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CHALLENGES OF IN SCHOOL-ADOLESCENT AS EXPRESSED BY SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ETSAKO WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Adolescents are confronted with the challenges of transition from childhood to adulthood mostly without much tutor or awareness of the challenges and changes which the period enclosed. This crisis result in the manifestation of such problems as bullying, teenage pregnancies, drug abuse, different forms of violence and other vices that are linked with maladaptive behaviours. The study investigated adolescents' challenges as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West LGA of Edo State. A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. Twenty (20) students were randomly selected from ten schools, to make 200 respondents that participated in the study. A self-developed instrument titled "Adolescents' Challenges Questionnaire" (ACQ) was used to collect relevant data for the study. The questionnaire was pilot tested, validated and the reliability co-efficient of 0.65 gotten revealed that the instrument is reliable for the study. A Four Point- Likert Type scale developed questionnaire gave opportunity for respondents to pick an option that they mostly agreed/disagreed with. The major finding of the study revealed that "Academic Related challenges" is the highest challenge of adolescents. Other findings are that age of the respondents does not influence their expression on adolescents' problem while respondents' class level, gender, school type, religion and class type influenced their expression on adolescents' challenges.

The counseling implication of the findings is that counselors should consistently organize counseling programmes for students on study habits and study culture that would enhance academic success. Based on the findings of the study, therefore, it is recommended that Counselling Association of Nigeria through the Federal, State, and Local Government should weave in "Moral Education" into the education curriculum at all levels so as to impact in the adolescents, full knowledge of "adolescence", to teach the changes, challenges and societal expectations of adolescents at this crucial stage. With this full knowledge adolescents will be able to adjust well to the challenges and work on the various problems of adolescence as revealed in the past literatures.

Keywords: Adolescent, Adolescence, Transition.

Introduction

The term "adolescence" is a Latin word which means "to grow up" or "to grow into maturity". It is the period of life between childhood and adulthood and corresponds roughly to the teenage years (thirteen to eighteen years). Occasionally, adolescence is interchangeably used with youth even though they are significantly different. Adolescence like youth is a unique period of joy, vigour, opportunities as well as challenges; Adegoke (2003) reported that adolescents constitute a significant proportion of Nigeria population. They constitute the fastest growing segment of the population and are expected to almost double in size by the year 2000. They constitute the asset of the society, for they are accredited leaders of tomorrow. It is as a result of this, among a host of other significance of adolescents that studies relating to them are not misplaced priority.

Adolescence is the period of transition from childhood to adulthood involving physical, cognitive, and social changes; it is a period that lies between the end of childhood and the beginning of adulthood; it is a period a child grows to become an adult (Olasupo, 2000). Ugwuegbu (1980) viewed this period as a period of transition between childhood and manhood/womanhood. This period starts with the maturing of the sexual organs (puberty) and continues until the later teens. During this period, the child finds him/herself taking new interest in the opposite sex, in social activities and so many things that do not ordinarily appeal to him as a child. In other society, children move slowly and imperceptibly into the adult world. The onset of adolescence is seen as a crucial developmental transition due to the influence of changes across adolescence. In most societies, the beginning of adolescence is closely synchronized with the biological changes of puberty. In the tumultuous years, a young person experiences much growth and joy as well as doubt and confusion. These changes and growth create feelings of ambivalence and vagueness as they translate in to adulthood (Adegoke, 2003). Nzeslylva (2008) expressed that adolescent undergoes stress in certain areas such as gaining emancipation from parents, sexual adjustment and achieving adult role.

Bakare (1983) added that in children between the ages of 11-18 years, physical changes occur, which can be a source of great embarrassment and perplexity. Some of the changes are the rapid bodily growth known as adolescents' growth sprout, which causes sudden increase in height and an elongation of the arms and legs, which will seem to be too long. These changes ordinarily include self-consciousness. Freud (1969) categorized these changes into four categories namely:

Growth in body size;
Changes in body proportion;
Development of the primary sex characteristics; and
Development of the secondary sex characteristics

The first major change that occurs at puberty is the growth in the body size. There is growth spurt during which the body reaches its size. There could be additional weight with advancement in age. However, the normal weight and height for the body is attained at this period. The second major physical transformation that takes place at adolescence period consists of changes in the body proportion both interior and exterior. The third important physiological transformation at puberty is the development of the primary sex characteristic (the sex organ). Also, the development of the secondary sex characteristics is crucial at adolescence. Freud further identifies secondary sex characteristics for male and female thus:

For males

- * Broadening shoulders due to heavy muscles;
- * Definite shaping of arms and legs due to muscles development;
- * Development of breast knots around the males mammary glands;
- * Development of pubic hairs, which extends to the thighs;
- * Development of facial hairs including mustache, side-bow and beard;
- * Development of body hairs, chest, legs and armpit
- * Voice changes from high to low pitch;
- * Changes in skin complexion and texture;

For Females

- * Broadening of shoulders, increase in width and roundness of shape because of fat in their body.
- * Definite shaping of arms and legs due to fat; breast development; development of pubic hair; development of facial hair; development of hair on the limbs; voice changes from high to low pitch and changes in complexion and texture on the changes in primary and secondary sexual characteristics, Hurlock (1973) maintained that there are two types of changes in reproductive system during early adolescence. First, there are those related to the genital organs; this is associated with secretion of spermatozoa by boys and girls ovulates fertile eggs and their breast becomes enlarged. Also, both boys and girls show changes in the body hair, sweat glands and boy's voice alter and deepen. Conger (1977) added that these young persons who meet cultural standard, physical appearance and ability and receive approval from peers and adults may gain a better self-image.

Adegoke (2003) assured that environment provoke changes in adolescent, while a serene friendly and stable environment would most likely breed very responsible, fully adjusted and reliable adolescent; a hostile, war torn environment as experienced in most African countries produced aggressive, impatient and largely irresponsible adolescents who pose danger to the future of the society. It is at this crucial stage that adolescents need to be effectively monitored to guarantee a better tomorrow. At adolescence, chains of problems beset this stage with one leading to another and the count virtually became endless. Ironically, these problems arguably have no sex barrier as they inflict both male and female adolescents although with varying degrees and intensity. These problems are:

Profuse perspiration and body odour: Adolescents at this crucial stage (adolescence) sweat profusely especially around the folds of the body. Without proper personal hygiene, the person develops a repulsive or repugnant body odour and so should be well guided by adults on this. In their excessive physical activities, some may become sloth and do not wash their

clothes and the combined effects of dirt and sweat definitely result in bad odour.

Drug Abuse: This constitutes a major aspect of the adolescent life, since the past two decades. In Nigerian society; the use of drugs for self-help and treatment of ailment is normal. Drugs are in various forms and their effects in human body vary. Adegoke (2003) identified some of the drugs in use as marijuana, stimulant such as caffeine, amphetamines and cocaine, inhalant such as barbiturates, diazepam (valium), narcotic such as opium, morphine, codeine, heroine, damerol and percodan.

Drug users are usually categorized into three types namely experimenters, the compulsive users and the floaters. Teenagers' exposure to drug usually begins with experimentation. The drugs are usually very small quantity and occasionally out of boredom, curiosity and in response to peer pressure. From this, they graduate to compulsive users hooked and addicted to drugs thus exposing their lives to drug misuse. The floaters alternate between experimentation with drugs and being compulsive users. And it is expressed that children involved in this type of problem are those with very poor relationship with their parents, peers or school authorities.

Sexual Offences: Adegoke, (2003) emphasized that in African traditional society and even up to the contemporary Nigerian system; the issue of sex is often treated in secrecy, surrounded by guilt, mystery and controversy. Parents often find initiating and sustaining discussions about sexuality with their teenagers extremely difficult.

Alcohol Abuse: Excessive alcohol intake is a major substance that that can alter behaviour of adolescents. Feiser and Brannon (1988) revealed that it is a major health problem in America. Also, the use of alcoholic beverage is another threat to adolescent well- being. Some developed drinking habits to address some other problems such as failure, dissatisfaction and frustration.

Truancy: Oxford Dictionary (2001) defined a truant as a child who stays away from school with good reason(s). Truant does not go to school without any justifiable reason. Truancy, absenteeism and delinquency are great adolescent problems and that chronic truants are likely to have one or more of the under listed factors in their family background:

Poor housing;

Sick parents;

Single parenting (father /mother only);

Unemployed parent(s); and

Above-average number of children in a family

Housing background plays a very significant role in causing truancy among adolescents. Apart from the family background, schools also contribute to the incidence of truancy among adolescents. School could therefore alter or encourage adolescents' school attendance.

Examination Malpractice: This is a practice among adolescents to alter and influence examination performance through cheating. This could be attributed to emphasize laid on certificate as opposed to performance ability in school and the entire society.

Disobedience (Breaking of rules and regulations): This mostly is as a result or consequences of broken homes, rejection / over pampering of children from various homes. Once a child is not shown or enjoy love from home, they tend to exhibit some maladaptive behavioural problems which disobedience is one. Viewing the major problems of adolescents, it is believed that a disciplined father produces a disciplined son; while a disciplined mother breeds a disciplined child which produce disciplined home and lastly disciplined nation.

Therefore, to investigate adolescents' problems as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State, the following research questions were raised:

1. What is the highest challenge experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West LGA of Edo State?
2. Is there any significant difference in the challenges experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West LGA based on age, class level, gender and school type?
3. Is there any significant difference in the challenges experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West based on religion and class type?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference in the challenges experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West based on age, class level, gender, and school type.
2. There is no significant difference in the challenges experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West based on religion and class type.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. This research design was adopted because it provides an accurate description or picture of a particular situation or phenomenon at one or more points in time. The design does not establish cause and effect relationships, but it identifies the differences that exist between the variables. The population for this study is all secondary school students in Etsako West Local Government Area of Edo State. A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. At stage one, five public and five private schools with large population of students were purposively selected and they are Momodu College, Agbede; Auchi College, Auchi; South Ibie Secondary School, Iyakpi; Jattu Grammar School, Jattu; Iyamho Secondary School, Iyamho; Ikabigbo Secondary School, Ikabiagbo; Amina Foundation College, Agbede; Sa'id Secondary School,

Aviele; Bishop Oyeboode Memorial College, Auchi; and Diligence Secondary School, Jattu. At stage two, the students were stratified into age, class level, gender and school type. Finally, twenty (20) students were randomly selected from each of the ten schools. This makes a total of 200 respondents who participated in the study.

The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Counsellor Education, University of Ilorin. And the reliability was ascertained through test re-test reliability a value of 0.56 was obtained which shows that the instrument is reliable for the study.

The instrument was also pilot tested to ascertain the usability of the instrument and some items that were ambiguous were replaced. To collect relevant data from the respondents, a self-developed instrument titled "Adolescents Problems Questionnaire" (APQ) was used and the data were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics. The items are structured on a Four Likert scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree on subscales of Academic, Emotional, Physical and Psychological factors respectively.

Results

200 respondents participated in the study out of which 102 (51%) were between ages 10-15 years, 98 (48.5%) of the respondents were 16-20 years. 111 (55.5) are in JSS and 89 (44.5) are in SSS classes. 89 (44.5) are males, 111 (55.5%) of the respondents were females. 53 (51%) were in private schools while 55 (45%) are in public schools.

Table 1: Mean and Rank Order of Adolescent Problems

Item No	In my own view, the challenges confronting adolescent include:	Mean	Rank
9	Self-condemnation	3.40	1 st
4	involvement in truancy	3.37	2 nd
1	involvement in examination malpractice	3.32	3 rd
14	worrying over body weight (fat/slim)	3.28	4 th
10	self-disclosure problem	3.27	5 th
5	failure to study	3.23	6 th
7	unnecessary anger	3.15	7 th
18	involvement in wilful destruction	3.10	8 th
3	inability to copy note at the right time	3.08	9 th
11	disturbance by body development	3.07	10 th
17	having a feeling of inferiority complex	3.06	11 th
8	undue consciousness about physical appearance	3.04	12 th
6	heightened sexual desire	3.03	13 th
12	wearing indecent dresses	3.01	14 th
2	procrastination of school work	2.95	15 th
15	eagerness to look attractive	2.78	16 th
13	troubled over pimples on the face	2.77	17 th
20	living in isolation	2.71	18 th
16	involvement in peer bullying	2.70	19 th
19	sexual harassment	2.64	20 th

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Table 1 shows that items 9, 4, 1 and 4 were ranked 1st to 4th because respondents viewed them as the major problems experienced by adolescents while items 13, 20, 16 and 19 were ranked 17th to 20th because they are viewed to be least problems experienced by adolescents.

Research Question One: What is the highest challenge experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in West LGA of Edo State?

Table 2: Challenges Experienced by Adolescents

S/N	Adolescent Problem	No. of Respondent	Mean	Rank
1	Academic Problem	200	15.95	1 st
2	Emotional Problem	200	15.88	2 nd
3	Psychological Problem	200	14.90	3 rd
4	Physical Problem	200	14.90	3 rd

Table 2 shows that the secondary school students in Etsako West LGA of Edo State expressed "Academic Problem" to be the highest problem of adolescents while "Emotional problem" was ranked second. Psychological and physical problems were ranked 3rd to be the least problems experienced by adolescents.

Hypotheses Testing

This section presents the result of the hypotheses that were generated and tested using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the challenges experienced by in- school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West LGA based on age, class level, gender and school type.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test of Secondary School Students on Adolescents challenges Based on Age, Class Level, Gender and School Type.

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	df	Calculated t-value	Critical t value
Age						
10-15 yrs	102	60.65	3.56			
16-20yrs	98	61.20	4.37	198	0.99	1.96
Total	200					
Class Level						
JSS	111	62.58	3.93			
SSS	89	58.85	2.94	198	7.42*	1.96
Total	200					
Gender						
Male	89	60.03	3.85			
Female	111	61.63	3.95	198	-2.87*	1.96
Total	200					
School Type						
Private	102	60.06	4.22			
Public	98	61.82	3.50	198	3.20*	1.96
Total	200					

*Significant, $p > 0.05$.

Table 3 shows that the calculated t-value for age is less than the critical t-value. This means that, age of the respondents does not influence their expression on adolescents' problem. On the other hand, calculated t-value for class level (7.42), gender (-2.87) and school type (3.20) is greater than the critical t-value (1.96) at 0.05 alpha level. This means that age, class level, gender and school type of the respondents influence their expression on adolescents' challenges.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the challenges experienced by in-school adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West LGA based on religion and class type.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance of Respondents on Adolescents' challenges Based on Religion and Class Type

Source of Variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean Squares	Calculated F-ratio	Critical F-ratio
Religion					
Between Groups	350.359	2	175.179		
Within Groups	2794.361	197	14.185	12.35*	3.00
Total	3144.720	199			
Class Type					
Between Groups	740.810	2	370.405		
Within Groups	2403.910	197	12.203	30.36*	3.00
Total	3144.720	199			

*Significant, $p > 0.05$.

Table 4 shows the calculated t-value of 12.35 and 30.36 for religion and class type is greater than the critical t-value of 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level, thus the hypothesis is rejected.

Since a significant difference was found based on these variables, Duncan Multiple Range Test was employed as a post hoc test to determine where the significant difference lies.

Table 5: Duncan Multiple Range Test of Adolescents challenges as Expressed by Respondents Based on Religion

Religion	Frequency	Mean	Duncan Grouping	Group
Christianity	96	62.29	A	2
Islam	101	59.68	B	3
African Traditional Religion	3	58.67	C	1

Table 5 shows that Christianity has a greater mean (62.29) than the two other religions (Islam, 59.68 and African Traditional Religion 58.67). This mean revealed that Christianity expression on adolescents' challenges is different from other religions expression on adolescents' challenges. Although, the three religions have different means (62.29, 59.68 and 58.67) but Christianity mean (62.29) is statistically higher than the means of the other religions.

Table 6: Duncan Multiple Range Test of Adolescents as Expressed by Respondents Based on Class Type

Class Type	Frequency	Mean	Duncan Grouping	Group
Science	38	63.42	A	3
Commercial	102	61.61	B	2
Arts	60	58.17	C	1

Table 6 shows that the mean score of science respondents is statistically greater than the mean scores of commercial and arts respondents. The science contributed more to the significant difference noticed in table 5 while arts has the least mean (58.17) which is not statistically too far from the mean of commercial respondents (61.61). In this table, it means that the three class levels have different means which are statistically higher than the other.

Summary of Findings

- i. Secondary school students in Etsako West LGA of Edo State expressed "Academic Problem" to be the highest difficulty they experienced.
- ii. Age of the respondents does not influence their expression on adolescents' problem.
- iii. Class level, gender, school type, religion and class type of the respondents' influences their expression on adolescents' problem.

Discussion of Findings

The major finding of this study revealed that "Academic Related Problem" is the highest challenges experienced by adolescents. Under this subscale, the items highlighted are: failure to study often, procrastination of school work, involvements in truancy, inability to copy note at the right time and involvement in examination malpractices. All these items were rated to be high to revealed their level of impact on adolescents and this finding is backed up by Adegoke (2007) reported that academic under achievement among in school adolescents is due to confusion over their sex roles and identity diffusion.

Age of the respondents does not influence their expression on adolescents' challenges. The way they viewed adolescents' challenges is not too far from each other. Table 3 mean scores for age (16 - 15 and 16-20) was 60.65 and 61.20 respectively which is not statistically different from one another. Thus, there is no significant difference in the challenges experienced by adolescents as expressed by secondary school students in Etsako West LGA of Edo State based on age. Nzesylva (2008) reported that adolescents go through a lot of challenges as they embark on a search for the right pathways to promising adulthood.

Class level, gender, school type, religion and class type of the respondents on the other hand influenced their expression on in-school adolescents' challenges. That is, these variables influenced the perception of respondents on in-school adolescents' challenges. It also means that junior and senior secondary school; male and female; public and private school; Christianity, Islam and African traditional religion and Arts, Commercial and Science Classes attached to the respondents have a strong influence on their expression on adolescents' challenges. That means, these variables are very vital in dealing with adolescents problems and challenges.

Implications of the Findings for Guidance and Counselling

As the major finding of the study has revealed that "Academic Related Problem" is the highest problem of adolescents, guidance counsellors need to make sure that programmes are organized for adolescents on study habit and other related matters that could contribute to their academic pursuits. Mostly, "truancy" and "self-condemnation" among adolescents should be well handled by counsellors so that adolescents can prepared for academic success at all levels.

Counsellors at all levels of education should be made to organize seminars on the evils of examination malpractices and other maladaptive and behavioural problems so as to enlighten the youths on living a moral life that worth emulation and with this, the youngsters will see more reasons in behaving well and fitted into a peaceful and moral society.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that:

1. Counselling Association of Nigeria with the help of Federal, State, and Local Government should teach and include moral education into the educational curriculum at all levels of education. With this knowledge, adolescents will see adolescence as a real stage of transition from childhood to adulthood and behave well to suit into adulthood.

2. Counsellors in schools should also educate the adolescents either the early, middle, or the adolescents on the various problems and challenges at adolescence so as to build a kind of immunity in them to face the challenges and move peacefully to adulthood without fixations that could build up a frustrating adult.
3. With the findings of the study that revealed a significant difference in adolescents' problem based on class level, gender, school type, religion and class type. This will serve as a point for school counsellors to use these variables positively in planning counselling programmes in their schools to differently organize programmes based on these variables because they influence the respondents for this study's expression negatively.

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