. So, when the parents are always fighting, this is how the child sees life as. When the child grows up, he will want to show his actions and prove to everybody that he has power. And by doing this, he might even put it down to his girlfriend, and fight her over any little things.*

FDG5: *I think this is a fact for dating violence. I will say, depending on the person, there are some people that just believe that violence is the only answer maybe because of their background or what they see their parent do. So even the slightest thing that their partner does to them then they just take offence, fight and abuse their partner.*

FDG8: *Why couples fight in relationships is because some people may come from a polygamous home where the father and the mum fight every day, almost every day, or maybe in their environment there are a lot of polygamous families around, it can also add. Is like first-hand throwing things is part of them, they will end up doing the same thing when in a relationship, beating their partner and all that.*

FDG3: *When one experiences the parents always fighting at home, he or she will also think that, it is a normal way of behaving in a relationship. The boyfriend starts getting rude and can fight, or hit the girl.*

FDG1: *A person who grows up in a violent family environment will also be violent in his or her own relationship. Why? Because when you remember how your mum and dad always quarrel and fight over every little thing, you too start acting like that because you take it as a normal way of life.*

FDG6: *Maybe somebody abused them when they were smaller and now they want to abuse somebody else. It gives you power, you know, you have enough power to hold one person down and take advantage.*

As indicated in the above extracts, negative childhood experiences as an interpersonal level factor increased the possibility of susceptibility of being victims or perpetrators of dating violence.

5.3.1.2.2 Influence from others

This theme emerged from the data in relation to interaction with close relations or others that increased the possibility of a person's susceptibility to becoming a victim or perpetrator of dating violence. These 'others' may include friends or family members with whom one associates:

FDG4: *I think bad influence from your girlfriends can actually----make a guy to fight their girl. Maybe there is a friend instigating her and when the girl talk to her friend [about] what the guy is doing to her, the friend will advise her, you must slap him, if I were you I would do this or that. Then you now go and slap him as your friend advised, this will result to serious fight that may lead to physical injuries and emotional trauma. This can also happen with the guy, and vice versa.*

FDG9: *My girlfriend advised me to stop talking to my boyfriend because of certain unresolved issues and I ended up destroying my own relationship by yielding to her advice. My guy beat me up like a baby and said next time you will not try that with me again. My boyfriend has never hit me before but just because I acted according to my girlfriend's advice. I have learnt my lesson.*

FDG7: *Friends can also influence what happen in a relationship. For instance, there are those that, some men, any issue they have they like discussing about it with their friends, he is actually tempted to use violence based on what his friends have told him. Like the friends can also determine what happens in a relationship.*

A participant from FDG2 narrated how family could be a contributor to dating violence in a relationship:

The family can also influence people to be violent in relationships. For example, when you take any issues that come between you and your partner and then you take it to your mum and she will say 'For what! I never did this to your dad, why will he do that to you?' You understand. Some mothers are like that. They will now prompt you, they will put words into your head, they will feed in things that will make you angry and then when you get back to your partner, you have no other choice than to beat her up.

As shown in the above extracts from the data, influence from others is an interpersonal level factor that increases susceptibility to being victims or perpetrators of dating violence.

5.3.1.2.3 Clash in belief systems between two partners

Clash in belief systems between two partners, such as differences in religion, background and beliefs emerged as interpersonal level risk factors that contribute to dating violence, as demonstrated by the following extracts from participants in the FDGs:

FDG2: *I believe that if you are from different background you may see things from different perspectives. Like if a Muslim guy is now dating a Christian sister. There might be some difference among them. The guy will be listing things that are supposed to be done this way, the girl will be listing the things that are supposed to be done that way and that will make them to disagree. And at times, if the girl proves to be stubborn it might lead to violence where the guy beats up the girlfriend and they start fighting.*

FDG6: *I think the things we learnt while growing up, you know, like there are these some strong beliefs, maybe we learnt from our grandparents, our aunties, the people that we are surrounded with and we can't let it go. Now, coming into a relationship with somebody who also has some strong beliefs, that he is also holding to. In that case, there is going to be a lot of violence because they both don't want to let go of what they know is right; who will let go, who will first say okay! I will let go of my own belief and the rightful thing.*

FDG3: *Maybe what this guy believes is that a girl is supposed to respect a guy and he holds strongly to that belief. The girl believes we are equal, you can respect me also and*

she too holds strongly to that, now who is going to let go and surrender? So, most of the times this causes quarrelling and violence among dating partners.

FDG1: *Again, for the environment, as some girls are being raised in public yard while some are being trained in a flat, and the character of the one who grew up in a public yard differs from that who grew up in a flat. So, it will actually clash because you two do things differently. The guy believes that his opinion is the final whether the girlfriend like it or not and this often leads to quarrel and fighting among them.*

As outlined in the above extracts from the data, clash in belief systems between two partners was identified as an interpersonal level factor that increased the possibility of susceptibility to being victims or perpetrators of dating violence.

5.3.1.3 Community level risk factors

Community risk factors are those factors in the community setting, such as school environment, school system, workplace and neighbourhood, which predispose any person to being susceptible either as a perpetrator or victim of dating violence (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014). At this level two themes emerged: patriarchy in the community and violence in the community.

5.3.1.3.1 Patriarchy in the community

This theme was derived from data related to characteristics in the community setting such as negative beliefs of the people in a culture and community that increase the possibility of susceptibility to becoming a victim or perpetrator of dating violence. Patriarchy in the community as community level factors of risk for dating violence were demonstrated by the following extracts from different FDGs:

FDG6: *In Nigeria, a woman is not allowed to talk when a man is talking. No, the woman can't talk, she is not expected to talk. It's like you are passive, just sit down there and be quiet. So, I feel over time, if you meet someone that is not used to that way of life or something, maybe when the man is just talking to his friend, you are like hmm, or you answer as a girlfriend, that is how, that can make him to be violent towards you as his partner.*

FDG5: *This is Nigeria, so, our culture says that if you are a woman you need to lie down for the man to pass. That mentality has not changed. Even if you are a director in an office, you can't come to your boyfriend and begin to raise shoulders or boss him around. The guy can get angry and beat you up for that.*

Participant 1 from FDG 2: *This is Nigeria, it is something that happens when you are a woman, whether you are right or wrong, they will never, ever, side with you. So, when I do something as a woman that my partner does not like, and he wants to correct me, he might end up beating me.*

FDG9: *This is a general belief in our society. Boys use their ego and they believe that they are the boss. So, if you cannot respect him as culture demands, he will fight you till you know that he is the head in the relationship. This is because they grow up to know that. It is the way they were taught that as a man, you are the head. Even as a child, they already know and they start exhibiting this right from young age and even when they start dating.*

FDG7: *I heard some men say women are like children and the only way to tell them they are wrong is to beat her. Some will even tell you that they enjoy beating women. They believe that it makes her to be well behaved. So, this belief too can make men to be violent in dating relationships.*

As exemplified in the above extracts from data, patriarchy in the community was identified as a community level factor that contributed to risk for dating violence among dating partners.

5.3.1.3.2 Violence in the community

Violence in the community, such as the exposure to difference negative persons in the environment and community lifestyles emerged as community level risk factors that contributed to partners fighting and abusing each other in dating relationships, as demonstrated by the following extracts:

FDG 8: *And the environment too, if a person comes from XXXX [name of community withheld] because everybody has characterised that place as a bad community or something like that. When you grow up with the agberos, awawa [toughs and ruffians] all*

of them, then, when you grow up with those, you just see life a different way entirely. When you go, and have relationship with those kind of people, they just see you as haa! Nothing.

FDG4: *No matter how good the family is, no matter how good the children might be, but growing up in very high violent areas like in the ghetto, the way they behave there, they react to issues violently, so if the girlfriend does anything wrong, she gets the beating of her life, and she cannot defend herself because she is a woman.*

FDG2: *In my own case, I grew up in a very rough environment XXXX [name of community withheld]. The girls there behave like men and they don't care. If my guy hits me I will injure him beyond recognition. He will know that there are girls who are more powerful than guys. No man can fight me and go just like that, that is how I grew up, to defend myself.*

As stated in the above extracts from the data, violence in the community was identified as a community level factor that contributes to dating violence.

5.3.1.4 Societal level risk factors

Societal level risk factors, as described by (Vezina et al., 2015), are those features in the greater society that make a person vulnerable to being a perpetrator or victim. At this level three themes were identified: influence of technology on relationships, absence of regulations to protect women from abuse, and poverty.

5.3.1.4.1 Influence of technology on relationships

Electronic gadgets such as phones, WhatsApp, television, BlackBerry chat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were identified as risk factors for dating violence under the societal level in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group), as demonstrated by the following extracts from the data:

FGD1: *The media, Internet, those have influences on violence in relationships. The things we see and imitate like the films we watch, those foreign behaviours we imitate, and when your boyfriend does not like it and asked you to stop doing that, when you repeat it then your boyfriend will be angry and start quarrelling. From quarrel, fighting and abuse.*

FDG6: *I think technology in the society nowadays has caused a lot of problems. So, when you watch these things, and I for example start imitating and becoming like what I see.... Things like that definitely can bring about violence between me and my dating partner.*

FDG5: *The other day I dressed with this short dress, like the design I saw from a movie. My boyfriend shouted at me 'Look at you, you are like a prostitute'. He started insulting me to the extent that we started fighting.*

FDG3: *Yes, is true, the things we watch on TV, Internet and phones has a way of negatively influencing our attitudes and characters in relationships. Those are foreign attitudes from abroad which are not our culture. When one starts imitating those things, it may make my partner to be angry and to fight each other.*

FDG8: *Some children they didn't grow up in a violent environment but because of what they watch on TV, they see on media, they want to practice on their partners; they can cause violence in relationships.*

As shown in the above extracts from the data, the influence of technology on relationships was identified as a societal level factor that contributes to risk for dating violence among dating partners.

5.3.1.4.2 Absence of regulations to protect women from abuse

This theme emerged from the data in relation to the absence of laws in Nigeria to protect women from violence and abuse in intimate relationships. Participants in all nine focus groups (including pilot group) referred to this, as demonstrated by the following extracts:

FGD1: *The policies in Nigeria are not helping issues like this [dating violence] at all. Implementation of policies are lacking due to bribing and corruption. Even if the laws are there but it is just paper work is not working. They are not working. Your guy will beat you and you go report to the police, the police will collect bribe from him and the case is closed.*

FDG9: *This is Africa, this is Nigeria, I don't know of any particular law favouring the female folks or the female gender. Even protection from rape or whatever, I don't think that such laws even exist.*

FDG2: *Sometimes even if the laws are there women are slow to report. In Nigeria, it is like there is a covering layer over your eyes, because you are a woman, I tell you. You see, the women are not even coming out, because the violent men instil fear in them. They can't even come out to tell you that I am in a violent relationship. The man might even threaten her and it might even get worse. So, they are scared.*

As presented in the above extracts from the data, the absence of regulations to protect women from violence was identified as a societal level factor contributing to risk for dating violence among university students in Nigeria.

5.3.1.4.3 Poverty

Unemployment, lack of provision of job space by the authorities, partners depending on the other and unmet demands of partners were unanimously highlighted as factors that contribute as risks for dating violence among dating partners. This was demonstrated in extracts from all nine focus groups (including pilot group):

FDG7: *The economy situation in Nigeria is not helping partners at all and this can lead to dating violence. For example, most men are jobless even before the Buhari's regime and by the time you start dating a girl who is over-demanding, again the guy may not have the money to provide what the girl wants. If she keeps demanding, he can get frustrated and will start fighting with her.*

FDG3: *Unemployment too can lead to dating violence. If for, instance, the guy after graduating with first class, second class upper, and two years, three years is gone but this guy still don't have a job, he is like what am I doing? He gets angry and if the girlfriend by mistake asks him for anything, because he is jobless and cannot provide for her he may not know when he starts being abusive and beating up his girlfriend.*

FDG6: *One thing about this country today is if other people are earning money, but you don't have a job, it can cause dating violence. The guy is like I can't even take care of my girlfriend I can't even take care of my family, he becomes frustrated and angry all because he cannot meet up with his demands. So, he feels he will soon lose her to other guys who are richer. It gets to a time when the girl asks for certain things that become his fear and anger, maybe he starts to hit the girl violently which will lead to more fights in a relationship.*

FDG4: *So, talking about Nigeria situation now, is all about unemployment, most men are jobless. Unemployment can make someone frustrated and act violently in relationship. That is one thing I know.*

FDG2: *In my own opinion, I think excessive dependences, on one partner or the other can trigger fights. For example, the boyfriend oversees everything that must do with the girlfriend; she keeps asking and asking, there is a time, like you will start pushing somebody to the wall, the person will want to bounce back. So, the person tends to capitalise on that aspect, and since you are dependent on me, that means, I have power over you, so I can beat you at any time I feel angered.*

FDG9: *I will say, when the man is not able to satisfy the needs or affair of the woman, I saw a case... or rather, I knew a guy who had a girlfriend... though he is working and he is still a student. So, that very day was irony, she was just asking the guy for money...give me this, give me that... and he was like 'I don't have money' and he went out, he came back, she just carried hot iron and stabbed it on his chest. The guy shouting, the girl started shouting, and then packed her loads and left. So, I think, since he was unable to meet her needs, she can do anything she wants.*

FDG3: *Like when my guy doesn't have money, he will not want anyone around him, and if I ask him for anything, he will just get provoked and a quarrel just starts, from there a fight begins.*

As highlighted in the above extracts from data, poverty was identified as a societal level factor for dating violence among dating partners

5.4 Part 2: Protective factors for dating violence

The 11 themes identified under the protective level factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria are as follows:

Individual level protective factors

1. Maturity and self-knowledge/acceptance before dating
2. Self-protective behaviours
3. Control of emotions

Interpersonal level protective factors

1. Having elders as good role models
2. Trusting relationship
3. Mutual respect between partners
4. Open relationship and transparency between partners

Community level protective factors

1. Cultural norms to reduce violence
2. University response

Societal level protective factors

1. Public awareness
2. Laws to protect women from violence

5.4.1 Individual protective level factors

Individual protective factors are those features in individuals that help to protect the individual from risk of violence (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014). At this level three themes emerged: maturity and self-knowledge/acceptance before dating, self-protective behaviours and control of emotions (anger management).

5.4.1.1 Maturity and self-knowledge/acceptance before dating

This theme emerged from the data in relation to genetic make-up, habits, and/or features in the individual that help to protect them from becoming a victim or perpetrator of dating violence. Participants identified the following as crucial elements for a dating partner to protect them self: know your partner, acceptance before relationship, maturity, having knowledge of relationships, having experience of relationships, being of age and being prepared for relationship as individual level protective factors for dating violence. The following extracts from several participants in the FDGs refer to these.

The following extract is from one participant from FDG3 who shared her opinion about maturity as a protective factor for dating violence among students at the University of Benin:

It still boils down to your sense of maturity. If you can't handle the situation, then you shouldn't be involved in a relationship. No matter whether the guy is handsome, you have to know who you are first before you go into a relationship, you understand that.

These participants shared their views on the need to have knowledge about the relationship before going into it:

FDG6: *If that person is talking to you and he has no knowledge of himself, he has little or nothing to give to you, so, if you go to a person that is inexperienced, that has nothing to give, I don't think that will have positive effect in your relationship. I think that before you go into a relationship, there should be a reason why you are doing it. So, you should be kind of optimistic about it.*

FDG1: *I feel you have to accept yourself first before you accept the next person because sometimes he will not meet up to your standards. You do not go into a relationship with a mindset that you are going to change the person because some persons cannot meet up with your standards.*

FDG5: *First of all, you have to accept yourself, then the next person. When you accept the other person, try to be romantic. Just accept the person for who they are so you won't see faults and get angry. Accept him the way he is so you won't see his faults. Then you will be happy and safe from violence.*

FDG7: *When you go into a relationship you come with your standards and before you end up with him the person since you cannot change him, so it is better to know and accept yourself first.*

FDG2: *If in your own mind, you cannot accept him to be your husband or you are not even praying for him to be your husband, because dating is supposed to lead to marriage, then do not accept him, nor accept any gifts he offers you so that you can be on the safe side.*

As highlighted in the above extracts from the data, maturity and self-knowledge or acceptance before dating were identified as individual level protective factors for dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.1.2 Self-protective behaviours

Avoidance of violent occasions, being extra careful and forgiveness were identified by all nine groups as essential self-protective behaviours that can protect dating partners from dating violence. This is demonstrated in the following extracts from data.

This FDG 2 participant shared her view on the need to avoid cohabiting with partners:

Girls should avoid going to cohabit with their partners.

Another participant, from FDG6, shared her view that partners be careful and watchful as necessary self-protective behaviour required in a relationship:

We should be careful and watch the kind of boys we date.

This is a response from an FDG8 participant who shared her view relating to studying one's partner as self-protective behaviour that is vital in a relationship:

Another very important thing is that know your relationship, study your partner, know the kind of person you are in relationship with. If you see that this guy you are dating has anger issues, like the first few months of the relationship, you did just one small thing [and] the guy just slap you or wanted to slap you. That kind of thing, ha! You don't need to be told, leave the relationship and pray for the guy because if you don't leave and you are praying for the guy he might kill you before the prayer is answered. [Participants all laugh]

This participant from FDG3 shared her view concerning self-protective behaviour needed in a relationship:

So, you have to be careful in the way you talk to men, Sometimes, that is very, very important. There are polite ways of answering questions, so, girls should answer their boyfriends politely and avoid being insulting. In this way dating partners will be happy and safe.

The following extract from one participant in FDG2 concerns forgiveness as a protective factor for dating violence among partners:

So, they should be able to forgive each other, not that you start saying the other day you did this and you are doing it again. So, we should be able to forgive each other, they should be able to forgive each other, we are not perfect human beings.

A participant from FDG9 shared this:

People tend to think that in relationships, one of them should be perfect. Mistakes happen, you don't just bypass that, mistakes happen in relationships. Your partner may do something wrong, you will learn to forgive. The guy does something wrong, he begs you, you forgive him.

As emphasised in the above extracts from the data, self-protective behaviours were identified as individual level protective factors against dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.1.3 Self-control of emotions

Control of emotions including aggression, anger, quick temper and personal characteristics like pride, lying, and having self-control emerged from data on individual level protective factors for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. The theme was identified from data from all nine focus groups (including pilot group) as demonstrated in the following extracts.

FDG4: *Everybody have to learn how to manage anger. It is impossible for you to say you can never be angry with somebody, no, even when you are angered, is somebody else that you too will annoy. So, if you can learn a way to manage your anger. When am angry these are things I do. You look for a way to walk away from the person and calm down. By them you people can now talk about what happened. There are all those possibilities too.*

FDG9: *Anger management. Is just anger management, just try and organise something like programmes to teach partners on how to manage their different emotions.*

FDG8: *When you know, you are getting angry or your guy is getting angry to avoid quarrel, just say you are sorry. Sorry, a five-letter word, can stop any quarrel and dating violence.*

FDG1: *I will add by saying we should be able to apologise although there are some people that even if you tell them sorry many times, they will still say they cannot take it but at least you've said sorry.*

FDG2: *As for me, in relationship, to prevent violence, I believe the boy and girl must have a low temper. They need to always take issues calmly no matter what.*

As highlighted in the above extracts from the data, self-control of emotions emerged as an individual level protective factor for dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.2 Interpersonal level protective factors

Interpersonal protective factors are described as those relationship-related factors such as friends, peers, family and neighbours that an individual interacts with, that help to reduce risk or protect the individual from dating violence (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014). At this level four themes emerged: having elders as good role models, trusting relationships, mutual respect between dating partners, and open relationship and transparency between partners.

5.4.2.1 Having elders as good role models

The elders that were identified as role models include parents, family members, friends, religious leaders and other persons such as school teachers. The role-modelled behaviours that were identified as protective were giving advice, admonishing, teaching and counselling the dating partners. Extracts from all nine focus groups (including pilot group) demonstrate the development of this theme.

FDG3: *It is better to go to those adults who have positive experience or relationships that you admire to ask for advice. So, when they give you advice, using their own relationship success stories, maybe that can have more effect on young partners.*

FDG4: *There is little or nothing we can do to change our parents if they are violent, we know that violence is bad, so, we will be the ones that will effect that change. Maybe we can go for counselling as a couple, perhaps that can help.*

FDG8: *The girls will like to look onto the elder sister while the guys will look onto the elder brother, so one thing in life is that, as the elder daughters and the elder son, the way you bring them up matters a lot in how they behave in their relationship. Elder sisters and brothers advise the dating couple on how to treat each other nicely and thus avoid dating violence.*

FDG2: *Then consult people who can give you good advice because at the end of the day, you want a safe and loving relationship.*

FDG1: *When you are dating especially when you guys are going into marriage you want to ensure that you try as much as possible to use preventive measures like marriage counselling so that violence will not be part of the relationship.*

As highlighted in the above extracts from the data, having elders as good role models emerged as an interpersonal level protective factor against dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.2.2 Trusting relationship

Being trustworthy, and faithful were identified as essential to protect dating partners from dating violence. Participants in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group) referred to this:

FDG3: *We should learn to trust our partners. When we have trust for one another then we will be happy and safe in our relationships.*

FDG7: *Dating partners should have trust for one another no matter the situation so that they will be happy and safe in their relationships.*

FDG4: *Okay I will say trust and truth. Just be truthful.*

FDG1: *When they are faithful to each other, the relationship will be happy and safe.*

5.4.2.3 Mutual respect between dating partners

Respect for one another emerged as an interpersonal level protective factor for dating

violence amongst students at the University of Benin Nigeria. The theme was identified from data from participants in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group), as demonstrated by the following examples:

FDG3: *I think there is a need for partners to respect one another.*

FDG6: *Respect each other because this is one thing I know that will bring happiness in a relationship and other aspects. I will say we should be truthful to each other at all times.*

FDG9: *If you really have respect for the other partner, you will not want to violate another person. I don't think he will want to abuse you or fight you.*

FDG4: *There should be mutual understanding between partners.*

FDG 5: *Partners should understand themselves in a dating relationships because when you understand each other, I don't think there will be violence in that relationship.*

FDG7: *Give each other spaces to do other things while in a relationship and always trust your partner no matter the distance between you two.*

FDG2: *But when you are in a relationship, there should be space, there should be time when you have space to do whatever you want, he has space for himself, you understand.*

As stressed in the above extracts, mutual respect between dating partners emerged as an interpersonal level protective factors against dating violence amongst students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.2.4 Open relationship and transparency between partners

This theme emerged as an interpersonal level protective factor against dating violence. Participants identified having an open relationship, and being truthful and transparent to one another as important elements that a dating partner requires to protect themselves from dating violence. Participants in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group) agreed:

FDG9: *The relationship between two people should be open, no matter how ugly it is. So, keeping secret is not really idea in a relationship.*

FDG3: *When there is transparency with someone, you know when you are open, that is, you say everything, you don't have to hide, you say ---like you say sweetheart I am going somewhere! The guy is like are you okay? You make sure that he knows your whereabouts not that his friends will now call him and say, I saw your babe in club oh! Come how far are you now! The guy is like, you know, she told me, okay, he will even vow for you.*

FDG5: *Open relationships. It means the relationship should be known to all around you such as your family, friends so that if, for example, anything is going wrong they can help partners to resolve such issues.*

FDG8: *When they are faithful to each other, the relationship will be happy and safe.*

FDG 6; *If you do something and I know am not okay with it, a wise and rational person or learned human being will speak out what you did just now I am not okay with it, please don't do it like this. So, the thing is you just have to talk, not being the mute type that don't want to talk. Although some men will see you as being the nagging type but you should also know the limit, how to talk, and the right time to talk.*

FDG 2: *There should be support and good communication among the partners. Like me now, I am in a relationship and both of us are in a University environment, he calls me every day to find out how I am doing and what happened to me. With that I always respect him because I know he cares about me and this good communication has been helping us. So, I think continuous communication among dating partners is vital for a healthy relationship.*

As emphasised in the above extracts from the data, open relationships and transparency between dating partners emerged as interpersonal level protective factors for dating violence amongst students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.3 Community level protective factors

Community level protective factors are those features found in the community that help to protect an individual from risk or violence (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014). At this level two themes emerged: cultural norms to reduce violence and university response.

5.4.3.1 Cultural norms to reduce violence

This theme emerged as a community level protective factor for dating violence, and is subject to the community or environmental or cultural values that exist in the community. Cultural norms to reduce violence, such as reducing attitudes of favouring males more than females and gender equality were identified as significant elements that can help to reduce dating violence among dating partners. Participants in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group) demonstrated this, as seen in the following extracts:

FDG4: *Cultural norms and attitudes that can help reduce or prevent violence should be promoted by everyone in the community.*

FDG3: *The attitude of honouring men more than women should be eradicated because when you give the boys preferential treatment compared to the girls they feel that they are only the best.*

FDG1: *Men dating partners should be educated to give room for the women partners to make their own decisions not you always making the decisions because you feel you are the man.*

FDG6: *Women should be given equal opportunities in every area of life. Like give women key roles as leaders in the communities; gender equality is what can protect women from dating violence”*

As highlighted in the above extracts from data, cultural norms to reduce violence emerged as community level protective factors against dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.3.2 University response

Insecurity, absence of policies, lack of university authorities addressing relationship violence, specifically dating violence, and lack of implementation of other existing university laws emerged from the data under community level protective factors for dating violence at the University of Benin, Nigeria. The theme was identified by all nine groups, and is demonstrated in the following extracts from data:

FDG2: *I think the school has to bring in awareness. Bring in all these kinds of NGOs and companies to talk about people, enlightening us about, just doing those kinds of awareness campaign will go a long way to help.*

A participant from **FDG 7** shared the need for adequate supervision by residence wardens as a protective factor:

Also in school hostel, they should also encourage, I think they have all these supervisors, they just help in hostels like the way it is done abroad, like when they see a child, and like there is marks on the body, the child is angry his eyes are red, they will approach her and ask, did your mum beat you? I think it should also be like that. I feel basically, you are exercising your authority of monitoring students.

This participant from FDG 1 added her opinion:

You have to eliminate people who are not competent to oversee the hostel affairs and employ those who are competent to do the jobs because those at the top are just corrupt, because once they give them money they will just employ them even when they are not qualified, that is the problem in Nigeria.

A participant from FDG 3 shared the importance of making security staff do their jobs:

I think the school should look into protecting female students and make security do their job of protecting students, especially female students.

The participants also identified the need for the university counsellors to do their jobs.

FDG7: *In Uniben, student counselling, I think there was one time the head of that counselling department was actually going from hostel to hostel educating students. In fact, hers was just everything, both malpractices and all. Enlightening us, telling us what our rights actually are as students, what we can stand for, the one we can do, you know, just enumerate them - that we were never aware of before. So, is just, I believe every university have a framework but maybe over the years maybe they just left it one side like that. So, they should just try to resurrect all those frameworks and put a zealous man to spearhead, you understand. Someone with good work, someone who is proactive,*

someone like that, just put the person there in charge to spearhead the work and something like that.

FDG 9: *School counsellors should educate and support partners by teaching them some things about dating relationships, like what to do to avoid dating violence.*

One participant from FDG 5 shared the importance and need for educating students and methods to be used, as she said:

Apart from jingles, they can organise conferences and workshops like this to teach students these issues.

This participant from FDG 2 supported the above, by adding the following:

Seminars will still have more power. In fact, every week a seminar, because once you teach one, the other day teach another one.

This participant from FDG 4 stated the need to add dating matters into the school curriculum:

The school can also introduce this into the school curriculum so that no matter the course you are doing, whatever course you are studying you will have knowledge of relationships.

Participants identified the significance of the university policies and laws:

FDG1: *The school can actually prevent this violence in relationships, I guess that what the school should do is just maybe to put up a particular law that any guy that beats up a girl will be penalised or any boy that maltreats a girl in an abusive manner will be penalised. Because I believe in such laws.*

FDG6: *For me I think the school should put basic laws; apart from putting these basic laws it should enforce it.*

FDG4: *The only thing the school can do is to have laws. University to enact policies of prevention of abuse.*

FDG8: *But for the prevention, the universities can have 'the no fighting rules, the no abuse rules' but after that, basically is left to the individuals who are abused now to come forward to report.*

FDG9: *I think a befitting punishment is necessary for every kind of violence. since I have been in this school five years now, I barely hear people fight because Uniben has this slogan 'If you want to graduate early you don't fight' ... So, that is a good one, at least fighting is not allowed, so, basically a way to prevent abuses should also be made.*

FDG2: *Uniben has tried, the rules of no fighting are a strong one, they have security in the right places, they have portals, I think the school so far has tried, and I think they can do more ...*

As highlighted in the above extracts, there are important issues regarding university response that the university needs to address, and these needs to be embraced by all in order to have a peaceful and healthy dating relationship free from dating violence.

5.4.4 Societal level protective factors

Societal protective factors are those interactions in the larger society that help to promote healthy living and protect individuals from risk or harm (Center for Disease Control Prevention, 2014). At this level two themes emerged from the participants' responses: public awareness and laws to protect women from violence.

5.4.4.1 Public awareness

This theme was derived from the data related to public awareness such as use of the technologies available for disseminating information to the public such as the media, including television, radio, newspapers, magazines, the Internet, phones, WhatsApp, Twitter, Instagram, BlackBerry chat. These communication channels were identified as vital to help to educate the public, making them aware of ways to reduce dating violence among dating partners.

Extracts from all nine focus groups (including the pilot group) were used to develop this theme; here are some examples:

FDG3: *Okay, Nigeria can as well help to make sure students are aware of this through the media. This is 21th century, we have these media like NTA (new era or age where media services are available and accessible by the public, like National Television Authority), they can organise some programmes, like let me say something like what are the causes of violence, ways to avoid sources of violence whereby all will hear. Because as teenagers you can't tell me you are not on air. These are the means that they can help to approach the issues in the system.*

FDG5: *The government can also prevent this violence by teaching people about their rights on media. Some people they are like, they don't know their rights, they don't even know their stand. So, whatever somebody does to them, they just see it as normal, like that is how I see it. Some kind of things that will help them in their relationships and what is supposed to happen and what is not supposed to happen in a relationship.*

FDG8: *Those things like the boy poured his girlfriend hot water, acid or burnt her to death should be publicised, you know, they should inform everyone, this was how the guy was punished, we should hear more of these things to serve as a warning to others.*

FDG4: *I know they always publicize somebody beat somebody, somebody pour his wife with acid, he is in prison, no there should be follow up on these things, those things just die off because is in police custody we don't know whether he was sentenced or not, they just say, the police arrested him. There is nothing more you hear, ha!*

This participant from FDG3 shared her views on the need for religious bodies to educate their members and provide support:

Religious organisations has role to play in educating her members by organising programs like workshops for the youths, dating partners and counselling dating partners on how to address relationships issues. They should encourage all dating partners to attend marriage counselling classes before they eventually get married, where they are thought so many issues related to relationships.

Another participant from FDG1 shared the view that counselling services should be provided and be made known to the public:

Services for young couples to go for counselling when they have issues among them for help should be made available in this country. They can meet their pastors in churches as a Christian or their seniors who can give them good counsel.

This participant from FDG9 said parents should be taught as follows:

They should do counselling for parents they can tell parents ha! This is what you look out for your child, oh, this is what you have to inculcate in your child before they even start dating.

As highlighted in the above extracts from the data, public awareness emerged as a societal level protective factor for dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.4.4.2 Laws to protect women from violence

This theme was derived from participants' responses to 6.1 interaction in the society that increases the possibility of a person's protection against dating violence. Participants unanimously agreed that there is a need for the Government to enact laws as a check to protect dating partners and other relationships from violence.

Participants in all nine focus groups (including the pilot group) made comments that were used to develop this theme. Some examples are given below:

FDG2: *Our government! The government should change, they should enforce the law to protect women from abuse of any kind including dating violence.*

FDG3: *Apart from putting these basic laws in place they should enforce it and I think the best way, should I say, the overseer or the final judge will I say whatever may lead to violence should not be seen in the schools.*

FDG 5: *I think they should have a law that attract a penalty to dating violence not the one they are doing now, they should actually set up a committee that will ensure that there is no dating violence. Like in abroad now, you can't say you are going to slap your girl and then go scot free, unless you just want to do it and run away to avoid being a victim.*

They will look for you and arrest you. So, when there is a law like that you will think twice before you slap your girlfriend.

As highlighted in the above extracts from the data, laws to protect women from violence emerged as societal level protective factors against dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

5.5 Conclusion

The findings of the current study revealed both the risk factors and the protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. The five themes under the risk factors and the three themes under the protective factors for dating violence were identified at all four levels of the socio-ecological framework of violence which guided the study. These include the individual, interpersonal, community and societal level factors that contribute to risk or protection factors for dating violence among students. These are further discussed in the next chapter, which elaborates on the findings and support from the literature.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the finding of the study, its recommendations and the conclusion.

The discussion is divided into two parts: Part 1 discusses the risk factors for dating violence among female students, while Part 2 discusses the protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

The discussion of the risk and the protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria follows the four levels of the socio-ecological model of violence which was used to guide the study.

6.2 Part 1: Risk factors for dating violence among female students

The findings of the current study on the risk factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria, are similar to those identified in both international and continental literature. Although the findings of the current study cannot be generalised due to the case study methodology used, they have demonstrated that the risks and protective factors for dating violence among the youth are similar everywhere, including on Nigerian campuses.

6.2.1 Individual risk factors

There is ample literature that supports the findings of the current study on the individual level risk factors for dating violence, including personality traits such as anger, aggression and poor/lack of control of emotions as well as substance abuse among students (Boladale et al., 2015; Coker et al., 2014; Edwards, Sylaska, et al., 2015; Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Iconis, 2013). In support of the findings of the current study, poor control of emotions has also been identified as an individual level risk factor for dating violence by Boivin et al. (2011); Draucker et al. (2010) in their studies. Participants observed that poor control of emotions, aggressive behaviours and anger are major reasons for dating violence. Other studies have shown that poor control of

emotions in diverse forms plays a very significant role in the various risks identified among dating partners (Draucker et al., 2010; Eckhardt, & Crane, 2015; Thompson, 2014). In another study in Nigeria, Ekechukwu and Ateke (2014) reported that low self-esteem, poor anger management, deception, secretiveness and jealousy are caused by interpersonal and personal factors, which supports the findings of this current study. Presaghi, Manca, Rodriguez-Franco and Curcio (2015) in their findings reported that there is an attitude which supports aggression as the correct way of resolving conflict among dating partners, and that this is typically related to reports of dating aggression. This is peculiar to this study, which showed that dating partners used aggression to correct whatever conflict they had with their dating partners.

In this current study possessiveness and ownership were identified as risk factors for dating violence among students. This result is similar to the findings of Stephenson et al. (2013), who indicated that men are possessive of their partners.

The findings on alcohol and substance abuse as a risk factor for dating violence are also supported by many studies both nationally and internationally. Similar findings were reported by Ekechukwu and Ateke (2014) in Nigeria, who reported that alcohol and other substances are used by partners to perpetrate violence on their partners. In support of the findings of the current study, Oshiname et al. (2013) highlighted that the smoking of cocaine, marijuana and brisk drinking were among the various substances dating partners used to perpetrate violence against their partners, in a study conducted in Nigeria. Iconis (2013) reported the same in the USA among students, where alcohol and other substances were found to be mostly used by students to perpetrate dating violence. Others who found similar results internationally include Kaukinen (2014), who reported that alcohol and substance abuse is a risk for dating violence among partners. Shorey, Brasfield, et al. (2015) found that alcohol and substance abuse, including brisk drinking, increased the risk of violence perpetration among partners.

These drugs therefore proved to have an impact on the individuals' lives and the way they behave. This violence can either be physical, sexual, psychological or emotional. Shorey, Seavey, Brasfield, Febres, Fite et al. (2015) noted that there is a relationship

between alcohol use and psychological, physical and sexual dating violence perpetration among male students.

The findings of this study identified poor interpersonal skills as an individual level risk factor for perpetrating dating violence or becoming a victim of it. This finding is similar to those of Ekechukwu and Ateke (2014); Kaukinen (2014), who found that poor communication skills is a reason for dating violence among partners.

Having multiple partners or being suspected of infidelity by a dating partner, cheating, and being unfaithful were also identified as risk factors for dating violence in the current study. These findings are supported by Draucker, Martsof and Stephenson (2012), who identified risky sexual behaviour as an individual level risk factor for dating violence among dating partners.

The findings of the current study regarding the individual risk factors for dating violence among university students and youth in general are well supported in the international and local literature (Boladale et al., 2015; Diaz-Aguado, & Martinez, 2015; Fergus, & Zimmerman, 2005).

6.2.2 Interpersonal risk factors

The findings of the current study revealed childhood experiences, influence from others and clash in belief systems between two partners are interpersonal risk factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. This is supported by literature from most other countries of the world. For instance, findings from Iconis (2013), Jouriles, McDonald, Mueller and Grych (2012); (Umana et al., 2014) support the findings of the current study on poor childhood experiences as a risk for dating violence among students and youth in particular. Umana et al. (2014) also indicated that individuals who experience violence or grow up in a violent relationship tend to accept violence as a norm and are more likely to use violence in their own relationships than those who experienced little or no violence. Lee et al. (2014) highlighted how exposure to family violence increases dating violence and suggested that in the view of social

cognitive theory, where the individual experiences family violence such partners are more likely to copy and use such habits in their own relationships, because this theory states that children learn by imitation.

The current study revealed that influence from others could lead to risk factors for dating violence among dating partners. Another area identified by the participants was that the advice which dating partners get from people around them can influence their behaviour in their relationship. Similar findings were reported by (Makin-Byrd, Bierman, & Group, 2013). In a contrast, Branch, Richards and Dretsch (2013, p. 1553) reported that friends and social support is not significantly related to dating violence victimisation for males and that parental social support is not significantly related to male or female dating violence in a study conducted in the USA.

Sears and Byers (2010) reported that lack of close and supportive parental relationships has been identified as a risk factor for male and female teen dating violence perpetration, thus supporting the findings of the current study on this level as a risk factor for dating violence among students.

The findings on peer pressure as a risk factor for dating violence among university students is supported by Stephenson et al. (2013), who reported an event in a narrative where peers instigated their friend against his girlfriend and then watched him beat her up without supporting the girl.

In a meta-analysis study of role of peer pressure in adolescent dating violence, Garthe et al. (2017) found that across 27 studies of peer dating violence, peer aggression and antisocial behaviours are a reality that cannot be ignored.

6.2.3 Community level risk factors

The current study identified patriarchy in the community and violence in the community as community level factors of dating violence. Boladale et al. (2015); Ekechukwu and Ateke (2014) have reported similar findings on men's headship position over women in Nigeria. In a study conducted in China patriarchy was also reported to exist with males holding onto their culture of power, wealth, respect and prestige over the women (Chan,

2012). Patriarchy and gender-based violence was found to be enacted by the males rather than the females (Shen et al., 2012b). This demonstrates the significance of patriarchy as a risk factor for dating violence in different countries where men still hold headship of the family.

The findings of cultural background as a risk factor for dating violence among youth is supported by a qualitative study from South Africa; Radzilani-Makatu and Mahlalela (2015) reported that cultural background is a risk factor for dating violence. (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014) and Aguanunu (2014) also supported this finding of the current study, concluding that in countries with cultural backgrounds where women are repressed and overwhelmed by male supremacy, men abuse their power and control. Oshiname et al. (2013, p. 146) attested that in Nigeria “men are socialized to believe that they are superior to women and so should dominate their partners”. This supports the findings of the current study where male partners were reported to be more superior and thus to dominate their female partners in violent dating relationships among students.

The WHO Organization 2013 reported that the community environments in which people live influences violence among intimate partners and at school. It stated that “the community in which social relationships occur such as in the schools also influence violence”

6.2.4 Societal risk factors

The use of Internet, phones, WhatsApp, television, BlackBerry chat, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram were identified as the common social media that are risk factors for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria in the current study. These findings are supported by Weitzer (2011), who found that a lot of films are regularly being watched by students using their phones and laptops and these further increase dating partners' risk in perpetrating various forms of dating violence. Similarly, Kim, Lau, Cheuk, Kan, Hui et al. (2010) in Hong Kong found that the Internet has a way of influencing dating partners. In another longitudinal study conducted in Canada,

Friedlander et al. (2013) reported a link between persistent aggressive media use and teen dating violence.

The current study also further identified the absence of regulations to protect women from abuse as a societal level risk factor for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. This finding is supported by Izugbara et al. (2008), who concluded that in Nigeria the absence of regulations leads few persons reporting cases of IPV to civil authorities like the police, for fear of being blamed and the male perpetrator not being brought to justice. They further reported that in all cases where women reported violence to civil authorities, the only punishment reportedly meted out was to request the perpetrators to pay for the cost of the victims' medical treatment, indicating that dating violence often goes unpunished (Izugbara et al., 2008).

In the current study poverty was also identified as a risk factor for dating violence among dating partners at the University of Benin, Nigeria. Similar findings have been reported in Nigeria with poverty leading to dating violence among intimate partners (Izugbara et al., 2008). These findings in Nigeria are similar to those reported by Gretchen (2004), Friedlander et al. (2013) and Garcia-Moreno et al. (2013), who concluded that women from poor socio-economic backgrounds are prone to dating violence globally.

6.3 Part 2: Protective factors for dating violence among female students

The findings of the current study on the protective factors of dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria, are similar to those identified in both international and local literature. This shows that students across the globe are aware of the protective factors for dating violence. Knowing the protective factors for dating violence may be helpful in developing strategies to prevent dating violence among students.

6.3.1 Individual protective factors

Maturity and self-knowledge/acceptance before dating were identified as a protective factor among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. Similar findings were

reported by Khaddouma, Gordon and Bolden (2015), who reported that in achieving a satisfactory relationship the partners should be mindful, differentiate themselves and have self-satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings of this study identified control of emotions such as aggression, anger and quick temper, and personal characteristics like pride and lying as individual level protective factors for dating violence among students. Similar findings by Peskin et al. (2014), who recommended that skills training for managing emotional responses such as anger and stress that could trigger off physical dating violence perpetration is a protective measure needed by partners.

Self-protective behaviours such as a peaceful and healthy way of resolving conflicts among students were also identified as protective factors under this level at the University of Benin, Nigeria. In support of this finding Antle, Sullivan, Dryden, Karam, and Barbee (2011) found out that knowledge, skills and positive attitudes that can effect change in relationships are important relationships education program of preventing dating violence. Other findings that support development and use of self-protective factors for dating violence include those of (Ekechukwu, & Ateke, 2014; Peskin et al., 2014; Phipps, & Smith, 2012; Rivera, & Fincham, 2015).

6.3.2 Interpersonal protective factors

The findings of the current study reveal having elders as good role models, a trusting relationship, mutual respect between dating partners and openness and transparency between partners are interpersonal protective factors for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. These findings are supported by Kerig (2010); Sylaska and Walters (2014), who identified having elders as role models as a protective factor for dating violence among youths. Foshee, McNaughton Reyes, Ennett, Suchindran, Mathias et al. (2011) further supported this when they reported that peer and parental support including monitoring are vital for healthy dating relationships among partners.

Another finding of the current study was having mutual respect as a protective factor for dating violence among dating partners. In support of this finding, Peskin et al. (2014) indicated that mutual respect can be encouraged through skills training in effective

communication and conflict resolution, which are significant attributes that dating partners should possess to help to protect them from dating violence. Debnam, Howard and Garza (2014) in the USA concluded that respect for one another brings about healthy relationship among partners.

Ekechukwu and Ateke (2014, p. 106) in Nigeria suggest that “adolescents must be taught about the subtleties of dating violence as well as the limits and boundaries that must be observed in their dating relationships”.

The current findings revealed that trust and open, transparent relationships were highlighted as important elements which dating partners require in order to have a peaceful and healthy dating relationship. This is supported by Debnam et al. (2014), who also recommended that partners should have trust for one another and build self-confidence.

In the current study, good interpersonal relationships among dating partners were an important protective factor against dating violence. In a similar study on honesty as a protective factor for dating violence in the USA, Debnam et al. (2014) found that good communication is a characteristic for a healthy relationship, and that this involves “openness” and “transparency”. Debnam et al. (2014) stated that a healthy relationship is where the partner is always “there to listen” to each other’s thoughts, feelings, and day-to-day concerns.

6.3.3 Community protective factors

The findings of the current study identified cultural norms to reduce violence and university response as community level protective factors for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. This finding is supported by the Sustainable Development Goals number six, which is to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by eliminating all forms of norms that support violence against women (United Nations, 2013).

In this study, participants emphasised the need for the University of Benin to respond to security issues on the campus and to address relationship violence, especially dating violence, by implementing existing laws and putting policies in place to check the occurrence of violence among partners. A similar call was made by Kaukinen (2014, p. 291) who suggested that “social support from family, friends, and academic institutions will serve as a buffer of dating violence victimization on campuses”.

Participants also highlighted the need for education through the services of a counsellor and inclusion of relationship topics in the school curriculum, as well as education of students through workshops, seminars, and conferences. Inclusion of non-governmental agencies to assist the university in the care and protection of victims of relationship violence was also identified. This is supported by Banyard (2014), who highlighted the need for the campus community to address issues around violence against women through community participation in diverse ways, such as making policies that may support researchers and university management in reducing violence against women on campuses.

6.3.4 Societal protective factors

The current study revealed public awareness as a societal protective factor for dating violence amongst students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. Participants emphasised the need for the media to educate the public through programmes geared at promoting healthy relationships. This finding is supported by an Australian study which indicated that media exposure of public disagreement concerning prominent occurrences of violence against women raised public awareness (Flood, & Pease, 2009). Shen et al. (2012b) also suggested that social advocacy through the use of the media and educational courses is essential to increase public and adolescent awareness of dating violence perpetration and victimisation. Similarly, Flood and Pease (2009) indicated that media coverage of research findings concerning violence against women and girls can increase community awareness of the importance of the problem of gender-based-violence including dating violence. In another study Fulu, Kerr-Wilson and Lang (2014) advocated that in raising awareness and changing social norms, communication and

advocacy campaigns are a must in preventing violence against women in schools and in society in general.

The current study also found that laws to protect women from violence were a societal level protective factor for dating violence among students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. Participants emphasised the importance of the authorities and Government of Nigeria implementing policies and enacting laws that will protect women from violence, especially dating violence. In support of the current findings, Kettrey and Emery (2010) in the USA advocated for such intervention by using discussions of public interventions and laws. Flood and Pease (2009) also identified the use of criminal justice policies and law reforms to address issues of violence against women and girls. Participants regarded the lack of laws to protect women from violence as well as lack of policies and weak implementation of such policies as reason for the increases in dating and relationship violence among partners.

Contrary to Cerulli, Kothari, Dichter, Marcus, Wiley et al. (2014) findings in US where the criminal justice system has all the facilities which consist of pro-arrest and pro-prosecution policies, enforcement, victim/survivors services, health care, district court, circular court, probation and batteries intervention. This study finding shows that there are no such services now in Nigeria. And identified lack of these functional facilities as a major problem in reporting, caring, and lack of statistical information of cases of dating violence and other forms of violence. This suggest that efforts should be made by all to see that there are policies, working facilities and available data capturing of dating violence cases. Not the way cases are handed presently in Nigeria as indicated by (Izugbara et al., 2008).

The US prosecutor Research institution advocates for survivors/victims' safety as their highest urgency where the government statistics shows that criminal justices policies have made a positive impact but this is not the case in Nigeria. This finding also suggest that women and girls needs to report cases and use the criminal justice system to pursue their legitimate right, protect themselves and increase their empowerment but they can only do so when there are working facilities.

In this study participants also advocated the need for all religious organisations and women's groups to educate and counsel their members on issues related to dating violence, and to provide services like marriage counselling for partners, specifically dating partners. In support of this, Flood and Pease (2009) identified collective mobilisation of women's movements and organisations in fighting to recognise violence against women and girls as a social problem that requires a collective effort to address gender-based-violence including dating violence.

These findings of the current study on the protective factors for dating violence are well supported in the literature. Knowing these protective factors can assist in the development of intervention strategies for prevention of dating violence on campuses in Nigeria and elsewhere.

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the findings of the study in relation to relevant studies, including the limitations of the study, conclusions and recommendations for different stakeholders and researchers,

The findings of the study identified both risk and protective factors for dating violence among university students according to the four levels of the socio-ecological framework. This study contributes knowledge about risks and protective factors for dating violence to the University of Benin, Nigeria, and other universities in Nigeria and elsewhere on the African continent.

6.5 Recommendations

6.5.1 Recommendations for future research

The was a case study of one university in Nigeria. Further research across the national universities and using qualitative research methods and mixed-methods research is recommended in order to provide university administrators and policy makers with data to develop prevention strategies for dating violence on Nigerian campuses. Intervention studies that address risk factors and protective factors for dating violence are

recommended in order to identify evidence-based prevention of dating violence interventions that are appropriate and culturally relevant to Nigeria campus communities.

6.5.2 Recommendations to improve practice on prevention of dating violence on university campuses

Using the findings of the current study, the university management and other stakeholders, including health workers, counsellors and social workers on campus should come together and develop policy and regulations to address dating violence on campuses in order to protect female students from this and other violence against women on campus. Structures to implement and monitor implementation of such policies should be built into the development of such policies.

6.6 Limitations of the study

Although this study generated rich data for the description of the risk and protective factors for dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria, there were a lot of challenges in getting access to the study participants, who were selected from the five female undergraduate residences, because of the imminent end of semester examinations which were to be followed by a long university vacation. As a result, data collection was rushed and there was no member checking to verify the findings, as the students were already on vacation by the time the researcher completed data collection and preliminary data analysis. Through this limitation, the researcher proposes that the university timetable be carefully considered when planning to conduct research with university students in order to avoid a similar experience. The limitations of the study highlighted the need to consider the university calendar when planning any research with students. This added new and important knowledge for all researchers who are considering conducting research among university students.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant information sheet

University of Cape Town
Department of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
Division of Nursing and Midwifery

The title of the study: Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Dating Violence among Female Students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

Introduction

I am Agatha Aigbodion. I am currently a Master's student at the University of Cape Town, South Africa working on my master's dissertation. This study is a requirement for an MSc degree in Nursing, and the findings may be published in a scientific journal.

AIM OF STUDY

This research study is aimed at exploring the perception of risk and protective factors of dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

RESEARCH PROCEDURE

The study will be conducted through focus group discussions. You will be involved in discussing your perceptions of risk and protective factors associated with dating violence in the University according to the questions that will be asked by the researcher. The group discussion will last one to two hours. Only female undergraduate students who are between ages 18-28, residing in the university residence, in a steady dating relationship or have been in a relationship in the last six months or longer are being recruited to participate in this study.

This study has received ethics approval from the University of Cape Town, Faculty of Health Science Human Research Ethics Committee with REC/REF 143/2016.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN

If you are eligible for the study, you will be invited to a meeting where the study procedures will be explained to you and time for the focus groups discussion will be communicated to you. You will be sent reminders through phone messages and face-face-contacts.

You will be required to come to the meeting venue for us to share ideas and experiences on risks and protective factors associated with dating violence in our University. We will audio-record the group sessions and take field notes so that we will not miss any important point discussed during the sessions.

The transcript will be sent back to you, so that, you can check if it correctly represents your opinions. If you have questions before and after the meetings, you will be free to ask so that explanations can be made.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your confidentiality will be maintained at all times by storing signed informed consent forms separately from the data obtained in the study. Audio tapes will be destroyed immediately the research study is published in a journal in 2017. Your name will not be associated with the research findings. It is important for you to know that all the information that will be discussed in this group will be kept confidential and should be treated as private. You are requested not to share information discussed during the focus group discussion with anyone outside this group and among yourselves after the session. Although confidentiality cannot be fully guaranteed, you will sign a confidentiality agreement where you agree that once the focus group discussions are ended, you will not talk about the discussions with participants and other persons who were not involved in the study.

The information collected will be stored in a password protected computer and a locker, and only the research team will have access to it. We will not publish the entire discussions, but it is important that you know that extracts may be used to report the findings of this study, for instance in the Master's thesis or a journal article. If this is done, we will remove all information that may identify you and replace them with codes. For example, group 2.

VOLUNTARINESS AND THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You are free to stop participation at any time; there will be no consequences for you.

RISKS

There are no anticipated significant physical risks associated with involvement in this research. There may be the possibility that discomfort, stressful memories or emotions may arise while thinking about past experiences. When necessary, I will provide referral resources for psychological support. I will ensure that you are safe throughout the process.

BENEFIT OF PARTICIPATING IN THE STUDY

The benefits of participating in this study are that you will be contributing to knowledge on dating violence. You will gain knowledge from the information about the need to practice safe dating relationships and also where to find help when necessary, for prompt intervention.

INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN THE STUDY

Individuals involved in the study are the researcher, the two research assistants, and the supervisor who is based in South Africa.

DISSEMINATION OF THE STUDY FINDINGS

Findings of this study will be reported in a Masters thesis and submitted to the University of Cape Town. A report summarising the study findings will be sent to the University of Benin. The study findings may also be published in a scientific journal and presented at conferences. I will also share the study findings with you once the research is completed.

WHO IS FUNDING THE STUDY

The study is currently funded by the researcher. I am however hoping to get funding.

CONTACT DETAILS

If you have any queries about the study, please contact:

Mrs Aigbodion Agatha

Phone: +270734729365, +2348032431020

Email: aqbaqa001@myuct.ac.za, omokhefe.aigbodion@uniben.edu

OR

Prof Sinegugu Duma

University of Cape Town

Phone: +270214066321

Email: Sinegugu.Duma@uct.ac.za

If you think you have not been treated fairly or have hurt by joining the study, please contact the UCT-FHS Human Research Ethics Committee, the University of Cape Town on +270214066338. Or write to Shuretta Thomas, Human Research Committee, Room E52-24, Old Main Building, Groote Schuur Hospital, Observatory 7925, Cape Town, South Africa

Thank you!



Appendix 2: Informed consent form

RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH DATING VIOLENCE AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, NIGERIA.

I _____ have read the information sheet. I understand what is required of me and I have had all my questions answered. I do not feel that I am forced to take part in this study and I am doing so of my own free will. I know that I can withdraw at any time if I so wish and that it will have no bad consequences for me.

Participant's signature: _____

Date _____

Researcher's signature _____

Date _____



Appendix 3: Confidentiality agreement

TITLE OF THE STUDY: Risk and Protective Factors associated with dating violence among female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group discussion. I am currently a Masters student at the University of Cape Town, South Africa working on my master's dissertation. The purpose of this study is to better understand the dating relationship experience of female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. It is important for you to know that all the information that will be discussed in this group will be kept confidential and should be treated as private. Members are requested not to share information discussed during the focus group discussion with anyone outside this group and among themselves after the session. Although confidentiality cannot be fully guaranteed, I hope that by signing this Confidentiality Agreement form, each member will adhere to the rules of confidentiality and not discuss the contents of the focus group discussions [to this agreement].

I _____ (name) declare that I have read and understand the information and agree to participate fully under the condition stated above.

Participant Signature: _____ Date _____



Appendix 4: Interview guide for focus group discussion

Introduction (5minutes)

Good afternoon, my name is Agatha Aigbodion. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this focus group discussion. I welcome you to today's meeting. I am currently studying for a Master's degree in Nursing at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. This research is a requirement for my degree. The results may also be published in a scientific journal. The purpose of this study is to better understand the dating relationship perception, opinions, ideas, beliefs, experience of female students at the University of Benin, Nigeria. I will be moderating the focus group discussions. Mrs A and B are trained research assistance who will be assisting me today. Mrs A will serve as the timekeeper while Mrs B will audio-record and also take notes of our meeting.

A focus group is a small group discussion which centres on a particular topic in depth. Today we will be talking about dating violence perceptions, experiences of female undergraduate students at the University of Benin. We are here to share ideas and opinions on these issues. In a focus group, there are no right or wrong answers. Your ideas are all important. Please feel free to speak up and it is okay to disagree with other opinions. You are free to ask any question as we go on with the discussion so that explanations can be made. If you have a question, please signify by raising your hand and I will give you the opportunity to ask your question. To keep the discussions in line with the research topic, I may move on to the next topic of discussion from time to time, but please stop me if you have a contribution to add.

I am going to audio record our discussion and also take field notes. This is because I do not want to miss out any of your contributions. I will later use the information we share today to write a general report, which may inform the development of prevention strategies for dating violence that are relevant and acceptable to you. Be assured that your identity will be protected. The name I am going to be addressing you with, will not be your official names. The information you

share with me will be used for research purposes and will be destroyed in 2018. Everyone will sign a confidentiality agreement indicating that they will not disclose what has been discussed outside of this group and among members once the meeting is over. I urge all of you to maintain confidentiality about what we share here at all times. I will be using just first names and may request you to choose any name you wish to be called throughout our discussion. The transcript will be sent back to you, so that, you can check if it correctly represents your opinions. Findings of the study will also be communicated to you. Please turn cell phones off for the duration of the session or put them on vibration.

I will now briefly introduce the study topic. A dating relationship is a romantic or intimate relationship between two individuals that is determined by factors such as the length of the relationship, the type of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between two individuals involved. Its aim is to assess each other's suitability as a partner in an intimate relationship or a spouse.

Dating violence, on the other hand, is a pattern of assaultive and controlling behaviour that one person uses against the other to gain or maintain power in a dating relationship). Dating violence is behaviours that dating couples experience. It can be physical, sexual, psychological and emotional violence between two people that are having or had a "dating" relationship, like boyfriend/girlfriend.

Dating violence is a global public health problem and a socio-cultural issue affecting millions of female university students in dating relationships. Different factors may increase the risk of dating violence and also protective factors that can reduce violence. Also, theorist believes that there are reasons for the development of violence in a dating relationship.

The socio-ecological framework guiding this study states that there is an interaction between the individual, close relations, community, society and the environment which plays a key role in influencing the way we behave and act.

Can you share with me what you understand by dating violence?

Now, I will be asking you some questions. All the questions will address factors from all four levels of the socio-ecological framework. Please feel free to share your opinions, observations, experiences, and ideas.

I will request your permission to audio record this discussion. Do I have your permission to do so?

Now, let us introduce ourselves using a name of our choice for the purpose of this discussion. First name ONLY, starting from this end, and add, "I agree to be audio- recorded" and then we begin.

[BEGIN AUDIO RECORDING]

Semi-structured interview guide with the following questions:

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS (To be captured in the attendance sheet):

1. What is the name that you will like to be referred to for this discussion?
2. What is your age?
3. In what year of registration are you currently?

RISK FACTORS OF DATING VIOLENCE

1. In your opinion what can make romantic partners abuse one another?
2. What do you consider to be the reasons that make partners fight in a relationship?
3. What personal characteristics can predispose a partner to violence in a relationship?
4. How can close relations we interact with within our community predispose partners to violence?
5. Probing Question: Please give other examples of the societal/environmental factors?

PROTECTIVE FACTORS OF DATING VIOLENCE

1. In a romantic relationship, what do you consider are the characteristics that can make romantic partners happy? Or what are the key elements that can make partners happy and safe in relationships?
2. What do you consider as key necessities that will make partners happy and safe?
3. What do you consider as individual characteristics that can make the partners happy and safe?
4. How can your personal relationship with other people within your community make partners happy and safe?
5. Probing Question: Please give other examples at the societal/environmental factor?

CLOSURE

At the end of the session, the modulator will summarize the key issues raised, and key points made immediately as a follow-up so that their responses can be understood.

We will now have our Refreshments and close for the day.

Thank you for your participation.



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE TOWN
Faculty of Health Sciences
Human Research Ethics Committee



Room E52-24 Old Main Building
Groote Schuur Hospital
Observatory 7925
Telephone [021] 406 6626

Email: shuretta.thomas@uct.ac.za

Website: www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms

16 May 2016

HREC REF: 143/2016

A/Prof S Duma
Health & Rehab
Nursing Division
F-floor, OMB

Dear A/Prof Duma

PROJECT TITLE: RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH DATING VIOLENCE AMONG FEMALE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, NIGERIA (Master's candidate- Ms A Aigbodion)

Thank you for your response to the Faculty of Health Sciences Human Research Ethics Committee dated 13 April 2016.

It is a pleasure to inform you that the HREC has **formally approved** the above-mentioned study subject to providing all participants with information related to professional standards and discrimination/harassment that is available on Campus.

Approval is granted for one year until the 30th May 2017.

Please submit a progress form, using the standardised Annual Report Form if the study continues beyond the approval period. Please submit a Standard Closure form if the study is completed within the approval period.

(Forms can be found on our website: www.health.uct.ac.za/fhs/research/humanethics/forms)

Please quote the HREC REF in all your correspondence.

Please note that the ongoing ethical conduct of the study remains the responsibility of the principal investigator.

Please note that for all studies approved by the HREC, the principal Investigator **must** obtain appropriate institutional approval before the research may occur.

The HREC acknowledge that the student Agatha Aigbodion will also be involved in this study.

Yours sincerely

PP
PROFESSOR M BLOCKMAN
CHAIRPERSON, FHS HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE
Federal Wide Assurance Number: FWA00001637.

HREC REF 143/2016

Appendix 6: Research Ethics Clearance from the University of Benin



UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

University Research and Publications Committee
Office of the Vice-Chancellor
P.M.B. 1154, Benin City, Nigeria Tel: 234 52 602973 Fax: 234 52 602370
e-mail: vc@uniben.edu, urpc@uniben.edu

Ref:

Date:

Mrs. Aigbodion Agatha Omokhefe
Department of Health and Rehabilitation
Division of Nursing and Midwifery
University of Cape Town
South Africa.

26th May, 2016

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

I write to convey approval for you to conduct your research titled *'Risk and Protective Factors Associated with Dating Violence Among Female Students at the University of Benin, Nigeria.*

This study will be conducted in our University and we hope the outcome of the study will be useful to the University-based counselling unit in particular and to other stakeholders.

Thanks.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'F.E. Okieimen'.

Professor F.E. Okieimen
CHAIRMAN URPC
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
Director, Research Administration
BENIN CITY.