

Effects of the Demographic Characteristics of Students on Gender-Based Violence among Junior Secondary School Students in Osun State, Nigeria

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Abstract— Gender-based violence is any aggressive action that threatens safety, causes physical, social or emotional harm to a person. The number of reported gender-based violence crimes is increasing at an alarming rate daily. Thus, the study assessed the effects of the demographic characteristics of students on gender based violence among junior secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria. Both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized for the study. A survey research design was adopted. Two thousand (2000) questionnaires were administered to junior secondary school students in all the three senatorial districts of the state, one thousand six hundred and twenty (1620) questionnaires were returned using simple random sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. Secondary sources of data were sourced from journals, books, internet etc. The findings showed that the demographic characteristics of students (i.e. age, sex, school type and school location) have no effects on gender-based violence. The study concluded that measures should be taken to uphold the human rights of students and related harms to which they are subjected to.

Keywords— *Demographic Characteristics, Gender-Based Violence, Physical Violence, Psychological Violence, Sexual Violence, Significant Influence.*

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Russo and Pirlott (2006), gender-based violence is a violence that is directed against a person on the basis of gender, including act that inflict physical, mental or sexual harm or threat of such acts, coercion or other deprivation of freedom. Current estimates of gender based violence indicate that 70% of women worldwide have been physical or sexually assaulted by a male partner at least once in their lives (Oladepo et al, 2011).

In Zambia, 27% of married women reported being beaten by their spouse or partner in the past year and about 13% of

15-19 year olds were sexually coerced in the past 12 months. A study conducted on gender-based violence among female high school students in Debarik, Ethiopia showed that gender-based violence is still a common phenomenon among young girls. The study revealed that the prevalence of performed and attempted rape was 8.8% and 11.5%. Two recent studies confirmed that 15% and 27% of young females reported forced penetrative and attempted rape, respectively while 44% confirmed that they faced unwanted touches (Iliyasu et al, 2011).

Gender-based violence occurs more against secondary school females because of their gender. This is the reason why many have not been able to discuss about the effects of demographic characteristics on gender based among junior secondary school students in Nigeria. Based on this perceived research gap, this present study is aimed at examining effects of the demographic characteristics of student on gender-based violence among junior secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria.

II. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

To examine the effects of the demographic characteristics of students (sex, age, school location and school type) on gender-based violence among junior secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

- (1) There is no significant effect of students sex, age, school location and school type on gender-based violence among junior secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will provide insights to researchers, teachers, school counselors, parents on the effects of the demographic characteristics of students on gender-based violence in Nigerian secondary Schools. The study will add to the existing literature on forms, prevalence

and forms of gender-based violence in Nigerian secondary schools.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Concept of Gender-based Violence

The concept of gender-based violence means violence inflicted or suffered on the basis of gender difference. While the concept is commonly used to mean violence against women. However, the term gender-based violence in this study is adopted to encompass all women, men, boys and girls who have experience one form of violence acts at one time or the other.

United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (2014) defined gender-based violence as a fundamental violation of human rights and a violence that occurs as a result of normative role expectations association with one's gender and unequal power relationships between genders.

According to Sai (1995) gender-based violence is any forceful or unwelcomed acts that is committed against boy or girl because of his/her gender. He stated further that these acts are likely to result in physical, sexual or emotional suffering that is inflicted directly through deceit, seduction, threat, coercion or any other means on the victim with the purpose or effects of intimidating, punishing or humiliating him/her; or of maintaining his/her in stereotype roles. Zain (2012) referred gender-based violence as an extreme manifestation on gender inequity, targeting women and girls because of their subordinate social status in society. He opined that this can take the forms of psychological, physical or sexual abuse and in all of its manifestations; it can have serious implication to human being's sexual and reproductive health.

The International Center for Reason on Women (2009) also referred to gender-based violence as an act or threat or harm inflicted on a person because of his/her gender. It stated further that this act can result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering. It encompasses sexual violence, sex trafficking, harmful practices such as female genital mutilation / cutting, forced early marriage, forced prostitution, sexual exploration, bullying, intimidation, corporal punishment to name but a few.

Forms of Gender-Based Violence

There are many forms of gender-based violence which include, physical, socio-economic, sexual, verbal and psychological. These are discussed below:

Physical Violence

Physical violence is an act attempting or resulting in pain and/or physical injury. It includes beating, burning, kicking, punching, biting, maiming or killing, the use of objects or weapon or tearing out of one's hair. According to a research conducted by these researchers, there is persuasive physical violence against government, owned secondary students in Nigeria. It was also discovered that six out of ten pupils in secondary schools have experienced at least one form of physical violence. Most of the physical violence carried out on the pupils took place within the school settings, showing that corporal punishment is more widely practiced in schools than in the home. Perpetrators of physical violence in schools include teachers, senior pupils, principals and peers.

Sexual Violence

This is a widespread phenomenon in Nigeria where about two thirds of the government-owned secondary school girls have experienced at least one or more forms of sexual violence. Sexual violence includes many actions that are used similarly in the public and private sphere; examples include rape, forcing somebody to masturbate in front of others, forced, unsafe sex, sexual harassment etc.

Perpetrators of sexual harassment in schools include teachers, senior students and peers. Some teachers in government owned schools are the main perpetrators of sexual violence, through forcing and coercing girl pupils into sexual intercourse in exchange for better grades, gifts or money.

Psychological Violence

This includes intimidation, threats, name calling, insults, isolation, withholding information and threatening behavior. Both female and male students in state-owned secondary schools have encountered threats and intimidation. The main perpetrators are teachers. Female students are more prone to psychological violence than male students; teachers use it as a way of intimidating them to accept their sexual proposal.

Verbal Violence

This include issues that are person related such as put downs (in private or in front of others) swear-words, threatening with other forms of violence against the victim. Depending on the most emotional sensitive area of the victim, abusers consciously target these issues in a way that is painful, while many gays and lesbians only "come out" after secondary school.

Socio-Economic Violence

This is a form of violence that can make the victim more vulnerable to other form of violence. Most typical forms of socio-economic violence include taking away the ear rings of the victims, not allowing them to have a separate income etc. socio-economic violence is both a cause and an effect of dominant power relations in societies. It can also include denial of access to education, denial of access to services etc.

Causes of Gender-Based Violence

According to UNGEI (Ibid), causes of gender-based violence include gender inequalities and rigid gender expectations, broader societal norms, tradition and acceptance of violence, acceptance of disciplinary approaches within schools by parents, teachers and student themselves, insecure or unsafe home and family environment and weak prevention or security mechanisms in communities.

Sida (2015) asserted that causes of gender-based violence are gender discriminatory norms and unequal balance of power between girls, women, boys and men. Heise, Pitanguy and German (1995) identified four causes in gender-based violence in any known society which include economic inequality between male and female; a pattern of using physical violence to resolve conflict; male authority control of decision making in the home; and divorce restriction for married women.

In a study conducted by Barasa, Wamue-Ngare and Wanjama (2013), they identified causes of school related gender-based violence. This includes cultural beliefs, poverty and authoritarian school environment etc.

Effects / Consequences of Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence could lead to mental and physical health consequences. Gender-based violence emerges as a significant cause of disability and health problem among females of reproductive age in both the industrial and the developing world and the victims accounts for nearly one in five healthy years lost to female age 14 to 44.

The psychological effect of gender-based violence in both boys and girls are more debilitating than the physical effects, fear, fatigue, sleeping and eating disturbances, anxiety and post-traumatic stress in order (PTSD) are effects of gender-based violence.

Also, it is generally believed that children who are physically punished are less likely than other children to internalize moral values. They are more inclined to engage

in disorderly and aggressive conduct such as hitting their siblings, parents, school mates and boyfriends or girlfriends (Durrant, 2005).

Children and adolescents exposed to violence many experience trauma and emotional harm such as depression behavioral problems, fear, and uncertain relationship problem and in some cases post-traumatic stress disorder.

Moreover, school related gender-based violence results in sexual, physical or psychological harm to girls while in boys, intimidation, low self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy are expressed. Chawani and Kadzamira (2004) reported that physical and psychological punishment, verbal abuse, bullying and sexual violence are reasons for absenteeism, dropping-out and lack of motivation for academic achievement.

A study in Nigeria indicated that many parents were forced to marry off their underage daughters as a way to protect them from gender-based violence (Badri, 2014). It is clear from the above review that the effects of gender-based violence has serious consequences on the life of male and female, men and women.

Gender-Based Violence in Nigerian Secondary Schools

In a study conducted by these researchers school related gender-based violence (SREBV) is perpetrated by both male and female students and teachers in school.

Iliyasu et al (ibid) posited that gender-based violence in secondary schools reveals that most Nigerian secondary school boys and girls are victims. A 1998 empirical study in Zaria discovered that 90% of young school girls who were patients seeking for STDs were children between age 13 and above.

In another empirical study carried out in one of the northern state of Nigeria among 300 students across few secondary schools using the hypothesis testing indicated that 171 (58.8%) of the students reported having experience or more forms of gender-based violence of these that have experience violence, 22.2% reported sexual violence, 22.2% reported sexual violence 50.8% endured emotional and verbal violence and 22.8% experienced physical violence.

Furthermore, two recent empirical studies reported that 15% and 27% of young female reported forced penetrative and attempted rape respectively, while 44% reported that they faced unwanted touches.

Finally, in a study conducted by UNICEF and Federal Ministry of Education in September 2007 showed that all forms of gender-based violence were present in Nigerian secondary schools. Physical violence and psychological

(85%) accounted for the bulk or violence against children in schools. Other types of violence reported among learners in junior secondary school included, sexual and health related violence (100%), others 5%.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Both primary and secondary sources of data were used for the study. A survey research design was adopted. 2000 questionnaires were administered to junior secondary school students in all the three senatorial districts of Osun State out of which 1620 questionnaires were returned using simple random sampling technique. Two research instruments were used for the study; these were Gender-Based Violence Questionnaires (GBVO); and Sociological Construct Questionnaire (SCQ). Descriptive and inferential statistics such as percentage scopes, frequency counts, chi-square, pearson product movement correlation (r) statistics and Multiple Regression analysis were used to analyze data. All these were tested at 0.05 level significance. They were divided into two sections. SectionA deals with the descriptive analysis of students’ information while section B deals significant effects of students demographic characteristics (sex, age, school location and school type) on gender-based violence among junior secondary school students in Osun State using test of hypotheses.

V. RESULTS OF DISCUSSION

Section A

Descriptive Analysis of the Students’ Demographic Information

Table.1: Students’ Frequently Distribution by Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	754	46.5
Female	863	53.3
Missing	3	0.2
Total	1620	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 1 showed that 754 (46.5%) were males, 863 (53.3%) were female while 3 (0.2%) were missing.

Table.2: Students’ Frequency Distribution by School Location

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Urban Schools	1135	70.1
Rural Schools	485	29.9
Total	1620	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Table 2 revealed that 1135 (70.1%) of the sample were resident in the urban areas while 485 (29.9) % of there were resident in the rural areas.

Table.3: Students’ Frequency Distribution by School Type

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Mixed School	1580	97.5
Single School	40	2.5
Total	1620	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

Results from table 3 showed that 1580 (97.5%) were from mix sex schools (girls and boys) while 40 (2.5%) of them were from single sex school (girls only).

Table.4: Students’ Frequency Distribution by Age

Ages	Frequency	Percentage
(10-14)	1531	94.5
(15-19)	21	1.3
Missing	68	4
Total	1620	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2016

The results from table 4 showed 1531 (94.5%) of the junior secondary school students were between the age of 10-14, 21(1.3%) were between the age of 15-19 while 68 (4.2) were missing.

Section B

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant effect of students’ sex on gender-based violence. The hypothesis was tested using a t-test to compare the means of students’ sex on gender-based violence.

Table.5: T-test of the Effect of Sex on Gender-Based Violence

Sex	N	Mean	SD	t	Sig
Male	706	39.28	10.96	0.287	<0.05
Female	818	39.12	10.95		

Table 5 revealed the t-test of the effect of sex on gender-based violence, it implied that there was no significant effect of sex on gender-based violence with (t = 0.287, p > 0.05), therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that gender-based violence could be done by both male and female students.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of students’ age on gender-based violence.

The hypothesis was tested using a t-test to compare the means of students’ age on gender-based violence. The result is presented in Table 6.

Table.6: T-Test of the Effect of Age on Gender-Based Violence

Ages	N	Mean	SD	T	Sig
10-14	1446	39.09	10.79	-2.06	<0.05
15-19	21	44.00	15.18		

Table 6 revealed the effect of students' age was assessed on gender-based violence using t-test, the results implied that there was significant but negative effect of age on gender-based violence with ($t=2.06$, $p < 0.05$), therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that gender-based violence perpetrators depend on the age bracket into which they fall.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant effect of students' location on gender-based violence.

The result is presented in Table 7.

Table.7: T-Test of the Effect of School Location on Gender-Based Violence

Location of School	N	Mean	SD	T	Sig
Urban Areas	1058	39.33	11.04	0.764	>0.05
Rural Areas	469	38.87	10.71		

Table 7 showed the t-test of the effect of school location on gender-based violence, it implied that there was no significant of school location on gender-based violence with ($t = 0.764$, $p > 0.05$), therefore the null hypothesis is accepted that there is no effect of the school location of students on gender-based violence. This indicates that gender-based violence could be perpetrated by students in both urban and rural schools.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant effect of students' school type on gender-based violence.

Table.8: T-test of the Effect of School Type on Gender-based Violence

Type of School	N	Mean	SD	T	Sig
Mixed	1487	39.42	10.78	5.12	>0.05
Single	40	30.53	13.32		

Table 8 revealed the t-test of the effect of school type on gender-based violence, it implied that there was no significant effect of school type on the prevalence of gender-based violence with ($t = 5.12$, $p > 0.05$), therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. This indicates that students in either mixed or single sex schools could be both perpetrators and victims of gender-based violence.

Discussions of Findings

The findings of the study showed that sex, age, school location and school type of student have no effect on gender-based violence among junior secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria.

Both male and female students have been found to be both perpetrators and victims of gender-based violence. Gender-based violence is no respecter of age. It could be done depending on the age bracket into which they fall. The study also discovered that school types and school location have no significant effect on gender base violence. Gender-based violence can be perpetrated by students irrespective of whether they attend single or mixed school. Threat, verbal abuse, name calling, may take place among students and from teachers to students in any school.

Also, gender-based violence can happen in urban schools and rural schools. The results showed that both students from urban and rural areas have experienced one form of gender-based violence or the other.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The objectives of the study was to assess the effects of the demographic characteristics of the students (sex, age, school location and school type) on the influence of gender-based violence among junior secondary school student in Osun State, Nigeria. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency count, percentage, pearson moment correlation, linear regression, t-test and chi-square to test the four hypotheses in the study at 0.05 level of significant.

The finding revealed that there is no significant effect of age, class, school location and school types on gender-based violence among junior school students in Osun State, Nigeria. The study concluded that measured should be taken to uphold the human rights of students and related harms to which they are subjected to.

Stemming from the finding of the study, the following major recommendations were made:

1. Osun State government should develop a code of conduct for teachers and students that prohibit gender-based violence and other related harm in secondary schools.
2. State government should hold principals, vice principals, teachers and non-teaching personnel accountable for their conduct with students and a disciplinary measures should be meted to them.

3. State government should provide awareness on the social and economic consequences of gender-based violence in secondary schools.
4. State Ministry of Education should incorporate gender-based violence education into the curriculum of secondary school students to increase awareness and knowledge about effect of school related gender-based violence.
5. State Ministry of Justice needs to review and revise the criminal code that deal with any of form of gender based violence in school. They should ensure that perpetrators are given punishment proportion to their crime.
6. State Ministry of Education should put in place monitoring and evaluative system with appropriate indicator matrices to track progress made on each of the sector development plans and identify bottlenecks to expedite implementation and achievement of concrete outcomes.
7. Principals should involve parents in school matters in order to improve communication with school management, families and the community at large to ensure strong cooperation effective flows of information and coordinated action against incidences of violence.
8. School management should put in place a pupil friendly reporting mechanisms to encourage quick and open reporting of incidences of abuse and to other related harm in school.

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