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Violence in Our Tertiary Institutions the Need for Psychological Intervention: A Nigerian Experience

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Abstract

In this paper the importance of the role culture played and the nature of complexity in its definition by various researchers in social science and anthropology have been explained. Beside this, the society and personality which are complex inseparable factors in nature, have also been examined. The paper observed that ability to adjust or adapt to the environment played a great role in psychological well being of a person. It was however, noted that apart from the developmental problems, global problems within Nigeria take the greatest share. For instance, university students had not been spared from these psychosocial menace where criminal activities, cultism, violence are prevalent in all our universities and other tertiary institutions. The major factors of interest in the paper are the implication for early identification of students who are prone to engage in such deviant behaviour. With the present standardisation of Logotest (IMF scale) among the University of Ibadan student which has been found to be an appropriate tool for not only deviant behaviour but also the assessment and diagnosis of meaning of life/inner meaning fulfilment and existential problems/neurosis/frustration, it is expected that other colleagues in Africa would look into these aspects and take them into consideration in their respectively tertiary Institutions and other relevant Institution and Non governmental organisation.

Introduction

Today, things are not the same as they were in the past. Existential crisis or the meaninglessness of life is the predominant factor-affecting individuals either directly or indirectly all over the world. Kroon¹ (1997) demonstrated this view by pointing out the rise from one per-cent to five per-cent of world population of major depression cases in the last fifty years. This was confirmed also by Kroon¹ (1997) study conducted twenty-two years ago in the U.S.A. where an increment of three to six fold of violence and deviant behaviours existed among six hundred children sampled. In addition to this, he has also found out that three out of five marriages studied ended in divorce and resulted in distressed children. Africans are not left out of these social menaces because of many changes they underwent through slavery, colonization, and short-lived democratic governments. In the past decade of the twentieth century, the social transformation from both political and economic crisis has made people in Nigeria to be hopeless and helpless in facing the daily life situation such as constant fuel crisis and high costs of living etc. All these problems are further confirmed by Andah² (1982), who says, "In many ways, Africans are still in rudimentary societies beset with problems of poverty and malnutrition, disease and spiritual confusion and disorientation". In the case of Nigeria, these problems are further complicated by inter-ethnic strife and conflicts and all that such strife brings with it". Also, Ogunsanya³ (1998) posited that Nigerian students have the highest rate of violence all over the world.

Generally, there have been tremendous changes in the social structure over the world but Nigeria has the greatest share because the nature of its past history, which was "primary as members of a fixed kinship or ethnic group". There is no longer a collective responsibility but individualism. Moral value, which used to bring people together, has disappeared. As a result, there is nothing to leave behind for the next generation to emulate.

The extent of the problems faced by the University of Ibadan Students had been highlighted by Ogunsanya³ (1998) with data and table presentations of the number of frequency of misconduct and maladaptive behaviours from 1992 to 1998 which is extended to 2000 by this author (see Appendix 1 - 5). Many crises involving violence and cultism are now prevalent in

Nigerian tertiary institutions and there is need to find a suitable diagnostic tool for identifying not only these antisocial behaviours but also people in crises. Kroon¹ (1997) gave five major causes of the problem facing people in western countries, which could also be the causes of problems facing people in African cultures, as we are now globalized. The first cause of the problems indicated by Kroon¹ (1997) is the "high competitive complex World" we are all now in (both African and western culture). Also, African population is increasing rapidly, as a result, everyone wants to be educated and get high pay with white color job by neglecting farming and other menial jobs. Hence, this could result in both physical and emotional distress when some individuals could not reach their life goals or purpose in life. This is what Frankl⁴ (1969) called existential frustration which may lead to the feeling of inner emptiness, that is, the feeling of meaningless or "existential vacuum". This had been confirmed by many studies by Frankl in his several books, where he expressed that the feeling of meaninglessness is an "inner emptiness" of the youths, which had been the major cause of the alarming rate of drug abuse, sexual misconducts such as the growing rate of cultism. Despite all efforts in eradicating cultism either by individuals, churches, mosques, the courts and the government in general, cultism is still on the increase because cultists remain adamant in their nefarious activities.

The second cause of the present World existential crisis according to Kroon¹ (1997) is the issue of modern values and beliefs that had eroded the traditional values that was once enjoyed by the old generations. These new belief systems are not fitted into the maintenance of "integrity and spiritual needs of people". As a result of existential frustration such people might experience existential vacuum and neurosis.

The third cause of the problem facing the African culture is that when one's ability to maintain one's integrity and achieve self-actualization is disturbed, one's ability to interact well with fellow being will be affected. As a result "conflict or withdrawal of oneself or depression" will follow such situation. Some people in African culture experience these. There is the need for research in this area in order to know the extent of the prevalence of such cases in Nigeria.

The fourth cause of the problem facing us is the lack of communication or when there is no good communication among African people, the result is "social isolation". This indicates lack

of good interaction within African culture, which is prominent among some segments of people in Nigeria.

Finally, the fifth cause of the problem facing us is the effect of social isolation that causes the loss of man's reality which may lead to psychosis, paranoid, violence and so on. This is because, man's concept of reality is maintained through interactions with other people after going through the above stated five causes of the problems facing the western and the African culture. There is therefore the need to accurately assess all these behaviour patterns from psychological point of view, apart from the usual traditional diagnosis in African culture.

II

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that in western culture psycho diagnosis is a psychological assessment, which is necessary for all our students at the point of entry into the territory institution as part of the requirement for the admission into the universities or alike. After the admission, annual testing should be mandated for the continued psychological assessment. This is necessary as we are moving toward globalization in order to be able to solve some after maths problems of these changes from our traditional values.

Asagba (2002) had found out that despite the growing evidence of psycho-social deviant behaviours such as examination malpractices, stealing, violent activities, cultism and various others among the students in the university, (there was no special Counselling programme set for such purposes). Presently, there are not enough counsellors to offer Counselling services to students when ever it is necessary or even administering psychological tests to the newly admitted students (JAMBITES) and also monitoring their behaviour through periodical psychological and sociological assessment with the follow-up. According to Asagba's suggestion in 2002, which was as a result of her experience in the university students' counsellor, there weren't enough personnel for such matters and the few ones were more involved with administrative matters and could not create enough time for their own personal activities. The findings of Asagba⁵ (2002) had highlighted and made researchers and fellow colleagues not only diagnose but also help in designing psychotherapeutic / preventive programme as well as logotherapeutic intervention programme. At present, most of the university programmes had been made to curb cultism and other

maladaptive behaviours, which were based on curative rather than preventive ones. It is high time the university and other tertiary Institutions programmes are geared towards preventive measures.

III

Asagba⁵ (2002) research was able to come up with development of the diagnostic and prognosis tables, which were established from the data that were generated from the logotest (questionnaire format) by using the table's frequency distribution of the individual participants in the study total scores. The logotest is scored by combining all the scores with high points indicating unfulfilment, dissatisfaction with life, existential frustration, and noogenic neurosis. Therefore, the higher the score, the more strongly warning signs about disturbed psychological well-being. This is indicated for psycho / logotherapy or counseling. As directed in the Logotest manual by Lukas and Preble⁶ (1989), the total test score of the studied population is divided into quartiles as follows:- (1) The first one is the first quartile (Q1) which is 25% (26.7%) of the test in the studied population with scores of 0 - 10. This indicates good inner meaning fulfilment (IMF), the root or foundation for stable psychological health. (2) The second one is the addition of the second and the third quartiles (Q2+Q3) comprising 50% (50.6%) of the test in the studied population with scores from 11 - 17, which indicates that there is no cause for alarm or danger. (3) The third one is the fourth quartile (Q4), which is equivalent to 25% (21.5%) of the studied population with scores from 18 - 34, that indicates poor IMF. Such people at this stage require counselling/therapy in order to bounce back to normal mental health.

(4) The fourth Quartile is then further sub-divided into deciles in the following order: -

The fourth one is the highest decile (D10) that is 10% (8.4%) of the population with scores of 22 to 34. This indicates extremely poor IMF, which is the root or a cause for neogenic neurosis or depression. This is where urgent therapy is needed as soon as it is possible.

(5) The fifth one is the second highest decile (D9) that is 10% (8.1%) of the population with scores of 19 - 21 which indicates poor IMF: An existential frustration that lead to neurosis, depression etc. (6) The sixth is the rest of 5% of the population which is Q4 - D9 + D10 with score of 18 that indicates

moderate IMF where careful observation is recommended or advised. (See. Appendix 6 – 7) for the frequency and quartile table, diagnosis and prognosis tables. If they are left a longer period without intervention there is possibility for them to get deeper into existential crisis, frustration or neurosis which could be found in the Q4 - D9 + D10 scores of 18 – 34 this stage also is the stage they will be trying to engage in other different kinds of activities in an effort to feel their inner emptiness or boredom.

IV

Our findings indicated that the Nigerian version (with the University of Ibadan sample) of logotest (IMF scale), which is an appropriate tool for the assessment and diagnosis of meaning of life/inner meaning fulfillment and existential problems /neurosis /frustration. That is, the test is for the use of the University of Ibadan Students had emerged. The scale meet the psychometric properties standard required for the manual by the joint committee of the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association and the National Council of measurement in education. The reliability and validity control ascertained the psychometric properties for the present study. For instance, the reliability of the total scores for all the participants was established by the Spearman Brown Correlation which showed a very significant $r = 0.63$. The inter-items correlations for all the items showed also a significance of Logotest part I (9 items). With coefficient alpha $r = .59$, for Part II (7 items) $r = .47$ and Part III (4 items) $r = .56$. And for the three comparative tests: - self-esteem scale (15 items) $r = .67$; Life Stressful Event scale $r = .96$ and life satisfaction scale (13 items) $r = .51$. The Intercorrelation for the sub-test to the total score for part I, $r = .79$; Part II, $r = .57$ part III, $r = .44$; Part III2, $r = .42$; part III3, $r = .41$. These could be seen in the Appendix 8. Based on the above findings of reliability and validity control, it was established that the logotest is highly reliable and valid manual. The far the study population could be published soon. The type of intervention or therapy needed for the test takers would also be based on the result of the test as indicated in the diagnosis and prognosis table (Appendix 7). While Appendix showed the standardization table for all the tagged studied population

Conclusion

From this paper, one can conclude that ability to adjust or adapt to the environment played a great role. In this chapter, the importance of the role culture played and the nature of complexity in its definition by various researchers in social science and anthropology have been explained. Not only culture, but also the society and personality, which are complex inseparable factors in nature, have been examined. Discussed briefly were the stages of life from infancy through adolescent to old age and people faced with different developmental crises (that everyone must pass through). Ability to adjust or adapt to the environment played a great role in psychological well being of a person. It was noted that apart from the developmental problems, global problems within Nigeria take the greatest share. For instance, university students had not been spared from these psychosocial menace where criminal activities, cultism, violence are prevalent in all our universities and other tertiary institutions. The statements of the problem identified all these psychosocial menace with some studies that had been carried out in the university. For example, not enough psycho-diagnostic tools and counselling of the students are available at present. The major factors of interest to the present paper are their implication for early identification of students who are prone to engage in such deviant behaviour.

With the present standardisation of Logotest (IMF scale) among the University of Ibadan student which has been found to be an appropriate tool for not only deviant behaviour but also the assessment and diagnosis of meaning of life/inner meaning fulfilment and existential problems/neurosis/frustration, it is expected that other colleagues in Africa would look into these aspects and take them into consideration in their respectively tertiary Institutions and other relevant Institution and Non governmental organisation.

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Appendix 1 Identified Cult Members According To Their Faculties

S/N		Law	Soc. Science	Education	Science	Technolog ^v	Arts	College of Medicine	Medicine	Vet. Forestric	Agric. & Forestric	Unknown	Total
1.	Cult Members Identified by the Police	2	7	1	6	4	4	6	-	2	2	2	32
2.	Cult Members Known by their Activities	5	16	6	17	6	4	4	4	2	1	1	64
3.	Others Known Through Criminal Activities	2	10	6	25	5	6	9	1	9	25	25	73
Total		9	33	13	48	15	14	19	5	13	28	197	

Source: University of Ibadan Security Unit, 1998

N.B: 'Unknown' probably refers to non-students of the University of Ibadan who may be members of the secret cult network from other institutions of learning (cited in Ogunsanya, 1999).

Appendix 2: Cases of Misconduct Suspected to Be Perpetrated By Cult Boys on the Campus between December 1992 and June 1998

Activities	Number
Stealing	121
Threaten life	32
Impersonation	1
Gambling	1
Assault	8
Stealing from car	5
Dispute	1
Examination malpractices	92
Others	23
Total	284

Source: University of Ibadan Security Unit, 1998 (cited in Ogunsanya, 1999)

**Appendix 3: Criminal Activities Suspected To Be Perpetrated
By Cult Boys on the Campus between December
1992 and 3rd June 1998**

ACTIVITIES	NUMBER
RAPE	6
ROBBERY	2
UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF PISTOL	4
BURGLARY AND STEALING	42
HOUSE BREAKING AND STEALING	32
UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF HEMP	1
ENTERING AND STEALING	9
ASSAULT OCCASIONING HARM	2
CAR THEFT	7
FORGERY	2
OFFICE BREAKING AND STEALING	1
CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES BY VIRTUE OF BEING CULT MEMBERS DECLARED BY POLICE AND OTHERS	99
TOTAL	207

Source: University of Ibadan Security Unit, 1998 (cited in Ogunsanya, 1999).

Appendix 4: CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES SUSPECTED TO BE PERPETRATED BY CULTS BETWEEN DECEMBER 1992 AND 31ST JULY 1998 AT THE UNIVERSITY

5		L a w	Socia l Sci ence	Educ ation	Sci enc e	Tech nolog y	Ar ts	Colle ge of Medi cine	Vet. Medi cine	Agric. & Fore stry	Unk now n	T ot al
1.	1992 Cult Activities	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
2.	1993 U. I. Polytechn ic Fracas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	26
3.	1994 Dangerou s Weapons	-	1	-	2	1	-	-	-	-	-	4
4.	1996 Suspecte d Cult members	1	4	1	1	3	1	1	1	-	1	14
5.	1996 Other Cases	1	6	1	7	1	2	1	2	1	-	22
6.	1997 Suspecte d Cults by Police	2	9	1	4	4	4	6	-	2	2	34
7.	1998 Suspect Cult Activities	2	2	2	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	13
8.	1993 Exam. Malpracti ces	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
9.	1994 Exam. Malpracti ces	1	1	-	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	4
10.	1995 Exam. Malpracti ces	-	2	11	7	2	-	-	-	-	-	22
11.	1996 Exam. Malpracti ces	-	1	1	5	6	2	7	-	3	-	25
12.	1998 Exam. Malpracti ces	-	-	-	-	-	-	45	-	-	-	45
13.	1992 Criminal Acts by Cults	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	-	2	5
14.	1993 Criminal	2	9	1	14	4	4	3	-	5	23	65

	Cults											
15	1994 Criminal Acts by Cults	1	12	6	9	2	4	13	2	11	2	6 2
16	1995 Criminal acts by Cults	1	16	4	9	5	8	12	7	10	1	7 3
17	1996 Criminal Acts by Cults	5	7	4	11	1	2	7	-	1	8	4 6
18	1997 Criminal Acts by Cults	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	-	1	1 5
19	1998 Criminal Acts by Cults	-	2	3	5	1	1	3	-	-	1	1 6
	T	1 6	75	38	83	32	2 8	202	12	33	67	4 8 6

Source: University of Ibadan Security Unit, 1998 (cited in Ogunsanya, 1999)

N.B: 'Unknown' probably refers to non-students of the University of Ibadan who may be members of the secret cult network from other institutions of learning

Appendix 5: CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES FROM JANUARY 1999 -

S/N		Law	Social Science	Edu.	Science	Technology	Arts	Itinerary	Col. of Med.	Vet. Med.	H/ Nutrition	Agric. & Forestry	Unknown	Total
1.	Rape		2		1								1	4
2.	Robbery						1			1				2
3.	Unlawful Possession of Pistol Burglary & Stealing House breaking	1			4	1					1			8
4.	Unlawful Possession of Stamp													
5.	Entering & Stralling	1	1	3	5	1			1			3	9 ⁰²	26
6.	Assault Occasioning Harm	1		4						1	1	1		7
7.	Impersonation		1		2					1			1	6
8.	Car Theft													
9.	Forgery				1			1						2
10.	Office breaking and stealing													
11.	Kidnapping												1	1
12.	Exam Malpractices				9				1				1	11
13.	Criminal Activities by cult members												1	2
14.	Suspects	1	1										5	7
15.	Stealing by Trick					1						1		2
16.	Fraud			1				1						2
17.	Threatening Life				2	1	1			1				5
18.	Willful Damage													
19.	Affray												1	1
20.	Accident												5	5
21.	Student Rampage												2	2
22.	Dangerous Driving												1	1
23.	Homosexuality													1
		7	4	6	9	23	3	5	2	1	5	2	7	29 ⁰⁴

August 31st, 2000

Source: University of Ibadan Security Unit, 1998 (cited in Ogunsanya, 1999). 2000 collected by the researcher from the U.I. Security

Appendix 6 Summary of the Frequency Distribution with Percentages

Quartile and Decile for the Males and Females of the Nigerian Population

Scores	IMF	Males	Female	Total
0 - 2	Good (Q1)	2	3	3
3 - 4		5	2	7
5 - 6		28(29.8%)	20	48(26.7%)
7 - 8		35	35	70
9 - 10		61	64	125
11-12	Medium (Q2+Q3)	82	70	152
13-14		65	71(50.9%)	136
15-16		45	63	108(50.6%)
17		25	21	46
18	Poor (Q4)	17	18	35
19-20		31	25	56
21-22		19	29	48
23-24		13(20.7%)		28(21.5%)
25-26		7	15(22.4%)	14
27-28		1	7	2
29-30		1	1	2
31-32		0	1	1
33-34	2	1	2	
		0	0	
Total: -		439	434	873

Source: The calculation pattern of this table was adapted from the Logotest manual by Lukas and Preble (1989).

Appendix 7 Summary of the Diagnostic and Prognosis for the University Students' Population

	Score	%	Diagnosis	Consequently	Prognosis
1.	1-10	26.7%	Very good IFM	Existentially secure, even under bad conditions	Very good
	11-17	50.6%	IFM neither very good nor very bad	Neither very secures nor endangered. Stability may not hold in crises	Open. May develop in a positive or negative direction
	18	5%	Watch out! Borderline existential frustration	May lead to life crisis with critical psychological consequences	Good if guided in the search for meaning
	19-21	8.1%	Existential frustration	Basis f, neuroses, depressions, psychopathy, addiction, sexual perversion	Successful only if intervention is logotherapeutic
	22-34	8.4%	Neogenic neurosis	Danger of life. A No to life includes a No to get well	Urgent logo-therapy treatment needed

The Calculation pattern adapted from logotest manual, (1989) and Stanich & Ortengren, (1990)

Appendix 8 Showing the Item Total Correlation of all the Items in the Instruments

No. of Items in the Section/Part of the Total Test Scores	Coefficient Alpha	Spearman Brown Split Half Reliability
Logotest Part I (9 items)	.59	.58
Logotest Part II (7 items)	.47	.47
Logotest Part III (4 items)	.56	.17
Self-esteem Scale (15 items)	.67	.62
Life Stressful Event Scale ₁ (31 items)	.92	.78
Life Stressful Event Scale ₂ (39 items)	.96	.87
Life Satisfaction Scale (13 items)	.51	.50

**Appendix 9 Summary of the Standardization
Table for the Nigerian Population
(University of Ibadan Standardization)**

Valid Total Score	-15	16 - 29	30 - 39	40 - 49	50 - 59	60	TOTAL
1.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
2.00	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
3.00	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
4.00	3	2	0	0	0	1	6
5.00	2	11	4	0	0	1	18
6.00	0	19	4	2	0	5	30
7.00	3	13	6	0	0	2	24
8.00	1	27	4	0	0	4	36
9.00	3	42	5	2	0	5	57
10.00	4	49	5	2	1	7	68
11.00	4	48	13	4	0	7	76
12.00	6	59	6	0	0	7	78
13.00	10	42	3	3	0	10	68
14.00	4	46	10	2	0	9	71
15.00	9	32	9	1	0	7	63
16.00	4	29	7	0	0	6	46
17.00	4	28	4	1	0	10	47
18.00	5	24	3	3	0	0	35
19.00	4	16	8	0	0	3	31
20.00	0	18	4	2	0	4	28
21.00	4	12	5	1	0	2	24
22.00	1	13	8	1	0	1	24
23.00	1	4	6	0	0	2	18
24.00	0	3	6	2	0	0	11
25.00	0	3	6	1	0	0	10
26.00	0	2	2	0	0	0	4
27.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
28.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
29.00	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
30.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
31.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
32.00	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
33.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
34.00	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total:-	72	563	129	27	1	93	886 Random Sample
1. QUARTILE	11.0	10.00	11.0	11.0	10.0	10.0	
4. QUARTILE	17.0	16.0	71.0	20.0	10.0	16.0	
9. DECILE	10.00	9.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	9.8	
10. DECILE	7.0	8.0	8.4	10.0	7.4		
x of TOTAL SCORE	13.6	13.3	15.5	15.0	10.0	13.3	
x of TOTAL SCORE	4.5	5.0	6.0	4.0		3.1	
SD PART I	3.3	3.3	4.5	6.0	5	4.3	
SD PART I	3.1	3.1	3.3	3.3		2.8	

(The Calculation pattern is adapted from the logtest manual, 1989).