



Gender Based Verbal Abuse among Civil Servants in Edo State, Nigeria

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Abstract. This study examined the perception of gender-based emotional violence among civil servants in Edo state. The study also tested the hypothesis on the influence of demographic attributes on employees' perception of gender-based emotional violence in Edo State civil service. The study adopted the survey research design and employed a structured questionnaire to elicit information from respondents. The responses from the questionnaire copies were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, mean and standard deviation. Chi-Square (χ^2) was used as an inferential statistical technique for testing the research hypotheses at a 5% level of significance. All of the statistical analyses in this study were carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 24). 58.4% of the respondents investigated affirmed the occurrence of verbal abuse in Edo State civil service mainly perpetrated by supervisor/immediate boss, client/customers, and colleagues/co-workers. The study also showed that low performance and productivity, mental health issues, rage, anxiety, and sadness, as well as a decline in job satisfaction, are all effects of gender-based verbal abuse among Edo State public servants. The study recommends that the Edo State Government should set up specialized courts to handle gender-based violence-related cases swiftly.

Keywords: Gender-Based Violence, Verbal Abuse, Work Performance

1. Introduction

Women play strategic roles in every society; they are primary care givers of children and elders in most countries of the world. However, women seem to have been relegated to the home over the years, and seem not to be very involved in issues of national development, especially in developing countries, such as Nigeria (Agbaje, 2019). One possible explanation is that some people think women's opinions are

invariably sentimental and emotional. Because they frequently lack the physical strength of their male counterparts, women are traditionally viewed as the weaker sex and are therefore the most commonly targeted victims of gender-based violence (Iliyasu, Abubakar, Aliyu, Galadanci & Salihu, 2011; Naidoo, 2017; Wieten, Chhoun & Yi, 2020).

Violence against women (VAW) or sexual gender-based violence (SGBV) are other names for gender-based violence (GBV), which is defined as acts of violence principally committed against women and girls. These acts of violence include but are not limited to rape, domestic violence, sexual harassment, reproductive-coercion female infanticide, prenatal sex selection, obstetric violence, and mob violence; as well as harmful customary or traditional practices such as female genital mutilation, marriage by abduction and forced marriage (Watts & Zimmerman, 2002; Kalokhe, Del Rio, Dunkle, Stephenson, Metheny, Paranjape, & Sahay, 2017).

The workplace has become an important site of intervention to reduce GBV and its costly effects not only on productivity, but also on individuals, families, and societies. As new forms of paid labour challenge stereotypical gender norms related to "women's" versus "men's" work, new opportunities for women's economic advancement and development open up. This brings both benefits and risks, depending on the context and availability of services designed to prevent and respond to GBV. The main objective of this study is to provide empirical evidence of the prevalence and consequences of gender-based verbal violence in Edo State Civil Service. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to ascertain the frequency and repercussions of verbal abuse based on gender among Edo State civil servants.

1.1 Research Hypotheses

In line with the research objective, this study tests the following null hypotheses:

H_{01} Perception of gender-based verbal abuse is not significantly influenced by the demographic variables of civil servants in Edo State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptualizing Gender-Based Violence

Sexual gender-based violence (SGBV), violence against women (VAW), and gender-based violence (GBV) are all terms that can be used interchangeably to refer to the same issue. It is the term used to denote harm inflicted upon individuals and groups that is connected to normative understandings of their gender (Bloom, 2008). Cultural conceptions of gender roles, institutional and structural pressures that support gender-based violence, and societal influences that mould violent incidents along gender lines are some examples of this connection. GBV is a term that describes any harmful act that is carried out against a person's will, and the act is based on socially attributed differences between males and females within the context of a specific society (Uwameiye & Iserameiya, 2013).

Over the past two decades, there has been an increase in research documenting very high levels of violence against women from many regions of the world (Oladepo, Yusuf & Arulogun, 2011; Sikweyiya, 2014; Naidoo, 2017; Muluken, Stulz, Francis & Kingsley, 2020). The outcome of Azeez (2016) study on gender-based violence experiences and reactions in Ibadan metropolis that 80% of gender-based violence perpetrators are likely to continue with the violent acts further reiterates the worrisome and alarming dimension of the problem in Nigeria.

Gender-based violence is not only a public health problem, but also a social problem and a violation of human rights including women's reproductive health rights (Heise, Ellsberg & Gottmoeller, 2002; Harvey, Beckman, Browner & Sherman, 2002; Shamu, 2013). This violence takes different dimensions such as physical, sexual, emotional, psychological and economic (Shamu, 2013). They have different unpleasant health implications which are associated with a high use of health care services, long term physical and mental disabilities, poor health status and poor quality of life (Campbell 2002; WHO 2002; WHO 2005; Karamagi, Tumwine, Tylleskar, & Heggenhougen, 2007; WHO 2013; The World Bank 2019). Kaphle, Adhikari, Neupane, Yadav, Subedi, &

Hamal (2014) asserts that most women are not safe in their workplace as they are the victim of many types of GBV at the workplace and they are more likely to be involved and experience violence in diverse forms such as physical, emotional, sexual etc. but due to social stigma, economic condition, illiteracy these are under-reported.

2.2 Gender-Based Verbal Abuse

One type of interpersonal violence that is used to manipulate or assert authority over victims is verbal abuse. Verbal abuse, which is intended to shame, harass, humiliate, insult, or threaten vulnerable people, causes suffering, misery, and distress through bullying or intimidation. Verbal abuse is unpredictable and manipulative. It may manifest overtly in the form of angry outbursts or covertly in the form of pretended concern that gives victims conflicting messages (Lane, 2003). As the abuser's threats increase, tension peaks, and physical or extreme emotional abuse follows. The following are examples of verbal abuse: Jokes, insults, criticism of the victim's abilities, disregard for the victim's feelings, withholding affection as a form of punishment, blaming the victim for all issues, yelling at the victim, humiliating the victim in front of others, accusing the victim of being the abusive partner, threatening to take the victim's children away, threatening physical violence, and threatening suicide as a form of punishment.

As Yamada (2000) argued, intimidating, mean-spirited, manipulative, and sometimes high-decibel behaviours are not unusual workplace occurrences, especially from supervisors and managers. Over 90% of adults experience psychological and emotional abuse at some time during the span of their work careers (Hornstein, 1996). The supervisors who inflict psychological abuse on subordinates represent one of the most frequent and serious problems confronting employees in today's workforce (Yamada, 2000). Evidence of employee abuse was found in a wide variety of organizations, including hospitals, universities, manufacturing plants, research industries and social service agencies (Ashforth, 1994; Bjorkqvist, Osterman, & Hjelt-Back, 1994; Keashly, 2001; Meares, Oetzel, Torres, Derkacs, & Ginossar, 2004). Emotional abuse is also quite costly, in that it refocuses employee energy from productivity to self-protection (Hirigoyen, 2002; Wyatt & Hare, 1997); it results in staff turnover and burnout (Infante & Gorden, 1985; Rayner & Hoel, 1997); it intensifies the use of sick leave (Thomas-Peter, 1997); it increases medical and workers' compensation claims due to occupational stress (Bassman, 1992); it results in hiring costly consultants (author's experience); it leads

to court settlements, legal fees and litigation (Kontorovich, 2001). Additionally, communication and teamwork break down (Lockhart, 1997), and organizations lose credibility and suffer loss of good reputations (Davenport, Schwartz & Elliott, 1999).

2.3 Consequences of Gender-Based Verbal Abuse on Performance in the Workplace

Performance is a multicomponent notion and on the fundamental level one can distinguish the process aspect of performance, that is, behavioural engagements from an expected outcome (Borman, & Motowidlo, 1993; Roe, 1999). The behaviour over here denotes the action people exhibit to accomplish a work, whereas the outcome aspect states about the consequence of individual's job behaviour (Campbell, 1990).

Borman, and Motowidlo (1997) defined job performance in the context of task performance as “effectiveness with which job occupants execute their assigned tasks, that realizes the fulfilment of organization’s vision while rewarding organization and individual proportionately. Task performance is a type of performance that includes specific behaviors related to the job, such as basic duties included in the job description. Task performance requires more cognitive ability and is primarily facilitated through task knowledge (requisite technical knowledge or principles to ensure job performance and having an ability to handle multiple assignments), task skill (application of technical knowledge to accomplish task without much supervision), and task habits (an innate ability to respond to assigned jobs that either facilitate or impede the performance (Conway, 1999). The term “worker performance” signifies an individual’s work achievement after exerting the required effort on the job which is associated with getting meaningful work, engaged profile, and compassionate colleagues/employers around (Hellriegel et al.,1999; Karakas, 2010). According to the ILO (2007), workers who do not fit into stereotypical social norms of what a “man” or a “woman” should be or do for a living, or who engage in diverse gendered behaviors, may be the targets of stigma, harassment, exploitation, abuse, and discrimination at work. Lack of bargaining power and labour policies also leave millions of workers, especially women, vulnerable and without recourse in the face of gender-based discrimination and workplace violence. Along with the physical and emotional suffering, the economic costs of violence against women are considerable and can amount to loss of money due to medical and health care services or loss of productivity because of increased absenteeism. It

affects job performance and leads to lateness, decreased job retention and career advancement. Victims of gender discrimination lose motivation and morale necessary to perform their jobs effectively (ILO, 2007).

Agbaje *et al.* (2021) asserts that GBV or violence against women in the workplace is a major public health problem globally. In Nigeria, the prevalence of GBV is high. Previous studies reported that GBV is an important public health problem in Nigeria (Umana, Fawole, & Adeoye, 2014; Aguocha, Duru, Onoh, Olose, Igwe, Amadi & Ogwunga, 2017; Okolo & Okolo, 2018; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2019). Okolo et al., (2018) reported that about 52.1% of the women indicated that domestic violence incidence is high, while 63.3% had experienced domestic violence at one time or the other. Sexual abuse was the most frequently reported form of abuse experienced (Aguocha et al., 2017). The high prevalence of GBV in Nigeria has been attributed to a culture of silence, cultural values, and practices (Okolo et al., 2018; International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 2019).

3. Research Methodology

Survey research design was adopted in this study. Specifically, cross-sectional survey design was used. The rationale for selecting survey research design is that it involves studying the current state of a unit or group at a particular point in time.

The population of this study consists of all staff (male and female) in Edo State civil service. According to the distribution of staff of Edo State civil service by ministries, departments and salary grade pay there are a total of 13,582 staff as at 21st February 2024, as sourced from Edo State Internal Revenue Services (EIRS), Benin City.

The sample size of this study is 400. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane (1967) formula since the population is finite.

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where: n = sample size; N= population = 13582; e = level of significance = 0.05

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)} = \frac{13582}{1 + 13582(0.05^2)} = 400$$

The simple random sampling technique was then used to randomly select the departments that participated in the survey. The research instrument for this study is a questionnaire designed for eliciting information on the prevalence and consequences of gender-based verbal violence in the workplace. The questionnaire was

broadly categorized into two sections. The first section consists of socio-demographic information about the respondents such as gender, age, educational attainment, marital status, staff category, work experience and religion are presented and discussed. The second section contains items on the prevalence and outcomes/consequences of gender-based verbal abuse in the workplace.

The responses from the copies of questionnaire administered were analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution, percentages, mean and standard deviation. Chi-Square (χ^2) was used as an inferential statistical technique for testing the research hypotheses. The research hypotheses were tested at 5% level of significance. This study used Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 24) to conduct all the statistical analyses.

4. Data Presentation, Analyses and Interpretation

Table 4.1: Demographic information of respondents

S/N	Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Frequency
1	Gender	Female	145	39.9	41.0
		Male	209	57.6	59.0
		Total	354	97.5	100.0
		Missing	9	2.5	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
2	Age	58years and Above	22	6.1	6.2
		48-58years	34	9.4	9.6
		38-47years	77	21.2	21.8
		28-37years	131	36.1	37.0
		18-27years	90	24.8	25.4
		Total	354	97.5	100.0
		Missing	9	2.5	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
3	Educational Attainment	Postgraduate	51	14.0	14.7
		HND/B.Sc. or Equivalent	198	54.5	56.9
		Primary School Cert. SSCE/GCE/NCE/Diploma/OND or Equivalent	92	25.3	26.4
		No formal Education	7	1.9	2.0
		Total	348	95.9	100.0
		Missing	15	4.1	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
4	Marital Status	Widow	12	3.3	3.4
		Divorced	24	6.6	6.8
		Married	188	51.8	53.1
		Single	130	35.8	36.7
		Total	354	97.5	100.0
		Missing	9	2.5	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
5	Staff Category	Junior Staff	167	46.0	47.4
		Senior Staff	185	51.0	52.6
		Total	352	97.0	100.0
		Missing	11	3.0	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
6	Work Experience	<10	181	49.9	49.9
		10 – 20	143	39.4	39.4
		>20	17	4.7	4.7
		Total	341	100	100
		Missing	22	6.1	6.1
		Overall Total	363		
7	Religion	African Traditional Worship	14	3.9	4.0
		Islam	66	18.2	18.8
		Christianity	271	74.7	77.2
		Total	351	96.7	100.0
		Missing	12	3.3	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024.

The Table shows that majority of the respondents are female, which are 209 accounting for 57.6% of the respondents. The male respondents were 145 representing 39.9% while 2.5% of the total respondents did not indicate their gender. The age distribution shows that majority of the respondents (131, 36.1%) were between 28 and 37years old. This is followed by 38-47 years old (77, 21.2%) and 18-27years (90, 24.8%). Finally, age groups 48years and above jointly accounted for 15.5% of the total respondents. 2.5% of the total respondents did not indicate their age category. Only 7 employees had no formal education. This category accounted for 1.9%. 92 (25.3%) of the respondents have Primary/Sch. Cert. SSCE/GCE/NCE/Diploma/OND or Equivalent while 198 (54.5%) of the respondents have first degree (HND/B.Sc Degree or Equivalent). Respondents with postgraduate qualifications accounted for 14% while 4.1% of the total respondents did not indicate their educational qualification. For the marital status, 130 (35.8%) of the respondents were single, while 188 (51.8%) were married. Only 24 respondents representing 6.6% were divorced while 12 (3.3%) were widow. 2.5% of the total respondents did not indicate their marital status.

The results revealed that majority of the respondents (185, 51%) fall under senior staff while 167 (46%) of the respondents were junior staff. Respondents that do

not indicate their category account for only 3%. Majority of the respondents have worked for less than ten years. This category accounted for 49.9% while respondents that have spent between ten to twenty years accounted for 39.4% of the total respondents. 17 (4.7%) of the respondents have worked for more than twenty years. 6.1% of the total respondents do not indicate their work experience.

Christianity is the religion of the majority of responders (74.7%). Respondents that practice Islam accounted for 18.2% while respondents that practice African Traditional Worship accounted for 3.9%. Only 3.3% of the total respondents did not indicate their religion.

Description of the prevalence and outcomes of verbal abuse

This section contains the descriptive analysis of the prevalence and outcomes of verbal abuse. Verbal abuse as used in this study refers to the act of directing negative statements toward someone, causing emotional harm believing to gain more power and control in a relationship. Verbal abuse consists of behaviours that are non-physical, but which can still be rather damaging, such as being threatening, insulting, or humiliating toward someone. The results are presented in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 below:

Table 4.2: Prevalence of verbal abuse

Q/N	Statement	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Frequency
PIV_1	Do you consider Verbal Abuse a typical form of abuse in your workplace?	No	142	39.1	40.1
		Yes	212	58.4	59.9
		Total	354	97.5	100.0
		Missing	9	2.5	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
PIV_2	How many times have you been verbally abused in your workplace?	Never	132	36.4	37.3
		More than three times	52	14.3	14.7
		Thrice	32	8.8	9.0
		Twice	80	22.0	22.6
		Once	58	16.0	16.4
		Total	354	97.5	100.0
		Missing	9	2.5	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
PIV_3	Using the last case of verbal abuse, when did this happen?	10years above	54	14.9	19.8
		7-9years ago	25	6.9	9.2
		4 - 6years ago	80	22.0	29.3
		1 - 3years	107	29.5	39.2
		Less than one year ago	7	1.9	2.6
		Total	273	75.2	100.0
		Missing	90	24.8	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	
PIV_4	Who abused you?	Family/Spouse	12	3.3	4.6
		Stranger	25	6.9	9.5
		Colleague/Co-worker	43	11.8	16.3
		Client/Customer	88	24.2	33.5
		Supervisor/Immediate Boss	65	17.9	24.7
		Director	30	8.3	11.4
		Total	263	72.5	100.0

Q/N	Statement	Category	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative Frequency
		Missing	100	27.5	
		Overall Total	363	100.0	

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024.

Table 4.2 shows that majority of the respondents (212, 58.4%) considered verbal abuse a typical case of violence in Edo State civil service while 142 respondents representing 39.1% did not consider verbal abuse a typical case. However, 9 (2.5%) of the respondents did not respond to the question. Table 4.1 further shows that 132 (36.4%) of the respondents have *Never* been verbally abused in the workplace. 58 (16%), 80 (22%), 32 (8.8%) and 52 (14.3%) represent *Once, Twice, Thrice* and *More than three times* respectively the respondents have been verbally abused in the workplace. As shown in Table 4.2, 53.4% of verbal abuse that occurred in the workplace were recorded in six years and below. 21.8% of such cases occurred more than six years ago as reported by the respondents. The respondents identified 30 (8.3%), 65 (17.9%), 88 (24.2%), 43 (11.8%), 25 (6.9%), and 12 (3.3%) of the verbal abuse were carried out by Directors, supervisor/immediate boss, client/customers, colleagues/co-workers, strangers, and family/spouse respectively. This shows that verbal violence/abuse is mainly perpetrated by supervisor/immediate boss, client/customers, and colleagues/co-workers.

Table 4.3: Outcomes/Consequences of Verbal Abuse

Q/N	Statement	Yes	No	Rank
PIV_12	It decreased my job satisfaction	168 (74.3%)	58 (25.7%)	1st
PIV_2	My mental health was affected negatively	147 (53.8%)	126 (46.2%)	2nd
PIV_1	I became afraid	130 (47.1%)	146 (52.9%)	3rd
PIV_8	My performance and productivity decreased	116 (51.3%)	110 (48.7%)	4th
PIV_7	I resulted to absenteeism	85 (37.1%)	144 (62.9%)	5th
PIV_10	It damaged my image and reputation	82 (36.3%)	144 (63.7%)	6th
PIV_3	I took sick leave/Time Off work	76 (27.8%)	197 (72.2%)	7th
PIV_5	I changed department	45 (19.9%)	181 (80.1%)	8th
PIV_11	It damaged the company's image and reputation	43 (19%)	183 (81%)	9th
PIV_9	It resulted to legal action	39 (17.3%)	187 (82.7%)	10th
PIV_13	I was fatigued or lost weight	38 (16.8%)	188 (83.2%)	11th
PIV_6	I asked for a transfer	37 (16.4%)	189 (83.6%)	12th
PIV_4	I left the job	25 (11.2%)	198 (88.8%)	13th

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024.

Table 4.3 shows that the major consequences or outcomes of verbal violence/abuse on victims as identified by the respondents are decreased job satisfaction; mental health challenges; it makes employees to be afraid; reduced performance and productivity; and absenteeism. Other consequences include damaged of image and reputation, fatigue and weight loss, damaged of image and reputation, transfer, taking legal action, change of department, and leaving the job, among others.

4.4: Influence of demographics on verbal abuse

Demographics	Category	Occurrence of Verbal Abuse			χ^2 (p-value)	Decision
		Yes [n(%)]	No [n(%)]	Total [n(%)]		
Gender	Female	44 (30.3)	101 (69.7)	145 (100)	9.755 (0.002)	Significant
	Male	98 (46.9)	111 (53.1)	209 (100)		
	Total	142 (40.1)	212 (59.9)	354 (100)		
Age	58years and Above	8 (36.4)	14 (63.6)	22 (100)	23.770 (0.000)	Significant
	48-58years	6 (17.6)	28 (82.4)	34 (100)		
	38-47years	22 (28.6)	55 (71.4)	77 (100)		
	28-37years	72 (55)	59 (45)	131 (100)		
	18-27years	34 (37.8)	56 (62.2)	90 (100)		
	Total	142 (40.1)	212 (59.9)	354 (100)		
Educational Attainment	Postgraduate	23 (45.1)	28 (54.9)	51 (100)	6.016 (0.111)	Not Significant
	HND/B.Sc. or Equivalent	70 (35.4)	128 (64.6)	198 (100)		
	Primary/Sch. Cert.	41 (44.6)	51 (55.4)	92 (100)		
	SSCE/GCE/NCE/Diploma/OND or Equivalent	5 (71.4)	2 (28.6)	7 (100)		
	No formal Education	139 (39.9)	209 (60.1)	348 (100)		

Marital Status	Widow	6 (50)	6 (50)	12 (100)	16.193 (0.001)	Significant
	Divorced	14 (58.3)	10 (41.7)	24 (100)		
	Married	87 (46.3)	101 (53.7)	188 (100)		
	Single	35 (26.9)	95 (73.1)	130 (100)		
	Total	142 (40.1)	212 (59.9)	354 (100)		
Religion	African Traditional Worship	6 (42.9)	8 (57.1)	14 (100)	0.136 (0.934)	Not Significant
	Islam	27 (40.9)	39 (59.1)	66 (100)		
	Christianity	106 (39.1)	165 (60.9)	271 (100)		
	Total	139 (39.6)	212 (60.4)	351 (100)		

Table 4.4 shows that male employees were more likely to have experienced verbal abuse compared to their female counterparts (46.9% vs. 30.3%). Based on the Chi-square results ($\chi^2 = 9.755$; $P=0.002$), the difference in the occurrence of verbal abuse between male and female employees is statistically significant at 5%. The results further showed that employees between 28 - 37years old experienced the highest level of verbal abuse as shown by 55% for the group compared to other age categorization. Based on the Chi-square results ($\chi^2 = 23.770$; $P=0.000$), the difference in the occurrence of verbal abuse among the different categories is statistically significant at 5%. The results also revealed that 71.4% of the employees with *No Formal Education* experienced the highest level of verbal abuse as compared to others. However, the Chi-square results ($\chi^2 = 6.016$; $P=0.111$) showed that the difference in the occurrence of verbal abuse is statistically significant at 5%. The results further revealed that 58.3% of the employees that were *Divorced* experienced the highest level of verbal abuse in the workplace compared to others (*Single* and *Married, Widow*). The Chi-square results ($\chi^2 = 16.193$; $P=0.001$) showing the difference in the occurrence of verbal abuse among the different categories is statistically significant at 5%. Lastly, Table 4.4 reveals that, in comparison to those who practice Christianity and African Traditional Worship, 40.9% of the employees who practice Islam were more likely to have encountered the highest degree of verbal abuse. The difference in the incidence of verbal abuse among employees who practice various religions is statistically significant at 5%, according to the Chi-square values ($\chi^2 = 0.136$; $P=0.934$).

Hypothesis: *Demographic attributes (age, gender, education, marital status, religion) do not significantly influence employees' perception of gender-based verbal abuse in Edo State civil service.*

The result shows that the occurrence of verbal abuse is significantly influenced by gender ($\chi^2 = 9.755$; $P=0.002$), age ($\chi^2 = 23.770$; $P=0.000$) and marital status ($\chi^2 = 16.193$; $P=0.001$). However, the occurrence of verbal abuse is not significantly influenced by educational attainment ($\chi^2 = 6.016$;

$P=0.111$) and religion ($\chi^2 = 0.136$; $P=0.934$). We therefore conclude that the occurrence of verbal abuse is significantly influenced by gender, age and marital status while educational attainment and religion do not show any statistically significant influence.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Gender-based violence also known as violence against women (VAW) is primarily directed at women and girls. GBV can be committed against women as well as men. Whether this violence occurs within the workplace or outside or is perpetrated to a man or woman, its effect can be damaging and harmful. This study therefore examined the prevalence and consequences of gender-based verbal violence in Edo state civil service. The study also ascertained the influence of demographic attributes (age, gender, education, marital status, religion) on employees' perception of gender-based verbal violence in Edo State civil service. The findings revealed that gender-based verbal abuse is prevalent in Edo state civil service. The study further revealed that the consequences of this abuse experienced among employees in the Edo State civil service include a decrease in job satisfaction; anger, anxiety, and depression; mental health, fear; and low performance and productivity.

The following suggestions are put forth in light of the study's findings:

- Edo State Government should set up specialized courts to swiftly handle gender-based emotional-violence related cases. This would discourage potential perpetrators of gender-based violence from taking advantage of slow pace of judgement and other barriers in the formal legal system of Nigeria.
- Edo State Government should formulate laws for protecting the confidentiality of victims of gender based emotional abuse who may report incidence of assaults. This will help in reducing stigmatization of victims and increase the likelihood of formally reporting such cases.

- Unit or department should be created in all the Local Government Areas in the state for reporting incidence of gender based emotional abuse.
- Professional counsellors and legal practitioners who can counsel and fast-track access to justice should be employed to manage the unit or department;
- There should be regular orientation programmes for staff about gender-based emotional violence to create awareness, educate them on different forms of gender-based violence, the penalties that go with them and strategies for preventing possible occurrence of such cases in the workplace.

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