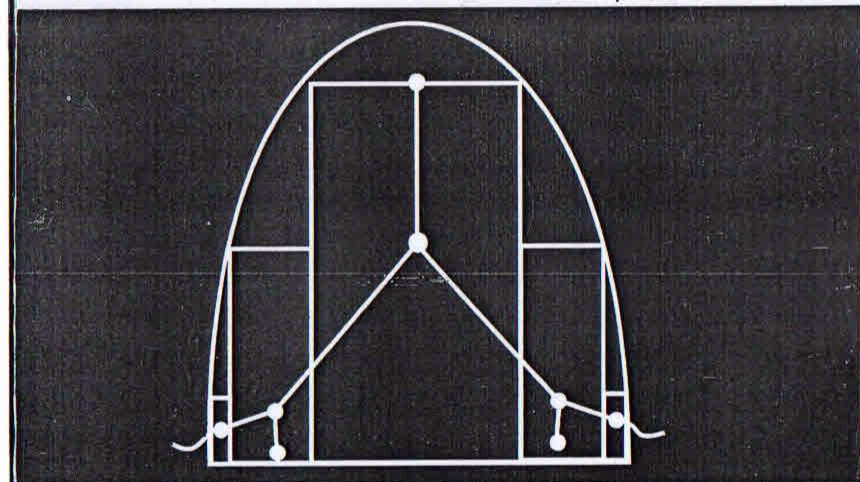


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### **Academic Stress and Poor Academic Performance as Predictors of Violent Behaviour among Undergraduates in South West, Nigeria**

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#### **Abstract**

*The issue of violent behaviour among students cannot be taken with levity because of its adverse impact on different categories of individuals. Violent behaviour may manifest in form of bullying, students unrest, vandalism, harassment, harming, arson and even killing. Many factors could account for violent behaviour among students. Thus, this study investigated academic stress and poor academic performance as predictors of violent behaviour among undergraduates in South West Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive research design of correlational type. A total of 2518 respondents participated in the study and were selected across six Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria. The simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the universities and the respondents. The instrument used for the study was adopted and has 40 items. Two research questions were answered in the study, while a null hypothesis generated was tested with multiple regression analysis. The results showed that academic stress and poor academic performance are potent factors that predict violent behaviour among undergraduates. However, academic stress has higher potency to violent behaviour among undergraduates than poor academic performance. It was recommended that professional counsellors should constantly pay attention to academic stress and poor academic performance among undergraduates before such escalate to violent behaviour.*

**Keywords:** Academic performance, Undergraduate, Academic stress, violent behaviour.



## Introduction

Violence has become a worrisome phenomenon in the modern educational system. For centuries, violence has been a commonplace feature of school life with its causes embedded in the social, cultural, historical and economic contexts of its time (COSBY, 2014). The focus of violence can be individuals, objects or the school itself, and the nature of the damage can be psychological, physical, emotional or material. Examples of violent behaviour in schools include rioting, sexual harassment, fighting and bullying. These activities have detrimental consequences on the running of the schools' activities and on the students' academic performance personal security and emotional stability. For instance, violence may contribute to physical deformities, humiliation, withdrawal, poor academic performance, high drop-out rates and even death. It should be recognised that school may play major role in preventing violence and on the other hand could be responsible for creating an environment that reinforces violent behaviour.

Despite recent campaign against violent behaviour among students it is still obvious that violence remains one of the greatest security threats to youths (university undergraduates) in Nigeria. Intentional injuries have been identified as the second and third leading causes of death of Nigerian adolescents (Adegoke, 2012), as well as substantial proportion of morbidity across the continents (Welsh, 2009). The rate of violent victimization among 12-24 year old is nearly twice as high as that among adults who are 25 years old and above (Healthwise, 2003). There are strong indications that violence has significant social, structural and environmental causes many of which are not well understood. There had been calls in the recent time for more social and environmental approaches to understanding and preventing violence in the whole population and especially among the youths who are usually vulnerable to violence. However youth differ from adults not only cognitively and developmentally, but also in terms of their primary social environments, there is a need to explore their unique social and environmental influences in relation to violence. This need is made more urgent in the light of the mixed findings of several popular youth violence prevention programmes (Brogaard, 2012).

Schools are a logical place to begin to examine the social environment of youth. Over 95% of youth spend up to six hours per weekday in school (Ongori & Agolla 2009). Furthermore, a substantial proportion of youth violence takes place at school while recent shootings and rioting on campuses have elevated public concerns about school safety. Institutions of higher learning may be particularly important because these grades span the transition from adolescence into adulthood (Chen, Lin & Tu 2006).

Stress has become an important topic in academic circle as well as in the society because without some stress one would be listless and apathetic creature, stress is unavoidable because it relates to any external event, be it pleasurable or anxiety producing. A person's response towards stress depends on whether an

event is appraised as a challenge or a threat (Beilock & DeCaro, 2007). According to Beilock (2011), students reported experiencing academic stress at predictable times each semester with the greatest sources resulting from taking and studying for examination, grade competition, and the large amount of content to master in a small amount of time. When stress is perceived negatively or becomes excessive, students experience physical and psychological impairment which may give rise to violence (Welsh, 2009). Institutional level stressors are overcrowded lecture halls, semester system, and inadequate resources to perform academic work (Ashcraft, 2002). The pressure to perform well in an examination or test and time allocated could make academic environment very stressful. Often, undergraduate students perceive that lecturers exert great power over their lives and feel that they live in a state of substantial powerlessness (Ekundayo & Kolawole, 2013). This is likely to affect the social relations both within the institution and outside which affects the individual person's life in terms of commitment to achieving the goals of coming to school (Klein & Baals, 2001). Another source of stress is the difficulty of achieving social intimacy. When faced by this students develop frustration and subsequently resort to violence behaviour as a way of reacting to unpleasant condition.

Knowing the causes of academic stress will make the school counsellors and administrator know how to monitor and control the factors that are responsible for the students' academics stress, which often lead to violent behaviour. The poor academic performance of university students in Nigeria has been a major concern for stakeholders in education industry over the past few years. Several factors have generally been identified as causes of poor academic performance. Ashcraft (2002) reported that a teacher who does not have both the academic and the professional teacher qualification would undoubtedly have a negative influence on the teaching and learning of his/her subject. Similarly, it was further stated that a teacher who is academically and professionally qualified but works under unfavourable conditions of service would be less dedicated to his work and thus be less productive than a teacher who is unqualified but works under favourable conditions of service.

The ways in which academic performance is measured is largely through the ordinal scale of grade point average (GPA). Undergraduate's GPA determines many things such as class rank and entrance to higher level after the first degree. Studies (Beilock, 2011; Klein & Baals, 2011) have been carried out on the correlation of many stress factors that students experience and the effects of stress on their GPA. In an institution of higher learning where the demands placed on students are based on deadlines and pressure for excelling in tests or examination, the students are likely to be the victims of stress. This situation may predispose students to violent behaviour which of course, could significantly obstruct the tranquility on campuses in particular and the larger society in general. The various forms of violent behaviour in the universities include disruption of learning activities, destruction of learning facilities, obstruction of



free flow of movement, the use of provocative language, physical combat, harassment, arson and other forms of violation of the school rules and regulation. The other negative effect of violent behaviour among the undergraduate is the tension that parents have regarding the matter. It is the goal of every parent to enroll their children in school (especially university) so that they can have a better future. When children do not learn well or when they involve themselves with violence, many parents experience grief especially when they see their children fighting or hurting other children. Violent behaviour among students also has a negative effect to the development of the nation. Countries that want to develop would make it their priority to prevent possible factors that may influence students' involvement in violent behaviour. This highlights the need for research to examine the academic stress and poor academic performance as predictors of violent behaviour among undergraduates. With such knowledge, educationists will be able to pay more attention to the sources of academic stress and poor academic performance of students in order to prevent and control violent behaviour. It could also assist in adopting counselling measures that would help students in developing sound bodies and mind.

#### Statement of the Problem:

Despite a wealth of literature (Beilock & Decaro, 2007; Climent, 2009 & Beilock, 2011) on violent behaviour among university students, little is known about poor academic performance and academic stress as correlates of violent behaviour among undergraduate students. A social-environmental approach adopted by Brogaard (2012) suggests that schools, as a major context for adolescent development, influence individuals' acquisition and enactment of violent behaviours. Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013) investigated Stress Among Secondary Teachers in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The study found that the respondents experienced high level of stress which did dispose them to conflicts in their homes. By implication, the study established correlation between stress and violent behaviour among teachers. Since to the best of the researchers' knowledge none of the previous studies has deemed it fit to considered correlation among academics stress, poor academics performance and violent behaviour. This need anchors on the fact that the future of any nation lies heavily on its young people since they are the leaders of tomorrow; therefore, it is important to study academic stress and poor academic performance as predictors of violent behaviour among undergraduates in South West, Nigeria

#### Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study

- What is the relative contribution of academic stress and poor academic performance to violent behaviour of university undergraduates?

- Which of the independent variables (academic stress and poor academic performance) has higher potency to predict violent behaviour of undergraduate students?

#### Research Hypothesis

- There is no significant relationship among academic stress, poor academic performance and violent behaviour of University undergraduates.

#### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which academic stress and poor academic performance determine violent behaviour among University undergraduates. Since the existence of a violence free society is determined by an individual's ability to moderately react to pressures, the researchers therefore use the findings to make useful recommendation for the accomplishment of violent free academic environment in South West, Nigeria. Specifically the study:

1. Investigated the composite contribution of academic stress and of poor academic performance on violent behaviour among undergraduates in South West, Nigeria.
2. Investigated the relative contributions of independent variables of academic stress and poor academic performance to violent behaviour among undergraduate in South west, Nigeria.
3. And investigated the relationship among academic stress, poor academic performance and violent behaviour among undergraduates in South-West Nigeria.

#### Significance of the Study

This study is significant and its findings would benefit stakeholders in the education sector. The prospective beneficiaries include the individuals, Clinicians, Counsellors, Ministry of Education, Education Researchers, Non-Governmental Organizations and the general society in that the recommendations that would be provided in this work would help to reduce violent behaviour among undergraduates in South West, Nigeria. It would help the three tiers of government to minimize violent behaviour through initiation of preventive measures. It will be useful and helpful to the policy makers especially the education planners on how to create enabling school environment capable of promoting violent free behaviour on campuses in South West Nigeria.

#### Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to the undergraduate in Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria while academic stress and poor academic performance were



the independent variables considered as possible determinants of violent behaviour among university undergraduate in South West, Nigeria.

## Methodology

### Research Design

The study adopted descriptive research design of correlational type. The researchers were interested in the extent to which relationships exist among the independent variables and the dependent variable without necessarily manipulating the independent variables. Here the dependent variable, which is violent behaviour is been paired with the independent variables (academic stress and poor academic performance) to know their composite and relative predictive values.

### Population

The population of the study comprised all the undergraduates in the Federal Universities in South West, Nigeria. Both male and female participants were considered in this study because of the uniformity and standardization of the instruments used in the assessment of the factors responsible for violent behaviour among undergraduates.

### Sample and Sampling Procedure

A sample of 2518 individuals was used for the study. The sample consisted of 1007 males and 1511 females. The multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted for the study which involved the simple random and stratified sampling techniques. These techniques were used at different stages which enhanced effective selection of respondents.

### Instrumentation

A questionnaire type of instrument was adopted for data collection because of the literacy level of study population. The decision was made after extensive review of literature. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The sections are: A, B, C, and D. **Section A:** This contains the demographic information of the students such as age, gender, religion. **Section B:** This part consists of 10-item Violent Behaviour Scale (VBS) developed by Velicer et al. (1989), measuring the level of violent behaviour. The authors established a reliability coefficient of 0.90 while the cross validated version was used in Nigeria by Omolabi (1999) who reported a reliability cronbach alpha of 0.79. The items were scored on five- point Likert response format ranging from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2) Neither Agree nor Disagree (3), Agree (4) to Strongly Agree (5). The researchers in the present study obtained alpha reliability coefficient of .92. **Section C:** This section was measured by Gadzella's Student-Life Stress Inventory which contains 22 items in a 5-Point

Likert-Type response format ranging from (strongly disagree (1), Disagree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3), Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5). Gadzella's inventory reflects a student's academic stressors and reactions to stressors on and off campus. The researchers in this study established alpha reliability coefficient of .75. **Section D:** An 8-Item Academic Performance Inventory (API) developed by Aremu, (2000), which requires responses of alternative options from the respondents was adopted and has original reliability coefficient of 0.87. The alternatives are strongly agree and strongly disagree. The researchers in the presence study reported alpha reliability coefficient of .71.

### Data Collection

Data pertaining to violent behaviour were collected on the basis of the subgroups involved in the study. The subgroups were the students in various faculties and departments.

### Data Analysis

Data obtained from the study were statistically treated to determine both the composite and relative impact of the independent variables on the dependent variables. The statistical tool used is Multiple Regression Analysis.

## Results

### Research Question 1:

*What is the composite contribution of academics stress and poor academic performance to students' violent behaviour?*

**Table 1:**

**Summary of regression analysis for the joint contributions of independent variables to the prediction of undergraduates' violent behaviour**

R = .719					
R Square = .517					
Adjusted R square = .513					
Std. Error = 3.86774					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
1	Regression	3986.009	2	1993.004	133.228
	Residual	3724.892	249	14.959	
	Total	7710.901	251		
					.000 <sup>a</sup>

Source: Fieldwork

Table 1 reveals significant joint contribution of academics stress and poor academics performance to the prediction of students violent behaviour. The result yielded a coefficient of multiple regressions  $R = 0.719$  and multiple  $R$ -square = 0.517.



This suggests that the two variables combined accounted for 51.3% ( $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .513$ ) variance in the prediction of undergraduates' violent behaviour. The other factors accounting for 48.7% variance in the prediction of students' violent behaviour are beyond the scope of this study. The ANOVA result from the regression analysis shows that there was a significant effect of the independent variables on the students' violent behaviour,  $F(2,249) = 133.228$ ,  $P < 0.001$ .

#### Research Question 2:

*Which of the independent variables (academic stress and poor academic performance) has higher potency to predict violent behaviour among undergraduates?*

Table 2:

Potent effect of the independent variables to the prediction of undergraduates' violent behaviour.

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1. (Constant)	20.657	2.124		9.727	.000
Academic Stress	.693	.044	.774	15.881	.000
Academic performance	-.150	.045	-.164	-3.370	.001

Source: Fieldwork

Table 2 shows that the two independent variables (academic stress and poor academic performance) are potent predictors of violent behaviour among undergraduates. The more potent factor was academic stress ( $\text{Beta} = .774$ ,  $t = 15.881$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ); followed by poor academic performance ( $\text{Beta} = -.164$ ,  $t = -3.370$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). This further implies that a unit increase in academic stress will increase the tendency for University students to display violent behaviour while units increase in their academic performance will reduce their tendency of displaying violent behaviour.

#### Research Hypothesis:

*What is the relationship between the independent variables (academic stress and poor academic performance) and violent behaviour of undergraduate students?*

Table 3:

Zero order correlation showing the relationship between study variables

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	1	2	3
Violent behaviour	31.1127	5.49037	1.000		
Academic stress	52.1944	6.19107	.703**	1.000	
Academic performance	26.2302	6.05535	-.166**	.427**	1.000

\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 (2-tailed)

Source: Fieldwork

Table 3 reveals the relationship that exists between independent variables (poor academic performance and academic stress) and the dependent variable (violent behaviour); University student's violent behaviour positively correlates with academic stress ( $r = .703$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), and poor academic performance ( $r = -.166$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). This implies that an increase in students' academic performance will reduce the probability of their tendency of reacting violently, while increased academic stress will increase the probability of students engaging in violent behaviour.

#### Discussion of Findings

The first research question examined the composite contribution of the independent variables (academic performance and academic stress) to students' violent behaviour. The result shows that there is a significant joint contribution of the independent variables (academic performance and academic stress) to the prediction of students' violent behaviour. This suggests that the two variables combined accounted for 51.3% ( $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .513$ ) variance in the prediction of undergraduates violent behaviour. This finding supports Brogaard (2012) who found that students with poor academic performance are highly characterized with academic deficits and abnormal behaviour. Likewise this finding supports Monaghan and Just (2000) who found that students with frequent poor academic performance are easily stressed up, frustrated and could manifest anti-social in behaviour due to the harm which their performance has done to their emotion. On this note, it could thus be inferred that violent behaviour among undergraduates could be triggered by academic stress and poor academic performance.

Research question two examined the variation in the potency of the independent variables academic stress, poor academic performance and violent behaviour. The result indicated that the two factors (academic stress and poor academic performance) are potent predictors of violent behaviour among students. The more potent factor was academic stress ( $\text{Beta} = .774$ ,  $t = 15.881$ ,



$P < 0.001$ ); followed by poor academic performance (Beta =  $-0.164$ ,  $t = -3.370$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ). Since this study shows that academic stress displays higher predictive power than poor academic performance in determining violent behaviour among undergraduates, it therefore supports Cosby (2010) who confirmed that students can be violent if overloaded with academic activities or over-stressed. Furthermore the findings of the present study supports Musser (2011) who opined that students could revolt violently after been taken through stressful academic activities. This implies that a unit increase in academic stress will increase the tendency for University students to display violent behaviour while unit increase in students' academic performance will reduce their tendency of displaying violent behaviour.

The research hypothesis examined the relationship among academic stress, poor academic performance and violent behaviour of undergraduates. The result shows that University students' violent behaviour correlates with academic stress ( $r = 0.703$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ), and poor academic performance ( $r = -0.166$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). This implies that increased academic stress will increase the probabilities of undergraduates engaging violent behaviour while an improvement in their (undergraduates) academic performance will reduce the probability of manifesting violent behaviour. The result of this study is in agreement with Johnson (2013) who found that violent behaviour is much more found among students with high academic distress than those with low academic distress. Likewise, Cosby (2010) had reported that sustained academic stress experienced by students could trigger the exhibition of anti-social behaviour. This therefore establishes the fact that academic stress is a significant predictor of students' display of violent behaviour. The result equally corroborates Welsh (2009) who reported that students who fail frequently are easily prone to frustration which could bring along all sorts of anti-social behaviour. Musser (2011) had also stated that violent behaviour is mostly found among poor performing students rather than the high performing ones.

### Conclusion of the Study

This study investigated the predictive influence of academic stress and poor academic performance on University students' violent behaviour. It was discovered that academic stress and poor academic performance jointly predicted undergraduates violent behaviour; accounting for 51.3% variance in students violent behaviour. It was also found that academic stress is the higher potent predictor of undergraduates' violent behaviour and is followed by poor academic performance. On this premise, it could be inferred that a unit increase in academic stress will increase the tendency for University students to display violent behaviour while unit increase in students academic performance will reduce their inclination towards violent behaviour.

### Recommendations

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

1. Professional counsellors should endeavour to always pay attention to academic stress and poor academic performance among undergraduates with the bid to proffering solutions to the problems before they escalate to violent behaviour;
2. The Student Affairs Unit of the universities should be on the alert always to respond to the welfare needs of the students in order to reduce the stress encountered on campuses;
3. The universities programme or calendar should be well designed to ensure students are not over loaded, which could serve as preventive measure to violent behaviour among undergraduates;
4. University authority should establish functional Counselling Centres to respond to academic stress and poor academic performance among university students.

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## Role of Information and Communication Technology in Effective Management of Tertiary Institutions of Kaduna State

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### Abstract

The study investigated the Role of Information and Communication Technology for effective management of tertiary institutions in Kaduna State. Its among others things identified the information technology devices that are important to tertiary institutions development and the level of provision and compliance of administrators of tertiary institutions to development of tertiary institutions. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 5 institutions in the state. Purposive random sampling technique was used to select a sample of 37 administrative staff 7 academic staff 5 personnel in MIS department and 322 students of the selected tertiary institutions from the targeted population. To give the general description of the data frequency tables and simple percentages were used. 2 hypotheses were formulated and the testing was done by using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). Based on the hypotheses tested, it was found out that Significant differences were not found to exist in the opinions of the respondents on the issue raised; the two hypotheses were accepted. Finding further revealed that ICT has been described as an effective tool for educational development. From the findings, recommendations were made some of which are: Distribution of virtual learning to higher institutions should be by priorities without any political undertone and educational fund of 26% of the annual budget is recommended to be paid to education sector.

### Introduction

Information and Communication Technology and globalization have greatly affected the Nigerian educational system generally. No meaningful progress will be made in educational sector without adjusting to scientific innovations and discoveries. The National Policy on Education (2004) emphasized that the philosophy of education is to be geared towards self realization of national unity, as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and