

STUDENTS' AWARENESS OF TYPES AND CONTROL STRATEGIES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN FEDERAL CAPITAL TERRITORY, ABUJA.

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Abstract

The study investigated the students' awareness of types and control strategies of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja. 10855 secondary school students in FCT, Abuja make up the study population. Based on the formula of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), a sample of 373 was used. Delinquency Questionnaire for Students (DQS) was used in this study to collect data from the sampled secondary school students. The data collected were subjected to SPSS analysis based on the research questions and null hypotheses. T-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses. The findings from the study showed that organized anti-social behaviour, unorganized ones, circumstantial delinquency and habit of bad mannerism and vulgarity are types of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. The study recommended that proper counselling should be given to students in FCT, Abuja about the dangers of deviant behaviours.

Key words: Students' awareness, Types, Control strategies.

Introduction

Every society has a set of norms which members are expected to observe, however, not every member of the society abides by those norms. Members who live contrary to the set norms are referred to as delinquents. Chaba (2002) avowed that students often get involved in antisocial behaviours because they feel that if they do not, they will be social misfits or termed as old fashioned among their peer groups or friends.

Juvenile Delinquency refers to the antisocial and criminal behaviour involving individuals below the age of 18. Juvenile Delinquency has consistently been a problem in the world, Nigeria inclusive (Ihejiene, 2014). In Nigeria, juvenile offenders are treated differently from adults, although this has not always been the case. (Encarta, 2009).

The global society today still grapples with Juvenile delinquency as a problem of the developed and developing world. Manifestations of delinquency among secondary school adolescents in Nigeria include: cruelty,

bullying, fighting, vandalism, stealing, lying, sexual immorality, mob action, carrying of weapons. There are two main categories of delinquent behaviours which Nigerian adolescents engage in; these are: criminal and status offences. The criminal offences include: stealing, arson, rape, drug offences, murder, burglary, pick pocket, and armed robbery (Okoye, 2001).

The issue of juvenile delinquency is an age long problem even among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. It seems that the juvenile delinquency of the past cannot be compared with that of the present era. The anti-social behaviours often associated with the juvenile delinquents, such vices as vandalism, drug abuse, weapon carrying, alcohol abuse, rape, examination malpractices, school violence, bullying, cultism, truancy, school drop-outs, to mention but a few. Obviously, unless something is done to roll back the wave of juvenile delinquency, the prospect of a better, safer and more prosperous and crime society emerging in Nigeria and in federal capital territory Abuja in particular will remain elusive. (*Shinku, 2006*).

Delinquent behaviour or delinquency is basically a legal concept. It is defined differently in different times and places. What may be regarded as delinquent behaviour therefore, remains an issue of controversy from one society to another and from time to time. According to Horne (2004) Juvenile delinquency refers to the various ways and manners in which children and young person breach the various rules or norms which then appropriate government agencies establish from time to time to regulate, their social conduct and behaviours in society such as the Nigerian society. A delinquent child is one who by habitually refusing to obey the reasonable and lawful commands of his parents or other lawful authority is seemed to be habitually uncontrolled, from home or school, thereby endanger the moral, health or welfare of him or others.

In Nigeria and in Federal Capital Territory Abuja in particular, the problem in secondary schools has been seen to escalate. In the past, punitive measures were the norm in reinforcing discipline amongst culprits. However, with time, thoughts of tempering punitive measures with a caring juvenile justice system evolved. This balance was seen as a way of addressing past inequalities emanating from social, economic and educational spheres amongst and between communities. The latter factors are generally regarded as precursors of delinquency amongst children in general and adolescents in particular (Okoye, 2001).

The extent of juvenile delinquency and crime in FCT schools, as alluded to earlier on, and the apparent permissiveness of society, were cause for concern for the present researcher, hence this study.

The problem of delinquency in which today's youth involve themselves; has gained such momentum that it has become a social problem being discussed on television, radio, newspapers and journals and more recently on the internet. It is so undesirable that people not only deplore and criticize, but want to reduce it to the barest minimum.

In the past, juvenile delinquency included truancy, being beyond parental control and so on. But in this contemporary time, juveniles in FCT Abuja engage in delinquent acts such as violence, assault, vandalism, alcoholism, rape, shoplifting, cultism, prostitution and examination malpractices, running away from home and gambling (Okoye, 2001).

These youth consistently misbehave due to numerous factors, some of which are beyond their control, but which have the consequences of undermining the socializing role of the home in particular, and the school. It is against this backdrop that, the study intends to explore students' perception of types and control strategies of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja.

The study answered two research questions and tested two hypotheses stated below:

- what is the perception of students on the types of juvenile delinquency in secondary in FCT Abuja?
- what is the perception of students on the control strategies of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja?
- there is no significant difference between the awareness of male and female students on the types of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja.
- there is no significant difference between the awareness of male and female students on the control strategies for juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja.

Method

The study employed a descriptive Survey. The study population comprised of all the Senior Secondary School students in FCT, Abuja. The total population is 10,855 (Secondary Education Board, 2018). A total of 373 students were sampled from the entire population. This is based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of sample specification.

The instrument for this study was a questionnaire titled: "Delinquency Questionnaire for Students (DQS)" developed by the researcher. The questionnaire was designed along Four-Point-Likert-Scale titled: "Delinquency Questionnaire for Students (DQS)" which comprised ten (10) items. The DQS was made up of two sections: A, and B.

Section A sought information on demographic data about the respondent while sections B were made up of the main items of the questionnaire. The instrument was validated by experts and a Cronbach Alpha reliability Coefficient of 0.68 was obtained. A simple percentage was used in analysing the questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using t-test statistics. The four-point-Likert-Scale had four parts, SA (4), A (3), D (2) and SD (1). While the scores were added, they made up a total of 10 points. When we divided the 10/4 it would be 2.5, which was the decision rule point of 2.5. Any value that was 2.5 and above was agreeing but any value that was below 2.5 fell to disagreement.

Results

Table 1: Perception of Students on the Types of Juvenile Delinquency
N=373

S./N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev	Decision
1	There are forms of juvenile delinquents that are organized in their anti-social behaviour	3.22	0.70	Agreed
2	Juvenile delinquency just starts by chance and not organized.	3.34	0.70	Agreed
3	Another form of juvenile behaviour is prone by Circumstances which lead to juvenile behaviour	3.23	0.60	Agreed
	Always of the habit of bad mannerism and vulgar or obscene comments.	3.31	0.67	Agreed
4	Sectional Mean	3.27		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The results on Table 1 show the perception of students on the types of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja. The results indicate agreement with all the items. The sectional mean of 3.27 (above midpoint of 2.50) creates basis for concluding that students perceive that organized anti-social behaviour, unorganized ones, circumstantial delinquency and habit of bad mannerism and vulgarity are types of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

Table 2: Perception of Students on the Control Strategies of Juvenile Delinquency

N=373

S./N	Items	Mean	Std. Dev	Decision
1	Establish clear guidelines for students an enabling environment characterized with acceptance and love is a game changer.	3.28	0.65	Agreed
2	Sensitivity of parents to the needs and feeling of the adolescence.	3.21	0.69	Agreed
3	Close supervisory and monitoring strategies at home and in the school.	3.24	0.74	Agreed
4	The place of guidance and counselling is inevitable	3.22	0.63	Agreed
5	Shaping behaviour through the uses of reward and punishment is effective	3.20	0.81	Agreed
6	Improving on teaching methodology making it attractive.	3.33	0.65	Agreed
Sectional Mean		3.25		

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The results on Table 2 show the perception of students on the control strategies of juvenile delinquency in secondary schools in FCT, Abuja. The results indicate agreement with all the items. The sectional mean of 3.25 (above midpoint of 2.50) creates basis for concluding that establishing clear guidelines, sensitivity to adolescents needs, close supervision, activities of counsellors and improved teaching methodology are the control strategies for juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

Table 3: t-test on Difference between the awareness of Male and Female Students on Types of Juvenile Delinquency

Gender	Number	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	231	3.26	0.37	-.751	382	.453	Accepted
Female	142	3.28	0.31				

The analysis on Table 3 was carried out to determine whether male and female students significantly differ in their awareness of the types of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. With a significant value of .453 (more than the 0.05 level of significance), the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the awareness of the types of juvenile delinquency by male and female students.

Table 4: t-test on Difference between the awareness of Male and Female Students on Control Strategies of Juvenile Delinquency

Gender	Number	Mean	S.D.	t-value	df	Sig(2-tailed)	Decision
Male	231	3.21	0.36	-1.59	382	.112	Accepted
Female	142	3.27	0.33				

The analysis on Table 4 was carried out to determine whether male and female students significantly differ in their awareness of the control strategies of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. With a significant value of .112 (more than the 0.05 level of significance), the null hypothesis was accepted.

This implies that there is no significant difference in the awareness of the control strategies of juvenile delinquency by male and female students.

Discussion

The result from the study showed that students are aware that organized anti-social behaviour, unorganized ones, circumstantial delinquency and habit of bad mannerism and vulgarity are types of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. This is echoed by Anon (2015) who is of the view that juvenile delinquency as an Anti-social or criminal behaviour by the children. Anon (2015) also stated that Juvenile is seen as young youthful, not fully developed, not yet adult that has yet reach sexual maturity.

The study further revealed that establishing clear guidelines, sensitivity to adolescents needs, close supervision, activities of counsellors and improved teaching methodology are the control strategies for juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. This is in line with the study of Okoye (2001), who recommended that the consequences of juvenile delinquency are on the individual, victim, family and wider community.

The result also revealed that there is no significant difference in the awareness of the types of juvenile delinquency by male and female students. This implies that both male and female secondary school students in FCT are aware of the types of juvenile delinquency. This is in contrast to the study of Shinku (2006) who stated that there are varieties of awareness or forms of behaviour. Each of the patterns has its own social context, the causes that are alleged to bring it about, and the forms of prevention or treatment most often suggested as appropriate for the pattern in question.

The result from the study equally stated that there is no significant difference in the awareness of the control strategies of juvenile delinquency by

male and female students. This again is in contrast to the findings of Toluhi (2002) who stated that the teacher has a vital role to play since the school is the best place for learning and bringing about the expected change and making the student a full and functional person.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that, students are aware that intimidation of junior students, refusal to do assignment, disobedience of school rules and regulations as well as vandalization of school properties are the consequences of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja. Establishing clear guidelines, sensitivity to adolescents needs, close supervision, activities of counsellors and improved teaching methodology are the control strategies for juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in FCT, Abuja.

Recommendations

In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations were advanced.

1. Proper counselling should be given to students in FCT, Abuja about the dangers of deviant behaviours.
2. The state government should provide every financial resources and moral support needed that will enable schools control the activities of students in FCT, Abuja.
3. Adequate attention like counselling and orientation services should be given to all the students to prevent them from engaging in any form of juvenile delinquency in schools.

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