

Socio-Cultural Factors on Antisocial Behaviour Among Students of Tertiary Institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria

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Abstract: *This study examined Socio-cultural factors on antisocial behaviour among students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. To guide the study, two hypotheses were tested. The study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of the study is 74,847 consisting of all students of public tertiary institutions in Cross River State., 1000 students was drawn using proportionate sampling technique. A questionnaire was used as instrument for the study. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer research questions while Regression and ANOVA was used to test hypotheses. The study also indicated that that a rise in cultural values will lead to a decrease in anti-social behaviour. This implies that when students are morally right, their tendencies of being involved in anti-social behaviours will reduce, students who belong to African traditional religion worshipper's group are prone to engage in actions and inactions that are regarded as anti, followed by the Muslims and the Christians. The study recommends that government should entrench through the instrument of education, the inculcation of the right type of values at the different stages of learning and religious leaders should use their platforms to preach and send a message of change, especially to students who are manifesting the signs of antisocial behaviour. This should be done with love.*

Keywords: Socio-cultural factors, antisocial behaviour, social consequences

INTRODUCTION

Culture is the totality of the way of life of a group of people, which is learned, shared and transmitted through generations. Helman (2011) sees culture “as a set of guidelines both explicit

and implicit, which individuals inherit as members of a particular society, and which tells them how to view the world, how to experience it emotionally, and how to behave in it in relations to other people, to supernatural forces or gods, and the natural environment. It also provides them with a way of transmitting these guidelines to the next generation by the use of symbols, language, art and ritual.” Jervis (2016) on the other hand defines culture as the totality of what a group of people think, their behaviour and what they produce that is transmitted through generations. Culture is dynamic; it is not static and is modified from generation to generation.

The way people behave and their actions are best explained by their culture. Culture influences the way people perceive various occurrences. Culture plays a huge part in understanding the beliefs and practices of a group of people. Cross Riverians, especially undergraduates who come from the rural areas, though a little bit learned, have continued to rely on traditional therapy in health situations. People have remained bound to cultural beliefs and values. People tend to view events of diseases and deaths from cultural and supernatural perspectives. Thus, most parents stick to cultural practices and teach the same to their wards. These parents have more confidence in herbal remedies, homemade concoctions and even prefer magic or spiritual treatment to orthodox treatment.

Antisocial behaviour among undergraduate students over time has received much concern from teachers, parents, educational administrators, psychologists and society in general due to the negative consequences these behaviours have on the teaching-learning process, the victims, as well as the quality of social interactions in educational settings. Acts of aggression, property vandalism and destruction, harassment and intimidation by students are increasing in intensity, prevalence and incidence. These negative behaviours occur due to the result of unsatisfactory social, ethical, moral, and psychological development of children at home, school and socialization in the society (Nteh & Josaiah, 2022). The environment one lives or finds himself greatly impacts the area of his emotional and social development, from both the aspect of satisfying basic needs and developing certain positive emotional relationships, with objects, persons and events which is characterized by socio-cultural indices known as socio-cultural factors. However, in the opinion of Apeh and Nteh (2024), teacher-student relationships will help to control anti-social behaviour. Edgar (2010) stated that undergraduates will normally act and behave in ways that are seen as appropriate to their culture and class in society. The student’s dress code, grooming, language, belief system and attitude become molded to fit into that society which makes them become accepted by that society. Sociocultural factors are the larger-scale forces within cultures and societies that affect the thoughts, feelings and behaviours of many individuals including undergraduate students. Socio-cultural factors play a big role in determining how an individual behaves in any given environment. Paul (2013) posited that baring the breasts is seen as normal, while in some places it is forbidden. Edgar (2010) supported this when he asserted that some places allow males and females to mingle freely in public places, while others do not. This alone, has a tremendous impact on the behaviour of the people involved and is evident when these persons go

to a place that has a different culture and society compared to theirs. They encounter what is known as “culture shock”, and it is most evident from their reactions and behaviours when they come in contact with a new place.

Research into socio-cultural factors that can affect any variable according to Amed (2014) is usually studied in two dimensions which are the cultural and social dimensions. This, according to George and Haman (2015) is because the word socio-cultural has to do with both social and cultural indices. Cultural beliefs and practices have a considerable influence on the behaviour of Nigerians despite the numerous campaigns; awareness etc. carried out by the government and other public and private organizations.

Statement of the Problem

A rising form of antisocial behaviour has been observed among students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State which has given birth to unrest and pandemonium in most of the school campuses. Sometime in Cross River University of Technology, Calabar campus, the policy of “No school fee, No exams” was aggressively repelled by students through violent demonstrations which got some of the institutions' properties damaged. As if that was not enough, some of the angry students were seen throwing sachets of packed water (popularly called pure water in Nigeria) at the former Acting Vice Chancellor (Chronicle News bulletin, 14th June, 2019). Information gathered from the public relations unit of the Cross River University of Technology, Calabar campus revealed that most of the students who participated in the demonstration stated that the school administration had no right whatsoever to stop students from writing their exams even if the students were yet to pay their tuition fees. Students ‘lifestyles remain an important determinant to their behavior according to Ekpenyong (2014).

The presence of more than one language and culture in Cross River State has given birth to diversity in attitudes, belief systems, customs, traditions, religion and perceptions of undergraduate students concerning some institutional policies and ethics in the state. The researcher has observed that one of the most serious problems that seems to undermine the provision of quality education in our tertiary institutions is that of indiscipline and antisocial behaviour borne out of the desire by undergraduate students to exercise their opinions and attitudes as a result of different cultural and societal backgrounds.

Societal and cultural differences have the potency to influence the behaviour and academic achievement of undergraduate students in school. The Menace of antisocial behaviour like cultism, truancy, drug/alcohol, gangsterism, armed robbery and examination malpractice among undergraduate students have been on the increase in almost all the tertiary institutions in Cross River State. Apart from the negative related behaviour demonstrated by students, some other undergraduate students in Cross River Tertiary Institutions as reported by Akpama (2015) blame self for not having the capacity to change situation, finds it difficult to speak up, timid, tries to

please everyone, holds back anger, resentment, and rage, views self as logical, rational. Sees others as too emotional, out of control and regards their culture as civilized, and regards others as underdeveloped, and disadvantaged, turns to other culture to enrich humanity while invalidating it by considering it exotic.

Students sometimes in class exhibit antisocial behaviour through a range of aggressive and coercive behaviours. Some of these behaviours include physical aggression, caustic verbalization, noncompliance and criminality. Such students demonstrate impulsivity, poor interpersonal skills, ineffective cognitive problem skill, and academic deficiencies that negatively affect learning and socialization. In the event of using school properties and library for example, students in tertiary institutions have been seen by the researcher to manifest behavioural forms like pilfering or theft, mutilation, defacing of library materials, hiding of books in between shelves and keeping books beyond due dates, chewing, eating, drinking, noise, littering, and loitering.

The question is, could all these forms of antisocial behaviour be attributed to the students' socio-cultural background or could it just be some other factors? It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the relationship between socio-cultural factors such as culture, religion, attitudes, education, language and antisocial behaviour among students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. To what extent do cultural values influence antisocial behaviour among undergraduate students?
- ii. How does religious affiliation influence antisocial behaviour among undergraduate students?

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey method. Descriptive survey design is a research method used to gather information and describe the characteristics, attitudes, behaviours, or opinions of a specific population. It aims to provide a snapshot of a population or a specific phenomenon at a given point in time. In a descriptive survey design, researchers collect data through self-report questionnaires, interviews, or observations. The data is then analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize and describe the key findings. Wang, Liu, & Kircova, (2021) opine that a descriptive survey is a valuable tool for providing a clear understanding of various phenomena.

The population of this study is 74,847 consisting of all students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State. The institutions are; University of Calabar (UNICAL), National Open University (NOUN), Cross River University of Technology (CRUTECH), College of Health Technology

(CHT), Federal College of Education (FCE) Obudu, College of Education (CEO) Akamkpa, School of Nursing and Midwifery Itigidi, School of Nursing and Midwifery Calabar, School of Nursing and Midwifery Ogoja, Institute of Technology and Management (CR-ITM). From the total sample of 74,847 students of public tertiary institutions, the researcher sampled 1,000 students through proportionate to give room for better accuracy of results.

The instrument used to collect data for this study was a questionnaire titled: Sociocultural Factors and Anti-social Behaviour Questionnaire (SFABQ). It was designed to collect information from undergraduate students concerning sociocultural factors (in the identified variables) such as cultural values, religious affiliation, attitude towards schooling, social learning and number of spoken languages. The questionnaire had three sections A, B and C. Section A was based on students' data such as name of institution, gender, L.G.A, course of study and age. Section B obtained data from students about the research sub-independent variables of sociocultural factors. The instrument was face validated by specialists in measurement and evaluation field of educational psychology who offered the much-needed assistance in terms of grammatical rules and mechanical organization of the instrument. The reliability index stood at 0.85. therefore, the instrument was judged to be reliable.

RESULTS

H₀₁: There is no significant cultural values influence antisocial behaviour among undergraduate students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression was applied with cultural values as independent variable and the students' anti-social behaviour as the dependent variable. The F-ratio test was used to test for the significance of the overall influence model while t-test was used to test for the significance of the relative contributions of the regression constant and coefficient (which is the influence of the independent variable) in the model.

Table 1: significant cultural values influence antisocial behaviour among undergraduate students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria

R – value = .375	adj. R – Squared = .139				
R – squared = .140	std. error = 3.345				
Source of variation	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F-value	P-value
Regression	1797.932	1	1797.932	160.633*	.000
Residual	11021.454	985	11.189		
Total	12819.386	986			
Predictor variable	Unstandardised coeff		Std coeff	t-value	p-value
	B	Std. error			
Constant	29.517	.590		50.030*	.000
Cultural values	-.476	.038	-.375	-12.676*	.000

* Significant at .05 level. $P < .05$

The results in Table 10 show that an R-value of .375 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .140. This means that the variation in cultural values accounted for about 14.0% of the total variation in students' anti-social behaviour. The P-value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (160.683) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that cultural values have significant influence on students' anti-social behaviour, with both the regression constant (29.517) and coefficient (-.476) making significant contribution in the influence model ($t = 50.030$ & -12.676 , $P = .000 < .05$). The presence of cultural values in the model is negative, meaning that increase in it can reduce significantly anti-social behaviour in students of tertiary institutions. The influence model may be written as

$$y = 29.517 - .476x$$

where y = anti-social behaviour

x = cultural values

H0₂: There is no significant religious affiliation influence antisocial behaviour among undergraduate students of tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria.

To test this hypothesis, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was applied with religious affiliation as factor and students' anti-social behaviour as dependent variable. The F-ratio test was used to test for the significance of the main influence while Fisher's Least Significant Difference (LSD) test was used as post hoc test.

Table 2: One-way ANOVA of students' anti-social behaviour by their religion

Students' religious affiliation	N	Mean	Std dev.	Std Error
Christianity	766	21.963	3.537	.129
Islam	122	22.098	3.398	.323
African traditional religion	99	23.768	3.997	.359
Total	987	22.161	3.606	.115

Source of Variation	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F- value	P- value
Corrected model	285.933	2	142.967	11.224*	.000
Intercept	234698.187	1	234698.187	18426.129*	.000
Religious Affi.	285.933	2	142.967	11.224*	.000
Error	12533.453	984	12.737		
Total	497549.000	987			
Corrected total	12819.386	986			

*Significant at .05 level. $P < .05$

The results in Table 11 revealed that African traditional religion worshipers had the highest mean anti-social behaviour ($\bar{x} = 23.768$) followed by Muslims ($\bar{x} = 22.098$) and the least were Christians ($\bar{x} = 21.963$). The P-value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (11.224) is less than .05. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that religious affiliation has significant influence on anti-social behaviour among students of tertiary institutions.

To locate the pair of means responsible for the observed significant results, the LSD test was applied. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: LSD multiple (pairwise) comparison of students anti-social behaviour by religious affiliation

Religious group	Christianity	Islam	African tradition
Christianity	21.963**	.135	1.804*
Islam	.698	22.098	1.669*
African traditional religion	.000	.001	23.768

* Significant at .05 level. $P < .05$

** Values along main diagonal are group means, above it are mean differences (MD) and below it are corresponding P-values.

The results in Table 3 show that African traditional religion worshipers differ significantly from Christians (MD = 1.804, $P = .000$) and Muslims (MD = 1.669, $P = .001$). The difference in anti-social behaviour between Christians and Muslims was not significant (MD = .135, $P = .698 > .05$).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The statistical analysis and test of hypothesis one of this study has revealed the fact that cultural values have significant negative influence of anti-social behaviour among students of tertiary institutions. The significant negative influence here implies that a rise in cultural values will lead to a decrease in anti-social behaviour. This further implies that when students are morally upright, their tendencies of being involved in anti-social behaviour will reduced.

Those findings corroborates with a study carried out by Angrar *et al.*, (2014) who did a cross sectional study on the impact of cultural values on the deviant behaviours of undergraduate students across five West African Countries Universities, Nigeria inclusive. The authors concluded from their findings that the opinions students have concerning what their cultural background gave them for example, their mode of dressing is something that is difficult to let go throughout their life time. This implies that, the cultural values that were inculcated in their lives were such that can put them on the known as regards what is expected of them at any given time.

Furthermore, Franka (2013) and Morris (2014) have revealed that culture as a socio-cultural variable has an influence on one's behaviour. This then implies that the culture one has internalized will most certainly propel his actions and behaviours. The findings of this study is in consonance with a study carried out by Izeka (2014) to determine cultural similarities and differences among university students in United Kingdom. The study revealed that all human possess certain biologically based maturation level and pride position influencing their behaviour.

This findings is also supported by a study carried out by Wan *et al.*, (2015) to measure personal values of Chinese university students. Their findings show a general tendency that more personally important culturally distinctive values were rated, the more respondent identified with the respective cultural groups suggesting that personal values might reflect cultural identify and thus cultural values.

From afore empirical supports, it is very clear that cultural values have a negative significant influence on anti-social behaviour. Cultural values which represent an integrated pattern of belief and behaviour can either be intrinsically or extrinsically. Intrinsic values connotes the aspect of an individual where he/she internally motivated to live by the norms of the society. On the other hand, extrinsic values connotes when one is externally propelled to adjust to the dictates of his/her immediate society. Worthy of note briefly, is the fact that value assumes the state of what is ideal and accepted by some individual or group and it can varies in that, what is expected or regarded as value in some regions may be trivialize in other regions. This then points to the fact that, when students acquaint themselves with such things that are regarded as ideal given any circumstance they find themselves, then there is every tendency that the rise in anti-social behaviour will be ameliorated and cushioned as it is the case of this study.

The statistical analysis of hypothesis two of the study has revealed the fact that religion has significant influence on anti-social behaviour among students of tertiary institutions. The findings further revealed in specifics, that the African traditional religion worshippers had the highest mean of anti-social behaviour, followed by Muslims and the least were the Christians. The findings also made it clear that the African traditional religion worshipers differ significantly from Christians and Muslims, while the difference in antisocial behaviour between Christians and Muslims was not significant.

The sequential revelations of this study points to the fact that, students who belonged to African traditional religion worshipers group were more prone to engage in actions and inactions that are regarded as anti, followed by the Muslims and the Christians being the least, would less likely engage in anti-social behaviour.

The findings of this study is in line with a study carried out by Francis and Mullen (2017) to examine the relationship between religiosity and drug use behaviour among European high school

students. Their results revealed that religions affiliation was a significant predictor of attitudes towards drug contact (attendance) demonstrated the most liberal behavioural pattern toward substance use.

The findings of this study also corroborate with a study carried out by Daniella and George (2014) on the influence of religion a student's behavioural pattern among twenty universities in United States of American. The findings revealed that, of the total sample used for the study, 60% of Christians had a strong correlational value, signifying a strong relationship between their religion and their academic outcomes, followed by the Muslims and those who belonged to other religious practices such as Hindu, Buddha, Krishina, Judaism, Pagan, Nudism, etc. had a correlational R-value of 0.01 signifying a weak relationship. Furthermore, the findings showed that, religion be it Christian, Muslims, Hindu, Judaism and every other one tested in the study had a positive correlation with their behavioural pattern.

A study carried out by Ali *et al.*, ((2013) on the relationship between religious attitude and depression behaviour among medical students in South Iran Universities is equally in line with the present study. The findings of their study revealed the fact that religious factors might protect against the influence of negative life events and therefore suggests a possible need to incorporate religious perspectives into students' health behaviour.

The above empirical supports make it clear that religion can attract anti-social behaviour by lowering its likelihood. Furthermore, this study has revealed that Christian students would less likely engage in anti-social behaviour, followed by Muslim student and African traditional worshippers' students are more prone to engage in anti-social behaviour.

For the Christians who are seen to less likely engage in anti-social behaviour it could be as a result of their deep teachings on love and doing good even to those that fight them. This admonishes Christian's students to Jettison actions and lifestyles that are anti and this has tremendously lowered the incessant of anti-social behaviour among the Christian students. The Muslim students also are taught to love in their religion but, the love is manifested more amongst themselves in that when once they fed that their religion or belief is being threatened, they can go any mile even to the extent of gruesomely but cheering another. The killings perpetrated by one Muslims brothers is no longer news as it is seen and heard on almost a daily basis. This further implies that the Muslims students will most likely engage in behaviours that are anti them the Christian students. The third group, being the ATR on the other hand are seen to engage more in anti-social behaviour as revealed by this study. This group are people who practice a long-standing custom and they have an inherited pattern of thought or action which may most likely be crooked – this inherited pattern of actions most times involves being extremely evil or cruel. Due to their deep attachment with long standing customs, they may not allow themselves to be influenced a great deal by western religion (Christianity), which can predispose them to jettison some of their diabolic acts,

but they may however fear of letting go their religion and this further makes them to use some form of means acquired to perpetrate evil. No wonder in the present study, they are seen to exhibit anti-social behaviour than two groups.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings, the study concludes that a rise in cultural values will lead to a decrease in anti-social behaviour. This implies that when students are morally right, their tendencies of being involved in anti-social behaviours will reduce. Students who belong to African traditional religion worshipper's group are prone to engage in actions and inactions that are regarded as anti, followed by the Muslims and the Christians. When students have a good attitude towards schooling, their tendency of being involved in anti-social behaviour will decrease. Also, educated students will less likely be prone to antisocial behavior as would their counterparts who are not educated.

- i. The government should entrench through the instrument of education, the inculcation of the right type of values at the different stages of learning.
- ii. Religious leaders should use their platforms to preach and send a message of change, especially to students who are manifesting the signs of antisocial behaviour. This should be done with love.
- iii. Teachings on morality should be included in all the stages of school curriculum so as to help cushion the manifestations of behaviours that are anti.

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