

# **INFLUENCE OF COMMUNITY VIOLENCE AND TRAUMA ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA.**

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## **Abstract**

*Education is a tool that plays an important role in the preparation of young people for full participation in the society. The study investigated Effect of Community Violence and Trauma on academic achievements of secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey design and ex-post facto research design. The population of the study consisted of 49,954 Senior Secondary School One students in Niger State, Nigeria. Using Research Advisors Table for Determining sample size of the given population, a sample size of 383 respondents was randomly selected, using Dip hat method from 25 secondary schools in the State. The researcher used a validated instrument known as Community Violence and Trauma on the Academic Achievement Questionnaire (CVAITQ) to collect data from the respondents. Scores in six subjects at Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) were used as instrument to assess the students' academic achievement. Test-retest method were used to ascertain the reliability of one of the instruments. The coefficient was ascertained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation with a reliability of 0.88. Descriptive statistics, frequency counts. Percentage mean scores were used to answer the two research questions, while t-test was used to analyse and test the two null hypotheses at 0.05 significance level. Findings from the study revealed negative effect of physical violence and Trauma on the academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State Nigeria. Similarly, there is a negative influence of physical, psychological violence and Trauma on the academic achievement of secondary school students The study recommended that the school proprietors should employ the services of more professionals Trauma counsellors and psychologists who could identify and extend their services to the homes of students who encounter psychological, physical violence and Trauma. The implication of the findings were stated and recommendations were made on effective ways of handling community violence.*

**Key words:** Community, violence, trauma, academic achievement, gender and socio-economic factors.

## Introduction

Education is a tool that plays the pivotal role of bringing about political, moral, human and socio-economic change in the lives of citizens, for full participation in any given national function. Education is of great value to every nation; therefore, it attracts considerable attention to the family and the community. Its aims are to equip students with knowledge, skills and attitude that will enable them render useful services to themselves and society. According to Asiabaka (2010), education is the key to national development, which provides the intellectual capability needed to harness human and material resources for scientific and technological advancement.

One of the major worldwide issues in the Nigerian society today is community violence. Violence can be seen as the intentional use of physical force threatened against oneself, another person, or against a group of people that could result into injury, psychological harm or deprivation. According to Bakare, Asuquo and Agomoh (2010) community violence is the physical abuse, sexual abuse, cultural abuse, verbal abuse, emotional and economic abuse, between/among people who have at some time had an intimate or family relationship.

Several factors lead to community violence, such factors are poverty, unemployment, indiscipline, low self-esteem, immaturity, substance abuses and character disorder (Ahie, 2017). Oyadeyi (2014) found in his study that community violence in any form is a violation of fundamental human rights. Such as inalienable rights of life, right to personal liberty, freedom of movement and right to dignity of human person are often violated with respect to domestic violence.

Oyadeyi (2014) cites community violence as one of the most under estimated and under-reported crimes, it has been found to be grossly under-reported and not documented as a result of natural factors. Most victims see community violence as a family matter, which must not be interfered with by an outsider. According to World Health Organization (WHO) in its 2010 study, the study shows that more than 15 million children in the United States live in homes in which community violence has happened at least once. These children are at risk of suffering the influence of community violence and even becoming violent in future.

Gender violence is any act of violence that results in, or is likely to result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women or men, including the threat of such acts. The student who comes from such environment may lack decision-making in matters of his or her academic work. This may be one reason why many students engage themselves in examination malpractices instead of studying hard to write and pass their own. This may influence the student's academic achievement because he may lack concentration.

Economic status on the other hand, according to America Psychological Association (2008) is commonly conceptualised as the social standing or class of individual or group. A family's economic status is based on family income, parental education level, parental occupation, and social status in the community such as contacts within the community, group associations, and the community's perception of the family. This is because students who come from community where there is always violence based on the economic status of the parent(s) may also suffer academically. They may not be stable in classes for lack of school fees or they may be thinking of what to encounter at home after school. This could likely lead to poor academic achievement of children.

**Statement of the Problem**

Influence of community violence on students' academic achievement is a serious social problem in the society. It takes different forms ranging from physical, psychological, gender and socio-economic violence.

Education Research Project (2019). Examination bodies such as West African Examinations Council (WAEC), the Chief Examiner Reports (2019) that 99,402 (31%) passed D-7-E8, while 68,002 (2.6%) scored F-9. And in the 2018 (WAEC) results released in the North Central geopolitical zone of students' academic achievement was generally poor particularly Niger State.

To this end, the study aims at critically examining, how influence of community violence and trauma has contributed to poor academic achievements of secondary school students in Niger State in particular, and so it forms main problem or focus of the study.

**Physical Abuse**

Physical violence: Any act, such as pushing, pinching, kicking,, stabbing, shouting, hunting, slapping, chucking, using any object to hit, twisting of a body part and forcing the ingestions of an unwanted substance that lead to harm of the child healthy survival and development. Physical abuse has wide and variously effect on students development and functioning domains. Student academic achievement are one of the aspects that can be affected by student maltreatment (Wafaa & Wedjan, 2016).

According to (WHO, 2010) report, physical violence could be in different form, such as: hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, burning, poisoning and suffocating. Physical abuse was predicted to negatively affect students' academic achievement and behavioural adjustment. (Waffa & Wejdan 2016) reported that physically abused school age children continue to function more poorly than their non-maltreated peers on a variety of academic and socio-emotional measures, they also have low grades, showed less academic engagement more social skills deficits and low ego resiliency than non-maltreated comparison children.

Behavioural signs of physical violence in students as stated by Aihie (2009).

- Over complaint, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative
- Being hyper active, aggressive, disruptive and destructive towards themselves and others.
- Display of regressed behaviour, such as playing truancy

**Psychological Violence/Abuse**

Psychological violence is any behaviour that threatens and undermines the victim's self-worth or self-esteem or controls the victims freedom.

According to World Health Organization (WHO, 2010), psychological violence can be in these forms:

- Humiliating victim privately or publicly
- Controlling what a victim can do and cannot do
- Upholding information from the victim
- Deliberately doing something to make the victim feel embarrassed
- Isolating the victim from friends and family

- Implicitly blackmailing the victim
- Deny the victim access to some basic resources and necessities

**Academic Achievement:** In this work, it refers to performance outcomes in intellectual domains taught at school, measured by standardised test, resulting to cumulative grades at the end of JSS3 \*Upper Basic) before proceeding to SS1 six subjects considered were: English Language, mathematics Basic Science, Social Studies, Business Studies and Civic Education. Academic achievement is the extent to which a student, a teacher or an institution has accrued their short or long-term educational goals. Academic achievement is commonly measured through examination continuous assessment elements such as test anxiety, home environment, motivation and emotions require consideration when developing models of school achievements.

Alvdrez and Weinstein (1999) stated that early academic achievement enhances later academic achievement. Parents' academic socialisation is a term describing the way parents influence students' academic achievement by shaping students skills, behaviour and attitudes towards school. Parents' influence students through the environment and discourse parents have with the students.

### Research Questions

1. What is the influence of physical violence and trauma on academic achievements of secondary school students in Niger State?
2. What is the influence of psychological violence and trauma on academic achievements of secondary schools students in Niger State?

### Hypotheses

- H0<sub>1</sub>:** Physical violence and trauma will not significantly influence academic achievement of Secondary School students in Niger State, based on gender.
- H0<sub>2</sub>:** Psychological violence and trauma will not significantly influence academic achievements of Secondary School student in Niger State, based on socio-economic factors.

### Methodology

The study adapted descriptive survey design and Ex-post- facto design. The population of the study was 47,959 students of Senior Secondary 1 within Niger State. The study used 383 respondents that were selected from secondary schools through multistage sampling procedure. The economic backgrounds range from high, medium and low income earners. The research instrument tagged community violence and trauma on academic achievement (CVATA) consists of three sections: Section A was the Bio data, section B consisted of five items each on physical violence and psychological violence. Section C consists of five items which sought information on the extent to which psychological and physical abuse has an effect on the academic achievement of students.

Three experts in counselling psychology department validated the instrument. The mean rating of 2.5 null hypotheses shows acceptance of the items while that below 2.5 indicate rejection of null hypotheses. Test re-test was used to obtain scores used in determining the reliability of the instrument which gave a reliability coefficient of 0.88. Mean and Standard Deviation scores were used to answer the research questions while analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

**Answer to Research Question**

1. What are the influences of physical violence and trauma on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State based on gender?

**Table 1: Influence of Physical Violence and Trauma on Academic achievements of Secondary School Students in Niger State.**

S/No	Items	$\bar{X}$	Std. Dev	Decision
1.	Fighting among family members hinders students' concentration in their class work	3.66	0.53	Agree
2.	Bullying among siblings creates fear in other student that lead to class attendance	3.19	0.74	Agree
3.	Burning of valuables in the family affects students' academic performance in school	3.44	0.69	Agree
4.	Authoritative parents create fear in children which can reduce students concentration on academic work	3.42	0.76	Agree
5.	Children who witness physical violence in the school may lack oral expression in the class and school	3.38	0.70	Agree
<b>Sectional mean</b>		<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.68</b>	

Table 1 shows the influence of physical violence on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State. The respondents agreed with all items on influence of physical violence on academic achievements of secondary school students.

**Table 2: What are the Influences of Psychological Violence and Trauma on Academic Achievements of Secondary Schools Students in Niger State?**

S/No	Items	$\bar{X}$	Std. Dev	Decision
1.	Anxiety and Trauma among family members reduce student's concentration on academic work	3.22	0.64	Agree
2.	Aggression among family members contributes to student's poor concentration in school work	3.29	0.71	Agree
3.	Trauma created by violence is a factor to student's poor self-image in school	3.34	0.68	Agree
4.	Excessive attention from parents affects students' concentration in class	2.72	1.00	Agree
5.	Quarrels among family members are a factor to students' lack of interest in school	3.11	0.89	Agree
<b>Sectional mean</b>		<b>3.13</b>	<b>0.78</b>	

Table 2 shows the influence of psychological violence on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State. The respondents agreed with all items on influence of psychosocial violence on academic achievement of secondary school students. The sectional mean of 3.14 indicates that psychological violence has effect on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State.

### Test of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** The influence of physical violence and trauma will not significantly affect academic achievement of students in Niger State based on gender

**Table 3: T-test Comparison of Physical Violence in the Community between Male and Female**

Variable	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	Std. Dev.	t-value	df	Sig (2 - tailed)	Decision
Physical Violence	Male	158	3.47	.40	1.62	381	.107	Accepted
	Female	225	3.39	.48				

The analysis on Table 3 was carried out to determine whether there is difference between male and female respondents in the influence of physical violence and trauma on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State. A significant value of .107 (more than the 0.05 level of significance) shows that there is no significant difference. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

This implies that there is no significant difference between male and female respondents in the influence of physical violence and trauma on academic achievements of secondary school students in FCT.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** The influence of psychological violence and trauma will not significantly affect academic achievement of students in Niger State based on socio-economic factor..

**Table 4: ANOVA of Comparison of Psychological Violence based on Socio- Economic Factor**

Economic background	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Between Groups	2.08	2	1.04	6.22	.002	Rejected
Within Groups	63.63	380	.17			
<b>Total</b>	<b>65.72</b>	<b>382</b>				

The analysis on table 4 were carried out to determine whether there is difference in the influence of psychological violence and trauma on academic achievement of secondary school students based on economic background. A significant value of .002 (less than the 0.05 level of significance) shows that there is significant difference. The hypothesis is, therefore, rejected. This implies that there is significant difference in the influence of psychological violence and trauma on academic achievement of secondary school students based on Economic background.



### **Discussions of the Findings**

It reveals that physical violence has an effect on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State; with a mean of 3.42, it shows that attack on school by bandit affects their class work, fighting among community members hinder students' concentration in their class work, also bullying among siblings creates fear in other students that leads to poor class attendance. The parents were not left out as it was found that authoritative parents create fear in children which can reduce students' concentration on academic work, and further found that children who witness community violence from home or in school, suffer physical injuries and isolate themselves from school work. The finding is in agreement with Adegoke and Oladeji (2008) who found that a significant relationship between community violence variables, such as promiscuity, infidelity and physical assault of children in the family, and performance of students in schools. Also, Alabi and Oni (2017) investigated the impact of domestic violence on a child academic performance and revealed the prevalence of all forms of domestic violence such as physical, economic, emotional and psychological in most of the homes investigated in this study.

In addition, psychological violence was found to have an influence on academic achievement of secondary school students. As anxiety, aggression family negligence, quarrels among family members were found to have an effect on the academic achievement of students; it was also found that they lead to poor concentration, low self-esteem and lack of interest academic work. This correlates Kolawole (2009), who investigated the effects of domestic violence on the academic achievements of secondary school adolescents and found that growing up in a domestically violated environment makes students engage in different social vices, such as examination malpractice, and fighting in school; and that domestically violated secondary school adolescents are psychologically traumatised in class. Also, Alabi and Oni (2017) investigated the impact of domestic violence on a child's academic performance and revealed the prevalence of all forms of domestic violence such as physical, economic, emotional and psychological in most of the homes investigated in this study.

The study found agreement among the respondents, that physical violence influences academic achievements of secondary school students in Niger State, Nigeria.

Respondents agree that psychological violence has an effect on academic achievement of secondary school students in Niger State Nigeria.

### **Implications for Counselling**

Counselling services in the school system are aimed at helping students identify and improve on their academic needs. This is done by interacting with the professional school counsellors so that they can change their behaviours. Counselling is a helping profession; therefore, counsellors should assist in family counselling. Counsellors can organise talks, seminars, conferences, workshop, group and individual guidance, multimedia programmes on community violence and trauma and its impact on the family members especially the children.

Families, individuals, educational institutions, government agencies, private agencies and other agents interested in family resolution, should lay emphasis on family members' roles and responsibilities, in order to curb or reduce community violence.

## Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that physical violence in the community has an influence on academic achievements of secondary school students in Niger State. It also showed that fighting among family members hinder students' concentration in their class work.

Also, psychological violence in the community was found to have an influence on academic achievements of secondary school students, such as anxiety, aggression, family negligence was found to have an influence on the academic achievements of students in Niger State.

## Recommendations

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

- The mean found agreement among the respondents that physical violence influences academic achievements of secondary school students in Niger State of Nigeria. The study recommended that parents in the State should ensure that whatever community violence and trauma encountered at home or school do not affect the children academic work and school managements should constantly ensure that students' academic achievement remains a priority to them.
- The mean of psychological violence was found to influence academic achievement of secondary school students. The study recommended that government, through their various agencies and school owners, should employ the services of more professional counsellors and psychologists, who could identify and extend their services to the homes where students encounter psychological violence, such as humiliation, isolation, blackmail and depression, to enable such families to be aware of the consequences of this aspect of community violence on the academic achievements of their children.
- The study recommended that government, through their various agencies, should sensitise parent and student on the danger of community violence and how it can affect their academic achievements in school, through the establishment of Community Violence Centre.
- The study recommended that male and female students should be empowered, through seminars and workshops, with relevant knowledge and awareness of issues that can cause gender violence against both sexes at home and in the school. Laws on gender violence should be enacted and penalties for offenders clearly spelt out; such laws should be translated into local languages for simple dissemination to all schools, to avoid physical or psychological violence in schools and homes.

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