

PSYCHO-SOCIAL CORRELATES OF STUDENTS' INVOLVEMENT IN SECRET CULTS AND COUNSELLING ROLE IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN SOUTHERN SENATORIAL DISTRICT OF CROSS RIVER STATE – NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the premise of incessant havoc being perpetrated by adherents of secret cults in the country's institution of higher learning. These cult groups terrorize fellow students, intimidate members of campus communities in various ways and are often involved in crimes like rape, burglary, thuggery, stealing, attacking with daggers, axes, acid and other forms of sophisticated weapons as well as constituting general threat to peace in institutions of higher learning. (Fawole, 1994). Has two purposes, to examine the extent at which parental socio-economic status influence students' involvement in secret cults, and to investigate if peer group do influence students involvement in secret cults. The data used in testing the hypothesis were gotten from the post-test scores of all the subjects. Hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance. Based on the results of the hypotheses recommendations were made.

KEYWORDS: Students, secret cult, peer group and parental effect.

INTRODUCTION

In all institutions of higher learning in southern senatorial district of Cross River State and beyond, the mere mention of secret cults conjure fear because of the members' dreadful acts; Considering the havoc being perpetuated by the adherents of secret cult in the country's institutions of higher learning. One may be constrained and scared from attempting any discussion, not even to talk of writing a book on the matter. (Enyenihi, 1997).

A cursory look at the history of cultism illuminates our understanding of the phenomenon. It may be hyperbolic to say that, this monster was at dawn as weak as the lamb but at the dead of the night it becomes a scavenger, a cannibal, a blood sucker, and a blood thirsty semi-god. As observed by Fagbemi, (1991)

The debut of cult in our university was Prof. Wole Soyinka's pyrate confraternity at the university college Ibadan in 1952. In line with other secret cults tradition, its aims included shaking off the yoke of colonial mentality, asserting the identity of true independence, and to instill university culture into members. That was the weak lamb that started it all. The pyrate confraternity was never intended to suppress and oppress fellow students but to do things in the cult member's way.

From these objectives and explanatory notes, it could be deduced that the objectives of the father-cults were not destructive, rather they were revolutionary given the colonial environment. The political undertone of the movement was never concealed and its activities were intriguing. (Wole Soyinka in Ogunbameru 1997).

The pyrate confraternity had political

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undertone, in addition to personality development. It was not designed to be a symbol of oppression, terrorism and "hard guyship", rather it was to encourage and foster social reforms, political awareness, students cohesion and the evolution of university culture. These ideas are now a thing of the past. (Punch 2002, 10 August).

Unlike the original pyrate confraternity there has been a marked deviation of norms and values by the modern campus cult members, which wield socio-political and economic powers. With arms and ammunition they have invaded the campus like viruses steadily devouring both the present and the future generation of our leaders. The pyrate confraternity had a field day until 1960's when Buccaneers emerged; pyrate and the Buccaneers shared the caricature symbol of the skull and the Cross bones. It is the lack of cohesion and consistency in the confraternity that has produced the avalanche of cultic groups that have invaded the campuses today. It was not until 1968, also at the premier university, that the first notable departure came with the formation of the supreme Eiyé confraternity. Unlike its predecessor, it came at the throes of external and governmental oppression, which its members thought, should be resisted. Its method was not devoid of violence, the objectives of the Eiyé confraternity and the need to protect its upsurge necessitated secrecy (Ufot, 1982).

The first ritual cult in the history of Nigeria University was the Eiyé confraternity. Since then many secret cults have emerged in our universities. At the university of Calabar, the upsurge has produced cults of various names among them are: Black Axe, KKK, Ozo, Vikings, Panama, black cat, Buccaneers (sea Dogs) Eiyé confraternity, Mafia, Black Beret, Dargos, Frigates, Himalayas, Canavy, pyrate, Walrus, Barracausdas, Amazons, Marplates, Black Brassiere, pink ladies, the Trojan horse, the temple of Eden, knight Cadet, Daughters of Jezebel, the Red Devils and the Blood spot to mention but a few (concord Newspaper March 12, 1994).

In essence, cult activities affect members, rival cult groups, other students, institutional authorities, law enforcement apparatus and the society at large. It is a corrosive outgrowth that menaces the entire society, which calls for an antidote. Surprisingly cultism in institutions of higher learning find its archetype in the larger society of which it is just a microcosm, in that some policy elite, government,

military officials seem to have belonged to one or two cult groups. Thus the resurgence of secret society particularly the variety that are dysfunctional for social order, has indeed reached a crescendo which if left to government and educational authorities alone, the society would be puzzled and distraught. These Ivory towers have become enveloped by a climate of violence and insecurity, which threaten the fundamental objectives and performance of institutions of higher learning such as: universities, polytechnics and colleges of Education. This work therefore seek to determine the influence of psychological factors on student's involvement in secret cult practices in the area of study.

Statement of The Problem

Observations over the years showed that secret cult activity in institutions of higher learning is one of the most serious problems facing the educational system today. Secret cult activities include stealing, rape, burglary, thuggery, bullying of other students, drug abuse, rioting, murder, truancy, looting, lying, assault, destroying of school and public property, examination mal-practice and disobeying school rules and regulations and many others.

This problem has caused parents and guardians, teachers, social workers, counselors and psychologist school administration interest groups and the various administer much headache.

A lot of measures have been adopted to curb this ugly situation. For example in 1989 the military government promulgated Degree No. 47 (Prohibiting secret cult activities/practices in schools) in order to stem the tide of campus secret cults. Not only that, conferences, seminars, workshops and discussions have been organized and held in schools and other public places. The press and the mass media are not left out in this campaign against secret cults in schools. Cult activities affect academic programme, rival groups, other peace loving students, institutional authorities, law enforcement apparatus and the society at large (Izeze, 1991).

In spite of the various steps to stop the problem of secret cults in institutions of higher learning, it has persisted. It is on this basis that the researcher still stands to examine the factors that may influence students involvement in secret cult in institutions of higher learning in southern senatorial district of Cross River State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to:

1. To ascertain the extent at which parental socio-economic status influence students' involvement in secret cults, and
2. To investigate if peer group do influence students involvement in secret cults.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypothesis were formulated to guide the study

1. There is no significant influence of parental socio-economic status on students' involvement in secret cults.
2. Peer group pressure does not significantly influence students' involvement in secret cults.

Significance of the study:

The findings of this study is significant in that it has revealed the factors that influence's student involvement in secret cults, the study will be of benefit to students, teachers, parents, counseling psychologists, policy makers, school administrator, researcher in education, curriculum planners, sociologists, security operative's governmental and non governmental establishment to enhance their proficiency in curbing the menace of secret cultism in our educational institutions as well as the entire society.

For teachers and parents, the study is aimed at suggesting measures that could assist in moulding good character in students. It is also hoped that by adopting these measures, the rate of secret cults involvement would be curtailed; and restoring our educational system to its enviable status quo.

Research Design

This study utilized the ex-post facto research design. EX-POST-FACTO design is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the scientist (researcher) does not have direct control of independent variables because their manifestations have already occurred. Inference about relations among variables are made without any direct intervention, from the concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables.

Based on the definitions of Ex-post-facto above, it be fit the present study, because the situation for the study already exist or has already taken place example, these cult groups terrorize fellow students, intimidate members of

campus communities in various ways and are often involved in crimes like rape, burglary, thuggery, stealing, attacking with daggers, axes, acid and other forms of sophisticated weapons.

Research area:

This study was confined to southern senatorial district of Cross River State. Cross River State is one of the thirty six (36) states that made up the Federal Republic of Nigeria. It is located in the Southern part of the country. The state is made up of eighteen (18) local government areas and is divided into three (3) senatorial district. The southern senatorial district of Cross River State comprising Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar municipal, Calabar South and Odukpani Local government Areas.

This area stretches from Biase Local Government Area in the North to Bakassi Local Government Area in the South towards the Atlantic ocean. In the East by the Republic of Cameroon and in the West by Akwa Ibom and Abia States.

The area is not industrialized and the people are not business conscious but farmers and civil service oriented.

Population of the Study

The population for this study consisted of all students from the university of Calabar, Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, College of Education Akamkpa, and College of Health Technology Calabar all in the Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, with the over all students population of four hundred and ninety thousand, eight hundred and ten (490, 810). This figures range from 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 academic sessions university of Calabar 385, 170, CRUTECH 73, 288, COE 26, 840 and College of Health Technology 5, 512.

Sampling Procedure

Purposive sampling technique was used since the sample population involved only the district with higher institutions. Hence, purposive sampling technique appears to be the most appropriate technique for this study.

The Sample

The sample for the study consists of five hundred students, drawn from the university of Calabar 200 students, Cross River University of Technology 200 students, college of Education Akamkpa 50 students and college of Health

Technology Calabar 50 students. All the above mentioned institutions of higher learning are co-educational. Hence, the subjects were randomly sampled.

Instrumentation:

The instrument designed for data collection of this study was based on college student psychosocial correlates questionnaire, constructed by the researcher with the aid of colleagues (lecturers), in the department of Educational foundations and administration, and from data gathered in the course of reviewing related literature.

The questionnaire composed of two sections A and B. Section A sought to elicit personal and demographic information, while section B was designed to elicit information on all other variables in the study. It consisted of twenty six (26) items stated positively and negatively to reflect the major aspects of the independent variables. There were items on academic self and social self-concept seeking to find out the influence of self-concept on students tendencies to be involved in secret cults.

The respondents were required to tick (✓) the statement as it applies to him or her on any of the columns provided. A four point like scale was used in scoring the student responses. The four points are very often true (4 points) often true (3 points) some times true (2 points) and rarely true (1 point). The reverse was used for negatively stated items.

Validity

After the construction of the questionnaire, it was given to colleagues (lecturers) in the department to assess its appropriateness. They offered useful suggestions and criticism after which the items were revised and presented in the final draft.

Reliability

To ascertain the reliability of the research instrument, a pilot testing was carried out using (50) samples in Cross River University of technology (CRUTECH), Calabar were randomly selected from three faculties in the said university.

Table 1: Test- retest reliability Co-efficient.

		No of items	No. of testing	X	SD	Rrt
1	Self Concept	4	1 st 2 nd	6.25 5.30	1.64 1.20	0.85
2	Personality types	4	1 st 2 nd	5.13 5.66	1.16 1.29	0.91
3	Parental socio-economic status	6	1 st 2 nd	8.48 8.70	1.54 1.95	0.97
4	Family type	4	1 st 2 nd	5.90 5.15	1.29 1.92	0.87
5	Peer group influence	4	1 st 2 nd	5.85 6.28	3.94 4.59	0.93
6	Parenting style	4	1 st 2 nd	5.63 4.75	1.46 1.48	0.84
7	Student involvement	3	1 st 2 nd	6.25 5.32	2.84 1.45	0.85

$$\frac{\text{Smaller variance } \delta_1^2}{\text{bigger Variance } \delta_2^2}$$

Data collection procedure.

The researcher used one instrument to gather information for the study, this instrument was the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was administered in the four (4) campuses selected for the study. It was administered in the various schools with the help of colleagues therein.

After the students had finished responding to the instrument, the researcher went round and collected the questionnaire. They were scored and recorded, for the purpose of analysis.

Procedure for testing hypotheses

The hypotheses formulated for the study guided the process of data analysis. Two null hypotheses were postulated. The variables in such hypotheses identified and the statistics used to test the hypotheses stated.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significance influence of parental socio-economic status on students' involvement in secret cults. The variables involved are: independent variable:- Parental socio-economic status, Dependent variable:- Students' involvement in secret cults. The appropriate statistics analysis techniques used in testing this hypothesis was Analysis of variance (ANOVA).

Table 2: The results of the analysis are presented in table 2. Results of analysis of variance (ANOVA) in students' involvement in secret cults.

Source of variation	Degree of freedom	sum square	means square	F
Between groups	2	6.8561.95	34280.98	204.43
Within groups	497	83341.2	167.69	
Total	499	151903.15		

Significant at .05 level, calculated $f = 204, 43$; critical $f = 4. 660$

From the analysis in table 2 reveals that the calculated value of F is greater than the critical F at .05 level of significance with the degree of freedom of 2 and 497. With this result therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, hence there is a significant influence of parental socio-economic

status on students' involvement in secret cults.

Hypotheses 2

Peer group pressure does not significantly influence students' involvement in secret cults.

Table 3: The results of the analysis are presented in table 3. Result of Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis on the influence of peer group pressure of student's involvement in secret cults.

Variable	ΣX ΣY	ΣX^2 ΣY^2	ΣXY	r_{XY}
Peer group pressure	2345	28296	22485	0.7672
Students' involvement	2586	27596		

Significant at .05 Alpha levels. df 498

The result from table 3 shows a significant influence of peer group pressure on students' involvement in secret cults. Since the calculated value of r is = 0.7672 is greater than the critical r – value of .1946, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected on that premise. Hence peer group

pressure significantly influence students' involvement in secret cults activities.

Summary of the Findings

The finding from the two hypotheses shows that there are significant influences of peer group

pressure and parental socio-economic status on the involvement of students in secret cult activities.

CONCLUSION

Result from hypothesis one revealed that parental socio-economic status significantly influence students' involvement in secret cults groups. It was observed that socio-economic status of parents influences the students' choice of campus society to belong or to involve in.

It was also revealed that peer group pressure wields significant influence on students' tendency to join secret cult groups. Psychologists, guidance counselors, sociologists support this view.

In support of this result Denga (1998) posit that age and playmates have a strong moderating influence on the behaviour of their peers, in that children tend to obey their peers groups more than they obey their parents. Also, Omosule, (1994) found that because of the mysterious and inquisitive nature of youths, peer group wield a significant influence over adolescent behaviour including tendency to join cult groups.

Another supporter of these result, Animba (1992) states that parenting style played a profound role in inducing students involvement in secret cults. Also there is a significant influence of parenting style and parental attitudes on student's involvement in secret cults and other deviant behaviours.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. All students associations should be encouraged to register with copies of their constitutions attached to their registration forms.
2. University authorities should hold executive members of such registered associations responsible for any suspected cases of criminal activities so that they will co-operate to fish out culprits in their midst.
3. Parents should be requested to sign letters of undertaking on behalf of their wards at the point of entering into the institution of higher learning.

4. Parents should also be more alert to their social obligations by inculcating in their children good morals.

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