

Exploration of Social Cognitive Learning Theory: An Expedition to re-enact Gender-based Violence Prevention Strategies in Nigerian Secondary Schools



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ABSTRACT

This theoretical paper discussed the potential of social cognitive learning theory as an effective tool for re-enacting gender-based prevention strategies in Nigerian secondary schools. The paper is premised on the impact of gender-based violence in Nigerian secondary schools and identifies factors that impede gender equality efforts in the country. The paper responded to the fundamental objectives of Social Cognitive Learning Theory. It analysed and interpreted the assumptions in line with how they could be used to respond to the management of gender-based violence, and the accuracy of the SCLT using observations and the literature to justify the assumption of SCLT to the management of gender-based violence. The paper examined the background of social cognitive theory and its capacity to provide a means of unveiling and managing gender-based prejudice. The paper concluded that SCLT provides valuable insights for re-enacting gender-based prevention strategies in secondary schools. The study indicates that gender-based violence may be prevented in Nigerian secondary schools by using social cognitive learning theory, and it offers suggestions for how school administrators should handle this issue. This study adds to existing literature on using the social learning theory to combat gender-based violence in schools.

Keywords: Gender-Based Violence, School-Based Violence, Social Modelling, Self-Efficacy, Vicarious Learning, Reciprocal Determinism

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Publication History

Received:

16th April, 2025

Accepted:

31st July, 2025

Published:

28th August, 2025

To Cite this Article:

Onaolapo, Damilola Gbemisola, and Sekitla Daniel Makhasane.

“Exploration of Social Cognitive Learning Theory: An Expedition to re-enact Gender-based Violence Prevention Strategies in Nigerian Secondary Schools,” *E-Journal of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences* 6, no. 9 (2025): 2172 - 2184, <https://doi.org/10.38159/ehass.20256931>

INTRODUCTION

Globally, there is a trend in school-related gender-based violence. There is a growing issue of gender-based violence in secondary schools. After basic school, secondary education is an important stage in Nigeria's education that acts as a transition to either further study or vocational training.¹ Secondary education is essential for giving learners the information and abilities they need for future undertakings as well as for preparing them for higher education.² The Universal Basic Education (UBE) initiative,

¹ Stanley U. Nnorom, Okonkwo Eucheria Chinenye, and Aloysius O. Ezeanolue, “Educational Management and Staff Development Programmes: Mainspring for Achieving Goals in Secondary Schools in Nigeria,” *Journal of Research & Method in Education (IOSR-JRME)* 10, no. 4 (2020): 49–55; Ahmed Foluke Margaret et al., “Shortage of Science Teachers in Nigerian Educational Institutions: Causes and Way Forward,” *Miasto Przyszłości* 28 (2023): 34–41.

² John Olayemi Okunlola and Winston Hendricks, “Functionality of Secondary Education: An Investigation into Numeracy, Literacy, and Civic/Citizenship Competencies of Secondary School Graduates in Rural Communities of Southwestern Nigeria,” *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 10, no. 8 (2022): 490.

which attempts to guarantee access to high-quality basic education for all Nigerian children, is one of the measures the Nigerian government has put in place to address these issues.³

Despite the advantages of secondary education for nation-building, the persistent problems plaguing the secondary school system in Nigeria prevent learners from realizing their potential for academic success.⁴ Musa has stated that secondary school is the middle level of education and the system is riddled with various magnitudes of challenges and problems undermining the efforts of school administrators.⁵ The rise in gender-based violence in schools in Nigeria's secondary schools is one issue, among others. Despite international, national, and state policies against gender-based violence, violent acts and behaviours with gender continue to be reported in Nigerian secondary schools. According to Ekine, gender-based violence in schools has contributed to the threat that interferes with schools' aims and objectives at both the classroom and the school level.⁶

Some scholars have indicated that school-related gender-based violence is also visible in schools in Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, and developed nations like the United States of America.⁷ Gender-based violence is prevalent in acts of or threats of sexual, physical, and psychological violence. Gender-based violence perpetuates harmful gender stereotypes, reinforces power imbalances, and creates an environment of fear and intimidation in schools.⁸ In the same vein, Stewart et.al. contend that gender-based violence negatively impacts learners' self-esteem, mental health, and overall educational experience.⁹ Girls in particular suffer additional difficulties such as higher rates of dropout owing to shame and fear, early marriages, and increased susceptibility to sexual assault. Complex dynamics and underlying factors have given rise to gender-based violence.¹⁰ The enduring nature of this problem is attributed to several causes, including cultural beliefs, unequal power dynamics, lack of knowledge, and insufficient policies.¹¹

Gender-based violence in Nigerian secondary schools must be addressed through a multipronged approach, including collaboration from several stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, learners, community leaders, and government representatives.¹² Raising awareness, advocating for gender equality and respectful relationships, delivering comprehensive sexuality education, putting strict regulations and reporting procedures in place, and providing support services to survivors should be the main goals of this strategy. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory (SCLT) offers an effective strategy for addressing gender-based violence in Nigerian schools that can save the educational system. Therefore, the study aims to present a way of dealing with gender-based violence regarding SCLT principles, mostly in the Nigerian secondary school system, to effectively nip the problem in the bud for achieving school objectives.

³ Atinuke Ruth Ogundele, Moses Oladele Ogunniran, and M Abanikannda, "Challenges of Educational Technology and Adequacy of Trained Educator for the Implementation of Universal Basic Education (UBE) Program in Primary Schools: A Case of Ondo State, Nigeria," *Int J Soc Sci English Lit* 3 (2019): 13.

⁴ Moshood Olayinka Salahu, "Assessment of Educational Policy in Nigeria: A Study of State and Non-State Provision of Basic Education in Kwara State (2009-2019)" (Kwara State University (Nigeria), 2020).12.

⁵ Audu Ibrahim Musa, "Uplifting the Standard of History Education in Dealing with Economic and Socio-Political Challenges in Nigeria," *International Journal Of All Research Writings* 1, no. 3 (2019): 28

⁶ Adefunke Ekine, "Gender-Based Violence in Primary Schools: Nigeria. Echidna Global Scholar Alumni Brief Series.," *Center for Universal Education at The Brookings Institution*, 2020, 5.

⁷ C Afolabi, "Gender-Based Violence Prevalence in Tertiary Institutions, Ekiti State, South-Western Nigeria," *American Journal of Humanity Social Science Research* 3, no. 8 (2019): 137; Sora Lee and Robert Rudolf, "The Relationship between School-Related Gender-Based Violence and Absenteeism: Evidence from 14 Southern and Eastern African Countries," *South African Journal of Education* 42, no. 4 (2022); Chiji Longinus Ezeji, "Gender-Based Violence: Its Impact on Women and Girls during COVID-19 Pandemic in Lagos State, Nigeria.," *Alternation* 29, no. 2 (2022),78.

⁸ T. G. Obagboye and S. T. James, "Preventing Gender-Based Violence In Africa (Nigeria And Ethiopia); Socio-Legal Considerations," *Irish International Journal of Law, Political Sciences and Administration* 6, no. 5 (2022), 44.

⁹ Rebecca Stewart et al., "Gendered Stereotypes and Norms: A Systematic Review of Interventions Designed to Shift Attitudes and Behaviour," *Heliyon* 7, no. 4 (2021),13.

¹⁰ T. Palermo, J. Bleck, and A. Peterman, "Tip of the Iceberg: Reporting and Gender-Based Violence in Developing Countries," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 179, no. 5 (March 1, 2014): 602–12, <https://doi.org/10.1093/aje/kwt295>.

¹¹ Damilola Gbemisola Onaolapo, Sekitla Daniel Makhasane, and Ademola Akinlolu Onaolapo, "Mitigating Gender-Based Violence Through the Use of Ubuntu-Like Leadership in Nigeria Secondary School," *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences and Humanities* 8, no. 2 (2022): 196–206.

¹² Silvia Guglielmi et al., "Reimagining Girls' Education: Solutions to Keep Girls Learning in Emergencies.," *UNICEF*, 2021; Esther Adesua Osime, "Utilization of Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV) Response Services among Women and Girls Affected by Conflict in Northeast Nigeria: Barriers, Opportunities, and Strategies" (Universiteit Amsterdam, The Netherlands., 2021), 5.

Consequently, this study offers a thorough justification for how SCLT is related to the prevention of gender-based violence in the Nigerian secondary school system. To direct this theoretical investigation, the study's main research question is this: How might SCLT be implemented to strengthen gender-based preventative techniques in secondary schools in Nigeria? This study intends to improve gender-based preventive tactics in secondary schools in Nigeria by repositioning the SCLT through critical analysis. To address the management of gender-based violence in Nigerian secondary schools, the archetypal SCLT is investigated, examined, and redirected. To achieve the aims mentioned above, the study explores:

1. The fundamentals of SCLT, analyse and interpret the assumptions in line with how it could be used to manage gender-based violence.
2. The accuracy of the SCLT using observations and the literature to justify the assumption of SCLT in the management of gender-based violence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Evolutionary Development of SCLT

Over several decades and with the influence of many academics, the Social Cognitive Learning Theory, also known as the Social Learning Theory or the Observational Learning Theory, has evolved.¹³ Originally shaped by behaviourist viewpoints, SCLT theory has expanded to include social interactions, cognitive processes, and the reciprocal link that exists between people and their surroundings. With the introduction of crucial ideas like reciprocal determinism, self-efficacy, and observational learning, Albert Bandura, in particular, has played a significant role in developing and improving the theory.¹⁴ Numerous disciplines, including psychology, organizational behaviour, education, and health promotion, have found use for the notion. Modern viewpoints keep delving into novel subjects, including social interaction, self-regulation, and the effects of technology on behaviour and education. The Social Cognitive Learning Theory's inception may have taught us more about how individuals learn through observation, cognition, and social factors, as well as how these concepts continue to shape our understanding of human behaviour and learning processes.¹⁵

The idea of social cognitive learning is a psychological paradigm that examines how people learn and develop via observing others. According to Vaka-Vivili, it is frequently referred to as a social learning theory or an observational learning theory.¹⁶ Beyond conventional behaviourist perspectives, SCLT theory emphasizes the influence of social interactions, cognitive processes, and environmental elements on learning.¹⁷ The basic tenet of social cognitive learning is that people pick up new attitudes, behaviours, and beliefs from watching other people. Learning occurs both directly and indirectly, via seeing the actions of others and the outcomes they experience.¹⁸ Through observation and behaviour imitation of role models or important individuals, people can learn new skills, acquire knowledge, and alter their own actions.¹⁹ SCLT highlights various key concepts. According to Morse et al., one central concept is observational learning, which involves paying attention to and retaining information about observed behaviours, reproducing those behaviours, and being motivated to engage in them based on

¹³ Frank Van Overwalle et al., "Consensus Paper: Cerebellum and Social Cognition," *The Cerebellum* 19, no. 6 (2020): 840; Mark A Smith, "Social Learning and Addiction," *Behavioural Brain Research* 398 (2021): 2; M. Singh et al., "Beyond Social Learning," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B* 376, no. 1828 (2021): 2.

¹⁴ Albert Bandura, "Reflections on Self-Efficacy," *Advances in Behaviour Research and Therapy* 1, no. 4 (1978): 238; Sofyan Hadi, Hery Setiyatna, and Agus Sutiyo, "Learning Behavior Theory According to Ivan Pavlov, Thorndike, Skinner and Albert Bandura," *Novateur Publications* 1 (2023): 175–84.

¹⁵ Sorin Adam Matei, "Social Cognitive Theory, Social Learning, Self-Efficacy and Social Media," *Decision Support Systems* 42, no. 3 (2006): 1877.

¹⁶ Margaret Vaka-Vivili, "Self-Efficacy Beliefs Influencing Pasifika Students' Achievement in Science" (Open Access Te Herenga Waka-Victoria University of Wellington, 2022), 15.

¹⁷ Kelly S. Chaney, "The Effect of Embedded Professional Learning Communities on Teacher Self-Efficacy and Collective Efficacy in PLC Model Schools" (University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 2023), 5.

¹⁸ Albert Bandura and Richard H Walters, *Social Learning Theory*, vol. 1 (Prentice hall Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1977); Bandura, "Reflections on Self-Efficacy" 14; David R Olson and Jerome S Bruner, "Learning through Experience and Learning through Media," *Teachers College Record* 75, no. 5 (1974): 127.

¹⁹ Albert Bandura, "Self-Efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change," *Psychological Review* 84, no.2 (1977): 191.

the outcomes witnessed.²⁰ As people evaluate, make sense of, and recall the observed actions, cognitive processes play a critical part in this learning.²¹ Self-efficacy, defined as a person's confidence in their capacity to carry out a certain job or action, is another important idea.²²

The reciprocal interaction that exists between people and their environment is another point of emphasis for the social cognitive learning hypothesis. It suggests that behaviour, as well as individual traits like ideas, beliefs, and self-efficacy, and contextual factors, are dynamically influenced. This theory has wide-ranging applications in organizational behaviour, psychology, education, and health promotion, among other fields. It provides information on successful teaching methods, interventions for behaviour modification, and how the media shapes people's attitudes and actions.²³

Assumptions of SCLT and their Reflective Observations

The assumptions of the SCLT are as follows: social modelling, self-efficacy, vicarious learning, and reciprocal determinism. The reflective observation (applicability of SCLT theory to addressing gender-based violence).

Social Modelling

The process through which individuals acquire new behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs is known as social modelling, sometimes known as observational learning or social learning.²⁴ It is an essential component of human learning and has a big impact on how people behave and grow.²⁵ From early childhood, individuals are constantly exposed to various social models, including parents, peers, teachers, and media figures. These models exhibit behaviours that are observed and internalized by individuals, influencing their actions and beliefs.²⁶ Social modelling occurs through the observation of others' behaviours, the consequences that follow, and the interpretation of those behaviours.

The process of social modelling involves several key elements. The first process involves individuals paying attention to the behaviours of others and selectively observing those that are salient or meaningful to them.²⁷ They focus on the actions, verbal expressions, emotional responses, and outcomes associated with the observed behaviours. Next, individuals retain the observed information in their memory. This retention allows them to recall and reproduce the behaviour at a later time. Factors such as cognitive abilities, motivation, and rehearsal influence the retention of observed behaviours. Once the behaviour is stored in memory, individuals can reproduce or imitate it.²⁸ The accuracy of the reproduction depends on factors such as physical and cognitive capabilities, self-efficacy beliefs, and the perceived value of the behaviour.

An important component of social modelling is motivation. People are more prone to copy actions that are linked to successful results, prizes, or social acceptance.²⁹ The model's attractiveness or reputation, the behaviour's perceived worth, and the predicted results can all have an impact on why people choose to emulate them. Reinforcement also plays a role in social modelling. Positive

²⁰ Benjamin A B Morse, Jennifer P Carman, and Michaela T Zint, "Fostering Environmental Behaviors through Observational Learning," *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 27, no. 10 (2019): 1534.

²¹ Janet N. Ahn, Danfei Hu, and Melissa Vega, "'Do as I Do, Not as I Say': Using Social Learning Theory to Unpack the Impact of Role Models on Students' Outcomes in Education," *Social and Personality Psychology Compass* 14, no. 2 (February 20, 2020), <https://doi.org/10.1111/spc3.12517>.

²² Rebecca Lazarides and Lisa Marie Warner, "Teacher Self-Efficacy," in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*, 2020.

²³ Dale H Schunk and Maria K DiBenedetto, "Motivation and Social Cognitive Theory," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 60 (2020): 101832.

²⁴ Albert Bandura, "Social-Learning Theory of Identificatory Processes," *Handbook of Socialization Theory and Research* 213 (1969): 262.

²⁵ Sunday David Edinyang, "The Significance of Social Learning Theories in the Teaching of Social Studies Education," *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology Research* 2, no. 1 (2016): 41.

²⁶ Dale H Schunk and Barry J Zimmerman, "Social Origins of Self-Regulatory Competence," *Educational Psychologist* 32, no. 4 (1997): 196.

²⁷ Dale H Schunk and Ellen L Usher, "Social Cognitive Theory and Motivation," *The Oxford Handbook of Human Motivation* 2 (2012): 12.

²⁸ James E Maddux, *Self-Efficacy, Adaptation, and Adjustment: Theory, Research, and Application* (Springer Science & Business Media, 2013).

²⁹ Stacey L Malek, Shikhar Sarin, and Christophe Haon, "Extrinsic Rewards, Intrinsic Motivation, and New Product Development Performance," *Journal of Product Innovation Management* 37, no. 6 (2020): 530.

reinforcement, such as praise or rewards, strengthens the likelihood of imitating the behaviour.³⁰ Conversely, negative reinforcement or punishment can discourage imitation. It is employed as a strategy for behaviour change, skill acquisition, and promoting prosocial behaviours. For individuals with positive role models and opportunities for observational learning, social modelling contributes to personal development, behaviour modification, and the acquisition of new skills and knowledge.³¹ Social modelling is a powerful process through which individuals learn and acquire behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs by observing and imitating others. It influences the development of individuals throughout their lives and has significant implications for understanding human learning and behaviour.

DISCUSSION

Reflective Observations and Application of SCLT to Addressing Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a problem affecting many Nigerian schools, creating an unsafe and hostile environment for learners. Addressing this problem requires multifaceted approaches, including the use of social modelling techniques. Social modelling, or observational learning, involves individuals learning and imitating behaviours they observe in others.³² Leveraging social modelling strategies, Nigerian schools can promote positive attitudes, behaviours, and norms that reject gender-based violence and foster a culture of respect, equality, and non-violence. In this way, members of the school community in general and learners in particular can observe and learn attitudes, learning, and norms that promote a free gender-based violence environment.

Social modelling recognizes the influence of role models, peers, and teachers in shaping learners' attitudes and behaviours.³³ It acknowledges that learners learn from formal instruction but also through observing the actions and consequences experienced by those around them. Through the use of social modelling techniques, schools can provide learners with positive examples to emulate and create an environment where gender-based violence is not tolerated. This strategy strongly emphasizes the significance of positive role models who exhibit polite and nonviolent conduct both inside and outside of the school. It also recognizes the significant influence of peer interactions and the need to promote peer cultures that reject gender-based violence. Given that, teachers and school staff members play a critical role as role models, showcasing respectful behaviours and delivering gender-sensitive education is essential. Employing social modelling techniques (principles), Nigerian schools can challenge harmful gender stereotypes, raise awareness about the consequences of gender-based violence, and empower learners to become advocates for equality and non-violence.³⁴ This approach promotes a shift in attitudes and behaviours, creating a safer and more inclusive learning environment for all learners.

Self-Efficacy and Its Reflective Observations

Another assumption is that the psychological concept of self-efficacy significantly impacts human motivation, behaviour, and achievement. Self-efficacy is described by Bandura as a person's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks, accomplish specific objectives, or display specific behaviours..³⁵ Self-efficacy beliefs influence how individuals think, feel, and behave. Individuals with high self-efficacy perceive themselves as competent, leading to greater motivation, persistence, and resilience in the face of obstacles.³⁶ Conversely, low self-efficacy can undermine motivation and lead to self-doubt, avoidance, and decreased performance.

Several factors can affect how self-efficacy develops. First, the growth of self-efficacy is greatly influenced by mastery experiences or good performances in prior similar situations. When individuals repeatedly succeed in a particular task, their belief in their ability to perform that task successfully

³⁰ Hadi, Setiyatna, and Sutiyono, "Learning Behavior Theory According to Ivan Pavlov, Thorndike, Skinner and Albert Bandura," 176.

³¹ Adalgisa Battistelli et al., "Information Sharing and Innovative Work Behavior: The Role of Work-based Learning, Challenging Tasks, and Organizational Commitment," *Human Resource Development Quarterly* 30, no. 3 (2019): 362.

³² Albert Bandura and Richard Isadore Evans, *Albert Bandura* (Insight Media, 2006).

³³ Albert Bandura, "Social Cognitive Theory for Personal and Social Change by Enabling Media," in *Entertainment-Education and Social Change* (Routledge, 2003), 100.

³⁴ U N Women, *Global Guidance on Addressing School-Related Gender-Based Violence* (UNESCO Publishing, 2016).

³⁵ Bandura, "Reflections on Self-Efficacy," 238.

³⁶ Albert Bandura and Sebastian Wessels, *Self-Efficacy*, vol. 4 (1994), 74.

increases. Secondly, social modelling and vicarious experiences shape self-efficacy.³⁷ Observing others successfully perform a task or overcome challenges can boost an individual's belief in their capabilities. Thirdly, self-efficacy may be impacted by social influence and other people's perspectives. Encouraging and helpful feedback can increase self-efficacy, but unfavourable comments might decrease it.

Furthermore, individuals' interpretation and assessment of their physical and emotional states, such as their level of anxiety or stress, can impact self-efficacy.³⁸ If individuals perceive their anxiety as debilitating, their self-efficacy may suffer. On the other hand, if they interpret their anxiety as manageable, it may not significantly affect their self-efficacy. They impact setting objectives, exerting effort, being resilient in the face of failure, and being capable of overcoming obstacles. Self-efficacy is a skill that people may develop to improve their motivation, effectiveness, and general well-being.³⁹ Additionally, teachers and leaders can foster self-efficacy in others by providing support, feedback, and opportunities for mastery experiences, ultimately facilitating personal growth and success.

Reflective Observations and Applicability of Self-Efficacy to Address Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a growing concern and issue affecting many Nigerian secondary schools, creating an environment where learners are subjected to various forms of abuse, discrimination, and harassment.⁴⁰ Addressing this problem requires a comprehensive approach that includes empowering learners with the belief in their ability to challenge and prevent gender-based violence. Self-efficacy is characterized as their assurance in their capacity to carry out certain tasks and achieve desired outcomes.⁴¹ In the context of addressing gender-based violence, Self-efficacy is essential for enabling learners to speak up for themselves, claim their rights, and foster an environment of respect, equality, and safety in their schools.

When learners possess a strong sense of self-efficacy, they view themselves as competent in dealing with challenging situations related to gender-based violence. This belief in their abilities is a driving force for taking action, advocating for change, and promoting positive behaviours within their school community.⁴² Fostering self-efficacy among learners, Nigerian secondary schools can help combat gender-based violence. High self-efficacy learners are more likely to question oppressive practices, step in as active bystanders, and assist victims of gender-based violence. They are motivated to speak up, take initiative, and contribute to creating an environment where everyone feels safe, respected, and valued. This approach recognizes the importance of empowering learners to become agents of change in addressing gender-based violence. It emphasizes the need to provide them with the skills, knowledge, and support necessary to challenge harmful behaviours and promote positive alternatives. By building learners' belief in their capabilities, we can foster a generation of empowered individuals who actively contribute to creating a society free from gender-based violence.

Vicarious Learning

Vicarious learning, sometimes referred to as observational learning or learning via observation, is a process through which people pick up new information, abilities, and behaviours by paying attention to other people.⁴³ A key component of human learning, vicarious learning is essential for socialization, education, and personal growth. Vicarious learning emphasizes the influence of social theory; individuals can learn and imitate behaviours by observing the actions, consequences, and outcomes

³⁷ Bandura, "Reflections on Self-Efficacy," 13.

³⁸ Albert Bandura, "Perceived Self-Efficacy in Cognitive Development and Functioning," *Educational Psychologist* 28, no. 2 (1993): 119.

³⁹ Albert Bandura, "Exercise of Personal and Collective Efficacy in Changing Societies" (Self-efficacy in changing societies/Cambridge University Press, 1995), 5.

⁴⁰ Amira Y. Badri, "School Gender-Based Violence in Africa: Prevalence and Consequences," *Global Journal of Arts Humanities and Social Sciences* 2, no. 2 (2014): 3; Adeola Ajayi, "Effects of the Demographic Characteristics of Students on Gender-Based Violence among Junior Secondary School Students in Osun State, Nigeria," *International Journal of Rural Development, Environment and Health Research* 1, no. 1 (2017), 83; Olusegun Grace Funmilayo, "Gender Based Violence, a Glaring Pandemic in Nigerian Universities," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business, Arts and Science* 2, no. 5 (2020): 103.

⁴¹ Peter A. Heslin and Ute-Christine Klehe, "Self-Efficacy," *Encyclopedia Of Industrial/Organizational Psychology, SG Rogelberg, Ed 2* (2006): 706.

⁴² Albert Bandura, *Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies* (Cambridge university press, 1997).

⁴³ Albert Bandura, "Vicarious Processes: A Case of No-Trial Learning," in *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, vol. 2 (Elsevier, 1965), 5.

experienced by others.⁴⁴ Through this process, individuals learn what is possible, what is rewarded or punished, and how to perform specific tasks or behaviours.

Vicarious learning involves several elements. Firstly, individuals pay attention to the actions and behaviours of others, focusing on relevant cues such as their actions, gestures, verbalizations, and emotional expressions.⁴⁵ They actively observe and attend to the behaviour being demonstrated. Individuals retain the observed information in memory. The retention process allows individuals to store and recall the information when needed. The observed behaviour can be imitated or reproduced by individuals.⁴⁶ Individuals can replicate observed behaviours based on their understanding and interpretation of the model's actions. The chance of reproduction is influenced by self-efficacy (confidence in one's skills), motivation, and the behaviour's perceived worth. The process of vicarious learning is also influenced by reinforcement and punishment. Individuals learn from observing the consequences of others' behaviours.⁴⁷ Learners are more inclined to mimic a behaviour if they see favourable results or incentives linked with it. On the other hand, if learners notice unfavourable results or penalties, they can be dissuaded from modelling the conduct.

Vicarious learning has significant implications in various domains, including education, social behaviour, and personal development.⁴⁸ It can be applied in classrooms, where learners observe and learn from their teachers and peers. Vicarious learning is a potent method through which people learn new things by imitating the knowledge, abilities, and actions of others.⁴⁹ Understanding the process of vicarious learning, educators, parents, and society as a whole can leverage positive role models, provide meaningful experiences, and promote pro-social behaviours to facilitate learning and personal growth.

Reflective Observation and Applicability of Vicarious Learning to Address Gender-Based Violence

Vicarious learning, a concept rooted in social cognitive learning theory, offers valuable insights into how individuals can learn from observing others' experiences.⁵⁰ When applied to addressing gender-based violence, vicarious learning becomes a powerful tool for promoting awareness, empathy, and behaviour change. By witnessing the experiences and consequences faced by others, individuals can gain a deeper understanding of the issue and develop strategies to prevent and address gender-based violence. Vicarious learning's involvement in addressing gender-based violence brings to light a variety of strategies that might be used in educational settings to promote change. By utilizing vicarious learning effectively, schools and communities can empower individuals to become agents of change in the fight against gender-based violence.

Reciprocal Determinism

Added supposition by Bandura proposed the idea of reciprocal determinism when he created the social cognitive theory. Reciprocal determinism speaks of the dynamic between a person's conduct, internalized characteristics (such as beliefs and attitudes), and their surroundings. According to reciprocal determinism, these three factors continually influence and shape one another.⁵¹ In reciprocal determinism, behaviour refers to the actions and conduct of an individual. Personal factors are an individual's cognitive processes, beliefs, attitudes, and values.⁵² The physical and social surroundings

⁴⁴ Carrie L. Masia and Philip N. Chase, "Vicarious Learning Revisited: A Contemporary Behavior Analytic Interpretation," *Journal of Behavior Therapy and Experimental Psychiatry* 28, no. 1 (1997): 43; J Terry Mayes, "Still to Learn from Vicarious Learning," *E-Learning and Digital Media* 12, no. 3-4 (2015): 365.

⁴⁵ Albert Bandura, "Social Cognitive Theory of Social Referencing," in *Social Referencing and the Social Construction of Reality in Infancy* (Springer, 1992), 176.

⁴⁶ Ted L Rosenthal and Barry J Zimmerman, *Social Learning and Cognition* (Academic Press, 2014).

⁴⁷ Saul McLeod, "Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory," *Simply Psychology*. London 694 (2011): 695.

⁴⁸ Steven L Anderson and Nancy E Betz, "Sources of Social Self-Efficacy Expectations: Their Measurement and Relation to Career Development," *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 58, no. 1 (2001): 98-117.

⁴⁹ Joan E. Grusec, "Social Learning Theory and Developmental Psychology: The Legacies of Robert R. Sears and Albert Bandura.," in *A Century of Developmental Psychology.*, ed. R. D. Parke et al. (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1994), 475, <https://doi.org/10.1037/10155-016>.

⁵⁰ Joanna Hayden, *Introduction to Health Behavior Theory* (Jones & Bartlett Learning, 2022).

⁵¹ Bandura, "Reflections on Self-Efficacy," 345.

⁵² Stanley Ross, "A Conceptual Model for Understanding the Process of Self-Leadership Development and Action-Steps to Promote Personal Leadership Development," *Journal of Management Development* 33, no. 4 (2014): 299-323.

in which people interact, such as family, peers, schools, and larger societal influences, are included in the social environment.

Reciprocal determinism proposes that these factors are interdependent and influence each other bidirectionally. To put it another way, a person's conduct is a result of the continual interaction between personal and environmental elements.⁵³ For example, a learner's academic performance may be influenced by their self-beliefs (personal factor), the support they receive from teachers and parents (social environment), and their actual engagement in learning activities (behaviour). The concept of reciprocal determinism highlights the dynamic nature of human behaviour and emphasizes that individuals actively contribute to and are influenced by their environment.⁵⁴ It implies that altering one aspect may cause the others to change. For instance, a learner's motivation and sense of self-efficacy can be increased by their instructors' encouragement and positive feedback (environment), which can then improve their behaviour (academic performance). The creation of treatments, educational programs, and policies aimed at promoting good behaviours and results can be guided by the reciprocal nature of the behaviour, individual variables, and the social context.⁵⁵ By recognizing the reciprocal influences at play, individuals and society can work towards creating environments that support and reinforce desired behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs. Similarly, reciprocal influences at play enable the school leaders to promote a free gender-based violence environment.

Reflective Observation and Reciprocal Determinism's Applicability in Addressing Gender-Based Violence

Gender-based violence is a pervasive issue that requires a multifaceted approach for effective prevention and intervention. One valuable framework for understanding the dynamics of gender-based violence is reciprocal determinism, which explores the interplay between individual factors, behaviour, and the social environment.⁵⁶ Reciprocal determinism recognizes that these elements are interconnected and mutually influential, providing insights into how interventions can be designed to address and prevent gender-based violence. Understanding the reciprocal nature of individual factors, behaviour, and the social environment, we can develop strategies that promote positive change and create environments that reject violence and uphold gender equality. Through education, policy changes, and community engagement, reciprocal determinism can guide efforts to foster a culture of respect, empathy, and non-violence, ultimately working towards eradicating gender-based violence.

The Implications of Social Cognitive Learning Theory to Secondary School Management and How Gender-Based Violence can be Addressed

The social cognitive learning theory is concerned with the ways in which individuals learn new actions by observation, reinforcement, and imitation. As a result, Nabavi and Bijandi highlighted how learning and observation have a significant impact on learners' cognitive development.⁵⁷ The theory's ramifications for secondary school administration make it evident that promoting a safe and healthy learning environment and opposing gender-based violence are crucial issues to take into account. Some suggestions are as follows:

1. Modelling behaviour

The social cognitive learning hypothesis states that learners watch and mimic the actions of classmates, instructors, and other people. Therefore, encouraging healthy role modelling is crucial for secondary school administration. When interacting with learners, teachers and staff should act in a courteous and non-violent manner and set clear standards for proper behaviour.

⁵³ D. C. Phillips and Rob Orton, "The New Causal Principle of Cognitive Learning Theory: Perspectives on Bandura's 'Reciprocal Determinism,'" *Psychological Review* 90, no. 2 (April 1983): 160, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.90.2.158>.

⁵⁴ Tim R V Davis and Fred Luthans, "A Social Learning Approach to Organizational Behavior," *Academy of Management Review* 5, no. 2 (1980): 285.

⁵⁵ Frank Pajares and Ellen L Usher, "Self-Efficacy, Motivation, and Achievement in School from the Perspective of Reciprocal Determinism," *Advances in Motivation and Achievement* 15 (2008): 395.

⁵⁶ Stuart Woodcock and Nelly Tournaki, "Bandura's Triadic Reciprocal Determinism Model and Teacher Self-Efficacy Scales: A Revisit," *Teacher Development* 27, no. 1 (2023): 76..

⁵⁷ Razieh Tadayon Nabavi and Mohammad Sadegh Bijandi, "Bandura's Social Learning Theory & Social Cognitive Learning Theory," *Theory of Developmental Psychology* 1, no. 1 (2012): 5.

2. Encouraging prosocial behaviour

The theory highlights the role of reinforcement in shaping behaviour. Secondary school management can promote prosocial behaviour by providing positive reinforcement, such as praise and recognition, for learners who exhibit respectful and inclusive actions. This can foster a school culture that values empathy, cooperation, and tolerance.

3. Creating a safe and supportive environment

The social cognitive learning theory states that learning and behaviour modifications are greatly aided by a peaceful learning environment. Institutions of higher learning ought to try to provide a welcoming and safe space where learners feel comfortable expressing themselves and reporting instances of gender-based violence. This can mean creating clear guidelines for managing and resolving issues, providing counselling, and instituting policies against bullying and violence.

Similarly, school administrators who adhere to the principles of SCLT may deal with gender-based violence in the school by doing the following:

1. Education and awareness

Comprehensive teaching on gender-based violence, including its manifestations, repercussions, and preventative measures, ought to be given top priority by secondary school administrators. Health and social studies are two examples of disciplines where this knowledge may be introduced into the curriculum. Other options include seminars and awareness campaigns. It is imperative to advance a thorough comprehension of consent, respectful relationships, and gender equality.

2. Policy creation

It is important for schools to create and implement policies that specifically address gender-based violence. These regulations have to specify how events are to be reported, how investigations are conducted, and what penalties are meant for those who violate them. They should also advocate for a zero-tolerance policy against harassment or violence of any kind, regardless of gender.

3. Support systems

It is important for secondary schools to set up support networks for victims of gender-based violence. This may entail making counselling services available, starting peer support groups, and working with neighbourhood organizations that are dedicated to resolving similar problems. To safeguard victims' health and offer a safe space where they can seek assistance.

4. Engaging parents and guardians

Working together with guardians and parents is crucial when tackling gender-based violence. Schools might provide seminars or educational sessions to enlighten parents about the problem, provide resources, and offer advice on how to encourage polite conduct and good relationships at home. By integrating the tenets of social cognitive learning theory into the administration of secondary schools and implementing a thorough strategy to tackle gender-based violence, educational institutions may make a substantial contribution towards fostering a secure, welcoming, and courteous learning environment for every learner.

CONCLUSION

This study has looked at the SCLT and how its ideas may be incorporated into the secondary school curricula in Nigeria to stem the tide of gender-based violence. The acceptance of the SCLT's guiding principles, it is concluded, makes SCLT the ideal strategy for tackling gender-based violence in Nigerian secondary schools. These include, among others, vicarious learning, self-efficacy, and observational learning. If followed, the proposals would help to lessen the recent spike in gender-based violence in Nigeria's secondary school system.

Funding Information

No grant from any funding organization in the public, private, or nonprofit sectors was specifically awarded for this research.

Information About Data Availability

Since no new data were generated or examined in this study, data sharing does not apply to this publication.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions stated in this piece are the writer's own, and they may not represent the official stance or policy of any organization to which they are connected.

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