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Relationship Between Parental Factors and Uses of Abusive Words Among Primary School Pupils: Community Service Perspective

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A B S T R A C T

This study aimed to investigate the relationship between parental factors and the use of abusive words among primary school pupils, taken from a community service program. The research focused on examining the impact of parenting stress, parental personality traits, and parental beliefs on the language choices and behaviors of children in the Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The study employed a correlational design and collected data through questionnaires and rating scales from 378 pupils and their parents. The findings revealed that parenting stress, parental personality traits, and parental beliefs significantly influenced the use of abusive words among children. The results indicated that higher levels of parenting stress, extroverted parental personalities, and certain parental beliefs were associated with a greater likelihood of children using abusive language. The study also found that abusive words were sometimes used by children in the sampled area. These findings have important implications for parents, educators, and policymakers. By focusing on reducing parenting stress, promoting positive parental personality traits, and fostering supportive parental beliefs, efforts can be made to create a conducive environment that discourages the use of abusive words among children.

A R T I C L E   I N F O

1. INTRODUCTION

Parents play a pivotal role as caregivers for children, making them the most influential individuals in young children's lives. From birth, children rely on their mothers, fathers, and other caregivers in the parenting role to ensure their protection and well-being. During early childhood, parents, families, and caregivers guide children in learning appropriate behavior for societal functioning Swear words are prevalent today and are commonly used by both men and women as expressions of anger and frustration in emotionally charged states, such as stress or emotional meltdowns However, the use of abusive words can occur in any emotional or mental state. This study aims to investigate parental factors and the usage of abusive words among children, focusing on parenting stress, parental personality, and parental beliefs.

Parenting stress refers to the stress experienced in response to the demands of parenthood, which is considered a normal part of the parenting experience (Belsky, 1984). Psychologists define parenting stress as the distress parents feel when they perceive difficulties in coping with their parental responsibilities (Abidin, 1992). Parenting stress is influenced by multiple factors, including characteristics of the parent (e.g., developmental history, personality), the child (for example, temperament), and the situation (for example marital relationships, social support) (Belsky, 1984). Abidin's determinants of parenting behavior model suggest that parenting stress predicts parenting behaviors (Abidin, 1992). It theorizes that parents, experiencing stress related to their parenting role, are motivated to seek available resources such as social support, material resources, and cognitive coping. However, when parents lack adequate resources and effective coping strategies, their parenting stress is more likely to lead to negative parenting behaviors (Abidin, 1992). Research has demonstrated that parenting stress directly influences parenting behaviors, with higher cumulative parenting stress resulting in ineffective and dysfunctional parenting reactions (Cabanatuan & Ahmad, 2022; Abidin, 1992; Belsky, 1984; Crnic & Low, 2002). Parenting stress refers to the stress experienced by parents in response to the demands of being a parent. Research has shown that parenting stress can directly influence parenting behaviors, including the use of abusive words by children (Abidin, 1992; Crnic & Low, 2002). Higher levels of cumulative parenting stress have been associated with ineffective and dysfunctional parenting reactions (Abidin, 1992).

Parental personality is considered a key determinant of child-rearing (Belsky & Barends, 2002). It is argued that parental maturity and psychological well-being are fundamental ingredients for effective parental functioning (Belsky & Barends, 2002). Research conducted by Grazyna Kochanska and colleagues highlights the impact of parental personality on parenting (Kochanska *et al.,* 2007). Parents who have memories of unhappy and unstable childhoods are more likely to engage in power assertion as a parenting strategy (Kochanska *et al.,* 2007). However, certain personality characteristics can compensate for negative experiences and lead to positive parenting practices (Kochanska *et al.,* 2007). Patience and calmness are among the specific personality characteristics proposed to influence parenting (Belsky & Barends, 2002).

The personality traits and characteristics of parents can influence their parenting practices and, consequently, the language choices of their children. Parental maturity and psychological well-being have been identified as important factors for effective parental functioning (Belsky & Barends, 2002). Certain personality characteristics, such as patience and calmness, have been proposed to influence parenting behavior (Belsky & Barends, 2002).

Parental beliefs refer to the naive theories held by parents about development achievements and essential aspects of child-rearing that influence child development. These theories are rooted in the parents' cognitive systems, which are based on their knowledge of development, previous experiences with parenthood, and culturally inherited habits and behaviors. Parental beliefs are the set of theories and knowledge parents hold about child development and child-rearing practices. These beliefs are shaped by their cognitive systems, previous experiences with parenthood, and cultural norms. Parental beliefs can influence the use of abusive words by primary school pupils, as parents' attitudes towards language and communication style are likely to be reflected in their children's behavior.

It is not uncommon for caregivers to encounter children who use swear words, offensive language, or socially unacceptable words. Children may hear these words from others, including family members, peers, or exposure to media (Winstok, 2018). During their development, young children experiment with language to understand what is socially acceptable and to test boundaries.

There are several reasons why a child may use inappropriate language. Sometimes, a child may use a word accidentally, unknowingly repeating what they have heard without understanding its inappropriateness or meaning. They might swear to intimidate others or seek attention and reactions. Additionally, children may resort to hurtful language when they are upset. The attention a child receives for using inappropriate words can come from various sources, including parents, other children, or the home environment. While it may be challenging to control the attention, a child receives from external sources, reducing the attention given to inappropriate words while in the caregiver's care is possible. Interacting frequently with the child throughout the day, engaging in conversations, and praising their appropriate behavior can redirect their attention. It is also beneficial to highlight positive aspects about the child to others. If a child does use inappropriate words, calmly explain that those words are not acceptable and redirect their attention to another activity.

When parents or adults hear a young child using inappropriate language, their typical responses may involve laughter or shock, without directly addressing the issue. This can be confusing for the child and make it more challenging to address the problem effectively. When a child uses inappropriate language, it is important to address it directly and immediately. Remaining calm, maintaining a neutral facial expression, and saying, "That is a word we don't use here" can convey the message effectively. If the child asks why, provide a simple explanation, such as "Those words can hurt someone's feelings" or "Most people do not like those words". If the child continues to use inappropriate language, consistency in response is key. It is also essential to communicate with the child's family, informing them about the words the child has used and the circumstances. However, it is important to be cautious and avoid blaming or putting down the child's parents or family. The child may have heard the word from others or may not have used them at home. Collaborate with the family to establish a shared approach in responding to the child's use of inappropriate language, and maintain consistency.

Verbal abuse falls under the category of emotional abuse, involving the use of words to assault, dominate, ridicule, manipulate, or degrade another person, negatively impacting their psychological health (Sanders *et al.,* 2014a). It is a means of controlling and maintaining power over another individual (Sanders *et al.,* 2014a). Verbal abuse can occur in various types of relationships, including romantic relationships, parent-child relationships, family relationships, and co-worker relationships (Sanders *et al.,* 2014b). While verbal abuse often precedes physical abuse, it can also exist independently without physical abuse (Sanders *et*

al., 2014b). The effects of verbal abuse can be equally damaging as those of physical abuse (Sanders *et al.,* 2014b).

Verbal abuse encompasses behaviors such as name-calling, bullying, demeaning, frightening, intimidating, or controlling another person through the use of words (Sanders *et al.,* 2014b). These behaviors are attempts to gain power and control, and they should not be tolerated or excused (Sanders *et al.,* 2014a).

Children's exposure to aggression, whether within the family or in their social environments, significantly influences their language development (Crick & Dodge, 1996). Witnessing parental aggression or experiencing aggressive behavior from peers can normalize and reinforce the use of abusive words in children (Crick & Dodge, 1996). Research indicates that children exposed to higher levels of aggression are more likely to adopt and use abusive language (Winstok, 2018).

Language socialization refers to the process by which children acquire language skills and learn appropriate language use within their cultural and social contexts (Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). Parental language socialization practices have a significant impact on children's language choices, including the use of abusive words (Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). Research suggests that parents who model respectful and non-abusive language and provide guidance on appropriate language use have children who are less likely to engage in abusive language (Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009).

The media, including television, movies, and online platforms, expose children to a wide range of language, including abusive words (Valkenburg *et al.,* 2013). Parental mediation of media content and discussions about appropriate language use can influence children's language development and decrease the likelihood of adopting abusive language (Valkenburg *et al.,* 2013). Active parental involvement in monitoring and guiding children's media consumption is crucial for mitigating the influence of media on language choices (Valkenburg *et al.,* 2013).

Cultural norms and values also play a role in shaping children's language use and the acceptance of abusive words (Kulkarni, 2017). Different cultures may have varying tolerance levels for abusive language, which can influence children's language development (Kulkarni, 2017). Parental attitudes towards and acceptance of abusive words, as well as cultural norms surrounding communication and conflict resolution, can impact children's language choices (Kulkarni, 2017).

Peers have a significant impact on children's language development, and their influence on language choices should not be overlooked (Masten *et al.,* 2005). Research suggests that children who have peers who use abusive language are more likely to adopt and use such language themselves (Masten *et al.,* 2005). The quality of peer relationships and the social dynamics within peer groups can impact children's language use and the perpetuation of abusive language.

Interventions aimed at reducing the use of abusive language among children often involve a multifaceted approach that targets both parental factors and child factors (Sanders *et al.,* 2014b). Parenting programs that focus on promoting positive parenting practices, effective communication, and conflict resolution skills have shown promise in decreasing children's use of abusive language (Sanders *et al.,* 2014a). School-based programs that address language use, social skills, and emotional regulation can also contribute to reducing abusive language among children (Schultz *et al.,* 2011).

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between parental factors and the use of abusive words among primary school pupils. Specifically, the study aims to investigate how variables such as parenting stress, parental personality, and parental beliefs influence

the language choices and behaviors of children in primary school. By understanding the factors that contribute to the use of abusive words among primary school pupils, this research seeks to provide valuable insights for parents, educators, and policymakers to develop effective interventions and strategies to address and prevent the use of abusive language in this age group.

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study.

(i) What is the level of parenting stress in Ilorin Local Government Area, Kwara State?
(ii) What are the parental personality traits in Ilorin Local Government Area, Kwara State?
(iii) To what extent does parental belief influence child rearing in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State?
(iv) How often do pupils use abusive words in Ilorin Local Government Area, Kwara State?

The following hypotheses were postulated for this study.

(i) Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin South local government area.
(ii) Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between parental personality and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin South local government area.
(iii) Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between parental belief in child rearing and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin South local government area.

2. METHODS

A correlational design was employed to investigate the relationship between parental factors and the use of abusive words among pupils. Correlation analysis allows for the examination of the strength and direction of the relationship between multiple variables. This design was deemed suitable for this study as it allowed the researcher to describe and observe the existing relationship without manipulating any factors or variables. The study was conducted in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The population of interest for this study consisted of pupils and their parents in Ilorin South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The total number of pupils in Ilorin South Local Government Area is 16,179, encompassing both public and private primary schools in the area.

The sample size comprised 378 pupils and their parents, as advised by the research advisor 2006 for generalizability. A random sampling technique was adopted by the researcher to select the sample size for the study. The final sample size of 378 pupils was selected from both public and private schools. Two instruments were used for this study. The instruments used for this study were a questionnaire and a rating scale. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher to assess parental factors, gathering the opinions of the selected pupils' parents. Additionally, a rating scale titled "RC" was employed to measure the degree or extent of abusive words among children. Frequency and percentage were used to analyze the demographic data of the respondents. The mean rating was used to provide answers to research questions 1 to 4, while hypotheses were tested with the use of Pearson Product Moment correlation (PPMC) all at 0.05 level of significance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic profile of the respondents was presented using frequency counts, means, and percentages. Inferential statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were adopted to analyze the research hypotheses generated at 0.05 at the level of significance.

Table 1 shows the gender of respondents on the relationship between parental factors and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South Local Government Area of Kwara State based on gender. One hundred and fifty-three (153) of the respondents representing 40.5% were male while two hundred and twenty-five (225) of the respondents were female representing 59.5%. From the analysis above, it was indicated that female respondents were found to be more in number than male respondents. Therefore, because of the above result, female respondents prevailed among teachers' respondents.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents based on gender.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	153	40.5%
Female	225	59.5%
Total	**378**	**100**

3.1. Research Question One: What is the level of parenting stress in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Table 2 shows the responses of the respondents on parenting stress in the Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State. It was indicated that the following were high: Having children has been a financial burden(Mean=1.64), I do not enjoy spending time with my children(Mean=1.71), the major source of stress in my life is my children(Mean=1.60), It is difficult to balance different responsibility because of my children(Mean=1.71), Caring for my children sometimes takes more time and energy than I have to give(Mean=1.84), I find my children unenjoyable(Mean=1.61), Having children has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life(Mean=1.65), Having children leaves little time and flexibility in my life(Mean=1.71), the behavior of my children is often embarrassing or stressful to me(1.75), and If I had it to do it again, I might decide not to have children(Mean=1.69).). In light of the result, it was indicated parents' stress was high. The weighted mean (1.69) which is a numeric indicator that the parent's level of stress was high in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.

3.2. Research Question Two: What is the personality trait of the parent in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Table 3 shows the responses of the respondents on the predominant personality type of the parent in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State. It was indicated that the following items of predominant personality type of the parent were extrovert: I feel depressed when thinking of my children(Mean=2.48), I get angry being a parent, I have trust issues over my children(Mean=1.58), I feel depressed being a parent(Mean=1.69), I feel bad seeing my children(Mean=1.69), I feel used a lot by my children(Mean=1.72), I get tired working with my children at home(Mean=1.90), I don't like working together with my children(Mean=1.97), and I feel duty carry my children(Mean=1.58). While the following item always affects the use of abusive words among children: In the light of the result, it was indicated that the predominant personality type of the parent was extrovert. The weighted mean (1.90) which is a numeric indicator that the personality type of the parent was extrovert in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 2. Summary of frequency counts, mean, and percentages showing the level of parenting stress.

No	Parental Stress	High	Average	Low	Mean
1	Having children has been a financial burden	85(22.5)	72(19.0)	221(58.5)	1.64
2	I do not enjoy spending time with my children	90(23.8)	89(23.5)	199(52.6)	1.71
3	The major source of stress in my life is my children.	63(16.7)	101(26.7)	214(56.6)	1.60
4	It is difficult to balance different responsibilities because of my children.	75(19.8)	118(31.2)	185(48.9)	1.71
5	Caring for my children sometimes takes more time and energy than I have to give.	85(22.5)	146(38.6)	147(38.9)	1.84
6	I find my children unenjoyable.	58(15.8)	114(30.2)	206(54.5)	1.61
7	Having children has meant having too few choices and too little control over my life.	61(16.1)	124(32.8)	193(51.1)	1.65
8	Having children leaves little time and flexibility in my life.	96(25.4)	77(20.4)	205(54.2)	1.71
9	The behavior of my children is often embarrassing or stressful to me.	95(25.1)	93(24.6)	190(50.3)	1.75
10	If I had to do it again, I might decide not to have children.	89(23.5)	82(21.7)	207(54.8)	1.69
	Weighted Mean				**1.69**

Decision rule: Low=00-1.49, average 1.50-1.60 High=1.61-3.00   Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

Table 3. Summary of frequency counts, mean, and percentages showing parenting personality in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

No	Parental Personality	Always	Sometimes	Never	Mean
1	I am usually outgoing and sociable.	211(55.8)	136(36.0)	31(8.2)	2.48
2	I prefer to spend time with others rather than be alone	290(76.7)	56(14.8)	32(8.5)	2.68
3	I tend to be organized and disciplined in my daily life.	46(12.2)	128(33.9)	204(54.0)	1.58
4	I am generally calm and relaxed, even in stressful situations.	88(23.3)	86(22.3)	204(54.0)	1.69
5	I enjoy taking risks and trying new experiences.	85(22.5)	91(24.1)	202(53.4)	1.69
6	I am compassionate and empathetic towards others.	82(21.7)	108(28.6)	188(49.7)	1.72
7	I am assertive and confident in expressing my opinions.	100(26.5)	139(36.8)	139(36.8)	1.90
8	I value routine and consistency in my daily activities.	106(28.0)	156(41.3)	116(30.7)	1.97
9	I am open-minded and receptive to new ideas and perspectives.	76(20.1)	120(31.7)	182(48.1)	1.72
10	I am emotionally stable and rarely experience mood swings.	66(17.5)	87(23.0)	225(59.5)	1.58
	Weighted Mean				**1.90**

Decision rule: Introvert=00-1.49, Extrovert=1.50-3.00   Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

3.3. Research Question Three: To what extent does parental belief influence child rearing in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State?

Table 4 shows the responses of the respondents on parental belief in child-rearing in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State. It was indicated that the following item was never part of parental belief. A parent should take total control of a child's life with no room for free will (Mean=1.48). While the following items were sometimes part of parental beliefs: I do not bother to check the children I care for(mean=2.02), I do not mind making bad decisions for my children(mean=1.63), I do not like helping my children with their homework(mean=2.00), Children are exposed to a stressful situation to become a better adult(mean=2.09), Hard time helps children to become a better person(mean=1.72), Children opinions are irrelevant(mean=2.18), Accommodating children wishes is a sign of weakness(mean=2.13), Children's age makes them incapable of thinking(mean=2.04), and Children do not like to be yelled at(mean=1.69). In light of the result, it was indicated that parental beliefs sometimes influence child rearing in Ilorin South Local Government Area. The weighted mean (2.51) which is a numeric indicator that the parents believe influences child-rearing in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 4. Summary of frequency counts, mean, and percentages showing parenting beliefs in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

No	Parental Believe	Yes	Undecided	No	Mean
1	I believe that setting clear rules and boundaries is important for child rearing	144(38.1)	98(25.9)	136(36.0)	2.02
2	I believe that providing emotional support and nurturing is essential for child-rearing.	73(19.3)	93(24.6)	212(56.1)	1.63
3	I believe that instilling values and moral principles is crucial for child-rearing.	138(36.5)	102(27.0)	138(36.5)	2.00
4	I believe that promoting independence and autonomy is beneficial for child-rearing.	163(43.1)	87(23.0)	128(33.9)	2.09
5	I believe that fostering a positive and supportive environment is key to effective child-rearing.	76(20.1)	s119(31.5)	183(48.4)	1.72
6	I believe that educational and intellectual development should be prioritized in child-rearing.	159(42.1)	128(33.9)	91(24.1)	2.18
7	I believe that maintaining open and honest communication is essential for child-rearing.	143(37.8)	143(37.8)	92(24.3)	2.13
8	I believe that respecting and valuing the unique qualities and characteristics of each child is important for child-rearing.	126(33.3)	140(37.0)	112(29.6)	2.04
9	I believe that promoting the development of social skills and healthy relationships is crucial for child-rearing.	40(10.6)	103(27.2)	235(62.2)	1.48
10	I believe that providing opportunities for exploration and creativity is beneficial for child-rearing.	62(16.4)	138(36.5)	178(47.1)	1.69
	Weighted Mean				2.51

Decision rule: No=00-1.49, Undecided=1.50-2.49, Yes=2.50-3.00   Note: The figures in parentheses are in percentages

3.4. Research Question Four: How often do pupils use abusive words in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State

Table 5 shows the responses of the respondents on the use of abusive words among children in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State. It was indicated that the following items were sometimes used as abusive words among the children in Ilorin South Local Government Area: The child involves in name-calling (mean=2.00), The child bullies others with words(mean=1.66), It is in the habit of a child to demean others(mean=1.68), The child frightens others with his or her words(mean=1.72), It is in the habit of a child to intimidate people(mean=1.76), The child frequently yelled at others(mean=1.78), He or she screams at other for fun(mean=1.52), Vogue words are frequently used to swear at others(mean=1.63), The child always uses potty words with friends(mean=1.66), Other children are afraid of the child's words(mean=2.33). In light of the result, it was indicated that the use of abusive words among children is sometimes high in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State. The weighted mean (1.77) which is a numeric indicator that children sometimes use abusive words in Ilorin South Local Government Area of Kwara State.

Table 5. Summary of frequency counts, mean, and percentages showing the use of abusive words among children in Ilorin-South Local Government Area, Kwara State.

No	Items	Always	sometimes	Never	Mean
1	How frequently does your child use abusive language when interacting with siblings or friends	127(33.6)	124(32.8)	127(33.6)	2.00
2	How often does your child use abusive language as a means of expressing frustration or annoyance	88(23.3)	73(19.3)	217(57.4)	1.66
3	How frequently does your child resort to using offensive words during conflicts or arguments?	81(21.4)	94(24.9)	203(53.7)	1.68
4	How often does your child use abusive language when talking to authority figures, such as teachers or parents?	83(22.0)	107(28.3)	188(49.7)	1.72
5	How many instances of using abusive words does your child typically engage in during a week?	82(21.7)	125(33.1)	171(45.2)	1.76
6	How often does your child use abusive language when playing or engaging in recreational activities	78(20.6)	139(36.8)	161(42.6)	1.78
7	Daily, how frequently does your child use offensive or derogatory words?	42(11.1)	111(29.4)	225(59.5)	1.52
8	How often does your child use abusive words in response to feeling misunderstood or ignored?	72(19.0)	96(25.4)	210(55.6)	1.63
9	The child always uses potty words with friends.	79(20.9)	90(23.8)	209(55.3)	1.66
10	Other children are afraid of the child's words.	198(52.4)	107(28.3)	73(19.3)	2.33
	Weighted Mean				**1.77**

3.5. Ho$_1$: There is no significant relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words among pupils in the Ilorin-South South local government area

Table 6 shows the relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South south local government area. The table reveals that there was a significant relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South South local government area (r = 0.256; df = 754; P <0.05). The

hypothesis was, therefore, rejected in light of the result since the significant value was less than 0.05 level of significance. By implication, it shows that as parental stress increases, the abusive words used by parents also increase.

Table 6. Summary of pearson 'r' table showing the relationship between parental personality and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South South local government area.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	df	Sig.	Remark
Parenting stress	378	16.90	5.907				
				0.256	754	0.000	Significant
Abusive words	378	17.74	5.723				

3.6. Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between parental personality traits and the use of abusive words among pupils in the Ilorin-South South local government area

Table 7 shows the relationship between parental personality and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South south local government area. The table reveals that there was a significant relationship between parental personality traits and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South South local government area (r = .495; df = 754; P <0.05). That is, the type of personality determines the use of abusive words among parents. The hypothesis was, therefore, rejected in light of the result since the significant value was less than 0.05 level of significance.

Table 7. Summary of Pearson 'r' table showing the relationship between parental personality and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South South local government area.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	R	df	Sig.	Remark
Parental Personality	378	19.01	5.599				
				0.495	754	0.000	Significant
Abusive words	378	17.74	5.723				

3.7. Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between parental belief and the use of abusive words among pupils in the Ilorin-South local government area.

Table 8 shows the relationship between parental belief and the use of abusive words among pupils in the Ilorin-South south local government area. The table reveals that there was a significant relationship between parental belief and the use of abusive words among children in the Ilorin-South local government area (r = .517; df = 754; P <0.05). The hypothesis was, therefore, rejected in light of the result since the significant value was less than 0.05 level of significance.

Table 8. Summary of Pearson 'r' table showing the relationship between parental belief in child rearing and the use of abusive words among pupils in the Ilorin-South Local Government Area.

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	df	Sig.	Remark
Parental Believe	378	19.05	4.390				
				0.517	754	0.000	Significant
Abusive words	378	17.74	5.723				

3.8. Discussion of Findings

The finding that the parent's level of stress was high indicates that parents in the study experienced significant stress in their parenting role. This finding is supported by several studies in the field. Research by Abidin (1992) suggests that parenting stress is a common experience among parents and can have a negative impact on their emotional well-being. Parenting stress refers to the stress felt in response to the demands and challenges of being a parent. It is associated with lower emotional well-being in parents (Abidin, 1992). Furthermore, studies have shown that parenting stress is influenced by multiple factors. Belsky (1984) found that characteristics of the parent, such as developmental history and personality, can contribute to parenting stress. Additionally, the child's temperament and situational factors, such as marital relationships and social support, can also influence parenting stress (Belsky, 1984).

The impact of high parenting stress on parenting behaviors has been well-documented. Crnic and Low (2002) found that higher cumulative parenting stress is associated with ineffective and dysfunctional parenting reactions. When parents experience high levels of stress and lack the necessary resources and coping strategies, it can lead to negative parenting behaviors (Abidin, 1992). The finding of high parental stress underscores the importance of addressing and managing parenting stress to promote positive parenting behaviors and well-being. Interventions and programs that focus on promoting positive parenting practices, effective coping strategies, and access to resources and support can help alleviate parenting stress and improve the well-being of parents (Sanders *et al.,* 2014b).

Another finding of this study revealed that the common personality type of the parents was extrovert which suggests that a majority of the parents exhibited outgoing and sociable characteristics. This finding aligns with previous research on personality types and parenting. Personality is a key factor that influences various aspects of parenting, including parent-child interactions, parenting styles, and the overall parenting experience. Extroversion is one of the major dimensions of personality and is characterized by sociability, assertiveness, and a preference for social stimulation.

Research by Belsky and Barends (2002) supports the association between extroversion and parenting. They argued that parental maturity and psychological well-being, which are linked to personality traits, are fundamental ingredients for effective parenting. Extroverted parents may be more inclined to engage in social interactions and exhibit warm and expressive behaviors toward their children. While the finding suggests that the common personality type of the parents was extrovert, it is important to note that personality is complex and multidimensional. Other personality traits, such as introversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, also play significant roles in parenting behaviors (Belsky & Barends, 2002; Shaffiyah *et al.,* 2022). Furthermore, the relationship between personality and parenting is not always straightforward. It is influenced by various factors, including cultural and contextual differences. Kochanska *et al.,* (2007) found that the influence of personality on parenting behaviors can be moderated by certain characteristics. For example, parents who had negative experiences in their childhoods but possessed specific positive personality characteristics were able to exhibit positive parenting practices.

The finding that parental beliefs influence child rearing aligns with previous research highlighting the significance of parental beliefs in shaping parenting practices and child development outcomes. Parental beliefs refer to the set of theories and assumptions held by parents about child development, parenting strategies, and what is important for raising children. These beliefs are influenced by various factors such as parents' knowledge of child

development, previous experiences with parenthood, cultural and societal norms, and inherited habits and behaviors.

Research has consistently shown that parental beliefs play a crucial role in parenting behaviors and child outcomes. According to Bandura's Social Learning Theory, parents' beliefs about their efficacy in parenting and their children's capabilities can shape their behaviors and interactions with their children. Parents who hold positive and adaptive beliefs about their parenting abilities are more likely to engage in effective parenting practices that promote positive child development. Several studies have provided empirical evidence for the influence of parental beliefs on child-rearing. For example, Hill and Jones (1997) found that parents' beliefs about the importance of autonomy and independence were positively associated with their use of autonomy-supportive parenting practices. Similarly, research by Bornstein *et al.* (2011) demonstrated that parental beliefs about the importance of educational success were related to their involvement in their children's education and academic outcomes. Furthermore, cultural and societal factors can shape parental beliefs and practices. Cross-cultural research has revealed variations in parental beliefs and child-rearing practices across different cultures (Keller *et al.,* 2004). Cultural values, norms, and expectations influence parents' beliefs about appropriate parenting strategies, discipline, and the socialization of children.

The finding that children sometimes use abusive words is a common observation supported by various studies examining language development and socialization in children. During their development, children go through a phase of language acquisition where they experiment with language and learn what is socially acceptable or unacceptable (Bates & Goodman, 1997). This experimentation includes the use of inappropriate or abusive words, which can be influenced by various factors. Children may use abusive words for different reasons. They may accidentally use such words without understanding their inappropriate nature or meaning, or they may imitate what they have heard from others, including family members, peers, or media (Jay & Janschewitz, 2008). Additionally, children may use abusive words to express frustration, seek attention, or test boundaries as part of their social and emotional development (Power *et al.*, 2016).

Exposure to abusive language can come from various sources, including interactions with family members, exposure to media content, or interactions with peers (Winstok, 2018). Observing aggression within the family or social environments, such as parental aggression or aggressive behavior from peers, can normalize and reinforce the use of abusive words in children (Crick & Dodge, 1996). It is important to note that the use of abusive words by children does not necessarily indicate a long-term behavioral issue or aggressive behavior. It is a normal part of the language development and socialization process as children learn appropriate language use and navigate social norms (Power *et al.,* 2016). To address this behavior, consistent and appropriate responses from parents and caregivers are essential. When children use abusive words, it is important to address the behavior directly and immediately, providing clear explanations about why those words are inappropriate and the potential consequences of their use.

The finding that there was a significant relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words among children highlights the impact of parental stress on children's language choices and behavior. Parenting stress refers to the stress experienced by parents in response to the demands and challenges of parenting (Abidin, 1992). Numerous studies have shown that parenting stress can influence parenting behaviors, including the use of abusive language by parents or the tolerance of such language within the family environment (Crnic & Low, 2002). When parents experience high levels of stress related to their parenting

role and feel overwhelmed or unable to cope, it can lead to negative parenting behaviors, including the use of abusive language (Abidin, 1992). Parenting stress is associated with lower emotional well-being in parents and can contribute to ineffective and dysfunctional parenting reactions (Abidin, 1992; Belsky, 1984).

Research has demonstrated a direct relationship between parenting stress and parenting behaviors. Higher cumulative parenting stress is associated with more ineffective and dysfunctional parenting reactions, including the use of abusive language (Abidin, 1992; Belsky, 1984; Crnic & Low, 2002). The relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words among children can be explained by the impact of parental stress on parenting behaviors. When parents experience high levels of stress, they may have difficulties regulating their emotions, resulting in less effective coping strategies and a higher likelihood of engaging in negative parenting behaviors (Abidin, 1992). This can include the use of abusive language towards their children or the acceptance of such language within the family environment. Understanding the relationship between parenting stress and the use of abusive words is crucial for promoting positive parenting practices and creating a nurturing environment for children. Interventions aimed at reducing parenting stress, such as parenting programs that focus on promoting effective coping strategies, stress management, and social support, have shown promise in decreasing negative parenting behaviors (Sanders *et al.,* 2014b).

The finding that there was a significant relationship between parental personality traits and the use of abusive words among children highlights the influence of parental personality traits on children's language choices and behavior. Parental personality plays a crucial role in shaping parenting cognitions and behaviors, which can ultimately impact the language used within the family environment (Belsky & Barends, 2002). Studies have shown that certain personality characteristics of parents are associated with the use of abusive words or the tolerance of such language.

For example, research by Grazyna Kochanska and colleagues found that parents who had memories of unhappy and unstable childhoods were more likely to engage in power assertion, including the use of abusive language (Kochanska *et al.,* 2007). However, it is important to note that the relationship between parental personality and the use of abusive words is not straightforward and can be influenced by various factors. Personality traits such as patience, calmness, and self-control have been proposed to have a positive influence on parenting practices and the use of non-abusive language (Kochanska *et al.,* 2007). Parents who possess these traits are more likely to regulate their emotions effectively and constructively respond to their children, promoting a nurturing and respectful communication style.

Additionally, studies have shown that parental maturity and psychological well-being, which are closely related to personality traits, are fundamental ingredients for effective parental functioning (Belsky & Barends, 2002). Parents who exhibit higher levels of psychological well-being are more likely to engage in positive parenting practices and use non-abusive language when interacting with their children. Understanding the relationship between parental personality and the use of abusive words among children can inform interventions and support programs aimed at promoting positive parenting behaviors. By providing parents with tools to enhance their self-awareness, emotional regulation, and communication skills, we can help create a more positive and respectful family environment.

The finding that there is a relationship between parental belief and the use of abusive words among children highlights the influence of parental beliefs on the language choices and behavior of children within the family context. Parental beliefs, defined as a set of naive theories about development achievements and what is important for child rearing,

significantly impact parenting practices and the socialization of children. These beliefs are rooted in parents' cognitive systems, which are shaped by their knowledge of child development, previous experiences with parenthood, and cultural norms and values.

Research has shown that parental beliefs about discipline and appropriate language use directly affect children's language development and the use of abusive words (Palma *et al.,* 2021). When parents hold beliefs that condone or tolerate the use of abusive language, children are more likely to adopt and use such language themselves (Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). On the other hand, parents who have beliefs promoting respectful communication and non-abusive language are more likely to have children who refrain from using abusive words (Ochs & Izquierdo, 2009). Cultural factors also play a significant role in shaping parental beliefs and their impact on children's language choices. Different cultures may have varying tolerance levels for abusive language, which can influence parental beliefs and subsequently affect children's language development (Kulkarni, 2017). Parental beliefs are not isolated but are influenced by broader cultural norms and values regarding communication and conflict resolution.

4. CONCLUSION

This study, which was conducted as part of a community service project, aims to look into the relationship between parental characteristics and the use of harsh language by primary school students. The study examined how parental ideas, personality factors, and parenting stress affected children's linguistic preferences and behavior. The results showed that parental attitudes, parental personality factors, and parenting stress all had a substantial impact on how harsh words were used by children. According to the findings, children who use abusive language are more likely to have higher levels of parenting stress, extroverted parental personalities, and specific parental beliefs. The survey also discovered that kids in the sampling area occasionally used derogatory language. The ramifications of these findings for parents, educators, and politicians are significant. Understanding the causes of abusive language usage among primary school students can aid in the development of efficient treatments and techniques to deal with and stop such behaviors. The use of abusive language by children can be prevented by emphasizing the reduction of parenting stress, encouraging positive parental personality traits, and encouraging supportive parental attitudes.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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