

IMPACT OF FAMILY VARIABLES ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AMONG PRIMARY SIX CHILDREN IN SOME SELECTED PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN AKPABUYO L. G. A. OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the Impact of family variables on learners' juvenile delinquency among primary six children in some selected public primary schools in Akpabuyo LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria. Three hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Ex-post facto research design was adapted for the study. Data for testing the hypotheses were collected through a questionnaire titled family variables and juvenile delinquency questionnaire (FVJDQ) constructed by the researchers. The instrument was administered to a 300 learners consisting of 150 boys and 150 girls. The data collected were statistically analyzed using 1 way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tested at .05 level of significance. On the basis of the findings, recommendations were made such as; Poverty eradication programmes should be intensified so that families with low income status are uplifted to meet up their children's needs. Parents who are not employed should engage themselves meaningfully either through private business or take up farming in order to raise funds for their family needs.

Keywords: Impact: Family variables; juvenile delinquency.

Introduction

A family variable is a multidimensional concept which includes; occupational status, educational achievement, income level, size of family, poverty and wealth status among other things. All over the world, there area strong tide between family variables and juvenile delinquency of family members (Edet 2017).The researchers observed that factors like family variables, self-concept, culture, gender, economic status, residence and geographical location have been identified as influencing juvenile delinquency among Primary school pupils.

According to Ikpeme (2019) who stated that, one of the key family variable determinants is income. Ikpeme (2019) noted that increased income and juvenile delinquency of family members are linked. In Nigeria generally and Cross River State in particular (Akpabuyo), the socio-economic and living conditions of many household are based on their income status. Asuquo (2001) numerated among others, some factors in family variables that may affect a child as includes academic attainment of parents, socio-economic status, parent's marital status, living environment, parenting style and parent's attitude.

The major aim of education is to develop a personality worthy in character and learning. However, the achievement of this hefty goal in the aspect of positive character training does not seem to be feasible or realizable in a sense, as cases of delinquent behaviours are on the increase in our schools, primary schools inclusive. Obviously, today there is a loud outcry and raising concerns on the rate of unacceptable and indiscipline behaviour by students and minors among them, hence juvenile delinquency. Some of these acts of misconduct include truancy, stealing,

underage drinking and smoking, substance use, vandalism, fighting, violation of school regulations among others. These unruly behaviours are inimical to the teaching-learning process. This research became imperative considering the threat posed by these behaviours to the education process.

The Nigerian constitution of 1979 defines Juvenile delinquency as a crime committed by a young person under the age of 18 years as a result of trying to comply with the wishes of his peers or escape from parental pressure or certain emotional or psychological situation. Santer & Stocking (2011) see a juvenile as anyone under the age of 18, regardless of how each individual state defines a juvenile. A delinquent is an individual who fails to obey the laws. Juvenile delinquency is defined as an individual under age 18 who fails to abide by the laws. Bolvin (2019) identified the following as factors responsible for delinquency; family issues, imitation, peer pressure among other things. In the same vein, Papalia & Oids (2018) observed that poor education standards, violence in the home and social circles, peer pressure, socio-economic factors and substance abuse are leading factors contributing to juvenile delinquency.

The causes of juvenile delinquency are multiple and include peer pressure, parental neglect, genetic or biological factors, poor education, poverty, divorce and child abuse (Musgrave 2011). The consequences of juvenile delinquency in Nigeria are quite devastating to the educative process and to people's lives and properties in the larger society. Odebunmi (2017) assess that juvenile delinquency may be expressed in form of aggression, bullying, violation of stipulated rules and regulations. A juvenile delinquent person gets irritated at the slightest provocation, truancy, hostility, easily irritated and loss of temper without any justifiable reason. Most juvenile delinquents lack moral sense and standards and are unstable in their ways and have no affections for others. Some of those juvenile delinquents exhibit negative behaviours, and their mood change at all times.

It is generally observed these days that not a day passes without some media report of either examination leakage, student unrest, cases of indiscipline, drug abuse, cult activities and other issues found among students. Most juvenile delinquents are engaged in truancy, stealing, fighting, bullying, examination malpractice, cigarette smoking, and cult activities among others. These days, students (primary school learners inclusive) prefer reading romantic magazines, sex novels and watch promiscuous films.

Psychologists, sociologists and educationists have long acknowledged the role of family variables, such as family background or socio-economic status and peer pressure as determinants of juvenile delinquency among students. The term family variables is used to describe the interaction of family wealth, parental level of education, home environment, family size and family structure among others. All of the variables have great influence on whether a student would be delinquent or not. Some of those family influences are that of socializing, parenting and molding its members. In other words, these family variables can influence children in their primary socialization, training and development (Mboto, 2010). For instance, parent's socio-economic status may influence the well-being of children. A weak or low socio-economic background therefore signals a woeful and weak future or poor academic performance of primary school children.

Socio-economic status refers to the income, wealth and social status of parents. If normally remains the most indispensable predictor of the school achievement. Wealth and high income parents create a conducive learning environment for their children providing with the necessary learning materials at home and a private teacher to teach the children.

In another study carried out by Anachol (2012) who affirmed that the socio-economic and living conditions of many household could lead a child to become delinquent or not. Poverty has been identified as a casual factor of juvenile delinquency just as wealth has also been identified as a casual factor. Benjamin (2012) enumerated some family variables that may instigate juvenile delinquency to include academic attainment, socio-economic and occupational status of parents just to mention a few. There are basically three classes of home backgrounds;

they include the upper class, middle class and lower class. The upper class consists of people who rank high in both economic and educational scale of the society, engage in big economical viable ventures and control many resources because of their outstanding position in the society. They are capable of handling the academic affairs, health, feeding and clothing of their learning wards financially better than their counterparts from middle and lower classes.

Occupational status: this refers to the type of job in which parents engages themselves for a living. Therefore, whatever a parent does to earn a living which is the to income.

Parents educational status is concerned with whether parents are educated or uneducated. Educated parents have been found to influence school achievement of their children. Uneducated parents do not motivate and encourage their children to study hard and do not reinforce what the child was taught at school, whereas educated parents take interest in knowing what was laughs at school and the need to revise with the child, they also examine children's note book occasionally, (Swift 1967).

In discussing occupational background, Taslim (2018) opined that children from high occupational backgrounds behaved better than those from low occupational background. This means that parental occupational status has a direct influence on children behaviour. Douglas (2014) stated that social class which was measured mainly by the occupation of their fathers was one of the important factors that influence the behaviour of children. He went further to affirm that 50 percent of high ability children from lower manual working class homes were school drop outs at the ages of 14-16 years, while only 10 percent and 22 percent respectively at the upper and middle class children of the same ability levels become school drop outs at the same age. Ezeani (2013) observed that the father's occupational status affects the child's interactions and behaviour. This implies that juvenile delinquency may be influenced by parental occupational level. For instance, children from lower manual working group are more handicapped in terms of meeting their school demands and so fall easy prey to being delinquent. In other words, children from low occupational status are susceptible to become delinquent than children from upper class.

Furthermore, children from highly educated background continue to do better in school than those from less educated homes. This invariably implies that the educational background impacts on the upbringing of the child. Jude (2019) asserts that children from educationally deprived houses will lack the background that is necessary for progress in reading and are likely to indulge in delinquent behaviour. Paul (2011) also reported that children from illiterate homes lack the ability and fundamentals needed to live above criminal tendencies due to ignorance on the part of their parents. In addition, Harry (2018) observed that educated parents more often see the value of inculcating right moral values on their children by preparing them for school. From the above assertions, it is worthy to conclude that parents by all means are the pivot by which the behaviour of children depends. Some enlightened parents make adequate provisions for their children's education and moral behaviour by sending them to good schools during their primary school age while others make instructional materials available for the children at home before they start school. On the other hand, the less privileged children who may have high intelligent quotient but due to lack of adequate provision, find themselves into delinquent behaviours. It is against this background that this study investigated the impact of family variables on learners' juvenile delinquency among primary six children in some selected public primary schools in Akpabuyo LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Statement of the problem

Today in schools, so many learners are maladjusted, unfriendly and appear generally hard to be pleased. Some find it difficult to cope with the demands of school life. Some are bullies, aggressive, withdrawn and passive, play truancy and isolated. Many are unwilling or unable to make use of their abilities and usually engage in activities that tend to be destructive to both themselves and others in the school.

Concern is being raised to the effect that they were unabated violent incidents of children unrest in schools that resulted in loss of property worth millions of naira and lives. Children delinquent behaviour is a prevailing problem that is linked to a number of factors. For instance, where a family is poor and cannot afford three square meals for the children and may not be able to satisfy the school needs of the child will be compelled to take delinquent behaviour as an alternative way of survival.

The occupational and educational status especially with regard to unemployment or underemployment, illiterates or people who are not educated lack the formal knowledge to deal with delinquent behaviour as escape route. A good example is cybercrime and internet fraud; there is no gainsaying the fact that insecurity, instability and uncertainty are some of the consequence of delinquent behaviour among children. It is also a fact that most of the children engaged in delinquent behaviour had only succeeded in wasting their lives. One will also wonder how most of the children are victims of criminality, examination malpractices, cultism and other unwholesome acts as a result of their indolent behaviours. Thus the study on the impact of family variables on juvenile delinquency among primary six children in some selected public primary schools in Akpabuyo LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the study

The major concern of the researchers is to investigate the impact of family variables on learners' juvenile delinquency among primary six children in some selected public primary schools in Akpabuyo LGA of Cross River State, Nigeria.

The specific purposes include determining:

- i. The extent to which family income level influences juvenile delinquency among primary six children in Akpabuyo LGA.
- ii. Whether parental occupational status influences juvenile delinquency of their children.
- iii. The level to which parental educational status influences primary six children juvenile delinquency in Akpabuyo LGA.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent does family income level influence juvenile delinquency among primary six children?
2. How parental occupational status does influence juvenile delinquency of primary six children.
3. How the level of parental educational status does influence primary six children juvenile delinquency in public primary schools in Akpabuyo LGA?

Hypotheses of the study

Three hypotheses were formulated from the research questions. These hypotheses are as follows;

1. There is no significant influence of family income level on juvenile delinquency among primary six children in Akpabuyo LGA.
2. Parental occupational status does not significantly influence primary six children's juvenile delinquent behaviour in Akpabuyo Local Government Area.
3. Educational level of parents does not significantly influence primary six children's juvenile delinquency of primary six children Akpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River State.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is ex post facto design. Ex-post facto design is a systematic empirical inquiry in which the researcher does not have direct control of independent variables because their manipulation has already occurred or because they are inherently not manipulated. In this design, inference about relations among variables is made without direct intervention from concomitant variation of independent and dependent variables.

This design is suited for this study because the nature and influence of family variables on juvenile delinquency among primary six children in Akpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria is being investigated. It is economical for measurement of several of these variables and their inter relation simultaneously. The population of the study consists of all the public primary schools in Akpabuyo Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. The sampling technique used in this study was the stratified random sampling technique. The purpose was to ensure that learners from all the primary schools were equally represented in the study. Again, since all the primary schools are co-education, the researchers want to ensure that gender equality is maintained hence the method was most appropriate. The sample of the study was made up of three hundred (300) learners consisting of one hundred and fifty (150) boys and one hundred and fifty (150) girls sampled from the ten (10) selected public primary schools within Akpabuyo Local Government Area.

A questionnaire titled Family Variables and juvenile delinquency Questionnaire'(FVJDQ) was used in collecting data for the study. The first section of the questionnaire focused on family income level and juvenile delinquency. The section covers questions 1 to 5. The second section deals on parental occupational status and juvenile delinquency. It covers questions 6 to 10. The third section centers on parental educational status and juvenile delinquency and consists of questions 11 to 15. The fourth section deals on juvenile delinquency and consists of questions 16 to 20. Responses to the questionnaire items were structured and patterned with a 4 point scale. Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

In order to establish validity of the instrument in this study, two other experts in Measurement and Evaluation in National Teachers' Institute (Calabar study centre) reviewed the items chosen. The specialists assessed the relevance of the items in relation to the objectives/hypotheses of the study, their comprehensiveness, solvability and statistical presentations and analysis.

Trial test was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The vetted instrument was administered on a sample of 50 learners from private primary schools in the study area and repeated on the same sample giving two weeks interval. The data collected from the two sessions of administration were to estimate the reliabilities of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha statistics was used for internal consistency and test-retest for across time stability. The results are summarized in table 1.

Table 1
Reliability of Research Instrument

Name of sub scale	Session	No. of item	Mean	Std Dev	Std Err	Rrxx	Rtt
Family	1 st	10	27.22	4.49	.110	.836*	.708*
Income level	2 nd	10	26.83	5.23	.126	.794*	
Parental occupational	1 st	10	28.26	3.87	.132	.925	.817*
Status	2 nd	10	25.98	4.12	.118	.863	
Parental educational	1 st	10	27.96	3.26	.110	.786*	.748*
Status	2 nd	10	26.73	4.69	.146	.759*	
Juvenile	1 st	10	28.39	5.14	.58	.862	.781*
Delinquency	2 nd	10	27.85	4.27	.162	.8438*	

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fishers Least Significant(FLS) were used to test the three hypotheses.

Presentation of Results.

Hypothesis one

There is no significant influence of family income level on the juvenile delinquency among primary six children in Akpabuyo LGA of Cross River State.

The independent variable is family income which was categorized as high. Moderate and low, while the dependent variable is juvenile delinquency. To test this hypothesis, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and the result presented in Table 2 showed that ($F=19.75, p<.05$).

Table 2

One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the influence of Family Income on Children's Juvenile Delinquency

Family income	N	Mean	Std. deviation		
High	100	29.649	29.649		
Moderate	100	37.369	37.369		
Low	100	33.947	33.947		
Total	300	32.763	32.763		
Source of variable	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F.ratio	Sign
Between groups	3085.344	2	1542.672	15.997	.000
Within groups	28737.782	297	96.436		
Total	31823.126	299			

From Table 2 F. Ratio (19.755) p (.000) is less than p (.05). This implies that there is a significant influence of family income on juvenile delinquency. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. A post hoc analysis was carried out using Fishers Least Significant difference (LSD) on the influence of family income on juvenile delinquency was shown in Table 3.

Table 3

Fishers Least Significant Different (LSD) Post Hoc analysis on the Influence of Family Income

Variables	Low n = 100	Moderate n = 100	High n = 100
Low	33.94 ^a	- 3.42	4.3
Moderate	- 5.02 ^{cx}	37.36	7.23
High	3.82 ^x	3.77 ^x	29.64

msw = 96.436

a- group means along the principal diagonal

b- group mean difference above the principal diagonal

c- Calculated t-values below the principal diagonal

* -significant t-values

Hypothesis two

Parental occupational status does not significantly influence primary six children juvenile delinquent behaviour in Akpabuyo Local Government Area. The independent variable here is parental occupation categorized as skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled while the dependent variable is juvenile delinquency. To test this hypothesis, one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used and the result as presented in Table 4 showed that ($F=17.05, p=.05$).

Table 4**One-Way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the influence of parental occupation on juvenile delinquency of Children.**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. deviation		
Skilled	100	30.386	9.129		
Moderate	100	31.862	9.495		
Low	100	36.655	7.584		
Total	300	32.784	9.178		
Source of variable	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F. ratio	Sign
Between groups	2648.280	2	132.115	13.470	.000
Within groups	29196.029	297	98.303		
Total	31844.259	298			

From table 4, p (.000) is less than p (.05). This implies that there is a significant influence of parental occupation on juvenile delinquency at their children. Hence the null hypothesis is rejected. A post hoc analysis was carried out using Fishers Least Significant Differences and the result is presented in Table 5 showed that the mean value ($x=36.65$) of children from homes with unskilled parents is greater than the mean value of children from semi-skilled ($x=33.94$) and the mean value ($x=29.64$) of children from skilled parents. This implies that children from parents who are unskilled are more susceptible to juvenile delinquency than children from parents who are semi-skilled and skilled.

Table 5**Fishers Least Significant Different (LSD) Post Hoc analysis on the Influence of Parental Occupation on Juvenile Delinquency of Children**

Variables	Unskilled n = 100	Semi-skilled n = 100	High n = 100
Unskilled	36.65 ^a	4.79 ^b	5.79
Semi-skilled	3.21 ^{cx}	31.86	1.00
Skilled	4.23*	1.87	30.86

msw = 98.303

a- group means along the principal diagonal

b- group mean difference above the principal diagonal

c- Calculated t-values below the principal diagonal

* -significant t-values

Hypothesis three

Educational levels of parents do not significantly influence primary six children juvenile delinquency in Akpabuyo Local Government Area. The independent variable involved in this hypothesis is levels of parental education with three dimensions (tertiary, secondary/primary, and no formal education); while the dependent variable is children juvenile delinquency. To test this hypothesis, children's juvenile delinquency was compared with the three dimensions of parental educational levels using one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The result is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

One way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the influence of parental level of education on children's juvenile delinquency occupation on juvenile delinquency of Children

Variables	N	Mean	Std. deviation		
Skilled	100	30.386	9.129		
Moderate	100	31.862	9.495		
Low	100	36.655	7.584		
Total	300	32.784	9.178		
Source of variable	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F.ratio	Sign
Between groups	2648.280	2	132.115	13.470	.000
Within groups	29196.029	297	98.303		
Total	31844.259	299			

The result in Table 6 showed that the calculated F-ratio of 4.200 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 297 degree of freedom. With these result, the hypothesis was rejected.

This implies that parental levels of education significantly influenced their children's juvenile delinquent behaviour. Since parental educational levels influenced the children's juvenile delinquency, a post hoc comparison among means was carried out using Fishers Least significance difference (LSD) method to determine the mean pair different responsible for the significance. The result is presented in Table 7. The post hoc test presented in Table 7 shows that children's juvenile delinquent behaviour when their parents' level of education is tertiary is significantly different from children whose parents' level of education is either secondary or primary and no formal education. Also children whose parents' educational level is secondary/primary are significantly different in their juvenile delinquent behaviour than children whose parents' level of education is no formal in their juvenile delinquent behaviour.

Table 7

Fishers Least Significant Difference (LSD) Post Hoc Analysis of the influence of parental level of education on children juvenile delinquency

Variables	Tertiary n = 100	Secondary/Primary n = 100	No education n = 100
Tertiary	30.95	-0.78 ^b	-0.11
Secondary/primary	-1.09 ^c	31.73	0.67
No education	1.40	2.14	31.06

m_{sw} = 98.303

a- group means along the principal diagonal

b- group mean difference above the principal diagonal

c- Calculated t-values below the principal diagonal

*-significant t-values

Discussion of findings

Family income level and primary six children juvenile delinquency

There is no significant influence of family income levels on juvenile delinquency among primary six children in Akpabuyo Local Government Area. The result of this study reveal that family income significantly influence children's juvenile delinquency. The findings are in agreement with the view of Hirth (2012) opinion that children whose parents are poor carry with them negative and inferiority complexes when they are in company of their counterpart whose parents are wealthy. Some of them in order to make up turn out to be delinquent and involved in criminal acts, aggressiveness, unfriendly and negative behaviour. The result of the study is also

in line with Nnamani (2011) who reported that youths from poor home background are easily disposed to joining delinquent groups than those from wealthy background.

Again, the result is consistent with that of Chrislay (2017) who affirmed that parents with high income earnings were better in providing their children's needs parents found it difficult to provide their needs. The result is in affirmation with Goilar (2013) funding that children from high income families are likely to resist the temptation of joining delinquent gangs than children from the lower class who may easily be lured to join delinquent gangs. Furthermore the result is in line with that of Adie (2017), Chritlin (2018), and Ilarry (2018) who all agreed that poverty is a major factor that pushes many youths to delinquent behaviour and truancy.

Parental occupation status and juvenile delinquency

The null hypothesis states that parental occupational status does not significantly influence primary six children juvenile delinquent behaviour. The null hypothesis was rejected based on the results of analysis of data in table 4. The result revealed that there is a significant influence of parental income on the children's juvenile delinquency. This result agreed with Adeyemo (2017) who noted that unemployed parents may not pay attention to their children and how they behave, a situation that pushes some to join delinquent gangs. The result is also in line with Taslim (2018) who maintained that children from occupational high background are less involved in delinquent behaviours compared to children from occupational low background families. Again, this result is in consonant with Douglas (2014) report that 62 percent of delinquent in remand home in Britain were from parent who are unemployed and/or do not have paid jobs.

Equally, the result of this study is consistent with Lander (2017) who agreed that children from low occupational status family join delinquent groups as a result of hunger, lack or want, and see the gang as a convenient way to survive. Furthermore the result is in agreement with Okere (2017) observation that secured job engender family stability, home discipline, parental interest and positive parental attitude towards their children wellbeing, but a poor job creates home conditions that can cause children to be a deviant.

Parental educational status and juvenile delinquency

The null hypothesis states that, educational levels of parents do not significantly influence primary six children juvenile delinquent in Akpabuyo Local Government Area. The result from the table 6 indicates that there is a significant influence of parental education level n the children juvenile delinquency. The findings of the study aligns with that of Ibia (2019) report that educated parents easily choose the path their children would take because they have seen the importance of education on a Child's life. Also the result tallies with that of UNICEF(2014) who reaffirmed that parental education actually influence children to be responsible and sensitive to make appropriate choice at all times and would also help to reduce the risk of potentially negative out comes such as delinquent behaviour.

The finding of the study is in line with the finding of Egbuono and Starfield (2012) that 85 percent of the children who belong to delinquent gangs had peasant, illiterate family background.

The finding of this study is also in collaborates Lamina, Sule-Odu and Jagun (2014) report that the higher the parents educational level, the less the children tend to be indulge in delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, the finding agree with Otuadah (2016) finding that educated parents like their children to become like themselves and inculcate moral values on them while the uneducated parents may be nonchalant towards their children education which make them vulnerable to delinquent influence.

Conclusion

From the outcome of this study, the researchers concluded that family income has a significant influence on primary six children juvenile delinquency in selected public primary schools in Akpabuyo Local Government Area. Also parental occupational status equally affects primary six children juvenile delinquency in favour of those children whose parents have professional jobs with a better salary. On the other hand, parental educational levels significantly influence primary six children juvenile delinquency in selected primary schools in Akpabuyo.

Implication of the study

Based on the summary and conclusion of this study, it implies that poverty, unemployment and poor education or no formal education for parents are the root causes of juvenile delinquent behaviours found among children of primary school age.

The researchers' advice that corporate bodies, governments and individuals should come to the aids of parents that are not measuring up in these areas noted by the study.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion and implications of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Poverty eradication programmes should be intensified so that families with low income status are uplifted to meet up their children's need.
2. Parents that are unemployed should engage themselves meaningfully either through private business or take up farming in order to raise funds for their family's needs.
3. Adult education should be intensified so that parents that are not educated will at least know how to read and write in order to know the importance of education and make good provision for their children to abstain from juvenile delinquency.

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