

## EFFECT OF ADLERIAN THERAPY ON THE PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS

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**ABSTRACT:** *This study examined the effect of Adlerian therapy on the psychosocial challenges of adolescence. Two research hypotheses were made to guide the study. The sample consisted of seventy (71) senior secondary school students. A 40 item self-developed questionnaire was designed for data collection. The study adopted a quasi-experimental control group design. Analysis of data was achieved using the Analysis of Co-variance (ANCOVA) at the level of significance of 0.05. The result of the findings showed that there is a significant effect of Adlerian therapy on the psychosocial challenges of adolescents and that age do not affect the psychosocial challenges of secondary school adolescent. Conclusions were made and some counselling implications were highlighted.*

**KEYWORDS:** Adlerian therapy, psychosocial challenges, adolescents, secondary school, ANCOVA

### INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a phase in life that encompasses variations in social, behavioural, emotional as well as biological developmental changes of an individual and this individual is known to be an adolescent. Adolescence is the stage of development between childhood and adulthood, indicating the time during which a person experiences different biological and emotional changes. According to World Health Organization (2017), Adolescence is the period of age ranging from 10 years to 19 years is one of the serious transition in the lifecycle that occurs after childhood and before adulthood and is considered by a tremendous pace in growth and change that is second only to that of infancy. Adolescents in this age range are commonly described as defiant, interested in themselves and usually exceedingly difficult. In the same vein, this time is also filled with freedom and independence and skyrocket growth and development. The period of adolescence can be a tensed time for adolescents and the family as well as considering their age need to play a vital role to help the adolescent walk through this stage successfully so that they can mature into upright adults. Every adult must well understand the aims of adolescence and work with their adolescents by offering support throughout their developmental.

Adolescence is the transitional stage in the life cycle between 13 and 19 years of age characterized by development between childhood and adulthood, representing the period during which a person experiences a variety of biological and emotional changes. Adolescence is a stage increasing independence from adult controls, witnessing rapidly occurring physical and psychological changes, exploration of social issues and concerns, increased focus on activities with a peer group and establishment of a basic self-identity (Hurlock, 1981). The most obvious changes during adolescence involve physical, psychological, and sexual development, including the appearance of secondary sexual features and the ability to reproduce. Adolescents are preoccupied with these physical changes and how they are

perceived by others. Many adolescents and families are reassured to learn that the maturation process takes place at a different pace for everyone. Changes may occur earlier in some and later in others, but eventually, they will occur. Adolescence begins with the first well-defined maturation event called puberty. Included in the biological challenges are the changes that occur due to the release of the sexual hormones that affect emotions. Half of the lifetime, mental disorders begin before the age of 14 years, and 75% begin by the age of 24 years (World health organization, 2011). Mood variations can increase, which can impact on relationships of parents and siblings at home and socially or at school.

Psychosocial challenges have various definitions from different researchers. For instance, According to Muthas and Mushina (2016), psychosocial challenges have to do with the challenges and problems that affect the adolescent's day to day activities. It can be deduced that psychosocial challenges are problems or issues that adolescents are confronted with which affect their overall wellbeing. Researchers have tried to define psychosocial challenges as a state of emotional and behaviour disorders synonymous with internalizing and externalizing conditions, respectively. Most common disorders include depression and anxiety (internalizing disorders), and delinquency, aggression, educational difficulties, truancy (externalizing disorders) (Ahmad, Khaliq, Khan, & Amir, 2007). For adolescents to function well in any given society, the atmosphere must be filled with attention, love, and understanding. In the contemporary world, many adolescents are faced with psychosocial issues because of how they were trained and the exposure they were given. Apart from that, the family type of adolescents also determines the psychosocial competence of adolescents.

Also, Sexual activity during adolescence can involve serious consequences for which the adolescent is not prepared, such as unintentional pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. As the changes associated with adolescence affect core family relationships, the counsellors can further develop a supportive partnership with the adolescent and the family by providing sensitive and effective anticipatory guidance that can help prepare them to navigate this developmental rite of passage successfully. Studies show that psychosocial disorder has a relationship with the age groups (14-15 and 16-19). Specifically, 14-15 year adolescents are commonly affected. (Ahmad, Khaliq, Khan, & Amir, 2007).

During the period of transition, adolescents have mood swings, that is they can cry and laugh easily, they are found moody and irritable. The reason is not farfetched, this is because they do not understand all the changes that are taking place in their bodies and thereby, they become vulnerable. Socially, adolescents like to spend most of their time with their peer group. In this group (peer group), there are cultures, language, values, dress code, as well as likes and dislikes. However, conforming to social group norms is the basic aim of an adolescent. This account for the reason why adolescents make friends. Anyone who does not make or have friends goes into depression, which can have negative consequences on his/her psychosocial development (Lakshmana & Uppara, 2013). In the same vein, the adolescent is faced with social problems, he has to contend with striking changes in physical appearance and physiological functioning that he may not understand. This may make the period of adolescence a turbulent one if not effectively managed (Badejo, 2005). All these inhibit the psychosocial development of the adolescents which in turn bring about psychosocial challenges in the adolescents.

Although, many research works were carried on psychosocial problems of adolescents by Muthu's and Muhsina, (2016); Ikorok, Lawal, & Akpabio, (2015); Famakinwa, Olagunju, & Akinlawon, (2016); Ajidaun (2011). However, many of this research work did not provide the solution to this problem of psychosocial challenges and this present work intends to fill the gap by seeking intervention on how to curb or reduce the menace of the psychosocial problem among secondary school adolescents. Due to the increasing psychosocial challenges, parents, teachers are finding it difficult to manage these adolescents. This research aims at using Adlerian therapy as an intervention strategy to reduce the adolescent's psychosocial challenges in secondary school. Adlerian therapy is a goal-oriented therapy aimed at helping individual strive for superiority by covering up their feeling of inferiority and also encouraging the adolescent to be an active member of the society where they belong. According to Adler (1907), he believed that feelings of inferiority played a significant role in determining an individual's behaviour and he also stressed that, there is need to discover the main cause of feelings of inferiority to assist in the development of strong ego and thereby help the individual eliminate some psychosocial problems. Therefore, this paper intends to examine the effect of Adlerian therapy on the psychosocial challenges of secondary school adolescents.

### **Purpose of the study**

The primary aim of this study is to ascertain the effect of Adlerian therapy on the psychosocial challenges of adolescents.

### **Research Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant effect of Adlerian Therapy on the Psychosocial Challenges of secondary school adolescents.
2. There is no significant effect of age on the Psychosocial Challenges of secondary school adolescents.

### **METHODS**

The research design that was adopted is quasi-experimental. The population of the study consist of all secondary school adolescents in Lagos State.

### **Sample and Sampling technique**

The sample for the study consists of 71 secondary school adolescents. Where the experimental group were 34 secondary school adolescents and the control group were 37 secondary school adolescents. The researcher used a simple random sampling technique to select schools. The participants were selected through the school counsellor and teachers to participate in the research work. The student with psychosocial problems was abundantly identified in each school used. The students were administered with the questionnaire titled Adolescents Psychosocial Problem Inventory (APPI). The result from the questionnaire was used to identify those with psychosocial challenges and that need to be enlisted for the experimental research. As such, these adolescents were identified and were randomly assigned to the experimental group and the control group.

**Validation of instrument**

The instrument (questionnaire) used is titled Adolescents Psychosocial Problem Inventory (APPI). The questionnaire was validated by psychometrics experts and its reliability coefficient using Cronbach Alpha is 0.81.

**Data Analysis**

From this study, the data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

**RESULT**

**Hypothesis 1.** There is no significant effect of Adlerian Therapy on the Psychosocial Challenges of secondary school adolescents.

**Table 1: Effects of Adlerian Therapy on the Psychosocial Challenges of secondary school adolescents**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	12929.887 <sup>a</sup>	2	6464.943	132.039	0
Intercept	1.853	1	1.853	0.038	0.846
Pretest	3038.748	1	3038.748	62.063	0
Adlerian	12929.275	1	12929.275	264.066	0
Error	3329.437	68	48.962		
Total	400628	71			
Corrected Total	16259.324	70			

a. R Squared = .795 (Adjusted R Squared = .789)

From table 1, the effect of Adlerian Therapy  $F(1, 68) = 264.066$  and this show that the effect is significant at 0.05, ( $p < 0.05$ ). This implies that there is a significant effect of Adlerian Therapy on the psychosocial challenges of secondary school adolescents. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, there is a significant effect of the treatment on the students exposed to Adlerian Therapy comparable to their counterpart in the control group.

**Hypothesis 2**

**Table 2: Effects of age on the Psychosocial Challenges of secondary school adolescents**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	969.141 <sup>a</sup>	3	323.047	1.416	0.246
Intercept	4418.399	1	4418.399	19.361	0
Pretest	24.684	1	24.684	0.108	0.743
Age	968.529	2	484.264	2.122	0.128
Error	15290.183	67	228.212		
Total	400628	71			
Corrected Total	16259.324	70			

a. R Squared = .060 (Adjusted R Squared = .017)

Table2 shows that the effect of age  $F(2, 67) = 2.122$ , was not significant at 0.05, ( $p > 0.05$ ). Since the p-value of the F-ratio is greater than 0.05, then the null hypothesis was not rejected. This implies that age has no significant effect on the psychosocial challenges of secondary school adolescents. Students of different age groups respond in the same way.

## DISCUSSION

**Hypothesis 1:** The first hypothesis states that there is a significant effect of Adlerian therapy on the psychosocial challenges of secondary school adolescents.

The findings of this study indicated that there was a significant effect of treatment (Adlerian therapy) on the psychosocial challenges of secondary school adolescents. The result of the first hypothesis indicates that a significant difference existed between the scores of respondents exposed to treatment (the experimental groups) and that of those in the control group. Therefore, the first hypothesis was rejected. The respondents exposed to the Adlerian therapy performed better than those who were not exposed to the treatment package. The effectiveness of the applied therapy was plausible as a result of the power of the therapy at assisting the adolescents to be psychosocially competent. The therapy was steered towards addressing adolescents' problems which seemed to be the main reason for psychosocial challenges in them. The therapy was tactically selected with the idea to moderate the psychosocial problems of adolescents in school to enhance the psychosocial competence in adolescents. The effect of this therapy was possible due to the emphasis on how the students could develop high self-concept of themselves and encouraging them to be contributing members of their society. With particular emphasis on their emotional, social, behavioural and educational challenges, the adolescents were encouraged that they can improve in themselves by reducing their feeling of inferiority and striving for perfection. This result is in line with the study of Boxer, Laura, Sara, Goldstein, Musher, & Eric (2005) that their social, cognitive approach coupled with some counselling techniques can lessen adolescents' verbal aggressions. A self-assured teenager had a significant decline in aggressive behaviours. The finding also showed that the students who have less confidence and non-acceptable by peers would display certain rebellious behaviours, such as giving criticism to get what they want. Keshavarzi, Mirnasab & Gargan, (2016) result of finding indicates a significant increase in the functional emotion regulation strategies as well as a marked decrease in the dysfunctional emotion regulation strategies. According to Freed

(1998), opined that the application of Transaction Analysis helped adolescents develop self-understanding and acquire the skill to make changes both within themselves and in their communication with others. Besides, Vahidiborji & Jadidi (2017) studied that reality therapy is effective on three subscales: emotional, social and academic adjustment. Melisa (2010) also found that reality therapy is effective in treating high school delinquency. Ojewola (2017) confirmed that the participants exposed to the reality therapy performed better than those in the control group. In nutshell, the result of the first hypothesis indicates Adlerian Therapy is significantly effective in reducing the Psychosocial challenges of adolescents.

## **Hypothesis 2**

This present study explored the effect of Adlerian on the psychosocial challenges of adolescents. It is observed from the result that adolescents of all ages experienced psychosocial problems. The cause could be that since the period of adolescence commences between the age of 12years to 19 years, the adolescents may be undergoing these issues at any year of the age. As such, it does not matter the age each adolescent experience it. This opposes the finding of Madu & Matla, 2003; Chen, Chen, Fagot-Campagna, & Narayan, 2001; Sutherland & Willner, (1998) who studied that 12% to 18% of school and college-going students respectively had taken alcohol and the most common age group in school going children for the onset of alcohol was 14-16 year of age(73 %), while college-age group students the onset of taken drugs was mainly between 17-19years of age(43%). Smoking was less popular among adolescents at 4% as compared to 12.2% in the college group of 14years was the age at which maximum school-going children took to drug abuse either alcohol or cigarettes in the study. Also, Bista, Pushpa, Thapa, Sapkota, Singh & Pokhreal (2010) studied Psychosocial dysfunction was associated with the age groups 14years to 19years. Similarly, the finding of Attkinson & Rosenblatt (1998) stated that adolescents among 12years are having psychosocial challenges compared to the other ages. Robert & et al in a meta-analysis of 52 studies done in 20 countries of the world, found that prevalence of psychopathology among adolescents (12 to 18 years) varies from 6% to 41% (Jenson, Watanabe, Richters, Cortes, Roper, & Liu 1995). This study confirmed other findings that the rise in emotional and behavioural problems from 12 years up to 17 years is reported in previous studies (Mishra & Sharma,2001). Study of Sharma, Parvan, Gupta, Ojha, & Goel (2011) confirmed that the prevalence of behavioural and emotional problems among 12years to 18 years school-going adolescents was found to be 30.4%. Lack of ability to talk to the mother is significantly associated with the development of depression in children of 12years to 17 years of age, (Monck, Graham & Richman,1994). The study of Chrisi, & Patten, (1997) also found that 16-year-old adolescents of divorced parents had more somatic complaints and lower self-esteem than children of intact families.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study brings out the effect of Adlerian therapy on the psychosocial challenges of adolescents. The treatments Adlerian therapy applied in this study were highly effective in the reduction of psychosocial challenges among secondary school adolescents. It can be concluded that psychosocial issues of adolescents can be appropriately mitigated if appropriate treatments are used on them. Adlerian therapy is very significant in curbing the issue of psychosocial development in adolescents. Besides, age does not have any effect on the psychosocial

challenges of adolescents. That is, all adolescents experience the psychosocial problem in the same way.

### Counselling Implications

A sizeable number of adolescents need support in coping with psychosocial challenges of life. That is, there should be an intervention strategy to prevent these issues in adolescents. Besides, the School counsellor can handle the problem most effectively by providing help to those that are being confronted with these problems, especially at an early age. Moreover, it is essential to have the role of the counsellor being felt in the school system. With the availability of a counsellor, it will help to discover adolescents with psychosocial problems to use appropriate therapies in curbing and reducing these problems. Community involvement is also pivotal, and the school can become the base using inventive programs like student street plays, seminars etc. thus educating the family as well as the community regarding the adolescence period and some of the problems they may encounter in the process and how they (adolescents) can successfully negotiate this period.

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**Authors' contributions:** LSB carried out the research work and engaged in the writing of the manuscript. AB was involved in the validation of the instrument and authentication of the analysed data. All authors proofread and approved the completion of the final manuscript.

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