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+234 803 334 4750

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EDITORIAL DESK

The Journal of Contemporary Issues in Nigerian Economy stands as a beacon of scholarly excellence, drawing upon a diverse spectrum of researchers hailing from the expansive West African region and beyond. This volume showcases 14 meticulously researched articles curated from contributors in Nigeria and the United States of America. The genesis of these scholarly endives can be traced back to the auspicious conference convened at the Lagos State University Makanjuola Lecture Hall, held in December, 2023.

These articles, characterized by their depth and precision, underwent rigorous scrutiny during the conference, with over 90 participants actively engaging in critique. Subsequent to this extensive quality assurance regimen and plagiarism checks, only 14 articles successfully met the standards set forth by the esteemed guild of the editorial team, in strict adherence to international best practices.

It is with great pleasure that the Board of Editors announces the second edition of the publication schedule of the journal. Our heartfelt congratulations extend to the authors whose papers demonstrated exceptional merit and successfully navigated the rigorous selection criteria. To future researchers, we extend our encouragement to strive for greater heights in their scholarly pursuits.

The Board of Editors appreciates the Vice Chancellor, Prof. Ibiyemi Ibilola Olatunji Bello, mni NPOM for providing the enabling environment for the conference and her directives to the editorial team for strong quality assurance measures. We believe in your leadership and concerted efforts at ensuring high standards for the journal publication.

Prof. M. O. B. Mohammed, FNAEAP
Editor in Chief

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DOMESTIC SERVITUDE AND SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN LAGOS STATE: COUNSELLING INTERVENTIONS

Muyideen Babatunde TAHIR (Ph.D)¹, Enitan Omolara FALADE (Ph.D)² Olawunmi Ayodeji BADEJO³

Department of Educational Foundations and Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University Ojo, Lagos.

mufty48@gmail.com; oenitan5@gmail.com; ayobadejo2001@yahoo.com
07037746003; 09023724923; 08023013913

Abstract

This study examined the influence of domestic servitude on the prevalence of suicidal behaviour among university students in Lagos State. Using the Domestic Servitude and Suicidal Behaviour Inventory (DSSBI), a descriptive correlation design was adopted to elicit information among university students in four (4) public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample used for this research comprised 150 participants who were randomly selected from the population. Its reliability coefficient was 0.86. The instrument comprised three sections on suicidal behaviour and domestic servitude with 35 items. The instrument was administered to respondents in a group counselling setting. Data collected were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) and t-test for stated hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. It was revealed that there was a significant relationship between domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour and no significant difference between domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among male and female University students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The counselling interventions will create awareness, inform and give regular orientations to university students. It was recommended that university students who are experiencing undesired feelings or thoughts of suicidal behaviour owing to domestic servitude should seek support from counsellor psychologists.

Keywords: Domestic Servitude, Suicidal Behaviour, University Students, Lagos State, Counselling Interventions

Introduction

The worries of University life could be overwhelming, leading to stress, anxiety, and sometimes depression. With few interactions with youth, the feelings of domestic servitude encapsulated with overwhelming responsibilities that contributed to mental health issues and strange attitudes among them and more importantly undergraduate students.

Suicidal behaviour (SB) is a nexus occurrence that includes ideation, attempt, and consummated suicide, these could be owing to genetic, social, environmental and as well as psychological factors (Davila & Luna, 2019). It is the manifestation of a process that develops gradually from suicidal ideation, attempted suicide and most times snowball suicide acts (Badejo & Tahir, 2022). Thus, suicidal behaviour is a social happening, public health issues and psychological menace more often displayed among undergraduate students in Universities (Silva et al., 2018) and this psychological distress affects learning in several ways (Ifenyichukwu et al., 2022).

Therefore, it is imperative to be aware of this behaviour's prevalence and the factors associated with its occurrence. World Health Organisation (WHO, 2023) mentioned several human beings engage in self-extermination nearly a million within 365 days; almost 11 per cent out of the 100,000 population committed suicide and it was more observed globally among adolescents within the age range of 18 and 25 (WHO, 2019; Seena & Bo, 2020; Badejo & Tahir, 2023).

Some of the possible causes of suicidal behaviour are among the following; mental health

disorders, psychological disturbance, shadow pandemic, involuntary actions and exploitation of others, domestic servitude and many others (Adepelumi, 2015; Badejo & Tahir, 2023; Ifenyichukwu et al., 2022). All these aforementioned could build or lead to predisposition among University students as follows: severe mental disorders, depression, personality disorders, drug abuse, physical health problems and environmental (that is violence, socioeconomic inequality, and lifestyle), which combined and generated greater vulnerability to suicidal behaviour among University students in Lagos State, Nigeria (Viertio et al., 2021).

It is a well-known fact that many people end up in slavery situation because many are helpless to modern ways of slavery through hoodwinked, entangled and exploited, more often than not owing to poverty and omission without laws properly protecting them resulting in domestic servitude.

Domestic Servitude (DS) could be referred to as domestic slavery which could be displayed in multifaceted forms such as:

- human trafficking (like circumstances work in a private residence that creates unique vulnerabilities for victims),
- a worker is not free to leave the employment despite abuse, underpaid and or irregularly paid most times
- not receiving the basic benefits and no protections like a day off,
- ability to move freely is often limited,
- creating room for isolation,
- exposing them to harm (either physically or emotionally) (US Department of State, n.d.)

It is modern-day enslavement where domestic workers are forced to work with little or no pay, sometimes exposed and involved various abuses without employers' right (Fiona David & Jacqueline, 2019; The Passage, 2017).

Additionally, DS is an act using an individual (include male and female) as domestic slavery through employment arrangement transitions into a situation whereby they cannot leave off their own free will, similar to a case of enslavement. It also seems to be a type of forced labour whereby the victim is usually expected to work around a person's home every day and be 'on call 24 hours a day (West Yorkshire Police, n. d.).

It could be further narrated as a situation where checks and balances by authorities could not be accessed to inspect employee conditions in private homes and this allowed for exploitation, and sexual violence among many University students who wanted to make ends meet to pay their school fees.

Signs of Domestic Servitude

These are signs of DS; not having access to their salary, no absolute freedom (including physical or emotional upsetting) and no working limitation as well as working hour. It also included not allowing supervision contact with their own family members or friends, having no privacy, fear of the employer to engage with the authorities and many few others (Marici et al., 2023).

Gender could serve as a moderating factor but one cannot ascertain the level of male and female University students' engagement in domestic servitude but the conditions attached to it paved way for the occurrence of suicidal behaviour among them. The statistics revealed that approximately 0.003 percent of males and females world population are victims of contemporary

slavery, yet females involvement are high with seven out of ten found in domestic slavery while some scholars mentioned 90 percent of those who were victims are females. Similarly, 16 million trafficking victims exploited for labour and 3.8 million (24%) are domestic servitude (Eteng et al., 2021).

In addition, the ratio of female involvement in trafficking world over to male is 7:3(Caritas International, 2023). Females are disproportionately affected socially and psychologically by modern slavery, they accounted for 71 per cent of the 40.3 million people living in domestic servitude (Minderoo Foundation, 2023; Vierito et al., 2021).

Counselling interventions

The need for creating awareness and regular orientations for University students' through counselling centre in most of universities in order to expose them to effect of domestic servitude such as suicidal behaviour and so on (Sutton, 2023)

Hypotheses

- i- There is no significant relationship between domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among University students in Lagos State.
- ii- There is no significant effect of domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among male and female University students in Lagos State.

Methodology

The research design adopted the descriptive correlation design to elicit information about domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among students in four (4) public Universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The sample used for the research comprised 150 participants who were randomly selected from the population from the Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo, University of Lagos (UNILAG), Akoka, Lagos State University of Education (LASUED), Epe, all in Lagos State, Nigeria. The instruments were designed by the researchers known as Domestic Servitude and Suicidal Behaviour Inventory (DSSBI) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by an expert in the field of psychometrics and its reliability was determined through pilot testing in using Cronbach's Alpha and alpha coefficients reliability values were obtained. Its reliability coefficient is 0.86. The instruments comprised three sections. Section A sought information on respondents' demographic information while section B and C sought information on suicidal behaviour and domestic servitude with 35 items. The instrument was administered to respondents in a group counselling setting. Data collected were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlational Coefficient (PPMCC) and t-test for stated hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance and was set at a p-value < 0.05.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among University students in Lagos State.

Table 1: Correlations between Domestic Servitude and Suicidal Behaviour among University Students in Lagos State

		Domestic Servitude	Suicidal Ideation
Domestic Servitude	Pearson Correlation	1	.746**
	Sig. (2tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Suicidal Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	.746**	1
	Sig. (2tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2tailed)

From Table 1, it was observed that the correlation coefficient using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) stood at 0.746. It also showed that there was a strong positive correlation between the variables and the correlation p-value <0.005 . The correlation was significant at a 0.05 level. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This then indicated that there was a significant relationship between domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among University students in Lagos State. That is, the higher the level of their domestic servitude, the higher their suicidal behaviour level and vice versa.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant effect of domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among male and female University students in Lagos State.

Table 2: Independent Samples Test Domestic Servitude and Suicidal Behaviour among

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					
	F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2 - tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error	
suicidal behavior	Equal variances assumed	2.425	.122	- .802	148	.424	-1.283	1.600
	Equal variances not assumed			- .802	1	117.97	.424	-1.283

Table 2 shows that the independent t-test conducted that $df=148$, $F= 2.425$, $p>0.05$. This result shows that there is no statistically significance difference between the variables. Hence, the null hypothesis was not rejected. In other words, there was no significant difference in domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among male and female University students in Lagos State.

Discussion

The result obtained from hypothesis one indicated that there was a significant relationship between domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among University students in Lagos State. This implies that any effect of domestic servitude, high suicidal behaviour because of the relationship. This finding was associated with the fact that the resultant effect of the domestic servitude triggered frequency of suicidal behaviour among University students and affected their social interactions, psychological stability and mental health well-being due to domestic servitude and other domestic slavery (Badejo & Tahir, 2023; Fiona-David & Jacqueline, 2019; The Passage, 2017).

The study also found no difference in the domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among male and female University students in Lagos State, which was in disagreement with that of previous studies that emphasised that females were affected making up seven (7) in ten (10) of the world's domestic slavery victims and 90 per cent of the victims are mostly females (Eteng et al., 2021). Yet, the result obtained from this study showed the effect of domestic servitude has no gender bias among University students in Lagos State. Also, females are disproportionately affected socially and psychologically by modern slavery, they accounted for 71 per cent of the 40.3 million people living in domestic servitude (Minderoo Foundation, 2023; Vierito et al., 2021).

Conclusion

It was concluded as follows;

- i. that there was a significant relationship between the domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among University students in Lagos State.
- ii. that the higher the level of domestic servitude, the higher the suicidal behaviour level and vice versa.
- iii. that there was no significant difference in domestic servitude and suicidal behaviour among male and female University students in Lagos State.

Recommendations

It was recommended that;

- a. those experiencing these feelings or thoughts of suicidal behaviour should quickly seek support from counsellors, psychologists, or university mental health services.
- b. the study has provided information about the severity of suicidal behaviour among universities this will inform and enhance individual understanding of some elements of suicidal behaviour and make a worthwhile guard for all.
- c. All stakeholders must be involved

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