



**Causes and Preventive Measures of Aggressive Behaviour  
among In-school Adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis:  
Stakeholders' Perception**

Omoshalewa Lasbat Badamas

*Abstract*

Aggressive behaviour has been described to be an act engaged in to harm someone who is considered to be vulnerable. It has been observed to be on the increase among young people, most particularly, adolescents in our society. This study therefore examines the stakeholders' perceived causes and preventive measures of aggressive behaviours among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis in Nigeria. A descriptive survey design was used for this study. Two hundred senior secondary school students and 100 teachers; making a total of 300 respondents, were selected for the study. A questionnaire was used to obtain data from the respondents. The instrument was validated by experts in the Department of Social Sciences Education. Two research questions were answered and two research hypotheses tested. Percentage and mean ratings were used to answer Research Questions One and Two, while an independent t-test was used to test the two formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of this study revealed that the stakeholders' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis was poor teacher-students' interactions. Stakeholders perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour to be regular moral and religion teachings, and parental monitoring of what their children watch on social media. Based on the discussion of findings and the conclusions drawn, it was recommended that aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents can be prevented by engaging in moral and religion teachings on aggressive behaviour.

Keywords: aggressive, behaviour, causes, violence, preventive measures, stakeholders

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## ***Introduction***

Aggression is a significant problem at both the immediate and societal levels, and has a negative impact on both victims and committers. Aggression is a behaviour whose immediate intent is to hurt someone. It is a destructive force in social relations, and as a result is an important social issue. Human aggression is any behaviour directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate intent to cause harm, that the perpetrator must believe that the behaviour will harm the target, and that the target is motivated to avoid the behaviour (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Myers, 2010). Recently, there are a lot of uncertainties; clashes leading to aggressive behaviour which is upsetting among in-school adolescents as well as other age groups in society. The intricacies of contemporary life always causes some stress, anxiety and attacking behaviour in human beings which can lead to several anti-behaviours among in-school adolescents. A number of adolescents demonstrate aggression in various ways and cause harm to others. Generally, aggression is an imbalanced state of mind, hence it is always chaotic in nature and common among adolescents. Aggression may be defined as a harmful aspect of the personality of a child and/or others which is expressed through behaviour when a situation arises and in particular among in-school adolescents. Aggressive behaviours can vary from problems with emotional regulation to severe and manipulative behaviours. Aggressive behaviour can be triggered by arguments, bullying, both verbally (name-calling) and physically (pushing); threatening; striking back in anger; use of strong-arm tactics (to get something they want); and engaging in physical fights. Notably, aggressive behaviors do not always involve physical contact with another person. Verbal aggression in elementary school years can be part of a developmental trajectory leading to adolescent delinquency and Conduct Disorder (Larson & Lochman, 2002).

Lokoyi's (2015) findings revealed that different parenting styles are associated with aggressive behaviour. An authoritative parenting style continues to influence children's development in positive ways beyond childhood and into adolescence; conceptually, the authoritative style parents have both responsive and demanding dimensions. Their children have fewer behavioural problems and a high rate of academic achievement in school. Thus, with high demand and responsiveness between parent and child, there will be less internalizing and externalizing symptoms. In contrast, permissive parents are responsive but they are not demanding. The children tend to be passive and unresponsive in their interaction with others, become dependent and lack social responsibility. Closely related to parenting styles is psychological variables such as self-esteem, personality traits and locus of control which could be an underlining factor for how we react, talk and take actions in our day-to-day activities. Since the school is a social environment, one will expect students to relate by sharing ideas and learning from others. However, some students, faced with this situation, may be provoked. For instance, an individual with a self-esteem problem may be involved in aggressive behaviour compared to someone with a balanced self-esteem. Some literature suggests that high self-esteem is linked to aggressive behaviour (Kirkpatrick, Waugh, Valencia & Webster, 2002), while some researchers have noted a link between elevated levels of self-esteem (particularly in the form of narcissism) and aggression (Barry, Grafeman, Adler & Pickard, 2007). Others have shown an association between low self-esteem and aggression (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffitt & Caspi, 2005).

Another cause of aggression in an adolescent could be the onset of an aggressive tendency at childhood rather than at the adolescent stage. The children that develop aggressive tendencies at childhood are more likely to display the most persistent, severe, and violent antisocial behaviour. However, childhood aggression is often viewed as an indication of a broader syndrome, frequently involving oppositional and defiant behavior toward adults and covert rule-breaking behaviours. These behaviours could lead to more serious and recurrent violations in adolescence, such as stealing, vandalism, assault, and substance abuse (Larson & Lochman, 2002). Identity and role confusion can lead to aggression and violence among in-school adolescents when they are not properly managed.

Stakeholders in the field of education should be greatly concerned about the extent of aggressive behaviour and violence in schools because aggression directly or indirectly impedes our basic needs of safety and security which in turn affects teaching and learning. The fact that there are factors that cause aggression implies that there are ways to prevent aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents. Preventive measures for controlling aggressive behaviour could come in diverse ways such as organizing training for aggressive tendencies for students. Students should also be enlightened about the likely causes and consequences of their aggression. Another way of trying to prevent aggression could be to engage the parents of the students who are known to be exhibiting aggression in school. The parent's methods of raising their children (i.e., the parenting style) could be responsible. Furthermore, students who have been known to be flexing muscles on others through aggressive behaviour could be brought together for rehabilitation and encouraged to desist from such behaviour as it is detrimental to society and their future. Other preventive measures that could be used as found out in the study of Shireen and Sufiana (2015) include a teacher-parent relationship, parents creating a trust-based environment for their children, as well as others.

Aggression has been reported by Geen (2001) to be a prevailing anti-social act affecting individuals on a daily basis. It is a negative stimulus to another person as it pertains to the intention of harming that person (with the expectation that the aversive stimulus will reach its destination). School violence and aggressive tendencies have become a social problem especially among secondary school students in the contemporary world. The term 'violence' is defined by threats, verbal and physical attacks, vandalism, ostracization, extortion and other delinquent behaviours perpetrated by student(s) against others in the school community. The exposure of students to violence, according to Finekelhor, Ormrod, Turner, Hamby and Kracke (2009), occurs from association with friends, classmates, or an adult.

The issue of aggression and violence has become a very serious subject of concern in our society and families where you see husbands and wives killing each other because of a lack of self-control and other psychological and anti-social problems. This problem is not limited to homes; it has gradually found its way to schools where you see students fight at the slightest provocations. This study therefore examines the causes and preventive measures for aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. There are two research questions: 1) What are the causes of aggressive behaviour among in school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis?; and 2) What are the preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis? There are also two research hypotheses: H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in teachers and students' perceived causes of aggressive behaviours among in-school adolescents in

Ilorin Metropolis; and H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in teachers and students perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis, were answered and tested respectively.

### ***Research Method***

A descriptive survey research design was used to conduct this study. The sample for the study comprised 200 students and 100 teachers. Simple random sampling techniques were used to select 10 senior secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis. Twenty students and 10 teachers were randomly selected from the 10 schools. The research instrument for this study was a structured questionnaire adapted from Amuda-Kannike (2018) to measure the causes and preventive measures of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents. The questionnaire was titled “Stakeholders’ Perceived Causes and Preventive Measures of Aggressive Behaviour among In-School Adolescents”. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: Section A, B, and C. Section A described the demographic variable of the respondents, section B contained the causes of aggressive behaviour while section C consisted of the preventive measures of aggressive behaviour.

Experts in the Department of Social Sciences Education were given the instrument to establish face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was carried out by the researcher. Two sets of test administrations were carried out at the interval of two weeks. Data obtain from the first and second administration was collated separately and subjected to reliability using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. The reliability coefficient was found at 0.69. Two research questions were raised in this study. Research Questions One and Two were answered with the use of mean ratings and percentages while the two research hypotheses were tested using t-test at a 0.05 level of significance.

### ***Results***

The demographic data of the respondents are presented and interpreted in this section.

**Table 1**  
**Distribution of Respondents by Gender and Status**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Gender	Male	146	48.7
	Female	154	51.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Status of Stakeholders	Teacher	100	33.3
	Students	200	66.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Three hundred respondents were drawn for this research, out of which 48.7% were male and 51.3% were female. Also, 33.3% were teachers while 66.7% were students.

### *Answering the Research Questions*

Research Question One: What are the stakeholders' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis?

To answer the research question, responses on the stakeholders' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis as perceived by teachers and students were coded and analysed using descriptive statistics of mean. A decision as to the perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis was based on the benchmark of 2.50. To achieve this, the average of the numerical points for the response options were obtained as  $(4+3+2+1)/4$ . In which 4 stands for Strongly Agree, 3 stands for Agree, 2 stands for Disagree, and 1 for Strongly Disagree. Items with a mean score of 2.50 or above were regarded as causative factors, while items with a mean score below 2.50 were not regarded as among the causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. The outcome of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**

**Rank Ordering of the Stakeholders' Perceived Causes of Aggressive Behaviour among In-School Adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis**

S/N	Items	Mean	Rank
1	Students behaved aggressively when their needs are not met	2.14	16 <sup>th</sup>
2	School cliques-groups with conflicting ideas and values causes indiscipline among students	2.82	8 <sup>th*</sup>
3	Self-centeredness and dishonesty of close friends also results in aggressive behaviour	2.65	10 <sup>th*</sup>
4	Unfriendly relationships with peers	2.52	12 <sup>th*</sup>
5	Parent negligence and indifference in raising their children	3.07	4 <sup>th*</sup>
6	Financial problems	1.35	20 <sup>th</sup>

7	Parents constant fighting and quarreling at home influence the child's behaviour (Aggression)	2.41	14 <sup>th</sup>
8	Parental punitive measure and family instability causes children to be aggressive in class or school	2.01	18 <sup>th</sup>
9	Broken home makes children to be more aggressive in-school	2.97	6 <sup>th*</sup>
10	Children from poor families are more aggressive than children from rich families	2.67	9 <sup>th*</sup>
11	Personality and individual problems	3.02	5 <sup>th*</sup>
12	Being frank and dishonest and authoritative behaviour of teachers make students to be aggressive	2.54	11 <sup>th*</sup>
13	Poor teacher-students' interaction cause students to be aggressive	3.43	1 <sup>st*</sup>
14	Pressure of studies make students to be aggressive	2.10	17 <sup>th</sup>
15	Stressful situation	3.13	3 <sup>rd*</sup>
16	favoritism with some students and grudges with others	2.01	18 <sup>th</sup>
17	Social media and watching television	2.50	13 <sup>th*</sup>
18	Being a victim of Violence	2.92	7 <sup>th*</sup>
19	Teenage and physical changes	2.20	15 <sup>th</sup>
20	Psychological problems like inferiority complex	3.15	2 <sup>nd*</sup>

Table 2 shows the stakeholders' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. Based on the analysis, the stakeholders' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis in their order of ranking are: poor teacher-students' interaction, psychological problems like inferiority complex, stressful situation, parent negligence and indifference in raising their children, personality and individual problems, broken home makes children to be more aggressive in-school, being a victim of violence, school cliques-groups with conflicting ideas and values, poor family background, self-

centeredness and dishonesty of close friends, dishonest and authoritative behaviour of teachers, unfriendly relationships with peers, and social medial and watching of television.

Research Question Two: What are the stakeholders' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis?

To answer the research question, responses on the stakeholders' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis were coded and analysed using descriptive statistics of mean. A decision as to the perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis was based on the benchmark of 2.50. To achieve this, the average of the numerical points for the response options were obtained as  $(4+3+2+1)/4$ . In which 4 stands for Strongly Agree, 3 stands for Agree, 2 stands for Disagree, and 1 for Strongly Disagree. Items with a mean score of 2.50 or above were regarded as preventive measures, while items with a mean score below 2.50 were not regarded as preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. The output of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**

**Rank Ordering of the Stakeholders' Perceived Preventive Measures to Aggressive Behaviour among In-School Adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis**

S/N	Items	Mean	Rank
1	Friendly and good domestic environment by parents	3.07	3 <sup>rd</sup>
2	Trust based parent-children relationship	2.52	12 <sup>th</sup>
3	Teacher's good behaviour and positive attitude toward students	3.03	5 <sup>th</sup>
4	Parent-teacher interaction	2.51	14 <sup>th</sup>
5	Regular moral and religion teachings on aggressive behaviour	3.10	1 <sup>st</sup>
6	Parental monitoring of what their children watch on the social media	3.08	2 <sup>nd</sup>
7	Venting aggression on inanimate objects(catharsis)	3.00	8 <sup>th</sup>
8	Punishment should be meted out to students that involve in aggressive behaviour in class or school	2.54	13 <sup>th</sup>



9	Organizing an enlightenment program for aggressive students	2.67	9 <sup>th</sup>
10	Walking away without saying anything	2.01	15 <sup>th</sup>
11	Visiting a guidance counselor	3.01	7 <sup>th</sup>
12	Reporting to teacher	3.05	4 <sup>th</sup>
13	Unhealthy relationship/ gathering should be prohibited in-schools	2.58	11 <sup>th</sup>
14	Caring and respect for every students' feelings, beliefs, emotions, as well as his/her cultural and social values	2.65	10 <sup>th</sup>
15	Taking away something the children enjoy, or missing out on favorite activities both at home and in-school.	3.03	5 <sup>th</sup>

Table 3 shows the stakeholders' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis. Based on the analysis, the stakeholders' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis in their order of ranking includes: regular moral and religion teachings on aggressive behaviour, parental monitoring of what their children watch on the social media, a friendly and good domestic environment by parents, reporting to a teacher, taking away something the children enjoys, or missing out on favorite activities both at home and in-school, teacher's good behaviour and positive attitude toward students, visiting a guidance counselor, venting aggression on inanimate objects(catharsis), organizing an enlightenment program for aggressive students, caring and respect for every students' feelings, beliefs, emotions, as well as his/her cultural and social values, unhealthy relationship/ gathering should be prohibited in-schools, trust based parent-children relationship, punishment should be meted out to students that involve in aggressive behaviour in class or school, parent-teacher interaction, and walking away without saying anything.

### ***Hypotheses Testing***

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in teachers and students' perceived causes of aggressive behaviours among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis.

**Table 4****Independent t-test of Difference in Teachers and Students' Perceived Causes of Aggressive Behaviours among In-School Adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis**

Stakeholders	No	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Teachers	100	62.63	4.53	298	3.09	0.03	Significant
Students	200	67.06	4.32				

The results in Table 4 show t-value of 3.09 and significance value of 0.03 which is less than 0.05 ( $0.03 < 0.05$ ). Since 0.03 is less than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is significant difference in teachers and students' perceived causes of aggressive behaviours among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in teachers and students' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis.

**Table 5****Independent t-test of Difference in Teachers and Students' Perceived Preventive Measures to Aggressive Behaviour among In-School Adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis**

Stakeholders	No	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Remarks
Teachers	100	43.44	4.01	298	1.17	0.08	Not Significant
Students	200	42.09	3.37				

Result in Table 5 show t-value of 1.17 and significance value of 0.08 which is greater than 0.05 ( $0.08 > 0.05$ ). Since 0.08 is greater than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant difference in teachers and students' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis.

## *Discussion*

This study analysed stakeholders' perceived causes and preventive measures of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. The first finding of the study found that stakeholders' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis were in this order: poor teacher-students' interaction was ranked first, psychological problems like inferiority complex was ranked second, stressful situation ranked third, parent negligence and indifference in raising their children was ranked fourth while personality and individual problems was ranked fifth, broken home makes children to be more aggressive in-school, being a victim of violence, school cliques-groups with conflicting ideas and values, poor family background, self-centeredness and dishonesty of close friends, dishonest and authoritative behaviour of teachers, unfriendly relationships with peers, and social media and watching of television was ranked last.

This result is in agreement with the finding of Shireen and Sufiana (2015) who found that students have no tolerance for criticism, that as soon as the teacher says something or point out a mistake of the students, a very quick and strong reaction is observed. Their moods change, their facial expressions become very negative, and in some cases, they start talking very rudely. On the contrary, this result disagreed with the findings of Stuart (2009) who found that aggressive actions in children are the effects of the attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), manic stage of bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, paranoia or other psychotic conditions. The variation observed between the present study and that of Stuart (2009) could be as result of the level of the respondent. The present study was conducted among secondary school students while that of Stuart was carried out among children in primary schools.

The second finding of this study revealed that stakeholders' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis ranges from regular moral and religion teachings on aggressive behaviour, parental monitoring of what their children watch on the social media, friendly and good domestic environment by parents, trust based parent-children relationship to walking away from aggressive triggered situations or environment without saying anything.

This result is on the contrary to Gini, Pozzoli & Hymel (2014) that discipline strategies teach children new methods to handle their negative feelings and behaviors. Time out strategy and withdrawal of privileges that is taking away something the children enjoys, or missing out on a favorite activity, like watching television can also be helpful as a preventive measure to students' aggressive behaviour.

On the other hand, this result is in agreement with the finding of Shireen and Sufiana (2015) who found that the role of parents at home, and parents-teacher interaction, strong teacher- student interaction, cooperative learning activities for students and their moral and religious training, scrutiny of presenting movies on promotion of aggression, and need of teachers' training for providing counseling to aggressive students are some measures which can reduce students' aggressive tendencies.

The third finding of this study revealed that there is significant difference in teachers and students' perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. A plausible explanation for this could be as a result of teachers' experiences with different students from different backgrounds and teachers' years of experience. Teachers also

have to deal with different students from year to year and from different classes. The students' perceptions and experiences on the other hand might be limited to their classes and family only. But teachers with different experiences from different schools coupled with the fact that most of them are parents might have richer experience or perception than students which accounted for the significant difference in their perception of the causes of students' aggressive behaviour than the students might have.

The fourth finding of this study revealed that there is no significant difference in teachers and students' perceived preventive measures to aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis. This result is possible where the teachers and the students' perceived preventive measures of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents went in the same direction without much variation. This might be as a result of their perception of the preventive measure which was considered best or suitable to prevent aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents in Ilorin Metropolis.

### ***Conclusion***

Based on the discussion of findings, it was concluded that the first and second causes of aggressive behaviour as perceived by the stakeholders were poor teacher-students' interaction and psychological problems (i.e., an inferiority complex). The study further concluded that there was a significant difference in stakeholder perceived causes of aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents while there was no significant difference in the preventive measure of aggressive among in-school adolescents in Ilorin metropolis.

### ***Recommendation***

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents can be prevented by engaging in moral and religious teachings on aggressive behaviour, parental monitoring of what children watch on the social media, a friendly and good domestic environment by parents, and a trust-based parent-children relationship to walking away from aggressive triggered situations from the environment without saying anything.

With aforementioned preventive measures, aggressive behaviour among in-school adolescents could be reduced to the barest minimum.

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