



## RESEARCH ARTICLE

### DEFERENCES OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT AMONG TERTIARY INSTITUTION STUDENTS IN ZARIA KADUNA STATE

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#### ABSTRACT

This study investigated the correlation between domestic violence and social adjustment among tertiary institution students in Zaria, Kaduna State. The study was directed by two objectives, which were converted into research questions and hypotheses. The research employed a survey design, targeting a population of 13,744 male and female students from Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, and the Federal College of Education (FCE), Zaria, from which a sample of 375 was chosen. The study employed a multistage sampling approach. The data collection instruments employed were the Domestic Violence Inventory, derived from Edleson (2007), and the Social Adjustment Inventory, adapted from Bell (1994). The tools' reliability was determined to be .899 for the Domestic Violence Inventory and .898 for the Social Adjustment Inventory, respectively. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to evaluate the hypotheses. The study's findings indicated a substantial difference in domestic violence among tertiary institution students in Zaria, Kaduna State, based on their age group. A substantial difference ( $p=.035$ ) occurs in the social adjustment of tertiary institution students in Zaria, Kaduna State, based on their age bracket ( $p=.035$ ). A substantial difference was found in domestic violence and social adjustment among tertiary institution students in Zaria, Kaduna State, based on their age groupings. According to the study's findings, it is recommended that counsellors, educational psychologists, and teachers assist students in mitigating domestic violence and social adjustment issues by raising awareness about adapting to their academic environment.

**Keywords:** Domestic Violence, Social Adjustment, Tertiary Institution, Students

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## **1.0. INTRODUCTION**

Social adjustment is a vital component of an individual's overall well-being, especially among students in higher education. It pertains to the act of participating in contacts, relationships, and social activities within one's social milieu. Consequently, multiple factors can affect social adjustment among students in tertiary institutions. Nonetheless, a crucial element that may significantly influence social adaptation is domestic violence. Domestic abuse is a widespread problem that can impact individuals globally, especially students in higher education institutions. It denotes any type of physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual abuse perpetrated by an intimate partner or family member.

Social Adjustment entails adapting to new norms and values. In a technical context, social adjustment refers to the ability to interact harmoniously with societal members to the best of one's ability. Social adjustment refers to the response to the demands and pressures of the social environment. From a developmental perspective, social adjustment must encompass the complete spectrum of transformations through which an entire social system adapts to the varied fundamental needs and desires of individuals and social groups within that system, or transitions away from a perceived unsatisfactory state of existence towards a more favourable condition (Rothbart, 2006).

Vanhaller (2006) posits that adjustment might be conceptualised as psychological survival, analogous to how biologists employ the term adaptation to denote physiological survival. Vanhaller's definition is informed by Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin asserted that only those species most equipped to adapt to changing conditions survive. Consequently, those who can adapt to new circumstances in their surroundings can lead a harmonious and fulfilling existence. The term 'adjustment' in psychology can be seen as synonymous with 'adaptation' in the biological context. Adjustment encompasses a successful adaptation to the exigencies of daily living. The above discussion indicates that adjustment is a process that enables an individual to lead a happy and comfortable life while balancing their needs with their ability to satisfy them. It allows him to modify his lifestyle in accordance with the demands of his strength and capacity to effectuate the requisite alterations in his environmental conditions.



Every aspiring individual dreams of acquiring a Western education; they anticipate a tranquil and emotionally nurturing household, free from violence, humiliation, molestation, or threats. Violence as a human right is essential to the principles of dignity, equality, non-discrimination, and non-interference, transcending gender, social class, cultural groups, political affiliations, religion, and geographical concerns. Students subjected to domestic violence may experience many social adjustment challenges, including school dropout and inadequate academic performance. Domestic abuse is linked to heightened aggressive behaviour and exacerbated emotional issues, including despair, anxiety, diminished social adjustment skills, and worse academic performance. Consequently, students in tertiary institutions frequently experience abuse, whether physical, social, sexual, or emotional. Domestic violence refers to any violent action inside an intimate relationship employed by one individual to exert control over the other (Etter & Birzer, 2007).

Domestic violence imposes a significant strain on various areas of the social system. The issue is increasingly transcending national boundaries, as well as socio-economic, cultural, racial, and class divides. This issue is both geographically widespread and extensively prevalent. This is due to the fact that society as a whole and individual health specifically are at risk. It is substantial; nonetheless, no other significant public health issue has been so extensively overlooked and poorly comprehended. Consequently, domestic violence is not merely a dispute; it constitutes a pattern of coercive control exerted by one individual over another. Perpetrators employ physical and sexual assault, threats, mental abuse, and economic deprivation to exert control over their victims and achieve their objectives (Aluede, 2011). Domestic violence transpires when an individual employs physical violence, coercion, threats, intimidation, isolation, stalking, emotional abuse, or economic abuse to exert control over a partner in a relationship (Obi & Columba, 2009).

The scope and severity of domestic violence cannot be accurately quantified because to numerous instances in which victims do not report, rendering it an interpersonal issue. Student violence typically results in significant repercussions for social adjustment. In addition to the traumatic nature of violent scenes, students may experience both short-term and long-term emotional disturbances, potentially impacting their social behaviour and adjustment in tertiary institutions, as well as adversely affecting their social and interpersonal



relationships. These students may then become abusers themselves, indicating a continuum of behavioural issues. Students who observe violence in postsecondary institutions frequently exhibit similar behavioural and psychological issues as those who have experienced abuse themselves (Tony, 2002).

This suggests that students who observe societal violence may be more adept at articulating their fears and anxieties about social behaviour, which can lead to challenges in academic performance, including poor social adjustment, reluctance to attend school, and difficulties with concentration. Raphaela (2005) characterises such students as continually arguing with others, revolting against adult directions and school authority and being unwilling to do school work.

Ling (2011) conducted a study at the University of Hong Kong examining gender disparities in self-reported intimate relationship violence, revealing that minor partner violence was equally reported by both men and women, however serious partner violence was predominantly perpetrated by men. The data revealed that men were more prone to physically assault, choke, or strangle their partners, whereas women were more inclined to throw things, slap, kick, bite, punch, or strike with an object. The researchers have identified divergent results for men and women in relation to intimate relationship abuse. Caldwell's (2012) assessment revealed that 70% of female victims in one study experienced "very frightened" responses to intimate partner abuse, but 85% of male victims reported "no fear." The review indicated that intimate partner violence influenced relationship satisfaction for women, but not for men.

Ali Ahmad and Khan (2018) performed a study on the social and intellectual adaptation of university students. The study employed a survey research approach and a sample of 550 students was recruited. The Student Adaptation Questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. The acquired data were analysed utilising frequencies, percentages, mean scores, standard deviation, t-tests, and analysis of variance. The study's findings indicated that male students exhibit superior social adjustment compared to female students, and that boarding students have enhanced social adjustment relative to day students.



Many students in higher education may encounter difficulties in social adjustment due to domestic abuse. Consequently, the move of students from their home environment to postsecondary institutions may induce anxiety, thereby impacting their social adjustment. Students who endure domestic violence, including physical, sexual, emotional, and verbal abuse, may encounter difficulties in social adjustment inside higher institutions.

The researcher noted that the increasing prevalence of domestic violence in Nigeria, particularly within tertiary institutions, is a significant issue impacting students. This phenomenon may adversely affect students' social adjustment by fostering absenteeism, inattentiveness, and diminished concentration in class, leading to feelings of helplessness and poor academic performance. These factors are critical parameters for assessing success among students in tertiary institutions. Consequently, if violence and its associated repercussions persist unchecked, the future of Nigerian students at postsecondary institutions may be jeopardised. This study aims to investigate the correlation between domestic violence and social adjustment among tertiary institution students in Kaduna State.

## 2.1. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to determine:

1. The difference of domestic violence among students of different age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state.
2. The difference of social adjustment among students of different age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state.

## 2.2. Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to provide direction to this study.

**Ho1:** There is no significant difference of domestic violence among students of different age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state.

**Ho2:** There is no significant difference of social adjustment among students of different age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state.



### 3.0. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a survey research design to assess the correlation between domestic violence and social adjustment among tertiary institution students in Kaduna State. Survey design encompasses the examination of both large and small populations by selecting and analysing samples derived from these groups to ascertain the relative occurrence, distribution, and interrelationships of sociological and psychological factors (Kerlinger, 1986). The study's population encompassed two tertiary institutions in Kaduna State: Ahmadu Bello University (ABU), Zaria, and Federal College of Education (FCE), Zaria, comprising a total of 13,744 male and female students in NCE II and 200 level for the 2015/2016 academic session, from which a sample of 375 was extracted.

The data collection instruments utilised were the Domestic Violence Inventory, derived from Edleson (2007), and the Social Adjustment Inventory, adapted from Bell (1994). The tools underwent content validity assessment by specialists in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The dependability of the instruments was determined to be .899 for the Domestic Violence Inventory and .898 for the Social Adjustment Inventory, respectively. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to evaluate hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05.

### 4.0. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### 4.1. Presentation of Results

The following are the findings of the study based on the hypotheses tested:

**Hypothesis One (1):** There is no significant difference of domestic violence among students of different age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state.

**Table 1: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on difference in domestic violence among students on the basis of age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	836.707	3	278.902	2.894	0.035
Within Groups	34312.224	356	96.383		
Total	35148.931	359			

Source: Authors' Analysis (2025).





Table 1 reveals that significant difference exists in the domestic violence of students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State on the basis of their age bracket with  $p = .035$  which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the domestic violence on the basis of age bracket among students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State, is hereby rejected.

**Hypothesis Two (2):** There is no significant difference of social adjustment among students of different age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna state.

**Table 2: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on difference in social adjustment among students on the basis of age bracket in tertiary institutions in Zaria, Kaduna State**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	6273.060	3	2091.020	16.819	0.000
Within Groups	44259.340	356	124.324		
Total	50532.400	359			

**Source: Authors' Analysis (2025).**

Table 2 shows that there is a big variation in how well students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State get along with others based on their age group, with a p-value of .035, which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. So, the null hypothesis, which says that there is no significant difference in how well students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State respond to social situations based on their age group, is now rejected.

#### **4.2. Discussion of Findings**

This study looked at the difference between domestic violence and social adjustment among college students in Zaria Kaduna State. The study's results showed that there is a big disparity in the amount of domestic violence that students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State experience based on their age group. Ling (2011) did a study called "Gender differences in self-reports of intimate partner violence in University of Hong Kong," and this finding is in line with the study's results. The study found that men were more likely to beat, choke, or strangle their partners, while women were more likely to throw things, slap, kick, bite, punch, or hit someone with something. The finding is also in accordance with Caldwell's (2012) evaluation, which indicated that 70% of female victims in one research were "very scared" of



intimate partner violence from their spouses, but 85% of male victims said they were "not scared." The review also revealed that intimate partner violence affected how happy women were in their relationships, but not how happy men were. The design and target population of the two studies could have had a role in the agreement. For example, both studies used survey research design and were done on students at higher institutions.

The study found that there is a big difference in how well students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State get along with others based on their age group. Ali, Ahmad, and Khan (2018) also found that university students had trouble adjusting socially and academically. This finding is in line with theirs. The study found that male students are better at getting along with others than female students, and boarding students are better at getting along with others than day students. The fact that both studies employed the same survey design and were conducted among college students could explain why they agreed.

## **5.0. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study's results showed that there is a big variation in the domestic violence and social adjustment of students in tertiary institutions in Zaria Kaduna State based on their age group. Based on what the study found, it is recommended that counsellors, educational psychologists, and teachers help students deal with domestic violence and social adjustment by teaching them how to fit in at school.

### **Competing Interest**

The authors have declared that no conflicting interest exist in this manuscript

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