

Case Report

Violence Against Women: A Case Report of Violence Perpetrated By a Couple on a Single Lady

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Abstract

Introduction: Violence against women (VAW) is a menace that is increasing all over the world. It is one of the most widespread human rights abuses and a public health problem. Most victims of violence against women know their perpetrators.

Case Presentation: A 28 year old single lady had a quarrel with her female neighbour. The neighbour's husband held the single lady's hands behind her and ordered his wife to beat up the single lady. The female neighbour then bit the left upper eye lid of the single lady resulting in haemorrhage and pain. The injury was sutured.

Conclusion: Men are not the only perpetrators of such violence. Single women are at risk of being victims of violence. To end violence against women, everyone is involved because in some societies such issues are never discussed in public.

Key Words: Violence, Single Lady, Human Bite, Eye

Introduction

Violence against women is a menace that is increasing worldwide. It takes the form of sexual abuse and rape, physical injury comprising of cuts, bruises, human bite and burns and sexual harassment at the workplace. The perpetrators are usually male partners or colleagues. Violence against women is wide spread around the world [1]. It is a term used to collectively refer to violent acts that are primarily or exclusively committed against women and physical abuse is one of the commonest forms of abuse [2]. It is a form of gender based violence which can be described as any harm that is perpetrated against a person as a result of inequalities that are based on gender roles [3]. The united nations declaration on the elimination of violence against women in 1993 defines violence against women as any act of gender based violence that results in or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm of suffering of women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty whether occurring in private or public life [4]. Violence against women is a major public health and human rights concern [5]. For this reason the United Nations has designated November 25 as the international day for the elimination of violence against women. Violence against women is a burning issue of human rights often swept under the carpet as if it does not matter especially in Africa and particularly in Nigeria [1]. Worldwide governments and various organizations are actively working to combat this menace through a variety of programmes [2]. Women are crucial to the growth and development of any nation² therefore violence against women is a major threat to social and economic development [1].

Case Presentation

A twenty eight year old single Nigerian lady had a quarrel with her female neighbour. The neighbour's husband overpowered the single lady by holding the single lady's hands behind her and commanded his wife to beat up the single lady. The single lady was bitten on the left upper eye lid by her neighbour. There was haemorrhage and pain.

On examination, there was a 4cm laceration on the upper left eye lid with rough edges bleeding palpebral conjunctiva and eyeball were intact. Visual acuity could not be properly assessed because the patient was uncooperative because the left eye was very tender. Irrigation was done. The patient was to pay out of pocket, so she refused treatment and presented three days later by which time there was profuse foul smelling pussy discharge from the injury. Irrigation was done and the discharge sent for microbiological studies. Analgesics and antibiotics were administered. The laceration was sutured when the eye discharge had subsided.





Discussion

Violence against women is a serious issue and can render a woman disabled in extreme as in this case if there was no prompt treatment, the single lady may have lost one eye. It is not only men that physically abuse women as in this case the violence was perpetrated by a couple. There is a stigma of being single in some societies as the woman is seen as being unable to defend herself because she has no body to speak for her. Sometimes single ladies are even abused and violated by their own relatives' and friends. In this case the victim's neighbour overpowered her physically and authorized his wife to beat her up because the victim had no male partner at that time to fight for her. Not being able to assess health insurance led to a delay in the management as the victim had to pay out of pocket and she did not have the money at the time the injury occurred. Further delay in the management may have led to blindness or poor vision in the affected eye. The discomfort from the injury led to some loss of work days. There some non-governmental organizations in Nigeria that helps to fight violence against women. Single women which include women that have never married, those divorce and widows are usually the victims of violence and discrimination in the society.

Conclusion

Men are not the only perpetrators of violence against women. Single women that include the never married, divorced and widowed are at risk of being violated physically, socially and financially (that is economically). Health insurance is important in the management of injuries resulting from violence against women. Ending violence against women involves everyone.

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