



PERCEPTION OF FAMILY VARIABLES ON DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR AMONG STUDENTS OF HUMAN KINETICS AND SPORTS SCIENCE IN UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR, CALABAR, CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigates perception of family variables on delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department in University of Calabar, Cross River State. Two null hypothesis were stated. The study adopted survey research design. The sample for the study comprised 82 students from Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, randomly selected from all levels representing 50% of the population of 164. The instruments used in data collection for the study was a questionnaire titled “Perception of Family Variable on Delinquency Behaviour Questionnaire” (PFVDBQ). It was validated by experts in Human Kinetics and Sports Science and experts in Test and Measurement Units, both in University of Calabar. The reliability of the instruments was determining by using Cronbach alpha reliability method. The reliability estimate gave a reliability coefficient of .78. Data collected were analysed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis tested at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that there was significant positive relationship between broken home and socio-economic status of parents on delinquent behaviour of students. It was recommended among others that parents should endeavour to stay together, keep their family intact, no matter the tough situation they are passing through in order to jointly ensure that their children/wards are properly brought up.

Keywords: Perception, Family, Variable, Delinquent and Behaviour.

1.0 Introduction

Students delinquent behaviours is especially concerned with our society though outrage

long problems family variables have increased tremendously. The family is usually regarded as the first agent of

socialization to the child because the family is expected to foster value orientation in children. Its dimension and frequency in recent years leaves one in doubt as to what will become of our society in the nearest future (Inyang, 2018). There are increasing reports of these anti-social activities from the media annual reports of social welfare officers and student's court case lists.

According to Ekpo (2019) in our daily activities, it is common to find university students involved in violent crimes, cases of rape, murder, serious assaults and robbery, economic crime (street crimes) among others. The last two decades have witnessed a shift in training methodology for young person's which have discard discipline thus increasing the rate of students' delinquency. A great cause of student's delinquency is traceable to lack of parental marital conflicts. Ahueansebhor, Eyam, Adie. (2024), opined that parents are examples to their children, whatever they want to be or not was supposed to be decided by their parents who they look up to as their first role model. Children are especially susceptible to examples, having a national tendency to imitate others mostly the ones they are very closed to such as their parents. This imitative trait in children makes it imperative for example since young ones tend to gravitate in the directives of the moral standard, they observe in those whom they look up to. Moreover, studies have generally revealed that children raised by abusive parents often grow into adults who are abusive themselves. Also, where are left on the loose without proper parental supervision, it often reflects in a lack of respect for societal restrains (Isichei, 2018).

Edelman (2019) describes the family as a home where the husband, wife and children live together in peace, love and harmony for the lord and for each other. It is family that provides the ideal environment for children to receive the necessary training given to them by their parents. Some families are organized while others are disorganized and both has their different consequences on the society. Odok, Ahueansebhor, Apie, Ogabor, Osaji & shantali, (2024), further stressed that organized family can successfully achieve the inculcation of values to their children. While disorganization immensely contributes to indiscipline. Most children from these types of disorganized homes end up as delinquents and as adult criminals and they do not grow up in the atmosphere of warmth, love and trust, (Ahueansebhor, Emeribe & Odok,2023). In most urban streets today, one easily sees most of our young secondary school boys parading themselves as motor touts instead of being in school or help their parents at home in domestic chores. Conversely, our young girls are no exception, instead of them being in school, they are on the street and club houses looking for men to give them ride and buy things for them. Nevertheless, a visit to places like hotels, bars, parks, motels and so on will reveal the number of young people engaged in one nefarious activity or another. Delinquent behaviour is also a problem of our communities, the nature and degree may differ. A community free from crime and other anti-social activities is characterized by dominant parental influence on children through socialization (Ahueansebhor, Ogabor & Apie, 2015).

2.0 Literature Review

Broken home and delinquent behaviour among students. A home is defined as the house, flat or apartment that an individual life in with his/her family, (Hornby, 2018). Ogbeide (2018) a family is defined as a group of people who are related to each other. This includes genetic connection, adoption, marriage or by mutual agreement. The family comprised of married couple with their biological or adopted child/children living together in one household. When a child is born, the family is the first primary group with which they come into contact. It is a place for the transmission of social values of right or wrong; what is morally and religiously accepted or condemned by the society. It follows that by the time a child attained five to seven years of age he must have learnt what are his rights, obligations and roles within the society. The home lays the psychological, moral and spiritual foundations in the overall development of the child (Ogabor, O'Neill & Ahueansebhor, 2015).

A study conducted by Wright and Wright (2017) revealed that the most direct source of delinquent behaviour can be found in the family's failure to maintain social control through its inability to effectively transmit the dominant value of society. The scholars also noted that families are important to consider when explaining delinquent behaviour. For them, a criminal parent cannot teach the child adverse lessons about life when their child views or witness his or her parents deviant behaviours. Ahueansebhor, Adie, Ukpata and Eyam, (2024) opined that a stable home is the one that consists of the father, mother and children without

separation, divorce death of one or both parents, maladjustments, desertion or single parenthood. The relationship between couples must be cordial in order to breed peaceful coexistence and understanding; the absence of this breeds instability and frustration in children which leads to broken homes.

Broken homes exist where children are left to their own ideas and solutions due to lack of care, affection and control by their parents (Demuth, 2020).

Hoffman (2019) asserted that broken homes are associated with delinquent delinquency, but also that family arrangement is not just a broken home issue. Specifically, the author found out that levels of delinquent delinquency were much higher in teenagers residing with single fathers and lowest among teenagers who were part of a two – parent household. Ahueansebhor, Osaji, Ogabor, Apie, & Odok (2025), suggested that higher levels of delinquency among children residing with their father were due mainly to inadequate parental involvement in a teenager's life, the lack of supervision and the absence of close relationships between the teenager and his parents are factors that influence delinquency.

Ahueansebhor, O'Neill & Ogabor (2015) noted that broken home are fertile breeding grounds for children's stress, tension lack of motivation, frustration and depression which are instrumental to their academic, emotional and social adjustment on the other hand, training received from stable homes is of great importance in their personality, academic, social and economic achievement; especially from childhood to adolescents. According to Fraser (2021), psychological

home condition arises mainly from illegitimacy of the children; the label of the adopted child, broken homes, divorce, separation and parental deprivation are likely to cause negative behaviour in children, especially when they reach the adolescence age. Broken homes could cause the children to feel isolated and problematic; hence, they are frustrated and psychologically disturbed even when they are in classroom, which could result in poor academic performance. Problem of self-concept in adolescents from broken home family may lead them to a variety of behaviour that are not responsible because the child self-identified themselves as different and have a lot of problems (Juby, 2018). According to Amato (2019) adolescents from broken homes face more behavioural problems, increased conflict with parents, increased drugs and alcoholism, and increase, in mental health problems.

2.1 Socio-economic status of parents and delinquent behaviour among students

Osokoya (2019) remarked that the relationship between the parents' socio-economic status and delinquency cannot be over-emphasized. This relationship really exists among the adolescents of various sphere of life. Following the idea of Manweber (2020) which stated that the socio-economic status is usually measured by the wealth a person possesses. For instance, assets like cars, building, investments etc. All these include the job or business which a man does and are used to assess a person's level of socio-economic standard, level or status students. Students from high socio-economic status enjoy better living conditions. That is, they are provided with the basic necessary

things of life such as good food, proper clothing, library, decent and comfortable accommodations and other facilities that can aid them well in life (Anam & Ahueansebhor, 2017). But students from the low socio-economic class are provided with little or none of these facilities or materials mentioned above, of which will lead to the students performing below expectation on issue concerning life and thereby generates into delinquent behaviours in order to survive (Shawmaker, 2017).

Adewale (2018) had reported that in rural community where nutritional status is relatively low and health problems are prevalent, children general achievement is greatly hindered. This assertion is again hinged on nature of parental socio-economic background. Moreover, Eze (2018) opined that when a child gets proper nutrition, health care, stimulation during pre-school years the ability to interact and take optimal advantage of the full complement of resources offered by a formal learning environment is enhanced, it is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have possible effects on the behavioural patterns in their various schools. Family has a vital role in socializing the child and providing him the basic needs (O'Neill, Ahueansebhor & Ogabor, 2015).

Furthermore, in a study of predicting delinquent behaviours using socio-economic status and family structure variables by Shayna (2016), 150 families in Cattaraugus county participated in his study, 80 non-traditional families, this refers to one parent household, step parent households, widowed, or family members filling the parental role and 70 traditional families, this refers to both

biological parents' presents. The result of the findings showed that families with low socio-economic status and non-traditional families produced the highest number of delinquent behaviour compared to families with high socio-economic status and traditional families. Traditional families also produced fewer counts of delinquent behaviour as compared to the non-traditional families of the same socio-economic status. The conclusion of his study was that delinquent behaviour may depend on an interaction between family status and socio-economic status such as the best predictors for delinquent behaviour are non-traditional families and low socio-economic status.

Similarly, Cureye (2016), noted that low-income families are prone to higher stress levels with children. Such children are prone to delinquent behaviour and predisposed to psychopathology than middle and high – income families. According to Hoffman (2019), criminal activities may be found in every neighbourhood, the incidence of unlawful behaviour is significantly higher in economically disadvantaged regions. Children who live in these neighbourhoods are more likely to engage in illegal behaviour, such as shoplifting or getting into violent altercations, simply because they believe they have no other choice but to do so. It is possible that youngsters living in such regions may not feel the need to turn to criminal activity in order to make ends meet if they are given access to an appropriate education and the essentials for survival.

2.2 Statement of the problems

The students' delinquent behaviours have increased tremendously in Nigerian urban

and rural areas. Its dispersion and frequency in recent years is so alarming that it has raised a rural panic among the Nigerian population. A close look at our institutions of learning reveals that delinquents have become daring in recent times and their menacing activities so wide spread that all remedial measures applied seem to have failed to tackle the problem. For instance, cases of delinquencies and maladjustments are becoming the orders of the day among students in institutes of learning. Students are observed loitering in the streets instead of staying in the classrooms during lecture hours, many students drop out from schools because their parents are not intact. Most armed robbers and cultism related activities are associated with this type of students. Most students engage in stealing because their parents' occupation do not give them time to check them and for others the parents' income cannot actually meet the needs for their families.

Incidences of assault in schools are not left out. Some university students now take it as a point of duty to gang up and molest their mates, lecturers and management for wrong doings. One really wonders where those breeds of students come from. Nowadays, because of poor parenting approach, students engaging in substance and alcohol abuse is widespread. Students now take to smoking marijuana, cannabis, and other hard drugs like cocaine, heroin, while their mates are in class studying. The question is where has our societal value gone to? Why is the student's delinquent behaviour on the increase? Why has delinquent behaviour of our youths on the increase are time? These and many issue therefore raised the questions on family

variables and student's delinquent behaviours which this study sought to provide answers to.

2.3 Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate family variables and delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, in University of Calabar, Cross River State. Specifically, the study sought to find out, whether;

1. Broken homes can relate to delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State.
2. Socio-economic status of parents can relate to delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State.

Research questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. How does broken homes relate to delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State?
2. Does socio-economic status of parents relate to delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State?

Research hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

1. Broken home does not significantly relate with delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State.
2. Socio-economic status of parents does not significantly relate with delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State.

3.0 Methodology

The study adopted for this study is the survey research design. This design was chosen for the study because it involves the collection of data to accurately and objectively describe existing phenomenon. The sample for the study comprised of 82 students randomly selected from the Department of Human Kinetics and Sports Science, University of Calabar representing 50% of the population of 164 students. The instruments used in data collection for the study were a questionnaire titled "Perception of Family Variables on Delinquent Behaviour Questionnaire (PFVDBQ)". It had two sections: A and B, section A, contained demographic variables, while section B arranged in four – point rating scale consisted of 12 items, six of the items measured each of the two variables utilized for this investigation. The instrument was validated by two experts in Human Kinetics and Sports Science and Department of Measurement and Evaluation Unit, University of Calabar. While the reliability

was established through a trial test using Cronbach Alpha method. The coefficient obtained ranged from .78 to .84, which confirms that the instrument was reliable in achieving the objectives of this study. Data collection was done in the stated Department with the sampled respondents by the researcher and data collected were analysed

using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis and test at .05 level of significance. The null form of this hypothesis states there is no significant relationship between broken home and delinquent behaviour among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar.

Table 1

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of relationship between broken home and delinquent behaviour (N = 82)

Variables	Σx	Σx^2	Σxy	Cal-r
	Σy	Σy^2		
Broken home	5204	8708		
Delinquent behaviour	4862	6466	128864	0.56

*significance at .05 level, df = 80, critical r-value 0.138

The result from table one above shows that the calculated r-value of 0.56 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.138 at .05 level of significance with 80 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected, while, the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Hence, broken home significantly relate with delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State.

Hypothesis two

Socio-economic status of parents does not significantly relate with delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar. To test this hypothesis, Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis was used at .05 level of significance. The summary of the result obtained from the analysis as presented in table 2.

Table 2:

Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis of relationship between broken home and delinquent behaviours among students (N = 82)

Variables	Σx	Σx^2	Σxy	Cal-r
	Σy	Σy^2		
Socio-economic status	5122	8572		
Delinquent behaviour	4916	6864	136226	*0.62

*significance at .05 level, df = 80, critical r-value 0.138

The result from table two above revealed that the calculated r-value of 0.62 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.138 at .05 level of significance with 80 degree of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis was rejected while, the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that socio-economic status of parents relates with delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State.

4.0 Discussion of findings

This section deals with the discussion of findings of hypothesis by hypothesis:

Hypothesis one

Broken homes does not significantly relate with delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State. However, on the bases of the result obtained from the statistical analysis of data, the null hypothesis was rejected because the calculated r-value of 0.56 was found greater than the critical r-value of 0.138. The implication of the result is that broken home significantly relate with delinquent behaviours among students of Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State. The reason for this finding could be that when there is a separation of family as a result of divorce, the children raised by one partner usually end up getting involved in several anti-social behaviours, such as, stealing, bullying and other delinquent behaviours. This can be attributed to lack of proper upbringing and monitoring.

The finding of this study agrees with the views of Wright and Wright (2017) who revealed that the most direct source of delinquent behaviour can be found in the family's failure to maintain social control through its inability to effectively transmit the dominant value of society. The scholars also noted that families are important to consider when explaining delinquent behaviour, for them a criminal parent cannot teach the child adverse lessons about life when their child views or witness his or her parents deviant behaviours.

Also in support of this hypothesis is the assertion made by Fraser (2021) who stated that psychological home conditions arise mainly from illegitimacy of the children; the label of the adopted child, broken homes, divorced, separation and parental deprivation are likely to cause negative behaviour in children especially when they reach the adolescent age. Broken homes could cause the children to feel isolated and problematic; hence, they are frustrated and psychologically disturbed even when they are in classrooms; which could lead to poor academic performance. Also in support of this hypothesis is the view of Amato (2019) who asserted that adolescents from broken homes face more behavioural problems, increased conflict with parents, increase in drugs and alcoholism and increase in mental health problems.

Hypothesis two

The finding obtained from analysis of data and testing of hypothesis two in the study revealed that the null hypothesis was rejected. The implication of this finding is

that there was a significant relationship between socio-economic status of parents and delinquent behaviour of students in Human Kinetics and Sports Science Department, University of Calabar, Cross River State. The reason for this finding could be that when parents are not able to provide the basic needs for their children/ward they could result to crimes and delinquent behaviours. This finding is in agreement with that of Adewale (2018) who reported that in a rural community where nutritional status is relatively low and health problems are prevalent children general achievement is greatly hindered, this assertion is again hinged on the nature of parental socio-economic background. Eze (2018) opined that when a child gets proper nutrition, healthcare, stimulation during pre-school years, the ability to interact and take optimal advantage of the full complement of resources offered by a formal learning environment is enhanced, it is not out of place to imagine that parental socio-economic background can have possible effects on the behavioural patterns in their various schools. Family has a vital role to play in socializing the child and providing him with basic needs. The finding of this study is also inconsonance with that of Hoffman (2019) who stated that, criminal activities may be behaviour is significantly higher in economically disadvantaged\aged regions, children who live in these neighbourhoods are more likely to engage in illegal behaviour, such as shoplifting or getting into violent altercations, simply because they believe they have no other choice but to do so it is possible that youngsters living in such regions may not feel the need to turn to criminal activities in

order to make ends meet, if they are given access to an appropriate education and the essentials for survival.

5.0 Conclusions

Delinquency appears to be the most widespread social issue to comparison to other social issues. Social factors and conditions have a significant impact on the prevalence of delinquency. Individuals who engage in criminal behaviour before becoming full grown adults are commonly referred to as juvenile offenders. The presence of negative family dynamics and associations with delinquent peers are widely recognized as significant contributors to the development of abusive and antisocial behaviour. It is imperative for policymakers, parents and preventive initiatives to have a comprehensive understanding of this complex relationship, so as to be able to guide a society that can minimize the likelihood of criminal behaviour amongst its youths.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Parents should endeavour to stay together, keep their family intact, no matter the tough situation they are passing through, in order to jointly ensure that their children/wards are properly brought up.
2. Parents should at all times be encouraged to do their best to provide for at least the basic needs of their children/wards. This will at least minimize bad behaviour like pilfering, bullying others. Again,

parents should create time to check and monitor the activities of their children. This will also help in reducing the prodigality in them.

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