

**PARENTING STYLES AND SUBSTANCE USE AS CORRELATES OF AGGRESSIVE  
BEHAVIOURS AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NORTH  
WEST, NIGERIA**

**BY**

**SUNDAY BASSEY AKPAN**

Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling  
School of Education, Federal College of Education, Katsina, Katsina State  
[robertjoy130@gmail.com](mailto:robertjoy130@gmail.com)

**&**

**DR. UMAR MAMMAN AND DR. BINTA ADO ALI**

Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, College of Education, Federal  
University Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State

**Abstract**

The researchers investigated parenting styles and substance use as correlates of aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. Four (4) research objectives and hypotheses were stated and formulated to guide the study. A correlational research design was employed for the study. The population comprised of four hundred and forty one thousand, three hundred and fourteen (441,314) SSII students and a sample size of one thousand five hundred and thirty two (1,532) senior secondary school students were drawn and a multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for the study. Parenting Styles Questionnaire (PSQ), Substance Use Questionnaire (SUQ) and Aggressive Behaviours Questionnaire (ABQ) were the instruments used for collection of data. The instruments were validated by three (3) experts, two specialists in Educational Psychology and one in Test and Measurement while Cronbach's Alpha analysis was used to establish the reliability coefficients of 0.74 for parenting styles, 0.79 for substance use and 0.87 for aggressive behaviours respectively were obtained. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) for bivariate relationships, all tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Key findings revealed that authoritative parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, permissive

parenting style and substance use had a significant relationship with aggressive behaviours among secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. Recommendations such as; parents should adopt the authoritative parenting style by combining warmth, open communication, and firm discipline to nurture their children's academic success and reduce aggressive behaviours among others.

***Keywords:** Aggressive Behaviours, Parenting Styles, Substance Use*

## **Introduction**

In the evolving landscape of adolescent development, the interplay of various factors such as parenting styles, substance use and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students presents a major concern in different parts of the country Nigeria and North West, Nigeria in particular.

However, secondary education serves as a crucial stage in shaping the behaviours of young individuals, not only academically but also in terms of their social and emotional development (Usman et al, 2023). During this formative period, students went through a myriad of challenges, ranging from academic pressures to peer interactions, all of which influence their overall well-being and success in school. Understanding the challenges are not only academically intriguing but also socially imperative for the overall well-being of the child. Aggressive behaviours, if left unaddressed, can hinder academic progress and jeopardize the overall learning environment.

However parenting styles are seen as the different approaches or patterns of bringing up a child or children. Nduka (2023) identified three major parenting styles based on parental demandingness and responsiveness, which included authoritative parenting, authoritarian parenting, and permissive parenting. Furthermore, the role of parenting styles cannot be understated in shaping adolescents' psychosocial development and behavioural tendencies. The manner in which parents interact with and discipline their children can significantly influence their academic engagement, emotional well-being, and propensity for aggressive behaviours as a result of students' behaviour toward substance use among them.

However, according to World Health Organization (2022), substance use refers to the consumption of psychoactive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, opioids, stimulants, and other illicit drugs, which can alter mood, perception, consciousness, and behaviour. Substance use can range from occasional and recreational to chronic and problematic, and it carries various physical, psychological, social, and legal consequences. Additionally, the prevalence of substance use, ranging from alcohol to illicit drugs, underscores the need for comprehensive interventions that can address the root causes and mitigate the adverse effects on students' academic success and social conduct. According to Idiedo and Eyaufe (2023) substance use has been shown to have a negative impact on academic performance and behaviours among adolescents. They reported that students who engage in substance use may experience difficulties in concentrating, remembering information, and completing assignments, which can lead to lower grades and poor academic achievement. Moreover, substance use according to Idiedo and Eyaufe (2023) has been linked to aggressive behaviours, including fighting, bullying, poor academic achievement and other forms of violence among students.

Therefore, aggressive behaviours among secondary school students have become a major issue of concern in recent times. Presently, secondary schools have become plagued with incessant exhibition of aggressive behaviours by students toward resolving problems that affect their existence or freedom. This can be seen in frequent students violation of school rules and violent demonstration, abuse, confrontation and molestation of themselves and teachers, indeed, the most common single request for assistance from teachers is related to behaviours and classroom management (Usman et al., 2023). It leads to number of problems among the consequences is the wanton destruction of school property, disruption of academic and administrative programmes, suspension of students and many others.

In all of these, the school principals, teachers, and even students themselves find it so frustrating to spend many years in school than expected due to exhibition of aggressive behaviours that lead to unnecessary suspension as a way of punishment. Aggressive behaviours among students include physical violence, verbal abuse, bullying and so on, they have serious consequences for students among which are suspension from school, expulsion, and legal repercussions. Students who exhibit aggressive behaviours are also at risk of developing mental health issues, substance abuse problems, and difficulties forming positive relationships with others. According to Fili (2016) aggression is a broad construct that encompasses a wide variety of behaviours that are intended to hurt or harm others. Conversely, aggressive behaviours, if left unaddressed, can hinder academic progress and jeopardize the overall learning environment.

Given the multifaceted nature of these issues, investigating parenting styles and substance use as correlates of aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria holds significant scholarly and practical relevance. By unraveling the complex interplay of these variables, educators, policymakers and other education stakeholders can devise targeted interventions that promote positive academic outcomes, mitigate aggressive behaviours, and foster a supportive educational environment conducive to the holistic development of our students.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In the secondary school system of Nigeria, particularly in the North West Geo-political Zone, there is a growing concern regarding aggressive behaviours among the students. Historically, graduates from secondary institutions were esteemed as societal role models, embodying both admirable character and knowledge. However, the present scenario starkly contrasts this perception. The recent trends indicate a disturbing rise in aggressive tendencies among secondary school students, warranting significant attention.

However, the prevalence of aggressive behaviours among secondary school students, manifesting in verbal confrontations, physical altercations, students bullying among themselves and disrespect towards teachers jeopardize the integrity of our school culture and values thereby threatening the societal harmony. Without proper intervention, secondary schools risk becoming breeding grounds for societal disruption.

Many researchers have observed that the correlation between parenting styles and aggressive behaviours align themselves considering Hosokawa and Katsura (2017) who identified authoritarian parenting as a contributing factor to poor communication skills and increased aggression among adolescents. The above findings have prompted the researchers' curiosity, leading to the investigation of underlying factors contributing to aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The general objectives of this study is to investigate social media addiction, parenting styles and substance use as correlates of academic achievement and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives were stated to:

1. assess the extent at which authoritative parenting style correlates with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

2. investigate how authoritarian parenting style correlates with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.
3. determine the relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.
4. explore the extent to which substance use correlates with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### Research Questions

The following research questions were asked to guide the study

- 2 To what extent does authoritative parenting style correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria?
- 3 How does authoritarian parenting style correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria?
- 4 What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria?
- 5 To what extent does substance use correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at .05 level of significance.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Authoritative parenting style does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Authoritarian parenting style does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** Substance use does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### Methodology

The research adopted correlational research design. This design measures the relationship between two or more variables to determine or estimate the extent at which the values for the variables are related (Nworgu, 2015). This design is suitable because the study involves the collection of data in order to determine the degree of relationship social media addiction, substance use and academic achievement among students.

The total population for this study was one million, five hundred and two thousand, two hundred and ninety three (1,502,293) Senior Students from Public Secondary Schools in North West, Nigeria while the target population of comprised of four hundred and forty one thousand, three hundred and fourteen (441,314) SSII students from two thousand three hundred and eighty five (2,385) Public Secondary Schools across the seven States in North West, Nigeria.

The sample size of one thousand, five hundred and thirty two (1,532) SSII students was drawn from the total population of the study using Research Advisors, (2006). Multi-stage sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents for this study. This is a technique in which more than one sampling method is applied in selecting sample at different stages.

The instruments used for data collection are: Parenting Styles Questionnaire (PSQ), Substance Use Questionnaire (SUQ) and Aggressive Behaviours Questionnaire (ABQ) were administered on SSII students to elicit their responses. The instruments were scored based on 4-point rating scale. The scale has four (4) response categories of SA (Strongly Agree) with 4 points weight, A (Agree) with 3 points weight, D (Disagree) with 2 points weight, SD (Strongly Disagree) with 1 point weight. Positive worded items were weighted in this manner whereas negatively worded items were the weight reverse on the scale thus: Strongly Agree (SA) = 1 point, Agree (A) = 2 points, Disagree (D) = 3 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 4 points.

### Results

#### Hypothesis One

Authoritative parenting style does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 1: r–value of authoritative parenting style and aggressive behaviours**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Authoritative parenting style	1532	31.36	3.76				
Aggressive Behaviours	1532	62.67	6.16	1530	.703**	.000	Rejected

\*\*Correlation not significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 1 indicated correlation analysis between authoritative parenting style and aggressive behaviours. The finding revealed that the r. value is .703 and the p. value .000 which is less than .05 level of significant with 1530 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, authoritative parenting style does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria is thereby rejected. It implies that, authoritative parenting style is significantly correlates with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### Hypothesis Two

Authoritarian parenting style does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 2: r–value of authoritarian parenting style and aggressive behaviours**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Authoritarian parenting style	1532	30.52	3.93				
Aggressive Behaviours	1532	62.67	6.16	1530	.689**	.000	Rejected

\*\*Correlation not significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 indicated correlation analysis between Authoritarian parenting style and aggressive behaviours. The finding revealed that the r. value is .689 and the p. value .000 which is less than

.05 level of significant with 1530 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, Authoritarian parenting style does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria is thereby rejected. It implies that, Authoritarian parenting style significantly correlates with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### Hypothesis Three

There is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 3: r-value of permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Permissive Parenting Style	1532	31.48	4.11				
Aggressive Behaviours	1532	62.67	6.16	1530	.751**	.000	Rejected

\*\*Correlation not significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 indicated relationship analysis between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours. The finding revealed that the r. value is .751 and the p. value .000 which is greater than .05 level of significant with 1530 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria is thereby rejected. It implies that, there is significant relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### Hypothesis Four

Substance use does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

**Table 4: r-value of substance use and aggressive behaviours**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	df	r-value	p-value	Decision
Substance use	1532	62.04	6.12				
Aggressive Behaviours				1530	.721**	.000	Rejected
	1532	62.67	6.16				

\*\*Correlation not significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 indicated correlation analysis between Substance use and aggressive behaviours. The finding revealed that the r. value is .721 and the p. value .000 which is less than .05 level of significant with 1501 degree of freedom. This shows that the result is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that, Substance use does not significantly correlate with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria is thereby rejected. It implies that, Substance use is significantly correlates with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

### Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one revealed that, there is significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. The findings of this study align with the findings of Dominguez and White (2020) who found that authoritative parenting is associated with the development of effective communication and conflict-resolution skills in adolescents, contributing to lower levels of aggression. Similarly, Liu et al. (2020) supported the findings that authoritative parenting fosters emotional regulation in adolescents, thereby reducing the likelihood of aggressive behaviours as a maladaptive coping mechanism.

Hypothesis two revealed that, there is significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. The findings of this study is consistent with that of Rodriguez et al. (2017) who observed that authoritarian parenting disrupts adolescents' emotional regulation processes, which can lead to elevated stress levels and, consequently, aggressive behaviour. Similarly, Hosokawa and Katsura (2017) found that authoritarian parenting is associated with poor communication skills and limited

opportunities for adolescents to express themselves, both of which may heighten the risk of aggressive responses in conflict situations. In addition, Pinquart (2017) opined that the punitive nature of authoritarian parenting can foster aggressive tendencies as a coping mechanism.

Hypothesis three revealed that, there is significant relationship between permissive parenting style and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. The findings of this study is not different from that of Schechter and Harel (2020) who stated that permissive parenting may impair emotional regulation, leading to increased impulsivity and aggression. Similarly, Kong et al. (2021) found that adolescents in permissive households often demonstrate poor communication skills and limited conflict-resolution strategies, which can escalate interpersonal tensions and contribute to aggressive responses. The findings of the study is also in line with the findings of Gadeyne et al. (2014) who observed that the lack of parental guidance and structure inherent in permissive parenting can lead adolescents to adopt maladaptive coping strategies such as aggression as a way of navigating frustration or asserting control in the absence of authoritative support.

Hypothesis four revealed that, there is significant relationship between substance use and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. This means that, a very high increase in substance use results to a corresponding increase in aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria. The findings of this study is consistent with findings of Connell et al. (2019) which revealed that adolescents with higher levels of alcohol and illicit drug use were significantly more likely to engage in various forms of aggression, including verbal abuse, physical confrontation, and bullying. In the vein, the meta-analytic study conducted by Smith and Fox (2022) revealed that the relationship persists across gender, age, socio-economic status, and cultural contexts, thereby reinforcing the notion that substance use is a reliable predictor of aggression among adolescents.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings from this study, it was concluded that, there are relationship among parenting styles, substance use and aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria have been analyzed and from the results obtained, it was evident that: parenting styles and substance use have significant relationship either positive or negative with aggressive behaviours among senior secondary school students in North West, Nigeria.

It was concluded that, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles linked to the development of aggressive behaviours that associated with bullying, verbal altercation, physical confrontation, and disrespect towards authority figures. This finding affirms growing global concerns about the psychological and educational consequences of parenting styles, especially among students.

It was also concluded, that this study also sheds light on the critical role of substance use in exacerbating behavioural problems. By revealing a very high positive correlation between substance use and aggressive behaviours, the study provides concrete evidence that can support the design of substance abuse prevention and rehabilitation programs for adolescents, especially within school environments.

Based on the above observations, it is concluded here that, the two independent variables (parenting styles and substance use) of this study have significant joint relationship and that when they co-occurred; the impacts on dependent variables (aggressive behaviours) become so severe among the students in the study area.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should adopt the authoritative parenting style by combining warmth, open communication, and firm discipline to nurture their children's academic success and reduce aggressive behaviours. They should also monitor social media use and discourage substance use to promote responsible behaviours and focus on learning.
2. Educational psychologists should design and implement comprehensive school-based intervention programs that focus on enhancing students-parents relationships and behaviour modification strategies. By collaborating with teachers and parents, educational psychologists can create supportive learning environments that foster both academic excellence and positive behavioural outcomes without aggressiveness among students in the North West region.
3. School counsellors should establish continuous counselling and awareness initiatives aimed at addressing the negative effects of substance use and poor parenting influences on students' behavioural development. Through individualized and group counselling sessions, counsellors should guide students toward self-awareness, emotional stability, and responsible decision-making.

4. Students should cultivate personal discipline and self-regulation by abstaining from substance use and dedicating more time to academic and self-improvement activities. They should adopt positive attitudes toward learning, show respect for teachers and peers, and participate actively in extracurricular programs that build character and social skills. By so doing, students will not only enhance their academic achievement but also contribute to creating a peaceful and productive school environment conducive to holistic development.

### References

- Connell, C. M., Gilreath, T. D., & Hansen, N. B. (2019). A multiprocess latent class analysis of the co-occurrence of substance use and sexual risk behaviours among adolescents. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 70(6), 943-951.
- Dominguez, S., & White, K. R. (2020). Parenting styles and academic achievement: Mediating effects of children's motivational beliefs. *Journal of Family Issues*, 41(3), 430-450.
- Fili, E. (2016) Parenting Styles & Aggressive Behaviour among Preschool Going Children. *International Journal of Academic Research and Reflection*, 4(2), 1-9.
- Gadeyne, E., Ghesquiere, P., & Onghena, P. (2014). Longitudinal relations between parenting and child adjustment in young children. *Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology*, 33(2), 347-358.
- Hosokawa, R., & Katsura, T. (2017). Impact of authoritarian and authoritative parenting style on children's behaviours. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 26(2), 626-637.
- Idiedo, V. & Eyaufe, O. O. (2023). Social Media Addiction and Effect on Academic Performance among Science Students. *Journal of Library Services and Technologies* 5(2), 53-71.
- Kong, F., You, X., & Wu, S. (2021). Parenting styles and academic achievement: A cross-lagged panel analysis. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 30(4), 1065-1073.
- Liu, Y., Wang, M., & Yang, Y. (2020). Parenting styles and adolescent aggression: The mediating role of moral identity. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 35(21), 4957-4979.

- Nduka, N. E. (2023). Parenting Styles and Social Media Addiction as Correlates of Antisocial Behaviour among Adolescents. *Journal of Psychology and Behavioural Disciplines*, 3(1), 52-63.
- Nworgu, B. C. (2015). *Educational research: Basic issues and methodology* (2nd Ed.). Enugu: University Trust Publishers.
- Pinquart, M. (2017). Associations of parenting styles and dimensions with academic achievement in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology*, 29(2), 309-343.
- Rodriguez, C. M., Richardson, M. J., & Waters, H. S. (2017). The relationship between parental overprotection and aggression in Emerging Adulthood: The moderating role of dispositional aggression. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 26(10), 1038-1056.
- Smith, A. B., & Fox, S. A. (2022). Meta-analysis of substance use and aggression among adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 70(1), 108-116.
- Usman, A., Akpan, S. B. & Agerewe, S. B. (2023). Variables of Learning Environment and Aggressive Behaviours among Secondary School Students. *International Journal on Integrated Education*, 6(5), 151-161.
- WHO Assisted Working Group (2022) The Alcohol, smoking and substance involvement screening test (ASSIST): development, reliability and feasibility. *Addiction*, 97(9), 1183–1194.