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The Relationship Between Family Background Indicators and the Types of Crimes Predominantly Committed by Incarcerated Juveniles in Selected Correctional Centers in Kogi State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This research investigates the relationship between family background indicators and the types of crimes predominantly committed by incarcerated juveniles in selected correctional centers in Kogi State, Nigeria. Implications for social rehabilitation of inmates. The study was guided by three objectives. Juvenile structured questionnaire (JSQ) was used to collect data from three hundred and seventy-two (372) respondents derived from staff from the rehabilitation center and incarcerated juvenile. Purposive sampling technique was adopted for incarcerated juvenile, and random sampling for the staff. Descriptive Percentages and mean were used to analyze the Research Questions while inferential statistics of Pearson Correlation was used to analyze the Hypotheses. Findings on family background indicators revealed that 42.6% of the parents had secondary education, 51.8% earned between ¦ 1,000 to ¦ 50, 000 per month while 59.8% have a household size of one to ten. On type of crime mostly committed, 79.3% of juveniles were involved in stealing, 62.1% into drug abuse and 39.1% fighting. Test of hypothesis between family background indicators and type of crime mostly committed revealed family type (-0.175), home type (-0.541), age (0.467), education (-0.400) occupation (-0.164), economic status (-0.489) and family size (1.000). In conclusion, family background indicators have strong correlation with the type of crime mostly committed by incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state. These correlations have serious implications on the social rehabilitation program for juvenile correctional centers. The recommends that, there is need for government and non-governmental organizations to revisit and develop a social rehabilitation program.

Key Words: Juvenile Incarceration, Rehabilitation, criminal activities, delinquent behavior, social integration

Introduction

Juvenile delinquency remains a significant social issue globally with numerous factors contributing to the involvement of young people in criminal activities. In Nigeria, the challenge is particularly pronounced, as economic and social inequalities exacerbate the conditions that lead to juvenile crime. The family plays a crucial role in shaping the behavior and attitudes of children. Disruptions in family structure, economic hardship and a lack of parental supervision can contribute to the development of delinquent behaviors. Family background is mainly the set of social, economic, cultural, and welfare characteristics of a family. Family background is also the kind of family one comes from and the kind of education one has had. It can also refer to social and racial origin, financial status and the type of work experience (Harper, 2021). These components of family background continue to change due to changing societal situations in careers and in fortunes. These changes become eminent because most parents come

from different family background with different orientation, environmental interaction, family de-functionality, social integration and technological development. Thus, some of these behaviors displayed by parents may likely create conflicts in areas of couple's functionality, finance management, child discipline, sex relationship and overall family decisions and responsibilities (Netala, 2015).

Parental background is supposed to care for, socialize and optimize the potential of children, however, it sometimes falls short of these due to the family economic, social and cultural conditions found to have consistent impact on the juvenile behavior (Maimuna, 2018, Yemane, 2021). Family composition such as children born out of wedlock, single headed families, lack of fatherly role models, poor parent-child relationships and negative peer group influence hasten juvenile delinquencies (Yemane, 2021). When the family shows sign of disintegration, it results into large number of delinquent juveniles Children Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN, 2017). The increasing rate of juvenile delinquency has become a major social problem locally and globally (Benjamin & Cyril, 2018). Currently, there is not an agency whose jurisdiction is tracking worldwide juvenile delinquency but UNICEF (2020) estimates that over one million children are in some type of detention globally. The preponderance of juvenile delinquency and incarceration due to the increasing rate of family instability and family background correlates such as poverty, unemployment, socioeconomic status, education, environment, peer pressure, family type are increasingly attracting research concerns (Paulina & Aniebietabasi, 2018). Thus, an investigation to see how this correlates contribute to the type of crime committed by juveniles is imperative in the present challenges faced in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Nigerian Correctional Service (2022) in Kogi state estimated a total of 23 juvenile cases in 2020 as compared to 87 cases in 2022 showing sharp increase in juvenile crimes. The most troubled and troublesome children in our society drawn mainly from families which have repeatedly broken down internally and externally (Morgan, 2006). Persistent offenders seem to have experienced particularly problematic childhood in terms of deprivation and inadequate parenting (McVie. & Holmes, 2005). The family is the fundamental building block of human society, family is home which is the natural school for children. Through bonding with parents, children internalize the moral values that are likely to shape their future conduct. Children who are rejected by their parents, grow up in homes with considerable conflict and are at greatest risk of becoming delinquents (Imaobong, 2002).

Despite numerous efforts by government and non-governmental organizations to curb juvenile delinquency, the rate of youth crime continues to rise in Kogi State. The increasing number of juveniles in correctional centers raises questions about the underlying causes of their criminal behavior. There is a paucity of research on how specific family background indicators correlate with the types of crimes committed by juveniles. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between family background factors and juvenile crime in Kogi State, with a view to informing more effective rehabilitation strategies.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between family background indicators and the types of crimes predominantly committed by incarcerated juveniles in selected correctional centers in Kogi State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study will:

1. Identify the types of crimes most commonly committed by juveniles in selected correctional centers in Kogi State.
2. Examine the relationship between family background indicators (parental income, education level,

age, occupation, family structure. home type) and the type of crime committed.

3. Identify strategies that will help to curb juvenile crimes in Kogi state

Hypothesis

One null hypothesis guided the study:

HO: There is no significant relationship between family background indicators and the type of crime mostly committed by incarcerated juveniles in Kogi State.

Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional survey design to collect data from incarcerated juveniles in selected correctional centers in Kogi State. The total population of the study comprised of all the 87 juveniles incarcerated and 1,051 staff in Kogi correctional centers (NCS, 2022). A total of 87 juveniles and 285 staff (372) made up the sample of the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select incarcerated juveniles, and a random sampling technique was used to select Staff of these correctional centers across each of the six local governments (Ankpa, Dekina, Idah, Okene, Kabba and Kotonkarifi).

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire that includes both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections that cover demographic information, family background indicators and details about the crime committed.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages. Pearson Correlation was used to test the hypothesis at 0.01 level of significance. For the mean scores, the decision rule mean is any mean above 3.00 is taken as agreed while less than 3.00 is taken as disagreed.

Results

Table 1 present family background indicators of incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state. It shows that 90.8% of juvenile parents have formal education, and 9.2% had no formal education. Parent estimated monthly income reveals that majority of the parent's ends between ¦ 1,000 to ¦ 50, 000 per month. Family type reveals that single parent family were majority (26.5%). Household size of parent showed that majority of the family had between one to ten members (59.8%). Information on accommodation shows that majority of the parents stays in rented apartment (57.5%).

Table 1: Descriptive Characteristics on Family Background Indicators of Incarcerated Juveniles in Kogi State

S/No	Family Background Indicators	Items	Freq.	%
A	**Juvenile parents Level of Education**			
		1. No Formal Education	8	9.2
		2. Primary Education	11	12.6
		3. Secondary Education	37	42.6
		4. Tertiary Education	31	35.6
		Total	**87**	**100**
B	**Parent Occupation**			
		1. Farmer	10	11.5
		2. Trader	21	24.2
		3. Civil Servant	33	37.9
		4. Artisan	15	17.2
		5. Politician	8	9.2
		Total	**87**	**100**
C	**Parent Estimated Monthly Income**			
		1. ₦1,000 to ₦50, 000 per month	45	51.8
		2. ₦51, 000 to ₦100, 000 per month	21	24.1
		3. ₦100, 000 & above per month	21	24.1
		Total	**87**	**100**
D	**Family Type**			
		1. Nuclear family	11	12.6
		2. Extended Family	10	11.5
		3. Polygamous	21	24.1
		4. Single Parent Family	23	26.5
		5. Re-married Family	22	25.3
		Total	**87**	**100**
E	**Household size**			
		1. 1 to 10	52	59.8
		2. 11 to 20	25	28.7
		3. 20 and above	10	11.5
		Total	**87**	**100**
F	**Parent Accommodation/Residence**			
		1. Personal House	12	13.8
		2. Rented Apartment	50	57.5
		3. Inherited Apartment	17	19.5
		4. Government Quarters	0	0
		5. Relative Apartment	8	9.2
		Total	**87**	**100**
G	**Home Type**			
		1. Parents are Living Together	4	4.6
		2. Parents have Divorced/ Broken Home	64	73.6
		3. Parents still married but living apart	19	21.8
		Total	**87**	**100**

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Table 1: Descriptive Characteristics on Family Background Indicators of Incarcerated Juveniles in Kogi State

Table 2 presents the type of crimes predominantly committed by incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state. All the crimes were committed with stealing (79.3%) and drug abuse (62.1%)) ranking the highest

Table 2: Descriptive Characteristics on Type of Crimes predominantly committed by Incarcerated Juveniles in Kogi State

S/No.	Crimes	Yes		Rank
		Freq.	%	
1.	Rape	29	33.3	6
2.	Fighting	34	39.1	3
3.	Robbery	11	12.6	10
4.	Kidnapping	12	13.8	9
5.	Fraud	21	24.1	7
6.	Murder	4	4.6	11
7.	Drug use and Abuse	54	62.1	2
8.	Cultism	33	37.9	4
9.	Conspiracy to steal/kill	17	19.5	8
10.	hooliganism	11	12.6	10
11.	Arson	11	12.6	10
12.	Stealing	69	79.3	1
13.	Stabbing	30	34.5	5

Table 3 indicated that all the items had 4.02 to 5.00 which are above the benchmark of 3.00. This shows that all the items are strategies that will help in curbing crime among juveniles in Kogi state. The standard deviation ranging from 0.00 to 0.63 indicating that the responses did not vary.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on Strategies that can help in Curbing Crime among Juveniles in Kogi State

N	Strategies	X	Std.	Remark
1.	Tracing parents' crime history	4.94	0.24	Agreed
2.	Upholding the rights of children	4.96	0.18	Agreed
3.	Investigating family background factors	5,00	0.00	Agreed
4.	Knowing friends and the activities of wards or children	5.00	0.00	Agreed
5.	Vocational skills training for all members	4.26	0.63	Agreed
6.	Counselling to improve psychological behavior	4.07	0.25	Agreed
7.	Cognitive and behavioral self-control strategies should be taught at the school and community level	4.27	0.44	Agreed
8.	Government economic Policy for juveniles	4.30	0.46	Agreed
9.	Activities for physical and mental fitness	4.17	0.46	Agreed
10.	Separate juveniles' facilities from the major correctional facilities	5.00	0.00	Agreed
11.	Prevention of abuse and exploitation of children	4.92	0.26	Agreed
12.	Focus on juvenile delinquency and reintegration with family and community.	4.42	0.49	Agreed
13.	Juvenile police units with special training in discovering delinquents and pre-delinquents	4.56	0.50	Agreed
14.	identify children who are in a situation of social maladjustment	4.20	0.40	Agreed
15.	Improved family bonds, family leisure activities, family support systems	4.94	0.24	Agreed
16.	Provision of recreational activities at school and community levels	4.10	0.30	Agreed

Table 4 results revealed that there was negative correlation between type of crime and all family background indicators except family size.

Table 4: Pearson Correlation of Test of Hypothesis

		Family Type	Parent Home Type	Parent Occup ation	Parent Age	Parent Education.	Parent Econ. Status	Family Size
Rate of Crime	**Pearson Correlation**	-0.175**	-0.541**	-0.164	-0.467**	-0.400**	-0.489**	1.000**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003	0.000	0.129	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	N	87	87	87	87	87	87	87

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Pearson Correlation of Test of Hypothesis

Discussion

Information on family background indicators of incarcerated juveniles in Kogi state indicated that majority of the incarcerated juvenile's parents had secondary education and end low income. When parents are well educated, it improves a sense of competence and self-efficacy which gives constant satisfaction. This brings positive changes in attitude which is in turn pass to the kids. Alternatively, additional parental education may change parents' behavior in ways that reduces children's propensity to commit crime. This is consistent with the work of Athanasius (2021) who found that family income and parental level of educational attainment significantly contributed to level of juvenile delinquency. Similarly, Chalfin and Deza (2019), found that children of less educated

parents are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior.

Family type is considered very crucial because of the unique role in the upbringing of the child since the family is always first agent of socialization. If the home environment is divided or separated as a result of family crises, death or even career task, there is likelihood of parents truncating their primary responsibility of adequate monitoring and supervision. Similarly, Nkhata, & Mwale, (2016), found that juveniles who were more prone to deviant acts came from single parent families as compared to those who came from intact homes. This is still debatable as Kembe (2024) proved that children from single parents do not necessarily turn deviant if they are trained with family values that are sustainable.

On the type of crimes commonly committed by deviant juveniles, stealing and drug abuse were the most prevalent type of crime discovered. (Hg.org, 2023). Jane (2023) found that rape, stealing, burglary, disobedience, homicide, truancy, vandalism, and robbery as crimes linked with juveniles.

Knowing the type of friends, investigating family background and separate remands were identified as basic requirements for good juveniles' rehabilitation. Closely, Kembe (2024) revealed that parent-management training, value re-orientation and community care are effective at preventing juvenile delinquency. Correlation exists between family background indicators such as family size, parent home type, parent occupation, parent age, parent education, parent economic status, family size and type of crime mostly committed. Finebone and Temi (2022), established that there is strong link between family structure and juvenile delinquency; and that children in single-parent or broken homes commit more crime than children from homes that are conflict free.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings it can be concluded that most of the crimes committed by juveniles in Kogi state have link with family background. Therefore, the need for the involvement of parents, legal unit and governments in the rehabilitation of juveniles.The following recommendations are made:

1. Kogi state government should implement family-based interventions policies providing affordable and supporting training and social welfare programs for juveniles' offenders and their families.
2. Parents need to take up the responsibilities of guiding and mentoring children as an important service providing nurturance as well as transmitting the ideals of the society.

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