

Relationship between Antisocial Personality and Antisocial Behaviour: The Moderating Role of Intrapersonal Peace among Adolescents.

***Anulika Onyinyechukwu Nnadozie, Chukwuemeka .A. Felix Okoye, & Okechukwu Christian Onuoha**

Department of Psychology Faculty of Social Science, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka

*Correspondence: ao.nnadozie@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract

This study examined the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behavior with intrapersonal peace as moderator. The participants were four hundred and fifty one (451) adolescents sampled from selected secondary school in Awka metropolis of Anambra State, Nigeria. Their age ranged from 14 to 17 years, with a mean age of 15.7 years and standard deviation of 1.01. Three instruments were employed in the study: the subtype antisocial behavior scale, antisocial personality scale and intrapersonal peace scale. Moderated regression statistic was adopted for data analysis. The results showed that there was a relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behavior at β -.544, $P < .01$. Also, there was a relationship between intrapersonal peace and antisocial behavior at β -.544, $P < .01$. Intrapersonal peace moderated the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behavior at β -.43, $P < .01$. The recommendation emphasized the importance of intrapersonal peace in the therapeutic process of managing antisocial behavior of secondary school children.

Keywords: Antisocial, Personality, Behaviour, Intrapersonal, Peace, Adolescents.

Introduction

In most Nigeria Schools, students' incessant involvement in protests, riot and all manner of recalcitrant behavior have become the new norm (Mbagwu, Annorzie & Ugwu, 2018) this trend of restiveness, violence and insecurity may not be directly related to degradation of Nigeria's national values; however, it is believed by many to have orchestrated social tension (Ikediashi & Akande, 2015); and might have promoted the rise in antisocial behavior. This trend appears to be noticeable among secondary school students. Secondary school students are mostly adolescents whose ages ranges from 10 to 18 or more, with certain developmental challenges such as self-searching and confusion.

Without adequate care or nurture, there is tendency that students at this crucial stage of development may become hostile and insubordinate, especially to parents' school authorities and deviant to social standards. With antisocial personality dispositions, antisocial behavior may be rife with impalatable consequences. In schools such students may lead revolts, protests, and other forms of antisocial behaviour and the consequence of these unhealthy behaviors could have grave impact on them, because they are considered leaders of tomorrow and the future of every society. Antisocial behaviours are actions that harm others, without consideration for their wellbeing. It is referred to as any form of conduct that violates the basic rights of another person or that disrupts the peace of others in the society (Nauert, 2018). Antisocial behaviors among students or within school environment such as passive aggressiveness, recalcitrant behaviour, revolt, and indifference may have negative impact on students' mental health, behaviour, appropriate development and even their academic achievement (Molero-Jurado et al, 2016),

In Nigeria, classroom learning, and academic achievement of some students have been impaired by these undesirable behaviours observed among students (Diwe, Aguocha Duru Uwakwe, Merenu & Nwefoh, 2016). Students with antisocial behaviour commonly engage in behavior such as verbal and physical aggression; hence, negatively affecting appropriate social skills acquisition and performance, which also negatively influences their ability to successfully negotiate peer relations, their future adult relationships and educational experiences. (Molero-Jurado et al, 2016). Anti-social behaviours are indeed equally as injurious to the student as it is to the society in general; and these students might be predisposed such unhealthy behavior (antisocial personality trait) which may increase their vulnerability to antisocial behavior.

Antisocial personality is characterized by consistent patterns of disregard for, or violation of the rights of others (Berger, 2016). It is a personality type that is often marked with low sense of moral or conscience, impulsivity, and aggressiveness. Thread craft – walker and Henderson (2018) opined that people with antisocial personality traits are mostly vulnerable to crime and legal problems. Among adolescents, there is a trait pattern of delinquent behaviours and general attitude towards disregarding the constituted authorities among the agents of socialization such as the parents, elderly, older siblings,

religious leaders, peers, and teachers. Without proper management, most people with antisocial traits often slides into antisocial personality disorder; which is a pervasive and persistent disregard for morals social norms, and the rights and feelings of others (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) furthermore, those with antisocial traits often experience problems with interpersonal relationships (Wilson, Stroud & Durbin, 2017) bonds are always weak; their interpersonal relationships often revolve around the manipulation, exploitation and abuse of others (Perry & Szalavitz, 2017). Nevertheless, they generally have no problems in establishing a relationship, but they may experience difficulties in sustaining and maintaining them (Wilson, Stroud & Durbin, 2017). It is reasoned by the researcher that this manifest unstable relationship among people with antisocial personality traits maybe because of lack of or poor intrapersonal peace.

Poor intrapersonal peace might be one of the causes of lack of remorsefulness and overly recalcitrant behavior observed and person with antisocial personality trait (Redekop, 2014). Hence, the researcher's contention that intrapersonal peace could moderate the level of antisocial behaviour irrespective of their traits. Intrapersonal peace is a state of equilibrium with ones mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially. Redekop (2014) saw it as cultivating understanding of the self, loving oneself and having compassion as one of the ways of creating a harmonious relationship with self. According to Esmaeili (2020), without intrapersonal peace, in a person, the person may be unforgiving towards his/herself, delusional, conflicting and in a state of turmoil which might pave way to self-vulnerability towards varying forms of antisocial behavior. Given this position, the researchers contend that intrapersonal peace could moderate antisocial behaviour and vulnerability traits.

Theoretically, this study was anchored on the psychosocial development theory propounded by Erikson (1950), and theory of the mind posited by Premack and Woodruff (1978). Essentially, both theories offer in - dept explanation and understanding of the true state of the mind of adolescents in secondary school who are passing through the stage of identity searching and role confusion, which can be best managed if the mind as Premack et al propounded is at peace having internalized that other (people with whom the adolescents socializes and interacts with) have beliefs, intents, which characteristically

may differ from theirs. This appreciation is pertinent for crisis-free social interactions especially when analyzing, judging and inferring from others behavior.

Empirically, the researchers reviewed some related studies with reference to variable of study. Aboh, Nwankwo, Agu and Chikwendu (2015) examined factors influencing maladaptive behavior among high school students. Data were collected from one hundred (100) participants comprising of 50 males and 50 females whose ages ranged from 12-16 and 17-21 years respectively. They found that broken homes significantly influenced maladaptive behaviour and also negative attitudes of teachers significantly influenced maladaptive behavior.

Also, Diwe, Aguocha, Duru, Ukwakwe and Nwefor (2016) evaluated gender differences in prevalence and pattern of conduct disorder among adolescent secondary school students in Orlu, South-East, Nigeria. The participants were four hundred and two (402) students selected from public and private secondary schools. They found that 69.77% of the respondents had committed at least one form of antisocial behaviour or another. Males had higher prevalence of antisocial behaviour compared to their female counterparts. They Also found that the most prevalent antisocial behavior in each gender was stealing.

Furthermore, Wilson, Stroud, and Durbin (2017) studied interpersonal dysfunction in personality disorders as meta-analytic review. The study involved 127 published and unpublished studies, comprising 2,579 effect sizes. The finding supports the construct and discriminant validity of personality disorders in the current diagnostic manual, as well as the proposed conceptualization that disturbances in self and interpersonal functioning constitute the core of personality pathology. Moreover Mbagwu, Annorzie and Ugwu (2018) investigated the impact of parents' financial school truancy among secondary school students in Aba Nigeria. The study involved four hundred (400) participants, comprising of 200 male and 200 females aged from 11-20 years. They found that parents' financial level and residential area did not impact significantly on truant behaviour of students, while personality type significantly impacted on truancy among the students.

Given the paucity of empirical studies in this area, this study explored whether personality disposition (antisocial personality) is related to antisocial behaviour and whether intrapersonal peace could moderate this relationship.

Hypothesis

1. There would be a significant relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour.
2. There would be a significant relationship between intrapersonal peace and antisocial behaviour
3. Intrapersonal peace would moderate the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour

Method

Participants

Four hundred and fifty-one secondary school students in Anambra state participated in this study; their ages ranged from 14 to 17 years. (Mean age is 15.7, standard deviation 1.01). Among the participants, 192 were males while 259 were females. They were drawn from senior Secondary School students (SS 2) in Anambra State. The participants were both day-school students and boarding students in the selected schools. The participants were selected using multi-stage sampling technique, while Purposive sampling was adapted for the selection the 3 senatorial zones in Anambra State. A cluster sampling method was adapted for selection of schools from the city clusters whereas simple random sampling technique was used to select each participant from each of the schools.

Instruments

The method of data collection was conducted using a survey method specifically, using self-report questionnaires in eliciting responses from the students. Three instruments were adapted for data collection, which are: Sub-Type Antisocial behaviour scale, Anti-social personality scale and Intrapersonal peace scale index.

Sub-type Antisocial Behaviour Scale

Sub-Type Antisocial Behaviour Scale (STABS) is a 32-item instrument developed by Burt and Donnellan (2009). STAB measures antisocial behaviour across the subtypes of physical aggression, relational aggression, theft, rebelliousness, destructive aggression, honesty, and fraud. The authors reported validity measures from .85 to .87 across the dimensions and .86 for the general scale. Sample items in the scale include: "Littered public areas by smashing bottles, tipping trash cans, etc.", "Tried to hurt someone's feelings" and "Hit others when provoked". The response format for the scale ranges from 1 to 5, "never", "hardly ever" "sometimes" "frequently" and "nearly all the time" in a progressive order. The STAB scale was adopted for students' antisocial behaviour and a pilot test was carried out to establish its suitability among Nigerian sample. The researcher obtained a reliability alpha coefficient of .70.

Antisocial personality inventory

Antisocial personality inventory was developed by Blackburn and Fawcett (1999). It is a 20-item questionnaire. The response format is in a 3-point likert of "Not at all true", "Sometimes true" and "Definitely true". Sample items included: "your emotions are shallow and fake", "you blame others for your mistakes" and "you think you are better or more important than other people". The authors reported an internal consistence of .78 for all items and subscales. The Antisocial personality inventory was adopted for students' personality profiling in the study and a pilot test was carried out to establish its suitability among Nigerian sample. The researcher obtained a reliability alpha coefficient of .74.

Intrapersonal peace scale

Intrapersonal peace scale inventory was developed by Zucker, Ahn, Sinclair, Blais, Nelson and Burke (2014). It is a 15-item questionnaire. The response format is in a 5-point likert which ranged from 1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree". The authors reported an internal consistence of .78 for all items and subscales. The Antisocial personality inventory was adopted for students' personality profiling in the study and a pilot test was

carried out to establish its suitability among Nigerian sample. The researcher obtained a reliability alpha coefficient of .76.

Procedure

The approval for this study was granted by the Head, department of Psychology, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State Nigeria; with a letter of introduction which was taken to the principal of the schools selected for the study. The researchers presented letter of introduction collected from the Department of Psychology Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka and sought for permission to carry out the research among the students. After explaining the objectives of the study to the principals, permission to conduct the study was granted and date for the study was also agreed on by researchers and principals of each school. On the agreed date for the study, the researchers went to the schools with a research assistant, selected the participants and administered the questionnaires. Participant was giving instructions on how to fill the questionnaires. At the end of the exercise, among 520 distributed questionnaires, 506 were collected while 451 were properly filled and were used for data analysis.

Design / Statistics

This was a survey study that utilized a correlational design. That involved establishing the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour among adolescents and the moderation effects of intrapersonal peace. Moderated regression analysis was adopted as appropriate statistical tool for data analysis using statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 21).

Table: Summary of hierarchical regression on relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour as moderated by intrapersonal peace among secondary school students in Anambra State

Model	<i>R</i>	<i>CR</i> ²	<i>Df</i> <i>1</i>	<i>(df</i> ² <i>)</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>T</i>	<i>B</i>
Step 1	.19		2	(448)	42.06		
Antisocial personality						7.09	.57**
Intrapersonal peace						4.57	-.54**

Step 2	.24	.005	1	447	33.76		
Antisocial personality						7.24	.57**
Intrapersonal peace						4.36	-.54**
A x B						3.68	.43**

CR² = Change in R², p < .01.

Table 2 shows that the adjusted R² for step 1 is .19 at F(42.06) p < .01. In the second model, the adjusted R² is .24 and R change is .005. This R change was significant at F (33.76), df = 447 p < .01. The Beta coefficient for model 2 shows that antisocial personality significantly and positively predicted antisocial behaviour thus, the first hypothesis was confirmed at $\beta = .57$, p < .01. Similarly, intrapersonal peace significantly and negatively predicted antisocial behaviour at β coefficient value of .544, p < .01, thus, the second hypothesis was also confirmed. Also, the third hypothesis where intrapersonal peace moderated the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour was confirmed at $\beta = .43$, p < .01.

Discussion

The study examined the relationship between antisocial personality, antisocial behaviour and the moderating effects of intrapersonal peace. Three hypotheses were tested in the study.

The first hypothesis which stated that antisocial personality would significantly correlate with antisocial behaviour was accepted, which implies that students with antisocial personality traits were more prone to antisocial behaviour than others. The instance of such personality disorder does not only make them vulnerable to the pangs of antisocial behaviours in school but also with constituted authorities and within the socialization circles such as peers, family and others. This finding was in line with the study of Mbagwu, Annorzie and Ugwu's (2018). who investigated the impacts of parents' financial level, personality and residential area on school truancy among secondary school students in Aba with truancy serving as antisocial behaviour; and found that personality type significantly impacted on truancy (a form of antisocial behaviour exhibited by students) among secondary school students in Aba? Considering the similarities between the

culture and environment of the present study, there is a strong convergence that the current findings linking antisocial personality trait to antisocial behaviours is consistent with the previous findings.

Also, the meta-analytic findings of Wilson, Stroud and Durbin's (2017) supported the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour. They found that interpersonal dysfunction in personality disorders was consistent in predicting antisocial behaviour and difficulties in human interactions. Nonetheless, these studies were supported by Patrick and Brislin's (2018) theoretical perspectives on psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder which argued that psychopathy and antisocial personality disorder are related but with distinguishable diagnostic conditions.

The second hypothesis which stated that intrapersonal peace will significantly correlate with antisocial behaviour was also accepted. The finding indicates that intrapersonal peace may serve as an intrinsic motivational and dispositional factor which negatively influences antisocial behaviour. This negative predictive effect may be utilized to manage and reduce the prevalence of antisocial behavior in our society. Considering Molero-Jurado, et al. (2016) who's study analyzed the relationship between delinquent behaviors, interpersonal values, and academic performance found that students with high levels of recognition, independence, and leadership, as well as students with low levels of conformity and benevolence displayed significantly higher levels of delinquent behaviors. Thus, the probability of presenting a high level of delinquent behaviors is far greater in individuals with high independence, high leadership, high recognition, low benevolence, and low conformity than those who submit to authority, less independent, high benevolence and empathy. These traits are intrinsically motivated and are in tandem with intrapersonal values which can only be observed among individuals with intrapersonal peace.

Also, Ikediashi and Akande (2015) study on anti-social behaviours among Nigerian adolescents supported the finding of this present study. The authors stated that the causes of antisocial behaviors are the nature of the home environment, gender, socio economic

status of parents, peer group influence and residential location. These factors as highlighted are influenced and determined by the level of intrapersonal peace.

The third hypothesis of the study which sought to ascertain the moderation effect of intrapersonal peace on the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour was confirmed. The finding indicated that the more the inner peace, the higher the tendency for the reduction of antisocial behavior; why because, the intrapersonal peace is an intrinsic disposition which enables a person to be fair with the evaluation and judgment of actions of others and recognizing that their desires and motives may significantly differ from ours; given the individual differences occasioned by personal factors, environmental factors, and socialization processes in which the student has found him/herself. There is this expectation that the more a person with antisocial personality traits finds peace, internalizes conformity and consideration of others; there is high tendency that antisocial behaviour which has inverse relationship with intrapersonal peace will be on the decrease.

This finding is also in line with Erikson's theory of psychosocial development which hinted that the developmental stage of secondary school students is that of identity searching and role playing which throws them into confusion and could be a factor that triggers antisocial behaviour. It is also in line with the theory of mind which supports that the inner dispositional trait which is offered by the mindset of the person is handy in determining the antisocial behaviour outcomes. Considering the empirical evidence from the study of Molero-Jurado et al (2016) which analyzed the relationship between delinquent behaviors, interpersonal values and academic performance they found out that students with high levels of recognition, independence, and leadership, as well as students with low levels of conformity and benevolence display significantly higher levels of delinquent behaviors. Thus, with peace of mind or inner peace which in this study was explored as intrapersonal peace, levels of recognition, independence, and quest for leadership will reduce whereas levels of conformity and benevolence will increase leading to less antisocial behaviours.

Implications of the Study

The findings imply that students with antisocial personality traits are predisposed to antisocial behavior. Also, the findings imply that the presence of intrapersonal peace will bring about reduction of antisocial behavior irrespective of the persons personality traits.

Limitations of the Study

The limitation of this study is that it evaluated perception of participants' susceptibility to antisocial behaviour in line with academic timeline as there is limited resources to carrying out an experimental study. Thus, the evaluated responses of the respondents were elicited. In order to measure it effectively, a correlation design seeking predictive effects of antisocial personality on antisocial behaviour was utilized while the effects of intrapersonal peace were observed by introducing the variable to moderate the relationship. The researcher feels that by using this moderated method, the predictive effects will be accounted for.

Recommendations

1. From the findings of this study, it is recommended that parent, caregivers and teacher should employ the professional skills of clinical psychologist in other to access the personality traits of their children.
2. Also, they should be on the look-out for the characteristics of antisocial personality in other to manage or control their predisposition and foster functional individuals.
3. Finally, it is recommended that psychologist should apply the cultivation of intrapersonal peace in therapeutic processes in the treatment antisocial behavior among secondary school children.

Conclusion

This study explored the predictive effects of antisocial personality traits and intrapersonal peace on antisocial behaviour. Also, it sought to determine whether intrapersonal peace

moderated the relationship between antisocial personality and antisocial behaviour. At the end of data analysis, the finding confirmed the three hypotheses tested in the study

References

- Aboh, J.U., Nwankwo, B.E., Agu, S.A., & Chikwendu, C.E (2015). A study of factors influencing maladaptive behaviour among high School Students. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, 4(6): 215-220
- American Psychiatric Association (1994). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorder (4th1 Ed.) Washington, DC.
- Berger, F.K. (2016). *Antisocial personality disorder*: MedlinePlus Medical Encyclopedia
- Diwe, K., Aguocha, C., Duru, C., Uwakwe, K., Merenu, A., & Nwefoh, E. (2016). Gender Differences in Prevalence and Pattern of Conduct Disorder among Adolescent Secondary School Students in Southeast Nigeria. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences & Humanities*, 5(1), 231-242
- Erikson, E.H. (1950). *Childhood and Society*. New York: Norton
- Ikediashi, N.N. & Akande, J.A (2015). Anti-Social Behaviours Among Nigerian Adolescents. *Journal of Research & Method in Education* 5(1), 31-3
- Mbagwu, M. I., Annorzie, H. I., & Ugwu, A. A. (2018). Impact of Parents' financial Level, Personality and Residential Area on School Truancy among Secondary School Students in Aba. *Journal of Professional Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 1(1). 39-52
- Molero Jurado, M. D. M., Pérez Fuentes, M. D. C., Luque De La Rosa, A., Martos Martínez, Á., Barragán Martín, A. B., Márquez, S., & del Mar, M. (2016). Interpersonal values and academic performance related to delinquent behaviors. *Frontiers in psychology*, 7, 1480.
- Nauert, R. (2018). "Antisocial Behavior Linked to Genes and Environment". *psychcentral.com*.
- Perry, Bruce; Szalavitz, Maia (2017) [2006]. *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog*. New York: Basic Books. p. 123. ISBN 978-0-465-09445-5.
- Premack, D. & Woodruff, G. (1978). Does the chimpanzee have a theory of mind?. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 1(4): 515-526. doi:10.1017/S0140525X00076512
- Redekop, P. (2014). Inner Peace and Conflict Transformation. *Peace Research*, 31-49.

- Threadcraft-Walker, W., & Henderson, H. (2018). Reflections on race, personality, and crime. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 59*, 38-41.
- Wilson, S., Stroud, C. B., & Durbin, C. E. (2017). Interpersonal dysfunction in personality disorders: A meta-analytic review. *Psychological Bulletin, 143*(7), 677.
- Esmaeili, M., Yazdani, M., & Torfayeh, M. (2020). Effectiveness of intra and interpersonal peace-based intervention of psychological and emotional well-being of male aggressive adolescents. Vol - 08 journal of health education and health promotion