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## STRATEGIES FOR CURBING DEVIANT BEHAVIORS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN UDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE

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### **Abstract**

*The study determined the strategies for curbing deviant behaviors among secondary school students. The study adopted a descriptive survey approach in which three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the research. The population of the study consists of 972 teachers currently teaching in 25 secondary schools in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 10 secondary schools involved in the study while stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting 15 teachers from each of the 10 sample schools. A total of 150 teachers participated in the research. The instrument for data collection is a four point scale questionnaire. Mean scores were used in answering the research questions while t-test was used for analyzing the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result obtained from the study showed that truancy, examination malpractice and drug abuse are forms of deviant behaviors found among secondary school students. In line with the findings of the study, the educational implications of the findings were highlighted and recommendations were proffered. Strategies such as proper checking of students' activities and strictly ensuring that school rules and regulations are adhered to by students among other recommendation, should be taken seriously by teachers and parents.*

**Keywords:** Deviant Behaviors, school, Strategies.

### **Introduction**

Deviant behaviors in secondary school level continues to be a matter of great concern globally; though it is a more worrying trend in developing countries like Nigeria (Adegun, 2013). The rising wave of revolutionary and militant behaviors among secondary school students appears to suggest that Nigerian schools are fast becoming shadows of their former

selves (Nwobodo, 2008). This problem has lingered on over the years and has remained a thorn in the flesh of parents and government.

Humphrey and Schmallerger (2011) defined deviant behaviors as any behavior that implies violations from social norms. Writing on the issue of deviant behaviors in Nigerian schools, Anokam, (2002) complained that the prevalence of conduct disorder among Nigerian adolescents has increased recently in terms of frequency of recorded delinquent crimes and number of adolescents involved. This means that Nigerian schools are undergoing degeneration in ethical and moral standards.

Good behavior is a rational and result oriented behavior which exists when students behave in a manner that facilitates realization of the set objectives of the school (Aso, 2001). When students exhibit dysfunctional behaviors capable of frustrating, jeopardizing, slowing down or completely impeding the attainment of the set objectives of a school, a state of deviant behavior is said to exist. Good behavior entails training of the mind and character especially in view of producing control and habit of obedience. The individual with deviant behavior on the other hand is one whose energy and impulses are not controlled by moral principles or external authority. Such a person according to Aroh (2001) is a danger to himself, the school and the community as a whole.

Although deviance as a phenomena varies from one country to another, deviant acts in a school environment include truancy, drug and alcohol abuse, promiscuity, dodging class, rioting, smoking, vandalism, fighting, reporting late for class and insulting, resistance to change, to mention a few (Agboola & Salawu, 2011). Deviant behaviors generally manifested among students in Nigerian secondary schools are many and varied. It ranges from lateness to school to absenteeism, bullying, intimidation of junior students, violent demonstrations, assault, extortion, theft, cultism, fighting, organized torturing of junior students and sexual immorality. Others include use of abusive, foul and vulgar language on teachers, willful damage of school property and equipment, defacing and stealing of school furniture,

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deliberate vandalism, loitering, examination malpractice, drug abuse and general compliance with school rules and regulations. Ofodile (2002), regarded deviant behaviors as unacceptable behaviors which can be described as a deviation from appropriate behaviors. This according to him significantly interferes with the individual's growth and development and with the lives of others.

The adverse effects of deviant behaviors on schools and the society at large are numerous. It destroys the image and standard of the school, the Ministry of Education sanctions the school and deprives it of some routine benefits, the learning process suffers when students who misbehave cannot subject themselves to productive work since most of their times are spent in planning and executing havoc and violence, teachers carry out their teaching duties with fear and also such students become a big problem to the society.

In search for culprits of deviant behaviors in our society today particularly as it affects secondary school students, parents and teachers (including the principals) among other agents have been exposed and blamed. In line with this view, Onu (2006) traced students' behavior problems to the home and school environments. According to him, children develop conduct problems from practices at home. Some families are anti-social while others may be authoritarian or ultra-permissive. These patterns of child training affect the behavior of the child in school.

Ogu (2001) asserted that children learn to trust and distrust people in the first few years of their life from birth and therefore, if homes live with hostility, children will learn to be aggressive; if they live with criticism, children will learn to condemn; if they live with dishonesty, children learn to steal and tell lies; if they live with fear, children learn to be apprehensive. Since the school is an extension of the home and therefore become a generator of good conduct for the children, the home environment transcends into the school environment and makes the children what they become.

Deviant behavior is one thing that disturbs the equilibrium of our school system and as a result of this, students do not achieve as they should and occasionally, lives are lost. Obilom (2009) heaped the blame of constant reoccurrence of deviant behaviors on students, teachers, parents and government. He stated that little is known about the strategies for handling deviant behaviors in secondary schools. This study shall in no small measure assist the school administrators in finding out the strategies that will effectively help to bring the problem of deviant behaviors in secondary schools.

### **Scope of the Study**

The study is delimited to investigating the strategies for handling deviant behaviors found among secondary school students. Such deviant behaviors are truancy, examination malpractice and drug abuse. Secondary school teachers were used for the study.

### **Research Questions**

1. What are the strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students?
2. What are the strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students?
3. What are the strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students?

### **Hypotheses**

*HO<sub>1</sub>*: There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students.

*HO<sub>2</sub>*: There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students.

*HO<sub>3</sub>*: There is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students.

### **Methods**

#### **Design of the Study**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design.

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## **Area of the Study**

This study was carried out in Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State.

## **Population of the Study**

The population of this study consists of all the 972 teachers currently teaching in 25 secondary schools in Udi LGA of Enugu State.

## **Instrument for Data Collection**

A structured questionnaire was used for data collection in this study. The instrument was developed by the researcher and validated by three experts; one from the Department of Educational Foundations Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki and two others from Godfrey Okoye University, Enugu. The reliability of the instrument was determined by trial testing the instrument using twenty secondary school teachers from Enugu East Local Government Area and the information obtained were used to compute the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach Alpha formula which yielded the reliability index of 0.82. This is high enough for the instrument to be considered reliable.

## **Method of Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed using parametric statistic (mean and t-test).

## **Results**

### **Research Question 1**

What are the strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students?

**Table 1. Mean responses on the respondents on the strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students.**

S/NO.	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SIZE (M) $S(n_1)$	MEAN MALE $(x_1)$	SAMPE SIZE (F) $S(n_2)$	MEAN FEMALE $(x_2)$	TOTAL SAMPLE $S(n_3)$	MEAN OF MEANS $(x_3)$	DECISION
1	Provision of academic facilities like library, laboratory and workshops.	50	3.4	100	3.6	150	3.5	SA
2	Administering moderate punishment such as cutting of grasses, scrubbing of floors and planting of flowers.	50	3.4	100	3.6	150	3.6	SA
3	Engaging students with assignments and home works.	50	3.6	100	3.8	150	3.7	SA
4	Setting up a monitoring committee to check truant students.	50	3.4	100	3.6	150	3.5	SA
5	Teachers should ensure effective teaching.	50	3.6	100	3.9	150	3.8	SA
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>250</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>SA</b>

The result of Table 1 shows that all the items are the strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students.

## Research Question 2

What are the strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students?

**Table 2: Mean responses of the respondents on the strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students.**

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SIZE (M) $S(n_1)$	MEAN MALE $(x_1)$	SAMPLE SIZE (F) $S(n_2)$	MEAN FEMALE $(x_2)$	TOTAL SAMPLE $S(n_3)$	MEAN OF MEANS $(x_3)$	DECISION
6	Provision of a good and conducive school environment.	50	3.3	100	3.7	150	3.5	SA
7	Adequate lessons and practicals should be given to students	50	3.5	100	3.6	150	3.6	SA
8	Enforcing tight security in order to discourage students from sorting the teachers.	50	3.0	100	3.2	150	3.1	A
9	Schools should stop admitting students into exam classes.	50	3.2	100	3.7	150	3.5	SA
10	Electricity gadgets like mobile phones and computers should not be allowed into the exam hall.	50	3.5	100	3.6	150	3.6	SA
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>250</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>SA</b>

The result of Table 2 shows that all the items are strategies used for curbing exam malpractice among secondary school students.

### Research Question 3

What are the strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students?

**Table 3: Mean responses of the respondents on the strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students.**

S/N	ITEM DESCRIPTION	SAMPLE SIZE (M) S( $n_1$ )	MEAN MALE ( $x_1$ )	SAMPLE SIZE (F) S( $n_2$ )	MEAN FEMALE ( $x_2$ )	TOTAL SAMPLE S( $n_3$ )	MEAN OF MEANS ( $x_3$ )	DECISION
11	Training students to embark on physical exercise.	50	2.3	100	2.7	150	2.5	A
12	Government should promulgate and enforce laws that will prevent students from taking drugs.	50	3.3	100	3.4	150	3.4	SA
13.	School authorities should ensure good teaching.	50	3.4	100	3.8	150	3.6	SA
14.	Students should be discouraged from using kolanut and coffee to ward off sleep in order to improve in studies.	50	2.7	100	3.0	150	2.9	SA
15	Taking students to the school's sick bay in order to discourage self-medication.	50	2.7	100	3.1	150	2.9	SA
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>750</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>SA</b>

The result of Table 3 shows that all the items can be used as strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students.

### Hypotheses

The three hypotheses were tested using t-test. Summary of the analysis for the three null hypotheses are shown individually in table 4, 5 and 6.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the opinions of male and female teachers on strategies for dealing with truancy among secondary school students.

**Table 4: T-test of the mean rating scores of male and female teachers as regards strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students.**

Sample	Size (n)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Df	$\alpha$ level	T <sub>cal</sub>	T <sub>cr</sub>	Decision
Female teachers	100	3.7	0.7	99	0.05	0.78	1.96	Accept
Male teachers	50	3.5	0.78	49	0.05			

T-calculated 0.78 is not greater than t-critical 1.96 therefore; there is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies for curbing truancy among secondary school students.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the opinions of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students.

**Table 5: T-test of the mean ratings scores of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing examination malpractice.**

Sample	Size	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Df	$\alpha$ level	T <sub>cal</sub>	T <sub>cr</sub>	Decision
Female teachers	100	3.54	0.8	99	0.05	0.77	1.96	Accept
Male teachers	50	3.3	1.0	49	0.05			

T-calculated 0.77 is not greater than t-critical 1.96 therefore; there is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing examination malpractice among secondary school students.

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean scores of the opinions of the male and female teachers on strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students.

**Table 6: T-test of the mean ratings of male and female teachers on strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students**

Sample	Size (n)	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD	Df	$\alpha$ level	T <sub>cal</sub>	T <sub>cr</sub>	Decision
Female teachers	100	3.2	0.8	99	0.05	1.09	1.96	Accept
Male teachers	50	2.88	0.9	49	0.05			

T-calculated 1.09 is not greater than the t-critical 1.96 therefore; there is no significant difference between the opinions of male and female teachers on the strategies for curbing drug abuse among secondary school students.

The findings of this study revealed that truancy, examination malpractice and drug abuse are all conventional deviant behaviours found among secondary school students in the education sector. This could be as a result of lack of academic facilities in schools, provision of good and conducive learning environment, ensuring good and effective teaching, refusing to admit students into examination classes, discouraging students from having nocturnal and illegal gatherings, discouraging students from taking drugs indiscriminately and substances that could cause intoxication.

School authorities are to enforce the implementation of the school rules and regulations in order to check the problem of deviant behaviours on secondary schools. The study recommends close watching and monitoring of students behaviors by the school authorities in order to easily detect any form of deviant behavior and also implement the strategies mentioned above to ensure safe and sound learning environment. Also, academic environments should be conducive and facilities well equipped for effective teaching and learning that could lead to behavior reformation and modification.

### **Educational Implications of the findings and Recommendations**

The study has implications for school authorities, Parents-Teachers Association (PTA) and teachers. From the findings, school authorities should know the right rules and regulations to make and to ensure that they are enforced. The findings revealed that there is need for the school authorities to set up monitoring committee that should monitor the behaviours of students and apply adequate and moderate punishment where necessary.

The Parents-Teachers Association should assist the school in selecting and integrating values and morals by co-operating with teachers since it is in the family that the core values are initially cultivated.

The findings of this study encourage teachers to make use of facilities and instructional materials while teaching in order to ensure adequate teaching.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Academic facilities and structures should be provided for adequate teaching and learning.
2. Engaging students with home works and assignments are necessary in order to always keep their minds busy.
3. Students should be discouraged from taking kola-nuts and coffee to ward off sleep while preparing for examinations. They should also be taken to sick bay in order to discourage self-medication that could lead to drug abuse.

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