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**INFLUENCE OF HIGH-HANDEDNESS ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS'
ACADEMIC AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT IN FCT ABUJA, NIGERIA**

ABDULAZIZ, Isiaka, ADEGBOYE S. O. & RASHID. S. A

**Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin,
Ilorin, Nigeria.**

abdulaziz.i@unilorin.edu.ng

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INFLUENCE OF HIGH-HANDEDNESS ON SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACADEMIC AND PSYCHO-SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT IN FCT ABUJA, NIGERIA

ABDULAZIZ, Isiaka, ADEGBOYE S. O. & RASHID. S. A

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Abstract

The descriptive survey research method of the correctional type was adopted for the study. The sample for the study comprised two hundred and eighty-two senior secondary school students selected in the three area councils using a multistage sampling procedure. An instrument titled "High-handedness and Psycho-social Adjustment Questionnaire" (HPAQ) was employed in gathering data for the study. Results revealed that 93.3% of senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria experienced a low level of high-handedness while 68.8% and 62.4%, respectively, exhibited a high level of academic and psychosocial adjustment. Also, high-handedness significantly influences the academic and psychosocial adjustment of senior secondary students in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria. The study concludes that high-handedness was a significant determinant of the academic and psychosocial adjustment of the senior secondary students. It is therefore recommended that the school administrators, in collaboration with parents and other critical stakeholders, should further work towards ensuring that the case of high-handedness is completely eradicated in the school system.

Introduction

High-handedness is as old as the school setting itself. It seems to be a social phenomenon that has come to stay in our secondary schools and institutions of higher learning, such as colleges of education, polytechnics, and universities. However, high-handedness is more rampant in our secondary schools, where the students are in their transitional stage of adolescence. They want to

have freedom and also acquire the ultimate power to modify their peers' behaviour. High-handedness among students of secondary schools occurs world over. Of all the challenges facing any typical secondary schools, none is as debilitating as high-handedness because of its effect on the oppressor as well the victim. High-handedness is a pattern of social behaviour in which an individual is chosen as the target of recurring aggression by one or more. The target (the victim) usually has less power than oppressor(s) (Baron & Bryne, 2005). High-handedness offences can be considered an aggressive disorder, a negative or anti-social behaviour. High-handedness among school-aged youth is increasingly recognised as an important problem affecting their well-being and social functioning (Cowle,2000).

High-handedness exists among families, societies, companies, and nations. The victims of High-handedness suffer insults, assaults, and other forms of loss or misfortune. These victims could be individuals, groups, companies, nations, and a host of others depending on the usage of the prevailing condition in context. High-handedness could be explained in a number of ways. First, high-handedness can be either direct or indirect. Words, physical contact, and social relations (manipulating friends) are also ways in which High-handedness can be expressed. Despite these differences in perception of high-handiness, it is possible to identify three distinct characteristics of High-handedness: frequency, intention to hurt, and an asymmetric relationship between the domineering and victim (Hanewnikel,2004).

High-handedness is generally seen as the intimidation of the weak or the process of intimidating or maltreating somebody in an extremely vulnerable situation. According to the Oxford Advanced Learner's English Dictionary, high-handiness can be defined as the act of using authority or power without proper consideration of the feelings or rights of others. Thus, the above submission could be justified by saying a nation can use its strength against another that is weaker in power or more vulnerable in order to gain some advantages over her, likewise in the field of business, where competition is strong among companies. Similarly, High-handedness is an aggressive behavioural tendency designed to hurt someone else. Over the years, literature has revealed that scholars had, with little or no professional consensus, been inconsistent in their definition of high-handedness. What is close to being an agreeable definition is that it is an aggressive behaviour that operationally satisfies two criteria: (a) repetition – it happens more than once; and, (b) there is a power balance

such that it is difficult for the victim to defend him or herself (Olweus, 2015). Succinctly put, high-handedness is the systemic abuse of power (Smith & Ananiadouk, 2003).

There are various types of high-handedness. All are categorically or majorly grouped into Physical, verbal, and Relational high-handedness (Crick, et. Al., 2001). In physical high-handedness, the domineer often punches, hits, and/or extort money from the victim. In the case of verbal high-handedness, the domineer engages in making rude or hurtful remarks towards the victim. Nevertheless, when psychological harm and manipulation of the social system is involved, such is described as relational high-handedness. Abdulaziz and Saba (2013) identified kicking, hitting, extortion of money from the victim, locking up the victim in a room or toilet, isolation, teasing, threat of beating, boastful words, or intimidation as different forms of high-handedness. These forms were further grouped into two categories: direct and indirect high-handedness (Olweus, 2015).

Rigby (2003) and Rasheed, Ajayi and Abdulaziz (2017) also categorised high-handedness into two: direct and indirect. Instances of direct high-handedness (also known as physical high-handedness) are physical contacts such as hitting, shoving and poking, throwing things, punching, stabbing, pulling hair, scratching, pushing, threatening, slapping, kicking, or pinching in order to inflict injuries on the victim. Conversely, examples of indirect high-handedness are insults and teasing; these affect the victim psychologically and emotionally. Rasheed, Ajayi and Abdulaziz's (2017) study showed that physical high-handedness is more dominant than emotional high-handedness. The study also found that students often become domineers as they desire to display strength and boastfulness.

Causes and Influence of High-handedness

Abdulaziz and Abdurraheem (2018) categorised the causes of high-handedness into four factors: societal, biological, peer group influence, and environmental.

Societal Factor: The family is the smallest unit of society and the first point of contact for any individual. Society is a group of people who meet from time to time to share common interests and beliefs. Most of what children display in society is learnt from the home, hence the popular saying "charity begins at home". (Abdulaziz & Abdurraheem, 2018). Olweus (2015) averred that

parental neglect, family instability, family stress, rejection, aggression within the home or society, isolation, and child abuse all contribute to a child becoming an oppressor.

Biological Factor: Aggressive behaviour could develop in a child due to hormonal imbalances, malfunctioning of the body organs, or mental health issues (Craig,1998). Our physical characteristics, such as skin and hair color, are biologically determined; this goes a long way to determining the group or race a person belongs to.

Peer Group Influence: As a child grows, especially during adolescent age, he/she tends to associate with a group of children that fall into the bracket of their age and gender more than their immediate family members. Abdulaziz (2021) defined that a peer group is approximately persons of the same age and status, with most likely the same interests. Hence, those that constitute the same group have the same ideology or characteristics; they mingle and relate freely with one another; they give themselves moral support.

Environmental Factor: Environmental influences, such as teachers' attitudes, behaviours, and supervisory routines play a crucial role in determining the extent to which high-handedness will manifest itself in a classroom or a school setting (Omoteso, 2010), most especially when the supervisor is weak, or there is little or no supervision at all (Olweus, 2015). Some students may tend to exhibit their dominance over others or some school culture where the school chooses to ignore obvious signs or is truly naive about what can happen in an unsupervised hallway or playground.

High-handedness and Student's Academic

Best academic performance is well achieved in a serene and conducive environment where one can easily relate with other students and teachers, where there is no fear of molestation, high-handedness, or violence of any kind, and where all the necessary facilities to encourage and aid learning are available and within the students' reach. Academic performance is an achievement which points at the extent at which a learner, tutor or a citadel of learning has attained their short- or long-term academic goals. The reverse is indeed the case in the institutions of learning characterised by high-handedness and other forms of violence, even where the facilities for improved and easy learning are available.

High-handedness and Student's Psycho-Social Adjustment

Psycho-social refers to both mental and social factors such as relationships, education, age, and employment that pertain to an individual's life history. In psychology, adjustment is the relative degree of harmony between an individual's needs and the environment (Rigby, 2003). Psychosocial adjustment is the psychologically accommodated response of an individual to a life-altering event or transition. In this review, psycho-social adjustment is the way the domineers or the victims adjust or adapt to the psychological and social ill effects or ailments resulting from high-handedness; it is the adaptive task of managing upsetting feelings and frustration aroused by illness, and preserving emotional imbalance (Balogun, Obimuyiwa, Abdulaziz & Oniye, 2019). The consequences of high-handedness are far-reaching; they often range from lower attendance rate and poor academic achievement to increased violence and juvenile delinquencies.

The effects and the impact of humiliation are far-reaching, most especially on the humiliated as well as their immediate community. Therefore, humiliation is considered a great impediment to positive human development. Experiences of humiliation disrupt social cohesion (Olweus, 2015). Bullying/victimisation is a form of humiliating experience (Losel & Beelman, 2003). Given that high-handedness often occurs publicly, it involves the subjugation of a less powerful victim. The outcome of this often affects the entire school community by limiting social cohesion. Losel and Beelman's (2003) theory of humiliation addresses humiliation on a global scale. Humiliation involves "putting down and holding down" (Losel & Beelman, 2003) and has such intense power that it is considered "the nuclear bomb of emotions". Humiliating another person becomes morally and ethically wrong with the emergence of human rights and the recognition that all persons are deserving of dignity. The basis of Lindner's theory is the notion that all humans desire and deserve recognition and respect. However, humiliation violates these fundamental human rights, and this often results in eroded interpersonal relationships and disrupted social cohesion (Losel & Beelman, 2003).

According to Losel and Beelman (2003), there are four types of humiliation: individual uses conquest humiliation to force a formal equal into a subordinate position. Conquest humiliation is a precursor

to high-handedness as this form of humiliation establishes the power differential inherent in a high-handed dynamic. For example, if two adolescent girls of equal status are vying for the position of "queen bee" of a desired social group, one girl could use relational aggression (e.g., spreading rumours and exclusion from other related social gatherings) to humiliate her rival and turn other girls against her rival, thus relegating her rival to a lower position and creating a power differential. Reinforcement humiliation is used to maintain social hierarchy established by conquest humiliation. Following the above example, the new queen bee would continue to spread rumours about and exclude her rival as a means of ongoing humiliation to maintain her rival's subjugation. Reinforcement Humiliation is used as a means of creating a larger power differential between the humiliator and the victim. If the new queen bee wanted to ensure the complete second demise of her rival, she could use relegation humiliation to sabotage her rival's new friendships by increasing the intensity and frequency of high-handedness, thus making her rival appear socially undesirable and relegating her to an even lower position. Exclusion humiliation is the most stringent form of humiliation and involves banishing victims altogether by exiling or killing them. In the realm of high-handedness, this form of humiliation would occur if the queen bee ensured that everyone in the class completely ignored and avoided her rival, perhaps until the rival left school or, in extreme situations, committed suicide.

Statement of the problem

In recent times, education encompasses protecting the welfare of both individuals and society as a whole. It aims at developing man's creative abilities in order to contribute positively to society, to promote efficient and effective teaching and learning, and to promote and encourage development of a wholesome personality to meet various situations in social, economic, and moral life (Raheyi, 2002). High-handedness has been identified as one of the major vices that influenced students' attitudes, behaviour, and learning in schools, thereby creating a barrier to learning with negative outcomes on the part of both the students and the institutions. It can lead to physical injuries, loss of self-esteem, truancy, dropping out, trauma, suicide and deaths.

A lot of students have dropped out of school as they could not get protection against their oppressors, while others had no choice but to join the bully so as to gain acceptance and security.

These acts of indiscipline engaged in by the oppressors disrupt learning and have a direct impact on students' performances (Olweus cited in Balogun, Abdulaziz & Oniye, 2019)

Research Questions

1. What is the level of high handedness among the senior secondary schools' students in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria?
2. What is the level of academic adjustment of senior secondary schools' students in the FCT Abuja?
3. What is the level of psycho-social adjustment of senior secondary schools' students in the FCT Abuja?
4. What is the influence of high-handedness on students' academic adjustment in the FCT Abuja?
5. What is the influence of high-handedness on students' psycho-social adjustment in the FCT Abuja?

Research Hypothesis

The following research hypotheses were formulated based on the purpose of this study:

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' academic adjustment in the FCT Abuja, Nigeria.

H₀₂: No significant influence of high-handedness existed on senior secondary students' psycho-social adjustment in the FCT Abuja.

Methodology

This study is focused on influence of high-handedness on senior secondary school students' academic and psycho-social adjustment in FCT Abuja, Nigeria. The population for this study comprised all senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, while a purposive sampling technique was used to sample three area councils: Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Bwari and Gwagwalada Area Council, representing FCT Abuja. The target population for this study was Public Senior Secondary School Students (SS1-SS3) based on the fact that they have been exposed to high-handed conduct as either oppressors, victims, or witnesses. Proportionate sampling

techniques would be used to select the total number of schools from each of the selected area councils. That is 10 out of 88 senior secondary schools. Questionnaire was preferred for this study because it is a means of supplying the researcher with quantifiable data that is readily available for the statistical analyses. The questionnaire that was be used will be titled “High-handedness and Psycho-social Adjustment Questionnaire” (HPAQ). High-handedness and Psycho-social Adjustment Questionnaire (HPAQ) will be divided into four sections. Section A was used to elicit the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Section B was used to measure high-handed conduct among senior secondary school students and will also be adapted from Kim (2006), bullying behaviour scale from Kim (2006) was adapted because the response pattern was changed from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree to Always, Often, Sometimes, and Never to suit the items in scale. While Section C was used to elicit information on Psycho-social Adjustment. Validity of the instrument is how well it fulfils the functions for which it is being used, or the degree to which a test usually measures what it intends to measure and how it does. Each section of the instrument has instructions on the response format to follow. In determining the reliability of the instrument, the test re-test method was used, between the intervals of three weeks of establishing reliability. The first and second administrations of the instrument were correlated using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation. Although, the reliability of the instruments has already been established by the developers, the BPQ questionnaire was used by Ahmed and Braithwaite (2014), who reported a reliability coefficient of 0.82. Olweus and Balogun, Abdulaziz & Oniye (2015) reported a reliability of 0.76 of BPQ (Bullying Prevalence Questionnaire). The researcher still went further to establish the reliability through the test re-test reliability method. With an acceptable level of the reliability coefficient of 0.76. Descriptive and inferential statistics were adopted in the analysis of the data collected in the study. Frequency and percentage were used to answer research questions one through three, while Chi-Square statistical technique was used to test the two stated null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of high handedness among the senior secondary schools' students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 1: Level of High Handedness among the Senior Secondary Schools' Students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria

Level of High-Handedness	Score Range	Mean (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	0-18	263	93.3
Moderate	19-36	19	6.7
High	37-54	-	-
Total		282	100.0

High score indicates high level of high-handedness (mean= 8.58, SD=5.55)

The results in Table 2 showed that the vast majority (93.3%) of senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria, experienced a low level of high-handedness while 6.7% experienced a moderate level. None of the sampled students experienced a high level of high-handedness.

Research Question 2: What is the level of academic adjustment of senior secondary schools' students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 3: Level of Academic Adjustment of the Senior Secondary Schools' Students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria

Level Academic Adjustment	Score Range	Mean (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	0-17	-	-
Moderate	18-34	88	31.2
High	35-51	194	68.8
Total		282	100.0

High score indicates high level of Academic Adjustment (mean= 37.22, SD=6.38)

The results in Table 3 showed that the majority (68.8%) of senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria exhibited a high level of academic adjustment, while 31.2% exhibited a moderate level. None of the sampled students exhibited a low level of academic adjustment.

Research Question 3: What is the level of psycho-social adjustment of senior secondary schools' students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria?

Table 4: Level of Psychosocial Adjustment of the Senior Secondary Schools' Students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria

Level Psychosocial Adjustment	Score Range	Mean (n)	Percentage (%)
Low	33-48	-	-
Moderate	17-32	106	37.6
High	0-16	176	62.4
Total		282	100.0

Low score indicates high level of Psychosocial Adjustment (mean= 15.16, SD=5.06)

The results in Table 4 showed that 62.4% of senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria exhibited a high level of psychosocial adjustment while 37.6% exhibited a moderate level. None of the sampled students exhibited a low level of psychosocial adjustment.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' academic adjustment in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.

Table 5

Chi-Square Test of Influence of High-Handedness on Senior Secondary Students' Academic Adjustment

Level of High-Handedness	Level of Academic Adjustment						$\chi^2(2)$
	Low		Moderate		High		
	N	%	N	%	n	%	
Low	-	-	73	27.8	190	72.2	21.630*
Moderate	-	-	15	78.9	4	21.1	
High	-	-	-	-	-	-	

* $p < .05$, $p = .000$

Results in Table 5 showed the influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' academic adjustment in FCT Abuja, Nigeria. The result of Chi-square test of influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' academic adjustment gives, $\chi^2(n = 282) = 21.630$, $p < .05$. As the p-value is found less than .05, the stated null hypothesis is rejected. The results therefore showed that there is a significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' academic adjustment. The majority (72.2%) of the students with low level of high handedness exhibited a high level of academic adjustment.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' psychosocial adjustment in FCT Abuja, Nigeria

Table 6

Chi-Square Test of Influence of High-Handedness on Senior Secondary Students' Psycho-Social Adjustment

Level of High-Handedness	Level of Psycho-social Adjustment						$\chi^2(2)$
	High		Moderate		Low		
	N	%	N	%	n	%	
Low	171	65.0	92	35.0	-	-	11.314*
Moderate	5	26.3	14	73.7%	-	-	
High	-	-	-	-	-	-	

*p< .05, p= .001

Results in Table 6 showed the influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' psychosocial adjustment in FCT Abuja, Nigeria. The result of Chi-square test of influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' psychosocial adjustment gives, $\chi^2 (n = 282) = 11.314$, $p < .05$. As the p-value is found less than .05, the stated null hypothesis is rejected. The results therefore showed that there is a significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' psychosocial adjustment. The majority (65.0%) of the students with low level of high handedness exhibited a high level of psychosocial adjustment.

Discussion of Findings

One of the findings of this study revealed that, majority of senior secondary schools' students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria experienced low level of high-handedness. In fact, the percentage of students in that category is 93.3. This implies that the school environment in the study area is characterized with a low level of high-handedness. This finding corroborates findings of Rasheed, Ajaji & Abdulaziz (2017) who reported that nearly 30 percent reported occasional to frequent involvement in high-handedness in the study comprised more than 15, 000 public school students. Though, studies (Cowle,2000) observed that lack of current and accurate statistical facts and absence of well documented evidence have made it difficult to appreciate the prevalence of high-handed conduct in the Nigerian schools.

The findings of the study also revealed that the majority of senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria, exhibited a high level of academic adjustment. About 69 percent of the sample students exhibited a high level of academic adjustment, while about 31 percent had moderate academic adjustment. In fact, no student was found in the category of those with experience of low level of academic adjustment. This outcome further confirmed the conducive and friendly nature of the learning environment in the study area.

It was also revealed in the findings of the study that most of the senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria exhibited a high level of psychosocial adjustment. Nearly 63 percent of the sampled students exhibited a high level of psychosocial adjustment, while about 37 percent exhibited a moderate level, and none of the students exhibited a low level of psychosocial adjustment. This implies that students are able to adjust to both the academic and environmental demands of the learning environment in their respective schools. This outcome is consistent with how Anderson, Craig (1998) describe adjustment as the relative degree of harmony between students' individual needs and the environment.

The findings of the study revealed that there was a significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' academic adjustment. The majority of the students with low level of high-handedness exhibited a high level of academic adjustment. The outcome of the finding can be interpreted as the existence of a low level of high-handedness in the school environment, and this scenario tends to contribute to the process of academic adjustment of the students in the environment. This finding tends to support the assertion of Raheyi (2002) on the consequences of high-handedness. According to Raheyi (2002), high-handedness tends to affect the climate of the school setting, the morale of the teachers, and indirectly, the ability of all the students to learn to the best of their abilities. This suggests that high-handedness can significantly influence the academic adjustment of learners.

The findings of the study further revealed that there was a significant influence of high-handedness on senior secondary students' psychosocial adjustment. In the current study, the majority of the students with a low level of high-handedness exhibited a high level of psychosocial adjustment. It implies that in the study, in an environment devoid of high-handedness or with a minimum level of psychosocial adjustment capability, the students are fostered and vice versa. Study (Koivisto, 2004) has established that high-handedness and oppression are associated with poorer psychosocial adjustment, which are indicated by behavioural problems, school adjustment, social and emotional adjustment or well-being, and parental influence. Inconsistent with the study's findings are the findings of Cowle (2000), who claim that oppressors and victims are both psychologically affected, but that high-handed victims experience more adjustment difficulties than oppressors.

Conclusion

From the findings, it was shown that high-handedness is not a prevalent phenomenon among the senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja. Most senior secondary school students in FCT Abuja, Nigeria possessed a high level of academic and psychosocial adjustment, while high-handedness was found to exert a significant influence on the academic and psychosocial adjustment of the senior secondary students in the study area.

Recommendations

The School administrators, in collaboration with parents and other critical stakeholders, should further work towards ensuring that the case of high-handedness is completely eradicated in the school system. The students should also be assisted in acquisition and developing skills that can further boost their academic adjustment ability. The stakeholders in the school system should ensure that students' psychosocial adjustment is of paramount importance and efforts should be made not to compromise but to build and develop the status quo. School administrators should pay attention to the experiences of students with low level of academic adjustment in order to understand their world and give necessary professional assistance if the need arises. Any student's psychosocial adjustment can be understood based on his or her experience with high-handedness; thus, school administrators and parents should ensure open communication between them and their wards.

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