

INTERRELATIONSHIP AMONG FAMILY BACKGROUND, PEER RELATION AND JUVENILE DELINQUENCY OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NASARAWA STATE BASED ON GENDER

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Abstract

Juvenile delinquency has become such a complex and social problem that hinders students from realizing their full potentials and also leads to moral decadence among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. These Juvenile delinquencies such as cultism, smoking, alcoholism, aggression, theft, harassment, disrespect to parents, teachers' assault among others are to a large extent influenced by students' family background and peer relation. This research was carried out to examine the interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender. The study was had one objective, one corresponding research question and a null hypothesis. The objective of the study aimed at examining the interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender. The study adopted a correlational research design and the population of the study was 21875 with a sample size of 378 (266 males and 112 females). Multi-stage stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study. Questionnaire tagged "Family Background, Peer Relation and Juvenile Delinquency (FBPR&JDQ) was used as an instrument for data

collection. The research questions were answered using mean and standard deviations while the null hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significant using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The findings of the study showed a significant interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Nasarawa State regardless of gender. It was therefore recommended that Parents should closely monitor their children so as to guide them from moving with notorious groups and also make sure that harmony, peace, love, obedience, honesty, equity, and justice are provided to all the members of the family regardless of gender

Keywords: Family background, Juvenile delinquency, peer relation, Gender.

Introduction

There is a growing interest in examining the variables that lead children to engage in juvenile delinquency or deviant behaviour, some of these variables point out family background which include family educational background and family socio-economic background are of prime importance to the children's life. They are also vulnerable in their early teen years due to influence of peer pressure as a result of some certain norms, values and behaviour.

Family background according to Wright and Cullen (2009) is the combination of any or all the educational and professional qualifications of parents, estimated wealth, marital eligibility, reputations, medical history of the family (especially mental health and genetic diseases). He suggested that family crisis has left children and parent alike starving for intimacy and connection. Children from single parenting or broken homes as a result of divorce or separation are more vulnerable to delinquency than children who are from two parenting families. Also, children who are victims of marital conflicts are at greater risk of becoming delinquent. Previous research has shown relationships between exposure to parental divorce and marital conflicts while growing up with psychological distress in adulthood (Caldwell, Beutler, Ross & Silver, 2010). Social learning theory posits that aggressive behavior is acquired as parents display aggressive behavior where children emulate it as an acceptable means of achieving their desires.

Peer relation often reflects the role of peer group as a means of socialization. Peer relation is seen as the level of influences that peers can have on one another (Hartney, 2011), Jones (2010) also sees peer relation as the way and manner in which people from the same social status or age influenced another from the same social class or age limit. Peer relation is normally linked to teens but it also has influence on other people aside teenagers. Membership in a delinquent gang is same as membership of other natural groupings, which prepares them to be adults. Such associations, helps an individual to acquire sense of safety and security and equally develops knowledge of social interactions and can display such qualities in terms of loyalty and leadership (Hartney, 2011).

Different authors defined juvenile delinquency in various ways, and the idea of child offenders is carried by most of the definitions. Juvenile delinquency as a concept refers to prohibitive behaviour among a particular age bracket - children and youths. Sambo (2008) sees juvenile delinquency as the crime or atrocities committed by the youth in the society which are now universally accepted as menace usually adopted by teenagers. In the same

vein, Ogbebor (2012) opined that juvenile delinquency is that behavior committed by on the children which may under the law subject then to legal action in the juvenile court which may be a new legal term to many people. He also noted that the former known code of laws “The code of Hammurabi “give some specifications about the responsibilities of children to parents and specified punishments for offenders which is according to age.

According to UNICEF (2012), the result of self report studies indicate that most of young people who are involved in delinquent behaviors are almost same of the same age and gender and in most cases, the committers are males acting in groups. Also, young people, who often engaged in delinquent behaviours do live in different circumstances such as broken homes, peer pressure, overcrowded environment and other unfavourable conditions in the home. Report indicated that the number of children who are victims of unwanted circumstances is estimated to have rose from 80 million in 1992 to 150 million in 2000 (UNICEF, 2012).

Gender refers to as socially-induced functions of a relationship existing between men and women involving both males and females. Analyses of differences between genders often show a marginalization of **women and girls** in areas such as education, economic, social, political, legal, and physical issues. This is why there is an urgent need for serious discussions on the issue so as to address these imbalances (Nwosu, 2008).

There are a number of reasons why young men are more engaged in criminal or violent behavior as compared to their young female counterparts. Various restrictive and simulative factors encourage women to adhere strictly to some social norms which is not applicable to men, one good example is the fear of sexual harassment and also girls are always under stronger family control as compared to boys. Culturally, deviant behaviour among women is given less attention in the society than the ones committed by young men. In addition aggression and violence an important determinant in the establishment of masculinity and sexuality in patricentric or paternal societies aimed at reinforcing and maintaining the social rank and authoritative position of men. The male understanding of violence can be minimized, forgiven, denied or justified because men in some cases do not consider verbal or sexual harassment as violent behavior.

Statement of the Problem

Every parent aimed at bringing up a child that will develop the right attitude of patriotism and good interpersonal relationship by educating the child to his full potentials. Unfortunately juvenile delinquency has constituted a complex problem that has impacted negatively on students’ behavior and consequently leads to moral decadence and possible school drop outs among secondary school students in the state. This menace has gained such a momentum that it has become a social problem facing Nigeria in general and Nasarawa State in particular. Juvenile delinquency includes truancy, destruction of school properties, injuries to teachers and students, cultism, smoking, alcoholism, aggression, theft, harassment, disrespect to parents and teachers, assault etc. These delinquent behaviors are closely linked to students’ family background and mostly observed among peers who have negative influence on each other, they can influence one another to avoid classes, steal, abuse drugs, taking of alcohol and other violent or delinquent behavior. From the aforementioned problems, the study sought to examined the Interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquencies among secondary school students in Nasarawa State

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this Study is to determine the interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender. Specifically, the study intends to:

1. determine the interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender.

Research Questions

The study answered the following research question.

1. What is the interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender?

Statement of Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

H₀: There is no significant interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender.]

Literature Review

Concept of Family Background

Family background according to Wright and Cullen (2009) can be understood to be the permutation and combination of any or all of education and professional qualification of parents, estimated wealth, marital eligibility, reputation, medical history of the family (especially mental health and genetic diseases). Family background also refers to all the circumstances, forces and conditions in the family which influence child's behavior physically, mentally and emotionally. Children come from different family backgrounds and as such they are affected differently by such variations and that account for the reason why some children have good and comfortable family background while others do not. May (2015) note that in some cases, family background may change from time to time for the same individual because parents are primarily responsible for establishing the family and exercise control over it and as such, they are responsible for the type of family background there in.

Concept of Peer Relations

According to Hartney (2011), peer relation refers to the influences that peers can have on one another. Peer relation is an emotional relationship existing among children from the same social groups (such as age, grade or status) acting or behaving in a similar manner. Miranda (2013) defined Peer relation as a direct influence of children by their peers or an individual who are influenced by their peers thereby changing their attitudes, values, or behaviours to be in line with the influencing groups or individual. This type of pressure varies from general social pressure because it makes an individual to change due to feeling of influenced by a peer or peer group. The effects of social groups include membership groups, in which individuals are "formally" members (such as political parties and trade unions), and cliques in which membership is not clearly defined. However, a person does not need to be a member or be seeking membership of a group to be affected by peer pressure.

Peer relation may occur in places of work, at school or in the society and it can affect people of all ages. It may also affect people in so many ways but the focus is on peer relation as a

correlates of juvenile delinquency in-schools. Peer relation may have a positive influence and help to challenge or motivate one to do his best and it may also result in one doing thing that may not fit with ones sense of what is right or wrong. In other words, when peer relation makes one do things that people are not comfortable with, that is a negative peer relation. Operationally, peer relation is a relationship among children that is influenced by ideas, values and behaviour either positively or negatively and always occur within students. Studies have shown that many popular students who refused to manage their time well make lower grades as compared to unpopular ones (Hartney, 2011). This is may be due to the fact that popular students may waste their time worrying about their social life instead of studying.

2.1.6 Concept of Juvenile Delinquency

Different authors defined juvenile delinquency in various ways, and the idea of child offenders is carried by most of the definitions. Juvenile delinquency as a concept refers to prohibitive behaviour among a particular age limit- children and youths. Sambo (2008) sees juvenile delinquency as the problems caused by the youth in the community which are now generally accepted as crimes frequently committed by young people under the age of 18 years. In the same vein Ogbebor (2012) opined that juvenile delinquency is that behavior committed by children which may under the law subject those children to the juvenile court of law as such it is a relatively new and legal term for a very old phenomenon. He also said that the earliest known code of laws “ The code of Hammurabi “ took specific note of the duties of children to parents and prescribed punishments for violation, later as legal system were elaborated offenders were dealt with according to age. Ali (2009) noted that youth delinquency has been associated with the adolescent age, to him this because it is the age when youths struggle for their freedom. In this attempt they commit so many offences. .

Loeber (2008) also viewed Juvenile delinquency as participation in illegal behavior by minors (juveniles, i.e. individuals younger than the statutory age of majority). Most legal systems prescribe specific procedures for dealing with juveniles, such as juvenile detention centers, and courts. A juvenile delinquent in is a person who is typically below 18 years of age and commits an act that otherwise would have been charged with a crime if they were an adult. Depending on the type and severity of the offense committed, it is possible for people under 18 to be charged and treated as adults. However, juvenile offending can be considered normative adolescent behaviour because most teens tend to offend by committing non-violent crimes, only once or a few times, and only during adolescence. Repeated and/or violent offending is likely to lead to later and more violent offenses. When this happens, the offender often displayed antisocial behavior even before reaching adolescence.

Today, all states set age limits that determine whether a person accused of a crime is treated as an adult or as a juvenile. In most states, young people are considered juveniles until age 18. However, some states set the limit at 16 and 17 (Loeber, 2008). In most states, a juvenile accused of serious crime, such as robbery or murder, can be transferred to criminal court and tried as an adult. Sometimes prosecutors make this decision or some states that allow transfers require a hearing to consider the age and record of the juvenile, the type of crime, and the likelihood that the youth can be helped by the juvenile court. As a result of complexity involving juvenile crime, many states have revised their juvenile codes to make it easier to transfer youthful offenders to adult court (Lundahl, Tollefson, & Lovejoy, 2008).

Research Methodology

Research Design

This study was carried out using descriptive survey (correlational research design). Correlational research design attempts to find out the mutual interaction between two or more variables from the same group of respondents looking for relationship on which to base predictions. Correlational research design attempts to determine the extent and the direction of the relationship between two or more variables (Anikweze, 2013). Correlational research design is considered appropriate for this study because it will help to establish the relationship that exists between two or more variables.

Population of the Study

The target population for the study is 21875 which consist of all the public senior secondary schools class (SS II) students in Nasarawa State. There are 235 public senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. These schools are distributed across the three Senatorial zones of the state. The population of the study is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Population of the Study

S/N	Zone	No. of schools	No. of students
1	Nasarawa South	105	7813
2	Nasarawa North	60	4389
3	Nasarawa West	70	9673
	Total	235	21,875

Source: Nasarawa State Ministry of Education, 2017/2018

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for the study comprises of 378 SS II students from the public senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. The sample size was adopted using a table for determining sample size for research activities by Paul C. Boyd, Educational and Psychological Measurement (2006). The study adopted multi-stage stratified random sampling. The schools for the study were clustered into three (3) Senatorial zones, Nasarawa South, Nasarawa North and Nasarawa West. A non-proportionate stratified random sampling procedure was used to draw four (4) schools from each zone so as to embrace zones with few schools; twelve schools were selected to represent the entire schools. A proportionate stratified random sampling procedure was used to select students from the sampled school in each senatorial zone. The schools were stratified into urban and rural schools and each school again will be further stratified into male and female respondents.

The researcher purposely used SS II students as the respondents considering the fact that SSI students are new in the school, while SS III students, are preparing for their final examination and may not have time to participate in the study, and SSI are new in the school and may not be stable enough to participate as respondents.

Table 2: Sample Size of the Study

S/No	Schools	Population	M	F	Sample
1.	GSS Lafia	256	39	13	52
2.	GSS Ombi I	75	11	4	15
3.	GSS Akurba	161	23	10	33
4.	GSS Shabu	145	22	7	29
5.	GSS Akwanga Central	120	16	8	24
6.	GSS N/Eggon	206	30	12	42
7.	GSS Andaha	63	9	4	13
8.	GSS Gudi	119	18	6	24
9.	GSS Karu	84	12	5	17
10.	G.C Nasarawa	358	47	25	72
11.	GSS Gadabuke	105	17	4	21
12.	GSS Laminga	180	22	14	36
	Total	1872	266	112	378

Method of Data Collection

The study used questionnaire as the primary method of data collection. Questionnaire is a data gathering method that will enable the researcher to ask specific questions dissected to a particular purpose to the target population either directly or by post. The questionnaire tagged “Family Background, Peer Relation and Juvenile Delinquency (FBPR& JDQ) was designed to contain clear and unambiguous questions and responses from the respondents and are carefully structured to cover all the relevant areas of the study. They are also structured based on a five-point likert-scale and consisted of two sections. Section A deals with the background information of the respondent such as Gender and School location. Section B deals with items revolving around the research questions and hypothesis such as family educational background, peer relation and Juvenile delinquency.

Administration of Instrument

The research instrument was administered by the researcher directly to the respondents and was collected back by the researcher immediately after completion. The questionnaire was administered to public senior secondary students when the school is in session and during school hours. This is important because the schools will provide the most suitable pool of children within the target population. Two research assistants assisted the researchers who were selected among the secondary school teachers in the sampled schools.

Techniques for Data Analysis

Data collected were analyzed using Mean, Standard Deviations and Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient. Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation while Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient was used to test null hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussions

Results

Research Question: What is the interrelationship among family background, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary schools students in Nasarawa State based on gender?

Table 3: Inter Correlation Matrix of Family Educational Background, Family Socio-Economic Background, Peer Relation and Juvenile Delinquency of Senior Secondary School Students in Nasarawa state on the bases of students' gender

Gender			Family Education Background	Family Socio Economic Background	Peer Relation	Juvenile Delinquency
Male	Family	Pearson Correlation	1	.108	.188**	-.024
	Education	Sig. (2-tailed)		.083	.002	.700
	Background	N	259	259	259	259
	Family Socio	Pearson Correlation	.108	1	.461**	-.035
	Economic	Sig. (2-tailed)	.083		.000	.577
	Background	N	259	259	259	259
	Peer Relation	Pearson Correlation	.188**	.461**	1	-.044
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000		.479
		N	259	259	259	259
	Juvenile	Pearson Correlation	-.024	-.035	-.044	1
	Delinquency	Sig. (2-tailed)	.700	.577	.479	
		N	259	259	259	259
Female	Family	Pearson Correlation	1	-.011	.005	.053
	Educational	Sig. (2-tailed)		.908	.958	.569
	Background	N	119	119	119	119
	Family Socio	Pearson Correlation	-.011	1	.433**	.166
	Economic	Sig. (2-tailed)	.908		.000	.072
	Background	N	119	119	119	119
	Peer Relation	Pearson Correlation	.005	.433**	1	-.077
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.958	.000		.404
		N	119	119	119	119
	Juvenile	Pearson Correlation	.053	.166	-.077	1
	Delinquency	Sig. (2-tailed)	.569	.072	.404	
		N	119	119	119	119

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows the matrix of the correlation coefficients for the four variables based on students' gender. Each variable is perfectly correlated with itself since $r = 1$ along the diagonal of the table. The result show that for male students; family educational background has positive relationship to family socio economic status; $r = .108$ ($p > .05$), family educational background has a positive significant interrelationship with peer pressure $r = .188$ ($p < .05$) and family educational background has a negative relationship with juvenile delinquency; $r = -.024$ ($p > .05$). Findings from the study also show that for male students, family socio economic status has a positive significant interrelationship with peer relation; $r = .461$ ($p < .05$) and a negative relationship; $r = -.077$ ($p < .05$) with juvenile delinquency.

Findings from the study also show the result for female students; family educational background has negative relationship with family socio economic status; $r = -.011$ ($p > .05$), family educational background also has a positive relationship with peer pressure; $r = .005$ ($p > .05$) and family educational background has a positive relationship with juvenile delinquency; $r = .053$ ($p > .05$). Findings from the study also show that for female students,

family socio economic status has a positive significant interrelationship with peer relation; $r = .433$ ($p < .05$) and a positive relationship with juvenile delinquency $r = .166$ ($p < .05$).

HO₁: There is no significant interrelationship among family background, family, peer relation and juvenile delinquency of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State based on gender.

Multiple Regression Analysis on the interrelationship among gender, family background, peer relation on juvenile delinquency

Table 4 Regression Summaries and ANOVA of Gender, Family Background, Peer Relation on Juvenile Delinquency

Multiple R = .092		R Square = .008		Adjusted R Square = -.002		Standard Error = 3.92
Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)						
Source of Variance	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.	
Regression	49.133	4	12.283	.798	.527 ^b	
Residual	5744.010	373	15.399			
Total	5793.143	377				

a. Dependent Variable: Juvenile Delinquency

b. Predictors: (Constant), Peer Relation, Gender, Family Background

Table 4 shows that the combination of the predictor variables (family background, peer relation) is not significant in predicting male and female students' on their juvenile delinquent behaviour ($F_{(4, 373)} = .798$, $p > 0.05$). The multiple correlation coefficient (R) of all the combined predictor (independent) variables on students juvenile delinquent behaviour = 0.092; adjusted $R^2 = -.002$, which translates to only -.2% contribution of the predictor (independent) variables on students juvenile delinquent behaviour in Nasarawa State.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study show that there is a significant interrelationship of family background and peer pressure on juvenile delinquency on the bases of gender of senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State. The gender of the child may also impact the relationship between parenting practices and delinquency. Findings of this study also corroborate with the findings of Ekpo and Ajake (2013) which showed that family background of parents significantly influences student's delinquency. Another study by Haslinda, Adriana, Nobaya and Syamsyihana (2015) also show significant associations between delinquent behaviour levels with both age and ethnicity; but no significant associations with gender or religion. Results indicate that common perceptions about at-risk youth may run contrary to reality; despite being at-risk, the respondents displayed lower-than-expected levels of delinquency, and moderate aggressive behaviour. The findings of this study is still in accord with Ugwuoke and Duruji (2015) results which shown that children from unstable homes engage more in juvenile delinquency than their counterparts from more stable homes. As expected, inadequate parental supervision predicted delinquency. In the same direction,

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that students' family educational background, family socio- economic status and their interaction with peer groups has significantly influenced the occurrence of juvenile delinquencies among students of senior secondary schools in Nasarawa State. The study therefore recommends that Parents should closely monitor their children so as to guide them from moving with notorious groups and also make sure that harmony, peace, love, honesty, equity and justice, are provided to all the members of the family regardless of gender.

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