



PARENTING STYLES AND PERSONALITY TRAITS AS PREDICTORS OF DELINQUENT BEHAVIOURS AMONG JUVENILE OFFENDERS IN OGUN STATE

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ABSTRACT

Many factors that put adolescents at risk of delinquency have been identified in studies; however, disproportionately few of the studies on delinquency and its predisposing factors were carried out in Nigeria, and mostly among non-delinquent offenders. This study investigated perceived parental styles and personality traits as predictors of delinquent behaviour among delinquent offenders in Remand Homes in Abeokuta, Ogun-state.

The study adopted ex-post facto survey design with simple random sampling to select 227 participants. Data were collected using questionnaire, consisting of standardised and psychometrically robust measures of Parental Authority Questionnaire, Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, and Self-Reported Delinquency Measure. Results indicated that permissive parenting style ($\beta = 0.16$; $p < .05$) was predictive of delinquent behaviour. Psychoticism ($\beta = .10$; $p < .05$) and extraversion ($\beta = -.26$; $p < .01$) were also predictive of delinquency. Male participants were more involved in delinquency than female participants $\{t(2, 225) = -6.93$; $p < .01\}$. However, no significant difference between participants from separated-home and participants from intact-home on delinquent behaviour $\{t(2, 225) = -.73$; $p > .05\}$. This study concluded that, permissive parenting style and psychoticism-trait and extraversion-trait were strong factors in predicting delinquent behaviours. Also, irrespective of type of homes the adolescents live, delinquent behaviours are the same among this population. The study recommended that rehabilitation should focus more on male gender but not living out female gender irrespective of their type of homes as the case maybe. Parents of the delinquent youths should be targeted for psychological intervention as well, especially with regards to positive parenting.

Keywords: Delinquent, offenders, Parenting, Personality, Adolescent.

INTRODUCTION

Juvenile delinquent behaviour is one of the important social issues faced by most nations of the world today including third world countries and Nigeria is not exempted. Psychologists, sociologists and criminologists the world over have long debated the various causes of delinquency. A developing and even more disturbing phenomenon is the alarming rate of children, young persons and youths getting involved in crimes. Consequently, as delinquency become a serious problem all over the world. Evidently, the causes of these behaviours are found in a complex of psychological, social, and economic factors, like those of crime in general and emotional maladjustments is also implicated in many delinquents from clinical studies (Balogun & Chukwumezie, 2010).

In the US, delinquency among adolescents such as school shootings, fighting at school, bullying, absenteeism, and other forms of violence with school shootings receiving a great deal of media attention (National Institute of media and Family, 2001). In the case of Nigeria, between 1920 and 1960, pick pocketing and prostitution by youth were seen as a significant social concern and punished harshly (Fourchard, 2006). In addition, the last two decades witnessed crimes ranging from minor stealing to major robbery and killing perpetuated by teens (Okorodudu, 2010), and involvement of these adolescents in delinquent activities is on the increase too (Okorodudu, 2010). Furthermore, Eke, (2004) notes the main delinquent behaviours engaged in by Nigerian adolescents are: stealing, arson, rape, drug offences and murder, burglary, pick pocket, and armed robbery. Unfortunately, to some extent for some decades in Nigeria, studies of deviance, delinquency and crime have been affected grossly by poor records (Udegbe and Osinowo, 1997). However, a study by Osinowo and Taiwo (1998) found that among street children and school, self-reported behaviours such as stealing, sexual intercourse and smoking were common among these children. Most of them came from broken homes and resorted to the streets because of economic deprivation.

Eke (2004) observes that causes of juvenile delinquency tend to find theoretical explanations in the interaction between biological, environmental and social factors. She believes that the biological or genetic make-up of individuals can predispose adolescents' engagement in delinquent activities. In the same vein, a number of studies have assessed how socioeconomic factors are associated with delinquency. Wikstrom & Loeber (2000) analyzed disadvantaged neighbourhoods in context of those males who were serious juvenile offenders. What they found was that regardless of the neighbourhood, if youth scored high on overall offender risk characteristics, the neighbourhood that they lived in did not affect their potential for offending. Shannon (2006) identified institutionalized youth, compared them to youth from the community, and found that the former evidenced higher levels of social disadvantage.

Delinquency is likely to be encouraged by various factors which feed on or link to each other, not only one factor would be responsible for its development. Undoubtedly, parenting styles play significant and vital role in delinquency as well as very crucial roles in adolescents' transition to adulthood as it has been recognized as a major vehicle in socializing the child (Utti 2006); Parenting is the act of parenthood, the child upbringing, training rearing or child education. Parenting styles are categorized under three major forms: the authoritarian, the authoritative or democratic, and the permissive or laissez-faire or self-indulgence or un-involving (Baumrind, 1991). The authoritarian parenting style constitutes of parents who are often strict, and harsh, authoritative parents are flexible and responsive to the child's needs but still enforce reasonable standards of conduct while permissive or laissez-faire parents are those who impose few restrictions, rules or limits on their children according (Ang & Groh, 2006). Daderman, Meurling, and Hallman (2001) found Psychoticism, Extraversion and Neuroticism to be significantly higher in juvenile offenders compared to a non-delinquent control group. In the same vein, Aleixo and Norris, (2000) studies found Psychoticism and Extraversion instead of Psychoticism and Neuroticism to be positively related to juvenile delinquency in offender samples

The link between family relationship and parenting style/monitoring is often found to be associated with each other and effects the levels of delinquency. For example, Johnson, Giordano, Manning, and Longmore (2011) found that low early parental support, overt conflict by parent, and parental monitoring are significantly related to offending during young adulthood. Peer delinquency was also found to be a mediator between delinquency and parental support. Furthermore, poor relationship with parents was found to be a contributing factor to association with delinquent peers. Parental supervision as part of parenting methods is usually the strongest predictor in juvenile offending (Farrington, 2011). Harsh and punitive discipline, including physical punishment (Farrington, 2011), neglectful parenting (Hoeve, Blokland, Dubas, Loeber, Gerris, & van der Laan, 2008) are also predictive of juvenile delinquency. Neglectful parenting style distinguished between groups of youth offenders, where neglectful parenting style was found in serious youth offender trajectories (the study includes serious persisting, serious desisting, and moderate desisting) and the minor youth offender trajectories (minor persisting and non-delinquents).

Single-parent families as opposed to complete families set youths at higher risk for delinquency due to loss of attachment to one parent and less supervision (Juby & Farrington, 2001; Wong, Slotboon, & Bijileveld, 2010). Ingram, Patchin, Huebner, McCluskey, and Bynum (2007) found that single-parent families reported lower parental supervision. Specifically, dysfunction homes typified by divorce or death of parents may prong adolescents into participation in delinquent behaviours (Boroffice 2004). The incidence of parental separation may result in adolescent's embarrassment, depression (Boroffice 2004, Hyssong, 2000) and even make them miss school, perform poorly academically and participate in delinquent behaviours (Atkinson, 2004, Boroffice, 2004; Okorodudu, 2006). However not all studies came to the same conclusion.

Furthermore, criminal behaviours or criminal tendencies have some undertones and which may be noted in personality traits; unique and variable patterns of human behaviour, focusing on sensing, thinking and feeling. The personality of the individual is the settled framework of references within which a person addresses the current situation and decides how to behave

(Tenibiaje, 2011). Eysenck (1996) argued that personality influences behaviour. Eysenck and Eysenck (1998) highlighted three basic elements of personality: as Extroversion (E), Neuroticism (N), and Psychoticism (P). Each of these dimensions runs from a high to a low scale, the extroversion scale runs from high to low, Neuroticism runs from high (neuroticism) to low (stable) and similarly with psychoticism. A number of studies have tried to determine if some personality traits are common to criminals than the general population, Conklin (2001) showed that the personality traits of offenders did differ from the general population, although, the differences were usually small. Tenibiaje (1995) observed that the personality characteristics of juvenile delinquents and criminals were not similar, in terms of extroversion, neuroticism and psychoticism.

A number of personal and social factors determine youths' behaviours. One of the concrete risk factors is gender. Gender differences have been reported by many studies. For example males are more involved in delinquent behavior than females. One of the explanations of the higher level of delinquency in males than in females is that the etiology of delinquency may differ for males and females. Boys are mostly always found to be more at risk of offending than girls (Cassidy, 2011), and girls are found to exhibit less problematic externalising behaviour in general (Vandervalk, Spruijt, Goede, Maas, & Meeus, 2005). Males may be more vulnerable to risk factors for delinquency such as inadequate parenting than females (Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva 2001; Van der Laan & Blom, 2006). However, Onyechi and Okere, (2007) found that gender is not a significant factor in adolescents deviant behaviour and subsequent effect on academic achievement. Machteld, Judith, Veroni, Peter, Wilma & Jan (2009) did not find any differences between males and females with respect to the link between parenting and delinquency

Be as it may, due to the alarming rate of juvenile delinquency in our country today, governments, parents, guidance, social welfare, psychologists, teachers, moralists and well-meaning Nigerians have all picked interest on its adverse effects in our society. Juvenile delinquency is detrimental and costly on many levels, including individual, family, community, and in the greater social context. The increasing waves of juvenile delinquency in our country place lives, properties and future of our youth at stake. In addition, Okorodudu and Omoni (2005) also observed that adolescents may exhibit suicidal tendencies, juvenile delinquency, vandalism, destruction of public property, maiming and murder of parents and violence against the larger society. Aremu (2007) reported that rarely does an evening pass in which the locally televised nightly news does not provide coverage of at least one shocking and disturbing act of criminal violence involving juveniles and youths in Nigeria. Despite researchers and stakeholders' efforts in the developed countries to tackle criminal behaviour in the population from childhood, the case is different in the developing world, especially in Nigeria among this population. In addition, much of the work done in this area are from western countries which cannot be totally relied on due to cultural relativity; therefore, there is a need to understand more possible psychosocial factors predisposing juveniles to delinquency in our society.

To nip criminal behaviours in the board, focus must be placed on minor offenders that may likely be a thorn on the flesh of the society tomorrow as they grow. Through this finding, authority (social welfare), school counsellors, psychologists, and NGOs who are interested in juvenile crime fighting and prevention will understand more the dynamics of delinquency from Nigeria perspective and may come out with active preventive and rehabilitative program that will work on the factors predisposing them to crime.

Hypotheses

- i. Perceived parenting styles, personality-traits will jointly and independently influence delinquent behaviour among juvenile delinquents in Remand Homes
- ii. Male participants will involve significantly more in delinquent behaviour than female participants.

- iii. Participants from separated-home will involve significantly more in delinquent behaviour than participants from intact-home.

METHOD

Design

This study adopted ex-post facto design using survey method. Data from juvenile who are remanded in conventional (Borstal Home) for various criminal offenses committed and remand home were used.

Setting

The settings for this study were Juvenile Remand Home Asero, Abeokuta and Borstal Training Institute Abeokuta, both in Ogun state. The Borstal home is one of the three Borstal institutions in Nigeria and the only one in the South Western region for any juvenile arrested.

Participants

A total of numbers of 227 participants were randomly selected from the two homes: Age distribution shows those who are 8-13years were 34 (15%) and 14-18years 193 (85.0%). On religion, Christians were 138 (60.8%), Muslims were 63(27.8%). The living arrangement of participants also shows those who are from intact-home were 107 (47.1%) while separated/divorced home were 120 (52.9%). Parental educational status shows those with senior secondary education/ordinary diploma (SSCE/ND) were 132 (58.1%), high national diploma/Bsc (HND/Bsc) 59 (26%), and others 36 (15.9%). Beyond parental control 117 (51.5%) and committal were 32 (14.1%) representing male juvenile and female 78 (34.4%).

Instruments

The questionnaire consists of five items measuring demographic variables of the participants, such as; age, sex, living status, religion, parental education, parental occupation, residency, parental marital status and offense committed.

Parenting styles was assessed by PAQ developed by Buri (1991). It is a 30- item questionnaire designed to measure Baumrind's (1971) permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative parenting styles. Unlike other parenting scales, the PAQ is a survey for adolescents to complete, not parents. The responses to the questions are rated on a 5-Likert Scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The questions are divided into the three categories, permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative, with 10 questions defining each parenting style. The higher the score in a given category, the greater the level of the parental authority style measured. The results of several studies have supported the PAQ as a reliable and valid measure (Buri, 1991). Time required for completion of this measure is approximately 20 minutes. The reliability of the PAQ was found to be 0.77 to 0.92 in a test re-test check over a two-week period of time (Buri, 1991). Validity for the PAQ was found to be 0.74 to 0.87 for the subscales (Buri, 1991). However, the researcher revalidated the scale for the present study by pilot-testing and all the 30 items were retained after the total-item analysis. The Cronbach alpha for permissive style was 0.72. For authoritarian style, the Cronbach alpha was 0.77 and for authoritative style, the Cronbach alpha was 0.74 and this made this scale suitable for this study.

Personality traits was measured by Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQR-S) developed by Eysenck and Barrett (1985). In this form the four indices of extraversion, neuroticism, psychoticism and the lie scale each contain 12 items. They report reliabilities for males and females respectively of 0.84 and 0.80 for neuroticism, 0.88 and 0.84 for extraversion, 0.62 and 0.61 for psychoticism, and 0.77 and 0.73 for the lie scale. However, for this study, the lie scale was not included in the analysis. For Neurotism sub-scale, 5 items were deleted while 8 items were retained. The Cronbach alpha was 0.80. For Psychotism sub-scale, 5 items were deleted while 8 items were retained. The Cronbach alpha was 0.64. Extraversion sub-scale, 8

items were deleted while 5 items were retained. The Cronbach alpha was 0.52. All after the total-items analysis was done through pilot test and this made this scale suitable for this study. Delinquent was assessed with Self-Reported Delinquency Measure (SRD) developed by Elliot & Ageton, (1980). It is a 47-item measure used to assess self-reported involvement in delinquency for youth between the ages of 2 and 17. It has six scales assessing different types of delinquent act. It was adapted and modified with responses to the questions rated on a 4-Likert Scale, ranging from "Sometime= 1" to "Always= 4. The scales are: predatory crimes against persons, predatory crimes against property, illegal service crimes, public disorder crimes, status crimes, and hard drug use. The measure is directly comparable with other self-report and official measures that are reported annually (Elliot & Ageton, 1980). Time required for completion of this measure is approximately 20 minutes. The Cronbach's Alpha for the self-report delinquency scale was found to be 0.91 by Elliot and Ageton (1980. This study reported Cronbach alpha 0.93 after total-items analysis was done. Out of 48 items on the scale, 7 items were deleted while 41 items were retained and this made this scale suitable for this study

Procedure

The data for the study were collected among juveniles in two different juvenile homes (Remand and Borstal home) in Abeokuta, Ogun-State. The researcher was interested only in delinquent juveniles who have been taken to custody on account of behavioral problems in juvenile home and those remanded in Borstal institute. Permission was obtained from authorities of the Remand home and Comptroller (also called principal) of the Borstal training institute respectively. The researcher explained the purpose and the objectives of the study to the authorities of the homes and approval was given to collect the data for the study.

RESULTS

In respect to hypothesis one that says perceived parenting styles, personality-traits will jointly and independently influence delinquent behaviour among juvenile delinquents in Remand Homes. The hypothesis is tested and presented in table 1.

Table 1: showing summary of joint and independent prediction of delinquent behaviour by permissive parenting, authoritarian parenting, authoritative parenting, neurotism, psychotism, and extraversion among juveniles

Predictors	R	R ²	df	F-ratio	P	β	P
Permissive						0.162	< 0.05
Authoritarian						-0.047	> 0.05
Authoritative						0.102	> 0.05
Neurotism	0.353	0.125	226	5.223	< 0.001	0.100	> 0.05
Psychotism						0.126	< 0.05
Extraversion						0.255	< 0.05

Table 1: shows that there was significant joint influence of permissive parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style, neurotism, psychotism, and extraversion traits on delinquency among the participants (R²=0.125(F(6,226)=5.223, p<.001). The r value of 0.353 shows a multiple relationship among the three dimensions of parenting styles, the three personality traits and delinquent behaviour. Similarly, permissive parenting style (β= 0.162, t= 2.092; P< 0.05), psychotism trait (β= 0.126, t= 1.901; P< 0.05), and extraversion trait (β= 0.255, t= - 3.990; P< 0.001). more importantly alone contributed about 22.5% to the total variance also had a significant independent influence on delinquent behaviour which means those who are low on this involve more in delinquency. However, authoritarian parenting style,

authoritative parenting style, and neuroticism could not influence delinquent behaviour independently. The r^2 value of 0.125 shows joint influence of the independent variables accounted for 12.5% to the variation in delinquent behaviour. This implies that permissive parenting style, psychotism trait, and extraversion only can influence delinquent behaviour among these juveniles while unfortunately authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style and neuroticism trait cannot influence delinquency independently. Therefore, the hypothesis is partially accepted.

Regarding hypothesis two which states male participants will involve significantly more in delinquent behaviour than female participants was tested and presented in Table 2

Table2: showing summary of group independent T-test between male and female on delinquent behaviour among juveniles

Variable	N	X	SD	df	t	P
Male	117	100.41	22.16			
				225	-6.930	< 0.001
Female	78	122.23	20.10			

Table 2 reveals that there is a significant difference between male participants and female participants on delinquent behaviour ($t= -6.930$, $df= 225$; $P< 0.001$). The difference can be observed from the mean of male ($X= 100.41$; $SD=22.16$) and female ($X = 122.23$; $SD=20.10$) with a mean difference of 21.82. This implies that male participants involve significantly more in delinquent behaviour than female participants. Therefore, this hypothesis is retained.

Hypothesis three which states that participants from separated-home will involve significantly more in delinquent behaviour than participants from intact-home was tested using T-test for independent samples. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: showing summary of group independent T-test between participants from separate home and intact-home on delinquent behaviour among juveniles

Variable	N	X	SD	df	t	P
Separated Home	102	108.13	23.37			
				225	- .730	> 0.05
Intact-home	107	105.80	24.69			

Table 3 reveals that there is no significant difference between participants from separated-home and participants from intact-home on delinquent behaviour ($t= -.730$, $df= 225$; $P,> 0.05$). The difference can be observed from the mean of participants from separated-home ($X= 108.13$; $SD=23.37$) and intact-home ($X = 105.80$; $SD=24.69$) with a mean difference of 2.33. This means that participants from separated home are not significantly difference on delinquent behaviour. In other word, there are the same on delinquency. Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this study was to investigate perceived parenting styles and personality traits as correlates of delinquent behaviour among juvenile offenders in Borstal home and remand homes This study attempted to examine gender differences and living status of the participants on delinquency, investigated differences in perceived parenting styles on delinquent behaviour, examine differences in personality traits on delinquent behaviour, and investigated joint and independent influence of perceived parenting styles, personality traits on juvenile delinquency.

In respect to the parenting styles and personality traits predicting juvenile delinquency, the result indicated that there was significant joint influence of permissive parenting style, authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style, neuroticism, psychoticism, and extraversion traits on delinquency among the participants. Additionally, there was a significant independent influence of permissive parenting style, psychoticism trait, and extraversion trait on delinquent behaviour as observed in the model. This result is in consonance with Farrington, (2011) who reported parental supervision as part of parenting methods is usually the strongest predictor in juvenile offending. Similarly, the result is in tandem with Hoeve et al. (2008) who reported neglectful parenting is predictive of juvenile delinquency. This result is also supported by Daderman et al. (2001) who found Psychoticism, Extraversion and Neuroticism to be significantly higher in juvenile offenders compared to a non-delinquent control group. In the same vein, Aleixo and Norris, (2000) studies found Psychoticism and Extraversion instead of Psychoticism and Neuroticism to be positively related to juvenile delinquency in offender samples. Bingham et al. (2006) generally observed that men had greater numbers of offence than women. The outcome of their behaviour also shows that men had lower parental monitoring and greater parental permissiveness, less parental-oriented and had more substance use than women. The greater parental permissiveness and less parental monitor must increase men's juvenile delinquency

In the issue of gender differences, the result revealed there was a significant difference between male participants and female participants on delinquent behaviour. This implies that male participants involve significantly more in delinquent behaviour than female participants. In consonance with Moffitt et al. (2001) who reported males are more involved in delinquent behavior than females. In the same vein, Van der Laan and Blom (2006) also reported an important difference in gender. Boys committed a criminal offence 1.5 times more often than girls do. One of the explanations of the higher level of delinquency in males than in females is that the aetiology of delinquency may differ for males and females. Males may be more vulnerable to risk factors for delinquency such as inadequate parenting than females. However, in dissonance, Onyechi and Okere, (2007) found that gender is not a significant factor in adolescents deviant behaviour and subsequent effect on academic achievement. Similarly, Machteld et al. (2009) did not find any differences between males and females with respect to the link between parenting and delinquency. However, they found some differences between the link between delinquency and paternal and maternal parenting. Fathers' supportive behavior was more strongly related to delinquency than mothers' support.

Also, with respect to type of home they are from, result showed that there was no significant difference between participants from separated-home and participants from intact-home on delinquent behaviour. This means that participants from intact-home are not significantly difference on delinquent behaviour to those from separated home. In other words, both groups are the same on delinquency. This result is in dissonance with Wong et al. (2010) who reported that single-parent families as opposed to complete families set youths at higher risk for delinquency due to loss of attachment to one parent and less supervision. Some plausible explanation for this result could be that children from in-tact home do not have right supervision from their parents or attachment with their parents which may be due to the prevailing economy of the country where both parents have to look for how to provide for the family leading to neglect of good child-rearing. For example, monitoring has been consistently found to moderate delinquent peer influences on children's subsequent delinquent behaviours by buffering the effects (Pettit, John, Kenneth, & Darrell, 1999). Similarly, the kind of environment in which most of these children are living many be a factor as most of them experience various criminal activities which are not punished and so they copy such. Again, low parental monitoring also predicts engagement in more risky sexual activity (Metzler, Noell, Biglan, Ary, & Smolkowski, 1994). In dissonance to this result, Thornberry Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth & Jang (1994) found that children who live in homes with only one parent or in which marital relationships have been disrupted by divorce or separation are more likely to display a range of behavioural problems including



delinquencies than children who are from two parent families. A study by Demuth and Brown (2004) demonstrated that broken homes are associated with juvenile delinquency but also that family arrangements are not just a broken home issue.

Conclusion

This study concluded that permissive parenting style, psychotism trait, and extraversion were significant predictors of delinquent behaviour among juvenile offenders. Similarly, the study concluded that male juvenile offenders involved more in delinquent behaviour compared to female. Finally, it was also concluded that adolescent involved in delinquent in respective type of home in which the juvenile lives.

Recommendations

Research on antecedents and predictors of delinquency is of direct importance to the development or improvement of prevention and intervention strategies. This study has revealed some important factors should not be over looked in intervention programme for the pre-adolescents and the adolescent. This study recommended that more focused should be on the male gender in the planning for the behavioural intervention but this is not to leave girls out totally. Also, irrespective of the type of home they are living or they come from. Those in charge of rehabilitation program should not be carried away by living arrangement of these people as this factor showed no difference in delinquent behaviours. Last but not the list, parents should also be part of the intervention too in form of family therapy in order to understand their negative roles in exposing these people to delinquency through their styles of child rearing and they must be taught on positive parenting.

Limitation

This study is not without its own shortcomings. In the first place, due to time limit and logistic factors, the study could not make the study a longitudinal study which would have been best method for this study. In future study could expend the sample size to include other region the country for better external validity. Nevertheless, these limitations do not nullify the results of the study.

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