

EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY AND NEGATIVE SELF-CONCEPT AS PREDICTORS OF BEST FRIEND CONFLICT AMONG ADOLESCENTS IN AWKA CITY, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

Sylvester Ntochukwu Madu^{1a} & Ifeanyi Michael Obasi^{1b}

**Department of Psychology,
 Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University,
 Anambra State, Nigeria**

^{1a}Email: madusylvester@yahoo.com; Phone: +23470628836301

^{1b}Email: anyirobort@gmail.com; Phone: +2348068502897

ABSTRACT: *The study explored emotional instability and negative self-concept as predictors of best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria, using 112 Secondary School Students, selected through simple random sampling technique of 44 boys, 68 girls, age-range 13-17, mean-age 14.61 and SD 1.32. The instruments were Friendship Conflict and Betrayal Questionnaire, Emotional Instability Scale, and Negative Self-concept Scale. The study adopted correlational design, and Multiple Linear Regressions. Results showed overall model accounted for 32.7% of best friend conflict, $R=.572$, $R^2=.327$, adjusted $R^2=.315$, ($F_{2, 109}$) = 26.47, $p<.001$. Emotional instability indicated positive significant prediction of best friend conflict at ($F_{2, 109}$), $\beta= -.81$, $t = 4.46$, $p<.001$; while negative self-concept negatively predicted best friend conflict ($F_{2, 109}$), $\beta= -.89$, $t = -7.13$, $p<.01$. Recommendations: Those involved in adolescents development should be proactive in reducing adolescents' best friend conflict, emotional instability, and negative self-concept.*

KEYWORDS: Emotional Instability, Negative Self-Concept, Best Friend Conflict, Adolescents, Anambra State, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Best friend conflict can take the form of fighting, name-calling, bullying and so on. If unresolved, could cause low self-esteem, frustration, distress, anxiety, hurt, anger, loneliness, depression and antisocial behaviour among adolescents (Casey-Canon, Hayward, & Gowen, 2017; La Greca & Harrison, 2015; Storch & Masia-Warner, 2014; Underwood, 2013). Studies had focused on adolescents' conflicts with best of friends without attention being extended to issues like negative self-concept and emotional instability as causal factors in Nigeria. On this ground, this study examines emotional instability and negative self-concept as predictors of best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria in order to bridge this gap.

Best friend conflict is a state of incompatible behaviours, disagreement or opposition between adolescents who were once recognized as mutually friends (Garvey, 2014; Hartup, 2013; Hay, 2014; Shantz, 2017).

Authorities contend that best friend conflict is a dyadic state of mutual opposition consisting of at least three events including A responding to B's initial objection by persisting in the original behaviour or offering counter opposition (Maynard, 2015; Shantz, 2017; Shantz & Hobart, 2009). Best friend conflict is important to adolescent's social development. It is through it that true cooperation between adolescents emerges. It is avenue adolescents learn how to deal with differences in opinion such as constructive procedures of discussion, debate, argument, negotiation and compromise (Collins & Laursen, 2012; Deutsch, 2013; Piaget, 1932; Sullivan, 1953; Youniss, 2016).

Experiences with best friend conflict are likely to reduce egocentrism, promote social understanding, enhance discourse skills, and provide opportunities for learning how to regulate negative emotion. For adolescents' conflicts with friends are often centered on struggles over objects, possessions or take the form of arguments (Chung & Asher, 2016; Dunn &

Slomkowski, 2012; Piaget, 1966; Garvey, 2014; Goodwin & Goodwin, 2017; Katz, Kramer, & Gottman, 2012).

If the adolescent recognizes similarities between self and another (considers the other to be a close friend), the individual is more likely to listen to that person's objections, try to persuade or compromise with that adolescent. If the perception is that there are no similarities between self and the other, the individual is more likely to use coercive tactics, insults or threats (Shantz & Hobart, 2009). Best friend conflicts exists because of possessions and ownership right throughout the life span. This plays important role in the formation, maintenance and termination of social relationships (Bakeman & Browniee; 2012; Eckerman, Whatley & McGhee, 2009; Hay, 2014; Hartup, 2012; Selman, 2018).

Emotional instability on the other hand is the degree to which emotions fluctuate over time (Larsen & Diener, 1987). It is also usually characterized as a tendency to exhibit rapid, unexpected, and intense affective reactions. Emotion instability is a core feature of disorders that span the internalizing and externalizing spectra (Beauchaine & Thayer 2015; Hofmann, Sawyer, Fang & Asnaani, 2012). Researchers have observed links between emotional instability and self-inflicted injury, identity disturbance, substance abuse, depression, conduct problems, anxiety, post-traumatic stress, and borderline personality disorder (Beauchaine, Gatzke-Kopp & Mead, 2007; Cappadocia, Desrocher, Pepler & Schroeder, 2009; Crowell *et al.*, 2014; Dvorak *et al.*, 2014; Fossati, Feeney, & Maffei & Borroni, 2014; Gratz & Tull 2010; Weiss, Tull, Anestis & Gratz, 2013).

Adolescents' with high emotional instability tend to experience such negative feelings as anxiety, embarrassment, inability to adapt and low self-esteem (Yu, Tian, Vogel & Kwok, 2010). If adolescents' cannot receive timely motivation from friend their emotional instability may result in conflict, behavioural and adaptation problems (Dickens, 2006). Emotional instability likely leads to proneness for social loafing tendencies and difficulties in prosocial behaviours expected in social relationship (Cole, Liera, & Pemberton, 2009; Koenigsberg, 2010).

Negative self-concept is the dysfunctional or distorted thinking of oneself that leads to maladaptive functioning. Realistic and rational thinking leads to adaptive functioning (Clark & Beck, 2011). A person's negative self-concept is the self and the world, which is supported by their intermediate and core beliefs, set up a self-reinforcing cycle that predisposes an individual to emotional dysregulation and maladaptive behaviour (Clark & Beck, 2011). It is believed that people who experience negative self-concept experienced increased negative evaluations in response to ambiguous social situations and catastrophization in response to mildly negative social evaluations and social anxiety when compared to controls and best friend conflict (Stopa & Clark, 2010).

Negative self-concept is related to increase best friend conflict. Hogendoorn *et al.*, (2010) pointed out that negative self-concept was negatively related to psychological maladjustment (emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity-attention problems, peer problems, and prosocial behaviour) as reported by the parents of children and adolescents. Best friend conflict has been linked with negative self-concept constructs such as pessimism, self-blame, and denial (Smith *et al.*, 2008). Evidence suggested that negative self-concept, such as self-blame, rumination, blaming others, and catastrophizing factored best friend conflict among adolescents (Garnefski, Kraaij, & Spinhoven, 2011).

Statement of the Problem

Adolescence stage is a human development period characterised by uncertainties and difficulties in adjustment and adaptation especially in social relationships. This may affect some adolescents in relating with their friends. The causes may be due to inability of these adolescents to assert their autonomy or lack of identity orientation, which would have serve as a building block for their appropriate adaptation and adjustment in social relationships. Consequently, some challenges are usually witnessed in such areas as argument, opposition and conflict with friends which may detrimentally infringe on the psychological wellbeing. These result into verbal abuse,

physical assault, anger, frustration, distress, feeling of sadness, social isolation/alienation, depression and to some extent suicidal ideation (Casey-Canon, Hayward, & Gowen, 2017; La Greca & Harrison, 2015; Storch & Masia-Warner, 2014; Underwood, 2013). Need to address the above challenges was what informed this study. No known study has explored the connectedness of best friends' conflict, emotional instability and negative self-concept in Nigeria to the researchers' best of knowledge. The present study therefore explored emotional instability and negative self-concept as predictors of adolescents' best friends' conflict in Awka city, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. How will emotional instability predict adolescents' best friend conflict in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria?
2. In what way will negative self-concept predict best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka, Anambra State?

Purpose of the Study

The study aims at investigating:

1. If emotional instability will predict adolescents' best friend conflict in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.
2. If negative self-concept will predict best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka, Anambra State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

Best Friends' Conflict

Humiliation Theory by Lindner (2001): The basis for Lindner's theory is the notion that all humans desire and deserve recognition and respect. Humiliation violates this fundamental human right, resulting in eroded interpersonal relationships and disrupted social cohesion (Lindner, 2007). The humiliation dynamic involves three roles: Humiliator (person who inflicts humiliation), victim (person who experiences humiliation), and witness (person or persons who observe and verify that humiliation is occurring (Klein, 1991). Bullies whether physically, verbally, or relationally humiliate the victims, relegating the victims to a lower social status in an effort to establish power.

Lindner's (2001a, 2006) theory of humiliation addresses humiliation on a global scale (feelings of humiliation among the German people after World War I set the stage for Hitler's rise to power). This theory can also be applied to best friend conflict to illuminate the role humiliation plays in the outcomes of victims, as well as to illustrate how conflict prevents the formation of a peaceful and cohesive school environment.

Moreover, humiliation is "excessive overt derogation" that occurs when a more powerful individual publically reveals the inadequacies of a weaker victim, who feels the treatment is unjustified (Jackson, 1999). The concept of humiliation is distinct from shame. An individual can shame him or herself, whereas humiliation requires action from an outside agent who engenders feelings of powerlessness in the victim (Hartling & Luchetta, 1999; Klein, 1991). The effects of humiliation are far reaching and impact on the humiliated individual as well as the surrounding community or society. Humiliation is considered a relevant impediment to positive human development. From harmony on preschool playgrounds to global peace, experiences of humiliation disrupt social cohesion (Lindner, 2003). Best friend conflict usually causes sense of humiliation given that conflict usually occurs publically, involves the subjugation of a less powerful victim, and affects the entire school community by limiting social cohesion (Meltzer, Vostanis, Ford, Bebbington, & Dennis, 2011; Simmons, 2002).

Victims internalize the humiliation and feel deep despair, which manifests as depression. This reaction to humiliation explains why victims often have higher rates of depression compared with non-victimized youth (Juvonen, Graham, & Schuster, 2003; Menesini, Modena & Tani, 2009). Humiliation exacerbates interpersonal conflicts and results in strong, negative emotions. Individuals who are humiliated by their partner feel hatred towards their partner and tended to withdraw (Fitness & Fletcher, 1993).

Emotional Instability

Two-Step Theory by Schachter (1964):

Schachter's theory is a two-factor or two-step theory. In the first step, stimulus input produces

an undifferentiated state of physiological arousal. In the second step, the arousal is interpreted in light of the characteristics of that input. It is this cognitive process of attribution of arousal to the presumed cause of the arousal that produces a specific emotional experience. Like Schachter equated emotion with emotional experience (feeling component). The degree of arousal (the somatic component) determines the intensity of the emotion whereas the additional element of attribution (cognitive component) provides the quality of the emotion. Attribution of arousal to different eliciting events produces different emotions

Critics have challenged the empirical evidence for Schachter's theory as well as the theory itself (Reisenzein, 1983; Zajonc, 1980). Zajonc argued against Schachter's (1964) idea that cognition is a necessary cause of emotions. Kunst-Wilson and Zajonc (1980) demonstrated that mere (repeated) exposure to stimuli led to an increase in liking of those stimuli, even when the stimuli were presented subliminally so that conscious identification of them was not possible.

Negative Self-Concept

Self-categorization theory by Turner and Reynolds (2001): The theory proposed that the self should not be considered as a foundational aspect of cognition, but rather the self should be seen as a product of the cognitive system at work (Onorato & Turner, 2004; Reynolds & Turner, 2006; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994; Turner, & Onorato, 1998). The theory also assumes that the self can be categorized at various levels of abstraction. In other words, human beings may categorize the self as a singular "I"(personal identity), or as a more inclusive "we"(social identity).

Three types of self-category are often given as examples (Haslam, 2001; Haslam, Oakes, Turner, & McGarty, 1996; Turner & Oakes, 1986; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher & Wetherell, 1987). The lowest level of abstraction is given as a personal self, where the perceiver self-categorizes as "I". A higher level of abstraction corresponds to a social self, where the perceiver self-categorizes as "we" in comparison to a salient out-group (them). A highest level of abstraction is represented by us humans, where

the salient out-group is animals or other non-humans. A common misconception is that these three example categories represent the self-categories that humans use (Turner & Reynolds, 2010). Self-categorization theorists have demonstrated similar effects for social stimuli (Van Rooy, Van Overwalle, Vanhooymissen, Labiouse, & French, 2003; Tajfel & Wilkes, 1963)

According to self-categorization theory, depersonalization describes a process of self-stereotyping. This is where people come to see themselves more as the interchangeable exemplars of a social category than as unique personalities defined by their differences from others (Turner, 1985). Under these conditions a perceiver directly bases their behaviour and beliefs on the norms, goals and needs of a salient in-group (Brown & Turner, 1981; Haslam, Reicher & Platow, 2011). If a person's salient self-category becomes 'army officer' then that person is more likely to act in terms of the norms associated with that category (to wear a uniform, follow orders, and distrust an enemy) and less likely to act in terms of other potential self-categories (Haslam, 2001). Here the person can be said to be accentuating the similarities between his or her and other members of the 'army officers' category.

Depersonalization is not a loss of self, but rather a redefinition of the self in terms of group membership (McGarty, 1999). A depersonalized self, or a social identity, is as valid and meaningful as a personalized self, or personal identity (Haslam et al., 2011). A loss of self is sometimes referred to using the alternative term deindividuation (Bruner, 1957; McGarty, 2001; Turner, 1985; Turner & Oakes, 1986; Turner, Oakes, Haslam & McGarty, 1994; Turner & Reynolds, 2010; Voci, 2006).

Empirical Review

Emotional Instability and Best Friend Conflict: Zhang *et al.* (2020) examined the role of social support and emotional exhaustion in the association between work-family conflict and anxiety symptoms among female medical staff testing a moderated mediation model. Based on a sample of 764 female nurses and physicians, a model was tested in which emotional exhaustion

served as a mediator and social support was regarded as a moderator between work-family conflict and anxiety symptoms. The study showed a moderated mediation model where the relationship between work-family conflict and anxiety symptoms via emotional exhaustion were weakest for female medical staff who reported high levels of social support.

Nittel, Rief and Mehl (2019) investigated whether the instability of negative emotions leads to paranoia in healthy participants. It should be further analyzed if the application of maladaptive ER strategies enhances subclinical paranoid ideation and if the use of adaptive ER strategies reduces subclinical paranoid ideation. Nonclinical controls ($n = 83$) repeatedly reported the presence and instability of negative emotions, paranoia, and the use of maladaptive (expressive suppression, rumination) and adaptive (reappraisal, acceptance) ER strategies in their daily life on six consecutive days using electronic mobile assessment. Hierarchical linear regression analysis revealed that nonclinical controls reporting a pronounced instability of negative emotions showed more pronounced paranoia at a subsequent time point. Moreover, participants who used expressive suppression at a certain time experienced more severe paranoia at the subsequent time point.

Petersen and Le (2017) examined the associations between attachment avoidance and anxiety, conflict resolution, and psychological distress in romantic relationships in a large sample ($N = 697$) recruited online. The study result revealed that anxiety and avoidance were associated with heightened psychological distress, and maladaptive conflict resolution strategies were found partially mediate these associations.

Negative Self-concept and Best Friend

Conflict: Nwafor, Nwanji and Nwankwo (2019) investigated family conflict, desire for change and negative self-concept as predictors of bullying behaviour among adolescent in Awka metropolis. One hundred and forty-four (144) students from three different secondary schools in Awka served as participants in this study. 55 (38.2%) were boys while 89 (61.8%) were girls.

Simple random sampling technique was used to select the secondary schools and the participants. The ages of the participants ranged from 13 to 17 years with a mean age of 15.53 years and standard deviation of 1.09. Three instruments were used in the study: The Self-Report Family Inventory (SFI), Automatic Thoughts Scale (ATS) and Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (QBO: 1993). The study adopted correlational design and Multiple Linear Regressions as appropriate statistical analysis for the study. The result of the multiple regression analysis using enter method showed that the three independent variables (family conflict, desire for change and negative self-concept) contributed 34.0% ($R^2 = .32$) of the overall model. Also, family conflict and negative self-concept significantly and positively predicted bullying behaviour among adolescent in Awka metropolis at $p < .01$, while desire for change significantly but negatively predicted bullying behaviour among adolescent in Awka metropolis at $p < .01$.

Levey, Garandeau, Meeus and Branje (2019) examined whether best friend delinquency and adolescent self-concept clarity were related to the development of adolescents' delinquency, and whether self-concept clarity moderated the relation between adolescent and best friend delinquency. Dutch adolescents ($N = 497$, M_{age} Wave 1 = 13 years, 287 boys) and their best friends participated across six annual waves. The study revealed that both adolescents and best friends reported on their delinquency and adolescents reported on their self-concept clarity. Adolescent delinquency linearly declined, and although adolescents' and best friends' delinquency levels were related, changes in delinquency of adolescents and best friends were not. Adolescents low on self-concept clarity reported higher levels of delinquency. Self-concept clarity also moderated the relation between adolescent and best friend delinquency levels, with stronger relations observed for adolescents with lower self-concept clarity.

Castro-Sánchez, Zurita-Ortega, Ruiz and Chacón-Cuberos (2019) analysed the relationships between self-concept, empathy and violent behaviours in schoolchildren through structural equation analysis. The sample of the study was made up of 734 schoolchildren from

the province of Granada (Spain), both male and female, aged between 10 and 12, and it consists of analysing self-concept (AF-5), empathy levels (TECA) and violent behaviour at schools (ECV). A structural equation model was performed and successfully adjusted ($\chi^2 = 563.203$; $DF = 59$; $p < 0.001$; CFI = 0.943; NFI = 0.937; IFI = 0.943; RMSEA = 0.076). In the study, a positive and direct relationship between self-concept and cognitive empathy has been found; manifest aggression is negatively related to self-concept. Similarly, affective empathy has a negative relationship with relational aggression.

Hypotheses

1. Emotional instability will not predict adolescents' best friend conflict in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria.
2. Negative self-concept will not predict best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka, Anambra State.

METHOD

Participants: The study used 112 Secondary School Students within Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria. These schools and participants of the study were selected through simple random sampling. This is to give equal opportunity to all the 17 secondary schools within Awka city, in which 44 (39.3%) of the students were male and 68 (60.7%) were female. Age of students was between 13 to 17 years with mean age of 14.61 and standard deviation of 1.32.

Instruments: One of the instruments used was **Friendship Conflict and Betrayal Questionnaire (FCBQ)** by Parker and Asher (1993). The FCBQ is a 7-item Likert questionnaire that assesses the youth's self-perceived quality of friendship with his/her best friend, with Likert response format of Not at all true=1, A little true=2, Somewhat true=3 Pretty true=4, Really true=5. The scale has Cronbach alpha of 0.84, while in this study, Cronbach of 0.86 was reported through the use of 50 participants from the main the study.

Another instrument used in the study was **Emotional Instability Scale by Pastorelli, Barbaranelli, Cermak, Rozsa and Caprara (1997)**. This is a 20-item scale (answer format: often, 3; sometimes, 2; never, 1) containing five

control items which do not contribute to the total score and which were included to avoid 'response set phenomena'. Various items offer a description of a particular child's behaviour denoting a lack of adequate self-control in social situations as a result of a poor capacity to refrain from impulsivity and emotionality. The reported psychometric properties of the instrument were 0.84 (boys) 0.85 (girls) Italy, 0.79(boys) 0.83 (girls) Hungary and the Czech Republic 0.79 (boys) 0.77 (girls). The researchers reported Cronbach of 0.85 reported through the use of 50 participants from the main the study.

The third instrument used was **Negative Self-concept Scale by Hollon and Kendall (1980)**. The Scale contains 30 items that measured the frequency of occurrence of negative thoughts (negative self-statements) associated with depression. It is a five-point Likert-type scale consisting of the ratings "Never crossed my mind" (1 point), "Rarely crossed my mind" (2 points), "Occasionally crossed my mind" (3 points), "Frequently crossed my mind" (4 points) and "Always crossed my mind" (5 Points). The lowest possible score is 30 and the highest is 150, and a higher score indicates that the individual's negative thoughts emerge frequently. A high total score indicates more frequent negative cognitions. The scale has Cronbach alpha of .94 for Low/Negative Self-Concept and Negative Expectations. When the scale was correlated with Depression Inventory (CDI) $r = .64^{**}$. In Nigeria, Nwafor, Nwanji and Nwankwo reported Cronbach alpha of 0.82 for the scale and concurrent validity of .70 while correlating NSS with Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire (QBO, 1993). The researchers reported Cronbach alpha of 0.81 through the use of 50 participants from the main the study for pilot test.

Procedure: In this study arrangements for administration of the research questionnaires were made through the school principal. In the schools, the researchers were allowed to administer the questionnaires to those in junior and secondary class. In each of the schools, the classroom teachers aid the researchers as assistants to administer the questionnaires following written instructions provided by the researchers. Instructions were written to replicate

those given by the researchers as closely as possible. Every effort was made to accommodate the schedule of each individual school. The researchers administered the instruments during the regular school day during one or more class periods depending on school enrolment. The total time for administration of all questionnaires was approximately forty minutes. Directions were given, instruments distributed, completed and collected within one class period. The instruments included gender, age, class, and school.

Ethical considerations were observed. Informed consent of the students was observed.

Thereafter, they were debriefed about the study and the purpose of the study. The anonymity of their names and confidentiality of information they gave were assured to them at the course of distributing the questionnaires.

Design and Statistics: The study adopted correlational design because the study was geared to establish relationships that exist between the study variables (best friend conflict, emotional instability and negative self-concept). The statistic adopted was multiple linear regression in order to ascertain the predictive baseline among the variables.

RESULT

Descriptive and Correlational Zero Order Matrix Statistics Table of Emotional Instability, Negative Self-concept and Best Friend Conflict

Model	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	1	2	3
1. Best Friend Conflict	14.96	4.27	112	—		
2. Emotional Instability	34.43	1.60	112	.17**	—	
3. Negative Self-Concept	13.46	1.75	112	.01**	.01**	—

Results from descriptive and correlational zero order matrix statistics above revealed that r (N=112) = .17**, $p > .01$, ($M=34.43$ and $SD=1.60$) showed significant relationship between emotional instability and

best friend conflict. Similarly, r (N=112) = .01**, $p < .01$, ($M=13.46$ and $SD=1.75$) indicated a significant relationship between negative self-concept and best friend conflict.

Multiple Linear Regression Statistics Table of Emotional Instability, Negative Self-concept and Best Friend Conflict

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	Std. E.E	F	Df	β	t	Sig.
E.I	.572 ^a	.327	.315	3.53	26.47	2	.81	6.46	.000
N.S.C.							-.89	-7.13	.000

Overall model accounted for 32.7% of the best friend conflict, with $R = .572$, $R^2 = .327$, adjusted $R^2 = .315$, ($F_{2, 109} = 26.47$, $p < .001$). Emotional instability indicated positive significant prediction on best friend conflict at ($F_{2, 109}$), $\beta = .81$, $t = 6.46$, $p < .001$. Again, negative self-concept negatively predicted best friend conflict at ($F_{2, 109}$), $\beta = -.89$, $t = -7.13$, $p < .01$.

Summary of the Findings

Correlation:

1. Emotional instability had positive significant correlation with best friend conflict.
2. Negative self-concept significantly correlated with best friend conflict.

Prediction:

1. Emotional instability had positive significant prediction on best friend conflict.
2. Negative self-concept negatively significantly predicted with best friend conflict.

DISCUSSION

The study investigated emotional instability and negative self-concept as predictors of adolescents' best friend conflict in Awka city, Anambra State, Nigeria. First hypothesis which stated emotional instability will not predict best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka city, Anambra State was not confirmed. This affirms the assertions by scholars that pronounced instability of negative emotions, avoidance, psychological distress, and maladaptive conflict

resolution, pronounced paranoia and anxiety symptoms via emotional exhaustion increase best friend conflict (Nittel, Rief & Mehl, 2019; Petersen & Le, 2017; Zhang *et al.*, 2020). This also validates two-step theory proposition by Schachter (1964) that degree of arousal (somatic component) determines the intensity of the emotion whereas the additional element of attribution (cognitive component) provides the quality of the emotion. Attribution of arousal to different eliciting events produces different emotions.

Second hypothesis which stated that negative self-concept will not predict best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka city, Anambra State was rejected. This was in consonance with the observations that negative self-concept, bully, aggression, and cognitive/affective empathy causes best friend conflict among adolescent (Castro-Sánchez, Zurita-Ortega, Ruiz & Chacón-Cuberos, 2019; Nwafor, Nwanji & Nwankwo, 2019). Theoretically, the finding supported Turner and Reynolds (2001) postulations that there are innumerable self-categories that a perceiver may use, and in particular that there are myriad of different personal and social identities that a perceiver may invoke in his or her day-to-day life which might likely provoke best friend conflict (Reynolds & Turner, 2006; Turner & Onorato, 1998). Misconception may also be attributable to where a singular social identity was contrasted against a singular personal identity (Turner, 1982). Hence, as negative self-concept decrease best friend conflict increases.

Implications of the Study

1. From these findings Social and Clinical psychologists, as well as Psychotherapists will generate intervention and treatment plans that will facilitate resolution to best friend conflicts adolescents in secondary school and society at large.
2. School administrators and parents will understand the connectivity between emotional instability, negative self-concept and best friend conflict among their students and children as well as how these affect the social life.

3. The adolescents themselves will gain an overview how their emotional instability and negative self-concept affect their relationship with peers. Hence, they will know how to checkmate their emotions and negativity for best friend conflict management purposes.

Conclusion

This study examined emotional instability and negative self-concept as predictors of best friend conflict among adolescents in Awka city, Anambra State. The findings: Emotional instability had positive significant prediction on best friend conflict; while negative self-concept negatively significantly predicted with best friend conflict.

Recommendations

1. Schools' social and psychological environments should be made in such a way as to promote emotional stability and reduce negative self-concept of adolescents.
2. Developmental behaviour managers like Social Psychologists, Clinical Psychologists, Developmental Psychologist, Counselling Psychologists, Social Workers, and Educationists should embrace the challenge of behaviour modifications involved in restructuring emotional instability and negative self-concept

Limitations

1. The use of self-report measures only for data collection could limit generalization of the study results.
2. Furthermore, population for the study was only from few secondary schools in Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria which invariably affects generalization of the study.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. Future studies can also take on a qualitative method to get an in-depth understanding of best friend conflict among adolescents.
2. Furthermore, future studies should use a larger sample extending to other parts of the country, so as to enhance generalization of results.

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APPENDIX 1

questions are about you and your friend. Not at all true=1, A little true=2, Somewhat true=3 Pretty true=4, Really true=5.

Friendship Conflict and Betrayal Questionnaire

Instruction: With this questionnaire, we are going to ask you to circle the choice which describes you best. These

S/N	Items	1	2	3	4	5					
1	Me and my friend argue a lot										
2	We fight a lot										
3	We get mad at each other a lot										
4	We doesn't listen to each other										

Developed by Parker, J. G., & Asher, S. R. (1993)

Emotional Instability Scale

Instruction: With this scale, we are going to ask you to circle the choice which describes you best.

S/N	Items	1	2	3
1	I am impatient			
2	I make trouble for others			
3	I get along well with others*			
4	I shout			
5	I interrupt others while they are talking			
6	I play loud games			
7	I play with matches or fire			
8	I am funny*			
9	I bother others			
10	I have bad moods			
11	I am impolite			
12	I feel happy*			
13	I don't respect others			
14	I cry			
15	I make new friends easily*			
16	It's hard for me to stay still			
17	At school I talk when I shouldn't			
18	I do well in school*			
19	I get mad			

20	I play dangerous games				
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Developed by Pastorelli, C., Barbaranelli, C., Cermak, I., Sandor Rozsa, S., & Caprara, G.V. (1997)

Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire (Negative Self-Concept and Negative Expectation Subscale)

Instructions: Listed are a variety of thoughts that pop into people's heads. Please read each thought and indicate how frequently, if at all, the thought has occurred to you over the past week. Please read each item carefully and circle the appropriate answers on the answer sheet in the following fashion:

1 = not at all, 2 = sometimes, 3 = moderately often, 4 = often, 5 = all the time

S/N	Items	1	2	3	4	5
1	I'm no good.					
2	Why can't I ever succeed?					
3	My life is not going the way I want it to.					
4	I'm a loser.					
5	I'm a failure.					
6	I'm a failure.					
7	My future is bleak.					

Developed by Hollon, S.D. & Kendall, P.C. (1980)