

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND PARENTS' BACKGROUND IN MAIDUGURI METROPOLITAN, BORNO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study was a correlation designed to examine the relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' background in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State, Nigeria. One research question and six hypotheses were answered and tested in the study. The target population of the study consists of all the 450 juvenile delinquents who were remanded in the government remand home 'Tandari' Maiduguri between 2005 and 2008. The researchers used all the 450 juveniles hence there was no need for sampling. The data on the research question was analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages and rank ordering while those generated from the hypotheses were analyzed using Chi square which were estimated at 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed five (stealing, sexual offences, truancy, drug abuse and fighting) delinquent behaviours engaged in by the children. The study also revealed that there exist significant relationship between parents' income, marital status, education, occupation, home location and child rearing practices and juvenile delinquency. Based on these findings, it was recommended that parents should pay adequate attention to their children in terms of their activities, what they possess and movies and films they watch. While the parents themselves should endeavour to keep their marriage intact and be flexible in the way they handle the children.

Key words: Juvenile, Delinquency and Parents' Background

Introduction

The term delinquency is derived from the Latin word "delinquere" meaning "neglect". It refers to the law violating behaviour of persons. Juvenile refers to individuals who are between the ages of nine and eighteen. Anybody between this age range is regarded as a child by the law. Juvenile delinquency can also be defined as violation of law, misconduct, act of law breaking and antisocial behaviour by the children. In other words, it is an antisocial misdeed in violation of the law by a minor (Encyclopedia International, 1987). According to Griffin (1986), Juvenile delinquency is the inability of the young people to adhere to the existing norms and values of the society (community) in which they live which may be liable for punishment. Juvenile delinquencies are those acts of young persons which the juvenile courts of jurisdictions consider as dangerous to the young person, his/her family and to the community in which he/she lives (Encyclopedia international, 1978).

According to the Standard Encyclopedia (1989), Juvenile delinquency is the violation of law and ordinance by a person(s) who is/are legally classified as a Juvenile or youth rather than adult. However, young (person) law breakers are considered as children who are in need of help not criminal to be punishable by a criminal (courts) law. Santrock (2005) said that juvenile delinquency is applied to a minor who breaks the law or engages in behaviour that is considered illegal. Like other categories of disorders, juvenile delinquency is a broad concept, legal infractions range from littering to murder. What seems to be undetachable from the various definitions above is the term violation of law and order which of course had implied meaning with phrases like misconduct, act of lawlessness, law breaking and inability to adhere to the existing norms and values guiding the society/community.

A person below the age of eighteen who commits a crime is generally regarded as a delinquent rather than a criminal. One must not assume that juvenile delinquency is comparable to adult criminality in all respects but one should assume that individuals who are apprehended for delinquency and sent to state training schools are always juveniles/criminals. Some of the offences juveniles are likely to commit include: being unmanageable at home, truancy and running away from homes. These violations are called "status offences". A term which means they are offences only because of the status of the person committing the violation. They are not violation for adults (Encyclopedia of psychology, 1984). There is no doubt that the increase on the studies of delinquency have given the impression that mid 20 century family has failed to supply adequate moral guidance and thus promote delinquency through

psychologically harmful child/parents relationship, parents through their threats, negligence and man handling of teachers have seriously impeded the education of their children thereby increasing delinquency (Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, 2003). Education which is a life long process starts at home with parents as enormous builders of a good foundation matter a lot, but this is not the case today (Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, 2003). According to Shepard and Greene (2001), it is regrettable that parents for the sake of money neglect their God given duties of rearing their children to teachers and then turn round to blame the teachers for what they themselves have caused.

The early social relationship which a child establishes is with the members of the immediate family. This will influence his/her later attitude and behaviour. If the family background of the child is faulty it may not go well with the child's prospects because at the end, the child will become problem to the society. In some homes, the child is encouraged to take part in family affairs, encouraged and allowed to express his/her view, listened to and given opportunity to develop his/her body and mind. This privilege enhances the child's future prospect because the child will feel he/she is important hence his/her views are also respected. On the other hand, a child can be forced to become isolated, secretive, shy, unadventurous and fearing new situation. This will happen if the child is repressed and deprived of a happy family life (Santrock, 2005).

Damage done to character by parents is some times very difficult to repair. The nagging wife, the bullying father, the quarrelsome parents, parents with negative attitude in providing the basic needs of the children and illiterate parents never produce well-mannered children. Other parents who may have influence on their children are the drunkard parents, absentee parents, parents who are always away from home. These parents deprive them of love and security and as such the children will exhibit deviant behaviours (Graham and Bowling, 1995).

In a study conducted by Walklate (2003) on understanding criminology, found that there are relationship between parents' education and juvenile behaviour disorder and delinquency. He also found that major crimes were committed by Juveniles from low educated parents. According to his findings, parents with low education are likely to have children with low intelligence and do worse in school. This may increase the chances of delinquency because low educational attainment, low attachment to school and low educational aspirations are all risk factors for delinquency in themselves.

Gorman-Smith, Tolan, Ashili and David (1998) in their study on relation of family problems to patterns of delinquent involvement among urban youths found that parental conflict and parental aggressiveness predicted violent offence, While lack of maternal affection and paternal criminality predicted involvement in property crimes. Another research conducted by Gorman-Smith revealed that children are more likely to resort to violence if there is violence within relationships that they share with their family (Gorman-smith, *et al*, 1998). They emphasized that children, who are rejected by their parents, grow up in homes with considerable conflict or inadequately monitored are at the greatest risk of becoming delinquents.

According to Farrington (2002), another family factors which may have an influence on delinquent behaviours by the juveniles include: parents-child rearing practices, if a child has low parental child rearing practice, he/she is much likely to offend, many studies have found a strong correlation between a lack of supervision and violent behavior, and it appears to be the most important family influence on delinquency, because when parents commonly do not know where their children are, what their activities are or who their friends are, the children are more likely to be truants from school.

Statement of the Problem

It is apparent that the rate of teenage children becoming delinquents is growing each day and every year. Over the last few decades, violence committed by young people has risen. Juvenile delinquency has eaten deep into the fabric of the society. Juvenile delinquency in society affects the image of that society and creates a great problem. Thus, delinquency has become a great concern not only to parents but also to the government and other social workers because it has threatened the harmonious development of the human personality all over the State and the country in general.

It is inline with the obvious problems associated with juvenile delinquency that the researchers undertake this study to determine the relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' background in Maiduguri Metropolitan Borno State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The study is aimed at:

1. Finding the delinquent offences committed by the children in Maiduguri remand home, Borno State, Nigeria.
2. Determine if there exist significant relationship between parents' income, marital status, educational background, occupation, home location and child rearing practices and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Research question

The following research question was asked:

1. What are the delinquent offences committed by the children in Maiduguri remand home, Borno State, Nigeria?

Research hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between parents' income and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between the marital status of parents and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between parents' educational background and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.
- Ho₄: There is no significant relationship between Parents' occupation, and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.
- Ho₅: There is no significant relationship between parents' home location and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.
- Ho₆: There is no significant relationship between parents-child rearing practices and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Method

Participants and setting

This study adopted correlation research design to examine the relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' background in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State. All the 450 juvenile delinquents who were remanded in Maiduguri remand

home 'Tandari' between 2005 and 2008 formed the population of the study. The researchers used all the 450 delinquents; hence there was no need for sampling.

Instrument

The instrument used for data collection was the records of juvenile delinquents that were remanded in the reform home in Maiduguri between 2005 and 2008. The records were obtained from the officer in-charge of the remand home. The records consist of the list of the 450 juveniles with their family background information such as their parents' income status, marital status, educational background, occupation, home location and the types of offences they were remanded for.

Method of data Analysis

The data collected on the delinquent offences committed by the children in Maiduguri remand home, Borno State, Nigeria were analyzed using descriptive statistical technique of frequency counts and percentages. The frequency was further ranked to give a pictorial view of the offences committed by the children. All the six null hypotheses were analyzed using chi-square (X^2) test which was estimated at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results are presented in Tables 1-7

Research question one: What are the juvenile offences committed by the children in Maiduguri remand home?

Table 1: Distribution of Juvenile offences committed by the children in Maiduguri, remand home between 2005 and 2008

Offences	Frequency	Percentages	Rank
Stealing	156	34.7	1 st
Truancy	109	24.2	2 nd
Fighting	87	19.3	3 rd
Sexual offences	68	15.1	4 th
Drug abuse	30	6.7	5 th
Total	450	100	

The results in Table 1 reveal that stealing, truancy, fighting, sexual offences and drug abuse are the juvenile offences committed by the children remanded in Maiduguri remand home between 2005 and 2008.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' income in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Table 2: Correlation between juvenile delinquency and parents' income in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State

Offences	Income status of parents			df	X ²	P value	Decision
	Low	Middle	High				
Stealing	□□□□□	23(20.71)	8(11.05)	4	32.61	9.49	Sig.
Sexual offences	25(26.24)	9(20.71)	24(11.05)				
Truancy	18(16.74)	16(13.21)	3(7.05)				
Drug abuse	11(5.83)	21(12.5)	3(6.67)				
Fighting	14(9.95)	6(7.86)	2(4.19)				
Total	95(45.24)	75(35.71)	40(19.05)				

Figures in brackets represent expected frequencies.

The results in Table 2 revealed that the computed X² value of 32.61 is greater than the Table value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance. Thus, the hypothesis which states that there exists no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' income in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State is therefore rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' income.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' marital status in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Table 3: Chi- square (X²) analysis of juvenile delinquency and parents' marital status in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State

Offences	Marital status of parents			df	X ²	P value	Decision
	Intact	Divorced	Single				
Stealing	21(14.9)	31(31.8)	6(11.3)	4	25.05	9.49	Sig.
Sexual offences	22(14.9)	18(31.8)	18(11.3)				
Truancy	3(9.3)	22(20.3)	12(7.2)				

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Borno State, Nigeria*

Drug abuse	5(9)	27(19.2)	3(6.8)			
Fighting	3(5.7)	17(12.0)	2(4.3)			
Total	54(25.7)	115(54.8)	41(19.5)			

Figures in brackets represent expected frequencies.

Results in Table 3 reveal that the calculated X^2 value is 25.05, while the critical X^2 value at 0.05 level of significance and at 4 degree of freedom is 9.49. Since the calculated X^2 is greater than the critical X^2 value, the null hypothesis was therefore rejected and the alternative accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between parents' marital status and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' educational background in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Table 4: Chi-square (X^2) analysis of juvenile delinquency and parents' educational background in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State

Offences	Parents' level of education			df	X^2	P value	Decision
	SSCE, TC II&below	Dip.& NCE	Degree & above				
Stealing	25(25.7)	23(21)	10(11.3)	4	32.79	9.49	Sig.
Sexual offences	30(25.7)	22(21)	6(11.3)				
Truancy	14(16.4)	20(13.4)	3(7.2)				
Drug abuse	11(15.5)	5(12.7)	19(6.8)				
Fighting	13(9.7)	6(8.0)	3(4.3)				
Total	93(44.3)	76(36.2)	41(19.5)				

Figures in brackets represent expected frequencies.

Table 4 shows the computed X^2 value of 32.79 which was greater than the Table value of 9.49 at degrees of freedom of 4 at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between parents' educational background and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and occupation of parents in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Table 5: Chi-square (X^2) analysis of juvenile delinquency and parents' occupation in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State

Offences	Parents' occupation	df	X^2	P value	Decision
	Civil servant	Military	Business	Farming	
Stealing	19(17.7)	8(9.9)	21(18.9)	10(11.6)	4 26.91 9 Sig.
Sexual offences	15(17.7)	7(9.9)	24(18.9)	12(11.6)	
Truancy	11(11.3)	3(6.3)	8(12)	15(7.4)	
Drug abuse	11(10.7)	15(6)	6(11.3)	3(7)	
Fighting	8(6.7)	3(3.8)	9(7.1)	2(4.4)	
Total	64(30.5)	36(17.1)	68(32.4)	42(20)	

Figures in brackets represent expected frequencies.

Table 5 reveals the calculated chi-square value of 26.91 and a critical X^2 value of 9.49, at 4 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between parents' occupation and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State was rejected.

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' home location in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Table 6: Chi-square (X^2) analysis of juvenile delinquency and parents' home location in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State

Offences	Home location		df	X^2	P value	Decision
	Rural	Urban				
Stealing	28(18.5)	30(39.5)	4	11.41	9.49	Sig.
Sexual offences	12(18.5)	46(39.5)				
Truancy	6(11.8)	31(25.2)				
Drug abuse	15(11.2)	20(23.8)				
Fighting	6(7)	16(15)				
Total	67(31.9)	143(68.1)				

Figures in brackets represent expected frequencies.

Table 6 shows calculated X^2 value of 11.41 and X^2 critical value of 9.49. Since the calculated X^2 value is greater than the critical value of 9.49. The hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between parents' home location and juvenile delinquency in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State is rejected.

Hypothesis Six: There is no significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' child rearing practices in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State.

Table 7: Correlation between juvenile delinquency and parents' child rearing practices in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State

Offences	Child rearing practices			Df	X^2	P value	Decision
	Rigid	Moderate	Permissive				
Stealing	27(21.3)	8(10.2)	23(26.5)	4	38.36	9.49	Sig.
Sexual offences	23(21.3)	6(10.2)	29(26.5)				
Truancy	7(13.6)	19(6.5)	11(16.9)				
Drug abuse	165(12.8)	3(6.2)	16(16)				
Fighting	4(8.1)	1(3.9)	17(10)				
Total	77(36.7)	37(17.6)	96(45.7)				

Figures in brackets represent expected frequencies.

Table 7 revealed that the calculated X^2 value of 38.36 was greater than the critical X^2 value of 9.49. The result therefore shows that there is significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' child rearing practices in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State. Hence the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' background in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State, Nigeria. The findings of this study revealed stealing, truancy, fighting, sexual offences and drug abuse as the offences committed by the children remanded at the Maiduguri remand home between 2005 and 2008. The results in Table 2 revealed that, there was significant relationship between parents' income and juvenile delinquency. This means that, delinquent acts committed by juveniles in the society are related to their parents-economic status. The results also showed that, there were more delinquents in the families where parents are low income earners than from moderate and high income earners. This finding collaborates with the findings of Santrock (2005) who asserted that, delinquency is committed more frequently by children from low income parents.

The findings of this study also agreed with previous study carried out by Rutter (1971) who reported that there were less antisocial boys in homes where the marriage was "good", compared with when the marriage was "poor". Similarly, Wallerstein and Blackself (1989) reported that boys from broken homes show higher rate of behaviour and interpersonal problems than boys from intact homes. The study further revealed that, there was significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and educational background of the parents. The findings also revealed that, there are more delinquents from parents with low educational background than from parents' with high educational background. These findings support the position of Santrock (2005) who reported that children who become delinquents often have parents with no and low educational background.

The findings showed that there was significant relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' occupation. This finding is also in support of Donald's (1989) findings who revealed that parents with low occupation are lacking the zeal to encourage their children to further their education due to the cost of schooling and as a result some decide to drop out of school while some resort to criminal life and antisocial behaviours. The study also revealed that there was significant relationship between parents' home location and juvenile delinquency. The findings further revealed that, there are more delinquents from parents living in the urban than those from the rural location. This finding confirms Chauhan's (2005) findings which showed that delinquents come primarily from urban areas and congested parts of the cities. According to him, civilization existing in the urban areas exposes children to various forms of antisocial behaviours. Juveniles dwelling in the rural areas have less problems because of the little exposure to city life and probably because family bond in the rural social system is still strong.

The study further revealed that, there was significant relationship between parent-child rearing practices and juvenile delinquency. This finding is in conformity with Guy's (1980) findings who pointed out that; fundamental element in child rearing can be achieved through healthy parents-child relationship and monitoring during the early years. The finding also agree with Graham and Bowling's (1995) findings who revealed that, family support and rearing practices are associated with delinquency. He stressed that moderate rearing practice plays a vital role in discouraging children from becoming delinquents.

Conclusion

The study examined the relationship between juvenile delinquency and parents' background in Maiduguri Metropolitan, Borno State. From the findings of this research the researchers conclude that stealing, sexually related offences, truancy and drug abuse are the delinquent behaviours that led to the children remanded in Maiduguri remand home. It was also concluded that parents' background factors such as parents' income, marital status, education, occupation, parents' home location and child rearing practices are related to juvenile delinquency. Thus, juvenile delinquency like other social problems is not a product of single family background factor but that of multiple factors which involves a definite inter play between numerous factors in the society. It becomes necessary to specifically manage these factors because their consequences would be more serious in promoting numerous patterns of delinquency in our society.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were made:

1. Low income parents should investigate their children thoroughly, especially when they see them with expensive things that they can not afford to provide them with. High income parents too should not over pamper and spoil their children by giving them lots of money to spend or allow them to watch movies and war films because children seems to learn behaviours such as stealing, fighting, drug abuse, sexual offences, from it. Poverty alleviation programme should identify families with economic problems and help them. Families can be given family up-keep grants through special social welfare services in their localities.
2. Parents should endeavour to stay together for the sake of their children and should use dialogue and reconciliation as a means of resolving disputes and conflicts rather than separation and divorce. Parents should also be educated on the implications of divorce, separation, death and quarrelling on the development of children.
3. Parents should encourage their children to be contented with whatever they have in their homes. Children should be discouraged from comparing themselves with their peers who have parents with high income/occupation.
4. Parents living in urban location should monitor the activities of their children because city life exposes children to more delinquent behaviours.

6. Parents should not be over permissive or too strict in rearing their children, instead they should be moderate and develop effective parenting model that would enhance good behaviour in their children.

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