FAMILY SIZE AND STUDENTS' TENDENCIES TO ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR: IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING IN COVID-19 ERA IN CALABAR EDUCATION ZONE, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Anti-social behaviours are disturbing, harmful, negative and maladjusted behaviours that are unacceptable in the society. Hence, this study was carried out to establish the extent family size influences students' antisocial behaviour tendencies in Calabar Education Zone, Cross River State. A research question and hypothesis were used in this study. Ex-post facto research design was adopted. A sample of eight-hundred and seventy-seven (877) students was randomly selected from the population of 6223 students using stratified random sampling techniques. A well validated and reliable 5-point scale questionnaire titled "Family Size and Students' Tendencies to Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire (FS-STABQ) was used for data collection. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that family size significantly influenced students' tendencies to engage in antisocial behaviours in moral, domestic, school and social activities. Conclusively, this has implication for repositioning of educational psychology in school counseling towards students' adjustment and adaptation in COVID-19 era. Recommendations included that school authorities should organize lectures and workshops for parents and students to educate them on the phenomenon of antisocial behaviour and its consequences in terms of family size.*

Keywords: family size, antisocial behaviour among students', educational psychology, counseling, COVID-19 era.

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Introduction

In the world generally, human beings interact with one another on a daily basis in various ways and for various purposes. During interaction, behaviours are manifested in different settings such as moral, domestic, school and social settings. However, for everyone to feel secured in this relation, the role of pro-social behaviour cannot be down played. Pro-social behaviour has to do with helping, sympathizing and cooperating with one another. It demands self sacrifice from everyone involved. The school which is the microcosm of society is backed by society to provide adequate and proper socialization and education of its citizens to acquire relevant [219] knowledge and skills that would guarantee their proper adjustment through manifestation of pro-social behaviour. Unfortunately, antisocial behaviour seems to be on the increase, thus, becoming a social problem with dire consequences. Anti-social behaviour refers to the destructive, harmful, negative actions or maladaptive behaviour of an individual towards other individuals or things in the society. (Khalig & Rasool, 2019). Mash and Wolfe (2016) described antisocial behaviour as any set of behaviour that goes against the norms that society has in place or an emotion that tends to harm, hurt or destroy someone or something.

Antisocial behaviour is predominant among secondary school students in Calabar Education Zone. These behaviours include those that are morally related such as; lack of self-restraint, being abusive, disrespect to constituted authority, stealing and non-participation in religious activities among others. In homes, anti-social tendencies among secondary school students could manifest in the form of disobedience to parents and refusal to carry out household chores. School-wise, anti-social behavioural tendencies could be exhibited in the form of lateness to school, truancy, loitering, violence (fighting, vandalism and bullying), cheating, examination malpractice and not wearing the correct uniform to school. Socially, anti-social tendencies are seen in terms of poor relationship with peers, siblings, neighbours, substance abuse and refusal to attend social functions in schools like club meetings, quiz, debate, sports and send-off-parties.

The researchers observed overtime that there seems to be a growing tendency to engage in anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Calabar Education Zone. Based on this observation, the researcher decided to undertake a study on the subject matter. They approached the study from the perspective of family size that could influence anti-social behaviour tendencies. Family size refers to the number of people within a particular household either by marriage, birth or legal adoption. Family size considered here can be very large, large or small.

Anti-social behaviour seems to have varying and serious effects on the individual both at school and society, because it could deprive an individual of appropriate behavioral development and manifestation. At the classroom level for instance, anti-social behaviour could disrupt teaching and retard successful learning. The consequences of anti-social behaviour are far reaching. They could make a child to be tagged indiscipline, untrusted and rejected by peers, parents, teachers and neighbours and the society. These could result to some psychological consequences on the individual like loneliness, frustration and negative self-concept. A child, who is not trusted, may become truant, violent, stubborn, loiters around and lacks respect for time.

Tremendous measures have been put in place by the Federal, State and Local Governments, School Authorities, Parent Teachers Association (PTA), School based management Committee (SBMC), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other concerned individuals to reduce this menace to its barest minimum. The Government has renovated schools, employed qualified teachers and provided other necessary amenities and infrastructure in most schools. The schools in conjunction with the PTA and SBMC have assisted in erecting perimeter fences in many schools and employed security men to safeguard lives and property and to create conducive

teaching and learning environment. The NGOs and other social organizations have empowered children in areas of skill acquisition, development of positive self-concept and high self-esteem.

Despite all these concerted efforts to checkmate the tendencies, anti-social behaviours among students especially in Calabar Education Zone, have persisted especially during and after the COVID-19 era when there was closure of school resulting in learning decline economic recession and pressure that rendered so many young and energetic a populace idle and vulnerable to questionable behaviours. This calls for an urgent need to carry out the study in order to seek ways to reduce the problem to its barest minimum. Hence, the study aims at finding out what [220] influence family size has on the students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour. This study is anchored on the following theories; Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977) which central idea is that behaviour is acquired through instrumental learning and modeling. Therefore, students' antisocial behaviour can be attributed to the prevalent method of upbringing and social relation in their families. Evidence shows that acquisition of antisocial behaviour varies based on family sizes. This justifies the attempt made to carry out this study. Icek-Ajzen theory of planned action (1985) purports that an individual's intention determines his behaviour. However, the theory maintains that there could be some other factors beyond the individual's control which may influence the behaviour manifested. This theory as applied to this study proposed a hypothesis that family size where an individual is socialised can actually exert certain influences that could lead the person to anti-social behaviour.

A study on family size and children behaviour reveals that the size of a family has influence on the behaviour of the children (Johnson, Shulman & Collins, 2001). Tygart (2001) noted that increased family size contributes to children delinquent and anti-social behaviours. Hurlock in Adie (2018) explaining the above trend noted a perceived reduced parental care experienced by children in a large family setting lead to unguided development which may in turn result in misguided attitude towards social life including the tendencies to anti-social behaviour. Matthew (2011) carried out a correlation study on family size and social adjustment in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria. With a well validated and reliable instrument, data was collected from 200 respondents. Results revealed a significant relationship between family size and social adjustment of students. Family size of 2-5 was considered a small size and a number exceeding 5 was considered large or very large. Farrington (2005) maintained that large numbered families whether rich or poor are difficult to manage, and are characterized with a high number of children, rowdiness, which could create avenues for poor learning and anti-social behaviours. Bysenk & Locksoh (2011) found that most introverted children come from small size homes and that they are more easily adjusted to school environment, can easily express their selves in the classroom. Therefore, they achieve greater academically as opposed to introverted children of large families. Booth and Kee (2006) found out that children in large families have lower levels of education and perform poorly in academics as well as may turn bullies. On the contrary, Powell and Stallman (2010) argued that children's academic attainment depends on input on time and money from their parents. Billings (2012) asserted that children from large families become delinquent because they are sometimes deprived of security, protection and love that should come from close parental relationship. This also impacts negatively on their academic success. Similarly, Sotonade in Adie (2018) asserted that children from large families characterized by insufficient need satisfaction, suffer health conditions that may lead to negative attitude toward school, thereby affecting their performance

Whereas, as noted by Gabriel (2013), small size families like the nuclear family setting are likely to provide better social, emotional, cognitive and behavioural needs for their children and these have a positive influence on their school success. This is corroborated by Ella, Odok & Ella

(2015) study on influence of family size and family type on academic performance of students in government school in Calabar Municipality revealed that students from relatively small family size perform better in verbal and non-verbal test than children from large family size. However, Atsu (2017) on moral conduct of students in secondary schools in Delta State: An assessment of the effect of native culture on discipline, order and control discovered that family size did not significantly influence social adjustment.

The literature reviewed so far in this study show that family size; large or small exert certain influence on individuals which could moderate their behaviour toward anti-social tendency in moral, domestic, school, and social settings. Also, from the review of literature in this study, it is observed that some of the studies are in foreign countries and majority outside Cross River [221] State. This study will fill this gap in location. Also, this study fills a gap by attempting to study the influence of family size on anti-social behaviour in four different situations in one study. This makes this study different from others. As a result, the findings add to expansion of knowledge in this area.

Research Question

To what extent does family size influence students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour?

Hypothesis

Family size does not significantly influence students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour

Methodology

Ex-post facto design was adopted for this study. This is because the phenomena (family size and anti-social behavior tendencies) investigated have already occurred before the study was conducted and the researcher had no control over them. The study was conducted in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River, Nigeria. The zone is made up of seven Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs), which are; Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar Municipality, Calabar South, and Odukpani. The area is bounded to the north by Yakurr Local Government of Cross River State, to the south by Akwa Ibom state and the Atlantic Ocean; to the east by the Republic of Cameroon and to the west by Abia and Ebonyi States. On the globe, Cross River State lies within longitudes 8^0 $15^1$and 8^0 25^1 and latitude 4^040^1 and $5^005^{1.}$ The area is endowed with some industries, big markets, eateries, hotels and various local sit-out and game stations. There are many public and private institutions in the area that offer primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational education services to both indigenes and non-indigenes. Majority of the inhabitants of the area are public servants, some are into business of various types, while the indigenous people engage in fishing, farming, and craft. The population of this study comprises all senior secondary school two (SS2) students in public secondary schools which in number is six thousand two hundred and twenty three (6,223) comprising three thousand, four hundred and seven (3,407) males and 2,816 females) within the age bracket of 14 to 20 years The stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of this study. The education zone was stratified on the basis of Local Government Education Authorities. Simple Random Sampling was adopted in the selection of the schools and students in the study area. This was done through the hat and draw method. The seven LGEAs had a population of six thousand two hundred and twenty three (6,223) students from which a sample of eight hundred and seventy seven (877) students was drawn. A 5-point scale typed questionnaire titled "Family Size and Students' Tendencies to Anti-Social Behaviour Questionnaire. (FSSTABQ) constructed by the researcher was

used for data collection. The instrument had two sections; section A collected information on demographic data of the respondent such as sex, age and family size, section B collected information on tendencies to antisocial behaviour which was further broken into B1 moral activities, B2 domestics activities, B3 school activities and B4 social activities. The instrument was subjected to face validity and the reliability was confirmed using split-half reliability method (the reliability coefficient ranges from 0.88 to 0.95). Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to answer research questions and test the hypothesis respectively.

Presentation of result

To what extent does family size influence students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour?
To answer this research question, the levels of the respondents' tendencies to anti-social behaviour were matched with their family size to the extent to which family size exerted on tendencies to anti-social behaviour. Simple percentage analysis was used for the description. The description is presented in Table 1.
The result in table 1 shows that 272 respondents representing 31.02% who were for small family size exhibited tendencies to anti-social behaviour in terms of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities respectively. Also, 328 respondents representing [222]
37.40% who were for large family size exhibited tendencies to anti-social behaviour in terms of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities respectively. Again, 277 respondents representing 31.58% who were for very large family size exhibited tendencies to anti-social behaviour in terms of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities and social activities respectively.
The proportion of secondary school students that are inclined to anti-social tendencies due to family size is presented in Table1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of the influence of family size on student's tendencies to anti-social behaviour

		N	(%)
MORAL	Small	272	31.02
	Large	328	37.40
	Very large	277	31.58
	Total	877	100.00
DOMESTIC	Small	272	31.02
	Large	328	37.40
	Very large	277	31.58
	Total	877	100.00
SCHOOL	Small	272	31.02
	Large	328	37.40
	Very large	277	31.58
	Total	877	100.00
SOCIAL	Small	272	31.02
	Large	328	37.40
	Very large	277	31.58
	Total	877	100.00

Hypothesis one:

Family size does not significantly influence students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour. The independent variable in this hypothesis is family size, while the dependent variable is students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour. The dependent variable had four components in this study, namely, moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities. Respondents were categorized into three groups based on their scores on family size variable as small family size, large family size and very large family size. The statistical analysis technique deployed to test this hypothesis was one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2 [223]

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the influence of Family size on students' tendencies to Anti-social behaviour (n=877)

Anti-social behavior		N	$\overline{X}$	SD
MORAL	Small	272	35.0184	2.90877
	Large	328	34.9116	3.15571
	Very large	277	34.4368	3.78026
	Total	877	34.7948	3.30128
DOMESTIC	Small	272	35.2022	2.39917
	Large	328	36.1372	3.13938
	Very large	277	36.1949	2.79069
	Total	877	35.8655	2.84816
SCHOOL	Small	272	34.0037	3.29430
	Large	328	32.7988	4.04362
	Very large	277	32.4116	2.45915
SOCIAL	Total	877	33.0502	3.43528
	Small	272	35.8272	4.21860
	Large	328	37.0091	3.72896
	Very large	277	37.7653	2.09705
	Total	877	36.8814	3.56090

Table 3 shows the sizes, means and SD for the three groups of respondents based on the levels of their family size. The actual results of ANOVA that compared the four group mean values are shown in Table 3. The comparison yielded F-ratios of 2.466, 10.965, 16.722 and 21.639 for moral activities, domestic activities, school activities and social activities respectively. The four F-ratios (for moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities) are each higher [224] than the critical F-ratio of 3.02 at .05 level of significance, with 2 and 874 degrees of freedom and none was less than the critical F-ratio. With these results, the null hypothesis is rejected in each of the four instances of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities. This implies that there is a significant influence of family size on students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour in the four aspects of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities.

In order to understand the pattern of the significant influence of family size on students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities and social activities, a post hoc multiple comparison analysis was carried out using Fischer's least significant difference (LSD) test. The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4

The Post Hoc test result presented in table 4 shows that students whose level of family size

Table 3. Analysis of variance of the influence of family size on students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour.

		Sum of squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
MORAL	Between groups	53.567	2	26.784	2.466*	.086
	Within groups	9493.488	874	10.862		
	Total	9547.056	876			
DOMESTIC	Between groups	173.945	2	86.973	10.965*	.000
	Within groups	6932.178	874	7.932		
	Total	7106.123	876			
SCHOOL	Between groups	380.994	2	190.497	16.722*	.000
	Within groups	9956.799	874	11.392		
	Total	10337.792	876			
SOCIAL	Between groups	524.069	2	262.034	21.639*	.000
	Within groups	10583.59	874	12.109		
	Total	11107.667	8876			

*<,05; critical F2, 874 = 33.02s

Table 4. Results of Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence family size on students' tendencies to anti-social behavior (moral activities, domestic activities, school activities, and social activities).

Anti-social behaviour	Family size	N	Small 272	Large 328	Very large 277
	Small	272	35.02[a]	-0.11[b]	-0.58
MORAL	Large	328	-3.85*[c]	34.91	-1.41
	Very large	277	-10.34*	-9.86*	34.44
			MSW =	10.862	
	Small	272	35.02[a]	1.56[b]	-0.98
DOMESTIC	Large	328	-3.85*[c]	36.14	-1.41
	Very large	277	-10.34*	-9.86*	36.19
			MSW =	7.932	
	Small	272	34.00[a]	-0.77[b]	-2.18
SCHOOL	Large	328	-3.85*[c]	32.80	-1.41
	Very large	277	-10.34*	-9.86*	32.41
			MSW =	11.392	
	Small	272	35.83[a]	-0.77[b]	-2.18
	Large	328	-3.85*[c]	37.01	-1.41
SOCIAL	Very large	277	-10.34*	-9.86*	37.77
			MSW	12.109	

* Significant at .05 level, critical t = 1.96, df = 874.

A) Group means are placed along the diagonal.
B) Difference between group means are placed above the diagonal.
C) Fisher's t-values are placed below the diagonal.

is small are significantly different in their tendencies to anti- social behaviour in terms of moral activities, domestic activities, school activities and social activities from those whose level of family size is either large or very large. Also, students whose family size is large are significantly different in students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour from those whose family size is very large.

Discussion of findings

The results of the hypothesis which showed that there is a significant influence of family size on secondary school students anti-social behavioural tendencies corroborates the outcome of the descriptive analysis of the research question that shows the extent to which different family sizes exerted different amount of anti-social behavioural tendencies with large family size exerting the highest influence. This finding supports the works of Johnson, Shulman and Collins (2001) that family size influences children's behaviour. Tygart (2001), Farrington (2005), Kee (2006) and Billings (2012) all found that large family size influence anti-social behaviour. This is because in some large family size settings, the children experience reduced parental attention and care which can culminate in a misguided attitude towards anti-social behavioural tendencies (Hurlock, in Adie 2018). These latent factors (parental care and attention) are certainly risk factors for anti-social behaviour in these large and very large families setting. This is not to say that large family settings in African are not good for proper upbringing of children. This is supported by the findings of Atsu (2017) who revealed that family size has no influence on social adjustment. The findings of this study reveal that there is an influence of family size whether very large, large or small on anti-social behavioural setting but with the influence exerted more from large family size. This is supported by the works of Gabriel (2013) who found that children from nuclear families tend to fare better on a number of cognitive, emotional and behavioural needs. Based on the result of this study, it can be submitted that anti-social behaviour among students in Calabar Education Zone is traceable to family size.

Implication of Educational psychology in school counselling during post COVID-19 era

Anti-social behavior among students in the school system has become a worrisome social phenomenon with attendant psychological effects on all concerns for children. This includes education stakeholders such as; teachers, parents, school administrators and government. The researcher perceives anti-social behaviour as an ill wind that demands the collective efforts of all educational stakeholders to nip it in the bud. This is expedient because the leaders of tomorrow may not realise in their sound mind if allowed to continue in anti-social behaviour.

Psychologists believe that anti-social behaviours are influenced by either hereditary or environmental factors or both. As observed in this study, these undesirable behavioural tendencies are manifested in moral, domestic, school and social behaviour which negatively affect the entirety of students' wellbeing.

In helping society curb anti-social behaviour and eliminate its prevalence in schools, Orji (2019) recommended that all socialization agencies must play their role to heal Nigeria of these ills of which curbing the development of anti-social behaviour among students in the school system is inclusive. The schools have roles to play as the microcosm of society, the place where human behaviours are transformed for the benefit of self and societal development. Unfortunately, some schools provide unsatisfactory conditions that equally moderate anti-social tendency and behaviour to grow among students. Therefore, educational psychologist's role in the school system has become critical to institute preventive and intervention strategies to help the school and

entire society to curb the development of anti-social behaviour. Hence, the following strategies are suggested.

1. Schools should apply preventative and intervention measures such as effective school policies on discipline, school and home partnership, and providing a safe and conducive environment.
2. Co-curricular activities should be provided alongside constructive recreational activities that affect children's cognitive and behavioural orientation toward social behaviour.
3. Counseling periods in the school timetable should be effectively utilized for training on good social behaviour, study habits, and behaviour modification activities such as organising workshops and training in social skills. Orji (2020) discovered that social skills training in communication, assertiveness, self control, and empathy can reduce delinquent behaviour.

Conclusion

Based on the result and finding of the study, family size significantly influences students' tendencies to anti-social behaviour in moral, domestic, school and social settings. It could be submitted that the tendency to anti-social behaviour in the state generally and in Calabar Education Zone is traceable to the influence of different family sizes experienced by students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. School authorities should organize lectures and workshops for parents and students to educate them on the phenomenon of antisocial behaviour and its consequences on individuals and society. These may help both parties work toward development of pro-social behaviour.
2. Parents should endeavour to plan for the size of family they will be able to cater for. This will enable them to provide better attention in parental care and provision that fosters proper social, emotional, psychological development and wellbeing of their children. This is because inadequacies of satisfaction of this need could lead some children to anti-social behavior which will affect their acceptance in moral, domestic, school and social settings.

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