

Effect of Violence on Nigerian Adolescents' Academic Performance: Implication for Counselling

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ABSTRACT

The study investigates the effect of violence on Nigerian adolescents' academic performance. Three research questions and hypotheses formed the guide for the study. The study adopted a causal research design. The population of the study covered all 174 secondary schools in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State, Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were used in selecting 20 adolescents each from the 15 schools which form the sample of 300 adolescents. Mean and standard deviation were used in analyzing data collected on the research questions while a t-test was used in testing the null hypotheses at 0.05 confidence level using SPSS Version 20. The results revealed that violence, gender and family type have a significant influence on the academic performance of adolescents' students' in Ovia Northeast Local Government of Edo State. The implication for counseling is that the counselor should in collaboration with authorities' war the perpetrator of violence as it is an unacceptable behaviour and as such should not be a codon. It was recommended among others that there is need for adequate counselling by trained counsellors for stakeholders, the victim, the perpetrator, and the general public that violence, gender, and family type have significant influence on adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Keywords: Violence, academic performance, adolescents' Gender, family type.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, up to one billion children and adolescent aged 2–17 years have experienced physical, sexual or emotional violence or neglect in the past year (World Health Organization, 2019). Despite the various efforts by well-meaning and concerned citizens, government, agencies, and institutions not so many reliefs seem to have seemed as more and more cases of violence against children and adolescents are reported daily across the globe (UNICEF, 2018). In Nigeria, the Child's Rights Act was passed into law in 2003, the law guarantees the rights of all children in Nigeria, protecting children's right to a life free of violence such as child abuse, child labour, and forced marriage, among others. Since then 34 of the 36 States of the Federation have fully domesticated the Child Rights Act (Muanya & Onyedika-Ugoeze, 2019). The delay in non-legalizing of the act in the remaining states is because of religion, coupled with ethnic and cultural diversity.

Violence is viewed differently by different authors, though the World Health Organization (WHO) put forward a comprehensive definition of violence based on the different aspects. Violence is an antisocial behaviour that is intended to hurt and inflict pain on victims. It consists of actions, words, attitudes, or bodily damages that can are prevent people from reaching their full developmental potentials. By WHO definition, violence is 'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation' (Chizoba, Iheakaghchi, Ngwoke, & Aye, 2022)

Everywhere in the world, violence has been associated with negative impacts on educational outcomes, with analyses of school-based surveys associating bullying with lower school participation and learning, and a small number of quantitative studies finding negative effects of sexual violence on school participation and achievement (Okafor, 2020).

Violence can occur in communities, homes as domestic violence and in schools, along the streets, in the church, market or even on the playgrounds. School violence, especially among students has continued to manifest in different forms, despite school authority's efforts to minimize it. According to Obilor and Ikpa (2021), school violence includes fighting/assaults (with or without weapons by two or more individuals); bullying; physical, sexual, and psychological child abuse; dating violence; and violence against oneself (intentional non-suicidal self-injury). More so, it can be as threats, verbal and physical attacks, vandalism, ostracization, extortion and other delinquent behaviour perpetrated by adolescents against others in the school community, Violence cannot be attributed to a single factor. Its causes are complex and occur at different levels. (Psaki, Mensch, & Soler-Hampejsek, 2017).

Ojelu, (2021) considered societal factors such as parental neglect, family instability, and aggression within the home or in the society, family stress, rejection, isolation, and exposure to violent movies, marginalization, child abuse, antisocial acts, and inconsistent reinforcements as contributory factors to violence among children and adolescent in Nigerian schools. Njeru, Katiba and Mugambi, (2017) also believed that school violence has causes and factors outside the school, such as the family environment, the social environment and the personality of the individual. In addition, affirms that exposure of students to violence occurs from association with friends, classmates, or an adult. Some other causes as peer pressure, untamed mass media influence, globalization, prevailing economic and political systems and other social issues may equally contribute to disposition to violence by different individuals.

Muanya and Onyedika-Ugoeze (2019) recognized adolescents who get exposed to violence in the form of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, neglect, or even witnessing violence in the home has a significant effect on their wellbeing. It is a risk factor for a range of risk behaviours and disorders. For example, smoking, obesity, high-risk sexual behaviour, and depression are, in turn, causally related to other major public health problems such as cancer, heart disease, sexually transmitted disease, and suicide. Violence has further damaged effects on the perpetrator, victim and the entire society at large. A violent child/ adolescent can develop into an adult criminal, suicide bomber, assassin and kidnapper or even become a militant who terrorizes the entire nation. Today in Nigeria, many persons live in fear because of increasing violence on the entire populace manifesting in killings, rape, banditry, kidnapping, robbery, terrorism, and extortion. School children have been kidnapped and held hostage for ransom, many died, and others presumed to be alive but to reunite with their families (Chizoba et al., 2022).

Emaimo and Daniel (2019) affirmed that adolescents' who are victims or witnesses of domestic violence may develop physical, psychological and behavioural problems as a result of physical, verbal, emotional, and other forms of health problems. More so, research has shown that the health consequences of violence are far broader than death and injuries. Victims of violence are at risk of psychological and behavioural problems, including depression, alcohol abuse, anxiety, and suicidal behaviour, and reproductive health problems, such as sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies, and sexual dysfunction (Fantuzzo & Mohr, 2019).

This may affect the adolescents' involvement in school as they may go to school when they are too frightened to learn and a good number of them may lag in class as well as in life as a result of exposure to domestic violence (Dlamini & Makondo, 2017). The short- term and long-term emotional and physical

repercussions of domestic violence may affect student's school attendance, academic performance, and behavioural patterns both in school and class participation.

Efosa- Ehioghiren, (2017) described academic performance as the show of knowledge obtained or skills developed by students in the school subject. Academic performance means how well one does in school. Poor grades are viewed as bad academic performance. Dlamini et al, (2017) view academic performance as the capacity of students to get high grades and standard test scores in school courses, particularly courses that are part of the core academic curriculum.

Violence remains highly unreported despite its huge health consequences. It is basically violation of human rights and a global health problem, hindering the achievement of adolescent academic performance. Adolescents are at risk of violence and its associated consequences. It should be

stated clearly here that these behaviours not only cut across gender, age, class or groups in society but to the generality of the society depending on their actions toward a particular activity. For example unintentional injuries, smoking, unhealthy diet, abusing drugs and sexual behaviour that lead to unwanted pregnancies or sexually transmitted diseases, having unprotected sex, early sexual intercourse, aggression dating violence, sexual assault, substance abuse delinquency behaviours, school failure, and dropout, tobacco use, alcohol abuse, other illicit drug use or risky driving and crime/violence injuries, mental health, substance use, and loss in productivity (Efosa- Ehioghiren, 2023). Nigeria features most of the major factors that contribute to increase in violence cases: Recent increase in regional conflicts with the associated displacement of people, collapsing national economies with the population below the poverty line, and 30 million Nigerians between the ages of 10–19 years (Anne, Wael, Robert & Azuka, 2021).

Currently, the level of awareness and investment in the prevention of violence against adolescents still remains low or nonexistent in most low- and middle-income countries. This may be attributed to a lack of consciousness of the impact of violence against adolescents especially about the danger and emotional damage to mental health on vulnerable adolescents.

Cases of violence are on the high and show no signs of reduction in Nigeria, regardless of age, tribe, religion, or even social status. There is a need to redefine the meaning of violence on school children since such social problems also change along with society and also search out more effective strategies for tackling the menace. Against this backdrop the study investigates the effect of violence on Nigerian adolescents' academic performance: Implication for Counseling

Specifically, the questions buttressed in this study are (i) to what extent does violence influence academic performance of students' in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State; (ii) to what extent is gender of victim of violence of adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State (iii). Family type influence domestic violence on academic performance of students' in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

LITERATURE REVIEW

Domestic violence

Domestic violence is a purposeful use of force or strength on a person within and outside the house which affects the person adversely or the society at large (Efosa-Ehioghiren, Iwenanogie, & Ebenebe, 2020). Cases of violence against Nigerian students have been on the increase recently especially that of the girl-child such as torture, kidnapping, shooting, sexual harassment, rape, corporal punishment and so on and there are various types of violence exist against students within the family, schools, alternative care

institutions, detention facilities, places where adolescents work for communities (Alabi & Oni, 2017).

Forms of violence

- I. **Child maltreatment** (including violent punishment) involves physical, sexual and psychological/emotional violence; and neglect of infants, children and adolescents by parents, caregivers and other authority figures, most often in the home but also in settings such as schools and orphanages (Bostock, Plumpton & Pratt, 2017).
- II. **Bullying** (including online bullying) is unwanted aggressive behaviour by another child or group of children who are neither siblings nor in a romantic relationship with the victim. It involves repeated physical, psychological or social harm, and often takes place in schools and other settings where children gather, and online (Efosa-Ehioghiren, 2017).
- III. **Youth violence** is concentrated among those aged 10–29 years, occurs most often in community settings between acquaintances and strangers, includes physical assault with weapons (such as guns and knives) or without weapons, and may involve gang violence.
- IV. **Intimate partner violence** (or domestic violence) involves violence by an intimate partner or ex-partner. Although males can also be victims, intimate partner violence disproportionately affects females. It commonly occurs against girls within child and early/forced marriages. Among romantically involved but unmarried adolescents it is sometimes called “dating violence” (Burnham, 2019)
- V. **Sexual violence** includes non-consensual completed or attempted sexual contact; non-consensual acts of a sexual nature not involving contact (such as voyeurism or sexual harassment); acts of sexual trafficking committed against someone who is unable to consent or refuse; and online exploitation.
- VI. **Emotional or psychological violence** and witnessing violence includes restricting a child’s movements, denigration, ridicule, threats and intimidation, discrimination, rejection, and other non-physical forms of hostile treatment.
- VII. **Witnessing violence** can involve forcing a child to observe an act of violence, or the incidental witnessing of violence between two or more other persons.
- VIII. **Corporal punishment**: is any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause pain or discomfort, however light. Most corporal punishment involves hitting (‘smacking’, ‘slapping’, ‘spanking’) children with the hand or with an implement – whip, stick, belt, shoe, and so on. But it can also involve, for example, kicking, shaking or throwing children, scratching, pinching, burning or scalding them, or forcing them to swallow food or liquid (Holiday, Kahn, Thorpe, Shah, Hameeduddin, & Decker, 2020).
- IX. **Gender-based violence** when directed against girls or boys because of their biological sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, any of these types of violence can also constitute gender-based violence.

Academic Performance

Academic performance is the outcome of education which reveals the extent to which a student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals. Academic performance or achievement is commonly measured by examinations or continuous assessment (Efosa-Ehioghiren, 2017). For an adolescent to be able to achieve this, he/she must be in the best state of mind; psychologically, mentally, physically, morally, spiritually, and emotionally. These are attributes that are systematically built through the process of upbringing by the immediate family. The student’s academic performance is influenced by interplay of their individual family background, school attended, punctuality in all school activities and the environment they grow. Particularly, the family shapes student’s behaviours and attitudes towards school through provision of learning opportunities. Studies have shown that the academic performance of students, poor or excellent, is

significantly influenced by their family background, among other factors.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated;

Ho₁ There is no significant influence of violence on academic performance of students' in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Ho₂ There is no significant influence of gender of victim violence of adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Ho₃ There is no significant influence of Family type (rich or poor) of violence on academic performance of students' in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

METHODS

Research Approach

The study adopted a causal research design to determine influence of violence on academic performance of students' in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State. Population of the study covered all the 174 secondary schools in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

However, 300 adolescents from 15 secondary schools which are made of Ebomisi Secondary School, Ugbogiobo, Ezomo College, St. Davids Boys Model Secondary School Fuboneka Nifor Road, Evboneka Town, Odighi Grammar School, Iguador Secondary School, Nifor Secondary School, Utoka Grammar School, Utese Secondary School, Ekosodin Secondary School, Army Day Secondary School, Isiohor, Osasimwoba Secondary School, Oba-Erediauwa Secondary School, Okada Uram School, Okada, St James Grammar School Afide and Army Day Secondary School Ek Bare Ekehaun Barrak. 20 adolescents were randomly selected. Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were used in selecting 20 adolescents each from the 15 schools which form the sample. The stratification was based on victims of violence, gender, and family type. Only 47% (141) of the respondents were female while 53% (159) were male.

A 23 items researchers' designed questionnaire tagged " Violence Questionnaire (VQ)" was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument has a 5-points Likert scale of Strongly Disagreed (SD), Disagreed (D), Undecided (U), Agreed (A) and. Strongly Agreed (SA) with corresponding values of 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1. The average mean of 3.0 was used for decision making. Any item with a mean rating of 3.0 and above was regarded as a high influence of domestic violence on academic performance of students while mean below 3.0 was considered low influence of influence of violence on academic performance of students. Any item with standard deviation of 0.00 to 0.05 revealed that the respondents were not far from the mean and opinion of one another.

The VQ was validated by three experts in the fields of guidance and counselling, psychology and measurement and evaluation of the Ambrose Alli University Ekpoma, Edo State, Nigeria. Split half technique and Cronbach alpha reliability methods were used in determining the internal consistency of the instrument and a coefficient of 0.88 was obtained which was considered relevant and adequate for the study. Mean and standard Deviation were used in analyzing data collected on the research questions while t-test was used in testing the null-hypotheses at 0.05 confidence level using SPSS Version 20. The instrument was divided into 3 sections (A, B and C). Section A collected data on demographic characteristics of the respondent such as gender, highest educational qualification, and family type. Section B elicited data on the influence of violence, gender of violence on academic performance of students' while Section C obtained

information on influence of family type of violence on academic performance of students’. Three research questions and three null-hypotheses were answered and tested in this study. The results are presented in Tables 1 to 6.

Research Question One

How does violence influence academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State?

RESULTS

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation on violence influence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo Stat

S/N	Statement	X	SD	Remark
6	Have you suffered violence	3.62	0.08	Rejected
7	Do you know someone that have suffered Violence	3.65	0.99	Rejected
8	Do victim of violence report the offences to the authority	3.72	0.55	Rejected
9	Do victim of violence start away from School because of the violence	3.13	0.63	Rejected
10	Violence constitutes to major setback in life Because of its impact	3.01	0.07	Rejected
11	Violence is a purposeful use of force	3.51	0.45	Rejected
12	Violence dose not occur in the communities, homes schools, streets, church, market, playgrounds	3.73	0.4	Rejected
13	Violence remains highly unreported despite its huge health consequences and spontaneous shocks	3.62	0.08	Rejected
14	Violence does not cause danger and emotional damage on mental health of the vulnerable adolescents	3.7	0.41	Rejected
15	Lack of discipline and self-control does not cause Violence and adverse consequences	3.51	0.45	Rejected

Note: X=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation Researcher’s computation 2023

Table 1 indicated that the mean of the 10 Statements (6 to 15) that violence influences academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State, ranged from 3.01 to 3.73 which are above the cutoff point of 3.0 and the standard deviation ranged from 0.07 to 0.99 showing that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses. Thus, violence has significant influence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Research Question 2: How does gender victim violence influence adolescents academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Gender victim of domestic violence influence adolescents academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

S/N	Statement	X	SD	Remark
16	My gender boosts my academic performance	3.34	0.46	Rejected
17	My gender gives me fear about violence	3.21	0.94	Rejected

18	My gender affects my social outlook on life after Victimized of violence	3.61	0.45	Rejected
19	My gender enhances my social status to be victim of violence	3.67	0.32	Rejected
20	Avoiding pitfall in life based on my gender gives Me a positive outlook not to suffered violence	3.13	0.6	Rejected
21	My gender Curtails pressure on violence	3.62	0.08	Rejected
22	Gender gives me ample chances of avoiding violence and its consequence	3.41	0.99	Rejected
23	Gender discourages people from engaging in violence	3.21	0.94	Rejected

Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation Researcher’s computation 2023

Table 2 indicated that the mean of the 8 Statements (16 to 23) on the influence of gender victim of domestic violence on adolescents academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State, ranged from 3.13 to 3.67 which are above the cutoff point of 3.0 and the standard deviation ranged from 0.60 to 0.99 showing that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses. Thus, gender victims of violence have significant influence on adolescents’ academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Research Question 3: How does family type influence violence on adolescents’ academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on the influence of family type on violence on adolescents’ academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

S/N	Statement	X	SD	Remark
24	Family type does not cause violence	3.06	0.51	Rejected
25	Having large family members affects violence	3.45	0.96	Rejected
26	Pressure from small family members affects violence	3.02	0.4	Rejected
27	Having rich family members affects violence	3.24	0.34	Rejected
28	Having poor family members affects violence	3.53	3.56	Rejected

•Note: X = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation Researcher’s computation 2023

Table 3 indicated that the mean of the 5 Statements (24 to 28) on the influence of family type on violence on adolescents’ academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State, ranged from 3.02 to 3.53 which are above the cutoff point of 3.0 and the standard deviation ranged from 0.34 to 0.96 showing that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses. Thus, family type has a significant influence on violence on adolescents’ academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Hypotheses

Ho₁ There is no significant influence of violence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Table 4: Analysis of the Influence of violence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

Variable	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Single source	159	3.44	1.12				
				211	1.75	1.02	Rejected
Multiple Sources	141	3.94	1.26				

Researcher’s computation 2023

From Table 4, the calculated t-value of 1.75 is greater than the t-critical of 1.02. Thus, the null-hypothesis was rejected.

Ho₂ There is no significant influence of gender of victim violence of adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Table 5: Analysis of the Influence of Gender of victim violence of adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

Variable	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	159	3.62	1.08				
				211	1.63	1.05	Rejected
Female	141	3.71	1.14				

Researcher’s computation 2023

From Table 5, the calculated t-value of 1.63 is greater than the t-critical of 1.05. Thus, the null-hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is significant influence of gender of victim violence of adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Ho₃ There is no significant influence of Family type (rich or poor) of violence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.

Table 6: Analysis of the Influence of Family type (Rich or Poor) of violence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

Variable	N	X	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Rich	159	4.02	2.01				
				211	2.08	1.77	Rejected
Poor	141	3.61	1.19				

From Table 6, the calculated t-value of 2.08 is greater than the t-critical of 1.77. Thus, the null-hypothesis was rejected. Thus, there is significant influence of family type (rich or poor) of violence on academic performance of students’ in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State

DISCUSSION

The study investigated the effect of violence on Nigerian adolescents’ academic performance: Implication for Counseling in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State. The result revealed that violence has significant influence on academic performance of adolescents’ students’ in Ovia Northeast local

Government of Edo State. This finding is consistent with (Obilor & Ikpa, 2021) who investigated the assessment of the effects of violence on students' academic performance in public senior secondary schools in Rivers State. The statistical analysis shows that adolescents' that had suffered violence are likely to perform poorly academically. In the same vein (Njeru, Katiba & Mugambi, 2017) found that there is effect of the domestic violence on academic performance of pupils in Magumoni Division.

The result also revealed that gender has significant influence of victim violence of adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State. In agreement with the finding is (Okafor 2020) who investigated influence of domestic violence on girl-child academic performance of students and found out that female adolescents' that are victim of violence are never at par with their male academically. Also, the finding corroborates that found by Efosa-Ehioghiren, Iwenanogie & Ebenebe, (2020) that gender-based violence is a major issue of Nigerian victim. On the family type however, the result revealed that family type (rich or poor) of violence on academic performance of students' in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State, consequently the result is an indicator that family type (rich or poor) are vulnerable of violent and suffered academically and in agreement with the finding of (Anne, Wael, Robert & Azuka, 2021) there is the negative impact of violence on children's education and well-being from Northern Nigeria.

Implications for Counselling

Based on findings of this study,

Violence on the adolescents in Nigeria is a source of concern for all stakeholders, the victim, the perpetrator, and the public. The counselor should collaborate with authorities' war perpetrator of violence as it is an unacceptable behaviour and as such should not be condoned. There is need for counselling and rehabilitation for the victim. Violence poses extra educational concerns such as low threshold for repeated failures in school tasks and school dropout. Both ways, it is both economic and health risk for the adolescents'. Legalistic conception of violence on the adolescents' may preclude the counselor/teacher from taking proactive measures to curb propensities to committing violence by perpetrators. There is need for the counselor/teacher to be properly reoriented to be able to identify psychological threats that are precursors to violence.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that violence, gender, and family type have significant influence on adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State. Counsellor and Edo State Government should in collaboration with other relevant bodies render services at regular intervals towards supporting the victim of violence and create an enabled environment that will prevent occurrence and elimination of violence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is need for adequate counseling by trained counsellor for stakeholders, the victim, the perpetrator, and the general public that violence, gender and family type have significant influence on adolescents on the academic performance in Ovia Northeast local Government of Edo State.
2. Adequate attention should be given by the state government to caregivers, parents, and teachers to address violence and its related cases in respective of their gender.
3. Counselling should be given on regular intervals to family in order to address this issues irrespective of rich or poor family, violence affects adolescents academic performance.

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