

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AND PARENTAL COMMUNICATION AS A CORRELATE OF ADOLESCENT RISKY BEHAVIOUR AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN ABIA STATE

Ndubuka Chibuzor

Department of Home Economics Education
Abia State University, Uturu

&

Nene, Duke-Natrebo, C.

Department of Home Economics and Hotel Management.
Ignitius Ajuru University of Education, Portharcourt.

Abstract

The study was carried out to investigate parental involvement and parental communication as a correlate of adolescent risky behaviour among senior secondary in-schools adolescent in Abia state. Two research questions were posed for study and two null hypothesis were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted the correlation design. The sample of the study was 400 in-school adolescent from eight Local Government Areas in three education zones. Two instruments were used for data collection which were Parent Involvement and Parental Communication Scale (PIPCS) and Adolescent Risky Behaviour Scale (ARBS). The two instruments were face validated by three validates. The internal consistencies of PIPCS and ARBS were 0.84 and 0.78 respectively which were determined using the cronbach alpha. Data was collected through the administration of 400 copies of each of the research instruments to the respondents where 100% recovery was recorded. Simple Linear Regression was used to analyzed the data collected. Results revealed that there was a low negative correlation between the parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior which was not significant. Also there was a low negative correlation between the parental communication and adolescent risky behavior .Based on the findings, the study recommended that Parent should be adequately involved in the activities of their children and maintain effective and healthy communication with their children especially at the adolescence stage of human development.

Introduction

Adolescence is generally agreed to be the period between the ages of 10 and 19. A period of adolescence occupies a unique stage in every person's life. It is a period among human beings where lot physiological as well as anatomical changes

take place resulting in reproductive maturity in adolescents. Many adolescents manage this transformation successfully while others experience major stress and find themselves engaging in behaviours such as sexual experimentation, exploration and promiscuity that place their well-being at risk (Romerl & Stanton, 2003). To this extent, Adolescence is a period in that is characterized by high curiosity on the parts of the individual to be actively involved in sexual behaviours. This why Balsa, Giuliano and French, (2011) described adolescence as a dynamic developmental period, during which young people develop behaviours and habits that affect their health and social outcomes.

Adolescence which is from Latin word: *adolescere* meaning ("to grow up") is a transitional stage of physical and psychological human development generally occurring between puberty and legal adulthood (Medline, 2013). The adolescence period is connected with the teenage years even though its physical, psychological and cultural expressions may start sooner and end after. For example, although puberty has been historically associated with the onset of adolescent development, it now typically begins prior to the teenage years and there have been a normative shift of it occurring in preadolescence, particularly in females (Onuoha, 2018).

Adolescence has also been identified as a period of the lifespan where there is an emergence and intensification of psychopathology (Paus, Keshavan & Giedd, 2008). From the foregoing Adolescence can be said to be a time of increased autonomy and experimentation; a time when peer relationships become increasingly important, and when the risk of engagement in potentially harmful behaviors becomes a salient area of concern (Brown & Rinelli, 2010). At this stage of development, there is increased tendency for the individual to engage in adolescent risky behaviors which can mar their future aspirations.

The different stages of human development have its own unique features/ characteristics and challenges which the adolescent stage is no exception. Some of these unique features of the adolescence stage of human development do include seeking for social acceptance, making new friends, attraction to the opposite sex, rapid human growth amongst others the different stages of human development if not properly guided by the parent may lead to the individual getting involved in risky behaviors. The peculiar challenges associated with adolescent during the transformation stages may lead the adolescents to risky behaviors (Young, 2013).

Poor management of the adolescent at the adolescence stage will expose them to risky behavior which is often associated with that stage of human development (Onuoha, 2018). According to Jui Jui-Yen Huang and Tamar (2015), adolescent risky behavior are activities which the adolescent engage in that have adverse effects on the overall development of the

wellbeing of the youths or that might prevent them from future successes or developments. These behaviors can cause immediate physical injury (e.g. Fighting) as well as behavior with cumulative negative effects (substance use). Some of the most common risky behaviors for adolescents include substance use (cigarettes, alcohol, drugs); sexual behaviors (early sexual debut, sex with multiple partners, unprotected sex, teen pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases); delinquency; aggression and violence; and risky driving (Young, 2013).

These adolescent risky behaviors can affect the youth by disrupting their normal development or preventing them from participating in the typical experience for their age group. For example, teen pregnancy can preclude youth from experiencing typical adolescent life such as graduating from schools or from developing close friendship with peers. Thus, high-risk behavior can significantly impact the lives of youth and those around them because of the enormous effect that these behaviors have on mortality and morbidity during this period of life (Giedd et al., 2012; O'Brien, Albert, Chein & Steinberg, 2011). Studies have shown that three-quarters of all deaths during adolescence are due to accidental injury, suicide, and homicide (Neumark-Sztainer et al., 1997; Resnick et al., 1997). Between middle childhood and adolescence, some studies estimate, mortality rates may increase by as much as 200% (Pharo, Sim, Graham, Gross & Hayne, 2011).

Over the years, the rate of in-school adolescents' involvement in risky behavior such as smoking, drug abuses, risky sexual behaviors, and excessive alcoholism is increasing at an alarming rate in Abia State, as more adolescents are now involved in these activities. Today, the rate of alcohol intake by the adolescent has increased tremendously; this was evident as Stevens-Watkins and Rostisty (2010) reported that alcoholism has its onset during adolescence for many individuals and tends to increase and reach its peak between late adolescence and young adulthood. Also, the rate at which the in-school adolescent involves in smoking of cigarette and use of marijuana has increased tremendously in Abia State, as the adolescent are not mindful of the damaging health consequences of smoking and drug abuses, as Young (2013) reported that currently 53% of the high school students currently smoke. In a similar vein, the rate at which the in-school adolescents are involved in risky sexual behavior is increasing at an alarming rate, as these risky sexual behaviors have led to serious health damage and contraction of sexually transmitted diseases. To this extent, Young (2013) reported that sexual activity seems to peak during the adolescent stage as a result of curiosity of the adolescent to be at par with contemporary behavior of their peer.

The alarming rate at which the in-school adolescent involve in risky behaviors could be attributed to the parenting styles, adolescents home environment and family structures. To this extent Onuoha(2018) found out that environmental factors such peer groups and family structure significantly influences adolescent involvement in risky sexual behaviors, Jui Jui-Yen Huang and Tamar(2015) also revealed that deviant peer and harsh parenting significantly influence adolescent risky behaviors. Since these variables such as peer groups, family structure, harsh parenting have been studied in relation to adolescent risky behaviors and the alarming rate of adolescent involvement in risk behaviors still persist, it therefore become necessary to investigate how parental involvement and parental communication correlates adolescent risky behavior.

Parental involvement refers to commitment from the parents to actively participate in, both, the school and their children's education, as well as overall well-being of the child. According to Nyarko(2007),parental involvement can be defined as the activities that parents do which are considered worthwhile in the educational achievements of their children. It is used to delineate both parental home and school involvement. It refers to the school-related activities, actions, and behaviors that parents perform at home that impact on the academic success of the children. Parental Involvement includes activities such as helping children with their homework, discussion with the children about their school progress, provision of words of encouragement, etc. Thus, "limited parent-child involvement" plays a huge role in why adolescents sort to risk behavior in the first place since it is hard for adolescents to value someone they have little communication with (Pagani, Tremblay, Nagin, Zoccolitto, Vitaro & Mcduff, 2008).

Parental involvement is vital to the outcome of a child's behavior. It is easy to see why a child would turn to delinquency when there is no one there to stop them from doing so. Successful parenting is done when there is a balanced commitment to the attention and guidance a child needs. Without it, adolescents can continue to be influenced by the wrong people. To this extent, Pagani et al(2008) revealed that adequate parental involvement in child care reduces the rate at which the adolescent will be involved in risky behaviour, hence it is on this bases that the present study explored how parental involvement correlates adolescent risky behaviour.

Parental communication is another parent-child relationship component that either makes or breaks the bond between parents and their kids. This being so, adolescents become particularly sensitive to certain 'you' statements directed at them by their parents (Pagani et al., 2008). Principally, the parent-child communication concept is a scientific structure of the family's

superficial world that is defined based on family members' communication with one another - what they tell one another, what they do and what they mean by these communications (Koemer and Fitzpatrick, 2002). Communication creates a connection between parents and adolescent. This also sheds light on the sensitivity adolescents have when it comes to changes in communication with their parents. If a child were to initially have a warm relationship with their parents but later have one a bit more hostile, the change would definitely impact how the parent and child interacted with each other. On the contrary, when adolescents are shown support and encouragement instead of disapproving behavior by their parents, they develop a sense of belonging (Strohschein & Matthew, 2008).

If this is true, there needs to be a genuine connection between the parent and adolescent, especially on the parent's side, in order to successfully maintain a good parent-adolescent relationship.

The pattern of the parent-child communication should be such that we have a clear understanding of the content and intention of each message, and family members should be able to transfer their thoughts, feelings, desires and needs to one another. The primary meaning of parent-child communication is that children learn communication with others, interpret others' feelings as well as generally experience the communication activities with others (Koemer and Fitzpatrick, 2002). Yet again, for this reason, communication between parents and adolescents are important. Having a parent come try and discipline a child after not communicating effectively to create a disconnection between the two which can increase the adolescent risky behavior. To this extent, Strohschein & Matthew (2008) found out that effective parent child communication increases the bond between parents and children which decreases the rate of adolescent risky behavior. It is on these bases that the present study will determine influence of parent child communication on adolescent risky behavior.

The rate at which the in-school adolescent are getting involved in risky behavior such as smoking, drug abuses, risky sexual behaviors and excessive alcoholism is increasing at an alarming rate, as this risky behavior has led to high moral decadence of the adolescent in the society. These risky behavior now have resultant effect of increased mental disorders, unwanted pregnancy of the adolescents and increased rate of adolescent been infected with Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) such as HIV/AIDS. These has raised in incessant complaint and comment from the general on the quality of generation of Nigerian youths. Meanwhile efforts by many researchers to proffer solutions to the problem of adolescent risky behaviors through variables such as parenting styles, peer group influences and environmental

factors have not yielded the expected significant result, thus adolescent risky behaviors persist.

It is in view of these that the present study investigated through empirical evidences to provide answers to questions such as; To what extent does parental involvement correlate adolescent risk behavior? To what extent does parental communication correlate adolescent risk behavior?

The following research questions and hypotheses were posed for the study

1. To what extent does parental involvement correlate adolescent risky behavior?
 2. To what extent does parental communication correlate adolescent risky behavior?
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1. There is no significant correlation between the parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior.
 2. There is no significant correlation between the parental communication and adolescent risky behavior.

The null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Method

The correlation research design was employed for the study, Correlation design aimed at determining the relationship between independent variable(s)(Parent involvement and Parental communication) and dependent variable(s)(Adolescent Risky Behaviour) and enabling the researcher to establish relationship between the two variables.(Nworgu, 2013).

The study was carried out in Abia State and it covered all Senior Secondary Schools in Abia state. The population for the study was 24,854 students from a total of 247 secondary schools that cut across 17 local government areas from three education zones of the state which were Aba, Umuahia and Ohafia Education Zones respectively.

The sample of the study was 400 students which were determined using the Taro Yarmmane formula of determining sampling size. The sample of the study was therefore 400 which was selected from a sample of 76 secondary schools representing 29% across the 8 Local Government Areas representing 35% of the population selected from three Education Zones. The sample size for the teachers and schools was considered adequate because (Nwanna, 2007) recommended even the use of 10% for a population of a few thousand.

The multistage sampling was adopted where the first stage involved the use proportionate stratified sampling technique to select the teachers,

school and local government areas. The second stage also involved the use of simple random sampling techniques to select the required number of Local Government Areas from each of the Education Zones. The third stage involves the selection of the schools from each of the Local Government Areas selected. The last stage involved the selection of teachers from each of the schools selected using the purposive sampling techniques since most of the schools have one Agricultural Science Teachers with exceptions of some schools having two teachers.

Two instruments were used for data collection, the instruments were the Parent Involvement and Parental Communication Scale (PIPICS) and Adolescent Risky Behaviour Scale (ARBS) which were developed by the researcher and were constructed on a four points scale of 4=Very High Extent, 3=High Extent, 2=Low extent and 1=Very Low Extent. The Parent Involvement and Parental Communication Scale (PIPICS) consisted of 12 items. The Parent Involvement and Parental Communication Scale (PIPICS) comprised two sections. The section A focused on the bio data and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, while section B was divided into two clusters. Cluster A focused on Parent Involvement and consisted of 6 items while Cluster B focused on Parental Communication and consisted of 6 items. The Adolescent Risky Behaviour Scale (ARBS) consisted of 7 items.

To ensure the validity of the instruments, the two instruments were presented to three validates one from the Department of Educational Psychology, one from the Department of Home Science Education and one expert from the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation) who ensured the face validity by vetting items on the instruments. The corrections and recommendations were effected by the researcher.

The internal consistencies of the Parent Involvement and Parental Communication Scale (PIPICS) and The Adolescent Risky Behaviour Scale (ARBS) were determined using the cronbach alpha which yielded an internal consistency indexes of 0.84 and 0.78 for the Parent Involvement and Parental Communication Scale (PIPICS) and The Adolescent Risky Behaviour Scale (ARBS) respectively.

The researcher distributed 400 copies of each of the research instruments through the help of research assistants who are teachers and after which they returned the instruments which had been scored. Thus 100% recovery was recorded. Research questions 1 and 2 were answered the using Simple Linear Regression (SLR) while the two null hypotheses were tested using the hypothetical value of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the Simple Linear Regression (SLR).

Results**Table 1: Simple Linear Regression analysis showing the extent of correlation between parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior**

R	R Squared	Adjusted R-squared
-0.010 ^a	0.001	-0.002

a. Predictor: (Constant), parental involvement.

The data in Table 1 revealed that there was a low negative correlation of $r = -0.010$ between Parent Involvement and adolescent risky behavior. The calculated R^2 of 0.001 which also indicates that the variance observed in adolescent risky behavior was accounted for by the parental involvement.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance of the Simple Linear Regression Analyses of the Significant Correlation between Parental Involvement and Adolescent Risky Behavior.

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	3.384	1	3.384	0.037	0.810
Residual	36232.616	398	91.037		
Total	36236.000	399			

Dependent Variables: adolescent risky behavior

Predictors: (Constant), parental involvement.

Data in table 2 show an F- value of 0.037 and p-value of 0.810 since the p-value of 0.810 is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior was retained. Hence this implies that there is no significant low negative correlation between the parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior. Since the corresponding research question one revealed a low negative correlation between arental involvement and adolescent risky behavior.

Table 3: Simple Linear Regression analysis showing the extent of correlation between parental communication and adolescent risky behavior

R	R Squared	Adjusted R-squared
-0.012 ^a	0.001	-0.020

a. Predictor: (Constant), parental communication

The data in Table 3 revealed that there was a low negative correlation of $r = -0.012$ between parental communication and adolescent risky behavior. The calculated R^2 of 0.001 which also indicates that the variance observed in adolescent risky behavior was accounted for by the parental communication.

Table 4: Analysis of Variance of the Simple Linear Regression Analyses of The Significant Correlation Between Parental Communication and Adolescent Risky Behavior.

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	5.020	1	5.020	0.058	0.800
Residual	34495.940	398	86.673		
Total	34500.960	399			

Dependent Variables: adolescent risky behavior

Predictors: (Constant), parental communication.

Data in table 4 shows an F- value of 0.058 and p-value of 0.800 since the p-value of 0.800 is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant correlation between parental communication and adolescent risky behavior was retained. Hence this implies that there is no significant low negative correlation between the parental communication and adolescent risky behavior. Since the corresponding research question two revealed a low negative correlation between parental communication and adolescent risky behavior.

Discussion

The analysis of research question one and its corresponding hypothesis one do revealed that there is no significant low negative correlation between the parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior. These findings are in agreement with the findings of Pagani et al., (2008) revealed that adequate parental involvement in child care reduces the rate at which the adolescent will be involved in risky behavior. He findings also compliment the findings of (Nyarko, 2007) who found out that when parents are highly involved in the activities of their children both at home and the school, their children are less likely to be involved in social vices such as risky behaviours. Thus Parental who actively participate in, both, the school and their children's education, as well as overall well-being of the child are expected to monitor their children activities constantly which will consequently reduces the extent to which the adolescent involves in risky behaviours (Nyarko, 2007). These risky behaviors do include risky behavior such as smoking, drug abuses, risky sexual behaviors and

excessive alcoholism. The implication of this findings is that is that adequate involvement of parents in the activities of their adolescents will reduce the adolescent risky behavior which will ensure that the society will be morally inclined.

The analysis of research question two and its corresponding hypothesis two do revealed that there is no significant low negative correlation between the parental communication and adolescent risky behavior. These findings are in agreement with the findings of Strohschein & Matthew (2008) found out that effective parent child communication increases the bond between parents and children which decreases the rate of adolescent risky behavior. The findings also compliment the findings of Koemer & Fitzpatrick(2002 who found out that effective parent adolescent communication strengthen parent child relationship which helps to propagate effective wellbeing of the child and are less likely to be involved in risky behaviours such as smoking, drug use amongst others. Communication between parents and adolescents are important, having a parent who discloses information readily to their children create a partnership and attachment between them and their adolescent reduce the adolescent in indulging in risky behaviours. Also when parents try and discipline a child after not communicating effectively, creates a disconnection between the two which can increases the adolescent risky behavior. The implication of this finding is that adequate parental communication between parent and adolescents will reduce the adolescent risky behavior which will ensure that the society will be filled with adolescent who are well discipline, well behaved and morally inclined.

Conclusion

Adolescent stage of human development remains a critical stage of human development in which every individual must go through in life. This stage is usually confronted with its challenges which if not managed properly by parents may lead to the adolescent getting involved in risky behaviours. However, the extent to which these adolescents get involved in risky sexual behavior could be influenced by parental involvement and parental communication. It was on these bases the present study sought the extent to which parental involvement and parental communication correlates adolescent risky behavior. Based on this, the study concludes that there was a low negative correlation between the parental involvement and adolescent risky behavior which was not significant. Also there was a low negative correlation between the parental communication and adolescent risky behavior.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were preferred

1. Parent should be adequately involved in the activities of their children especially during the adolescence stage of human development since it reduces the adolescent engagement in risky behaviours.
2. Parents should ensure effective and healthy parent adolescent communication especially at the adolescence stage of human development, since close monitoring reduces the adolescent engagement in risky behaviours.

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