



INFLUENCE OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ADO – EKITI, EKITI STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *This study investigated the influence of domestic violence on the academic performance of secondary school students in Ado–Ekiti, the capital city of Ekiti State. A structured questionnaire was used to collect information from students from four selected secondary schools in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State, Nigeria. The total population of respondents used for the study were 200 students from the selected secondary schools, comprising 98 males and 102 females. Pearson correlation and linear regression analysis were used to analyse the data. The study revealed the significant influence of domestic violence on the academic performance of secondary school students. The study also revealed the impact of exposure to domestic violence on the attitudinal behavioural pattern of secondary school students, showing that students who got exposed to domestic violence tend to exhibit or involve in violent activities within the school or in the community.*

KEYWORDS: Domestic violence, Academic performance, Attitudinal behavioural pattern, Secondary school students.



INTRODUCTION

Academic performance is an important parameter in measuring success in students. A key goal of education is to ensure that every student has a chance to excel, both in school and in life. Students' performances in school depend on the student's mental and physical abilities which are influenced by other factors. Among the domineering factors that affect students' learning is the home. The home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state because it is the first training ground and the foundation for the child; whatever happens at home, therefore, goes a long way in affecting the behavioural and psychological upbringing of the child (Meltzer, 2009).

The home environment where a child grows up has a powerful influence on the child's moral and mental development. It is viewed as consequential for child developmental outcomes, such as cognitive ability, school readiness, academic achievement, and emotional adjustment. Whereby the academic performance of any child cannot be separated from the home environment in which the child grows up (Fantuzzo, Tighe & Childs, 2000). There are pieces of evidence from all parts of the world that some homes are witnessing severe domestic violence which is found to be impacting seriously the children from such homes.

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive behaviours used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner in any relationship such as marriage, dating, family, or cohabitation. It can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that influence another person. This includes any behaviour that intimidates, manipulates, humiliates, isolates, frightens, terrorizes, coerces, threatens, blames, hurts, injures, or wounds someone. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, religion, or gender, (Siemienuk, Krentz, Gish & Gill, 2010).

Domestic violence is oftentimes accompanied by psychological abuse and in many cases by forced sex as well. Family is seen as a place where people are expected to enjoy and maintain intimacy and experience greater emotional support in their relationships with people close to them, domestic violence within the home is regarded as a paradox. It is ironic that this very supportive social unit is also the arena where Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) is more often experienced. Children from slum areas, who witness violence between their parents on top of other social challenges, are exposed to the aftermath of domestic violence such as anxiety, depression, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, disobedience, nightmares and physical health deterioration all of which may negatively impinge on their academic performance and school participation.

The extent and magnitude of domestic violence cannot be precisely measured because there are many cases whereby victims fail to report thus making this vice an interpersonal and family secret. Violence between spouses usually has far-reaching consequences on children. Besides the scenes of violence being traumatic, the children may suffer short-term as well as long-term emotional imbalances, which not only affect their behaviour and performance in school but also may adversely affect their social and interpersonal relationships. These children may then end up being abusers themselves in what can be seen as a continuity hypothesis. Children who witness violence between their parents often develop many of the same behavioural and psychological problems as children who are themselves abused (Tony, 2002).



Raphaella (2005) affirms such children as constantly fighting with peers, rebelling against adult instructions and authority and being unwilling to do schoolwork. In literature, it has been asserted that children 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 violence. This may affect their participation in school as they may go to school when they are too scared to learn and a good number of them may lag behind in class as well as in life due to exposure to domestic violence. The short-term and long-term emotional and physical aftermath of domestic violence may affect pupils' school attendance, academic performance, and behavioural patterns both in school and class participation. This is because domestic violence in the context of the child's performance affects his/her reaction to life situations and level of performance (Rossman, 2001; Wathen, 2003; Osofsky, 2003; Grossman, 2005; Bogat et al., 2006).

Various studies on the effect of domestic violence on children had been conducted mostly in advanced countries (Rossman, 2001; Wathen, 2003; UNO, 2006; McDonald et al., 2006; Meltzer, 2009; Stanley, 2011), while few studies in the developing countries which could be traced to inadequate data as a result of the fact that domestic violence is considered as a family affair which should not be interfered with most especially in Africa (Aihie, 2009). Over the years, there have been recorded cases of mass failure or poor performance of students in Nigeria secondary schools, (Uwiafo, 2012). Also, previous studies supported the fact that the level of intimacy between the parents in a home has a significant influence on the academic performance of the children in that home, (Tenibiaje, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

The rate at which the academic performance of secondary school students is declining is becoming worrisome and alarming, this decline can be seen in student examination results. This recent development of declination in the academic performance of secondary school students has generated diverse reactions because the parents are getting worried based on the fact that the students became credit deficient which eventually made some of the students dropout of school. Schools are established to impart knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all this is the idea of enhancing good academic performances. Despite all programs and initiatives like Parent Teacher Association (PTA), educational programs like debate, quiz and counselling strategies made or devised in schools to improve students' academic performance, poor academic performance are recorded yearly.

It becomes necessary and imperative to examine the possible causes of poor academic performance among secondary school students. Poor academic performances have been attributed to various factors such as the student's attitude to academic-related activities in the school, approach to learning and academic self-concept, punctuality, and relationship with peers. Apart from the mentioned factors, domestic violence which means the pattern of abusive behaviours in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain control over another intimate partner, according to Raphaella (2005), has been considered to have a negative influence on the academic performances of children that are exposed to it. Children who grew up in a toxic environment tend to perform below average academically due to psychological and mental-attributed stress they undergo in the home due to the violence experienced.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine how students in secondary schools are influenced either directly or indirectly by domestic violence experienced in their homes.



Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study includes:

- To ascertain the negative influence of domestic violence on academic performance; and
- To find out the influence of domestic violence, and parental status on academic performance.

Objectives of study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

- determine the influence of domestic violence on academic performances; and to
- examine the influence of domestic violence on students' behavioural patterns.

Hypothesis

- Domestic violence will have a significant influence on the academic performance of secondary school students.
- Domestic violence will have a significant influence on behavioural attitudes towards violence among secondary school students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study focused on the influence of domestic violence and parental socio-economic status on the academic performance of secondary school students in Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State. The research method used in this study was determined by the research problem and the stated hypotheses.

Population of the Study

The participants for this study were drawn from three selected secondary schools in Ado-Ekiti (Christ Girls/Boys' Secondary School, Anglican Secondary School and Muslim Secondary School) With a total of 200 participants which involved both the male and female students.

Sampling Method

The study adopted the convenience sampling method in the selection of secondary schools in Ado-Ekiti.

Research Instruments

A questionnaire comprising two sections was designed for this study.

Section A of the questionnaire measured the demographic characteristics of the respondent which include age, gender, class and religion.



Section B consisted of Domestic Violence scale. The scale of child exposure to domestic violence by Fox and Leavitt (1996). The Child Exposure to Domestic Violence scale is a self-report tool used to measure the degree of exposure to domestic violence on multiple factors reported by children between the ages of 10 and 16. Parts I and II of the Child Exposure to Domestic Violence scale contain 30 items with six subscales that measure (1) Violence, (2) Exposure to Violence at Home, (3) Exposure to Violence in the Community, (4) Involvement in Violence, (5) Risk Factors and (6) Other Victimization. Responses to each item (except Exposure to Violence at Home) are assigned the following values: Never = 0, Sometimes = 1, Often = 2 and Almost Always = 3. Response values to all items within a subscale are then added together. Higher scores indicate more and lower scores indicate less violence, exposure, involvement, risk factors or other victimisation depending on the subscale content. The Exposure to Violence at Home subscale requires the child to choose one or more types of exposure. The child is asked to check off all the ways s/he/knew about the violence, and then the number of boxes checked is simply added up. As a result of the scoring outlined above, the value assigned to each child's responses on subscales and the overall scale may indicate the level of severity of a child's experience.

Method of Data Collection

Two hundred (200) questionnaires were administered to students in the selected secondary School in Ado-Ekiti taking the necessary informed consent about the purpose of the research. The questionnaires were retrieved and subjected to statistical analysis. The last promotional examination result for the students was collected from their respective class teachers. The examination result was used to measure the student's academic performance.

Statistical Techniques

In testing the hypotheses formulated for the study, Pearson correlation and Linear regression were used to analyse the data collected. The above statistical analysis made it possible for this study to answer questions about the influence of domestic violence on academic performance.

RESULTS

Table 1: Correlation analysis between domestic violence and academic performance of students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r.	sig.
Domestic violence	198	17.35	12.45	197	0.63	.001
Academic performance		63.87	7.943			

$p < 0.05$

The result presented in the Table above on the relationship between domestic violence and the academic performance of secondary school students revealed that [$r(197) = 0.63$ at $p < 0.05$] domestic violence significantly influences the academic performance of children in the home. The hypothesis is therefore accepted which implies that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and the academic performance of adolescents. In essence, it can be



deduced from the result obtained that the domestic violence experienced by the students at home influences their academic performance in their respective schools.

Table 2: Simple linear regression showing the influence of domestic violence on the behavioural patterns of secondary school students.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	7.251	.651		11.140	.000
Behavioural pattern	1.314	.103	.672	12.700	.000

R = .672, R² = .451, Adjusted R² = .449, df = 197, F = 161.281
 Dependent Variable = Behavioural Pattern
 Predictor = Domestic violence

p < 0.05

The Table above shows the simple linear regression analysis on the influence of domestic violence on the behavioural patterns of secondary school students. It was revealed that domestic violence predicts the violent behavioural pattern in children who witnessed domestic violence at home [F value = 161.281 at p < 0.05]. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. It, therefore, implies that domestic violence is a good predictor of students' behavioural patterns in school and in the community. In addition, it also revealed that there is a positive correlation between domestic violence and the behavioural pattern of students with an R-value of 0.67. The value of the coefficient of determination (R²=0.672) indicates that domestic violence accounted for 67.2% (R² X 100) of the total variance in the behavioural pattern of students. The other 32.8% is largely due to arrays of other factors that can influence the behavioural pattern of students.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The result on the influence of domestic violence on the academic performance of secondary school students revealed that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence experienced by the students and their performance at school. This finding is in tandem with that of Florida (2001) who was of the opinion that students who are exposed to domestic violence tend to lose concentration at school. This is because they experience emotional instability such as insecurity and fear of the future. This is believed to subsequently have a negative influence on their academic performance. The findings also corroborate that of Mudassir and Abubakar (2015) who were of the opinion that adolescents exposed to domestic abuse tend to suffer from poor academic achievements which can be attributed to the development tasks of school adaptation, retention ability and lack of concentration.

Also, findings on the influence of domestic violence on students' behavioural patterns revealed that domestic violence has a significant influence on the behavioural patterns of secondary school students. This infers that students who grew up in a toxic environment where domestic violence ensued most times, tend to exhibit or involve in violent activities either in the school or in the environment. It was also revealed that there is a positive correlation between domestic violence and the behavioural pattern of students. It accounts for about 67.2% of the factors that



influence students' behavioural patterns. This corroborates the position of Royal (1990) who was of the opinion that physically abused and rejected children feel dejected and unloved by their parents. This subsequently influences their interaction with other people or fellow students.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the result obtained in this study it can be concluded that domestic violence has a negative influence on students' academic performance. It could also be deduced that domestic violence affects students' behavioural patterns.

Recommendation

1. Parents should ensure they do not portray aggressive attitudes or behaviour in their children/ward presence. This is because children learn by watching what their parents do (social learning).
2. Teachers and parents should also make sure they create time to explain certain things to their students/adolescents to better understand what is right and wrong and how to relate with people in society.
3. Psychological services should be provided in schools to provide moral support to adolescents who experience domestic violence at home.
4. Awareness campaigns of domestic violence should be put in place, to sensitise the populace on the side effect(s) of domestic violence. When people become aware of the effects of domestic violence, the need to seek psychological intervention won't be far reached.

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