

A Conceptual Analysis of Correlates of Domestic Violence and Adolescent Risky Behavior

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ABSTRACT: The study explores domestic violence and how it influences adolescent risky behavior. Domestic violence is a devastating social problem resulting in significant and enduring effects on children, threatening both their health and emotional well-being. The study aimed at examining the relationships between domestic Violence and Psychological Empowerment, Domestic Violence and Self-esteem, psychological Empowerment and Self-Regulation, Self Esteem and Psychological empowerment, Self-Esteem and Self-regulation, Self-Regulation and Adolescent Risky Behavior and identify the stronger predictor of self-regulation between psychological empowerment and Self-esteem. Adolescent respondents who experienced domestic violence were purposely selected and guided by teachers and administrators who had provided support to these children. The questionnaire had six sections namely; personal information, the Child Exposure to Domestic Violence Scale, the Psychological empowerment scale, the Rosenberg Self-esteem Inventory, and the Brief Self-Control Scale. Data analysis employed Pearson's product-moment correlation (r) to test hypotheses 1, 2,3,4,5, and 6. Regression analysis was used for hypothesis 7. The results show a significant relationship between domestic Violence and Psychological Empowerment, Domestic Violence and Self-esteem, psychological Empowerment and Self-Regulation, Self Esteem and Psychological empowerment, Self-Esteem and Self-regulation, Self-Regulation, and Adolescent Risky Behavior. The study documents that Psychological empowerment is a stronger predictor of self-regulation than Self-esteem.

KEYWORDS: *Domestic violence, psychological empowerment, self-regulation, and Adolescent risky behavior*

I. BACKGROUND

Domestic violence has significant, long-standing devastating effects on young people hence threatening their psychological well-being. Domestic violence is manifested in various ways including: physical, emotional, psychological, financial, or sexual forms. Self-esteem is a person's overall subjective evaluation of one's own self-worth and levels of self-confidence. It is how one judges himself or herself coupled with an attitude toward the self. Self-esteem involves beliefs about oneself (Hewitt, 2009) while Smith and Mackie, (2007) suggest that self-concept is what we think about the self; self-esteem, is the positive or negative evaluations of the self and the feelings associated with the evaluation.

Abusive behavior can have a traumatic and long-lasting effect on children, living in an abusive relationship can slowly but surely decrease and damage their self-esteem and sense of identity. On the other hand, it is possible for them to regain feelings of self-worth if subsequent environments are supportive with close warm relationships. (Leichhardt Women's community health Centre, 2006).

Rappaport (1987) defines psychological empowerment as a process in which people gain mastery and control over aspects within their environment that affect them. Psychological empowerment is the concept used to describe empowerment at the individual level (Zimmerman, 2000). Psychological empowerment involves perceptions of control, understanding your environment, and taking a proactive approach which can be seen to be a precipitating factor of self-control. Gaining self-control in daily life signifies the development of a sense of self-regulation.

Daniela (2015), defines self-regulation as a conscious and unconscious process by which one exercises control over the self and its cognitive processes. Self-regulation signifies a capacity to control attention, emotion, and behavior in ways that are in harmony with internal and contextual demands (Zimmerman, 2000). Self-regulation refers to the conscious control of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors with a goal in mind; it includes capabilities such as planning and the ability to delay gratification (Hofmann, Friese, & Strack, 2009).

Children and adolescents in families that experience domestic violence are at high risk of being abused. They also suffer harmful psychological consequences, such as low self-esteem, a lack of self-confidence, insecurity, fears, and anxiety. Children may exhibit other behaviors such as sleep disturbances, bed-wetting, eating problems, rigid gender role, and poor impulse control. As children grow older, they may demonstrate extremes of behavior- withdrawal, depression, or either passive or aggressive delinquent acts. Lawrence et al (2022) in their study found that exposure to family violence was positively associated with aggressive behavior in adolescents. Other behaviors may include suicide attempts, running away from home and abuse of drugs and alcohol. Some adolescents, particularly boys, and some girls, may continue the cycle of violence by emulating aggressive behavior. So, it can be said that family violence works as a poison not only for the growth and development of the personality of the children but also affects their carrier and future.

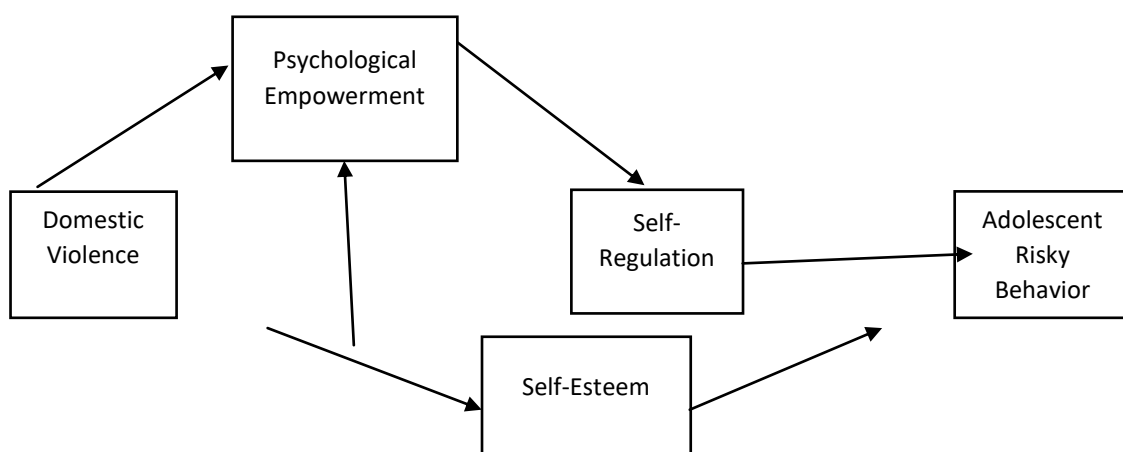
II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Domestic violence comes in varying forms including physical attacks, emotional abuse, financial deprivation or sexual abuse with devastating significant and enduring effects on children, threatening both their physical health and psychological well-being. Studies show that there is a close relationship between low self-esteem and domestic violence. Domestic violence can have traumatic and enduring effects on children, living in an abusive environment eventually decrease and damage their self-esteem and sense of identity. Similarly experiencing and witnessing domestic violence does affect the child with regards to psychological empowerment. Repeated exposure will erode their confidence and feeling of control over their lives and hence generate a sense of helplessness. In an abusive family environment, all supportive structures have been dismantled and therefore the child does not have the scaffolding necessary for healthy social and psychological development. A combination of low self-esteem with a loss of the sense of empowerment does not provide an atmosphere conducive to the development of the sense of self-regulation and with Self-regulation compromised, there will be challenges with regard to the individual engaging in a healthy cost-benefit analysis of behavior and the management of impulses, and hence the adolescent is more likely to engage in risky behaviors.

III. OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the relationship between domestic Violence and Psychological Empowerment.
2. To examine the relationship between domestic violence and Self-esteem.
3. To examine the relationship between psychological Empowerment and Self-Regulation.
4. To examine the relationship between Self Esteem and Psychological empowerment.
5. To examine the relationship between Self-Esteem and Self-regulation.
6. To examine the relationship between self-regulation and Adolescent Risky Behavior
7. Psychological empowerment is a stronger predictor of self-regulation than Self-esteem.

IV. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



V. METHODOLOGY

The study took a cross-sectional survey design. The sample of the study was selected from a population of school-going adolescents in the four major geographic regions of Uganda; namely Central, Eastern, southern western, and Northern. Two districts were randomly selected from the major geographical region and in which

adolescent respondents who experienced domestic violence were purposely selected guided by teachers and administrators who had provided support to these children.

Quantitative data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire with six sections: section A- personal information, Section B- the Child Exposure to Domestic Violence Scale (CEDV) 42 item 4-point Likert scale. Section C- Psychological empowerment scale (Nyende, 2014). Section D- Rosenberg Self-esteem inventory, a 10-item 4-point Likert scale (Rosenberg, 1965). Section E -the Brief Self-Control Scale (BSCS; Tangney, Baumeister & Boone, 2004). This 13-item scale assesses trait self-regulation with items such as "People would say that I have iron self-discipline" and "I am good at resisting temptation" on 5-point scales where 1 = *not at all* and 5 = *very much*.) Section F- Adolescent Risk-Taking Questionnaire (ARQ) a 4-point Likert scale.

The data collected was quantitative in nature. SPSS computer program was used for the analysis. The conceptual framework reflected the interaction of variables as correlates of domestic violence and data analysis used Pearson's product-moment correlation (r) to test hypotheses 1, 2,3,4,5, and 6. Hypothesis 7 was tested using regression analysis.

VI. RESULTS

6.1 Table 1: Table to show the correlation between domestic Violence and Psychological empowerment

		Psychological Empowerment
<i>Domestic Violence</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	-.584**
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.000
	<i>N</i>	317

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation results in Table 1 show a significant relationship between Domestic violence and Psychological empowerment. The Pearson correlation coefficient $r = -0.584$ and the sig (2-tailed) value at 0.000 which is less than 0.01, hence showing a significant negative relationship between the two variables.

6.2 Table 2: Table to show the correlation between domestic violence and Self Esteem

		Self Esteem
<i>Domestic Violence</i>	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	-.365
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.000
	<i>N</i>	317

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

The correlation results in Table 2 show a significant relationship between Domestic violence and self-esteem. The Pearson correlation coefficient $r = 0.365$ and the sig (2-tailed) value at 0.000 which is less than 0.01, hence showing a significant negative relationship between the two variables.

6.3 Table 3: Table to show the correlation between Psychological empowerment and Self-regulation

		Self Esteem
Psychological Empowerment	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.249**
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.000
	<i>N</i>	340

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

The correlation results in Table 3 show a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and self-regulation. The Pearson correlation coefficient $r=0.249$ and the sig (2-tailed) value at 0.000 which is less than 0.01, hence showing a significant relationship between the two variables.

6.4 Table 4: Table to show the correlation between Self-esteem and Self-regulation

		Self-Regulation
Self Esteem	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.139**
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.008
	<i>N</i>	342

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

The correlation results in Table 4 show a significant relationship between self-esteem and Self-regulation. The Pearson correlation coefficient $r=0.139$ and the sig (2-tailed) value at 0.008 which is less than 0.01, hence showing a significant relationship between the two variables.

6.5 Table 5: Table to show the correlation between psychological empowerment and Self-esteem

		Self Esteem
Psychological Empowerment	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	.498**
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.000
	<i>N</i>	340

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

The correlation results in Table 5 show a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and self Esteem. The Pearson correlation coefficient $r=0.498$ and the sig (2-tailed) value at 0.000 which is less than 0.01, hence showing a significant relationship between the two variables.

6.6 Table 6: Table to show the correlation between self-regulation and Adolescent Risky Behavior

		Adolescent Risky Behavior
Self-Regulation	<i>Pearson Correlation</i>	-.460**
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>	.007
	<i>N</i>	342

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

The correlation results in Table 6 show a significant relationship between self-regulation and Adolescent risky behavior. The Pearson correlation coefficient $r=-0.460$ and the sig (2-tailed) value at 0.007 which is less than 0.01, hence showing a significant relationship between the two variables. The relationship is a negative one, whereby as regulation scores increase risky behavior scores decrease

6.7 Table 7: Table to show Regression Analysis on the predictive power of Psychological empowerment and self-esteem on Self-regulation.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	29.508	1.817		16.244	.000
Psychological empowerment	.148	.034	.232	4.393	.000
Self-Esteem	.116	.056	.111	2.096	.037

a. Dependent Variable: Self-Regulation

The results in Table 7 above show that psychological empowerment is a stronger predictor of self-regulation than Self-esteem. Psychological empowerment shows a lower Sig. value of 0.000 then 0.037 for self-esteem

VII. DISCUSSIONS

7.1 Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between domestic Violence and Psychological Empowerment.

The correlation results in Table 1 show a significant negative relationship between Domestic violence and Psychological empowerment, hence retaining the hypothesis. Domestic violence does significantly undermine the development of psychological empowerment. Empowerment is seen as a process that nurtures power created in the relationships nurtured and hence used to master and gain control over their environment. The reverse relationship between domestic violence and psychological empowerment emphasizes the negative impact on the development of a sense of control over one's life if raised in this kind of atmosphere.

7.2 Hypothesis 2: There is a significant relationship between domestic Violence and Self-esteem

The correlation results in Table 2 show a significant negative relationship between Domestic violence and self-esteem, hence retaining the hypothesis. Exposure to domestic violence can have serious negative effects on children. It does present serious threats to physical and emotional security. Effects may include problem behavior like depression, aggressiveness, irrational fears, insomnia, and esteem problems (Osofsky, 2003). There is a close relationship between low self-esteem and violence (Reasoner, 2016). Research also shows that there is a link between domestic violence and low self-esteem, victims may develop low self-esteem as a result of extended exposure to abuse, and the victim endures due to a lack of self-awareness or worth (Brodshow, 2013).

The most frequently encountered symptoms of low self-esteem include depression, perceptions of inadequacy, negative comparisons to others, refusal to accept compliments, neglect of own emotional needs, subordinating their own needs, lowered expectations, difficulty maintaining relationships, concerns regarding self-image, lack of confidence in own judgment and distorted views of self.

7.3 Hypothesis 3: There is a significant relationship between psychological Empowerment and Self-Regulation.

The correlation results in Table 3 show a significant relationship between psychological empowerment and self-regulation, hence retaining the hypothesis. Empowerment is regarded to encompass a psychological sense of personal control as well as social influence. According to Zimmerman 2000, psychological empowerment involves perceptions of control, understanding your environment, and taking a proactive approach and can be seen to be a precipitating factor of self-control. The theory provides a good foundation for the explanation of empowerment and that the power nurtured can lead to gaining control and gaining self-control in daily life signifies the development of a sense of self-regulation. The outcome of the study agrees with the findings by Shamrifar et al 2019, indicating that psychological empowerment has a positive and significant effect on self-regulation and goes ahead to conclude that powerful people are self-controlling and self-regulating.

7.4 Hypothesis 4: There is a significant relationship between Self-Esteem and Self-regulation.

The correlation results in Table 4 show a significant relationship between self-esteem and Self-regulation, hence retaining the hypothesis. Self-regulation increases with an increase in self-esteem. It makes sense in that high esteem gives one confidence in their opinions. The Self-Regulation Theory suggests that our behavior is determined by what one considers to be good behavior, involving the drive to meet the desired behaviors, one's level of awareness of the circumstances and his actions, and one's level of motivation to resist temptations and make a good decision. The findings are consistent with findings by Spencer et al, 2002 that girls with high self-esteem are three times more likely to delay sex than girls with low self-esteem. Low self-esteem is associated with violent behavior, higher school dropout rates, early pregnancy, suicide, and low school achievement (Misetich& Delis-Abrams, 2003).

High-esteem people tend to appreciate themselves and other people, make their own decisions and conform to the norms of society, see the world in realistic terms, and accept others with greater confidence and a more positive direction. Other qualities involve being able to concentrate on solving problems in their lives, having loving and respectful relationships, knowing what their values are and living their lives accordingly and speaking up and telling others their opinions, calmly and kindly, and sharing their wants and needs with others.

7.5 Hypothesis 5: There is a significant relationship between Self-esteem and Psychological empowerment

The correlation results in Table 5 show a significant relationship between self Esteem and psychological empowerment, hence retaining the hypothesis. Self-esteem influences cognition, emotions, desires, and goals in a person (Sandra. 2009). It is regarded to be an internal belief system that an individual possesses about oneself (Rahmani, 2011). High self-esteem people perceive themselves as better, more capable, and of greater worth than people with low self-esteem. This self-evaluation impacts the level of psychological empowerment. The more confident you are, the more you are likely to feel a sense of control over your decisions, behavior, and aspects of your environment.

7.6 Hypothesis 6: There is a significant relationship between self-Regulation and Adolescent Risky Behavior

The correlation results in Table 6 show a significant relationship between self-regulation and Adolescent risky behavior, hence retaining the hypothesis. High levels of self-regulation are regarded to be protective against drinking and risky sex among adolescents (Hull & Slone, 2004). Several studies have demonstrated that self-regulation may also buffer against risk factors. In studies of adolescent alcohol and other substance use, Wills et al (2008) found that the impacts of peer substance use, negative life events, and impulsivity were meliorated among adolescents high in self-regulation. That is, self-regulation buffered against environmental and dispositional risk factors for substance abuse. Family is the most important foundation of socialization for the children. So constant conflict and quarreling between the family members directly affects the development of the child's personality and the decisions they make.

7.7 Hypothesis 7: Psychological empowerment is a stronger predictor of self-regulation than Self-esteem.

The results in Table 6 above show that psychological empowerment is a greater predictor than Self-esteem, hence retaining the hypothesis. Psychological empowerment is a greater predictor of self-regulation than self-esteem, meaning that it has greater influence although empowerment is the individual is enhanced by self-esteem as well. These results emphasize that building esteem and enhancement of empowerment in the youth will ultimately build their capacity for self-regulation.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

Domestic violence undermines the development of psychological empowerment. The reverse relationship between domestic violence and psychological empowerment emphasizes the negative impact on the development of a sense of control over one's life if raised in this kind of atmosphere. Exposure to domestic violence can have serious negative effects on children. There is a close relationship between low self-esteem and problems such as violence. Research also shows that victims develop low self-esteem over time as they experience or witness domestic violence.

Psychological empowerment has a positive and significant effect on self-regulation and goes ahead to conclude that powerful people are self-controlling and self-regulating. Empowerment is therefore regarded to involve a psychological sense of personal control as well as social influence. Psychological empowerment involves perceptions of control, understanding your environment, and taking a proactive approach which can be seen to be a precipitating factor of self-control. Self-regulation increases with an increase in self-esteem. It makes sense in that high esteem gives one confidence in their opinions. High self-esteem increases one's

willpower to resist temptations and choose the “right” path. High-esteem people tend to appreciate themselves and other people, make their own decisions and conform to the norms of society, see the world in realistic terms, and accept others with greater confidence and a more positive direction.

High self-esteem people perceive themselves as better, more capable, and of greater worth than people with low self-esteem. This self-evaluation impacts the level of psychological empowerment. The more confident you are, the more you are likely to feel a sense of control over your decisions, behavior

High self-regulation is considered to be protective against drinking and risky sex among adolescents. Developing self-regulation is known to safeguard adolescents from temptations of sexual involvement and drug use. In a study by Raul and Noemi (2022), results show that most of the risk factors that were measured were evident in the group exposed to family violence. Therefore, conflict and violence within the family directly affect the development of the child's personality and the decisions they make.

Psychological empowerment is a greater predictor of self-regulation than self-esteem, meaning that it has greater influence although empowerment is the individual is enhanced by self-esteem as well.

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