

Indiscipline and Security Challenge in the Public Schools of the State of Osun, Nigeria: Solutions and Way Forward

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Abstract

Deviance and delinquency are strong behavioural maladjustments that lead to most indiscipline problems in schools at large. Causative factors responsible for deviance and delinquency were discussed in the paper, solutions proffered and way forward as prelude in our education sector. In the sociologist view, deviance is not as bad as people take it, because it is mendable why delinquency is hard to reverse. Theories of deviant behaviour were used to analyze these problems. Sometimes ago, the secondary school students of the State of Osun went on rampage due to the maltreatment meted to them on their Qualifying Mock Examination results, but the government took it as juvenile delinquency. This led to the breach of security in the State. This paper examined deeply the cause of the students' deviant behaviour and its aftermath effect on the education sector of the state. Thereafter, conclusions and recommendations were made to prevent such occurrence in the future.

Keywords: Indiscipline, Public Schools, Secondary Education, Way-Out..

Introduction

Indiscipline do emanate from behavioural maladjustments, which is termed as deviance and delinquency among youth or students in the schools. A person is said to be socially deviant if he / she is violating what the significant social norms in that particular culture dictates. A deviant violates institutionalized expectation shared and recognized as legitimate within a social system (Akuezulo, 2015). A delinquent is a young person who continually breaks the law set by an institution. The indiscipline problems that are being experienced in schools cannot be dissociated from each other, because the society instills a societal control which the population must abide by in accordance with the expectation of the general order. The juvenile delinquency and deviance behavior are learned function which often acquired via parent's negligence, and schools are expected to stand as a social agent to correct these maladjustment behaviours. The tendency to pass-on deviant behavior through generations in a family is higher. These are non-accidental physical inquiry, neglect, emotional abuse, sexual prostitution and abandonment, etc. In most families in Nigeria, children suffer neglect due to parents' separation, either by different work places /

stations or divorce. The country's labour market posits difficulties on family's wellbeing owing to job struggle, most of the young couples will not consider their children emotion (fear, anger, joy, etc) wellbeing when assumed job placement; they do not balance childbearing and upbringing with monetary satisfaction in form of job acquisition. They do not want to sacrifice for their children, all these lead to development maladjustment in children. Most school Principals nowadays are fond of either ordering Police arrest and detention of such children, the state security and judiciary do nothing but punishment in form of juvenile imprisonment. This paper is meant to re-examine these problems, save Nigerian school children from ill-baked education.

What causes man to act in certain ways are well established by the integration of psychological, biological and sociological (social work) fields. Deviance and delinquency are learned behaviors. Emerging learning theories explained how behavioural changes take place in teaching / learning processes. A greater percentage of deviance and delinquency that are of biological origins are inherent behavioural problems which are discussion of

Attention Deficient Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The sociological points consider family as a link of socialization in one's environment (Becker, 1963).

In the family, divorce, conflict, neglect, child abuse and deviant parents are the main indicator for the offspring action. Lack of supervision or care for children needs, is linked to delinquent behavior. Poverty is also a reason for conflict in the family, which can lead to parent's break-up and thus raise delinquent children. The government's attitude towards workers in the State of Osun (between 2015 – 2018), especially teachers has pedagogical negative implications. This can be featured in poor parenting, poor achievement arising from sit-down / lukewarm attitude of teachers. Remember, "a hungry man is an angry man". The manifestation is seen on the school's children having learning disabilities and learning difficulties through self-managing behavior now resulted into when students are unattended to, the problem caused by the government of the State. Building schools' infrastructure for the State is a welcome development, but it must not cause disequilibrium as experienced in the State. Workers received half-salary from July 2015 till September 2018, and as of now fifteen (15) months are outstanding full salaries, yet to be paid to workers. The chain-effect is that these workers who have hundreds of relatives and traders that are dependents. In short, people (parents) are suffering. Due to lack of circular flow of income now in the State, the teachers, the artisans and entire labour force are hungry, even the schools' children will hardly eat when they are in school environment. All these pose difficulties and barriers to school children's focus on their studies, modulating attention, controlling impulsivity and self-managing behavior. All these (in-turn) are responsible for the deviance and delinquency behavior among school children. The mass failure recorded in the State's Mock examination conducted in the year 2015 / 2016 among these children is a signal to their future, which led to school children unrest in the State.

Factors accountable for deviance and delinquent behaviour

Based on the introduction discussed above, the causes of discipline problems were highlighted. The causes of deviant and delinquent behavior will be viewed from psychological, environmental, biological, educational, economical, political and sociological perspectives.

Psychological Factor

It is an established facts that deviance and delinquent are learned behavior. The influence of parents on their wards as the first teacher is a well-established fact. Before a child comes into the four walls of school, he / she have evolved personality development between ages 0 – 2years. Poor parenting and developmental mismanagement are accountable for most delinquent cases and maladjustments, because the composition and control of activity of children is a turnover from his infancy and childhood experience.

The influence of peer group is another strong factor where the children can learn from, the classical conditioning proposed by I.P Pavlov, a distinguished scientist and Nobel prize winner, a Russian physiologist can be viewed in the light that a child who is influenced by his peer and ill-behaved can be reinforced after the influence and kept on behaving in more deviant and delinquent manners (O Donohue & Ferguson, 2006).

E.L. Thorndike agreed that behavior was the organism's response to stimulus. As learning is a connecting response to a stimulus with group behavior influenced desired behaviour of members, we can see that undesired behavior are stamped as acceptable to the group as against institution's desire and willingness to conformity.(Source)

Environmental Factor

"Environmental" here means the outer surrounding of organism, both organic and inorganic components. The environment contains the habitat which is the ecological factor of the organism. The type of environment provided by the parents at home can influence the way a student acts at school. How does a child become an offshoot and independence of his home? A medical history of a child goes thus: an infant has hearing disability which was unknown to his parents, anytime the child is given an instruction or assignment to carry out; he fails in his duty. His parent's response is to nag, shout, abuse and beat

because of this. The tendency is there, that the child will mimic his / her parents and appears with the composure in the school. Wherever he is shouted upon by people (peers or teachers), the turnover of this behavior manifests in wildness influencing his peers with this negative behavior, therefore constituting problems to school administration. This results to making the child autistic, that is, unable to relate to other children's response due to his aggressiveness. Hence, he becomes parameter for social behavior of the school involved (Cohen, 1965).

Here, we can see that school and home are dependent and upon them the students evolve their character trait. If a student suffers deprivation and abandonment in the hands of parent, such student might transfer aggression to his fellow students' thereby causing social disorganization, which form deviance and delinquent group in the school. A child can act deviantly to his teacher through hostility from crude treatment melted to him at home.

Biological Factor

The hearing disorder, which is unknown to the parents of the ward in medical history above, may be owing to genetic factor the child has no control over. Many factors point to behavioural disorder in medical literature. A recent study shows that a child may be hyperactive (for example overactive), impulsive or inattentive, owing to his brain chemistry and neurological development; a discussion of Attention Deficient Disorder (ADD) and Attention Deficient Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The symptoms of ADD and ADHD are manifested in a child by exhibiting extreme restlessness and inability to pay attention, concentrate, follow rules and control impulses, characteristics of children with learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities and learning difficulties; strong implication for teaching and learning process of children. The school is usually difficult for children with ADD and ADHD where they are tagged "bad: Oluigbo Children" which should not be so because these children are healthy with extraordinary needs that consequently requiring a special depth of understanding from the children's environment: parents, teachers, government, school guidance counselors and medical personnel; which constitute their outer surroundings.

These children's environment should stop their attitudinal behavior of condemnation by blaming parents, teachers, and government without necessarily addressing the problem of these children with the view to proffer solution to them.

Educational Factor

"Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe". – A.G Well.

"To me, the sole hope of human salvation lies in teaching ". – George Bernard Shaw.

"Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it; I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in". – Abraham Lincoln.

"Neither piety, now liberty can long flourish in a community where the education of youth is neglected". – Albert Cooper.

"Universal suffrage, without universal education, would be a curse". – H.L. Wayland.

Teachers use education to save mankind. An appeal to teachers is to look inward and fend for themselves and their dependents', so that the education of our youth shall not be destroyed. In the words of a School Principal, he explained the reason teachers should not be solely dependent on salary but look inward for other means of livelihood. The Principal claimed to be a "Spare-Part Seller", which has been helping him to pay children's school fees without borrowing from anywhere. Other forms of jobs that teachers can engage themselves after school hours are: online browsing and registration of students for examinations, academic empowerment service, coaching class. Remember, "tough time does not last; only tough people last".(Source)

Economic Factor

Economic pressure exert on all people to have access to certain basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter, not to mention all the goods and services associated with modern industrial societies. Nevertheless, inappropriate behavior can lead to loss of income that in turn can lead to various hardships for the culprits' poor achievement at public examination. This attested to the disequilibrium of government

priority of the State of Osun, where schools' infrastructural development is promoted at the expense of human resource development. The immediate past Governor, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola used Japan and China as case study for education in the State, whereas the federal government considered him as tiny god from the over-exaggeration of the success of his government; without looking for how the development actually took place. In fact, what epitomized to the success will be discussed in the course of this paper.

Political Factor

The deviant behaviour of the terminal high school students in the State of Osun towards their 2015 Mock examination result showed that of political will. It is a class struggle where few students were registered for the examination, the unregistered ones considered it as setback of no more admission that year. Students that were preparing for external examinations (WASSCE and NECO SSCE) which come but once a year could not make use of the best opportunities available to them. So, their performance was woeful, because most of the days featured teachers on "sit down strike" due to non-regular payment of the half-salary that workers were being paid.

The grievances of the students were enormous, but one of it was that the government failed to inform them early enough the development on examination fees that was suddenly introduced. They claimed that the money for the examination could have been sourced for before then. Truly, many of the candidates did not write SSCE examination that year. The bigger question then aroused that, "how then could the State of Osun fill her quota in Nigerian higher institutions?" Be it in the federal, State and private post-secondary institutions all around in Nigeria. Infact, it was a big break in the education sector that year.

The government complained on the failure of students in public examination, the government didn't look at the state of disequilibrium she caused; where workers' salaries were not paid. The English adage does say "a hungry man is an angry man". It happened that the school calendar did not wait for government to adjust in case of external examinations. The government was busy erecting mighty edifices and good roads at the expense of the lives of promising children in the

education sector of the State. Wait Kelly once said "if you want to get elected as President, you have got to think of some memorable homily, so is the school can be pestered into memorizing it; even if they don't know what it means". It was that the ratio of students' population to teachers was alarming, but then government made state security, physical projects, and empowerment of artisans, market women and rural area development more important than education of the innocent children.

Sociological Factor

The macro-sociological theories of deviance explain how the use of physical punishment by parents and teachers to control misbehavior among children, even the state security where most Principals find as solitude during upsurge in the school. The judiciary does penalize such children in juvenile prison, etc. Although, physical punishment may produce conformity in the immediate situation, but in the long run it tends to increase the probability of deviance among students inside and outside the school. The theory explains physical punishment of students and its attendant violence in school like rioting.

The labeling theory and deviance was formulated by Howard Beckett and introduced in 1963. Labeling theory is the theory of deviance that views deviance as a label assigned to behaviour and individual by figures of authority. Simply put, and according to this theory, no one is actually a deviant or delinquent and no action is deviant unless specified by society.

A further illustration of labeling theory suggests that deviance is caused by the deviant person being negatively labeled, internalizing the label and acting according to the label. Buttressing it, labeling theory says that once a deviant feels this way; he will continue to behave in the way society expects them to.

In a school system, if a teacher label a student unruly (cursing), the student may internalize that label from the authority figure and behave unruly as if the labeling was a self-fulfilling prophesy, even his peers may never desist from seeing the said unruly student in that way. However, the teacher has the power to decide what is deviance and acceptable and enjoys the power behind the labeling process. In almost all secondary schools today, Principals often use

policemen to arrest unruly students; either to label such students as delinquents or deviants which make such students to see themselves as being treated like a criminal.

The children's tenets of belief which are their self-concept development are formed. The self-concept is a series of belief children have acquired that they use to relate with the outside world and themselves. From labeling theory, all that is being done is to properly train the children and change tide anywhere. Here, we can deduce that teachers and school principal / headmaster / headmistress have failed because they have not been acting as confidant to the students; which is contrary to the role of teachers.

Effects of these Factors on the Learners and its Pedagogical Implications

The children's training centers on many factors, few of which had been explained above and influences their learning process. Developmental mismanagement, poor parenting, neurological disorder, poor self-concept and rejection leads to poor achievement of the students in school. Learning difficulties and disabilities have serious pedagogical implications like poor memory, inability to complete task, examination malpractice, drop-out from school, truancy, unemployment, corruption, etc.

It should be considered that this case should be shouldered by the three levels of government. I hope that all the youth and school pupils do not want to be mentally-illed with this attitude of disequilibrium and of misplaced priority.

Solutions and Way Forward

How do we care for and understand children that have no control over impulsive behaviour and despondent parents about their wards. When arrest is made of students with juvenile delinquency, have teachers play the confidant role to this set of students? As far back as 1909, the American Education System recognized and identified this problem of children in America and set up the children guidance movement by founding Juvenile Psychopathic Institute and family centers should be established.

The medicalization of deviants and delinquents should be given a consideration as it being done in the United States of America.

Another alternative is to set up education therapy facilities in school; these are set of factors that train students without medicalization.

The National Policy on Education (NPE, 2013) in Nigeria should consider establishing Juvenile Psychopathic Institute and Clinic in the schools in the country.

Conclusion

Certain factors are responsible for making students to be labeled "deviants and delinquents". Thus, they see themselves as such. Maintenance of discipline through physical punishment can never produce a good studentship the society can rely on and adults that will live devoid of crime. Labeling theory focuses on the reaction of other people and the subsequent effects of these reactions which cause deviance and delinquency.

If these suggestions are carefully implemented, most of the problems facing Nigerian education system will be eliminated; if the cases of most third world developing countries that implemented it are anything to go by.

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