

***Relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Adjustment of
Secondary School Students living in Conflict Area of Southern Part of Kaduna,
Nigeria***

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Abstract

This study adopted a correlational research design to examine the relationship between Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Adjustment of Senior Secondary School Students. The population of the study was nine hundred and eighty seven (987) secondary school students with posttraumatic symptoms in Godo-Godo and Kafanchan Zonal Educational Inspectorate Divisions, Kaduna state, Nigeria. The sample of the study was 272 SSII Students with symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder drawn from twenty (20) Senior Secondary Schools. Data was collected using posttraumatic stress disorder inventory (PTSDI), social adjustment inventory (SAI), Emotional Adjustment Inventory (EAI) and Academic Adjustment Inventory (AAI). The PTSDI was faced and content validated, and had reliability of .856. the SAI, EAI and AAI had reliability coefficients of .898, .892 and .779 respectively. Pearson product moment correlation statistics was used to test the three hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings show that relationships exist between posttraumatic stress disorder and social adjustment, emotional adjustment, and academic adjustment as components of adjustment among secondary school students. It was recommended, among others, that psychologists and counsellors should be encouraged to help students with posttraumatic stress disorder by providing functional psychological testing and counselling centres in the areas.

Keyword: posttraumatic, stress, disorder, adjustment, students

Introduction

Post-traumatic stress disorder occurs when students lose their loved ones, may be in motor accident, plane crash, exposure to violence, students' abuse in form of physical, sexual and emotional abuse, and weather-related disaster like flood that happened in some parts of Nigeria, and bomb explosion. Students are subjected to various devastating experiences which may be traumatic such as communal violence, public coercion, political violence, death of loved ones which may go unnoticed thereby leading to psychological problems among the students. There are other major acts of violence such as political crisis, farmer herdsmen clash in the Nigerian society, religious crisis and bullying, which are traumatic events confronting students today, especially at the secondary school level. These events may easily influence their social, emotional and academic adjustment (Shalev, 2012). Post-traumatic stress among students may be as a result of violent environment, death of loved ones, gun shooting, political issues which brought about the behaviour of anxiety, aggression, depression which may go unnoticed thereby leading to psychological problem among the students. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) includes fear, anger, helplessness and so on and the victims may need help from counsellors, teachers and psychologists.

Adjustment refers to an individual's general adaptation to his environment and the demands of life such as the way he relates to other people that is interpersonal behaviour (Bhagat & Baliya, 2016), handles his responsibility, deals with stress and meets his own needs and life satisfaction.

Social adjustment refers to the individual's development of social cognitive understanding that contributes to social competence, interpersonal relationship or sensitivity and social awareness of how the self-related to other individuals and groups in a complete social world. According to Nwoke and Eze (2004), social adjustment is an innate psychological disposition to cope with standard, values and needs of a society in order to be acceptable; it involves coping with new standards of individual value; it also refers to coping with social challenges confronting one in any given situation or environment and the innate strength to accommodate any possible outcome or change.

Emotional adjustment on the other hand can be described as the behavioural processes by which human beings maintain equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacle of environments. Emotional adjustment is the maintenance of emotional equilibrium in the face of internal and external stressors. This is facilitated by cognitive process of acceptance and adaptation such as maintaining emotional control and coping behaviour in the face of an identity crisis (Mallinckrodt, 2012). Frequently intense and apparently unjustified emotional outbursts lead others to judge the individual as "immature," and suppression of emotional expression results in moodiness, which tends to make the individual rude, uncooperative and preoccupied

with self. A satisfactory state of personal and emotional adjustment is said to exist when an individual's physical and psychological needs can be satisfied by socially acceptable patterns of behaviour (Mallinckrodt, 2012).

Academic adjustment refers to a students' ability to meet academic demands, to be attentive, to participate in class activities, and become an independent student, while social and emotional adjustment refer to a student's ability to establish meaningful and positive relationships with teachers and peers, and feel emotionally secure. Academic adjustment involves not only students' academic progress and achievement, but also their attitude towards school, anxieties, loneliness, social support and academic motivation (Adhiambo & Mildred, 2011).

Omar, Elfaydi, Ibrahim, and Kirembwe (2016) revealed that there is a positive relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and lack of psychological compatibility. They also reported that some of the injured in the fighting front suffer from social isolation. Brooks (2008) found that veterans with combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder were more likely to have a history of students' emotional abuse than those without posttraumatic stress disorder. Edebor (2015) conducted a research on relationship of posttraumatic stress disorder and academic performance among junior secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria, and reported a significant relationship.

Statement of the Problem

Students who experience community violence, political crises, religious crisis, farmers and herdsman crisis, kidnapping, and shooting may develop feelings of depression, anxiety and aggressive behaviour. As a result of which students may resort to unwanted behaviour which may be contrary to societal norms and values. Individual students may exhibit different behaviour patterns due to personal experiences, and this may influence their social and emotional adjustment as well as the academic adjustment of students.

Secondary School Students particularly in Godo-Godo and Kanfanchan Zonal inspectorate divisions in southern Kaduna are victims of communal violence, political crises, religious crises, kidnapping, which pose insecurity to lives, and make students to be under perpetual fear and apprehension. The traumatic experience may bring about poor social and emotional adjustment as well as academic adjustment, lack of concentration and anxiety among secondary school students. Some secondary school students may become aggressive due to the rate of community violence, kidnapping, gun shooting, anxiety as they cannot cope with the violence in the environment they find themselves. There are cases of students who lose their parents, loved ones and relatives which is another traumatic experience in the secondary school students' life;

they may go to school but keep re-experiencing the event even when lessons may be going on, thereby having depressed mood, aggression and anxiety. Also, students were transferred from one school to another to write their examination as a result of fear and frequent violent in the area and the likes.

The decline of social, emotional and academic adjustment among secondary school students would be attributed to anxiety, aggression and depression among other factors. This is because anxiety-afflicted students lack the reflective thinking ability that is required in cognitive task, which may also affect the social and emotional wellbeing in the school environment. This incident of students' poor academic adjustment, despite all the effort of the government in ensuring qualitative education and provision of good atmosphere for learning at secondary school levels, is a thing of concern. Due to the detrimental effect of anxiety, aggression and depression to the lives of secondary school students, it has become a matter of concern to psychologists, counsellors, school administrators, parents and teachers. Therefore, the problem of the study is to find out if there is any relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and adjustment of secondary school students living in conflict areas of southern part of Kaduna, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and social adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in conflict area of southern part of Kaduna State.
2. To determine the relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Emotional adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in conflict area of southern part of Kaduna State.
3. To find out the relationship between Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and academic adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in conflict area of southern part of Kaduna State.

Hypotheses

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and social adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in conflict area of southern part of Kaduna State.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Emotional adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in conflict area of southern part of Kaduna State.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and academic adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in conflict area of southern part of Kaduna State.

Methodology

This research employed correlational design. According to Mitchell and Jolley (2007), when researchers want to find out the relationship between two or more variables, then correlation design should be used. This design is a form of descriptive research undertaken when dealing with systematic collection of data or information from a population through the use of personal interview, opinion scale, questionnaire and observation. This enables the researcher to make generalization at the end of the research. The design involves an investigation of entire population of people or items under the study by collecting data from sample drawn from the population and assuming that these samples are true representation of the entire population. Since the population of this study is large, and samples are to be drawn to represent the entire population, correlational method is appropriate to that effect.

The population of this study was made up of nine hundred and eighty seven (987) secondary school students with posttraumatic symptoms in two educational zones, Kafanchan and Godo-Godo. The process was carried out through the use of checklist to identify the respondents with posttraumatic problem.

Simple random sampling technique was used in the selection of 20 secondary schools out of 64 secondary schools in the two zones. According to Abdullahi (2015), simple random sampling is a method of selecting a portion of population such that each member of the population has equal chance of being selected. However, this could be done in various ways, including ballot method and use of table of random numbers. Therefore, the researchers made use of ballot method in selecting the schools. In this method, the elements in the population are assigned numbers, which are then written on pieces of paper, folded so that the number on each paper is hidden. The pieces of paper are put in a suitable container and shaken thoroughly so the required number of the respondents is picked from the container. The sample size of this study is 274 secondary school students with symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder from two Educational Zones of Godo-Godo and Kafanchan. However, there was death mortality of two (2) out of two hundred and seventy four (274). Therefore, two hundred and seventy two (272) was used for data analysis. This sample is drawn from an entire population of SSII secondary school students with posttraumatic symptom which is 987. This selection conforms to Research Advisor's (2006) table of specification. The researchers purposively target SSII students with posttraumatic symptom in Kafanchan and Godo Godo Educational Zones. Their level of posttraumatic stress disorder was determined and correlated with their social, emotional, and academic adjustment.

Four main instruments were used for this study. The instruments are posttraumatic stress condition which was adapted from educational media solutions (2011) and Harvard program in refuge posttraumatic and it comprises of five (5) Likert scale and subdivided into three categories; Anxiety items consist of ten (10), Aggression items consist of ten (10) and depression ten (10) items. Observations were made by experts in the Educational Psychology Department of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Social Adjustment Inventory and Emotional Adjustment Inventory were adapted from Bell (2012); the social adjustment inventory consists of nineteen (19) items while emotional adjustment inventory consists of twenty (20) items; both had five (5) Likert scale response options. Academic adjustment inventory was also adapted from Bell (2012). It consists of fifteen (15) items. The scoring guide is as follows: 0-30 - Mild adjusted individual; 30-60 - Average adjusted individual while 60 and above highly adjusted. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) (r) was used for data analysis.

Presentation of results

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and social adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and social adjustment

| Variables | N | Mean | SD | Df | Correlation index r | P |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------|-------|-----|---------------------|-------|
| Post-Traumatic stress disorder | 272 | 101.12 | 22.65 | 270 | -0.852** | 0.001 |
| Social Adjustment | | 66.44 | 17.13 | | | |

**Correlation is significant at 0.05

Table 1 indicates the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics which shows that significant relationship exists between post-traumatic stress disorder and social adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state. Reason being that the calculated p-value of 0.001 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. The computed value of correlation index (r) of -0.852 at df of 270 shows that there is negative relationship between posttraumatic stress and social adjustment. Therefore,

the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and social adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state, is hereby rejected.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state.

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional adjustment

| Variables | N | Mean | SD | df | Correlation index r | p |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------|-------|-----|---------------------|-------|
| Post-Traumatic stress disorder | 272 | 101.12 | 22.65 | 270 | -0.804** | 0.000 |
| Emotional Adjustment | | 64.67 | 14.12 | | | |

**Correlation is significant at 0.05

Table 2 indicates the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics which shows that significant relationship exists between post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state. Reason being that the calculated p-value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. The computed value of correlation index (r) of -0.804 at df of 270 shows that there is a negative relationship between posttraumatic stress and emotional adjustment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state, is hereby rejected.

Ho3: There is no significant relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and academic adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and academic adjustment

| Variables | N | Mean | SD | Df | Correlation index r | p |
|--------------------------------|----------|-------------|-----------|-----------|----------------------------|----------|
| Post-Traumatic stress disorder | 272 | 101.12 | 22.65 | 270 | -0.876** | 0.000 |
| Academic Adjustment | | 49.95 | 11.66 | | | |

**Correlation is significant at 0.05

Table 3 indicates the summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics which shows that significant relationship exists between post-traumatic stress disorder and academic adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state. Reason being that the calculated p value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha level of significance. The computed value of correlation index (r) of -0.876 at df of 270 shows that there is a negative relationship between posttraumatic stress and academic adjustment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between post-traumatic stress disorder and academic adjustment as component of adjustment among secondary school students living in the conflict area of southern part of Kaduna state, is hereby rejected.

Discussion of the findings

One of the findings of this research indicated that significant relationship exists between posttraumatic stress disorder and social adjustment of secondary school students. The finding agrees with Omar, Elfaydi, Ibrahim and Kirembwe (2016) who reported that there is a positive relationship between PTSD and lack of psychological compatibility.

The second finding of this research indicated that significant relationship exists between posttraumatic stress disorder and emotional adjustment of secondary schools student. The finding agrees with that of Brooks (2008), who found out that veterans with combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder were more likely to have a history of students' emotional abuse than those without posttraumatic stress disorder.

The third finding of this research indicated that significant relationship exists between posttraumatic stress disorder and academic adjustment. This finding is in line with Edebor (2015) who conducted a research on relationship of posttraumatic stress disorder and academic performance among junior secondary school students in Rivers State, Nigeria, and reported a significant relationship.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions can be deduced: posttraumatic stress disorders are related with social, emotional and academic adjustment of secondary school students in the study area.

Recommendations

1. Since there is relationship between posttraumatic stress disorder and social adjustment, psychologists and counsellors should be encouraged to attend to and help students with posttraumatic stress disorder. This can be achieved by establishing and supporting functional psychological testing and counselling centres in the areas.

2. Since there is a relationship between posttraumatic stress disorder and emotional adjustment, psychologists and counsellors should be encouraged to assist students with posttraumatic disorder problems in Godo-godo and Kafanchan zonal educational inspectorate divisions so as to enhance their emotional adjustment.

3. Conference/workshop should be organized for teachers and school administrators in order for them to pay more attention to secondary schools students with posttraumatic stress disorder issues and refer them to psychological testing and counselling centres. By adopting this, academic adjustment of students will improve.

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