

Family and School Protective Factors as Predictors to Risk Compromising Behaviours Among Secondary School Students in Bauchi Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the family and school protective factors as predictors to risk-compromising behaviours. Correlational research design was used to determine the relationship between the variables. The population consists of 8,589 students from 22 public secondary schools in Bauchi metropolis and sample of 367 students were selected through the proportionate stratified sampling and simple random sampling techniques. A structured questionnaire titled Protective Factors Questionnaire (PFQ) and Students' Risk Compromising Behaviours Scale (SRCBS) were used to elicit information from the participants. The finding showed that there is a significant relationship between family protective factors ($r=0.89$) and in-school adolescent involvement in risk-compromising behaviours in Bauchi Metropolis. Similarly, a significant positive correlation is found between school protective factors ($r=0.75$) and in-school adolescent risk-compromising behaviors, suggesting weak or poor school discipline as a predictor. The study recommends that parents, teachers and community members should organise youth programmes that will focus on fostering known protective factors that are predictors to risks in their environments.

Keywords: Family, Predictors, Risk Compromising Behaviours and School Protective Factors,

Introduction

Students today are said to be the future workforce of tomorrow and to have competent and productive workforce, the students are expected to be healthy, morally sound, mentally stable and educationally fit. Though many indulge in risk-compromising behaviours that may thwart the expectation placed on them as many have died through motor vehicle accidents, suicide, substance overdose and sexual related activities. The World Health Organization (2009) asserts that the stage between childhood and adulthood is characterised with some lifestyles that are gradually established overtime. With this cycle of life, some youths take to tobacco, drug, and other unhealthy social and physical riskcompromising activities.

Riskcompromising behaviours are problem behaviours adolescents involve in; it is characterised by both the personalities of adolescents and the unconventional behaviour in social environments partially created by adolescents. Unconventional behaviours manifest in individuals who tolerate divergent or marginal behaviours and who have no ties

with any social institution. While these behaviours can appear in harmless actions, such as wearing an unusual hairstyle, they can also lead to unwanted results that can potentially threaten an adolescent's health and life. Risk-compromising behaviours comprises two main subsets of behaviours: problem behaviours and health-risk behaviours. Problem behaviours are socially prohibited behaviours such as commercial sex and substance abuse that are capable of causing some form of social unrest and that require control response or sanction (Donovan, 2015). Health-risk behaviours (such as, cigarette smoking) may compromise health, but may not necessarily violate social or legal norms of the society like other problem behaviours.

As stated by Edum (2006), teenagers in our society are not excluded from engaging in risky behaviours that put them at risk. Some are influenced by their peers, while others are driven by the easy access to substances that are commonly abused. Additionally, exposure to television, films, and books may prompt some adolescents to experiment with these substances in order to personally experience their effects.

The destiny of any community, society, state, or nation is intertwined with the character and behaviour of its adolescents in that particular area. Consequently, responsible young individuals in a society indicate a responsible and promising future for that society, while the opposite holds true as well. In our society, adolescents often face challenges that lead them to adopt various strategies to cope with these issues and successfully navigate within societal norms. While some individuals find solace in legal methods, others resort to illegal and unhealthy practices, such as the use and abuse of illicit substances, thereby engaging in risky behaviours. The effects of specific illicit substances vary based on their mode of operation, quantity consumed, the user's history, and other factors.

Engaging in substance use is a significant risk compromising behaviour observed among secondary school students. The danger of substance use to the overall Nigerian development is apparently clear which includes crime, health hazards, addiction leading to theft and even armed robbery to get money to sustain the behaviour, instead of the adolescents being catalysts for the country's development, it turned them to be nuisance which tends to threaten the future of the nation. Effects of substance use include declining grades, absenteeism from school, noise-making, loss of interest in studying, difficulty in reading for tests and examinations, developing health challenges that make them absent from school activities and increased potential for dropping out of school (Ngozi, Sylvia & Nkem, 2015).

Moreover, violence is a behaviour characterised by the use of physical force with the intention to harm, destroy, or cause the death of an individual or something else. Violence could also be physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, verbal abuse, financial, cultural and spiritual. Physical violence uses a part of their body or object to control a person's actions. Physical violence encompasses the act of employing physical force that leads to pain, discomfort, or injury to another individual. Assault with a weapon or object can lead to severe injury and murder. According to Radio

Nigeria (2017), physical violence was the incident that happened within Bauchi metropolis on December 2017 after an 18 years old boy was found dead killed by a 14 years old boy who stabbed him in the neck with a knife over a minor misunderstanding. According to the correspondent, the person responsible for the crime happened to be an SS1 student in secondary school within Bauchi Metropolis. Similarly, according to Guardian Newspaper (GNP, 2015) a teenager within Bauchi Metropolis has stabbed a 25 years old to death with a knife as a result of an argument that ensued between them.

Risky sexual behaviour is another risk compromising behaviour. It is any behaviour that increases the probability of negative consequences associated with sexual contact, including Human-Immuno Deficiency Virus (HIV)/Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) or other sexually transmitted diseases (STD), abortion and unplanned pregnancy (Adesemowo & Okubanjo, 2011). Youth sexual behaviour is highly relevant to different public health problems. Youth unprotected sexual intercourse contributes to unwanted pregnancies, abortions, pregnancy-related complications, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS (Marston & King, 2006). Sexual immorality that happened within Bauchi Metropolis as reported by Premium Times (PT, 2017) concerning some secondary school students that engaged in illegal marriages among themselves which led to the closure of a secondary school in the state capital for some time. Such act could lead to unwanted pregnancy and massive dropout of adolescents from school.

Protective factors according to Jessor (2013) are classified as; personal factors include those from the psychological domain: self-esteem, emotional well-being and risk-taking disposition. Socio-environmental factors include both actual and perceived components such as family structure and family connectedness, school connectedness, and stressful life experiences such as past physical and sexual abuse. Behavioural factors include school achievement, involvement in

extracurricular activities and attendance at religious services. From Jessor classification, the placement of these variables into these larger categories might not be a clear-cut as most of the variables have personal, socio-environmental and behavioural components.

Gender differences in the context of risk compromising behaviours have been the focus of several investigations. Many studies reveal that men display riskier behaviours than women, but Weden and Zabin (2005) asserts that one reason for this generally consistent finding is that women simply tend to report risky behaviours less than men. Women may under-report because of fear of societal judgment and rejection. In traditional western society, it is accepted and almost expected for males to behave in risky and promiscuous ways. Society portrays them as being typical males who are considered “cool” or “boys just being boys”. With these current predicaments of risk compromising behaviours that are affecting secondary school students, more research using protective factors as predictors to such risk compromising behaviours is highly needed. This is because protective factors help to explain environmental factors that ignite individual, group and societal behaviours (Brown, 2006).

Family and protective factors have been found to be important predictors of risk-compromising behaviours among secondary school students. Family factors such as parental involvement, parental monitoring, and family functioning have been shown to be related to a reduction in risk-taking behaviours, including substance use, sexual behaviour, and violence. For example, studies have found that parental involvement in a child's life is positively associated with their academic achievement and reduces the likelihood of engaging in risky behaviours (Chung & Mak, 2019).

Parental monitoring is another family factor that is crucial in preventing risk compromising behaviours among adolescents, as it helps to create a sense of structure and accountability for the child. When parents monitor children activities, they are better able to identify any potential problems and intervene to prevent them (Nlandu et al., 2018). Furthermore, there is

a correlation between positive family functioning and reduced levels of risk-taking behaviors among adolescents. For example, adolescents who report high levels of family cohesion and low levels of conflict are less likely to engage in substance use and other risk-taking behaviours (Su & Supple, 2014).

Protective factors also play a role in reducing risk compromising behaviours among secondary school students. Academic achievement and school connectedness have been shown to be protective factors that can reduce the likelihood of engaging in risk-taking behaviors (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Denny et al., 2011). Finally, peer influence is another important predictor of risk compromising behaviours among secondary school students. Adolescents who associate with deviant peers are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviors (Juvonen et al., 2003). Therefore, it is important for schools to provide positive peer environments that encourage healthy behaviours and discourage deviant behaviour.

The school environment plays a crucial role in shaping the behaviors and attitudes of secondary school students. It provides students with opportunities to learn, socialise, and form connections, serving as a second home for many adolescents. As a result, school protective factors have been identified as potential predictors of risk compromising behaviours among secondary school students.

Studies have found that supportive school climates and positive school experiences, such as a strong sense of connectedness to school, are associated with lower levels of risk-taking behaviours and substance use (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Akos, 2011). Moreover, students who perceive that their school prioritizes their safety and well-being are more inclined to refrain from participating in harmful behaviors (Battin-Pearson, Newcomb, & Abbott, 2000). This implies that school failure to ensure students safety could be a contributing factor to students involvement in risk compromising behaviours.

Moreover, teacher-student relationships and the availability of positive role models can also

serve as protective factors in reducing risk-taking behaviours (Klem & Connell, 2004). Teachers who provide emotional support, clear expectations, and opportunities for students to participate in meaningful activities can help students develop a sense of belonging and purpose, reducing the likelihood of engaging in risk-compromising behaviors (Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 1997). Also, school-based programmes and services, such as counseling, peer mentoring, and health education, can also serve as protective factors by providing students with opportunities to develop healthy coping skills and learn about the dangers of risk-taking behaviors.

Other protective factors are also needed as predictors for positive psychological outcomes and resilient in high-risk circumstances like self-esteem, the possession of positive coping strategies, attending worship places, involvement in positive peer networks and health-enhancing behaviours (healthy diet, regular exercise, good sleep and rest). Thus, the need and essence of protective factors is to contribute to the positive youth development and serve as predictors to risk compromising behaviours among senior secondary schools in Bauchi Metropolis.

Statement of the Problem

The rise in risk-compromising behaviours among secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis is a growing concern. A survey conducted by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2017) reveals that the number of dropouts in secondary schools has increased, with a total of 6,423 adolescents dropping out of school in Nigeria, and 2,021 in the North East Zone alone. Bauchi State has the highest dropout rate at 64.2%, with 783 adolescents leaving school due to engaging in risk compromising behaviours.

UNESCO (1995) reports that the childhood and adolescent stage is crucial for the development of knowledge, attitudes, values, and skills that can lead to healthy behaviour and prevent risk-taking behaviours. However, it is also a time when young people are vulnerable to sexual

activities, violence, and substance abuse. Currently, in Bauchi metropolis, videos such as "Girls Gone Wild" have become popular on social media and have encouraged students to engage in previously unacceptable behaviors like flashing their bodies and participating in sexual acts.

In Bauchi metropolis, the consequences of these behaviours include injury, pregnancy complications, sexually transmitted diseases, substance abuse, poor academic performance, truancy, and the inability to achieve educational goals. A study by Ibrahim, Umar, and Usman (2016) suggests that alcohol and marijuana use, delinquent behaviours, and sexual intercourse could become a major problem for the education system if left unaddressed. However, there is a lack of research on family and school protective factors to risk-compromising behaviours in Bauchi metropolis. This study therefore, investigated family and school protective factors as predictors to risk-compromising behaviours among secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised for this study:

1. What are the family protective factors against risk-compromising behaviours among secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis?
2. What are the school protective factors against risk-compromising behaviours among secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated to guide the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between family protective factors and school adolescent involvement in risk compromising in Bauchi Metropolis.
2. There is no significant relationship between school protective factors and in-school adolescent involvement in risk-compromising.

Methodology

The study employed a correlational survey research design. The population consists of all the 8,589 students in the 22 senior secondary schools in Bauchi Metropolis. The researcher selected 367 senior secondary one students as sample for the study because of their developmental stage which coincides with adolescence that is characterised by physical, social, mental, and emotional changes that make them vulnerable to engage or involve in risk-compromising behaviours. This selection hinged on criteria for determining sample size by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) who stated that 367 sample should be drawn from the population of 8,000 to 8,999. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques of proportionate sampling and simple random sampling of hat drawn technique were employed for this study. The schools were stratified based on type and gender while simple random sampling was applied to select the respondents proportionate to the population of the schools.

The instruments for data collection were Students Risk Compromising Behaviours Scale

(SRCBS) by Arthur, Hawkins and Protective Factors Questionnaire (PFQ) Pollard, Catalano and Baglioni (2002) and Suicide Resiliency Inventory (SRI-25) by Bruns (2014). The reliability of internal consistency of the instruments was determined through Cronbach's Alpha method and reliability coefficients of 0.85 and 0.75 were obtained for both instruments respectively. The instruments were structured on five-point Likert-scale as Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The test-retest results obtained were SRCBS and PFQ indicated 0.85 while SRI-25 was 0.70 which indicated the instruments were reliable. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer while Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

RESULTS**Research Question One**

What are the family protective factors against the risk compromising behaviours among secondary school students in Bauchi Metropolis?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Family Protective Factors of Secondary School among the Secondary School Students

S/n	Statement on Family Protective Factors	\bar{X}	SD
1	My family really tries to help me whenever I am involved in violent behaviour.	3.64	1.63
2	I can find someone in my family who can help me cope if I should think about using illicit substance.	3.27	1.55
3	I have a family that I could turn to for emotional support when I am angry and unstable	3.98	1.20
4	I have relatives with whom I can share my sadness	4.00	1.25
5	My parents warn me on the consequences of engaging in sexual activities	4.18	1.27
6	My family is willing to help me make good decisions	4.53	0.94
7	My parents care about my welfare	4.39	0.99

NB: $X < 3.0$ = Disagreed, ≥ 3.0 = Agreed as measured on 5-point scale

Results in Table 1 show that respondents agreed on all the statements of family protective factors with mean values greater than the cut-off mean point of 3.0. The common family protective factor is family willingness to help students

make good decisions (M=4.53, SD=0.94), followed by parents care about students welfare (M=4.39, SD=0.99), while the least is counselling from family members on the thought of using illicit substance. However,

mean values greater than 3.0 signifies that family protective factors of secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis include: family willingness to help them make good decisions, parents care about student's welfare, help from family whenever one is involved in violent behaviour, emotional support, sharing things together, parental care, and counselling from

family members on the thought of using illicit substance.

Research Question Two

What are the school protective factors against risk compromising behaviours among secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of School Protective Factors of Secondary School among the Secondary School Students

S/N	Educational Protective Factors	\bar{X}	SD
1	I have a counsellor with whom I share my educational issues at school.	4.10	1.11
2	My teachers encourage and support me towards making smart decisions.	4.34	1.03
3	My school create awareness on the danger of drug abuse	3.98	1.37
4	My school organises extracurricular activities to reduce the urge of engaging in sexual behaviours	3.95	1.30
5	My teachers reward good behaviours	4.39	0.99
6	My teachers serve as good role models in exhibiting good behaviours	4.34	1.02

NB: $X < 3.0$ = Disagreed, ≥ 3.0 = Agreed as measured on 5-point scale

The results as shown in Table 2 indicate that respondents agreed on all the items ($X \geq 3.0$) as school protective factors. Item 5 (teachers reward of good behaviours) is the most perceived school protective factor ($M=4.39$, $SD=0.99$), followed by creating awareness on the danger of drug abuse ($M=4.34$), as well as teachers' role model ($M=4.39$), while the least perceived factor is school extracurricular activities ($M=3.95$). Thus, figures generally imply that perceived school protective factors of

secondary school students in Bauchi metropolis are: school counsellors' role, teachers' support, school awareness on drug abuse, school extracurricular activities, teachers' reward, and teacher as a model.

Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between family protective factors and in-school adolescent involvement in risk compromising in Bauchi Metropolis of Bauchi State, Nigeria

Table 3: Correlation Between Family Protective Factors and in-School Adolescent Involvement in Risk Compromising

Variables	N	(\bar{x})	SD	Df	r=value	Crit. Value	Decision
Family Protective Factors	179	3.2400	41.271	366	.0.89	.015	Rejected
Risk Compromising	188	3.1293	57.031				

From the table above, the correlation value is $r=0.89$. and the critical value is .015, Since the critical value (.015) is less than .0.89, the null hypothesis is rejected and conclude that there is a significant relationship between family protective factors and in school adolescent

involvement in risk-compromising in Bauchi Metropolis.

Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between school protective factors and in-school adolescent involvement in risk compromising behaviours.

Table 4: Correlation Between School Protective Factors and in-School Adolescent Involvement in Risk-Compromising Behaviours

<i>Variables</i>	<i>N</i>	(\bar{x})	<i>SD</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>Cal. r-value</i>	<i>Crit. Value</i>	<i>Decision</i>
school protective factors	179	3.3515	40.276	366	.0.75	.047	<i>Rejected</i>
risk compromising	188	3.1293	57.031				

From the table above, the correlation value is 0.75 and the critical value is .047. Since the critical value (0.047) is less 0.05. This implies that there is a strong positive correlation between school protective factors and in-school adolescent involvement in risk compromising. It further means that weak or poor school discipline is a predictor to in-school adolescent involvement in risk compromising

Discussion of Findings

The study has identified protective factors relative to school factors. School protective factors perceived by secondary school students include: school counsellors' role, teachers' support, school awareness on drug abuse, school extracurricular activities, teachers' reward, and teacher as a model. These perceptions may be attributed to series of interventions and invaluable programmes introduced in various secondary schools within the scope of study such as character education programmes. This programme promote positive values, such as treating others fairly, showing others respect and understanding, and displaying empathy, caring and support for others. In this way, the programs seek to foster caring and supportive interpersonal relationships and a positive school climate, as characterized by opportunities to participate in school activities and decision making and shared positive norms, goals, and values. Smith, Tollit, and Helphill, (2008) findings from evaluations of the Positive Action programme (a school-based, social-emotional and character education programme for students in secondary school) supported that this

intervention reduces school misconduct, truancy, bullying, early sexual activity, and substance use.

The nature of the school environment be responsible for students responses because schools functions as a second home for adolescents and provided opportunities for them to learn, socialize and feel connected (Denny et al. 2011). Previous studies back up that the evidence for educational protective factors focused on modifying individual characteristics through curriculum-based interventions and is very similar across risk behaviours (Madkour, Farhart, & Halpern, 2010). Moreover, 'whole-school' interventions addressing the school ethos, are promising, and provide evidence that this approach can reduce risk behaviours among the students (Fletcher, Bonell & Hargreaves, 2008).

Also, family protective factors tend to be reported among secondary school students and these include: family willingness to help them make good decisions, parents care about students' welfare, help from family whenever one involved in violent behaviour, emotional support, sharing things together, parental care, and counselling from family members on the thought of using illicit substance. This can be attributed to the nature of parents' students have. For example, parents who spent leisure time with adolescents and give them autonomy will serve as a protective factor for these risky compromising behaviours (Kobus' 2003; Brooks et al. 2012). More so, students'

perceptions of the above family protective factors may be rooted in the ties of relationship they have with parents and other family members, because having a caring family, children being close to their parents, and low levels of family conflict lessened emotional distress and risk-taking behaviour such as substance use (Su & Supple, 2014). Conversely, according to Chauhan (2000), when parents experience poverty and are unable to meet the essential physiological needs of their children, it can lead to frustration. This frustration, in turn, can contribute to the development of anger and overall antisocial behaviour in adolescents. Similarly, Nwankwo (2003) observed that children born into impoverished environments may resort to socially-unacceptable behaviours as a means of survival.

Conclusion

The study's findings underscore the significance of various family protective factors in mitigating substance use among students in Bauchi Metropolis, Nigeria. These factors include family willingness to guide decision-making, parental concern for student welfare, support during instances of violent behavior, emotional assistance, shared activities, overall parental care, and counseling against illicit substance use. Additionally, within the educational context, teachers' reinforcement of positive behaviors emerged as the most prominent protective factor, followed by initiatives like raising awareness about drug abuse and teachers serving as role models. Conversely, school extracurricular activities were perceived as the least influential protective factor.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were provided:

1. Parents, teachers and community members should organise youth programmes focusing on fostering known protective factors such as youth-adult attachments and meaningful participation in community activities as it may also be able to work on reducing the exposure of youth to particular risks in their environments.
2. Teachers should organize an interactive session in a form of discussion on areas of need for a multi-dimensional risk-compromising behaviours prevention, such as acting in order to

expel the forces that can lead to risk compromising behaviours.

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