

# Perceived Influence Of Cognitive Resructuring Technique On Proneness To Maladaptive Behaviours Among Secondary School Students In Gboko Local Government Area, Benue State

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**Abstract**—This study was carried out on to investigate the perceived influence of cognitive restructuring technique on proneness to maladaptive behaviours among secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state. Three research questions and one null hypothesis guided the study. Survey research design was used, the population of the study was of 5119 respondents made up of 813 teachers and 4,506 students in secondary schools in Gboko local government area of Benue State. The sample for the study was 359 respondents determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Table. The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers from literature reviewed. Data generated was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation, while a non – parametric statistics of chi – square (goodness of fit test) was used to test the null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that there are nine types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students, six factors predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour, cognitive restructuring exerts six effects on Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students and cognitive Restructuring significantly influence maladaptive behaviour of Secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state. It was recommended amongst others that students should be exposed to the use of cognitive restructuring technique in both individual and group counselling methods to prevent unapproved behaviour among students.

**Keywords**—*Maladaptive Behaviour, Cognitive Resructuring and Secondary School Students*

## Introduction

It is not only philosophical but is a truism that the relative peace of any society and stability of any government depend largely on the possibility of experiencing low level of maladaptive behaviour or a total absence of it in that particular society especially Nigeria. This is because the emergence of modern technologies such as computers, internet and the advanced Information and Communications Technology (ICT), many young adults especially secondary school teenagers watch films and other forms of videos that showcase maladaptive behaviours without considering their consequences.

Maladaptive behaviour is a type of behaviour characterized by self-centeredness, aggression, bullying and low self-control that is often impairing in nature that intervention is called for in most situations. According to Nwoke and Eze (as cited in Oparaduru, 2017), maladaptive behaviour is a style of strategic behaviour characterized by self-centeredness and indifference to the suffering of others. In the opinion of Eisenberg, Spinrad and Eggum (2017), maladaptive behaviour can range from minor to severe behaviours that can either be tolerable and safe or be harmful to an individual and the people around him or her. Diche (2016) defined maladaptive behaviour as that behaviour that violates the laid down rules and regulations of a given organization or group. The author further emphasized that maladaptive behaviour is a common phenomenon in the life of every human being but, stress that it is rampant among students in schools which has led them to joining secrets cults, and other heinous crimes in the school. Maladaptive behaviour as a case study among students have the

institution as a home of thinking among parents and students because of manifestation of crimes being committed by them. The above implies that all maladaptive behaviour involves the use of cunning, fraud, or stealth to obtain material or symbolic resources and hence would require appropriate cognitive restructuring as an adaptive behaviour intervention for proper remedy and modification of such negative behaviours.

Cognitive restructuring involves a process of re-orienting one's thought processes to reality; thereby requiring one's mind to think factually, logically and truthfully. In the submission of Gardner (as cited in Oparaduru, 2017), it is a process of acting the belief structure in-depth, seeking of distress and need for change. This imply that it is the process of learning to refute cognitive distortion or fundamental faulty thinking with the goal of replacing one's irrational counter-factual beliefs with more accurate and beneficial ones. The above conceptualizations suggests that cognitive restructuring is a behaviour modification technique which is based on teaching a client how to reduce negative emotional reactions by getting him/her to interpret situations with greater accuracy. Specifically, the problem is to get the individual or client to avoid crooked thinking and think straight. In other words, cognitive restructuring aims at replacing irrational belief or thinking with rational ones hence could exert significant influence on adolescence proneness to maladaptive behaviour.

### Statement of the Problem

In Gboko Local Government Area of Benue state, there has been reports of increase in the incidence of students' involvement in maladaptive behaviours especially among the Senior Secondary School Students. The majority of such behavioural manifestations are more pronounced among the teenagers and some young adults in such a manner that our society finds it disturbing and worrisome. Many youth/ teenagers in Gboko metropolis in recent times would not want to listen to the counsel of the elderly people as was the case in time past, rather they want to adhere to their own decisions and standard gotten from their peers and may regard the elderly advice given to them as that of the "old school". They would rather want to live their lives the way they feel like disregarding its consequences. As a result of this mind set, many of them are involved in maladaptive behaviour such as, stealing, rape, cheating in the examination and many others. However, most of maladaptive behaviours found among some of the school children, youth and teenagers in Gboko could be attributed also to some risk factors such as individual mind set, family, peer group, school and community factors. It is worrisome to the researchers to discover that these maladaptive behaviours emanated from unchecked behavioural deficiency patterns. As a result of the unchecked ugly development, there is increase in moral decadence among our teenagers who may later make life difficult in their community. It then means that if this kind of life

pattern is not checked, there would be high level of negative or maladaptive behaviours. It is against this background that this study is intended.

### Purpose of the Study

1. Identify the types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state.
2. Ascertain the factors that predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state.
3. Determine the perceived effects of Maladaptive behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local government area, Benue state

### Research Questions

1. What are the types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state?
2. What are the factors that predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state?
3. What are perceived effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local government area, Benue state?

### Hypotheses

H<sub>0</sub>: Cognitive Restructuring Does not significantly influence maladaptive behaviour of Secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state.

### METHODOLOGY

The study adopts survey research design. This design is therefore appropriate for the study because the opinion of teachers and students was sought on using a structured questionnaire for generalization of findings on the same population of respondents in Gboko local government area, Benue state. The total population for the study is 5119 made up of 613 teachers and 4,506 students from secondary Schools in Gboko Local Government Area of Benue State (Benue State Teaching Service Board,2023). The sample for the study was 359 respondents determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample distribution Table. Proportionate stratified sampling technique was used to select 43 teachers and 316 students across secondary schools in Gboko local government area. The instrument for data collection for this study was a self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire titled "Influence of Cognitive Restructuring on Proneness to Maladaptive Behaviours Questionnaire (ICRPMBQ), and was constructed by the researcher based on the three (3) research questions. The (ICRPMBQ) use in this study consist of 21 items divided into three (3) sections labeled Sections A, B, and C respectively. Each Section was designed to collect information based on the research questions for the purpose of answering the questions. Each ICRPMBQ item had four response options of either strongly agree(SA), agree(A), Disagree (D) or strongly disagree(SD) with corresponding nominal values of 4,3,2 and 1. The instrument was content and face validated by our

project supervisor who is an expert in Educational Guidance and counseling. This was to ensure that ambiguity is reduced and that the items measures the intended outcome.

The researcher administered the instruments (questionnaires) to the respondents with the help of three research assistant. Before moving to the secondary schools, permission was sought from the principal of each school through a letter of introduction from the researcher’s institution. The researcher with the help of research assistant administered the instrument on the respondents in the schools. A total of three hundred and fifty-nine (359) copies of questionnaires was administered and retrieved from respondents for data analysis. This was administered within two weeks. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive and non-parametric inferential statistical tools. Descriptive statistic such Mean and Standard Deviation was used to answer the research questions. The instrument which took the form of a continuum of Strongly Agreed SA = 4 Agreed A =3, Disagreed D =2 and Strongly Disagreed SD=1.

The Mean Benchmark was calculated thus;

$$\frac{4+3+2+1}{4} = 2.50$$

Therefore any item with a Mean value of 2.50 and above was considered ‘Agreed while those below 2.50 were considered “Disagreed”.

The hypothesis was tested using a non-parametric statistic of Chi-Square test of goodness of fit at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for rejection or otherwise of hypotheses was based on the p-value and alpha value. A hypothesis of no significant influence was not rejected for any cluster of item whose p-value was equal to or greater than alpha value of 0.05( $P \geq 0.05$ ) while it was rejected for any cluster of item whose p-value was less than alpha value of 0.05 ( $P < 0.05$ ).

## Results

The result of the study was organized around the research questions answered and hypotheses tested as follows:

### Research Question 1

What are the types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state?

To answer this question the analysis of respondents’ responses on types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state is shown below.

**Table 1: Mean Ratings of Respondents on Types of Maladaptive Behaviour Exhibited by Secondary School Students in Gboko Local Government Area, Benue State (n = 359)**

S/N	Types of maladaptive behaviour	$\bar{X}$	Std	Remark
1	Examination malpractice	3.72	0.45	Agreed
2	Truancy	3.65	0.49	Agreed
3	Bullying	3.65	0.48	Agreed
4	Lateness to school	3.67	0.49	Agreed
5	Stealing	3.60	0.56	Agreed
6	Drug Abuse	2.97	0.84	Agreed
7	Cultism	3.40	0.63	Agreed
8	Sex offences	3.38	0.85	Agreed
9	Absenteeism	3.51	0.67	Agreed
<b>Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.50</b>	<b>0.61</b>	Agreed

n = number of respondents,  $\bar{X}$  = mean of respondents, Std = standard deviation

Data presented in Table 1 revealed that all the nine items had their mean values ranged from 2.97 to 3.72 with a cluster mean of 3.50 The result indicates that their mean values were above the cut-off point of 2.50. This result imply that the respondents agreed that there are nine types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state. The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.45 to 0.85 with a cluster standard deviation of 0.61, which indicates that there was less variability in the opinion of both respondents on the types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state.

### Research Question 2

What are the factors that predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state?

To answer this question the analysis of respondents’ responses on factors that predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state is shown below.

**Table 2: Mean Ratings of Respondents on Factors That Predispose Secondary School Students to Maladaptive Behaviour in Gboko Local Government Area, Benue State (n = 359)**

S/N	Factors that predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour	$\bar{X}$	Std	Remark
10	Individual factor usually known as faulty thinking	3.40	0.58	Agreed
11	Deviant Peers that often persuades the individual to engage in maladaptive behaviour	3.17	0.82	Agreed
12	Anti-social personality which results in running away, skipping school, fighting, possessing weapons, lying, stealing and damage to either animals or property	3.32	0.58	Agreed
13	Dysfunctional Family where students lack family support both emotionally and otherwise	3.36	0.66	Agreed
14	Low self-control that involves one's inability to control temperament and impulsivity	3.55	0.57	Agreed
15	School and community factors such as failure to bond to school, poor academic performance, low academic aspirations, living in a poor family, disorganized neighborhoods, concentration of delinquent peer groups as well as access to weapons	3.68	0.49	Agreed
<b>Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.41</b>	<b>0.62</b>	Agreed

n = number of respondents,  $\bar{X}$  = mean of respondents, Std = standard deviation

Data presented in Table 2 revealed that all the six items had their mean values ranged from 3.17 to 3.68 with a cluster mean of 3.41. The result indicates that their mean values were above the cut-off point of 2.50. This result implies that the respondents agreed that six factors predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state. The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.49 to 0.82 with a cluster standard deviation of 0.62 which indicates that there was less variability in the opinion of both respondents on the factors that predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state.

### Research Question 3

What are perceived effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local government area, Benue state?

To answer this question the analysis of respondents' responses on perceived effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local government area, Benue state is shown below.

**Table 3: Mean Ratings of Respondents on Perceived Effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local Government Area, Benue State (n = 359)**

S/N	Effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Students	$\bar{X}$	Std	Remark
16	Maladaptive behaviour affects teaching and learning as teachers spend more time trying to control students rather than teaching them	3.42	0.67	Agreed
17	It leads to poor parent-child relationship as most reasonable parents withdraw their love and care on deviant children and also most mal-behaved children do not like coming closer to their parents because of fear of being hit	3.40	0.58	Agreed
18	Most involved students do not benefit from schooling. It affects their academic performance because, they are often into one maladaptive behaviour or the other losing most vital class lessons	3.46	0.56	Agreed
19	Maladaptive behaved students often threaten their teachers, school authorities and even parents at home	3.51	0.63	Agreed
20	It leads to demonstrations and destruction of school properties and in some cases	3.36	0.68	Agreed
21	maladaptive students observe frequent demonstrations in the face of little issues	3.62	0.51	Agreed
<b>Cluster Mean and Standard Deviation</b>		<b>3.46</b>	<b>0.60</b>	Agreed

n = number of respondents,  $\bar{X}$  = mean of respondents, Std = standard deviation

**Source:** Field work, 2023

Data presented in Table 3 revealed that all the six items had their mean values ranged from 3.36 to 3.62 with a cluster mean of 3.46. The result indicates that their mean values were above the cut-off point of 2.50. This result implies that the respondents agreed that they were perceived effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local government area, Benue state. The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.51 to 0.68 with a cluster standard deviation of 0.60 which indicates that there was less variability in the opinion of both respondents on perceived effects of Maladaptive Behaviour on Secondary School Students in Gboko local government area, Benue state.

### Testing of Hypotheses 1

Cognitive Restructuring Does not significantly influence maladaptive behaviour of Secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state

**Table 4: Chi-Square Test of Goodness-of-Fit Analysis of Influence of Cognitive Restructuring on Maladaptive Behaviour of Secondary School Students in Gboko Local Government Area, Benue State**

	Df	c2α	Sig.	Alpha Level	Remark
Pearson Chi-square	3	63.964 <sup>a</sup>	.000	.05	S, R
Number of Observation	359				

*Df = degree of freedom, c2α = chi-square calculated, Sig. = P-value; P < .05, S = Significant, R = rejected*

Table 4 shows a p-value of .000 which was less than the alpha value of 0.05 at 3 degrees of freedom (i.e.  $.000 < .05$ ;  $df = 3$ ). This indicates that the test is statistically significant, implying that Cognitive Restructuring significantly influence maladaptive behaviour of Secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state, the null hypothesis, was rejected.

### Discussions of Findings

The findings of the study were discussed as follows:

The findings of the study in Table 1 revealed that there are nine types of maladaptive behaviour exhibited by secondary school students in Gboko local government area, Benue state. The maladaptive behaviour types exhibited by secondary school students in the study area were: Examination malpractice, Truancy, Bullying, Lateness to school, Stealing, Drug Abuse, Cultism, Sex offences and Absenteeism. This finding is in congruous with the findings of Danko (2014) who found maladaptive behaviours to include: Substance abuse, Attention-seeking behaviour, Anger conversion, Addiction to exercise and Internet addiction. The results also agree with Ibuchim (2016) who identified types of maladaptive behaviour in schools as: Examination malpractice, Truancy, Bullying, Lateness to school, Stealing, Drug Abuse, Cultism, Sex offences and Absenteeism. Similarly, Diche (2016) averred that maladaptive behaviour as that behaviour that violates the laid down rules and regulations of a given organization or group.

The results from the study in Table 2 revealed that six factors predispose secondary school students to maladaptive behaviour in Gboko local government area, Benue state. Such factors include: Individual factor, Deviant Peers, Anti-social personality, Dysfunctional Family, Low self-control, and School and community factors. The finding is in agreement with Agi (2016) who found predisposing factors of maladaptive behaviour to include Anti-social personality, genetic, biological factors among others. This finding however contradicts what Inman, Howard, Beaumont and Waker (2017) who contended that dysfunction homes typified by divorce or death of parents may predispose adolescents prone to participation in maladaptive behaviour. This made it

quite imperative for some adolescents to succeed in life whether their parents are dead, divorced or separated. The findings of the authors cited above, gave credence to the findings of this study.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

Maladaptive behaviours are exhibited among adolescents especially secondary school students. This often affects them physically, psychologically, academically, their peers, family and the society at large, This is why this study investigated the perceived influence of cognitive restructuring on proneness to maladaptive behaviour among secondary school students in Gboko Local Government area of Benue State, Nigeria. The investigation confirmed the researcher's expectation that the use of the techniques can be of help to curbing issues of proneness to maladaptive behaviour among our teenagers/youths. Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made: Students should be exposed to the use of cognitive restructuring technique in both individual and group counselling methods to prevent unapproved behaviour among students, School counsellors can utilize programmes in bringing about adaptive behaviour among our teenagers and young adults by organizing symposia, seminars and group counselling services in which they can receive tangible, emotional or information support and restructuring therapy that is involved, School Counsellors and Community agencies should encourage the formation of counselling programmes designed to mitigate the unintended and negative outcomes of maladaptive behaviour to avoid the collapse of this important group of our generation and human society at large.

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