FAMILY BACKGROUND AND PEER PRESSURE AS CORRELATE OF DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR AMONG PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS IN NIGERIA AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

Delinquent behaviour has become such a complex and social problem that hinders students from realizing their full potentials and also leads to moral decadence among senior secondary school students in Edo South Senatorial District. These delinquent behaviours such as absenteeism, truancy, theft, murder, rape, vandalism, terrorism, fraud, drug peddling/trafficking, hooliganism, foul language, obscene abuse, abusive harassment, drunkenness, prostitution, etc (are to a large extent influenced by students' family background and peer relation. This research was carried out to examine family background and peers pressure as correlate of delinquent behaviour among public secondary school students in Nigeria. It is believed that children from unstable homes are more likely to be delinquent. Evidence from literature suggest that such families expect less of their children, spend less time monitoring them and use less effective techniques to discipline them. Lack of warmth, direction, love and protection which the parents would have provided for them are lost and then they sought in anti-social behaviours. Also, when adolescents formed relationships with people who displayed delinquent behaviours, they are likely to take part in the behaviours themselves. For instance if adolescents spent time with deviant peers who consumed drugs, do not attend school regularly and are physically aggressive, then the adolescents are more likely to engage in aggressive behaviours as well.. The study has established and provided valuable insights into the factors influencing deviant behaviours among public secondary schools students in Nigeria. In conclusion, there is a nexus between deviant behaviours and variables such as family structure, family size, parents' educational level, and home environment and the importance of a stable and nurturing family settings in minimizing such behavior cannot be over-emphasized. It was therefore recommended that school authorities should establish and enforce stricter policies on punctuality and attendance, alongside effective communication between schools and parents

Keywords: Correlate, Delinquent Behaviour, Family Background, Peer Pressure and Students

Introduction

Education has been identified as one of the major means of development for any nation. It is universally accepted that education improves an individual's life and enables him to contribute to the development of the community and the nation as a whole. It is an essential component of human capital and it plays an important role in economic growth and development of any nation. It is believed that the educational system will facilitate good social, political and economic well-being of the students and the citizenry. However, some student's disposition and activities appears to be militating against the realisation of the aim of education in Nigeria educational system. Some of the common ones (anti-social behaviours) include truancy, drug/alcohol abuse, examination malpractices, absenteeism from school.

Delinquent behaviour is a broad term used to describe day to day incidence of nuisance and disorder that affects peoples' lives. Delinquent behaviours are disruptive acts characterized by covert and overt hostility and intentional aggression towards others. Delinquent behaviours include a repeated violation of social rules, theft and reckless disregard for self and others and defiant disposition. Delinquent behaviours develop and are shaped in the context of coercive social interactions within the family, community and educational environment. It is also influenced by the child's temperament, irritability, and the level of involvement with deviant peers and exposure to violence (Agbakwuru, 2012).

Delinquent behaviours account for series of problems encountered in the teaching and learning process, especially in the school context but also in the family and the society at large. Delinquent behaviours like cheating, stealing, fighting, drug abuse/addiction, truancy, lateness to school and bullying have contributed to the arrays of factors which affect the quality of education in our country Nigeria.

The literature have revealed that, there are several causes of deviant beaviours in students such as; parenting styles, peer relations, school environment and family background among others (Njoku & Ugoji 2024; Ifioko Yoro, Okpor, Brizimor, Obasuyi, Emordi, Odiakaose, Ojugo, Atuduhor, Abere, Ejeh, Ako, & Geteloma, 2024). However, to better understand deviant behavior in students, is by understanding their family background. This is because, families play a vital role in the upbringing of a child. Thus, students may be best understood by understanding their families.

The family as a group of people usually related by blood and sometimes by adoption, living together should cater for and provide the basic requirement for growth and all round development of the child (Osaiobare, 2016). The family, especially the parents being the first agent of socialization in individuals' life lives is the most important support system and the strongest factor in modeling the child's personality, and has great influence on the social, psychological, emotional and mental state of the child. Among the institutions generally associated with the socialization of the child, the family stands out uniquely as the most basic social unit, corner stone of the society and universal social institution.

Family background consist of, but not limited to family structure, family size, family location, parents socio-economic status, home environment, family location and parenting style. It is important to note that the existence of these characteristics in the family may discourage or encourage deviant beaviour among students

Another issue correlate of delinquent behaviour is peer pressure. Peer pressure can be seen as the influence exert by peer group that can change a child attitude, values and behaviours. A person affected by peer pressure may or may not want to belong to the group. Such people also recognize dissociative groups that they do not wish to belong and therefore, adopt behaviour in opposition to those of the group. In the same vein, Harris in Ajiboye (2015) opined that peer pressure can cause people to do things they will not normally do. For example, to take drugs, smoke, rude, fight, vandalise, lie, walk out of teacher and so on. Adolescent peer pressure is particularly common because most children spend large amount of time with their groups in school, church and other gathering.

Adolescents are more likely to be heavily influenced by their peers and less likely to make decisions for themselves if they have no self-esteem and may be experiencing problems in their family such as absence of parents. It seems that the socialization experience of adolescents is focused on peer interaction. Children are more likely to discuss their problems with their peers than with their parents and are more susceptible to their peers' perception of right and wrong. Adolescent usually exhibit high emotional tension and it is often said that adolescence is a period of storm and stress (Mohammed, 2012). However, it seems not all adolescents in our society may go through this acclaimed storm and stress without proper upbringing and support. Parent's attitude towards the children can make a difference in their children's life.

Kring, Davidson, Neale and Johnson (2017) observed that those delinquent behaviours exhibited by adolescents are in two categories. A pervasive pattern of disregard for the rights of others such as breaking rules, being irritable, physical aggression, being reckless, impulsive and truancy, running away from home, frequent lying, theft, arson show little regard for truth and little remorse for their misdeeds.

Berger (2010) opined that delinquent behaviour among students has assumed a worrisome dimension in our society. One would wonder what could have been the cause of this recurrent behaviour. The present study focused on the family background and peer pressure as predictors of delinquent behaviour of senior secondary school students.

Concept of Family Background

Family background according to Wright and Cullen cited in Yunusi, Jibrin and Nuhu (2022), is the combination of any or all the educational and professional qualifications of parents, estimated wealth, marital eligibility, reputations, medical history of the family (especially mental health and genetic diseases). They suggested that family crisis has left children and parent alike starving for intimacy and connection. Children from single parenting or broken homes as a result of divorce or separation are more vulnerable to delinquency than children who are from two parenting families. They argued further that, children who are victims of marital conflicts are at greater risk of becoming delinquent.

Previous research has shown relationships between exposure to parental divorce and marital conflicts while growing up with psychological distress in adulthood (Caldwell, Beutler, Ross & Silver, 2010). Social learning theory posits that aggressive behavior is acquired as parents display aggressive behavior where children emulate it as an acceptable means of achieving their desires.

Every student comes from a family and different parents adopt different approaches in raising their children. These raising styles are believed to exact some degree of influence on their children which include the knowledge of the values and norms of the society. There are different types of parenting raising styles such as: Authoritative/autocratic, democratic and Laissez-faire. (Okhuosami, 2017)

Authoritative Parenting style is identified with warmth and firm approach to raising children. Parents that adopt this approach encourage their children to be independent while maintaining limits and controls on their actions. Authoritative parents do not impose rules. Instead, they are willing to entertain, listen to, and take into account their children viewpoint. Authoritative parents engage in discussions and debates with their children, although ultimate responsibility resides with the parents (Arjun, 2022). Research findings of Nijh and Engel (2007) reveal that children of authoritative parents learn how to negotiate and engage in discussions. They understand that their opinions are valued. As a result, they are more likely to be socially competent, responsible, and autonomous.

Family size is the total number of persons living together in a home or family. Family could be rated as small, moderate and large in terms of size. In most cases, family size sometimes determines the level of care, supervision and supply of basic needs which a child gets from the home and parents. According to Odok (2013), family size refers to the total number of children in a child's family in addition to the child himself. Large numbered families whether rich or poor are difficult to maintain, they are characterized with a high number of children, rowdiness and this does not create convenience for learning. They also create in the upbringing of children some identified problems such as feeding, poor clothing, insufficient funds, and lack of proper attention for children, disciplinary problems and malnutrition which impact negatively on children academic performance

Family socio-economic status: Across all socio-economic groups, parents face major challenges when it comes to providing optimal care for their children. These challenges are more difficult among the poor families that are struggling to provide the basic needs necessary to sustain the family members (America Psychological Association, 2017**).** Post conventional wisdom held that children from poor and working background that youth born in the "dangerous classes" are much more likely to engage in delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, family socio-economic status is broken down into three categories which includes; high socio-economic status, middle socio-economic status, low socio-economic status. These categories are used to describe the areas a family or individual may fall into. In high socio-economic status, the family or individual will have higher educational status like all these professors, higher occupations, high income and wealth. In middle socio-economic status the family or individual will be in-between that is not high not low (Hirschi, 2013**).** Low socio-economic status signifies that the family or individual has no high education no well-paid occupation, and no wealth. The family or individual might be in absolute poverty

feeding from hand to mouth. When placing an individual or family into one of these categories or all, one or all of these factors education, occupation, income and the fourth variable wealth can be accessed. Socio-economic category is a quantifiable indicator of how high one is in the social stratum. It basically tells us how important the society considers one and how valued the person is by other members of the populous (Barr, 2014).

Delinquent Behaviour

Delinquent behavior refers to misdemeanor actions or commitments, that confront a law offender in any society (Brindlmayer, Khadduri, Osborne, Briansó and Cupito, 2022). It is the non-adherence to societal norms of law or morality. A person who has committed an offense that society views as bad or criminal – is termed a delinquent (Borgonovi & Ferrara, 2022) and is usually associated with young adulthood. Thus, juvenile delinquency is criminal behavior performed by an adolescent. This, unlawful behavior (i.e. juvenile) is often characterized by an antisocial and illegal direction that ripples off in itself as (in)actions that inevitably harm both other individuals and the society at large. Such behaviors tend to rise gradually and reach their peak at 16 to 17 years. The onset-and-peak behaviours can often vary for different delinquent acts as well as between boys and girls (Christian & Author, 2022). Afterward, delinquent acts decline as the youth enters early adulthood. Also, the teenagers cannot easily explain why they acted how they did; while, noting such behaviours as a coping mechanism (Malasowe, Aghware, Okpor, Edim, Ako & Ojugo, 2024) appropriate to dealing with the challenges of the times as necessary.

Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2013) in their research identified the following as deviant behaviours frequently and persistently executed in the class room; working out on the teacher, noise making, sleeping in class, pinching, aggression, vandalism, lies, truancy, cheating in examinations, immorality, alcoholism, use of drugs, cultism and so on.

The psychological tensions in adolescents away from home or from school have the potentials of exposing them to negative association. (Okorodudu & Omoni, 2015). These scholars also observed that adolescent may exhibit suicidal tendencies, Juvenile delinquency, vandalism, destruction of public property, maiming and violence against the large society. Juvenile delinquency is noted by Ekoja and Adole (2018) as gang delinquency. These gangs delinquent are group of youth that exhibit criminal behaviour. Several researches done on factors that precipitate delinquency among adolescents include that of Okorodudu and Okorodudu, (2013); Eke, (2014) when they stressed that adolescence is a period of stress and storm and the period is characterized by rebelliousness. This is caused by non-conducive environment such as; peer influence, drug abuse, poverty at home among others.

Eke, (2014) further buttressed that causes of delinquent behaviour tend to find theoretical explanations in the interaction between biological, environmental and social factors. She believed that the biological or genetic make-up of individuals can cause adolescents' engagement in delinquent activities. Chromosomal abnormalities in adolescents may predispose them to anti-social behaviours.

Ugwu and Stanley (2017) conducted a study on "Family dynamics as determinants of delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents in Asari-Toru Local Government Area of

Rivers State″. The result revealed that family size has no significant influence on delinquent behaviour among in-school adolescents. This result means that the number of siblings including the parents does not determine adolescents from such homes displaying delinquent behaviour. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents, guardians, classroom teachers, guidance counselors and other individuals involved should help raise children/wards in a ways that promotes the collective interest of the society

Forms of Delinquent Behaviours

Manifestations of delinquency among secondary school adolescents in Nigeria include: cruelty, bullying, fighting, vandalism, stealing, lying, sexual immorality, mob action, carrying of weapons etc. It is important to note that there are two main categories of delinquent behaviours which Nigerian adolescents engage in; these are: criminal and status offences. The criminal offences are violations which apply to adults and they include: stealing, arson, rape, drug offences, murder, burglary, pickpocket, and armed robbery. The other type is the status offence which does not apply to adults and they are: truancy, not adhering to parents demands etc. (Animasahun & Aremu, 2015).

When discussing delinquent acts among young individuals, it is essential to recognize that these acts have their causes, categories, and driving forces. Some deviant acts among adolescents are very serious, such as killing, raping, absenteeism, insecurity (Lie), stealing, unapproved school dress, destruction of school properties, truancy, bullying, examination malpractice, fighting, assault, drug abuse, cult related offence, hooliganism and vandalizing, while others are more minor in nature, such as disobeying parental orders or refusing to come home on time.

Meaning of Peer Pressure

Adolescence is a period in human development characterized by transition from childhood to adulthood. One of the most important transitions occurring during adolescence is the rise of peer pressure. Peer pressure provide an idea not only for the acquisition and maintenance of friendships, but also for the development of social skills e.g. good interpersonal relationship, social problem such as; lying, stealing, cheating and so on. Singh (2017) observed that the study of peer pressure in adolescence has shown to be important to the development of adolescents as it open up to the society, the gravity of this pressure on the adolescence. It also helps to understand adolescent friendships and their correlates (juvenile's delinquency, substance abuse)

Peer pressure could be seen as the influence exerted by peer group in encouraging a person to change his or her attitudes, values or behaviour to conform to the group of people who are relatively of the same age and come from same social group. Meldrum and Esiri (2016) defines peer pressure as collections of adolescent identified by interests, attitudes, abilities and personal characteristics they have in common. Peer Pressure according to Olowo (2020) plays a role in the development of negative outcomes such as poor academic adjustment and social anxiety. They also stated that research on peer pressure has demonstrated that the influence of peers peaks in middle adolescence and begin a gradual decline in later adolescence.

The influence of peer pressure on delinquent behaviour seems to be strong, regardless of ethnic group membership. Many ethnic group comparisons of peer influence on behaviour have found that those with peers group, participating in negative behaviour are more likely to engage in this behaviour as well, regardless of ethnicity, (Evelyn & Ngozi, 2015). Peer pressure provide adolescents with the attitudes, motivation that support delinquent behaviour and they provide opportunities to engage in specific delinquent acts (Alnasir & Al-Falaij,, 2016).

Drawing from the review above, peer pressure refers to expectations exerted by a peer group to behave in a particular way regardless of one's inclinations and desires. Thus, everything adolescent does in order to gain peers acceptance (i.e. positive reinforcement) or avoid sanctions can be seen as peer pressure. Peer pressure is the direct influence on people by peers, or the effect on an individual who gets encouraged to follow their peers by changing their attitudes, values or behaviours to conform to those of the influencing group or individual. This can result in either a positive or negative effect.

Family Background and Peer Pressure as Correlates of Delinquent Behaviour

The rise of anti-social behaviours among young people in Nigeria is attributed to family instability among other factors. This is true because children from unstable families have multiple behavioural problems which impel them to engage in delinquent behaviours. This, could be because the warmth, direction, love and protection which the parents would have provided for them are lost and then sought in anti-social behaviours. Collaborating this view, Udom, Anyanime, Nnabuk and Umuna, (2022), explained children from unstable homes are more likely to be delinquent. There is evidence to suggest that such families expect less of their children, spend less time monitoring them and use less effective techniques to discipline them. This means that such children have greater opportunities and motivation to participate in delinquent acts than those living with parents who give more attention to their children.

Delinquency is a widespread problem that impacts society negatively in many ways. Not only are adolescents physically injured from these behaviours they also become part of the juvenile justice landscape. The rate of delinquency is disproportionately high among ethnic minority youths – 56% of the African youth minority tribes reported engaging in a delinquent behaviour by age 17 compared to only 28% of other major tribes.

Burton in Laursen and Baur (2022) asserts that the lack of parental involvement is strongly associated with delinquency for minority ethnic groups but not for the majority group adolescents. Peers provide adolescents with the attitudes, motivation and rationalizations that support delinquent behaviour and they provide opportunities to engage in specific delinquent acts.

Peer pressure becomes a disturbing and worrisome social problem as growing children take on their peer group as their role models. This is because they begin to act and develop the copycat syndrome. What Igbinovia (2003) quoting Esiri (2016), identified the causes of crime in Nigeria). As a result of this syndrome, a child would desire the same kind of toys, wear the same kind of clothes, eat the same kind of food, share eating habits, share favourite television programmes share likes and dislikes, and even share bed times with

peers. At this point, the parents start having difficulties exercising social control on the child because the values and opinions of their peers (age or friendship cliques) as far as he/she is concerned super-cedes those of the parents. Also because they want to look and act like the others. Imitation and experimentation have been identified as ways by which teens and adolescents learn anti-social and criminal behaviour (Ogbebor, 2012).

As children grow into teens, the symptom of peer pressure becomes more problematic especially, where parental bonding is emotionally or otherwise lacking, or weak. Moreso, when there are difficulties and challenges at home and teenagers desire to fit with their peers and be accepted by them. Depending on the strength of this desire, „teenagers‟ right thinking may be beclouded or dislodged (Esiri, 2016). In view of these traits, a teenager who is a part of a group that is involved in cultism, thieving, stealing, lying, drugs, examination malpractice or any of the vice of society, is most likely to participate in them. Although all adolescents may experience peer pressure, not all of them may succumb to negative peer pressure. This is due to the fact that backgrounds such as the family, social, academic and neigbhourhood or environmental, as well as other influences may differ.

Delinquent peer are often seen as the most robust predictor of delinquent behaviour). The influence of peer delinquency seems to be strong regardless of ethnic group membership. Peers provide adolescents with the attitudes, motivation and rationalization that support delinquent behaviour and they provide opportunities to engage in specific delinquent acts.

Drawing from the review above, it can be deduced that there is a relationship between peer pressure and delinquent behaviour. This is true because, children begin to depend on their peers for acceptance rather than their parents during adolescence. In addition, peer pressure becomes harder to resist at this stage such that the opinions of peers often matter more than those of parents. When adolescents formed relationships with people who displayed delinquent behaviours, they are likely to take part in the behaviours themselves. For instance if adolescents spent time with deviant peers who consumed drugs, do not attend school regularly and are physically aggressive, then the adolescents are more likely to engage in aggressive behaviours as well.

Intervention Strategies

An intervention is a combination of program elements or strategies designed to produce behaviour changes or improve health status among individuals or children who exhibit delinquent behaviours. The following are intervention programmes for delinquent behaviour

1. Children's Home Education and Social Support (Catholic Chess Project)
2. Hope Worldwide, Nigeria:
3. Community Art Development Initiative (CADI):
4. Sahara Charitable Organization and Smile Foundation:
5. Remand Homes
6. Recreation (Audrey, 2021)

1. Children's Home Education and Social Support (Catholic Chess Project): This is located in Benin City, Edo State and caters for the young, poor orphaned, abandoned and less privileged children both in general well-being and education.

2. Hope Worldwide, Nigeria: Through her programme in 2004, with a substantial funding by United States of America Department of Agriculture (USDA) identified and registered about 4,000 of the less privileged in Lagos State with a view to assisting them. Out of this numbers, 143 children were provided with support

3. Community Art Development Initiative (CADI): This is a nongovernmental organization and community art outfit. Through a programme tagged ―School Kids Back to School‖, the outfit seeks to reduce the illiteracy level amongst children and promote good citizenship. The base of the intellectual resource is education. The programme gives the children who were denied the opportunity of going to school a chance to do so.

4. Sahara Charitable Organization and Smile Foundation: They run a project on mainstreaming and rehabilitating children in Mumbai Remand Homes. The project covers six centres in Mumbai, including, Bal Kalyan Nagari, Chembur Children‘s Home, David Sasoon and Umerkhadi Observation Home Counselling and other rehabilitation programme are done simultaneously in these centres. The unique tracking component of the project is implemented through Umerkhadi Observation Home. This aims at preventing dropouts amongst the inmates and ensures they continue their education when they leave the observation home. There is also a further plan on their rehabilitation and reintegration with their families

The special focus of the project is thus:

- To ensure quality education to all children (between 4 to 14 years) in the observation/children‘s homes in the city of Mumbai
- To track meticulously the development of children and their rehabilitation process
- To prevent dropouts from school once the children are out of institutional care

The project aims at providing quality education on one hand and prevents the dropout ratio especially when the institutionalized children are deinstitutionalized.

Remand Homes

The remand home is a social institution, which serves as corrective centre for young offenders remanded on the order of a juvenile court. Remand homes are an arm of the social welfare department. The Social Welfare Department of any state carries out its activities in accordance with the social development policy, which consists of; family and child welfare services, counseling and correction, rehabilitation and care of the elderly (Ezehi, 2017).

In Lagos State, remand homes fall under the Ministry of Youth, Sports and Social Development. The two remand homes in the state are;

(i) Boys Remand Home, Oregun, Ikeja
(ii) (ii) Girls Remand Home, Idi-Araba they have remands homes in almost all the states of the federation. Europe and United States of America call it Reformatory.

Other centres which render similar services include the Approved schools and the Children Transit Homes. In Lagos State there are three Approved schools namely:

(iii)   (i) Senior Boys' Approved School, Isheri

(iv)   (ii) Junior Boys' Approved School, Yaba (iii) Girls' Approved School, Idi-Araba

The Approved schools offer corrective training for the juveniles and wards in an effort to make them better citizens. They provide accommodation, education and necessary trainings to the inmates.

In Lagos State, they have one Children Transit Home at Idi-Araba. The children transit home caters for abandoned children from three years to ten years. These are picked up from the street or referred to the home from the motherless baby's homes and other registered orphanages. According to Stephen and Peggy (2007), between 2010 to 2014, some notable achievements made in the social welfare sector in Lagos State include;

- 621 delinquent children were given corrective training
- 680 delinquent children were kept in remand homes while awaiting court determination of their cases
- 98 children were fostered out to adoptive parents.

In Cross River State, there are two remand homes located at Calabar and Ogoja respectively and are under strict maintenance. This is to prevent the frequent cases of abscondence of inmates and ensure that adequate correctional measures are put in place for the juvenile offenders recommended by the court. This move is also to avoid any ugly incidence of the court sentencing a juvenile offender for correction to a regular prison to mix with the hardened criminals which is against juvenile justice administration.

The remand home is an effective institution whose singular objective is reforming the minor offenders and hence name "Reformatory" is used in Europe and America. The physical structure of a remand home should thus bear the following facilities; classrooms for the teaching of the inmates

- a mobile court for consideration of cases and continued assessment of the inmates
- a playground - hostels for residence. These when effectively put into use will lighten the task of reformation in such homes.

A common intervention strategy towards arresting the problem is the establishing of orphanages and remand homes. Challenges confronting such establishments include; space, accommodation, running cost, societal stigmatization of the children and final settlement of the young adults amongst them. Finance needed for operations is equally a problem given that such homes are usually run as non-profit charity organization/institutions. Individuals and corporate donation are major sources of assistance. For instance, the cost of education that goes on in some of the remand homes in Lagos State is principally borne by some religious bodies. Generally, such centres provide services like; food, shelter as well as educational services. Indeed, such vulnerable children need good nutrition for physical

growth, education for intellectual and emotional development, family ambience for socio-cultural and spiritual development. (Emery, 2010).

Reformatory programmes available in remand homes are:

(i)   Educational services: Teachers are employed (though by individuals and religious bodies) to teach the children. This is to keep them abreast of their school requirement so that they will not lag so much behind when they finally leave the home.

(ii)   (ii) Counselling services: Counselling is equally done on a regular basis by religious groups who visit regularly and the social workers. Experts are equally invited under the auspices of the social welfare department to counsel the inmates at regular intervals.

(iii)   Skill acquisition programmes: Workshops are available for skill acquisition programmes. They are given training on crafts and handicrafts, e.g. tailoring, shoe making, hairdressing, making of baskets, etc. This skill acquisition programme will not only inculcate in them a great sense of dignity of labour but will also equip them to be independent when they finally leave the home.

Reformatory homes are rehabilitation centers that are strategically built to reform juvenile delinquents using a mixture of physical and spiritual prowess. It is established that the reformatory homes are existing at different locations in Nigeria, despite the fact that they operate as reformatory schools with different methods of rehabilitation. However, some of the ex-delinquents perceived them as centers that are not rehabilitating but, instead, they only tortured and violate the fundamental rights of delinquents under their custody. While on the contrary parents perceived these schools as important and they are assisting in the reformation of their children (juvenile delinquents) (Ahmed &Tura, 2023).

Recreation:

One of the immediate benefits of recreational activities is that they fill unsupervised after school hours. According to Otuadah (2008) school children are most likely to engage in delinquent behaviour around 2pm-8pm. With crime rate peaking at 3pm, recreational programmes allow children to connect with other adults and children in the community. Such positive relationship may assist children in later years. Recreational programmes are designed to fit the personality of children and keep them from indulging in delinquent behaviour and this may include; sport, dancing, music, rock climbing, drama and karate etc.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has established and provided valuable insights into the factors influencing deviant behaviours among public secondary schools students in Nigeria. In conclusion, there

is a nexus between deviant behaviours and variables such as family structure, family size, parents' educational level, and home environment and the importance of a stable and nurturing family settings in minimizing such behavior cannot be over-emphasized. Based on the conclusion drawn from the findings, the following recommendations are hereby proffered.

1. The school authorities should establish and enforce stricter policies on punctuality and attendance, alongside effective communication between schools and parents.

2. School guidance counsellors should create peer education intervention programmes that address issues of peer pressure so as to foster positive peer influence

3. School counsellors should raise awareness on the need for parents to monitor the kind of peers their children associate with to forestall negative peer influence

4. Parents should create good family structure, adopt effective parenting styles to enhance positive behaviours and help their children to be well-adjusted

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