

Teachers' Perception on the Impact of Delinquent Behaviours on Academic Performance of Senior Secondary School Students in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis of Kebbi State, Nigeria

Abubakar, Aisha Shayau; and Dr. H.S. Aliero

Department of Education, Faculty of Education, Kebbi State University of Science and Technology, Aliero.

Corresponding author: shayauaisha967@gmail.com

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Abstract

The main focus of this study is to find out the perception of teachers on the impact of delinquent behaviours on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Birnin Kebbi metropolis. Descriptive research design was employed for the study. Five research objectives and five research questions were raised to guide the research. Four hundred and sixty-eight respondents participated in the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled "Students Delinquent Behaviour Questionnaire (SDBQ)" was employed to collect necessary data for the study. The data was analysed using frequency count and percentages. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made. The need to establish counseling centres and organized enlightenment programme is imperative. Information pertaining to delinquency should be known to parents, teachers, and students so that they will be well informed about delinquent behaviours. Secondary school teachers should be well sensitised on the need to acquire adequate information on delinquent behaviour. Students should discuss their problem freely among themselves to be able to make well-informed decisions about their future. This measure is expected to help students correct and avoid delinquent behaviour in order to make them useful for themselves and the society as a whole.

Keywords: Teachers, Perception, Delinquent Behaviour, Academic Performance, Secondary School, Students.

Introduction

Academic achievement is one of the most significant indicators of teaching and learning in the educational systems. Academic achievement is the scholastic standing of a student at any given moment which could be explained in terms of grades obtained in a subject or subjects (Mekonnen, 2014). It is the grade assigned or awarded to students after series of teaching and learning exercises usually measured by continuous assessments or examinations. As a dependent variable, academic achievement is highly influenced by many factors interest, motivation, home education environment, parental socio-economic status and antisocial behavior. The reality of good conduct among students is a result of decent behavior. Behavior is the way an individual acts towards people, society, or objects (Kayne, 2012).

Ogbonna (2013) refers to discipline as when students are taught to respect the school authorities, to observe the school laws, and regulations and to maintain an established

standard of behavior. Discipline is the force that prompts students to observe the rules and regulations which are necessary for the attainment of educational goals. It is a factor that restrains students from engaging in disruptive behavior or delinquent behavior. Alemika (2018) and Muncie (2019), defined Juvenile delinquency as any act in violation of criminal law, committed by a person defined under law as a juvenile, which if had been committed by an adult will be treated as a crime or criminal conduct. According to Scalia (2017), juvenile delinquency is a violation of federal law committed by a person prior to age eighteen which would have been a crime if committed by an adult.

According to the Bartol and Bartol (2011) the Psychological Definition of juvenile delinquency is a child's engagement in extreme anti-social behaviour. Thus, children are supposed to be a sign of innocence and loyalty, yet they are killing other children and even killing their own parents. Mason (2015) opined that delinquency is the behaviour consequent to the failure of personal and social control to produce behaviour in conformity with the norms of the social systems to which legal penalties are attached. Elliot and Voss (2011) and Sarason (2013) observed that juvenile delinquency is largely the result of failure of primary groups to offer the child appropriate non-delinquent social role models or to provide the child with the forms of social control which will ensure the acceptance of those social roles which are preferred in accordance with his needs. However, juvenile delinquency is a legal term for the behaviour of children and adolescents that in adults would be judged criminal under law.

Siegal, Larry Walsh and Brandon (2011) stressed that juvenile delinquency is the participation in legal behaviour by minors (individuals younger than the statutory age of majority). It is the resistance antisocial, illegal or criminal behaviour by children or adolescents to the level that it cannot be controlled or corrected by the parents, therefore endangers others in the society and becomes the concern of enforcement agency. The term juvenile delinquency was established so that law breakers could avoid the disgrace of being classified in illegal records as criminals. A juvenile delinquent in Nigeria is a person who is typically under the age of nineteen and commits an act that otherwise could have been charged as a crime if they were adults. According to Moffit (2016), a higher proportion of youths have experienced arrest by their early 20's than in the past although some scholars have concluded that this may reflect more aggressive criminal justice and zero tolerance policies rather than changes in youths' behaviour. Furthermore, juvenile delinquency can range from status offences such as; underage smoking, alcohol drinking to property and violent crimes.

Around the world, human beings always strive to reduce indiscipline and improve people's conformity to the rules and regulations of the society, violation of rules still occurs. School environment is one part of the society that is not independent of what happens in the larger society (Daramola, 2011). It is a known fact that series of crimes witnessed in the larger society today manifest themselves in the school environment. In Nigeria for example, there are reports of students engaging in examination malpractices, raping of fellow students, truancy and organized student's destructive behaviors like riot, arson and theft (Ado

Bayero, 2015). However, many of these students' crimes cannot be precisely classified as crime but rather; they are technically referred to as delinquency. Delinquency refers to the violation of law by a juvenile. It includes those acts which do not conform to societal norms and which are committed mostly by adolescents. The term juvenile act has also come to include anything that youngsters do that goes against the norms of the society, regardless of whether the action is legal or illegal (Deborah, 2013).

Gibbons (2010) postulates that juvenile delinquents constitute a social problem about which something must be done. According to him, these children must be converted into normal non-delinquent individuals by some rehabilitation techniques. Though the total number of delinquents is far greater than it was revealed in court statistical and police records but it is inadequate to discuss statistical facts without finding solutions to what the statistics pointed to.

Gibbons (2010) observed that there is an abundance of evidence of misbehavior among youths. The situation therefore, is that a large number of youths at all social levels and in all kinds of communities engage in acts of misconduct and law breaking which may remain hidden or undetected. In another survey, Dentscher (2016) indicates that American's rate juvenile delinquency as the most serious moral problem, out of about eleven issues tabled for consideration. This is to tell us that delinquent behavior is becoming alarming rate and that people are taking note of its negative impact in the society. It is against this background knowledge that the researcher intends to survey on teacher's perception on the impact of delinquent behavior on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Birnin Kebbi metropolis.

On the alarming rate of delinquent acts in Nigerian schools, Fabunmi (2014) claimed that nobody in the Nigeria society today even in the world at large who can deny the fact that the age of student radicalism or activism has arrived. This then is the reason why Nwana (2017) opined that many Nigerian's laymen and educationists cry out against an alleged fall in level of discipline. The impression according to him is that the students of today commit more offences than their contemporaries and that the schools of today is clearly a less disciplined community than the schools of the past. Consequently, this delinquent act is a serious problem that disturbs the mind of the entire people of the society.

In Nigeria, many concerned citizens have written on the subject of discourse which has eaten very deep into the fabric of our Nation in print and electronic media. Principals, Ministry of Education and successive Governments in seminars and workshops have noted this and evolved various schemes aimed at correcting deviant acts in Nigeria and in the institutions throughout the country.

The aim of this study, therefore, is to examine these delinquents' behaviors with the intends of coming up with solutions, suggestions and recommendations aimed at minimizing the problem.

Objectives of the Study

- i. To examine the characteristics leading to delinquent behaviour in secondary schools in Birnin Kebbi metropolis.
- ii. To examine the causes of delinquent behaviour of senior secondary school students in Birnin Kebbi metropolis.

Research Questions

- i. What are the characteristics leading to delinquent behaviours in secondary schools in Birnin Kebbi metropolis?
- ii. What are the causes of delinquent behaviour of senior secondary school students in Birnin Kebbi metropolis?

Methodology

In this study, the researcher employed the descriptive survey research design. This is due to the nature of the study whereby the opinion and views of people are sampled. Descriptive survey research design according to Nworgu (2015) aims at studying a group of people by collecting and analyzing data from a sample of the same group, considered to be a representative of the entire group. The researcher decided to adopt an instrument appropriate for sampling teachers' opinion and necessary for decision making. Data was collected from the respondents after administration. Respondents were given one and a half hours to respond to the instruments. 98% of the Questionnaire collected were correctly completed.

Results

Research Question One: What are the characteristics leading to delinquent behaviours among senior secondary schools' students in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis?

Table 1: Characteristics Leading to Delinquent Behaviours among Senior Secondary Schools' Students

	Agree		Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Truancy	411	87.82	57	12.18
Drug Abuse	303	64.74	165	35.26
Stealing	287	61.32	181	38.68
Examination Malpractice	441	94.23	27	5.78
Bullying others, fighting or violence	439	93.80	29	6.20
Running away from home to avoid obeying rules	369	78.63	99	21.37
Conflict with authority figure such as teachers, parents or older siblings	373	79.70	95	20.30
Stubborn, defiant behaviour or disobedience	312	66.67	156	33.33
Destruction of properties	303	64.74	165	35.26
Sex offenses	125	26.71	343	73.29

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The result of the responses shows the characteristics leading to delinquent behaviours among senior secondary schools' students in Birnin Kebbi Metropolis. It shows that examination malpractice and bullying others, fighting or violence and truancy received significant confirmation of agreement of 94.23%, 93.80% and 87.82% respectively. Likewise, the table also indicates that conflict with authority figure such as teachers, parents or older siblings, running away from home to avoid obeying rules, and stubborn, defiant behaviour or disobedience also received significant agreement affirmation of 79.70%, 78.63% and 66.67% respectively. Furthermore, the table also indicates that drug abuse (64.74%), destruction of property (64.74%) and stealing (61.32%) were also confirmed by the teachers to be contributory to characteristics leading to delinquent behaviours. But, as for sex offenses (26.71%), the respondents indicated that they are not inclusive in factors that contribute to delinquent behaviours; most likely because this aspect may be very low in the area of study. It is thus concluded that the respondents affirmed these factors as contributing to the characteristics of delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students.

Research Question Two: What are the causes of delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in BirninKebbi metropolis?

Table 2: Causes of Delinquent Behaviours among Senior Secondary Schools' Students

Research Items	Agree		Disagree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%
Low academic aspiration	395	84.40	73	15.60
Parenting style	435	92.45	33	7.05
Bad method of teaching	373	79.70	95	20.30
Harsh method adopted by some teachers	401	85.68	67	14.32
Unnecessary interference by parents/guardians in the disciplinary process in schools	399	85.26	69	14.74
General failure to live up to the expectation by relevant institutions for maintaining discipline in the society.	439	93.80	29	6.20
Lack of seriousness by the heads of institutions and teachers to maintain discipline in schools.	443	94.66	25	5.34
Insufficient and experienced trained personnel to enforce and maintain discipline in schools	403	86.11	65	13.89
Lack of extra-curriculum activities to keep the children busy	381	81.41	87	18.59
Poor implementation of educational reform programs and its implementations in the institutions	437	93.38	31	6.62

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The result of the responses shows the cause of delinquent behaviours among senior secondary schools' students in Kebbi metropolis. From the results, lack of seriousness by the heads of institutions and teachers to maintain discipline in schools (94.66%), general

failure to live up to the expectation by relevant institutions for maintaining discipline in the society (93.80%), poor implementation of educational reform programs and its implementations in the institutions (93.38%), and poor parenting style (92.45%), received high and significant confirmation of agreement to be the factors causing delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Kebbi metropolis. Likewise, the table also indicates that insufficient and experienced trained personnel to enforce and maintain discipline in schools (88.94%), harsh method adopted by some teachers (86.11%), unnecessary interference by parents/guardians in the disciplinary process in schools (85.26%), and low academic aspiration (84.40%) also received significant affirmation also cause delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Kebbi metropolis. Furthermore, the table also indicates that lack of extra-curriculum activities to keep the children busy (81.41%), and bad method of teaching (79.70%) were also confirmed by the respondents to be factors causing delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Kebbi metropolis. It is thus concluded that the respondents affirmed that lack of seriousness by the heads of institutions and teachers to maintain discipline in schools, general failure to live up to the expectation by relevant institutions for maintaining discipline in the society, poor implementation of educational reform programs and its implementations in the institutions, poor parenting style, insufficient and experienced trained personnel to enforce and maintain discipline in schools, harsh method adopted by some teachers, unnecessary interference by parents/guardians in the disciplinary process in schools, low academic aspiration, lack of extra-curriculum activities to keep the children busy and bad method of teaching are the factors causing delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Kebbi metropolis.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the research question number one revealed that characteristics leading to delinquent behaviour in secondary schools in Birnin Kebbi metropolis include

Examination malpractice, bullying others, fighting or violence, truancy, conflict with authority figure such as teachers, parents or older siblings, running away from home to avoid obeying rules, and stubborn, defiant behaviour or disobedience, drug abuse, destruction of property and stealing. This finding corroborates with that of Ukwuije (2023) who found that delinquent behaviours among secondary school students ranges from absenteeism from school, gambling, lateness to school, theft, cheating, destruction of property, disobedience, underage drinking, examination malpractice, vandalism, smoking, street fighting, cultism, rape, rioting and others. Also, research by Idamokoro (2015) noted that there are two main categories of delinquent behaviours which secondary school students often engaged in. These are criminal and status offences. The criminal offences include stealing, arson rape, drug offences, burglary and pick pocket while status offences include running away from home, malingering, truancy and others.

Furthermore, Burt and Donnellan (2019) in their findings classified characteristics leading to delinquent behaviour among secondary school students into three subtypes which are

physical aggression, social aggression, and rule-breaking. According to them, physical aggression includes fighting, physical bullying, getting angry and threatening others. Social aggression means those behaviours that are harmful to those who are in social relationships. This type of behaviour includes gossiping, spreading rumors, purposefully trying to destroy one's reputation, and trying to hurt one's feelings by being negative toward their appearance, actions and beliefs. Rule-breaking includes theft, absenteeism from school, vandalism and littering of the surroundings. In addition, Animashun (2014) stated that secondary school students' involvement in delinquent behaviour is on the increase and has been a source of worry to many Nigerians. Such delinquent behaviour ranges from absenteeism from school, gambling, lateness to school, theft, cheating, destruction of property, disobedience, underage drinking, examination malpractice, vandalism, smoking, street fighting, cultism, rape, rioting and others

Also, findings from research question number two revealed that lack of seriousness by the heads of institutions and teachers to maintain discipline in schools, general failure to live up to the expectation by relevant institutions for maintaining discipline in the society, poor implementation of educational reform programs and its implementations in the institutions, poor parenting style, insufficient and experienced trained personnel to enforce and maintain discipline in schools, among others are the major causes of delinquent behaviours among senior secondary school students in Kebbi metropolis. This finding is in line with that of Uzoeshi and Wali (2005) who identified three categories of factors responsible for delinquent behaviours among secondary school students. These are home base, schoolbase, and society base factors. Home base factors include divorce and poor parental care, school base factors include administrative incompetence and company of bad friends or peers, society base factors include corruption and other acts of moral decadence. Wickliffe (2012) also found that the significant factors underlying delinquency among adolescents as: broken home, inadequate education, inappropriate leisure time, influence of unwholesome mass media, instability of home, lack of proper discipline, vocational preparation, over protection by parents, parental conflict, parental rejection, poor living conditions, poor sex education both at home and in school, severe emotional disturbance and wrong companion.

Conclusion

Delinquent behavior has been shown to be a very significant factor affecting the academic performance of senior secondary school student in Birnin Kebbi. This factor arises as a result of socioeconomic background of the students such as single parenthood, over-pampering and faulty early child upbringing, negative peer group influence, emotional disturbance resulting from broken homes and poor exemplary life style of parents/guardians predicted delinquent behaviour among the students.

These makes the students to engage in various deviant behaviours such as staying away from school, drug addiction, late coming, noise making, missing of tests, taking of hard drugs, fighting, disobedience or misbehavior and loitering (i.e., moving around aimlessly).

The effects of these behaviours make the students to engage in examination malpractice, bullying others, fighting or violence and truancy. However, this social phenomenon of deviant behavior can be tackled if preventive mechanisms such as adequate parental care, establishing child guidance clinics both in schools and outside the schools to give appropriate treatment to the disturbed and mal-adjusted children, giving proper assistance to under privileged children to build their good character, etc are adhered to in both within and outside school system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. Parents and school administrators should endeavor to monitor the children and students respectively and ensure that every element of deviant behavior among students are quickly tackled and corrected to avoid repetition.
2. Effort should be made by school administrator to create a veritable learning environment that will discourage deviant behavior such as fencing of school and constant marking of attendance for students to since delinquent behaviors significantly influence academic performance of students.
3. The general public should work hard to promote peace and harmony especially among couples in an effort to discourage divorce, negative peer pressure and other social vices since they directly or indirectly affect students' academic performance.

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