

PARENTING STYLES AND PEER PRESSURE AS PREDICTORS OF ADOLESCENTS' DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR IN RIVERS EAST SENATORIAL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated parenting styles and peer pressure as predictors of adolescents' delinquent behaviour in Rivers East senatorial district, Nigeria. The population of the study consisted of 31,654 public junior secondary school students in the research area. A sample size of 1590 public junior secondary school students was selected for the study using cluster sampling technique. A researcher made instrument titled 'Parenting Styles, Peer Pressure and Delinquent Behaviour Questionnaire for Adolescents' (PSPPDDBA) was used for data collection. The content validity of the instrument was established by three experts in measurement and evaluation. Cronbach alpha was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument and reliability coefficients of .71, .73 and .70 were obtained for parenting styles, peer pressure and delinquent behaviour sub-sections of the instrument respectively with the overall reliability coefficient of .71. Simple and multiple regression statistics were used for data analysis at .05 level of significance. The study found that parenting styles and peer pressure taken independently and collectively significantly predict adolescents' delinquent behaviour. Three recommendations were made among which is that parents should always create suitable environment for effective child rearing as well as make provisions for the needs of their children/wards to reduce cases of adolescents' delinquent behaviour.

Key words: Adolescents, Delinquent Behaviour, Parenting Styles, Peer Group, Rivers East.

Introduction

The period of adolescence is an important stage to the growth of any individual. The unusual features that mark this period make it unique from other aspects of development. Adolescence period is sometimes referred to as a stormy and stressful period because of some biological, physical changes they do experience in their bodies. It is a transitional period from childhood to adulthood which requires an atmosphere full of love and understanding to function well. In Nigeria today, many adolescents are getting into delinquent behaviour problems simply because of how they were nurtured and what they were exposed to in the course of growing up. Some of the adolescents'

delinquent behaviours include banditry, cultism, kidnapping, armed-robbery, prostitution, etc. Delinquency is an unwelcomed action, omission, or moral behaviour of a juvenile which is socially not permitted in any society. On a general standpoint, the failure of any child to meet certain social obligations anticipated from him/her by a given society, then he/she is considered to be delinquent.

Though some past researchers have linked adolescents' anti-social activities to self-esteem, locus of control, parental level of education and parental income status however, the present researchers believe that parenting styles and peer pressure may contribute very reasonably to adolescents'

delinquent behaviour especially in Rivers East senatorial district. According to Onyekuru (2015), parenting style refers to strategies adopted by parents for regulating the behaviours of their wards/children and on the same hand socializing them towards developing socially acceptable personality. In his own view, Spera (2015) posited that parenting style is a psychological concept representing standard practices/strategies that parents employ in their child-rearing practices to realize their tacit aim for their wards/children. Styles of parenting include authoritative, authoritarian, neglectful, and permissive parenting styles.

In authoritative parenting style, both parents and children take joint decisions after sharing their views. Children's sentiments have great importance for responsive parents. Oliveira, et al. (2014) reported that authoritative parents are always helpful to their children. He further explained that such parents participate in their child activities irrespective of their busy schedules at job hence, children are psychologically attached to their parents; parents allow their children to solve any conflict on their own; parents' expectations are high as well as they respond to the needs of their children. Moreover, Oliveira, et al. (2014) asserted that authoritative parenting style puts responsibility on the child by permitting him/her to choose which gives the children the impetus to develop the qualities of self-discipline and cooperation.

On the other hand, authoritarian parenting style is a parent centered approach based on the belief that parents are the authority. It lays emphasis on submission and compliance from children without any parental compassion and receptiveness. Here, rules are set by parents to develop behaviour of their

children and drive them accordingly. It has no room for negotiations between parents and children. Authoritarian parents see themselves as an authority. In authoritarian parenting style, parents do not take responsibility for the quantity of punishment given by them. Parents make use of verbal aggression so as to criticize and reject unacceptable behaviour of their children (Azimi, et.al. 2012).

In permissive parenting style, parents are viewed as facilitators rather than controllers. According to Schaffer, et.al. (2009), permissive parents give their children full freedom and would not want to disturb their activities. Baumrind, et.al. (1986) in Sailor (2014) further added that children of permissive parents have no realization that they have to face anger from others, if they show inappropriate behaviour. As a result, children do not leave such behaviour. With the passage of time, as the children grow up, permissive parents feel helpless to change the behaviour of their children. It is not right on the part of the permissive parent to leave the child without any guidance or set rules. Permissive parents are indulgent that is, they accept the mistakes of their children leniently. Social skills of the children are fully developed because they are given the opportunities to express themselves. Thus, children begin to overpower their parents due to their friendly attitude. Such children consider this world as an experimental ground and are not afraid to indulge in illegal activities. According to Sailor (2014), permissive parents are self-centered, irresponsible, unconcerned about others' welfare, highly emotional, dependent and lack intrinsic motivation.

Neglectful parenting is a style suffused or represented by a lack of responsiveness to a child's needs.

Neglectful parents make few demands of their children and they are often indifferent, dismissive, or even completely neglectful. Baumrind characterized her parenting styles in terms of two key dimensions: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness. Neglectful parents are low on both of these dimensions. They do not respond well to the needs of their children and provide little affection, support, or love. They also make very few demands of their children. They rarely set rules and do not offer guidance or expectations for behavior.

Evidence of empirical studies on the relationship between parenting styles and adolescents' anti-social activities abound. For example, Alessio and Maury (2009) studied the relationship between parenting and adolescents' anti-social behaviour. The study used data collected from a sample of 840 Italian adolescents' and their parents to explore the relations between parenting, adolescent self-disclosure, and anti-social behavior. Stratified random sampling technique was used for data collection while inferential and descriptive statistics were used for data analysis. In the hypothesized model, parenting practices (for instance, parental monitoring and control) have direct effects on parental knowledge and anti-social behavior. Parenting style (for example, parent-child closeness), on the other hand, is directly related to adolescent self-disclosure, which in turn is positively related to parental knowledge and negatively related to adolescents' antisocial behavior.

Shettima (2017) investigated paternal parenting styles, self-efficacy and its relationship with antisocial behaviours among adolescents of Geidam metropolis, Yobe State, Nigeria. The research was carried out on the sample of 339 male

adolescents' aged between 15 to 18 years of Government Science and Technical College as well as Government Science Secondary School of Geidam Metropolis area of Yobe State in North Eastern Nigeria. Parental Styles Questionnaire (PAQ) of Buri (1991) Self-Youth Report Questionnaire of Achenbach (1991) were employed for data collection. The results of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between paternal authoritarian and permissive parenting styles with anti-social behaviours. Meanwhile, there was significant negative relationship between paternal authoritative parenting styles with adolescents' behaviours among adolescents of Geidam Metropolis. Moreover, one-way ANOVA test revealed that parents' education levels have a greater influence on adolescents' anti-social behaviours.

In a related study, Trenas, et.al. (2013) investigated whether there are differences in the parenting style received by two groups of children who obtained low-risk and high-risk scores, respectively, in relation to aggressive behaviour and determine which parenting variables are linked with the presence or absence of this kind of problematic behaviour. A sample of 33 children between 3 and 14 years old (21 male and 12 female) with risk scores in aggressive behaviour and another similar group with low scores in this variable. Two self-made instruments were administered both instruments to the parents, we carried out a binomial logistic regression analysis which resulted in a prediction model for the 87.9% of the sample, made up of the parenting variables; father's satisfaction with parenting and role orientation, mother's autonomy and limit setting. Moreover, analysis of the variance revealed significant differences in the support and

communication perceived by the fathers and mothers of both groups.

Adesanya and Osinowo (2019) 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 standardized 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. Male participants were more involved in delinquency than female participants $\{t(2, 225) = -6.93$; $p < .01\}$. The study concluded that, permissive parenting style and psychoticism-trait and extraversion-trait were strong factors in predicting delinquent behaviours.

Okorodudu (2010) investigated the influence of parenting styles on adolescents' delinquency. A sample of 404 adolescents was used for the study. Regression statistics was used for the analyses of the study. Irrespective of gender, location, and age, the results of the analyses showed that laissez-faire parenting style effectively predicts 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. More so, Ugwu (2011) investigated the influence of parenting style and gender as predictors of disposition towards anti-social behavior two hundred (200) SS1 students of Secondary Schools in Enugu (Trans-Ekulu Girls" Secondary School, Enugu, Federal Government College, Enugu, New-Haven Boys" Secondary School, Enugu) participated in the study. Participants were within the age range of 13 and 18 years with a mean age of 15.5 using ANOVA. The results of ANOVA showed non-significant main effects of parenting styles on anti-social behavior between participants from permissive, authoritarian and authoritative parents: $f(1,194) = 1.048$, $p > .05$.

Peer pressure is another variable of interest to the researchers in this study. Peer pressure can be both negative and positive. The researchers observed that the negative aspect of peer pressure strives more than the positive aspect. Adolescents belong to one peer group or the other which serves as a source of identity and social support. As members of a peer group, they (adolescents) conform to the ideas, beliefs, and judgment of the peer group and they spend much more time, with their peers than parents.

In support of the above statement, Wakoli, et.al. (2016) found a significant relationship between adolescent students' peers and aggressive behaviour among students. The study was conducted to determine the extent to which adolescent students' peers influence aggressive behaviour among students in Bungoma County. Stratified random sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select a sample of 467 used for the study. The study used questionnaires to

collect data. Pearson Correlation statistics was used to test the significance of the stated hypotheses at .05. In the same vein, Amadi (2019) found a positive relationship between peer pressure and anti-social behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State. A sample of 300 SS 11 students in public secondary schools in Ikwerre Local Government Area of Rivers State was selected for the study through simple random sampling technique. Five instruments were used in the study for data collection. The research questions and hypotheses were answered and tested respectively using Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics at 0.05 level of correspondence.

Onoyase and Ebebuwa-Okoh (2018) examined the relationship among adolescents' developmental characteristics, peer group influence, and their anti-social behaviours. The sample size of 594 students were randomly selected from secondary schools in the 3 Senatorial Districts of Delta State. Questionnaire titled 'Relationship among Adolescents' Characteristics, Peer Group Influence and their Anti-social Behaviours' was used for this study. Regression and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. The findings revealed that physical, intellectual, social/emotional characteristics and peer group influence adolescents' anti-social behaviours. Kpae and Adokiye (2019) investigated the influence of peer pressure on youth criminality in Rivers States. The study examined 1268 youths which are employed, unemployed and student (secondary and tertiary). The youths also include both sex, male and female and they were selected using the random sampling technique. The selected samples were analyzed using both the descriptive and

inferential statistical techniques. Results from the analysis revealed that there is a statistical significant relationship between peer pressure and the various social criminal vices in Rivers State and that peer groups have stronger influence on criminal related activities in Rivers State. Esiri (2016) examined the influence of peer pressure on criminal behaviour of youths in Nigeria. The study particularly investigated peer pressure in adolescent and how it may influence or create the leverage to non-conformity to societal norms and laws. Finally, the study concluded that peer pressure exists for conformity and in delinquent sub-culture.

Statement of the Problem

Recently, in Rivers State, particularly in Rivers East senatorial district, motorists and passengers have witnessed high frequency of armed robbery, cult clashes, kidnapping, and other anti-social activities perpetrated by adolescents in the area. In some rare cases, victims of the ugly situations were reportedly killed, some women raped while some travelers had their valuables stolen from them. This is in spite the efforts made by different local government authorities and Rivers State Government to curtail the spate of criminal activities in the state. The problem of this study therefore was to determine parenting styles, peer pressure and delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate parenting styles and peer pressure as predictors of delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district, Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to achieve the following objectives:

- Determine the extent to which parenting styles collectively predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents.
- Ascertain the extent to which peer pressure predicts delinquent behaviour of adolescents.
- Determine the extent to which parenting styles and peer pressure predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents.

Research Questions

The following research questions were guided the conduct of the study:

1. To what extent do parenting styles collectively predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents?
2. To what extent does peer pressure predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents?
3. To what extent do parenting styles and peer pressure predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

- a. Parenting styles do not significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents.
- b. Peer pressure does not significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents.
- c. Parenting styles and peer pressure do not significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents.

Methodology

Correlational research design was adopted for the study in order to establish the relationship between parenting styles, peer pressure and delinquent behaviour of

adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district. The population of the study consisted of 31,654 public junior secondary school students in the research area. A sample size of 1590 public junior secondary school students was selected for the study using cluster sampling technique. The respondents were selected from JS 1, JS 2 and JS 3. They were aged between 10 years and 15 years.

A researcher made instrument titled 'Parenting Styles, Peer Pressure and Delinquent Behaviour Questionnaire for Adolescents' (PSPDDBA) was used for data collection. It was a 30 item questionnaire in which 10 items measured each of parenting styles, peer pressure and adolescents' delinquent behaviour. All the items were positively skewed and were responded to on a four point Likert type scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) weighted 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

The content validity of the instrument was established by three experts in measurement and evaluation, Department of Educational Foundations, Guidance and Counseling, University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. They vetted the items in terms of their relevance, appropriateness, and language level. The corrections and recommendations of the experts were incorporated in the final version of the instrument.

Cronbach alpha was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument and reliability coefficients of .71, .73 and .70 were obtained for parenting styles, peer pressure and delinquent behavior sub-sections of the instrument respectively with the overall reliability coefficient of .71. The reliability coefficient of .71 was high which justified the use of the instrument for the study. Simple and

multiple regression statistics were used for data analysis. The hypotheses were tested at .05 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Multiple regression analysis on the extent to which parenting styles collectively predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district

Model Value	R	R-Square Decision	Adjusted R-Square	Std Error of the estimate	F	P-
1	.543	.294 Sig.	.304	5.341	1.285	

The R^2 of .294 implies that parenting styles account for 29.4% of the variance in delinquent behaviour of adolescents while 70.6% could be accounted for by other factors. Additionally, analysis of data shows that $p < .05$ at F-value of 1.285 is significant.

Hence, hypothesis one is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is retained. This implies that parenting styles significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district.

Table 2: Simple regression analysis on the extent to which peer pressure predicts delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district

Model Value	R	R-Square Decision	Adjusted R-Square	Std Error of the estimate	F	P-
1	.658	.432 Sig.	.411	2.006	.337	.000

The R^2 of .432 implies that peer pressure accounts for 43.2% of the variance in delinquent behaviour of adolescents while 56.8% could be accounted for by other factors. Additionally, analysis of data shows that $p < .05$ at F-value of .337 is

significant. Hence, hypothesis two is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is retained. This implies that peer pressure is a significant predictor of delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district.

Table 3: Multiple regression analysis on the extent to which parenting styles and peer group predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district

Model Decision	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std Error of the estimate	F	P-Value
1	.726	.527 Sig.	.498	2.119	.775	.000

The R^2 of .527 implies that parenting styles and peer pressure account for 52.7% of the variance in delinquent behaviour of adolescents while 47.3% could be accounted for by other factors. More so, analysis of data shows that $p < .05$ at F-value of .775 is significant. Hence, hypothesis three is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is retained. This implies that parenting styles and peer pressure significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district.

Discussion of Findings

Analysis of data on research question one and its corresponding hypothesis one revealed that parenting styles collectively predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district. It is a very known fact that the home environment serves as the child's first place of contact. The child while in the home needs parental care, love, warmth and supervision for proper adjustment and socialization. Where parents fail in their responsibilities to their children, it may not be out of place for such children to take to the streets where possibilities of engaging in diverse heinous crimes would not be totally ruled out. This present finding that parenting styles significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents is supported by Amadi (2019) and Okorodudu (2010) and does not disagree with any of the empirical literature reviewed in this study by the researchers.

More so, the study revealed that peer pressure is a significant predictor of delinquent behaviour of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district. This finding is not out of place considering the fact that most of the armed robbery and kidnapping gangs caught recently in the area are adolescents of the same age brackets. In

their confession after being tortured by men of Nigerian Police Force, most of them narrated how they were lured into such groups by their peers who mounted strong pressure on them.

This present finding that peer pressure significantly predict delinquent behaviour of adolescents is in agreement with the findings many past authors such as Onoyase and Ebinuwa-Okoh (2018), Kpae and Adokiyi (2019), as well as Esiri (2016) who in his study found that peer pressure exists for conformity and in delinquent sub-culture. None of the reviewed empirical literature was in disagreement with the present finding.

Conclusion/Implications for Counseling

The fact that parenting styles and peer pressure account for 52.7% of the variance in delinquent behavior of adolescents in Rivers East senatorial district, calls for immediate counseling intervention. Guidance counselors operating in Rivers State in collaboration with the state government should as a matter of urgency engage in robust and aggressive media sensitization of parents on the dangers of poor parental upbringing of their children. During such programmes, guidance counselors should emphasize on the need for adequate parental care, supervision and monitoring of their children/wards which are necessary ingredients for effective child rearing. More so, parents should be made to realize that if they create conducive environment where their children/wards will freely communicate with them, establish cordial relationship with their children/wards, and desist from unnecessary parental over-reactions to issues among others, the present surge in adolescents' indulgence in kidnapping, armed-robbery, illegal oil refining activities,

cultism, political hugger, prostitution, etc. in Rivers State would be reduced drastically if not totally eliminated. Finally, guidance counselors posted to secondary schools should try as much as possible to identify any unproductive and unhealthy peer groups existing in their various schools as well as ensure that such groups are not allowed to exist.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study:

- Parents should always create suitable environment for effective child rearing as well as make provisions for the needs of their children/wards to prevent adolescents' delinquent behavior.
- Adolescents should identify themselves with only peer groups that will contribute meaningfully to the development.
- Government should ensure that guidance and counseling units are established in every public secondary school in Nigeria and manned by qualified guidance counselors to address the several counseling needs of the students.

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