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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

The Journal of Professional Counselling (JPC) is devoted to advancing knowledge, practice and theory of Guidance and Counselling. The Journal receives and publishes papers or articles on diverse areas relating to guidance and counselling. It encourages original research efforts contributing to the advancement of counselling in and outside Nigeria. Fundamental practical problems and challenges in the society are synthesized and solutions proffered from counselling perspectives.

The present volume is the third edition essentially published to promote the contributions of seasoned professional counsellors nationwide on Mental Health Issues and Counselling in Nigeria. The papers are expository and expressions of serious concerns about the mental health state of Nigerians cutting across all spheres of human endeavour and the place of counselling as a remedy for addressing such challenges. Papers have been written and assessed across six broad sub-themes on mental issues and counselling.

The editorial board appreciates all the contributions of dedicated members towards the actualization of the aims of the Association particularly in the production of the edition of the journal. Special tribute is paid to all our members who contributed to the success of the edition but passed away before its actualization.

Elders, executive members and all dedicated APROCON members, well done, let us keep the flag of APROCON and Counselling flying in Nigeria and the world.

Professor (Mrs.) Mary Grace Fajonyomi
Editor

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BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS AND PREDISPOSITION TOWARD BULLYING AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING

Ogungbade, O. K., Ph.D.
Yahaya, L. A., Ph.D.

&

Robert, M. M.
Department of Counsellor Education
Faculty of Education
University of Ilorin
Nigeria

Abstract

Bullying is a global phenomenon with devastating consequences for the victims, their families, and the societies at large. This study therefore investigated the behaviour patterns and predisposition toward bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised all SS 1 to SS 3 students in private and public schools in Kwara State which was estimated at 100,000 students. A total of 420 students (SS 1 – SS 3) were randomly selected from the population of secondary school students in Kwara State and they constituted the respondents. An instrument entitled "Behaviour Patterns and Predisposition to Bullying Questionnaire (BPPBQ)" was used to obtain relevant data. Content validity was used to ascertain the validity of the instrument while test retest method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and coefficient value of 0.76 was obtained. Two research questions were raised and four hypotheses were analyzed using t-test. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents indicated Type A behaviour pattern. The behaviour patterns of the respondents include striving to achieve their goals in any situation, performing well in every activity they are involved and always conscious of time among others. The predisposition of the students towards bullying was low. Two hypotheses were not rejected while two others were rejected. Based on the findings, it was recommended that professional counsellors should provide early intervention to bullied and their victims in order to keep bullying behaviour in check. Professional counsellors should train students on the use of Assertive Training to provide assistance to the students, who are predisposed to bullying in the schools. Since students of public schools are more prone to bullying than students of private schools, it was recommended that the Kwara State Government should sensitize the public school teachers on the need to properly identify cases of bullying and make referral to professional counsellors.

Keywords: Behaviour pattern, Bullying, Predisposition, Counselling.

Introduction

Bullying is an act of intimidation, harassing or oppressing others due to their weakness or inability. It is a serious social ill which is capable of turning individuals within a given society into social misfits with long-term implications. Concerted efforts and decisive actions is therefore required from individuals, families, schools, school counsellors, psychologists, policy-makers, and the governments to address the problem. Mental health of the students could be responsible for engaging in bullying. Mental health is the psychological well-being of an individual that enables him or her to function at a satisfactory level of emotional, psychological, social and behavioural standard. It determines how the person reasons, interacts, socialises, reacts and behaves to people in his or her environment. Bullying affects not only the

students but also the teachers, the school administrators and the broader community (Henry, 2000). It weakens the entire educational foundation of schools and as such, stakeholders in the educational system have shown concern over the problem of bullying in schools. Bullying is a destructive behaviour which is difficult to completely eliminate in schools (Nickel, Krawczyk, Nickel, Forthofer, Keitler, Leberich, Muelbacher, Tritt, Mitterlehner, Norshidah & Khadim, 2014).

Omenyi (2013) noted that acts perpetrated by bullies are intentionally done to cause pain on the victims and to deny freedom and safety. Wet (2008) also noted that bullies always channel their energy and focus on individuals who are different from them in size and strength and that the victims are unlikely to retaliate when bullied. Bullying can be grouped into direct bullying and the indirect bullying. Khadim (2014) stated that direct bullying entails direct physical act such as punching, kicking, and slapping among others which causes pain to their victims. Indirect bullying entails insults and teasing which causes the victim psychological and emotional pains. Both categories of bullying are very dangerous. Bullying does not only affect the victims as it also has some effects on the bullies (Wet, 2005). The effects of bullying behaviours include poor academic performance, physical abuse and psychological problems for the victims (Aluede, 2006). Acts of bullying of any form are very terribly harmful for the bullies, their victims, the school environment and their communities (Omoteso, 2010).

The personality characteristics and typical reaction patterns, combined with the level of physical strength or weakness in the case of boys, explain the development of bullying problems among students. Environmental influences, such as behaviours, supervisory routines, and teachers' attitudes play a crucial role in determining the extent to which these problems manifest themselves in the school. Parents who model aggression as a way of meeting their needs, or who use harsh or aggressive methods of discipline are significantly more likely to have children who engage in aggression or bullying (Omoteso, 2010).

Bullying behaviours are rampant among adolescents in either the school or outside the school (Olweus, 2003; Owoyemi & Oyeleru, 2010). According to Martin, Carlson and Buskist (2007), males were more likely to become physically bullies especially fighting others while females were more likely to be psychological bullies especially calling people names and excluding those who are not their friends from their play group, and gossiping.

In order to reduce cases of bullying in schools, professional counsellors could train students the use of Assertive Training, which is a helpful skill that is useful to teach adolescents in order to avoid becoming victims of bullies. Besides, Beane (2008) agreed that teaching children to say *Leave me alone or Bug off* with confidence and then walk away with confidence will definitely help to reduce bullying situations in our schools. A sense of self-confidence while communicating with bullies is important, the victims are less likely to be targeted (Olweus, 2004). When people who used to be victims of bullying situation tend to respond in the ways not pleasing to the bully, the victims would not be bullied again. Acts of bullying are always reduced when counsellors organize sensitization programme on anti-bullying. Counsellors should train teachers and other members of school staff on identification of bullies and appropriate response to potential victimization, positive feedback and modeling to promote appropriate social interactions.

Despite the adverse effects of bullying on students, schools and education in general, to the best knowledge of the researchers, only little effort is being made to address the problem. In order for school environment to be safe, peaceful and conducive for learning, every stakeholder in the educational sector has to be keener in preventing cases of bully. As a way of creating more awareness on the problem of bullying in Kwara State secondary schools, the researchers conducted this study. The following research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study:

- L. What are the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State?

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2. What is the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State?

The following hypotheses were postulated and tested:

1. There is no significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of school type.
4. There is no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of school type.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study since it investigated the behaviour patterns and predisposition toward bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State. The population for the study is made up of 235,652 secondary schools students in Kwara State. The target population for this study consisted of over 100,000 S.S.S. 1, SS 2 and S.S.S. 3 in selected secondary schools in Kwara State. Research Advisor (2006) indicated that the sample size appropriate for this study under a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 5% as 384.

Three Senatorial Districts in Kwara State were purposively selected for this study. The dip-hat/lucky dip hand sampling technique was used to select two local governments from each of the three Senatorial Districts. The container was shaken properly; after which 2 local governments were picked at random to represent each of the senatorial districts. Thus, 6 local governments were selected. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two secondary schools (1 private; 1 public) from each of the Local Governments under each of the senatorial districts. A total of 12 secondary schools (6 private; 6 public) was sampled. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 35 secondary school students from each of the levels (S.S.S. 1 to S.S.S. 3) for the study. A total of 70 secondary school students were randomly selected from each local government. Thus, a total of 420 secondary school students were selected.

An instrument tagged "Behaviour Patterns and Predisposition to Bullying Questionnaire (BPPBQ)" was used to gather data from the respondents. It has three sections: A, B and C. Section A has two items that elicited demographic information about the respondents. Section B comprised information on Behaviour Patterns, while Section C comprised information on the predisposition toward bullying. Sections B and C required the respondents to indicate their responses using a four-point Likert-type scale of: Strongly Agree (SA), 4 points, Agree (A), 3 points, Disagree (D), 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD), 1 point. The research instrument was pilot tested on 20 secondary school students in Kwara State. Ambiguous items were restructured for clarity. The students that the instrument was pilot tested on were different from those that were involved in the final part of the study, although they had similar characteristics with those that later participated in the study.

Five experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin validated the instrument. The test re-test reliability method was adopted to determine the reliability of the test. The questionnaires were given to twenty secondary school students in Kwara State, after an interval of four weeks. The same respondents were given the same instrument to respond to. The two sets of scores were then correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation, which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.75. The instrument was therefore considered reliable for the study. The completed questionnaire was

collected from the respondents on the spot. The highest mean score was 4.36 while the lowest score was 1.09 mean score. Therefore, the mid-point was 2.50. Respondents that had 2.50 mean score and above were rated as having Type A behaviour pattern, while respondents that had mean score of 1.00 – 2.49 were rated as having Type B behaviour pattern. Respondents' disposition to bullying was also rated using four-point Likert Type Scale. Respondents who scored 2.50 mean score and above were rated as having negative disposition to bullying while those having below 2.50 mean score were rated as having negative disposition to bullying. The respondent's personal data were analysed using percentages. Research questions were answered using mean and rank order while t-test was used to test the hypotheses generated at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The distribution of respondents by variables of the study i.e gender and school type are presented in this section.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Personal Data

Item grouping	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	211	50.2
Female	209	49.8
Total	420	100.0
School Type		
Public	210	50.0
Private	210	50.0
Total	420	100.0

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents by demographic data. Based on gender, 211 (50.2) were male respondents while 209 (49.8%) were female. On School type, 210 (50%) respondents were from public schools while the remaining 210 (50%) were from private schools.

Research Question 1: What are the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Rank Order on the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State

Item No	Behaviour Patterns	Mean	Rank
10	I always strive to achieve my goal in any situation.	3.52	1 st
15	I perform well in every activities I am involved	3.51	1 st
1	I am always conscious of time	3.47	3 rd
18	I have a lot of self-control	3.42	4 th
12	I always develop high challenging sport in any activity I found myself	3.38	5 th
7	I am always afraid of being called a failure	3.26	6 th
2	I am always engaged with one thing or the other	3.26	6 th
9	I get involved in many activities at a time	3.12	8 th
17	I rush over my work and demand others to hurry up	3.08	9 th
19	I feel unfulfilled as I constantly want to achieve	2.99	10 th
6	I am usually overwhelmed by the amount of task I perform	2.95	11 th
20	I am easily irritated by delays in achieving a given task	2.92	12 th
3	I hardly find time to relax	2.91	13 th
14	I hardly complete an assigned duty before moving on to another	2.90	14 th

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9	I am personally prone to anger	2.80	15 th
4	I feel unhappy sitting idle	2.79	16 th
16	I feel compulsion to meet deadlines	2.72	17 th
11	I am very impatient when I want to accomplish a task	2.55	18 th
8	I usually get myself involved in many different unrelated activities	2.53	19 th
13	I am an impatient person	2.44	20 th

In Table 2, items 10, 15 and 1 were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd with mean scores of 3.52, 3.51, and 3.47 respectively and they indicated that *I always strive to achieve my goal in any situation; I perform well in every activities I am involved; and I am always conscious of time.* Items 11, 8 and 13 ranked 18th, 19th and 20th with mean scores of 2.55, 2.53, and 2.44 respectively and they indicated that *I am very impatient when I want to accomplish a task; I usually get myself involved in many different unrelated activities; and I am an impatient person.* Nineteen out of the twenty items have means that are greater than 2.50, hence it can be concluded that the majority of the respondents had Type A Behaviour Pattern.

Research Question 2: *What is the predisposition of students towards bullying in Kwara State?*

Table 3: Mean Scores and Rank Order on the Predisposition towards Bullying among Secondary School Students in Kwara State

Item No	I have the predisposition to engaging in bullying when:	Mean	Rank
2	I am being provoked	2.59	1 st
1	I am insulted by other students	2.51	2 nd
4	My teachers use corporal punishment	2.41	3 rd
20	I need attention but not given	2.40	4 th
10	Other Students are ungrateful	2.39	5 th
3	I am hungry	2.38	6 th
11	I am frustrated	2.35	7 th
13	The school authority uses too rigid rules and regulations	2.35	8 th
5	Other Students are rude to me	2.30	9 th
8	Junior students disobey me	2.28	10 th
12	I am wrongly accused	2.27	11 th
19	Other attempt to dominate me	2.25	12 th
9	I am hurt	2.20	13 th
18	I could not impress others	2.09	14 th
7	Teachers display non - challant attitude towards me	2.07	15 th
16	I am isolated	2.03	16 th
14	I have low grade	2.02	17 th
6	I am unhappy	2.00	18 th
15	I failed an examination	1.82	19 th
17	I have problem with my parents	1.78	20 th

Table 3 shows the mean scores and rank order of the predisposition towards bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State. Using the mean score to determine the predisposition towards bullying, Items 2, 1 and 4 were ranked 1st, 2nd and 3rd with mean scores of 2.59, 2.51, and 2.41 respectively. Items 6, 15 and 17 were ranked 18th, 19th and 20th with mean scores of 2.00, 1.82, and 1.78 respectively. Only two out of the twenty items have means that are greater than the mid-point of 2.50, hence it can be concluded that the respondents indicated low predisposition to bullying which can be interpreted as having negative disposition to bullying.

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of gender*

Table 4: Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value on the Behaviour Patterns of Secondary School Students in Kwara State on the basis of Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	211	59.80	7.19	418	2.15*	1.96	0.03
Female	209	61.43	8.33				

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows a p-value of 0.03, since this value is less than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of gender

Hypothesis 2: *There is no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of gender*

Table 5: Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value on the Predisposition to Bullying among Secondary School Students in Kwara State on the Basis of Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Male	211	43.72	11.60	418	1.45	1.96	0.14
Female	209	45.37	11.81				

Table 5 indicates a p-value of 0.14, since this value is greater than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypothesis is not rejected. Hence, there is no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among the students in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of gender.

Hypothesis 3: *There is no significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of school type*

Table 6: Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value on the Behaviour Patterns of Secondary School Students in Kwara State on the Basis of School Type

School Type	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Public	210	62.70	7.60	418	5.67*	1.96	0.00
Private	210	58.52	7.46				

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 6 shows a p-value of 0.00, since this value is less than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State Nigeria on the basis of school type

Hypothesis 4: *There is no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of school type*

Table 7: Mean, Standard Deviations and t-value on the Predisposition to Bullying among Secondary School Students in Kwara State on the Basis of School Type

School Type	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value	p-value
Public	210	45.29	11.84	418	1.31	1.96	0.19
Private	210	43.79	11.58				

Table 7 indicates a p-value of 0.19, since this value is greater than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypothesis is not rejected. Hence, there is no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among the students in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of school type.

Discussion of Findings

The study found that majority of the respondents indicated Type A Behaviour Pattern. They strived to achieve their goal in any situation; performed well in different activities they were involved; always conscious of time; exercised a lot of self-control; developed high challenging spirit in any activity they engaged in.

Another finding indicated that there was low level of predisposition toward bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State. This could be as a result of the fact that Type A persons tend to concentrate on performance and achieving success rather than intimidating others.

Further findings revealed that there was a significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of gender. This finding contradicts Bukowski, Sippola and Newcomd (2000) which stated that students irrespective of their gender are faced with myriads of rules, discrete curriculum and assessment regime which as a result of being within the adolescent period, tend to display some bullying behaviours. In Nigeria, for example, bullying behaviour among students is rampant and has a negative impact on students' learning in a safe and secure environment without fear.

Findings further revealed no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State, Nigeria on the basis of gender. This might be as a result of the same upbringing of both male and female. Also, the predisposition of the gender could be because of living in the same environment by both males and females, this is connected to the fact that males and females interacted in the same environment where they live.

The finding also revealed that there was a significant difference in the behaviour patterns of secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of school type. The difference noted could be attributed to the type of students admitted some could be calm while others could engage in bullying. Also, private school teachers might have more time for the students due to the fact that the students could be few whereas at public schools, there might be more students in the classes than the teachers-students ratio recommended by the appropriate authority. Moreover, economic status of the parents whose adolescents attend private schools might be high which could contribute to how the students comport themselves whereas it could be otherwise for parents whose adolescents might be at public schools.

Finally, the study also revealed that there was no significant difference in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kwara State on the basis of school type. The finding corroborated Omoteso (2010) which stated that students generally have a negative disposition towards the act of bullying and they try as much as possible to seek for help as soon as they are being intimidated by their fellow students irrespective of the type of school. According to Omoteso, when students find it difficult

reporting the study to a higher authority, the system would not experiencing some difficulties in controlling or best schoolwork and in the long run experience a decline in academic performance.

Implications for Counselling

Counselling service in the school system is the most important aspect of school guidance programme which is aimed at helping students' immediate academic and personal-social issues. This is done in conformity with the professional school counselling as the students are voluntarily change their bullying behaviour. Based on the findings of this study, school counselling have great responsibility to assist students who are bullies and those who bullied other students for better academic performance. The school counsellors also need to pay particular attention to female students in providing professional assistance to them.

Conclusion

The study concluded that majority of the respondents were the F and that significant difference existed in the behaviour pattern of secondary school students in Kogi State, Nigeria on the basis of gender and school type while significant differences were not found in the predisposition to bullying among secondary school students in Kogi State, Nigeria on the basis of gender and school type.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

- Professional counselling should provide early intervention for those who bullied others (bullies) and the victims in order to keep the behaviour patterns in check.
- Professional counselling should equip students with assertive skills to provide assistance to those who are predisposed to bullying in the schools.
- Since females engaged in bullying others psychologically more than males, the teachers are encouraged to instill good personal disposition among students so as to prevent bullying behaviour and
- Since students of public schools were more prone to bullying than students of private schools, it is recommended that Kogi State Government should sensitize the public school teachers in ways of identifying bullies and make reference to Professional Counsellors who would provide necessary assistance.

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