

AN EXAMINATION OF THE OCCURRENCE OF GENDER-CENTERED SCHOOL AGGRESSION AMONG FEMALE YOUTHS IN DELTA CENTRAL SENATORIAL DISTRICT, DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

Toyin ODOFIN, (Ph.D)
odofintoyin123@gmail.com

Elizabeth Osita EGBULE (Ph.D)
eoegbule@delsu.edu.ng

*Department of Guidance and Counselling,
Faculty of Education, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria*

Abstract

The goal of this inquiry is to examine the occurrence of gender-centered school aggression among female youths. To direct its investigation, the study developed three research questions and used a cross-sectional survey approach. A multi-stage sample technique was deployed to choose a total of 1,165 adult participants, including males/females, who were 18 years of age or older from two rural and two urban local government regions. A self-made questionnaire and comprehensive interview questions were deployed to obtain the data. These study tools were validated by two more specialists in Guidance and Counseling Department at Delta State University, Abraka, plus the researcher's supervisors. These tests were given to 20 youngsters who weren't in the study's sample to establish reliability, and the results showed a Cronbach Alpha coefficient of 0.75. In the carefully selected LGAs, the researchers and six trained research assistants collected data for the investigation. Descriptive statistics, such as percentages, and thematic approaches were used in the data analysis. According to the investigation's results, young people in the Delta Central Senatorial District frequently assault women, with variances depending on their age, marital status, degree of education, religion, and gender. Male dominance, gender disparity, the belief that men are superior, the belief that women are the weaker gender, and female economic dependency on men are only a few of the variables that have been linked to aggression towards women. The investigation came to the conclusion that vehemence towards women might result in a numeral of unfavourable consequences, such as homicide, suicide, depression, STDs, HIV/AIDS, drug misuse, harm to the body, high mortality rates, high blood pressure, and even unexpected death. The investigation suggests that in light of these findings, both governmental and non-governmental groups hold workshops/seminars in rural and urban regions and broaden their awareness-raising initiatives to include rural people.

Keywords: Occurrence, aggression, discrimination, and gender.

Introduction

Gender-centered aggression is an encompassing word for any injury done towards an individual that has a detrimental bearing on the person's physical/mental-health, progression, and distinctiveness. It is centered on gendered power disparities that take advantage of gender variances. Gender-centered

aggression primarily bears women/girls transversely all cultures, and it can take physical, sexual, mental, economic, or socio-cultural forms (Minerson et al, 2011). Gender-centered aggression has existed in human culture for a lengthy time. Many local and international treaties have been signed, and numerous national policies have been implemented. These initiatives have failed to deliver a favourable effect of gender equality in social, political, and economic sectors. Culture and the socialization process have not aided in this endeavor.

In Nigeria, gender-centered aggression is rampant. Still, it is underreported due to some negative factors that prevent women from talking about incidences of aggression. Thus, with the increase in gender-centered aggression in recent times, the emerging dimension of social media-orchestrated aggression will further exacerbate the situation, and thus warrants an investigation, to throw more light on the phenomenon, which gave impetus to this inquiry. Today, acts like accidents, assault of the weak (physical/mental) within and outside the home, the domination of one sex by the other, unequal access to goods and services, and so on are now contained within the range of acts that constitute aggression (Guerra de Macedo, 2003). Expression, "aggression towards women" can mean different things to describe it, such as home aggression, assault, rape and violence. Flood and Pease (2006) opined that each duration dismisses some forms of aggression and is subject to swings in meaning and also has varied cultural interpretations.

It is very important to talk note of aggression towards female, aggression towards women is a distinctively varied phenomenon, while men tend to be confronted and killed by strangers or casual acquaintances, women are most at risk at home or in society with men or other family members whom they trust (Mouzos and Makkai, 2004). Gender-centered aggression is found in every society but it is varied in different society to the other.

Vehemence towards women is a serious reliance for both health and human rights. Every woman in Nigeria should be prepared to experience some type of assault at least once in her lifetime (Okemgbo et al., 2002). According to the UN, "any act of aggression that leads to or is probably of causing any form of harm/pain to women, featuring threats of such acts, coercion, or deliberate loss of liberty, whether happened in public/private life" (United Nations, 2013) is considered gender-centered vehemence towards women. At its most basic level, sexual aggression is using of sex to assert dominance over another person and to cause them pain.

Women of all ages, cultures, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic origins are adversely affected by the social and public health problem of vehemence towards women (Cherniak et al., 2005; Naved and Persson, 2005; Krug et al., 2002). It includes any phrases, demeanors, or actions that transgress a person's bodily integrity, sense of self, or feeling of trust (Xiao et al., 2005). Sexual coercion, female infanticide, physical, sexual, or mental harm, child assault, murder, rape, and harassment on the basis of gender are all examples of gender-centered vehemence (Gupta et al. 2006). According to all indications, aggression among Nigerian teenagers, particularly in schools, appears to be widespread as evidenced by their attempts to fight, destroy school property, kill, and abduct their fellow students. When a person's anticipation or hope is dashed, he becomes angry and seeks to address the reliance by acting aggressively. The denial of fundamental requirements, threats to one's life, verbal/physical assault directed at another person, and even boredom can lead to aggressiveness and the destruction of property (Odojin & Ozuri, 2022). Media of all kinds now plays

foremost parts in people's everyday lives. Youths' daily lives at home and school are technology-driven, which seems to dominate their lives, making them vulnerable to all forms of aggression (Odojin & Igabari, 2023). Youths are affected by things they see in social media, including Facebook, Instagram which creates an opportunity where youths engage in drug/alcohol use. It is towards this background that this inquiry investigated the occurrence of gender base school aggression among female youths.

Gender-centered verbal/physical is a global reliance that transcends all boundaries, be they physical, social, cultural, economic, or ethnic. It is an act of anger committed because of gender disparities, sexual assault, child labor, bullying, and deprivation in all forms, Badri (2014). According to Decker et al. (2014), teenagers are particularly susceptible to two forms of gender-centered verbal/physical: genital partner aggression and non-partner sexual aggression. Although to varying degrees, all sexes are susceptible to various forms of sexual assault. Typically, girls are more probably than males to experience sexual assault, Lundgren and Amin (2015).

Norms and customs, particularly in the Nigerian context, tend to favor male offspring over females in the home environment, fueling gender inequity, causing women to have poor self-esteem, and supporting occurrence of aggression towards females. Aggression can take place in the household, school, church organizations, and the whole society. Aggression in the household may be perpetrated by parents, siblings, foster parents, guardians, uncles, aunts, neighbors, acquaintances, and strangers. Disadvantaged children, such as orphans, street children, or child immigrants, and handicapped children, are more vulnerable in the neighborhood. Most attackers are known to the victim, and most attacks go unreported due to ignorance or naivety, fear induced by the assailant, threats, stigma, and humiliation, the person involved is a close family member, or they are unaware of organizations where such incidents are recorded Palermo et al. (2014).

The researchers have observed that the outcome of aggression may be long or short- duration devastating negative impact on a person's mental, physical, reproductive health. Suicide inclinations, hazardous sexual behaviors, and drug/alcohol assault are common among exposed people. It is a fact that in higher educational institutions, undergraduates can sometimes feel overwhelmed or discouraged, as they encounter various life and academic challenges which could lead to aggression among the students and social pressure plus a new social environment and financial burden mounted on them could also be responsible for fierce behaviour. (Egbule & Odojin, 2022). Hence the need to carry out this study on gender-centered aggression especially among youths.

Research Questions

1. What is the view on grounds of aggression centered on participant's age?
2. What is the view on grounds of aggression centered on participant's level of education?
3. What is the view on grounds of aggression centered on participant's sex?

Methodology

This investigation looked at instances of verbal/physical towards women in the Delta State's Delta Central Senatorial District. In the investigation, a cross-sectional sample survey was used. To help direct the investigation, five (5) research questions were posed. Using multi-stage selection

approaches, a total of 1,165 participants, both male/female, aged 18 and over, was carefully sampled. A self-made questionnaire and detailed interview questions were utilized as the data gathering tools. The supervisors of the researcher and two other test specialists from Guidance and Counseling at Delta State University, Abraka, verified these tools. Twenty (20) teens who were not contained within in the study's sample were given these instruments to test their validity. The data were examined using Cronbach Alpha Statistics, and a coefficient value of .75 was found. Six trained research assistants assisted the researcher in administering the instrument to the sampled participants in each of the carefully selected LGAs to collect data for the investigation. Utilizing percentage-centered descriptive statistics and thematic approaches, the data acquired were examined.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: What is the view on grounds of aggression centered on participant's age?

Table 1: Age of participants and grounds of aggression towards women?

Variables	Age of Participants			Total
	Young (18 – 39)	Middle Age (40 – 59)	Old (60 and above)	
Male Dominance				
Weak	141 (73.1)	47 (24.4)	5 (2.6)	193 (100.0)
Strong	637 (65.5)	283 (29.1)	52 (5.3)	972 (100.0)
Total	778 (66.8)	330 (28.3)	57 (4.9)	1165 (100.0)
Gender Inequality				
Weak	148 (71.5)	56 (27.1)	3 (1.4)	207 (100.0)
Strong	630 (65.8)	274 (28.6)	54 (5.6)	958 (100.0)
Total	778 (66.8)	330 (28.3)	57 (4.9)	1165 (100.0)
Superiority of Males to females				
Weak	115 (69.3)	47 (28.3)	4 (2.4)	166 (100.0)
Strongly	663 (66.4)	283 (28.3)	53 (5.6)	999 (100.0)
Total	778 (66.8)	330 (28.3)	57 (4.9)	1165 (100.0)
Females are seen as weaker sex				
Weak	321 (70.2)	117 (25.6)	19 (4.2)	457 (100.0)
Strong	457 (64.5)	213 (30.1)	38 (5.4)	708 (100.0)
Total	778 (66.8)	330 (28.3)	57 (4.9)	1165 (100.0)
Females economic reliance on males				
Weak	244 (69.5)	99 (28.2)	8 (2.3)	351 (100.0)
Strong	534 (65.6)	231 (28.4)	49 (6.0)	814 (100.0)
Total	778 (66.8)	330 (28.3)	57 (4.9)	1165 (100.0)

Source: Field work 2021

The ages of the participants and their opinions on the reasons why males act aggressively towards women are summarized in Table 1. The findings indicated that 65.5% of the young, 28.1% of the middle-aged, and 5.3% of the elderly participants thought that male dominances is a momentous contribution to aggressiveness toward women. Furthermore, 66.7% of the young, 28.6% of the middle-aged, and 5.6% of the elderly participants said that gender disparity was a momentous reliance that may affect verbal/physical towards women. On no occasion the less, 66.4% of the young, 28.3% of the middle-aged, and 5.6% of the elderly participants said that male superiority is a momentous contributing factor to hostility toward women. A foremost component, according to 64.5% of participants under 30, 30.1% of middle-aged, and 5.4% of older participants, is the perception that women are the weaker sex. Young (65.6%), middle-aged (28.4%), and older (6.0%) participants, in that order, concurred that females' economic dependency on men is a momentous cause. Since they were all over the age of 18, it was thought that their ages may have a bearing on how they saw and professed verbal/physical toward women.

Research question 2: What is the view on grounds of aggression centered on participant's level of education?

Table 2: Level of education of participants and grounds of aggression towards women

Variables	Level of education of Participants			Total
	Low	Medium	High	
Male Dominance				
Weak	24 (12.4)	65 (33.7)	104 (53.9)	193 (100.0)
Strong	162 (16.7)	478 (49.2)	332 (34.2)	972 (100.0)
Total	186 (16.0)	543 (46.0)	436 (37.4)	1165 (100.0)
Gender Inequality				
Weak	29 (14.0)	96 (46.4)	82 (39.6)	207 (100.0)
Strong	157 (16.4)	447 (46.7)	354 (37.0)	958 (100.0)
Total	186 (16.0)	543 (46.0)	436 (37.4)	1165 (100.0)
Superiority of Males to females				
Weak	26 (15.7)	67 (50.8)	73 (44.0)	166 (100.0)
Strongly	160 (16.0)	476 (47.6)	363 (36.3)	999 (100.0)
Total	186 (16.0)	543 (46.0)	436 (37.4)	1165 (100.0)
Females are seen as weaker sex				
Weak	71 (15.5)	232 (50.8)	154 (33.7)	457 (100.0)
Strong	115 (16.2)	311 (43.9)	282 (39.8)	708 (100.0)
Total	186 (16.0)	543 (46.0)	436 (37.4)	1165 (100.0)
Females economic reliance on males				
Weak	46 (13.1)	175 (49.9)	130 (37.0)	351 (100.0)
Strong	140 (17.2)	368 (45.2)	306 (37.6)	814 (100.0)
Total	186 (16.0)	543 (46.0)	436 (37.4)	1165 (100.0)

Source: Field work 2021

According to their degree of education, Table 2 participants' opinions on verbal/physical towards women were displayed. This study sought to understand the link amid education and attitudes about verbal/physical towards women. This finding indicated a connection amid education and attitudes toward verbal/physical towards women. Concerning the reliance of male dominance, 16.7% of participants with lower educational levels, 49.2% of participants with moderate educational levels, 34.2% participants with higher educational levels thought it was a momentous influence. Additionally, participants with low education levels (16.4%), medium education levels (46.7%), and high education levels (37.0%) agreed that gender disparity is a momentous influence. In addition, a momentous contributing factor to aggressiveness was indicated by 16.0% of participants with little schooling, 48.2% participants with moderate schooling, 36.3% participants with higher education. According to the replies, women are professed as the weaker sex by 16.2%, 43.9%, 39.8% participants with lower, moderate, and high level of education, respectively. On no occasion the less, participants with low levels of education (17.2%), medium levels (45.2%), and high levels (37.6%) of education continued to believe that females' economic dependency on men is a momentous component to aggressiveness toward women.

Research question 3: What is the view on grounds of aggression centered on participant's sex in?

Table 3: Sex of participants and grounds of aggression towards women

Variables	Sex of participants		Total
	Males	Females	
Male Dominance			
Weak	85 (44.0)	108 (56.0)	193 (100.0)
Strong	419 (43.1)	553 (56.9)	972 (100.0)
Total	504 (43.3)	661 (56.7)	1165 (100.0)
Gender Inequality			
Weak	94 (45.4)	113 (54.6)	207 (100.0)
Strong	410 (42.8)	548 (57.2)	958 (100.0)
Total	504 (43.3)	661 (56.7)	1165 (100.0)
Superiority of males to females			
Weak	74 (44.6)	92 (55.4)	166 (100.0)
Strong	430 (43.0)	569 (40.9)	999 (100.0)
Total	504 (43.3)	661 (56.7)	1165 (100.0)
Females are seen as weaker sex			
Weak	215 (47.0)	242 (53.0)	457 (100.0)
Strong	289 (40.8)	419 (59.2)	708 (100.0)
Total	504 (43.3)	661 (56.7)	1165 (100.0)
Females economic reliance on males			
Weak	150 (42.7)	201 (57.3)	351 (100.0)
Strong	354 (43.5)	460 (56.6)	814 (100.0)
Total	504 (43.3)	661 (56.7)	1165 (100.0)

Source: field work 2021

Table 3 shows that 43.1% of male are participants and 56.9% of female participants believed that men dominates women which is a strong contribution. Also, 42.8% of participants are male while 57.2% participants are female believed that sex differences is also a momentous contribution to aggressiveness toward women.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: The research results reveal intriguing insights into the relationship between age and perspectives on factors contributing to aggression towards women. Younger participants, falling within the 18 to 30 age group, exhibited a greater awareness of and concern for male dominance, gender inequality, and the perceived superiority of males and females as significant contributors to aggression towards women. In contrast, middle-aged participants, aged 31 to 50, showed less concern about these factors, while older participants, aged above 50, exhibited the least concern. These findings can be partly attributed to generational shifts in societal awareness and values. Younger generations tend to be more sensitized to issues of gender equity, reflecting evolving cultural norms.

Research Question 2: The research findings did not establish a straightforward correlation between educational level and attitudes towards aggression against women. Participants with a medium level of education expressed greater concern regarding the identified factors contributing to aggression towards women compared to those with low or high levels of education. This outcome challenges the assumption that higher educational attainment inherently leads to more enlightened views on gender-based violence. Instead, these findings underscore the influence of cultural norms, societal expectations, and personal beliefs in shaping attitudes towards gender-based violence. The inquiry disagrees with the findings of Mouzos and Makkai, (2004) who found that aggression towards women has nothing to do with one's educational background but that it is a genetic thing.

Research Question 3: The results revealed that gender emerged as a significant determinant of attitudes towards aggression against women. Female participants consistently exhibited higher levels of concern regarding male dominance, gender inequality, the perception of females as the weaker sex, and females' economic reliance on males as contributing factors to aggression towards women compared to male participants. These findings reinforce the gendered nature of aggression against women, highlighting the disproportionate impact on women and their heightened awareness of these issues. This result agrees with the finding of the inquiry carried out by Ezeilo and Ohia, (2006) who discovered that women are more interested in going for marriage counselling, seminars and workshops because they are the most vulnerable being subject to aggression. This result also agrees with the findings of the inquiring carried out by Lundgren and Amin (2015) who discovered that girls are more probably than males to experience this assault.

Conclusion

The study comes to the conclusion that while psycho-social characteristics including age, religion, education, marital status, and sex might affect hostility towards women, a woman's character is ultimately a primary contributing element to this aggression. The results show that the foremostity of participants disapprove of using physical verbal/physical towards women. More youthful participants, those who have on no occasion been married, those with a middle level of education, women, and people who live in rural areas disapprove of using physical verbal/physical towards women than their comparable peers in the study. Participants in the survey in Delta State's Delta

Central Senatorial District cited a numeral of situations that would justify employing physical force towards women.

Recommendations

1. Workshops/seminars should be held by the government in both urban and rural areas. Through electronic and print media, non-governmental organizations might also increase their efforts to sensitize rural communities. Non-government groups should also collaborate with the ministry of women affairs to make sure that the reliance of verbal/physical towards women is widely understood.
2. Institutional processes should be in place so that women and girls who have been the targets of verbal/physical may disclose those incidents in a private, secure setting.
3. To eradicate verbal/physical towards women in our culture, counseling centers must be built, and suitable procedures must be put in place.
4. Male perpetrators of physical verbal/physical towards women need to modify their mindset. They need to realize that punishing women for not living up to their standards and doing their jobs as moms and spouses well is not the only way to reform them. It is possible to employ dialogue as a remedial action.
5. Female verbal/physical victims should stay away from silence and not submit their issues to organizations to solve their reliance and avoid accepting their fate, they should be enthusiastic to attend these organizations.

Implication for Counselling

1. Use psychotherapies to treat those who have been confronted by women.
2. Assure that the needs and difficulties of victims of verbal/physical towards women are properly handled centered on complete and accurate information supplied by clients during counseling sessions.
3. Always go to workshops, seminars, and conferences because they will give counselors and counseling psychologists the counseling skills they need to deal with victims of verbal/physical toward women.
4. Counselling is made attractive and interactive by relating clients with real life situations and putting into consideration individual variances of the victims of aggression towards women.
5. Counselor should be aware that victims of verbal/physical towards women can receive treatment and assistance through a variety of treatments, regardless of their gender, age, marital status, religion, or level of education.

References

- Amin, J. (2015). Women, discrimination and harmful traditional practices. *Daily Times*, p.9.
- Badri, R., (2014). Aggression Atowards Women: *Estimates from the Redesigned Survey* (NCJ 154348). Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice.
- Cherniak, M.D., Blehar, M.C., Waters, E., & Wall, S. (2005). *Patterns of attachment: A m e n t a l inquiry of the strange situation*. Hillsdale, N.J.: Eribaum.
- Decker, R.E (2014). *Aggression towards wives*. New York: Free Press.
- Egbule, E.O & Odojin, T. (2022): Effect of rational emotive behaviour therapy on the management of suicidal thoughts among students in Delta State University, Abrake, Nigeria. *Journal of Professional Counselling (JPC)*. Vol 5, (1), pg 63-69.

- Flood, M., & Pease, B. (2006). The factors influencing neighborhood attitudes in relation to aggression towards women. A Critical Review of the Literature. *Mental Health and Wellbeing Unit*. (pp 143-161) Melbourne Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.
- Grupta, M. (2006). *Custom and conflict in Africa*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Guerra de Macedo, C. (2003). Aggression: A public health problem. *Boletinde la Oficina Sanitaria PanAmericana* 115(5), 5.
- Heise, L. (2013). Aggression towards women: The missing agenda in the health of women: A global perspective. Kolinsky, J. Timyan and J. Gay (Ed.), Boulder Colorado: West View Press
- International Aggression Towards Women Survey (2004). Canberra: Australian Institute of Criminology.
- Krug, C., & Straus, M.A. (2002). Effect of alcohol on behaviour. *Quarterly Journal of Studies on Alcohol*, 19, 764-774.
- Minerson, J., & Makkai, T. (2011) Women's experiences of male aggression: Findings from the Australian component of the international aggression towards women survey. *Research and Public Policy Series* (56). Canberra Australian Institute of Criminology.
- Naved, C. A., & Person, J. C. (2005). Effects of frustration justification on hostile aggression *Aggressive Behavior*, 21, 359 – 369.
- Odofin, T & Ozuri, R. (2022). Aggressive behaviour, Psychosocial learning environment and academic achievement among public SSS2 student's in Ughelli South LGA, Delta State. *Delsu Journal of Educational Research and Development (DJERD)*, 19 (1), 177-183.
- Odofin, T & Igabari, Q. (2023). Assessment of social media exposure and substance assault among adolescent secondary school students in Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Science and Education Research Studies*, Vol 3 (5) 846-851.
- Okempo, P. (2002). Towards understanding aggression: The use of the body and the role of the father. *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 76, 487-502.
- Palermo, J. S., & Hoge, R. D. (2014). An investigation of the frustration-aggression relation in children. *Canad. J. Beuav. Sci.*, 5, 362 – 370.
- United Nations Reports on Aggression Towards Women (2013).