

Socio-Cognitive Factors As Predictors Of Dating Violence Among Undergraduate Students Of University Of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper examined the effect of socio-cognitive factors (personal, behavioural, environmental factors) on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri. The study was a survey research design. Three hundred and eighty four (384) undergraduate students of University of Maiduguri served as participants in this study. The participants were sampled from a total population (32,760) of undergraduate students in the twelve Faculties of University of Maiduguri. The study used self-developed questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. Simple random sampling and Krejcie & Morgan (1970) was employed to obtain the sample size. The study employed ANOVA to test the hypothesis and multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of socio-cognitive factors (personal, behavioural, environmental factors) on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri. The study revealed that socio-cognitive factors (personal factor, behavioural factor and environmental factor) have significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri. The researcher recommended that the management of University of Maiduguri, parents, and other educators should have a proactive program in place to raise awareness in schools and communities regarding safe dating practices.

Keywords: Socio-cognitive factors, Dating violence, Undergraduate Students

1.1 Introduction

Dating violence (DV) among undergraduate students is a pervasive problem that has far reaching consequences on society, with up to 51% of undergraduate students estimated to be victims of dating violence in campus each year (Yahaya, 2018).

Dating violence can be defined as a form of relationship abuse which involves insult or assault. It is a maladaptive behavior in relationship among couples which can have severe physical and psychological consequences and can lead to homicide or suicide in extreme cases as well as emotional symptoms stemming from depression and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (Holtzworth-Munroe, 1992).

According to the U.S. Department of Justice (2012), dating violence is defined as violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic nature with the victim. For the problems associated to dating violence to be controlled, there

is a need to examine the factors that are likely to lead to dating violence. Dating violence is defined as physical, sexual, psychological, or emotional violence within a dating relationship, including stalking. It can occur in person or electronically, and can occur with dating partners both past and present. In more recent years, the scope of dating violence has been broadened to include psychological abuse – defined as verbal assaults between partners or from one partner to another (demeaning, degrading, or derogatory verbal terms) and sexual abuse that includes, but is not limited to, sexual coercion, rape, and molestation (Holtzworth-Munroe, 1992).

Violence on the other hand is the deliberate use of force (physical, psychological, verbal, etc.) or power which may be threat against oneself, another person or against a group of persons/community that either results in or has the likelihood of resulting in injury, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation (Aminini-Philips, 2013).

Many youth enter into dating relationship without prior experience. So social media effect, lack of self-concept and bad parenting style are some of the challenges faced by youth. According to Adamo (2014), maintaining a healthy relationship require skills that many adolescents are not patient enough to learn. The lack of conflict handling skills and growing up in environments that experience constant violence or in communities that experience high rates of violence, can lead to unhealthy and even violent relationships among adolescents (Adamo, 2014).

The number of undergraduate students who are currently experiencing or have experienced some types of dating violence is on the increase. Some researchers attributed it to the socioeconomic status of parties involved in dating but the research attributes it to socio-cognitive factors.

Although researchers are beginning to develop interest in dating violence, there has been relatively little research examining dating violence among undergraduate students in Nigeria. Based on this perceived research gap, this present study is aimed at examining the effect of socio-cognitive factor (personal, behavioural, environmental factors) on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri.

1.2 Hypothesis

H0: socio-cognitive factors (personal factor, behavioural factor and environmental factor) have significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri.

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Theoretical framework

Feminist theory was one of the major theories used in this study. Feminist theory addresses gender hierarchy and power (Sprenkel & Moon, 1996). White and Klein (2002) defines feminist theory as an analysis of women's subordination for the purpose of figuring out how to change it. This view suggests that women are suppressed and overpowered by male dominance. When specifically applied to dating violence, the feminist theory proposes that all forms of abuse are about power and control, embedded in a patriarchal value system (Jackson, 1999).

2.2 Empirical review

Gryl, Stith and Bird (1991) examined prevalence rates of physical dating violence among college students, by comparing violent relationships to non-violent ones. In reference to initiating violence respondents reported that 51% of the time their partners initiated violence, 41% reported they initiated and 8% reported both individuals were equally responsible (i.e. pushed, slapped, hit with object, kicked, use of lethal weapon, etc.).

Ajuwon, Funmilayo and Osungbade (2011) conducted a cross-sectional survey to assess experience and perpetration of physical, sexual and psychological violent behaviours among school-based adolescents. A total of 1366 students (50.4% females and 49.6% males) randomly selected from six public secondary schools in Ibadan, Nigeria were interviewed

using a 36-item questionnaire. Respondents answered questions regarding demographic profile, sexual behaviour, and the extent to which they had experienced or perpetrated physical, sexual and psychological violent behaviours. The predictors of experience of violence among males were use of alcohol, witnessing domestic violence, involving in work and parental use of alcohol. Among females parental use of alcohol and being young were predictors of violence. Reports of perpetration of physical, sexual and psychological violence among males were 75.3%, 44.9% and 13.3% respectively. Existing research on the prevalence of verbal and physical abuse among college students provides further insight into this issue. For example, one study on dating violence among college students evaluated specifically verbally and physically abusive behaviors. Out of the 572 respondents, the results indicated that 82% reported being verbally abusive with a partner in the last year, and 21% reported physically aggressive behaviors towards a partner within the same time frame (Shook, Gerrity, Jurich & Segrist, 2000).

2.3 Personal Factors and Dating Violence

Many factors, both personal and situational, have been found in the literature to be associated with the stay/leave decision for married women who have experienced intimate partner violence. As expected, McDonough (2010) found that when comparing battered women with non-battered women, battered women reported fewer rewards and greater costs in their relationships and greater desire for relationship alternatives than non-battered women. Relationship features, such as the nature of the violence, offender characteristics, previous history of abuse, and commitment to and satisfaction with the relationship (Anderson & Saunders); emotional responses, such as fear, social embarrassment, and loneliness (Patzel, 2006); and psychological characteristics, such as locus of control and self-efficacy (Anderson & Saunders, 2003), have been found to serve as additional factors influencing this complex decision.

Personal factors include: mental-health problems (e.g., low self-esteem, anxiety, anger or depressed mood, and suicidality); participation in maladaptive or antisocial behaviors (e.g., substance abuse, risky sex); low academic achievement; deficient communication skills and aggressive conflict-management styles; and low help-seeking proclivities (Patzel, 2006). Studies on these personal factors typically examine their associations with both perpetration and victimization for male and female students. For instance, studies find depressed mood associated for females with perpetration of dating abuse (Anderson & Saunders, 2003). Sad and hopeless feelings have been associated for both males and females with increased risk for physical victimization (Anderson & Saunders, 2003). For both males and females, physical and emotional dating victimization have also been associated with symptoms of anxiety and depression, although perceived social support may moderate this relation, particularly for African American males (Anderson & Saunders, 2003). Also for males, dating victimization is predicted by low self-esteem and is associated with suicidal ideation or attempts (Anderson & Saunders, 2003). In one study, female victimization was associated with alcohol and marijuana use, early initiation of alcohol use, and sexual history (i.e., ever having sex, number of lifetime partners), whereas victimization among males was associated only with sexual history. For females, sexual victimization is associated with depressed mood proclivities (Patzel, 2006).

2.4 Behavioural Factors and Dating Violence

Howard and Wang (2003) also examined dating violence and its relationship with sexual behavior. Based on the results, it was found that adolescents who engaged in risky sexual behavior, such as not using a condom during their previous sexual encounter, were at a significantly higher risk of experiencing dating violence. The results of this study created a profile for at-risk adolescent females, in which several variables were found to be significantly correlated with adolescent dating violence. Variables included experiencing a recent and prolonged depressive episode, regular binge drinking, using cocaine or inhalants,

having multiple sex partners, and not using condoms during previous sexual encounters (Howard & Wang, 2003).

A study by Bergman (1992) investigated how variables such as number of dating partners, grade point average, and dating frequency correlated with dating violence. The results indicated that the number of dating partners a participant reported was positively correlated with reports of dating violence. More specifically, higher numbers of dating partners replied positively correlated with reports of dating violence, while lower numbers of dating partners negatively correlated with reports of dating violence. The next best indicator was grade point average (GPA). A negative relationship was found between GPA and dating violence, meaning that lower GPAs correlated with higher reports of dating violence while higher GPAs correlated with fewer reports of dating violence. Lastly, the variable of dating frequency had a positive correlation to dating violence, meaning that as dating frequency increased, reports of dating violence increased as well (Bergman, 1992).

2.5 Environmental Factors and Dating Violence

Geographic region as a possible risk factor, particularly the U.S. North/South divide, has received some attention, as has the geographic factor of urban versus rural location or inner-city versus suburban setting. Research has also weighed family structure, specifically, single-parent versus two-parent, as a risk factor (Arriaga & Foshee, 2004).

A number of studies have found socioeconomic disadvantage whether of a youth's family, school, or neighbourhood to be a factor that heightens the risk for dating violence (Arriaga & Foshee, 2004). In fact, by some definitions, low socioeconomic status proxied sometimes by parental education is one of the defining attributes of "high-risk" youth or youth at risk (Arriaga & Foshee, 2004). At the same time, studies of dating violence have made at best only limited efforts to clarify how low socioeconomic status exercises an effect on teen dating abuse. The studies do not necessarily have as their aim to claim differential risk as a direct function of being of low socioeconomic status. The studies are ambiguous as to whether low socioeconomic status affects abuse directly and independently by the same dynamic that produces other excess health-risk and antisocial behaviors, or indirectly by fueling other more immediate risk behaviors that increase the odds of abuse, such as association with violent peers, or by modifying the influence of other risk factors.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

Three hundred and eighty four (384) undergraduate students of University of Maiduguri served as participants in this study. The participants were sampled from a total population (32,760) of undergraduate students in the twelve Faculties of University of Maiduguri.

3.2 Instrument

A 25-item self developed scale on dating violence was used in the study. This scale was developed to determine the effect of socio-cognitive factor (personal, behavioural, environmental factors) on dating violence among undergraduate students. The items were vetted by experts on psychological tests. After the vetting, the face and content validity of the instrument was approved. In addition, the instrument was subjected to pilot study using 120 undergraduate students from Borno State University, Maiduguri. Using alpha reliability test, an alpha coefficient of 0.76 was obtained. This indicated that the instrument is reliable.

3.3 Procedure

Simple random sampling technique was used to select the participants. This random method was carried out by writing Yes or No in different pieces of paper that were folded and gathered in a cellophane bag. Each potential participant was allowed to pick a folded paper. After the picking, those that picked yes were told to write their names in a paper, while those that picked no were thanked for the time they spent with the researcher. Those that picked yes were given the questionnaire to fill.

3.4 Research Design

The study was a survey method. It gathered data on the effect of socio-cognitive factor (personal, behavioural, environmental factors) on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri.

3.5 Method of Data Analysis

The study employed ANOVA to test the hypothesis and multiple regression analysis to determine the effect of socio-cognitive factor (personal, behavioural, environmental factors) on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri.

4. Results and Discussion

The results were presented in tables and discussed according to the research hypothesis.

Hypothesis (H0): Socio-cognitive factors (personal factor, behavioural factor and environmental factor) have no significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri.

Table 1: Summary of ANOVA on Effect of Socio-cognitive Factors on Dating Violence among Undergraduate Students

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-value
Regression	190.374	2	95.187	256.885	0.000
Residual	136.293	381	0.358		
Total	326.667	383			

Source: Field Survey, 2019

Table1 shows the results of the ANOVA technique employed to test the null hypothesis against alternative hypothesis. Socio-cognitive factors have significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of University of Maiduguri. This is because the probability value (P = 0.000) is less than alpha ($\alpha = 0.05$) level of significance $P < \alpha$. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that socio-cognitive factors (personal factor, behavioural factor and environmental factor) have no significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri is rejected at 0.05 level of significance. It can be generalized that socio-cognitive factors (personal factor, behavioural factor and environmental factor) have significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri. This finding agrees with the finding of Ajuwon, Funmilayo and Osungbade (2011).

Table 2: Summary of multiple Regression analysis Effect of Socio-cognitive Factors on Dating Violence among Undergraduate Students

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	P-value
Constant	0.372	0.112	3.321**	0.012
Personal Factor (PF)	0.236	0.025	9.440***	0.000
Behavioral Factors (BF)	-0.911	0.146	-6.239*	0.000
Environmental Factors (EF)	0.725	0.151	4.801**	0.000
R ² =	0.856	86%		

Note: *** significant at 1% level, * * significant at 5% level, * significant at 10% level

Independent Variables: PF, BF and EF

Independent Variable: DV

Table 2 shows that the model was suitable for explaining the effect of socio-cognitive factors on dating violence among undergraduate students of University of Maiduguri. All the variables included in the model were significant in explaining the variation in the

dependent variable. These variables are: PF, BF and EF respectively. The values of the coefficient of determination R^2 suggest that the model explained 86% variation in the data.

Personal Factors (PF)

The result shows that PF has a positive coefficient that was significant at 1 % level. This indicates that personal factors have significant effect on dating violence. This could be attributed to the fact that one's emotion, temperament and mental state play a crucial role in his/her relationship. This finding is in line with the finding of Shook, Gerrity, Jurich & Segrist, 2000).

Behavioral Factors (BF)

The result implies that BF was negative and significant at 10% level. This negative coefficient value may be a result of the fact that negative behavior leads to violence between dating partners. This means that BF has significant effect on dating violence in the study area. This finding is consistent with the finding of Ajuwon, Funmilayo and Osungbade (2011).

Environmental Factors (EF)

EF has a positive coefficient as expected and significant at 5%. This means that has significant effect on dating violence in the study area. This finding supports the finding of Ajuwon, Funmilayo and Osungbade (2011)

4.2 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the researcher arrived at the conclusion that socio-cognitive factors (personal factor, behavioural factor and environmental factor) have significant effect on dating violence among undergraduate students of university of Maiduguri.

4.3 Recommendation

Based on research, the researcher recommended that the Management of University of Maiduguri, parents, and other educators should have a proactive program in place to raise awareness in schools and communities regarding safe dating practices.

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DATING VIOLENCE QUESTIONNAIRES (DVQ).

Instruction: Please tick [] in the appropriate column that best represents your opinion

Demographic characteristics (DC)

Section A

1. Name of faculty.....
2. Name of Department.....
3. SEX: (1) Male [] (2) Female []
4. AGE: (1) 18-22 years [] (2) 23-25 years [] (3) 26-30 years [] (4) 30 and above []
5. LEVEL: (1) 100L [] (2) 200L [] (3) 300L [] (4) 400L [] (5) 500L []
6. Number in the family (1) 1-3 [] (2) 4-6 [] (3) 7-9 [] (4) 10 and above[]
7. Are you in a relationship? (1) YES [] (2) NO []
8. Number of person in relationship with (1) 1 [] (2) 2 [] (3) 3 [] (4)4 []
9. Campus or off-campus

SECTION B: DETACHMENT

S/N		SA	A	D	SD
10.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she stops talking to me or disappears for several days without any explanation to show his/her annoyance				
11.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she always comes late to our appointments and does not fulfil his/her promises and is irresponsible				
12.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she does not acknowledge any responsibility regarding to our relationship or what happens to both of us.				
13.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she ignores my feelings most often.				

14.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she refuses to help me when am in real need				
15.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she lies to me and manipulate me.				
16.	I detach from my friend/partner because he/she impose rules on the relationship (days, time types of outgoing) at his/her exclusive convenience				
SECTION C: HUMILIATION					
17.	Your friend ridicules or insults you for the ideas you uphold.				
18.	Your friend ridicules or insults your beliefs, religion or social class				
19.	Your friend ridicules your way of expressing yourself				
20.	Your friend criticizes you, underestimate you, or humiliates you				
21.	Your friend insults you in the presence of friend or relatives				
22.	Your friend criticizes, insults, or yells at you				
23.	Your friend humiliates you in public				
SECTION D: SEX INDULGENCE					
24.	Your friend forces you to perform certain sexual acts.				
25.	Your friend compiles you to have sex and does not want you to explain why you don't want it.				
26.	Your friend treats you as a sex object				
27.	Your friend forces you to strip down even if you don't want to				
28.	Your friend insists, touches you in a way which you don't like and don't want				
29.	Your friend doesn't take into account your feelings about sex				
SECTION E: COERCION					

30.	Your friend invades your space				
31.	Your friend puts your love to test, setting you traps to find out, if you cheat on him/her, loves him/her or are faithful				
32.	Your friend threatens to hurt himself/herself, if you leave him/her				
33.	Your friend physically stops you from leaving his/her place				
34.	Your friend talks to you about relationships he/she imagines to have.				
35.	Your friend feels you can't argue with him/her because he/she is almost always annoyed at you.				
SECTION F: PHYSICAL ASSAULTS					
36.	Your friend beats you				
37.	Your friend slaps, pushes, shakes or strangulates you				
38.	Your friend hurts you with some object				
39.	Your friend throws blunt instrument at you with the intention to hurt you.				
40.	Your friend damages your precious object.				
SECTION G: GENDER-BASED PHENOMENON					
41.	Your friend ridicules or insults women/men as a group				
42.	Your friend mocks women/men in general				
43.	Your friend believes that the opposite sex is inferior, and says that women should obey men (or Vice-versa)				
44.	Your friend makes fun of you or discredit you as a women/man				
44.	Your friend feels unjustly, criticizing your sexuality				
SECTION H: EMOTIONAL PUNISHMENT					
45.	Your friend refuses to have sex with you or gives you affection to express his/her anger or annoyance.				

46.	Your friend refuses to give you support or affection as punishment				
47.	Your friend threatens to abandon you.				
SECTION I: INSTRUMENTAL VIOLENCE					
48.	Your friend steals from you				
49.	Your friend takes your car keys or money away from you				
50.	Your friend makes you go into debt				

SOCIO-COGNITIVE SCALE

SECTION A: SELF-EFFICACY SCALE (PERSONAL)

1.	I find it difficult to maintain one boy/girl friend				
2.	I find it easy to choose a reasonable boy/girl friend				
3.	I believe I have the knowledge and ability to choose a good friend				
4.	I find it difficult to choose a life partner within numerous friends I have				
5	I find it easy to keep at least 3 friends at a time				
6	I find it easy to relax with more than 2 friends at a time				
7	I find it easy to maintain a healthy relationship with the person I love				
SECTION B; SOCIAL SUPPORT SCALE (ENVIRONMENTAL)					
8	There are opposite sex friends around your residence?				
9	Do your parents/guardians suggest who should be your life partner				
10	Do your parents/guardians force who should be your life partner				
11	Do your parents/guardians encourage you to choose a life				

	partner from a specific class				
12	Do you agree with your parents on whom to have as a life partner				
SECTION C; BEHAVIOUR STRATEGIES SCALE (BEHAVIOURAL)					
13	Did you choose to tell your friend if the relationship cannot last long				
14	Rather than choose friends because of their physical characteristics, did you choose friends due to their character				
15	Did you leave your friend one you are done with the relationship				
16	Did you prepare sitting for a healthy relationship when you feel your friend is not serious with you				
17	Did you try getting into new relationship with another partner who is familiar with the other friend				
18	Did you do things to make the relationship more satisfactory				

KEY: SA= Strongly Agreed

A = Agreed

D = Disagreed

SD= Strongly Disagreed