

## BEHAVIOURAL DISORDER AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ADO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EKITI STATE

Ayodele, C.S. (PhD)\*, Olotu, Olukoya Adewale \*\*

Department of Guidance & Counselling, Faculty of Education, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, NIGERIA

&

Aina Olanike \*\*\*

Adenike Ogunsanya College of Education, Ijanikin, Lagos, NIGERIA

### ABSTRACT

The study examined behavior disorders in the learners and their physical environment among secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area of Ekiti State. It is a descriptive survey containing two hypotheses formulated to guide the study. The population of the study comprises all secondary school students in Ado Local Government Area. One hundred and twenty (120) respondents from public secondary schools were selected using simple random sampling technique. The instrument of the study was a self-constructed 20 –item questionnaire tagged “Counselling Intervention for Learners and their Environment “(CILE). Face and content validity of the instrument were ensured while test-retest method was adopted for the reliability of the instrument. Data obtained was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and independent t-test. The result showed that there is a significant relationship between behavioural disorder in learners and their physical environment. Also, it was revealed that there is no significant difference between behavioural disorder and the ages of the learners. Based on these findings, it was recommended that, government should provide conducive learning atmosphere for learners; also, counsellors should be provided in all Nigerian secondary schools who will cater for the emotional and psychological stability of behavioural disorder students.

**Keywords:** Emotional behavioural disorder (EBD), behavioural disorder ( BD), Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Conduct disorder (CD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

### INTRODUCTION

All over the world , there is no singular universal definition of behavioural disorder. More so, there are divergent views of the term and construct; while some scholars believed that behavioral disorder (BD) is the same as emotional behavioural disorder (EBD) others say both words can used interchangeably . It is also assumed that both words are synonymous and connote same meaning (Kauffman, 2001). It is strongly believed that the different definitions are due to teachers options, their background, cultural values, personalities and religious views.

More often than expected, the behavior of some students within the school settings could pose a serious challenge to any teacher. In Ekiti State, Nigeria; it is noticeable and no more news that students do engaged in series of unpleasant activities which also invariably affects their performance in both internal and external examination. What makes it a concern is the fact that such behavior could be injurious to the student himself/herself, his peers, friends, and school mates and even at home. (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Before any behavior can be termed as emotional /behavioural disorder, such behavior would have been

extreme or deficit. Extreme behaviours in the sense that, such behaviours go beyond normal acceptable behaviours by the society. In another vein, a behavior could be seen as deficit when a person lacks the required trait expected by the society. Students who are supposed to be in school are seen playing around, riding motor bike “okada”, engage in bus conductor, smoking India hemp and other social and emotional vices. In either ways, any behavior that do not conforms to the general acceptable norm is either rejected or disowned.

Among secondary school students, is often common to see them displaying one form of deviant or excess behaviours. This study is aimed at investigating the influence and the contributions of physical environment on the behaviours of students. According to this study, physical environment in the sense are culture, economy, peer groups, home setting and the school of the learners. In an attempt to look deep into what constitutes emotional behavioural disorders among secondary schools students; one needs to look at it from the universal point of view.

Individual with Disability Education Act, IDEA (1997) pointed out some major features of any child with emotional behavioural disorders which include inability to assimilate what is taught, inability to build or maintain satisfactory relationship with friends, classmates and teachers, display of abnormal behavior under a normal circumstance with apparent show of fear at home and school settings. According to IDEA, for a behavior to be identified as EBD, some traits have to be persistently visible over quite a period of time, such include: unacceptable or unguided behavior under normal circumstances, inability to maintain and build a lasting relationship, depression, aggression, retaliation and so on. In addition, it should be noted that, any definition of behavioural disorder given, must emphasize that such traits displayed should be repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviours which is visible over time and attested to in different circumstances.

### **The Problem**

Emotional / Behavior disorder could pose serious concern to parents and even teachers, especially if such behaviours affect the academic performance of such students in class. (U.S. Department of Education, 2001) In Nigeria, another disturbing fact is, students displaying behavioural disorders may not see such acts as abnormal, in fact, in most cases, they are not bothered by it because they perceived it as norms and pleasing. The implication is, if such is not curbed, it may continue at the detriment of the child and people around him/her.

Various students that suffer EBD do often encountered challenges in school and outside school. In comparison with their mates, they are likely to have lower scores, exhibition of truancy, lack concentration and prone to drop out (Boreson, 2006; Reid, Shriner & Wehby, 2004). According to another report, as a result of their instability, students with EBD are less likely to excel in school and drop out before entering higher institution. (Bullock & Gable, 2006; Carter & Lundsford, 2005; Gable, 2004; Quinn, Rutherford, Leone, Osher, & Poirier, 2005). Because of the severity and frequency of these behaviours students with EBD are less heard, occasionally listened to, less valued and less respected. (Baker, 2005; Cooper, 2006; Lewis & Burman, 2008). Wehby, Lane and Fork (2003) opined that emotionally disturbed students do display irrational behaviours that consequently affects their academics and self-confidence. Students showing behavioural disorder traits are most likely to develop unaccepted relationship at home and school vicinity.

## Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between behavioural disorder in learners and the physical environment of the learners.
2. There is no significant difference between behavioural disorders in learners and the age of the learners.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been divergent views on whether students with EBD should be kept in different schools, but research has proved otherwise. Based on different findings and report on EBD it was proved that student with EBD can be taught in regular school settings though they could be given special attention. In fact, alienating or separating may not be necessary except in rare occasion (Cook, Landrum, Tankersley, & Kauffman, 2003).

Research and recent findings had revealed that among school children, teenagers and youth; there are three major disruptive behaviours which are Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD), Conduct Disorder (CD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). These three (ODD, CD, & ADHD) have similar traits and features which may make identification and diagnosis difficult (Masi & Favilla, 2000). It has been observed that ten percent of children under 12 years old are assumed to have oppositional deficit disorders (ODD) with a larger number of the percentages to be boys. Children suffering from this disorder usually exhibits the following traits: constant display of anger, disobedient to constituted authorities, low self-image, repeated arguments and the like.

Adolescents displaying Conduct Disorder are generally labelled because they don't just conform to simple and basic rules. They display delinquent behaviours and irrational actions which calls for concern. The features include: constant fighting, truancy, physical assault, attack and violent or over reaction (IDEA, 2004). In ADHD, the major display attributes include inattention, forgetfulness, absent mindedness, hyperactivity (over activity), regular restlessness and physical imbalances. It has also been confirmed that boys are the highest display of ADHD (IDEA, 2004)

Since there is no definite cause of emotional behavioural disorder, but some scholars believed that the causes of emotional behavioural disorder (EBD) can be grouped under two major factors which are biological and environmental in nature. On this note, it will be necessary to investigate the physical environment of the child and how it affects the child positively or negatively (IDEA, 2004). Research made it clear that, there is no definite cause of emotional/behavioural disorders. Though it is also assumed that it could be traceable to biological and environmental factors such as: harsh discipline, child abuse and neglect, personality of the child, violence in family, lack of thorough supervision and malfunction of the brain (Masi & Favilla, 2000). So many possible risks are associated with EBD among high school students which are learning difficulties, lack of maximum concentration, destruction of properties and brain malfunction. All these could hamper the psychological development of a child and adversely affect their academic and personal goal pursuits.

## METHODOLOGY

This research is a descriptive survey. The population of this research consist of all secondary school students in Ado-Ekiti Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 120 students/ respondents from six Senior Secondary School, SS1to SS3 who manifested deviant behaviours. A 20-item self-developed questionnaire titled “ Counselling Interventions for Learners and their Environment (CILE) ”. The questionnaire consist of two sections A and B . Section A deals with the respondent’s personal data while Section “B” consists of items relating to behavioural disorder among learners and their environment. Face and content validity of the instrument was ensured while test-retest method was adopted within two weeks to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The responses were scored and Pearson Product Movement Correlation Co-efficient was used to correlate the score. The data collected was analyzed using inferential statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis and t-test were used to test the hypotheses. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## RESULTS

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between behavioural disorder in learners and the physical environment of the learners.

Table 1: Pearson Correlation of the Physical Environment and Behavioural Disorder in Learners.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r cal	r table
Physical Environment	120	10.28	1.18	0.474	0.195
Behavioural Disorder	120	28.33	2.16		

Table 1 reveals that r cal (0.474) is positive and moderate. Also, r cal (0.474) is greater than r table (0.195) at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is a relationship between behavioural disorder in learners and their physical environment.

### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant difference between behavioural disorders in learners and the age of the learners.

Table 2 : t-test summary of Age and Behavioural Disorder in Learners

Source of Variation	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-cal	t- table
Below 15yrs	66	28.17	1.87	118	0.936	1.980
16yrs and Above	54	28.54	2.46			

Table 2 shows that  $t_{cal}$  (0.936) is less than  $t_{table}$  (1.980) at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is hereby accepted. Therefore, there is no difference between behavioural disorder in learners and the age of the learners.

## DISCUSSION

The result showed that there was a relationship between behavioural disorders and physical environment of the learners. These findings support Sunderland (2000) which stated that constant interaction and relationship between adolescence environments determines who he is and his attitude towards life. This findings also agrees with Cartel (2005), Heward (2003) who supported that positive environment within the learner is likely to produce a well-adjusted happy child despite genetic predisposition. The physical environment of the learner in this context includes culture, economy, peer groups and schools. The various responses put together showed that the physical environment which comprises of peer groups, culture, economy and school contribute towards behavioural disorders in learners.

The results also showed that there was no difference between behavioural disorder in learners and in the age of learners because the learners' age does not influence any form of disorders in behavior. This findings supported Bullock & Gable (2006) which stated that there is no age difference in emotional behavior disorder among children. In addition, these findings agreed with Baker (2005), IDEA (2004) who reported that behavior disorder traits must be persistently visible over a period of time, meaning that age does not influence disorders in behavior manifested by teenage learners.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study; in respective of students' age, environment is important in determining the behavioural disorder of learners. The following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should endeavor to build a cordial relationship with their wards as this will give them the opportunity to know their children and what they are involved in.
2. The government should provide conducive learning atmosphere for learners. Motivate them and also promote classroom concentration.
3. Teacher must be sensitive to learners' difference such as their background, disabilities and ability to learn.
4. Counsellors should be provided in all Nigerian secondary schools who will cater for emotionally and psychological stability of behavioural disorder students.

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