



PREDICTIVE POWER OF SOCIAL SUPPORT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF DEPRESSION AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS WITH BULLYING EXPERIENCE IN EBONYI STATE.

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Abstract

There have been empirical evidences revealing that depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience are at increase rate on daily basis. This however calls for immediate attention to manage this new wave of bullying experience affecting students and making them depressed. On this note, the present study investigated on predictive power of social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience in Ebonyi State. Two research questions and corresponding hypotheses which was tested at 0.05 level of significance was used for the study. The study used a correlation design with population of 120,882 students in 222 public secondary schools in Ebonyi State. The study through simple random sampling technique used the sample size of 480 depressed in-school adolescents identified with bullying experience using personal experiences checklist with a 32- item self-report (Hunt et al., 2012) and adapted bullying experience self-reported questions (Ngo et al., 2021). Social Support Inventory (SSI) and Reynolds Adolescents Depression Scale 2nd Edition (RADS-2) was used for data collection. Three validates face validated the instruments. Internal consistency reliability coefficients of 0.87 and 0.78 were obtained for SSI and RADS-2 using Cronbach alpha method. Linear regression was used to answer the research questions and t-test associated with linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The result indicated that both emotional and instrumental social support significantly predict depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience to a high extent. Based on the results, it was recommended that Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and Non-Governmental Organizations should be active and supportive in providing essential materials and required information through an established platform targeted to curb the new wave of bullying behaviour making in-school adolescents depressed, Parents, teachers, friends and other important persons should always encourage preventive measures and proactive approach with a broader focus on giving attention, help and support to the emotional and physical need of in-school adolescents in case of any

subjected psychological problems and violent experience, Ebonyi State government should collaborate with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other international organizations in making sure that necessary policies and efforts towards ameliorating bullying and psychological problems such as depression affecting in-school adolescents is highly and practically implemented among others.

Keywords: Adolescence, Bullying, Depression and Social support.

Introduction

A vital period in human growth and development of every learner is the stage of adolescence. Adolescence could be described as the period in human growth and development which happens after childhood and before adulthood from 10 to 19 years (WHO, 2012). At this stage of adolescence, a child not only passes into adulthood as normal human beings but manifest a lot of changes (Nwokocha & Olatunya, 2016). The changes could be biological, intellectual and psycho-social which usual determined by hormonal/hereditary and environmental factors which is heralded by puberty and ends at maturity (Nwokocha & Olatunya, 2016). These changes in adolescents could be harnessed and sharpened for the benefits of mankind through the preparation of adolescents for adult roles while in school (Mayer, 2004). This preparation is so important because it is in the school that adolescents mostly acquire basic skills to survive in life. Adolescents in the school could be also referred to as in-school adolescents. In school adolescents could be seen as typical adolescents who are in school whether college or high school with intention to acquire necessary learning experiences to move into adulthood (Schneider, 1999). According to Nwangwu, Adimora, Ukwueze and Ugwuezea (2017), in-school adolescents are students in secondary school. While in school, most adolescents try to make frantic effort to gain some freedom away from their parents and teachers so as to build their own social life or circle and gain acknowledgement from peers in their group (Uba, 2014). At this stage, their emotions are high and could predispose them to crisis which may harm others around them. In Ebonyi State, most secondary school students have been observed to engage in intimidating and harassing the perceived weaker ones by subjecting them into bullying.

Bullying is a form of violent behaviour against humanity which the societies across the world abhor. Studies revealed that bullying is considered as a horrible experience that confronts society at large including in-school adolescents on daily basis (Thornbery, 2010; Aluede, 2011; Hymel, Rocke-Henderson & Bananno, 2005; Eneremadu, 2011). On daily basis, (National Crime Prevention Council, 2013) reported that six (6) out of ten (10) children and in-school adolescents have terrifying experience of bullying. Bullying is defined as multifaceted mistreatment mostly seen in schools and workplaces (WHO, 2010). Bullying could be also seen as aggressive behaviour in which individual or more in-school adolescents repeatedly and willingly harm other students or victims physically, psychologically or emotionally overtime because those victims involved are perceived as weakly and cannot defend themselves (Agulanna, 2014; King et al., 1996; Nansel, et al., 2001; & Olweus, 1993). Similarly, bullying has been described as repeated negative experience which over time happened to individuals and which mostly carried out by one or several individuals who are stronger than the victims (Aluede, Adeleke, Omoike, and Afen-Akpaída, 2008).

Bullying among in-school adolescents is a horrible experience which may happen in various ways or forms. Many forms of bullying involve spreading rumors to possess the victim's belongings, name calling and physical violence (Fekkes, et al., 2005 & Nansel, et al., 2001). Others are physical and emotional aggression, including mockery, name-calling, teasing, threats, rumor or social exclusion, taunting and harassment (WHO, 2010). In Nigeria, a study on bullying however highlighted that the most form of bullying as reported by half of the respondents (50%) was 'kicking and hitting' and followed by 'threats to beat you' (25%) (Egbochuku, 2007). A lot of in-school adolescents in Ebonyi State have in one way or the other experience most of these forms of bullying which usually happen at school, outside school, anywhere, among others. Supporting this, studies have shown that bullying has capacity to occur in school of various categories (Aluede et al., 2008). Egbochuku (2007)

observed that bullying occurs more often in the playground (40%), followed by classroom (25%) respectively.

In this study, bullying is described as unwanted repeated behaviour among in-school adolescents that involves perceived power imbalance which makes them depressed. Bullying is something not good to experience. At school, many in-adolescents in Ebonyi State are confronted with all forms of psychological and physical harm on daily basis. This usually repeats itself over time and has been carried out by some students who perceived themselves as stronger than the others. The rate at which bullying experience among in-adolescents is going on in Ebonyi State is so disheartening and seems to be prevalent.

Bullying experience as a violent behaviour affecting humanity seems to be at increase level. Research has revealed that bullying of students is not just a global phenomenon which has being into existence but its prevalence rate continue to increase (Postigo,Gonzalez, Montoya,& Ordonez, 2013). The prevalence of bullying has increased over the past 10 years by approximately 25% (National Centre of Education Statistics, 2013). A total of 10-20% of adolescents is severely affected with bullying (Boulton Underwood, 1992; Klomek, et al., 2007; Liang, Flisher & Lombard, 2007; Nansel, et al., 2001 &Whitney & Smith, 1993). Further reports from past literature suggest that bullying is at increase among school-age students across the world (Due, Holstein & Soc, 2008; Fleming, & Jacobsen, 2010). Studies carried out in Europe and America revealed different increase rate of bullying of which Sweden got 15%, USA, 32% , Columbia 63% and Lilhuania with 65% (Due, Holstein & Soc, 2008). For studies in Africa, prevalence rates ranging from 18% to 82% have been reported (Fleming, & Jacobsen, 2010; Kubwalo et al., 2009; Owusu, Oliver & Kang, 2011; Siziya, Rudatsikira & Muula, 2012; Egbochuku, 2007). In Nigeria, a study was carried out on bullying among junior secondary school students which revealed 78% prevalence rate of bullying (Egbochuku, 2007). The above prevalence reports of bullying globally simply indicates that bullying is a terrifying violent behaviour which is common and has continue to increase with some likely consequential impacts on in- school adolescents.

Some severe consequences of bullying experience among in-school adolescents have been observed accordingly. Studies revealed that students with bullying experience are often exhibit emotional and physical signs which among them are: complaining of headaches, loss of appetite, severe fear to attend school, poor interest in classroom activities, like spending time with family and friends (Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim & Sadek, 2010). Cook, Williams, Guerra, Kim and Sadek added that in-school adolescents with bullying experience are likely to lack social skills, become aggressive, think negatively, encounter difficulties in solving social problems, abounded and isolated by peers. Hobbies (2016) noted that students with bullying experience are prevented from engaging effectively in learning activities; withdraw from their peers, decreases chances of participating in common community activities, places excessive demands upon teachers and makes future placement difficult. By implication, learning outcome of students could be jeopardized. In support of this, (Eneremadu, 2011) revealed that in-school adolescents with bullying experience usually perform poorly in academic tasks because of lack of concentration and fear of being bullied again. When in-school adolescents continue to perform poorly in academic tasks due to bullying experience, it may make them depressed. On this note, literature established that in-school adolescents with bullying experience can suffer some social, physical and psychological problems, including depression (Agulanna, 2014; Alison, 2016).

Depression is one of the psychological problems confronting human population across the world. Depression which is the most common form of emotional problem experienced during adolescence could be referred to as a state of experiencing low mood and aversion to activity with characteristics of confused thinking, regret, hopelessness and worthlessness to the affected individuals (Birmaher et al., 1996; Peterson, et al., 1993 & WHO, 2008). Depression affecting students is increasingly common in robust-resourced nations with estimated prevalence of 5.6% (Castello, Erkanli & Angold, 2006). In Nigeria, about 2.3%- 36.6% of in-school adolescents are reported to be depressed (Anjum, et al., 2019; Khasakhala et al., 2012; Bahls, 2002; Njoku & Obogo, 2017; Chinawa et al., 2015). However,

in-school adolescents who are reported to be depressed is a condition that is so worrisome. Being depressed mostly among in-school adolescents cannot just happen. Ordinarily, it could be that harmful experiences or some forms of violent/maltreatment such as bullying triggers it. Observably, many depressed in-school adolescents in Ebonyi State are victims of bullying. A study on bullying, suicidal behaviour and depression of in-school adolescents revealed a strong association between bullying and depression of students with further evidence that bullying triggers victims to behave negatively and thus make them depressed (Ping, 2013). Further studies revealed that in-school adolescents who are depressed have been associated with the bullying experiences (Wang, Lannotti, Luk, & Nansel, 2010; Roland, 2002; Agulanna, 2014).

In this study, depressed in-school adolescents are those secondary school students who are battling with some forms of psychological problems in term of poor and confused reasoning, feeling of guilt or regret, hopelessness, worthlessness and have develop low mood towards activity or events of life, including classroom activities. One striking issue is that depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience are likely to become afraid of attending to school regularly, feel helplessness and hopelessness and having over all sense of sadness especially when experiencing difficulties in solving social and other related learning problems. This however calls for the need to understand and employ protective approach that in turn tends to assist depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience to promote their well-being through proper management approach using social support. In other words, proactive support from family, friends and other important persons may assist in-school adolescents when subjected to deleterious events, including bullying. This could be provided and achieved through the network base of social support.

Social support is another necessary construct which this study cannot be overlooked. It is a multi-faceted complex concept that has received increase research attention (Kim, Connolly & Tamm, 2014). Social support is viewed as a basic human mental need for increasing the quality of life and for the reduction of mental health issues, including depression affecting the students (Alsubaie, Stain, Webster & Wadman, 2019). Social support also means having family, friends and other persons around to get help and lean on in times of challenges of life or experience of violent behaviour for a broader focus and strong self- image (Adimora, et al., 2021). In this study, social support could be referred to as an established protective factor and avenue of giving attention, help and support to the need of in-school adolescents especially at any moment of subjected violent behaviour and other experience of deleterious cases of bullying. However, social support primarily focused on those actions that exhibit love, care and forms aspect of a social network of mutual assistance and common obligations with expectation to improve the well-being of individuals, including depressed in-school adolescents. One thing about social support is that the network created by an individual's meaningful interpersonal interaction could help to maintain a suitable psychological and social transformation, thereby, promoting strong frame work for attending to challenges of humanity (Manga, Abella, Barrio & Alvarez, 2007).

The importance of social support as a source of help for adolescents with crisis situation has been established by the various studies. Social support promotes quality of life and provides a buffer against adverse life event (Salovey, Rothman, Detweiler & Steward, 2000). This also implies that life is more meaningful in an environment provided with strong social support mostly for the depressed in-school adolescents. This is because depressed in-school adolescents without strong social support are prone to be at risk of experiencing bullying (Peets, Hodges & Salmivalli, 2011). Wentzel (2017) added that students with high social support are capable to overcome problems related to learning as well as enjoying their studies and are less likely to suffer from depression. This simply means that depressed in-school adolescents especially in Ebonyi State may not be able to enjoy schooling due to bullying experience without a strong social support from family, friends and other significant persons. This could help depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience to adjust both physically and psychologically mostly when supports are provided in different forms.

Social support can come in various forms or sources in respond to problems affecting individuals, including adolescents in schools. Some sources of social support include: parents, teachers, friends

and classmates that could be given in form of physical or psychological assistance (Rueger, Malecki & Demaray, 2008; Kleiman & Riskind, 2013; Lakey & Orehek, 2011). Other different forms of providing social support are: affective support which has to do with love, liking and respect; instrumental/tangible or operational support (i.e, help in work, provision of financial succor, shelter, goods or services and other materials), emotional support (which involves offering of empathy, affection, caring, encouragement, intimacy, warmth acceptance to individuals assuring them that they are valued), appraisal support (i.e information promoting self-evaluation), and informational support which has to do with the provision of advice, guidance, suggestions and other useful information to someone in need of help (Edward, 2004; Uchino, 2004; Logsdon & Koniak-Griffin, 2005) Further study classified various forms of social support into two major types which are: emotional- affective and instrumental or operational support (Adimora, et al., 2021; Salovery, Rothman, Detweiler & Steward, 2000). Emotional support regards to the actions individuals take to make someone else feel cared for. Instrumental support refers to the physical support in form of offering financial assistance, housekeeping, shelter and other material services (Salovery, Rothman, Detweiler & Steward, 2000; Uchino, 2004; Adimora, et al., 2021). In this study, the two major forms of social support are captured accordingly. In the emotional support, depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience may be provided with active listening, attention, presence, encouragement and loved in order to make them feel cared for and appreciated. Instrumental or operational support involves providing physical support such as money, shelter, materials (e.g replacing any damaged school materials due to bullying attack) and other practical commitment promoting the general well-being of depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience.

Some empirical studies have been highlighted to strengthen the position of social support on related psychological problems such as depression affecting individuals, including in-school adolescents with bullying experience. A study on social support as a protective factor for bullied children and adolescents statistically reported a stronger association between bullying and internalizing disorder such as depression with high social support compared to low social support of learners (Cosgrove, 2014). Similar study conducted on bullying, social support and adolescents' mental health revealed amongst that social support from friends significantly contributed higher scores on mental well-being and fewer or less depression symptoms on adolescents' population (Ringda et al., 2021). A related study carried out on social support as a correlate of depression among people living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria, statistically revealed a high predictive power of instrumental and emotional social support on depressed people living with HIV (Adimora, et al., 2021). A contrary study was conducted on extent to which social support can have a buffering effect against the adverse consequences of bullying on academic achievement and mental health of in-school adolescents in East London which revealed specifically that social supports from friends and family was not sufficient to protect depressed in-school adolescents as a result of being bullied (Rothson, Head, Klineberg, & Stansfeld, 2011).

Apparently, in Ebonyi State, it has been also necessary to state that the issue of bullying experience appears to be prevalent or at increase rate among in-school adolescents. It has severely affected academic activities of the students with many teachers facing a lot of challenges and distractions in delivery their lessons which invariably limit the teachers' strengths to deliver and meet up with expected objectives of the topic to be delivered. Again, in-school adolescents with bullying experience in most secondary schools in Ebonyi State have been observed to be depressed. As a result of this, many depressed in-school adolescents in Ebonyi State usually feel sad, hopelessness and always having issues with going to school regularly due to fear of having more bullying experience. Being depressed especially among in-school adolescents with bullying experience is something not good because it may affects them psychologically and socially, including classroom activities and has posed a severe threat to the family/parents, schools, friends and other significant persons in Ebonyi State. This therefore, required that proactive support could be provided to encourage in-school adolescents with bullying attack avoid being depressed so as to enjoy optimal learning experience possibly through the bed rock of social support that based on some theoretical back up.

The need to back up this study with a theoretical support could be relevant. This study is guided by the Humiliation theory propounded by Lindner (2003) which posits that victims of bullying feel humiliated and that humiliation as an effect of bullying is far-reaching and impacts the humiliated individual and the surrounding society, including school environment. The underlining perception of this theory is that putting in-school adolescents down through physical, verbal or emotional means becomes morally and ethically wrong. The theoretical thrust here is that every in-school adolescents desired and deserved recognition, and respect. This will help to strengthen their social relationship and learning activities and as well, prevent some psychological problems such as depression. This could also be achieved in an environment with strong social support. The next is social control theory by Lilly, Callen and Ball (1995) which posits that family, school and other social institution act as agents to minimize problem behaviour such as bullying. The theory also asserts that in-school adolescents with bullying experience are at the risk of having higher rates of emotional problems including depression. In this study, social control theory is very important in that depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience could be supported by the family members, teachers (school), peer/friends, community and other social institutions to overcome bullying and its related problems affecting them to learn optimally.

However, various ideas regarding this study have been explored with supported literatures/empirical studies and theoretical back up. The empirical studies captured in this study are mainly foreign and seem not to represent vividly the whole ideas needed to address issues regarding bullying experience of depressed in-school adolescents. In other words, none of these studies above investigated specifically on depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience. Again, to the best knowledge of the researchers, predictive power of social support on depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience appear not to have been adequately addressed in Nigeria, specifically in Ebonyi State. With this in mind, the predictive power of social support on depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience is still not sure. Hence the need for this presents study.

Research Questions

The following research questions are posed to guide the study.

1. What is the predictive power of emotional social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience?
2. What is the predictive power of instrumental social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience?

Hypotheses

To guide the study, two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

1. Emotional social support does not significantly predict the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience.
2. Instrumental social support does not significantly predict the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience.

Materials and Methods

Ethical Approval

The researchers got ethical approval from the Ebonyi State Secondary Education Board and Parents Teachers Association Ebonyi State branch for the study protocol and for a preliminary survey to identify in-school adolescents with bullying experience.

Design

The study adopted a correlation design to investigate on predictive power of social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. Ezema et al. (2019), Gana et al. (2019), Okenyi et al. (2019), Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Njeze (2020); Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Ageda (2020); Ugwuanyi, Okeke and Asomugha (2020), Achagh et

al. (2020), Ugwuanyi et al. (2020) and Okenyi et al. (2021), Orji et al. (2023) have used this kind of design.

Study Area and population

The study was carried out in secondary schools in Ebonyi State which is one of the states in the South Eastern region of Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The population of this study comprised all the 120,882 in-school adolescents in 222 public secondary schools in Ebonyi State.

Sample/Sampling Technique

The researchers used simple random sampling to select 120 secondary schools out of the 222 public secondary schools in the area of the study with population of 120,882. Purposively, in-school adolescents in the selected 120 public secondary schools were screened using the adapted personal experiences checklist with a 32- item self-report for measuring bullying experiences of children and adolescents (Hunt et al., 2012; Ngo et al.,2021). In the checklist for bullying experience of adolescents, some self-reported questions were asked to the students which among them are to know if the in-school adolescents have ever been experienced physical violence (slapping, hitting, kicking or beating), threatened with weapons (e.g scissors, knife and even a gun), looked in the classroom, toilet or other rooms, robbed money or none of them. The other self-report captured whether someone ever disrespected and ignored to listen to the opinion of in-school adolescents, taken control by another person and force in-school adolescents to do something against their wish, pressurized in-school adolescents to engage in destructive behaviour or none of them. The last self-report questions have to do with looking down on the in-school adolescents by making fun, carried out some mimicked and imitated behaviour, insult others using fake information, rumors about other students, pulled/taken off students school uniforms, touched a sensitive parts of the body, indulge in forced immoral activities, among others. The researchers also used oral interviews to supplement the data obtained through the use of checklist. These standardized checklist used to identified in-school adolescents with bullying experience were reviewed and in-school adolescents identified with any options of the self-report questions above were regarded as those that had bullying experience. In-school adolescents that did not select any of the self-reported options thereby, selecting only none of them, were classified as those without bullying experience and for that, excluded from the sample for the study. The sample size of in-school adolescents identified with bullying experience was 480.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The sample size of students identified with bullying experience was based on inclusion criteria. For the inclusion criteria, the students must be an adolescents at the secondary school level, the in-school adolescents must be available for the study without interference. The in-school adolescents must have the necessary bullying experience as stated in the self-reported questions from the checklist for bullying which among them are to know if the in-school adolescents have ever been experienced physical violence (slapping, hitting, kicking or beating), threatened with weapons (e.g scissors, knife and even a gun), looked in the classroom, toilet or other rooms, robbed money or none of them. In-school adolescents without self-reported cases of bullying were excluded from participating in the study.

Measures

Social Support Inventory (SSI)

The researchers adopted Social Support Inventory (SSI) by Timmerman et al., (2000) for the study. Social Support Inventory is a self- administered scale developed to measure perceived adequacy of social supports and availability of types/ forms of social support. SSI consists of 20 items capturing both emotional and instrumental social support. The score for each item ranges from (rarely or none of the time) and (all of the time). The higher scores obtained from the SSI indicates that social support

is been provided at higher level. While low scores shows that both emotional and instrumental social support is been provided at a lower level. Social Support Inventory (SSI) has been accepted and used for the previous research (Adimora et al., 2022).

Reynolds Adolescents Depression Scale 2nd Edition (RADS-2)

The RAD-2 is developed by Reynolds (2002) as a 30-item self-report screening measure for the depressed adolescents' population. The items are rated on a four-point Likert scale ("almost never," "hardly ever," "sometimes," "most of the time"). The RADS-2 depression total score is calculated and converted to a t-score using a total re-standardization sample. At a score of 60 can be considered the clinical severity bench mark score for depressed in-school adolescents.

Reliability

Social Support Inventory (SSI) and Reynolds Adolescents Depression Scale 2nd Edition (RADS-2) were subjected to field trial to ensure consistency in achieving the expected objectives. They were modified accordingly based on data generated through field trial. Data obtained through the trial testing of the instruments were used to compute the internal consistency of the items of the instruments. To obtain the internal consistency reliability of the items of Social Support Inventory (SSI) and Reynolds Adolescents Depression Scale 2nd Edition (RADS-2), the data generated were analyzed using Cronbach alpha method. The internal consistency of 0.87 was obtained for (SSI) and 0.78 was gotten for RADS-2.

Data Analysis

Data collected was analyzed using linear regression to answer the research questions and t-test associated with linear regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the predictive power of emotional social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience?

Table 1: linear regression of the predictive power of emotional social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Decision
1	.79 ^a	.62	.61	High extent

Data on table 1 revealed that a positive high relationship of .79 exists between emotional social support and depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience. The extent of prediction is determined using the coefficient of determinism. The coefficient of determinism is calculated by multiplying the regression square by 100% which gave 62.3% (.62*100). Therefore, emotional social support predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience to a high extent.

Research Question 2: What is the predictive power of instrumental social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience?

Table 2: linear regression of the prediction of instrumental social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescent with bullying experience

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Decision
1	.88	.77	.78	High extent

Data on table 2 revealed that a positive high relationship of .77 exists between instrumental social support and depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience. The extent of prediction is determined using the coefficient of determinism. The coefficient of determinism is calculated by

multiplying the regression square by 100% which gave 78 (.78*100). Therefore, instrumental social support predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience to a high extent.

Hypothesis 1: Emotional social support does not significantly predict the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience. Data on table 3 revealed that the t-test associated with linear regression is given as 34.53. The hypothesis is rejected because the significant value of .00 is less than the alpha value of .05. Therefore, emotional social support significantly predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience.

Table 3: t-test associated with linear regression of the predictive power of emotional social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	9.02	.74	12.26	.00	.05	Significant
	Emotional social support	.76	.02	.79	34.53		

Hypothesis 2: Instrumental social support does not significantly predict the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience.

Table 4: t-test associated with linear regression of the predictive power of instrumental social support in the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Alpha level	Decision
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1	(Constant)	4.73	.75	6.27	.00	.05	Significant
	Instrumental social support	.87	.02	.88	39.35		

Data on table 11 revealed that the t-test associated with linear regression is given as 39.35. The hypothesis is rejected because the significant value of .00 is less than the alpha value of .05. Therefore, instrumental social support significantly predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience.

Discussion of Findings

Emotional social support and management of depression among in-school Adolescents with Bullying Experience

The study revealed that emotional social support significantly predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents to a high extent. This result is a clear indication based on the earlier report that social support is viewed as a basic human mental need for increasing the quality of life and for the reduction/management of mental health issues, including depression affecting the students (Alsubaie, Stain, Webster & Wadman, 2019). Wentzel (2017) added that students with high emotional social support are capable to overcome problems related to learning as well as enjoying their studies and are less likely to suffer from depression. This simply means that depressed in-school adolescents especially in Ebonyi State may not be able to enjoy schooling due to bullying experience unless a strong emotional social support from family, friends and other significant persons are being provided. This could help depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience to adjust both

physically and psychologically mostly when supports are proactively managed and provided. In providing emotional support, depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience must be offered with active listening, attention, presence, encouragement and loved to make them feel cared for and appreciated. On this note, the finding of this study is in tandem with a study on social support as a protective factor for bullied children and adolescents statistically reported a stronger association between bullying and internalizing disorder such as depression with high social support compared to low social support of learners (Cosgrove,2014). Concurring to the importance of emotional social support to well-being of individuals, this study also agreed with a related study carried out on social support as a correlate of depression among people living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria, which statistically revealed a high predictive power of emotional social support on depressed people living with HIV (Adimora, et al., 2021). Contrary, the finding of this study disagreed with a study on extent to which social support can have a buffering effect against the adverse consequences of bullying on academic achievement and mental health of in-school adolescents in East London which revealed specifically that social supports from friends and family was not sufficient to protect depressed in-school adolescents as a result of being bullied (Rothon, Head, Klineberg,& Stansfeld, 2011).

Instrumental social support and management of depression among in-school Adolescents with Bullying Experience

The study showed that instrumental social support significantly predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience to a high extent. Providing instrumental social support to depressed in-school adolescents in form of physical support which include help in work, provision of financial succor, shelter, goods or services and other materials are important actions which promotes quality of life and provides a buffer against adverse life event (Salovey, Rothman, Detweiler & Steward, 2000). This also implies that life is more meaningful in an environment provided with strong instrumental social support mostly for the depressed in-school adolescents. One striking issue is that proactive instrumental supports from family, friends and other important persons are essential in assisting in-school adolescents when subjected to deleterious events, including bullying. The finding of this study is in support of a study conducted on bullying, social support and adolescents' mental health which revealed amongst that social support from friends significantly contributed higher scores on mental well-being and fewer or less depression symptoms on adolescents' population (Ringda et al., 2021). This also based on the view of (Wentzel, 2017) that students with high social support are capable to overcome problems related to learning as well as enjoying their studies and is less likely to suffer from depression. The finding of this study also corroborate with a related study carried out on social support as a correlate of depression among people living with HIV and AIDS in Nigeria, which statistically revealed a high predictive power of instrumental social support on depressed people living with HIV (Adimora, et al., 2021). The finding of this study disagreed with a study conducted on extent to which social support can have a buffering effect against the adverse consequences of bullying on academic achievement and mental health of in-school adolescents in East London which revealed specifically that social supports from friends and family was not sufficient to protect depressed in-school adolescents as a result of being bullied (Rothon, Head, Klineberg,& Stansfeld, 2011).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that social support significantly predicts the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience to a high extent. Specifically, it was concluded that with emphasis on emotional and instrumental social support independently and significantly predict the management of depression among in-school adolescents with bullying experience to a high extent.

Recommendations

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

1. Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and Non-Governmental Organizations should be active and supportive in providing essential materials and required information through an established platform targeted to curb the new wave of bullying behaviour making in-school adolescents depressed.
2. Parents, teachers, friends and other important persons should always encourage preventive measures and proactive approach with a broader focus on giving attention, help and support to the emotional and physical need of in-school adolescents in case of any subjected psychological problems and violent experience.
3. Ministries of Education especially in Ebonyi State should organize and sponsor seminars and workshops for students, parents and other stakeholders in education on the need to promote good values and acceptable behaviour in secondary schools in Nigeria.
4. Ebonyi State government should collaborate with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other international organizations in making sure that necessary policies and efforts towards ameliorating bullying and psychological problems such as depression affecting in-school adolescents is highly and practically implemented.
5. Counseling/school social work units in Ebonyi State secondary schools should be established and well equipped to enable them perform better by providing good ideas, advice, guidance and support the effort of making depressed in-school adolescents with bullying experience feel cared for.
6. Establishing war against bullying clubs in every secondary school in Ebonyi State is necessary and should be made compulsory to educate students on the dangers of bullying and its consequences such as depression.

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