

Perceived Influence of Childhood Trauma and Parenting Styles on Antisocial Behavior among Secondary School Students in APO Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined influence of childhood trauma and parenting styles on antisocial behavior among secondary school students in Apo Federal capital territory, Abuja, Nigeria. A survey research design was used to select a sample of 187 participants. Their demographic characteristics 109 (58.8%) being male and 78 (41.2%) being female. In addition to providing demographic data, participants responded to (3) standardized self-report, including socio-demographic questionnaires. Data was analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics. On the whole, three hypotheses were formulated and inferentially tested at 0.05 level of significant, using simple linear and multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that childhood trauma positively influence antisocial behavior among Secondary School students ($\beta = .564$, $t = 5.331$, $p < .05$). Finding revealed that neglectful parenting was associated with the strongest positive influence on antisocial behavior ($\beta = .306$, $t = 4.775$, $p < .05$); Authoritarian also have strong positive influence on antisocial behavior ($\beta = .256$, $t = 4.206$, $p < .05$), followed by Permissive parenting among Secondary School students ($\beta = .165$, $t = 3.242$, $p = .05$). The study concluded and recommended. Schools should implement counseling services and psychosocial support programs to help students cope with childhood trauma and reduce antisocial tendencies. Parents should be educated

on effective parenting strategies, with emphasis on authoritative practices that combine warmth, responsiveness, and structured guidance.

Keywords: childhood trauma, parenting styles and antisocial behavior

Introduction

Antisocial behaviour among secondary schoolstudents remains a significant concern in Nigeria, with various studies highlighting its prevalence and underlying factors.

A study by Ogwo (2017) in Nasarawa State found that secondary school from intact families exhibited a 52.5% incidence of delinquency, while those from broken families had a 46.5% incidence. This suggests that family cohesion and unity are vital in mitigating antisocial tendencies among adolescents.

Research by Chukwukaodinaka (2024) in Cross River State examined the influence of personality types on conduct disorders among secondary school students. The study revealed that persuasive and aesthetic personality types significantly influenced conduct disorders, underscoring the importance of understanding individual personality traits in addressing antisocial behaviour.

Peer influence and self-esteem are significant predictors of substance abuse among adolescents. A study by Igbineweka and Tari (2023) in Edo State found that both peer influence and self-esteem significantly predicted substance abuse among senior secondary school students, highlighting the need for interventions targeting peer relationships and self-esteem enhancement.

Tafida et al. (2023) investigated the impact of childhood trauma and substance use on antisocial behaviour among adolescents in Lafia Metropolis, Nasarawa State. The study found a positive predictive relationship between childhood trauma and antisocial behaviour ($r = 0.672$), and between substance use and antisocial behaviour ($r = 0.367$), emphasizing the need for preventive programmes addressing these factors.

Teachers' perceptions of antisocial behaviours can influence students' academic achievements. Eze et al. (2023) assessed teachers' perceptions in Obollo-Afor Education Zone and found that truancy and drug abuse significantly affected students' academic performance, indicating the importance of addressing antisocial behaviours to improve educational outcomes.

Parenting styles, perceived stress, and media exposure contribute to adolescent aggression. Onyedire et al. (2023) explored these factors among secondary school students in Nsukka and found significant correlations, suggesting that interventions should focus on promoting positive parenting practices and managing stress to reduce aggression. Folorunsho et al. (2024) reviewed the impact of parenting styles and family structures on juvenile delinquency in Nigeria. The study highlighted that negative parenting practices and family discord contribute to delinquent behaviour, advocating for a shift towards

constructive parenting and policy interventions supporting family stability.

Childhood trauma includes experiences such as physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and exposure to domestic violence, which collectively influence the well-being and academic performance of adolescents (Felitti et al., 2019).

Studies have documented that the prevalence of childhood trauma among secondary school students' varies but tends to be alarmingly high in many contexts. In Nigeria, for example, several investigations report rates ranging from 30% to as high as 70%, indicating a significant proportion of youths suffering from some form of abuse or neglect (Edet et al., 2022; Gabriel-Job et al., 2013). Edet et al. (2022) revealed that 67.3% of secondary school students' in Calabar had experienced at least one type of childhood trauma, with sexual abuse accounting for 41.3%. This high prevalence highlights a pressing concern that extends beyond individual suffering to impact educational outcomes and community health.

The psychological consequences of childhood trauma among students' are profound. Research indicates strong associations between childhood trauma and the development of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and suicidal ideation (Busari, 2013; Tafida et al., 2023). For instance, Tafida et al. (2023) observed that childhood trauma was a significant predictor of antisocial behaviours

and substance use among secondary school students in Nasarawa State, Nigeria, with 55% of those exposed to trauma engaging in risky behaviours. This finding aligns with global evidence suggesting trauma increases vulnerability to mental health disorders and maladaptive coping mechanisms (Hughes et al., 2017).

Moreover, childhood trauma can disrupt cognitive and emotional regulation, resulting in poor academic performance and school absenteeism (Dube et al., 2020). In a study conducted in Enugu Metropolis, Chime et al. (2021) reported that 61% of sexually abused adolescents showed decreased school participation and lower academic achievement compared to their non-abused peers. This underscores the importance of trauma-informed approaches within educational settings to support affected students and mitigate negative outcomes.

In Nigeria, the societal implications of childhood trauma are compounded by economic challenges, limited access to mental health services, and sociocultural barriers that hinder disclosure and treatment. For instance, a 2022 study in Lagos State by Ajayi et al. documented that 58% of secondary school students reported witnessing or experiencing domestic violence, which is strongly associated with depressive symptoms and aggressive behaviour during adolescence. Similarly, Okechukwu and Nwankwo (2021) found that 43% of students in rural schools had experienced emotional neglect, which predicted poor self-esteem and social withdrawal.

Parenting styles significantly influence students' psychological adjustment, academic success, and social development, especially during the critical secondary school years when youths face increased demands for autonomy and identity formation. According to Darling and Steinberg (2021), parenting is best understood as a context that shapes students behavior through a combination of warmth, control, and communication. Baumrind's (1967) foundational work categorized parenting into four main styles authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful each varying in responsiveness and demandingness, which continues to guide contemporary research.

In contrast, authoritarian parenting, which emphasizes obedience and strict discipline without warmth, has been associated with increased mental health challenges. Johnson and Thompson (2022) documented that 45% of adolescents from authoritarian homes exhibited symptoms of anxiety and depression, significantly higher than the 20% observed in those from authoritative families. This style is also linked to diminished academic achievement; Gonzales et al. (2020) noted a 15% decrease in grade point averages among students' subjected to authoritarian parenting compared to their peers.

Permissive parenting, characterized by high warmth but low control, has been linked to behavioral issues and poorer self-regulation. Martinez et al. (2021) reported that students' raised in permissive households were 30% more likely to engage in substance use and

exhibit truancy. Moreover, neglectful parenting marked by low responsiveness and low demandingness produces the most adverse outcomes. Kim and Park (2023) showed that students' experiencing neglectful parenting had a 40% higher likelihood of school dropout and behavioral disorders compared to those raised under authoritative parenting.

These patterns highlight the complex interplay between parenting and students' outcomes. Williams and Green (2024), in their meta-analysis, concluded that balanced parenting approaches combining warmth and firm control are crucial during students' to promote autonomy while providing necessary guidance. Furthermore, cultural context moderates these relationships; Chao (2019) emphasized that in some Asian cultures, what is traditionally labeled "authoritarian" may have different implications and effects, often intertwined with the cultural value of "training" (guan), which can promote positive outcomes if combined with parental warmth.

Statement of the Problem

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in cases of antisocial behavior among secondary school students in Apo, Federal Capital Territory, and Abuja, Nigeria. This troubling trend has been linked to various factors including peer pressure, family dysfunction, and socio-economic challenges. According to Adeyemi and Okeke (2022),

approximately 35% of students in secondary schools Apo exhibit behaviors such as truancy, bullying, and minor vandalism, which disrupt the educational environment and pose risks to community safety. Similarly, Yusuf and Bello (2023) observed that 40% of surveyed students admitted to engaging in acts of aggression or defiance towards authority figures, emphasizing the urgent need for intervention programs. The Nigerian Educational Research Council (2021) also reported a rising trend in school-related antisocial incidents, attributing them partly to inadequate counseling services and lack of parental supervision. On the psychological front, Eze and Nwosu (2020) argued that these behaviors are symptomatic of deeper emotional and mental health issues prevalent among students, which often go unaddressed in Nigerian schools. Meanwhile, Okafor (2023) pointed out that community factors such as exposure to violence and substance abuse significantly influence adolescents' propensity to engage in antisocial conduct. In response, Abubakar et al. (2024) highlighted the effectiveness of community-based mentorship and peer-support programs in reducing such behaviors by up to 25%.

Research Questions

This study will answer the following research questions:

- i. What is the influence of Childhood Trauma on Antisocial Behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the influence of parenting style on Antisocial Behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- i. There will be a significant influence of Childhood Trauma on Antisocial Behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.
- ii. There will be a significant influence of parenting style on Antisocial Behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

This research work will expose the parents to the role they unintentionally play in the life of their children most especially when it comes to antisocial behavior, this research will also serve as an eye opener to the influence of parental style on antisocial behavior among secondary school adolescents.

- i. The findings will contribute to the existing body of literature on adolescent psychology, trauma, and behavioral development.

- ii. Insights from this study can help parents and caregivers recognize the potential impacts of their parenting style and past traumatic experiences on their children's behavior. This awareness may encourage the adoption of healthier parenting practices to reduce antisocial behavior.
- iii. Educators and school counselors can use the findings to develop targeted programs that support students exhibiting antisocial behavior. Early identification and intervention strategies can be tailored to address underlying issues related to trauma and family environment.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study covers Independent variables; "Childhood Trauma, parenting styles" and Dependent variable; "Antisocial Behavior "Secondary School Adolescents in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The study will be conducted among Secondary School Adolescents in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarification/Literature review

This section presents the conceptual definitions of key variables in the study and critically reviews related empirical literature to provide a theoretical and research-based foundation for understanding the relationship between of personality traits, prison environment and Prison Adjustment

Childhood Trauma and Antisocial Behavior

Childhood trauma, which includes experiences such as physical abuse, emotional neglect, and exposure to domestic violence, has been identified as a significant risk factor for antisocial tendencies, including aggression, rule-breaking, and criminal conduct (Widom & Maxfield, 2022). For instance, a meta-analysis by Smith et al. (2023) found that children exposed to traumatic events were approximately 35% more likely to develop conduct disorders and engage in antisocial behaviors during adolescence compared to their non-traumatized peers. This link is thought to be mediated by neurobiological changes in the brain's stress regulation systems and impaired emotional regulation capacity, which foster aggressive and impulsive behaviors (Jones et al., 2021). However, not all scholars agree on the deterministic nature of trauma leading to antisocial outcomes. Some researchers argue that while childhood trauma is a significant risk factor, it interacts with other environmental and genetic factors to influence antisocial behavior (Moffitt, 2018). Moffitt's developmental taxonomy posits that antisocial behavior emerges from a complex interplay between individual traits and environmental exposures, suggesting that trauma alone cannot predict outcomes without considering resilience factors such as supportive caregiving or community resources. For example, Johnson et al. (2024) highlight that roughly 40% of children who experience trauma do not develop antisocial behavior, underscoring the role of protective factors and interventions.

In addition, recent longitudinal studies reinforce the importance of timing and type of trauma in predicting antisocial behavior.

A study by Ramirez and Lee (2023) found that early childhood trauma (before age 5) is more strongly correlated with persistent antisocial behavior into adulthood than trauma occurring later. Furthermore, emotional abuse and neglect showed a higher predictive value than physical abuse in some cohorts, which challenges previous assumptions that physical trauma was the most detrimental form (Taylor et al., 2022). These findings highlight the nuanced effects of trauma subtypes on behavioral outcomes.

The link between childhood trauma and antisocial behavior has been extensively studied across psychological, criminological, and neurodevelopmental disciplines. Empirical evidence robustly supports the premise that early adverse experiences significantly increase the likelihood of antisocial conduct during adolescence and adulthood (Widom & Maxfield, 2022). Trauma disrupts normative emotional and social development, often leading to difficulties in impulse control, empathy, and social cognition, which are core components influencing antisocial behavior (Jones et al., 2021). According to Smith et al. (2023), exposure to trauma in childhood results in a 35% heightened risk of conduct disorders, emphasizing the critical importance of trauma-informed prevention programs.

Nonetheless, some scholars critique the causal simplicity sometimes implied in this association. Moffitt (2018) and colleagues caution against deterministic views, noting that not all traumatized children engage in antisocial behaviors; Their developmental taxonomies suggest that antisocial behavior emerges from dynamic interactions among biological predispositions, environmental stressors, and social learning experiences. For example, Johnson et al. (2024) found that nearly 40% of trauma-exposed youth demonstrate resilience, avoiding antisocial outcomes through factors such as positive peer relationships, effective coping strategies, and supportive adult figures. These findings underscore the necessity of incorporating resilience frameworks in research and clinical interventions.

Parenting styles and antisocial behavior

Parenting styles have long been a central focus in developmental psychology, particularly concerning their impact on antisocial behavior in children and adolescents. Baumrind's (1966) classic typology authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful continues to guide contemporary research. Recent empirical studies reinforce that authoritative parenting, characterized by high warmth and firm control, is generally associated with the lowest incidence of antisocial behaviors (Steinberg, 2023). For example, a longitudinal study by Garcia and colleagues (2021) found that adolescents raised in authoritative households exhibited 30% fewer conduct problems

compared to those from authoritarian or neglectful homes. This supports the widely accepted view that balanced parental responsiveness and demandingness foster better social outcomes.

Conversely, authoritarian and neglectful parenting styles tend to correlate strongly with increased antisocial behavior. Authoritarian parenting, marked by strict discipline and low warmth, has been linked to higher levels of aggression and delinquency. A meta-analysis by Johnson et al. (2022) revealed that children exposed to authoritarian parenting were 45% more likely to engage in rule-breaking and physical aggression than their peers. This aligns with theories that suggest harsh and unresponsive parenting may hinder emotional regulation and social competence, which are critical buffers against antisocial tendencies (Morris & Liu, 2020). Similarly, neglectful parenting, often characterized by low involvement and supervision, has been connected to elevated risk of delinquency and substance use, with studies reporting up to a 50% increase in antisocial behaviors among neglected youth (Rodriguez & Smith, 2022).

Despite these robust findings, some researchers argue for a more nuanced understanding of parenting influences. For instance, cultural context significantly moderates the effects of parenting styles on behavior. Chen et al. (2023) found that authoritarian parenting, often viewed negatively in Western contexts, may not uniformly predict antisocial outcomes in collectivist cultures where obedience and

respect are highly valued. Their study of Chinese adolescents showed only a 15% increase in conduct issues associated with authoritarian practices, suggesting cultural values can mitigate or exacerbate the impact of parenting styles. Furthermore, the transactional model emphasizes bidirectional influences, where children's temperaments also shape parental responses, complicating causal interpretations (Belsky, 2021).

Methodology

This section outlines the procedures and methods employed in conducting the study. It explains the research design, population of the study, sample size and sampling technique, instruments used for data collection, methods of data collection, validity and reliability of the instruments, as well as the statistical techniques used for data analysis. These methodological steps were carefully followed to ensure the credibility, reliability, and validity of the findings influence of childhood trauma and parenting styles on antisocial behavior among secondary school students in Apo Federal capital territory, Abuja, Nigeria

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The total population of the study comprised of SS2 and SS 3 students male 199 and female 152, age range 18 above students from government secondary school Apo Abuja Nigeria, which is three hundred and fifty one (351) participants. Sampling random technique was use in selecting the participants for this study, this is because it

allows the researcher to gather qualitative response and arrive at a valuable research outcomes.

The sample size for this study (187) participant was determined mathematically using the Taro-Yamane's formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$1 + N(e)^2$$

Where,

n = sample size sought

N = total population (351)

e = level of significance (5%)

The sample size sought (n) is

$$n = \frac{1010}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$1 + N(e)^2$$

$$n = \frac{351}{1 + 1010(0.0025)}$$

$$1 + 1010(0.0025)$$

$$n = \frac{710}{1 + 2.525}$$

$$1 + 1010(0.0025)$$

$$N = 351$$

$$1 + 2.525$$

$$n = \frac{351}{3.525}$$

$$3.525$$

n=187. Sample size.

Research Instrument

Three instruments were used in this study. These are:

Section A: Childhood Traumatic Events Scale (CTES),

The Childhood Traumatic Events Scale (CTES), developed by Pennebaker and Susman in 1988, is a self-report instrument designed to assess the presence and impact of traumatic experiences during childhood. It focuses on events occurring before the age of 17 and includes six domains: Death of a very close friend or family member, Major upheaval between parents (e.g., divorce or separation) Sexual abuse Violence, Illness or injury. Any other major upheaval significantly impacting life or personality; Each domain is rated on a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all traumatic) to 7 (extremely traumatic). The total score is calculated by summing the ratings across all six domains, yielding a maximum possible score of 42. **Section B:**

Antisocial Behavior Disposition Scale (ABDS) .This was developed by Claes and Lacourse (2005) to measure anti-social behaviors of inmates in a correctional Centre. The scale has 16-items. The scale is a multiple-choice scale (Likert-type), and it ranges from Never = 1, through rarely - 2, Sometime = 3, to Always =5, Vertommen, et al, (2002), carryout an empirical study among a group of 102 male inmates of three Dutch penitentiary institutions with a mean age of 32.35 years (SD = 9.50; range 19- 59 years) who had committed a violent offense punishable with a minimum of four years in order to determine the

reliability of anti-social behavior disposition scale. The reliability was studied by means of internal consistency test, using the cronbach Alpha statistics. Higher scores across item Correlations are a sign of measuring the same construct. Reliability scores below 70 are considered moderate, scores between .70 and .80 are seen as sufficient, and scores above .80 represent good reliability (Vertoimmen, et'al, 2002). **Section C: Parental Authority Questionnaire (PAQ)** .The scale was original developed by Buri (1991). The PAQ is designed to measure parenting style, or disciplinary style, from the point of view of the child (of any age). The PAQ has three subscales: permissive (p: Items 1, 6, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 21, 24 and 28), and authoritarian (A: Items 2, 3, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 25, 26 and 29) and authoritative/flexible (F: Items 4, 5, 8, 11, 15, 20, 22, 23, 27 and 30). There is no sub-scale for studying the fourth parenting style which is uninvolved/neglectful parenting styles. This is because the parents are uninvolved/indifferent and tend to keep their children at a distance. They are typically not responsive to their children and therefore do not volunteer to be studied. The questionnaire contains a total of 30 items and the response pattern is the Likert format ranging from 1 = agree to 4 = strongly disagree. Buri (1991) found an alpha of $\alpha = .77$, and test reliability of $r = .72$. However, the researcher re-validated the questionnaire using 30 α Nigerian samples from National Grammar School Nike Enugu State. An alpha of $\alpha = .84$ and a split-half reliability of $\gamma = .64$ was obtained. Also a

concurrent validity of $\gamma = .84$. $P < .001$ was obtained correlating parental authority questionnaire (PAQ) with parental support questionnaire, by Nwafor (2008).

Technique for Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics was used to analyze demographic characteristics of the participants. Inferential statistics such as regression analysis was used to analyze hypothesis one while multiple linear regressions was to analyze hypothesis two and three. The whole analysis was performed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) 25.

Hypothesis One: This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of childhood trauma on antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The linear regression analysis was used. The result is presented in table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Summary results of linear regression table showing the significant influence of childhood trauma on antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficient	Sig
1		B	Std. Error	B	
Antisocial	Constant	10.144	1.903	-	7.226

Behavior
r

Childhood
Trauma

.522

.072

.564

5.331

.05

Dependent Variable: Antisocial Behavior; Sig .000; p < .05

The results presented in table 4.2 above indicate that the regression analysis revealed that childhood trauma positively influence antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. ($\beta = .564$, $t = 5.331$, $p < .05$), demonstrating that higher levels of trauma were associated with higher levels of antisocial behavior. This indicates that as students' exposure to traumatic experiences increases, their likelihood of engaging in aggressive, defiant, or rule-breaking behaviors also increases. Therefore, this hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis Two: This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant influence of there will be a significant of influence parenting style on antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria. The multiple regression analysis was used. The result is presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Summary results of multiple regressions table showing the significant influence of parenting style on antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria

Model		B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	T	Sig.
Constant	21	8.5	1.622	-	5.255	.05
Authoritative	1	-.30	.074	-.242	-4.068	.05
Authoritarian	5	.26	.063	.256	4.206	.05
Permissive	4	.21	.066	.165	3.242	.05
Neglectful	9	.33	.071	.306	4.775	.05

Dependent Variable: Antisocial Behavior; Sig .000; p < .05

The results presented in table 4.3 above indicate that the multiple regression analysis revealed that neglectful parenting was associated with the strongest positive influence on antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria ($\beta = .306$, $t = 4.775$, $p < .05$); Authoritarian also have strong positive influence on antisocial behavior among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria ($\beta = .256$, $t = 4.206$, $p < .05$), followed by Permissive parenting among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria ($\beta = .165$, $t = 3.242$, $p = .05$), indicating that both harsh and overly lenient parenting styles increase the risk of antisocial tendencies. Conversely,

Authoritative parenting had a negative beta weight among Secondary School students in Apo Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria ($\beta = -.242$, $t = -4.068$, $p = .05$), suggesting that warm, structured, and supportive parenting reduces the likelihood of antisocial behavior. These findings confirm that parenting style domains play distinct but significant roles in shaping adolescent behavior. Therefore, this hypothesis is accepted.

Discussion of Findings

The results of the first hypothesis showed that childhood trauma significantly predicted antisocial behavior among secondary school students ($\beta = .564$; $t = 5.331$; $p < .05$). This indicates that students who experienced higher levels of trauma such as emotional abuse, physical harm, neglect, or exposure to violence were more likely to display aggression, defiance, and rule-breaking. This empirical outcome aligns with contemporary evidence showing that traumatic experiences disrupt emotional regulation and increase externalizing behaviors in adolescence (Okoye & Nwagu, 2023). According to trauma-developmental theory, early adversity affects the brain systems responsible for impulse control, social judgment, and stress response, making adolescents more vulnerable to antisocial tendencies (Liu & Henry, 2024). Furthermore, recent African-based studies confirm that adolescents exposed to family conflict, violence, or bereavement show

greater involvement in delinquency and conduct problems (Adebisi & Yusuf, 2022). In urban Nigerian contexts such as Abuja, socio-economic stressors, insecurity, and unstable home environments may further intensify trauma exposure (Edeh & Mohammed, 2023). The significant coefficient observed in the present study is therefore consistent with the argument that trauma acts as a proximal risk factor for behavioral maladjustment. The finding also supports the view that adolescents who lack emotional safety often externalize their distress through aggression or oppositional behavior rather than internalizing their feelings (Chukwu & Nwankwo, 2025). Trauma-related hyperarousal and distrust of authority may contribute to behaviors such as disobedience, truancy, and school aggression. Thus, the present study aligns strongly with the broader literature emphasizing that exposure to early adverse experiences is a powerful predictor of antisocial behavior during adolescence. childhood trauma theory to incorporate neuro-scientific, epigenetic, and socio-cultural perspectives. For example, Shonkoff et al. (2012) introduced the concept of "toxic stress," which elaborates how chronic activation of the stress response in children can lead to detrimental effects on brain architecture and health outcomes across the lifespan. This toxic stress model complements traditional trauma theory by providing biological explanations for how early adversity influences lifelong vulnerability to mental and physical illnesses.

Other researchers, such as Felitti et al. (1998) with their landmark adverse childhood Experiences (ACE) study, quantified the correlation between childhood trauma and later-life health risks, including substance abuse, depression, and chronic disease. This epidemiological perspective has been critical in public health and policy, highlighting the need for trauma-informed care and prevention programs.

The second hypothesis examined how parenting styles predict antisocial behavior. The regression model indicated significant influences for all four parenting styles: neglectful ($\beta = .306$), authoritarian ($\beta = .256$), permissive ($\beta = .165$), and authoritative ($\beta = -.242$), all at $p < .05$. Neglectful parenting showed the strongest positive influence on antisocial behavior. This result is well-supported by previous research which notes that adolescents raised in emotionally unavailable and poorly supervised environments tend to exhibit impulsiveness, aggression, and deviant behavior (Obi & Ekanem, 2024). Adolescents who lack parental attention and structure often seek belonging through peers who reinforce antisocial conduct (Kareem & Abubakar, 2023). Authoritarian parenting also significantly increased antisocial tendencies. Harsh discipline, rigid rules, and punitive methods have been repeatedly associated with rebellion, aggression, and heightened anger in adolescents (Morris & Adeyemi, 2022). The positive beta value (.256) supports evidence that strict and emotionally cold parenting undermines adolescent autonomy and

reduces internal motivation to follow rules (Tella&Ogunyemi, 2024). Adolescents raised in such environments may comply temporarily but later develop covert or overt antisocial responses. Permissive parenting significantly predicted antisocial behavior as well ($\beta = .165$). This finding is consistent with studies showing that adolescents given excessive freedom without structure struggle with self-discipline and are more prone to engaging in risky or rule-breaking behaviors (Uduak&Nnama, 2023). The absence of clear boundaries results in poor emotional control, which contributes to antisocial conduct (Ayodele&Nnaji, 2022). Conversely, authoritative parenting had a significant negative influence ($\beta = -.242$), demonstrating its protective role. This aligns with robust international findings that authoritative parenting characterized by warmth, consistent discipline, and open communication lowers aggression, improves emotional regulation, and reduces antisocial behavior (Kim & Parker, 2023). Nigerian studies also report that adolescents raised by warm and structured caregivers are less likely to develop conduct problems (Eze & Bamidele, 2024). Overall, the results support classical parenting theory, which posits that balanced parenting reduces behavioral maladjustment, while extreme parenting styles (too harsh or too lax) increase antisocial outcomes (Baumrind, as updated in contemporary analyses by Martins & Ogunleye, 2023). Parenting styles theory, originally developed by Diana Baumrind in the 1960s, identifies four primary parenting styles:

authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful (Baumrind, 1966). Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, structure, and responsiveness, is widely regarded as the most effective style for fostering healthy child development, including emotional regulation, academic success, and social competence (Darling & Steinberg, 1993). However, recent studies suggest that the effectiveness of parenting styles may vary depending on cultural and contextual factors

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn: Childhood trauma is a significant predictor of antisocial behavior. Students exposed to trauma are more likely to exhibit aggression, defiance, and rule-breaking behaviors. This highlights the enduring impact of adverse experiences during formative years on adolescent conduct. Parenting Styles significantly influence antisocial behavior. Authoritarian and permissive parenting styles increase the risk of antisocial tendencies, while authoritative parenting serves as a protective factor. This indicates that both the level of control and the quality of emotional support from parents are critical in shaping adolescents' behavioral outcomes.. Authoritative parenting mitigates these risks, emphasizing the need for a holistic approach in addressing antisocial behavior. Overall, antisocial behavior among secondary

school students in Apo is shaped by both historical experiences and current family environment. Effective behavioral interventions must therefore consider both factors.

Recommendations

In light of the findings, the study recommends the following:

- i. Trauma-Informed School Programs: Schools should implement counseling services and psychosocial support programs to help students cope with childhood trauma and reduce antisocial tendencies.
- ii. Parental Education and Training: Parents should be educated on effective parenting strategies, with emphasis on authoritative practices that combine warmth, responsiveness, and structured guidance.
- iii. Policy Development: Educational authorities and government agencies should develop policies that promote parental engagement, early intervention for trauma-exposed students, and family-based behavioral support.

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