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## **Domination by Aggressive Behaviours among Students in Orumba North, Anambra State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

This study adopted descriptive survey design to investigate the influence of gender, parenting styles and peer pressure on the aggressive behaviours of students in Orumba North local government area of Anambra State. Two hundred and ninety-one students consisting 189 males and 102 females with age range of 13 to 16 and mean age of 14.6 years were randomly drawn with ballot method from a population of students spread across three community secondary schools in ONLGAs. Three instruments namely; Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire ( $r=0.72$ ); Baumrid Parental Care Scale ( $r=0.70$ ); Glasen and Brown Peer Pressure Inventory ( $r=0.78$ ) were employed for collection of data. T-test for independent samples and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were adopted as statistical tools to analyze four hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The results show that level of aggressive behaviour differs significantly on the basis of gender ( $df=289$ ,  $t=2.9908$ ,  $P<.05$ ). There is a significant negative relationship between parenting styles and aggressive behaviours ( $r=-0.074$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), while positive association exist between peer pressure and aggressive behaviour ( $r=0.6296$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The independent variables jointly contributed 52% of the variance in aggressive behaviours among students in ONLGA. The researchers concluded that both personal and social factors are related with aggressive behaviours of students. It recommended that counselling psychologists should mount interventions to teach parents positive parenting styles as well as empower the students with the skill of anger management.

**Key Words:** Parenting style, Peer Pressure, Aggressive behaviour, Adolescence, Orumba

### **Introduction**

Aggression is generally a primary, natural and matured emotion experienced by virtually all humans. Aggression has functional value for survival. For instance, it is through aggression that one can

mobilize psychological resources for corrective action. However, uncontrolled aggressive behaviour can negatively affect those people around aggressors. In recent times, the level at which young people exhibit aggressive behaviours in every setting is attracting the attention of stakeholders including counselling psychologist, reformatory homes, researchers and policy makers amongst others. Researchers (Ojewola, 2014; Shireen & Sufiana, 2015; Elmasry, Fouad, Khalil & Sherra 2016) provided evidence that the incidence of aggression is growing rapidly among secondary school students. Aggressive behaviours among students can be categorized into two broad areas: verbal aggression and physical aggression. What distinguishes these behaviours as exhibited by the aggressive student is that they are done with intent to do harm physically and emotionally. Verbal aggression includes defiance, continuous arguing, cut-downs, threats, swearing, bossing, sarcasm and teasing (Leff, Waasdorp, & Crick, 2010; Verlaan & Turmel, 2010). On the other hand, physical aggression can be exhibited as kicking, hitting, fighting, spitting, throwing materials with intent to do harm (either to a person or to objects, e.g., a window) and biting, among others (Sydney-Agbor, 2016). A variety of factors have been attributed as the root causes of aggressive behaviour, including genetics (*Cherepkova, Elena, Maksimov, Vladimir, Aftanas, Lyubomir, Menshanov & Petr, 2015*); culture (Thomas, 1958); media (Akert, Robin, Aronson & Wilson, 2005); gender (*Archer, 2004*) and social learning (Ofole, Awoyemi, Siokwu, Ojukwu & Uwakwe, 2015 ).

There is preliminary evidence to suggest that gender is associated with the development of pre-social or antisocial behaviour in students (Ikediashi & Akande, 2015). However the extent to which gender influence aggressive behaviour is not well understood. Some researchers reported that males are more physically aggressive than females (Ikediashi & Akande, 2015; Mobarake, 2015). *They opine that men are predispose than females to be aggressive and are involved more in criminal activities (Agboola, 2011)*. However, studies found no discrepancy in male and female aggressive behaviours in experimental context (Tremblay, Japel & Pérusse, 1999; Geolge, 2012; *Lussier, Patrick; Corrado, Tzoumakis & Stacy, 2012*). They were of the opinion that physically aggressive behaviours such as kicking, biting and hitting are expressions of innate and spontaneous reactions to biological drives such as anger, hunger, and affiliation (*Lussier, Patrick; Corrado, Tzoumakis & Stacy, 2012*).

Another variable that has the likelihood to influence aggressive behaviour is parenting style. This is because literature shows that the family is the first and most significant agent of socialization. Parenting style is a psychological construct representing standard strategies that parents use in their child rearing. According to Baumrind (1991) parenting styles are the representations of how parents respond and demand to their children. Parenting styles are categorized under three major forms: the authoritarian, the authoritative or democratic, and the permissive or laissez-faire or self indulgence or un-involving (Baumrind, 1991). The authoritarian parenting style constitutes of parents who are often strict and harsh (Ang & Groh, 2006). While permissive or laissez-faire parents are those who impose few restrictions, rules or limits on their children (Okorodudu, 2010). On the other hand, democratic parents establish and adopt democratic principles and advance “logical and natural consequences”. They teach children to be responsible and understand the natural consequences of proper rules of conduct and improper behaviour (Furedi, 2001). There is controversy concerning the role parenting styles play on students’ aggressive behaviours. For instances some studies (Calvete, Gámez-Guadix & Orue, 2014; Llorca-Mestre, Malonda-Vidal & Samper-García 2017; Llorca, Richaud & Malonda, 2017) found that the type of style adopted by parents in bringing up their children is an important predictor of aggressive behaviours. They argued that children who enjoyed good parenting style are less inclined to manifest aggressive behaviour, upset others or get involved with deviant peers (Calvete, Gámez-Guadix & Orue, 2014). On the contrary, Evis (2016) found no statistical significant interaction effect between parenting styles and aggressive behaviour

Individuals in society will usually make friends or have their closest associates from among their peer groups. A peer group refers to persons that belong to the same age (or about the same age) and/or status. Examples of peer groups include, age peer group, school or educational peer group, social peer group, professional peer group and work peer group (Omogho, 2016). Peer associates have been reported to have a great influence on the lifestyle of members (Omogho, 2016). According to Nsofor (2013) peer group association as an agent of socialization, determines to a large extent, what social codes an individual learns (Nsofor, 2013). This implies that individuals whose core group members believe in aggressive behaviours will learn and internalize more of aggressive codes than those that conform to the norms of the society (Omogho, 2016).

It is evident from literature that the association between parenting styles, peer pressures, and aggressive behaviours is poorly understood due to inconsistent findings. There is need therefore to address the lacuna by contributing to literature in aggressive behaviours. The study examined statistical significant difference in aggressive behaviour of male and female. In addition, it investigated the relationship between parenting styles, peer pressures and aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North Nigeria. The outcome of this study will provide expand the horizon of knowledge regarding aggressive behaviours as well as impact on interventions designed to curb aggressive behaviours among students..

### **Hypotheses**

Three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no statistical significant difference in aggressive behaviour of male and female students in Orumba North local government areas.
2. There is no statistical significant relationship between parenting styles (authoritarian, authoritative and permissive) and aggressive behaviour of student in Orumba North local government areas.
3. There is no statistical significant relationship between peer pressure and aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North local government areas.
4. Gender, parental influence and peer pressure will not have a significant joint influence on aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North local government areas.

### **Methodology**

Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. Simple random sample technique was used to select two hundred and ninety-one students from secondary schools Orumba North Local Government Area of Anambra State. Three Community secondary schools were randomly drawn from 16 major towns in Orumba North local government area using ballot method. The schools used were Community High School, Nanka, Community Secondary School, Ndikelionwu and Community Secondary School, Ufuma. The three schools have an approximated population of 4456 senior secondary school students. A representative sample of 291 students consisting of 189 males and 102 females with age range of 13 to 16 years and mean age of 14.6 years responded to three self-report instruments. Prior to the commencement of the study, the approval of the school principals were obtained. Of the 300 questionnaires administered, 291 were correctly filled and analyzed for the study. The return rate of 97% was therefore, considered satisfactory by the researchers.

### **Measures**

Three instruments were utilized for data collection. Section A of the instrument was used to obtain information regarding the respondents age, gender and school. Section B consists of item on parenting

styles while section C consists of items on peer pressure. Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (BPAQ) was adopted to measure students' aggressive behaviours. It is a 29 item self-report questionnaire anchored on 5 point Likert format ranging from 1- to 5. The scale has four dimensions of aggression namely: physical aggression, verbal aggression, anger and hostility. The authors reported internal consistency for the four subscales and total score ranging from 0.72 (verbal aggression) to 0.89 (total BPAQ score). Ofole, Awoyemi, Siokwu, Ojukwu and Uwakwe (2015) obtained a reliability index of  $r=0.78$  using students in Lagos state, Nigeria. For the purpose of this study test re-test was done within two weeks interval and a reliability index of  $r=0.72$  was obtained.

Parental care scale by Baumrid (1991) was used to assess the type of parental style from the participants' perspective. The 20 item inventory which was originally designed to measure what children perceive as the styles or approaches that their parents dominantly use in taking care of them was adopted for the purpose of this study. The author reported an internal consistency alpha coefficient of 0.86. Nigerian researchers who used the instrument certified it satisfactory to be used for Nigerian population (Annia, 2008; Ofole & Agokei, 2015). Pearson's Product Moment Correlation coefficient for pilot study was  $r=0.70$ .

Peer pressure was measured using subscales of the peer pressure inventory by Glasen and Brown (1985). The scale has eight sections, however only three sub sections were relevant for the study. The sub scales include; pro peer conformity pressure, pro misconduct pressure and anti misconduct pressure. The instrument was pilot tested on 60 randomly selected students from Imo State and test re-test show a reliability index of  $r=0.78$ .

Three statistical tools were used to analyze the data. T-test for independent samples was used to assess if there is a significant difference in aggressive behaviours of male and female. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to examine the relationship between parenting styles and aggressive behaviour of students. ANOVA was used to determine the joint contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of aggressive behaviours.

## Results

The result of the first hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in aggressive behaviour of male and female students is presented in table 1 as follow:

**Table 1: Difference in Aggressive Behaviour Of Male And Female Students**

Variables	Gender	N	Mean	St. Dev	DF	T-value	Sig
Aggressive Behaviour	Male	189	0.17352	0.080132	289	2.9908	0.0056
	Female	102	0.14028	0.07934			

The result in Table 1 revealed that the level of aggressive behaviours among students differ significantly across gender ( $df=289$ ,  $N=291$ ,  $t=2.9908$ ,  $P<.05$ ). Therefore, it is evident that there is a significant gender difference with regards the involvement in aggressive behaviour among students in Orumba North. Hence, it can be inferred from this result that irrespective of gender, the students exhibit aggressive behaviours. In addition, the mean score of male students (0.17352) in aggressive behaviour is significantly higher than the mean score of female students (0.14028). The implication of this finding is that the male have higher likelihood of involving in aggressive behaviours than their female counter part.

**Hypothesis Two:** Hypothesis two stated that there is no significant relationship between parenting styles and aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North local government areas. To answer this research question, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) was utilized. The result of the correlation analysis is presented in Table 2 as follows:

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Results**

Variable	N	$\frac{\sum x}{\sum y}$	$\frac{\sum x^2}{\sum y^2}$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Sig.
Parenting Styles	291	3.2624	0.0164	0.2252	-0.7296(**)	0.018
Aggressive Behaviour		2.806	0.014			

The results in Table 2 show that there is a significant negative relationship between parenting styles ( $r=-0.073$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and aggressive behaviour among students in Orumba North local government area. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. It can therefore be deduced that the parenting styles adopted by parents in bringing up their students determines whether or not they will be involved in aggressive behaviour. It further shows that the higher the positive and supportive parenting style is adopted in rearing the students, the less likelihood the students will display aggressive behaviours. On the contrary, unsupportive and laissez faire parenting style will lead to having students with aggressive behaviours

**Hypothesis Three:** The result of the third hypothesis which stated that there will be no significant relationship between peer pressure and aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North local government areas is presented in Table 3 as follows:

**Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Results showing Relationship between Peer Pressure and Aggressive Behaviours**

Variable	N	$\frac{\sum x}{\sum y}$	$\frac{\sum x^2}{\sum y^2}$	$\sum xy$	r-value	Sig.
Peer Pressure	291	3.2624	0.0164	0.4948	0.6296 (**)	.0122
Aggressive Behaviour		0.1104	0.0004			

As shown in Table 3, the correlation coefficient ( $r=0.63$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) is positive and statistically significant at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected in favour of the alternate hypothesis. This means that there is significant positive relationship between peer pressure and aggressive behaviour among students in Orumba North. It can therefore be deduced that tendency for aggressive behaviour increases as a result of peer pressure.

**Hypothesis Four:** This hypothesis stated that gender, parental influence and peer pressure will not have a significant joint influence on aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North local government areas. This hypothesis was analyzed using the regression analysis. The result is presented in table 4 as follow:

**Table 4: Summary of Regression Results**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	R	R Square	Adj. R Square
Regression	2.2704	4	0.5676	162.171	.004(a)	.6336(a)	.5784	.576
Residuals	0.992	286						
Total	3.2624	290	0.0035					

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender, Parental Influence, Peer Pressure

Table 4 indicates that the independent variables gender, parental influence and peer pressure are joint predictor of aggressive behaviour among students' in Orumba North. Table 4 shows the multiple correlation coefficient  $r = 0.6336$  and that of the multiple adjusted R-square = 0.5784. This implies that, 58% of the variations in aggressive behaviour among students' is accounted for by all the predictors when considered jointly while the remaining 42% variations is accounted for by other variable outside the study model. The ANOVA F-ratio ( $F=162.17$ ,  $df=4/286$ ,  $P<.05$ ) was also significant. This implies that the overall model have the adequate goodness of fit.

### Discussion

The first finding of this study is that there is a significant gender difference in aggressive behaviour of students in Orumba North. The results obtained show difference between male and female in aggressive behaviours. It further reveals that male students have higher tendencies to be more aggressive than their female counterparts. The finding is consistent with the result reported by previous studies (see kediashi & Akande, 2015; Mobarake, 2015; Roya 2015; Sydney-Agbor, 2016) who found that male and female differ in aggressive behaviour. This result notwithstanding, other researchers (Geolge, 2012; Lussier, Patrick; Corrado, Tzoumakis & Stacy, 2012) found no statistical significant aggressive behaviour based on gender. The first possible explanation for this finding could be found in Berkowitz (1993) theoretical position that men are socialized to be aggressive while women are not (Berkowitz, 1993, p. 395). Other reasons could be differences in anatomy (Ellis, 2014) and presence of testosterone hormone which can have a profound effect on brain circuits that are involved in threat-processing and human aggression (Ellis, 2014).

Another result showed that there is a statistical significant negative relationship between parenting styles and aggressive behaviour among students in Orumba North local government area. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. The implication of this result is that poor parenting style has tendency to produce students who have aggressive behaviour. This outcome corroborates the findings of a number of studies which reveal an association between parenting styles and students behavioural outcomes (Calvete, Gámez-Guadix & Orue, 2014; Anake & Adigeb, 2015; Llorca-Mestre, Malonda-Vidal & Samper-García 2017; Evis, 2016; Llorca, Richaud & Malonda, 2017. This result is plausible when one considers that theoretically, negative parenting characteristics, including strictness, neglect, control, punishment, and lack of support will potentially lead to subsequent child behavioural problems such as aggressive behaviours. This suggests that positive parenting techniques such as high level of parental support and monitoring tended to have children who were less likely to exhibit aggressive behaviours. However, the presence of negative parenting techniques such as poor supervision, inconsistent discipline and corporal punishment as described by (Van As and Janssens (2012) may contribute to children aggressive behaviour. In addition, Mulvaney and Mebert (2007) found that parents using corporal punishment significantly increased the probability of children expressing antisocial traits or negative behaviours. This is supported Gámez-Guadix, Straus,

Carrobbles, Muñoz-Rivas and Almendros (2010) who documented a significant correlation between corporal punishment and negative behavioural adjustment among children. In addition, Van As and Janssens (2012) also proposed that poor quality of parent-child interaction and the lack of parental support are related to children's behavioural problems. Broadly speaking, an empirical body of literature has established that poor parenting style was related to children's aggressive behaviours.

Another result obtained from this research is that there is statistically significant relationship with between peer pressure and aggressive behaviour among students in Orumba North local government area. The implication is that as peer pressure increases, the tendency to be aggressive also increases. The finding is consistent with the result reported by several researchers (see Campbell Starkey, Holliday, Audrey, Bloor, Parry-Langdon, Hughes & Moore, 2008; Cook, MacCoun, Muschkin, & Vigdo, 2008; Ajidahun, 2011). However, Ugoji (2014) gave a contrary evidence of peer influence on aggressive behaviours. This outcome is not surprising due to the well documented high correlation between the behaviours of people and their friends (Campbell et al., 2008; Cook et al., 2008). Another reason for the association between peer pressure and aggressive behaviours could be as a result of what is known as '**instrumental for status attainment**' whereby aggressive behaviour is viewed as instrumental for students to attain status among their peers. For instance studies opined that aggression may also be strategic, purposeful behaviour employed by "normal" students to gain status (Kreager, 2007; Hawley, Little & Card, 2007; Rodkin & Berger, 2008). A study found that bullies were strongly motivated by status, and further, that bullying increased prestige (Sijtsema, Veenstra, Lindenberg & Salmivalli, 2009).

A predictable outcome of this study is that there is a significant joint contribution of the three independent variables (gender, parenting styles and peer pressure) on aggressive behaviours of students in Orumba North. The result obtained showed that the three variables have the adequate goodness of fit and accounted for 58% of the variations in aggressive behaviour among students in Orumba North local government area. This outcome corroborates Elvis (2016) and Sydney-Agbor (2016) who reported that development of aggression is influenced by multiple factors and processes including temperament (Rothbart, 2007), socialization (Lochman, 2004), contextual factors, (Leventahl & Brooks-Gunn, 2004) and media (Ofole et al. 2015; Ezeokoli & Ofole, 2015).

### **Counselling Implications of the Study**

1. The outcomes of this study have counselling implications for practitioners. First, they should ensure that strong family-school collaboration is established with parents of the students. This will provide them the forum to discuss positive parenting program with parents/guardians the students. The program will be implemented to prevent severe emotional, developmental and behavioural problems in children by enhancing the knowledge, skills, and confidence of parents in child rearing practices. It will be aimed at changing the mind set of parents from punishing bad behaviours to actively and creatively modelling and teaching children about positive behaviours.
2. Parents of the students should also be encouraged to model non aggressive behaviours at home because children learn from everything adults do. Their parents' actions directly impact them and how they choose to behave.
3. The behavioural intervention expert should teach students how to use assertive communication to resolve conflicts or disagreements rather than resorting to aggressive behaviours.

4. Seminars, workshops and trainings could be organized for students on topic such as managing impulse, build their self esteem, emotional intelligence, self control, negotiation and effective communication skills.
5. The school counsellor could teach students the skill of choosing friends wisely, how to use refusal skills when pressured and value clarifications which entail sorting out their values from the value of others.

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