

Correlational Study of Peer Influence and Juvenile Delinquency among Secondary School Adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis

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Abstract

A connection between peer-influence and adolescent delinquency among auxiliary school young people in Ibadan Metropolis was investigated. Multi-stage purposive sampling was used to select 120 participants. They consisted of 68 male and 42 female respondents with ages ranged between 11 and 18 years. The mean age and standard deviation of the ages are respectively 14.62 years and 13.37. Three research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 critical region. Two instruments were used to collect the data: Juvenile Delinquency Scale ($r = 0.83$) and Negative Peer Influence Scale ($r = 0.95$). The data collected were exposed to P. P. M. C. The findings showed that there was significant association between peer -influence and adolescent delinquency of the participants in Ibadan Metropolis (r . calculated = 0.54; $df = 238$; $P < 0.05$). It was observed that there was significant association between peer influence and delinquency of male secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis (r . calculated = 0.35; $df = 134$; $P < 0.05$); and that there was significant association between peer-influence and juvenile delinquency among female secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis (r . calculated = 0.27; $df = 80$; $P < 0.05$). The findings were discussed and necessary recommendations were put forward.

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INTRODUCTION

The issue of adolescent misconduct is getting more confounded and widespread, and wrongdoing anticipation programs are either unequipped to manage the current real factors or don't exist. Many developing nations have done pretty much nothing to manage these issues, and global projects are clearly deficient. Created nations are occupied with exercises focused on adolescent wrongdoing counteraction, however the general impact of these projects is fairly feeble on the grounds that the systems set up are regularly lacking to address the current circumstance. Overall, current endeavours to battle adolescent misconduct are portrayed by the absence of orderly activities and the shortfall of assignments situated and successful social work with the two guilty parties and casualties, regardless of whether genuine or potential. Investigation is additionally

muddled by an absence of worldwide similar information (World Youth Report, 2003). The concept of delinquency is so complex that it is perceived differently by psychologists, sociologists, legal practitioners, religionists etc. but the consensus is that delinquency is an anti-social behaviour. Each society prescribes its own set of norms and values which must be strictly adhered to by its members and anybody violating such norm is seen as a delinquent. Practically every general public since the beginning of history has looked on youth wrongdoing as a significant issue, and the current general public is the same. The underlining reasoning of Juvenile equity as the historical backdrop of youngster government assistance in Nigeria turned out to be exceptionally intriguing and of worry for all since it affects the entire society the government, homes/family and all stake holders. The trend in the study of this problem has moved gradually from the focus on physical and psychological

composition of the individual to the influence of the social structure on an individual.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Delinquency on the whole is not an easy concept to define because of its complex characteristics. However delinquency has been for a very long time a societal evil. These delinquent behaviours consist of acts that violate the laws of the society.

Siegel and Welsh (2011) stressed further that delinquency covers an enormous range of crime which includes felonies, such as robbery, assault and loitering. The issue of adolescent delinquent behaviours has been a problem all over the globe and this has created a lot of concern to parents, teachers, government and the society and this has led to governments setting up remand homes where these delinquents are managed. The act of delinquency which is prevalent among secondary school students nowadays has been an age long problem in Nigeria secondary schools.

Delinquent behaviours have eaten deep into the flesh of Nigeria's youths and the astronomical effect is visible for all to see. Cases of rape, armed robbery, impersonation, obtaining money by false pretence and of recent kidnapping and armed insurgency in the North east, south South and South East of the country have taken an unprecedented upward progression as a result of the inability to curb these forms of delinquency This is having an untoward effect on the socio economic development of the country. It can therefore be said that the scariest undertone of Nigeria's socio economic problem is the high rate of delinquency among youths (Orga, Ecwochi & Eneh, 2018).

In view of this, it is therefore expediently necessary to beam the searchlight on how to reduce the menace to its barest minimum.

Contemplating adolescent misconduct by taking guardian or companion impacts into thought is an old pattern in criminal science (Ingram et al., 2007). Another significant advancement in understanding companion impacts on misconduct is the connection between family connections, mass communication and the friend impact (Brendgen, Vitaro, Tremblay, and Wanner, 2002; Ingram et al., 2007). This pattern gives credit to social learning approaches since family connections, rough or peaceful wrongdoings of companions, contribution to degenerate companion gatherings, and broad communications as an unoriginal specialist to help socialization, attracts a big image to clarify adolescent misconduct. A few theoreticians recommend that the families, who are absent of successful control on and appropriate parental checking of the youngster's exercises, increase the

likelihood of the kid's contact with freak peers (Ingram et al., 2007).

Studies have been made to test learning hypotheses in the field of adolescent misconduct (Rebellon, 2006; Payne and Salotti 2007). Brendgen et al. (2002) attest that individual characteristics, social-ecological elements like openness to brutality in media, constant pressure experienced in informal organizations, and risky encounters with family and friends are compelling inside and out in adolescent's savage demonstrations. It is additionally to be expected that during immaturity, shifted sorts of relationship with peers are both normal and inescapable (Warr and Stafford, 2002). For instance, by utilizing information from the National Youth Survey,

Weerman and Smeenk (2005) discovered that peer relations (i.e., openness to delinquent companions, time spent with peers, dedication to peers) changed significantly all through youth, following a lot of a similar examples as wrongdoing itself. It is well known that peer affiliations are one of the strongest predictors of adolescent problem behaviour. Association with risk-taking friends is strongly related to alcohol use (Barnow, Schultz, Lucht, Ulrich, Preuss & Freyberger, 2004), illicit drug use (Nation & Heflinger, 2006), and aggression and delinquency among both male and female adolescents (Barnow, Lucht, & Freyberger, 2005). These effects have been found to be remarkably consistent across various countries (e.g., Beyers, Toumbourou, Catalano, Arthur, & Hawkins, 2004). Indeed, there is evidence that peer affiliations may be the mechanism through which social disadvantage and family conflict affect a number of undesirable life outcomes in later adolescence and early adulthood, such as criminal behaviour, sexual promiscuity, and early childbearing (Dishion, Ha, & Vérroneau, 2009).

Hoffman, Monge Chou and Valente (2007) indicate that adolescents who smoke cigarettes are more likely to select other smokers as peers, rather than affiliation with smoking peers leading adolescents to smoke. In a sample of Swedish adolescents, Kiesner, Kerr and Stattin (2004) found that the most antisocial adolescents tended to choose multiple "best friends" who also exhibited delinquent behaviour. This type of peer selection effect is known as peer homophily (e.g., Kiesner, Poulin, & Nicotra, 2003). Put differently, peer homophily suggests that "birds of a feather flock together." Regnerus (2002) found that, especially in older adolescents (ages 17-19), the amount of time spent with friends - in addition to friends' own delinquency - predicted engagement in theft and minor delinquency (e.g., graffiti, damaging property). For another example, Steinberg, Blatt-Eisengart, and Cauffman (2006) reported

that adolescents raised by more involved parents are more resistant to such peer influences. Vitaro, Pedersen and Brendgen (2007) found that association with disruptive friends in middle school predicted delinquent behaviour in high school irrespective of the gender of the participants. An experiment by Paternoster and colleagues (2012) provided evidence in support of this social learning perspective, where 38% of college students exposed to a deviant experimental confederate (compared to none of the students in the control condition) later reported intending to cheat on a word recall task. This evidence suggests that both peer exposure and vulnerability to deviant peer influences predict delinquent behaviour in young people. Adegoke (2015) reported a study on the major related elements supporting and answerable for an expanding adolescent wrongdoing. Three examination theories were planned to control the investigation. Fifty delinquent and fifty non-delinquent adolescents were randomly chosen from ten schools across Ibadan Metropolis of Oyo State, Nigeria and research instrument was given to elicit required data.

The hypotheses were tested using P. P. M. C. at $p \leq .05$ level of importance and fitting levels of opportunity. Results showed peer influence is the primary sustainer of adolescent wrongdoing. A lot of research works have been done on factors responsible for adolescent delinquency like the effect of psychosocial factors and bio-demographic factors, but peer influence as a single militating factor and consideration of its counselling implication in its amelioration has not been sufficiently dealt with. This research therefore is out to bridge the gap with other studies earlier done on adolescent delinquency. The purpose of this study was to establish the relationship between peer influence and tendency for juvenile delinquency among the selected secondary school adolescents within Ibadan Metropolis. Specifically, the study intended to explore the association between peer influence and delinquency among selected adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis and gender influence of the relationship.

Hypotheses of the Study

1. There is significant connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency of the participants.
2. There is significant connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency of the male participants.
3. There is no significant connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency of the female participants

3.0 METHODS

This study adopted a descriptive research design of ex-post factor type. This design was adopted in the study because there was no intention to manipulate any variable. The participants were observed directly in their natural setting.

The population of the study include all secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis. The secondary school adolescents in the four local government areas with the Metropolis are the population of this study.

Multi-stage purposive sampling technique was used in the study. The secondary schools in Ibadan Metropolis were divided into two existing zones (main-city and less-city). Two secondary schools were purposively selected from each of the zones. Thirty secondary school adolescents were purposively selected from each of the selected schools. The participants consisted of 120 systematically selected secondary school adolescents within Ibadan Metropolis. They were made up of 68 male and 42 female adolescents. The ages of the respondents range between 11 and 18 years with the mean age and standard deviation of ages are 14.62 year and 13.37 respectively.

Two instruments were used to collect the data of this study. They are Juvenile Delinquency Scale and Adolescent Negative Peer Influence Scale.

Juvenile Delinquency Scale is a self-constructed but well validated scale. This scale has 20 items structured in four likert response format with response options ranging from “very much like me” to “not at all like me”. The minimum and maximum obtainable score of the scale are 20 and 80, respectively. The reliability of the scale is established by determining the internal consistency with the split-half method which returned reliability coefficient of 0.83.

Negative Peer Influence Scale (Animasahun, 2007) was used to measure the peer influence. This scale has fifteen items. The test items are drawn on a 5-point likert scale with response options ranging from “strongly disagree -(1)” to “strongly agree- (5)”. The respondents are supposed to choose and circle 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 which is most applicable to them. The author also reported Cronbach alpha and spilt half reliability of 0.95.

The investigators visited the selected schools. In each of the schools, the permission to use some students as research participants were sought and obtained from the school authority. The participants from each school were gathered in a classroom where the purpose of the investigators were explained to them. The research instrument was given to them. Questions and clarification were welcome from the participants.

P.P.M.C. was adopted for analysis of the generated data. The method is useful in estimating the

significant relationship between variables which are not more than two. In each of the hypotheses of this study, two variables were involved.

4.0 RESULT

Hypothesis One

There is significant connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency among secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis

Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and PPMC score of Secondary School Adolescents on Peer Influence and Juvenile Delinquency

V.	No	Mean	Sd.	Df	r. Cal	P
P. I	120	55.67	13.06			
J. D	120	56.47	12.93	119	0.54	**

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

Table 1 shows the result obtained from testing hypothesis One. The table shows that r. calculated = 0.54, degree of freedom = 238 and r. critical = 0.19. Since r. calculated (0.54) is greater than r. critical (0.19), the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is significant relationship between peer influence and juvenile delinquency among secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis.

Hypothesis Two

There is a significant connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency among male secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis.

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and PPMC score of Male Secondary School Adolescents on Peer Influence and Juvenile Delinquency

V.	No	Mean	Sd.	Df	r. Cal	P
P. I	68	57.27	10.36			
J. D	68	56.97	11.12	67	0.35	**

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

Table 2 shows the result obtained from testing hypothesis two. From the table it is apparent that r. calculated = 0.35, degree of freedom = 134 and r. critical = 0.19. Since r. calculated (0.34) is greater than r. critical (0.19), the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between peer influence and juvenile delinquency among male secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis.

Hypothesis Three

There is significant difference between peer influence and juvenile delinquency among female secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and PPMC score of Secondary School Adolescents on Peer Influence and Juvenile Delinquency

V.	No	Mean	Sd.	Df	r. Cal	P
P. I	42	56.25	9.36			
J. D	42	56.74	10.57	41	0.27	**

** (Significant at 0.05 critical region)

The finding from the first hypothesis shows that there is significant connection between peer influence and the adolescents' juvenile delinquency in Ibadan Metropolis. This means that peer influence and tendency to engage in juvenile delinquency are significantly related among the participants of this study. This implies that the higher the negative peer influence of the participants, the higher the probability of engaging in juvenile delinquency. This finding supports the previous findings of Adegoke (2015), Vitaro, et al (2007) and Barnow, et al (2005). These studies concluded that peer influence had significant relationship with juvenile delinquency. This finding may be connected with the fact that peer influence has been one of the social forces behind the behaviour of people in general and adolescents in particular. The influence peers have on the manifestation of behaviours among adolescents cannot be underemphasized. Adolescents who are in the group of peers who bully are likely to imitate the act and be ready to bully anybody that comes his way after a slight provocation. Many adolescents are into negative behaviours such as smoking, drug addiction, and other negative behaviours because they belong to a group where these behaviours are demonstrated freely.

Findings of this study also disclosed that there is significant connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency among male secondary school adolescents in Ibadan Metropolis. This means that peer influence and juvenile delinquency are significantly related among the participants of this study. This also shows that being male did not influence the connection between the peer influence and juvenile delinquency of the participants. This finding is in line with the findings of Vitaro, et al (2007) and Barnow, et al (2005), which observe that gender did not influence the connection between peer influence and secondary school students' juvenile delinquency.

Findings of this study also depict that there is significant connection between female peer influence and

their juvenile delinquency in Ibadan Metropolis. Put differently, the peer influence among the female participants is significantly related with the probability of engaging in juvenile delinquency.

This finding confirms the previous findings of Vitaro, et al (2007) and Barnow, et al (2005). These studies observed the connection between peer influence and juvenile delinquency is not gender biased. Female adolescents who move with friends that exhibit negative behaviour are likely to join them in the antisocial behaviour.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study show that peer influence exert significant relationship with juvenile delinquency among adolescent. Parents should monitor the type of friends their children keep. Bad companionship hinders good behaviours. The economy of the country should not be allowed to blind the parents as to who the friends of their children are. Failure to do this may have grave consequence on the behaviour of the children. Society should also play their role in making sure that anti-social behaviours exhibited by adolescents are strongly reduced if not totally eradicated. Reduction in the anti-social behaviours of adolescents is tantamount to reduction in juvenile delinquency. This is the best time to do this so as to assist in findings ways of reducing the adolescent induced anti-social upheaval ravaging this country.

The findings of this study would assist in extending the frontiers of knowledge on the management of juvenile delinquency. The subsequent researchers in this area of study will find the findings of this study useful in conducting and reporting their studies.

Conclusions of the Study

It is concluded from this study that peer influence on secondary school adolescents is significantly related to the probability of them engaging in juvenile delinquency. The findings also show that the relationship remains significant irrespective of the gender of the adolescent. Put differently the male and female peer influence has significant relationship on the possibility of the adolescents exhibiting juvenile delinquent tendencies.

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