

Causes and Effects of Anti-Social Behaviour among Secondary School Students

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Abstract: *The study investigated causes and effects of anti-social behaviours among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The study was guided by four research questions. The population of the study was 1781 parents, teachers and students in public secondary schools in the area. A sample of 327 respondents was selected proportionally across the three strata. A Likert-type questionnaire was developed by researcher and used to elicit information from respondents. The instrument was validated by experts and found fit for the study. Data collected were analysed using frequency and mean. The mean of a four-point scale was put at 2.50. The study found among others that causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students are media influence, ineffective school administration, peer influence, broken home, lack of parental care and poor socioeconomic background. Among the effects found are lead students to engage in criminal activities when they become adults; to believe that crimes pay. It also victimizes innocent citizens, retards the development of the society, and offends God and humanity. It could lead to students dropping out of school, and dents the image of the school which the students attend. The study therefore, recommended among others that schools should have functioning counsellor; parents should make their home suitable for child upbringing; and teachers should provide them proper guidance.*

Keywords: *Anti-social behaviour, causes, effects, secondary school students*

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INTRODUCTION

The wellbeing of any nation depends to a large extent on training and moulding of characters of her citizens. The school plays this role as a socializing agent. This role has become more demanding in the contemporary society where the rate of occurrence of anti-social behaviour among secondary school children in the society has become so frequent and alarming. Anti-social behaviour refers to disruptive acts characterized by covert and overt hostility and intentional aggression towards others. Wachikwu and Ibegbunam (2012) defined anti-social behaviour as crimes committed by young people below the age of eighteen years usually characterized by violation of existing social norms and values. Anti-social behaviour exists along a severity continuum and includes repeated violations of social rules, defiance of authority and of the rights of others, deceitfulness and recklessness, disregard for self and others (Njendu,

2014). Anti-social behaviour could also be regarded as an act that does not conform to the societal value and norms. It takes many shapes and forms depending on how it is being carried out.

The Nigeria society today, no doubt, is infested with a multiplicity of anti-social behaviour. The issue of disciplinary problem among secondary school students has become a matter of concern to government, school administrators, parents, and individuals. Ikediashi and Akande (2010) observed that people with antisocial personalities have a low tolerance for frustration. They act on impulse, lose their temper quickly, and lie easily and skillfully. In childhood, they are often bullies who fight, lie, cheat, steal, and are truant from school. They blame others for their misdeeds, feel picked out by their parents and teachers, and never seem not to learn from their mistakes. Bulus (2010) observed that the children of Nigeria today are besieged with behavioural problems; they hardly subject themselves to the kind of discipline and hard work required for the attainment of most educational and professional goals stipulated for the technological development of this country. Bulus concluded that the industrial and technological dreams of Nigeria would never come true since the dominant orientation of its children is towards behavioural problems. Consenting to this, many authors (Ekpo & Ajake, 2013; Amazu, 2016) have written on the issue and its alarming degree of complexity and sophistication.

Antisocial behaviour among secondary school students undermines the attainment of the goal of secondary education. Ekpo and Ajake (2013) noted that most secondary school students are in the adolescent stage. They have needs and problems that arise from organic, psychological and social pressures. These pressures in turn exert influences on them, which make them exhibit behaviours that are not in consonance with societal norms leading to delinquency. Several studies have sought to address the problem of antisocial behaviours among secondary school students. Mobarake (2015) examined the association between age, gender and antisocial behaviour among adolescents aged between 13 and 18 years in Tehran city in Iran and results showed a positive significant correlation between age of respondents and antisocial behaviour. The finding was that older adolescents were associated with more frequency of adolescent's antisocial behaviour than younger adolescents. Furthermore, there was a difference in adolescent's antisocial behaviour between male and female. These results indicated that the male is more likely to show antisocial behaviour than female. Igbo and Ihejiene (2015) however found no significant influence of gender on student delinquent behaviours. In another study, Nyaga (2015) investigated the contributions of microsystems to antisocial behaviours among adolescents in secondary schools in Manyatta, Embu County, Kenya and found out that truancy was the most common, followed by bullying and drug abuse respectively.

Since antisocial behaviour varies in context, it may not be adequate to generalize findings from previous studies. There is the need to determine causes and consequences of antisocial behaviour in Anambra State where the problem has been unreported. Thus the study sought to investigate the cause and consequences of antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Anambra State.

Statement of Problem

Anti-social behaviours among secondary school children have done a great damage to children, the schools concerned, parents and the society at large and its consequences have been so overwhelming that educationalists have been compelled to investigate its root cause and proffer solutions. Allen and Allen (2010) noted that the effects of anti-social behaviours touched on nearly all the critical nerve centres of the existence of our society that it cannot be overlooked.

Anti-social behaviours usually lead to destruction of school and staff property, sustenance of serious injuries and in extreme cases, loss of lives, thus bringing untold hardship and misery to the parents and guardians and even to the children themselves. It is against this problem that the researcher sought to investigate the Causes and the consequences of anti-social behaviours among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the causes and effects of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Specifically the study sought to:

1. Find out the anti-social behaviours that frequently occur among secondary school students;
2. Identify the causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students;
3. Find out the consequences of anti-social behaviours among secondary school students;
4. Find out the measures adopted by schools in curbing anti-social behaviour among secondary school students.

Research Questions

The following research questions derived from the specific purposes were answered in the study:

1. What are the anti-social behaviours that frequently occur among secondary school students?
2. What are the causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students?
3. What are the consequences of anti-social behaviours among secondary school students?
4. What are the measures adopted by schools in curbing anti-social behaviour among secondary school students?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 1781. This comprised 295 teachers, 743 parents and 743 SS II students in 14 public secondary schools in Orumba South Local Government Area of Anambra State. The sample of the study was 327. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane formula, which yielded a sample size of 327. A proportionate sampling technique was used to select the number of respondents to participate in the study. Questionnaire titled 'Causes and Consequences of Antisocial Behaviour Survey' (CCASBS) was the instrument used for data collection. The questionnaire was designed for students, teachers and parents respectively, and developed to elicit information from respondents on the four research questions guiding the study. There are four weighted options on the scale which are: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree, weighted from 4 points to 1 point respectively. The instrument was validated using three experts (two in education psychology and one in measurement and evaluation). The instrument was administered by hand delivery by the researcher. Student and teacher respondents were accessed at their various schools, while the parents' questionnaire was delivered to parents by the students involved. Completed copies of questionnaire were collected by researcher through the assistants who were well briefed. From the 327 copies of questionnaire distributed, 311 copies were returned valid. This represents 95.11 per cent of copies distributed. Data obtained from field study were analysed using simple descriptive statistics.

RESULTS

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on anti-social behaviour frequently occurring among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area (N= 311)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	fx	\bar{X}	Remark
1	Examination malpractice	209	59	36	7	1092	3.51	Agreed
2	Lateness to school	198	43	21	49	1012	3.25	Agreed
3	Abortion among female students	76	12	49	174	612	1.96	Disagreed
4	Stealing	65	88	54	104	736	2.36	Disagreed
5	Rape	32	11	76	192	505	1.62	Disagreed
6	Cultism	76	45	55	135	684	2.19	Disagreed
7	Rudeness to constituted authority	165	87	21	38	1001	3.21	Agreed
8	Bullying	201	65	24	21	1068	3.43	Agreed
9	Drug abuse	166	24	54	70	914	2.93	Agreed
10	Truancy	234	49	21	7	1132	3.63	Agreed
11	Cruelty	99	108	65	39	889	2.85	Agreed
12	Violence	165	99	43	4	1047	3.36	Agreed
13	Arson	54	22	105	130	622	2.00	Disagreed
14	Vandalism of school property	245	45	13	8	1149	3.69	Agreed
15	Noncompliance to rules	276	23	6	6	1191	3.82	Agreed
16	Intimidating other students	267	34	4	6	1184	3.80	Agreed
17	Manipulation to gain undue advantage	176	61	45	29	1006	3.23	Agreed

Table 1 shows the mean ratings of respondents on anti-social behaviours frequently occurring among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. From the 17 items of anti-social behaviours presented, 12 were rated above the criterion mean of 2.50. These are items 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15,16 and 17. This indicates they are the frequent anti-social behaviour occurring among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government

Area. Five items were rated below the cut-off mean indicating that these do not occur frequently among students in Orumba South Local Government Area. They are items 3, 4, 5, 6 and 13.

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area (N= 311)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	fx	\bar{X}	Remark
18	Media influence	234	64	8	5	1149	3.69	Agreed
19	Lack of counsellor in schools	65	77	68	101	769	2.47	Disagreed
20	Ineffective school administration	69	101	65	76	785	2.52	Agreed
21	Peer influence	201	55	15	40	1039	3.34	Agreed
22	Broken home	123	98	14	76	890	2.86	Agreed
23	Lack of parental care.	165	87	43	16	1023	3.28	Agreed
24	Poor socioeconomic background	176	88	32	15	1047	3.36	Agreed
25	Single parenthood	32	46	44	189	543	1.74	Disagreed

Table 2 shows the mean ratings of respondents on causes of anti-social behaviours among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. From the eight possible causes listed, 6 were rated above the criterion mean of 2.50 which indicates that they are causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. The items are 18, 20, 21, 22, 23 and 24. Two items (2 and 8) did not reach the cut-off mean, namely items 19 and 25. This is an indication that they are not causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area.

Table 3: Mean ratings of respondents on consequences of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area (N= 311)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	fx	\bar{X}	Remark
26	Antisocial behaviour can lead students to engage in criminal activities when they become adults.	211	76	21	3	1117	3.59	Agreed
27	It leads students to believe that crimes pay.	99	179	32	1	998	3.20	Agreed
28	Antisocial behaviour victimizes innocent	276	34	1	-	1208	3.88	Agreed

citizens.

29	Antisocial behaviour retards the development of the society.	232	65	12	2	1149	3.69	Agreed
30	Antisocial behaviour offends God and humanity.	289	11	11	-	1211	3.89	Agreed
31	It could lead to students dropping out of school.	237	55	10	9	1142	3.67	Agreed
32	It dents the image of the school which the students attend.	167	77	47	20	1013	3.25	Agreed
33	It could lead the students to imprisonment.	299	10	2	-	1230	3.95	Agreed

Table 3 shows the mean ratings of respondents on effects of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. All the eight possible effects listed were rated above the criterion mean of 2.50. They were rated from 3.20 to 3.95. The ratings indicate that these are effects of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area.

Table 4: Mean ratings of respondents on measures to be adopted to treat anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area (N= 311)

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	fx	\bar{X}	Remark
34	Establishing clear behavioural goals that gradually shape a child's behaviour in areas of specific concern.	211	76	14	10	1110	3.56	Agreed
35	Developing a system to monitor whether the child is reaching the goals set for him.	243	66	2	-	1174	3.77	Agreed
36	Developing a system to reinforce appropriate behaviour toward reaching stipulated goals.	201	32	23	55	1001	3.21	Agreed
37	Providing negative consequences for inappropriate behaviour.	231	66	3	11	1139	3.66	Agreed
38	Training students on social skills.	274	21	7	9	1182	3.80	Agreed

39	Creating opportunities for students' involvement and contribution at home, school, and among peers.	198	54	21	38	1034	3.32	Agreed
40	Recognizing and reinforcing efforts and accomplishments. Creating functional guidance and counselling unit in the school.	249	61	1	-	1181	3.79	Agreed

Table 4 shows the mean ratings of respondents on measures that could be employed to treat anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. All the seven possible measures listed were rated above the criterion mean of 2.50. They were rated from 3.21 to 3.80. The ratings indicate that these are possible measures to treat anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area.

Discussion of Results

The research question one sought to identify anti-social behaviour that frequently occur among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. The study found that the following to be anti-social behaviour frequently occurring: Examination malpractice, Lateness to school, Rudeness to constituted authority, Bullying, Drug abuse, Truancy, Cruelty, Violence, Vandalism of school property, Noncompliance to rules, intimidating other students and Manipulation to gain undue advantage. Abortion, cultism, stealing, rape and arson do not occur frequently. The findings on prevailing anti-social behaviour agreed with Njendu (2014) who examined the causes and prevalence of antisocial behaviour among secondary school students with hearing impairment in Ibadan, Nigeria and found that the most common antisocial behaviour exhibited by the participants are: examination malpractice, lateness, abortion, stealing, rape, cultism and rudeness. Unlike, Njendu's study, however, the present study did not find stealing, rape cultism and abortion prevailing in the schools in Orumba South Local Government Area. This, perhaps, could be attributed to difference in the location of the schools in the two studies. Kenya is a different country from Nigeria with peculiar problems and circumstances. Bulus (2010) observed that the impact of location or place of residence as one of the contributory factors in the development of antisocial behaviour traits in adolescents cannot be over-emphasized; diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds can make an area susceptible to anti-social behaviour.

The research question two sought to determine the causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. The study found that Media influence, Ineffective school administration, Peer influence, Broken home, Lack of parental care and Poor socioeconomic background cause anti-social behaviour. Lack of counsellor in schools and Single parenthood are not causes of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. Exposure to mass media especially social media could influence the young mind negatively. Moreover, school administration should be proactive in addressing anti-social behaviour of the adolescents. Where the school administration is dysfunctional, the schools become breeding grounds for deviances. The study also indicted home background as a possible factor in anti-social behaviour. Children

need adequate parental care. The findings agreed with Amazu (2016) who investigated factors influencing maladaptive behaviour in which broken home and negative attitudes of teachers serve as independent variables while maladaptive behaviour serves as dependent variable and revealed that broken home significantly influenced maladaptive behaviour and also, negative attitudes of teachers significantly influenced maladaptive behaviour.

Similarly, Mobareke (2015) undertook a study to determine the extent of aggressive behaviour exhibited by secondary school learners and found that the more negative the family climate, school climate, community climate or influence of friends are, or the more negative the emotional self-concept of the adolescent is, the more aggressive the adolescent is, and vice versa. The study however, disagreed with the earlier finding on single parenthood as a factor in anti-social behaviour. For instance, Njendu (2015) revealed that presence of both parents contributes to the development of parent-child relationship, and step-parents have effects on delinquency. The study concludes that presence of both parents contributes greatly to the development of parent-child relationship, that children who come from families where both parents were present were happy and reported having good relationship with their parents unlike those children who come from families with only one of the parents.

Research question three sought to determine the consequences of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area and found that antisocial behaviour can lead students to engage in criminal activities when they become adults; it leads students to believe that crimes pay. Antisocial behaviour victimizes innocent citizens, retards the development of the society, offends God and humanity and it could lead to students dropping out of school. It also dents the image of the school which the students attend and could lead the students to imprisonment. These adverse consequences make anti-social behaviour a thing to be abhorred in schools if children must grow healthy and become better citizens tomorrow. The findings of the study are in line with Wachukwu and Ibegbunam (2012) who stated that the consequences of conduct disorder in adolescents are adverse especially if no remedy is sought and found at the early stage of the manifestation of the traits. According to him, there is a high rate of transition from antisocial behaviour in adolescents to adult criminal activities.

Research question four sought to find out possible measures to treat the problems of anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area. The study found that measures to be adopted to treat anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area are establishing clear behavioural goals that gradually shape a child's behaviour in areas of specific concern, developing a system to monitor whether the child is reaching the goals set for him, developing a system to reinforce appropriate behaviour toward reaching stipulated goals and providing negative consequences for inappropriate behaviour. Others are training students on social skills; creating opportunities for students' involvement and contribution at home, school, and among peers; recognizing and reinforcing efforts and accomplishments; and creating functional guidance and counselling unit in the school.

Idle mind is said to be the devil's workshop. But, when students are occupied with meaningful activities, they barely have time to engage in anti-social behaviour. Thus, setting goals for students, and ensuring that these goals are met through active engagement and reward for good behaviours will reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour among students. The findings of the study are consistent with contingency management programmes which according to Ekpo and Ajake (2013), involves: establishing clear behavioural goals that gradually shape a

child's behaviour in areas of specific concern; developing a system to monitor whether the child is reaching these goals; developing a system to reinforce appropriate behaviour toward reaching stipulated goals Examples include gaining of points when an aggressive child has expressed anger appropriately and has displayed increased pro-social interactions with peers and with adults; and Providing negative consequences for inappropriate behaviour.

CONCLUSION

Anti-social behaviours are behaviours expressed in socially unacceptable ways. These anti-social behaviours are diverse, but the ones which frequently occur among secondary school students in Orumba South Local Government Area are Examination malpractice, Lateness to school, Rudeness to constituted authority, Bullying, Drug abuse, Truancy, Cruelty, Violence, Vandalism of school property, Noncompliance to rules, Intimidating other students and Manipulation to gain undue advantage. Causes of these behaviours are traced to broken home, media and peer influence, and so on. Anti-social behaviour if not treated, has adverse consequences on secondary school students. This can also lead to advance criminal activities. The need to apply professional counselling measures to address the problem therefore is pleaded.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings and the educational implications of the study, the following are recommended:

1. Schools should have functioning counsellor. These counsellors should apply professional remedies at their disposal to treat anti-social behaviour of students.
2. Parents should make their home suitable for child upbringing. The home environment includes the psychological aspects of happiness, love, care and morals.
3. Teachers stand in loco parentis for these students and should provide them proper guidance.
4. Students should minimize media use except for academic activities, maintain only healthy peer relationships and remain focussed on their studies.
5. Appropriate sanction for breaking of rules should always apply. Parents, school heads and law enforcement agents are therefore enjoined to implement enabling laws.

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