

**INFLUENCE OF FAMILY TYPE AND PERSONALITY
CHARACTERISTICS ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY
AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS OF KUBWA
BWARI AREA COUNCIL FCT ABUJA NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT: This study investigated the influence of family type and personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Kubwa, Bwari Area Council, FCT Abuja, Nigeria. Employing the Cross-Sectional Survey design, 200 adolescent secondary school students participated, selected through systematic random sampling. 12-17 years. Participants comprised of 90 males and 110 females with a mean age of 14.96 years (SD=1.12). The Self-Report Delinquency Scale and Big Five Inventory (BFI) were utilized for data collection, with three hypotheses tested using independent t-tests, Simple Linear Regression, and Multiple Regression analyses. Findings revealed no significant difference in delinquency rates between single-parent and nuclear families. However, personality traits significantly influenced juvenile delinquency among the students. Additionally, a significant joint influence of personality characteristics and family type on delinquency was observed. It was concluded that while there is no significant difference in delinquency between single-parent and nuclear families, personality traits, both individually and in conjunction with family type, are significant determinants of juvenile delinquency. The study recommends implementing support programs for parents, educating families on the psychological effects of broken homes, establishing structured assessments of adolescent personality traits, and encouraging further research for validation and deeper understanding.

Keywords: Juvenile Delinquency, Family Type, Personality Characteristics, Secondary School Students, Kubwa Bwari Area Council

INTRODUCTION

A delinquent is one who deviates from the norms set up by the society. Children and adolescents who are minor in age and who deviate from the norms of society are known as juvenile delinquents. The term 'juvenile delinquent' or 'young delinquent' means a child or youth who deviates seriously from the norms of society and commits crimes. They are the criminals who are referred to as minors in major problems because they have not reached the age of taking criminal responsibilities based on each country's law. According to Schwartz and Johnson (1985), the term delinquency is used for the juvenile (usually under the age of 18) who has committed an act that would be considered illegal for an adult. When an individual commits an illegal act below the age of seven, they are called problem children, not delinquents.

The welfare of the young is relatively not a new phenomenon in the history of civilization, as children are highly valued in all societies. Juvenile delinquency is an important area of concern, because the care of children must be fully regulated to ensure that our future generations are not being exposed to in-appropriate Values and behaviours. Fortunately, the current view of juveniles emphasizes the fact that children are indeed valuable and should be protected, nurtured, and educated. Almost everyone has used the term juvenile delinquent on occasion, perhaps in describing someone they know or in discussing the problem of crime in society; but the term has different meanings for different people. One person may refer to youngsters who are chronically truant from school as delinquent; others may employ the term in reference to adolescents who commit homicide, rape, or armed robbery; still others may use the term to describe children who break curfew laws or engage in premarital sex. Given these conflicting viewpoints, it is necessary to consider the legal definitions of juvenile delinquency. Legal definitions of juvenile delinquency are contained in statutory laws, which enumerate specific actions that constitute delinquent behaviour; children who are found to be engaging in these behaviours are then labelled by the juvenile justice court as delinquent.

Under the law children could be held responsible for criminal acts. Numerous accounts can be found in literature of children who were convicted and punished for crimes. One such account tells of a thirteen-year-old English girl who was executed for having allegedly killed her mistress. Under the law, children could be charged, tried, and sentenced in the same manner as adults. During the late nineteenth century, the growing child-saving movement in the United States helped stimulate public concern about the plight of children, particularly the harsh treatment children received in the adult courts. The child savers advocated the establishment of an alternative court, which would be designed to protect the welfare of the young. Instead of automatically punishing a child for misbehaviour, this new court would offer humane treatment and an opportunity for rehabilitation. This approach would extend to children who had committed offences as well as to orphans and children who had been abused or neglected. At the time of the establishment of the first juvenile court, delinquency was already considered a major problem in the United States. Reformers not only felt that children had been treated too harshly under adult law but they were also opposed to the practice of placing children in jails alongside adults to await trial and then incarcerating them in the same facilities after trial. Constant exposure to accomplished criminals was felt to be detrimental to juveniles in that it gave them opportunities to develop their skills at illegal acts and reinforced their deviant behavioural patterns.

The problem of juvenile delinquency, particularly in urban areas, has grown significantly in recent years (Moffit, 2009). A 2009 global survey of juvenile crime in cities, conducted by UNIHABITAT, collected considerable data on the dynamics of the problem. The survey reported that in Europe, juvenile crime had increased by 2.6% compared to the previous year's increase of 1.7%. South East Asia, Latin America and North America were reported to have juvenile crime growth rates of 0.7%, 3.9% and 1.8% respectively. The relatively high rate of juvenile crime in Latin America has been attributed to the drug economy in places like Mexico and Colombia (Raul, 2010). In Africa, according to UNIHABITAT, juvenile criminality has continued to increase largely as a result of chronic unemployment among youth. Between 2007 and 2009, juvenile crime increased from 3.2% to 5.7%. Such increases have also been linked to the rate at which cities proliferate or the levels of urbanization and the social changes and complexities that accompany these processes, including urban poverty (UN, 2008). Urbanization-related increases in crime rates are often more common in Africa where average annual growth rates have been estimated at 7.2% between 1980 and 1990 and 9.3% between 1990 and 2000.

Sociologists emphasize the role of the social environment in the aetiology or causes, of delinquent behaviour. The major characteristics of societies with high rates of juvenile misconduct are industrialization, modernization, and urbanization. These societies are characterized by particular family structures and youth cultures that are thought to be influential in the behaviour of youth. Moreover, the increased affluence brought about by industrialization is also believed to encourage criminal activity. The type of family structure most frequently found in industrialized nations is the "nuclear" or "conjugal" family. In these societies, the family is based on the husband-wife tie and their offspring, and there is a relative independence of other kinship ties. This type of family structure is useful to an industrialized social system because it increases mobility; when households are set up independently, a move to a new location necessitated by one's job does not need the approval of large numbers of relatives. The cost of living in the society makes the maintenance of extended kin networks very difficult, if not impossible, so that the extended family system, with several generations residing in a common residence, is very uncommon. This change in the family structure is paralleled by changes in the socialization process children undergo. Nuclear families have less control over their young because there are fewer adults to act as socialization agents; in addition, there is competition from other groups for influence over the family members. Peer groups and educational institutions consume much of the child's time and interest and may serve to undermine the power of parents.

Family type is a major factor in the causation of juvenile delinquency worked on the assumption that, if the family background (especially the general atmosphere of the home and the attitude of the other members of the family) is congenial for the proper development of a child, it is likely that the child will grow up to be law-abiding. A study by Demuth and Brown (2004), demonstrates that broken homes are associated with juvenile delinquency but also that family arrangements are not just a broken home issue.

On the basis of family types, families can be classified as nuclear or small family and joint or extended family. (Reiss, 1988) stated that the nuclear family system is a term used to define a family group consisting of a father, mother and their children. Joint or extended family system comprises of father, mother, and children, one or more grandparents, an Aunt, an Uncle and even some cousins, live together within the same household. The size of the nuclear family depends on the number of children in the family whereas number of uncles, aunt, cousins and grandparents decide the size of a joint or extended family. In developing countries, the joint or extended family system has been the prevalent family system (Mason, 1992). However, in recent times, urbanization has led to alterations in existing family structures in the country, especially the larger cities. It has been suggested that urbanization leads to households becoming less extended and more nuclear and that this trend would be observed in developing countries (Bongaarts, 2001). The situation mentioned by Bongaarts indicates a major social change within the family which is restructuring the society inclining more towards goal specific nature rather than emotional or intimate touch in the relationships.

Specifically, the researchers found that levels of juvenile delinquency were much higher in teenagers residing with single fathers and lowest among teenagers who were part of a two-parent household. The researchers suggest that higher levels of delinquency among children residing with their fathers were due mainly to inadequate parental involvement in a teenager's life. Demuth and Brown drew the inference that overall, the lack of supervision and the absence of close relationships between the teenager and his parents are factors that influence delinquency. Demuth and Brown's (2004) also suggested that where parental supervision and parental bandings are weak, it can lead to delinquency.

On the other hand, family as an integrated and functional unit of society has for a considerable period of time captured the attention and imagination of researchers. While the family itself is a matter of study, equally important for research is its role as a factor influencing and affecting the development, behaviour, and wellbeing of the individual. The family is a basic unit of study in many social science disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, economics, anthropology, social psychiatry, and social work. Scholars who claimed that extra family conditions are essential in the explanation of delinquent behaviour worked on the assumption that participation in the creation and maintenance of delinquent subculture is an important factor in the causation of juvenile delinquency. Although the issue of juvenile delinquency is an age-long problem, it seems that the juvenile delinquency of the past cannot be compared with that of the present era. The anti-social behaviours often associated with juvenile delinquents, such as vandalism, drug abuse, weapon carrying, alcohol abuse, rape, examination malpractices, school violence, bullying, cultism, truancy, school drop-outs, to mention but a few. Obviously, unless something is done to roll back the wave of juvenile delinquency, the prospect of a better, safer and more prosperous crime society emerging in Nigeria will remain elusive. (Udoh, et al, 2010). Research indicates that various exposures to violence within the family or outside the family are important sources of delinquency. In other words, if violence encompasses all emotional and environmental aspects of the juvenile's life, he is more likely to engage in delinquent activities (Hagan and Foster 2001). Family behaviours particularly, parental, monitoring and disciplining seem to influence association with delinquent peers throughout the juvenile period.

A personality trait is an interrelated cluster of mental and or behavioural characteristics. According to Allport (1937), the coherent core of personality is attributable to traits which underlie personality. Traits enable individuals to respond to heterogeneous stimuli in a typical manner, and traits influence their thoughts and actions in diverse but characteristic ways. Thus, for Allport, traits account for both the stable enduring features of personality as well that it may fluctuate and grow. Juvenile delinquents showed more depression cognitive distortions and problem behaviour than non- delinquents. Key characteristics of depression include difficulty concentrating, loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, hopelessness, feelings of worthlessness, and, at its extreme, suicidal thoughts and tendencies. Hunt 2008 theorized that Depressive symptoms are closely related to juvenile delinquents. Adolescents in the correction centres are more depressed than those from the community-based samples. In particular, they considered how depression may predict antisocial behaviour among girls. During childhood, males' and females' rates of depression are similar and relatively low. Early adolescence marks a time when the rates clearly diverge, with a sharp rise in the onset of depression in girls according to Obeidallah, D.A., & Earls, F.J. (1999). Long-standing place in descriptions of criminality and personality disorders and is one the most researched conditions in psychopathology (Tengstrom, et al, 2004). Also, Meier, et al, 2008 concluded that there is a relationship between personality specifications and agitation, emotional senselessness, and the delinquent behaviours of male and female juveniles who are in contact with each other.

Criminal's behaviour is influenced by various personal traits. Over the last three decades' personality traits are major determinants of criminal and delinquent's behaviour in children. A juvenile delinquent is an individual who sustains a pattern of delinquency over a long period of time, and whose life and identity are organized around a pattern of deviant behaviour. Criminal behaviour is influenced by single personality traits or particular group of personality traits. There is a relationship between personality and delinquency and perpetration of crime. Juvenile deviation related studies generally presented two theoretical perspectives- sociological and psychological. Psychology forces the personal and inner control that is made up by super

ego or skilled by behaviour patterns. Sociology gives attention on society or community institutions that have a direct effect on the processes of external social control. They are deviations rely both on the personal and social control. The lack of personal and social control may result in crime involvement.

Crime and delinquency, including violence of all kinds, adversely affect economic and social development, strengthen social exclusion and poverty, undermine citizenship and security, and reduce the capacity of the state to govern effectively (UN, 2005:10). Even though the problem of delinquency is not a new occurrence, today the African region, with its average of 28.4 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants, registers one of the highest rates of homicide and criminal victimization in the world (UNICRI, 2005). Of all the homicides reported, 28.7 percent were attributable to young men between 10 and 19 years of age. While social and economic conditions vary both within and among countries, there are still a range of internal and external factors that can be commonly associated with the high levels of youth violence and delinquency in the region. The rapid urbanization process, together with persistent poverty, inequality, political violence, the inadequacy of social services, the consolidation of transnational crime organizations, the spread of drug use and drug trafficking (especially the arrival of crack-cocaine), the disintegration of families and social networks, and the availability of weapons, are all considered and often cited as the root causes of the upsurge in juvenile crime (Moser, 2006).

The vulnerability of youth to poverty and marginalization is well illustrated by the number of adolescents working to supplement family income in cities. The International Labor Office estimates that there are at least 15 million children working in urban Africa, and that approximately half of these are between the ages of 6 and 14 years old (ILO, 2009). The World Bank (2009) estimates that in Nigeria 54 percent of urban adolescents and children aged 6-14 are working, most of them in the precarious informal sector and in hazardous conditions. It is thus easy to conclude that the intensity and severity of juvenile offences are generally determined by the prevailing social, economic and cultural conditions in a country. In many African countries, there is evidence of an increase in juvenile crime taking place concurrently with economic decline, especially in the poor districts of large cities (Moser, 2006). In many cases, street children later become young offenders, having already encountered violence in the immediate social environment as either witnesses or victims of violent acts. The educational attainments of this group are rather low as a rule, basic social experiences acquired in the family are too often insufficient, and their socio-economic environment is characterized by poverty and under- or unemployment (UN, 2005). It is against this background that the researcher is interested to investigate the contributions of family type and personality on juvenile delinquency in some selected secondary schools in Kubwa, Abuja FCT.

Statement of the Problem

Juvenile delinquency is also known as juvenile offending has been a topic that recently catches the eyes of many researchers globally that need to be eradicated in the society at all cost. Delinquent behaviours have great negative impact and can be weighed even on the adolescents exhibiting it. Larsen and Buss (2002) noted that delinquent behaviour can result to children's poor academic performance and also leads to dropping out of schools. This ugly trend has gotten its way in most secondary schools in Kubwa, Bwari Area Council, Abuja FCT and currently attracting attention of parents, teachers, stakeholders and the society at large. The students indulge in different forms of delinquent behaviours, which includes; cultism, smoking of Indian hemp, drug abuse, indecent dressing, stealing, examination malpractice, pre-matured

sex, rape, abortion and other social vices, which are detrimental to their future development and by extension that of the society.

Recently, these listed cult groups have invaded the secondary schools initiating and recruiting students who are under aged. Such as; Buccaneers, Black Axe, Black Cats, Pirates, Maphitis etc. They are now terrorizing their fellow students and harassing their teachers. More so, they are involved in internal and external internet fraud, killing and street riots. The perpetration of these problems has escalated beyond the control of the school authority and beacons on the government for the immediate rescue of our young wards. As social scientists, the question of what are the actual causes of these social disorganization and misconducts has become imperative.

Many studies have been conducted on the delinquent behaviour of secondary school adolescents exploring other variables like socio-economic status, peer pressure, and school types among others but little attention has been given to the family type and personality which are unique characteristics of an individual. Therefore, these issues are very vital to investigating family type and personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to investigate the influence of family type and personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Kubwa Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

- i. To investigate the influence of family type on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria
- ii. To examine personality characteristics (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to experience) influenced juvenile delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria
- iii. To examine the joint influence of family type and personality characteristics (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to experience) on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

- i. There will be a significant difference between single parents and nuclear families in juvenile delinquency, among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja
- ii. Personality characteristics (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to experience) will significantly influence Juvenile Delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria
- iii. There will be a joint influence of family type and personality characteristics (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism and Openness to experience) on Juvenile Delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria

Conceptual Framework

Personality Traits

Personality, as defined by Allport (1965), encompasses individual traits shaping thoughts and actions. Cattell (1966) delineated various traits, while Eysenck and Eysenck (1985) simplified it to three: extraversion, neuroticism, and psychoticism. The Big Five model (Goldberg, 1992) gained prominence, comprising openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1985). Saucier and Goldberg (1998) argued against expanding beyond these five traits.

Agreeableness fosters cooperation and social harmony (Goldberg, 1992), while its absence leads to selfishness and suspicion (Howard, 1995). Openness to experience drives creativity and curiosity (Howard & Howard, 1995), contrasting with conventional approaches (Burch & Anderson, 2008). Conscientiousness influences career decisions and organizational behaviour (Judge, 1999), with high scorers being meticulous and risk-averse (Burch & Anderson, 2008).

Extraversion signifies sociability and outgoingness (Cattell & Mead, 2008), while introversion denotes reservedness and discomfort with social interaction (Goldberg, 1992). Neuroticism correlates with emotional instability and pessimism (Ostendorf, 1992), leading to mental health issues and career setbacks (Judge, 1999). Conversely, low neuroticism reflects optimism and resilience (Mount, 2005), aiding in coping with stress (Roberts & Robins, 2000).

Family Types

Family types vary widely, classified as matrifocal, conjugal, avuncular, or extended, with rules on sexual relations (Schneider, 1984). "Family" extends metaphorically to include community, nationhood, and humanism. Early views tied family to "blood," but research shows diverse understandings, including shared living and care (Murphy, 2013). Scholars attribute modern marriage's evolution to religious and cultural influences (Murphy, 2013). Sociological focus includes the family's role in stratified societies (Weber, Macfarlane, Ozment, Goody, & Laslett, cited in Murphy, 2013). Today, mothers working and fathers involved in childcare are more accepted, emphasizing communication and equality in families (Axinn, Clarkberg, & Thornton, 2014).

Conjugal (Nuclear) Family

The term "nuclear family" is commonly used, especially in the United States of America, to refer to conjugal families. A "conjugal" family includes only the spouses and unmarried children who are not of age. A sociologist Zeitzen, (2008). distinguish between conjugal families (relatively independent of the kindred of the parents and of other families in general) and nuclear families (which maintain relatively close ties with their kindred). Other family structures - with (for example) blended parents, single parents, and domestic partnerships – have begun to challenge the normality of the nuclear family.

Single-Parent Family

A single-parent family consist one parent together with his or her children, where the parent is either widowed, divorced and not remarried, or never married. The parent may either have sole custody of the children, or, the parents may have a shared parenting arrangement, where the

children divide their time equally between two different single-parent families or between one single-parent family and one blended family. Physical, mental and social well-being is lower for sole custody children, compared to children in nuclear families or shared parenting arrangements. The numbers of single-parent families have been increasing, and about half of all children in the United States have lived in a single-parent family at some point before they reach the age of 18. Most single-parent families are headed by a mother, but the number of single-parent families headed by fathers is increasing. Bryant, (2016).

Extended Family

The extended family structure consists of two or more adults who are related, either by blood or marriage, living in the same home. This family includes many relatives living together and working toward common goals, such as raising the children and keeping up with the household duties. Many extended families include cousins, aunts or uncles and grandparents living together. This type of family structure may form due to financial difficulties or because older relatives are unable to care for themselves alone. Extended families are becoming increasingly common all over the world.

Empirical Review

Family Type and Delinquency

Family structure significantly influences delinquency rates among adolescents, as evidenced by extensive research (Amato & Keith, 1991; Price & Kunz, 2003). Studies consistently find that youth from broken homes exhibit higher levels of delinquency compared to those from intact families (Juby & Farrington, 2001). For instance, a longitudinal survey conducted in South London by Juby and Farrington (2001) discovered that delinquency rates were notably elevated among boys living in non-intact homes.

Meta-analyses, such as the one conducted by Price and Kunz (2003), have further solidified the association between divorce and juvenile delinquency. Their study, encompassing 72 research papers, revealed that children from divorced families tend to have higher rates of various forms of delinquency, including status offenses, crimes against persons, felony theft, general delinquency, and substance use, although alcohol use showed no significant difference. While some have suggested a genetic predisposition among children from divorced families (Guo, Roettger, & Shih, 2006), subsequent research has refuted this notion. Burt et al. (2009) found that parental divorce, rather than inherited genes, is the primary driver of adolescent delinquency.

The presence of a father figure in the household emerges as a crucial factor in mitigating delinquency. Comanor and Phillips (2002), utilizing data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, concluded that the single most influential factor in reducing delinquency is the presence of a father in the home. This finding aligns with other studies that have examined the impact of broken homes on delinquency, suggesting that children from single-mother households may be particularly vulnerable to delinquent behaviour.

Cohabitation and blended families also contribute to increased delinquency risk among adolescents. Apel and Kaukinen (2008) found considerable variability in delinquent behaviour among youth from what are traditionally classified as intact and non-intact families. They noted

that children residing with cohabitating parents, especially those with a non-biological partner, exhibit heightened levels of antisocial behaviour.

Parenting styles play a crucial role in shaping adolescent behaviour and delinquency. Okorodudu and Nwamaka (2010) conducted a study on the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' delinquency. Their findings indicated that laissez-faire parenting predicted delinquent behaviour, while authoritative parenting characterized by control and responsiveness fostered positive outcomes. Parents who actively monitored and supported their adolescents' autonomy were associated with lower levels of delinquency.

In summary, while family structure significantly impacts adolescent delinquency, it is not solely deterministic. Factors such as parental presence, cohabitation, and parenting styles interact to shape adolescent behaviour and delinquency outcomes.

Personality Characteristics and Juvenile Delinquency

Several studies have examined the intricate relationship between personality traits and juvenile delinquency, shedding light on diverse cultural and social contexts. Kausar et al. (2012) conducted a study in Pakistan, revealing that delinquents scored significantly higher on psychopathic deviance, depression, hypochondriasis, and schizophrenia compared to non-delinquents. This suggests a potential link between specific personality traits and engagement in delinquent behaviour within the Pakistani context. In Tripura, Poonam and Hillol (2014) found that delinquents displayed distinct personality traits compared to non-delinquent peers. Delinquents exhibited traits such as extroversion, dependency, short temper, and lower levels of anxiety, indicating potential psychological markers associated with delinquent behaviour in this region.

Jug (2015) explored the interplay between personality dimensions, social intelligence, social support, and juvenile delinquency. Their findings highlighted the importance of conscientiousness and agreeableness in negatively predicting delinquency, emphasizing the role of social factors in influencing adolescent behaviour. Sehrish (2014) investigated personality differences between delinquents and non-delinquents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The study revealed that delinquents scored higher on psychoticism, neuroticism, extraversion, and deceitfulness compared to their non-delinquent counterparts. This underscores the significance of understanding personality dynamics in shaping delinquent behaviour among adolescents in this region.

Laak and Hussmann (2003) examined the association between the Big Five personality traits and offending behaviour. Their study demonstrated that agreeableness was significantly linked to co-offending, suggesting that certain personality traits may influence the propensity to engage in collaborative criminal activities. In the Netherlands, Laak et al. (2003) explored the relationship between personality traits and delinquency among incarcerated girls. They found that girls with higher scores on openness reported more delinquent behaviour, particularly in the form of fighting and cheating, highlighting the nuanced role of personality in shaping criminal behaviour among female adolescents.

Alexio and Norris (2011) focused on British male offenders, revealing a significant positive correlation between extraversion and crimes against people. This suggests that specific personality traits may predispose individuals to certain types of offending behaviour, contributing to our understanding of the complex interplay between personality and

delinquency. In England, Little (2013) found no significant differences in extraversion between delinquent and non-delinquent populations, challenging conventional assumptions about the relationship between personality traits and criminal behaviour.

These studies collectively emphasise the importance of considering personality dynamics in understanding juvenile delinquency across different cultural and social contexts, providing valuable evidence for developing targeted interventions and support systems for at-risk youth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey design to investigate influence of family type and personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students of Kubwa Bwari Area Council, FCT Abuja, Nigeria. The predictor (independent) variables are family type and personality characteristics. The criterion (dependent) variable is Juvenile delinquency. In this design, the dependent variable (Juvenile delinquency) will be observed, while independent variables (in this study family type and personality characteristics) will be looked for.

Setting

The study is situated in Kubwa, Bwari Area Council, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria. Kubwa, established in 1990, is a prominent residential district within the metropolitan area of Abuja and is recognized as the largest satellite town in West Africa. Originally inhabited by the Gbagi people, Kubwa has evolved into a diverse and heterogeneous community due to government policies on the relocation of the Gbagi people. The community now comprises primarily three major ethnic groups—Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo—alongside other ethnic minorities. Its residents include civil servants, businessmen and women, commercial motorcycle riders, artisans, and entrepreneurs.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

Participants for this are secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area council. Which were drawn from four selected secondary schools in Kubwa Bwari Abuja FCT namely; Government Secondary School Kubwa, Government Secondary School Byazhin, Shining Star College Kubwa and Excellent Grade International School with age range 12-17 years, The targeted number of participants is 200 with 50 from each schools mentioned above.

The population for this study was 200 adolescent secondary school students. They were made of 90 (45.0%) Male and 110 (55.0%) Female within the age range of 12-17 years. Mean age of 14.96 (SD=1.12). They were from different ethnic groups which includes; Ibo 57 (28.5%), Hausa 83 (41.5%), Yoruba 20 (10.0%) and others 40 (20.0%) respectively. Out of the participants, 97 (48.5%) Christians while 103 (51.5%) Islam.

Systematic Sampling was used for this study. Systematic sampling is a type of probability sampling method in which sample members from a larger population are selected according to a random starting point but with a fixed, periodic interval. This interval, called the sampling interval, is calculated by dividing the population size by the desired sample size. The justification for the choice of this sampling method is that, choosing a sample size through a

systematic approach can be done quickly. Once a fixed starting point has been identified, a constant interval is selected to facilitate participant selection. Within systematic sampling, as with other sampling methods, a target population must be selected prior to selecting participants.

Method of Data Collection

A questionnaire, divided into sections A, B and C was used for this study.

Section A: Demographics information of the respondents such as age, Class, ethnic group, religion category of school.

Section B: Self-Report Delinquency Scale

The Self-Report Delinquency Scale (SRDS) is a 24-item scale developed by Elliot and Ageton (1980); the main purpose of the SRDS is to assess if individuals have involved themselves in criminal behaviour, and if so, the frequency of their actions. The involvement in delinquent and criminal behaviour is measured using the self-report technique. The Cronbach's Alpha for the self-report delinquency scale was found to be .91 by Elliot and Ageton (1980); based on the accepted alpha value of .7 or more being significant, the self-report delinquency scale shows high reliability. Three categories – content, construct, and criteria – were used to assess the validity of the instrument.

Section C: Big Five Inventory (BFI)

The Big Five Personality Inventory is 44-item inventory that measures an individual on the Big Five Factors (dimensions) of personality (Goldberg, 1993). Each of the factors is then further divided into personality facets. The Big Five Personality Inventory (John & Srivastava, 1999) has forty-four items with an overall reliability coefficient of .84 Cronbach Alpha with a Likert response scale. The first three of the Big Five (Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness) showed mean validities clearly exceeding .90, suggesting virtual equivalence among the instruments. Neuroticism (.88) and Openness (.83) were lower. It was measured on a 5-Likert scale ranging from 1=Disagree strongly, 2= Disagree a little, 3= Neither agree nor disagree, 4= Agree a little and 5=Agree Strongly.

Pilot Study

To determine if the participants could understand the questionnaire items, 40 secondary school students selected from Government Secondary School Makurdi, and Gaadi Comprehensive Secondary Makurdi were administered the questionnaires. From the study it was found that the secondary school students had no problem comprehending the test items. Based on this, it was expected that there will be no problem studying two hundred secondary school students (200). Also, to determine the reliability of the questionnaires to be used in this study, the reliability test was conducted and the results were presented under instruments.

Lastly, confirmatory factor analysis was carried out to confirm the existing dimensions of the instruments used in the study. Also, item loading was used to check how well the items of the various instruments used measured their respective factors. Using suppressed coefficient method, those items that did not load up .3 were removed while those that measured up to .3

and above were returned to be used in the study. The following items on personality traits scale were removed; item 39 and 40.

Procedure

Through an introductory letter, the researchers obtained permission from the schools. A systematic sampling approach was used to select students. Form teachers were consulted in every class, and every third name was chosen to participate in the study. The Questionnaires were distributed to the participants in their classes, with instructions provided on how to fill them out. Participants were encouraged to express their views freely, ensuring anonymity and rapport. Finally, the researchers collected the questionnaires and thanked the participants for their involvement.

Technique for Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse the study data. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation, described respondents' demographic characteristics. Independent t-tests assessed differences between single parenting and nuclear family setups. Simple linear regression tested hypothesis two, while multiple regressions analysed hypotheses two and three. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23, facilitated the analyses.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher obtained ethical permission from the authority of the various schools proposed to study. Sequel to the approval, students who met the preliminary eligibility criteria were contacted, informed about the study, and asked to complete an informed consent form with the permission of the parents or guardians. The criteria for eligibility include (1) the participants should be adolescents between 12 to 17 years; (2) they should be current secondary school students of Government Secondary School Kubwa, Government Secondary School Byazhin, Shining Star College Kubwa and Excellent Grade International School.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DATA ANALYSIS

Data presentation

Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to analyse the study data. Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation, described respondents' demographic characteristics. Independent t-tests assessed differences between single parenting and nuclear family setups. Simple linear regression tested hypothesis two, while multiple regressions analysed hypotheses two and three. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 23, facilitated the analyses.

Data Analysis and Results

Based on the tested hypotheses in the study the results are presented as follows:

Hypothesis One

This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant difference in juvenile delinquency between single-parent and nuclear families among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the result is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Independent t-test showing the difference between Single and Nuclear Family on Juvenile Delinquency, among Secondary Students in Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	t	Sig
Single parent family	107	71.8411	6.53788	194	-.742	.459
Dual Family	89	72.5169	6.18119			

The result in Table 1 indicated that there is no significant difference in juvenile delinquency between single parents and nuclear among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. Based on this finding, hypothesis one was rejected.

Hypothesis Two

This hypothesis stated that personality characteristics will significantly influence juvenile delinquency among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This hypothesis was tested using multiple linear regression and the result is presented in Table 2

Table 2: Simple Linear Regression Showing the Influence of Personality Characteristics on Juvenile Delinquency among Secondary Students in Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja

Variables	R	R ²	F	β	t	Sig
Constant	.634	.403	25.196		13.643	.000
Extraversion				.266	4.693	.000
Agreeableness				-.227	-4.009	.000
Conscientiousness				.540	9.537	.000
Neuroticism				.027	.370	.712
Openness				-.064	-.880	.380

The result in table 2 shows that there is a significant influence of personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency [F(5,192), =25.196, P<.001]. The result further indicated that personality characteristics accounted for 40.3% of the variation in juvenile delinquency among adolescent secondary school students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. Individually, extraversion (β=.266, P<.001), conscientiousness (β=.540, P<.001) made significant positive contributions to juvenile delinquency among secondary school students. This implies that the more the scores of the students with these personality characteristics, the more their involvement in delinquency. While, agreeableness (β=-.227, P<.001) significantly and negatively contributed to juvenile delinquency. This means that the higher the scores on this personality characteristic among the students, the lesser their involvement in delinquency. With this finding, hypothesis two was accepted.

Hypothesis Three

This hypothesis stated that there will be a significant joint influence of personality characteristics and family type among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This hypothesis was tested using multiple linear regression and the result is presented in Table 3

Table 3: Multiple Regression Showing the Joint Influence of Personality Characteristics and Family Type on Juvenile Delinquency among Secondary Students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja

Variables	R	R ²	F	β	t	Sig.
Constant	.163	.141	2.608		15.463	.010
Personality characteristics				.060	.842	.401
Family type				.153	2.133	.034

The result in Table 3 shows that there is a significant joint influence of personality characteristics and family type on juvenile delinquency [$F(2,192) = 2.608, P < .05$]. The result further indicated that personality characteristics and family type jointly accounted for 14.1% of the variance in juvenile delinquency of secondary school students. With this result, hypothesis three was accepted.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study investigated the influence of family type and personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency among adolescent secondary school students of Kubwa Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja Nigeria. Three hypotheses were tested and the results formed the basis for this discussion.

Hypotheses one stated that there will be a significant difference in juvenile delinquency between single parent and nuclear families among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This hypothesis was tested using independent t-test and the result indicated that there is no significant difference on juvenile delinquency between single parents and nuclear among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This result is contrary to that of Manning and Lamb (2003) who found that children who live in single-parent or cohabitating families show higher signs of delinquency than those who live in intact and non-cohabitating families. This study examined whether family structure affects childhood delinquency. They found that single parenthood does reduce the well-being of children. Cohabitation, however, is only associated with delinquency and not the well-being of a child. In other words, this study shows that single-parent families and cohabitation can affect children and influence whether they will participate in juvenile delinquency or not and it also shows that single parenthood does reduce the well-being of children, but cohabitation does not.

Similarly, Demuth and Brown (2004) extended prior research that has investigated the effects of growing up in a two-parent versus single-mother family by examining adolescent delinquency in single-father families too. This strategy helped the researchers to identify whether the effect is predominantly a function of parental absence (i.e., one versus two parents) or parental gender (i.e., single mother versus single father). The results indicated that adolescents in single-parent families were significantly more delinquent than their counterparts residing with two biological, married parents (Demuth & Brown, 2004). They also, however,

found a difference in single-mother and single-father families. Children from single-father families showed higher signs of delinquency than those adolescents from single-mother families. Adolescents from single-parent families do show higher signs of juvenile delinquency overall, compared to children from intact families. Previous research has shown that children from intact homes are less delinquent than youth from broken and divorced homes.

Hypothesis two stated that personality characteristics will significantly influence juvenile delinquency among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This hypothesis was tested using multiple linear regression and the result shows that there is a significant influence of personality characteristics on juvenile delinquency. The present study is not contrary to that of Poonam and Hillol (2014) who investigated the relationship between personality traits of juvenile delinquency among delinquents and non-delinquent juveniles taking Tripura as a model state. Findings revealed that the juvenile delinquents differed from their normal counterparts with all the dimensions of personality. It is observed that juvenile delinquents are more extroverts, possess high self-concepts, are more dependent, short-tempered, have poor adjustment capacity and are less anxious than those of their normal counterparts. Corroborating this finding further, Jug (2015) identified that extraversion and neuroticism connect importantly with juvenile delinquency; pleasantness and conscientiousness significantly positively predict the level of juvenile delinquency, processing of social information as one of the dimensions of social intelligence positively predicts juvenile delinquency, on the other hand, social awareness is negatively associated with delinquent behaviour. Social support from significant people, especially parents and good friends, negatively predicts juvenile delinquency. Supportively, Laak and Hussmann (2003) identified some support for the relationship between certain personality factors (conscientiousness and agreeableness) and offending. Agreeableness was the only factor shown to be significantly associated with co-offending. Agreeableness and conscientiousness were significantly able to differentiate between non-offenders and co-offenders.

Hypothesis three stated that there will be a significant joint influence of personality characteristics and family type among secondary students of Kubwa, Bwari Area Council FCT Abuja. This hypothesis was tested using multiple linear regression and the result shows that there is a significant joint influence of personality characteristics and family type on juvenile delinquency. The result further indicated that personality characteristics and family type jointly accounted for 14.1% of the variance in juvenile delinquency of secondary school students. With this result, hypothesis three was accepted.

Conclusions

This study has effectively addressed its aims and objectives, shedding light on key aspects of juvenile delinquency among adolescent secondary school students in Kubwa, Bwari Area Council, FCT Abuja. The findings suggest that there is no significant difference in juvenile delinquency between single-parent and nuclear families in this context.

However, personality characteristics exert a considerable influence on juvenile delinquency, explaining 40.3% of the variance among students. Specifically, extraversion and conscientiousness positively contributed to delinquency, while agreeableness had a negative impact. These results indicate that certain personality traits may predispose individuals to delinquent behaviour.

Furthermore, the study revealed a significant joint influence of personality characteristics and family type on juvenile delinquency. Together, these factors accounted for 14.1% of the variation in delinquency among secondary school students in Kubwa. This emphasises the importance of considering both individual traits and family dynamics in understanding and addressing juvenile delinquency.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- i. Implement support programs for parents and guardians to ensure they fulfil their responsibilities in providing for their family members, regardless of biological or adoptive relationships. This could include financial assistance, access to resources, and parenting education to reduce the likelihood of juvenile delinquency.
- ii. Provide comprehensive education and support to families, emphasizing the psychological impacts of broken homes on adolescents. Family members should be equipped with strategies to monitor and address behavioural issues in juveniles effectively, fostering a supportive and nurturing environment.
- iii. Develop a structured framework for periodic assessment of adolescent personality traits by both parents and school authorities. This assessment should aim to identify and reinforce positive character attributes while addressing any emerging negative tendencies. Intervention programs can be tailored based on these assessments to provide targeted support.
- iv. Encourage further research endeavours in similar settings with larger sample sizes to validate the findings of this study. Expanded studies will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between family dynamics, personality traits, and juvenile delinquency, ultimately informing more effective intervention strategies.

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