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INFLUENCE OF PARENTHOOD STATUS ON JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AMONG IN-SCHOOL STUDENT IN SOMOLU LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF LAGOS STATE

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Abstract

This paper examined the influence of parenthood status on juvenile delinquency among in-school student in Somolu Local Government Area (LGA) of Lagos State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. Simple random sampling technique was used to randomly select adolescents aged 14-18 who were in SS1 and SS2 from the population of because they have already integrated themselves into the school system and must have displayed one or two delinquent behaviours. Sixty-seven (67) students were randomly selected from six different senior public schools under the Education District II which is 402 students form the selected adolescents of aged 14-18 who were in SS1 and SS2. The instrument title: "Parenthood Status and Juvenile Delinquency Questionnaire (PSJDQ). The number of items developed for the study were 40 and the responses were analyzed using descriptive statistic which involved the use of tables, percentages and weighted. The questionnaire items were validated and the reliability determined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. This reliability of the Parenthood Status (PS) was demonstrated by a high Cronbach's alpha of 0.88, indicating excellent internal consistency. Pearson Correlation coefficient, T-test and ANOVA were used in the analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The finding of the result showed that there is a significant influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents are improvement in parenthood status that caused corresponding change in cyber delinquency. Also, the result revealed that there is a significant relationship between parenthood status had influence on drug related offences, because null hypothesis was rejected. The study recommended that schools and community organisations should offer workshops and resources to educate parents on effective parenting strategies and the importance of active engagement, as this has been shown to reduce juvenile delinquency.

Keyword: Parenthood Status, Juvenile Delinquency, Adolescence

Introduction

The prevalence of juvenile delinquency among in-school adolescents is a significant concern globally. Juvenile delinquency, therefore, is a serious global concern, wrongdoings and unexpected behaviours among juveniles are becoming exceedingly worrisome, especially for parents, teachers, government authorities, caretakers, and Nigerian society at large. Daily reports from news outlets highlight adolescents engaging in delinquent deeds such as stealing, ruthlessness, disrespecting elders, vandalism, examination malpractices, harassment, cultism, running away from home, and not abiding by the rules laid down by their communities (Aremu, 2020; Lopez & King, 2021). This view is corroborated by ThisDay live (2022) which reported that the tendency of teenagers to engage in criminal activities in Nigeria is increasing at a geometric progression. Juvenile delinquent has become a cankerworm that has eaten deep into our educational system in Nigeria; this is not just limited to Government owned schools but it cuts across private schools too. The antisocial behaviours of teenagers have been posing several damages to the wellbeing of the inhabitants of Nigeria. According to Carter & Lee (2022), the incidences of juvenile anti-social behaviour have tremendously increased in intensity and magnitude in recent years, permeating every society whether developing or advanced. In Africa, the rate of juvenile delinquency is quite evident. Children ages 10 to 19 involve themselves in one or more maladaptive behaviours or the other; these maladaptive behaviour ranges from truancy to including criminal behaviors in Nigeria (Johnson & Brown, 2020).

Adolescence is a critical stage where young individuals are subjected to numerous choices in their social environment. Exposure to different social realities, together with the nature of family or parental upbringing, can modify or transform juvenile

behaviours (Amran & Basri, 2020, Johnson & Brown, 2020). Simply put, the type of influence parents have on adolescents may determine the kind of person or attributes possessed by such individuals. The rate at which children under the age of 16 engage in criminal behaviour is high in Nigeria. Most adolescents engage in different criminal behaviours such as including stealing, ritual killing, cybercrime, kidnapping, armed robbery, forced sexual relationship, kleptomania, burglary, disobedience, homicide, habitual truancy, drug addiction, prostitution, cultism, and bullying. The rate at which these crimes are committed among adolescents in Nigeria is unprecedentedly on the increase (Aremu, 2020). To avoid social disorder and increased social problems among juvenile, there is need to look into the issue of juvenile delinquency among adolescents in Nigeria.

As adolescents navigate the complex transition from childhood to adulthood, they encounter various social, psychological, and environmental influences that shape their behavior. Understanding the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency requires a multifaceted approach that considers biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors. The main contributing factor to delinquency in Africa can be attributed to poverty and domestic violence (Peter & Nwadukwe (2022). In a study carried out in very vulnerable areas of New York, USA, Craig and Cashwell (2019) found that the most effective way to help adolescents with behavioral difficulties is to focus on or assess their parental background. They also identified three important factors that can increase the possibility of delinquent behaviors among young individuals: (a) Insufficient or careless supervision of young ones by parents or step-parents, (b) Excessive discipline, whether physical or verbal, by parents or caretakers, and (c) Lack of unity or cohesiveness among family members or relatives.

Adolescent delinquency is a critical societal issue which could breed insecurity and social instability resulting from aggression by young and old people against adolescents. The increase in delinquency among adolescents may be associated with peer environmental, psychological and parental influences. Of these factors, parental influence is the most prominent and accounts for more than half of delinquencies among children below age 19 (Amran & Basri, 2020). Likewise, Siegel Welsh (2018) opines that many adolescents engaged in juvenile delinquencies as a result of shattered homes, single parenting, separated families, disagreement between parents, trust and confidence issues among parents, parents with criminal or psychological records, and improper upbringing. However, parent involvement and economic status may be responsible for high incidence of adolescent delinquencies in Nigeria.

Parenthood is said to be the state of being a parent which involves the roles, responsibilities, and relationships associated with raising and caring for children. It circumscribes a wide range of activities and experiences, which include guidance, nurturing, providing emotional support and practical assistance to children. Obijekwu (2020) and Green & Harper (2019) posited that parenthood is the state of being a parent, which provides the opportunity to guide, teach, and pass on values to the next generation. Parenthood requires parents showing warmth and acceptance, provision of support and effective communication towards the children. Hence, being a parent is one of the difficult tasks of most parents. At times, it may be an enjoyable, satisfying, and priceless experience to be a parent (Lang, 2020).

In term of parenthood, parenthoods are classified into three types namely: single parenthood, foster and dual parenthood (Aremu, John-Akinola & Desmennu, 2019).

Single parenthood is a situation where the nurturing and well-being of a child or children in the family is carried out by one parent. This could be a situation where it is just the mother or father is the one in charge of raising the child(ren). Foster parenthood is a type of parenthood where a different couple raise a child that is not biologically theirs. They provide a safe and comfortable family environment for the child(ren). While the dual parenthood is a process whereby both partners share parental responsibilities and duties in the household. It is against this background that this study, therefore, investigated that influence of parenthood status on juvenile delinquency among in-school student in Somolu Local Government Area of Lagos State.

Statement of the Problem

Juvenile delinquency remains a pervasive issue in society. Juvenile delinquency is a very serious social problem both in the world and Nigeria. The alarming rate of juvenile delinquency in Nigeria today is unprecedented. Several stakeholders such as governments, parents, guidance, sponsors, teachers, moralists and well-meaning Nigerians are concerned about the disturbing trend and attendant consequences of juvenile delinquencies among adolescents. These delinquents are been nurtured in the society at a very alarming rate. Likewise, the high cases of sexual abuse like rape, pick pockets, armed robbers, truancy, stealing, examination malpractice and lawlessness among school going adolescents are observed among adolescents. However, there is a gap in understanding how specific aspects of parenthood and socioeconomics contribute to juvenile delinquency among in-school adolescents.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of parenthood status on juvenile delinquency in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Investigate the impact of parental involvement among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.
2. Find out the parents' socioeconomic status among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.
3. Determine the influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.
4. Investigate the influence of parenthood status on cyber delinquency among in-school adolescent in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.
5. Examine the influence of parenthood status on drug related offences among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

1. How does the structure of the family unit influence juvenile delinquency?
2. What is the impact of parental involvement and juvenile delinquency?
3. How does their parents' socioeconomic status correlate with juvenile delinquency among in-school adolescents?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated in this study:

1. There is no significant influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.
2. There is no significant influence of parenthood status on cyber delinquency among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.
3. There is no significant influence of parenthood status on drug related offences among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study, while the population for this study was 22,067 students. Simple random sampling technique was used to randomly select adolescents aged 14-18 who were in SS1 and SS2 because they have already integrated themselves into the school system and must have displayed one or two delinquent behaviours. The purposive sampling techniques was employed to select four hundred (402) students from six different senior public schools from the sampled schools. They are Ajayi Crowther Memorial Grammar School, Arch Deacon Adelaja Senior High School, C.M.S Girls' Grammar School, Jagunmolu High School, Gbagada Senior Grammar School, and Lanre Awolokun Senior High School. The instrument title: "Parenthood Status and Juvenile Delinquency Questionnaire (PSJDQ). The number of items developed for the study were 40 and the responses were analyzed using descriptive statistic which involved the use of tables, percentages and weighted. The reliability of the Parenthood Status (PS) is demonstrated by a high Cronbach's alpha, typically around 0.88, indicating excellent internal consistency and dependable

measurement of parental involvement. Descriptive statistics was used to test hypotheses 1 to 3. Pearson Correlation coefficient, T-test and ANOVA were used in the analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1: Investigated the impact of parental involvement among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Table 1: Impact of parental involvement among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

(I) SES	(J) SES	Mean Difference (I-J)	Sig.
Low	Moderate	5.511*	.000
	High	14.432*	.000
Moderate	Low	-5.511*	.000
	High	8.921*	.000
High	Low	-14.432*	.000
	Moderate	-8.921*	.000

From Table 1, it concerns parental involvement among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State differed in their juvenile delinquency from the moderate and high respectively (P = 0.000 and 0.000 < 0.05).

Research Question 2: To what effect does parents' socioeconomic status among in school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Table 2: Does parents' socioeconomic status among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Family	SES	N	Mean	SD
Single	Low	117	84.50	4.726
	High	6	71.33	6.186
	Total	123	83.86	5.561
Dual	Low	68	82.16	4.352
	Moderate	144	78.13	9.935
	High	65	69.02	11.851
	Total	277	76.98	10.514
Total	Low	185	83.64	4.718
	Moderate	144	78.13	9.935
	High	71	69.21	11.470
	Total	400	79.10	9.800

Table 2 shows parents' socioeconomic status among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State, the pair-wise comparison of the groups showed that those low parents' socioeconomic status of students significantly differed in their juvenile delinquency from the moderate and low respectively (P = 0.000 and 0.000 < 0.05).

$H0_1$: There is no significant influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Table 3: Influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	Sig.	P	Remark
Parenthood Status	402	5.99	5.56	0.398	0.000	<0.05	Significant
Property Crime	402	76.98	10.51				

P< 0.05

Table 3 presents the result of Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient for the influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents, the result revealed a moderate and positive linear relationship between the two variables (r=0.398) which was significant at p<0.05. This implies that influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents are related and could influence each other. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

$H0_2$: There is no significant influence of parenthood status on cyber delinquency among in-school adolescent in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Table 4: Influence of Parenthood Status on Cyber Delinquency

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	r	Sig.	P	Remark
Parenthood Status	402	79.10	9.80	0.278	0.000	<0.05	Significant
Cyber Delinquency	402	39.33	5.99				

P< 0.05

The result in Table 4 showed a significant influence of parenthood status on cyber delinquency (r = r=0.278). The result revealed a low positive and significant relationship between the two variables (p<0.05). This implies that improvement in parenthood status is associated with a corresponding change in cyber delinquency, hence the null hypothesis was rejected.

$H0_3$: There is no significant influence of parenthood status on drug related offences among in-school in Somolu Local Government Lagos State.

Table 5: influence of parenthood status on drug related offences

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	R	Sig.	P	Remark
Parenthood Status	402	5.99	5.56	0.484	0.000	<0.05	Significant
Drug Related Offences	402	76.98	10.51				

P< 0.05

Table 5 showed a significant influence of parenthood status on drug related offences, the result revealed a moderate and positive linear relationship between the two variables (r=0.484) which was significant at p<0.05. This implies that parenthood status had influence on drug related offences. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion

The analysis revealed influence of parenthood status on property crime among in-school adolescents are related and could influence each other. This study suggested that parenthood status has a substantial impact on property crime, with adolescents from parenthood status exhibiting higher property crime rates. Green and Harper (2019 and Aremu (2020) reported that single-parent family structures contribute significantly to the probability of adolescents participating in criminal activities. Additionally, Wilson and Finch (2018) discovered that adolescents from single-parent households

have a 30% higher chance of engaging in delinquent activities compared to those from two-parent households. Furthermore, stealing includes robbery, burglary, breaking and entering, and shoplifting from fellow students, staff and school property, and withholding the school fees given to children by parents. Siegel and Welsh (2018) define juvenile delinquency as the participation of minors (individuals who are younger than the statutory age of maturity, under 18 years in the case of Nigeria) in illegal behaviour. Amran and Basri (2020) further noted that adolescent delinquency refers to any behaviour that does not conform to the rules, regulations, norms, and values of a given society. Juvenile delinquency, also referred to as juvenile offending, is described as resistant, antisocial, illegal or criminal behaviour perpetuated by children or adolescents to the level that it cannot be controlled or corrected by parents, endangers others in the community and becomes the concern of law enforcement agencies (Peter & Nwadukwe, 2022). The scholar further confirmed that noting that a community with a high rate of crime inevitably exposes its adolescents to criminal activities, as young people tend to model the behaviours prevalent in their immediate environment.

The analysis also indicated an influence of parenthood status on cyber delinquency among in-school adolescent. This implies that higher levels of parenthood status are associated with lower rates of cyber delinquency. Johnson and Brown (2020) and Aremu (2020) found that consistent parental involvement is linked to better academic performance and lower engagement in criminal activities. Lopez and King (2021) highlighted that parental involvement, through monitoring and guidance, plays a vital role in preventing delinquency. Finally, Carter and Lee (2022) emphasized that the quality of parent-child interactions and the extent of parental involvement are significant predictors of juvenile delinquency rates. Additionally, Aremi, John-

Akinola & Desmenmu (2019) found that adolescents with actively involved parents are 25% less likely to engage in cyber delinquent behaviors compared to those with less parental involvement. Similarly, Wilson and Finch (2018) observed that the emotional support and supervision provided by involved parents are crucial in deterring cyber delinquent behaviour among adolescents. More so, the significant influence of parenthood status on drug related offences, the result revealed a moderate and positive linear relationship between the two variables. The drug offences committed by students are smoking of cigarettes and Indian hemp, keeping or using drugs allegedly to aid memory, keeping or using drugs for regular diseases, but not prescribed by a doctor, keeping or using drugs to prevent or abort pregnancy, drinking alcoholic drinks etc. (Ololube, 2013).

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that parenthood status significantly influences juvenile delinquency among in-school adolescents in Somolu Local Government Area of Lagos State. Specifically, parenthood status was found to have a significant positive relationship with property crime ($r = 0.398$, $p<0.05$), indicating that variations in parenthood status are associated with corresponding changes in property crime among adolescents. Similarly, parenthood status showed a significant positive relationship with cyber delinquency ($r = 0.278$, $p<0.05$), suggesting that higher levels of parental involvement and engagement are associated with lower rates of cyber delinquency. Furthermore, a moderate and significant positive relationship was found between parenthood status and drug-related offences ($r = 0.484$, $p<0.05$), highlighting the protective role that active and engaged parenting plays in

deterring drug-related behaviour. Overall, these findings underscore the critical importance of parenthood status in shaping adolescent behaviour and reducing delinquency. Targeted interventions that strengthen parental engagement and support family structures are recommended to effectively reduce juvenile delinquency among in-school adolescents.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following were recommended:

1. Implement and support programs aimed at increasing parental involvement in children's education in order to curb criminal daily activities among our boys nowadays.
2. Government should developed support services mechanism for parent, children and adolescent and member of families as a whole in the area of education and counseling. By addressing the unique challenges faced by parent households and adolescent, these services can help mitigate the risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency.
3. Design and implement comprehensive intervention programs that address individual risk factors separately rather than expecting combined effects. This approach ensures that interventions are tailored to the specific needs related to family structure, parental involvement, improving their overall effectiveness in reducing juvenile delinquency.

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