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Family Background and the Development of Delinquent Behaviour among Adolescents

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Abstract:

The study in a descriptive cross-sectional survey design examined the impact of family background and the development of delinquent behaviour among 120 students from Government Model School and Gaadi Comprehensive College, Makurdi. Participant's ages ranged from 14-23 years, mean age of 15.48 years and standard deviation of 2.51. A 17-item questionnaire Family Background and Delinquency Scale (FABDS) developed by the researchers were employed to assess family background and delinquency among adolescents. Thereafter, multi-statistical tool were used to test the hypotheses with an alpha level of <0.05. The first hypothesis was analyzed with Pearson correlation and linear regression and results showed a significant relationship between family background and delinquent behavior among adolescents, $r(120) = 0.44, P < 0.05$; ($\beta = 0.32$; $t = 5.39$; $P < 0.05$). The second hypothesis was analyzed with independent t-test and results indicates significant difference between participants from non-broken homes and those from broken homes on the development of delinquent behaviour, [$t(118) = -5.45, P < 0.05$]. The third hypothesis was also retained as significant difference between participants from poor homes and those from rich homes on the development of delinquent behaviour was observed, [$t(118) = -1.68, P < 0.05$]. Additional regression analysis revealed that demographic variables such as age, gender, school, father's occupation, and mother's occupation jointly predicted delinquent behaviour among adolescents $F(5, 114) = 2.46; P < 0.05$. In line with findings, the study recommends among other things that further studies be conducted to come up with workshops and interventions to aid in fostering adolescent's healthy personality development.

Keywords: Delinquent behaviours, family background, Benue students

1. Introduction

The family is the first and the most basic institution of every society for developing the child's potentials in all aspect of life. In light of this reality, family background in developing economies has also changed dramatically over the last century, becoming very diverse in today's society (Kierkus, Johnson & Hewitt, 2010). Adolescents of all ages are living in various types of homes, such as those from poor or rich home, in broken and non-broken homes as evident in single, married, and cohabiting parents. As Wallman (2010) opined, the families that children grow up in and the social environment in which they live can have major effects on their well-being. Historically, the word delinquency is derived from the Latin word 'delinquere' meaning 'de' which is, away and linquere, which is, to leave thus, meaning to leave or to abandon. Originally, the word had an objective meaning as it referred to parents who abandoned and neglected their children. In contemporary time, it is used and applied to those children who indulge in wrongful and harmful activities which are socially unacceptable (Loeber & Farrington, 2001). Delinquency has been seen as a condition of drift, maladjustment, pathology, disturbance, moral depravity and unruly behaviour.

In Nigeria, the Children and Young Persons Laws (CYPL) recognize three categories of juvenile delinquents: namely 'juvenile offenders', 'beyond parental control' and 'wanderers, beggars, truants' and the like. The 'beyond parental control' are those that their parents established that they could not control them and make them of good behaviours. 'Wanderers, beggars, truants' and the like are referred to as those who are in need of care and protection (Muncie, 2000). From the above, one can distinguish delinquency from crime in two major ways. Firstly, delinquency is a more inclusive term than crime, which means that it includes in addition to law violation, some other acts or behaviours like 'beyond parental control', 'wandering, truancy, begging', being exposed to 'moral danger', being exposed to the 'risk or slavery' and the like. These behaviours and/or acts are essentially not criminal. Secondly, delinquency is different from crime in that the people involved are immature that is, delinquents unlike criminals, are immature, they are 16 years old or less (Adebowale & Anifowose, 2017). Manifestation of delinquent behaviours is one of the major problems associated with adolescents in secondary schools today (Ugwu & Stanley, 2017). The pervading incidence of delinquency among adolescent is alarming and calls for serious consideration especially as juvenile delinquency has been rated a global issue (Carter &

Stewin, 1999) and it has been observed by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) that more than 1 million world's children are in prison (Bochenek, 2016).

Furthermore, development of adolescent delinquency has been on the increase in Nigeria in recent times. The last decade witnessed crimes ranging from minor stealing to major robbery, rape and killing perpetuated by teens. There has been increasing concern of the Police and the general public on the seriousness of adolescent crime and conduct problems (Wu, Chia, Lee & Lee, 1998). The outcome of their research also shows that most serious crimes, such as rioting, robbery and extortion accounted for 15 percent. Eke (2004) in his study notes that there are two main categories of delinquent behaviours Nigerian adolescents are engaged in criminal and status offences. The criminal offences include stealing, arson, rape, drug offences and murder, burglary, pick pocket, and armed robbery. However, the researcher listed status offences to include: running away from home, malingering, truancy etc. Onyehalu (2003) also asserted that the existence of stable and normal societies is based on acceptable ethical principles, norms and healthy values. Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2003) referred to the norms and values as desirable behaviours; while Onyehalu (2003) claims that any departure from the accepted norms by people who are not yet adult is delinquency.

However, Bingham, Shope, & Raghunathan (2006) refer to such behaviours which are socially proscribed/prohibited as problem behaviours. Any behaviour that falls short of societal norms, values, beliefs and expectations are undesirable behaviours (Okorodudu and Okorodudu, 2003). Boroffice (2003) believes that factors such as biological social, view of self, attitudes, beliefs, sense of his future etc., are some of the factors that predispose adolescents to unhealthy behaviours or delinquency.

Several studies carried out on factors that precipitate the development of delinquency among adolescents (Okorodudu and Okorodudu, 2003; Eke, 2004; Eke, 2004a) stress that adolescence is a period of stress and storm. Eke also observed that the period is characterized by rebelliousness. This is caused by non-conducive emotional environment. Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2003) listed environmental factors; social factors, physical factors, psychological factors; peer group influence, drug abuse and the family factor as causes of delinquency among adolescents. Eke (2004) observed that causes of juvenile delinquency tend to find theoretical explanations in the interaction between biological, environmental and social factors. The researcher believes that the biological or genetic make-up of individuals can predispose adolescent's engagement in delinquent activities.

The Nigerian government had devised and employed several measures aimed at curbing adolescents' delinquency in our society but to no avail. For instance establishment and administration of juvenile justice; promulgation of juvenile laws and courts, establishment of remand homes, establishment of security and law enforcement agency etc. Many researchers agree that the foundation of adolescent delinquency is rooted in the kind of home the adolescent is brought up (Odebumi, 2007; Otudah, 2008; Utti, 2006). The basis for good behaviour orientation and good adolescents' attitude development is founded on positive parenting. Okpako (2004) stated that the parents should be blamed and be made to take responsibility for the misfortune that befalls their adolescents. Hence the study wishes to examine the influence of family background and the development of delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

2. Statement of the Problem

For some students, parental care is absent and they lack communal activities to engage them in useful skills, while some do not have adequate training and mentoring to help them acquire good behaviour and life skills. The outcome of juvenile delinquency, such as thuggery, kidnapping, robbery, terrorism, rape, insurgency and so on, can be very disastrous in any given society. Nigeria and the entire world are already experiencing some of the negative consequences of juvenile delinquency. It has, therefore, become necessary to work on some of these numerous factors responsible for alarming increase of juvenile delinquency in the society.

Painfully, global crime rate is increasing year by year especially juvenile crimes, which are barriers for the growth of the society. A lot of researches are conducted almost each year in most of the regions of the world for finding out main reasons of and development of juvenile delinquency, exposes the scarcity of researches in this field, which if tackled, adolescents can improve qualitatively and those who are involved in crimes they can be helped/stopped by trying to reduce the causes that aids in development of such delinquent behaviors.

Delinquent behaviour account for series of problems encountered in the teaching and learning process, especially in the school context but also in the family and the society at large. Delinquent behaviours like cheating, stealing, fighting, drug abuse/addiction, truancy, sexual promiscuity, lateness to classes and bullying have contributed in no small measure to the erosion of values that is gradually washing away the quality and beauty of secondary schools in Nigeria, which of course spells dooms for various aspects of national life. More so, delinquent behaviours accounts for one of the major factors that affect the academic performance of school children because both the victim and perpetrator are usually depressed and anxious. If nothing drastic is done to stem this ugly tide, Nigeria will face a total erosion of discipline and moral standard among the youth population. This in turn will pose a great danger to the economy, unity and progress of the country. Hence, the objective of the study is to investigate the influence of family background and the development of delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents of Government Model School and Gaadi Comprehensive College all in Makurdi, Benue State. In other to carry out this probe, three hypotheses were tested:

- There will be a significant relationship between family background and delinquent behavior among adolescents.
- There will be a significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescents from broken homes and those from non-broken home.
- There will be a significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescent from poor and rich homes.

3. Operational Definition of Terms

3.1. Family Background

In this study, family background is operationally defined as being from a broken home or non-broken home on one hand; and on the other hand being from a poor or rich home. Family background was measured by a structured questionnaire (Family Background and Delinquency Scale) designed to assess the operational definition of family background in this study. Family background comprises of 12 items and scores from 37.28 and above were categorized as problematic family background while scores below 37.28 were not categorized so.

3.2. Adolescence/Adolescent

Adolescence is a stage between adulthood and childhood in which a lot of physical and psychological changes take place in an individual; while an adolescent is an individual who flouts the law or engages in behavior that is considered illegal in any given society.

3.3. Juvenile Delinquency

Delinquency implies failure in duties or wanting in moral or social activities without any element of impairment or retarded intellect. Children who come under the ages of 8-18 are considered to be juvenile and delinquent are the ones who show behavior which is illegal for adults and refers to a person who commits a misdemeanor. Although, due to the peculiarity of a Nigerian child who may not begin formal education on time due to poverty, neglect and other socio-economic variables, one may find young adults slightly above 20 years still in secondary school. Children below age of 7 years, who commits same kind of illegal act, would be called problem child due to the fact that at this age it is assumed a child does not have the ability to differentiate maturely between right and wrong or legal and illegal act (Vijayanath, Anitha, Raju, & Babladi, 2010). While, juvenile delinquency is the participation in illegal behaviour by adolescents or minors (Oladele, 2005). Delinquent behaviour comprises of 5-items and scores from 12.91 and above were categorized as delinquent while scores below are categorized as not delinquent.

- Behaviour: is a life pattern of an individual which could be negative or positive.

4. Theoretical Review

4.1. Social Bond Control Theory (Hirschi, 1969)

One theoretical perspective that can explain the relationship between family background and delinquency among adolescents is social bond control theory (Hirschi, 1969). Social bond control theory of crime a person is likely to develop delinquent behavior when their link with society is reduced and weakened. The main tenet of this theory is that increased social bonds among family and friends decrease the likelihood of engaging in crime and anti-social behaviours. Specifically, Hirschi (1969) specifies four elements of the social bond: attachment, described as the extent that a person has close affectionate ties with others; commitment, described as the fear of lawbreaking behavior; involvement, described as meaning participating in conventional acts to make one too busy to commit crime; and belief, described as impressions or opinions that are highly dependent upon social reinforcement. Hirschi's (1969) version of social control theory contends that individuals conform because they have strong affective attachments to parents, stakes in conformity, involvement in conventional activities, and belief in social norms. Conversely, those youth who have weak or no attachments, low stakes in conformity, little involvement in conventional activities, and poor attitudes regarding societal norms are more likely to participate in delinquent behavior. Hirschi originally argued that the attachment between parent and child is paramount and the strength of this relationship whether positive or negative is the most important factor in determining delinquent behavior. In other words, it is the quality, and not the quantity, of bonds that determines delinquency (Leiber, Mack, & Featherstone, 2009). Many children who experience a divorce or are otherwise in nontraditional families may not be as close to their parents as children in two-biological-parent families. They may experience weakened bonds with their parents and others, thus increasing the likelihood that they will engage in crime and delinquency (Matsueda & Heimer, 1987).

If a child lives in a nontraditional family structure, this can impact the four elements of the bond. Hirschi suggested that inadequate families fail to provide the attachments that could leverage children into socialized life-styles (Hirschi, 1969). If a child is brought up in a broken home, the child is going to have a hard time socially and this may cause the child to turn to deviant acts. Parental attachment can, therefore, be a key factor in explaining crime and delinquency among adolescents.

4.2. Social Learning Theory

Social learning theory by Bandura indicates that an individual does observational learning which means that we try to model what others do by watching them doing. This theory can be applied in any context. This theory can also explain the phenomenon of learning through peers; that is an adolescent, learns from their friends because they spend most of their time with friends. Therefore, if a friend is involved in bad criminal acts, there are chances of that child's involvement in criminal acts as well (McLeod, 2016). Another theory by a behaviorist Skinner (1953), within context of delinquent behavior explains that, children's behavior is shaped by reinforcement and punishment. A child's behavior is shaped by the environment they live in; those behaviors are increased which are rewarded in the society, community or the family.

Some of the potential explanations for delinquency in this study were: family background which served as continuous variable and also served as a discrete variable comprising of broken/non-broken home and rich/poor homes.

4.3. Empirical Review of Relevant Literature

4.3.1. Studies of Students from Broken and Non-Broken Homes and Delinquent Behaviour

There are researches that examine the impact of family background on delinquent behaviour (Price & Kunz, 2003; Amato & Keith, 1991). The majority of research finds that adolescents from broken homes report increased levels of delinquency. For example, in a longitudinal survey of 411 males living in South London, Juby and Farrington (2001) found that delinquency rates were higher among 75 boys who were living in non-intact homes compared to boys living in intact families. Moreover, Price and Kunz (2003) conducted a meta-analysis involving 72 studies that involved divorce and juvenile delinquency. The results indicated that children from divorced homes have higher rates of delinquency (status offenses, crimes against person, felony theft, general delinquency, tobacco and drug use) compared to children from intact homes, with the exception of alcohol use.

Burt, Barnes, McGue, & Lacono (2009) examined if parental divorce or genes that are inherited are the cause of delinquency. From a sample of 610 adoptive and biological families, they found that it is the experience of parental divorce, and not common genes that drives the association between divorce and adolescent delinquency.

It has been reported in a study that youngsters who are from disadvantaged neighborhood and have unstable family are more likely to be involved in violent delinquent behaviors (Thornberry & Hall, 2005).

4.3.2. Studies of Students from Rich and Poor Homes and Delinquent Behaviour

In United States 39% single-parents usually belongs to poor families, which can also be a main factor of juvenile crimes (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009). A longitudinal study done with adolescents noted that delinquency is high among those children who live in families and communities which are facing poverty, it was noted that there is greater influence of poor communities than poor families (Hay, Fortson, Hollist, Alzheimer, & Schaible, 2007).

Again, Wong (2011) found that poverty is the main factor that has effect on single-parenthood, divorce, and marriage later on these issues become cause of criminal acts in adolescents so in turn poverty indirectly has an effect on delinquent behavior. Nisar, Ullah, Ali, & Alam, (2015) found that low income is the one of the basic cause of juvenile crimes in adolescents.

Ugwu & Stanley (2017) investigated family dynamics as determinants of delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents in Asari-Toru Local Government Area of Rivers State. In their study, four hundred and forty five (445) respondents drawn from SS1 and SS2 classes formed the sample from ten government senior secondary schools. Findings revealed that parent's socio-economic status has influence on students' delinquent behaviours. While on the other hand, family size was found not to have any significant influence on delinquency.

4.3.3. General Studies on Delinquent Behaviours

Adebowale & Anifowose (2017) examined family background, school environment and peer group as predictors of juvenile delinquency in Abeokuta. In their study, two hundred and fifty students were randomly selected from 10 secondary schools. Findings revealed that there are significant relationships between family background and juvenile delinquency, school environment and juvenile delinquency, and also between peer group and juvenile delinquency.

Okorodudu (2010) investigated the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' delinquency. 404 sample sizes were used for the study. Irrespective of gender, location and age, the results of the analyses show that *lassair-faire* parenting style effectively predicted adolescents' delinquency while authoritarian and authoritative did not. Parents who are positively oriented in their styles (demandingness and responsiveness) will make their adolescents socially competent and goal - directed. Parents who exerted control and monitored adolescent activities and promoted self-autonomy were found to have the most positive effects on adolescents' behaviour. Uninvolving parents and also non responsive to adolescents needs had negative impacts on their behaviour.

Cassidy (2011) explored the role of family factors and psychological distress in relation to delinquency and youth offending. 219 older children and adolescents aged between 12-17 years living in areas associated with high levels of youth offending in the UK served as participants. Results showed that family relations were the best predictors of delinquency and were also correlated with psychological distress. The relationship between delinquency and psychological distress indicated that participants with more psychological distress were less likely to be involved in criminal behaviour.

Shek & Lin (2016) on the basis of longitudinal data collected over 6 years, the changes in delinquent behavior and the related socio-demographic, personal, and family determinants were examined. Students responded to a questionnaire containing socio-demographic questions and validated measures of positive youth development, family functioning, and delinquent behavior. The results indicated that there was an increasing trend of delinquent behavior with the growth rate slowing down over the high school years. Male adolescents reported higher levels of delinquent behavior and showed a greater increase of delinquent behavior relative to female adolescents. Although positive youth development and family functioning were negatively associated with the initial level of delinquent behavior, they were positively associated with the growth rate of delinquent behavior over time.

In all the empirical studies considered, majority dealt on socio-economic factors of adolescents alone; while others examined displacement of homes (broken/non-broken) on delinquent behaviours. None actually considered the role of

these two factors together. Again, most studies considered were either carried out outside Nigeria or within the Southern part of Nigeria (Abeokuta, Rivers State etc.); to the best knowledge of the researchers, non were carried out in Benue State as at the time of the study. This lacuna also created another justification for this study.

5. Method

5.1. Research Design

A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was deployed for this study with structured questionnaire data collection techniques to examine the relationship between family background and the development of delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents in Government Model School and Gaadi Comprehensive College all in Makurdi, Benue State.

5.2. Participants

The participants for this study were purposively sampled from Senior Secondary II drawn from Government Model School and Gaadi Comprehensive College all in Makurdi. In all, a total of 120 adolescents were recruited consisting of 60 students from each of the schools. Their ages ranged from 14-23 years, a mean age of 15.48 years and standard deviation of 2.51. Of the 120 participants, 57 (47.5%) were males and 63 (52.5%) were females. Participant fathers occupation showed that majority were farmers 41 (34.2%), while 39 (32.5%) were artisans, 16 (13.3%) were civil servants, and 24 (20.0%) were entrepreneurs or business men. In the same vein, participant mother's occupation indicated that a greater number were housewives 81 (67.5%), 8 (6.7%) were seamstresses, 12 (10.0%) were civil servant, and 19 (15.8%) were entrepreneur.

5.3. Instrument

5.3.1. Family Background and Delinquency Scale (FABDS)

The instrument was developed by the researchers to assess family background and delinquency among adolescents. It is a 17-item questionnaire. The instrument was designed using a 4-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The responses in the instrument are weighted 4,3,2,1 and they were all scored directly. The possible highest score for FABDS was 68 while the lowest possible score was 17.

The instruments consist of two sections. Section A served as the bio-data or demographic variables such as gender, age, school and father/mother's occupation. Section B comprises of the family background and delinquency behaviours. Delinquent behaviour comprises 5-items: We say anything we want to say at home, if there is a disagreement in our family, we try hard to keep the peace, we fight a lot in our family, we take alcohol as a result of worry? We do fight as a result of worry? The score for delinquent behaviour ranges from 5-20. Family background (broken or not-broken homes) comprises 7-items. Some of the items are: Activities in our family are not carefully planned, Family members often criticize each other, Our parents stay together, and Our parents interact with each other at home. The score for family background (broken or not-broken homes) ranges from 7-28. Family background (rich or poor) comprises 5 items: We often take three square meal a day at home, We all live in one room apartment, My parents always provide our needs, My parents borrow to pay my school fees, and Financial problems are openly discussed in our family. Scores for family background (rich or poor) ranges from 5-20. The validity of the instrument was determined through experts' assessment in terms of face and content validity. The reliability of FABDS for the study was determined using the Cronbach alpha method with reliability of 0.74 indicating a high reliability or internal consistency. Prior to the data gathering of this present study, a pilot test to ascertain the consistency of study instrument was carried out with 34 students in SSI of Government Model School, Benue State and the result indicated that Cronbach Alpha for FABDS was .76 while that for family background subscale was .60, and for delinquent behaviour subscale was .69. All reliability tests were confirmed adequate.

5.4. Procedure

The researcher with the assistance of the Dean of Studies and teachers in the two secondary schools distributed the questionnaire to the participants in their classes. This was possible after the request from the higher authority i.e., the principal was granted. The participants were instructed to read carefully the specific instructions before responding. In addition, they were advised to call the attention of the lead researcher whenever they encounter difficulties in understanding the items of the questionnaire. Further, it was made known to them that the scale was not a test or an examination and as such had no right or wrong answers. No observed difficulty was encountered among participants in responding the questionnaires. The questionnaires were collected after a period of 30 minutes, collated, coded and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics (version 20).

5.5. Statistics Analysis

Multiple linear regression, Independent t-test, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, and descriptive statistics were employed to test study hypotheses and other salient latent behavioural tendencies among adolescents.

6. Results

Variables	Age	Gender	School	FO	MO	FB	DB
Age	1						
Gender	-.04	1					
School	.18*	.25**	1				
FO	.11	.03	.091	1			
MO	.15	.10	.02	.67**1	1		
FB	-.08	-.03	-.13	-.24**	-.06	1	
DB	-.20*	.11	-.06	-.20*	-.21*	.44**1	1

Table 1: Table of Zero-Order Correlation Matrix Showing Inter-Correlations of Study Variables

Note: FO = Father's Occupation, MO= Mother's Occupation, FB = Family Background, DB= Delinquent Behaviour.

*Correlation Significant at the 0.05 Level

**Correlation Significant at the 0.01 Level

A summary of the zero-order correlation showing the various inter-relationships among the variables of interest was performed to examine the extent to which each variable related to another: One correlation worth mentioning apart from others is that delinquent behaviour correlated with age ($r = -.20$; $p < 0.05$), with father's occupation ($r = -.20$; $p < 0.05$), with mother's occupation ($r = -.21$; $p < 0.05$) and with family background ($r = .44$; $p < 0.01$).

Variable of Interest	N	r	Sig.
Family background	120	0.44	<0.05
Delinquent behaviour			

Table 2: Table of Pearson Correlation of Family Background and Delinquent Behaviour among Secondary School Students in Markurdi

- Hypothesis One: There will be a significant relationship between family background and delinquent behavior among adolescents.

Table 2 indicates that family background significantly related with delinquent behaviour, $r(120) = 0.44$, $P < 0.05$. Hence, the first hypothesis which states that there will be a significant relationship between family background and delinquent behavior among adolescents was retained.

Regressions analysis was also analyzed to test this first hypothesis, and the results shows that family background yielded a coefficient of multiple correlation (R) of 0.444 and multiple correlation square (R^2) of 0.197 implying that, only 19.7 % of the variance in delinquent behaviour was accounted for by the influence of family background of participants alone ($\beta = 0.32$; $t = 5.39$; $P < 0.05$). The results also confirmed the first hypothesis.

Variable		N	Mean	Std	df	t	P
Family background	Not-broken home	53	11.01	3.56	118	-5.45	<0.05
	Broken home	67	14.42	3.29			

Table 3: Summary Table of Independent T-Test Showing the Difference between Students from Broken Homes and Those from Non-Broken Homes on the Development of Delinquent Behaviour

- Hypothesis Two: There will be a significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescents from broken homes and those from non-broken home.

Result presented in Table 3 shows a significant difference between participants from non-broken homes and those from broken homes on the development of delinquent behaviour, [t (118) = -5.45, P<0.05]. This difference was according to the mean scores were participants from non-broken homes and those from broken homes (x = 11.01 vs14.42) meaning that participants from broken homes reported more delinquent behaviour than those who are not. This implies that family background (non-broken homes/broken homes) influenced students' delinquent behaviour. The second hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescents from broken homes and those from non-broken home was accepted.

Variable		N	Mean	Std	Df	t	P
Family background	Poor	92	13.23	3.60	118	1.68	<0.05
	Rich	28	11.86	4.29			

Table 4: Summary Table of Independent T-test showing the Difference between Poor Students from Rich Students on the Development of Delinquent Behaviour

- Hypothesis Three: There will be a significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescent from poor and rich homes.

Result presented in Table 4 indicates a significant difference between participants from poor homes and those from rich homes on the development of delinquent behaviour, [t (118) = -1.68, P<0.05]. This difference was according to the mean scores were participants from poor homes and those from rich homes (x = 13.23vs 11.86) meaning that participants from poor homes reported more delinquent behaviour. Results have once again explained that family background (poor homes/rich homes) influences students' delinquent behaviour. Therefore, the third hypothesis which stated that there will be significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescents from poor homes and those from rich homes was retained.

Demographic Variables	Beta β	t-test	Sig	R	R ²	F	P	Df
Age	-.23	-1.68	<0.05	0.312	0.098	2.46	<0.05	114
Gender	1.03	1.46	>0.05					
School	-.45	-1.62	>.05					
Father's occupation	-.45	-.63	>0.05					
Mother's occupation	-.70	-1.24	>0.05					

Table 5: Summary Table of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing Relative Contributions of Demographic Variables (Age, Gender, School, Father's Occupation and Mother's Occupation) on Development of Delinquent Behaviour among Adolescents
Dependent Variable: Delinquent Behaviour

The results presented in Table 5 shows that demographic variables such as age, gender, school, father's occupation, and mother's occupation yielded a coefficient of multiple correlation (R) of 0.312 and multiple correlation square (R²) of 0.098. In other words, 9.8% of the variance in delinquent behaviour was accounted for by the combined effects of demographic variables. Table 5 also indicates that age was the only independent predictor of delinquent behaviour ($\beta = -.23$; t = -1.68; P<0.05).

Furthermore, Table 5 indicates that there was a significant joint prediction of demographic variables on delinquent behaviour among adolescents F (5, 114) = 2.46; P<0.05). This implies demographic variables such as age, gender, school, father's occupation, and mother's occupation jointly predicted delinquent behaviour among participants. Thus, demographic variables such as gender, age, educational status and length predicted psychological distress among adolescents. However, age being the only independent predictor of delinquent behaviour reveals that as adolescents get older their delinquency reduces and the younger they are, the more likely to be delinquent they are.

7. Discussion

This study examined the influence of family background and the development of delinquent behaviour among SS2 students. The first hypothesis which stated that there will be significant relationship between family background and delinquent behavior among adolescents was retained. This means that family background is one of the remote factors linked to delinquent behaviour among adolescents. This finding corroborates with Adebowale & Anifowose (2017) who examined family background, school environment and peer group as predictors of juvenile delinquency and found significant relationships. The finding also agrees with the longitudinal survey conducted by Juby and Farrington (2001) who found that delinquency rates were higher among adolescents. The result showed that, the family background has an impact on adolescent delinquent behaviour. Possible explanation of this finding is that family background is like a coin; being from a rich or poor family and coming from a broken or not-broken home has its advantages and disadvantages.

However, at the end of the day each side of the coin is linked to the development of delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

The second hypothesis which stated that there will be a significant difference in delinquent behavior of adolescents from broken homes and those from non-broken home was also retained. In other words, participants from broken homes reported a significant mean difference in delinquent behaviour than participants from non-broken home. This implies that family background (non-broken homes/broken homes) influenced students' delinquent behaviour. This finding is in line with Price and Kunz (2003) whose results indicated that children from divorced homes have higher rates of delinquency (status offenses, crimes against person, felony theft, general delinquency, tobacco and drug use) compared to children from intact homes, with the exception of alcohol use. The findings also tally with Burt, Barnes, McGue, & Lacono (2009) who found that it is the experience of parental divorce, and not common genes that drives the association between divorce and adolescent delinquency. Plausible explanation of this study can be expounded on the premise that children from broken homes go through a lot emotional trauma, neglect, depression, stigma, abuse and other ills that haunts them for a life time. In most cases, in other to deal with this tension and depressive situation, a faulty coping mechanism or negative defence mechanism may be adopted by the adolescent which in most cases runs contrary to the laid down laws of the society.

The third hypothesis which stated that significant differences will exist in delinquent behavior of adolescent from poor and rich homes was confirmed. In a lay man's term, participants from poor homes reported more delinquent behaviour than participants from rich home. The findings of this result is in consonance with Ugwu & Stanley (2017) who recruiting four hundred and forty five (445) SS1 and SS2 students found that parent's socio-economic status has influence on students' delinquent behaviours. A practical explanation of this finding is that coming from a poor home will come with a lot unfulfilled wants and desires ranging from basic needs to low esteem needs and security needs. And according to the Maslow's hierarchy of needs, if the basic needs are not met, the individual cannot move towards a better self and self-actualizing. Self-actualization being a natural drive in humans, will motivate the individual to seek for such ends and in the process will run contrary to laid down rules and regulation – leading to delinquency.

7.1. Conclusion/Significance of the Study

Findings of this study suggests that family background (broken and poor homes) are factors contributing to some extent in shaping delinquent behavior of an adolescent, which in an alternate condition, can help in healthy mental growth of an individual. This involves having a supportive family environment where parents should be positive role models and work together in giving their children basic needs of life. But if a child lives with non-supportive family or lives in broken families where parents are busy with their careers and in dealing with their own issues, a child is neglected; than they may end up choosing a deviant path which has greater chances of moving towards delinquency. The study therefore concludes that poor economic condition and relationship state of a family is the source of stress for the child and in turn, the child moves towards delinquency. In such scenarios, children are negatively motivated by their peers to do all it takes to become influential which will invariably expose them to criminal activities.

The study is significant because it was able to examine the influence of family background and the development of delinquent behavior among adolescents in Makori, capital of Benue State, Nigeria. The results will add to the body of knowledge and guide future researchers on other areas to consider when investigating delinquency among adolescents.

7.2. Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were highlighted:

- Parents should be proactive in birthing the number of kids they can take care of emotionally and financially and at all times be encouraged to do their best to provide at least the basic needs of their children. This as hoped will arrest delinquency. On the other hand, rich or wealthy parents should always check and monitor the activities of their children by giving them adequate attention and being involved in their lives. This can be achieved by adopting intentional parenting technique. This will also help in reducing prodigality and rascality among adolescents.
- Adolescent delinquents require guidance and protection such as can be provided by the existing educational and social activities. Teachers should constantly support and strengthen good behaviour in adolescents so that each individual members of the school is not left to the mercy of group pressure.
- The Benue State and Federal government should educate the masses through the social media and other relevant media about the effect of family background on the behaviour of adolescents.

7.3. Limitations of the Study

The researcher focused only on two (2) secondary schools in Makurdi metropolis (Government Model School and Gaadi Comprehensive College). This will make generalization of findings problematic. Another limitation is that the survey is school-based. Those who are most delinquent may have dropped out of school and some of the most important participants may be missing. Hence, future studies should assess more school and adolescents who are drop-outs to better understand delinquency among adolescents.

7.4. Policy Implications

This study shows that when social control variables are employed in models examining differences in the development of delinquency, family structures becomes contributory and predicting factors. This research indicates that

policies aimed to reduce crime by focusing on keeping families intact may be better served to strive to improve parenting practices, especially attention to kids, attachment, monitoring, and deliberate involvement. One way to do this would be to have parenting symposiums aimed at improving relationships with their children or workshops on how to better monitor, supervise, discipline, reinforce, show warmth, and act as role models to children. These are just a few policies that could be implemented to help parents and teachers better monitor and supervise their children and be more involved in their children's lives. All stakeholders involved in the development of children should be more concerned about their total wellbeing. If delinquency policies are to be truly effective, higher priority must be given to marginalized, vulnerable and disadvantage young people in society, and issues relating to youth in conflict with the law should be a central focus of national youth policies. Lastly, school organization interventions should adopt a systematic and comprehensive approach to juvenile delinquency prevention such as reorganizing teachers, engaging counselors and parents in the planning and replacing school administrators when necessary.

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Questionnaire

Section A

Instruction: Please Kindly Tick Or Write On The Relevant Information That Best Applies To You.

The Instrument Was designed using a 4-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), and Strongly Disagreed (SD).

Gender: Male [] Female []
 Age : 12-14 [] 14-18 [] 12-14 [] 18 years and above []
 School
 Class
 Occupation: Father:.....Mother

Section B

S/N	Items	SA/A	D/SD
1	Delinquent Behaviours: We say anything we want to say at home		
2	If there is a disagreement in our family, we try hard to keep the peace		
3	We fight a lot in our family		
4	We take alcohol as a result of worry		
5	We do fight as a result of worry		
6	Broken/Non-broken: Activities in our family are not carefully planned		
7	We hardly rely on each other in the family when a problem comes up		
8	In our family, each person has different values or standards of right and wrong		
9	Family members often criticize each other		
10	Our parents stay together		
11	My parents interact with us at home		
12	Do you like to stay with your parents at home		
13	Rich/Poor: We often take three square meal a day at home		
14	We all live in one room apartment.		
15	Our parents always provide your needs		
16	My parents borrow to pay my school fees		
17	Financial problems are openly discussed in our family		

Table 6