

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY INSTABILITY AND
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN NIGERIA USING ODOGBOLU
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, OF OGUN STATE**

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this study was carried out by **MONEHIN BLESSING OLUWASEUN** with Matriculation Number: **18012222039** in the department of **POL / SOS** of the School of Art and Social Sciences, Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu-Ijebu, Ogun State.

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DEDICATION

This project work is dedicated to my compassionate Almighty God who has helped me since the beginning of my life up till today.

Also to my parents, Mr. & Mrs. Monehin and my dear sister, Ikuerowo Olabisi for their tremendous assistance and support throughout my programme of study.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The issue of juvenile delinquency in the Nigerian society has gained a lot of recognition that must be critically examined because of its consequences in our society. Anti-social behaviours of young people have been posing a lot of problems to the wellbeing of the people in Nigeria. Juvenile antisocial behaviours experiencing in Nigeria include: thuggery, hooliganism, drug abuse, cultism, examination malpractices, prostitution and robbery.

Shoemaker (2013) defined juvenile delinquency as “illegal acts, whether criminal or status offences, which are committed by youth under the age of 18”. The origin of juvenile delinquency in Nigeria dates back to the 1920s when youth crimes such as pick pocketing and prostitution became predominant issues in Nigerian newspapers in that period. This ugly development brought about the establishment of judicial administrative processes by the colonial masters to be able to tackle the issue of juvenile delinquents (Fourchard, 2006). It is a pity that this issue of juvenile delinquency is still rampaging the Nigerian society and causing all sorts of antisocial behaviours among adolescents and even youths to an extent.

Furthermore, the problem of juvenile delinquency is not peculiar to Nigeria. In 2007, the law enforcement agencies in the United States of America reported 2.18 million arrests of juveniles (Alfry, 2010). Alfry also gave a report that the United States of America Bureau of Justice Statistics found out that more than 70% of juveniles that are jailed came from broken families. Going by the World Youth Report cited in Sheryln (2008), it was revealed that the rate of criminal activity among juveniles in groups in the Russia is about three to four times higher than that of adults. Motivated by the increasing rate of juvenile delinquency in Britain Juby and Farrington (2001) examined juvenile delinquency and family disruption in a longitudinal survey of South London males from age 8 to 46. The researchers found out that 29% of the boys from disrupted families were convicted as

juveniles compared with 18% of the boys from stable families. The researchers gave a conclusion that family instability was the main factor that contributes to the sudden increase of juvenile delinquency in Britain.

In view of the foregoing issues and trends globally and locally, many researchers agree that the foundation of juvenile delinquency is rooted in the kind of home the child is brought up (Okorodudu, 2010; Igbo, 2007). Muhammed et al (2009) have observed that family instability is on the increase in Nigeria and that the increasing crime trends among the youths may be attributed to this. Based on the foregoing, this study aims at assessing the relationship between family instability and juvenile delinquency in Nigeria by using Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State, Nigeria, as a case study.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Juvenile delinquency in Nigeria is a major social problem which affects the whole society and constitutes a serious impediment to development (Muhammed et al 2009). For instance, in Ogun municipality today, crime is common among the young people, many of who are caught in one criminal act or the other such as cultism, examination malpractice, armed robbery, assault, rape, house breaking, forgery, truancy (Nwankwo, and Nwoga, 2010).

Muhammed et al (2010) have observed that young people in contemporary Nigeria are mostly involved in armed robbery, cultism, kidnapping, drug abuse and other criminal activities. In corroborating this fact, the Imo state commander of National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) lamented that the young people were the most involved in illicit drug usage and dealing (Nkwopara, 2011). The consequences of this malady and other juvenile crimes such as; examination malpractice, alcoholism, forgery, rape, and so on in Nigeria include; social violence among youths, armed robbery, mental disorders, lack of respect for elders and other numerous social ills.

Inadequate supervision arising from family instability seems to be associated with juvenile delinquency (Alfrey, 2010). Alfrey further explained that those children in single-parent

families tend to receive lower levels of supervision. According to him, this inadequate parental supervision has a tendency to increase the likelihood of juvenile delinquency. Dogget (2004) has it that when there is one parent living in the home as opposed to two, it is more difficult to supervise children all the time. According to Dogget, every day activities like errands and work must be completed by the single parent, which leaves no parent in the home. Because of this, children in single-parent homes tend to receive lower levels of supervision (Sanni et al, 2010). Lack of parental monitoring contributes not only directly to children's anti-social behaviours, but also indirectly as it contributes to exposing them to associate with deviant peers, which is predictive of higher levels of deviant acts (Okorodudu, 2010). From observation, it seems that parents and care givers are not doing much in the supervision of their children in Nigeria because of their numerous economic and social engagements. This scenario tends to be giving impetus to juvenile delinquency in Nigeria and Ogun State Municipality in particular.

Children growing up in unstable families are at a greater risk of experiencing a variety of behavioural and educational problems, including; smoking, drug abuse, vandalism, violence and criminal acts than children from stable families (Sheryln, 2008). According to Sheryln, changes in the family can affect the levels of self-control in children. The transitions in the family structure also lead to changes in the organization, monitoring and disciplining of the children. If the changes are widespread, the resulting changes in the adolescents' levels of self-control will likely lead to anti-social behaviours (Mullens, 2004). Single-parent families are often financially vulnerable as compared to two-parent families. This unfortunate economic circumstance can draw these families to disorganized neighbourhoods where crime and delinquency are rampant (Alfrey, 2010). The implication according to Alfrey is that the children may be exposed to learning delinquent behaviours and they may also be enticed into joining delinquent gangs. It is the opinion of the researcher that financial vulnerability may also be a source of strain to children in single-parent families. Hence, they may not have some of their needs met by their single parent.

The effect is that children in such a situation may be pushed to engage in theft, extortion and other delinquent actions to make ends meet.

1.3 Research Questions

This research will be carried out to answer the following research questions:

What is the extent of an intact home family structure likely to influence child delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State?

Does a single parenthood (father only/mother only) structure contribute to children delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State?

Is a child who has lived in a children's home structure influenced to engage in child delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to assess the relationship between family instability and juvenile delinquency in Nigeria by using Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State, Nigeria as a case study. However, the specific objectives of the study are:

- i. To establish the extent of an intact home family structure likely to influence child delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State
- ii. To understand if a single parenthood (father only/mother only) structure contribute to children delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State
- iii. To investigate if a child who has lived in a children's home structure influenced to engage in child delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study will enhance the understanding of juvenile crimes in the Nigerian society. It is hoped that Family Counsellors will find the study on the dynamics and how families contribute to juvenile delinquency and show the need for Government to come up with policies that strengthen the family unit as its stability may lead to reduced cases of juvenile delinquency hence a more community preventive policies in planning of the Nigeria's Juvenile justice system and its handling of issues of juvenile delinquency. A lot of studies also focus on the influence of biological parents.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study investigates the relationship between family instability and juvenile delinquency in Nigeria by using Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State, Nigeria as a case study. The respondents will be selected from Odogbolu Local Government Area, of Ogun State.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The research instrument used was expected to generate varying data depending on the truthfulness of the children under study. This was, however, mitigated by design of a reliable and a valid research instrument. Finally, analysis of Secondary data was a challenge as some of the records were found to be inconsistent for meaningful analysis.

1.8 Definitions of Terms

The following terms were used in the course of this study:

Juvenile delinquency: a legal term for behaviour of children and adolescents that in adults would be judged criminal under law.

Family unit structure: Family Structure analysis examines one of these relationships, that between women and men or father and mother in a household. It can be defined as the varied roles played by women (mothers) and men (fathers) and its influence to the girls and boys born or brought up in the household.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of literature discussed various aspects of family instability and their influence on juvenile delinquency.

2.1 Review of Empirical Literature

The interest in researching the link between family instability and juvenile delinquency has grown worldwide because of the global increase in both unstable families and juvenile delinquency (Haas, Farrington, Killias, and Sattar, 2004). A survey by Doggett (2004), into the influence of family structure on juvenile delinquency using a self-report questionnaire and a sample size of twenty-six (26) respondents from a high school found out that out of the 26 students who confessed engaging in one form of delinquency or the other, 54% came from one parent household while the other 46% came from two parent and other households. Doggett explained that children from singleparents were more likely to become juvenile delinquents because they are scarcely monitored.

The study by Heck and Walsh (2000) aimed at investigating the effects of family structure on minor and serious delinquency using a sample of 489 white males processed by juvenile probation authorities in Idaho found out that 67.8% of the boys in the sample were from broken homes. The researchers further found out that the homes broken by desertion were significantly and positively related to combined delinquency. Heck and Walsh's findings affirm Doggett's (2004) findings that a broken home is a major predictor of juvenile delinquency.

Juby and Farrington (2001), examined family disruption and juvenile delinquency in a prospective longitudinal survey of South London males from age 8 to age 46. Three measures of offending were used: juvenile convictions (age 10-16 years); adult convictions

(age 17-40 years) but excluding those convicted as juveniles; and juvenile self-reported delinquency (age 14 years). The researchers found out that 29% of boys from disrupted families were convicted as juveniles compared with 18% of boys from stable families which confirmed that family disruption was linked to delinquency. Other findings included that the loss of a mother was more damaging than the loss of a father; families destabilized by parental disharmony were more prone to delinquency than families disrupted by parental death; delinquency rates were highest for disruptions at ages 0-4 and 10-14 years and lowest for disruptions at age 5 – 9 years.

Another survey into the influence of family structure on juvenile delinquency by Murry, William and Salekin (2006) using a sample size of 442 juveniles in a borstal institution found out that 53% of the sample came from one parent households. The findings of the research indicate that proportionately, more juvenile offenders come from family arrangements other than the two-parent family home. However, the researchers explained that family arrangements combined with other factors such as environmental factors, situational factors, and functional factors may provide more insight into juvenile delinquency.

Haas, Farrington, Killias and Sattar (2004) conducted a cross-sectional survey to examine the impact of different family configurations on delinquency using a sample of 21, 314 Swiss army male recruits. Data were gotten from self-report questionnaires which were filled by the male recruits. The findings of the study suggest that there is a link between broken homes and delinquency. This result support Juby and Farrington's (2001) findings which indicated a significant relationship between disrupted families and Juvenile delinquency.

A study by Mack (2007) aimed at investigating the impact of family structure; family processes and economic factors using a survey of 132 high school students in the United States found out that only 31% of the sample who reported involvement in delinquent acts came from broken homes. Based on the findings, the researcher opined that family

processes and economic factors played more important roles in predicting Juvenile delinquency than family structures.

In Cameroon, a study by Ngale (2009) which explored the relationship between family structure and Juvenile delinquency using a sample of 120 juveniles drawn from the Betamba children's correctional centre with a questionnaire found out that 66.1% or about three-fifths of the children came from two-parent (stable) homes, 16.05% of the children came from homes in which their parents live apart through divorce or temporary separation, while 5.35% of the children do not know their fathers, 12.5% of the children have either lost one or both of their parents. Based on the findings of the study, Ngale suggested that joblessness and economic hardship are major impediments to family cohesion which could be predictors for juvenile delinquency.

A survey by Kimani (2010) aimed at investigating the influence of family structure on juvenile delinquency using a sample size of 51 children drawn from the Nakuru children's Remand Home in Kenya found out that 65.4% of the respondents came from a single parent home. Based on the findings, the researcher concluded that children in a single parent led family had a high tendency to engage in juvenile delinquency than children from stable homes.

Another study by Azoro (2010) on the public perception of the effects of broken homes on the family in Awka South Local Government using a sample of 124 respondents found out that out of the total number of respondents sampled, 62.9% were of the view that broken homes lead to juvenile delinquency thus suggesting a significant relationship between broken homes and juvenile delinquency.

A study by Sanni, Udoh, Okediji, Modo and Ezech (2010) focused on investigating the influence of family structure on juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Nigeria. Using the multistage random sampling technique, 200 students were selected for the study from five public secondary schools in Uyo metropolis. The selfreport family

delinquency questionnaire was used for data collection. The researchers found out that only 32% of the respondents that showed symptoms of delinquency came from stable families as opposed to 68% from unstable families. Based on the findings, the researchers suggested that family instability has a significant influence on juvenile delinquency.

2.2 Broken Homes and Juvenile Delinquency:

Broken homes have been mostly associated with juvenile delinquency. Although some other factors such as lack of parental control and ineffective parental behavior have been attributed to the rise in juvenile delinquency, most of the literature on juvenile delinquency returns to the ultimate breakdown of the family as the main causative factor (Fry, 2010).

Mullens (2004) has it that juveniles from broken homes are more likely to run away from their family than children living in stable families. The core assumption is that a broken home has an imbalance and as a result is detrimental to a child's socialization and personality adjustment. As a result, a child may be more susceptible to negative peer pressure and may ultimately commit acts of delinquency not committed by children from stable families where there is a balanced structure of man and woman who act as good role models in the child acquiring more law abiding roles.

Alemika & Chukwuma (2001), in their study of juvenile administration in Nigeria averred that there is no significant relation between broken homes and juvenile delinquency. This assertion contradicts Kimani's (2010) findings from a study of family influence on juvenile delinquency.

Kimani found a positive relationship between broken homes and juvenile delinquency. This contrast may be as a result of differential focus of research and the methodologies adopted in the research.

Azoro (2010) has asserted that children from broken homes have a higher risk of indulging in delinquent acts than children from stable families. As a result of that, children from

broken homes suffer from what he called attachment disorder. According to Azoro, this implies a weakened bond with their parents. He argued that this lack of attachment to their parents exposes the children to anti-social behaviours. Hence, children from broken homes suffer from emotional pains and this propel them to engage in vicious crimes such as assault, rape, e.t.c.

Heck and Welsh (2010) have argued that the risk of delinquency is highly significant among children from broken homes compared to children from stable families. Heck and Welsh drew the inference that overall, the lack of supervision and absence of close relationships between the teenager and his parents are factors that influence delinquency. However, these researchers did not say much on the predisruption factors preceding broken homes.

The research findings on the relationship between divorce and juvenile delinquency have been mixed. Overall, however, there is a general support for the argument that children of divorce are more likely to be delinquent (Fry, 2010; Alfrey, 2010). For instance, Alfrey (2010) opined that in families that are disrupted by divorce, parents may have higher levels of conflict, be more prone to economic stress and meager parenting practices. Alfrey further asserted that exposure to these effects of divorce may compromise the child's social, economic and psychological wellbeing.

Videon (2002) has argued that children who live in homes with only one parent or in which marital relationships have been disrupted by divorce or separation are more likely to exhibit a wide range of behavioural problems including delinquency than children who are from stable families. Videon further argued that children who witness marital discord are at greater risk of becoming delinquents.

In concert with the above assertion, Uwaoma and Udeagha (2007) have also argued that children who are from divorced families have been found to have multiple behavioural problems which impel them to engage in delinquent behaviour. They further explained that

this occurs because the warmth, direction, love and protection which the parents would have provided for them are lost and sought in anti-social behaviours such as drug abuse and prostitution.

Wardle (2007: 95) opined that “divorce also is indirectly associated causally with juvenile delinquency”. Wardle further explained that children from homes broken by divorce are more at risk of being maltreated, and that maltreatment correlates strongly with delinquency. Children of divorce suffer heightened levels of emotional trauma when compared to children from stable families. Hence, increased rate of juvenile delinquency is witnessed among children of divorced parents (Heck and Welsh, 2000).

Siegel and Welsh (2008) have argued that divorce may influence children’s misbehavior through its effects on parental misbehavior. They further explained that divorce may encourage deviance since a stable marriage cushions parental misbehavior. For them, parents who are caught up in post divorce turmoil may influence their children to misbehave. Jekayinfa (N. D.) has asserted that children from divorced homes are more likely to be maladjusted in the society. She suggested that when a marriage breaks down, men and women alike often experience a diminished capacity to parent. Hence, parents affected by divorce give less time, provide less discipline and are less sensitive to their children since they themselves are caught up in its aftermath (Alfrey, 2010). “In general, children whose parents divorce have moderately poorer outcomes (i.e. emotional wellbeing, a variety of conduct related difficulties, academic achievement, physical health, teenage child bearing, and labor force participation) than children living in continuously intact two-parent families” (Videon, 2002:489).

2.3 Single Parenthood and Juvenile Delinquency

Single parenthood has been associated with juvenile delinquency (Okeke, 2005). Single parenthood could be a consequence of the death of a spouse, from separation or divorce or even by choice (Demuth and Brown, 2004; Okeke, 2005). Research has consistently shown

that children in single parent homes are more likely to be delinquent than children from the stable two parent families (Schroeder, Osgood and Oghia, 2010; Nielsen, 1996).

Demuth & Brown (2004) have avowed that single parent families and, in particular, mother-only families produce more delinquent children than two parent families. The assumption is that the presence of a father figure in the stable two parents' family helps to stabilize the male children who are more at risk of engaging in delinquency (Okeke, 2005). The absence of fathers from children's lives is one of the most important causes related to children's wellbeing such as increasing rates of juvenile crime and substance abuse (Dogget, 2004).

According to Wright and Wright (1994) and Kimani (2010), two-parent families provide increased supervision and monitoring of children and property, while singleparenthood increases the likelihood of delinquency and stigmatization simply by the fact that there is one less person to supervise adolescent's behaviour. Furthermore, Sweeney (2002) suggests that single parent families, especially, single mothers, expect less of their children, spend less time monitoring them and use less effective techniques to discipline them. In addition, it is harder for a sole parent to find time to monitor, supervise, and discipline children because they find it hard to "prioritize their children's needs above other live demands" (Mack, Michael, Richard and Maria, 2007:53). Overall, this means that children in single parent families have greater opportunities and motivation to participate in delinquent acts than those living in a two-parent family (Fry, 2010).

Alfrey (2010) has observed that the very absence of a two-parent family makes gang membership more appealing. Hence, children residing in single-parent families are at a greater risk of joining gangs than children from two-parent families. In corroborating this fact, Reed and Decker (2002) have observed that the gang can serve as a surrogate extended family for adolescents who do not see their own families as meeting their needs for belonging, nurturance and acceptance.

Single parent families often are financially vulnerable as compared to two-parent families (Alfrey, 2010). As a result, these economic circumstances frequently draw these families into more affordable but socially disorganized neighbourhoods where children are prone to learning delinquent behaviours (Anderson, 2002). Overall, the absence of one parent in a family is a major predictor for juvenile delinquency (Wardle, 2007).

2.4 Parental Death and Juvenile Delinquency

Parental death has been associated with juvenile delinquency (Ngale, 2009). Maki (2003) has argued that parental death before the age of 14 is connected to juvenile criminality. Maki further argued that parental death imposes stress and trauma on the children thereby exposing them to delinquent behaviours. Hence, children who are traumatized by the death of a parent tend to externalize their reactions to these stressful experiences by acting out aggressively or committing delinquent acts (Ireland and Wisdom, 1994).

Families destabilized by the death of a parent expose children to series of transitions and role conflicts (Uwaoma and Udeagha, 2007). These transitions may lead to improper personality development. Often, the inner conflicts and psychological trauma such children undergo expose them to antisocial behaviours such as assault and drug abuse (Nielsen, 1996). However, Siegel and Welsh (2008) have argued that children from families disrupted by the death of a parent are better adjusted than children from families polarized by divorce.

2.5 Review of Related Theories

This research study is predicated on some related criminological theories. These theories would enhance a better appreciation of the link between family instability and juvenile delinquency. The theories are: life course theory, social control theory, containment theory, general strain theory and social disorganization theory.

2.5.1 Life Course Theory

The life course theory in criminology was propounded by John Laub and Robert Sampson in the late 1980s (See, 2004). The theory evolved in an attempt to integrate some criminological theories in the explanation of crime and delinquency. The theory posits that a person's course in life is determined by short (transitory) and long (trajectory) events in his life, and crime can result when a transitory event causes stress in a person's life causing him to commit crime and delinquency (Cullen and Agnew, 2002). The main thrust of the theory is that both continuity and change exist through the life course and that modification in individual behaviour may occur through new experiences or social circumstances. The theory attempts to explain better the stability and changes in criminal behaviour through time and at different life stages (Cullen and Agnew, 2002). Hence, the theory is of the view that individual factors interact with social factors to determine the onset, length and end of criminal career. The relevance of this theory could be linked to the core points as they apply to juvenile delinquency. The life course theory view factors such as parental loss, poor parenting and parental conflict as stressors that impinge on the children. The life course perspective emphasizes that it is not a single stressor, but the accumulation of negative events that may result in problems for children (Juby and Farrington, 2001). In other words, the more disruptive life events a child experiences, the more stressful and damaging will be the effects (including juvenile delinquency). While enjoying growing popularity in research focusing specifically on the effects of familial factors on children's well being, life course theory is rarely appreciated in criminology (Amato, 1993 cited in Juby and Farrington, 2001).

2.5.2 Social Control Theory

Social control theory in criminology was developed by an American criminologist; Travis Hirschi in the late 1960s. The theory posits that criminal behaviour and delinquency result from failure of individuals to bond with conventional social groups such as the family and schools (Miller, 2009). In other words, a person is less likely to choose crime if he/she has

strong social bonds. Miller (2009:2) has it that “social control says that to the extent that a youngster fails to become attached to the control agencies of society (for instance, the families and the schools), the youngster’s chances of engaging in delinquency are increased”.

Travis Hirschi identified four key concepts in his social control theory, viz: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2001). According to Hirschi, attachment to others in the society provides the individuals insulation from committing deviant acts. Commitment entails an investment in conventional activities and norms. Involvement is behavioural and measures one’s tendency to participate in conventional activities while belief in the legitimacy of social norms and values minimize delinquency (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003; Alemika and Chukwuma, 2001).

The relevance of social control theory in this study is that juvenile delinquency thrives whenever the family institution as part of the social institutions fails to create an enabling environment for attachment to children. However, social control theory has been criticized for ignoring the effects of parental behaviour in modeling youth conduct (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003).

2.5.3 General Strain Theory

The general strain theory is a redefinition of Robert Merton’s Anomie theory developed by Robert Agnew in 1992(Cullen and Agnew, 2002). The theory evolved to explain how the conditions of strain experienced by middle-class youths lead to delinquency. Agnew identified three major types of deviance producing strains:

1. Strain as the failure to achieve positively valued goals. This failure entails a disjunction between aspirations and actual achievements.
2. Strain as the removal of positively valued stimuli from the individual. This state occurs with the actual or anticipated loss of something valued (e.g., the loss of a parent, a close relative).

3. Strain as the presentation of negative stimuli: Delinquency may ensue when a youth attempts to avoid or escape negative stimuli, terminates or alleviates the source of the negative stimuli, or seeks revenge against the source (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003).

In all cases, actual and anticipated strains may create a predisposition for delinquency or may function as a situational event that instigates a particular act (See, 2004). In other words, deviance is most likely to occur when the response of the individual to any of the above mentioned stressor is anger. Factors such as family bonds, self control, and self – efficacy will affect each individual’s reaction to stress (Cullen and Agnew, 2003). The General strain theory is relevant to this study in that it views the loss of a loved one (a parent) as a stressor that can predispose youths into delinquent acts. However, the General strain theory has been criticized for being too mechanistic (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003).

2.5.4 Containment Theory

The containment theory was pioneered by Walter Reckless in the early 1960s. The theory posits that every individual is a potential norm breaker but there are containment structures that insulate individuals against violation of norms (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003). Reckless saw forces pulling people away from conventional society or pushing them toward deviance to include:

1. Social pressures such as poor living conditions and family conflicts.
2. Social pulls that keep the individual away from acceptable behaviours such as criminal and delinquent subcultures or bad companions.
3. Biological/Psychological pushes such as inner tensions, hostility, and aggressiveness.
4. Rebellion against authority that originates within the individual and leads to unacceptable norms of living (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003).

The theory further opines that given these forces, only outer and inner containment structures stand between any individual and a delinquent lifestyle. Reckless observed that these restraining forces are sufficient to regulate most behaviour. Outer containment according to the theory comes from the family and other support groups in the society; it involves among other things, effective supervision and discipline, and group cohesiveness. Inner containment on the other hand is inner (psychological) dispositions such as conscience and a sense of responsibility (See, 2004). The implication of the containment theory to this study is that it explains how failure of the outer containment structures (the family inclusive) can make the children vulnerable to delinquency. As plausible as this theory may seem, it has been criticized for being over simplistic (Winfre and Abadinsky, 2003).

2.5.5 Social Disorganization Theory

The social disorganization theory was pioneered by Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay in 1972 in an effort to explain the rising crime situation in Chicago (Inciardi, 2007). The main thesis of this theory is that crime and delinquency are produced by social disorganization (See, 2004). This theory attributes crime to a breakdown of institutions such as family, church and the like, and relationships with people in those institutions (Cullen and Agnew, 2002).

Shaw and McKay further defined the indices of social disorganization as population heterogeneity, rapid population turnover, poor standard of living of residents, dilapidated building structures, weak social ties among residents and absence of dominant cultural patterns shared by most residents (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2001). The critical argument of this theory is that absence of strong community and social ties can generate high rate of delinquency among young persons. Hence, the proponents argue that juvenile delinquency is a feature of an environment characterized by social disorganization. However, one of the shortcomings of this theory is that it has been criticized for being tautological, as it simply

postulates that ‘bad conditions’ beget crime and delinquency but crime and delinquency are some of the indicators of ‘bad conditions’ (Opara, 1998).

Inadequate Parental Supervision:

Inadequate parental supervision arising from family instability has been adduced as a risk factor for juvenile delinquency. Alfry’s (2010) has asserted that children from fragmented families are scarcely supervised. He further elaborated that this inadequate supervision gives leverage to juvenile delinquency. This assertion is in agreement with that of Sanni et al (2010) who suggested that juveniles were likely to be delinquent if their activities are not adequately monitored.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study was a combination of the social control theory and the social disorganization theory. These theories seem to provide an adequate explanation of the nexus between family instability and juvenile delinquency.

Firstly, the social control theory posits that delinquency is a symptom of the failure of social institutions, such as the family to bond with the individuals in the society. Hence, individuals are more likely to be delinquent if they have weak social bonds (Miller, 2007).

The relevance of this theory could be linked to the main tenets as it applies to juvenile delinquency and family instability. Hence, the inability of the family as a social institution to bond with the children as a result of instability and disruptions could be associated with the problem of juvenile delinquency.

Secondly, social disorganization theory attributes crime and delinquency to the breakdown of institutions, such as the family, schools, church and the like and the relationships with people in those institutions. These two variables work as policing guides and if they are absent, then norms and rules may be broken.

The relevance of this theory can be deduced from its core premises .Social disorganization leads to weakened social bonds, which may invariably foster the existence of delinquent opportunity structures including exposure to delinquent peer 26 groups. Hence, without strong ties to a family, it may be hard for children to stay away from a negative group pulling them in. Overall, the weak social bonds in broken families may give leverage to juvenile delinquency.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design. The cross-sectional study aims at collecting information on certain variables in a study population at one point in time and gives an opportunity to get an overview of the issues involved in the study (Obikeze, 1999; Obasi, 1999; Babbie, 2007). This method is most relevant in eliciting opinions on how parental behaviour affects juvenile delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government..

3.2 Scope of the Study

This study explored the relationship between family instability and juvenile delinquency in Odogbolu municipality. In an effort to establish this relationship, this study examined the influence of family arrangement and cohesion on juvenile delinquency. 3.8 Study Population The target population for this study comprised juveniles (males and females) who are between the ages of 9 and 17 years. The decision to use this age bracket is justified by the fact that juveniles within the age bracket are best suited to give relevant information on the subject matter of the study.

3.3 Sampling procedure

The purposive sampling method was adopted in selecting the subjects for this study. Firstly, 10 comprehensive secondary schools which are attended by both boys and girls were purposively selected from all the secondary schools in Odogbolu. This was done to ensure the equal representation of the males and females in the sample. After that, 5 senior secondary students were randomly selected from each of the ten comprehensive secondary schools selected for the study. The students were randomly selected from the SS1 and SS2 classes. The SS3 students were not sampled in this study because at the time of conducting the study, the SS3 students will not be unavailable. The reason was that they had concluded

the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSCE) prior to the time the study was conducted. In a particular school, 25 males and 25 females were randomly selected from the SS1 class, while in the SS2 class, 13 males and 12 females were randomly selected to 30 make up a total of 50 students.

3.5 Instruments for data collection

The questionnaire was the major instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was constructed by the researcher based on the research questions and hypotheses. The questionnaire was validated by an expert in juvenile delinquency after some modifications. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. The first section of the questionnaire sought information on the demographic characteristics of the research subjects while the second section elicited information on the substantive issues of the study. The questions in the questionnaire comprised open-ended and fixed alternative questions. The interview guide was also used to collect more in-depth information from key informants on the subject matter. X

3.6 Administration of instruments

The questionnaire was administered to the students in their respective schools by the researcher with the help of 5 research assistants. The research assistants were undergraduate students. The research assistants were thoroughly trained on the study objectives and how to administer the instruments of the study. The questionnaires were other-administered. This means that the researcher and the research assistants filled the questionnaires for the respondents based on their responses to the questions in the questionnaire. The reason for this was to obviate the anticipated confusion the respondents might encounter if they were allowed to fill the questionnaires themselves

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the analysis of the data collected for this study. In this study, the respondents were drawn from 10 comprehensive secondary schools in Odogbolu Local Government. The following analyses are based on the five hundred and ten (510) questionnaires administered to the respondents. The analyses are divided into seven sections: demographic characteristics of respondents, level of communication in the respondents' families, level of supervision in respondents' families, family cohesion and symptoms of delinquency in the respondents. The hypotheses for this study were tested in this chapter. The qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews (IDI) with guidance counselors, a community leader in Odogbolu Local Government and a counseling psychologist were also analyzed in this chapter. This chapter ended with the discussion of findings of the study.

4.2 PERSONAL DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Distribution of Respondent according to the Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	255	50%
Female	255	50%
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 1 indicates that the male respondents were 255 which represented 50.0% of the respondents while the females were 255 representing 50% of the sample. This indicates that both sexes were equally represented in the sample.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondent according by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19 – 13	76	14.9%
14 - 17	434	85.1%
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 2 above shows that 434 respondents constituting 85.1% were within the age bracket of 14-17, while 76 (14.9%) respondents were within the age bracket of 9-13. This shows that the majority of the respondents in the sample were those within the age bracket of 14-17.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Class

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19 – 13	76	14.9%
14 - 17	434	85.1%
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 2 above shows that 434 respondents constituting 85.1% were within the age bracket of 14-17, while 76 (14.9%) respondents were within the age bracket of 9-13. This shows that the majority of the respondents in the sample were those within the age bracket of 14-17.

T able 3: Distribution of Respondents by Class

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SS1	255	50.0%
SS2	255	50.0%
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 3 shows that 255 respondents indicating 50.0% of the sample were in SS1 while those in SS2 were 255(50%).

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by the Marital Status of their Parents

Parents Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Married	283	55.5%
Separated	83	16.3%
Divorced	28	5.5%
Mother Deceased	37	7.3%
Father Deceased	73	14.3
Both parent deceased	6	1.2
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work, 2021

Table 4 above indicates that at the time of filling the questionnaires, 283 (55.5%) respondents reported that their parents were married and living together, this was followed by 83 (16.3%) respondents who reported that their parents were separated. 73 respondents (14.3%) reported that their fathers were deceased while 37(7.3%) respondents reported that their mothers were deceased. 28 (5.5%) respondents reported that their parents were divorced. The least category were 6 (1.2) respondents who reported that their two parents were deceased. For the purposes of this study, a stable family shall mean a family where the two biological parents are living together while a broken home in this study refers to any family where both biological parents are not living and staying together. Hence, responses from the respondents indicate that 283 respondents constituting 55.5% of the sample were from stable families while 227(44.5%) respondents were from broken homes. This statistics gives an insight into the rate of broken homes in Odogbolu Local Government. This view is supported by a guidance counselor in her response to the IDI question on the extent of family instability in Odogbolu Local Government.

According to her: ...

it is very obvious. There are a lot of changes. The only permanent thing in nature is change. It is also affecting the family. The family is really experiencing a lot of transformation in the negative. There is increase in divorce, separation and what have you. I think that it is emanating from the systemic problem in our society.

The responses from the In-depth Interview (IDI) also suggested that the increasing rate of family instability in Odogbolu Local Government is instigating juvenile delinquency in the area. A guidance counselor who was interviewed said that:

If you look at the cultists in our secondary schools, most of them that have been caught come from broken 39 homes and when they enter into the university, they end up not achieving anything and it is because of the instability in these families...

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents by Religious Affiliation

Religious Affiliation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Catholic	231	45.3%
Anglican	157	30.8%
Islam	6	1.2%
Pentecostal	114	22.4
None	2	.4%
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 5 shows that majority of the respondents were Catholics. This is indicated by 231 respondents which are 45.3% of the sample. This was followed by Anglicans who are 30.8% of the sample with 157 respondents. The Pentecostals were 114(22.4%) while the Islam adherents were 6 making up 1.2 % of the sample. The minority category in this

distribution was the African Traditional Religion (ATR) adherents with 2 respondents constituting .4% of the respondents.

4.2 LEVEL OF COMMUNICATION IN RESPONDENTS' FAMILIES

This section deals with the patterns of communication and relationship in the respondents' families.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents on how 'freely' they communicate with their Parents/Guardians

Do you feel free talking to your parents about anything	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes, all the time	180	45.3%
Sometimes	309	60.7%
No, Never	21	4.1%
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 6 above reveals that 60.7 % (309) of the total respondents seldom communicate with their parent(s)/guardian(s); this was followed by 35.3% of the respondents who communicate with their parent(s)/guardian(s) all the time. 21(4.1%) respondents reported that they never communicate with their parent(s)/guardian(s).

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents on 'Why' they don't communicate with their Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Reasons for not freely talking to your Parent(s)/Guardian	Mention	Not Mention	Total
I am not understood	10	500	45.3%

Shyness / Fright	6	504	510
Parent(s) / Guardian(s) not always around	3	507	4.1%
Confidentiality	2	508	510

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 7 above indicates that 10 of the respondents do not freely communicate with their parent(s)/ Guardian because they perceive that they would not be understood. On the other hand, 6 respondents don not freely communicate with their parent(s)/Guardian(s) because they are afraid and shy to do so.3 respondents reported that they do not freely talk to their parent(s)/Guardian because they are not always around while 2 respondents reported that they like keeping things to themselves.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents on ‘How often’ they communicate their Personal Problems with their Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Do you talk to your Parent(s)/Guardian(s) about your Personal Problems	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes, all the time	128	25.1
Sometimes	328	64.3%
No, Never	54	10.6
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 8 above reveals that 64.3 %(328) of the respondents seldom communicate their personal problems to their parents. This was followed by 25.1 % (128) of the respondents who reported that they often discuss their personal problems with their parent(s)/guardian(s). 10.6% (54) of the respondents never discuss their personal problems with their parent(s).

Table 9: Distribution of Respondents on ‘How often’ they spend time with their Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

How often do you spend time with your parent(s)/Guardian	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Often	150	29.4
Sometimes	311	61.0
Never	49	9.6
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 10 above shows that 311(61.0%) respondents seldom spend time with their parent(s)/guardian(s) followed by 29.4% (150) who often spend their time with their parent(s)/guardian(s). 49 respondents constituting 9.6% of the respondents reported that they never spend time with their parent(s)/guardian(s). This statistics reveals that most parent(s)/guardian(s) do not spend adequate time with their children and wards.

4.3 LEVEL OF SUPERVISION AND MONITORING IN RESPONDENTS’ FAMILIES

This section deals with the degree of supervision and monitoring in the respondents’ families.

Table 10: Distribution of respondents on ‘how often’ they are supervised/monitored by their Parent(s)/Guardian(s)

Are you usually left alone without the supervision of your parent(s)/guardian(s)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes, all the time	186	36.5
Sometimes	196	38.4
No, Never	128	25.1
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 11 above reveals that majority of the respondents represented by 38.4% (196) reported that they were seldom supervised while 36.5 % (186) reported they were usually left alone without supervision. 128(25.1%) respondents reported that they were never left without supervision. From the above statistics, it is evident that parents and guardians are not adequately monitoring their children and wards.

The qualitative data from the IDI lent credence to the view that parents and guardians are not doing enough in the monitoring and supervision of their children and wards. Majority of the people interviewed attributed inadequate supervision of children by their parents and guardians to the excessive pursuit of economic interests. Others opined that most parents are nonchalant about their children's welfare. These views were confirmed by their responses. A guidance counselor interviewed on this issue said:

...I don't think so. A lot of us are pursuing money. We are pursuing money forgetting the people for whom we are pursuing the money which is not right.

Table 11: Distribution of respondents on whether their parent(s)/guardian(s) know their company before they go out

Do you tell your parents whom you are going to be with before going out	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes, all the time	199	39.0
Sometimes	182	35.7
No,	129	25.3
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 11 above indicates that 199 respondents constituting 39.0% of the sample often tell their parent(s)/guardian whom they are going to be with before going out. This was

followed by 35.7% (182) of the respondents who seldom inform their parent(s)/guardian(s) about the identity of whom they are going to be with before they go out. However, 25.3% (129) of the respondents never tell their parents whom they are going to be with before going out.

Table 12: Distribution of Respondents on ‘whether’ their Parent(s)/guardian(s) know their friends

Do your parent(s)/guardian know who your friends are	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	284	55.7
No	226	44.3
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 12 above shows that 284 (55.7%) respondents reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) know their friends while 226 constituting 44.3% of the respondents in the sample reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) do not know their friends.

Table 13: Distribution of Respondents on ‘whether’ their parent(s)/guardian(s) monitor ‘what’ they watch on television

Do your parent(s)/guardian know who your friends are	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	160	31.4
Sometimes	163	32.0
No	187	36.7
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 13 above reveals that majority of the respondents representing 36.7% (187) of the total sample reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) do not monitor what they watch on television while 163 respondents representing 32.0% of the sample reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) monitor what they watch on television sometimes. The lowest percentage was 31.4% (160) of the respondents who reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) monitor what the watch on television. This statistics indicate that parent(s)/guardian(s) are not adequately monitoring their children's activities and this could have implications for juvenile delinquency.

Table 14: Distribution of Respondents on 'whether' their parent(s)/guardian(s) monitor their internet use

Do your parent(s)/guardian(s) monitor your internet use	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	85	16.7
No	271	53.1
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 14 above indicates that majority of the respondents representing 53.1% (271) of the sample reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) do not monitor their internet use. This was followed by 154 respondents constituting 30.2% of the sample who reported that their parent(s)/guardian(s) seldom monitor their internet use while 16.7 % (85) respondents affirmed that their parent(s)/guardian monitor their internet use. 4.4

4.4 FAMILY COHESION

This section looks at the level of cohesion and adaptability in the respondents' families.

Table 15: Distribution of Respondents on 'how often' they witness quarrels between their parent(s)/guardian(s)/relative

Do you witness quarrels between your parent(s)/guardian(s)/relatives	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	108	21.2
Sometimes	149	29.2
No	253	49.6
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 15 above shows that majority of the respondents represented by 49.6 % of the sample do not witness conflict between their parent(s)/guardian/relatives. On the other hand, 149(29.2%) respondents witness some measure of conflict between their parent(s)/guardian(s)/ relatives. 108 respondents constituting 21.2% of the sample reported that they often witnessed conflict between their parent(s)/guardian(s)/ relatives.

Table 16: Distribution of Respondents on ‘how often’ they witness fights between their Siblings

Do you witness fights between your siblings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	248	48.6
Sometimes	153	30.0
No	109	21.4
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 16 above reveals that majority of the respondents constituting 48.6 % (248) witness frequent fights involving their siblings. This was followed by 153 or 30.0% of the respondents who witness some measure of fights between their siblings. 109 (21.4%) respondents reported that they never witnessed fights between their siblings. The statistics above shows that majority of the respondents witnessed considerable conflict between their

siblings. This could give insight into the aggressive behaviours of juveniles. Also, it shows the need for parent(s)/guardian(s) to intensify their efforts in taming their children and wards so as to regulate their aggressive behaviours.

4.5 SYMPTOMS OF DELINQUENCY IN THE RESPONDENTS

This section analyzes the common delinquent acts that the respondents have committed in the past one year.

Table 17: Distribution of Respondents on their involvement in physical fight

In the past year, have you been involved in a physical fight	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	277	54.3
No	233	45.7
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 17 above indicates that majority of the respondents represented by 54.3% (277) reported that they engaged in physical fight as opposed to 233 respondents(45.7%) who did not engage in physical fight in the past one year.

Table 18: Distribution of Respondents ‘on whether’ they have run away from home in the past year

Do you witness fights between your siblings	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	14	2.7
No	496	97.3
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 18 shows that 2.7% (14) of the respondents ran away from their homes while 97.3% (496) of the respondents did not run away from their homes in the past year.

Table 19: Distribution of respondents on their engagement in Examination Malpractice

In the past year, have you engaged in examination malpractice	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	180	35.3
No	330	64.7
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 19 reveals that majority of the respondents representing 64.7% (330) of the sample did not engage in examination malpractice in the past year while 35.3 % (180) confessed that they engaged in examination malpractice in the past year.

Table 20: Distribution of Respondents on their engagement in Stealing

In the past year, have you taken anything from a store without paying for it	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	89	17.5
No	421	82.5
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 20 shows that the majority of the respondents representing 82.5 % (421) of the sample reported that they did not steal from a store while 17.5% (89) respondents stole from a store in the past year.

Table 21: Distribution of Respondents on their engagement in Vandalism

In the past year, have you purposely damaged a property that was not yours	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	111	21.8
No	399	78.2
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 21 indicates that 399 respondents (78.2%) did not engage in vandalism as opposed to 21.8% (111) who reported that they engaged in vandalism.

Table 22: Distribution of Respondents on their Truancy in school

Engagement in Truancy	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	144	28.2
No	366	71.8
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 22 reveals that majority of the respondents (71.8%) did not engage in truancy while 28.2 % (144) engaged in truancy in the past year.

Table 23: Distribution of Respondents on their Unruliness in the past year

In the past year, have you ever been too loud/rowdy and people complained	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	148	29.0
No	362	71.0
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 23 shows that 362(71.0%) respondents were not unruly in the past year as opposed to 148(29%) respondents who confessed being unruly in the past year.

Table 24: Distribution of Respondents on their Dishonesty in the past year

Have you lied to your parent(s)/guardian(s) about your destination/companion	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	187	36.7
No	323	63.3
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 24 reveals that 63.3 %(323) of the respondents were not dishonest in the past year while 36.7 %(187) of the respondents confessed being dishonest in the past year.

Table 25: Distribution of Respondents on their engagement in Verbal Abuse

In the past year, have you verbally abused someone	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	223	43.7
No	287	56.3
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 25 indicates that majority of the respondents representing 56.3% (283) of the sample did not engage in verbal abuse as opposed to 43.7% (223) of the respondents who verbally abused people in the past year.

Table 26: Distribution of Respondents on their engagement in Bullying

In the past year, have you ever bullied someone	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	130	25.5
No	380	74.5
Total	510	100%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 26 reveals that 380(74.5%) respondents did not bully anyone in the past year while 130(25.5%) respondents confessed that they engaged in bullying in the past year.

Table 27: Summary Percentage Distribution of the delinquent acts reported by the respondent

Delinquency	Percentage (%)
Fighting	54.3%
Verbal abuse	43.7%
Dishonesty	36.7%
Examination Malpractice	35.3%
Unruliness	29.0%
Truancy	28.2%
Bullying	25.5
Vandalism	21.8%
Stealing	17.5%
Running away	2.7%

Source: Field Work 2021

Table 27 indicates that majority of the respondents constituting 54.3% engaged in fighting in the past year, this was followed by 43.7% verbally abused people; 36.7% lied to their

parent(s)/guardian(s) about their destination and companion while 35.3% engaged in examination malpractice. 29.0% of the respondents were unruly in the past year, 28.2% confessed being truant, and 25.5% bullied people in the past year while 21.8% vandalized property that did not belong to them. 17.5% of the respondents reported that they stole from the shop in the past year. The least delinquent act reported was running away from home which was committed by 2.7% of the respondents. The above statistics suggest that much delinquent behaviours are exhibited by juveniles in Odogbolu Local Government with fighting being the most prevalent. The prevalence of these delinquent behaviours committed by juveniles appears to be having adverse consequences on the wellbeing of the inhabitants of Odogbolu Local Government. This view is corroborated by responses from the In-depth interview. For instance, a community leader in Ibefun in his response on this issue complained that: ...

like the increasing rate of kidnapping and cultism in Ibefun now...
Ibefun even Odogbolu at large is no longer safe. If you are walking along the streets now, you don't feel safe; and some of these acts are committed by these children...

4.6 Summary of Findings

The preponderance of juvenile delinquency has become a major social problem locally and globally. Many researchers have attributed this problem to the increasing diversification of the family system among other factors. As a result, the chief objective of this study was to examine the nexus between family instability and juvenile delinquency with focus on Odogbolu Local Government. This summary of findings is based on the findings gathered from 510 questionnaires administered to senior secondary school students who were purposively selected from 10 comprehensive secondary schools in Odogbolu Local Government. The findings also include information gathered from the In-Depth Interview discussions.

The result from the first hypothesis of the study showed that there is a significant relationship between broken homes and juvenile delinquency. This finding is in concert with the findings of Kimani (2010). Kimani found out that children from broken homes had a tendency to engage in juvenile delinquency than children from the ideal two-parent family. Furthermore, this finding is also corroborated by Videon's (2012) assertion that children who live in homes with only one parent or in which marital relationships have been disrupted by divorce or separation were more likely to exhibit a wide range of behavioural problems including delinquency than children who are from a stable two parent families. This also validates the findings by Fry (2010) that a two-parent family provides insulation against a child's vulnerability to delinquency. In contrast to the present findings, Alemika and Chukwuma (2001) in their study found no significant relationship between broken homes and juvenile delinquency.

This divergent finding by Alemika and Chukwuma contrary to the finding of this study might be due to the methodology and sample adopted by the researchers. In view of the present study and from the results of some studies reviewed herein, it is logical to accept the finding that broken homes predicted juvenile delinquency. The researcher also observed from the analysis of the second hypothesis that there was a significant relationship between inadequate parental supervision and juvenile delinquency.

This finding is in line with that of Heck and Welsh (2010) who found out that lack of supervision by parents and care-givers and absence of close relationships between the teenager and his parents were factors that influenced delinquency. The qualitative data from the present study also affirmed this finding as most of the participants complained about the negative influence of inadequate parental supervision on delinquency. This finding also agrees with the proposition of the Containment Theory reviewed in this study which argues that failure of the family as an 'outer containment structure' to regulate the individuals' behaviour through effective supervision predicts crime and delinquency.

The result from the analysis of the third hypothesis revealed that children from conflict-ridden families were vulnerable to delinquency than children from more peaceful families. This finding supports Alfry's (2010) assertion that children who witnessed frequent violence and conflicts in the home are more likely to be delinquent. This finding is also in agreement with that of Sanni et al (2010) who suggested that juveniles were likely to be delinquent if their social environments were fraught with conflict and violence. The following findings were also made based on the results obtained from this research study:

1. The rate of family instability is gradually increasing in Odogbolu Local Government.
2. Parent(s)/guardian(s) were not adequately supervising and monitoring their children and wards in Odogbolu Local Government
3. Parent(s)/guardian(s)-child communication level was abysmally poor in Odogbolu Local Government.
4. There was a prevalence of delinquent acts such as fighting, examination malpractice, running away from home, vandalism, dishonesty, stealing, verbal abuse, bullying and truancy in Odogbolu Local Government.
5. The preponderance of juvenile delinquency in Odogbolu Local Government adversely affected the social life of the inhabitants of the area.

CHAPTER FIVE

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study explored the relationship between family instability and juvenile delinquency. The motivation for this study was ignited by the upsurge in juvenile rate in Odogbolu Local Government.

In an effort to study this problem methodically, the researcher reviewed a good number of relevant literature and theories on the subject matter of this study. The use of questionnaires and interviews were also employed to gather empirical data for this study. The data analysis was done using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) .

Based on the empirical findings from this study, it was observed that the rate of family instability in Odogbolu Local Government has been gradually increasing in recent times. This study also found out that family instability constitutes various problems to the family and the society. Some of these problems include increase in crime and delinquency rate, psychological problems in children among others. Hence, a suitable family environment is a requisite factor necessary to insulate children against delinquency.

5.2 Conclusion

This study set out to examine the relationship between family instability and juvenile delinquency. The findings of this study showed that family instability is a risk factor for juvenile delinquency.

Results from this study showed that children from broken homes are at the greatest risk of becoming delinquents. This is because a broken home is mostly characterized by transitions

in parenting and role conflicts. This condition predisposes children in this kind of family settings to delinquency.

Although research has shown that a majority of delinquents come from fragmented families, this study found out that juvenile delinquency is also fostered by inadequate parental monitoring and supervision. Children who are inadequately supervised and poorly socialized, whose parent(s)/guardian(s) do not monitor their movements and activities are more likely to be delinquent. Furthermore, adequate parental supervision and monitoring breeds positive interaction between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and the children which is essential for a healthy child-upbringing. It therefore becomes imperative that parent(s)/guardian(s) should create adequate time for the supervision of their children. Also, familial conflicts have a positive relationship with juvenile delinquency. This means that children who experience conflicts in the forms of fights, quarrels and violence are prone to a delinquent lifestyle.

From the foregoing, it is pertinent to note that there is need for the family to rise up to the performance of its primary roles of positive child rearing and socialization and to create a healthy social environment in order to insulate the children from delinquency.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Governments should formulate and implement policies that will consolidate the integrity of the family. This is in view of the integral role the family plays in the socialization and moral grooming of the children.
2. Parents and care-givers should endeavor to make out sufficient time to spend with their children in order to monitor and supervise their activities especially what they watch on television and their internet use.

3. Alternative institutions such as day care centers and special schools should be considered for children of unstable families where other efforts to help them have failed.
4. Governments, social workers and counselors should provide assistance to families in need of resolution of conditions of instability and social disruptions in their families.
5. Governments, counselors and concerned agencies should develop programmes aimed at sensitizing parents and care-givers on parent roles and obligations, child-care and development and ways of building a healthy family environment.

5.4 Suggestions for Future Research

In view of the findings of this study, it will be imperative to further research in the following areas:

- i. An investigation into the influence of parenting styles on juvenile delinquency.
- ii. A survey of the impact of maternal employment on juvenile delinquency.
- iii. An exploration of the impact of family size on juvenile delinquency.
- iv. Family size and juvenile delinquency.
- v. An inquiry into the influence of family socio-economic status on juvenile delinquency.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

TAI SOLARIN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION OMU-IJEBU, OGUN STATE

PMB 2128, IJEBU- ODE, OGUN STATE.

This questionnaire is out to elicit information from you in order to gather data for a research. Your frank response would be of great significant in arriving at a reasonable conclusion regarding the purpose of this study. I, therefore, assure you that all information given will be treated as confidential.

Thank you for your cooperation.

.....

SECTION A

Please complete the following blank spaces and or put a tick [$\sqrt{\quad}$] where necessary.

1. Gender: male [] female []
2. Age : 9 – 13 () 14 – 17 () 18 above ()
3. Class: JSS 1 [] JSS 2 [] JSS 3 [] SS 1 [] S.S 2 [] SS 3 []
4. Marital status of Parent: Married and living together [] Separated [] Divorced []
Mother deceased [] Father deceased [] Both parents deceased []
5. Religious Affiliation: a. Catholic [] (b) Anglican [] (c) Islam [] (d) African
Traditional Religion [] (e) Other, please
specify.....

SECTION B

1. Whom do you live with most of the time? a. Both mother and father [] (b) With mother only [] (c) With father only [] (d). Mother and step father [] (e) Father and step mother [] (f) With a relative (e.g. grand parents, aunt, brother, sister, uncle etc) [] (g) I live with friends [] h. Other, specify
2. Do you feel free talking to your parent(s) / guardian(s) about anything? a. Yes, all the time [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No, never []
3. If 'No' to question 1 above, why?
.....
4. Do you talk with your parent(s) / guardian(s) about your personal problems? a. Yes, all the time [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No, never []
5. How often do you spend time with your parent(s) / guardian(s)? a. Often [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) Never []
6. Are you usually left alone without the supervision of your parent(s) / guardian(s)? a. Yes, all the time [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No, never []
7. Do you tell your parent(s) / guardian whom you are going to be with before you go out? a. Yes, all the time [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No []
8. Do your parent(s) / guardian(s) know who your friends are? a. Yes [] (b) No []
9. Do your parent(s) / guardian(s) know what you watch on television? a. Yes [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No []
10. Do your parent(s) / guardian(s) monitor your computer/internet use? a. Yes [] (b) Sometime [] (c) No []
11. Do you witness quarrels between your parent(s) / guardian(s) / relatives? a. Yes, all the time [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No []
12. Do you witness fights between your siblings? a. Yes, all the time [] (b) Sometimes [] (c) No []
13. In the past year, have you been involved in a physical fight? a. Yes [] (b) No []

14. In the past year, have you run away from home ? a. Yes [] (b) No []
15. In the past year have you engaged in examination malpractice ? a. Yes [] (b) No []
16. Have you ever taken something from a store without paying for it? a. Yes [] (b) No []
17. In the past year, have you purposely damaged a property that did not belong to you?
a. Yes [] (b) No []
18. In the past year, have you ever skipped class/school without excuse? a. Yes [] (b) No []
19. In the past year, have you ever been too loud /rowdy and people complained? a. Yes [] (b) No []
20. In the past 12 months, have you ever lied to your parent(s) / guardian(s) about where you had been or whom you were with? a. Yes [] (b) No []
21. In the past year, have you verbally abused someone? a. Yes [] (b) No []
22. In the past year, have you ever bullied someone? a. Yes [] (b) No []
23. Suggest ways of solving the problem of juvenile delinquency.....
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.....
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