

Influence of Family Relationship, Parenting Style And Self-Esteem On Delinquent Behaviour Among Juveniles in Remand Homes

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I. INTRODUCTION

Local and international news is replete with reports of crime. At least once in every week a Nigerian tabloid would have on its pages some reports of one form of crime or the other, committed either against individuals or against corporate bodies (Ribadu, 2007). A developing and even more disturbing phenomenon is the number of children, young persons and youths getting involved in crimes. According to the FBI report, although fewer crimes are being committed in the USA, the juvenile arrest rate has grown by 20% since 1991 and about 2.7 million juveniles were arrested in 1995, making it about 18% of all arrests. Additionally, in 1994 more than 1.5 million delinquency cases were processed in juvenile courts in the United States representing a 41% increase in cases since 1985 (Butts, 1996).

Juvenile delinquent behaviour is one of the important issues faced by most nations of the world today. Juvenile delinquency appears to be on the rise despite the social awareness of the ills of crime. Psychologists, sociologists and criminologists the world over have long debated the various causes of delinquency. The causes of such behavior, like those of crime in general, are found in a complex of psychological, social, and economic factors. Clinical studies point to emotional maladjustments in many delinquents, usually arising from disorganized family situations, as a factor in delinquency. Scott (1982) saw delinquency as typical responses to family stress, and motivated by one of the following: escape from home situations, avoidance of stress through excitement, hostility, loyalty testing and compensation. Recent research and theory has focused on the processes by which family poverty leads to violence and delinquency in individuals who live in public housing and lower-income neighborhoods (Aber, Seidman, Allen, Mitchell, & Garfinkel, 1992; Gonzales, Cauce, Friedman, and Mason, 1996). Gender (Moffitt et al, 2001); peer influences (Garnefski & Okma, 2002), race/ethnicity (Walker-Barnes & Mason, 2001), self-esteem (Rosenberg et al, 1989) and the presence of trauma, abuse and/or violence (Fox, 1996), in a child or youth's life are all factors implicated in the studies on the causes of juvenile delinquency. Some other theorists argue that just like in other criminal behaviours, there is no one single explanation

of delinquency. Adopting an eclectic approach to understanding the causes of delinquency may appear to be better because studies have shown that many of these factors overlap. A young person who lacked appropriate parental control may also have low self-esteem and face many barriers in life at a very young age. Whatever the cause may be, however, researchers seem to agree that delinquent behavior is very complex and there is no one reason why some children or young people commit delinquent acts while others are able to marshal their resources and live a positive life.

There is no formal definition of juvenile delinquency or delinquent behaviour. However, it would be imperative to first understand who a juvenile is before attempting to define juvenile delinquent behaviour. In most States a juvenile is defined as a person under the age of 18 (O'Connor, 2004). In Nigeria, the definition of a juvenile is implied from the provisions of the 1946 Children and Young persons Act, as a person above the age of 14 but under 17 (Okonkwo & Naish, 1990). Also according to Section 68 of the Criminal Justice Act, 1991, children (i.e. those under 14 year, and young persons, (i.e. those 14 and under 17 years (18 years for some purposes)), are referred to as juveniles. Developmentally, a juvenile is a person at the adolescent stage of development, which according to Erikson (1950,1968) in his theory of development is between the ages of ten and twenty.

The term juvenile delinquency has a broad definition; while some emphasize the legal aspect such as the violation of the law, others emphasize the characteristic problems of delinquency. During the 18th Century, the definition of juvenile delinquency shifted from "a form of misbehavior common to all children" to a euphemism for the conditions and behaviors of poor children (Roberts 2004). Juvenile delinquency, which is used interchangeably as juvenile delinquent behaviour is defined as any illegal actions committed by a juvenile in which there is an apprehension and court proceeding. Defining who is a delinquent and who is not, is determined by the norms and culture of the society in which the juvenile lives. What may be deemed a delinquent behaviour in Nigeria may be an acceptable behavior in another part of the world. However, when a juvenile commits an offence, contrary to the laws or norms of the society, such as acts of rape, vandalism, theft, drug related activity, arson or other anti-social behavior, he/she is then considered a juvenile delinquent. A delinquent is

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therefore a legal term which describes a juvenile or an adolescent who has broken a criminal law, and/or is being officially processed by the juvenile court and is judged by the court to be a delinquent. Juveniles are subject to juvenile court jurisdiction once they break the laws applied to the status of their offences.

Family, school, peer group, neighbourhood, and media each has its own values, born of its own experiences, and all these have their own influences on the behaviour of the juvenile. The family influence on roles and norms which juveniles follow comes through the socialization process that the individual experiences as part of the family culture. In other words, all juvenile delinquent behaviors are influenced by what goes on in the environment in which the juveniles live, which includes what they learn by observing adults, what they listen to, learn from peer groups, parents, relatives, and society as a whole.

Despite the statistical data on juvenile behaviours, there seems to be serious shortcomings in the understanding of causes of juvenile crime. Psychologists argue that to ease the crime problem, we must first understand its causes (Wrightsmen et al., 2002). That is to say, to be able to control or eradicate delinquent behaviours among juveniles, we must first of all understand the causal factors and address them. Family relationship, as it affects juvenile delinquency, is one of the variables of interest in this study. Family is a fundamental environment where all care and relationships that determine the child's personal development and growth take place and this has been implicated by various studies as one of the major factors that determine delinquency. This is because the family determines a child's class, structure, and development. Family exerts the most influence on a human being. Some family intervention researchers (Bry, Greene, Schutte, & Fishman, 1991; Szapocznik, et al., 1988; Szapocznik, 1997), believe that improving parenting practices and the family environment is the most effective and enduring strategy for reducing juvenile delinquency and associated behavioral and emotional problems. The quality and process of interaction between parent and child is considered an important aspect of the socialization process and an insulator to delinquency. Family relationships, duties, responsibilities and privileges, broken homes, family size, crises in the family, and the amount of control exercised over children all play considerable roles in forming character and influencing behavior, and have been subjects of study in the field of delinquency and crime. Dysfunctional family settings - characterized by conflict, inadequate parental control, weak internal linkages and integration, and premature autonomy - are closely associated with juvenile delinquency. The relationship between the parents and the children and among the siblings, how they interact, communicate and feel towards one another is another dimension of the family environment which influences attitudes and behaviours. Children who perceive that their parents are unaware of their whereabouts are likely to do what they want, all of which suggests that the focus of communication can affect the likelihood that the child can recall his parents when and if a

situation of potential delinquent behavior arises, or he/she may ignore it if he/she chooses to.

The family as a social institution, all over the world has seen substantial changes from the typical traditional family of man and wife (or wives as the case may be) and children, to the increase in one-parent families and non-marital unions. The absence of fathers in many low-income families can lead boys to seek patterns of masculinity in delinquent groups of peers. These groups in many respects substitute for the family, define male roles, and contribute to the acquisition of such attributes as cruelty, strength, excitability and anxiety (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1987). The home is the most fertile breeding ground for violent behavior. Children, who see a parent or other family members abused, or abuse another, are more likely to view violence as a way of solving problems are more likely to abuse others, as they grow older (American Psychological Association, 1996). In other words, the attitudes and actions of parents within the family environment could have important influence in the lives of the children, especially on whether a child is found to be incorrigible and disobedient or compliant and receptive or violent and abusive.

Psychologists have been interested in how parents influence the development of children's social and instrumental competence. Studies show that parenting affects the behavioural outcome of children, for instance, Snyder & Sickmund (1995), found that children and adolescents who lack adequate parental supervision are more likely to engage in criminal activities. Parenting is not a specific act, but a complex activity that includes many specific behaviors that work individually and together to influence child outcomes. One of the most common approaches to the study of parenting is what has been termed "parenting style", as conceptualized by Diana Baumrind, which she used to capture normal variations in parents' attempts to control and socialize their children (Baumrind, 1991). Also, Darling & Steinberg (1993), define parenting style as "a constellation of attitudes toward the child that are communicated to the child and that, taken together, create an emotional climate in which the parents' behaviours are expressed".

Parenting style captures three important elements of parenting: parental responsiveness and parental demandingness (Maccoby & Martin, 1983), and psychological control (Barber, 1996). Parental responsiveness which is also referred to as parental warmth or supportiveness, describes "the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self-regulation, and self-assertion by being attuned, supportive, and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" (Baumrind, 1991). Parental demandingness, also referred to as behavioral control, refers to "the claims parents make on children to become integrated into the family whole, by their maturity demands, supervision, disciplinary efforts and willingness to confront the child who disobeys" (Baumrind, 1991). The third dimension, Psychological Control, according to Barber, "refers to control attempts that intrude into the psychological and emotional development of the child" through use of parenting practices such as guilt induction, withdrawal of love, or shaming. Parenting styles differ in the

extent to which they are characterized by responsiveness, demandingness, and psychological control. A typology of four parenting styles have been created by categorizing parents according to how they differ on parental demandingness, responsiveness and psychological control. They are authoritative, authoritarian, indulgent, and uninvolved parenting styles (Maccoby & Martin, 1983).

Authoritative parents are both demanding and responsive. "They monitor and impart clear standards for their children's conduct. They are assertive, but not intrusive and restrictive. Their disciplinary methods are supportive, rather than punitive. They want their children to be assertive as well as socially responsible, and self-regulated as well as cooperative" (Baumrind, 1991).

Authoritarian parents are highly demanding and directive, but not responsive. "They are obedience- and status-oriented, and expect their orders to be obeyed without explanation" ((Baumrind, 1991).). These parents provide well-ordered and structured environments with clearly stated rules. Authoritarian parents can be divided into two types: nonauthoritarian-directive, who are directive, but not intrusive or autocratic in their use of power, and authoritarian-directive, who are highly intrusive.

Indulgent parents (also referred to as "permissive" or "nondirective") "are more responsive than they are demanding. They are nontraditional and lenient, do not require mature behavior, allow considerable self-regulation, and avoid confrontation" ((Baumrind, 1991). Indulgent parents may be further divided into two types: democratic parents, who, though lenient, are more conscientious, engaged, and committed to the child, and nondirective parents.

Uninvolved parents are low in both responsiveness and demandingness. In extreme cases, this parenting style might encompass both rejecting– neglecting and neglectful parents, although most parents of this type fall within the normal range.

Each of these parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices, and behaviors (Baumrind, 1991) and a distinct balance of responsiveness, demandingness and psychological control. According to Darling (1997), positive parenting is one which is high in these three dimensions of parenting, while negative parenting is one which stress one dimension above the others. From studies it could be concluded that the authoritative parenting represents a positive parenting, because it kind of balances the three elements of parenting, in creating the right emotional climate to influence child's behavioral outcome.

Consequences of Parenting Styles For Children

Parenting style has been found to predict child well-being in the domains of social competence, academic performance, psychosocial development, and problem behavior. Generally, parental responsiveness predicts social competence and psychosocial functioning, while parental demandingness is associated with instrumental competence and behavioral control. Research based on parent

interviews, child reports, and parent observations consistently finds:

Children and adolescents whose parents are *authoritative* (high in responsiveness, demandingness and psychological control) are rated by objective measures as more socially and instrumentally competent than those whose parents are nonauthoritative, while children and adolescents whose parents are *uninvolved* perform most poorly in all domains (Baumrind, 1991; Weiss & Schwarz, 1996; Miller et al., 1993).

Children and adolescents from *authoritarian* families (high in demandingness, but low in responsiveness) tend to perform moderately well in school and be uninvolved in problem behavior, but they have poorer social skills, lower self-esteem, and higher levels of depression.

Children and adolescents from *indulgent* homes (high in responsiveness, low in demandingness) are more likely to be involved in problem behavior and perform less well in school, but they have higher self-esteem, better social skills, and lower levels of depression.

Studies have implicated self-esteem as one of the basic factors that predict juvenile delinquency. Self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self-concept. It reflects a person's overall assessment, evaluation or appraisal of his or her own worth as a person.

There are basically two levels of self-esteem – high or low. An individual can exhibit high self-esteem, which means having positive feelings about oneself, or the opposite of it, which is a low self-esteem. While some researchers have suggested that high self-esteem individuals are actually more prone to antisocial behavior than low self-esteem individuals (Baumeister, Bushman, and Campbell, 2000), some other studies (Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Caspi, & Moffitt, 2005), showed a relation between low self-esteem and high antisocial behavior. It is generally thought that individuals with low self-esteem held strong negative views about themselves. In reality, it seems that the self-views of these individuals are not more negative but more confused (Campbell, 1990; Campbell & Lavelle, 1993). According to Roy Baumeister (1998), this self-concept confusion means that individuals with low self-esteem simply don't know themselves well enough and lack clarity about their abilities, which makes them less confident of success and more likely to set lower goals for themselves, compared to those with high self-esteem (McFarlin, Baumeister, & Blascovich, 1984). In contrast, individuals with high self-esteem persist longer in the face of failure, although sometimes they fail to recognize when it is pointless to persevere (Weitin & Lloyd, 2003). Low self-esteem is also associated with less effective social skills, in that they feel socially awkward, self-conscious, and especially vulnerable to rejection (Rosenberg, 1985). Unlike those with high self-esteem, they are reluctant to take bold steps, perhaps out of fear of humiliation that may result if they should fail. They instead fall back on indirect strategies, such as putting others down, to maintain or boost their self-esteem. (Tice, 1993). Brockner (1983), also found that individuals with low-self-esteem are more easily

persuaded to change their views and are more likely to conform to peer pressure. On the other hand, one may have a high self-esteem that is fragile, inflated and unrealistic (narcissism). Narcissism is the tendency to regard oneself as grandiosely self-important. Narcissists experience ego threats and are likely to engage in aggressive behaviours such as partner abuse, rape, gang violence, individual and group hate crimes and political terrorism (Baumeister, 1999; Baumeister, Smart, & Boden, 1996).

The foundation for self-esteem appears to be laid early in life. Studies have shown that parental involvement, acceptance, support and exposure to clearly defined limits have great influence on children's self-esteem (Felson, 1989; Harter, 1993). Baumrind and others have found correlations between parenting styles and children's traits and behaviours, including self-esteem (Feiring & Taska, 1996; Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Authoritative parenting which is high on the two dimensions of acceptance and control, is associated with the highest self-esteem scores. Neglectful parenting (low on acceptance and low on control) is associated with lowest self-esteem scores; while Authoritarian parenting, which is low on acceptance and high on control, and Permissive parenting (high on acceptance and low on control) are second and third respectively.

Therefore, apart from these variables of interest in this study being implicated by studies as singly influencing delinquency, there appears to be an interrelationship among them. They therefore may not be studied as singular causes of juvenile delinquency behaviour but as influential factors. Nigeria still believes in the family but we know that just like there are different personalities, there are different families and so different relationships exist in the families. This study therefore asks, could the family relationships in the adolescent's family influence the development of delinquency in the adolescent?

If these factors have any influential ability on juvenile delinquency, is there any inter-relationship among these factors? If there is, how do these factors interplay to predispose the young person to delinquent behaviour.

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the influence of family environment, parenting style and self-esteem on juvenile delinquency among the adolescents in the Remand Homes. The specific objective of the study would include:

1. to investigate how the adolescent's perceptions about his/her family and the relationships in the home, (that includes the relationship between the parents, the parents and their children, among the children themselves), influence the development of delinquency in the adolescent.
2. to determine which parenting styles would most significantly influence delinquency in the adolescent.
3. to determine which level of self-esteem would most likely influence delinquency in the adolescents.

4. the study also intends to investigate how these factors interact to bring about the development of juvenile delinquency.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Setting

The settings for this study are the Juvenile Remand and Abandoned Children's Home, Ibadan, Oyo State; Boys' Remand Home, Oregun; Special Boys' School, Isheri; Girls' Remand Home Idi-Araba; and Girls' Special School, Idi-Araba, all in Lagos State.

B. Research Design

The design adopted in this study is survey research design. The Dependent Variable of the study is Delinquent Behaviour while the Independent Variables are: Family Relationship, Parenting Style, and Self-esteem.

C. Participants

Two hundred and ten (210) participants were selected from four (4) Remand Homes in Lagos. The participants comprised of one hundred and eleven males, 111, (55.5%) and eighty-nine females 89, (44.5%). The age range is 10 - 19. A mean (\bar{x}) age of 13.73 and standard deviation (SD) of 2.23 were reported of the participants. Educational qualifications of the participants were as follows: one hundred and twenty-three, 123, (61.5%) have secondary education, while seventy-seven, 77, (38.5%) have primary education. One hundred and seventy-five, 175, (87.5%) were Christians, twenty, 20, (10%) were Moslems, while five, 5, (2.5%) practised traditional religion. Among the participants, one hundred and twenty, 120, (60%) were from monogamous family, twenty-five, 25, (12.5%) were from polygynous family, while fifty-five, 55, (27.5%) were from single-parent family. Twenty - seven, 27, (13.5%) were Ibo, ten, 10, (5.0%) were Hausa, one hundred and forty, 140, (70%) were Yoruba, and twenty - three, 23, (11.5%) were from others tribes.

III. INSTRUMENTS

Questionnaire format was used for data collection in the study. The questionnaire had five sections, namely section A, B, C, D and E.

Section A: Demographic Variable

This section was made up of personal data and/or socio-demographic variables of the respondents such as age, gender, religion, level of education and family structure.

Section B: Index Of Family Relationship

This section comprises the Index of Family Relationship Scale developed by Walter W. Hudson (1993). It was originally a 25-item self-report questionnaire on the respondent's perception of the conflicts or problems in the relationships in his/her family. The scale was rated on 5-point response format ranging from None of the time (1) to All the time (5). The author reported a reliability coefficient of 0.90 and content validity of 0.60. However, the researcher revalidated the scale for the present study by pilot-testing and out of the 25 items, 10 were retained after

the total-item analysis. The Cronbach alpha after the pilot test was .63, the Spearman-Brown coefficient was .71 and the Guttman Split-half coefficient was .76 and this made the questionnaire suitable for this study. A score above the mean of the scores means a perception of high conflict in the family relationship while a score below the mean of the scores means a perception of low conflict in the family relationship.

This present study reported a Cronbach alpha of .82, the Spearman-Brown coefficient of .85 and the Guttman Split-half coefficient of .84

Section C: Parenting Style Inventory II

This section was made up of the Parenting Style Inventory II (PSI - II) developed by Darling & Toyokawa (1997). The original scale had 15 items with a five - response format ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) and was designed to measure the children's perception of their parents' approach or style of caring for them, using only the mother to represent both parents. The scale therefore has such items as 'My mother doesn't really like me to tell her my troubles'; 'My mother respects my privacy'. (see Appendix)

The Parenting Style Inventory II (PSI) has three dimensions of 5-items each: Responsiveness, Demandingness and Autonomy-Granting. The highest possible scores on each dimension is 25, and the summation of all of them is 75. A high score on this scale shows Positive Parenting, (that means the parenting style that is high on all the three dimensions). This is referred to as authoritative parenting in some studies. On the other hand, a low score is indicative of Negative Parenting (that means a parenting style that emphasizes one dimension above the others). Darling (1997) identified these three dimensions to be linked to delinquent behaviour. The three dimensions could be used to group parents into these three categories, but they could also be used as composite scales independent of one another. For these reasons, the dimensions were used to independently predict delinquency in this study.

This scale was pilot-tested to make it suitable for Nigerian setting. It was also modified by using the same items to measure the parenting style of both mother and father and the responses to both were correlated, showing a coefficient of .84. The reliability was established with a Cronbach alpha of 0.64, the Spearman-Brown coefficient of 0.74, and the Guttman Split-half of 0.74, making the scale suitable for this study. In this present study, the scale reported a Cronbach alpha of .72, the Spearman-Brown coefficient of .77 and the Guttman Split-half of .64.

Section D: Self-esteem Scale

This section measured the participant's self-esteem using the Self-Esteem Scale by Adanijo & Oyefeso (1986). The scale consists of 15 items to which the participants expressed their degree of agreement on a 5-point likert scale ranging from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). The authors reported an internal consistency coefficient of $r = .79$ among bank officials. Because the participants used in the construction of the scale were bank officials and not children, the researcher also pilot-tested the scale among the

juveniles. Self-esteem was categorized into high and low self-esteem. A score above the mean score is indicative of high self-esteem, while a score below the mean score is indicative of low self-esteem. The result of the study showed a Cronbach's Alpha of .69, Spearman-Brown coefficient of .80 and Guttman split-half coefficient of .80.

Section E: Self-report Delinquency Scale

This section comprises the Self-report Delinquency Scale developed by the authors for the purposes of this study. The 35- item scale measures delinquency among juveniles of ages 10 - 21. The items were rated on a Likert format of 5-point response format ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The scale was pilot-tested and two items were dropped after the total-item correlation was done and it showed a Cronbach Alpha of .90, Spearman-Brown Coefficient of .91 and Guttman Split-Half Coefficient of .91, which makes it conducive for use in this study. A score above the mean of the standardization group indicates high delinquent behaviour while a score below the mean of the standardization group indicates low delinquent behaviour in the participant. This study reported a Cronbach Alpha of .57, Spearman-Brown Coefficient of .74 and Guttman Split-Half Coefficient of .74.

IV. PROCEDURE

The juveniles used in this study were selected using purposive sampling technique. The reason for using this sampling technique was because of the nature of the participants. The researcher was interested only in the government-owned Remand Homes, and not the Reformatory Centres run by Non-Governmental Organisations, and the Remand Homes are few. For instance, in Ibadan, there is one Remand Home while in Lagos there are four Remand Homes. The researcher was also interested only in those delinquent juveniles who have had to deal with the law and have been taken custody of by the law enforcement agents, viz the police, the court and subsequently, are being remanded in the Homes. Due to financial constraints and other challenges with logistics, the researchers limited the study to these five Remand Homes.

The researcher obtained permission to carry out the study from the Ministry of Youths, Sports and Social Development, Ikolaba, Ibadan and Alausa-Ikeja, Lagos, after presenting a letter of introduction from the Department. After obtaining permission, the researcher conducted a pilot study, the purpose of which was to revalidate the scales within our Nigerian setting.

While the juveniles in the Juvenile Remand and Abandoned Children's Home, Ibadan were used for the pilot study, the juveniles in the four Remand Homes (Boys' Remand Home, Oregun; Special Boys' School, Isheri; Girls' Remand Home, Idi-Araba; and Girls' Special School, Idi-Araba), all in Lagos State, were used for the main study.

The questionnaires were administered to 210 delinquent juveniles in the four Juvenile Homes in Lagos. The researcher explained the purpose and procedure of the study to the House-Officers in charge of the Homes, who helped to distribute the questionnaires to the participants. The

researcher also explained the need for the participants to willingly participate in the study and not by coercion and the participants were duly informed. The researcher assured them of utmost confidentiality with respect to their responses. The questionnaires were administered to the participants as they sat in their dining-rooms and classrooms as in an examination, so as to control for undue influence of others on each participant's responses to the questions. The filled questionnaires were submitted to the House-officers by each person immediately they finished

and they were all given ample time to finish depending on the age, academic level and level of intelligence of each participant as advised by the House-officers. A total of two hundred and ten (210) questionnaires were collected over a period of four days, out of which only two hundred and three (203) were correctly filled and two hundred (200) were submitted for statistical analysis.

V. RESULTS

Table 1 showing the result of the joint and independent prediction of juvenile delinquency by family relationship, parenting style and self esteem using multiple regression analysis

| Predictors | R ² | Adj R ² | F.ratio | Df | P | β | P |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
| Family relationship | | | | | | .342 | <.001 |
| Parenting style | .128 | .115 | 9.578 | 196 | <.001 | -.225 | <.001 |
| Self-esteem | | | | | | .052 | >.05 |

The t-test showed significant difference between male and female adolescents in delinquency. Male adolescent reported higher delinquent behavior (mean = 83.90, SD = 30.021) than did female adolescents (mean = 66.85, SD = 24.37), $t(198) = 4.33$, $p < .001$. This implies that male juveniles reported higher delinquency than their female counterpart. The hypothesis is therefore confirmed.

SELF ESTEEM: adolescents low in self-esteem will score significantly higher on delinquent behaviour compared to adolescents high in self-esteem. This was tested using an independent sample t-test. The result is presented in table.3 below.

Table 3 Summary table of an independent sample t-test effect of self esteem on delinquency among juveniles

| Dependent variable | Self-esteem | N | Mean | SD | Mean diff | Df | t | P |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-----|-------|--------|-----------|-----|-------|------|
| Delinquency among juveniles | Low | 100 | 80.68 | 31.118 | 8.730 | 198 | 2.158 | <.05 |
| | High | 100 | 71.95 | 25.835 | | | | |

From this table, the t-test showed significant difference in delinquency based on level of self-esteem of the juveniles. Juveniles high in self-esteem scored less in delinquency (Mean = 71.95, SD = 25.835), than the juveniles with low self-esteem (Mean = 80.68, SD = 25.835), $t(198) = 2.158$, $p = .05$, two-tailed. This implies

that juveniles with low self esteem reported higher delinquency than those with high self esteem. The hypothesis is therefore confirmed.

GENDER AND FAMILY: There will be significant interaction effects of gender and family relationship on delinquency among juveniles. This was tested using a 2 x 2 ANOVA. The result is presented in table 4 below.

Table 4 Two-Way ANOVA showing interactive effects of Gender and family relationship on delinquency among juveniles

| Source of variation | Df | Sum of Squares | Mean Square | F.ratio | P |
|-------------------------|-----|----------------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Gender (A) | 1 | 14072.954 | 14072.954 | 20.173 | <.001 |
| Family relationship (B) | 1 | 13831.468 | 13831.468 | 19.827 | <.001 |
| A x B | 1 | 248.191 | 248.191 | .356 | > .05 |
| Error | 196 | 136734.188 | 697.623 | | |
| Total | 199 | 165753.155 | | | |

From this table, there is no significant interaction between gender and family relationship on delinquency, though there were significant main effects between the two. The hypothesis was therefore not confirmed, and the null hypothesis accepted.

DIMENSION PARENTING: In order to buttress what literature has suggested about the three dimensions of parenting style (Responsiveness, Demandingness, and Psychological Autonomy granting,) being related to

delinquent behavior, these dimensions as composite scales were used to predict delinquency in juveniles.

The hypothesis states that the dimensions of Responsiveness, Demandingness, and Psychological Autonomy granting, will independently predict delinquent behaviour in juveniles. The hypothesis was tested using multiple regression and the result is shown in the table below.

Table 5 showing the result of the independent prediction of juvenile delinquency by Responsiveness, Demandingness, and Psychological Autonomy Granting

| Predictors | R ² | Adj R ² | F.ratio | Df | P | β | P |
|-------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------|-----|-------|-------|-------|
| Responsiveness | | | | | | -.338 | <.001 |
| Autonomy-granting | .158 | .140 | 11.837 | 196 | <.001 | -.016 | >.05 |
| Demandingness | | | | | | .180 | <.05 |

From the table, it shows that the three dimensions of parenting style had a significant joint prediction of delinquency ($R^2 = .153$, adjusted $R^2 = .140$, $F(3,196) = 11.837$, $p < .001$). Importantly, the dimension of Responsiveness showed a significant independent prediction of delinquency ($\beta = -.338$, $P < .001$). This is a negative relationship which suggests that the more responsive the parents are, the less delinquent the juveniles would be. In addition to that, the demandingness dimension had a significant independent prediction of delinquency ($\beta = .180$, $P < .05$), which is a positive relationship suggesting that the more demanding parents are, the more delinquent the juveniles will be. The result also shows that Autonomy-granting dimension has no significant prediction of delinquency.

In summary, the result shows that family relationship, parenting style and self-esteem combined to influence delinquent behavior. Family relationship had a positive relationship with delinquency while parenting style had a negative relationship with delinquency.

In addition to that, adolescents with high self-esteem had less delinquent behavior compared with their counter-parts with low self-esteem. Finally, it was observed that the dimension of responsiveness in parenting style had a negative relationship with delinquent behaviour, while the dimension of demandingness had a positive relationship with delinquent behaviour.

VI. DISCUSSION

From the results, it was found that family relationship independently predicted juvenile delinquent behavior. That is to say that the more conflicts the juvenile experiences in the family relationship, the more delinquent he/she becomes. Consistent with this view, Hoge, Andrews, and Leschied (1994) acknowledging that not one but a combination of factors are the strongest predictor of delinquent behaviour noted in their study that familial relationships combined with an association with delinquent peers offers the highest

predictor for delinquency. Hammen, Brennan, & Shih (2004), also found that children raised in environments high in conflict may be more prone to adjustment problems, whereas, children in a positive family environment (e.g., high expressiveness and cohesion, and low conflict) are more likely to adjust well (Drotar, 1997).

Parenting style, independently predicted juvenile delinquency and consistent with literature showed negative relationship with delinquency among juveniles. This means that positive parenting, (that is parenting high in responsiveness, demandingness and autonomy-granting) is associated with less juvenile delinquency. Parents who are highly responsive to their children and at the same time make reasonable demands on them as regards the expected behavior, while giving room for the children to be their independent selves would most likely produce children who are less predisposed to delinquent behavior.

McCord (1991) found that positive family expectations combined with competent mothers who were non-punitive in discipline, self-confident, and affectionate, apparently lessened the likelihood of juvenile delinquency. Also, Summers (2006), found that parental relationships with their adolescents were found to have an impact on their adolescent's behaviour at school. The study equally found that adolescents living with parents using authoritative parenting style (positive parenting) were less likely to receive disciplinary incidents compared to adolescents living with parents using the other parenting styles. Snyder & Sickmund (1995), also found that children and adolescents who lack adequate parental supervision are more likely to engage in criminal activities. As revealed by the present study, the second hypothesis which stated that male adolescents will score significantly higher on delinquency than the female adolescents was found to be significant and thus confirmed. This indicated that male juveniles will engage in more delinquent behavior than their female counterparts which result is consistent with literature. Generally, research on the development of antisocial behaviour and delinquency has been conducted

primarily among boys. This is in part due to lower prevalence rates of crime among girls. Recently however, studies have begun to address sex and gender differences in the etiology of antisocial behaviors due to the increase in the number of females who commit crimes lately. This development it is believed, can lead to a better understanding of the root causes of aggression and delinquency (Moffitt, Caspi, Rutter, & Silva, 2001). Though there is a growing sense that female delinquency is on the rise or, at least, that the difference between boys and girls in terms of delinquency is narrowing as have been observed by Odgers & Moretti, (2002), other researchers like Coie & Dodge, (1998); Eagly & Steffen, (1986); Hyde, (1984) have all found in their studies that males demonstrate greater overt aggression and delinquency than the females. A number of reasons could be proffered for this. Parents tend to adopt different ways of raising their children based on gender. Studies have shown that female children enjoy closer supervision by their parents than the male children. There are also cultural stereotypes which shapes the female child somehow differently from his male sibling, especially here in Nigeria. In the typical traditional Nigerian family, girls are brought up in a way that conditions them for home-making and not giving room for some of the social activities that expose the males to undue peer influences. Because there has been lower prevalence rate of delinquency among girls, even when they are exposed to peer influence, there will still be low rate of delinquency as a resulting from peer influence. Besides that even when women are involved in criminality, they are often victimless crimes, for instance, prostitution, unlike the male counterparts who engage in more violent crimes. Furthermore, the third hypothesis tested in this study which stated that adolescents low in self-esteem will score significantly higher on delinquent behaviour compared to adolescents high in self-esteem. was found to be significant and so, confirmed. This goes to show that self-esteem of juveniles predicts their likelihood to engage in delinquent behaviour or otherwise. Juveniles with low self-esteem were found to engage in more delinquent behaviour than the juveniles with high self esteem. Some researchers, (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Campbell 1990) have suggested that high self-esteem individuals are actually more prone to antisocial behavior than low self-esteem individuals. However, some other researchers made findings consistent with the result of this study. Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Caspi, & Moffitt (2005), showed a relation between low self-esteem and high antisocial behavior. Also, Thalma, Lobel, and Levanon (1988) found that children with high self esteem and low need for approval cheated significantly less than the children with high self esteem. Rosenberg, Schooler and Schoenbach (1989), found that low self-esteem fosters delinquency and that delinquency may enhance self-esteem. The findings of this study may be explained from the fact that individuals with low self-esteem simply don't know themselves well enough and lack clarity about their abilities, which makes them less confident of success in comparison to those with high self-esteem (McFarlin, Baumeister, & Blascovich, 1984). Successful achievements especially

academically has been associated with high self-esteem in adolescents and because these low-self-esteem individuals do not know how to put their abilities to work and set high goals for themselves, they go through a cycle of failures which reinforces their sense of low self-esteem. These low self-esteem juveniles may also have more difficulties with coping, hence, they may be easily persuaded to change their views and conform to peer pressure and are more prone to engage in antisocial behaviours to boost their self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1985; Brockner, 1983), unlike their high self-esteem counterparts. The fourth hypothesis tested in this study which stated that there will be significant interaction effects of gender and family relationship on delinquency among juveniles showed that there is no significant interaction between gender and family relationship on delinquency. Whether associations between family conflicts or disruption and delinquency are moderated by the gender of the child is an ongoing debate. Conflicts in the family have been found by some studies to pose greater risk factor for boys than girls (Moffitt et al., 2001). However, other studies have found that antisocial girls frequently come from high problem homes with numerous parental changes (Silverthorn & Frick, 1999). Some claims have been made that home environment, including frequent disruptions in household structure, is a more important predictor of aggression for girls than boys, but these claims have not been well-tested (Kruttschnitt, Gartner, & Ferraro, 2002). The current hypothesis attempted to determine whether there is any difference in the influence of family conflicts on the juveniles based on their gender. This result however showed that there is no significant difference. This means that family conflicts would have a negative effect on the juveniles irrespective of the gender. This is very understandable in the sense that every child needs a warm, loving, effective family environment to develop. When these characteristics are missing, irrespective of the gender, it would have a negative influence on the young person. The fifth hypothesis states that the dimensions of Responsiveness, Demandingness, and Psychological Autonomy granting, will independently predict delinquent behaviour in juveniles. The result of the multiple regression analysis showed that the three dimensions jointly predicted juvenile delinquent behavior. However, independently, responsiveness significantly predicted as well as showed a negative relationship with delinquency. This suggests that more responsive parenting indicates less delinquency. Responsiveness, according to Maccoby and Martin (1983), has such characteristics as support, warmth, acceptance and affection, which characteristics are found in the typology of authoritative parenting style. Also, demandingness independently predicted, but showed a positive relationship with delinquency. This relationship indicates that the more demanding the parenting style, the more likelihood of delinquency. Demandingness as identified by Maccoby and Martin, is characterized by control (punishment), restrictiveness, supervision, inductive parenting and conformity demands. These characteristics are identified in

the authoritarian parenting typology. While authoritative parenting is high in both responsiveness and control, authoritarian parenting is low in responsiveness and high in demandingness.

The findings of this study is supported by literature. Gorman-Smith et al. (2000) found that whereas, exceptionally functioning families (high levels of positive parenting, adequate discipline, structure, and cohesion), relatively similar to the authoritative parenting style, were less likely to be involved in each of the offending patterns studied, task-oriented families (high levels of structure, but low levels of warmth and beliefs about the family), which may be relatively similar to the authoritarian parenting style, appeared more likely to be involved in the serious chronic pattern of offending. Steinberg (1996), also found that juveniles raised in authoritative households were more self-confident, more responsible, and less likely to engage in substance abuse and delinquent behavior. Another study by Thomas (2004) found that children of parents whose style was punitive (a characteristic of authoritarian parenting style) were more likely to score high on an aggression scale. The result also shows that Autonomy-granting dimension has no significant prediction of delinquency.

VII. CONCLUSION

- The following conclusions could be drawn based on the findings of this study:
- Family relationship, parenting style and self-esteem jointly predict delinquency but only family relationship and parenting style independently predict delinquency.
- Family relationship has a positive relation with delinquency, which means that the more conflict perceived by a juvenile in his/her family relationship, the more he/she would score on delinquency.
- On the other hand, parenting style showed a significant negative relationship with juvenile delinquency which suggests that positive parenting style (high in responsiveness, demandingness and autonomy-granting) is associated with less juvenile delinquency.
- Male adolescents would be more delinquent than their female counterparts.
- Juveniles who have low self-esteem would be more delinquent than their counterparts who have high self-esteem.
- There was no significant interaction effect between gender and family relationship on delinquency. This means that the influence of family relationship conflicts on delinquency will not be different between male and female juveniles.
- Of the three dimensions of parenting style, only responsiveness and demandingness would independently predict delinquency.
- Responsiveness has a negative relationship with delinquency which suggests that juveniles who

receive more warmth, support and control from their parents would score less in delinquency.

- Also, demandingness showed a positive relationship with delinquency indicating that juveniles who are raised in a more strict and punitive but less affective environment would show more likelihood of delinquency.

VIII. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The basic implication of this study is that juvenile delinquent behavior is influenced by a number of social factors, which if studied will give a better understanding of the causes of delinquency. The first hypothesis tested stated that family relationship, parenting style and self-esteem will jointly and independently predict delinquency among juveniles. The result shows that family relationship, parenting style and self esteem have a significant joint influence on delinquency among juveniles while only family relationship and parenting style showed significant independent prediction. This shows that while conflicts in the family relationship of the juvenile and the type of parenting style he/she is exposed to independently predicted delinquency, self-esteem did not. However jointly, they combined to predict delinquency in the juvenile. This buttresses the fact that not a single but a number of factors combine to influence delinquency in children.

In the second hypothesis which stated that male adolescents will score significantly higher on delinquency than the female adolescents, male juveniles reported higher delinquency than their female counterparts. A statistical significant difference was found to exist between male and female adolescents on delinquent behavior, thereby confirming the hypothesis.

In the same vein, the third hypothesis which stated that adolescents low in self-esteem will score significantly higher on delinquent behaviour compared to adolescents high in self-esteem was also found to be significant and thus confirmed. The implication of this is that juveniles with low self esteem would report higher delinquency than those with high self esteem.

The fourth hypothesis which stated that there will be significant interaction effects of gender and family relationship on delinquency among juveniles was not significant and so was not confirmed. The implication of this is that conflict in family relationship is not moderated by the gender of the juvenile with respect to delinquency.

Hypothesis five stated that the dimensions of responsiveness, demandingness, and psychological autonomy granting, will independently predict delinquent behaviour in juveniles was partially confirmed in that while

responsiveness and demandingness independently predicted delinquent behavior, psychological autonomy granting showed no independent prediction. Moreover, while responsiveness showed a negative relationship with delinquency, demandingness showed a positive relationship. This implies that where the parenting style is more

responsive, delinquency will be less, and where demandingness is more, delinquency will be more.

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