



**Viewed With Skewed Lenses? Adolescents’
Perceptions On The Treatment They Receive From
Parents And Teachers In Masvingo Urban, Zimbabwe**

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Abstract:

This study endeavoured to explore the sentiments of secondary school adolescent learners regarding the way they are generally treated by significant others such as parents and teachers in Masvingo urban schools. The researchers were primed to embark on the study after realising that adolescence is a unique developmental stage in which the adolescents have unique emotional, physical, cognitive, social, spiritual and moral needs. The study was anchored on Erikson's psychosocial theory and Rogers' person-centred self-theory. The descriptive survey research design was employed with focus group discussions as the data gathering instruments. A sample of eighty (80) adolescents comprising 40 boys and 40 girls was selected using the stratified random sampling method. The data gathered through focus group discussions was subjected to thematic data analysis. The chi-squared test was also employed to explore the association between the level of adolescence and the adolescents' attitudes towards adult control and guidance. It was established that adolescents to a great extent harboured negative sentiments towards the manner in which their teachers and parents treated them at times. They pointed out that some of the norms and values emphasised by their parents and teachers were virtually outdated and anchored on stale information. The adolescents intimated that sometimes their teachers and parents deliberately prevented them from capitalising on the available technological innovations. The researchers recommended that teachers and parents should take their time to study the developmental needs of adolescents in a technologically dynamic world so as to sufficiently understand how best to help the adolescents.

Key words: *teenager, adolescence, peers, identity versus role confusion, empathy, unconditional positive regard, parenting styles*

1. Background To The Study

The events of adolescence are virtually captivating as they always harness the attention of a significant number of pre-adolescents, adolescents themselves and even adults. The progression from childhood to adulthood is sometimes hectic and dramatic so much that it triggers anxiety and distress both at home and at school. This is backed by Swartz, de la Rey, Duncan, Townsend and O'Neill (2011:87) who concede that it is almost universally accepted in virtually all cultures that adolescence as a developmental stage is turbulent and troublesome for the adolescent, his or her family and the society at large. According to Dacey and Travers (2002) adolescence has long been described as a period of storm and stress by Stanley G. Hall, a 19th century psychologist who came to be known as the father of adolescent psychology (Swartz, et al, 2011:87). While parents and teachers attempt to exercise guidance and control in the lives of the growing children, they can be met with untold resistance from adolescents in particular. Lahey (2009: 337) and Steinberg and Morris (2001:88) support this position by claiming that there is a notable genuine increase in bickering and squabbling between parents and teenagers during the early adolescent years. It was with these sentiments in mind that the researchers embarked on a study to explore the views of adolescent pupils on the way they were treated by their parents at home and their teachers at school.

Adolescence is a developmental stage which physically and psychologically lies between childhood and adulthood. According to Feldman (2009:423) adolescence is a developmental stage between childhood and adulthood which is characterised by profound changes and is occasionally a period of turmoil. Ozmete and Bayo-Lu (2009:313) say, "Adolescence has been described as a phase of life beginning in biology and ending in society". The first stage of adolescence is puberty, which is the point at which the individual becomes able to reproduce. Another allied term is teenager which simply means someone whose chronological age falls in the 13 to 19 year age range. The terms adolescent and teenager were interchangeably used in this study. Due to increased hormonal secretion, the adolescent experiences physical and emotional changes. Physically, adolescents undergo a growth spurt in which they develop both primary and secondary sex characteristics. Emotionally, both boys and girls experience erratic mood swings as a result of hormonal changes. It is these hormonal changes that tempt the adolescents to defy the authority systems which are in place especially in the case of boys. Moreover, the teenagers are prominently enthusiastic to gain the attention of members off the opposite sex. Furthermore, adolescents are normally tempted to engage

in experimental behaviour so as to establish the extent to which they can physically function as demanded by their newly established bodily structures.

The role of adults such as teachers and parents in facilitating the smooth transition from childhood to adulthood remains a critical necessity. Herrero, Este´vez and Musitu (2006:674) elaborate that parents and teachers are very important in assisting the adolescents to cope with the maturational challenges of adolescence. The interaction between adolescents and teachers is to some extent an extension of the parent–child relationships which the adolescent pupils bring to the classroom relational schemas about the nature of social relationships and attachment patterns with adults (Herrero, et al, 2006:674). This implies that adolescent relational schemas with parents at least act as a hint to adolescents to define their relationships with teachers who are also adults just like their parents (Davis, 2003; Herrero, et. al, 2006:674). The study focused on both parents and teachers because they are both figures of authority in the lives of the adolescents.

In the pre-colonial African set-up, the needs of adolescents were well catered for by aunts, uncles, grandparents and even great grandparents. Adolescent girls were imparted with virtually all the social skills such as pounding and grinding grain as well as how to conduct themselves on special occasions such as funerals and marriage ceremonies. On the other hand, adolescent boys were taught how to hunt, fish, and work in the fields and to herd farm animals. The elderly were virtually the fountains of the vital information which was to be timeously imparted on the adolescents. The adolescents of such a time were mostly well grounded in social virtues such as respect, diligence, obedience and docility. However, this once stable and self-contained arrangement underwent drastic transformation principally due to civilisation and modernisation. The shift from the above-mentioned social set-up partly spurred the researchers to embark on this study.

Modern adolescents no longer solely rely on their teachers and parents for vital information regarding their developmental needs and future careers aspirations. Various bureaus of information such as movies, digital satellite programmes and the internet have emerged and the adolescents have more role models than what their parents and teachers can possibly envisage. Canada National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (2008:01) posit that upon hearing about adolescents or teenagers, “most parents think about an Internet generation of online chatting and gaming, text messaging and web surfing young people”. MacRae (2007:08) intimates that young people absorb each new technological innovation so effortlessly that cyberspace is their habitat and members of the older generations who don’t join them run the risk of being superfluous and discounted. This,

to some extent implies that as much as teachers and parents endeavour to give adolescents valuable information and guidance to promote smooth progression from childhood to adulthood, not all their efforts are well embraced by their very intended beneficiaries. This study is an endeavour to unravel the diverse views and sentiments of adolescents regarding the way they are treated by their parents and teachers in Masvingo urban in Zimbabwe.

The role of peers in the lives of adolescents cannot be ignored. Steinberg and Morris (2001:93) argue that adolescents characteristically spend increasing amounts of time alone and with friends, and there is a significant and dramatic drop in the time adolescents spend with their parents. This is likely to make the parents simultaneously suspicious, confused and worried as the parents are tempted to feel that their adolescent children are devising some mischievous acts. As teenagers gain more independence, question their parents' rules, and spend more time with peers, more disagreements with parents often ensue. Santrock (2001) indicates that one crucial function of peer groups is to provide adolescents with a source of information pertaining to the world outside of the family and about themselves. American Psychological Association (2002:21) suggest that peer groups also serve as safe avenues where adolescents can gain popularity, status, prestige, and acceptance.

It is not entirely true that adolescents are always bent on having conflicts with their parents and teachers. Canada National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (2008:01) argue that sometimes adolescents need adults such as teachers and parents to help them to 'jump the maturity gap' by viewing them as adults-in-training who are learning to take responsibility for themselves and others. Accord to Perry (2000) in American Psychological Association (2002:23) a strong sense of bonding, closeness, and attachment to family have been found to be associated with better emotional development, better school performance, regardless of the nature of the family to which the adolescent belongs. Canada National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (2008:01) say, "beneath the bravado of independence is a game of emotional tug-of-war that teenagers want their parents to fight and occasionally win".

Chang (2007:4) reports that, as postulated by Baumrind, an authoritarian parent endeavours to shape, control, and evaluate the behaviour and attitudes of the child in accordance with a predetermined set standard of conduct so strictly that any deviations will result in forceful measures to curb self-will. Lahey (2009:350) says, "The authoritative parent gives strict rules to the child or adolescent with little or no discussion

on the reasons for the rules". Santrock (2004:74) further indicates that authoritarian parenting is so punitive and restrictive that there is little verbal exchange between children and the parents. Buki, Ma, Strom and Strom (2003) maintain that authoritarian parenting often triggers resistance on the part of the adolescents (Chang, 2007:19). This is supported by Allison and Schultz (2004) who maintain that parents who respond to adolescents' striving towards autonomy by becoming increasingly authoritarian tend to trigger more negative exchanges with their sons and daughters and more defiance with parental demands.

On the other hand, an authoritative parent positively encourages children to be independent while simultaneously placing limits and controls on their actions (Santrock, 2004:74). According to Lahey (2009:350), an authoritative parent is openly critical of the children's actions but at the same time regularly furnishes them with instructions on how to behave. Chang (2007:27) claims that research results indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between authoritative parenting and the ratings of perceived parents' satisfaction in academics, social, and personal areas of the adolescent's life. Several studies have confirmed Baumrind's assertion that the most beneficial parenting or leadership style in adolescence is characterised by a high degree of acceptance and warmth, a high level of monitoring or supervision (Riesch, Gray, Hoeffs, Keenan, Ertl and Mathison, 2003). In this study, the attributes of authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles outlined above were extended to the school setting as authoritarian and authoritative classroom management styles respectively. Snowman, McCown and Biehler (2009:312) posit that there is a parallel between Baumrind's parent styles and classroom management which teachers can employ.

Chang (2007:27) argues that cultural values may be critical determinants of the type of parenting style adopted by parents. Reddy, Rhodes and Mulhall (2003) report that longitudinal research has shown that an increase in the quality of the adolescent-teacher relationship corresponds to a decrease in psychological symptoms over time.

Chen, Greenberger, and Farruggia (2003) posit that in cultures such as Spain and most Western countries where adolescents are more liberal, the association between teacher support and adolescent psychological adjustment may be weaker relative to those cultures such as China where teachers play a more significant role in the lives of adolescents. Chang (2007) makes reference to a research study which was conducted with 156 teenagers from central New Jersey to establish the effects of parenting styles on teenagers' self-esteem and overall satisfaction with their parents and themselves. The

outcomes of the study indicated that while there were no significant differences between race and authoritative parenting style, there were however, significant differences in that Asian American parents tended to be more authoritarian than their Caucasian counterparts. It was against this backdrop that the researchers embarked on this study.

2.Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on two psychological theories namely Erik Erikson's psycho-social theory and Carl Rogers' person-centred self-theory. Erikson is a neo-psychoanalyst who developed a life-long stage theory. According to Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana (2010:61) the psycho-social theory is one of the most important and influential theories of life-span development. The psycho-social theory, which is based on the epigenetic principle, has eight sequential bipolar developmental stages which articulate the various crises which each individual has to resolve during his or her lifetime (Snowman, et. al, 2009:54). In this study, the fifth stage, which is technically called identity versus role confusion, was used because it coincided with the developmental stage of the research participants (Santrock, 2004:71). Erikson claims that adolescents experience a compelling need to develop an identity, that is, establishing who they are and where they are going (Donald, et. al, 2010:63). Successful attainment of an identity leads to identity achievement while failure to attain an identity leads to identity diffusion. Carl Rogers advanced the person-centred self-theory which dwells on principles such as unconditional positive regard, empathy, genuineness and freedom of expression. In this study, the researchers directed attention on empathy and unconditional positive regard in the interpretation part of the research outcomes. According to Feldman (2009:466) unconditional positive regard, in essence, is an attitude of acceptance and respect on the part of an observer regardless of what an individual says or does. This implies that unconditional positive regard is recognition, love, warmth and acceptance which are given to someone regardless of his strengths, weaknesses, age, sex or even intellectual ability. It is merely accepting an individual without imposing some conditions of worth. Only when an individual is accorded unconditional positive regard that he or she can evolve and develop cognitively and emotionally coupled with developing a stable self-concept (Feldman, 2009:466). According to Thompson and Henderson (2007:165) empathy is merely interpreting someone else's situation after analysing it from his or her perspective. Empathy is popularly described as putting yourself in someone else's shoes.

The views of the adolescent respondents regarding the way they are treated by their parents and teachers were discussed in conjunction with the above two theories.

3. Research Questions

The research study revolved around the following guiding questions:

- What are the sentiments of adolescents on the way they are treated by their parents?
- To what extent do adolescent learners value the guidance they receive from their teachers?
- How do adolescents view the disciplinary measures employed by their teachers in Masvingo urban secondary schools?

4. Hypotheses

H₀: There is no association between the level of adolescence and the adolescents' attitude towards parental and teacher authority

H₁: There is an association between the level of adolescence and the adolescents' attitude towards parental and teacher authority

5. Methodology

5.1. Research Design

The researchers employed the descriptive survey research design since perceptions and sentiments of the adolescent respondents were under scrutiny. Sidhu (2001) defines a descriptive survey as an investigation technique which focuses on describing and interpreting existing phenomena in the form of processes, effects, attitudes and beliefs (Kufakunesu, 2011:31). According to Leedy and Ormrod (2005) a descriptive survey is a simple research design in which large amounts of data can be gathered from a large sample in a short space of time. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) recommend that the descriptive survey is very much appropriate for the exploration of perceptions and attitudes. The researchers opted for the descriptive survey research design because it enabled them to establish the prevailing perceptions of adolescents regarding the way they were treated by parents and teachers. As a means of methodological triangulation, the researchers also employed the chi-squared test to statistically test the above hypotheses.

5.2. Population And Sample

From a population of approximately eight hundred (800) adolescent secondary school pupils in Masvingo urban, the researchers employed the stratified random sampling method to select a sample of eighty (80) respondents comprising 40 females and 40 males. According to Chiromo (2006:17) stratified random sampling entails dividing the population into smaller homogeneous groups and subsequently randomly selecting members from each subgroup. The stratification was done according to gender before the equal number of respondents was selected. The respondents had an age range of 14 years to 19 years and their mean age was 16.8 years with a standard deviation of 2.11 years.

5.3. Instrumentation

The researchers used focus group discussions conducted with 10 focus groups with each group comprising eight members. Muchengetwa and Chakuchichi (2010:48) define a focus group discussion as an innovative way of conducting in-depth interviews with a number of people simultaneously. Swartz, et. al (2011:29) describe a focus group discussion as a group conversation that explores a certain topic chosen by the researcher. Focus group discussions were also used so as to harness the sentiments of the respondents as they spurred one another to open up in groups. The researchers acted as moderators who facilitated the proceedings of the focus group discussions (Muchengetwa and Chakuchichi, 2010:49). As alluded to by Bergh and Theron (2009:211), a facilitator is an individual who guides members of a group to explore the subject under discussion and tries to ensure that the discussion remains on track.

5.4. Ethical Considerations

According to Chiromo (2006:10) ethics in the research fraternity are the principles of right and wrong that guide the researchers when they undertake their research studies. Essentially, ethical principles are meant to protect the research participants, the researchers and also the profession of the researchers. The researchers sought clearance from the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture officials in Masvingo urban. The informed consent of the respondents was sought and granted. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011:77) and Keenan (2002:66) view informed consent as an agreement by research informants to participate in a research study based on a full understanding of the nature of the entire research study. According to Kufakunesu (2011:39) anonymity is an ethical principle which stipulates that the names of the research participants should not

be revealed especially during data analysis and discussion. To ensure anonymity, the researchers used pseudonyms such as Adolescent 15.

5.5. Research Findings

The following are the major research findings which emerged after thematic data analysis and hypothesis testing:

- More than half of the sampled adolescents were to a large extent not very pleased with the treatment they received from their teachers and/ or parents. Fifty out of the 80 respondents (62.5%) at least complained about the manner in which those in authority at home and/ or at school interacted with them.
- Teachers were accused of being too authoritarian and too determined to frustrate the adolescents by denying them unconditional positive regard and empathy.
- The chi-squared test conducted to test if there was an association between the adolescence level and attitudes towards adult authority revealed that the attitudes of adolescents toward adult control improve as they drift towards young adulthood.
- Forty-eight out of the 80 respondents claimed that the part of the social advice which their parents and some teachers attempted to impart on them was virtually stale.
- The respondents revealed that they were habitually irritated both at home and at school by being accused of engaging or intending to engage in some socially unacceptable behaviours and vices.
- Forty-five per cent of the respondents admitted that they at least needed some form of adult guidance so as to resolve the various uncertainties associated with adolescence.

6. Discussion Of Findings

Fifty out of the 80 respondents (62.5%) at least complained about the manner in which their parents and / or teachers treated them. Various reasons were given for complaining about the nature of the interaction between the adolescents and those in authority at home and at school. The adolescent respondents blamed the teachers for being authoritarian to the extent of tempting the respondents to believe that the teachers were on a mission to frustrate them. As alluded to by Buki, et al (2003), Allison and Schultz (2004) and Chang (2007:19), authoritarian parenting or leadership is likely to be

resisted by adolescents. They accused teachers of being more of disciplinarians than counsellors. The researchers realised that the adolescents wished to be accorded a reasonable degree of autonomy and independence while simultaneously being reasonably confined by school rules. In a way, the research informants confirmed that they are to some extent comfortable with authoritative leadership at school which tallies with authoritative parenting at home. The research findings therefore confirmed the utility and acceptability of authoritative parenting and authoritative leadership particularly when dealing with adolescents (Santrock, 2004:74; Lahey, 2009:350; Chang, 2007:27; Riesch, et al 2003).

One adolescent made reference to the way they were prevented from bringing cell phones to school. He argued that teachers were not supposed to impound pupils' cell phones since cell phones were necessary gadgets like calculators and mathematical sets. The respondents regretted that even during weekends and holiday sessions, cell phones were impounded yet through the use of cell phones they could surf the internet and obtain very vital and up-to-date scholastic information. Moreover, some of the teenage pupils alleged that their teachers occasionally accorded them the opportunity to explain some of their actions. Adolescent 34 said:

Our teachers habitually silence us even in cases where we feel the need to be listened to. They normally threaten to beat us whenever they think we have offended them.

Sixty per cent of the female respondents alleged that sometimes lady teachers treated them as social rivals rather than 'daughters' and 'young sisters'. They complained that the hostility exhibited by some of the female teachers made it very difficult for them to consult their teachers when they had personal social, emotional, physical or even spiritual problems. They expressed the desire to be shown unconditional positive regard which would make it easy for them to seek guidance and counselling from their teachers. Some respondents blamed their parents and teachers for lacking empathy when interacting with the adolescents as postulated by Rogers (Thompson and Henderson, 2007:165). One respondent pointed out that parents and teachers need to be more tolerant and patience when dealing with adolescents especially considering that part of what they do is a consequence of hormonal turbulence within them. Adolescent 18 indicated that parents and teachers should remember some of the mistakes they made during their times as teenagers. Moreover, 16 out of the 80 respondents (20%) vehemently argued that both parents and teachers should at least accept them as they are. They intimated that they were fed up of being rated against the standards of some of their peers. They reiterated

that part of developing an identity is to recognise the uniqueness of each individual. These respondents were demanding to be granted unconditional positive regard (Feldman, 2009:466).

The researchers conducted a chi-squared test at 5% significance level to determine if there was an association between the adolescence level and the adolescents' attitude towards adult guidance and control. Table 1 below shows the contingency table which was used.

Adolescence Stage	Favourable	Unfavourable	TOTAL
Early Adolescence	6 (13.5)	24 (16.5)	30
Middle adolescence	10 (9.9)	12 (12.1)	22
Late adolescence	20 (12.6)	8 (15.4)	28
TOTAL	36	44	80

*Table 1: Contingency table showing adolescence stage and the attitudes of the adolescents towards guidance and control by teachers and parents: n= 80
Attitude towards guidance and control by teachers and parents*

[$\alpha = 0.05$; 2 degrees of freedom; Critical value = 5.991 and Test statistic = 15.48]

The null hypothesis (H_0) that there is no association between the level of adolescence and the adolescents' attitude towards parental and teacher authority was tested and ultimately rejected since the value of the test statistic, 15.44, well exceeded the critical value of 5.991. Consequently, the researchers settled for the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This implies that the attitudes of adolescents towards adult authority varied as the adolescents gravitated towards maturity. Early adolescents were found to be too sensitive to adult authority while teenagers in late adolescence were less rebellious. This agrees with the views of Lahey (2009: 337) and Steinberg and Morris (2001:88) who posit that the tension between adolescents and adults is high during early adolescence and markedly declines as the adolescent moves towards young adulthood.

It came to the attention of the researchers that one of the key sources of frustration on the part of the teenage respondents was being suspected of engaging or intending to engage in some socially unacceptable behaviours and vices. The teenagers accused their teachers and parents of viewing them with skewed lenses. This agrees with the assertion by Canada National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (2008:1) that upon hearing about teenagers, “We think of children cloistered in rooms hardly wanting to come out for dinner, or gangs of potentially violent young people, sexually promiscuous, hooking up, hanging out and abusing drugs”. Some female respondents claimed that their mothers treated them with suspicion, a move which the respondents interpreted as lack of trust. Some male teenagers lamented the way their fathers, mothers and some teachers falsely accused them of drinking beer, smoking, stealing and intending to impregnate other people’s daughters and being exposed to sexually transmitted infections. Canada National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (2008:1) claim that none of these stereotypes are accurate if an objective look at today’s teenagers is made. One female respondent gave the following remarks:

They anticipated mischief from us especially in the form of having heterosexual relationships, eloping, being impregnated and contracting sexually transmitted infections including the much dreaded HIV and AIDS pandemic.

The teenagers explicitly confessed that being habitually accused of planning to embark on deviant behaviour strongly dampened their confidence levels and simultaneously increased their anxiety levels. They pointed out that the false accusations tormented their imaginations and often left them on the brink of engaging in the very vices for which they were regularly accused of planning to engage in. Moreover, this group of respondents hinted that living under the shadow of such false allegations does not augur well with one’s identity formation (Donald, et al, 2010:63).

The study also revealed that 48 out of the 80, that is, 60% of the research participants alleged that part of the social advice which their parents and some teachers attempted to impart on them was virtually stale. The teenage respondents indicated that the advice received from their parents was sometimes rudimentary and anchored on the norms and values of adolescents who lived at least two and half decades previously. They precisely indicated that the views of adults on love relationships, scholastic achievement, career options, choice of friends, dressing and religiosity at times needed to be upgraded to match the contemporary trends (Smetana and Gaines, 2003; Renk, Liljequist, Simpson and Phares, 2005; Ozmete, and Bayo-Lu, 2009:315). In justifying their standpoints, the

teenagers pointed out that their parents and teachers simply needed to admit that culture is dynamic and the ways certain things are done are bound to undergo metamorphosis in seemingly ridiculous directions especially if the ever-changing technological front is taken into consideration. Moreover, the teenage respondents acknowledged that their peers played a significant role in ensuring that they remain up to date in many critical social, academic and emotional matters (Santrock, 2001; American Psychological Association, 2002:21). According to these adolescents, the various technological innovations at their disposal acted as a vital information bureau which to a large extent has rendered part of the advice from their parents and some teachers virtually antiquated. Despite the various unfavourable attitudes expressed by some teenagers, 45% (36 out of 80) of the respondents conceded that they at least needed some form of adult guidance so as to resolve the various uncertainties associated with adolescence. They maintained that there were no shortcuts to maturity; hence the vast social and professional experience of their parents and teachers was bound to at least give them some useful insights pertaining to how the various issues of life are tackled. This agreed with the claim by Herrero, et al (2006:674) that parents and teachers have a crucial role to play in the lives of teenagers. While admitting that some of their parents were not technologically versatile to the extent of using the internet and other technological innovations, they still had the parental duty of shepherding them into adulthood (MacRae, 2007:08). These teenagers intimated that some of the actions taken by their parents and teachers were meant to insulate them from making irrevocable life-changing blunders due to ignorance and emotional immaturity. Some female adolescents confessed that they are so close to their mothers that they have been taught a lot of social and emotional issues. This is in line with the assertion of Canada National Clearinghouse on Family Violence (2008:01) which says, "Beneath the bravado of independence is a game of emotional tug-of-war that teenagers want their parents to fight and occasionally win".

7. Conclusion

The above research findings seem to suggest that Stanley G. Hall's assertion that adolescence is a period of storm and stress is capable of standing the test of time (Dacey and Travers, 2002; Swartz, et al, 2011: :87). The friction between adolescents and the adults in authority who entail parents and teachers is a fascinating and simultaneously frustrating phenomenon because of its perennial and volatile nature. While the researchers established that the adolescent respondents had something to complain about

the way they were treated by their parents and teachers, it was interesting to note that part of the teenagers acknowledged that teachers and parents at least were helping them with their transition from childhood to adulthood.

8.Recommendation

On the basis of the information gleaned by the researchers from the research participants, the researchers made the following recommendations:

- Parents and guardians need to spend quality time with the adolescent children in their custody so as to reasonably understand their wishes, ambitions, fears and aspirations. .
- Guidance and counselling programmes should be intensified in schools so as to address the various developmental needs of the adolescents.
- Teachers should habitually conduct action research in secondary schools so as to fully understand some of the challenges bedevilling adolescent learners and subsequently generate solutions to such challenges.
- Various clubs should be established in schools so as to accord teachers the opportunity to understand the mentality of the adolescents they are nurturing.

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