

Cognitive Behaviours of Out-Of-School-Adolescents in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined cognitive behaviours of out-of-school adolescents in Southwest, Nigeria. The study specifically assessed the extent of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents; and determined the difference in cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents based on their sex and location. Descriptive research design of the survey type was used in the study. The population of the study consisted of out-of-school-adolescents, in Southwest Nigeria. The study sample of 1458 out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was selected using multistage sampling procedure. The research instrument used was a questionnaire titled "Adolescents Cognitive Behaviours Questionnaire" (ACBQ) designed by the researcher. Face and content validity procedure of the instrument were ensured by experts in Guidance and Counselling, Educational Psychology, and Tests and Measurement. The reliability of this instrument was subjected to split half procedure to ensure its internal consistency and the value obtained after the correlation was 0.72 which indicated that the instrument was reliable. The data collected were scored and subjected to statistical analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. The result of findings revealed that out-of-school-adolescents have highest exhibition of religious faith cognitive behaviour, closely followed by achievement motivation and altruism while the least exhibition was cognitive behaviour on nationalism. Also, the extent of cognitive behaviours among out-of-school-adolescents was moderate while cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was not significantly differentiated by sex and location. It was recommended among others that the government should set-up a counselling intervention team that will see to the welfare and cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents.

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Introduction

Cognition is a psychological concept that explains how the human mental ability processes gained knowledge and understanding. These processes involve thinking, knowing, remembering, judging, and problem solving. Kendra (2019) observed that these processes of gaining knowledge and understanding operate at the higher level of intellectual functioning of the human brain which also includes planning. He also explained cognition as the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge through thoughts, experiences, and the senses. It was further explained that these processes involve intellectual stimulations such as attention, knowledge formation, memory, judgment, evaluation, and reasoning, problem solving (computation), decision making, comprehension, and language production. Shresthra (2017) defined behaviour as any action that an organism uses to adjust to the environment. But some Behaviourist and Psychologists appear to differ in opinion as some posited that anything that goes on in the mind and cannot be observed and may not be regarded as human behaviour, especially as it concerns mental processes. But another school of thought is of the opinion that human behaviour involves both observable (overt behaviour) and non-observable (covert behaviour).

Cognitive behaviour in this study therefore refers to an individual's thinking style as it relate to their emotions, feelings, and thinking which may be rational or irrational on issues they considers in their mind. Their thinking may consequently influence their behaviours and personality. Rachey (2018) referred to cognitive behaviours as one's thinking pattern, how one links ideas together to make one's personal decision, that is, how one's thought influences one's behaviour and actions.

Out-of-school-adolescence in this study may be defined as adolescents who are between the ages of 10 to 19 years who are supposed to be in school but are not in school. WHO (2013) describes the adolescence stage as a period of development which occur between the ages of 10 and 19 years and explained further that, it is a phase of physical, cognitive, and psychological development that occurs during the period of puberty to adulthood and this include adolescents at the lower and upper secondary school level of education. However, UNESCO (2015) observed that out-of-school-adolescents denotes those that are definitely not in school, meaning they are not enrolled in junior or senior secondary school as is applicable in Nigeria.

Survey reports on Nigeria's population of out-of-school-adolescents and children by United Nations and UNICEF (2018) in collaboration with Nigeria's National Demographic health survey NDHS, (2018) affirmed their rising in population from 10.5 million in 2015 to 13.2 million in 2018, and this also appears to be the highest in the world affirming that one in every five out-of-school-adolescent is a Nigerian. Nigeria's estimated population as at 12th May, 2019 numbering 200,209,652 shows a mean age of 17.5 years (an adolescent age bracket). And more pertinent is the Southwest Nigeria data of out-of-school-adolescents by Nigeria Bureau of statistics (NBS) and United Nations International Children Fund (2018) showing that Lagos State has 229,264, out-of-school-adolescents, Ekiti State has 99,778, Oyo State has 463,280, Ondo State has 113,746, Ogun State has 158, 797, and Osun State has 260,522. The sum total of out-of-school-adolescents is about 1,325,387, in Southwest Nigeria (Punch, 28th June, 2019).

It appears that some Nigeria's out-of-school-adolescents are not seeing much good in the unity and existence of Nigeria as a nation from their thinking. They seem to feel and think that, Nigeria does not have anything good to offer them for their socio-economic survival

hence their engagement in fraudulent activities and social vices such as corporate begging, hooliganism, kidnapping, and armed robbery in the society at large, and perhaps dependent on rich persons within the family for their social and economic wellbeing. They also appear not to believe that they can initiate small scale business of their own and work gradually to achieve success and eventually become employer of labour. All these unbecoming attitudes appear to emanate from their negative thinking.

The gender factor may very much influence out-of-school-adolescents cognition as it appears that male adolescents students withdrawing from school may easily engage themselves in menial jobs such as commercial bus conductor services, commercial motorcycle riders (okada), serving a Brick Mason at building site, and at best learning a trade/vocation as a means of earning income early in life since sometimes the burden of home maintenances rest on him as the man. On the female out-of-school-adolescents, the moral strength to control her early puberty demand appears a major factor responsible for their early pregnancy and being out of school. UNESCO (2018) report shows that adolescents not in school are disproportionately female, impoverished, and rural in some instances and this makes them doubly disadvantaged especially if they are females from poor families and perhaps reside in rural areas. She opined that these set of girls may appear very less likely to acquire the benefit of education as they grow to become adults, and may think of depending on their husband for sustenance.

Another pertinent factor is the location where out-of-school-adolescents resides, it appears rural place of resident's culture, traditions, and their socio-economic status may make them have less value for education, and the situation may be more compounded by schools' poor infrastructures, non-availability of educational facilities, and non-availability of qualified teachers. It also appears the social life and exposure of adolescents at urban and rural areas may not be the same. It has also been observed that in developing countries the socio-economic status of rural disparities poses greater obstacle to adolescent's educational attainment.

The problem of this study is the uncertainty about the out-of-school-adolescents sense of nationalism, altruism, religious faith, and achievement motivation. In view of the above, the study examined cognitive behaviours of out-of-school adolescents in Southwest, Nigeria. The study specifically:

1. assessed the extent of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents;
2. determined the sex difference in cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents; and
3. examined the location difference in cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents.

Research Question

This research question was raised for this study;

1. What is the extent of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents?

Research Hypotheses

The null hypotheses below were postulated for this study;

1. The cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria will not be significantly differentiated by sex.
2. The cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria will not be significantly differentiated by location.

Methodology

Descriptive research design of the survey type was used in the study. The method was adopted for the study because it involved a large population of out-of-school-adolescents. The population of the study consisted of out-of-school-adolescents, both male and female in Southwest Nigeria. The study sample of 1458 out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was selected using multistage sampling procedure. The research instrument used was a questionnaire titled "Adolescents Cognitive Behaviours Questionnaire" (ACBQ) designed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of two sections namely Sections A and B. Section A sought for the personal data of the respondents on certain variables such as gender and location while Section B contained 40 items that measured cognitive behaviours in the area of nationalism, altruism, religious faith and achievement motivation. A four point Likert-type scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree was adopted for each of the subsections in Section B. The high point was indicative of positive trait of cognitive behaviour while the low points indicate negative traits of cognitive behaviour of out-of-school-adolescents.

Face and content validity procedure of the instrument were ensured by experts in Guidance and Counselling, Educational Psychology, and Tests and Measurement. The reliability of this instrument was subjected to split half procedure to ensure its internal consistency. The scores on odd and even items obtained from the two separate administration of the test was correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient. The value obtained after the correlation was 0.72 which indicated that the instrument was reliable. The data of the study was collected and collated by the researcher after the administration of the questionnaire. The data collected were scored and subjected to statistical analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. Both hypotheses were tested using t-test at 0.05 level of significance.

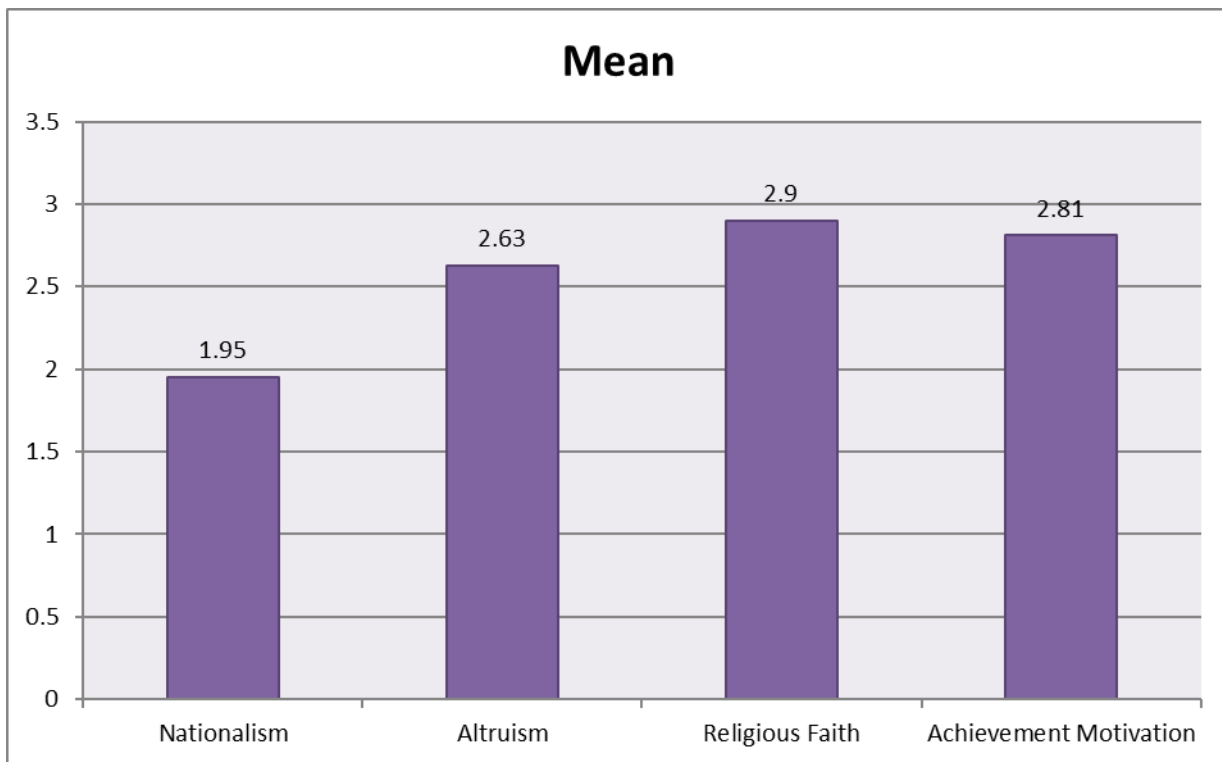
Results

Research Question 1: What is the extent of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents?

In answering this question, data on cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents were collected from the responses of the respondents to items in the questionnaire. The data were collated and analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and mean.

Table 1a: Mean Scores of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents

S/N	ITEMS	Total Mean	Average Mean	Rank
1	Nationalism	19.52	1.95	4 th
2	Altruism	26.33	2.63	3 rd
3	Religious Faith	29.02	2.90	1 st
4	Achievement Motivation	28.10	2.81	2 nd



Fig

Figure i: Bar chart showing cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents

Table 1a and figure i showed the cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents. The result indicated that the average mean mark of cognitive behaviour on nationalism is ($\bar{x} = 1.95$), altruism cognitive behaviour ($\bar{x} = 2.63$), religious faith cognitive behaviour ($\bar{x} = 2.90$) and achievement motivation cognitive behaviour ($\bar{x} = 2.81$). It is deduced from the above that out-of-school-adolescents have highest exhibition of religious faith cognitive behaviour, closely followed by achievement motivation and altruism while the least exhibition was cognitive behaviour on nationalism.

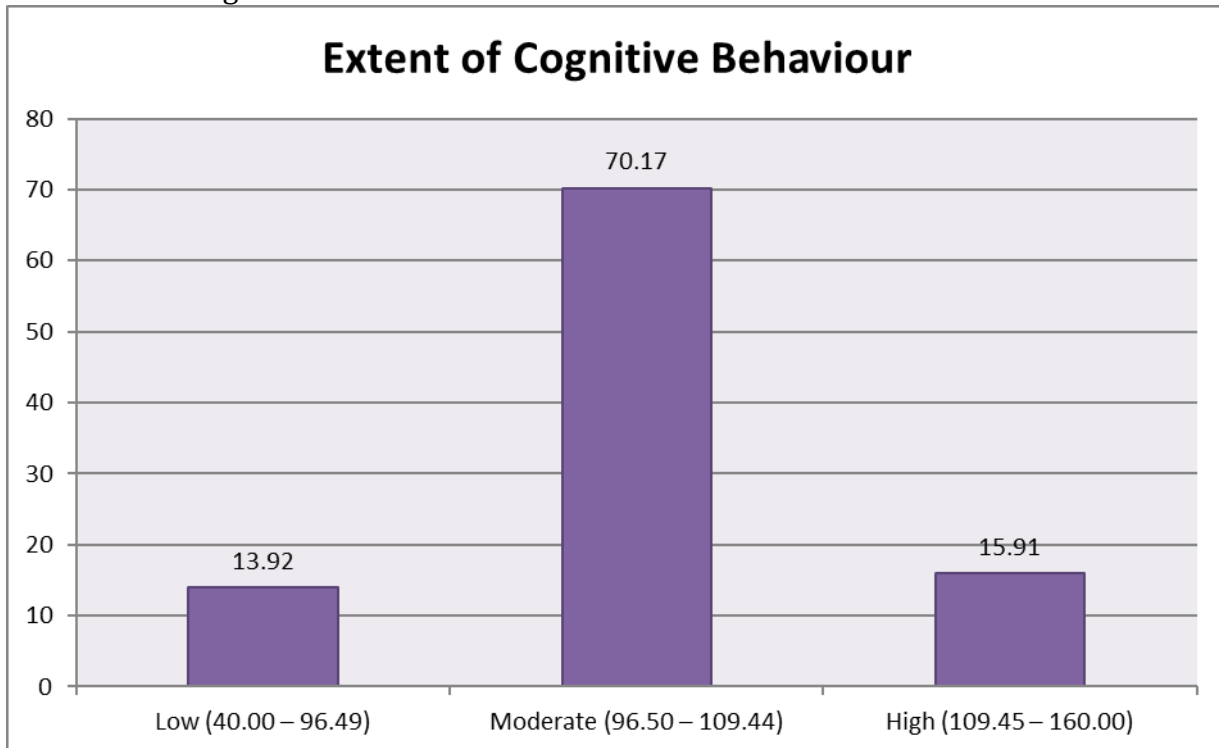
Table 1b: Extent of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents

Levels of Practice	No of Respondents	Percent age
Low (40.00 – 96.49)	203	13.92
Moderate (96.50 – 109.44)	1023	70.17
High (109.45 – 160.00)	232	15.91
Total	1458	100

Table 1b reveals the extent of cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents. The score of the responses were used to determine the extent as either low, moderate or high. The low extent of cognitive behaviours was determined by subtracting the standard deviation from the mean mark ($102.97 - 6.48 = 96.49$). The moderate extent of cognitive behaviours was determined by mean mark (102.97) while the high extent of cognitive behaviours was determined by adding the standard deviation from the mean mark ($102.97 + 6.48 = 109.45$).

Therefore, the low level of extent of cognitive behaviours ranges from 40.00 – 96.49 while moderate extent of cognitive behaviours was 96.50 – 109.44 and high extent of cognitive behaviours ranges from 109.45 – 160.00. The result shows that out of 1458 respondents, 203 of the respondents representing 13.92 percent had low extent of cognitive

behaviours. Those who had moderate extent of cognitive behaviours were 1023 respondents representing 70.17 percent while 232 respondents representing 15.91 percent had high extent of cognitive behaviours. This shows that the extent of cognitive behaviours among out-of-school-adolescents was moderate. Figure ii further reveals the extent of cognitive behaviours at a glance.



Fig

Figure ii: Bar Chart showing extent of cognitive behaviours among out-of-school-adolescents

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: The cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria will not be significantly differentiated by sex

In order to test the hypothesis, data on cognitive behaviour were collected from the responses of the respondents to items under Section B of QACBCN (item 1 – 40) in the questionnaire. t-test was used to compute difference in cognitive behaviour between male and female out-of-school-adolescents. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: t-test Analysis for difference in cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents based on their gender

Variations	N	Mean	SD	Df	t _{cal}	P
Male	976	102.93	6.53	1456	0.400	0.689
Female	482	103.07	6.39			

P>0.05

Table 2 shows that the t-cal value of 0.400 was not significant because the P value (0.689) > 0.05. This implies that null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, the cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was not significantly differentiated by sex.

Hypothesis 2: The cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria will not be significantly differentiated by location



In order to test the hypothesis, data on cognitive behaviour were collected from the responses of the respondents to items in the questionnaire. t-test was used to compute difference in cognitive behaviour between rural and urban out-of-school-adolescents. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: t-test Analysis for difference in cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents based on their location

Variations	N	Mean	SD	Df	t _{cal}	P
Rural	846	103.13	6.55	1456	1.048	0.295
Urban	612	102.76	6.40			

P>0.05

Table 8 shows that the t-cal value of 1.048 was not significant because the P value (0.295) > 0.05. This implies that null hypothesis was not rejected. Hence, the cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was not significantly differentiated by their location.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that out-of-school-adolescents have highest exhibition of religious faith cognitive behaviour, closely followed by achievement motivation and altruism while the least exhibition was cognitive behaviour on nationalism. The extent of cognitive behaviours among out-of-school-adolescents was moderate. This finding is in line with the findings of Chinawa (2014).

Amyle (2018) observed in his study that the cognitive behaviour of some out-of-school-adolescents appear to be that of self-defeating, illogical reasoning, which may have generated emotional dysfunctions and lack of self-worth that may have influenced their decision to associate themselves with peers of deviant behaviours. Chinawa (2014) opined that out-of-school-adolescents appear to have different cognitive behavioural problems ranging from violent related behaviour problems, such as substance use and misused, drug addiction, smoking, alcoholism, sexual abuse, and bullying. He also opined that each of these behavioural challenges come with her associated burden ranging from psychiatric manifestations, occasional emotional panics, drug psychosis, homicides, suicidal thoughts and drug addiction.

The study also revealed that the cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was not significantly differentiated by sex. This implies that the male and female out-of-school-adolescents have the same counselling needs. In consonance with the findings of this study, Viyalaxmi and Varsh (2014) revealed that there were no significant differences between the responses of male and female adolescents on counselling needs. It was further revealed that the cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was not significantly differentiated by location.

Conclusion

The study concludes that out-of-school-adolescents have highest exhibition of religious faith cognitive behaviour, closely followed by achievement motivation and altruism while the least exhibition was cognitive behaviour on nationalism. Also, the extent of cognitive behaviours among out-of-school-adolescents was moderate. The study also

concludes that cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents in Southwest Nigeria was not significantly differentiated by sex and location.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. The government should set-up a counselling intervention team that will see to the welfare and cognitive behaviours of out-of-school-adolescents.
2. The government through professional counsellors should fund cognitive restructuring behaviour intervention programme for out-of-school-adolescents.

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