

Influence of Parental Socio-economic Status on Conduct Disorder among Secondary School Students in North-Central Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the influence of parental socio-economic status on conduct disorder among secondary school students in North-Central, Nigeria. Seven research questions and four hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The research employed a descriptive survey design. The population of the study was 951,377 students in North-Central. The sample was four hundred (400) students drawn from the population. A self-design questionnaire was used for the study. The questionnaire was titled: Socio-economic Status on Conduct Disorder Questionnaire (SSCDQ). The reliability coefficient index of 0.89 was obtained using test-retest. The data collected were analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings showed that there was no significant influence among students in both hostility, deceitfulness and violations based on socio-economic levels. The study further indicated that there was no significant influence between male and female students in their manifestation of conduct disorder. Based on their findings the study recommended that parents need to be engaged in high paying employments such as professional occupation as study showed that the higher the level of parental occupation, the lower the students conduct disorder.

Keywords: Aggression, Conduct, Disorder, Hostility, Socio-economic

Introduction

Globally, education is regarded as a right that should be accorded to all human beings. It is the reason why a international human rights groups approach to education for all considered is education as a fundamental human right. But, in the course of this process, some problems may arise which are personal or social in nature and which are often against the norms of the society, making it a tasking endeavour. Students from family background that are susceptible to innovation which allow them explore educational facilities, positive home climate, cordial socialisation process among family members, sufficient nutrition, effective parenting style, responsiveness to their socioeconomic and psychological responsibility, would have profound and massive influence on their behavioural conduct.

Parental socio-economic status of individuals is majorly divided into three; high, middle and lower socio-economic status. Determinants of individuals' parental socio-economic status may include: possessions, type of occupation, type of house, level of education to

mention but a few. This may relate to individual status via parental background, parental occupation as well as other family factors which influence the behaviour and development of the individual positively or negatively in all ramifications. Consequently, parental occupation and status has influence on the behaviour of the child in terms of his learning, socialization and personality (Odgers et al., 2022). Similarly, availability of modern learning and teaching materials are found to have positive influence on child's learning in the areas of language and cognitive development.

Conduct disorder is seen as the participation in unlawful related acts by minors who are younger than the statutory age of majority, mostly adolescents in secondary schools. Secondary school students with behavioural disorder may include: lying, smoking, use of alcohol and or drugs, involvement in early sexual activity, skipping school and having higher than average risk of suicide. Adolescents may also have other mental, emotional or behavioural disorders like attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) among others (American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, 2015). According to Pardini and Fite (2020) conduct disorder is the resistant antisocial, illegal or criminal behaviour by children or adolescent to the level that it cannot be controlled by the parents, and it endangers others in the community it is a source of concern to most law enforcement agencies. In other words, conduct disorder has been variously viewed as a condition of drift, maladjustment, pathology, disturbance, moral depravity and unruly behaviour that are against the norms and values of the society. Boylan et al., (2022) indicated that conduct disorder is a mental disorder characterized by aggressive and antisocial behaviors in which the person violates the basic rights of other people, shows a damaging attitude towards animals and objects, and constantly and repeatedly defies the values of society and established laws. Also, Raudino et al. (2022) conceived conduct disorder as a repetitive and persistent pattern of behaviour in which peoples' fundamental rights, as well as the major ethics and social norms commiserating with age or laws are violated.

Researchers in recent times have identified several factors as the causes of conduct disorder among students. Among such factors identified include; students' socioeconomic status, home background, school environment, society and psychosocial factors. Latinmer et al., (2022) revealed that the results indicated that frustration and jealousy were the most outstanding among psychological instigators. For social instigators, home background, especially domestic violence, instigated conduct disorder most. Poverty and the inability to meet personal needs were the most prominent economic instigators. Based on these results, counselling techniques were suggested for timely intervention to curb the problem. Also, Owens and Hinshaw et al.(2023)found that adolescent in homes from low socio-economic family status and neighbor hoods were more likely to become juvenile offenders. Loomanset al. (2017) who revealed that socio-economic status, stress at home, violence in the community, conflict with parents, and parental depression and economic stress were important in creating

negative behavioural outcomes for adolescents. Stene-Larsen (2019) revealed that there is a significant relationship between peer influence, socio economic status and deviant behavior among senior secondary school students in Imo State, Nigeria. Nwankwo (2023) showed that violence and aggression among adolescents are strongly linked to high level of low socioeconomic status of parents. Further highlighted that parents are less effective in nurturing and monitoring their children when families live impoverished lives. This diminished effectiveness leads to increased aggression in the children. Gidado et al., (2023) on the significance of environment as a key determinant of student's academic achievement. Further indicate that uncomfortable, unstable home and un peaceful learning is negatively affected learning skills and academic achievement.

Davies (2018) suggest that socioeconomic status influencing children's behaviour emotional regulation. For instance, children may cope with the distressing emotions stemming from poverty by suppressing their own feelings, leading to misinterpretations of social cues and ineffective problem-solving. Low socioeconomic status is associated with hostility such as stress and low self-esteem. Low socio-economic status is associated with hostility such as stress and low self-esteem. Mohan, et al., (2021) revealed that living in low socio-economic conditions and unemployment leads to economic and social stress. Multiple socio economic factors contribute to a higher incidence of hostility and overwhelmed stress in children and adolescents. Amandeep (2017) shows that there is significant influence of parental socio-economic status on student's hostile. Also, Patel (2024) who found that families with high socio-economic status often have more resources to promote and support their young children's development while families with middle and low socio-economic status encourage students hostility during learning.

Weir (2020) who found that low socio-economic status creates a struggle to obtain needed resources for education, psychological and physical health services, and sometimes access to basic needs such as food and shelter. Adolescents from homes with lower socioeconomic status have higher rates of deceitfulness. In contrast, low SES individuals face greater socioeconomic challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and inadequate access to healthcare, which significantly elevate the risk of hostility disorders (Purtle, 2020). Chan and Koo (2022) finding shows that secondary school students differ significantly in their level of deceitfulness based on parental socio-economic status. Barnhart (2023) found that there is significant relationship parental socio-economic status and deceitfulness students in Brooklyn. Heinze et al. (2015) who shows that there is significant difference in deceitfulness in college students in North Caroline on the basis of parenting style. In addition, Kerekes et al., (2018) affirmed that there is significant influence of parental socio-economic status on students' deceitful, antisocial behaviours in school.

Travis (2019) found that students of high socio-economic status were more likely to be involved in violation of school rules including vandalism than students of low economic status.

Rennes (2022) revealed that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and violation of rules of senior secondary schools in Brooklyn. Further indicated that children high socio-economic status promotes classroom rules to discourage students from displaying disruptive behavior and discourage students social skills. According to Gidado and Diffang (2024), children's home background has massive and tremendous influence on their behavioural characteristics including some of their psychological dispositions. Many children are what they are because of their family background, since the family is the first agent of socialization and some children could symbolize the embodiment of their immediate family. A child is a precursor of his home background, since every individual is from a family which in most cases influences their learning conduct and academic performance. Gidado and Diffang (2023) also discovered that young children, sometimes, exposed to criminality and other vices as a result of poor parental socio-economic status. They reiterated that children from dysfunctional families do not consistently get their needs met and equally find it difficult to adjust to the larger society, hence some of them resort into diverse antisocial behaviours including exam malpractices, drug usage and abuse and also engages in a lot of illegal and criminal behaviour to sustain their immediate needs.

Going from above it is evident that many previous researchers has indicate the relative influence of socio-economic status of students on their manifestation of conduct disorder. Despite the growing body of research on parenting socio-economics and conduct disorder in Nigeria, a significant gap exists in the literature regarding the influence and correlates of conduct disorder among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria. Furthermore, it is was found out that the impact of socioeconomic status on conduct disorder in this region remains unexplored. This research work, attempts to provide valid data that would bridge the existing gap and provide further insight on the likely relationships between socioeconomic factors and students' conduct disorder.

Statement of the Problem

Parents are foundational in the moulding of their children behavioural characteristics. The increasing widespread of unruly and antisocial related behaviours in form of conduct disorder among secondary school students in the North-Central Nigeria are source of concern to the right-thinking citizens. The issue is becoming worrisome due to the negative impact it could have on students' general well-being. Students conduct disorder and other social vices is drastically affecting the student academic achievement, socialization learning environment, violation of rules among others (Kohls, 2021). However, most of this disobedience of parents and peer groups and other violations of law came into existence as a result of parenting styles, parental socio-economic status and parental preference on gender.

It has been observed that the study area is faced with high rates of poverty, family disruptions, and limited access to mental health services. It is further observed that there is serious overcrowding and limited psychological support, high prevalence of mental health

issues, with many students exhibiting traits consistent with conduct disorder and untreated behavioural problems which has clearly revealed the likely conduct disorder that was more prominent among its study samples. While there are no clear details on the prevalence of conduct disorder specifically in North-Central Nigeria, it is acknowledged that behavioural problems among secondary schools are significant, but remain underreported which poses challenges in mental health service delivery.

It is on this note the researchers examine influence of parents' socioeconomic status on conduct disorder among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The specific objectives were to:

- i. Find out the parents' socio-economic status among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.
- ii. Determine the conduct disorder prominently exhibited among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.
- iii. Determine the influence in aggression among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level
- iv. Determine the influence in hostility among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level
- v. Determine the influence in deceitfulness among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socio-economic level;
- vi. Find out the influence in violation of rules among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level.
- vii. Examine the influence between male and female in conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.

Research Questions

- i. What is the parents' socio-economic status among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria?
- ii. What is the conduct disorder prominently exhibited among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria?
- iii. What is the influence in aggression among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level?
- iv. What is the influence in hostility among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socio-economic level?
- v. What is the influence in deceitfulness among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socio-economic level?
- vi. What is the influence in violation of rules among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socio-economic level?

- vii. What is the influence between male and female in conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant influence in aggression among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence in hostility among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socio-economic level.

H₀₃: There is no significant influence in deceitfulness among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level.

H₀₄: There is no significant influence in violation of rules among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on parents' socioeconomic level.

H₀₅: There is no significant influence between male and female in conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used for this study. This is because it is simply the best method for collecting information from a large population located at different places in natural setting and it is more accurate as in the ease of study population. It is a design with attempt to document current collection or attitudes to describe what exists at the moment. Akeredola (2015) viewed the importance of survey research design with a common goal to collection of data from respondents. The data thus gathered from the survey is analyzed and interpretation made. Choice of survey research design was based on the fact that survey provides the researchers with reliable, usable, primary data to inform research decisions.

The population of the study consist of 951,377 (Nine Hundred and Fifty-One Thousand, Three Hundred and Seventy-Seven) students of co-educational public secondary schools across the seven (7) North-Central States of Nigeria and the FCT. The states are: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Nasarawa, Plateau, Niger State and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). Data on schools and population of the study were obtained from the various State's Ministries of Education (2022). The sample used for this study was 400 (Four Hundred) senior secondary school students drawn from some selected schools identified with Conduct Disorder in line with Glenn (2012) sample specification. The sample consisted of 58 students from each of six states and 52 in the FCT. The sample size was drawn through purposive sampling technique. The rationale for choosing this sampling technique is used in qualitative research to select a specific group of individuals or units for analysis. Participants were chosen on purpose, not randomly. Seven states and the Federal Capital Territory which made up North-Central Nigeria were sampled.

The instruments adopted in this research are Parents' Socio-economic Status Scale (PSS) and Conduct Disorder Scale (CDS). The CDS was adopted in this study because of its efficiency in evaluating students exhibiting severe behavioural problems including Conduct

Disorder. Furthermore, it provides standard scores for use in identifying students with Conduct Disorder. These items comprise four subscales representing the core symptom clusters that are necessary for the diagnosis of Conduct Disorder which include: Aggressive Conduct, Hostility, Deceitfulness and Theft, and Rule Violations. The reliability coefficient for the whole scale (CDS) is 0.78.

The analysis of data was carried out using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistical tools like mean score and standard deviation were used to answer research questions one and two. Inferential statistical tool such as Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze H_{01} to H_{04} while t-test analysis was used to H_{05} . All null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the parents' socio-economic status among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents based on Socio-Economic Level

Socio-economic Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High Socioeconomic Level	85	21.30
Moderate Socioeconomic Level	103	25.80
Low Socioeconomic Level	106	26.50
Very Low Socioeconomic Level	106	26.50
Total	400	100.00

As shown in table 1, the distribution of respondents based on socio-economic level was presented. The table shows that 85(21.30%) of the respondents were from High socioeconomic level, 103(25.80%) of the respondents with moderate socio-economic level, 106(26.50%) of the respondents with low socioeconomic level, 106(26.50%) of the respondents with very low socioeconomic level. This means that there were more with low socio-economic level and very low socioeconomic level, followed by those with moderate socioeconomic level while the least were those with high socio-economic level.

Research Question 2: What is the conduct disorder prominently exhibited among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria?

Table 2: The conduct disorder prominent among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria

Conduct Disorder	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
Aggression	115	2.83	0.21	3 rd
Hostility	109	3.17	0.42	1 st
Deceitfulness	81	2.95	0.17	2 nd
Violations	95	2.69	0.08	4 th
Sectional Mean		2.91	0.22	

As shown in Table 2, an analysis of conduct disorder prominent among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria was presented. The table shows that the mean score of respondents for aggression was 2.83, 3.17 for hostility, 2.95 for deceitfulness, while the mean score for violations was 2.69. This implies that the mean score for conduct disorder was higher for hostility followed by deceitfulness and aggression, while the least conduct disorder was found in violations. Generally, the sectional mean for conduct disorder was 2.91, indicating that students used for the study regularly engage in behaviours that could be categorized as conduct disorder.

Null Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant influence in aggression among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio economic level.

Table 3: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the influence in aggression among students in North-Central Nigeria based on socioeconomic level

Socioeconomic Level	N	Mean	SD	Aggression	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
High	21	2.84	.220	Between Groups	.033	3	.011	.247	.864
Moderate	33	2.80	.193	Within Groups	4.921	111	.044		
Low	27	2.84	.236	Total	4.954	114			
Very Low	34	2.84	.110						
Total	115	2.83	.208						

As shown in Table 3, an analysis of variance to test the significant influence in aggression among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level was presented. The table showed $F_{(df=114)}$ value of 0.247 and a significant value

of 0.864 which is greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence in aggression among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level is hereby not rejected. Therefore, there was no significant influence in hostility among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence in hostility among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level.

Table 4: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the influence in hostility among students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level

Socioeconomic Level	N	Mean	SD	Hostility	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
High	29	3.17	.413	Between Groups	.007	3	.002	.013	.998
Moderate	20	3.167	.426	Within Groups	19.340	105	.184		
Low	30	3.18	.442	Total	19.347	108			
Very Low	30	3.16	.433						
Total	109	3.17	.423						

As shown in Table 4, an analysis of variance to test the significant influence in hostility among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level was presented. The table showed $F_{(df=108)}$ value of 0.13 and a significant value of 0.998 which is greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence in hostility among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level is hereby not rejected. Therefore, there was no significant influence in hostility among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level.

H₀₃: There is no significant influence in deceitfulness among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio- economic level.

Table 5: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the difference in deceitfulness among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio economic level

Socioeconomic Level	N	Mean	SD	Deceitfulness	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
High	20	2.98	.183	Between Groups	.017	3	.006	.199	.897
Moderate	21	2.96	.172	Within Groups	2.165	77	.028		
Low	20	2.94	.157	Total	2.182	80			
Very Low	20	2.94	.157						
Total	81	2.95	.165						

As shown in Table 5, an analysis of variance to test the significant influence in deceitfulness among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level was presented. The table showed $F_{(df=80)}$ value of 0.199 and a significant value of 0.897 which is greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence in deceitfulness among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level is hereby not rejected. Therefore, there was no significant influence in deceitfulness among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level.

H₀₄: There is no significant influence in violation of rules among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio- economic level.

Table 6: Analysis of variance (ANOVA) on the influence in violation of rules among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level

Socioeconomic Level	N	Mean	SD	Violation	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
High	15	2.69	.080	Between Groups	.000	3	.000	.011	.998
Moderate	29	2.69	.082	Within Groups	.633	91	.007		
Low	29	2.69	.084	Total	.633	94			
Very Low	22	2.69	.087						
Total	95	2.69	.082						

As shown in Table 6, an analysis of variance to test the significant influence in violation of rules among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio economic level was presented. The table showed $F_{(df=94)}$ value of 0.11 and a significant value of 0.998 which is greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence in violation among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level is hereby not rejected. Therefore, there was no significant influence in violation among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level.

H₀₅: There is no significant influence between male and female in conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.

Table 7: t-test on the influence between male and female in conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in North-Central, Nigeria

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	189	60.96	12.16	.434	343	0.665	Accepted
Female	211	61.53	11.97				

As shown in Table 7, t-test analysis to determine the significant influence between male and female in conduct disorder among secondary school students in North-Central, Nigeria was presented. The table revealed that a mean score of 60.96 with standard deviation of 12.16 for male students while mean score of 61.53 with standard deviation of 11.97 for female students. The table also indicated a calculated t-value of .434 with the table value of .665 ($p > 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. There is no significant influence between male and female in conduct disorder among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria.

Discussions of Findings

Finding revealed that there is no significant influence in hostility among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level. This finding was at contradicts the finding of Obiunu (2018) shows that family socio-economic status physically places young adolescents into social stressors and hostility behaviour in school. The finding is disagreement with the finding of Aneshensel and Sucoff (2016) found that students in low socio-economic status perceive greater ambient hazards such as crime, violence, and drug use, among themselves than those in high socioeconomic status. The finding differs from the finding of Gidado et al., (2023) on the significance of environment as a key determinant of student's academic achievement. Further indicate that uncomfortable, unstable home and unpeaceful learning is negatively affected learning skills, conduct behaviour and academic achievement.

Finding shows that there is no significant influence in deceitfulness among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socio-economic level. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Onwunyili and Obi (2023) who discovered that there is no significant relationship between parent's socioeconomic status and students' deceitfulness in senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. This finding was at variance with the finding of Mihret et al. (2019) which revealed that parental socio-economic status has a significant influence on students' conduct disorder. The finding has contradicted the finding of Gidado & Diffang (2023) who discovered that young children sometimes exposed to criminality and other vices as a result of poor parent socio-economic status. They further reiterated that children from dysfunctional families do not consistently get their needs met and equally find it difficult to adjust to the larger society, hence some of them resort into diverse antisocial behaviours including exam malpractices, drug usage and abuse and also engages in a lot of illegal and criminal behaviour to sustain their immediate needs.

Finding of this study that there is no significant influence in violation of rules among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria based on socioeconomic level. The finding disagreed with the finding of Frick, et al. (2017) who shows that low socio-economic status and low persistence in discipline were said to predict violation of school rules and regulations. Parents who are inconsistent in their child upbringing could unintentionally promote conduct disorder and could lead to a mutual escalation into negative behaviour such as aggression, violation and deceitful. This finding also contradicted the finding of Susan and Gabriel (2023) which revealed that low socio-economic status can lead to vandalized school properties and involve in drug abuse. They further buttress that parenting styles and socio-economic status significantly influence conduct disorder of students.

Finding shows that there is no significant influence between male and female in conduct disorder among secondary school students in North-Central Nigeria. This finding was at variance with the finding of Baker and Scarth (2020) who shows that conduct disorder was common in boys compared to girls. Boys tend to exhibit aggressive behaviours while girls are more likely to break social rules through offences such as truancy, lying and prostitution. This finding was consistent with the finding of Zahed et al. (2016) which showed that there was no significant influence between male and female students' involvement in conduct disorder in secondary schools. This could be due to the fact that engagement in conduct disorder particularly deceitfulness and hostility don't favour any gender.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the higher the level of parental socio-economics status influence lower conduct disorder and vice versa. Also, the rule violation is the most prominent conduct disorder while hostility is the least prominent conduct disorder. Also, both male and

female has the same level of conduct disorder and hence, no significance influence between gender and conduct disorder in North-Central Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. Rule violations is the most prominent conduct disorder and as such it is recommended that schools and parents should show good examples and also put mechanism in place such as offering intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements to the children.
2. Father should be more concerned about the conduct disorder of their children as the study showed that they perpetrate more of the parenting styles that increases conduct disorder as compared with their maternal parenting styles.
3. Parents need to be engaged in high paying employments such as professional occupation as study showed that the higher the level of parental occupation, the lower the students conduct disorder.
4. Parents need to acquire some level of education such as university degree or its equivalent, as the study showed that the higher the parent's educational level, the lower the students conduct disorder, and vice versa
5. Both male and female students have the same conduct disorder and as such should have the same level of attention in how to use the appropriate parenting styles to control or reduce the children conduct disorder.

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