

PSYCHOSOCIAL- FACTORS PREDISPOSING AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

BY

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Abstract

The study examined psychosocial factors predisposing aggressive behaviour among secondary schools students in Edo State, Nigeria. Three research questions and two hypotheses were answered and tested in the study. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of this study covered all sixteen thousand three hundred and seventy two (16,372) Senior Secondary School one (SSS 1) students in Edo State. A sample of one hundred and sixty three (163) representing 1 percent of secondary school students was drawn using the simple sampling technique. The instrument used was titled: Psycho-social Factors Predisposing Aggressive Behaviour Questionnaire (PFPBQ). The mean and standard deviation was used to analyse the research question 1. Hypotheses were tested with the t-test for two independent sample means respectively. The test of hypotheses was carried out at 0.05 level of significance. The result from the analyses showed that the psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse) were positively perceived as predisposers of aggressive behaviours among students in secondary schools in Edo State. It was recommended that parents should be affectionate, accepting and helpful to their children; schools should have regular parent awareness programs based on their experiences and research.

Keywords: *Psycho-social factors, Parental discipline, Parental role and Parental substance*

Introduction

Education has been acclaimed as an important instrument used for effecting national change and development in every given society. It is a tool that plays the pivotal role of bringing about political, moral, human and socio-economic change in the lives of citizens in a given nation. Consequently, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (2013) under the National Policy of Education categorized education into various aspects, namely: Basic Education, Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD), Tertiary/Higher Education, Teacher Education, and Special Education. The role of Post-Basic Education and Career Development (PBECD) among other aspect of education in the school curriculum cannot be over-emphasized. It is an aspect of education that includes: Senior Secondary Education, Higher School and Continuing Education given in Vocational Enterprises Institutions (VEIs). Hence, FRN (2013) describes it as the education children receive after successful completion of nine years of Basic Education and passing the Basic Education (BECE) and Junior Arabic and Islamic Studies Certificate (JAISCE).

Aggression is a behaviour that causes physical or emotional harm to others, or threatens to. Imhonde, Aluede and Oboite (2009) referred to aggression as behaviour between members of the same species that is intended to cause humiliation, pain, or harm. It covers all forms of physical, verbal or psychological intent to injure or harm a target or an individual. This explains why people with aggressive behaviour tend to be irritable, impulsive, and restless. Aggressive behaviour is intentional, meaning it is done on purpose, violates social norms, and causes a breakdown in a relationship. Emotional problems are the most common cause of aggressive behaviour. Occasional outbursts of aggression are common and even normal. Aggressive behaviour is a problem because it occurs frequently or in a pattern. Generally speaking, aggressive behaviour stems from an inability to control behaviour or form a misunderstanding of what behaviour is appropriate.

Aggressive behaviours appear replete in our secondary schools. According to Shekarey Ladani and Rostami (2020), aggressive behaviours are common in schools. In the same vein, Aluede (2011) stated that violence in schools was an issue that had become more prominent in the last few years, as news articles about violent deeds within the school setting are now on the increase. Aggression among secondary school students is an issue of concern among stakeholders in education essentially because a school is an institution designed for teaching and learning. Unarguably, teaching and learning can only successfully take place in a conducive environment devoid of intimidation, harassment, insecurity and fear. In secondary schools the use of weapons such as; knives, dagger, bottles, axes and clubs for fighting among students is common especially during inter-class fights and inter-school sports competitions. Many

students sustain injuries during such clashes. Physical fight between one student and the other including bullying are frequent occurrences in secondary schools. According to Aluede (2011), bullying, a subcategory of aggressive behaviour, is encountered regularly by children and adolescents in the context of schools worldwide and could be caused by psychosocial factors.

Psycho-social factors are elements that are interacting with a person's social wellbeing and environment in a manner that could induce positive or negative behaviour in the individual. The psychosocial factors responsible for aggressive behaviour among learners are numerous and traceable to the domain of parent and other social agents. Some of these factors include but are not limited to: parental discipline, parental role models, and substance abuse among parents among others. Parental discipline refers to the behavioural values and moral conduct of parents. This is opposed to parental indiscipline which is characterized by unruly acts, behaviours and acts of lawlessness by parents. According to Temitayo, Nayaya and Lukman (2013), parents' anti-social behaviour, disrespect for constituted authority, use of profane language or abusive words may affect a child's emotions and predispose them towards aggression. They added that poor parental discipline in the use of harsh, physical punishment to discipline children may increase aggression in children and affect their upbringing.

Parental role model or parental role modelling can be seen as a situation whereby a child sees in their father or mother some admirable virtues and values and further aspires or even take deliberate effort to demonstrate the same behaviour. For instance, a child may find in his father/mother a role model simply because of their career success or life achievement. On the otherhand, a child who esteems his father a role model, may consider it appropriate to smoke cigarette, drink to stupor, insults elderly ones and even fight in public if the father exhibit one or more of such behaviour. Alokun and Osakinle (2020) rightly conceded that learners can literally be trained to be aggressive during episodes of conflict with others. Aggressive learners from wealthy parents are sometimes enticed to emulate the life of their "high and mighty parents" who have the money to maintain their newly acquired 'elitist' lifestyles. Hence they may start stealing from their parents. Such role models may be known by their queer dress code that is in conflict with societal and religious norms, for example, baggy trousers among boys and mini-skirts among girls. Those opposed to the dress codes may be jeered and ridiculed for being barbaric and backward. Some aggressive adult role models, such as hip hop music divas like *Davido*, *Tiwa Savage* and *Olamide* use a unique language and obscene lyrics that are also adapted by young adolescents to communicate among themselves. Learners imitating their models may also abuse their peers verbally. That alone may be enough provocation for physical retaliation by the victim(s) in question.

Aside, parental discipline, upbringing, and role modelling, parental substance abuse may be another reason for aggressive behaviour in school children. Buttressing this Onukwufor (2019) noted that learners that live with parents who take alcohols and illegal drugs may be exposed to domestic violence, neglect and poor parenting; which in turn could make them emotional unstable, depressive or even aggressive. He added that drugs leads to dull reactions, sleepiness, euphoria and a general dysfunction in users or abusers. Hence, addicted parents often get annoyed by their children seeking attention and consequently scream at them or chase them away. Aluede (2011) conceded that addicted parents are quick to find fault with their children, yelling at them inappropriately on very trivial issues. They often blame forces beyond their control that propelled them to addiction to drugs. Feeling frustrated, neglected and abused, these children can be perceived acting out their frustrations on their peers at school, e.g. getting easily annoyed even at the slightest provocation. According to Alokun and Osakinle (2020), causes of aggression among young learners may differ according to their gender and age.

Gender is an attribute that can be used to describe an individual. It is a sociological construct that refers to a wide range of biological, emotional mental, behavioural, and physical characteristics that can be attributed to "maleness" or "femaleness" of an individual. In the context of this study, it is restricted to the biological or sex classification of students into male and female secondary school students. Adigun, Onihunwa, Irunokhai, Sada and Adesina (2020) described gender as the range of physical, biological, mental and behavioural characteristics pertaining to and differentiating between the feminine and masculine (female and male) population. According to them, the importance of examining performance in relation to gender is based primarily on the socio-cultural differences between girls and boys that often make people attribute some vocations and professions such as engineering, construction works, arts and crafts, etc. to men while catering, typing, nursing, secretarial duties are classified as a female domain. In

relation to aggressive tendencies, women are often considered to be more emotional while men are usually more egoistic in personal concerns and affairs.

Age is another nominal attribute that can be used to describe and classify an individual. It refers to the length of time one has lived or existed. It is usually described in terms of length of time one has lived as measured in chronological terms of days, weeks, month and years. It has often been regarded as the state of the mind, implying that age has nothing to do with years but abilities and competencies of individuals. However, the fact still remains that the capabilities, exposures, experiences and behavioural tendencies of an older learner could be different from a young learner. In relation to aggressive tendencies, Alokun and Osakinle (2020) submitted that older people have more tendency to be angry and respond differently to things that younger ones could easily trivialize or ignore. It is pertinent to determine psychosocial factors influencing aggressive behaviour among secondary schools students in Edo State.

Studies on factors predisposing aggressive behaviour among secondary schools students in Nigeria has been carried out by scholars in recent times. Aboh, Nwankwo, Agu and Chikwendu (2020) investigated factors affecting aggressive behaviour in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study found that parents' attitude had a significant relationship on aggressive and non-aggressive anti-social behaviour of adolescents. Obikeze and Obi (2020) investigated the prevalence and incidence of aggressive behaviours among adolescents in senior secondary schools in Anambra State. The result of the analysis showed that adolescents frequently manifest aggressive behavior such as arson, bullying, beating, hitting, speaking, knife attack etc with the males exceeding the females at the rate of manifestation of aggressive behaviours. Omoteso (2019) examined the prevalence and nature of aggression and bullying behaviour among secondary school students in Osun State, Nigeria. Results showed that the prevalence of aggression and bullying among the students was high. Gender differences were not found in regards to aggressive tendencies in students. Akhtar and Kushwaha (2015) examined the sex differences in aggressive behaviour of Adolescents by using a sample of Two hundred teenagers consisted of 100 boys and 100 girls, age ranging from 16 to 19 years. Dr. G.C. Pati's Aggression test was used for data collection. Results show that the boys were more aggressive than girls as showing mean value of aggressive behavior 11.96 and 6.26 respectively. Onukwufor (2019) examined the prevalence, gender and level of schooling difference in adolescent secondary school students' physical and verbal aggression in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State Nigeria.

Aggression among secondary school students is an issue of concern among stakeholders in education essentially because a school is an institution designed for teaching and learning. Unarguably, teaching and learning can only successfully take place in a conducive environment devoid of intimidation, harassment, insecurity and fear. It has been observed that the use of weapons such as; knives, dagger, bottles, and axes for fighting among students is common especially during inter-class fights and inter-school sports competitions in secondary schools in Edo State. Many students sustain injuries during such clashes. Aside this, bullying and physical fight with fist and clubs are not uncommon among students in secondary schools in (Obikeze & Obi, 2020). According to Aluede (2011), bullying, a subcategory of aggressive behaviour, is encountered regularly by children and adolescents in the context of schools worldwide.

Several recent studies have been carried out to examine the causes of aggressive behaviour in Nigeria. Izuchi and Anetoh (2020) investigated the psychological determinants of aggressive behaviour among adolescents in secondary schools in Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State and found that age along with other variables (parental mentoring, self-concept and locus of control) significantly influenced aggressive behaviour among secondary school adolescents. Onukwufor (2019) examined the prevalence, gender and level of schooling difference in adolescent secondary school students' physical and verbal aggression in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State Nigeria and found that 20.8% of the secondary school students were physically aggressive while the prevalence of verbal aggression among the students was 48.3%. Aside been carried out Eastern part beyond Edo State, the two aforementioned studies ignored other possible causes of aggression such as environmental and school-related factors.

Obikeze and Obi (2020) investigated the prevalence and incidence of aggressive behaviours among adolescents in senior secondary schools in Anambra State and found that adolescents frequently manifest aggressive behavior such as arson, bullying, beating, hitting, speaking, knife attack etc. with the males exceeding the females at the rate of manifestation of aggressive behaviours. Sydney-Agbor (2016)

investigated the roles of religiosity, family relations and gender on aggressive behaviour of undergraduate students in Owerri, South Eastern Nigeria and found that religiosity and family relations jointly predict aggressive behaviour. Aside been carried out Eastern part beyond Edo State, the two aforementioned studies also ignored other possible causes of aggression such as environmental causes, school-related factors and personal factors such as sex and age. It is this knowledge gap that this study sought to fill in Edo State by investigating the psycho-social factors predisposing aggressive behaviour among secondary schools students in Edo State.

Research Question

The research question below was raised to guide this investigation.

- 1) How do students perceive the psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviours among students in secondary schools in Edo State?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested in the study:

- 1) There is no significant sex difference in perception of psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State
- 2) There is no significant age difference in perception of psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State

Methodology

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey research design is one in which information is collected without changing the environment or manipulating the variables of the study. Descriptive survey is a research design in which the researcher interacts with the participants through interview or questionnaire to collect the necessary information (Sekaran, 2013). The population of this study covered all the sixteen thousand three hundred and seventy two (16,372) Senior Secondary School one (SSS 1) students in Edo State. The record is as obtained from the Post Primary Education Board (PPEB), Benin City, Edo State (2022). A sample of one hundred and sixty three (163) secondary school students was used for the study while the simple sampling technique was used as the sampling technique. One percent (1%) of the senior secondary school students in each local government was drawn as sample from Edo State.

The instrument that was used for the collection of data is a questionnaire developed by the researcher. The instrument was titled: Parental Factors Predisposing Aggressive Behaviour Questionnaire (PFPBQ). The instruments was divided into Sections A and B. Section A contains information on the personal data of students like name of their school and sex and age of students. Data on sex and age of students helps in the classification of students in the district. Section B contains 5-items each bordering on the three (3) parental causes of aggressive behaviour namely – parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse as predisposers of aggressive behaviour. The item statements bordering on parental causes include: parental discipline (Items 1-5), parental role models (Items 5-10) and parental substance abuse (Items 11 and 15). All the items were rated on a four point likert scale type of: Strongly Agree - 4; Agree - 3; Disagree - 2; Strongly Agree - 1.

The Cronbach reliability technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The instruments (PFPBQ) were administered to 30 senior students selected from secondary schools outside the local government area. The choice of public school students outside the local government area was informed by the need to select participant for that pilot study that was drawn for the target population. After administration, responses of participants in the pilot group were collated and analysed using Cronbach Alpha reliability technique. The instrument was adjudged reliable for use in the main study; with a Cronbach alpha of 0.75 obtained. The researcher and two trained research assistants administered the questionnaires. The school heads was thoroughly briefed about the purpose of the study in other to solicit their permission in collecting data from students in their schools. The mean and standard deviation was used to analyse the research question 1. A mean score of 2.50 was used as the benchmark for determining students' perception. This is obtained by adding up the four (4) likert type scales (Strongly Agreed -4,

Agreed -3, Disagreed -2 and Strongly Disagreed -1) and dividing the sum of the scales (10) by the total number of scales (4) to give 2.50. Hence, a score of 2.50 or higher represents positive perception while 1 to 2.49 was taken otherwise. Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with the t-test for two independent sample means respectively. The test of hypotheses was carried out at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: How do students perceive the psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviours among students in secondary schools in Edo State?

Table 1: Mean score and Standard Deviation on Students' perception of Psychosocial Factors as Predisposers of Aggressive Behaviours among Students in Secondary Schools in Edo State

| s/n | | N = 163 | | Remarks |
|---------------------------------|--|-----------|-------|-----------|
| | | \bar{X} | SD | |
| Parental Discipline | | | | |
| 1 | Students use abusive words on others when their parents have a carefree attitude towards discipline | 2.58 | .830 | Agreed |
| 2 | Students threaten to hurt their mates at school when their parents/guardian maltreat them at school | 2.49 | .781 | Disagreed |
| 3 | Parents/guardian who do not show concern for the welfare of their children/wards make them develop aggressive tendencies | 2.63 | .896 | Agreed |
| 4 | When students are never corrected by their parents when wrong, they tend to show aggression towards others | 2.72 | 1.014 | Agreed |
| 5 | Parental discipline is needed to make students stay away from aggression | 2.75 | 1.062 | Agreed |
| Mean score 2.63 | | | | |
| Parental role models | | | | |
| 6 | Students aggressive behaviour comes from modelling ones parents in whatever they do | 2.39 | .983 | Disagreed |
| 7 | Students exhibit aggressive behaviour when they follow the footsteps of their parents | 2.60 | .814 | Agreed |
| 8 | Students desire to be like their parents make them also emulate their aggressive behaviours | 2.62 | .976 | Agreed |
| 9 | Students desire to fulfill the failed dreams of their parents, make they act like their parents | 2.71 | .909 | Agreed |
| 10 | Parents that express sarcasm in order to cause emotional and psychological pain may teach their children to follow suit. | 2.57 | 1.054 | Agreed |
| Mean score 2.58 | | | | |
| Parental substance abuse | | | | |
| 11 | Students act of assaulting another is traceable to smoking behaviour of their parents at homes | 2.59 | | |
| 12 | Students express themselves in loud angry manner when they sees their parents do the same when drunk | 2.60 | 1.023 | Agreed |
| 13 | Alcoholic parents who yell at their children indirectly teach them to do the same to others | 2.47 | .991 | Disagreed |
| 14 | Aggressive behaviour in children is traceable to smoking habit of their parents | 2.36 | 1.113 | Disagreed |
| 15 | Parents can make a child resort to anger when they indulge in alcohol consumption | 2.53 | 1.005 | Agreed |
| Mean score 2.51 | | | | |

Overall Mean Score ($\bar{X} \geq 2.58$)

Result in Table 1 shows that majority of the students agreed on items 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14, and 15 at a mean score ranging from 2.53 to 2.75 respectively and disagreed on items 1, 2, 6, 9, 13 and 14 at a mean score of 2.36 to 2.58 respectively. However, the overall mean score of 2.58 is greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 (i.e $2.54 > 2.50$). Hence, it is concluded that parental factors (parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse) are predisposers of aggressive behaviours among students in secondary schools in Edo State.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant sex difference in perception of psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State

Table 2: Analysis on Sex Differences of Students' Perception on Social Factors Predisposing Deviant Behaviour in secondary schools

| Variable | Sex | N | \bar{X} | S.D | d.f | t-cal. | Sig. level | Remark |
|--------------------------|---------|----|-----------|------|-----|--------|------------|------------------------|
| Parental discipline | Male | 71 | 2.87 | .446 | 161 | 5.312* | .000 | Accept null hypothesis |
| | Females | 92 | 2.45 | .535 | | | | |
| Parental role model | Male | 71 | 2.61 | .517 | 161 | .714 | .476 | Reject null hypothesis |
| | Females | 92 | 2.55 | .595 | | | | |
| Parental substance abuse | Male | 71 | 2.64 | .580 | 161 | 2.304* | .022 | Reject null hypothesis |
| | Females | 92 | 2.41 | .676 | | | | |

* *T-cal. is significant at 0.05 level*

The result in Table 2 showed that the calculated t-value for 5.312 for parental discipline and 2.304 for parental substance abuse were significant ($p < 0.05$) while the calculated t-value .174 for parental role model was not significant ($p > 0.05$). This indicated that the t-values for parental discipline and parental substance abuse was statistically significant while parental role model was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This indicates that there is a significant sex difference in perception of parental factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State. This implies the perception of parental factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students differ with respect to their gender.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant age difference in perception of psychosocial factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State

Table 2: Analysis on Age Difference of Students' Perception of Parental Factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as Predisposers of Aggressive Behaviour

| Variable | Sex | N | \bar{X} | S.D | d.f | t-cal. | Sig. level | Remark |
|--------------------------|-----------------|----|-----------|------|-----|--------|------------|------------------------|
| Parental discipline | Below 16years | 86 | 2.73 | .446 | 161 | 2.316 | .022 | Retain null hypothesis |
| | 16years & above | 77 | 2.53 | .535 | | | | |
| Parental role model | Below 16years | 86 | 2.58 | .517 | 161 | .086 | .931 | Retain null hypothesis |
| | 16years & above | 77 | 2.57 | .595 | | | | |
| Parental substance abuse | Below 16years | 86 | 2.44 | .580 | 161 | -1.467 | .144 | Retain null hypothesis |
| | 16years & above | 77 | 2.59 | .676 | | | | |

* *T-cal. is significant at 0.05 level*

The result in Table 2 showed that the calculated t-value 2.316 for parental, .086 for parental role model and -1.467 for parental substance abuse were not significant ($p < 0.05$). Hence, the null hypothesis was retained. This indicated there is no significant age difference in perception of parental factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State. This implies that the perception of parental factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students does not differ with respect to age in Edo State.

Discussion

The result showed that parental factors (parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse) are predisposers of aggressive behaviours among students in secondary schools in Edo State. The result agreed with that of Aboh, Nwankwo, Agu and Chikwendu (2020) who found that parents' attitude had a significant relationship on aggressive and non-aggressive anti-social behaviour of adolescents.

The result showed that there is a significant sex difference in perception of parental factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students in Edo State. The result is in line with that of Obikeze and Obi (2020) who found that adolescents frequently manifest aggressive behavior such as arson, bullying, beating, hitting, speaking, knife attack etc with the males exceeding the females at the rate of manifestation of aggressive behaviours. The result is not in support with that of Omoteso (2019) who found that gender

differences were not found in regards to aggressive tendencies in students. The result is in line with that of Akhtar and Kushwaha (2015) who found that the boys were more aggressive than girls as showing mean value of aggressive behavior 11.96 and 6.26 respectively.

The result showed that the perception of parental factors (parental discipline, parental role models and parental substance abuse) as predisposers of aggressive behaviour among secondary school students does not differ with respect to age in Esan West Local Government Area of Edo State. The result is in line with that of Onukwufor (2019) who found 20.8% of the secondary school students were physically aggressive, while the prevalence of verbal aggression among the students was 48.3%. Prevalence of physical aggression and verbal aggression were higher among older students than younger ones. The result is in line with that of Kemunto (2003) who found that age differences in the manifestation of aggressive behaviour.

Conclusion

Based on findings, it was concluded that parental factors (parental discipline, parental role modelling and parental substance abuse) are predisposers of aggressive behaviours among students in secondary schools in Edo State

Recommendations

Arising from findings the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should be affectionate, accepting and helpful to their children in order to prevent aggressive behaviour among them.
2. There should be training and retraining programmes for teachers in order for them to be aware about the correct ways of handling aggressive behaviours in order to prevent aggressive behaviour among them
3. Strict rules and regulations should be made and implemented to checkmate the media in presenting materials to children.

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