



News

Tell your kids lies and they lie more as adult, research reveals

By Rasheed Sobowale

There are many ways parents try to dissuade their children from misbehaving. In fact, most of us can remember countless lies our parents told us while growing up.

Parents no doubt are trying to call their wards to order with lies they tell, but a new psychology study conducted by researchers of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) suggests that such action may encourage children to lie more when they become adults.

The researchers studied 379 Singaporean young adults. The participants were asked whether their parents lied to them when they were children and how many times they have lied to their parents now.

The research is measuring pay back you may say — not far from the truth anyway.

The study analysis revealed that, the more these participants were lied to as children the higher the chance and number of times they lied to their parents in return.

These adults according to the research report also noted they face greater difficulty in meeting psychological and social challenges. Adjustment difficulties include disruptiveness, conduct problems, experience of guilt and shame, as well as selfish and manipulative character.

The research was conducted by the NTU Singapore in collaboration with Canada's University of Toronto, the United States' University of California, San Diego, and China's Zhejiang Normal University. It was published in the Journal of Experimental Child Psychology in September.

According to the lead author, Assistant Professor, Setoh Peipei from NTU Singapore's School of Social Sciences "Parenting by lying can seem to save time especially when the real reasons behind why parents want children to do something is complicated to explain.

"When parents tell children that 'honesty is the best policy', but display dishonesty by lying, such behaviour can send conflicting messages to their children. Parents' dishonesty may eventually erode trust and promote dishonesty in children."

"Our research suggests that parenting by lying is a practice that has negative consequences for children when they grow up.