

Quality of parenting and juvenile delinquency

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Abstract

The increase in the number of juvenile delinquents in Nigeria especially Benin Metropolis can be dangerous for the future of adolescents. One of the factors causing this as inferred in this study is parents. This study therefore aims to determine the relationship between Quality of Parenting and Juvenile Delinquency. The design of this study was descriptive. Analysis of the study was carried out using the Chi-square test. The number of samples in this study was 123 juvenile delinquents and 5 officials at the Children Correctional Center, Benin City. The study adopted the total number of population as its sample which is 123 juvenile delinquents thus no sample technique was used. While the 5 officials were purposively selected out of 7 officials. The dependent variable was juvenile delinquency. The parameters for measuring Quality of Parenting were parenting styles, parents'-child communication, family structure and parents' socio-economic status. The two parameters were significantly related to juvenile delinquency especially parenting styles and family structure. In conclusion, there is a significant relationship between Quality of Parenting and Juvenile Delinquency.

Keywords: Adolescent; Juvenile; Delinquency; Quality; Parenting Style; Communication; Family Structure

1 Introduction

When a child is born, it is announced with joy and festivity in most African societies as children are esteemed very high as the most valuable gifts from the Almighty God. Children represent the future generation; hence, they must be properly trained for their future roles. Parents/guardian plays a significant role in this moulding process as they represent the first socializing agents of the child (Olusakin, Nwolisa and Babatola, 2010). Adolescence, which is a stage between the childhood and adulthood, is a transition period that is often characterized with emotional instability. Adolescents tend to experience stress, as they get conflicting messages from peers, media; have conflicts within the family and school and with difficulties in establishing self-identity and self-esteem (Bamidele, 2010). The stage is regarded as the period of storm and stress and is confronted with a myriad of challenges emanating from the peculiarity attached to this transition period from childhood to adulthood (Omoegun, 2004). Omoegun, (2004) further adds that adolescents at this stage, often turn to anti-social behaviour as a way out of these problems and or challenges.

This predominant atmosphere gives rise to questions about what could have been the possible cause of children, adolescence and even adults involvement in delinquent behaviours. Could parents, who are to be in care for the appropriate behaviour in children, be held responsible for such behaviour as a result of laxity and failure in carrying out their parental responsibilities (Olusakin, Nwolisa & Babatola)? Olusakin & Nwolisa, (2010) have boldly stated in their work that parents may in one way or the other contribute to their children's involvement in anti-social practices. The above claim was supported by Nwolisa (2010), who stated that most parents and guardian are ineffective in their roles in the upbringing of their children, their lapses is manifested in the society being fraught with different kinds and shades of harmful (unwholesome) attitudes, character and behaviour. It is now a norm for society to blame association in schools, churches, peer influence and other agents of socialization as the influencing factor or the causes of this

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delinquent behaviour witness among contemporary adolescent. Sufficient attention has not been paid to the family as the first contact of every person. The family represents one of the sturdiest socializing agents in any child's life. They educate children on how to manage unacceptable/unwanted behaviour, to pleasure seeking, and to honour the rights and views of others. Ironically, children can also learn aggressive, antisocial, and violent behaviour at home. At crucial developmental stages of children's lives, parents are obliged to provide their children with appropriate parenting modes that encourage moral and responsible thinking. Scholars have discovered that family type and environment influences juvenile delinquency; for example, Rathinabalan & Naaraayan, (2017) posit that inconsistent parenting, familial problems, and child neglect influences teens into deviant behaviour. Parenting styles have provided us with the basis for enlightening and encouraging children and adolescence to develop more pro-social attitude and behaviour. Every society has seen children mal-behaviour as a social problem which makes no difference in our society. Crime associated with young persons is a global challenge that calls for urgent attention. Antwi, (2016) states that deviance behaviour among teenagers or adolescent is inevitable in any society where there is an acceptable way of life or mode of conducts. The author adds that deviant behaviour and or crime are seen as an impediment to the tranquility enjoyed by members of a society or country (Bernburg, 2019). This delinquent crime perpetuated by young people has drawn the attention of many people who are concerned about the training of these delinquent children (Yusuf et al, 2021). Yusuf et al (2021) further stated that juvenile crime is therefore one of the major social issues all countries are struggling to deal with and if young criminals are not cared for, they will graduate into hardened criminals.

Youth seek self-identity and autonomy during their adolescence. Some of them engage in illegal activities, which cause their parents to be concerned about their well-being. Moitra and Mukherjee (2012) contend that parents play an important role in shaping adolescents' delinquent behaviour. They point out, for example, that home is the place where any child's normal and healthy development begins, and that the family is an individual's backbone. According to this viewpoint, the family is a basic ecology in which children's behaviour is manifested in their childhood through negative or positive reinforcement.

Many media reports on the rising problem of juvenile delinquency in years past have significantly blamed the family unit as the major cause of juvenile delinquency (Daily Mail, 2012 in Coleman, 2013). Understanding adolescent delinquency can include a number of complicated factors, including the family. In order to properly understand how traumatic experiences or mistreatment may have a considerable influence on behaviour, both throughout infancy and leading up to maturity, theories on child development have been particularly included. These theories have been used by criminologists to investigate the social issue of adolescent delinquency from a family-centered viewpoint, with an emphasis on the causal relationship between the family and the emergence of delinquent behaviours. With a complex unit like the family, researchers have chosen to pick specific areas or variables from the family unit to study on how they relate to juvenile delinquency. Early study majorly focused on the family as the primary factor for the development of teenage crimes. In recent years, academics have also suggested that parenting is one of the reasons for juvenile involvement in delinquency. This study aimed at answering the following research questions:

- What is the relationship between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency?
- What is the relationship between parent-child communication and juvenile delinquency?
- The specific objectives were to:
- Establish the relationship between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency.
- Ascertain the relationship between parent-child communication and juvenile delinquency.

2 Literature review

Delinquency concerns a variety of behaviour that violates legal and social rules at a high personal and societal cost. In this study, we investigate the quality of parenting as one key social precursors of delinquent behaviour such as stealing, purchasing stolen goods and vandalism among juveniles. In this study, the quality of parenting was measured with factors like parenting styles, the level of parent-child communication, the family structure and the parents' socio-economic status. Thus, this chapter examined relevant literatures on quality of parenting and juvenile delinquency in Benin metropolis and the theoretical framework adopted in the study. This was organized in the following order:

- Conceptualizing parenting styles
- Conceptualizing juvenile delinquency
- Role of parenting and delinquency
- Parental discipline
- Communication in the family and juvenile delinquency
- Family Structure and Juvenile Delinquency

- Parent's socio-economic status and juvenile delinquency
- Theoretical framework

2.1 Conceptualizing Parenting Practices

In order to raise their children, parents are interested in attempting to find realistic, efficient methods. Martin and Colbert (1997) suggest that parents evolve a style of interaction with their children based on two dimensions: parental warmth or responsiveness and parental control or demand. Based on these two major dimensions of responsiveness (warmth) and demand (control), Baumrind (1993) identified four main patterns of parenting namely: authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and neglectful. Generally speaking, high levels of warmth and support are linked to low levels of delinquency, while low levels of support or even rejection are linked to high levels of delinquency.

2.2 Authoritarian

Parents that adopt an authoritarian style of parenting are cold and in charge. Martin and Colbert (1997) maintain that authoritarian parents have an absolute set of standards and expect obedience without any questions or comments; they are highly demanding, controlling and punitive, they often use forceful measures to control behaviour. They are typically from the working class and instill in their kids a respect for rules, conventions, authority, and hard work. Although not all working class parents match this description, it should be emphasized that even parents who are unemployed may be authoritative, sometimes as a result of difficulties with their job hunt. They don't respond to their kids' needs and don't give out a lot of love and support. Additionally, parents make all choices rather than promoting vocal cooperation. According to Warari (2015), autocratic control produces a combination of rebellion and dependency. Such kids learn to be dependent on their parents, to be submissive, and to obey. Less frequently, they don't demonstrate initiative, autonomy, or adult independence. The authoritarian parents make an effort to assess, mild, and control their kids' attitudes and behaviour in accordance with the rigid rules of behaviour known as the absolute standard. Given this unwavering standard, parents should expect their children to abide by very rigorous guidelines. The youngsters are disciplined if they disobey these regulations. Cherry (2015) points out that authoritarian parents usually fail to come up with reasoning behind such rules. According to Hoskins (2014), authoritarian parents exhibit low responsiveness and they are highly demanding. In this parenting approach, parents place a strong emphasis on conformity and obedience and hence anticipate being obeyed without justification in a less affectionate setting.

Such teenagers are less likely to identify with their parents, are more antagonistic toward them, and bitterly hate their dominance. Youths become rebellious, blatantly confrontational, and hostile when they succeed in defying parental authority, especially if discipline has been severe, unjust, and given without respect and care. Rebellious people frequently flee their homes as soon as they can, and some of them may end up being delinquents. Macie (2003) argue that both the meeker and stronger children show emotional disturbance and have more problems. Children who are routinely treated in an authoritarian way tend to be moody, unhappy, fearful, withdrawn, un-spontaneous and irritable.

According to Moffit (2006) authoritarian parenting is associated with children social incompetence, such children are often anxious about social comparison, fail to initiate activity and have poor communications skills. Authoritarian parents have strict standards and discourage expressions of disagreement. Restrictive parenting discourages creativity in children (Warari, 2015).

Adolescents are less receptive to authoritarianism, and authoritarian behaviour is typically seen as being dictatorial. Wissink and Meijer (2006) argue that adolescents who perceive their parents as either very strict or very permissive tend to be less close to their parents and are more rebellious than youth with democratic parents. Authoritarian families place a strong emphasis on obeying authorities and keeping kids from acting inappropriately. Such family frequently adopts a chilly and disapproving emotional tone. Kids from this family can end up rebelling or acting out in unhealthy ways. Ngwiri (2008) agrees that authoritarian parents bring up children who run away from home and school, are fearful and angry, are aggressive and fight at the slightest opportunity, are bullies irritable and underachievers. The children must be disciplined in a tough yet caring manner while using a moderate amount of praise and punishment. This type of parenting is authoritative.

2.3 Permissive

According to Baumrind (1966), permissive parents attempt to behave in acceptant, affirmative and non-punitive manner toward their children's impulses, actions and desires. Considering the definition proposed by Baumrind that this parenting style tends to have a higher level of responsiveness, it implies that a responsive parent is more likely to define and determine rules associated with family, while encouraging the adolescents to consider it as a resource (Johnson & Kelley, 2011). Neglecting parents are those that show very low level of involvement as well as strictness

with their child (Kremers, Brug, de Vries, & Engels, 2003). According to Hoskins (2014), permissive parents can be characterized as exhibiting low level of demandingness and high level of responsiveness, whereas neglecting parents are neither responsive nor demanding. They behave in a manner that is more affirmative toward the impulses, actions and desires of adolescent while consulting with them about family decisions. In addition, they tend to avoid engaging in behavioural control, do not set rules and set a small number of behavioural expectations for their adolescents. From this perspective, it can be stated that permissive parents actually allow the adolescents to actively participate without being concerned for their actions. Nevertheless, it is widely believed that the delinquent behaviour in most of the juveniles is the result of parenting styles. For example, Poduthase (2012) argues that adolescents can be led towards delinquent behaviour when they are exposed to lack of intimacy, lack of guidance, lack of parental involvement, lack of parental attachment, anger and blaming. It would therefore not be wrong to state that there is a significant link between the parental styles and individual's tendency to engage in delinquent or violent behaviour. In other words, lack of parental involvement and interaction results in increased risk of violence, primarily in male juveniles (Brook et al, 2014).

2.4 Authoritative

Baumrind first introduced the concept of authoritative parenting style. According to Baumrind (1966), the authoritative parents provide guidance to their children on issue oriented and rational manner. Since the level of demandingness is higher in this parenting style, parents usually welcome effective communication as well as effective relationship between them (Piko & Balazs, 2012).

According to Hoskins (2014), authoritative parents show more responsiveness and demandingness by being more forgiving of severe behaviour. These parents promote verbal reciprocity, explain the justification for their rules, and employ force, persuasion, and molding to achieve their goals. Positive teenage outcomes are more frequently linked to this parenting approach. This approach to parenting is often linked with affirmative adolescent outcomes. As a result, it is found as most beneficial and effective style of parenting among most of the families. In other words, authoritative parenting style fosters positive well-being of adolescents. For parents to be classified as authoritative, they should fulfill the criterion proposed by Baumrind; however, for parents to be categorized as authoritative, they should have low score in terms of passive acceptant.

Nijhof & Engels (2007), hold a strong belief that an authoritative parenting style is essential for a healthy psychological and social growth of adolescent children. This is especially true because an authoritative parenting style encourages children to become more self-reliant, self-confident, and capable of using appropriate coping mechanisms while also forming positive self-images (Parker & Benson, 2004).

2.5 Conceptualizing Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency is seen as one of the menace that destroys life and property in our society today and the level and height of juvenile delinquency among today's adolescent have grown to become major concern to not only parents, guidance and sponsors but also to well-wishers.

Rape, thieving, kleptomanism, burglary, disobedience, homicide, truancy, vandalism, and robbery are some of the crimes linked with juveniles. Juvenile delinquency is defined in the Nigerian constitution of 1979 as "a crime committed by a young person under the age of 18 years as a result of attempting to comply with the wishes of his peers or to escape from certain parental pressure and or gratify certain emotional stimulation." Before an adolescent in Nigeria is branded a delinquent, he must be prosecuted in a juvenile court and proven guilty of some offenses. Such offenses include habitual absenteeism, drug addiction, prostitution, thievery, cultism, armed robbery among others. The implications of adolescent misbehaviour on the Nigerian society are not only catastrophic, but also numerous. They endanger both lives and property, and they stifle the country's prosperity.

Juvenile delinquency has also contributed to the bad image of our country (Nigeria). Because of the need to get rich quick among juvenile, corruption and ritual killings have become the new norms. A critical look at the Nigerian political sphere revealed that, politics has to turn into a do or die affair where thuggery and fighting is the order of the day. This has made politics in our country (Nigeria) a risky endeavour. From this description, Shoemaker (2013) defined juvenile delinquency as "illegal activities, whether criminal or status infraction, perpetrated by youth under the age of 18."

3 Methodology

The research design is the strategy that the researcher is interested in or decided to adopt in carrying out his/her research. It involves the step to step approach that is coherent and logical with which you can effectively measure the

variable and analyze the problem. The descriptive research design was adopted in this study. This research design lays emphasis on the level of a relationship between two variables. By this design, we can understand the problem of juvenile delinquency in depth and with the quality of parenting as a causative factor; we can predict future occurrences as it relates to both variables.

The study adopted a triangulation of both quantitative and qualitative instruments, methods of data collection and analysis as it affects Quality of Parenting and Juvenile Delinquency in Benin Metropolis. The quantitative was used to describe the situation in terms of frequencies, central tendencies and dispersion. Qualitative analysis helped to get in-depth information from respondents about descriptions that cannot actually be measured through the quantitative method alone. Benin City was the then major city of the Edo (Bini) kingdom of Benin (flourished 13th-19th century). It has a borderline tropical savannah climate bordering upon a tropical monsoon climate. The weather is uncomfortably hot and humid year-round, and generally very dull, especially between July and September. The Binis are known for bronze sculpture, its casting skills, and their arts and craft. Its museum (1960) has a significant collection of some of the kingdom's early pieces. Igue festival is the most popular of the festivals where the Oba celebrates the history and culture of his people and blesses the land and the people. It is celebrated at a time between Christmas and New Year.

Juvenile delinquency has revealed an upsurge in its prevalence in Benin City over long period. 535 juvenile criminals were arraigned before a juvenile court in Benin City, Nigeria, between April 1969 and March 1971. Of these, 282 (52.71%) were males with the rest 235 (47.29%) were females. Their ages ranged between 6 and 17 years. The majority of delinquents sampled in this study were between the ages of 12-16 years (Odiase et al, 1978 in Benin encyclopedia).

Most researches conducted in Edo State in the 20th century have shown that one the reasons for school dropouts were associated with personal, familial or educational difficulties which cumulatively fostered the continuation of juvenile delinquency in the State. The low level of education and other cultural causes favoured the adoption of criminal behaviour among the juveniles. One of these researches is Wole Alakija (2005) in Benin encyclopedia, according to him; more males were convicted than females and more females under the age 14 to 18 years old age group. Most of the convictions resulted from crimes against property. So, it can be asserted that juvenile delinquency in this area is closely associated with education and material insecurity. The upraise of these social problems in Benin Metropolis has necessitated the study in this area.

The study population were juveniles at the remand home in Benin Metropolis, who have been remanded due to one delinquent act or the other. The population consists of 123 juveniles from the state government remand home in Benin City, Nigeria otherwise called Children Correctional Center (Welfare) as at December, 2021. Source: Records Department, Children Correctional Center, Benin City 2021. According to the department, the figure varies by the day. Considering the population of the study, the total figure; 123 was adopted as the sample of the study thus, there was no sample size and sampling technique. Furthermore, five (5) officials were purposively sampled to respond to the in-depth interview guide.

3.1 Methods of Data Analysis

The descriptive method of data analysis was adopted for the study. Frequencies, simple percentages, tables and charts were used to describe responses on demographic characteristics. Chi-square test was used to precisely and consistently arrange and test the formulated hypothesis with the aid of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Statistical decisions was made at a significant level of 0.05 p-value. The qualitative data was analyzed using manual thematic and content analysis. The procedure started with familiarization with the data. This involved the listening over and over again to the recordings so as to ensure proper transcription. It was followed by reading over and over again the transcripts, study notes and identifying the themes that are recurrent. After identifying the themes, they were coded and analyzed.

4 Data presentation and analysis

Tables 1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Gender of Respondents					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	97	78.9	78.9	78.9
	Female	26	21.1	21.1	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	100.0	
Age of Respondents					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	10-13 years	26	21.1	21.1	21.1
	14-17 years	97	78.9	78.9	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	100.0	
Which L.G.A do you live?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Egor	39	31.7	38.6	38.6
	Oredo	23	18.7	22.8	61.4
	Ikpoba Okha	32	26.0	31.7	93.1
	Others	7	5.7	6.9	100.0
	Total	101	82.1	100.0	
Missing	.00	22	17.9		
Total		123	100.0		

The table above shows that 97 or 78.9 percent of the respondents are males while the rest 26 representing 21.1 percent are females. While the respondent classification according to their age shows that 26 or 21.1 percent are between the ages of 10- 13 years, 97 or 78.9 percent are between the ages of 14 – 17 years. Based on Local Government Area, 39 or 31.7 percent of the respondents are from Egor, 23 or 18.7 percent of the respondents are from Oredo, and 32 or 26.0 percent are from Ikpoba-Okha while the rest 7 or 5.7 percent are from other Local Government Areas that perhaps outside Benin Metropolis.

According to the demographic results, boys are more likely than girls to participate in criminal activity, which is consistent with Blackwell and Kane's (2015) study in Yusuf et al (2021) who discovered that in most cases, one factor contributing to the gender gap in criminal activity is the fact that males receive less parental supervision and are encouraged and permitted to take greater risks than girls., while looking at the age group, 14-17 years of age has the highest age range in the study. This is factual because at this age, adolescents start to look for autonomy; they want to investigate their environment and learn more about it, or they may be trying to get away from their parents' demands. While from the Local Government Area, Egor has the highest number of participants in the study, one of the possible reasons was because the area is predominantly dominated by young people as it is where the University of Benin main campus is situated. Being a student environment, one can infer that peer influence as an underlying factor.

4.1 Test of Hypothesis

The formulated hypotheses for this study were tested in this section of Chapter Four. They were tested with the Chi-Square Test. This inferential statistical technique was used to test for the independence between various two variables that made up each of the hypotheses. Accordingly, the test was to confirm whether ne variable is independent from another one or not. In other words, it tested whether or not a statistically significant relationship exists between a dependent and an independent variable. The Chi-Square (X^2) Test works with nominal scale variables for both the dependent and independent variables. Decisions were made with the p-value = 0.05 benchmark.

4.1.1 Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between parenting styles and juvenile delinquency**Table 2** Chi-square Analysis of the Relationship between Parenting Styles and Juvenile Delinquency

S/n	Questions	X ²	Df	P-Value	Decision
1	Do you have any form of hurtful experience from your parents?	9.711	1	P≤0.05	Significant
2	Which of the following ways do your parents use in punishing (or correcting you)?	42.009	1	P≤0.05	Significant
3	Do you always live by strict instructions in your home?	1.359	1	P>0.05	Not significant
4	What were your reasons for obeying your parents?	11.725	1	P≤0.05	Significant
5	How often do you get praises and encouragement from your parents?	.138	1	P>0.05	Not significant

Source: Researcher's survey, and SPSS computation, 2024.

The cross tabulation of the variables in Table 4.13 was done to find out if there was significant relationship between parenting style and juvenile delinquency. It is obvious that there exist a significant relationship between parenting style and juvenile delinquency as 3 out of 5 responses were significantly associated with juvenile delinquency. This finding therefore implies that the type of parenting models used to raise a child can have a major impact on the degree of delinquency that the child can succumb to. This is coherent with Poduthase (2012) in Yusuf et al. (2021) who argues that adolescents may become delinquent when they experience the lack of affection, lack of guidance, lack of parental involvement, lack of parental attachment, frustration, and guilt that define a style of parenting. It would also be accurate to say that parenting practices and a person's propensity for acting aggressively or delinquently are significantly correlated. In other words, children who don't have parental participation or contact have a higher chance of becoming delinquent. (Brook et al., 2014).

4.1.2 Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between parent-child communication and juvenile delinquency**Table 3** Chi-square Analysis of the Relationship between Parents's to Child Communication and Juvenile Delinquency

S/n	Questions	X ²	Df	P-Value	Decision
1	Who do you freely discuss personal issues with?	19.486	3	P≤0.05	Significant
2	How well do you get along with your parents?	2.555	2	P>0.05	Not significant
3	How frequently do you enjoy quality time with your parents?	30.455	3	P≤0.05	Significant
4	Did you know the expectations of your parents on you while living with them?	26.695	1	P≤0.05	Significant
5	Do you hold family meetings to talk about family matters when you are at home?	2.138	1	P>0.05	Not significant
6	Do you usually have family devotion while living with your parents?	5.625	1	P>0.05	Not significant

Source: Researcher's survey, and SPSS computation, 2024.

The cross tabulation of the variables in Table 4.14 was done to find out if there was significant relationship between parent- child communication and juvenile delinquency. From Table 4.14, it seems that parent-child communication may not be significantly associated with juvenile delinquency as the responses were equally given. Effective parent-child communication is paramount in the family to result to children's non-indulgence in delinquent acts. Notwithstanding, children also communicate with other members of the family; referring to extended family members like cousins, aunties, uncles etc. Also children go out to interact with other children in the neighbourhood. This finding therefore helps us infer that though children may have positive communication with parents, they can also have negative

communication with other extended family members or neighbours at the same time. One with the greater influence can bring about anti-social behaviour or delinquent behaviour among the children. Evil communication truly corrupts good manners. This finding agrees with Brewer et al. (2020) where it was stated that young people's associations with delinquent peers or any individual is a well-established risk factor for youth anti-social behaviour. Sutherland in his book 'Principle of Criminology' (1947) also suggested that anti-social attitudes can be learned among deviant peer associations or interactions.

The Global theme derived from the interview is the ecosystem of youth crime. In the children's ecosystem, parental negligence, environmental factors, and wealth profile of parents were identified as very influential in the situation of the children. Respondent identified the combination of these factors as very important in influencing delinquency. It follows therefore that one factor (parental relationship) is not sufficient to influence delinquency.

4.2 Parental negligence

The theme of parental negligence is recurrent in the narratives of the gatekeepers. They narrate that there is a discernible pattern of parental neglect around the children in the facility. A respondent had this to say;

Usually it's not really the case, we don't have one-on-one contact with parents all the time. They seldom come around so most of them when they actually come around they complain the children are beyond parental control, others they say they are being influenced by peer groups and people around their vicinity (Key informant Respondent, 2024)

From the response, it is evident that there is parental negligence around the delinquents.

4.2.1 *Delinquency as a product of environmental influence*

There is the notion that Child offenders are influenced by wider environmental forces to engage in offences. A respondent had this to say about the role environment lays in creating and maintaining delinquency;

Well, if we go back to what I said earlier that they are mostly influenced by their environment it will still boil down to economic status in some cases because it takes financial well-being to actually be able to afford to give in some certain areas. For example, if you want to train up a child ordinarily what comes to your mind, you say okay, an estate setting so if you cannot afford that when what you can afford is a slum or a ghetto where you have to stay side by side with your neighbour and all that such things comes back to economic factors (Key informant Respondent, 2024)

The response above indicates that the society is heterogeneous. The residency of the children contributes to the chances of offending as the risk is exponentially higher in neighbourhoods that are poor when compared to affluent neighbourhoods.

4.2.2 *Wealth as index of parental responsibility*

There is the theme of wealth as an index of responsibility. Informant noted that material advancement or income explains ability to meet the needs of children and wards. The text above highlights the importance of meeting the material needs of children which will mitigate the need for the child to engage in acts aimed at survival. Another informant had this to say

A situation where you are thinking of the next meal, how do you pay attention to the behaviour of your children? That is not really a top priority on your list. It's all survival that comes to your mind, how do we survive the next day? how do we eat the next day? so, in such a situation you tend to forget about morals sometimes the parents can even be a negative influence to their child (Key informant Respondent, 2022)

The demands for survival and meeting the needs of daily survival have been noted to alter the family structure in ways that allows for criminality and offending as a means to meet the needs. This also shows that the society at large has no safety nets for the vulnerable in the society. Child offences are therefore framed as economic crimes as an instrument to meet needs.

5 Conclusion

There is a significant relationship between Quality of Parenting and Juvenile Delinquency in Benin Metropolis. Quality of parenting is a complex subject and various factors affect it. In this study, the quality of parenting was measured by parenting style, parents'-child communication, family structure and parents' socio-economic status. The authoritarian

parenting style fosters delinquency among juveniles. Being too strict and giving too much freedom to child, may lead a child to become delinquent. Family structure is one factor found in this study to be a cause of juvenile delinquency. The respondents of this study are adolescence, this is the stage wherein teenagers are having identity crisis and explore their curiosity. A home with single parent especially single mothers stand a chance of producing delinquent children. There is a particular parenting style used by single parents that can cause a child to become delinquent or not. One must not blindly adopt a style of parenting just because their peers are following it or simply follow the latest trends when it comes to parenting. Communication pattern between parent and child has a role to play in association with juvenile delinquency. Effective communication strengthens bond between parents and children. Such bond reduces the risk of the children's involvement in delinquency. Dysfunctional communication where the parents are not open in communicating with their child especially in making decisions on the problems facing the child can lead to delinquency. There is a positive significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and juvenile delinquency. A situation where parents can only afford to raise their children in delinquent society like the slums, juveniles can take to delinquent acts because of influence from peers within the environment. Also, when the basic needs of a child is not met by parents of low income, the quality of parenting can be affected and juveniles can take to crime as a way out of frustration or to belong to delinquent peer groups.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Government should develop and put into effect measures that will strengthen the value of the nuclear family. This is in light of the crucial role that families play in the moral upbringing and socialization of their children.
- Governments, social workers, counsellors, and other associated professions should help families that require support in resolving social disturbances and unstable situations in their households.
- To monitor and supervise their children's activities, particularly what they watch on television and online, parents and other caregivers should make an effort to spend enough time with their kids.
- Parents and caregivers need to work harder to make it easier for their children and themselves to develop friendly connections and open lines of communication.
- To reduce family poverty, the government should reevaluate its economic strategies. Governments should think about providing children with free educational options, counselling, and mentorship programs.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest to be disclosed.

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