INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES ON MORAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA

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Abstract
The study investigated the influence of parenting styles on moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. The research design for this study was a descriptive survey research design. The specific objective was to find out the correlation between parenting style and the status of moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. 45,795 students in the Federal Capital Territory made up the study population. A sample size of 381 was used. Parenting style and moral development Questionnaire (PSMDQ) was used in this study to collect data from the sampled secondary school students. The data collected were subjected to SPSS analysis based on the research questions and null hypotheses. t-test and NOVA statistics were used to test the hypotheses and to answer research questions. The findings from the study showed that the parents of secondary school students are more autocratic than other parental styles and the status of moral development of students are appreciably high. The study recommended that parents should be mindful of the type of parenting style to adopt and possible adopt autocratic parenting style.

Key Words: Parenting Style, Moral Development

Introduction
Experiences and history have shown that nations, whether capitalist or socialist, secular or theocratic, face one type of problem or the other as they March along the path of development in nation-building. Nigeria is not an exception. In fact, Nigeria as a nation, has been suffering from various forms of social ills since her independence in 1960, which had been identified as the major cog in the wheel of her development in all fields. One of these social ills, is the problem of moral indiscipline among students in secondary schools in Nigeria. Nigeria has been suffering from the problem of moral indiscipline among students in our secondary schools since 1960 such as cultism, substance abuse, rape, prostitution, arm robbery, examination malpractice, killing to mention but a few.

The end of adolescence and beginning of adulthood varies by country and by function. Furthermore, even within a single nation, state or culture there can be different ages at which an individual is considered mature enough for society to entrust them with certain privileges and responsibilities. Such milestones include driving a vehicle, having legal sexual relations, serving in armed forces or in a jury, purchasing and drinking alcohol, voting, enticing into contracts, finishing certain levels of education and marriage. Adolescence is usually accompanied by an increased independence allowed by the parents and legal guardians, including less supervision as compared to pre adolescence.

Adolescence is a search for risk taking, without risk-taking, teenagers would not have the motivation or confidence necessary to make a change in society from childhood to adulthood. Risk taking potentials have led so many to new found sexual attractiveness, drinking, drug use/addiction, negative attitudes or responses to elders, delinquency, depression, aggressiveness and examination malpractices. Berger (2001) and Ochiagha (2004) maintained that the students' moral development in Nigeria is a direct imitation of the adults whom they select as role models. Despite our cherished values and the obligation on parents and adult members of the society to transfer these values from father to offspring or from generation to generation, some adults exhibit moral indiscipline which adolescent, being good imitators, select as role models.

Students in Nigerian secondary school's according to Gana (2001), exhibit moral indiscipline by their involvements in armed robbery operations, examination malpractices, cultism, impersonation, sexual promiscuity, teenage and unwanted pregnancy, drug abuse, smoking, disrespect for elders and the constituted authorities. Ochiagha (2004) completed the list which includes drunkenness, ritual killing, dangerous driving, bank robbery, kidnapping, smuggling, currency trafficking and arson.

Parents have an important role to play as both socializing and control agent over their children's behaviour. One major component of parental control is monitoring strategy. For adolescent to conform to the norms and values of the society, parents must step up and choose appropriate style to use in training their children if we must see a virile society. Parenting styles are the standard strategies that parents use in their child's training, rearing and up-bringing with the inculcation of values, norms of the society in order to be useful to the society. Secondary school students depend on their parents for food, shelter, finance and companionship. Parents love as well as punishment can exert a great influence on children when handled properly (Baumrind 1991). Parents may find it difficult to train up their children to meet up

positively with this challenging and dynamic society and stand out to become world citizens. The task of adolescent training may be difficult due to economic crises, social instability and the weakening of major institutions including the state systems of public education and the family.

Parenting styles consider broader pattern of methods, hence, psychologists like Baumrind (2000) theory of social development and parenting styles which identify four parenting styles, namely democratic, autocratic, permissive and neglectful parenting. The four styles involve a combination of acceptance and responsiveness on the one hand and demand and control on the other hand.

Moral development involves thoughts, behaviours and feelings regarding standards of right and wrong. Moral development has an intrapersonal dimension that is a person's basic values and sense of self and interpersonal dimension that is a focus on what people should do in their interactions with other people. Parent–child relationship is very important in moral development of an adolescent. At this stage, they reason logically, abstractly and deductively. They try to compare the real with the ideal; create contrary- to –fact-proposition (Gibbs, 2003). They are cognitively capable of relating the distant past to the present; understand their roles in society, in history and the universe, conceptualise their own thoughts and think about their mental constructs as objects. Adolescence period cannot be compared to the period of parent- child relationship in which parents have the power and the children do not and at this stage (pre adolescence) they are less likely to advance in moral reasoning because rules are often handed down in an autocratic way. Adolescents who are well brought up not to steal, kill, rob, cheat, or commit any immoral acts are sometimes faced with contradictions between the moral concepts they have accepted and experienced outside their family and neighbourhood. According to Walker and Pitts (1998), adolescents come to recognise that their set of beliefs is but one of many and that there is considerable debate about what is right and what is wrong. They start to query their former beliefs and in the process develop their own moral system.

The researcher has observed that secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory exhibit some forms of immoral behaviours such as cultism, abuse of substance, rape, kidnapping, killing, examination malpractices, prostitution, teenage pregnancy to mention but a few. This has become a source of concern to school authorities and the researcher as well. While it can be argued that there are other agencies of socialization, the question is what is the influence of parenting style on moral development of secondary school students?. Moral decadence may have led to the decay of core values, such as hard work, respect for lives and constituted authorities as

well are among the perpetrators of these moral acts. Some secondary school students have continued to pose treats to the society through activities such as secret cult, substance abuse, examination malpractice, fanaticism, arm robbery and kidnapping.   These are some of the challenges that have led the researcher to go into this study, to investigate the influence of parenting styles on moral development among secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory. The undisputed prevalence of these anti-social issues in the area of study against the bankrupt of the past measures to investigate them but to no avail constitutes the problems of this study. In other words, could parenting style accounts for these social challenges. From observation, adolescent excessively display delinquent behaviours toward others and to the society at large. This has propelled the researcher to investigate the influence parenting styles have on moral development of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory Abuja, and its implication for guidance.

The following research questions and hypotheses guided the study :
- What are the parenting styles of secondary school student's parent in Federal Capital Territory?
- What is the status of moral development of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory?
- What is the influence of democratic parenting styles on moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
- What is the influence of democratic parenting styles on moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja?
- What is the influence of laissez-faire parenting style on moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory?
- There is no significant relationship between democratic, autocratic and laissez-faire parenting style and moral development of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory.

Method

The research design was a descriptive survey design. The study population comprised of all the fifty five (55) public Senior Secondary schools in Federal Capital Territory. The population of senior secondary students is 45,795 (Secondary Education Board, 2017). The researcher used a stratified random sampling technique to select two (2) schools from each of the six (6) Area Councils found in the Federal Capital Territory Abuja. A proportionate

stratified sampling was further used to select respondents from each of the selected school. A total of 381students were selected based on Krejcie and Morgan table of sample specification (1970).

The instrument for data collection was an adopted questionnaire named Parenting Style and Moral Development Questionnaire (PSMDQ) from Onyinlola (2017). The questionnaire was structured along four-point modified scale and contained thirty five (35) items. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the instrument was presented to experts in the Department of Counselling and Educational Psychology for face and content validation. To ascertain the reliability, the instrument was further subjected to pilot test. The pilot test was conducted using thirty (30) secondary school students from Government Secondary School Dobi. The test-retest method of reliability was used. Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation co-efficient, a reliability index value of 0.84 was obtained. The data collected were analysed using mean scores and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

Results

Table 1: Students' Responses on Parenting Styles
N=381

S/N	Students' Responses on Democratic Parenting Style	Mean	Decision
1	Seek my opinion on some issues in the family	3.33	Agree
2	Allow me to take decisions on my own	2.43	Disagree
3	Always give me reason before they punish me	3.44	Agree
4	Allow me to develop myself with little or no		
5	interference	2.80	Agree
6	Always make sure that they meet my needs	3.19	Agree
	Always praise me whenever I do something right	3.43	Agree
	Sectional Mean/Std. Dev.	**3.10**	

S/N	Students' Responses on Autocratic Parenting Style	Mean	Decision
7	Always set high rules and regulations for me	3.02	Agree
8	Always expect more from me both in academics and		
9	house chores	3.14	Agree
10	Pay little attention to my basic needs	3.19	Agree
11	Always punish me each time I do something wrong	3.29	Agree
12	Do not like me taking decision on my own	2.91	Agree
	Use forceful measures to curb my self-will	2.79	Agree
	Sectional Mean/Std. Dev.	**3.06**	

S/No.	Students' Responses on Laissez-faire Parenting Style	Mean	Decision
13	Always support the decisions I take on my own	2.29	Disagree
14	Are careless about the type of friends I go out with	1.76	Disagree
15	Do not care what time I come back home	1.80	Disagree
16	Are not bothered whether I go to school or not	1.82	Disagree
17	Always accept my behaviour either good or bad	2.12	Disagree
	Sectional Mean/Std. Dev.	**1.96**	

Table 1 shows response to items on parenting styles of secondary school students in FCT. On democratic parenting style, the sectional mean of 3.10 shows that parents of students in FCT secondary schools appear to be democratic in their style of parenting. On autocratic parenting style, sectional mean of 3.06 also shows that parents of students in FCT secondary schools appear to be autocratic in their style of parenting. On Laissez-faire parenting style, the mean of 1.96 indicates that parents of students in FCT secondary schools do not practice laissez-faire parenting style. In summary, parents of secondary school students in FCT, therefore appear to be more democratic, followed by autocratic and less in terms of laissez-faire parenting style.

Research Question Two: What is the status of moral development of secondary school students in Federal Capital Territory?

Table 2: Status of Moral Development of Secondary School Students N=381

S/N	Items	Mean	Decision
18	Suffer emotionally as a result of my action	2.37	Disagree
19	I treat some people differently than others in school	2.23	Disagree
20	My actions fail to prove love for my country and people around		
21	me	2.22	Disagree
22	My actions shows lack of respect for constituted authority	2.65	Agree
23	My actions always violate standards of purity and decency	2.73	Agree
24	Most times I fail to care for someone weak or vulnerable	2.65	Agree
25	My decisions and actions are seen as unfairly	2.50	Agree
26	My actions and attitudes point as a betray to my group	2.27	Disagree
27	I do not always like to conformed to the traditions of society	2.45	Disagree
28	I feel emotionally unstable when something is disgusting to		
29	me	3.00	Agree
30	I feel insecure when someone is cruel towards me	2.90	Agree
31	I careless when I deny my younger ones of their rights	2.11	Disagree
32	I do not bother if someone show disloyalty towards me	2.88	Agree
	I careless when my action causes chaos or disorder	2.30	Disagree
	I do not bother when someone acts in a way that God would be provoke	1.98	Disagree
		2.48	
	Sectional Mean/ Std. Dev.		

Table 2 shows response to items on status of moral development of secondary school students in FCT. The sectional mean of 2.48 provides basis for the decision that students in FCT secondary schools have good moral standing since they fail to affirm these negative items on moral development. This implies that the status of moral development of students in FCT secondary schools is appreciably high.

Table 3: Result of Correlation Test of Parenting Styles and Moral Development of Secondary School Students in FCT

Variables	N	r-cal	Sig. (2 tailed)	Decision
Moral Development and Democratic Parenting Style	381	.313	.000	Significant
Variables	N	r-cal	Sig. (2 tailed)	Decision
Moral Development and Autocratic Parenting Style	381	.370	.000	Significant
Variables	N	r-cal	Sig. (2 tailed)	Decision
Moral Development and Laissez Faire Parenting Style	381	.284	.000	Significant

On the relationship between moral development and democratic parenting style, Table 3 shows, with the significant value of .000 (less than .05), that the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is significant relationship between democratic parenting style and moral development of secondary school students. The positive value of the correlation suggests that scores for the two variables move in the same direction. Therefore increasing scores in moral development tend to pair with increasing scores in democratic parenting style parenting style. One could therefore say that as parents become increasingly democratic, students tend to be higher in their moral development.

On the relationship between moral development and autocratic parenting style, Table 3 also shows, with the significant value of .000 (less than .05), that the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is significant relationship between autocratic parenting style and moral development of secondary school students. The positive value of the correlation suggests that scores for the two variables move in the same direction. Therefore increasing scores in moral development tend to pair with increasing scores in autocratic parenting style parenting style. One could therefore say that as parents become increasingly autocratic, students tend to be higher in their moral development.

On the relationship between moral development and laissez-faire parenting style, Table 3 also indicates, with the significant value of .000 (less than .05), that the null hypothesis is rejected. It is concluded that there is significant relationship between laissez-faire parenting style and moral development of secondary school students.

In summary, it can be deduced from the correlation tests that the most dominant of the parenting styles is autocratic parenting with correlation coefficient of .370 followed by the democratic parenting style whose correlation coefficient is .313. The lowest level of correlation however is with the laissez-faire parenting style with coefficient of .284. The dominant parenting style that influences moral development therefore is autocratic parenting style.

Discussion

In this study, the researcher found that parents of secondary school students in FCT appear to be more autocratic followed by democratic and less in terms of laissez-faire parenting style. This is not surprising because African parents are generally known to be very autocratic in their disciplinary approach. It is only in recent times with enlightenment and education that parents are becoming more democratic. In terms of laissez-faire parenting, it is alien in African society for parents to adopt an i-don't-care attitude towards their children's upbringing. This finding is in line with Olatunji and Afolabi (2011) in Ekiti who discovered that there is a weak relationship between parenting styles and moral development of students. However Okorodudu (2010) stated that laissez-faire parenting style effectively predicts adolescents' delinquency while autocratic and democratic did not. Parents who are positively oriented in their styles (demandingness and responsiveness) will make their adolescents socially competent and goal directed.

The researcher further discovered that the moral development of students in FCT secondary schools is appreciably high. This may be due to the fact that secondary school students grow up in different environments aside their home and this help in shaping their moral development. This is in contrary to Igbo (2005) who discovered that parents contribute to students' deviant behaviour.

Also, the study discovered that there is a significant relationship between the three parenting styles and moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory. This may not also be surprising because secondary schools in FCT always advocate moral development of students in respective of their backgrounds. Some schools equally imbibe moral education in their curriculum. This is in agreement with Onyinlola

(2017) who equally discovered that there is a significant relationship between the three parenting styles and moral development of adolescents.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study was drawn based on the findings from the study: parents of secondary school students in FCT appear to be more of autocratic and less in terms of other parenting styles. The dominant parenting styles is autocratic, this may be due to our African nature were our parents most times dominate and want to have the final say. Moral development of secondary school students are high, this may be as a result of the various environments the students grow up in. There was no significant difference between the three parenting styles and moral development of secondary school students in the FCT. The study also concluded that male and female students do not differ in the various parenting styles they experience and their moral development.

The following recommendations were made from the findings of this study:

1. Parenting styles used by parents affect their moral development. As such, parents should be mindful of the type of parenting styles they adopt.
2. The status of moral development of secondary school students in the Federal Capital Territory is high, as such, school authorities and parents should do more to ensure that the moral development of the students remain at high level.
3. There was significant relationship between democratic parenting style and moral development of secondary school students. The study therefore recommends that parents who are democratic in their style of parenting should ensure that it has a positive impact on the moral development of the students.
4. The study recommends that parents in the Federal Capital Territory should be encouraged to practice autocratic parenting style.

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