



AN EVALUATION OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL PERSONALITY DISORDER AMONG  
ADOLESCENTS IN ETCHE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

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#### ABSTRACT

This study investigated perceived factors that influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. Three research questions and three corresponding hypotheses guided the study. The researchers used simple random sampling technique to draw a sample of 1000 adolescents in SS II from the population. Two instruments titled Perceived Factor Scale (PFS) and Anti-social Personality Disorder Scale” (ASPDS) were used for data collection. The instruments were validated based on face, content and construct validity by three experts in Educational Measurement and Evaluation. Test-retest method was used to establish the reliability of the two instruments and the reliability coefficient for PFS was 0.76 and ASPDS was 0.77 respectively. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while independent t-test was used to test the corresponding hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The result shows that drug abuse, anti-social parents and emotional abuse significantly influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents. Based on the findings, conclusions were drawn and relevant recommendations made.

*Keywords:* Perceived Factor Scale, Personality Disorder, Narcotics.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of unnecessary violation of rules, regulations and right of others has been observed by the researchers to be common in some parts of Nigeria especially, among adolescents in Etche Local Government of Rivers State, Nigeria. Despite all laws against human rights violation and abuse at local and international levels, the researchers observed that some adolescents engage in physical fighting with their parents at home while others

constantly fight with their colleagues in the school. Some even fight their teachers without justifiable reasons. Most times, they insult, lie against their parents, colleagues, teachers and other significant individuals in issues that do not deserve such attitude. They exhibit behaviours that seem to show that they lack sense of remorse in most of their conducts. Some of them get involved in taking psychoactive drugs such as marijuana so as to gain social recognition which has made them more irresponsible. The above situation has led some of them to drop out of school and those who are still in school are having low academic achievement.

### *1.1 Aim And Objectives Of The Study*

The aim of this study is to investigate perceived factors that influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents in Etche Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, it sought to:

- find out if drug abuse is a factor that influences anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.
- identify if anti-social parents is a factor that influences personality disorder among adolescent.
- examine if emotional abuse is a factor that influences anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.

### *1.2 Research Questions*

The following research questions were used as a guide for the study:

- To what extent does drug abuse influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents?
- To what extent do anti-social parents influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents?
- To what extent does emotional abuse influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents?

### *1.3 Hypotheses*

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

- There is no significant influence of drug abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.
- There is no significant influence of anti-social parents on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.
- Emotional abuse does not significantly influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

According to Iwundu (2007) personality is the total characteristics or qualities that make up an individual such as emotionality, perception or self-concept, sensitivity, intelligence, attitude, interest and passion etc. Personality disorder is an abnormal behaviour that occurs in an individual in the course of day to day living. It is a disorientation or imbalance in human qualities or traits. It is mostly a disorder of the affective and cognitive state which is also a disorder of the id, ego and super-ego and often associated with "psychopath" (Iwundu, 2007). He further enumerated types of personality disorder as

paranoid, schizoid, histrionic, borderline, dependent and anti-social personality disorder etc. Adolescents in the course of their everyday life both in school and at home engage in strange relationship with others and often violate rules and regulations. Anne-Marrin and Cooper (2001) defined anti-social personality disorder as a psychiatric condition characterized by chronic behaviour that manipulates, exploits and violates the rights of others which is often a criminal behaviour. It is a condition in which an individual shows a pervasive disregard for the law and the rights of others.

Anti-social personality disorder (ASPD) also known as dissocial personality disorder (DPD) and sociopathy, is a personality disorder, characterized by a pervasive pattern of disregard for, or violation of, the right of others. An impoverished moral sense or conscience is often apparent, as well as a history of crime, legal problems, or impulsive and aggressive behavior (MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia, Mayo Clinic). According to National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2013) individuals are prone to substance abuse, addiction and abuse of various psychoactive substances is common. This behaviour leads them into frequent conflict with the law, and many people with ASPD have extensive histories of antisocial behaviour and criminal infractions stemming back before adulthood. A close observation of adolescents' strange and abnormal behaviours in recent times in the researchers' area, gave them great concern. They considered the following as the factors that may possibly influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents. They include drug abuse, anti-social parents and emotional abuse.

Drug abuse also called substance abuse or chemical abuse is a disorder that is characterized by disruptive pattern of using a substance that leads to significant problems or distress (Dryden-Edwards, 2005). According to the American Heritage Medical Dictionary (2007), is defined as the habitual use of drugs to alter one's mood, emotion or state of consciousness. Sociopathic parents exist and can cause great harm to their children through both emotional and physical abuse, even to the point of producing sociopathic children. A sociopath is a man or woman who cares only about him/herself (Tanya, NY). The child's mental health is often affected as well. Emotional abuse includes actions such as chronic or extreme spousal abuse in the child's presence, allowing a child to use drugs or alcohol, refusal or failure to provide needed psychological care constant belittling and holding of affection. This pattern of behaviour can lead to poor self-image, alcohol or drug abuse, disruptive behavior and even suicide (Iruloh & Ernest-Ehibudu, 2009).

Akinade (2001) explained that there are instances when individuals take drugs purely to change their moods which in turn impair their behaviour or social functioning. Ordu (2008) conducted a study on the correlates of drug abuse among students. The study used a sample size of 500 students and data collected was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. It was found that there is significant positive relationship between anti-social parents and drug abuse among students. Black (2006) states that parents of anti-social children frequently show high level of anti-social behaviour themselves. In his study, he showed that the parents of delinquent boys were more often alcoholic or criminal and their homes were frequently disrupted by divorce, separation or absence of a parent. He further explained that depriving a young child of a significant emotional bond will damage his ability to form intimate and trusting relationship, which may explain why some children are prone to develop anti-social personality. Anele (2002) carried out a study on influence of home factors on emotional abuse of secondary school students. The study used descriptive survey design with a sample of 420 students. It was found that there is significant influence of home factors such as family type, family dynamic on emotional abuse of students. However, emotional abuse is any form of distort in feelings which result to sadness, cruelty, jealousy etc. causing significant harm to the victim. Adedeji (2007) carried out a study on the influence of some psycho-social factors on child abuse among parents in Ibadan, Oyo State, using a sample of 2063 drawn via random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Pearson correlation, t-test and bi-serial correlation were used for data analysis. Results

showed that there is a significant relationship between parents’ levels of knowledge of child’s rights, socio-economic status, parental upbringing, parents’ value for culture and child abuse.

In another study conducted by Akpama (2008) to investigate socio-economic factors as predictors of sexual abuse of adolescents in selected secondary schools in Akwa Ibom and Cross River States, it was found that all the independent variables jointly predicted adolescents’ sexual abuse. More so, there were significant contributions to the prediction of sexual abuse by social factors; drug abuse, age of adolescents, peer pressure, etc. a sample size of 1,582 adolescents was studied. Multiple regression, Pearson correlation and chi-square were used for data analysis at 0.05 alpha levels. Ebenuwa-Okoh (2011) investigated family violence and sibling abuse in Nigerian families in Abraka, Delta State, using a sample of 380 respondents randomly selected for the study. Multiple regression and t-test statistics were used for data analysis. It was found that siblings’ abuse is real to Nigerian families and that family types do not affect experiences of sibling abuse.

### 3. METHOD AND MATERIALS

Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The population of this study consisted of 3,7321 adolescents in SSII (Zonal Schools Board, Okehi-Etche, 2016). Purposive sampling technique was used to select 1,000 adolescents which represent 30% of the population. The study made use of two instruments tagged Perceived Factor Scale (PFS) and Anti-Social Personality Disorder Scale” (ASPDS). The PFS was divided into two sections. Section A consisted of personal data, section B consisted of 30 items with modified 4 points Likert type scale designed to measure the perceived factors based on drug abuse, anti-social parents and emotional abuse. The Anti-social Personality Disorder Scale consisted of 40 items that measured anti-social personality disorder. Three experts determined the face and content validity of these two instruments. The reliability of the instruments PFS and ASPDS was determined using test retest method with the sample of 20 students. The first and retest scores of the sample were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The reliability coefficient of Perceived Factor Scale (PFS) was 0.76 while Anti-social Personality Disorder Scale (ASPDS) was 0.77. The researchers personally administrated the instruments with the help of three teachers in each school who were trained and instructed on what to do. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while independent tests were used to test the corresponding hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance.

### 4. RESULTS

The results were presented in line with the research questions and their corresponding hypotheses in the tables 1-:

Table 1: Mean (X), standard deviation (SD) and t-test analysis on the influence of drug abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents

Respondents	N	(X)	SD	DF	t-cal	t-crit	Level of significance
Drug abuse	843	61.77	8.16	998	81.71	1.96	0.05
Non-drug	378	42.35	5.23				

Table 1 shows that the t-critical value of 81.71 is greater than the critical t-values of 1.96. The null hypothesis which states that, “there is no significant influence of drug abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents” was rejected. This implies that there is significant influence of drug abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.

Table 2: Mean (X), standard deviation (SD) and t-test analysis on the influence of anti-social parents on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents

Respondents	N	(X)	SD	DF	t-cal	t-cri	Level of significance
Anti-social parents	863	26.01	4.08	998	52.56	1.96	0.05
Non-anti-social parents	137	65.44	8.61				

Table 2 shows the t-calculated value of 52.56 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. The null hypothesis which states that, “there is no significant influence of anti-social parents on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.” was therefore rejected while the alternative was retained. This means that there is significant influence of anti-social parents on personality disorder among adolescents.

Table 3: Mean (X), standard deviation (SD) and t-test analysis on the influence of emotional abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents

Respondents	N	(X)	SD	DF	t-CAL
Emotional abuse	543	32.21	3.67	998	
Non-emotional abuse	457	67.11	7.64		89.49

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value of 89.49 is greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. The null hypothesis that “Emotional abuse does not significantly influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescent” was rejected while the alternative was retained. This implies that emotional abuse significantly influence anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.

## 5. DISCUSSIONS

The findings show that there is significant influence of drug abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents. The result also indicated that the use of psychoactive drugs such as marijuana by adolescents affects their conduct. This result is in agreement with that of Krueger, Hicks, Patrick, Carlson, Lacono and McGue (2002) who carried out a research on etiologic connections among substance dependence, antisocial behaviour and personality: Modeling the externalizing spectrum. This study posits that there is a linking to each phenotype. Specifically, there is a positive relationship between antisocial behaviour and substance dependence. Again, the result of this study is supported by Krueger, Markon, Patrick, Benning and Kramer (2007) who carried out a study on linking antisocial behaviour, substance use and personality: An integrative quantitative model of the adult externalizing

spectrum. They found out that antisocial behaviour, substance use and aggressive personality traits often occur, forming a coherent spectrum of personality and psychopathology.

The results further show that there is significant influence of anti-social parents on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents. This result also shows that anti-social parents will likely nurse their children in the manner which they are. This finding is in agreement with that of Black (2006) who also found that parents of anti-social children frequently show a high level of anti-social behavior themselves. This study supports the findings of X'Ge (1996). The result showed that psychiatric disorders of biological parents were significantly related to children's antisocial/hostile behaviours.

The study also shows that there is significant influence of emotional abuse on social personality disorder among adolescents. This result also shows that emotional abuse such as threat, insult, humiliation, intimidation, isolation or stalking by parents, siblings or other individuals in the society will result in anti-social behaviour by adolescents. This result is also in agreement with that of Black (2006) who stressed that depriving a young child a significant emotional bond will damage his ability to form intimate and trusting relationship which will explain why some children are prone to develop anti-social personality. This finding is compatible with result of Luntz and Widom (1994) in their research on antisocial personality disorder in abused and neglected grown-up children. The findings showed that childhood victimization was a significant predictor of the number of lifetime symptoms of antisocial personality disorder, despite the fact that controls for demographic characteristics and arrest history were introduced.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were drawn from the findings of the study:

- There is significant influence of drug abuse on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.
- There is significant influence of anti-social parents on anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.
- Emotional abuse significantly influences anti-social personality disorder among adolescents.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Parents and other significant individuals in the society should always discourage adolescents from intake of all kinds of psychoactive drugs in and outside their homes as this will help them to remain focused and committed in their daily activities.
- Drug education should adequately be introduced in Nigerian educational system at all levels as part of citizenship education. This would create greater awareness on possible ways of drug abuse since prevention would always be better than cure.
- Family counselling should be encouraged in Nigeria to help counsel parents who are in the habit of abusing their children.

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