

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE INFLUENCE OF STUDENTS' GENDER AND PARENTING STYLES ON STUDENTS' AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOUR IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of students' gender and parenting styles on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey research design of ex-post-facto was employed. All public senior secondary school II students in Irewole, Isokan and Ayedaade Federal constituency formed the target population. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample six schools (that is two schools per local government). Simple random sampling technique was employed to select three-hundred (300) participants. The instrument used was validated and subjected to reliability test. The data were analyzed with the aid of inferential statistics. The empirical outcomes indicated negative influence of authoritative parenting style and students' aggressive behaviour. The result revealed a positive influence of autocratic and uninvolved parenting principles on students' aggressive behaviour. Besides, the empirical outcomes indicated that there is a weak joint influence of gender and parenting styles on students' aggressive behaviour. The findings also revealed that there is no significant difference in the level with which male and female adolescents demonstrated aggressive behaviour while in school. Lastly, the result indicated that a positive and significant but weak correlation between students' demonstration of aggressive behaviour and the application of different parenting styles with authoritative. The study concluded that parenting styles exhibited by parents in guiding and nurturing their wards have a long way to go in their wards' expression of aggressive behaviour while in school regardless of the gender of the wards. It is recommended that parents should embrace effective application of authoritative parenting style in the course of nurturing their children. As this would help in guiding against demonstration of aggressive behaviour among their wards regardless of their gender while in school.

Keywords: Gender, Parenting Styles, Aggressive Behaviour, Secondary School, students.

Introduction

The prevalence of violence and conflict in schools in recent years has caused scholars to become increasingly concerned about aggressive behaviour. According to Georgiou *et al.*, (2017), aggressive behaviour includes both relational and physical hostility as well as destructive behaviour that purposefully causes bodily or psychological harm to others. 83.93% of college learners have moderate to higher levels of aggression (Yu *et al.*, 2020).

This has a negative impact on both the aggressor's and the victim's psychological development and can even result in despair, suicide, and other negative outcomes (Yu *et al.*, 2020). According to the frustration-aggression idea, people's experiences with setbacks are the foundation for aggressive behaviour to occur. When people believe they have lost something that should be theirs, they become instantly satisfied by using aggression toward others to make up for their sense of loss (Baojuan and Xue, 2021).

Yajing *et al.*, (2019) found that the detection rate of behavioural disorders in preschool-aged children in China was 14.8%, which is greater than the 8–10% reported in Western countries (Wichstrøm *et al.*, 2017). Several social maladjustments, including juvenile delinquency, peer rejection, and a variety of criminal activities, have been linked to aggressive behaviour (Burt *et al.*, 2016).

Parenting styles are a collection of parenting philosophies, practices, actions, and emotional expressions that parents use to communicate with their children in everyday situations (Dexian, *et al.*, 2024). Parents play a crucial role in promoting positive adaptive development (Delvecchio, *et al.*, 2020). Children receive discipline in homes where the ideal parenting approach is used, but the opposite is true in homes where this approach is not used. This means that a child's growth, development, and behavioural patterns are significantly influenced by their parenting style (Kelland, 2020).

Research has shown that the violent conduct displayed by children and adolescents is greatly influenced by the parenting style employed (Qi, 2019). Negative parenting practices such as punishment, rejection, or exclusion can cause adolescents and teenagers to imitate delinquent behaviour, amplify hostile feelings and cognitive attributions (Goulter *et al.*, 2020), stifle and impede the development of emotional and behavioural regulation skills (Ganiban *et al.*, 2021), and ultimately encourage the emergence of aggressive behaviours (Ahemaitijiang *et al.*, 2021). According to Masud *et al.*, (2019), children who experienced severe maltreatment throughout their early years are more likely to have increased antisocial aggression. On the other hand, research has shown that positive parenting approaches, like providing care and exercising appropriate control, might discourage antisocial conduct (Ma *et al.*, 2020).

Furthermore, parental practices affect adolescents' capacity for empathy as well as how their social conduct develops. Previous studies indicate that parenting is a common extrinsic element influencing how children acquire empathy. According to Ma *et al.*, (2020), supportive parenting styles positively correlate with children's empathetic features, which are critical for the development of aggressive behaviour. Autocratic parents generally raise their children with social impairments, low social initiative, trouble expressing themselves, difficulty forming intimate connections, and frequent peer rejection (Alcaide, *et al.*, 2023; Reyes, *et al.*, 2023).

Saadati, *et al.*, (2020) found that adolescents with social disorders, rule-breaking behaviour, aggression, and isolation/depression issues were more likely to experience psychological feedback from permissive and authoritarian parenting approaches. Ju *et al.*'s (2020) research indicates that risk-taking behaviour is positively correlated with parental rejection and overprotection but negatively correlated with maternal warmth, suggesting an indirect relationship between parenting practices.

In both human and animal aggression, gender is a contributing element. Traditionally, it has been thought that men conduct the great majority of homicides and are typically more physically aggressive than women from an early age (Chaman, 2015). Secondary school students' hostility levels are significantly influenced by gender, with boys being more aggressive and private school students experiencing higher levels (Chaman, 2015).

Johannes and Thomas (2021) argued that the influence of gender determines how professionals classify violence occasioned by aggressive behaviour, with relationship violence frequently being classified as feminine and physical violence as typically masculine. Hence, when boys engage in relationship violence, people tend to view them as less aggressive, while girls' physical aggressive is not often taken seriously.

Yokota, (2017) concurred that boys tended to be more aggressive than girls. Aggression is the response to insults and provocation for both men and women. According to Muokwue, *et al.*, (2022) there is actually less of a difference between males and females when they have experienced frustration, insults, or threats. It is observed that both sexes utilize the same level of verbal hostility (Muokwue, *et al.*, 2022).

Numerous research has looked into the relationship between violent behaviour and parenting style; however, the findings have been mixed. Miller *et al.*, (2014), for instance, discovered that the influence of different parenting philosophies on adolescents' behavioural issues is contingent upon the adolescents' empathy level. On the other hand, Avc and Sak (2021) discovered no evidence of an empathy-mediated relationship between aggressive parenting and aggression. Most of these studies mostly addressed youths at the undergraduate stage, largely ignoring those adolescents in senior secondary schools. Parental actions towards their children during adolescents' stage can go a long way in addressing or triggering aggressive behaviours which may be manifested in undergraduate years. Attention has not been fully directed towards the relationship among gender, parenting styles and aggressive behaviour among secondary schools' students in Osun State, Nigeria. Hence, the needs for this study.

Objectives of the Study

The study's broad objective is to assess the influence of students' gender and parenting styles on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria, while specific objectives are to;

- i. examine the influence of authoritative parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria;
- ii. investigate the influence of autocratic parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria;
- iii. assess the influence of uninvolved parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria; and

- iv. examine the joint influence of gender and parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the study.

- i. What is the influence of authoritative parenting style on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?
- ii. What is the influence of autocratic parenting style on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?
- iii. What is the influence of uninvolved parenting style on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?
- iv. What is the joint influence of gender and parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses below are tested at 0.05 level of significance

- i. There is no significant difference in the students_ aggressive behaviour on the basis of gender.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) and students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

Theoretical Framework

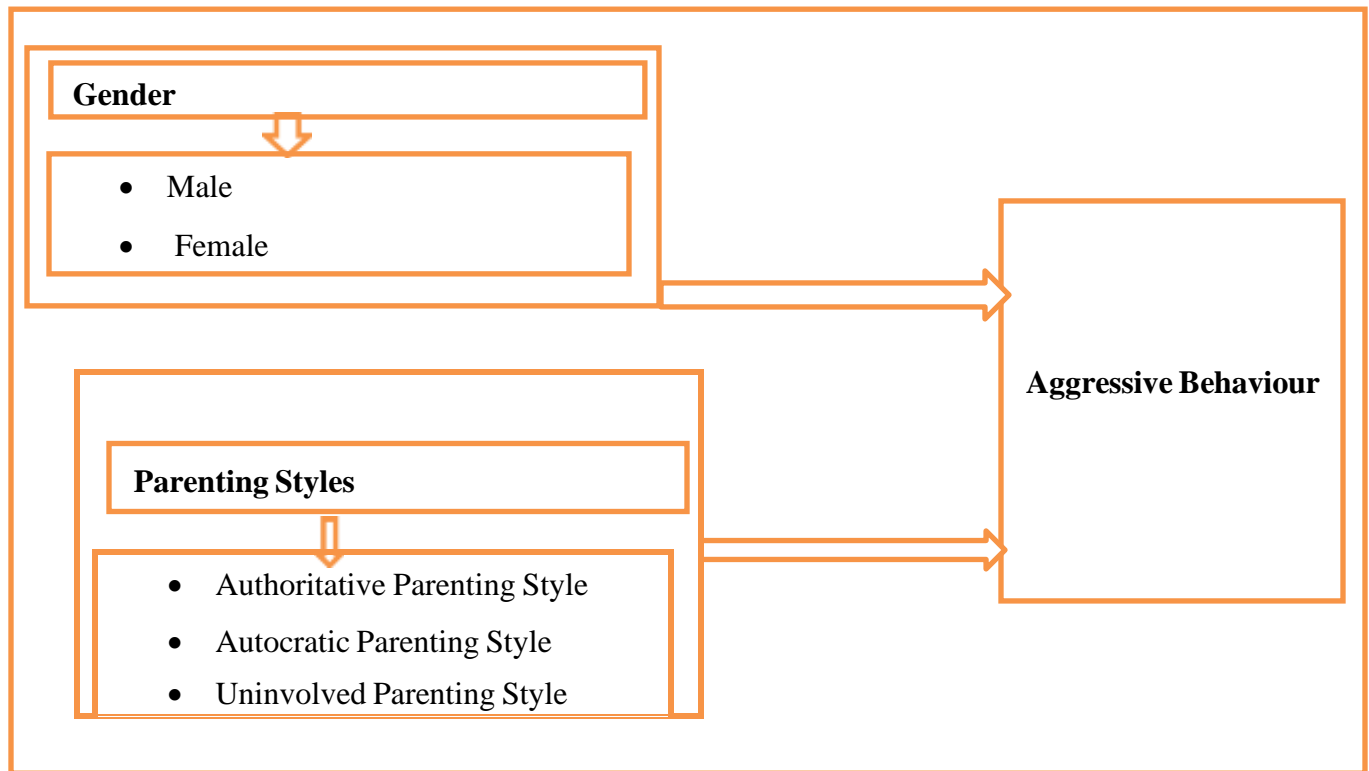
Social Learning Theory

According to Bandura's Social Learning (1973), The theory of aggressiveness postulates that certain aspects of the school or home surroundings facilitate the development, performance, and maintenance of aggressive behavioural reactions among the habitants. Such that members of family or learners in the school can pick up aggressive behaviour by copying the actions of someone they observe acting aggressively. It's crucial to remember that acquiring a behaviour does not need imitation; rather, it requires that the individual pay attention to the behaviour that was initially modeled.

According to Bandura (1973), aggressiveness has a wide range of causes and objectives, and the social learning theory seeks to explain aggression. According to this idea, aggressiveness is defined as behaviour that harms another person or piece of property, and that harm can be either physical or psychological (Bandura, 1973). According to Bandura, this behaviour is the result of ongoing, reciprocal interactions between the environment and the individual. In particular, Bandura asserts that violent traits are learned through direct experience or observation (Bandura, 1973). An individual's biological composition also influences the kinds of aggressive reactions and the speed at which learning occurs (Bandura, 1971). This is related to the many drive theories that contend that externally evoked urges to harm others are the cause of aggressiveness (Baron & Branscombe, 2016).

Three key social structures have the power to shape behaviour, especially aggressive behaviour. These are symbols, subcultures, and role models within the family (Bandura, 1965). Interactions among members of the household are referred to as the family. Parents, brothers, cousins, aunts, uncles, and other close relatives serve as the main role models in this situation. These family structures are associated with different child attachment types (Bowlby, 1988). Parents, for instance, have a significant influence on how children behave. From the perspective of aggression, adolescents can witness the attitudes and words used by aggressive parents. A subculture is a group of people who share common attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, or other prominent aspects of a society (Baron & Branscombe, 2016). The youngsters in the group may be impacted by adults who exhibit violent or aggressive belief systems, which could result in the development of aggressive tendencies in the youngsters.

Framework of the Study



Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey research design of ex-post-facto. The descriptive survey research approach enables gathering data from a subset of the population that represents the full target group. This design is valuable for expressing the relationship between the factors of interest in the research without manipulating the variables. Its purpose is to gather information from the participants in the study without altering or distorting the existing facts (Nworgu, 2006). In regards to the ex-post-facto aspect of the design, it assumes that the independent variables already existed before the researcher began observing the dependent variable (Kerlinger, 1964).

The ex-post-facto research method, known for its descriptive survey approach, is valuable for identifying the link between variables. It considers particular independent factors that may influence the dependent variable, either positively or negatively.

All senior secondary school II students in Ayedaade, Isokan and Irewole Federal constituency formed the target population. A total of three-hundred senior secondary school II students were sampled with the aid of simple random sampling technique. This comprised one-hundred and thirty-two females and one-hundred and sixty-eight males. The reason for this is that the basic random sampling approach ensures that every element in the population has an equal and independent probability of being selected for the sample. Six senior secondary schools were purposively sampled from all the three LGAs used in the study. The table 1 below contained the details of the school selected and sample chosen across the three LGAs.

S/N	LGAs	Name	Sample	
			Female	Male
1.	Ayedaade	Olufi High School, Gbongan	29	21
2.		Ode-omu High School	32	18
3.	Isokan	A.D.C Grammar School, Apomu	20	30
4.		Saint Anthony Grammar School, Ikoyi	21	29
5.	Irewole	Fatima College, Ikire. (Boys Only)	-----	40
6.		Ayedaade Grammar School, Ikire	30	30
Total			132	168

The instrument tagged Gender, Parenting Styles and Students' Aggressive Behaviour Questionnaire (GPSSABQ) was used. This comprised three sections. Section A consisted of gender of the participants. Section B comprised thirty (30) items for parenting styles having subscales of authoritative, autocratic and uninvolved with ten (10) items each. Section C consisted of items on aggressive behaviour having twenty (20) items.

The instrument was trail tested among thirty (30) students of the other schools, who were not part of the main focus. The Cronbach Alpha reliability approach was used which produced 0.77 and 0.82 reliability coefficient for parenting styles and students' aggressive behaviour, respectively. this instrument has Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) to Strongly Disagree (SD). The data obtained were analysed via Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25, where objectives one to four are achieved through regression while hypotheses one and two were tested using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and correlation.

Results and Discussion

Research Question I: What is the influence of authoritative parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 2. Simple regression result showing the influence of authoritative parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	S. E			
(Constant)	15.234	4.022		3.23	.000
Authoritative Parenting Style	-0.321	.324	.433	7.231	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Aggressive Behaviour

Table 2 indicated that there is negative and significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and students' aggressive behaviour. This is because with a unit increase in the parents' application of authoritative parenting style while nurturing their children would bring down the likelihood of such a child to put up aggressive behaviour in school by -0.32.

The means that the authoritative parenting style has a negative contribution to students' demonstration of aggressive behaviour. Hence, the higher the ability of parents to effectively apply authoritative parenting style, the lower their wards would exhibit aggressive behaviour in school. This is to infer that children of parents with high degrees of authority display lower levels of violent conduct and unstable emotions.

This means that the parenting styles the children encounter deeply influence their conduct while interacting with their peers. Children who grow up with authoritative parenting styles typically would not encounter rejection from their classmates, struggle to build deep friendships, lack social initiative, and have social impairments. This is to deduce that authoritative parenting fosters a close bond with children, outlines expectations, and justifies disciplinary measures. This approach promotes communication and self-control, improving emotional well-being and social outcomes. Children raised by authoritative parents have higher self-esteem, perform well in school, and achieve high levels of academic achievement. However, it requires endurance and work on both sides.

Sumargi *et al.* (2020) corroborated that parents who practice authoritative parenting are better able to avoid and manage troublesome behaviours in their children, such as resistance, fighting, impatience, whining, and other disruptive behaviours. Similarly, Tom and Amah (2024) found a substantial correlation between pupils' adherence to school rules and an authoritative parenting style. In contrary, Li *et al.* (2024) reported that children who experience an authoritative parenting style find it extremely difficult to interact with their peers. Dyah and Nabella's (2024) research, authoritative parenting has been linked to a number of issues, including behaviour al

issues, empathy development, life satisfaction, emotional difficulties, self-esteem, and behavioural and cognitive development in teenagers which is not in tandem with the findings of this study.

Research Question II: What is the influence of autocratic parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 3. Simple regression result showing the influence of autocratic parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	S. E	Beta		
(Constant)	11.310	3.011		3.721	.000
Autocratic Parenting Style	0.072	.405	.241	6.821	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Aggressive Behaviour

Table 3 indicated that there is positive and significant relationship between autocratic parenting style and students' aggressive behaviour. This is because with a unit increase in the parents' application of autocratic parenting style principle while nurturing their children would lead to increase aggressive behaviour among children in school by 0.07. The means that the autocratic parenting style has a positive contribution to students' demonstration of aggressive behaviour. This suggests that teenagers who thought their parents were autocrats displayed more aggressive behaviour than those who thought their parents were not.

Autocratic parents set strict guidelines for their children, expecting no mistakes or consequences. They are less caring, have high standards, and offer little leeway. Children of autocratic parents are often the best-behaved but may exhibit increased violence, social awkwardness, and low self-esteem. As children grow older, strict parental restrictions can inspire rebellion against authority. Ramsha and Manoj (2022) corroborated that the autocratic parenting style is strict, demanding, and low-responsive, leading to children with a conformist mindset, low self-esteem, poor academic performance, social skills struggles, behavioural difficulties, and an increased risk of mental health problems. Aggression and an autocratic parenting style were found to be significantly positively correlated (Arzeen *et al.*, 2023).

Research Question III: What is the influence of uninvolved parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 4. Simple regression result showing the influence of uninvolved parenting style on students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	S. E	Beta		
(Constant)	13.403	2.022		2.221	.000
Uninvolved Parenting Style	1.151	.532	.342	5.123	.000

b. Dependent Variable: Aggressive Behaviour

Table 4 indicated that there is positive and significant relationship between uninvolved parenting style and students' aggressive behaviour. This is because with a unit increase in the parents' application of uninvolved parenting style principle while nurturing their children would lead to increase aggressive behaviour among children in school by 1.15. This means that the uninvolved parenting style has a positive contribution to students' demonstration of aggressive behaviour. Hence, the higher the application uninvolved parenting style principles, the higher their wards would exhibit aggressive behaviour in school and beyond. This is to infer that when parents attempt to avoid or downplay their parental duty of guiding their adolescents, the adolescents would bring disruptive behaviours to school.

Uninvolved parents raise children with minimal involvement, resulting in independence and minimal nurturing. These children are often more resilient and self-sufficient, but may struggle with emotional regulation, coping mechanisms, academic obstacles, and social connections. Their abilities are a result of necessity. Sunita et al. (2022) found in their systematic study that there was a corresponding correlation between reduced monitoring and the frequency of children's after-school activities that were associated with risky behaviour. Early adolescent behaviour seems to be most significantly influenced by parental involvement and supervision of their everyday activities.

This finding is consistent with that of Morawska (2017), who discovered a significant relationship between behavioural and emotional variables, neglectful parenting style, and students' adjustment and adherence to school policies. This suggests that as behavioural and emotional issues escalate, so will criminal tendencies. This suggests that in order for adolescents to follow school regulations and have good communication skills, parents need to take responsibility for them and provide them with the right guidance. Kamran *et al.*, (2023) identified a number of domestic life issues, such as parents' mistakes, adolescents' low self-esteem, parents' mystification, and a breakdown in communication, might contribute to delinquent behaviour in adolescents. Lazaros (2024) claimed that a child's behaviour,

socialization, and personality development are greatly influenced by the way their parents interact with them.

Research Question IV: What is the joint influence of gender and parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria?

Table 5. Multiple regression result showing the joint influence of gender and parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) on students_ aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	S. E	
	.621a	.227	.381	10.234	
Source	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	25687.794	13	1975.984	13.301	.000 ^b
Residual	25098.425	287	134.216		
Total	50786.219	300			

The results from table 5 indicated that students_ gender and parenting styles consisted of authoritative, autocratic and uninvolved had positive multiple relationships (R=.62) with the response variable, that is, students_ aggressive behaviour. The R square value of 0.23 indicated that students_ gender and parenting styles jointly accounted for 23% of the total variance in students_ demonstration of aggressive behaviour while in school. Hence, other factors that are not included in this study accounted for the remaining proportion.

Estefanía *et al.*, (2008) concluded that while a favourable learning atmosphere is more protective for boys, a favourable home setting appears to be a stronger safeguard for girls in the development of behavioural issues at school. Dua and Eliana (2023) asserted that a thorough comprehension of the types and manifestations of aggressive behaviour is necessary to address the deficiency in knowledge regarding the elements that contribute to aggressive behaviour. The violent behaviours and acts that some pupils perform are largely influenced by familial variables, and the behaviours and displays of aggression that pupil exhibits are largely influenced by social factors, such as the child's lack of social skills. Noor *et al.*, (2020) discovered that 24.9% of the variation in children's aggressive conduct can be explained by the four parenting styles factors (e.g., authoritarian, authoritative, permissive, and uninvolved parenting styles). As a result, the study's conclusions showed a strong correlation between parenting style and violent young children's behaviour.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis I: There is no significant difference in the students' aggressive behaviour on the basis of gender.

Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the difference in students' aggressive behaviour on the basis of gender.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig
Between Groups	2131.377	1	565.688	1.234	0.081
Within Groups	56714.842	299	250.075		
Total	82386.219	300			

Table 6 contained the results of the difference in students' aggressive behaviour on the basis of gender. The empirical outcomes showed that there is no statistically significant difference in students' aggressive behaviour on the basis of gender ($F_{1, 299} = 1.23; 0.07 > 0.05$). This is because the sig. value of 0.07 is greater than the probability value of .05. Hence, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in students' aggressive behaviour on the basis of gender is upheld. This means that there is no significant difference in the level at which males and females students exhibited aggressive behaviour while in schools.

Martha *et al.*, (2021) found that aggressiveness was closely correlated with trait anger for men alone, only at low levels of provocation, and only began to trend at high provocation. However, men and women aggressed at similar rates. According to this, men and women may behave aggressively under the same circumstances, but the degree to which this conduct is motivated may vary. Kaj (2018) discovered that there was a slight gender difference favoring girls in indirect aggression but a significant gender difference favouring boys in direct aggression. They came to the conclusion that males and girls employed indirect violence to a nearly equal degree and questioned why there is a misconception that females utilize indirect hostility more frequently. Neelam and Kumkum (2016), on the other hand, found that men exhibit noticeably higher levels of hostility than do women.

Hypothesis II: There is no significant relationship between parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) and students' aggressive behaviour in Osun State, Nigeria.

Table 7: Correlation results showing the relationship between parenting styles (authoritative parenting style, autocratic parenting style and uninvolved parenting style) and students' aggressive behaviour.

	Aggressive Behaviour	Authoritative Style	Autocratic Style	Uninvolved Style
Correlation Coeff.	1.000	.223	.321	.218
Aggressive Beh. Sig. (2-tailed).	.000	.000	.000	.000
N	300	300	300	300

At the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The empirical outcomes from table 7 indicated that there is positive and significant but weak correlation between students' demonstration of aggressive behaviour and the application of different parenting styles with authoritative ($r = .223, p 0.00 < 0.05$), autocratic ($r = .32, p 0.00 < 0.05$) and uninvolved ($r = .218, p 0.00 < 0.05$). This means that there is weak but positive correlation between parenting style and violent young children's behaviour. Both positive and negative actions in children can be attributed to their parenting style, as children's conduct is affected by their upbringing. Servatyari *et al.*, (2018) acknowledged that aggression in children is directly impacted by parenting techniques. Children raised by parents that are authoritarian or permissive exhibit aggressive and negative tendencies, whereas children raised by authoritative parents exhibit positive psychological behaviour.

Conclusion

The study concluded that parenting styles exhibited by parents in guiding and nurturing their wards have a long way to go in their wards' demonstration of aggressive behaviour while in school regardless of the gender of their wards.

Recommendations

In the light of this, the following recommendations are highlighted for concerned stakeholders:

- i. Parents should embrace effective application of authoritative parenting style in the course of nurturing their children. As this would help in guiding against demonstration of aggressive behaviour among their wards regardless of their gender while in school.
- ii. Parents should desist from the application of autocratic and uninvolved parenting principles while nurturing their wards. This would make their wards to open up their minds with them and not involve in an aggressive behaviour, regardless of gender.

- iii. Aggressive behaviour can be manifested by both gender (males and female), students of both male and female are implored to desist from any disruptive behaviour that may hinder their progress while in school.

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