



Peer Pressure and Broken Home as Correlates of Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated peer pressure and broken home as correlates of antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Correlational research design was adopted. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Population of the study was 47,297 students in the in thirty seven public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Sample of the study was 410 public senior secondary school two students in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting the sample of the study. Questionnaire on Peer Pressure, Broken Home and Antisocial Behaviour of Students Assessment Scale was used for data collection. The instrument was face and content validated by two experts in Counselling Psychology, and Measurement and Evaluation. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability coefficients of 0.78 for the Peer Pressure and Broken Home Scale, and 0.80 for the Antisocial Behaviour Scale. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (r) was used to answer the research questions, while T-test transformation method was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Results of the study showed that: Peer pressure and broken home have negative and significant relationship with antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. It was recommended that Students should be mindful of the activities of any peer group that they want to identify with to avoid been exposed to unhealthy behaviours in the society, and that couples should handle their family issues amicably to avoid break-up that could expose their children to antisocial behaviours in the environment.

Keywords: Peer Pressure, Broken Home, Behaviour, Antisocial Behaviour

INTRODUCTION

In life and particularly during adolescence period, antisocial behaviours could be witnessed among the adolescents, hence proper care, support and guidance should be provided to curtail its ugly incidence in the society. Antisocial behaviour is any act that imposes physical or psychological harm on other people or their property (Kimberly & Jacob, 2020). Clare (2016) viewed antisocial behaviours as destructive acts characterized by covert and overt hostility and intentional aggression towards others. Antisocial behaviours mean acts that are not in conformity with social norms such as fighting, drug use, rape reckless driving, drunkenness, disrespect to authorities, etc in the community. Antisocial behaviour among adolescent students could be caused by several factors including poor home training, friendship with deviant peers, domestic violence and low self-esteem. Ojo (2019) revealed that parental alcohol and drug abuse, chaotic and unstable home life, absence of good parenting skills, use of coercive and corporal punishment, parental disruption due to divorce, death or other separation, parental psychiatric disorders, especially maternal depression and economic distress due to poverty and unemployment are contributory

factors of antisocial behaviours. This is a clear indication that students' antisocial behaviour could be linked to some psycho-social factors like peer pressure, broken homes among others.

Peer pressure is an important issue among adolescents. This is because every adolescent belongs to one peer group or the other as a source of identity and social support which he/she tend to conform to the group's ideas, beliefs and judgment. Adolescence from broken homes are more likely to have less intimate relationship with their parents with its negative implications on their behaviour like drugs abuse than those from intact homes. A family needs to be intact for the adolescents to experience the warmth and nurture of a loving family (Furstenberg, 2014). Adolescents from divorced or single-parent family could exhibit an anti-social behaviour in school that can get him/ her into trouble with the school authorities more often than those from two parents homes, perhaps because single parents finds it difficult to effectively monitor their children in addition to other responsibilities on their shoulders. In fact, broken home could cause serious distraction not only to the adolescent students, but to their to the parents who might never have find ground to regularly and properly address issues relating to their children's education and welfare generally. The foregoing background tend to show that peer pressure and broken home could affect students' behaviours. However, it seems that not much empirical studies have established the extent to which peer pressure and broken home relates to antisocial behaviour among students in senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis. It is on this premise that this study investigated peer pressure and broken home as correlates of anti-social behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

Antisocial behaviours mean acts that are not in conformity with social norms such as fighting, drug use, rape reckless driving, drunkenness, disrespect to authorities, etc in the community. The researcher observed that adolescents indulges in one antisocial behaviour or the other as many of the reported cases of online fraud, rape, drug abuse, etc are carried out by adolescents who are supposed to be in school, and this has in no small measure affected the economic and social lives of the people. The occurrence of anti-social behaviours have been attributed to parental history, parental alcohol and drug abuse, chaotic and unstable home life, absence of good parenting skills, use of coercive and corporal punishment, parental disruption due to divorce, death or other separation, parental psychiatric disorders, especially maternal depression and economic distress due to poverty and unemployment (Ojo, 2019). Could the incidence of anti-social behaviours among students be attributed to peer pressure and broken homes? In order to provide answers to this problem, this study sought to investigate peer pressure and broken home as correlates of antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the relationship that exists between peer pressure, broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate the relationship between peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.
2. Ascertain the relationship between broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the conduct of the study:

1. What is the relationship between peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis?
2. What type of relationship exists between broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. Peer pressure does not significantly relate to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

2. Broken home does not significantly relate to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Review of Literature

Cognitive Theory by Jean Piaget (1983)

Cognitive theory suggests that people's interpretations of events cause their reactions to events including emotional reactions. Cognitive theorists focus on how people perceive their social environment and learn to solve their problems. Piaget was one of the first psychologists who argued that people's reasoning abilities develop in an orderly and logical fashion. He noted that during the first stage of development (the sensor-motor stage), children respond to their social environment in a simple fashion by focusing their attention on interesting objects and developing their motor skills, and by the final stage of (the formal operations stage), the children must have developed into mature adults who are capable of complex reasoning and abstract thought. Veneziano and Veneziano (2013) observed that higher levels of moral reasoning are associated with acts of altruism, generosity and non-violence. This suggest that people with lower levels of moral reasoning will engage in crime and violence when they think they can get away with it. On the other hand, even when presented with the opportunity, people with higher levels of moral reasoning will refrain from criminal behaviour because they think it is wrong. Research suggests that some youth who engage in violent attacks on others actually believe that they are defending themselves, even when they have totally misinterpreted the level of threat (Lochman, 2014). This theory is relevant to this study because the theory focuses on the violent behaviour of people and assumed that people with lower levels of moral reasoning could engage in crime and violence when they think they can get away with it, while those with higher levels of moral reasoning tend to refrain from criminal behaviour when they think violence is a wrong act.

Concept of Antisocial Behaviour

Antisocial behaviours mean acts that are not in conformity with social norms such as fighting, drug use, rape reckless driving, drunkenness, disrespect to authorities, etc in the community. Anti-social behaviours can be exhibited by adolescent students both at home and in the school. Armelius and Andreassen (2017) revealed those children between age of 13 and 14 who bully or show aggressive behaviour towards others exhibit anti-social behaviours in their early adulthood and 20% of those children who exhibit anti-social behaviours at later ages had court appearances and police contact as a result of their behaviour. However, even though some studies found strong correlations between aggression and the viewing of violent media, while others found little evidence to support their case, the only unanimously accepted truth regarding antisocial behaviour is that parental guidance carries an undoubtedly strong influence; providing children with brief negative evaluations of violent characters helps to reduce violent effects in the individual (Bergen & Krane, 2016).

Peer Pressure and Antisocial Behaviour among Students

Peer pressure could become more disturbing and worrisome when growing children take on their peer group as their role models. This copycat syndrome some children to begin to desire the same kind of toys, wear the same kind of clothes, eat the same kind of food, share eating habits, share favourite television programmes share likes and dislikes, and even share bed times with peers. Imitation and experimentation have been observed as ways by which teens and adolescents learn anti-social and criminal behaviour (Powel et al., 2013; Ogbebor, 2012). Horton and Hunt (2014) noted that all authorities agree that an individual's need for acceptance within intimate groups is a most powerful lever for the use of group pressure towards group norms. Powel, Tauras and Ross (2013) agree that peer pressure may begin in early childhood, and increase until it reaches its peak in the pre-teen and teen years. Lapiere (2014) pointed out that children and teens learn how to get along with others of their own age group and in the process they learn to become more independent adults.

In his study, Farmer (2010) observed that 60% of adolescents were aggressive in school. Jones et al. (2015) argued that conflictual peer relationships may promote alliances among aggressive youngsters who can work together to harass and bully others. Adolescents who are exposed to and associate with anti-social peers learn to participate in anti-social behaviour through the process of vicarious learning and

principles of re enforcement, negative peer influence contribute a lot to increased use of substance and aggression (Elliot & Richards, 2011). Kimberly (2012) revealed that the more negative the influence of peers, the more aggressive the adolescents. Animasahum (2014) investigated the predictive effects of marital conflict, divorce and single parenthood on antisocial behaviours among secondary school adolescents in Ibadan and revealed that marital conflict, divorce and single parenthood correlated positively and significantly with adolescents' antisocial behaviours.

Broken Home and Antisocial Behaviour among Students

Demo and Acock (2016) stated that measures of family relations explained the largest proportion of variance in adolescent wellbeing. Majority of children whose parents have divorced function within normal or average limits in the years after divorce (Kelly, 2013). Demo and Acock (2014) noted that adolescents living in single-parent families can "acquire certain strengths, notably a sense of responsibility, as a consequence of altered family routines". Children benefit where a parental separation provides release from an aversive family situation. Videon (2012) noted that the prophylactic effects of parental separation are amplified as adolescents' satisfaction with the parent-adolescent relationship decreases. However, when adolescents are residentially separated from an unsatisfying same-sex parent relationship, their level of delinquent behaviour is lower than adolescents who continue to reside with a same-sex parent with whom they have a poor relationship.

Jaffee (2013) observed that the less time fathers lived with their children, the more conduct problems the children had, but only if the fathers exhibit low levels of antisocial behaviour. Fergusson (2016) found that among children who had experienced a parental separation, those whose parents reconciled or whose mother remarried exhibited more behavioural difficulties than children who remained in a single-parent family. Baydar et al. (2016) revealed that divorce was not negatively related to mothers' reports of children's behavioural and emotional problems. Ofordi (2018) who investigated psychosocial correlates of antisocial behaviour among adolescent students in Lumpur reported that adolescent students from broken homes engaged more in antisocial behaviours like stealing, smoking and drug abuse.

METHODOLOGY

Correlational research design was adopted for the study. Correlational research design is a design that measures the relationship between two or more variables without the researcher controlling either of them (McCombes, 2020). Correlational research design was chosen because the researcher sought to ascertain the type of relationship that exists between peer pressure, broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Population of the study was 47,297 students in the thirty seven (37) public senior secondary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State (source: Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, 2022). Sample of the study was 410 public senior secondary school two students in Port Harcourt Metropolis made up of 265 students in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area (114 males, 151 females) and 145 students (74 males, 71 females) in Port Harcourt City Local Government Area. Taro Yamane's sample size formula was used to arrive at the sample of 397, but the researcher increased it to 410 for a better representation of the population. Stratified random sampling technique was used to stratify the population of the study based on gender strata (male and female students) and Local Government Area strata (Obio/Akpor and Port Harcourt City) from which 15 schools were selected in Obio/Akpor and 10 schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas.

Stratified random sampling technique was also used to select 265 students (114 males and 151 females) from the 15 selected schools in Obio/Akpor, and 145 students (74 males and 71 females) from the 10 selected schools in Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas. The differences in the numbers of schools and students selected in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area and Port Harcourt City Local Government Areas is because both Local Government Areas do not have equal number of schools as well as students. The instrument used for data collection was a Questionnaire on Peer Pressure, Broken Home and Antisocial Behaviour of Students Assessment Scale prepared on a four-point response scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA) to Strongly Disagree (SD) with weighted 4 points to 1 point. The instrument was face and content validated by two experts in Counselling Psychology, and Measurement and Evaluation. Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability coefficients of 0.78 for the Peer Pressure

and Broken Home Scale, and 0.80 for the Antisocial Behaviour Scale. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used to answer the research questions, while T-test transformation method was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. T-test transformation or t-distribution method is appropriate for testing the significance of the computed correlation coefficient in the absence of SPSS irrespective of the sample size of the study since it approximates the z-transformation as the data tends to infinity (Wonu, Victor-Edema & Ndimele, 2021).

RESULTS

Research Question 1: *What is the relationship between peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis?*

Table 1: Relationship between Peer pressure and Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State (n = 403)

Variables	N	\bar{x}	SD	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r	t-crit.	Remark
Peer Pressure	403	3.00	0.46	1211	3800	3870	-0.92	1.96	Strong but Negative
Antisocial Behaviour	403	3.17	0.37	1277	4103				

Source: Field Data, 2022.

Table 1 presents the relationship between peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Table 1 shows that there is a strong negative relationship between peer pressure and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis with $r = -0.92$. This result indicates that peer pressure is one of the dominant factor that making students to indulge in antisocial behaviours such as truancy, drug abuse, etc in public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result of this study proves that peer pressure can exert some force and condition members of the group towards making wrong decisions, as well as acting in a way that is contrary to the law.

Research Question 2: *What type of relationship exists between broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis?*

Table 2: Relationship between Broken Home and Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State (n = 403)

Variable	N	\bar{x}	SD	$\sum X$ $\sum Y$	$\sum X^2$ $\sum Y^2$	$\sum XY$	r	r-crit	RMKS
Broken Home (X)	403	3.01	0.46	1213	3800	3870	-0.97	1.96	Strong but Negative
Antisocial Behaviour (Y)	403	3.17	0.37	1277	4103				

Source: Field Data, 2022.

Table 2 presents the relationship between broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Data in Table 2 shows that the relationship between broken home and antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis is strong but negative with r-value = -0.97 . This result indicates that broken home is a strong contributor of antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt

Metropolis. Hence, broken home exposes adolescent students to high level of antisocial acts and practices in the society.

Hypotheses Testing

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

Hypothesis 1: Peer pressure does not significantly relate to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Table 3: T-test Transformation for Relationship between Peer Pressure and Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State

Variables	N	x̄	SD	df	r	t-trans	t-crit	α	Remark
Peer Pressure	403	3.00	0.46						
				401	-0.92	-13.56	1.960	0.05	Sig.
Antisocial Behaviour	403	3.17	0.37						

Sig = Significant at 0.05 Significance Level

Results in Table 3 showed that at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom (df) of 401, r = -0.92, t-trans value = -13.56 and t-crit value = 1.960. Since at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 401, t-trans value (-13.56) > t-crit value (1.960), the null hypothesis that “peer pressure does not significantly relate to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis” was therefore rejected. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it was concluded that peer pressure is significantly related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Hypothesis 2: Broken home does not significantly relate to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

Table 4: T-test Transformation for Relationship between Broken Home and Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis

Variables	N	x̄	SD	df	r	t-trans	t-crit	α	Remark
Broken Home	403	3.01	0.46						
				401	-0.97	-13.94	1.960	0.05	Sig.
Antisocial Behaviour	403	3.17	0.37						

Sig = Significant at 0.05 Significance Level

Results in Table 4 showed that at 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom (df) of 401, r-value = -0.97, t-transformation (t-trans) = 13.94 and t-critical (t-crit) = 1.960. Since t-trans value (13.94) > t-crit value (1.960) at 0.05 significance level and degree of freedom (df) of 401, the null hypothesis that “broken home does not significantly relate to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis” was therefore rejected, hence the alternative is accepted. This implies that

broken home is significantly related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Peer Pressure and Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis

From the results for research question 1, it was observed that peer pressure is negatively related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. Also, results for hypothesis 1 showed that peer pressure is significantly related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. It was deduced that peer pressure is significantly related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. This result indicates that peer pressure is one of the dominant factor that making adolescent students to indulge in antisocial behaviours such as truancy, drug abuse, etc in public senior secondary school adolescents in Port Harcourt Metropolis of Rivers State. The result of this study proves that peer pressure can exert some force and condition members of the group towards making wrong decisions, as well as acting in a way that is contrary to the law. Steinberg (2019) buttressed the result of this study when he explained that adolescence is a unique stage of human development with specific characteristics, which individuals do not only strive to adapt to the environment and seek balance, but also to build significant relations outside the family as well as their identity and autonomy, while profound physical, cognitive, moral and socio-emotional changes take place.

Okorodudu's (2010) study in River State of Nigeria indicated that as young people grow; they begin to surrender to the influence of their peers as they shed off their parental orientation and replace it with dependence on their peers, and their friends also encourage them to engage in undesirable acts like fighting, alcohol consumption, sexual promiscuity and destruction of property. Since children are exposure to schooling so early, they could become aware of manners of doing things and rules that are different from those of their parents or families and they may begin to demand to do some of the things parents had not allowed them to do, as well as begin to cut boundaries or limits parents had set for them (Akers & Lee, 2016).

Broken Home and Antisocial Behaviour among Public Senior Secondary School Students in Port Harcourt Metropolis

Data in Table 2 for research question 2 indicated that broken home is negatively related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Also, results for hypothesis 2 showed that broken home is significantly related to antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. This result indicates that broken home is a strong contributor of antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis. Hence, broken home exposes adolescent students to high level of antisocial acts and practices in the society. Adolescents from divorced or single-parent family could exhibit an anti-social behaviour in school that can get him/ her into trouble with the school authorities more often than those from two parents homes, perhaps because single parents finds it difficult to effectively monitor their children coupled with other responsibilities on their shoulders, which is an indication that broken home or divorce is a kind of distraction that disrupts the functions of parents to their children (Cooney & Mortimer, 2016). In contrary to the finding of this study, Animasahum (2014) reported that marital conflict, divorce and single parenthood correlated positively and significantly with adolescents' antisocial behaviours. Butler et al. (2012) noted that the children in their study demonstrated "an active role helping their parents cope with divorce, even in circumstances where parents did not seem able to contain their more negative emotions and impulses. Elliott and Richards (2011) found that having a stepfather had a deleterious effect on children's behaviour scores.

CONCLUSION

The study found that peer pressure and broken home have negative and significant relationship with antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State. Based on the findings, it was concluded that peer pressure and broken home encourages anti-social behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State to a very high extent. On the other hand, peer pressure and broken home increases the rate of antisocial behaviour among public senior secondary school students in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made:

1. Students should be mindful of the activities of any peer group that they want to identify with to avoid been exposed to unhealthy behaviours in the society.
2. Couples should handle their family issues amicably to avoid break-up that could expose their children to antisocial behaviours in the environment.

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