

# Relationship between Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, Alcohol Consumption, and Domestic Violence among Police Officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, alcohol consumption, and domestic violence among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria. The officers responded to four valid scales ( Police Job Satisfaction Scale, Police Stress Scale , The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test, and the Intimate Partner Abuse Scale). Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Statistics. The result revealed that there was significant relationship between the three independent variables and that the independent variables significantly contributed to the prediction of domestic violence among the officers. The implications of these findings for police administrators and other stakeholders were discussed and recommendations were given.

(Keywords: law enforcement, police officers, occupational stress, job satisfaction, alcohol consumption, domestic violence, physical health, mental health)

## INTRODUCTION

The increase in violence among intimate partners has been a great concern among the researchers in recent times. This is because violence has dangerous effects on the victims, significant others, and the society where domestic violence is perpetrated. In most cases, violence against women has negative effects not only on their well-being, but also on their family members, as it weakens their morale, destroys their self-esteem and greatly incapacitates them from achieving their full potentials.

Domestic violence, which is also called intimate partner violence, has been defined as violence against women by numerous authors including

Kishor and Johnson (2006). Women are generally perceived as the sole victims of domestic violence and men as the perpetrators (Abbot and Williamson, 1999). However, domestic violence, in recent times, has graduated to another dimension, as it cuts, across gender, age, and religions. Domestic violence can cause a number of short- and long-term physical and mental health problems. These include, cuts, bruises, bite marks, concussion, loss of hearing and vision, temporary and permanent disfigurement, depression, alcohol or substance abuse, anxiety, personality disorders, social dysfunction, and suicide (Abbot and Williamson,1999; Coker, et al., 2009; and Howard, Trevillion, and Agnew-Davies, 2010 ).

Domestic violence within police families became a prominent issue in the early 1990s, when Johnson (1991) and Neidig, et al. (1992) claimed that over 40% of police officers surveyed in their studies reported being violent with their spouses. Also, Sgambellur, (2000) notes that domestic violence perpetration among the police officer is at a higher rate than the general population.

Domestic violence in Nigeria is taking a new dimension, as hardly will a month pass by without the news of domestic violence in the dailies, including incidents perpetrated by police officers who are saddled with the responsibility of protecting lives and property. Policing is one of the most stressful professions. The Nigeria Police Force is faced with additional problems of ethnic tensions, militancy, job dissatisfaction, poor welfare, and lack of funding. All of these factors could impose extra burdens on the officers, which could serve as catalysts to domestic violence.

Also, a typical Nigerian police officer believes that until he uses weapons or force for arresting or interrogating suspects or offenders he has failed in his responsibilities. In view of this, violent

behavior has been associated with the professional ethics and a normal way of life among our police officers. An officer may transfer such behavior to his or her matrimonial home and this could lead to intimate partner violence. While studies have been carried out on other people and professions, the police officers who are meant to maintain law and order have been ignored in the literature as perpetrators of domestic violence, especially in Nigeria. This study, therefore, examined the relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, and alcohol consumption on domestic violence among the police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Policing is very demanding and highly stressful, as the officers always have to face various challenges while performing their constitutional roles. A study by Johnson et al. (2005) found that policing was one of the six professions where high stress led to poor health and low job satisfaction. Traumatic stress is well pronounced among the officers. This kind of stress arises due to police organizational structures and hierarchies which tend to be rigidly stratified and unresponsive to individual needs. Domestic violence is now on the increase, which could be as a result of occupational stress.

Lumb and Breazeale (2002) assert that occupational stress, if untreated, can lead to negative changes in police officers, specifically in their self-schemas and in how they perceive the communities in which they serve. Gershon (2000) conducted a study to assess the relationship between police work, stress, and domestic violence by police officers in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. Her findings showed that occupational stress plays a significant role in predicting domestic violence among the officers.

Johnson, et al. (2005) also examined the relationship between violence exposure and domestic violence by police officers. They created measures of burnout, authoritarian spillover, alcohol use, department withdrawal, and violence exposure. The findings revealed that the relationship between violence exposure and domestic violence is a mediated process. When spousal violence occurs due to external burnout or authoritarianism, the amount of violence exposure becomes important. This study is significant because it identifies burnout (an advanced form of stress) as a predictor of domestic violence.

Job satisfaction is another significant construct that has significant place in this study. Job satisfaction has been conceptualized and operationalized as both a global and a multidimensional construct. On a global level, job satisfaction is considered in terms of an employee's overall satisfaction with his or her job. As a multidimensional construct, job satisfaction concerns satisfaction with pay, supervision, company policy and the nature of the work. Job satisfaction consists of extrinsic and intrinsic components. Intrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about the nature of the job tasks themselves, while extrinsic job satisfaction is how people feel about aspects of the work situation that are external to the job tasks (Hirschfeld, 2000).

Job satisfaction could be strongly linked with domestic violence. This is because when a police officer is not satisfied with his/her job, absenteeism, low productivity, frustration, psychological trauma, aggression, inability to perform his responsibilities at home as a responsible spouse and father, or failure in meeting a financial obligation may ensue. If not well handled, these could eventually lead to transfer of aggression, emotional detachment from a spouse, breakdown of communications, persistent crisis, withdrawal, bad mood, and ultimately, violent behavior at home.

The foregoing assumptions could perfectly fit into the policing job, most especially in Nigeria. This is because job dissatisfaction has been strongly established among police officers by some researchers (Akinawo 1995; Aremu; 1998; Ebo, 1993). This situation has implications for career in policing in Nigeria. There is therefore, the need for the police administrators to be committed to their officers. However, Adeyemo (2001), notes that most of the research works treat job satisfaction as dependent variables. This led to the consideration of job satisfaction as an independent variable in this study. This study sought to provide the possible influence of job satisfaction on domestic violence among officers of the Nigeria Police Force in Ikeja, Lagos state, Nigeria.

Alcohol consumption among police officers is of serious concern to police administrators, researchers and clinical psychologists. This is not unconnected to the fact that police officers who are meant to be the enforcer of laws are now turning to be law breakers as a result of alcohol

consumption. Swatt, Gibson, and Piquero (2007) reported that problematic alcohol use has been a serious issue in the United States and other countries. A study of 2,200 officers in 29 departments indicated that approximately 23% of the police officers sampled had serious issues with alcohol use (Hurrell et al., 1984).

Richmond et al. (1998) examined the lifestyle behaviors of 852 police officers and found that almost one-half (48%) of the male officers and two-fifths (40%) of the female officers 'consumed alcohol excessively, including continuous hazardous or harmful consumption and binge drinking' (p. 1729). Davey, et al. (2001) found that almost one-third (30%) of 749 responding officers were at risk of harm from excessive alcohol consumption.

Alcohol abuse has been associated with many forms of police misconduct, and recent studies on problem officers provide descriptions of cases that involve intoxicated police engaged in various forms of misbehavior and crime (Kane and White; 2009, Stinson, Liederbach, et al., 2012). When police officers who are employed to be law keepers are engrossed in alcohol consumption, their thinking, reasoning and their judgement ability are affected. Any decision taken at that time could be dangerous, if not deadly.

In Nigeria, police officers are often seen at different establishments, bars, restaurants, beer parlors, barracks, and road blocks consuming alcohol in order to ease tension and also to make themselves happy, not minding the consequences. Alcohol consumption has been strongly linked with health-related problems, like physical and mental harm with consequences of undesirable drinking marked by illness and distress to the target subjects and to the people around them. In addition, it can lead to hospital admission, prolonged disability, and early death, with subsequent economic loss to the community and to the nation (Kawada, Inagaki, and Kuratomi, 2010).

Silverberg (2000) states that the effects of alcohol abuse among police officers include: reduced work performance endangering safety and welfare of the public, higher rates of absenteeism; lateness for work; more sick leave; increase in the cost of health care benefits; lack of motivation; increased need for supervision; and setting a poor role model. Police officer's involvement in excessive alcohol consumption can impede

reaction time, impair thinking and co-ordination and may lead to aggressive behavior, particularly in the presence of threats (McNeill, 1996). Lindsay (2008), corroborated the link between alcohol drinking and their association with police suicides and domestic violence.

Foran and O'leary (2008) did a meta analytic review of alcohol on intimate partner violence. The results indicated that there is a small to moderate effect size for the association between alcohol use/abuse and male-to-female partner violence. Gavani (2010) opines that alcohol misuse is consistently found in a high proportion of those who perpetrate domestic abuse and sexual assault within intimate relationships where one partner has a problem with alcohol or other drugs. This study examined the relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction, alcohol consumption and domestic violence among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This research was guided by the following questions:

(I) What is the relationship between the independent variables (occupational stress, job satisfaction, and alcohol consumption) and the dependent variable (domestic violence) among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria?

(II) What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (occupational stress, job satisfaction, and alcohol consumption) and the dependent variable (domestic violence) among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria?

(III) What is the relative contribution of each of the independent variables (occupational stress, job satisfaction, and alcohol consumption) to the prediction of the dependent variable (domestic violence) among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria?

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The study investigated the relationship between the independent variables

(occupational stress, job satisfaction, and alcohol consumption) and the dependent variable (domestic violence) among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the significant impact of these three variables on domestic violence among the police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

### **Participants**

A total of two hundred and thirty-seven police officers within Ikeja, Lagos State Command, comprising 173, (72.9%) males and 64, (27.1%) females, were randomly selected from the command. The age of the respondents ranged between 37 and 56 years, with a mean age of 42.6 and SD of 3.6.

### **Instrumentation**

**Police Job Satisfaction Scale (PJSS):** This instrument was designed to measure the degree of fulfillment that a police officer feels as a result of his/her employment position. This instrument has ten items and was adopted from Aremu (2009). It has a 5-point structure response format, ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The instrument was reported to have reliability coefficient of 0.72. Examples of the items include: 'I could not think of other job except policing'; and 'I enjoy regularly promotion since I joined the police, due to my mentor'.

**Police Stress Scale. (PSS):** This scale is a modified version of Aremu's (2009) Police Stress Scale. The scale was designed to assess the level of stress of an individual police officer while performing his/her constitutional role. The scale has eight items with response options ranging from "very much like me" to "not at all like me" on five-point Likert format. The minimum and maximum obtainable scores are respectively 8 and 40. The scale was reported to have a Cronbach coefficient alpha of 0.72.

### **The Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test**

**(AUDIT):** This scale was developed by the World Health Organization (WHO) has been found to be an appropriate and reliable measure of alcohol use across genders, ages, and races (Steinbauer, Cantor, Holzer, and Volk, 1998). It has a Chronbach alpha of 0.77. Scores for each question on the AUDIT range from 0 to 4, with the first response for each question scoring 0 (never), the second scoring 1 (less than monthly), the third scoring 2 (monthly), the fourth scoring 3 (weekly), and the last response scoring 4 (daily or almost daily). For questions 9 and 10, which only have 3 responses, the scoring is 0, 2, and 4 (from left to right). A score of 8 or more is associated with harmful or hazardous drinking. A score of 13 or more in women and 15 or more in men is likely to indicate alcohol dependence. The 10 items in the AUDIT are also classified into three domains. The first domain is titled "hazardous alcohol use" (Q1-3) and measures the quantity and frequency of alcohol consumption. The second domain is titled "dependence symptoms" (Q4-6) and measures abnormal drinking behavior. The third domain is titled "harmful alcohol use" (Q7-10) and measures negative consequences related to alcohol use. A score of four or more for females and five or more for males in Domain 1 (range: 0-12) indicates risk of a hazardous level of drinking. A score of four or more in Domain 2 (range: 0-12) indicates risk of psychological or physical dependence. A score of four or more in Domain 3 (range: 0-16) indicates risk of significant life problems due to excessive alcohol consumption.

**Intimate Partner Abuse Scale:** Domestic violence was measured with Intimate Partner Abuse Scale (Hudson, 1992). The scale has 9 items that measure physical and non-physical abuse that occur between partners in intimate relationship. The scale is scored according to a 5-point Likert response format with options that range from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The scale was revalidated in this study and it yielded Cronbach's alpha of .82. In interpreting scores in the scale, scores above the mean value indicated higher tendency to abuse a partner, while scores below the mean value indicated lower tendency to abuse a partner.

## Procedure

Copies of the questionnaires were administered to the participants in their various police stations following the approval of the police authorities. The administration of the instruments took six weeks.

## Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regressions to examine the relationship between occupational stress, job satisfaction and alcohol consumption on domestic violence among police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State Nigeria. All analyses were determined at a significant level of 0.05

## RESULTS

Table 1 reveals that there were significant correlations between the independent variables-Occupational stress ( $r = .643$ ,  $P < .05$ ), job satisfaction ( $r = .986$ ,  $P < .05$ ), alcohol consumption ( $r = .627$ ,  $P < .05$ ) and the dependent variable, domestic violence among the police officers. The

implication of this analysis is that occupational stress, job satisfaction and alcohol consumption could lead to domestic violence among the officers.

Table 2 indicates that there was a joint effect of occupational stress, job satisfaction and alcohol consumption among the officers. It also shows a value of  $R = 0.775$  and  $R^2 = .601$  and a multiple adjusted  $R^2 = .595$ . This means that 60.1% of the variance in the police officers' domestic violence behavior was as a result of the three independent variables taken together. The combination of the independent variables, which yielded an F-ratio of ( $F(3,233) = 12320.629$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ), showed that there was a joint effect of the independent variables on the domestic violence of the police officers.

Table 3 captures the relative contribution of each of the independent variables to the domestic violent behavior of the police officers. In terms of the magnitude of contribution, occupational stress was the most potent contributor to the officer' domestic violence behaviour ( $\beta = .973$ ,  $t = 67.524$ ,  $P < .05$ ), followed by alcohol consumption ( $\beta = .528$ ,  $t = 67.524$ ,  $P < .05$ ), and job satisfaction ( $\beta = .528$ ,  $t = 20.710$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

**Table 1:** The Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation Matrix Showing the Relationship between Domestic Violence, Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Alcohol Consumption among the Officers.

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Domestic Violence	Occupational Stress	Job Satisfaction	Alcohol Consumption
Domestic Violence	51.821	9.3102	1.000			
Occupational Stress	51.853	9.1203	.643***	1.000		
Job satisfaction	51.642	9.4601	.986***	.036	1.000	
Alcohol Consumption	52.744	10.4361	.627***	.113	.033	1.000

**Table 2:** Joint Contribution of Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Alcohol Consumption to Domestic Violence among the Officers.

R	= .7751	Multiple R	= .6010		
Multiple R <sup>2</sup> adjusted	= .5950	Standard Error Estimate	= 9.995		
Analysis of Variance					
Model	Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	P
Regression	73923.777	3	12320.629	123.335	< 0.05
Residual	49248.405	233	99.8951		
Total	123172.21	236			

**Table 3:** Relative Contribution of Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Alcohol Consumption among the Officers Leading to Violent Behavior of the Officers

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (beta)	T	Sig.
(Constant)	1.29323	.601		2.047	.041
Alcohol consumption	.29021	.0141	.528	20.710	.002
Occupational stress	.95734	.0.143	.973	67.524	.001
Job satisfaction	.21023	0.042	.301	5.010	.000

## DISCUSSION

The above results have clearly shown that the independent variables (occupational stress, job satisfaction and alcohol consumption) have proved to be factors to be reckoned with in regards to domestic violence among the police officers in Ikeja, Lagos State, Nigeria.

Occupational stress was found to have best predicted the domestic violence among the officers. This finding is supported by Lumb and Breazeale (2002), when they asserted that occupational stress, if untreated, can lead to negative attitude and behavioral changes in police officers. Gershon (2000) conducted a study to assess the relationship between police work stress and domestic violence by police officers. She identified the prevalence of stress as a factor of domestic violence. Erwin, et al. (2005) compared officers charged with intimate partner violence with those who had not been charged to identify risk factors. Stress was among the factors identified as a serious factor. When an officer is stressed beyond his/her coping mechanism, breaks in spousal communication, aggressive behavior, physical and emotional detachment from the spouse, and finally violent behaviors towards may ensue.

Job satisfaction was also found to have predicted domestic violence in this study. This is in agreement with the findings of Trachtenberg (2007), that job satisfaction, gender, gender role attitudes, type of employment, and socioeconomic status were predictors of work-family conflict among the participants in an online survey.

Alcohol consumption was strongly found to be related to domestic violence in this study. This result is also in line with the study of Linday (2008). He corroborated the link between alcohol drinking and their association with police suicides

and domestic violence. Also, Desjarlais, (1995), in his study of alcohol dependence and wife battering among the officers, established a strong correlation between alcohol dependence and wife battering among the officers. Lastly, Gavani (2010) offers that alcohol misuse is consistently found in a high proportion of those who perpetrate domestic abuse and sexual assault, and it has been found that within intimate relationships where one partner has a problem with alcohol or other drugs, domestic abuse are likely to be more.

## IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has shown clearly the strong relationship between the independent variables and domestic violence. Based on the above facts, it is hereby recommended that police administrators should work on sources of occupational stress and reduce it to the barest minimum, if it cannot be totally eradicated among the officers. Occupational stress does not have to lead to domestic violence. Officers should seek help when going through stress. Also, policing authorities should provide a good environment to operate. The welfare, in terms of job satisfaction, of the officers should be a major concern of the authorities.

Proactive programs and approaches are desired to prevent police officers from experiencing the negative effects of work stress which directly affects them and leads to frustration brought home to spouses, which could translate to domestic violence. Effective and efficient coping skills aimed at preventing or reducing reliance of the officers on alcohol consumption, and emphasis on dangers and consequences of excessive consumption of alcohol, should be part of the training for the officers.

## LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The first limitation of the study is the bureaucratic policy attached with the gathering of information especially sensitive information like domestic violence in a security organization like the police. Delays, disappointments, embarrassments, and negative attitudes were encountered in the process of collecting the research data. Another limitation of the study is its inability to accommodate other psychological factors. The three psychological factors used in this study do not mean that only these variables could predict domestic violence among the police officers. There are other variables that could be explored to investigate domestic violence among the officers.

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