

## **Counselling for Control of Gender Differences in the Rate of Impulsivity and Anti-Social Behaviour of Secondary School Students in Rivers State**

**Comfort Agi (Ph.D)**

Department of Educational Foundations,  
Faculty of Technical and Science Education  
Rivers State University of Science and Technology,  
Nkpolu Oroworukwo, Port Harcourt  
comfortagi@gmail.com

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined gender differences in the rate of impulsivity and differences in the rate of public and private secondary school students in antisocial behaviour. The population for the study as at 2016 was 664,199 students drawn from both public and private schools. Out of this figure, a sample of 600 students were randomly selected. A combination of simple random sample technique, stratified random sampling technique and snow-balling sampling technique were used in the process of selecting the sample. Two instruments (Barrat Impulsive scale and Anti-social behaviour scale) were used for the propose of data collection. These instruments where modified to suit the cultural background of respondents. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were formulated. Chi-square as a statistical tool was used to analyze the data. Results obtained from the study revealed that there is significant gender difference in the rate of impulsivity among secondary school students in Rivers State. Similarly, differences exist in the rate of anti-social behaviour between public and private secondary school students. Based on the findings, the study recommended that equal attention should be given to both male and female students by both teachers and parents in the treatment of impulsivity. Also, guidance and counselling centers should be established in both public and private secondary schools.*

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**Keywords:** *Counselling, Impulsivity, Anti-social behaviour and Gender Differences.*

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### **Introduction**

According to Lawal (2011), impulsivity is a personality trait which is present in any person. It is usually considered as a predisposition which implies that it is part of behaviour and not a single act in which an individual react to internal or external stimuli in an unplanned and quick manner without due consideration of the implication of such reaction to himself/herself or other individuals. Ramalingam (2006) stated impulsivity as the tendency to act without deliberation. He stressed that it is a natural or instinctive tendency or a tendency arising suddenly from excitement. This simply means that impulsivity emanates from certain stimuli, internal or external.

Barrat (2005) stressed that impulsivity is a psychological concept associated with the inability of an individual to restrain or regulate his or her behaviour. Hinslie and Shatzy (2009) in Lawal (2011) opined that impulsivity is a swift action without forethought or conscious judgment. This means impulsive individual is characterized by some behaviour such as lack of planning taking

decision suddenly and risk-taking. This is in allusion to Sigmund Freud (1923) psychoanalytic theory that the improvise person is guided by pleasure principle. This pleasure principle overshadows his/her rational thinking. An impulsive person finds it difficult to modify or suppress his or her emotional feelings such as sexual or aggressive emotions

According to Eveden (2009), impulsivity is not unidimensional but multidimensional psychological construct which is categorized into many sub-types such as: motor impulsivity which involves action, or on-going into action on the spur of the moment, i.e prompt response to issues; attention impulsivity which involves getting easily bored or not focusing on the task at hand, cognitive or non-planning impulsivity which involves the inability to plan or think carefully. Based on this, impulsivity is a personality trait which is actually present in every human being. However, studies have shown that impulsivity is more prone to individuals with behavioral and personality disorder such as alcohol and substance abuse and antisocial personality disorders, than individuals without such disorders (Moeller, 2006, and Lawal, 2011). The studies of Gerald and Higley, (2008) have shown that impulsivity is associated with health-risk, criminal and anti-social behaviours. Other related studies such as Holmes (2006), Morley and Hall (2007) and Delisi (2005) and Lawal (2011) attested that there is strong relationship between impulsivity personality disorder such as anti-social personality disorder, oppositional disorder, conduct disorder attention deficit and hyper activity disorder, conduct disorder. Since this study is mostly within adolescence period, and that they are support to the trained for future leadership role in the society, it is utmost importance to carry out such study. This study sought to find out two main important issues about impulsivity. Firstly, the paper sought to find out gender difference in the rate of impulsivity among secondary school students in Rivers State. Secondly, the issue of difference among public and private secondary school students in social vices was also investigated.

Social vices have impacted negatively on the secondary schools is no doubt. That there social vices have contributed to national instability is also not in doubt.

Odoemelam (2012) in a study identified youth deviant behaviour by stating thus; “*deviance are those action that are:*

*Socially unacceptable to the greater number of the people of a given society, which include violence, drug abuse, unwholesome sexual activities leading to teenage pregnancies bullying, stealing, lying, and use of substances.*

Odoemelam (2012) stressed that the spate of violence, drug abuse, cult wars, unwholesome sexual activities leading to teenage pregnancies, bullying on some secondary schools and several other defiant behaviours such as stealing, lying, area boys, and abuse of substances are not helping government’s efforts at arresting the seeming falling standard of education in our post primary and tertiary institutions. In a similar study Ibanga (2005) indicated that young people frequently exploited various kinds of realignment acts such as examination malpractices, extortion of money, drug addiction, cultism, sealing, truancy, bullying, killings and rape among others. Umezulike and Nwadinobi (2015) similarly identified the following as social vices or anti social behaviours exhibited by youths: immorality/sexual promiscuity, sexual armament, thuggery, examination malpractices, cultism, drugs/substance abuse, immodest/obscene dressing. Eze (2008) position that antisocial behaviour is an overall lack of adherence to social norms and standards that allow members of a given society to co-exist peacefully. Similarly, Ramalingam (2006) position that anti-social personality consist of a deviant personality, sociopath personality or psychopathic personality. Kemberly and Arinola (2006) opined that anti-social behaviour are common characteristic of individual who derive pleasure in lying, stealing, assaulting others,

bellling argumentative and sexually promiscuous. They pointed out that these behaviours, which are usually associated with emotional disturbances, may involve a violation of the legal code in a given society.

As a result of the negative influence of electronic media, other forms of deviant behaviour commonly found among secondary school students include substance abuse, examination malpractices, cultism, property offence (such as vandalism and theft), person offences (such as vandalism and theft), person offences (such as bullying and rape) etc.

The problem has become a source of worry among parents, teachers and; the general public and the mass media. The police and other law enforcement agencies have similarly shown worriers by trying to effect arrests and place the culprits under their surveillance.

It is worthy to note that the increasing, wave of violence, drug abuse, smoking, alcoholism, sex and sex related offences, rape, prostitution, examination malpractices, kidnapping, robbery, aggressive behaviour, bullying, cult and cultism is affecting the holistic growth and development of the adolescents in our society. In order to cope with the challenges in our society, some of the adolescents resort to doing menial jobs, belonging to gangs, cult and becoming prostitutes. They engage in kidnapping as a way of taking out their frustrations on the society (Odoemelam, 2012). In a nutshell, antisocial behaviours consists of acts that are socially dishonourable among such acts, drug abuse, rank first as it is the gateway to other criminal activities. This heinous act is common among the adolescents and it cut across gender, school location, socio-economic status, etc. This provides an impetus for this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This purpose of this study is counselling for control of gender differences in the rate of impulsivity and antisocial behaviour of secondary school students in Rivers State. Specially, the following objectives find the study:

1. To find out differences between male and female students in the rate and manifestations of different types of impulsivity among secondary student in Rivers states.
2. To find out differences in the rate and manifestations of antisocial behaviours between public and private school students in Rivers State.

### **Research Questions**

The following are the research question that guided the study:

1. To what extent has the rate and manifestation of different types of impulsivity affect male and female secondary school students in Rivers States?
2. To what extent has rate and manifestations of antisocial behaviours affect public and private secondary school students in Rivers state?

### **Hypotheses**

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the rate and manifestations of different types of impulsivity between male and female secondary school students in Rivers States.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the rate and manifestations of antisocial behaviour between public and private secondary school students in Rivers States.

### **Methodology**

The study, which is small-scale in nature, was undertaken to find out the rate of impulsivity and antisocial behaviour of secondary school students in Rivers States. It was conducted to find out

differences in the prevalence of impulsivity and antisocial behaviours on the basis of gender and school types survey was used in order to collect the data for the study. A total of 600 students were obtained out of a population of 664,199 students from both public and private schools used as sample for the study. These comprise 400 male and 200 female students. This number was obtained for from the public and private dichotomy. The procedures used for the purpose of obtaining the sample were a combination of sample, stratified and show-balling techniques. This was chosen because it provided the researcher with the opportunity for selection by elimination. Two instruments were used for the purpose of data collection. These instruments were Barrat impulsivity scale (Bis-11) and Anti-social Behaviour Scale (ASB). Barrat impulsivity scale is a scale commonly used in measuring the level of impulsivity. It is a 30-item self-report questionnaire developed by Barrat and adopted by the researcher. Anti-social Behaviour Scale consists of a 30-item questionnaire fashioned on the basis of Likert 4-point scale format adapted by the researcher. All the two data collection instruments were plot-tested to ensure that they were reliable and valid. Both proved to be reliable and valid ad demonstrated by the value which was obtained as 0.88 reliability coefficient and face validity. The procedures used for the purpose of data collection were combination of personal contacts and the use of Research Assistants. In administering the questionnaire to male students, research assistants were used. However, in order to reduce mortality rate i.e. failure to return filled questionnaire by the respondents, the researcher insisted on-the-spot administration and retrieval of the questionnaire. Inferential statistics was used for the purpose of data analysis. Specifically, chi-square statistical technique was used to test the two hypotheses stated above.

### **Data Analysis and Results**

This section gives the results obtained after the data was analyzed. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested to find out their differences in the rate of impulsivity and antisocial behaviour among secondary school students in Rivers State. In carrying out this study the following were the summary of the specific hypotheses considered, tested and analyzed:

Ho<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant difference in the rate and manifestations of different types of impulsivity between male and female secondary school students in Rivers States.

Ho<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant difference in the rate and manifestations of antisocial behaviour between public and private secondary school students in Rivers States.

In investigating whether or not gender differences exist in the rate and manifestation of different types of impulsivity among secondary school students in Rivers State, a sample of 600 students comprising 400 male and 200 female students were administered with Barrat impulsive scale. The scale, which was developed in 1995 consists of a 30-item self-report questionnaire. The items were further, subdivided into three sub-scales for easy comprehension and inline with the three classification of impulsiveness vis-à-vis motor impulsiveness (e.g. “I do things without thinking”). Non-planning impulsiveness (“I do not plan for the future”) and attention – impulsiveness (“I am not a careful thinker”).

However, in testing the second null hypothesis, anti-social behaviour questionnaire, which was formatted on Likert 4-point scale was administered to 600 respondents comprising 300 public and 300 private school students. The ASB consists of 30-items questionnaire which measures antisocial behaviours in adolescents such as alcoholism, abusive language, substance abuse, stealing, truancy, absenteeism, fighting, etc. The statistical tool used to test the two null hypotheses was chi-square. The results of the chi-square tables are presented below:

**Table 1: Chi-square value for male and female on rate of impulsivity.**

	<b>Novelty Seeking</b>	<b>Getting Easily Bored</b>	<b>Lack of Planning</b>	<b>Swift Action</b>	<b>Risk Taking</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>
Male	120(113.33)	110(100)	50(66.7)	70(66.7)	50(53.33)	400
Female	50(56.7)	40(50)	50(33.33)	30(33.33)	30(26.7)	200
Total	170	150	100	100	80	600

$$N^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \text{ and df} = (R-1)(C-1)$$

The expected frequencies for male and female students across different characteristics of impulsivity is hereby calculated as follows:

**Male**

Novelty Seeking	=	$\frac{170 \times 400}{400}$	113.33
Getting Easily Bored	=	$\frac{150 \times 400}{600}$	100
Lack of Planning	=	$\frac{100 \times 400}{600}$	66.67 or 66.7
Swift Action	=	$\frac{100 \times 400}{600}$	66.67 or 66.7
Risk Taking	=	$\frac{80 \times 400}{600}$	53.33

**Female**

Novelty Seeking	=	$\frac{170 \times 200}{600}$	56.67 or 56.7
Getting Easily Bored	=	$\frac{150 \times 200}{600}$	50
Lack of Planning	=	$\frac{100 \times 200}{600}$	33.33
Swift Action	=	$\frac{100 \times 200}{600}$	33.33
Risk Taking	=	$\frac{80 \times 200}{600}$	26.67 or 26.7

$$N^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

O - E	$(O - E)^2$	$\sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
120 - 113.33 = 6.67	44.4889	0.392
110 - 100 = 10	100	1
50 - 66.7 = -16.7	278.89	4.181
70 - 66.7 = 3.3	10.89	0.163

50 – 53.33 = 3.33	11.0889	0.208
50 – 56.7 = -6.7	44.89	0.791
40 – 50 = -10	100	2
50 – 33.33 = 16.67	277.889	8.337
30 – 33.33 = -3.33	11.089	0.332
30 – 26.7 = 3.3	10.89	0.407
		<b>17.8</b>

The calculated chi-square value is 17.8 and this value is now compared with the chi-square value on the table of chi-square distribution at (2-1) (5-1) = 4df. To find out whether or not gender differences exist in the rate of impulsivity among secondary school students in Rivers State. The observed value from the table of chi-square distribution (9.49) shows that it is less than the calculated chi-square value (17.8) at 0.05 level of significance. This being the case, the null hypotheses is hereby rejected. That means the null hypotheses is not upheld meaning that there is significant gender difference in the rate of impulsivity among secondary school students in Rivers State. This is based on decision one rule that says: Reject the null hypothesis if the calculated value of the test statistics is greater than the critical value. At this point, the calculated value (cal-value) is 17.8 while the critical or table value is 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance.

**Table 2: Chi-square value of Public and Private Secondary School Students pm Rate of Anti-Social Behaviour.**

	Isolation	Disruptive Tendency	Antagonistic	Drug Abuse	Lying	Cheating	Grand/ Total
Public	60(50)	60(56.5)	30(55)	50(56)	80(57)	20(25.5)	300
Private	40(50)	53(56.5)	80(55)	62(56)	34(57)	31(25.5)	300
Total	100	113	110	112	114	51	600

The above values are observed values for the public and private students on anti-social behaviour. Below are the expected frequencies for the two groups across 6 characteristics of anti-social behaviours.

**Public**

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Isolation} &= \frac{100 \times 300}{600} = 50 \\ \text{Disruptive Behaviour} &= \frac{113 \times 300}{600} = 56.5 \\ \text{Antagonistic} &= \frac{110 \times 300}{600} = 55 \\ \text{Drug Abuse} &= \frac{112 \times 300}{600} = 56 \\ \text{Lying} &= \frac{114 \times 300}{600} = 57 \\ \text{Cheating} &= \frac{51 \times 300}{600} = 25.5 \end{aligned}$$

**Private**

$$\text{Isolation} = \frac{100 \times 300}{600} = 50$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Disruptive Behaviour} &= \frac{113 \times 300}{600} = 56.5 \\ \text{Antagonistic} &= \frac{110 \times 300}{600} = 55 \\ \text{Drug Abuse} &= \frac{112 \times 300}{600} = 56 \\ \text{Lying} &= \frac{114 \times 300}{600} = 57 \\ \text{Cheating} &= \frac{51 \times 300}{600} = 25.5 \end{aligned}$$

$$N^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

O - E	(O - E) <sup>2</sup>	$\sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$
50 - 50 = 10	100	2
60 - 56.5 = 3.5	12.25	0.21
30 - 55 = 25	625	11.36
50 - 56 = -6	36	0.64
80 - 57 = 23	529	9.28
20 - 25.5 = 5.5	30.25	1.18
40 - 50 = -10	100	21
53 - 56.5 = -3.5	12.25	0.21
80 - 55 = 25	625	11.36
62 - 56 = 6	36	0.64
34 - 57 = 023	529	9.28
31 - 25.5 = 5.5	30.25	1.18
		<b>49.34</b>

The calculated chi-square value is 49.34 and this is compared with the chi-square value on the table of chi-square distribution to find out whether or not difference exist in the rate and manifestation of anti-social behaviour among public and private secondary school students in Rivers State. The degree of freedom under which this comparison was made was (2-1) (6-1) = 1 x 5 = 5.

The observed value from the table of chi-square distribution (11.07) appears to be less than the calculated chi-square value of 49.34 at 0.05 level of significance. The implication of this to the entire study is that the null hypothesis is rejected in favour of alternate hypothesis, this means that differences exist in the rate of impulsivity and antisocial behaviour among public and private secondary school students in Rivers State.

### Summary

The following were the findings of the study:

- There are different types of impulsivity and anti-social behaviour being engaged in by secondary school students in Rivers Sate.
- The rate and manifestations of impulsivity and anti-social behaviour cut across gender

and school types.

- That there is significant gender difference in the rate of impulsivity among secondary school students in Rivers State.
- That significant difference exists between public and private secondary school students in the rate of anti-social behaviour.

### **Conclusion**

The study examined the rate of impulsivity and anti-social behaviour among secondary school students in Rivers State. Among the different indices measured to find out the rate of impulsivity among male and female secondary school students in Rivers State includes novelty-seeking, getting easily bored, inability to plan, swift action and risk taking. This revealed that there was significant gender difference in the rate of these impulsive factors among secondary school students in Rivers State. Similarly, the factors that measure anti-social behaviour between public and private secondary school students (Isolation, unnecessary disruptive action, antagonism toward others, drug abuse, lying, cheating, stealing and assaulting others) revealed that differences exist between these two groups.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

The school should collaborate with parents/guardians to watch out and identify early symptoms of impulsivity and behaviour disorder among children so that measures can be taken at that formative stage.

Through the use of various clinical scales such as School Social Behaviour Scale (SSBS), Behavioural Assessment System for Children (BASC), Child behaviour Checklists (CBCL) Diagnostic interviews Schedules for Children (DISC) etc., children prone to impulsivity and anti-social behaviour can be identified and once that is achieved, they can be reformed.

Guidance and counseling centres should be established and equipped both in public and private schools to handle most of the cases associated with impulsivity and anti-social behaviour in secondary schools.

Equal attention should be given to male and female students by both teachers and parents in the treatment of impulsivity and anti-social behaviour.

Public and Private schools should be fully equipped with social and recreational facilities in order to stem the tide of anti-social behaviour such as drug abuse and other vices.

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