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## Editorial Note

Undoubtedly, the human family is one of the most threatened units of our individual and communal existence. Many have argued that the family's failure or success reflects the order in the development of society. This unvarnished truth and the consequences of ignoring it account for establishing a journal devoted exclusively to family life - *International Journal of Family Life and Societal Development*. This journal, conceived as a means and avenue to express concern and interrogate pressing family issues and proffer solutions, is not a confessional one; it takes discursive and practical approaches to issues on family life from interdisciplinary perspectives.

In this maiden volume, Stephen Ayankeye argues that there is a nexus between family integration and societal development. Inversely, a disintegrated family will lead to the underdevelopment of society. He further argues that there are factors that engender family integration but that those factors are now being challenged. He recommends ways of ensuring that the challenges are tackled. Benson Igboin interrogates the effects of social media on family life. He argues that society is dynamic, and globalisation has ambivalent impacts on family life. While it is now practically impossible to insulate family life from social media, he concludes that reasonable and responsible deployment of social media will enhance family unity and connectedness. Sharon Slater's article examines the integration of family and the family's protection in Nigeria and Africa. Slater argues that the assault on children and families in Nigeria is propelled by the global sexual revolution, to which many parents in Africa have not given sufficient attention. She notes that this revolution should be viewed from a human rights perspective to challenge its causes and effects on African families, particularly young people. She thus recommends that parents and the African government have critical roles to play in safeguarding the sexual health of their children.

On his own, Elijah Adeyinka examines the effects of postmodernism on the African family system. He points out that postmodernism's tilt

towards relativism adversely impacts family life. In order to stem the tide of postmodernism's inroad into the family, he suggests that family life should be guided strictly by enduring biblical principles. Oluwakemi Amuda's article intervenes by highlighting the critical role of effective communication within the family. She argues that when there is adequate and mutual communication in the family, faith is developed, which results in the development of the whole person. For Abosede Ayinde, violence against the female gender in the family and society has remained unabated. Ayinde notes that contemporary society has been unable to arrest violence against the female gender. She also examines the biblical basis of violence against the female gender and recommends ways to ameliorate it. John Oladapo echoes the argument that the challenges of the modern family system directly link with societal development. He argues that the African family system is being critically neglected, and the consequences are dire and visible. He, therefore, recommends the need to pay urgent attention to those values that sustained the family system before modernity unleashed its forces on it. Princess and Raphael Idialu reaffirm the argument that effective communication in the family has a way of dispelling and resolving conflict. They examine effective communication skills to demonstrate that family health will be maintained and sustained when emplaced. Foluke Odesola articulates that parenting is critical to the healthy growth and development of the child. Effective parenting, she argues, leads to arresting juvenile delinquency. As a result, she recommends that effective parenting is a sine qua non for guiding the child through the challenges that the teenage period of development poses.

Ogbeni Sylvester examines the role of education in the development of the family. Although education costs are high and hardly affordable, he argues that education is essential to the family and society. He suggests ways through which parents could navigate the challenges the cost of education has posed in contemporary society. Michael Otun introduces the ethical and religious dilemma many Christian couples face in deciding whether or not to resort to IVF in

their quest to procreate. He argues that the decision is not easy because of many interpretations of scriptures and pressures that are brought to bear on couples. He thus concludes that couples should weigh the moral implications of IVF before taking their final decision. Finally, Andrew Itakorode Olanrewaju examines the causes and effects of drug abuse among youth. He argues that despite concerted efforts to discourage the youth from engaging in substance abuse, the reality on the ground shows an increase in the number of those involved. He recommends that parents and government should intensify efforts towards ensuring that the youth are dissuaded from abusing drugs because of their harmful effects on them and society.

Benson Ohihon Igboin  
Editor-in-Chief

# **PARENTING AND ITS IMPACT ON TEENAGE DELINQUENCY**

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## **Abstract**

Teenage delinquency is a global phenomenon, for it has become a significant concern of the government, parents, schools, society and the church. This paper focuses on understanding parenting styles and how they can affect teenage delinquency. The writer used a library-based approach to review some accessible research on the family, parenting, and juvenile and teenage delinquency. It was discovered that parenting is a crucial function in teenagers' life as they transition to adulthood. It can be gathered from the literature that parenting practices and styles adopted by parents in raising their children either avert or inhibit delinquent behaviour at any level of their lives. Therefore, parents should step up their parenting styles with the church's help and adopt an authoritative style to reduce teenage delinquency.

Keywords: Impact, Parenting style, Teenager, Juvenile Delinquency.

## **Introduction**

Teenage delinquency is a global problem that needs serious attention from everybody. According to Antwi (2016, 124), deviance or crime is inevitable in every society where there is an acceptable way of living or conduct. Deviance and crime by teenagers are regarded as a challenge to the tranquillity enjoyed by members of the society or country (Bernburg 2019, 179). Juvenile delinquency remains a concern for teachers, the community, and parents. Some juvenile crimes observed are stealing, deception, sexual promiscuity, thuggery, rape, drug abuse, absenteeism, verbal abuse, and cultism (Yusuf, Daud, & Arshat 2021, 1426). These delinquent acts committed by young people in teenagers have drawn the attention of many people concerned about these children's growth. Teenage crime

is, therefore, one of the main issues all countries of the world are struggling to deal with, and if young criminals are not cared for, they will graduate into hardened criminals. Teenage crime is caused by juvenile delinquency, which the next session of this paper will discuss.

### **Juvenile Delinquency in Nigeria**

According to More (2020, 1), the term “Juvenile delinquency” refers to a large variety of behaviour of adolescents and children which society does not approve of and for which some kind of admonishment, preventive or punishment and helpful actions are justified in the open interest. Juvenile delinquency is the failure of children and youths to meet certain obligations expected of them in by the society in which they live. Juvenile delinquency is a devastating event worldwide, including in Nigeria (Ojo 2012,5). It is, therefore, a result of the social changes that develop from the conflict between the African and Western cultures after the incidence of colonisation. Culture, in this case, refers to the usual way people do things, including various human values and morals or how they do things. This can as well be referred to as anti-social behaviour.

Examples of anti-social behaviour that we can see in Nigeria presently are arson (the crime of intentionally initiating a fire in order to harm or terminate something, particularly a building), misuse of drugs, rape, examination malpractices, school crime, intimidation, cults, truancy, drop-outs in schools and prostitution (Sanni et al. 2010, 25). The prospect of a more robust, improved, and stable criminal culture in Nigeria will remain impossible until there is a deliberate action to turn back a wave of juvenile and teenage crime (Sanni et al., 2010: 26).

In Nigeria, juvenile crime became noticed in the 1920s, when young offenders like pick-up, shoplifting and truancy became prevalent, which led to legal disciplinary proceedings being established by the colonial government dealing with criminals (Fourchard 2010, 130). Juvenile delinquency is evident in Nigeria as a significant problem that impedes and hinders progress (Muhammed et al. 2009,45).

According to Adegoke (2015, 18), juvenile involvement in crime in Nigeria is one of the critical regions of worry for the Nigerian Police Force.

It was revealed that one of Nigeria's primary issues of concern was youth and teenagers' involvement in the crime. Adegoke's study revealed that in 2001, 19,000 Nigerian teenagers were jailed for committing more than 185,000 crimes. In 2005, 31% of the children detained in Nigeria were guilty of shoplifting, 17% were arrested for robbery, and 11% for committing disturbances. Thus in Nigeria, these crimes have also resulted in social abuse, mental illness, disrespect to elders, armed robbery and other social ills among teenagers and young people (Yusuf et al. 2021, 1427).

Eke (2004, 4) notes that there are two main categories of delinquent behaviours in teenagers; criminal and status offences. The criminal offences include stealing, rape, arson, drug offences, burglary, murder, pickpocketing and armed robbery. However, she listed status offences, including running away from home and school, malingering, and truancy.

Parents play an intricate role in delinquency. Kumpfer & Magalhaes (2018, 179) opined that parents are one of the closest and most influential people in a young person's life. Parents have an essential role to play as a social and controlling agents for children's behaviour, which makes parenting important in teenagers' development.

### **Parenting and Juvenile Delinquency**

Parenting has been playing a fundamental role in teenagers' transition to adulthood. Parenting has been recognised as a major vehicle in socialising the child (Utti 2006, 30). According to Utti, parenting is the act of parenthood, the child's upbringing, training, and rearing or education. Some research reports have revealed that a large percentage of juvenile delinquency comes from homes that lack parental care and love. Attention, warmth and love go a long way in assisting the child's emotional development and adjustment

(Odebunmi 2007, 21). Growing children, even teenagers, require parental love, warmth and extreme attention to adjust adequately to the atmosphere in which they find themselves. Parents have a major role to play in the adjustment process of teenagers. The behavioural problems of most deviants are embedded in their homes (Onyechi & Okere 2007, 107).

Otuadah (2006, 25) noted that when the relationship between the parents and the teenager is warm, it creates a healthy development environment. Teenagers exhibit friendliness, cheerfulness, positive emotions and good maturity, showing evidently that such come from homes where they are loved and accepted (Otuadah 2006, 25). The neglected teenager gradually becomes a drug addict, hardened criminal, aggressive, armed robber, cultist, ritualist, and rapist.

Several types of research on the factors that precipitate delinquency among teenagers stress that the teenage age is a period of stress and storms characterised by rebelliousness (Okorodudu 2010, 60). According to him, it was observed that factors like environmental, social, psychological, physical, negative peer group influence, drug abuse and especially family are the causes of delinquency among teenagers. Eke (2004, 3) opined that causes of delinquency tend to find theoretical explanations in the interaction between biological, environmental and social factors. Eke believes that individuals' biological or genetic makeup can predispose teenagers to engage in delinquent activities. Chromosomal abnormalities among teenagers may dispose them to anti-social behaviours.

The Nigerian government has devised and employed several measures to curtail teenage and adolescent delinquency in our society, but to no avail (Okorodudu 2010, 61). For instance, the establishment and administration of juvenile justice, promulgation of juvenile courts and laws, establishment of remand homes, and security and law enforcement agencies. Therefore, many researchers agree that the foundation of teenagers' or adolescents' delinquency is rooted in the kind of home they are brought up (Odebunmi 2007, 20).

As the saying “Charity begins at home”, the basis of good behaviour orientation and good teenage attitude development is founded in positive parenting. Okpako (2004, 277) stated that parents should be blamed for the misfortune that befalls teenagers. Hence, the paper will discuss the relationship between delinquency in teenagers and parenting styles.

### **Parenting Styles**

According to Johnson (2016, 243), although a teenager can choose how to behave irrespective of what method of parenting the parents choose to practice, research reveals what is more operational for progressive results. Numerous studies have analysed the association between parenting styles and teenage delinquency. Parenting style deals with how teenagers perceive their parents, which invariably affects their reactions to the authority of the parents (Johnson 2016, 243). Adequate parenting and strong family ties are significant factors in averting delinquent behaviour. As discovered by Baumrind (1991), the four types of parenting styles and their outcomes are now discussed.

### **Authoritative Parenting**

The parents demonstrate responsiveness to the child's demandingness and needs (setting expectations of behaviour and consequences for noncompliance), checking the child's behaviour, providing clear standards of discipline, and conduct based on reasoning rather than on the power of assertion or withdrawal of love. Authoritative parents offer home environments rich with strict behavioural supervision with high degrees of emotional support. Within this parenting style, children are encouraged to behave prosocially, reason autonomously about moral problems, respect adults, and think independently (Baumrind 1997, 322).

Baumrind (1997, 322) observes that two primary parenting goals are to nurture character and optimal competence. She also adds that responsiveness is imperative as well. Responsiveness concerns how parents intentionally foster self-assertion and individuality by being attuned, acquiescent and supportive of children's needs and demands.

Disciplines happen within the context of a warm, engaged parent-child relationship. Parental warmth (both mother and father, but knowingly more vital for nurturing), compassion, and prosocial ethical perception were strong predictors of teenagers' prosocial behaviours (Carlo, Mestre & Samper 2010, 116).

This parenting style predicts positive and beneficial outcomes for children and teenagers. One result of the stern behavioural supervision that happens with high degrees of emotional support is the subsiding of engaging in criminal behaviour in adulthood (Bandura 1986, 55). Children and teenagers in these households reveal higher degrees of mental change. Overall, the teenagers developed with this method of child-raising tend to be more self-assertive, self-reliant, self-controlled, exploratory and content. They tend to have more life success and self-confidence.

### **Authoritarian Parenting**

In the home where this type of parenting is being practised, the parent demonstrates demandingness (setting expectations of behaviour and consequences for noncompliance); is less responsive to the child's needs, is more likely to use assertive power discipline, and may utilise love withdrawal to gain or impose compliance (Johnson 2016, 244). Love withdrawal involves using love as a weapon or reward; when the child does something wrong, support and love are withheld from the child. The parent runs with a “do as you are told” mode of discipline and does not frequently discuss why something was wrong, nor does the parent request a moral discussion with the child. The parent may exhibit some warmth but demands respect from the child (Johnson 2016, 244).

According to Simons, Simons and Chen (2007, 482), this parenting style has some degree of efficiency but also has some negative influence. Parental rejection and hostility foster anger and frustration in children and teenagers, resulting in higher levels of anti-social behaviour. Simon et al. (2007, 483) opined that children tend to be more discontent, withdrawn and distrustful. Cross-cultural differences have been found in the type of parenting style. Some

research suggests that this parenting style is more operational for Blacks than Whites, taking into history higher-risk environments, for example, lower social and economic status and dangerous neighbourhoods (Baumrind 1972, 265). However, this parenting style is more effective when parents demonstrate involvement, trust, care and communication. Many children develop healthy self-esteem and self-confidence but may have somewhat more inflexibility in their surviving style.

### **Permissive Indulgent Parenting**

A permissive indulgent parent demonstrates a high degree of responsiveness, a lack of demandingness (failing to set expectations of behaviour and consequence for noncompliance), less-involved parenting and is emotionally hostile (Johnson 2016, 244). The parent exhibits little control over the child, sets minimal anticipations and rarely disciplines. The parent fundamentally befriends their child, treating the child as if they are equals. It is more critical for this type of parent to be adored by their teenager than to offer discipline and structure. The parent allows the children to make their own decisions and set their own rules (for example, when to come back home in the evening, whom they date or relate with socially, what they eat or drink) rather than provide education and guidance for the child. The parent's emotional needs and self-esteem are met through interaction with their children and adult-to-adult connection with them.

Permissive indulgent parenting is one of the more negative and destructive parenting. Children and teenagers recounted lower mental well-being and more depressing signs than the ones brought up with authoritative parenting styles (Rothrauff & Cooney 2009, 140). Children and teenagers in these homes reveal higher degrees of psychological instability. The children tend to be less self-controlled and immature and demonstrate more anti-social behaviour than those raised with authoritative parenting. This style of parenting is connected with significantly higher criminal behaviour in adulthood. As opined by Johnson (2016, 244), because the children raised by permissive indulgent parents were never held accountable for their

activities, teenagers and adults tend to experience difficulty with regulations and struggle with control by others. They do what they like, when they want it, without regard to the rights or safety of others. The child's moral development is limited; hence, they can be more involved in anti-social and violent behaviours. Adults have a habit of dysfunctional relationships and are more likely to engage in anti-social and violent behaviour.

### **Permissive Neglectful or Uninvolved Parenting**

According to Maccoby & Martin (1983, 89), this type of parent demonstrates minimal warmth and control over the child. The parent often rejects the child and gives the child minimal or no attention or nurturance. This parent is neglectful in all parenting responsibilities. Basically, the parent offers some or most of the physical necessities of the child but has little or no relationship with the child. The slogan “children should be seen but not heard” may be applied here. Parents are consumed with their own lives and have little time or worry for their children. The child, at times, is left fending for himself with little or no structure in the family. Most of the time, the child is mainly neglected and ignored by the parents. This is common among single and divorced parents (Johnson 2016, 244).

This is feasibly the most damaging and destructive style of parenting. Children and teenagers from this style of parenting have lower psychological well-being, more depressive signs and higher rates of substance abuse than those developed with authoritative parenting styles. According to Steinberg (2001, 11), children in these homes demonstrate a higher degree of psychological maladjustment and have a high risk of developing behavioural disorders. Because of the lack of nearly any type of parenting, the sense of rejection shared with the lack of moral development makes teenagers right from childhood experience depression, narcissism and antisocialism, including violence. Likely, the parent rarely has any discussion with their child about moral issues, and the parent is not involved in the child's life unless the child's behaviour draws attention to the parent or family. In that case, the parents are likely to disallow the child from the family or

passionately secure the child by depicting him as a prey of the acts of others or situational conditions. Essentially, the parent sights the child as taxing and an inconvenience.

### **Recommendations**

According to the literature, religious adolescents are less delinquent and commit fewer crimes than their non-religious peers (Chui, Cheng & Wong 2013, 10). Therefore religious-based preventive intervention, which the Christian church should handle, is recommended, as briefly discussed below.

**Religious-Based Preventive Interventions:** According to Okonkwo (2012, 89), for an extended period, considerable effort has been made to prove that religion has a more significant role to play in correcting human behaviours, including teenage delinquency in society. Although some religious leaders have derailed their role in instilling moral principles and teachings in the people, there is a need to call back the different religious institutions to re-embark on this journey of bringing back ethos in society. Therefore, too many researchers have emerged and demonstrated the benefits of religious practices within society (Okonkwo 2012, 89).

Religious practices promote the well-being of individuals, families and communities. Regular attendance of religious amenities is related to stable family life, healthy, well-behaved children and strong marriages. The exercise of religion also decreases substance abuse, domestic abuse, addiction and crime. Studies have found that teenagers who frequently attend religious services have a high level of spiritual backing from others in their society and have the lowest levels of depression (Marshal & Handel 1997, 110). Immigrant youths similarly enjoy the aid of a higher level of universal well-being when they attend religious services regularly.

It is the critical duty of the church to provide sound moral and ethical education which directs human consciences towards doing good and avoiding evil; towards a wholesome love of God and neighbour; as

well as persuading individuals and social groups to embrace and fill their minds. Therefore, teenagers at all levels should be encouraged by their parents and authorities in these places to join various church organisations for their spiritual welfare. The government should recognise and promote the incalculable roles of church organisations in forming good characters for fighting teenage delinquencies in the country.

### **Conclusion**

To decrease anti-social behaviours in teenagers, we must focus on parenting styles. This research has provided a reliable and precise track to proliferate positive potentials for positive results. Imposing parenting is the most operative parenting method, with an authoritarian coming second. The permissive indulgent and permissive neglectful are ineffective in encouraging morality and encourage delinquency in children and teenagers. Effective parenting education, particularly in the church and other religious organisations, may give parents the tools to be the best, most operative prosocial parents possible.

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