

FAMILY AND SCHOOL INFLUENCE ON STUDENTS DEVELOPMENT OF PSYCHOPATHIC BEHAVIOUR IN PORT HARCOURT AND EMOHUA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF RIVERS STATE.

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ABSTRACT: *This study was conducted to verify the influence of family and school on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour in Port Harcourt and Emohua Local Government Areas of Rivers State. The population for the study was made up of all the senior secondary class two (SS II) students in the two Local Government Areas and they were 30,471. Sample for the study was made up of 570. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw 10 secondary schools for the study. Two instruments namely Psychopathic Behaviour Checklist (SPBC) and Psychopathic Behaviour Development Questionnaire (SPDBQ) were developed by the researcher for the study. The construct validity of SPBC was 0.85, while its reliability co-efficient was 0.60. The test-retest reliability of SPBDQ was 0.85. Two research questions were answered, while two hypotheses were tested. The data analysis technique adopted for the study included: mean, standard deviation, t-test and percentage. There was no significant influence of family on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour, also, there was no significant influence of school on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour. Items analysis reveal that 50% of the students reported that the separation or divorce between their father and mother cause them to be angry and aggressive always, while 81.6% female and 77% of male students reported that they sometimes tell their parents lies. Some recommendations were made, which included that parents should serve as good role models to their children.*

KEYWORDS: Psychopathic Behaviour, Family, School, Criminal Versatility

INTRODUCTION

The prevalence of psychopathic behaviour among secondary school students in contemporary Nigerian society has become a source of worry to all and sundry. Many citizens of this country dwell in perpetual fear due to the inglorious demeanour of psychopaths.

Wikipedia (2015) defined psychopathy as a personality disorder characterized by enduring antisocial behaviour, diminished empathy and remorse and disinhibited or bold behaviour. Implicit in the above definition is that a psychopath exhibits multiple anti-social behaviours which may include stealing, robbery, arson, fighting, kidnapping, etc. These undesirable behaviours are replete in all the parts of the country. In addition the psychopaths are extremely callous, devoid of empathy and are pathological liars.

It was a Canadian Psychologist Robert Hare who popularized the concept of psychopathy with his psychopathic checklist in 1991 and highlighted that: juvenile delinquency, criminal versatility, callousness and pathological lying are some of the characteristics of psychopathy. McCord and McCord cited in Lilienfeld, Latzman, Watts, Smith and Dutton (2014) postulated that psychopaths are superficially charming and commonly make positive first impressions on

other, at the same time they are callous grandiose guiltless, dishonest and frequently engage in impulsive reckless acts. Hare (1993) stipulated that psychopaths romantic relationships are typically devoid of tender emotions and marked by rampant promiscuity.

Family is the first social unit of any community. It is the prime responsibility of every family to bring up children according to the norms and culture of such a society. In effect, it is the inalienable duty of parents to ensure that their children are properly brought up. However, homes replete with marital conflicts may negatively influence the behaviour of children in such families. Some parents quarrel frequently and demonstrate physical aggression towards each other in the form of fighting, battering of each other and destroying some house hold properties. These inappropriate marital behaviours could cause children in such homes to learn the act of aggression and this could contribute to psychopathic development. In this regard, McRoberts (2001) observed that parental conflict and negativity have greater influence on the child being a psychopath. Nnenna and Nweke (1989;294) state “that the consequences of conflict and instability in Nigerian marital homes are known to be incessant exchange of words, insults, fighting ,breaking of valuable property, court cases and divorce” The stated consequences of conflict in marital homes do not augur well for the social, political and economic progress of the country .

In addition, the kind of relationship that exists between the child and the parents may influence the child’s behaviour. The extent of love and warmth exhibited to the child is a likely determinant factor of the type of behaviour the child demonstrates right from childhood and eventually to adulthood, if appropriate measures were not taken to correct any negative relationship with the parents.

The pattern of parents up-bring of the children is highly significant in shaping children’s behaviour. In connection with this, Hare (1993) states that parenting practices help to shape the behaviour expression of psychopathy. In this regard, Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg and Dornhusch (1991) observe that neglectful parenting styles contribute to problem behaviour in youths, while authoritative parenting style produces children that are high on psychological competence and low on measures of dysfunction. This suggests that in order to prevent the development of psychopathic behaviour in adolescents, authoritative parenting style is most effective.

Socio-economic background of a family can influence the behaviour of the children in that family. Tohan (1988) examined the social economic background of family and social stress correlates of adolescent antisocial and delinquent behaviour. He found that families that are supportive result in a lower level of antisocial and delinquent behaviour. Lowsocial economic status may culminate in stress and stress associated with poverty may affect parents ability to effect adequate control over their children.

The type of relationship existing among siblings may also affect the development of psychopathy. In most homes, conflict among siblings is common. This may lead to the development of aggressive behaviour which is an attribute of psychopathy.

Schools may inadvertently contribute towards the development of psychopathic behaviour. Gottfried and Hirsch (1990:149) state that “the quality of school that a child attends may also determine the likelihood of them associating with poorly behaving peers”. Thus if the school is replete with students of antisocial behaviour they may influence any adolescent sent to the school negatively. It has been observed that habits acquired at school often persist into adult

life. Therefore the school should endeavour to prevent drop-out, delinquency and anti-social behaviour.

Invariably, all schools face to some degree, the persistent problems of lack of motivation, school failure, and delinquent behaviour, vandalizing and stealing. Not all students can compete successfully, and therefore, frustration can result leading to jealousy and anti-social behaviour. This means that when students drop-out of school due to their inability to compete, they may become jealous of their former school mates who were able to complete their secondary education successfully.

Statement of Problem

The magnitude of psychopathic behaviours which is being exhibited in contemporary Nigeria is horrendous. A day hardly passes without one pathetic story or the other it could be gruesome murder or kidnapping of school children, robbery attack or suicide bombing. In these dastard acts, many precious lives and property are lost while others may find themselves in the hospital due to injuries sustained. Most of these obnoxious behaviours are exhibited by psychopaths. This study therefore intends to ascertain the family and school influence on students development of psychopathic behaviour.

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to find out the family and school influence on student's development of psychopathic behaviour. The specific objectives are: To

1. find out the influence of family on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour.
2. ascertain the influence of school on male and female students' development of psychopathic behaviour.

Research Questions:

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the influence of the family on male and female student's development of psychopathic behaviour?
2. What is the influence of the school on male and female student's development of psychopathic behaviour?

Hypotheses:

1. There is no significant influence of family on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour.
2. There is no significant influence of school on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study is analytic descriptive survey. The population of this research comprised all the senior secondary class two (SS II) students in all the state owned secondary schools in Port Harcourt and Emohua Local Government Area of Rivers State. The total population of SS II students in the two Local Government areas was 30,471. This was made up of 16779 males and 13692 females. A total of 100 SS II students were drawn through stratified random sampling technique and administered with a test to determine those with psychopathic characteristics. One hundred SS II students were drawn from each of the 10 schools used for the study. Out of the students tested 570 were identified to have psychopathic characteristics and they constituted the sample for this investigation: The sample size was also made up of 330 males and 240 females students. Two instruments were used for the study these are the student's psychopathic behaviour checklist (SPBC) and the student's psychopathic behaviour Development questionnaire (SPBDQ). The SPBC contained 36 items and the items were to be ticked Yes or No. On the other hand SPBDQ contained 48 items and it is a four point Likert type questionnaire (strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree). The researcher developed the two instruments. The instruments were validated by four experts in the area of Educational Psychology Measurement and Evaluation. The experts suggestions and recommendations were duly implemented. The SPBC internal consistency evidence of the construct validity was established using internal consistency method called item total correlation method with Kuder-Richardson's estimates. Kuder-Richardson's formula 20 showed that the instrument had 0.85, construct validity, and while Kuder. Richardson formula 21 showed construct validity of the instrument as 0.82. The test re-test technique was used to determine reliability of the SPBDQ and SPBC. The test retest determined the internal consistency of the instruments and their stability. Random Sampling was used to draw 40 students for SPBDQ and 30 for SPBC in two schools where the study did not take place and were administered with the instruments. Two weeks later, the two instruments were re-administered to the students by the researcher. Statistical method used for the computation of the reliability was Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient obtained for SPBDQ was 0.083, while that of SPBC was 0.60.

RESULTS

1. Results obtained from data analysis are presented below:

Research Question 1:

What is the difference between male and female student's family influence on their development of psychopathic behaviour.

Hypothesis 1:

There is no significant influence of family on male and female students' development of psychopathic behaviour.

Table 1: A t-test Analysis of Male and Female Students' Family Influence on the Development of Psychopathic Behaviour.

Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	t-cal	t-critical	Result
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Male	330	26.64	8.21	568	1.05	1.96	Not significant
Female	240	25.92	7.93				

Table one shows that the computed mean and standard deviation for male students as 26.64 and 8.21 respectively, while the female students had mean of 25.92 and standard deviation of 7.93. The mean difference between male and female students family influence on their development of psychopathic behaviour is 0.72. The result is that family influence male students to indulge in psychopathic behaviour or antisocial behaviour more than female students. The calculated t value of 1.05 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at alpha level of .05. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. As such, there is no significant difference between male and female students family influence on the students development of psychopathic, behaviour.

Research Question 2:

What is the difference between male and female students' school influence on the development of psychopathic behaviour.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant influence of school on male and female students' development of psychopathic behaviour.

Table 2: A t-test Analysis of Male and Female Students School Influence on the Development of Psychopathic Behaviour.

Gender	N	\bar{x}	SD	DF	t-cal	t-critical	Result
Male	330	31.62	18.66	568	.48	1.96	Not Significant
Female	240	31.00	8.49				

Table 2: shows that male students obtained mean of 31.62 and standard deviation of 18.66, while the female students got a mean of 31.00 and standard deviation of 8.49. The mean difference between male and female students is 0.62. The result is that school influenced more male students to participate in psychopathic behaviour more than female students. However the difference between male and female students school influence is not significant. This is because the computed t value of 0.48 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at 558 degree of freedom and .05 alpha level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis was accepted.

DISCUSSION

Family influence on student's psychopathic behaviour

Based on the outcome of the analyzed data as contained in table one, the null hypothesis was accepted. Its acceptance is because the calculated t value of 1.05 was less than the critical value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance. This implies that the calculated t-value is not statistically significant. The finding is that there is no significant difference between male and female students family influence, on the development of psychopathic behaviour. This finding is in consonance with Adio (2000) who found that there was no significant difference between male and female students family influence in the development of juvenile delinquency.

The result is at variance with Evertsson and Meeham (2012) who found that additive genetic (heritable) factors and Non-shared environmental factors each explain 50% of the variance in psychopathic personality traits while shared environmental factors were of no importance. This result disagrees with Hobbs (2006) who found that females depend more on parents for behavioural cues. Apparent in this observation is that as female students identify more closely with their parents; their level of psychopathic behaviour would reduce. The hypothesis outcome is also at variance with Hetherington (1981) who observed that the effects of marital disharmony and divorce are much more powerful and enduring for boys than for girls. Items analysis of this research found that 50% of the students reported that the separation or divorce between their father and mother cause them to be angry and aggressive always. Items analysis of the instrument for the study further revealed that 79.2% of the students reported that they tell lies to their parents sometimes. In terms of gender, it was found that 81.6% of the females and 77% of the male students often tell their parent lies.

School influence on students' psychopathic behaviour

The outcome of t-test computation as contained in table 2 showed that the null hypothesis was accepted. It's acceptance was because the calculated t-value of .48 is less than the critical value of 1.96 at .05 level of significance. The acceptance of the hypothesis means that there is no significant difference between male and female students school influence on their development of psychopathic behaviour. This finding is in disagreement with Adioogu (2000), who found that there was significant difference between male and female students in the development of juvenile delinquency. In this study, it has been found that school had greater influence towards students' development of psychopathic behaviour. The administrative style of some school authorities who often suspend and expel students could contribute towards the development of psychopathic behaviour. Hemphill, Toumbourous and Catalano (2005:22) observed that 1 time suspension from school raised the risk more than 5 times. This means that the moment a student has been suspended once, there is the possibility of the student committing similar offence five times. The aforementioned researchers concluded that school suspension may exacerbate antisocial behaviour. Items analysis of one of the instruments used for the study (SPBDQ) indicated that 47.8% of male and 61.6% of female students reported that their poor academic performance causes them to be sad and aggressive. It was discovered that 40.3% of males and 64.5% of female students reported that some teachers in their school sometimes call them names they do not like when they are unable to answer questions. The consequence of calling students bad names in the class was that 37.5% of males and 45.8% of female's students reported that sometime they do not like to attend the classes of teachers who gave them names. Also 40% of male and 45% of female students reported that the negative attitude of some teachers in the school towards them had made them not to be interested in their subjects.

The analysis of SPBC which is another instrument used for the study indicate that 71% of male and 74.2% of female students reported that they tell lies in the school to avoid punishment. Concerning examination malpractice, 47% of male and 59.7% of female students reported that sometimes they cheat during tests and examinations in their various schools. It was also found that 59.7% of male students and 83.3% of female students confessed that they go to school late sometimes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study the following recommendations are made:

1. Parents should serve as a good role model to their children. This means that the conduct of parents should be worthy of emulation by their children.
2. Parents are required to resolve their marital differences amicably without recourse to divorce in the interest of their children.
3. Based on the extent of school influence on male and female students development of psychopathic behaviour it is recommended that a functional disciplinary committee which would adjudicate on students misdemeanor and recommend appropriate punishments for offences to school authorities should be set up in each school by the principal.
4. It is imperative for a strong counselling unit to be established in each school by the government in order to ameliorate student's behavioural and academic problems.
5. School authorities should curtail or if practicable eliminate the policy of suspension and expulsion of students from schools since such measures could cause the affected students to end up as school dropouts thereby causing some of such students to embrace antisocial behaviours due to frustration.
6. Parents should encourage their children to participate more in religious activities like being members of choir and youth fellowships in order to distract their attention from psychopathic behaviours.

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