

# **Family Background and Adolescents' Delinquent Behaviour in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State**

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## **Abstract**

This study investigated Family Background and Adolescent's Delinquent Behaviour in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State. The researcher posed two research questions and formulated two hypotheses which was tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of study consisted of all 6,524 SSII students in 212 public secondary schools in Abia State. Simple random sampling techniques was used to draw a sample of 625 senior secondary II students from 21 schools in Abia State. Ten (10%) percent of the population was selected for the study. One researcher designed instrument titled: Family Background and adolescents' Delinquent Behaviour Questionnaire (FBADBQ) was used. The instrument was given to three experts, two from guidance and counseling and one from measurement and evaluation all in the department of Psychological Foundations, Faculty of Education, Abia State University, to check if the instrument measured what it supposed to measure. Cronbach Alpha was used to obtain the correlation coefficient for reliability which yielded a coefficient of 0.70 which was adjudged to be good for the study. Data collected were analyzed using Pearson Moment Correlation to answer research questions while t-test statistics associated with Linear regression was used to test the hypotheses. The finding revealed that there is low positive relationship between prenatal occupation and adolescents' behaviour. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents should always try as much as possible to monitor the progress of their children while in school and ensure they are not involved in delinquent behaviours.

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**Key words:** Family Background, Adolescents, and Delinquent Behaviour.

## **Introduction**

Adolescence refers to the period of human growth that occurs between childhood and adulthood. It is a time of rapid change and development of competencies, skills and habits. According to WHO (2013), adolescence is the period in human growth and development that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, from age 10 – 19. It is also referred to as the period of storm and stress. This creates confusion about the self because society considers them neither children nor adult. Adolescents like other humans, exhibit various behavioural problems. They have fluctuating moods and are aggressive and anxious. Ogbuokiri and Otta (2016), pointed out that the period of adolescence is marked by problems, some of which are as a result of changes going on in their bodies and their own environment. They think that risk taking is part of life and a way of discovering their capabilities and gathering experience that will lead them into future life. Attempt to find a way to adjust to all these problems and changes may push them into a variety of delinquent behaviours (Uba, 2012).

Delinquent behaviour refers to the pattern of engaging in criminal activities by individuals who are adolescents or young people under the age of 18. Frank (2010), viewed delinquency as the problem caused by the youth in the community, which are now universally accepted as crime committed by young people under the age of 21 years. Danga and Danga (2007), pointed out that delinquent youths are those who pilfer willfully; damage property and who are truant from school, engages in gang fighting, hostility and a general destructive tendency. They further affirmed that, they are often the product of parental rejection due to some behaviours that are beyond parents control which was infested by peer group and or social media influence.

No wonder, Aneke (2015) found that, parents of delinquent boys do not have good relationship with their sons, and that consciously or unconsciously, lead these adults into suffering an anti-social behaviour, hence youths who are loved and accepted by their parents make good behaviour. To support this, Ikediashi (2010) also, observed that the modern society has taken steps into making the adolescents realize the implication of mal-adaptive that lead to destruction of life and property, unlike what it used to be in the past. This why adolescent from good family and good parenting eventually turn out to be mature and less likely to engage in any risk taking behaviour (Awoyeni 2010).

The family is a very crucial unit in the growth and development of an individual in the society. The family been the first and major agency of socialization has a great influence on the development of the child (Threlfall, Seay, and Kohl, 2013). A neglect of the family responsibility in the upbringing of a child will be dangerous to the whole system, hence the family background of a child plays a very big role on the child's life. Family background refers to all the objects, forces and conditions in the home which influence the child physically, intellectually and emotionally (Muola, 2010). According to Eke (2004), family

background may vary from time to time for the same individuals. She maintained that it is parents that are primarily responsible for establishing the family and can exercise control over it. This means that parental attitudes are very important in promoting a healthy family background. Hence, family background involves parental occupation, parental level of education and parental marital status etc.

Parental occupation influences the type of education a child receives from the parents. Fajuyitan (2008), noted that the type of occupation parents do tend to exert influence on their children's education. Ogunshola and Adewale (2012), opined that parents of different families with different classes of occupation, have different ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children's behaviours which even affect their academic performance in school. According to (Simin, 2005), parental occupational status is part of a larger constellation of sociological variables influencing students' school outcome.

Parental education also has been view as part of family background. Parental education takes many forms. This include the provision of secured and stable environment intellectual stimulation, parent no child discussion, good models of constructive social and educational values. Parental level of education according to Epetein (2002) helps in checking homework, attending school meetings, and events, discussing school activities at home and has very powerful influences on students academic performance. While parent education positively affects students' academic achievement, low socio-economic parents are least likely to be involved in their children's education. There are other variables of family background such as marital status, socio-economic background and others but the researcher decided to limit the study on these ones. However, several researches have been carried out by different authors on these.

In a related study, Akinsanya and Ajayi (2011), carried out research on the relative effects of parents' occupation, qualification and academic motivation of adolescents in mathematics in Ogun State, Nigeria. The result reveals that parents' education had the highest significant influence on the academic achievement of students in mathematics. Mark (2015) also carried out a study on the influence of parental occupation on students' interest in physics. The finding revealed that parental occupation significantly influenced students' interest in physics and as well as their behavioural patterns in the classroom.

Korir and Kipkemboi (2014), conducted research on assessment of the influence of family background on students' academic performance in Vihiga, Kenya. The study set out to investigate the relationship between family background and students' academic performance. The findings revealed that family background was the most potent predictor of students' academic performance for a student to attain high academic performance in the districts' public day secondary schools.

Bola (2011) also conducted a study on the influence of parental education and parental occupation on academic achievement of adolescents in Akal College of Education, Punjab, India. The findings revealed that the children of educated parents and the children of the parents whose profession was teaching performed better than the children of illiterate parents.

Despite the depth and scope of these studies, to the best knowledge of the researcher, little or no work has been done on family background and adolescents' delinquent behaviour especially in the area of study that is the gap that the present study intends to fill.

### **Purpose of the Study:**

The purpose of this study is to investigate family background and adolescents' delinquent behaviour in senior secondary schools in Abia State. Specifically, the study intends to

1. determine the relationship between parental occupation and adolescents' delinquent behaviour among senior secondary school students in Abia State.
2. determine the relationship between parental level of education and adolescents' delinquent behaviour among senior secondary school students in Abia State.

### **Research Questions:**

To guide the study, the following research questions were posed.

1. What is the relationship between parental occupation and adolescents' delinquent behaviours in senior secondary schools in Abia State?
2. What is the relationship between parental level of education and adolescents' delinquent behaviours in senior secondary schools in Abia State.

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses guided the study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

1. There is no significant relationship between parental occupation and adolescents' delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Abia State.
2. There is no significant relationship between parental level of education and adolescents' delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Abia State.

### **Method**

The study adopted correlational research design. The population of the study consisted of all 6,524 SSII adolescent students in 212 public secondary schools in Abia State. Data was collected from Secondary School Management Board Umuahia. Simple random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of 625 senior secondary II students from 21 schools in Abia State. Ten (10%) percent of the population was selected for the study. One research designed instrument

titled: “Family background and Adolescents’ Delinquent Behaviour Questionnaire (FBADBQ) was used. The questionnaire has two sections Section A elicited information on the demographic data of the respondents, while section B elicited information related to Family background and Adolescents’ Delinquent Behaviour. These items were sub-divided into three parts. Cluster ‘A’ was on parental occupation with six (6) items. Cluster ‘B’ was on parental level of education with five (5) items and cluster ‘C’ was on adolescents delinquent behaviour with seven (7) items. This gave rise to eighteen (18) item questionnaire. The response format was structured in line with four point scale scale with numerical value assigned to them as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from Guidance and Counseling and one from Measurement and Evaluation all from Faculty of Education, Abia State University Uturu. It was found that the instrument was suitable for measuring what it supposed to measure. The reliability Index of the instrument was 0.70 using Cronback Alpha. The instrument was administered by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. The researcher used Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to answer the research questions while t-test statistic associated with Liner Regression was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

The results are presented in tables according to the research questions and hypotheses.

### Research Question One

What is the relationship between parental occupation and adolescents’ delinquent behaviours in senior secondary schools in Abia State?

The result of the analysis is presented in table 1

**Table 1: PPMC on Relationship between parental occupation background and adolescents delinquent behaviour**

S/N	Source of Variation	No	r	Decision
1	Parental occupation background	652		
2	Adolescents delinquent behaviour		0.207	Low positive

Data presented on table 1 shows the analysis that the correlation (r) between the predictor variable (parental occupation) and the criterion variable (Adolescent delinquent behaviours) is 0.207. The r of 0.207 implies that there is a low positive relationship between parental occupation and adolescent delinquent behaviours.

### Research Question two

What is the relationship between parental education background and adolescents delinquent behaviours in senior secondary school in Abia State?

The result of the analysis is presented on table 2

**Table 2: PPMC on Relationship between parental education background and adolescents' delinquent behaviours**

S/N	Source of Variation	No	r	Decision
1	Parental education background	652		
2	Adolescents delinquent behaviour		0.217	Low positive

The analysis above shows that the correlation (r) between the predictor variable (Parental education background) and the criterion variable (Adolescent delinquent behaviours) is 0.217. The r of 0.217 implies that there is a low positive relationship between parental education background and adolescent delinquent behaviours.

### Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between parental occupation and adolescents' delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Abia State.

**Table 3: Summary of t-statistics associated with regression analysis of significant relationship between parental occupation and adolescents' delinquent behaviours.**

Model	No	df	$\beta$	t	Sig	Decision
Parental occupation	652		0.207	36.809	0.00	Reject Ho
Adolescents delinquent behaviour		651		10.422		

The result indicated df to be 651 ( $\beta$  0.207 and t value of 36.809 with a p value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Since P value is less than the criterion significance level, therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis established. Thus there is a significant relationship between parental occupation and adolescents' delinquent behaviours.

## Hypothesis two

There is no significant relationship between parental education background and adolescents' delinquent behaviour among senior secondary school student in Abia State.

**Table 4: Summary of t statistics associated with regression analysis of significant relationship between parental education background and adolescents' delinquent behaviours.**

Model	No	df	$\beta$	t	Sig	Decision
Parental occupation	652		0.217	78.352	0.00	Reject Ho
Adolescents delinquent behaviour		651		10.927		

The result of table 4 indicated df to be 651 ( $\beta$  0.217 and t value of 78.352 with a P value of 0.00 at 0.05 level of significance. Since the P value is less than the criterion significance level, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected, the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Thus there is a significant relationship between parental education background and adolescents' delinquent behaviour.

## Discussions

The findings from research question one and the corresponding hypothesis 1 reveal that there is a low positive relationship between parental occupation and adolescent delinquent behaviours in senior secondary schools in Abia State. The hypothesis showed that there is a significant relationship between the variables. The findings are in agreement with that of Akinsanya and Ajayi (2011) who carried out research on relative effect of parents occupation and academic motivation of adolescents in secondary school mathematics in Ogun State, Nigeria. The result reveals that parents occupation had the highest significant influence on academic achievement of students in mathematics. This is an indication that the occupation parents do have a role in the way students behave in the school.

The findings from research question two and the corresponding hypothesis two reveal that there is a low positive relationship between parental education and adolescent delinquent behaviours in senior secondary schools in Abia State. The hypothesis shows that there is a significant relationship between the variables. The finding is in agreement with that of Bala (2011) who conducted a study on the influence of parental education on academic achievement of adolescents. The study showed that students from parents with formal education perform well than those from parents with informal education. The study found at hypothesis that there is significant relationship between parental education and academic achievement of adolescents.

## Conclusion

The study concluded that family background has a relationship with adolescents' delinquent behaviour. This implies that the background from which students are coming from may determine how they behave in the class and in their schools towards others.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Parents should always try as much as possible to monitor the progress of their children in their school days to ensure that they are not involved in delinquent behaviours.
2. Uneducated parents should be encouraged to hire the services of good psychologists to help in check-mating the activities of the children especially during holiday seasons.

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