

EFFECT OF COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND INTERPERSONAL THERAPIES ON MANAGING ADOLESCENTS' AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN OYO, OYO STATE, NIGERIA

By

¹AJAGBE SEUN WEYINMI (Ph.D)

weyinmiseun@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8948-320X>

¹OJOKHETA PAUL

paulojokheta@gmail.com

¹KAREEM KAZEEM KAYODE

kareemkazeem4u@gmail.com

¹Department of Educational Psychology,
Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, Nigeria

Abstract

The study examined the impact of cognitive behavioral and interpersonal therapies on managing adolescent aggressiveness among university students in Oyo, Oyo State. Using purposive sampling techniques, a sample of two hundred students was selected, with fifty students from each of the four universities in Oyo, Oyo State. Data were collected using questionnaires. The relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable was determined using Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC), and the combined influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable was assessed using multiple regression analysis.

The findings indicated a significant relationship between interpersonal therapies and adolescent aggressiveness among university students in Oyo ($r=.843$; $p<0.05$). Additionally, the study revealed a significant relationship between cognitive behavioral therapy and adolescent aggressiveness ($r=.732$; $p<0.05$). It also found a significant relationship between adolescent personality type and aggressiveness ($r=.543$; $p<0.05$).

The study concluded that physical and verbal aggressions among students are serious issues due to their inherent dangers. Aggression in schools can discourage students from attending due to fear of intimidation or harm, and it can hinder academic achievement. Fear from intimidation and harassment, whether in the classroom or outside, can reduce students' concentration and assimilation, leading to academic underachievement. Therefore, it is crucial to take all necessary measures to eliminate or reduce aggression in universities.

Based on the findings, the study recommends the following actions: Given the prevalence of physical and verbal aggression among students, lecturers should pay closer attention to students both in the classroom and on the playground, where such behaviors often occur, and ensure that aggressors are

appropriately punished. The formation of anti-aggression clubs in schools is also recommended. These clubs would monitor, discourage, and report aggressive behaviors to lecturers and school administrators, ensuring that perpetrators are suitably disciplined.

Keywords: *Cognitive Behaviour, Interpersonal Therapies, Adolescents Aggressiveness.*

INTRODUCTION

Aggressive behavior in children and adolescents is a common concern for parents and teachers. Research indicates that aggressive behaviors during adolescence can have long-lasting effects. Aggression is defined as a behavior intended to hurt or harm others to increase one's social dominance (Ferguson & Beaver, 2019). According to Kruti and Melonashi (2015), aggression is an emotional state with a desire to attack others, driven by both internal and external factors. Bushman and Huesmann (2020) distinguish between direct aggression, which includes physical acts like kicking, hitting, punching, and biting, and indirect aggression, which involves social isolation, exclusion, and threats. Additionally, social aggression aims to harm another person's social relationships or sense of inclusion, with effects that can last longer than those of physical or verbal aggression (Chen et al., 2020).

Aggressive behaviors in students are often seen as behavioral disorders, characterized by physical violence, abusive language, bossiness, tantrums, and emotional outbursts. These behaviors not only disrupt classroom instruction but also affect the well-being of lecturers. Paul-Cookey and Iwuama (2021) highlighted that behavioral aggressiveness is a significant global concern, evidenced by frequent reports of gang fights, shootings, and bombings. In this study, aggression refers to any behavior intended to harm others, characterized by physical force meant to injure or destroy. Cookey and Iwuama (2021) emphasize that such aggression in schools affects the educational process. Poju (2022) noted that violent adolescents often exhibit aggressive patterns from childhood, which are frequently overlooked as temporary phases.

Beno and Judge (2019) found that adolescents from father-absent households often harbor hostility, associate with deviant peers, and engage in negative activities, with these risks persisting regardless of race or educational background. Carver and Schrier (2020) revealed that young children often show physical aggression, but most learn to curb this behavior through environmental cues. This suggests that parenting quality is crucial in managing aggressive behavior, although modern societal changes have weakened family cohesion, impacting behavior.

Research shows that mothers with high levels of antisocial behavior tend to have children who exhibit early physical aggressiveness (Anderson, 2018). Students lacking empathy and displaying fearlessness are more prone to aggressive behavior, often seeking social recognition and exhibiting negative attitudes

towards authority (Amanda and Monica, 2018). However, since aggressive behavior is learned rather than inherited, it can be treated. Researchers have explored various strategies, including psychotherapies, to help adolescents with aggressive tendencies.

Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) posits that people can be rational or irrational in their thinking, and how they perceive their experiences affects their feelings and actions. Negative perceptions lead to negative emotions and behaviors. CBT aims to correct erroneous thinking to help individuals feel better and function more effectively. It addresses negative feelings like anger, depression, anxiety, and worthlessness through a rational approach.

Managing anger requires various resources, including cognitive and behavioral skills (Folkman & Lazarus, 2016). Adolescents with below-average intelligence often struggle more with managing anger due to intellectual limitations and poor self-awareness (Nieuwenhuijzen & Vriens, 2016). Interventions using a cognitive behavioral approach address cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects. This study aims to investigate cognitive behavior and interpersonal therapies as determinants in managing adolescent aggressiveness among university students in Oyo, Oyo State.

Concept of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is a problem-focused approach that helps individuals identify and change dysfunctional beliefs, thoughts, and behavior patterns contributing to their issues. The core principle of CBT is that thoughts influence emotions, which in turn affect behaviors. CBT integrates cognitive therapy and behavioral therapy. Cognitive therapy focuses on recognizing and altering faulty or maladaptive thinking patterns. For instance, a student struggling with a math problem might think, "I'm stupid, I can't do math." CBT would help replace this thought with a more realistic one, such as, "This problem is difficult; I'll ask for help," a strategy that has been effective in helping many young people tackle academic challenges (Beck, 2015).

Concept of Interpersonal Therapies

Interpersonal Therapy (IPT) was developed in the 1970s as a brief treatment for major depression and outlined in a manual by Klerman, Weissman, and Rounsaville (1984). Initially designed as a 12-week treatment for non-hospitalized depressed individuals, IPT has been proven effective in treating various psychiatric disorders, including dysthymia, anxiety, bipolar disorder, substance dependence, PTSD, eating disorders, and for specific groups such as adolescents and the elderly. IPT links the onset of depressive symptoms to current interpersonal problems, focusing on the patient's immediate social context rather than past relationships. The therapist intervenes in symptom formation and social dysfunction associated

with depression, rather than addressing the patient's personality aspects (Weissman and Markowitz, 2018).

Concept of Adolescence

Adolescence, derived from the Latin word "adolescere" meaning to grow to maturity, is a critical developmental period between the onset of puberty and the establishment of social independence. According to Steinberg (2018), adolescence is a dynamic construct informed by physiological, psychosocial, temporal, and cultural factors. The World Health Organization (2020) defines adolescents as individuals aged 10 to 19, youth as those aged 15 to 24, and young people as those aged 10 to 24. This period, often described as one of storm and stress (Saba, 2018), marks the transition from family-centered social systems to peer-centered ones. Adolescence involves significant physical, cognitive, and emotional changes, with implications for self-esteem and behavior (Falaye, 2022).

Concept of Aggressiveness

Aggression is generally defined as a deliberate act intended to cause harm. Bernstein et al. (2017) define aggression as an act meant to harm another person. Colman (2018) describes it as behavior aimed at injuring physically or psychologically. Myers (2015) adds that aggression includes physical or verbal behavior intended to hurt someone. Thus, aggression involves any deliberate act to harm, hurt, or destroy. Accidental harm or actions for someone's well-being, like a nurse giving a painful injection, are not considered aggressive. However, intent to harm, such as a student throwing a stone with the aim to injure, is aggressive. Extreme aggression is often referred to as violence, which is intended to cause severe harm or death (Brehm et al., 2017).

Statement of the Problem

It has been observed by the researcher that many adolescents in schools today exhibit timidity, shyness, and feelings of worthlessness, despite their educational exposure. These issues, often linked to low self-esteem, result in a lack of confidence and competence. Low self-esteem leads to psychological difficulties such as loneliness, frustration, rejection, and withdrawal. These negative self-perceptions can foster irrational thinking and deviant behaviors like bullying, fighting, and rule violations, which negatively impact academic success and social relationships.

To improve self-esteem, it is essential to alter and replace dysfunctional and irrational thoughts with rational ones. Adolescents with low self-esteem need training in counseling and psychological skills to cope with life's challenges and frustrations.

Objective of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate the Cognitive Behaviour and Interpersonal therapies as determinants on managing adolescents' aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria. The behaviours of students are irrational and aggressive which necessitated the need to use Cognitive

Behaviour and Interpersonal therapies to manage the behaviours of students in selected universities in Oyo State.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- i. To examine the types of adolescents aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the causes of adolescents aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.
- iii. To access the effects of adolescents aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.
- iv. To understand how Cognitive Behaviour and Interpersonal Therapies can be used in managing adolescents aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Research Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal therapies and adolescents' aggressive behavior among university Students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Cognitive Behaviour and adolescent aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between adolescent personality type and adolescents' aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between motivates and emotional behaviour on adolescents' aggressive behavior among university Students in Oyo, Oyo State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This deal with the method used to carry out the research work and involves the research design, population of the study, sample and sampling technique, research instrument, validity and reliability of the instrument, procedure for data collection and method of data analysis.

Research Design

The design of the study is descriptive survey. The method was found relevant because the respondents of the study were sampled in their areas.

Population of the study

The population of this study comprises of all university students in Oyo metropolis of Oyo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used for the study is purposive sampling technique. Four (4) universities were selected to represent Oyo metropolis of Oyo state. A sampling

technique was used to select two hundred (200) students, fifty (50) students from each university. These universities were;

- i. University of Ibadan in Affiliated with Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo.
- ii. Lagos State University in Affiliated with Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo.
- iii. Ekiti State University in Affiliated with Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo.
- iv. Atiba University, Oyo.

Instrumentation.

The instrument used for this study was self-structured questionnaire on the cognitive behavior and interpersonal therapies as predictor of managing adolescent's aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo, Oyo State (CBITDMAG). The questionnaire was carefully constructed, developed and structured. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A contains the demographic characteristics of the respondents while section B contains item relevant to the research questions. The respondents were provided with four-point likert scale, made up of the following responses Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Method of Data Analysis

The statistical methods were simple percentage, frequency counts. The association between the independent variables and the dependent variable was established using PPMC, and the joint contributions of the independent variables and the dependent variable were established using Multiple Regression. The statistical tools used for analyzing the results are Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Simple Regression.

RESULTS

This section encompasses the examination of data and the subsequent discussion of findings derived from the study. The research aimed to explore the role of cognitive behavior and interpersonal therapies in addressing adolescents' aggressiveness among university students in Oyo. Four research inquiries were posed, alongside the formulation and testing of four research hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05.

The data underwent analysis employing statistical techniques such as simple percentage calculations, frequency counts, and graphical representations including bar charts and pie charts to delineate respondents' characteristics. To discern the relationship between the independent variables (cognitive behavior and interpersonal therapies) and the dependent variable (adolescents' aggressiveness), Pearson Product-Moment Correlation (PPMC) was employed. Furthermore, Multiple Regression analysis was conducted to ascertain the collective impact of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

Testing of Research Hypotheses

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between interpersonal therapies sand adolescents' aggressive behavior among university Students in Oyo.

Table 1: Relationship between interpersonal therapies and aggressive behavior among university Students in Oyo.

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	P	Remark
Interpers onal Therapies	28.48	10.23	200		.843*	.000	Significan t
Adolescen ts Aggres siveness	33.00	14.91		198			

* Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 1 shows a there is a significant relationship between interpersonal therapies and adolescents' aggressiveness among university Students in Oyo ($r = .843$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that interpersonal therapies have an impact on adolescents' aggressiveness among university Students in Oyo. This implies that there is a positive impact of interpersonal therapies on adolescent's aggressiveness.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between Cognitive Behaviour and adolescent aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo.

Table 2: Relationship between cognitive behaviour and adolescent aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo.

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	P	Remark
Cognitive Behaviour	28.48	10.23	200		.732*	.000	Significan t
Adolescen t Aggressiv eness	33.00	14.91		199			

* Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 2 shows a there is significant relationship between cognitive behaviour and adolescent aggressiveness among university students in Oyo ($r = .732$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that cognitive behaviour has a link with adolescent aggressiveness among university students in Oyo.

Research Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between adolescent personality type and adolescents' aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo.

Table 3: Relationship between adolescent personality and aggressiveness among university students in Oyo.

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	P	Remark
Adolescent Personality	23.12	9.42	200		.543*	.000	Significant
Adolescents	33.00	14.91		211			

Aggressiveness

* Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 3 shows that there is significant relationship between adolescent personality type and adolescents' aggressiveness among university students in Oyo ($r = .543$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that adolescent personality type has significant relationship with aggressiveness among university students in Oyo.

Research Hypothesis four: There is no significant relationship between motivates and emotional behaviour on adolescents' aggressive behavior among university Students in Oyo.

Table 4: Relationship between motivates and emotional behaviour on adolescents' aggressive behavior among university Students in Oyo.

Variable	Mean	SD	N	Df	r-cal	P	Remark
Motivates/Emotional Behaviour	19.53	8.62	200		.511*	.000	Significant
Adolescents Aggressiveness	33.00	14.91		181			

* Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 4 shows a statistically significant link between motivates and emotional behaviour on adolescents' aggressiveness among university students in Oyo ($r = .511$; $p < 0.05$). This suggests that motivates and emotional behaviour has an impact on adolescents' aggressiveness among university Students in Oyo.

Table 5: Multiple regression analysis on Cognitive behaviour, Interpersonal therapies, Motivates/emotional behaviour and adolescent personality and adolescent aggressive behavior among university students in Oyo.

Multiple R(adjusted) =.890

Multiple R²(adjusted) =.790

Standard error of Estimate = 6.83

Analysis of Variance				
	Sum Square	of DF (SS)	Mean Square	F
Regression	66957.78	3	22319.26	478.76
Residual	17575.22	197	46.62	
Total	84533.00	200		

* Significant at $p < 0.05$

Table 5 shows that the independent variables (Cognitive behaviour, Interpersonal therapies, Motivates/emotional behaviour and adolescent personality) when pulled together have significant effect on adolescent aggressiveness among University Students in Oyo. The value of R (adjusted) =.890 and R² (adjusted) =.790. This means that 79.0% of the variance was accounted for by the predictor variables when taken together. The analysis of variance performed on the multiple regressions yielded an F- ratio value of 478.76 and was found to be significant at 0.05 levels.

DISCUSSION

Ezeokanna, Obi-Nwosu, and Okoye (2018) conducted a study investigating the impact of street life and gender on the aggressive tendencies and self-esteem levels of Nigerian youth. The research aimed to analyze how children's experiences living on the streets and their gender influenced their levels of aggression and self-esteem in two major cities within the Nigerian state of Anambra. Six research questions and corresponding null hypotheses guided the investigation, employing a descriptive research design. Participants were drawn from the towns of Onitsha and Awka in Anambra state, totaling 412 individuals aged between 13 to 17, comprising 277 males and 135 females. The sample encompassed 40 children, including 20 street children (14 males and 6 females) and 20 non-street children (12 males and 8 females).

Moreover, Anderson and Bushman (2022) highlighted the limited studies in Kenya regarding how aggressive behaviors influence personality traits. Aggressive personality, identified as a deeply ingrained characteristic, has been scarcely explored in psychological research in Kenya. Nevertheless, global research indicates that personality traits, alongside socio-demographic factors, may predict

violent behavior accurately. Notably, there has been a rise in the number of women and girls involved in violent behaviors in Kenya, leading to incarceration or admission to rehabilitation programs. Juvenile detention centers have also witnessed an increase, suggesting a rising number of young female offenders.

Additionally, Underwood (2019) focused on teenage girls, acknowledging that male adolescents typically outnumber females concerning measures of aggressive behavior. Studies have consistently shown that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is associated with significant and clinically relevant improvements, particularly when administered by skilled practitioners. CBT has been effectively utilized across various contexts and demographics, including schools, support groups, correctional facilities, and community-based organizations. Parents have shown a preference for CBT over medication for treating both externalizing and internalizing disorders.

Chingtham (2015) noted that teenagers are prone to engaging in risky behaviors during adolescence, such as skipping school or substance use, to fulfill various needs. Steinberg (2018) highlighted significant developmental changes during the transition from childhood to adulthood, including physical changes such as voice deepening and menstruation onset. These changes are accompanied by psychological and behavioral shifts typical of adolescence.

Furthermore, data collection utilized interviews, the Buss-Perry Aggression Questionnaire (1992), and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1979), with multiple analysis of variance employed for data analysis. Findings revealed significant differences in aggressive behavior between non-street children and street children, although no significant difference was observed in their self-esteem levels. Gender did not significantly influence aggressive behavior among street children, but it did impact self-esteem levels, with male street children exhibiting higher self-esteem than their female counterparts.

CONCLUSION

Drawing from the findings of this study, it can be concluded that the prevalence of physical and verbal aggression among students poses significant dangers due to its potential impact. Aggression within educational settings has the potential to deter students from attending school out of fear of intimidation or harm, consequently hindering their academic achievement. The presence of fear, resulting from intimidation and harassment either within the classroom or elsewhere, can lead to decreased concentration and assimilation levels, ultimately resulting in academic underachievement. Thus, it is imperative to take all necessary measures to address and mitigate aggression within university environments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the study's findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Increased Attention and Punishment:** Lecturers should pay closer attention to students, particularly in areas where aggressive behaviors are prevalent, such as classrooms and playgrounds. Aggressors should face appropriate consequences for their actions.
2. **Formation of Anti-Aggression Clubs:** Establishing anti-aggression clubs within schools can serve as a platform to monitor, discourage, and report aggressive behaviors to school authorities, ensuring that perpetrators are adequately punished.
3. **Psychological Treatment:** Rather than solely relying on punishment, it is essential for lecturers, counselors, psychologists, parents, and others to provide psychological treatment to adolescents grappling with aggression. Addressing underlying issues such as low self-esteem can be more effective in curbing aggressive behaviors.
4. **Establishment of Disciplinary Committees:** Schools should establish disciplinary committees to handle cases involving aggressive behavior, particularly physical aggression.
5. **Abolition of Seniority-Based Punishment:** Practices allowing senior students to punish junior students should be abolished, as they can often lead to unjustifiable punishment and abuse of power.
6. **Referral to School Counselors:** Students involved in aggression cases should be referred to school counselors for remediation, in addition to other disciplinary measures.
7. **Prompt Attention to Reported Cases:** School authorities should give due attention to all reported cases of aggression to encourage students to report offenses instead of resorting to retaliation.
8. **Implementation of Code of Conduct:** Every school should have a clearly defined code of conduct document provided to every student upon admission, outlining expected behavior and consequences for violations.

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