

Organizational Stress and Demographic Variables as Predictors of Workplace Violence in the Telecommunication Industry

ADEGOKE Olusegun Steve¹, AYANTAYO, Solomon Ojo²

¹*Department of Psychology, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan*

²*Department of Peace and Conflict Studies University of Ibadan*

Abstract: This study aimed at investigating organizational stress and demographic variables as predictors of workplace violence in the telecommunication industry. Workplace violence, in terms of occupational health and safety, is one of the most important problems of working life. “Incidents where staffs are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances related to their work, including an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well-being or health” interfering with work tools and equipment .

A cross-sectional research design was adopted in this study. The study was conducted in a telecommunication industry in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study setting was Etisalat Telecommunications Company. The participants for this study comprised of men and women who are workers in Etisalat Plc, Ibadan offices. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique with population sample size of 187. 80 (42.8%) of the participants were males, while the remaining 107 (57.2%) were females. The mean age was 34.17, SD= 8.72. The hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics.

The results showed that organizational stress had significant influence on workplace violence at $\{t(185) = 2.069; P < .05\}$; only age had a significant negative relationship with workplace violence in this study at $(r = -.51; p < .05)$. organizational stress and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. $(r = .155; P < .01)$; gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and work experience jointly explained about 9.2% variance observed in workplace violence $(R^2 = 0.92, F(5, 187) = 2.35, p < .05)$; age, $(\beta = .136, t = 2.010, p < .05)$, marital status $(\beta = -.137, t = -2.353, p < .05)$ and work experience $(\beta = -.148, p < .05)$

It was concluded that organizational stress and demographic variables are significant predictors of workplace violence . This study also indicated significant negative relationship between age and workplace violence. This study recommends that organizations should try as much as possible unravel the factors that have the tendency of causing stressors for the employees in the organization. This will help limiting the effect of job stressors on employee job attitudes and work behaviours.

I. INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Workplace violence, in terms of occupational health and safety, is one of the most important problems of working life. There are several definitions of workplace violence available in literature. Richards (2003) defined as “Incidents where staffs are abused, threatened or assaulted in

circumstances related to their work, including commuting to and from work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well-being or health”. Workplace violence includes not only physical but also non-physical violence. For example; workplace violence includes physical assault, homicide, robbery, verbal abuse, bullying/mobbing, swearing, shouting, sexual and racial harassment, name calling, threats, interfering with work tools and equipment (Essenberg, 2003, Chappell & Di Martino, 1999).

Fletcher, Cavanaugh, & Brakel (2000) defined as a “work or workplace-related problem negatively affecting the production force or safety of the employees”. Research has shown that violent behaviour in the workplace causes employees to experience stress, anxiety, burnout and depression. In addition, workplace violence is a reason for reduced job satisfaction, and a lower level of job involvement and organizational commitment (Herschovis & Barling, 2009).

Stress is increasingly becoming accepted as a workplace phenomenon negatively affecting a growing number of people across the world (Cox, et al., 2000). As the economy becomes global and competition increases in the battle for market shares and survival, pressure mounts on workers. With high levels of crime and aggression in society, violence finds its way into the workplace in the form of robbery and assaults, particularly on front-line staff and service providers. As pressures mount aggression may also build up within the workplace, making worker violence more likely. However, recent research in Europe, the US and Australia indicates that it is the emotional and psychological abuse referred to as ‘bullying’ and ‘mobbing’, rather than the physical violence which represents the greatest threat to most workers.

However, due to the increasing diversity of workforces, a number of studies also document the frequent presence of harassment on the basis of race or gender. Many women, particularly in the developing world have also experienced that the workplace represents no safe haven from domestic abusers. The study investigated the influence of organizational stress and demographic factors on workplace violence using Telecommunication industry as a case study.

Statement of Problem

Despite many years of research on organizational violence, there is still no consensus on psychosocial determinants of workplace violence among employees in the communication industry. Several studies have examined key factors influencing the safety in a particular industry, for example, manufacturing, road and bridge construction, health sector, offshore, grain, nuclear and chemical industries etc.

In 2009, approximately 572,000 nonfatal violent crimes (rape/sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated and simple assault) occurred against persons age 16 or older while they were at work or on duty, based on findings from the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). This accounted for about 24% of nonfatal violence against employed persons age 16 or older. Nonfatal violence in the workplace was about 15% of all nonfatal violent crime against persons age 16 or older. The rate of violent crime against employed persons has declined since 1993. In 2009, an estimated 4 violent crimes per 1,000 employed persons age 16 or older were committed while the victims were at work or on duty, compared to 6 violent crimes per 1,000 employed persons age 16 or older in 2002.

In 1993, the rate of nonfatal violence was 16 violent crimes per 1,000 employed persons while at work, a rate 75% higher than in 2009. According to 2009 preliminary data, 521 persons age 16 or older were victims of homicide in the workplace. In about a third of workplace homicides from 2005-2009, the victim worked in a sales or office occupation. The data on homicides in this report are based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI, 2010). Also in 2002 to 2009 the rate of nonfatal workplace violence has declined by 35%, following a 62% decline in the rate from 1993 to 2002.

The economic world is moving towards a single, global market place. However, this economic globalization has increased commercial competition with growing pressures on everyone at work as a result. In order to survive in this competitive environment, organizations are restructuring and downsizing with the aim of cutting costs. Tendering for contracts, which also now often include public services has become increasingly common, bringing with it more economic risk-taking in order to reduce cost. Organizational downsizing and restructuring has resulted in greater pressure on those remaining employees with an increase in workload and work pace. Such work-intensification has resulted in employees in some countries, for example the US and UK, also working long hours (Bosch, 1999).

In parallel with this development, a number of demographic changes have been taking place. In many countries women make up a growing proportion of the workforce. However, a very substantial amount of female workers are employed in precarious jobs, often with little job-security, low pay and unfavourable working conditions and remuneration. This process is not limited to the industrialized world. In addition,

for many female workers in developing and industrializing countries the work-experience is a harsh one, with mistreatment and sexual harassment a commonplace reality often nurtured by cultural and religious beliefs. Whilst a growing number of women are taking on managerial jobs, they are still faced with problem connected to exclusionary or undermining behaviour from men who may consider them a threat from violence survey international.

In most industrialized countries the population is ageing with growing pressures on social services as a result. Increasingly hospitals and nursing homes are inhabited by the oldest and neediest of the elderly, heightening the pressures on staff (Boyd, 1995). Workplace bullying has become a hot-button topic over the past few years, with statistics suggesting that up to 35 percent of the work force have fallen victim to this alarming trend. Will this incidents occurring with higher organizational related stressors? Therefore, in order to find ways of minimizing workplace violence in contemporary industries, the following research questions have been raised;

1. Will organizational stress significantly influence workplace violence among employees?
2. Would there be a significant gender difference in workplace violence?
3. Does relationship exist between age, education, work experience, marital status and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunications industry?
4. What is the relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry?
5. What are the joint and independent influences of demographic variables such as age, gender, education, work experience and marital status on workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry?

Purpose of Study

The major purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of organizational stress and demographic variables on workplace violence among employees. However, the specific objectives are as follow;

1. To examine the influence of organizational stress on workplace violence among employee.
2. To investigate the relationship between demographic variables such as age, education, work experience, marital status and workplace violence among employee.
3. To examine the relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry.
4. Would there be a significant gender difference in workplace violence?
5. To investigate the joint and independent influence of demographic variables such as age, gender,

education, work experience and marital status on workplace violence among employee

Significance of Study

Today, violence is commonly observed in all races and cultures. Violent incidents in the workplace which negatively affect employees' health and safety present an important problem of health and safety at work. Being exposed to knowledge of psychosocial determinants of workplace violent incidents at work is a plausible and valuable source of information useful to providing solution or amendment to the precursors of violence in the workplace.

Additionally the result findings in this study can be a reason for positive outcomes in the workers' physical and psychological health. Employees' perceptions of organizational policies, procedures and practices directed towards controlling and removing workplace violence and aggression, stated as violence prevention climate could be fashioned after psychosocial factors that would be examined in this current research.

Also, this study will empirically suggest way forward and recommendations based on the findings in the study and contribute immensely to the research knowledge and expand widely the existing literatures.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical framework

Theories provide complex and comprehensive conceptual understandings of things that cannot be pinned down. A supposition or a system of ideas intended to give general explanation to phenomenon of interest in a research work.

The Transactional Stress Model

Lazarus and Folkman (1991) defined psychological stress as "a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being" (p. 19). Thus, Lazarus and Folkman assume that cognitive appraisals play a crucial role in the stress process.

Appraisal processes refer to an individual's categorization and evaluation of an encounter with respect to this individual's well-being. Specifically, primary and secondary appraisal can be differentiated. By primary appraisal, encounters are categorized as irrelevant, benign-positive or stressful. Stress appraisals comprise harm/loss, threat, and challenge. By secondary appraisals, individuals evaluate what can be done in the face of the stressful encounter, i.e. they tax their coping options. On the basis of primary and secondary appraisals, individuals start their coping processes which can stimulate reappraisal processes. To arrive at a better understanding of the stress process and how it develops over time, Lazarus (1991) suggested putting more emphasis on an intra-individual analysis of the stress phenomenon, for example by studying the same persons in different contexts over time.

A few studies followed such an approach (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, DeLongis, & Gruen, 1986), the majority of empirical studies in the area of organizational stress however, did not adopt such a process perspective but treated stressful situations and individuals' reactions to them as stable. Moreover, it has been questioned whether a focus on individual processes offers much to the understanding of workplace stress (Brief & George, 1995).

Cybernetic Model.

Edwards (1992) proposed a cybernetic model of organizational stress (cf. for a related model, Cummings & Cooper, 1979, 1998). Edwards summarized earlier approaches on stress which implicitly assumed cybernetic principles (e.g., Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964; McGrath, 1976) and explicitly built on Carver and Scheier's (1982) work on cybernetics as a general theory of human behaviour. Crucial components in Carver and Scheier's model are an input function, a reference value, a comparator, and an output function. The input function refers to perceptions of one's own state or of situational features in the environment. The reference value comprises the individual's desires, values, or goals. The comparator compares the input function with the reference value. The output function refers to behaviour which is activated when a discrepancy between the input function and the reference value is detected.

Edwards (1992) defines stress as "a discrepancy between an employee's perceived state and desired state, provided that the presence of this discrepancy is considered important by the employee" (p. 245). Thus, stress occurs when the comparison between an individual's perception and his or her desire results in a discrepancy. The perception is assumed to be influenced by the physical and social environment, personal characteristics of the individual, the individual's cognitive construction of reality, and social information. The discrepancy between perception and desires (i.e., stress), affects two outcomes: the individual's well-being and his or her coping efforts. Additionally, reciprocal effects between well-being and coping are assumed. Moreover, coping may have an effect on the person and the situation, the individual's desires, and the duration of the stressful situation and the importance attached to it. The effects of the discrepancy on well-being and coping efforts are moderated by additional factors such as the importance of the discrepancy and its duration.

The medico-psychological approach

The study of stress has been primarily undertaken within what we refer to as the medico-psychological realm. This field of research operationalizes stress in terms of measurement of various parameters that are postulated to determine or effect the quality of working life and individual well-being. The medico-psychological studies of stress works within a positivistic, quantitative, clinical research tradition derived from natural science and medical research. The human body is

conceived of as a set of mechanisms and fluids that are hypothesized to operate in stable and predictable ways.

Deviations from these bodily standards are identified as indications of stress on the *individual* level. Applying to a set of methodologies, techniques, and practices enables the identification of physical and psychological malaises that causes individual sufferings. The medico-psychological field of scientific inquiry has been very successful in formulating adequate measures of stress and in establishing technologies for evaluation of *existing* organizational systems. In short, the medico-psychological approach to stress operates firstly on the level of *symptomatology*, it consists of a set of tools for identification and evaluation of the *effects* of stress such as various forms of individual mal-functioning (cf. Mason, 1971). The medico-psychological approach to stress does however demonstrate some deficiencies. First, it operationalizes stress in terms of its *effects*, not in terms of its causes. Stress is identified in terms of what it has already caused, for example individual nervous problems. Second, stress is conceptualized as being solely residing inside the individual human body.

In medical research, scholars deal with micro-organisms and bacteria that produce physical effects on the human body. In these cases, medical attention is used to eliminate the bacteria. Here the human body is very much examined from a system perspective; the human body is a closed system whose malfunctions can be sought from within that system. Socio-cultural theories on stress suggest, on the other hand, that stress is an outcome from a complex network of mechanisms and practices that emanates from outside the individual human body. Stress is in this perspective conceived of as a set of interrelated processes that rather revolves around the human body than existing within it (as, for instance, in the case of bacteriology). Therefore, stress can never be reduced to the level of the individual if the causes of stress are to be fruitfully examined. To conclude, the medico-psychological approach to stress operates from the perspective of treatment *ex post facto* rather than being an *ex-ante* approach wherein the social complexity of everyday organizational life is highlighted. The analysis of stress in organizations can never be removed from its social embeddedness without reducing a rich and multi-faceted phenomenon to a pursuit of mere treatment of already existing problems.

Taylor (1983) theory of cognitive adaptation

Taylor (1983) developed a theory of cognitive adaptation to life threatening events following work with cancer patients, rape victims and cardiac patients. She proposes that to achieve a quality of life that is equal to or exceeding that which the person experienced prior to a personally threatening event, the individual is required to engage in a readjustment process. This process focuses on three main themes: the search for meaning, gaining a sense of mastery or control over the event and its consequences, and self-enhancement (see Fig. 1). To protect the integrity of their psychological self and maintain

emotional well-being (self-protection), individuals use the adaptive process of finding meaning in and gaining control over the event. The search for meaning requires individuals to make sense of the event to understand why the catastrophe occurred and what impact it will have on the rest of their lives. Mastery entails the person regaining control over this and future events.

Following event individuals will usually experience diminished self-esteem and, in order to recover, they are required to find ways to feel good about themselves. According to Taylor, self enhancement is achieved by comparing oneself to others who have not fared as well in a similar situation, and thereby bolstering one's self-esteem. Moreover, Taylor argues that to successfully resolve these three processes the individual is required to form and maintain a set of illusions (which other people may or may not consider 'true' or 'correct'). These illusions necessitate individuals to view the known facts in a light that will enhance or maintain their view of themselves.

Organizational stress and Work violence

The interrelationship between stress and violence is increasingly recognized. It has been the object of many studies, although a full understanding of the factors involved and the mechanisms by which they operate is far from being achieved. What appears certain, in any case, is that the appearance of one of these problems at the workplace is unlikely to remain an isolated case but will be linked with the other areas of health and safety deterioration, spreading rapidly and proliferating across the entire workplace and other organizations (Ugon, 2001).

The importance of these connections is also emerging in the health sector. Several studies of medical students conducted over the last decade suggest that there is a high prevalence of experiences perceived as abusive – such as being yelled at, physically assaulted, sexually harassed and psychologically humiliated – and that these experiences constitute risk factors for stress. It has also been postulated that one specific outcome includes alcoholism as a cause of workplace violence (Rosenberg and Silver, 2000; Richman, 2001).

A further study by Rosenberg and Silver, (2000) examined the association between work stress and workplace violence among 421 German mining industry workers. They reported a significant positive relationship between work stress and workplace violence. The relationship they unraveled was a very strong relationship. They hence recommended that management of the mining industry should provide a week break for the workers in order to create time for the employees to get themselves together.

Stress and violence cause immediate and often long-term disruption to interpersonal relationships, the organization of work and the overall working environment. Employers bear the direct cost of lost production and more expensive security measures. They are also likely to bear the indirect cost of

reduced efficiency and productivity, the deterioration of product quality, poor company image and a reduction in the number of clients (Sharmin and Rahaman, 2002).

On the victim's side, stressors have been identified as predictors of violence. In a 2001 American study covering a sample of approximately 7,000 state employees of the State Bureau of Employee Health, the relationship between the occurrence of on-the-job physical assaults and 11 different job stressors was examined.

Four of the 11 stressor variables examined were found to be associated with assaults on both men and women. Limited job control, high levels of responsibility for other people, limited opportunities for alternative employment and skill under-utilization were all found to be significant predictors associated with assault for both sexes. The authors concluded that assaults may occur more frequently among highly stressed workers than among those experiencing less stress (Hurrell et al., 1997).

It is important, however, to point out that the connection is not an automatic one. The vast majority of people under severe negative stress – and everyone experience this at some time – do not become perpetrators of violence. It is usually the combination of stress with a number of additional factors, such as alcohol abuse, that triggers violence at the workplace (Hoel et al, 2000).

While stress may increase the likelihood of workers in the health sector becoming violent towards their patients and co-workers, patients, as well as their family members and other visitors may in turn be subject to intense negative stress and this may generate acts of violence against those workers, particularly those perceived as more vulnerable such as nurses' aides (Boyd, 1995). Boyd (1995) therefore reported a significant relationship between Workplace violence and Organizational stress.

A major study of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin, based on 21,500 face-to-face interviews with workers throughout the European Union indicated that:

1. 40 per cent of workers exposed to physical violence experience stress;
2. 47 per cent of workers exposed to bullying experience stress;
3. 46 per cent of workers exposed to sexual harassment experience stress (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2000).

A Canadian survey conducted in 1995-96 on home health-care workers fully confirms the major contribution of stress to workplace violence in any organization.

Demographics and Workplace violence

Previous studies of demographic factors and Work Place Violence have primarily focused on predicting or identifying

the role which gender plays on workplace violence. Fewer studies have examined which sexes have the tendency of engaging in physical and verbal abuse among nurses and nursing personnel in general medical settings. Llewellyn, (2001) and McCaskell (1994) discovered an influence of differences in gender on workplace violence. They reported that male workers in any organization were more involved in physical violence than female workers, while they also reported that female employees were more involved in verbal/abusive violence in the workplace. Hence, they found a significant influence of gender on workplace violence. Llewellyn (2001) also reported that there are possible co-factors causing the male to be more involved in physical abuse by postulating that alcohol might contribute to that effect.

Another study conducted by Levi, (2000) in an Organization in Slovakia reported that senior colleagues in the workplace are more likely to experience violence than junior colleagues in an organization. The study dichotomized seniority in terms of the number of years spent in the organization. Levi (2000), hence, reported that employees who have stayed longer in the organization are more involved in workplace violence than junior colleagues who are just joining the organization.

There are other demographic variables such as marital status of employees, gender and age. A study conducted by Kop & Hurrell (2002) tried to unravel the influence which this demographic variables of employees has on workplace physical or verbal violence. The study found a significant influence of marital status on workplace violence. The study found out that married employees were more involved in workplace violence than employees who are single (Kop & Hurrell, 2002). In addition, they also found a significant relationship between marital status and workplace violence.

In addition, previous study conducted by Amorós, (1990) among Yugoslavian medical personnel examined the relationship that existed between demographic variables such as age, marital status, years spent in work and their educational status. Male nurses report higher levels of physical and nonphysical violence than do female nurses. Younger age and having an associate degree education (vs. diploma or bachelor's degree) are related to increase physical and nonphysical WPV. In addition, nurses who have poor interpersonal relationships with supervisors, management, colleagues, physicians and/or administration are at higher risk for experiencing physical violence. Race and the number of years worked as a nurse or in a particular department appear to have little effect on the experience of violence in the workplace.

Throughout history, various forms of violence have manifested themselves in society as a consequence of certain sectors' or groups' domination over others. In this context, gender-based violence is a key social mechanism for perpetuating the subordination of women, since male hegemony —power being considered the generic patrimony of

men (Amorós, 1990)— is based on social control over women. Therefore, violations of women's human rights are directly or indirectly related to the gender system and to mainstream cultural values.

A study by Serie & Desarrollo (2001) reported a high correlation between work-related violence and work location generated by safety hazards in visited homes and neighbourhoods (Denton et al., 2000). It has been suggested that good lighting, high visibility of work areas, and reduced hiding places for perpetrators, should all be adopted as basic measures to reduce the risks of violence to workers in any organization.

The interrelation between the external environment and the working environment also appears significant in terms of predicting violence. In the specific context of possible violence and aggression in the workplace, especially premises open to the public, such as hospitals, the design of workplaces requires special attention and involves the following additional factors: comfortable seating, which is crucial especially where waiting is involved; comfort and size of waiting rooms; toilet facilities; supervised entrances; alarms; security guards; protective barriers; surveillance cameras and systems to alert other employees when urgent help is needed.

In the health sector, particularly for employees in contact with the public, effective communication can do much to prevent (LeBlanc & Kelloway, 2002; Schat & Kelloway, 2003) violence. In the case of hospitals, the provision of information to patients, their friends and relatives is crucial in lessening the risk of assault. This is particularly the case in situations involving distress and long waiting periods where even the usually well-balanced individual may become anxious, distressed, and eventually more prone to violence. Recent reporting from Mexico confirms the close connection between the working condition and violence in work settings of the health sector (Nieto and Sancedo, 2001).

Changes in work organization and work practices often cost little or nothing and they can bring important economic advantages both in terms of enterprise efficiency and in reducing the burden of stress and violence. In any organization, particularly for workers in contact with the public, change in work practices can be extremely important in limiting violence from employees. The most influential factor in reducing employee's aggression is speedy and efficient reinforcement from the management, which can be stimulated by various measures such as staff rotation for particularly demanding jobs, rostering more staff at peak periods, designing how staff moves between different working areas and tailoring employees flow to suit needs and resources.

Operational definition of terms

Organizational stress: It refers to the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that

are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope

Workplace violence: It refers to the violence climate in the workplace.

Demographic variables: these refer to (gender, age, religion and educational attainment, work experience) in this study are limited to the sociological characteristics of an individual as a result of his/her belongingness to a group.

Age: It refers to the chronological age of years individual has used as at when born to the last birthday.

III. METHODOLOGY

Research Design: A cross-sectional research design was adopted considering organizational stress and personality traits as explanatory variables while the dependent variable is workplace violence. The study was conducted in a telecommunication industry in Ibadan, Nigeria. The participants for this study consisted men and women who were workers in Etisalat Plc, Ibadan offices. The respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique with population sample size of 187. However, the socio-demographic variables of the research participants were analyzed using frequency distribution. Frequency distribution for gender revealed that 80 (42.8%) of the participants were males, while the remaining 107 (57.2%) were females.

For age distribution of the participants, 9 (4.8%) indicated to be 24 years and below, 61 (32.6%) indicated to be between 25 years and 29 years old, 57 (30.5%) signified to be between 30 years and 34 years old, 20 (10.7%) indicated to be between 35 years and 39 years old, 26 (13.9%) of the participants indicated to be between 40 years and 44 years old, 11 (5.9%) signified to be between 45 years to 49 years old, while the remaining 3 (1.6%) signal to be 50 years old and above. Marital status of the respondents showed that 48 (25.7%) are still single, 130 (69.5%) are married, while the remaining 9 (4.8%) are separated or divorced. From the religion distribution, 80 (42.8%) signaled to be Christians, 93 (49.7%) are Muslims, while the remaining 14 (7.5%) were from other religious group. Frequency distribution of the educational qualification of the respondents revealed that 46 (24.6%) of the respondents were OND holders, 55 (29.4%) were HND holders, 42 (22.5%) were University first degree holders, 37 (19.8%) were higher degree holders, while the remaining 7 (3.7%) of the respondents were professional degree holders. Finally, work experience of the respondents showed that 15 (8%) have been in the industry for one or two years, 60 (32.1%) have spent three to four years in the industry, 85 (45.5%) have been in the industry for five to six years, while the remaining 27 (14.4%) have spent seven years and above in the industry.

Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was used as a tool for collection of relevant information from the participants of study, the

instrument (i.e. questionnaire) was designed to collect information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents as well as the psychological variables of the study. The instrument utilized in this study contained 3 sections.

Section A: Comprised of demographic characteristics of the respondents include Age, Gender, Marital status, Religion, Educational qualification and Occupational work experience.

Section B – This consists of a 10-item scale measuring workplace stress developed by Cohen, (2001). The reliability and validity of the English translation of the PSS- 10 showed internal consistency ($\alpha = .80$). However, The psychometric properties of each study are summarized such that; Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency reliability, with a value $>.70$ considered a minimum measure of internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein,1994). Cronbach's alpha of the PSS-10 was evaluated at $>.70$ in all 12 studies in which it was used. The test-retest reliability of the PSS-10 was assessed in four studies, and met the criterion of $>.70$ in all cases. It is a five-point rating scale; *never =0, almost never, sometimes, fairly often, or very often=4*. Local reliability of this scale in this study reported a cronbach alpha of .67.

Section C- This consist of a 18-item scale measuring workplace violence developed by (Einarsen & Raknes, 1991, 1997; Mikkelsen & Einarsen, 2001). The reliability and validity of the English translation of the NAQ-R were investigated by Hoel et al., (2004). Again, internal consistency ($\alpha = .90$) and test-retest reliability ($r =.92$) were good. However, the response option is a 5-point Likert format. The scale has two levels of scoring; high and low workplace violence- related bullying using computed average scores as the cut-point. The local reliability of this scale in this study reported a cronbach alpha of .70.

Sampling Procedure

The researcher randomly sampled 200 participants in the organization after short introduction of the purpose of study to the potential participants who were all staff of Etisalat Telecom PLC, Ibadan. Having obtained the informed consent, the questionnaires were administered systematically so as to avoid sampling biases. No incentives were offered to the participants. The participants completed the questionnaires with ease in about 5 to 7 minutes. They were encouraged to ask questions or raise concerns they had about the research. At the retrieval point, it was realized that 187 of the 200 questionnaires administered were fully completed and collated for the data analysis.

Statistical Analysis

This analysis was carried out using statistical packages for the social sciences (SPSS) which include descriptive and inferential statistics. T-test for the gender and age differences and multiple regressions and ANOVA was also used. The socio demographic information of the respondents was

analyzed using frequency distribution and mean. The reliability of the adapted instrument was re-examined and reported as obtained in this study.

IV. RESULTS/ FINDINGS

This chapter deals with data analysis and interpretation of result of the findings. Specifically the study provided answers to four research hypotheses. The statistical tests used include multiple regression analysis for testing composite relationship of the independent variables, t-test for independent samples, and Pearson moment correlation (Pearson r).

Hypothesis one

Organizational stress will have a significant influence on workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. This was tested using t-test for independent sample. The result is shown in Table 1;

Table 1: T-test showing the influence of organizational stress on workplace violence

	Organizational stress	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
	High	95	18.95	5.51			
Workplace violence					185	2.069	<.01
	Low	92	17.42	4.53			

The result in *Table 1* indicates that participants who score high on organizational stress among employees in the telecommunications industry, recorded high level of workplace violence, than participants who scored low organizational stress at $t(185) = 2.069$; $P < .01$; Following the result, participants who score organizational stress had a mean score of (18.95) ; while participants who score less on organizational stress had a mean score of (17.42). This implies that differences in level of organizational stress had an influence in workplace violence among the telecommunications employees. In other words, the more employees experience organizational stress, the higher the rate of workplace violence.

Hypothesis two

There will be significant relationship between demographic variables such as age, education, work experience, marital status and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunications industry. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson moment correlation (Pearson r). The result is presented in Table 2;

Table 2: Zero order correlations showing the relationship between age, education qualification, work experience, marital status and workplace violence

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	X	SD
Age	-	.003	.600**	.353**	-.011	32.97	6.58
Marital status	-	-	.027	-.095	.072	1.8	0.51
Education qualification	-	-	-	.288**	-.056	2.49	1.17
Work experience	-	-	-	-	-.014	4.82	1.56
Workplace violence	-	-	-	-	-	18.17	5.08

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1 –tailed).

The results in Table 2 show the relationship between age, marital status, educational qualification, work experience and workplace violence. The result signified that there is a no significant relationship between age and marital status ($P > .01$). ($r = .003$; $P > .01$); the table hence presented a significant relationship between age and educational qualification ($P < .01$) ($r = .600$ **); $P < .01$), the relationship between the two variables are moderate and in the positive direction; the table further presented that there was a significant relationship between age and work experience ($P < .01$). ($r = .353$ **); $P < .01$). The relationship indicated a weak relationship but in the positive direction; there was no relationship between age and workplace violence ($r = -.011$; $P > .01$). The result indicated no relationship between marital status and educational qualification ($r = .027$; $P > .01$); marital status and work experience ($r = -.095$; $P > .01$), and marital status and workplace violence ($r = .072$; $P > .01$). The table also presented that there was a significant relationship between educational qualification and work experience at ($r = .288$; $P < .01$); and no relationship existed between educational qualification and workplace violence ($r = -.014$; $P > .01$). Finally, the result revealed no significant relationship between work experience and workplace violence. Therefore, the hypothesis was retained.

Hypothesis three

There will be a significant positive relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. This was tested with Pearson moment correlation (Pearson r). The result is shown in Table 3;

Table 3: Summary of zero order correlations showing the relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence

Variable	1	2	X	SD
1. Organizational stress	-	.155**	59.98	6.88
2. Workplace violence		-	18.57	5.1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1 –tailed).

The result in Table 3 revealed the relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. The result

signified that there was a significant relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence ($P < .01$). ($r = .155$ **); $P < .01$); and the strength of the relationship was a very weak one, and in the positive direction. The result indicated that the more organizational stress the employees’ experience, the higher the rate of violence in the workplace. However, the result confirms the stated hypothesis; therefore the result was accepted and the hypothesis retained.

Hypothesis four

Male participants will score high on workplace violence than their female counterparts in the telecommunications industry. This was tested with t-test for independent samples. The result is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: T-test summary showing the influence of sex on workplace violence

	Sex	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P
	Male	107	17.65	5.03			
Workplace violence					185	-1.612	>.01
	Female	80	18.86	5.10			

The result in Table 4 indicated no significant influence of sex on workplace violence at $t(185) = -1.612$; $P > .01$); Following the result above, male participants had a mean score of (17.65) ; while their female counterparts had a mean score of (18.86). This implies that sex differences contributed no significant influence on workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. Therefore, the result negates the stated hypothesis, hence, it was rejected and the result was accepted as a new finding.

Hypothesis five

Demographic variables (age, gender, education, work experience and marital status) will have joint and independent influence of on workplace violence among employee. This was tested with multiple regression analysis. The result is presented in Table 5;

Table 5: Multiple regression analysis showing the influence of gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and work experience on workplace violence.

Variable	Beta	t-value	Sig	R	R ²	F	P
Gender	-.041	-.534					>.05
Age	.136	2.010	<.01	.30	.09	2.35	<.05
Marital status	-.137	-2.353		3	2		<.05
Educational qualification	-.067	-1.134					>.05
Work experience	-.148	-2.333					<.05

The results in Table 5 revealed that respondent’s gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and work experience explain 9% of the change observed in the predicted workplace violence scores ($R^2 = 0.09$, $F(5, 187) = 2.35$, $p < .01$). Collectively, respondents’ gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and work experience predicted workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. Meaning that gender, age,

marital status, educational qualification and work experience of respondents has significant influence on workplace violence in the industry.

The result also demonstrated that independently, age, ($\beta = .136$, $t = 2.010$, $p < .01$), marital status ($\beta = -.137$, $t = -2.353$, $p < .05$) and work experience ($\beta = -.148$, $p < .01$) were significant independent predictors of workplace violence. Therefore, the hypothesis was supported.

V. DISCUSSION

The study examined factors influencing workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. The first hypothesis stated that Organizational stress will have a significant influence on workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. This was tested using t-test for independent sample. The result revealed that participants who score high on organizational stress among employees in the telecommunications industry, recorded high level of workplace violence, than participants who scored low organizational stress. Hence, the hypothesis was retained.

An American survey of 2001 was in support of this finding. They conducted a study, examining the influence of 11 different job stressors on violence among 7,000 state employees of the state Bureau of employee Health. Four of the 11 stressor variables examined were found to be associated with assaults on both men and women. Limited job control, high levels of responsibility for other people, limited opportunities for alternative employment and skill under-utilization were all found to be significant predictors associated with assault for both sexes. The authors concluded that assaults may occur more frequently among highly stressed workers than among those experiencing less stress.

Hypothesis two stated that there will be significant relationship between demographic variables such as age, education, work experience, marital status and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunications industry. This hypothesis was tested using Pearson moment correlation (Pearson r). The result indicated significant relationship between age and educational qualification, age and work experience and educational qualification and work experience. While no significant relationship existed between age and marital status, age and workplace violence, marital status and work experience, and workplace violence and work experience. Hence, the researcher retained the hypothesis.

In support of the findings of this study, previous study conducted by Amorós, (1990) among Yugoslavian medical personnel examined the relationship that existed between demographic variables such as age, marital status, years spent in work and their educational status. Male nurses report higher levels of physical and nonphysical violence than do female nurses. Younger age and having an associate degree education (vs. diploma or bachelor's degree) are related to increase physical and nonphysical WPV. In addition, nurses who have poor interpersonal relationships with supervisors,

management, colleagues, physicians and/or administration are at higher risk for experiencing physical violence. Race and the number of years worked as a nurse or in a particular department appear to have little effect on the experience of violence in the workplace.

Hypothesis three stated that there will be a significant positive relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence among employees in the telecommunication industry. This was tested with Pearson moment correlation (Pearson r). The result indicated a positively and a very weak significant relationship. The hypothesis was confirmed and retained.

Similar to the findings of this current study, a study by Rosenberg and Silver, (2000) examined the association between work stress and workplace violence among 421 German mining industry workers. They reported a significant positive relationship between work stress and workplace violence. The relationship they unraveled was a very strong relationship.

Hypothesis four stated that Male participants will score high on workplace violence than their female counterparts in the telecommunications industry. This was tested with t-test for independent samples. The result indicated no significant influence of gender on workplace violence.

A study by Llewellyn, (2001) and McCaskell (1994) negates the findings of this study. They both discovered an influence of differences in gender on workplace violence. They reported that male workers in any organization were more involved in physical violence than female workers, while they also reported that female employees were more involved in verbal/abusive violence in the workplace. Hence, they found a significant influence of gender on workplace violence. Llewellyn (2001) also reported that there are possible co-factors causing the male to be more involved in physical abuse by postulating that alcohol might contribute to that effect.

Hypothesis five stated that Demographic variables (age, gender, education, work experience and marital status) will have joint and independent influence of on workplace violence among employee. This was tested with multiple regression analysis. The result revealed that respondent's gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and work experience explain 9% of the change observed in the predicted workplace violence scores. Independent influence revealed that age, marital status and work experience were significant independent predictors of workplace violence.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

From the foregoing, organizational stress had a significant influence on workplace violence. This study also indicated significant relationship between age and educational qualification, age and work experience and educational qualification and work experience while no significant relationship existed between age and marital status, age and workplace violence, marital status and work experience, and

workplace violence and work experience. This study further revealed that there was a positive weak significant relationship between organizational stress and workplace violence. In addition, the study unraveled no significant influence of gender on workplace violence. conclusively, demographic variables such as gender, age, marital status, educational qualification and work experience had joint influence on workplace violence, while age, marital status and work experience had independent influence on workplace violence.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Workplace violence can be regarded as anti-productivity in any organization. Hence, for positive development in any organization, thy employees must have cordial relationship such that will contribute to the growth of the organization. Therefore, some recommendations were made from the findings of this study.

Firstly, this study recommends that organizations should try as much as possible unravel the factors that has the tendency of causing stressors for the employees in the organization. This will help in limiting the effect of job stressors. Organizations should provide avenues for periodic break/leave for employees, after working for particular number of days, weeks or months, considering the nature of the job. Finally, this study will recommend that human resource managers in any organization should always put into consideration the marital status, age and work experience of applicants before recruitment is made. However, some limitations of the study were highlighted as follow; the small sample size prohibits the generalization of results to all telecommunication industries in Nigeria. Future research should include a larger sample size with participants randomly drawn from several telecommunication industries, thereby providing a more representative sample of the population and greater generalizability of the study findings. Second, the cross-sectional design provided an opportunity to examine the variables at only one point in time.

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