

**PSYCHO-SOCIAL VALUE PERCEPTION OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL
STUDENTS OF GOMBE STATE AS CORRELATION OF THEIR SOCIAL
ADJUSTMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR REBRANDING THE NIGERIAN SOCIETY.**

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Abstract

The focus of the study was to determine whether psycho-social value perception of senior secondary school students correlates with their social adjustments. Psycho-social value perception is the judgment of students regarding their social relationships based on the mental understanding they derived from their home experience. Social adjustment is concerned with how students may be influenced in a social relationship bearing in mind the personal judgment which they already have from their home experience. The study arose from the concern that a changed society can profoundly be achieved through a youth-generation that is value-conscious. The sample of the study was 200 respondents drawn from public senior secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis of Gombe State. The Psycho-social Value Perception and Social Adjustment Scale (PVPSAS) was used as instrument for data collection. Conscientious effort was made to validate the instrument by associating its items with the factors that were examined. Based on this, the instrument was re-structured for clarity and relevance. To arrive at valid and objective conclusions, one research question was raised and three hypotheses were formulated. While the research question was answered using percentage, the hypotheses were tested using the statistical tools of correlational analysis, t-test-of significance and one-way ANOVA. Highlight of the findings showed that the students had higher psycho-social value perception as they advanced in age. It also showed that psycho-social adjustment problems were prevalent among secondary school students from houses with large family sizes. The conclusion is that with a larger percentage of Nigerians maintaining large family sizes, it is likely that most younger members of society may be experiencing psycho-social adjustment problems. The need therefore to map out strategies to stem the tide of social problem becomes imperative.

Background of The Study

Sociological studies focus on group behaviour within a social context. However, few sociological studies have actually investigated group relationships from the behavioural perspective of the individual as a part of society. Several others show that though a social being possesses a unique personality that distinguishes it from another, this unique feature of man however finds expression only within group interaction. Cooley (1909) and Mead (1934) are two sociologists who among others examined the socialization process of man within the social context. However, it was Mead who illustrated in detail the uniqueness of man as a social being and as constituting of a dual personality – The “me” and the “I” (McIntyre, 2002).

According to Mead (1934), the “Me” is a reflection of how a person perceives oneself from others’ point of view. The “I” on the other hand, is the reaction to the perception of others about oneself. The self or the “whole man” therefore emerges through the process of social interaction with others (Hogan, 2006). Hence, human beings are distinguished from other animals by their ability to imagine themselves in the place of others and so anticipate responses (Scott, 2005).

Man therefore is a social animal who is situated within an organized and structured society that is regulated by values and norms. The conformity to those values and norms is emphasized in bringing about social stability in society. Nevertheless, there could be exceptions to value conformity which result in their violation. Durkheim cited in McIntyre (2002) asserts that the violations of these values and norms is however beneficial to society. Although, Durkheim noted that the benefit which such a violation could bring to society is that it can help unite it; in the same manner, it could also bring about social adjustments. Social adjustments refer to the responses to observed behaviours that are incongruous to accepted values and norms of a society. It is a deliberate effort initiated to correct the observed anomalies in students’ attitudes. To that extent therefore, students with social adjustment problems constitute a major stress of the teacher, the school and the society at large (Elton, 1989).

One of the milieux where social adjustment is emphasized is the school system. A study of social adjustments among senior secondary school students therefore requires identification of factors of social adjustment problems prevalent among the students. These factors of social adjustment are clouded in peer or social pressure, personal characteristics, regulation by others and regulation by self, negative emotional state as well as interpersonal conflict.

Peer or social pressure is the external influence that bears on the behaviour of individual students. By this process, students form a social identity which derives from the basic tension between their need for affirmation from, and similarity with others and their need to maintain uniqueness at the same time (Brewer, 1991). Therefore, students have natural inclination towards activities but are also vulnerable to passivity. For instance, regular presence at unwanted places like gambling sites, prostitution joints, hemp smoking corners or alcoholic bars expose students to vulnerability of indulgence. The personal characteristics of students as a psychological factor derives from the belief that indulgent behaviours such as alcoholism, gambling, hooliganism, pilfering, bullying and cheating will make them feel better. Some of these behaviours cause disruption in classroom and may lead to violence both within and outside the school environment.

Regulation by others and by self are two important factors of social adjustment. Regulation by self is any effort made to be in control of, and to alter one’s actions, thoughts and feelings. For instance, a student exposed to negative experience such as sexual molestation, starvation and false accusation may grow up thinking that the society is cruel and unfriendly.

Within the school system such a student may feel suspicious and insecure among classmates and teachers. On the other hand, regulation by others is an external control to bring about compliance. This includes teacher's use of punishment when rules are broken or punishment by the larger society such as imprisonment. The extent to which the school therefore assists the student to have the right perception about social life is quite necessary and important.

Negative emotional state of the individual as a factor of social adjustment is an expression of outward depression. For instance, a child who is subjected to hawking, attends to house chores and probably walk long distance to fetch water in the morning and evening may always feel sad. The resultant effect may include going late to sleep and waking-up early, going to school late and ending up fatigued all through class periods whereby defeating the purpose of school. Interpersonal conflict as a factor of social adjustment is a feature that is current in relationship. It is an expression of lack of confidence in relationship as well as ignorance of the necessary social skills in getting oneself accepted in a group. The consequence may result in a feeling of dejection or perception of inferiority by other members of a group.

The foregoing description of psycho-social value factors reveals that students, particularly at the senior secondary school who experience adolescence characteristics often are vulnerable to a wide range of emotional and behavioural problems due to a number of social influences. These psycho-social value influences if left unchecked could cause disruptions and lead to major social dislocations of society. The inherent social vices and negative behaviour styles of Nigerians may not be unconnected with these. Thus, this study emerged out of the desire to provide significant frontiers for the re-branding of the Nigerian society through its youngsters.

Statement of the Problem

Psycho-social value perception is used in this study to explain the influence of values emphasized in the home on social relationships among students. The values at home as perceived by students may result in a negative attitude amongst students. Negative perception of home values or experiences as Schaefer (2006) noted, often result in misunderstanding and conflict in social relationships. The translation of these negative values into the school system may result in social adjustment problems.

Existing literature identified psycho-social behaviour as a correlation of social adjustment and that those who experience negative psycho-social value perception need help. It does appear however that the combined factors of family types and sizes as well as the chronological ages of children have not been examined as factors of social adjustment in relation to psycho-social value perception. Thus, the emergence of this effort to contribute to the existing literature on social adjustment.

Methods and Procedure

The design adopted was the correlational research design. It determines the relationship between two or more variables. It is descriptive in nature, hence it describes the degree of relationship between variables (Awotunde & Ugodulunwa, 2002). In this study, the relationship between the factors of psycho-social value perception and factors of social adjustment were examined.

The population of this study comprised all senior secondary school students in the Gombe metropolis. The targeted population consisted of all senior secondary three students who attended public secondary schools in the Gombe metropolis. These students were of the same

age bracket and came from different-ethnic, religious and family backgrounds. The study sample consisted of 200 students drawn from forty-six schools. Since the school populations were considered as homogenous, the simple random sampling technique was applied in the selection of the four sample schools. Fifty students were selected from each of the four schools for the students respondent-group. The hat and draw simple random sampling technique was used for the selection of the students in each of the four schools.

The Psycho-social Value Perception and Adjustment Scale (PVPSAS) was developed and used as instrument for data collection. The PVPSAS was validated by experts in the areas of sociology, psychology and educational measurement to ascertain its appropriateness in generating the relevant data for the study. The instrument consist of 30 items and focused on the different factors of the study. The researcher made the PVPSAS available to the sample population and personally administered it. The researcher read out the instructions to all the students who had difficulty in understanding the basic requirements and requested them not to write their names so as to assure them of the desire for confidentiality.

The data was analyzed using multiple methods of testing to include simple percentage, correlation coefficient (r), t-test and a one-way ANOVA to arrive at the results.

Research Question

The following research question was asked:

What is the nature of psycho-social value perception of senior secondary school students?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between family-size and social adjustment of senior secondary school students.

Ho₂: There is no significant effect of family type on social adjustment of senior secondary school students.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between the age of the students and the nature of their social adjustment.

Answering of Research Question

To what extent is the psycho-social value perception of secondary school students a correlation of their social adjustments?

Table 1: A Frequency Distribution Table Showing the Psycho-Social Value Perception of the Students.

Psycho-social experience	Frequency	Percentage
High	79	39.5
Moderate	21	10.5
Low	100	50
Total	200	100

Table 1 shows that 39.5% of the respondents population had the highest level of perception of psycho-social value of their home experience. 10.5% representing 21 respondents held moderate perception of their overall home experience while 50% representing 100

respondents had low perception of their home experience. Based on the results, 50% of the entire population had low perception about their overall home experience. It was likely then that, a significant part of the study population may have experienced social adjustment problems. This is because even if a home had positive psycho-social value atmosphere and the child failed to appreciate it, the tendency for such child to face social adjustment problems was indeed high.

Thus, since home experiences are incorporated as a process of life, students who grow up observing undesirable acts in their homes are likely to have negative perception of social realities. Moreso, Crano and Messe (1982) maintained that most of human acts occur in the presence of others. The attitude of students which is translated in the school social situation is therefore imbibed from the home. And a major consequence of this imbibed attitude is that it causes disruption which may lead to violence both in the school and outside where it is negative. A major reason for social adjustment problems as offered by Ball (1980) results from students attempt to solve "situations" that are unclear to them. Thus, Elton (1989) stated that students with social adjustment problems constitute a major stress of two teachers, the school and the society at large.

Testing of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between family size and social adjustments of senior secondary school students.

Table 2: A Table of Correlation Between Family Size and Social Adjustment of Senior Secondary School Students.

Correlation coefficient (r)	t-cal	t-tab	N	df	P-value
-0.215	-3.098	-1.645	200	198	0.002

Table 2 shows that the correlation coefficient (r) which described the relationship between social adjustment and family size was obtained as -0.215. The t-calculated was -3.098 while the t-tabulated was -1.645 with degree of freedom, 198. The P-value was 0.002.

The interpretation shows that with the negative correlation of -0.215, the two variables of social adjustment and family size moved in opposite directions. By this, it implied that as the family size of students increased, there was a corresponding decrease in the social adjustment of the students. Thus, students of family size above 4 children were most likely to have social adjustment problems.

To ascertain whether or not family size had a significant relationship with social adjustment, a t-test of significance was used. The test yielded a calculated value of t- -3.098 when compared with a tabulated value of -1.645 at 198 df. And since the tabulated value of t is greater than its calculated value and the p-value of the test is less than 0.05, then the null-hypothesis can be rejected. The inference is then that there is a significant relationship between family size and the social adjustment of the students used as respondents. In this study, family size of 2-4 children is considered a moderate size and most students were within this category. Any family size that exceeded 4 children was considered as large and could render social adjustment problems. This was alluded to by Johnson, Shuman & Collins (1991) when they stated that moderate sized homes are authoritative in nature while accepting that in such homes,

discipline is easily enforced. According to them, children from such homes are found to show the most positive outcomes in terms of general behaviour and attitudes.

Conversely, children from large family sized homes of beyond 4 are likely to experience social adjustment challenges. In developing societies where large population fractions are highly impoverished, there is a greater concern for social adjustment to guarantee social stability. Most children usually from large family sized homes are un-cared for. They often fend for themselves in terms of feeding and clothing.

Ho₂: There is no significant effect of family type on social adjustment of senior secondary school students.

Table 3: A Table of ANOVA Showing the Effect of Family Type on Social Adjustment.

Sources of Variation	Squares sum	df	Mean square	F	Significant level
Between groups	508.501	2	254.251	1.379	0.254
Within groups	36334.254	197	184.438		
Total	36842.755	199			

In table 3, the calculated value of 1.379 for f was obtained while the p-value of 0.254 was seen. Since the calculated of 1.379 F-value is greater than the p-value of 0.254, the null-hypothesis was upheld.

Thus the family type did not have a significant effect on the students' social adjustment. None of the literature reviewed specifically alluded to any effect of family type on social adjustment of adolescents. Also the results of analysis did not indicate any significant effect between the variables. However, Johnson, Schuman and Collins (1991), stated that adolescents from authoritative homes have been found to show the most positive outcomes in terms of general behaviour and attitudes. The study assumption was that family type would have effect on social adjustment but the results turned the other way as the students were mostly from monogamous families. Perhaps, it could be speculated that monogamous families are likely to support positive social adjustment.

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between the age of students and the nature of their social adjustment.

Table 4: A Table of Correlation Between Students Age and Their Social Adjustment.

Correlation co-efficient (r)	t-cal	t-tab	N	Df	P-value
0.163	2.325	1.645	200	198	0.021

Table 4 shows that the correlation co-efficient (r) which describes the strength of the relationship between the age of students and their social adjustments is 0.163. On the other hand, the t-calculated of 2.325 was obtained while the t-tabulated was observed as 1.645 at df 198 and the p-value of 0.021.

The interpretation shows a weak but positive relationship between the respondents' age and their social adjustments. The weak positive relationship or correlation between the two variables suggests that an increase in the value of one of the variables leads to a corresponding increase in the value of the other variables. It meant therefore that as the respondents' age increased, they responded positively to social adjustment demands but gradually.

The result of the t-test analysis which was carried out to establish the significance of the relationship showed a t-calculated value of 2.325 and t-tabulated of 1.645 and a p-value of 0.021. Since the calculated t-value is greater than the t-valued tabulated, the null-hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the conclusion that there was a significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their social adjustments.

These results correlate with the position of Meier (1995) that how students "see and hear" people are influenced by the judgment of their perception. Perception can be predicated on the age factor consideration.

Very closely, McClean (2002) examined how age influenced social adjustment by identifying two categories of students – the entity and incremental students. The entity student assesses his current task as measuring his overall self worth while the incremental student sees his task as only measuring this current ability.

Therefore, how an individual student perceives social reality can be a function of his chronological age as considered in this study. However, mental age was not considered in this study as the work centered on chronological age.

Conclusion

The state of human society is clouded with non-conformity and negative tendencies. Thus, the emergence of many strategies to stem the tide of school truancy, hooliganism, bullying, dishonesty, lateness, theft and rudeness among others. These social vices seem to be apparent amongst the youths of society. Thus, the school system is often re-positioned to address the attitudinal challenges of youths in terms of identification, sorting, transformation and moderation to socially accepted patterns of behaviour based on value-consciousness. Various factors abound that determine the achievement of social adjustment in society for stability.

It is therefore on the strengths of the findings suggested that;

- Parental roles should be taken seriously especially for children of tender ages to assist them develop relevant frames for social adjustment along acceptance values.
- It is more profitable to maintain smaller family-sizes in order to maintain maximum control over the children.

Institutions of learning in society should adopt more proactive measures in dealing with extreme negative behavioural tendencies. Although, the findings revealed that the more advanced in age children become, the more susceptible they become in yielding to social adjustment demands, there seem to be more complex adjustment problems in senior secondary schools as well as in higher institutions.

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