

## ***Influence of Conduct Disorder on the Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students of Kano State, Nigeria***

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### **Abstract**

*The study adopted ex post facto design to investigate the influence of Conduct Disorder on academic achievement of senior secondary school students of Kano State. Multistage sampling was used to select Three hundred and thirty three (333) students as sample from 6 senior secondary schools, from the target population of 2,493 students. An adapted instrument, Adolescents Conduct Disorder scale (ACD-Scale), was used for data collection while 2017 Kano state senior secondary schools qualifying examination results was used to determine the students' academic achievement. The adapted instrument was validated; the reliability was established as 0.868 using Cronbach's Alpha. Data collected for the study was analysed using frequency count and t-test. The study found that there is low prevalence of Conduct Disorder among senior secondary school students of Kano state and there is a significant difference in academic achievement between senior secondary school students with high conduct disorder and those with low conduct disorder in Kano State. Based on the findings, the study recommends that secondary school authorities should organize periodic programmes to enlighten the students on the effects of conduct disorder on their future development.*

**Keywords:** conduct, disorder, academic, achievement, Kano

### **Introduction**

The students of senior secondary schools in Kano State are generally within the adolescence period. This adolescence period is a very important period in the life of every individual. The period of adolescence is sometimes seen as a time filled with stress and uncertainty about self, riddled with sudden and frequent mood shifts, a time dubbed as the identity crisis phase. Adolescents often engage in new ways of behaviour and thinking that sometimes make them vulnerable to impulsivity and conduct disorder. Senior secondary school students are at a higher risk of exhibiting chronic anti-social behaviour and criminality, experience poor interpersonal functioning, drop out of school

and get involved in substance/drug abuse. Some people are of the belief that senior secondary schools nowadays have become a breeding ground for unscrupulous and uncultured youths through negative peer influences.

Conduct disorder is manifested by persistent conflict with parents, teachers, and peers and can lead to damage to property and physical injury to the person and others (Barlow & Durand, 2012). These patterns of behaviour are steady over time. American Psychiatric Association (2013) defines the essential characteristics of conduct disorder as "a persistent pattern of behaviour in which the basic rights of others or major age-appropriate social norms are violated." Conduct disorder falls into 4 main categories of behaviour viz (1) aggression toward people and animals (2) destruction of property without aggression towards people or animals (3) deceitfulness, lying, and theft (4) serious violations of rules.

Conduct disorder usually manifested in early or middle childhood is usually referred to as oppositional defiant behaviour. Almost one half of children with early oppositional defiant behaviour have an affective disorder, conduct disorder or both by adolescence (Ilomaki, Hakko, Ilomaki, & Rasanen, 2012). However, careful diagnosis to exclude irritability as a result of another unnoticed internalizing disorder is important in childhood stage. Evaluation of parent-child interactions and teacher-child interactions is also critical. Even in a stable home environment, a small number of preschool-aged children display significant irritability and aggression that results in disruption severe enough to be classified as conduct disorder (Bista, Thapa, Sapkota, Singh, & Pokharel, 2016).

Symptoms of conduct disorder vary with age as the adolescent develops physical strength, cognitive abilities, and sexual maturity (Buchha, 2012). Some of the behaviours which are less severe such as, lying, stealing, and physical fighting tend to emerge initially, whereas more severe behaviour, such as drugs/substance abuse, sexual oddities, stealing, among others are likely to surface at a later age (Coleman, 2008).

In a study conducted by Briggs, and Alikor (2013) with the title "Conduct Disorder amongst Children in an Urban School in Port Harcourt, Nigeria", the researchers used ex post facto design to guide the study; the instrument used for the study was a structured scale based on Vanderbilt ADHD Diagnostic Teacher Rating Scale for oppositional defiant and conduct disorder symptoms. Direct verbal interview was conducted for the students found with the symptoms of conduct disorder. The population used in the study was 885 students out of which 140 students diagnosed with conduct disorder were used in the study. The result from the study shows a high

prevalence of conduct disorder in the study area. The study recommends that school authorities should put in place mechanisms for early identification and appropriate treatment of conduct disorder in secondary schools.

Another study was conducted by Chinawa et al. (2014) with the title “Behavioral Disorder amongst Adolescents Attending Secondary School in Southeast Nigeria.” The research design for this study was cross-sectional survey design and the instrument used in the study was self-administered scale adapted from Health Kids Colorado Scale; the sample size for the study was a total of 763 students drawn from Ebonyi and Enugu States. The result from the study indicates high prevalence of conduct disorder in the study area. The study recommends that a longitudinal study should be conducted to determine the changing pattern of this disorder.

Another study was conducted by Olashore, Ogunwale, and Adebawale (2016) titled “Correlates of conduct disorder among secondary school students in Ogun State, Nigeria”. It was a cross-sectional descriptive study conducted among a sample of 147 students drawn from selected senior secondary schools of Ogun State, Nigeria using systematic random sampling technique. The finding from the study shows high prevalence of conduct disorder in the study area. The study recommends that the government and policy makers should come up with a comprehensive early intervention focused on improving parental supervision in large families as well as other re-training programmes aimed at reducing conduct disorder among secondary school students in Ogun State and Nigeria at large.

Maxwell and Adaugo (2019) conducted a study on the topic “Influence of Conduct Disorder on Academic Performance of Secondary School Students in Rivers State, Nigeria.” The research design for the study was experimental research design. The target population was 300 secondary school students drawn from three selected secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 90 students, that is 30% of the population. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the participants in the study. The instruments used in generating data for the study was “Conduct Disorder and Academic Performance Scale.” The findings from the study indicate that conduct disorder significantly influences students’ academic performance in the study area. The study recommends that parents and teachers should watch secondary school students closely in order to identify conduct disorder early before it goes out of hand.

Akpan, Ojinnaka, and Ekanem (2014) conducted a study on the Academic achievement of Secondary School Students with behavioural disorders in Uyo, Nigeria. A total number of 132 students aged between 12- 18 years with behavioural disorders were used for the study. Rutter scale for teachers (Scale B2) and their

matched-controls were selected. Their academic achievement was assessed using the overall scores achieved in the first and second term examinations in the 2005/2006 academic sessions, as well as scores in individual subjects. The result from the study revealed that 76.5% of students with conduct disorders had poor academic achievement. The overall academic achievement was statistically significant ( $p=0.04$ ). The mean scores of the students with Conduct Disorder on the four core subjects compared well with those of the controls. Students with Conduct Disorder underachieved more than those without conduct disorder. The study finally concludes that conduct disorders are associated with poor academic achievement of secondary school students in Uyo. The study recommended the periodic assessment of behaviour and academic records of students, and that teachers should closely monitor the students with conduct disorder in the school environment and engage them rigorously in academic activities.

Suleiman (2017) conducted a study on the topic “Influence of conduct disorder and depression on Academic performance among secondary school students in Kaduna State, Nigeria.” Descriptive Survey design was used to study a sample size of 777 secondary school students purposely selected from six educational zones. A close ended scale and a researcher designed academic performance test were used to obtain responses from the students. Data collected for this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages, mean, standard deviation, and inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation ( $r$ ) and Analysis of Variance ANOVA tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The findings from the study reveal that significant mean difference exists in academic performance between students with high conduct disorder and students with low conduct disorder in the study area. The study recommends that professional psychologists and counsellors should render psychological interventions using cognitive behavioural techniques for students with conduct disorder and depression in secondary schools.

Hakimi, Hejazi, and Lavasani (2011) conducted a study on the relationship between conduct disorder and academic achievement among adolescent students. The study was conducted using a samples of 285 adolescent students (191 females and 94 males) of Tehran Metropolis, Iran. Conduct Disorder scale and students’ End of the term results were used to collect data for the study. The results reveal that conduct disorder was significantly related to academic achievement among adolescent students. The higher the rate of Conduct Disorder in students the lesser their academic achievement and vice versa. The study recommended that curriculum developers should put into consideration personality traits and individual differences of learners, so as to help them take such differences into account and be more flexible while developing educational curriculum.

Academic achievement is defined as a successful completion of academic programme or the attainment of academic content and skills. Achievement is defined as measurable behaviour in a standardized series of tests (Marsh & Hau, 2004) where the tests are usually constructed and standardized to measure ability in school subjects. The most highly valued method of determining whether a successful completion has taken place for a learner is quantitative in nature (Fan & Chen, 2001). In other words, figures (in the context of grading and testing) are used to point out whether a student has been successful or unsuccessful in mastering academic content and skills (Meece, Anderman, & Anderman, 2006). A student who scores 70% and above (where 70% equals an A) is regarded to have achieved academically in the subject, whereas a student who scores below 50% (where 49-0 equals D, E and F) is regarded to have underachieved. In most cases, according to Vrugt & Oort (2008), "accomplishment" is sometimes used in place of "achievement" by educational researchers. They are of the view that, educational achievement is measured by standardized achievement test developed across various subjects in school. What this means is that academic achievement is determined by measuring what a student attained at the end of a course in terms of proficiency. But the test must be a standardized one to meet national or State norm. For any test to be standardized, it must be valid over a period of time. For any academic achievement to be determined, all students in the country or State must take the same coursework and engage in that coursework in the same way using the same curriculum (Good, Aronson, & Inzlicht, 2003). The baseline in academic achievement discussion is based on grades and test scores. Students may not be permitted to proceed to tertiary institutions from senior secondary school, for example, if they are unable to get 5 credits and above including Mathematics and English in Nigeria.

The incidences of fire setting in Kano State boarding schools was found to be committed by some students with the sole objective of setting the school on fire because they want to get a break from school; they were tired of boarding school as revealed by the special panel set up to investigate the cases by the Ministry of Education in 2016. Similarly, cases of bullying, examination malpractice, truancy, homosexuality, school riot etc such as the recent case that claimed the life of an SS 3 student in Maitama Sule Science College, Gaya in 2016 among others are increasing at an alarming rate in Kano State schools. In similar vein, on 28th of June, 2006 students of Government Senior Secondary School Sumaila engaged in a riot which claimed the lives of three (3) people including a police inspector. Similarly, on September 13, 2010 an adolescent senior secondary school student was arrested for killing his father, mother and his three younger siblings in Zoo Road area of Kano State. Similarly, on March 15, 2014 four (4) adolescents who were also Senior Secondary School Students were arrested in Kumbotso L.G.A of Kano State in

connection with the kidnapping and subsequent killing of a 7 year old child (Ibrahim, 2014).

In the same vein, the academic achievement of senior secondary school students of Kano state became a source of concern to the people of the state. It is no longer news that the academic standards of secondary school students in the state is falling by the day due to so many factors, such as, lack of adequate learning materials, lack of proper concentration and attention to learning by the students, immorality and conduct disorder, among others. The academic achievements among secondary school students in Kano have been decreasing over the years judging by the deteriorating results in Kano State Senior Secondary Schools Qualifying Examination (KERD, 2016). **For instance**, in Kano State between 2013-2018, there has not been any year that more than 27.2% of Kano State candidates scored 5 credits and above including Mathematics and English in SSQE examination. In 2013, out of the 70,354 candidates who sat for SSQE only 18,809 (26.7%) got 5 credits and above including mathematics and English language. In 2014, out of the 65,194 candidates that sat for SSQE, only 17,107 (27.2%) got 5 credits and above including mathematics and English. In 2015, out of 71,241 candidates who sat for the SSQE examination only 18,883 (26.5%) got 5 credits and above including mathematics and English. In 2016, out of 75,016 candidates who sat for the SSQE only 19,262 (25.68%) got 5 credits and above including mathematics and English. In 2017, out of 86,352 candidates who sat for SSQE only 17,017 (19.71%) got 5 credits and above including mathematics and English. In 2018, out of 98,342 candidates who sat for the SSQE only 24,758 (25.18%) got 5 credits and above including mathematics and English (KERD Report, 2016).

These poor academic achievements among the students have received increasing attention from the government and educational researchers over the years. In view of the above poor academic achievements of the students, there was a series of public outcries from the general public. For instance, in 2017 Kano state students who wrote senior secondary schools qualifying examination alongside their parents protested the level of failure in the examination (Ibrahim, 2014). The questions that remain unanswered are: what are the factors that led to these deteriorating academic achievements among the senior secondary school students of Kano state persistently? Is it as a result of the persistent conduct disorder manifested by senior secondary school students as pinpointed above or other factors? Hence, the researcher attempts to get a scientific answer to the above questions through this research.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of study are to determine:

- i. The prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State.
- ii. The mean difference in academic achievement between students with high conduct disorder and students with low conduct disorder in senior secondary schools in Kano State.

### **Research Question**

Based on the above objectives, the following research question is used to guide the study:

- i. What is the prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students of Kano State?

### **Research Hypothesis**

**Ho1:** There is no significant mean difference in academic achievement between students with high conduct disorder and students with low conduct disorder in senior secondary schools in Kano State.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts ex post facto design which was defined by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) as the research design that investigates possible cause and effect between two or more variables by observing an existing situation or state of affairs and searching back in time for possible causal factors. In effect, researchers tend to ask themselves what factors seem to influence certain conditions or behaviour. It is another means of teasing out antecedents that have already happened and cannot be manipulated by the researcher. It is against this background that this study is concerned with identifying the present academic achievement of the students in relation to conduct disorder of the students with a view to determining whether there is cause and effect between them.

Generally, the target population of the study consists of senior secondary school students of SS III in Kano state who wrote Qualifying Examination in 2017 numbering 79,897 students (KERD, 2016). However, for the purpose of this study, the schools were clustered into 14 Education Zones of Kano State and 6 Education Zones were selected using a simple random sample from the fourteen (14) Education zones. From each of the 6 selected education zones, one (1) senior secondary school was selected through simple random sampling as well, to produce the target population. Hence, the

researcher diagnosed 2,493 students with conduct disorder to come up with the target population of the study. The table 1 depicts the target population.

**Table 1:** Target population and sample size distribution

Education Zone	SN	LGA	Name of Schools	Population	Sample Size
Dambatta Zone	1	Dambatta	GSS Dambatta	475	63
Gwarzo Zone	2	Gwarzo	GSS Gwarzo	448	60
Dala Zone	3	Dala	AKCC Kano	354	47
Municipal Zone	4	Municipal	Rumfa College	685	91
Rano Zone	5	Rano	GSS Rano	235	32
Karaye Zone	6	Karaye	Unity Karaye	296	40
<b>Total</b>				<b>2,493</b>	<b>333</b>

Source: Office of the Director Planning, Research and Statistics, Kano Senior Secondary Schools Management Board (2017)

The sample of this study consists of three hundred and thirty-three students (333) drawn from public senior secondary school students of Kano State who wrote SSQE in 2017. The above decision is in line with Research Advisor (2006) table of sample size, from which the equivalent sample size for 2,493 is 333.

Multistage sampling was used to select 6 public male senior secondary schools from the 14 education zones of Kano State in the first instance. One school was randomly selected to represent each of the education zones selected. The researcher used proportionate sampling in determining the number of sample per school. The sample was divided proportionately according to the school population sampled, the higher the size of the school population the more sample that were allocated to the school.

The Adolescent Conduct Disorder Scale (ACD-Scale) (1980) was adapted from the American National Youth Survey which was originally named Youth self-report scale designed by Achenbach System of Empirically Based Assessment (ASEBA) (2001). The validity and reliability of the original version of the instrument was 0.86 and 0.84 respectively. In the scale, conduct disorder was assessed using self-report items.



Respondents were asked to indicate how often they had engaged in a variety of conduct disorder using a 4-point Likert scale. After a careful study of the original NYS scale taking into consideration the culture, environment and religious factors, the researcher developed a twenty-five (25) item scale named Adolescent Conduct Disorder Scale. The scale was divided into two sections (A and B). Section A consists of personal data which contains 4 items and section B consists of the items measuring conduct disorder of the respondents which contains 25 items.

The scoring guide for the instrument is given accordingly: the scale asks the respondents to indicate how often they had engaged in a variety of conduct disorder using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 4 to 1, often option was graded 4 points, sometimes option was graded 3 points, once option was graded 2 points, and never option was graded 1 point. The highest obtainable score in the scale is 100, while the lowest obtainable score is 25. Any student that scored 50 and above in the ACD-Scale is regarded as student with high conduct disorder, any student that scored below 50 in the ACD-Scale is regarded as student with low conduct disorder.

The researcher used construct validity to determine the validity of the instrument. The Adolescent Conduct Disorder Scale (ACD-Scale) was administered concurrently with Anti-Social Behaviour Scale, the correlation was found to be  $r = .63$ . The researcher also used Fornell-Larcker criterion to establish discriminant validity of the adapted version of Adolescent Conduct Disorder scale and the AVE index was found to be 0.68 which indicates a strong evidence of construct validity of the instrument.

In the original ADC-Scale designed and developed by National Youth Survey (NYS), the internal consistency reliability estimate for the ADC-Scale was 0.88 in the standardization sample of 793 individuals. This reliability estimate indicates that the total raw score on the scale possesses good internal consistency reliability as provided in the U.S Department of Youth (2009) for interpreting a reliability coefficient. In order to ascertain the culture fair reliability of the instrument, the researcher employed Cronbach alpha formula to get the reliability index of the instrument in Kano State as given below:

**Table 2:** Components ACD

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No. of Items based on Standardized Items</b>
Component 1	.877	.877	12
Component 2	.756	.756	8
Overall Components	.868	.868	20

From the above tables, Component one of the Adolescence Conduct Disorder Scale has  $\alpha=0.877$  reliability indexes while component two has  $\alpha=0.756$  as its reliability index. The overall Adolescence Conduct Disorder Scale has a reliability index of  $\alpha=0.868$ . This shows that the instrument is reliable because the value is above the 0.70 required for an instrument to be considered reliable (Anastasi & Urbina, 2010).

The data collected from the respondents was statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize the data and t-test to test the hypothesis.

### **Presentation of Results**

**Research Question:** What is the prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State?

**Table 3:** Prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State

<b>Rate of Conduct Disorder (%)</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
High rate of conduct disorder	101	30.33%
Low rate of conduct disorder	232	69.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>333</b>	<b>100%</b>

To determine the prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State, descriptive statistics of frequency count and simple percentage was performed. From the table, a total of 232 senior secondary school students representing 69.67% of the students have low rate of conduct disorder, while 101 senior secondary school students representing 30.33% of the students have high rate of conduct disorder respectively. Based on the obtained figures, it is evident that there is low prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State. This is because, 69.67% students that participated in the study were found with low conduct disorder and 30.33% among the students have high rate of conduct disorder. Based on the obtained results, as such, there is low prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State.

**Ho1:** There is no significant mean difference in academic achievement between students with high conduct disorder and students with low conduct disorder in Kano State.

**Table 4:** t-test for differences in academic achievement between students with high and low conduct disorder in Kano State

Groups	N	Mean	t-calculated	df	P value	Level of Significance
High conduct disorder	101	30.9901				
			-43.206	331	0.00	0.05
Low conduct disorder	232	70.7543				

In hypothesis one, the researcher found that t-calculated is -43.206, P-value is 0.00 at 331 degree of freedom, and 0.05 level of significance. P-value is less than level of significance. Since the p-value is less than the level of significance as indicated on table 4, the null hypothesis which states that “there is no significant mean difference in academic achievement between students with high conduct disorder and students with low conduct disorder in Kano State” is therefore rejected; while the alternate hypothesis, that “there is a significant difference in academic achievement between senior secondary school students with high conduct disorder and those with low conduct disorder in Kano State is retained.

### **Summary of the findings**

Findings of the study show:

a) That there is low prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State. This is because, 69.67% of the students that participated in the study were found with low conduct disorder and 30.33% among the students have high rate of conduct disorder.

b) That there is a significant difference in academic achievement between senior secondary school students with high conduct disorder and those with low conduct disorder in Kano State and this is in favour of low conduct disorder.

### **Discussion of the findings**

Research is a continuous and universal phenomenon. As such, some of the findings from this study correspond with the findings of similar researches conducted around the world while others differ.

This research reveals that that there is low prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State. This is because, 69.67% students that

participated in the study were found with low conduct disorder and 30.33% among the students have high rate of conduct disorder. The above finding is in line with the findings of Briggs and Alikor (2013), Chinawa, Manyike, Obu, Odetunde, Aniwada, Ndu, and Chinawa (2014), Olashore, Ogunwale, and Adebowale (2016).

In the same vein, the finding of the study reveals that there is a significant difference in academic achievement between senior secondary school students with high conduct disorder and those with low conduct disorder in Kano State in favour of low conduct disorder. The finding collaborates the findings of Maxwell, and Adaugo (2019), Akpan, Ojinnaka, and Ekanem (2014), Suleiman (2017), Hakimi, Hejazi, and Lavasani (2011).

### **Conclusion**

In view of the findings of this study, it was concluded that there is low prevalence of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students in Kano State. This is because, 69.67% of the students who participated in the study were found with low conduct disorder.

### **Recommendations**

a) Secondary school authorities should organize periodic programmes at least once in every term where the National Drugs and Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) officers, religious scholars, Hisba board officers and traditional and community leaders and parents as well as, political leaders are invited to enlighten the students on the consequences of conduct disorder and impulsivity to their future development in order to maintain the low rate of conduct disorder among senior secondary school students of Kano state.

b) School dramas, debates and essay competitions should be revived in Kano State and emphasis should be given to topics that will emphasise the consequences of Conduct Disorder among secondary school students.

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