

Leadership Role and Deviant Behavior among Female Secondary School Students

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Abstract

The study was designed to determine the influence of leadership role on deviant behavior with respect to destructive practices and truancy among female students in southern Cross River State, Nigeria. The survey design was used for this study. The Student Self Report Inventory (SSRI) questionnaire was used to collect data. The sample for this study consisted of four hundred (400) SS111 female students. The data collected were statistically analyzed using the independent t -test. The findings revealed that female students who play leadership role involve themselves in destructive practices more than female students who do not play leadership role. The findings also revealed that female students who do not play leadership role involve themselves in truancy more than students with leadership role. Based on the findings, it was recommended that school authority should be able to detect early misbehavior and help the child while he is still receptive to treatment than he will be later.

Key words: Leadership role, destructive practices and truancy.

Introduction

Female students in secondary schools perform leading roles as school prefects and leaders of clubs. These positions make them stand out as role models for other students. A female student who plays leadership role in school is expected to help the teachers maintain discipline, encourage academic excellence in school and promote a viable student teacher relationship. Unfortunately, the problem of deviant behaviour has outweighed good morals such that the contributions of female students who play leadership role has no impact on character formation of the students. It becomes more disheartening when you observe a female student involved in destructive practices and truancy.

In most homes, children express their anger at home by vandalizing household furniture which if not checked will degenerate to vandalization of public property. Some children run away from home when asked to perform house chores, they are seen roaming the streets instead of staying at home to help their parent's in house chores. These deviant vices are common in our secondary schools today. Aletan (1995) in his research findings observed that adolescents of senior secondary schools in Calabar urban get into repeated conflicts with customs, rules and laws of the society, portraying them as those that are deviant, which is synonymous with delinquency. The study carried out by Ajake, Isangedighi, and Bisong (2008) on the influence of child rearing styles on the manifestation of dishonest behavior among senior secondary school students in southern Cross River State Nigeria showed that child rearing style has significant influence on the three aspects of dishonest behavior such as lying, stealing, and truancy. Reports from the mass media, juvenile court shows increasing rate of delinquency in schools. Those who frequently visit remand homes and detention centers would be surprised to see an ever growing population of adolescent inmates (Ekpo, 1996; 1997; Balogun 1997).

A good number of school children roam the streets in their uniforms when they are expected to be in their classrooms learning.

Also, Ajake, Etuk and Omori (2010) investigated the influence of child rearing style and brutal behaviour of senior secondary school students using One Way Analysis Of Variance (ANOVA). Six hundred (600) senior secondary 111 students were used for the study. The result showed that the three child rearing styles have significant influence on student's brutal behavior.

Ifaturoti (1994:150) assert that youths have deviant characteristics, which suggest an abnormal situation, and makes youth become liable to involvement in illegal or anti-social activities. Albert (1997:287) stressed that deviant youths often have peculiar life styles by which they are identified and feared by the general populace.

In our society today, the teachers, school administrators, researchers, guidance counselors, psychologist and social workers all remark on the increasing deviant behaviour. Students engage in protest, and vandalization of school properties. The greatest hazard posed by these offenders is that they become more unrepentant in crime and develop more avenues and improved techniques of perfecting in their destructive and truant tendencies. It has become imperative therefore to find out if leadership role could possibly influence deviant behaviour of female SS111 students with regard to destructive behaviours and truancy.

Materials and Methods

Subjects: A total sample of 400 female senior secondary school students in SS111 classes.

Data collection: A questionnaire titled “ Students Self Report Inventory (SSRI) was used for data collection. The questionnaire has three (3) sections with thirty five items. Section A consisted of students personal data, section B consisted of leadership positions currently occupied by students in school. It had eleven sub-items designed to measure leadership role of students. Section C consisted of sixteen items designed to measure deviant behaviour with regard to destructive practices and truancy among students. Each item requires the respondents indicating how often she finds herself doing these things under always” often sometimes and “never”.

Results

The hypotheses were tested using the independent t. test. The hypothesis was tested on the dependent variable as shown in table 1. The results of the analysis shows that the calculated t- value of -5.10 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.97 at .05 level of significance with 398 degrees of freedom. The result therefore means that female students who play leadership roles differ significantly from those who do not play leadership role with respect to their involvement in destructive practices. Based on this result, a further pattern of the influence was explored. The mean on destructive practices for female students who do not play leadership roles (means =13.93) is higher than the mean on destructive practices for female students who play leadership roles (mean =11.80). This means that female students, who play Leadership roles, involve themselves in destructive practices more than female students who do not play leadership role.

On table 2, the result of the 2nd hypothesis revealed that the calculated t-value of 3.30 is higher than the critical t-value of 1.97 at .05 level of significance with 398 degrees of freedom.

The result of the analysis, therefore means that female students who play leadership roles differ significantly from those who do not play leadership roles with respect to their involvement in deviant behaviour with regard to truancy in secondary schools in southern cross River State of Nigeria. With these results, a further pattern of the influence was explored. The mean on deviant behaviour, with regard to truancy for the female students who do not play leadership roles (mean = 18.31) is higher than the mean on deviant behaviour with regard to truancy for the female students who play leadership roles (mean = 16.47). This means that female students, who do not play leadership roles in secondary school, involve themselves in deviant behaviour with regard to truancy more than female students who play leadership roles.

Table 1 independent t- test analysis of the influence of leadership roles on involvement in destructive practices among female secondary school students in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria

| Leadership role | N | X | SD | t-values |
|------------------------------------|------------|--------------|-------------|----------|
| Student who played Leadership role | 139 | 11.80 | 4.44 | |
| Student without Leadership role | 261 | 13.93 | 4.28 | -5.10 |
| Total | 400 | 13.19 | 4.39 | |

* P < 0.05, df = 398, critical t = 1.97

Table 2 independent t-test analysis of the influence of leadership roles on involvement in deviant behaviour with regard to truancy among female SSIII students in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria

| Leadership role | N | X | SD | t-values |
|------------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------|----------|
| Student who played Leadership role | 139 | 16.47 | 5.27 | |
| Student without Leadership role | 261 | 18.31 | 5.42 | 3.30* |
| Total | 400 | 117.67 | 5.36 | |

* P < 0.05, df = 398, critical f = 1.97

Discussion

Based on the results of the statistical analysis, it is revealed that female students who play leadership roles differ significantly from those who do not play leadership roles with regard to their involvement in destructive practices in secondary school.

Sticks (1972) carried out a survey of young people in Australia and found out that between 40 and 50 percent of students surveyed were involved in school violence. Most school in Australia in the year 1992 suspended students for vandalization 25 times. Godfredson (1985) carried out a study on the incidence of violence in school and found out that a percent of 12 to 19 year old student were involved in at least one incident of violence at school in six months prior to the survey.

Smith [1993], in his own study, asserted that the playground is not the most likely place for vandalization to be perpetrated in schools. In most secondary schools, students spend breaks and lunch time in classroom and corridors and are tempted to break louvers, chairs, tables and doors during a fight or rough play. He stated that destruction of desk is the most common form of vadalization perpetrated in school by students.

In a similar development, Ajake, Isanghedigi and Bissong (2008) sited in their study that the respondents brought up under the three styles of child learning differ significantly in each dimension of the dishonest behaviour under investigation. They observed a significant difference in that respondent in truancy, lying and stealing.

Conclusion

From the findings, it was concluded that leadership role does not significantly influence deviant behaviour with regard to destructive practices, but has an influence on truancy.

The result of this findings will help school administrators checkmate the activities of students who play leadership roles in schools. They should be aware that students with leadership roles use their positions to roam around the school premises intimidating and harassing other students all in the name of discharging their leadership duties.

It is therefore recommended that

- The school authority should detect early misbehavior and help the child while he is still young and more receptive to treatment than he will be later.
- Government should employ and send to all secondary school's guidance counselors to properly counsel students with behaviour problems.
- Recreational activities should be included in the school curriculum for the child's full participation so as to shun truancy among students.
- Students should be counseled not to allow the playing of leadership role interfere with their academic activities.

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