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Examinining the Influence of Traumatic Stress and Anger Expression on Violent Crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC)

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of traumatic stress and anger expression on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey research design. The population comprised of youths residing in selected communities within AMAC, from which a sample of 234 selected using a multistage sampling technique which include 136 males and 98 females. Data were collected using standardized instruments measuring traumatic stress, anger expression, and violent crime. The instruments demonstrated satisfactory reliability coefficients during the pilot study. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, simple linear regression and multiple regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of hypothesis one analysis revealed that traumatic stress have significant influence on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) ($\beta = .473$, $t = 8.622$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.347, 0.637]. The R^2 value of .242 indicates that traumatic stress accounted for 24.2% of the variance in violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Furthermore, the results of hypothesis two analysis revealed that anger expression significantly influenced violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) ($\beta = .582$, $t = 10.304$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.429, 0.727] The R^2 value of 31.4 indicates that anger expression accounted for 31.4% of the variance in violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMACThe study concluded that traumatic stress and anger expression are important psychological factors associated with violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council. It was recommended among others that government agencies, mental health professionals, community leaders, and non-governmental organizations should implement trauma-informed mental health services, anger management programmes, and community-based interventions aimed at reducing violent crime among youths.

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Keywords: Traumatic stress, anger expression and violent crime

Introduction

Violent crime has become one of the most pressing global social and violent crime concerns, with recent evidence showing persistent increases in assault, homicide, robbery, and gang-related activities across many societies (UNODC, 2024; WHO, 2023). The world health organization (2024) estimates that approximately 193,000 youths aged 15–29 die each year due to interpersonal violence, representing about 43% of all homicide deaths globally.

Furthermore, young males are disproportionately affected, accounting for nearly 80% of all youth homicide victims (UNODC, 2023). This gender disparity is consistent across high-, middle-, and low-income countries. Youth violent crime displays significant geographic variation. The Latin America and Caribbean region continues to report the highest youth homicide rates, ranging between 30–36 per 100,000 populations, largely associated with organized crime dynamics; drug trafficking, and gang culture (Flores & Martinez, 2022). In contrast, Europe records the lowest youth homicide rates globally, between 0.9–4 per 100,000, attributed to robust social welfare systems and community-level preventive interventions (Henderson & Clarke, 2023).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, youth homicide rates average 17–19 per 100,000, influenced by poverty, community disorganization, and limited institutional support (Adebayo, 2024). Meanwhile, North America has experienced increasing rates of weapon-related youth incidents, particularly firearm-related injuries and homicides (Smith & Carter, 2023). Across many Asian and Middle Eastern nations, youth violent crime is moderately prevalent but underreported due to inadequate surveillance systems (Rahman & Laghari,

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2023). While homicide provides a measurable indicator, non-fatal violence affects a larger proportion of youth worldwide.

A global school-based study covering 40 low- and middle-income countries found that 42% of adolescent boys and 37% of adolescent girls reported experiencing bullying, physical fights, or intimidation in the previous 12 months (WHO, 2024). Such non-fatal violence contributes to psychological distress, academic difficulties, and increased likelihood of subsequent delinquent behavior (Nguyen & Park, 2022).

Youth violence manifests in various forms, including assault, gang-related activity, community violence, and weapon-related incidents. According to recent studies, young people are more likely than adults to engage impulsively in violent acts because cognitive control systems particularly those governing judgment, self-regulation, and risk assessment are still developing during adolescence (Steinberg & Scott, 2023). As such, violent behaviour in youth is strongly associated with psychological stressors, biological maturation, and social pressures that interact to shape behavioural outcomes. Globally, it is influenced by complex interactions among socioeconomic, psychological, cultural, and structural factors (Murray & Barnes, 2023).

Nigeria has one of the largest youth populations globally, with over 70% of the population under 30 years, creating increased pressure on social, economic, and security systems (National Bureau of Statistics, 2024). Empirical findings show a sharp rise in violent crimes involving youth, including armed robbery, gang conflicts, terrorism recruitment, kidnapping, and community-based clashes. Nigeria’s expanding security challenges such as Boko Haram insurgency; banditry attacks, farmer–herder conflicts, and widespread communal violence have exposed millions of adolescents to traumatic

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stressors. These events destabilize emotional functioning and can predispose youths to aggressive or violent behaviours (Eze & Onu, 2023).

Additionally, urban centres such as Lagos, Abuja, Port Harcourt, and Ibadan report increasing youth involvement in cult-related clashes and violent street activities, often linked to anger dysregulation and peer reinforcement. Scholars argue that violent crime is no longer confined to unstable regions but has expanded across both developed and developing societies due to rising social stressors, economic uncertainties, exposure to traumatic events, and breakdown of informal social control systems (Akinsola, 2023; Nwankwo & Adeyemi, 2024).

Within this context, psychological factors such as traumatic stress and anger expression patterns have increasingly been recognized as major predictors of individuals' involvement in violent behaviour (Okolie, 2023; Peterson & McKee, 2024). This growing recognition underscores the importance of investigating how psychological strains shape behavioural choices that escalate into violent crime.

Traumatic stress refers to the psychological and emotional response to distressing events that overwhelm an individual's coping abilities, such as violence, loss, disaster, or severe threat (APA, 2023). Exposure to trauma during childhood or adolescence has been consistently associated with aggression, impulsivity, emotional numbing, and maladaptive behavioural responses. Traumatized youths often exhibit heightened arousal, hypervigilance, irritability, and impaired cognitive control, which can result in violent reactions during interpersonal conflicts (Martinez & Walker, 2024). In Nigeria, where many adolescents have experienced armed conflict, domestic violence, poverty, and

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community-level insecurity, traumatic stress has emerged as a significant predictor of youth engagement in violent acts (Ibrahim & Suleiman, 2024). Studies indicate that cumulative trauma increases the likelihood of joining violent groups, retaliatory aggression, and involvement in criminal networks.

Studies emphasize that traumatic stress alters neurobiological functioning, increases hyperarousal, heightens fear responses, and disrupts emotional regulation systems, making affected individuals more vulnerable to impulsive or aggressive actions (Harrell & Dyson, 2024; Eze & Mbakwe, 2023). In established communities where chronic exposure to violence, insecurity, and social instability persists, individuals may internalize trauma as part of daily living, resulting in persistent intrusive thoughts, emotional numbing, irritability, and heightened reactivity to all of which are psychological drivers linked with violent reactions to provocation or social conflict (Dunbar, 2024; Ahmed & Yusuf, 2023).

Closely related to traumatic stress is anger expression, which refers to the tendencies and methods individuals use to experience, manage, or express anger (Deffenbacher, 2023). Anger, though a normal human emotion, becomes problematic when expressed through aggression, retaliation, hostility, or violence. Scholars distinguish between anger-expression-out (acting anger outwardly, often in aggressive ways), anger-expression-in (suppressing anger internally in unhealthy ways), and anger-control (the capacity to regulate anger effectively) (Karim &Haruna, 2024; Chen et al., 2023). Research indicates that individuals with high traumatic stress are more likely to exhibit poor anger regulation, thereby increasing their likelihood of engaging in violent or antisocial behaviour (Onuoha&Igwe, 2024). Anger expression has therefore emerged as a powerful

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predictor of criminal involvement, especially in environments characterized by social tension, communal rivalry, economic stress, and institutional distrust. In Nigeria, elevated anger expression is often observed among youths exposed to economic hardship, family instability, cult groups, or violent neighbourhoods. Such youths demonstrate heightened irritability and low tolerance for frustration, which frequently escalate into violent confrontations (Adekeye & Salami, 2024). Anger dysregulation has also been associated with substance use among Nigerian youths, further

Statement of the Problem

Violent crime remains a serious public health, security, and criminal justice problem in Nigeria because of its consequences for human safety, psychological wellbeing, social stability, and economic activities. Crimes such as kidnapping, armed robbery, homicide, assault, cult-related violence, and other forms of interpersonal violence expose individuals and communities to experiences that may have lasting psychological consequences. The concern is particularly important because exposure to violent events does not end when the physical incident is over. Individuals who experience or witness violence may subsequently develop traumatic stress reactions, including persistent fear, hypervigilance, irritability, intrusive memories, emotional arousal, sleep disturbance, and heightened sensitivity to perceived threats (World Health Organization [WHO], 2024). When these reactions persist, they may affect an individual's ability to regulate emotions and respond appropriately to situations involving conflict or perceived danger.

The extent of the violent-crime problem can be demonstrated by official crime statistics from the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Police Command. According to the Command's 2024 scorecard, a total of 1,426 crime cases were recorded across the FCT during 2024,

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resulting in 1,077 arrests. Of these cases, 104 involved kidnapping, 268 involved armed robbery, and 68 involved homicide. The Command also recorded 263 cases of one-chance robbery and 38 cultism cases. In addition, 376 firearms were recovered, including 13 AK-47 magazines and 187 rounds of live ammunition. Although the Police Command reported a 15.1% reduction in overall crime incidents compared with 2023, the volume and seriousness of the reported violent offences demonstrate that violent crime remained a substantial security problem within the territory (FCT Police Command, 2025; The Abuja Inquirer, 2025).

The problem is particularly relevant to Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), where specific violent incidents have been documented. In 2024, residents of several AMAC communities, including Tasha 1, Tasha 2, Gydna/Akaraka, Agwan-Shawu, Idu, and Jiwa, reportedly experienced repeated attacks attributed to a gang popularly referred to as the "40 Boys" gang. During an attack in Tasha 2 in September 2024, several residents, including a police officer, were reportedly injured, while houses and vehicles were vandalised and some residents lost personal belongings. Earlier attacks in Akaraka and Tasha 1 also reportedly resulted in injuries, while a security guard was allegedly killed during an attack in Agwan-Shawu (Ogune, 2024). Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influence of traumatic stress and anger expression on youth involvement in violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC).

Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

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1. What is the influence of traumatic stress on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC)?
2. What is the influence of anger expression on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC)?

Research Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses:

1. There will be a significant influence of traumatic stress predicts violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC).
2. There will be a significant influence of anger expression on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC).

Significance of the Study

The study is significant in several ways:

This study will to help to fill a gap in the Nigerian literature by investigating the joint influence of traumatic stress and anger expression on youth involvement in violent crime, offering empirical data to guide future research.

Counsellors and psychologists can use the findings to design trauma-informed and anger-management interventions.

Schools and community organizations may develop behavioural support programs to reduce violent tendencies among youths.

Security agencies can incorporate mental-health approaches into crime-prevention strategies.

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The results will inform policymakers and government agencies on effective interventions to mitigate youth violence, particularly through youth-focused mental health and psychosocial support programs.

Scope of the Study

The content scope of this study covered the influence of traumatic stress and anger expression on youth violent crime at Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). This study was conducted among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC).

Conceptual Clarification/Literature review

This section presents the conceptual definitions of key variables in the study and critically reviews related empirical literature to provide a theoretical and research-based foundation for understanding the relationship between of influence of traumatic stress and anger expression on violent crime

Traumatic Stress and Violent Crime

The relationship between traumatic stress and violent crime has been widely investigated across diverse contexts, providing compelling evidence that exposure to trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms significantly increases the likelihood of violent behaviour.

Aebi et al. (2017) conducted a population-based cross-sectional study among 6,628 ninth-grade students in Switzerland, comprising 3,434 boys and 3,194 girls, with a mean age of 15.5 years, to investigate the relationship between post-traumatic stress and youth violence perpetration. Lifetime exposure to traumatic events and current PTSD were assessed using the University of California at Los Angeles Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

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Reaction Index (UCLA-RI), while violent behaviour was assessed through self-reported measures. Logistic regression was used to examine the association between PTSD and violent behaviour, while structural equation modelling was used to examine the mediating role of PTSD symptoms. The findings showed a strong statistically significant relationship between PTSD and violent behaviour, with PTSD associated with 7.9 times greater odds of violent behaviour among boys (OR = 7.9) and 5.5 times greater odds among girls (OR = 5.5). PTSD symptoms also partially mediated the association between traumatic exposure and violent behaviour among boys, although this mediation was not significant among girls. Dysphoric-arousal symptoms, particularly irritability and heightened arousal, were positively associated with violent behaviour in both genders. The study therefore demonstrated quantitatively that traumatic stress is strongly associated with youth violence and suggested that PTSD symptoms may provide an important psychological mechanism through which traumatic experiences contribute to violent behaviour.

Similarly, Wojciechowski (2020) examined juvenile offenders in United States using a longitudinal trajectory modeling design to identify patterns of violent behaviour in relation to PTSD symptoms. The sample consisted of justice-involved adolescents selected via purposive sampling from detention records, allowing the researcher to track violent offending over multiple years. PTSD diagnoses were assessed using clinical interviews based on DSM criteria, and violent offending trajectories were constructed from official criminal records. The statistical findings showed that adolescents with PTSD had more than twice the risk of assignment to each of the three trajectory groups involving violent behaviour, compared with adolescents in the abstaining trajectory.

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Recommendations included routine PTSD screening in juvenile justice facilities and the provision of targeted trauma-focused therapy to reduce sustained violent behaviour. This study emphasized the cumulative and chronic nature of trauma's impact on youth aggression and criminality.

In addition, Tsang (2018) investigated the independent contributions of trauma exposure and PTSD to delinquency among 1,354 serious adolescent offenders participating in the Pathways to Desistance Project in the United States. The study used a correlational design and assessed PTSD through structured clinical interviews, while participants' histories of violence exposure and delinquent behaviour were obtained through standardized assessments. Multivariable analyses were conducted to determine whether PTSD and violence exposure independently predicted antisocial behaviour after accounting for other relevant characteristics. The findings indicated that PTSD, exposure to violence, and psychopathy were independently associated with delinquent behaviour, although psychopathy demonstrated a stronger relationship with violent behaviour than PTSD alone. The statistical evidence therefore indicated that the contribution of PTSD remained significant after consideration of other individual-level risk factors, but its effect was comparatively weaker than that of psychopathic traits. The study consequently recommended multidimensional interventions that address trauma symptoms together with personality characteristics and continued exposure to violence. The finding suggests that traumatic stress is an important but non-deterministic risk factor for violent and antisocial behaviour among serious adolescent offenders.

Furthermore, Crimmins et al. (1997) examined the relationship between trauma exposure and violent behaviour among 414 juvenile offenders in New York City. Using a cross-

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sectional mixed-method design, the researchers obtained information about participants' traumatic experiences, life histories, substance use, and violent behaviours through semi-structured interviews. The analysis demonstrated a positive relationship between traumatic experiences and violent behaviour, with substance use emerging as an important factor through which trauma was associated with subsequent behavioural problems. Thus, the statistical pattern suggested that trauma could influence violent conduct both directly and indirectly through maladaptive coping mechanisms such as substance use. The researchers recommended routine assessment of traumatic experiences within juvenile justice settings and integrated treatment programmes addressing both psychological trauma and behavioural problems. The study is particularly relevant because it suggests that the relationship between traumatic stress and violent crime may involve multiple pathways rather than a single direct effect.

Peltonen et al. (2020) conducted a large-scale longitudinal birth-cohort study in Finland using administrative records involving 913,675 children born between 1986 and 2000. Trauma diagnoses recorded at ages 12–14 were linked with subsequent violent offending between ages 15 and 17, while demographic, socioeconomic, psychiatric, substance-use, and criminal-record information was also examined. The statistical findings were substantial: 6.5% of adolescents with a trauma diagnosis subsequently committed a violent offence compared with 1.8% of adolescents without a trauma diagnosis, corresponding to a relative risk of approximately 3.6. After adjustment for relevant demographic and family factors, the association remained statistically significant, with a fully adjusted risk difference of 0.024 ($p < .001$). Additional analyses controlling for psychiatric disorders, substance use, and other relevant factors continued to show a

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significant association. These findings provide strong longitudinal evidence that trauma-related disorders during early adolescence are associated with an increased probability of subsequent violent offending. The authors therefore emphasized the importance of identifying trauma early and providing appropriate interventions before traumatic stress develops into persistent behavioural and criminal problems.

In Nigeria, Atilola et al. (2014) conducted a comparative study involving juvenile justice inmates and school-going adolescents to examine trauma exposure and PTSD. The findings showed that 90% of juvenile justice inmates had experienced at least one lifetime traumatic event compared with 60% of adolescents in the comparison group, with the difference being statistically significant ($p = .001$). Current PTSD was identified in 5.8% of juvenile justice inmates compared with 1.4% of school-going adolescents, while lifetime PTSD was found in 9.7% and 2.8%, respectively, with the differences reaching statistical significance ($p < .05$). The study also found that the mean number of traumatic experiences was significantly higher among juvenile justice youths with PTSD. These findings demonstrate that traumatic experiences and PTSD are substantially more common among Nigerian youths involved in the juvenile justice system than among their school-going counterparts. Although the study did not directly model violent crime as its dependent variable, the high trauma and PTSD prevalence among justice-involved youths provides important evidence for the relevance of traumatic stress to youth offending in Nigeria.

Anger Expression and Violent Crime

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A growing body of empirical research has examined the relationship between anger expression patterns, including outward anger, internalized anger, anger suppression, anger rumination, and difficulties in emotional regulation, and aggressive or violent behaviour among adolescents and young adults. Across different countries and research designs, the evidence generally indicates that maladaptive anger expression is associated with increased aggression and violent conduct. The findings suggest that although experiencing anger is a normal emotional response, difficulties in regulating and expressing anger appropriately may increase the likelihood that anger will be translated into verbal aggression, physical aggression, interpersonal conflict, and other forms of violent behaviour.

Ayhan (2024) investigated the association between witnessing interparental violence and adolescents' anger expression styles in Türkiye using a descriptive correlational design. The study involved 1,000 adolescents aged 15–19 years, who were recruited through social media using convenience sampling. Data were collected through an online questionnaire containing the Witnessing Interparental Violence Scale and the Trait Anger Expression Inventory, and the data were analysed using SPSS 21.0. The findings showed that 446 participants (44.6%) had witnessed interparental violence. Adolescents who had witnessed interparental violence obtained significantly higher scores on trait anger, externalized anger, and internalized anger than those who had not witnessed such violence. Thus, the statistical comparison demonstrated significant differences in anger characteristics between adolescents exposed and not exposed to interparental violence. Although the accessible report does not provide the exact t, F, or p statistics for these comparisons, the authors concluded that witnessing interparental violence significantly

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affected adolescents' trait anger and anger-expression styles. These findings are relevant to violent behaviour because they indicate that repeated exposure to violence within the family may contribute to the development of maladaptive anger patterns, thereby increasing vulnerability to aggressive reactions during interpersonal conflicts. The study recommended further investigation across different cultural environments and the development of preventive strategies for youths exposed to family violence.

Similarly, Wongtongkam et al. (2016) examined the relationship between exposure to violence, anger, anger expression, and violent behaviour among 1,170 technical college students in Thailand using a cross-sectional design. Participants completed self-report questionnaires assessing the frequency of violent acts, antisocial behaviour, angry emotion, anger expression, and anger suppression. The statistical analysis examined the relationship between anger-expression scores and violent behaviours while taking demographic characteristics into consideration. The findings showed that anger-expression scores significantly predicted physical and verbal assaults, particularly punching and name-calling. In the reported regression/odds-ratio analyses, high anger expression was associated with increased odds of punching (adjusted OR = 1.75, 95% CI [1.19, 2.57]) and pushing (adjusted OR = 1.58, 95% CI [1.08, 2.33]). These statistics indicate that adolescents with higher levels of expressed anger were substantially more likely to engage in specific aggressive behaviours than those with lower anger-expression scores. The study therefore provides direct quantitative evidence that maladaptive anger expression is associated with concrete forms of violent conduct among young people. The authors recommended anger-control interventions as part of violence-prevention programmes for students.

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Methodology

This study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, which is suitable for investigating the influence of traumatic stress, anger expression, and involvement in violent behaviour among youths at a single point in time. The design allows for the efficient collection of data from a relatively large sample, enabling generalization within the target population.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The total population of the study comprised of only 986 (Youths) only selected by the researcher from Waru Community, Kabusa Ward, Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). According to national youth development policy of Nigeria 2019-2023: youths are persons aged 18 to 35 years; The multi stage sampling technique was used in selecting the participants for this study, this is because youths are spread across different wards and communities.

The sample size used for this study was determined mathematically using Z –Score formula

S= Z2 × P × (1−P)M2(1−P)M2

Where,

- S = sample size for infinite population
- Z = Z score
- P = population proportion (Assumed as 50% or 0.5)
- M = Margin of error

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Given: Z = 986, P = 0.5, M = 0.05

Using sample size formula,

$S = Z2 \times P \times (1-P)\ M2\ (1-P)2$

$S = (986)2 \times 0.5 \times (1-0.5)0.052(1-0.5)0.052$

$233 \times 0.25 / 0.0025$

S = 234.

Research Instrument

A self-report questionnaire consisting of three sections namely A, B, C

Section B: Impact of Event Scale–Revised (IES-R). The Impact of Event Scale–Revised (IES-R) was developed by Weiss and Marmar (1997) and revised in 2022, to assess psychological distress associated with exposure to traumatic events. The instrument contains 20 items measuring three major dimensions of trauma-related symptoms, namely intrusion, avoidance, and hyperarousal. Respondents rate each item on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (Not at all) to 4 (Extremely), with higher scores indicating greater trauma-related psychological distress. The instrument is suitable for assessing traumatic stress because it captures the major psychological reactions that may occur following exposure to traumatic experiences.

The IES-R has demonstrated strong psychometric properties in its original development and subsequent applications. Reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients range from .87 to .92 for Intrusion, .84 to .85 for Avoidance, and .79 to .90 for Hyperarousal, indicating satisfactory to excellent internal consistency across the dimensions; The previously cited

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Nigerian validation by Okeke and Ofoegbu (2021), with a reported Cronbach's alpha of .89, could not be independently verified and is therefore not presented as a confirmed Nigerian validation coefficient.

For the present study, the IES-R was subjected to a pilot study involving 50 participants who had characteristics similar to those of the respondents in the main study but were excluded from the final sample. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the clarity, appropriateness, and internal consistency of the items before the main administration. The responses obtained from the 50 participants were analysed using Cronbach's alpha. The analysis produced a reliability coefficient of $\alpha = .91$ for the IES-R. This coefficient indicates excellent internal consistency, as it is substantially above the generally accepted minimum reliability criterion of .70. The result therefore suggests that the items of the IES-R consistently measure traumatic stress within the context of the present study and that the instrument was suitable for administration in the main study.

Section C: State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory–2 (STAXI-2). The State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory–2 (STAXI-2) was developed by Spielberger (1999) to measure the experience, expression, and control of anger. The instrument consists of 35 items and assesses state anger, trait anger, anger expression-out, anger expression-in, anger control-out, and anger control-in. The STAXI-2 has demonstrated satisfactory internal consistency across its various dimensions. Reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients include .888 for State Anger, .804 for Trait Anger, .685 for Anger Expression-Out, .767 for Anger Expression-In, .865 for Anger Control-Out, and .868 for Anger Control-In. The differences in coefficients reflect the fact that the STAXI-2 consists of several distinct subscales measuring different aspects of anger. The previously

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cited Nigerian validation by Okoye and Ojukwu (2023), with a reported alpha coefficient of .87, could not be independently verified and is therefore not presented as an established Nigerian validation coefficient.

For the present study, the STAXI-2 was subjected to a pilot study involving 50 participants who were similar in characteristics to the intended study population but were excluded from participation in the main study. The pilot study was conducted to assess the suitability, comprehensibility, and internal consistency of the instrument within the study context. The responses obtained from the 50 participants were analysed using Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. The result produced an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of $\alpha = .88$. This coefficient indicates good internal consistency, demonstrating that the STAXI-2 items were sufficiently consistent in measuring anger experience, expression, and control among the pilot participants. Since the coefficient exceeded the .70 criterion, the instrument was considered reliable and suitable for use in the main study.

Techniques for Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentages) to summarize participant characteristics. For inferential analysis: simple linear regression analysis was employed to test hypothesis one and two while multiple linear regressions analysis was used to analyzed hypothesis three. The whole analysis was performed via statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) version 26.

Hypothesis One: This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of traumatic stress on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council

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(AMAC). This hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis and the result is presented in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Summary of linear regressions showing influence of traumatic stress on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC)

DV	Predictors	R	R2	F	DF	95%CI	β	t	P
Violent Crime	Constant	.492	.242	74.340	1.233				
	Traumatic Stress					[0.347, 0.637]	.473	8.622	.05

Table 4.2 present the results of hypothesis one analysis which revealed that traumatic stress have significant influence on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) ($\beta = .473$, $t = 8.622$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.347, 0.637]. The R^2 value of .242 indicates that traumatic stress accounted for 24.2% of the variance in violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Based on this result, hypothesis one is accepted.

Hypothesis Two: This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of anger expression on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). This hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis and the result is presented in table 4.3

Table 4.3: Summary of linear regressions showing influence of anger expression on violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC)

DV	Predictors	R	R2	F	DF	95%CI	β	t	P
Violent Crime	Constant	.560	.314	106.17	1.233				

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Anger Expression	[0.429, 0.727]	.582	10.304	.05

Table 4.3 present the results of hypothesis two analysis which revealed anger expression significantly influenced violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) ($\beta = .582$, $t = 10.304$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.429, 0.727] The R^2 value of 31.4 indicates that anger expression accounted for 31.4% of the variance in violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Based on this result, hypothesis two is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of hypothesis one revealed that traumatic stress significantly influenced youth violent crime among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). The result showed that traumatic stress positively predicted violent crime ($\beta = .473$, $t = 8.622$, $p < .05$, 95% CI [0.347, 0.637]). In addition, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .242$) indicated that traumatic stress accounted for 24.2% of the variance in youth violent crime. This finding suggests that youths who experience traumatic events such as abuse, neglect, and exposure to violence, insecurity, and adverse childhood experiences are more likely to engage in violent criminal activities. Traumatic experiences often affect emotional stability and psychological adjustment, making individuals more susceptible to aggression and antisocial behaviour.

The finding corroborates the study of Katembu et al. (2023), who found that childhood trauma significantly contributes to violent behaviour among adolescents through emotional dysregulation and cognitive-emotional deficits. Similarly, Day et al. (2023) reported that trauma exposure is strongly associated with aggression, delinquency, and

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violent offending among youths. These scholars argued that traumatic experiences interfere with healthy emotional development and increase the tendency toward violent and antisocial behaviours. The present finding therefore confirms that traumatic stress is an important psychological factor associated with youth involvement in violent crime.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that traumatic stress and anger expression significantly influence youth violent crime in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC).

The study demonstrated that traumatic experiences such as abuse, violence, neglect, insecurity, and other adverse experiences increase the likelihood of violent criminal behaviour among youths. Such experiences often lead to emotional instability, psychological distress, aggression, and antisocial behaviour.

The study also concluded that anger expression is a significant determinant of violent crime involvement among youths. Youths who experience difficulties in managing and expressing anger appropriately are more likely to engage in violent and criminal behaviours.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government agencies should establish trauma recovery and rehabilitation programmes for youths who have experienced traumatic events.

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2. Schools should incorporate emotional intelligence and anger management training into their guidance and counselling programmes.
3. Security agencies should collaborate with mental health professionals to identify and support at-risk youths before they become involved in violent criminal activities.

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