Original Research Article

The Influence of Selected Adolescent Behaviours on Academic Achievement in Biase High Schools

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Abstract

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It is the mind of any teacher to pass 100% of his/her knowledge to the learner. The teacher keeps looking for ways of improving his/her ability to do this. But he/she always meets with obstacles often generated by the learner. Some of these obstacles are characters such as truancy, substance use, gangsterism, financial distractions and engagement in sexual activities. The adolescents are in a rush to engage in these characters because they want to be recognised as adults. This paper sought to investigate the strength of the relationship between these deviant behaviours and academic scores of the children in Biase LGA of Cross River State. A stratified random sample was obtained from SS3 students who participated in Cross River State SSCE Mock Examination in 2017/2018 Academic Year. They were asked to respond to a questionnaire that yielded information on the level of involvement in some adolescent deviant characters while their academic achievements were obtained from Cross River State Ministry of Education, Examination and Certificate Division. These were organised using correlation coefficient in Microsoft Excel. Results revealed that there was a significant negative relationship between deviant characters and academic achievements (r^2 = 0.826). What causes children to involve themselves in deviant characters are environment and parent background related. To correct the social vice, the environment and parent will be responsible.

Keywords: Adolescence behaviours, education achievements, Biase, high schools, substance use, sexual activities, deviant characters

INTRODUCTION

The good performance or achievement of a child is the joy of both the parents and teacher. It is a reason why the teacher is always involved in evolving ways of successful delivery of knowledge to his learners. The teacher is worried about factors that could negatively or positively influence the performance of the learner. McLeod *et al.* (2012) noted that researchers keep investigating factors that could improve learning. Often, these workers deal with one factor at a time. So McLeod *et al.* (2012) suggested that a group of factors when studied at a time could show how they could affect learning together. This paper therefore aims at investigating some of these behaviours which occur in adolescents together that are

likely to influence academic outcome. It is agreed that the learner in secondary school is more often adolescent than a child or adult (Nkhata and Mwale, 2016). As Ensiminger (1987) explained, adolescence is a developmental period in which individual changes from child to adult. The length of this period varies from one individual to another. Certain specific behaviours occur for the first time in adolescents. Individuals are usually in a rush to get involved in some behaviours as they admire adults who indulge themselves in these delinquent behaviours. Nkhata and Mwale (2016), Dishion and Skaggs (2000) and Belle (2017) explained that factors such as environment, school, family, peer grouping
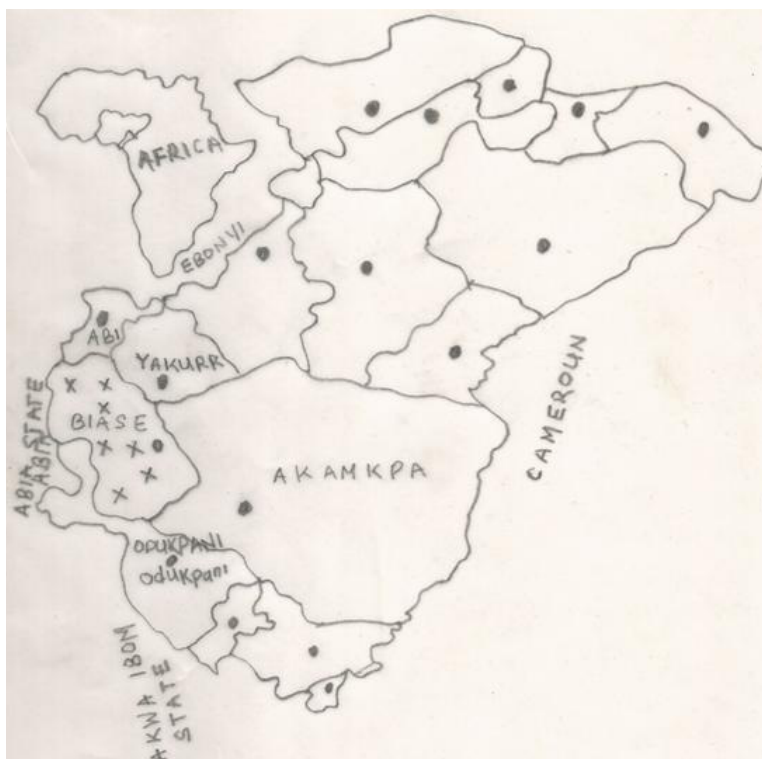
Figure 1. Map of Cross River State showing Biase Local Government Area with sampling stations

parenting are responsible for adolescent's deviant behaviours. The behaviours include drug, alcohol and cigarette use; initiation of sexual activities, leaving home and even working for money. King *et al* (2006) and Enberg and Morral (2006) stressed that drug use is related to reduction in sustained engagement in academic pursuits. This means that increased drug use reduces academic achievement outcome. Adding to reduction in school activities due to substance or drug use, drug use has another mechanism of reducing or impairing academic achievements. Manti *et al.* (2005) explained that drug use leads to change in adolescent working memory and brain activities. Substance use is correlated with depressed mental health (King *et al.*, 2006).

Many workers have published work on the influence of depression on academic achievement at different level of learning (Hunt *et al.*, 2010; Farmer and Bierman 2002; Fletcher 2010).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

Biase is one of the 774 local government areas (third tier of administration) in Nigeria. It lies between Latitude 12°

N and 12.45 S and Longitude 4°03 and 4° 9 E. It is bounded in the North by Yakurr Local Government Area. The Area has a land mass of 1,310,925 square kilometre (Bassey, 1991) and a population of 169,183 as at the 2006 population census conducted by The Federal Republic of Nigeria (Agbaraba, 1987; Worldometer, 2018). The people of Biase do not have a common language. However, there exist one major ethnic group 'the Ekoi'' with a dialect called *Erei* languages. Both English and Efik languages are widely spoken for commercial and social interactions. The major occupations of the people of Biase local Government Area include farming, fishing, wine tapping and petty trading. Farm produce include rice, cassava, yams, okra, plantain, cocoyam and fish. In the fishing folk, both men and women are involved at different levels of fishing industry. The people of the area are equally not left out in academic pursuit as indigents are highly placed in different levels of civil service within Nigeria and in Diaspora as well as institutions of learning. Figure 1

The population of the study

The population of the study is made of all the students in Senior Secondary School III in the 2018/2019 year class that took part Cross River State SSCE Mock in

2017/2018 in the whole Biase Local Government Area. This is made of 1,768 students that were in the SS3 within the period (Cross River State, 2017). This cohort was selected because all the schools had administered one common examination to all the members of the class. This examination is the Cross River State Ministry of Education Mock SSC Examination. Actual scores from mock SS II Examination were obtained from the Cross River State Ministry of Education Examination and Certificate Division.

Sampling

A cluster sampling was used to select sample for the experiment. All the names of secondary schools in Biase LGA were listed. These were categorised into urban schools, rural schools, private and public schools; mixed schools (boys and girls) and single sex schools (boys only, girls only). The population of this study was therefore, the entire SS3 students in Biase LGA for the year 2018/2019. These must have participated in the SS II, mock examination. Systematic sampling was used to select respondents from school. In each school every student whose number ends with two and zero (0) were selected to respond to the questionnaire. This gave a sample size of 113 respondents. See Table 1. These techniques are effective methods of selecting representative samples (Wahua, 1999).

The behaviours investigated in this study were academic performance which was the dependent variable and the independent variables were students' substance use, engagement in sexual activities, peer pressure, parental ties. Substance use here is defined as being involved in smoking of tobacco products or drinking alcoholic beverages or any combination of those substances. An individual is categorized as being involved in substance use when he or she may have consume these or a substance repeatedly for at least five times (Mekonen et al., 2017; WHO ASSIST Working Group, 2002; Humeniuk, et al., 2008)

The instrument

The questionnaire was made of socio-demographic section (Section A) that sought biodemographical information about the respondents. Perceived deviant character envisaged include: smoking of cigarette and alcohol consumption (substance consumption), involvement in sexual activities, gangsterism, non-acceptance of parental control and combining working for money with schooling was sought in section B. Each of these sections was appropriated ten questions to help bring out the deviant feature in a respondent. Each question contained a four point Liker's scale.

Administration of questionnaires

The questionnaire was pretested before it was administered to the respondents by well-trained data collectors. Information on substance use was obtained by a questionnaire investigating respondent's involvement in drug, alcohol and cigarette use; initiation of sexual activities, leaving home and even working for money (Mekonen et al., 2017; WHO ASSIST). Academic achievement was assessed by using the Mock West African Examination council (SSCE WAEC) examination result conducted by the Cross River (2018). The raw scores were used directly without a grading system. Each questionnaire was pre-numbered serially such that the questionnaire marked number 1 was given to the first student whose number ended with two, questionnaire number two was administered to student number ten in the register, and in that order. This made it possible to be able to pair the responses of a particular participant to his/her academic achievements.

The highest score for each of the items was 40. This was later expressed in percentages by using a formula x.100/40. Where x = score for a particular item, example involvement in sexual activities. Descriptive statistics were used for presenting the results pictorially and Pearson correlation was used with the help of Microsoft Excel to test for correlation of adolescent deviant behaviours and academic scores of students.

RESULTS

Of the 113 questionnaires administered, 100 percent of them were properly filled and returned. The high rate of questionnaire recovery was attributed to the fact that the questionnaires were retrieved on the spot with persuasion from the questionnaire administrator. Table 1 displays results of investigations from the various schools while Figure 2 displays the correlation analysis scores from students' involvement in adolescent deviant behaviours and their average academic scores. This gave a correlation R^2 of 0,826, which is higher than the table value at p = 0.05.

DISCUSSION

The age of the children was seen not to vary. Yet deviant behaviours and academic scores were observed to be varying from one school to another. Factors which influence these behaviours may be environment and peers related rather than the age of the adolescent. See Figure 3. Bolu-Steve and Esere (2017) pin pointed parental upbringing as a major cause of deviant behaviours in schools and this was supported by Chikwature et al (2016). Belle (2017) also agreed with

Table 1. Showing proportion of sample in population and correlation coefficient of various schools between adolescent deviant behaviours and academic achievements

|	Name of school	Type of school		location	Population N	Sample sizee (10% of population)	Average age of students in competed years	Mean score of involvement in adolescence behaviours %	Mean academic achievement	r²-value
1	Government Secondary School, Adim	Mixed boys & girls	Public	Urban	104	21	16.23	56.12	56.33	0.883
2	Community Secondary School, Abini	Mixed boys & girls	Public	Rural	53	11	15.92	47.58	66.15	0.830
3	Mary Immaculate Girls Juniorate Secondary School, Iwuru	Girls only	Private	Urban	34	7	15.88	34.16	67.76	0.933
4	Community Secondary School, Ehom	Mixed, boys & girls	Public	Rural	87	17	15,86	43.92	68.71	0.805
5	Community Secondary School, Akpet Central	Mixed, boys & girls	Public	Urban	104	21	16.11	45.14	65.15	0.768
6	Community Secondary School Abanwan-Erei	Mixed, boys & girls	Public	Rural	18	3	16.20	48.80	57.46	0.929
7	Stan-Best Secondary School, Akpet Central	Mixed, boys & girls	Private	Urban	25	5	16.00	51.24	50.54	0.870
8	Comprehensive High School, Akpet I	Mixed, boys & girls	Public	Rural	41	8	15.80	69.54	35.43	0.959
9	Ubagara High School, Ikun	Mixed, boys & girls	Private	Urban	47	9	15.78	58.56	47.32	0.794
10	Government Technical School, Biakpan	Mixed, boys & girls	Private	Rural	49	9	16.20	46.36	61.46	0.727
	Summary				562	110				0.826*

Note that * = significant relationship that was negative.
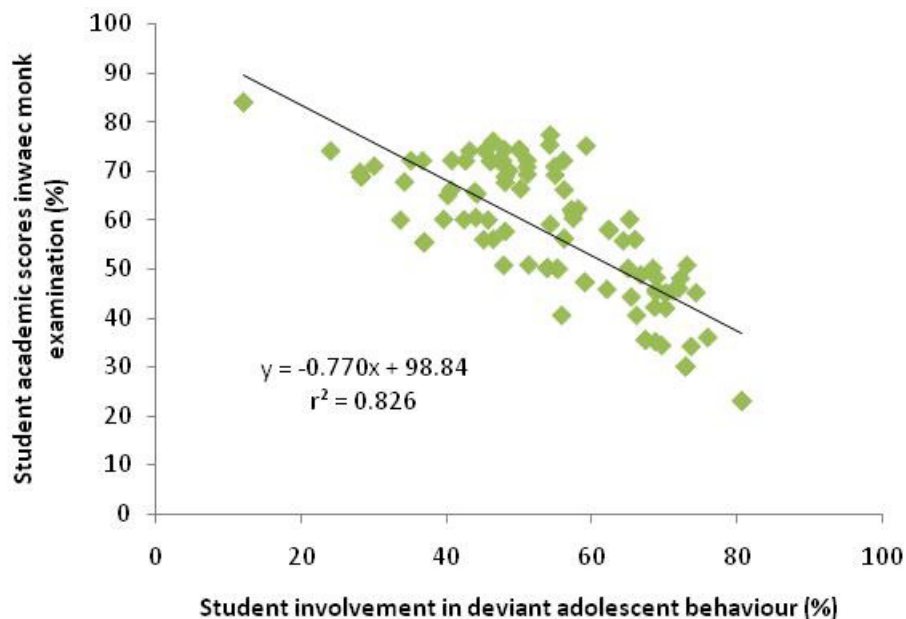
Figure 2. displays the correlation analysis scores from students' involvement in adolescent deviant behaviours and their average academic scores
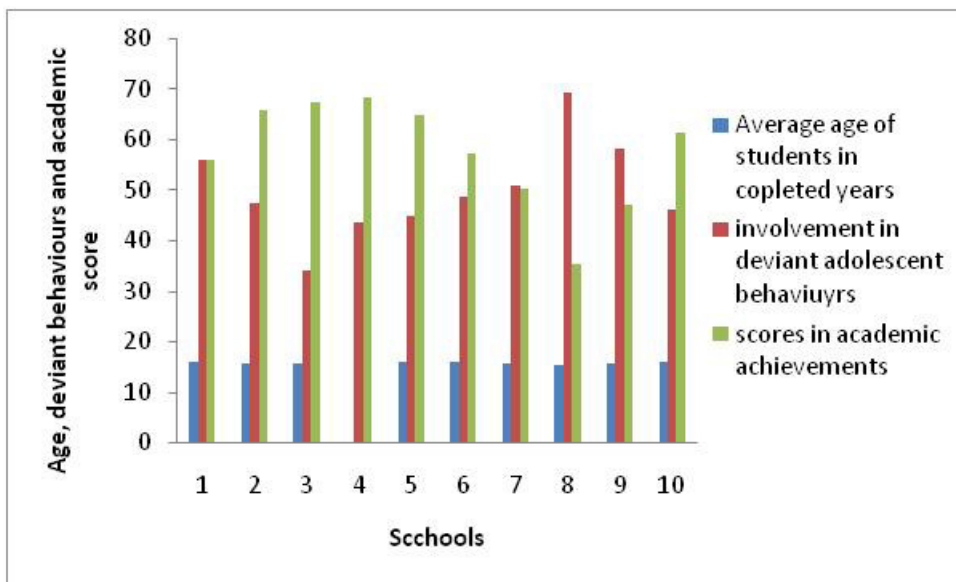

Figure 3. Bar chart of student's age, involvement in adolescent deviant behaviours and their average academic scores

this finding when she listed the family, the school, peer pressure, the community and the new media as factors that encourage deviant adolescent behaviours. She further noted that the factors (new media), which lead the child to behave defiantly are still the same media that could be used to correct the bahaviours of the adolescent. That is to mean that a child cannot be corrected in a vacuum. That goes a long way to say that

a school with a good reading culture encourages the new entrants to imbibe good reading habits. The environment is capable of motivating the adolescent because his primary aim is to learn. For a school with children having deviant behaviour, the child quickly imbibes the behaviours as children learn to know, do, be, and to live together.

Though it is agreed that physical exercise increase

blood flow and situates a child for proper learning, deviant behaviours in adolescent are different from organised physical exercise and, thus influence learning activities otherwise. These behaviours most of the time become habitual. The individual is involved physically and mentally, and thus is engaged 24 hours provided he/she is awake. Such children take portions of their time for learning to indulge in these deviant activities. Chikwature *et al* (2016) noted that poor and disruptive behaviour in the learning environment reduces children's ability to concentrate and absorb information and it unsettles children and causes immense stress for teachers. The behaviours lead a child to play truancy. He therefore has little time for learning compare to the normal child. Parent financial and social status could place a child where he may stay out of school, especially in day schools, to work for money. Truancy is high in such children. They continue to miss lessons. This makes it difficult for the child to comprehend what the teacher teaches the next time he/she finds himself/herself in the class. Such a child has no option than to loss interest and develop apathy towards academic activities. This may have resulted in the negative relationship between rate of involvement in this delinquencies and academic achievement observed in this study (Figure 2). These delinquent behaviours do not only affect the child involved because, this may draw the teacher's attention leading to bad effects on other students, since the teacher will be concentrating on these individuals at the expense of the rest of the class. The teacher uses a proportion of time he/she has for normal work to think and tend the deviant persons.

Children do things by seeing others do. In a learning environment with some children involved in adolescent deviant behaviours, many children that have no idea of such begin to behave deviantly due to social contagion. Nkata and Nwale (2016) says adolescents behave antisocially to be accepted and for association. They get affected in one way or the other as they socialised either positively or negatively by their fellow students and teachers (peers and other associates). According to US Research Council (1987), some teenagers become pregnant and may drop out of school. Bad characters do not only affect the children, but go further to tarnish the image of the school involved.

Mekonen *et al* (2017), in a study observed a negative relationship between substance use and academic achievement, similar to findings in this investigation. Substance use and generally deviant behaviour did not vary with age in this work possibly because the age of participants had a narrow range where children of the same year class were investigated. This is centrally

to the findings of Makanjuola (2007) and Mekonem (2017) that substance use was positively related to age among university students.

CONCLUSION

Earlier work by many investigators point to the fact that adolescent deviant behaviours do not favour academic achievement. This work was not just to confirm this earlier knowledge. Its intention was to estimate the strength of the relationship between the two variables. Correlation coefficient r2 reveals overall significant relationship between the two variables of $r^2 = 0.826$. Depending on the degree of involvement in these adolescent deviant characters therefore, the child academic achievements drops. It is shown that the presence of such adolescent behaviours does not only reduce academic scores and also the individual character but influences other children and even the teacher and the whole school. It gives a bad image to the school. It was equally observed that the deviant characters are not necessarily in borne or age based but could be acquired from environmental contact (peers, parents, school setting, tradition and media). These same influencing factors are the pathways through which adolescent deviant factors can be curbed, as explained by counsellors; in addition to persuasion and character rewarding.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire
Section A: Demographic data
1 Age
2.   Name   of [   ] school ……………………………………………………………………
3. Gender
[M]   [F]
4.   Type   of   school; boys only, girls only, boys and girls (Tick one)
5. School location; urban, rural, semi urban (Tick one)
SECTION B: Adolescent behaviours
In all these questions, SA stand for strongly agreed, A for agreed, DA for disagreed and SD for strongly disagreed. Select any one of them that best appeal to you

GANGSTERISM

	Item	SA	A	DA	SD	SCORE
1	I have friends in the school that we encourage ourselves to study hard.	1	2	3	4	
2	I have friends that we always spend our spare time planning how to revenge the wrong doings of our teachers.	4	3	2	1	
3	I and my friends usually discuss and involve ourselves in fighting over opponent.	4	3	2	1	
4	I always study hard to compete with my friends.	1	2	3	4	
5	We are usually in love with slogans such as waec or no waec, man must eat.	4	3	2	1	
6	Students that form a gang usually disturb my reading efficiency.	4	3	2	1	
7	I most of the time go without food to school because I share my food with my friends.	4	3	2	1	
8	I hate a particular teacher due to the unjust punishment he mated on my friend.	4	3	2	1	
9	I sometimes miss my classes because my friends do not like to attend them.	4	3	2	1	
10	I thank God for my friends for encouraging me positively in my studies.	1	2	3	4	

SMOKING AND ALCOHOL (SUBSTANCE) CONSUMPTION

	Item	SA	A	DA	SD	SCORE
1	Though I have strong impulse to drink and smoke, I do not participate due to religious and health reasons	1	2	3	4	
2	I have smoked cigarette ----- times in my life.	1	2	3	4	
3	I do smoke regularly.	4	3	2	1	
4	I drink alcohol regularly.	4	3	2	1	
5	I have taken alcohol only ----- times in my life.	1	2	3	4	
6	My friends drink and smoke but I do not smoke nor drink alcohol.	1	2	3	4	
7	My parents or mentors drink to my admiration.	4	3	2	1	
8	When I am faced with the urge to smoke or drink alcohol I can forgo classes until I get myself satisfied.	4	3	2	1	
9	As far as I can remember, I started smoking when I was in JSS class, SS1, SSII, or SSII.	4	3	2	1	
10	As far as I can remember, I started drinking alcohol when I was in JSS classes, SSI, SSII or SSIII.	4	3	2	1	

SEXUAL ACTIVITIES

	Item	SA	A	DA	SD	SCORE
1	While in school, I always think of my boy/girl friend at home.	4	3	2	1	
2	I sometimes sneak out of school to meet my boy/girlfriend.	4	3	2	1	
3	I have not had sexual intercourse before.	1	2	3	4	
4	Though I have not had sexual intercourse, my desire to have a taste of it is burning.	4	3	2	1	
5	I keep admiring the way I see my friend piloting love affairs with his/her girl/boy friend	4	3	2	1	
6	I enjoy writing text messages to my girl/boyfriend at the expense of my reading time.	4	3	2	1	
7	My parents encourage me to get a child for them as they do not have a lot of children.	4	3	2	1	
8	I got a child earlier than now, so I take time out of my studies to take care of the child/children.	4	3	2	1	
9	I do go to party often because it is a common place to meet my boy/girl friends	4	3	2	1	
10	Due to our family poor financial base, I was advised to be attached to a boy to support me financially.	4	3	2	1	

WORKING AND SCHOOLING

	Item	SA	A	DA	SD	SCORE
1	I involve myself in menial jobs to carter for my educational needs.	4	3	2	1	
2	My parents do not have salary that can cater for all my educational needs.	4	3	2	1	
3	The little income from my parents is shared among my numerous sibs such that each has too little.	4	3	2	1	
4	I therefore engage myself in a salary job to pay for my educational needs.	4	3	2	1	
5	I depend on alms for my education.	4	3	2	1	
6	I depend on government scholarship for my education.	4	3	2	1	
7	I do not have any biological parent alive that takes care of my educational needs.	4	3	2	1	
8	My parents are alive but do not take care of my educational and psychological needs.	4	3	2	1	
9	My parents are willing to take care of my educational needs but lack the ability.	4	3	2	1	
10	I am fully supported by my parents for my educational needs.	1	2	3	4	