

*Original Research Article*

# Parenting Approaches and Delinquency of Secondary School Adolescents in Calabar Education Zone

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Abstract

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The study examined the influence of parenting approaches on the delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone. One research question and one hypothesis guided the study. An ex-post facto research design was adopted. A sample of eight hundred and thirty-two (832) SS11 students was selected for the study. Data were collected using Parenting Approaches and Delinquency Questionnaire (PADQ) which has a reliability coefficient of .71 with Cronbach Alpha. Data collected were analysed using Analysis of Variance Statistical technique. The result revealed that parenting approaches significantly influence adolescent delinquency. Based on the finding, it was recommended among others the parents should monitor, control and supervise the activities of their children and also spend time with their children in order to minimize the chances of developing delinquent behavior.

**Key words:** Parenting, adolescent, delinquency, authoritarian, secondary school

## INTRODUCTION

The home is the environment where an individual is born and nurtured by parents and others until the individual is capable of fending for his own living. It is a basic unit of the society which plays a vital role in the growth and development of the child (Ogbeba, 2015). Kpernyam (2010) regards home as a social unit formed by a family. Functions of the home as stated by Supermerp (2003) include the primary socialization of children and personality stabilization, this is the fact that the home is the first institution to which a child is exposed and also it is automatically the first to teach and train the child. The home is also responsible for the inculcation of discipline, obedience to authority, respect for others and the respect for law of the land. It then implies that the family plays a major role in the development of a child whereas the parents and the significant others in the family play major role in nurturing the child. When a child is born, the child depends on parents or the caregiver, especially the mother for food, sustenance and comfort. Thus, the place of parents in the complex task of child rearing cannot be underestimated. Whatever the child becomes in future could depend on the kind of upbringing and the

parenting approach the child is exposed to in all areas of life. Parenting serves as the mechanism through which a child learns appropriate and inappropriate behavior, experience right and wrong choices in decision-making, acquire skills, understand roles and norms of a community (Perez and Cumsille, 2012). In the view of Latouf and Dunn (2010), parenting plays an important part in child socialization because it provides an early understanding of the self. Lamborn and Groh (2009) stated that general adjustment and psychological well-being, a healthy self-esteem and satisfaction with life are associated with quality parenting. O'Conner and Scott (2007) supporting the above view added that suboptimal parenting is associated with externalizing behavior such as antisocial behavior. Parenting approach as seen by Abosede (2012) is the psychological method of bringing up children in the family or environment. He further mentioned that the parenting style employed by parents lead to the overall development of the child. Parenting approach refers to the approach parents have in guiding and directing their children. It is the broad overall pattern of childrearing

practices values and behavior (Mensah and Kuranchie, 2013). Akhtar (2012) sees it as the way parents take care of their children which can have impact on the children's personality development and the way of interacting with social and close relations.

In the study of Baumrind in Berger (2005) on parental control, stated that three parenting approaches exist namely authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parenting: Authoritarian parenting is not only a restrictive and punitive approach that insists on rigid adherence to rules, respect for work and effort. It also places firm limits and control over adolescent allows a little verbal exchange. Consequently adolescents from such homes acquire socially incompetent behavior (Sailor, 2010, Hoskin, 2014). Authoritative parenting is marked by parental warmth, use of rules and reasoning or induction to promote obedience and keep discipline. Such parents use verbal and non-physically punishment, they are equally consistent in their words and actions overtime, they allow extensive verbal give-and-take with their adolescents. Johnson and Kelly (2011) stated that permissive parents may be different or indulgent. They are generally uninvolved in the lives of their adolescent children. They tend to avoid engaging in behavioural control, do not set rules and set a small number of behavioural expectations for their adolescent. It implies that permissive parents allow the adolescents to actively participate without being concerned for their actions (Greenwood, 2013; Cherry, 2015).

Delinquent behavior is one of the most distressful problems during the period when people are considered adolescents that is between the ages of 10 to 19. According to Elliot, Huizinga and Menard (2012) the list of delinquent activities include:

- Refusal to adhere to parental demands
- Alcohol use and drug addiction
- Stealing, property destruction, theft and rape

Adolescent delinquency can cause secondary school students' failure at examination, expulsion from school, disabilities in language and speech emotional disturbances, low self-esteem which will in turn make them to lose focus on what they aspire to do in future according to (Pepler and Cray, 2000). Children who display aggressive behavior usually exhibit deviant behaviour, such as sexual harassment, date violence, gang attacks, child abuse. It can also lead to injury, destruction of school property rape and loss of lives (Akume, 2015).

Tompsett and Toro (2016) point out that the risk of adolescent delinquent behavior is often headed by parenting styles. Work of Tremas Osuna and Cabrera (2013) on the relationship between parenting styles and aggression, in Spanish children between 3 and 14years, revealed significant differences in the support and communication perceived by fathers and mothers of both groups. Many studies have investigated the effect of parenting style on children's behavior (Liem Cavell

and Lustig, 2010, Pezella, 2010). Talib, Abdullah and Mansor (2011) argue that family of a child is socio-cultural-economic arrangement that has significant influence on not only the behaviour of the children but also on the development of the character. They further stated that ignorance in parenting can lead to unwanted damaging effect that ultimately create behavioural problem in children. Poor parental monitoring, guidance, communication and parental rejection have been identified by Dibia (2015) as indices of problem behaviours like delinquency.

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. In support of the view, Brook, Brook, Rosen, Rosa, Montoga and Whiteman, (2014) opined that lack of parental involvement and interaction result in increased risk of violence, primarily in male juveniles. The study Anake and Ada (2015) on parenting styles and adolescent behaviour in central educational zone of Cross River State using 627 SS II revealed that parenting style has a significant influence on adolescent's behaviour. The work of Andal, Amante, Whya, Gawa, Mojicai and Morgia (2016) on single parenting style as a predictor of juvenile delinquency using 118 respondents. 59 single parents and 59 children with an age of 10-18years showed that parenting can be a predictor of juvenile delinquency.

The study conducted by Moitra and Mukherjee (2010) on the relationship between mothers and fathers parenting behaviour and the development of delinquency in male adolescents using 200 adolescents (100 delinquent and 100 non-delinquent aged 11-18years revealed that parenting styles of mothers and fathers were linked to delinquency of which authoritative style appeared to be the best style of parenting. Ofoke, Oginyi and Nwankwo (20) studied the role of parenting style, gender and socio-economic status on delinquency behaviour tendency among undergraduates with total of 500 participants showed that undergraduates from the four different parenting styles differed statistically in their criminal behaviour. Sarwar (2016) Okorodudu (2010) research study on the influence of parenting style on children behaviour revealed that parenting style influence children behaviour. Another study by Okorodudu (2010) examined parental supportiveness that involved a healthy relationship, friendliness, supervision and participation in school work revealed that parental support an aspect of authoritative parenting was found out not significantly related to adolescent delinquent behaviour.

Rhucaroenpornpanich et al. (2010), examined parenting and adolescent problem behaviour among selected Bangkok in India. The bivariate analysis, ANOVA (F-test and X2 test, the finding revealed that monitoring was found to protect adolescent from delinquency). A research study on parenting styles and

adolescent delinquency conducted by Hoeve, Dubus, Loeber and Laan (2007) examined parental supervision and adolescent involvement in delinquent behaviour. The study reported that low control of parenting was significantly linked with adolescents involvement in moderate delinquency. Sanni, Nsiong, Abayomi, Felicia & Leonard (2010), investigated the role of family cohesion found that cohesive family involvement reduces the chances of aggressive behaviour. They further found out that low level of adaptability in the family results in higher level of behavioural problems. Parents using corporal punishment and negative behavioural approaches have been found to significantly increase the probability of their children expressing anti-social traits or negative behaviour. Van and Janssens (2014) also proposed that poor quality of parent-child interaction and lack of parental support are related to children's behavioural problems. Coste (2015) concluded that juvenile delinquency is directly linked to the behaviour of parents they adopt to treat their children. While Farrington (2010); Glueck and Glueck (2013) added that family influence is one the fundamental causes that leads the children to be delinquent.

Permissive parenting also has influence on children's behaviour, Underwood, Beron and Rosen (2009) found that permissive parenting style has positive correlations with antisocial behaviour. As in authoritarian parenting several researchers found that permissive parenting may cause antisocial behaviour such as rebelliousness and disruption among children (Schaffer et al, 2009). Parents with a permissive parenting style are too lenient and tolerant of their children with setting limits. This situation may cause children to lack the ability to differentiate what is good and bad for them. Permissive parents are relaxed and inconsistent in providing feedback to their children which may cause children to feel confused about what is good and bad. In permissive homes, children may think that they can do whatever they want and do not learn to respect anything. Authoritarian parenting according to Hoeve et al is linked to serious persistent delinquency such as murder, rape, robbery and selling hard drugs. A study about relationship between authoritarian parenting and delinquency found that negative response, aggression abandonment and physiological control in parenting had the strongest links to delinquency. Hoeve, et al (2009), Schaffer, Clark and Jeglic (2009) agreed that authoritarian parenting influenced adolescents through direct behaviour (Punitive and strict) which contributed to antisocial behaviour. Authoritarian children who live with authoritarian parents develop less responsibility because their parents make all their decisions for them and thus the children come to depend on their parents for almost everything. Because authoritarian parenting is harsh, demanding and strict, adolescents from these homes develop delinquent behaviour (Hoeve et al., 2008). Harsh discipline poor supervision, lack of direction and guidance cause

delinquency in male adolescents as suggested by Kiriakidis (2010). Authoritarian parenting style particularly plays an influence role in developing the delinquent behaviour among adolescents that eventually result in negative outcome (Kerr, Stattin and Ozdemir, 2012).

Authoritative parenting style is most of them associated with positive adolescent outcomes and has been found to be the most effective and beneficial style of parenting among most families. Adolescents with authoritative parent are less prone to externalizing behaviours and specially are less likely to engage in drug use than individuals with uninvolved parents (Andal, Amante, Miyagawa, Mojica and Morgia, 2016). Park, Kim, Chiang & Ju (2010) found that students from authoritative home had fewer psychological problems such as stress, anxiety and fewer disagreement with their parents suggesting less conflict with family members.

The reviewed literature, has shown that the parenting approach which is the behaviour and attitude of parents have lasting effect on their children well-being and the effects goes beyond the family and touches every aspect of the child's life. So for a well adjusted child, the parents need to have a balanced approach to parenting.

The rate of adolescent delinquency which increases in number, scope and complexity reported from every part of the country has been a source of great concern to all well-meaning Nigerians (Akume, Mayange and Vershima, 2015) because of its effect on the psychological well-being and psycho-social adjustment of the adolescents. Non-governmental organizations (NGO), Government, Churches, Media, schools have through seminars, workshops jingles, drama tried to sensitize the adolescents and parents on the consequences of poor parenting delinquent behaviour but it has no effect. This was what agitated the mind of the researcher to investigate the influence of parenting approaches and delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State.

### **Purpose of the study**

To determine the influence of parenting approaches on adolescents' delinquency.

### **Hypothesis**

1. There is no significant influence of parenting approaches on adolescents' delinquency.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The population of the study comprised all the senior secondary two (SS II) students in public secondary

**Table 1.** One-way Analysis of Variance of parenting approaches and delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone

Parenting styles	N	Mean	SD
Authoritarian	155	34.084	4.992
Authoritative	549	28.160	6.332
Permissive	128	27.133	6.760
Total	832	29.106	6.622

  

Source of variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Between groups	4830.146	2	2415.073	63.332*	.000
Within groups	31612.546	829	38.133		
Total	36442.692	831			

\*Significant at .05 alpha level;  $p < .05$ .

school in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State. The schools were 80 in number with a population of 7,123 SS II students (SSEB, 2015). Through stratified random sampling 712 students were selected for the study. The instrument for data collection was Parenting Approach and Adolescent Delinquency Questionnaire (PAADQ). This instrument had 26 items. It had three parts A,B,C. Part 'A' had information on personal data of respondents such as, age and sex. Part 'B' had 13 items used to gather data on parenting styles while Part C had items used to gather data on delinquency. The questionnaire items were developed by the researcher. The initial draft of the questionnaire was validated by three lecturers in Department of Educational Foundations, University of Calabar. The lecturers were given the topic and hypothesis to serve as guide. Based on their inputs, the items were modified where necessary. Reliability of the instrument was .71 using Cronbach alpha. The participants responded to the items using Likert 4-point rating scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The questionnaire were distributed and collected by the researcher. One way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for data analysis.

## RESULT

The data was analyzed using Analysis of Variance Statistical (ANOVA) technique at .05 level of significance.

### Hypothesis one

This hypothesis states that there is no significant influence of parenting approaches on delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone. The independent variable is parenting approaches while the dependent variable is delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone. The

hypothesis was analyzed using One-way Analysis of Variance tested at .05 level of significance and the result is presented in Table 1.

The result of the analysis in Table 1 revealed that the mean score obtained for the 155 subjects who are from authoritarian homes is 34.084 which is greater than the mean score of 28.160 obtained for the 549 subjects from authoritative homes and this is also greater than the mean score of 27.133 obtained for the 128 subjects who are from permissive homes. The result further revealed that the calculated F-ratio obtained was 63.332 with a p-value of .000 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 829 degrees of freedom. With the obtained result, the F-ratio was statistically significant and the hypothesis which states that there is no significant influence of parenting approaches on delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone was rejected.

Since delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone was significantly influenced by parenting approaches, the source of the difference was determined using Scheffe Post Hoc Test multiple comparison analysis as presented in Table 2.

The result of the Scheffe Post Hoc Test analysis as presented in Table 2 revealed that the mean of the subjects who are from authoritarian homes differ significantly when compared with the mean of those from authoritative homes with those from authoritarian homes having more delinquent behaviour (MD=5.924;  $p < .05$ ). The result further revealed that the mean of the subjects who are from authoritarian homes also differ significantly when compared with the mean of those from permissive homes with those from authoritarian homes having more delinquent behaviour (MD=6.951;  $p < .05$ ). The result finally revealed that the mean of the subjects who are from authoritative homes did not differ significantly when compared with the mean of those from permissive homes with those from authoritative homes having more delinquent behaviour (MD=1.027;  $p > .05$ ). Based on these, the source of the difference was basically from the subjects who are from authoritarian home.

**Table 2.** Scheffe Post Hoc Test for parenting approaches and delinquency of secondary school adolescents in Calabar Education Zone

Parenting approaches	N	Mean	Mean difference	Sig.
Authoritarian	155	34.084	5.924*	.000
Authoritative	549	28.160		
Authoritarian	155	34.084	6.951*	.000
Permissive	128	27.133		
Authoritative	549	28.160	1.027	.238
Permissive	128	27.133		

\*Significant at .05 level;  $p < .05$ .

## DISCUSSION

The result finding revealed significant influence of parenting approaches (Authoritarian) on delinquency. Authoritarian parenting approach involves demands without response. It features parental harshness, violence, aggression and punishment. Adolescents from authoritarian families have been found to be dependent, passive, less assured and low self-esteem as well as have weak communication system. This result agrees with the findings of Alika, Akanni and Akanni 2015; Abrihem, 2014), who opined that adolescents reared up through authoritarian parenting approach lack social competence because they expect the children strict compliance to parental rules and directives without explaining the rules to the children. This makes the children to be vulnerable to abusive or openly rebel by engaging in delinquent behaviour. The authoritative approach parents have both responsive and demanding dimension. Their children have fewer behavioural problems. In contrast, permissive parents are responsive but not demanding. So their children tend to get passive and be unresponsive in with their children. Generally, the level of support and warmth that parents show towards their children understandably influence adolescent delinquent.

## CONCLUSION

The finding revealed that the adolescents whose parents are authoritarian tend to be delinquent as strictness displayed by their parents make them rebellious. It then follows that dialogue, communication, explanation, provision of the child's needs and the creation of suitable environment for child rearing may prevent adolescents' delinquent behaviour.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Parents should monitor, control and supervise the activities of their children. They should also spend time

with their children in order to reduce the probability of developing delinquent behaviour.

2. Parents should be good role models for their children.
3. Parents and adolescents should learn to maintain a cordial relationship and interaction to guide against family conflict.
4. Counselors should organize regular seminars and conferences for parents to enlighten them on the importance of adopting good parenting practices in their homes.
5. Parents should prefer authoritative rather than authoritarian parenting approach.

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