

Psychosocial Factors of Delinquent Behaviours Amongst Secondary School Students In Ibadan

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Abstract: This summarizes a study examining the connections between media usage, parenting style, academic motivation, and delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in Ibadan. Employing a descriptive research design, the investigation involved 300 randomly selected participants and utilized statistical methods like Multiple Regression Analysis and Spearman Correlation to analyze the relationships between the variables. The results highlighted significant links between media usage, parenting style, academic motivation, and delinquent behaviors among the students. The research indicated varying levels of influence on delinquent behaviors for these factors. Collectively, the independent variables explained 83.1% of the variance in predicting delinquent behavior. Notably, media usage showed the most substantial impact, followed by academic motivation and then parenting style. Overall, the findings underscore the significance of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation in comprehending and anticipating delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in Ibadan. In light of the research findings, several key recommendations were put forward. These include proposals to establish regulatory bodies responsible for overseeing and censoring media content and ensuring appropriate content dissemination. Additionally, another suggested body would focus on governing and supporting parental practices while safeguarding child rights. The study also advised regular psychological assessments for students to address and manage potentially harmful mental conditions that could contribute to delinquent behavior.

Keywords: media usage, parenting style, academic motivation, delinquent behaviour

Background to the Study

The exploration of delinquency has gained significant attention within studies of behavioral science. It is observed that adolescents are increasingly developing behaviors that could jeopardize the mental and social stability of society. The actions of young individuals classified as delinquent could signify a decline in moral values and disrupt social order. According to Spinaguluva (2015), delinquency now refers to behaviors by young people that are illegal, harmful, or illicit. Ntshangase (2016) described delinquency as socially unhealthy or unacceptable behavior exhibited by juveniles. This definition implies that delinquency involves actions that go against social norms and legal standards, carried out by young individuals and beyond the control of their guardians or significant others, thus necessitating intervention by law enforcement.

Hawkins, Pollard, Catalano, and Baglioni (2017) highlighted various elements that contribute to the emergence of delinquent behavior in young individuals, such as environmental, school, psychological, and home-related factors. Goldstein and Redding (2015) discussed the prevalence of serious delinquency and juvenile crimes in American society, pointing out instances where young Americans have committed acts like rape, assaults on peers and teachers, and involvement in gang activities. Ntshangase (2016) referred to a study in Japan that emphasized the support for severe punishment for delinquent behavior within the country's culture. Kim (2018) focused on knife-carrying behavior among young people in the United Kingdom, noting an increased number of deaths from stabbings compared to gun-related incidents. Additionally, Kim highlighted prevalent delinquent behaviors in South Africa, including bullying, alcohol abuse, cigarette smoking, and internet fraud, emphasizing the threat this poses to more traditional societies. Iseberetonna and Maduawuchi (2021) observed antisocial behaviors among Nigerian youth, citing activities like prostitution, substance abuse, truancy, bullying, assaults, examination malpractices, cultism, theft, and robbery. It's acknowledged that various factors, including parenting style, may contribute to delinquency in these cases.

Hirschi (1969) proposed a criminological theory emphasizing that the quality of the parent-child relationship significantly influences a child's potential for delinquent behavior. According to Hirschi, when this connection fosters delinquency, such a child might evolve into a potential adult criminal. Ntshangase (2016) highlighted that a child's low self-control, a predictor of delinquency, is often rooted in poor parenting styles. Other theories, as suggested by Brandt (2016), have explored the relationship between parenting and child crime. These theories suggest that delinquent and criminal behaviors can be influenced by a combination of factors, such as socialization within a criminogenic environment and neuropsychological vulnerabilities in young individuals. Brandt (2016) also proposed that individuals born into a criminal environment and suffering from neuropsychological deficiencies are more likely to exhibit delinquent or deviant behaviors compared to those not raised in such an environment. In addition to familial factors, the media is identified as another influential factor that could contribute to delinquency.

The media serves to disseminate informative, productive, and entertaining content, but it also includes material that promotes delinquent behaviors like smoking, pornography, assault, and intimidation, influencing the behaviors and personalities of young individuals. According to Anderson and Bushman (2017), the general aggression model suggests that violent behaviors depicted in

media content can provoke serious aggression, particularly in young audiences. Surette (2016) views the depiction of violent crimes in the media as a catalyst for delinquent behaviors. Ferguson and Colwell (2017) observed that media portrayal of violent crimes can also serve as a source of stylistic inspiration. Despite limited scholarly connections between the media and delinquency (Gentile, 2016), it remains an area worthy of exploration, forming part of the objectives of this study. Moreover, there might be a link between academic exposure and delinquency. It's conceivable that young individuals who are more engaged in academic pursuits might display fewer delinquent tendencies. This suggests a potential correlation between delinquency and academic motivation.

Several researchers have noted a positive impact of academic exposure and motivation on reducing antisocial behaviors in young individuals. Luallen's study (2006), referenced in Ntshangase (2016), demonstrated a significant link between academic motivation and a decrease in delinquent behavior. The study indicated that students attending classes and participating in extracurricular activities were less likely to engage in delinquent behavior compared to school dropouts. Similarly, Aslund's research (2018) found that young individuals engaged in vocational or educational activities were less drawn to delinquency and typically avoided participating in such behaviors. This study highlighted that individuals with limited or no education were more inclined towards delinquency and often had records of felony. In essence, this collective study aimed to establish a correlation between parenting style, media influence, academic motivation, and delinquency. Taking into consideration all these variables, the forthcoming research seeks to provide a comprehensive justification for these correlations.

Purpose of the Study

The study aims to investigate the impact of media use, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behaviors. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the connections between media usage, parenting style, academic motivation, and delinquent behavior among secondary school students in Ibadan.
2. To ascertain the combined influence of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in Ibadan.
3. To determine the individual contributions of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation to delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in Ibadan.

Research Questions

- What is the significant relationship between media usage, parenting style, academic motivation, and delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?
- What is the joint contribution of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?
- What is the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?

METHODOLOGY

The research methodology for this study is delineated across six sections, encompassing Research Design, Population, Sampling Technique and Sample Size, Instrumentation, Method of Data Collection, and Method of Data Analysis.

Research Design

The study has adopted a descriptive survey design. This particular design involves drawing inferences about the entire population from the selected sample portion. It employs empirical statistical tools to analyze data collected from the field, providing explanations for observed events and circumstances.

Population

The research aims to investigate the correlation between parenting style, media influence, academic motivation, and delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in the Ibadan metropolis. Thus, the population for this study comprises secondary school students in Ibadan, located in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The study utilized a sample size of three hundred (300) individuals. The sampling technique employed a multi-staged approach, as described below:

Initial Stage: The selection of 6 local government areas in Ibadan was performed using a simple random sampling technique, specifically employing a ballot-type method. Three local government areas were chosen from the main cities, and three from the lesser cities. This method was chosen to ensure a sample that would offer a fair and unbiased representation of the population.

Second Stage: Similar randomization was applied to choose one (1) school from each of the selected local government areas.

Final Stage: The selection of participants involved employing the simple random technique, using methods such as the hat method. Fifty (50) individuals were chosen from each of the selected secondary schools, totaling three hundred (300) participants in the study.

Instrumentation

The instrument to be utilized for this study to obtain data from the field will be a questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to meet the research objectives and questions of the study. It contained five (5) sections which include

- Section A: Demographic characteristics of respondents
- Section B: Delinquent Scale
- Section C: Parenting Style scale
- Section D: Media Influence
- Section E: Academic Motivation

Demographic Characteristics

The demographic characteristics section incorporated variables such as sex, age, religion, class, family type, and school type. These variables formed part of the study's data collection, offering respondents various response options to choose from, allowing for a single response.

Delinquency Scale

The measurement of delinquency was conducted using the Deviant Behavior Variety Scale developed by Sanches et al (2017). This scale comprises 19 items evaluated on a five-point Likert response format, ranging from strongly disagree (SD) to strongly agree (SA). Sample items included "Lied to adults" and "used illegal drugs". The authors reported both factorial and convergent validity for the scale. The instrument's reliability, as measured by Cronbach's alpha, resulted in a value of .82. Additionally, the scale was revalidated with local participants; 20 items were administered to young individuals in juvenile homes not part of the main study, yielding a Cronbach's alpha value of .89.

Parenting Style Scale

The parenting style exhibited towards children was assessed using the Parenting Style Scale developed by Shyny (2017). This scale comprises 32 items measured on a five-point Likert response format, including options such as all of the time (AT), most time (MT), some time (ST), rarely (R), and never (N). Sample items included "I would like to be a friend, Philosopher, and guide to my child" and "I am very soft with my child so that I cannot correct him/her at the proper time by punishment". The internal consistency of the instrument ranged from .87 to .91. Post a revalidation process, the instrument's reliability measured by Cronbach's alpha yielded a value of .91

Academic Motivation Scale

The assessment of students' academic motivation utilized the Academic Motivation Scale (AMS) developed by Deci and Ryan (1985). This scale comprises 28 items organized into seven factors: knowledge (4 items), accomplishment (4 items), stimulation (6 items), identified regulation (2 items), introjected regulation (4 items), extrinsic regulation (4 items), and amotivation (4 items). It is measured on a five-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Sample items include "I experience pleasure when I discover new things" and "I experience pleasure while surpassing myself in my studies". The authors reported content validity for the instrument. After revalidation to ensure suitability for local use, the instrument was administered to separate samples not involved in the main study, resulting in a Cronbach's alpha value of .82.

Media Usage Scale

Media Utilization was evaluated using the Social Media and Academic Influence Scale (SMAIS) developed by Ahmad et al (2017). This scale specifically measures students' engagement with social media concerning academic activities. The SMAIS comprises four reliable factors: Access to Social Media, Academic Communication, Exposure, and Academic Attainment, totaling 14 items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from SD (Strongly Disagree) to SA (Strongly Agree). Sample items include: "I access social

media via handphone, Ipad, and computer" and "I use social media for academic chatting with friends and others". Regarding the scale's psychometric properties, the authors reported content and construct validity. They also reported the internal consistency for each subscale measured by Cronbach's alpha as .71 (Access to Social Media), .70 (Academic Communication), .70 (Exposure), and .70 (Academic Attainment).

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaires for this study were personally distributed by the researcher, who visited different schools to administer the questionnaire to the respondents. The administration process took approximately 20-30 minutes and commenced with a brief introduction explaining the purpose of the exercise and instructions for completing the questionnaire. The researcher then distributed the questionnaires and was available to address any difficulties encountered by the respondents during the administration process. Field copies were collected immediately after completion for further analysis.

Method of Data Analysis

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analyses were used. The regression analysis aimed to determine the collective and individual contributions of the independent variables to the dependent variable, while correlation analysis was utilized to ascertain the strength of the relationships between these variables. Descriptive statistics involved the presentation of data in tables, percentages, ranges, means, and standard deviations. Hypotheses were tested at a significance level of 0.05 Alpha.

RESULTS

This section showcases the outcomes of the investigation into the impact of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behavior among secondary school students in Ibadan. Three research inquiries were examined using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis at a significance level of 0.05. The summary of the discoveries is subsequently presented in the following tables.

Table 1: The Age distribution of the respondents

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------------|-----------|---------|
| 10-14 | 185 | 61.7 |
| 15-19 | 111 | 37 |
| 19 and above | 4 | 1.3 |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

Table 1 shows that 185 respondents 61.7% are between 10-14 years, 111 i.e. 37% respondents are between 15-19 years, and 1.3% representing 4 respondents are 19 years and above. This implies that the majority of the respondents are between the ages of 10 and 14.

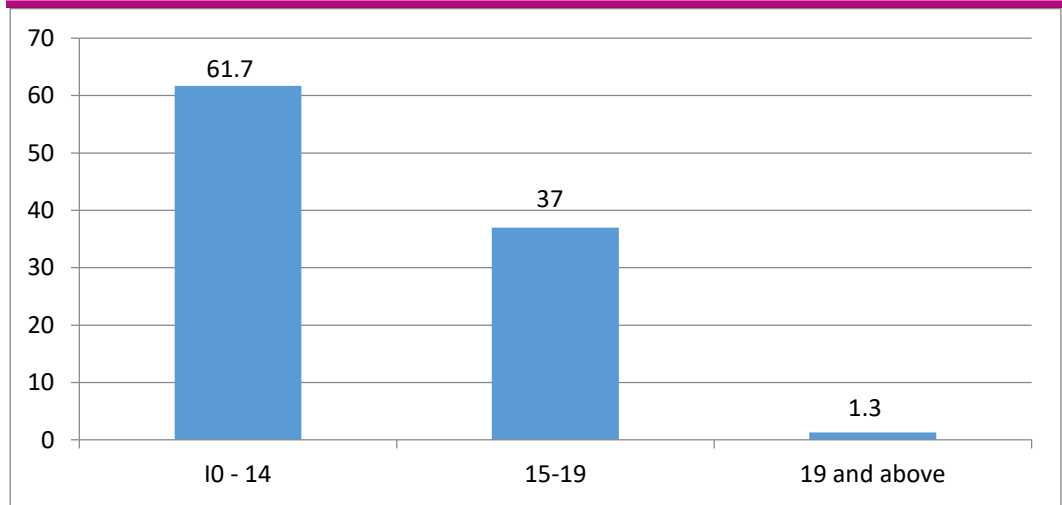


Figure 1: Bar Chart showing the percentage distribution of respondents by age

Table 2: The distribution of the respondents by Gender

| | Frequency | Percent |
|--------|-----------|---------|
| Male | 146 | 48.7 |
| Female | 154 | 51.3 |
| Total | 300 | 100.0 |

Table 2 reveals that 146 of the respondents representing 48.7% are male while 154 (51.3%) of the respondents are female. This implies that the majority of the respondents that participated in this study are females.

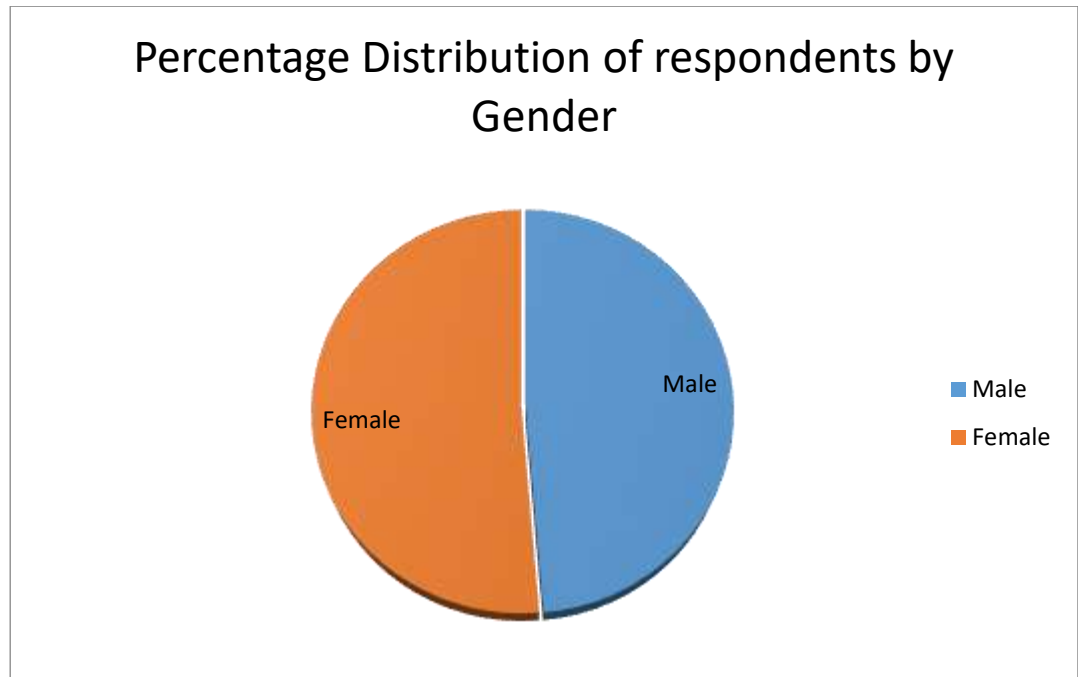


Figure 2: Pie Chart showing the percentage distribution of respondents by Gender

Research Question One

What is the influence of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Inter-correlations among media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on the delinquent behaviour among participants

| | Mean | SD | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------|-------|------|---------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| Delinquent behaviour | 43.14 | 7.11 | 1.000 | | | | |
| Media usage | 85.22 | 7.19 | .510** | 1.000 | | | |
| Parenting style | 312 | 7.09 | 0.212** | -.041 | 1.000 | | |
| Academic motivation | 37.10 | 7.32 | -.463** | .082 | -.146 | 1.000 | |

** Correlation significant at 0.05 level

Table 3 presents the significant impact of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behavior. The analysis shows a negative correlation between media usage ($r = 0.510$, $p < 0.05$) and parenting style ($r = 0.212$, $p < 0.05$) with delinquent behavior. In contrast, there is a positive correlation between academic motivation ($r = 0.142$, $p < 0.05$) and delinquent behavior. This indicates that higher levels of media usage and certain parenting styles tend to contribute to an increase in delinquent behavior, while higher academic motivation is associated with a decrease in delinquent behavior.

Research Question Two

What is the joint contribution of media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation on delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis on the joint contribution of the variables

| Multiple R | = 0.912 | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|-----|-----------------|---------|------|
| Multiple R ² | = 0.837 | | | | |
| Multiple R ² (Adjusted) | = 0.864 | | | | |
| Standard Error of Estimate | = 3.71516 | | | | |
| Source of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean of Squares | F-Ratio | P |
| Regression | 22851.041 | 4 | 5458.234 | 430.521 | .000 |
| Residual | 4861.713 | 283 | 13.626 | | |
| Total | 26710.756 | 287 | | | |

In Table 4, it is evident that the combined impact of the independent variables—media usage, parenting style, and academic motivation—on the delinquent behavior of secondary school students in Ibadan was substantial ($R = 0.912$, $p < .05$). The collective influence of these independent variables accounted for 83.1% of the total variance in predicting delinquent behavior among secondary school students in the Ibadan metropolis (adjusted $R^2 = 0.864$). The analysis of variance from the multiple regression data resulted in a significant F-ratio value at the 0.05 Alpha level ($F = 430.521$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that the joint contribution of the independent variables significantly impacted delinquent behavior.

Research Question Three

What is the relative contribution of each of the independent variables on delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?

Table 5: The relative contribution of each of the Independent Variables to delinquent behaviour of secondary school students in the Ibadan metropolis.

| | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. | Remark |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|--------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | |
| (Constant) | 4.449 | 3.314 | | 1.343 | .000 | Sig |
| Academic motivation | .437 | .099 | .138 | 2.578 | .004 | Sig |
| Media usage | .548 | .067 | .412 | 5.537 | .000 | Sig |
| Parenting style | .316 | .120 | .129 | 2.675 | .000 | Sig |

a Dependent Variable: delinquent behaviour

Table 5 outlines the individual contributions of each independent variable towards predicting the delinquent behavior of secondary school students in Ibadan. Concerning the magnitude of their contributions, it was observed that media usage had the most significant impact on predicting the students' delinquent behavior ($\beta = 0.412$, $t = 5.537$, $p < 0.05$). Following this, academic motivation ($\beta = 0.138$, $t = 2.578$, $p < 0.05$) and parenting style ($\beta = 0.129$, $t = 2.675$, $p < 0.05$) also made noteworthy contributions to predicting delinquent behavior among the students.

Discussions

Research Question One

What pattern of relationship exists between the independent variables (parenting style, media usage, and academic motivation) of delinquent behaviours among secondary school students in Ibadan?

Parenting Style and Delinquent Behaviour

The findings revealed a significant correlation between parenting style and delinquent behavior, suggesting that parenting style serves as a predictive factor influencing the behavior of the respondents. This result is underpinned by the critical role of parenting in shaping and modifying the behavior of young individuals. Parents serve as the primary role models for their children, and the behavior exhibited by parents or guardians significantly influences the behavior of children. It is important to note that parenting styles are commonly categorized into three primary types: democratic, authoritative, and permissive parenting. Authoritative parenting, characterized by strictness and a lack of empathy, can pose significant dangers. Children raised in such environments may experience fear and lack assertiveness, potentially leading to delinquent behavior when emotions run high. On the other hand, permissive parenting, which offers excessive freedom to children, permits behaviors that might be detrimental to moral and social values. This lax approach could contribute to delinquent tendencies as it might not instill appropriate boundaries or guidance in children, impacting their behavioral development.

The current finding aligns with existing research, such as a study conducted by Paschall (2003), which explored the correlation between parenting style and delinquency. This study involved 175 African-American male adolescents who completed a self-report questionnaire. The results indicated that 90% of the respondents' delinquent behaviors were associated with parenting attributes. Additionally, in Scandinavia, a study conducted by Stattin and Kerr (2000) involving 703 young individuals from various Swedish communities also demonstrated a link between parenting style and delinquency. Moreover, a study by Palmer and Hollin (2001) investigated young individuals aged 12 to 18, concluding that parental style significantly predicts delinquent behavior. These studies collectively support the notion that parenting style plays a crucial role in influencing and predicting delinquent behaviors among young individuals.

Media Usage and Delinquent Behaviour

The findings indicate a significant positive relationship between media usage and delinquent behavior among young individuals. Media consumption plays a crucial role in shaping the behavior of young people. The accessibility of various audio and visual media content has increased significantly, allowing easy and constant access for youngsters. There's a notable concern that modern civilization has veered away from moral values in media content, leading to the normalization of maladaptive materials like aggressive visual content, bullying-themed music, and pornography, among other elements harmful to societal norms and moral behavior. Society, in general, seems to be increasingly tolerant of these abnormalities, and unfortunately, these abnormal behaviors are often glorified and replicated through the media. Platforms like Facebook, WeChat, Instagram, TikTok, and others are filled with content that promotes delinquent behavior, influencing and setting examples for younger individuals. Such media content creators often serve as models for younger audiences, resulting in the emulation of behaviors like smoking, aggression, fighting, and exposure to explicit material. These observations suggest that there's a need for appropriate authorities to censor or regulate media products containing such harmful content, as it might be a significant reason for the observed correlation between media usage and delinquent behavior among the youth.

The current finding is supported by various studies that have delved into the relationship between media and delinquent behavior among young individuals. For instance, the study conducted by Grabe and Drew (2007) examined the association between media and delinquency among school-aged youths, finding a predictive link between media usage and delinquent behaviors among the participants. The authors emphasized the need for government and stakeholders to supervise media content, especially with regard to limiting youth engagement. Similarly, the findings by Cash, Thelwall, Peck, Ferrell, and Bridge (2013) further corroborate this connection. Their study, focusing on media usage among criminal detainees, revealed a significant relationship between media utilization, especially social media, and the adoption of violent and antisocial behaviors among young people. These behaviors included harassment, bullying, dating aggression, and gang-related crimes. Additionally, research by Williams and Latkin (2007) explored the correlation between social media usage and delinquent behavior among adolescents. Their findings also indicated a positive relationship between social media engagement and youths' involvement in activities such as substance abuse, rape, assault, and bullying. These collective studies echo the connection between media usage and the propensity for engaging in various forms of delinquent behavior among young individuals.

Academic Motivation and Delinquent Behaviour

The results indicate that there was no significant positive relationship between academic motivation and delinquent behavior, signifying that academic motivation did not significantly influence the respondents' tendencies towards behaviors such as pornographic addiction. This outcome can be rationalized by considering that academic motivation is typically viewed as a positive factor that should ideally decrease, rather than foster, delinquent behaviors. When students are highly motivated in their academic pursuits, they often focus on academic endeavors, diverting their attention from maladaptive behaviors such as involvement in cultism, associating with unhealthy peer groups, or engaging in physical altercations. While it's possible that some students, particularly those intensely motivated academically, might resort to substances like drugs to stay awake for studying, this occurrence might be infrequent. Especially among public school students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds lacking resources, the alternative to stay awake for study might involve milder remedies like drinking coffee rather than engaging in substance abuse. Some studies suggest that a lack of academic motivation could potentially lead students towards delinquent behaviors. Therefore, given these considerations, the finding suggesting no substantial correlation between academic motivation and delinquent behavior appears consistent and valid.

The current finding aligns with a study conducted by Jarjoura (2014) that investigated the impact of academic motivation on school delinquency. This study also observed no significant relationship between academic motivation and delinquent behavior, emphasizing that the absence of academic motivation tends to prompt delinquent behavior among the study subjects. The study highlighted that signs of low academic motivation, such as truancy and school dropout, are inversely associated with the likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviors. Similarly, a study conducted by Elliot (2009) reported a negative correlation between academic motivation and delinquent behaviors among high school students. The author suggested that motivating students could help keep them engaged in their studies, thereby reducing the likelihood of getting into trouble. Both studies support the idea that a lack of academic motivation is more strongly linked to delinquent behavior than the presence of academic motivation. Emphasizing the importance of fostering academic motivation to keep students engaged in their studies and deter them from delinquent activities

Research Question Two

The second research question focused on examining the collective impact of parenting style, media usage, and academic motivation on delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in Ibadan.

The findings indicated a significant joint effect of these independent variables parenting style, media usage, and academic motivation on the delinquent behavior of these students. The combined influence of these independent variables accounted for 83.1% of the total variation in predicting delinquent behaviors among secondary school students in Ibadan. This outcome strongly indicates that these independent variables, together, played a substantial role in contributing to the occurrence of delinquent behaviors among these students. The joint effect observed among the independent variables influencing delinquent behaviors in students can be understood through the interconnection between these factors. When parents fail in their roles, children often seek other sources of fulfillment, and the media becomes a readily available option. In cases where parents don't invest quality time in engaging with their children or understanding their social challenges, children may turn to the media for solace and guidance. The relationship between parenting style and media usage is crucial. Permissive parents might introduce their children to social media early on, intending to foster intellectual development. However, this early exposure can inadvertently subject children to inappropriate media content such as pornography, aggression, and violence. On the other hand, authoritative parents might strictly restrict media use, but when children encounter the wider social environment at school, they might compensate for these limitations by engaging excessively with negative aspects of social media. Moreover, parents play a pivotal role in fostering their children's academic motivation. A child with less parental support for education might struggle to stay motivated academically. Excessive media usage can also contribute to reduced academic motivation, potentially leading to delinquent behaviors.

Few studies have delved into findings similar to this one, such as the study by Anderson (2012), which explored the correlation between media use, academic drive, and delinquent behaviors among 16 to 18-year-olds in the United States. This study concluded that excessive exposure to social media can lead to decreased motivation for academic pursuits, culminating in academic setbacks and eventually contributing to delinquency. Additionally, Brugård and Falch (2012) conducted a study that aligns with these findings.

Research Question Three

The third research question sought to understand the individual impact of each independent variable on the delinquent behaviors of secondary school students in Ibadan. The findings underscored the significant relative influence of each variable on the students' delinquent behaviors. Among these variables, media usage emerged as the primary and most impactful contributor to delinquent behavior, followed by parenting style and academic motivation, in that order. This outcome aligns with the current societal landscape, where social media has become an omnipresent and widely accepted platform, especially among younger demographics. Social media has become an integral part of society, deeply involving nearly everyone, directly or indirectly. Communications, advertising, and various engagements primarily occur on social media platforms. Even intellectual pursuits and competitions have largely shifted to social media. Additionally, social media serves as a motivating factor for youth. There's evidence in literature suggesting that even socially withdrawn individuals find active engagement on social media, often emulating various unhealthy behaviors. Therefore, considering the overwhelming influence and pervasive nature of social media, it's plausible that media usage emerged as the primary and most influential contributor to delinquent behaviors in this study.

Parenting style, while ranking second in its contribution to student delinquency, plays a vital role in shaping children's behavior. However, during the adolescent phase, individuals experience a multitude of factors such as self-identity formation, peer influence, and role confusion. At this stage, the influence of parents may diminish as peer groups and the search for self-identity take precedence in influencing behaviors. Moreover, if a parenting style doesn't align with a child's preferences or needs, the child might adapt while in the parents' care but might drift away from that influence once they gain more independence. This transition to autonomy may lead to a shift in behaviors, potentially contributing to a lesser impact of parenting style on student delinquency. These factors could be underlying reasons why parenting style showed a relatively lower influence on student delinquency in the study.

The outcomes of this study find support in the findings of various researchers such as Palmer and Hollin (2001), Stattin and Kerr (2000), Simons et al. (2004), Surette (2007), Boda (2012), Knee and Neighbors (2002), and Rockafellow and Saules (2006). Each of these studies independently established that the independent variables examined in this study significantly contribute to delinquent behaviors. This collective body of research affirms and reinforces the impact and individual significance of the factors explored in this present study on delinquency.

Recommendations

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

- **Government Intervention in Media Regulation:** The government should take a proactive role in regulating media content. Presently, there is an influx of delinquent content that remains unchecked and unregulated on various media platforms. There is a need for a dedicated government body responsible for assessing, evaluating, and censoring content across media platforms. Policymakers should enact laws to govern social media use, ensuring a reasonable level of control over excessive or harmful content.
- **Parental Assessment and Support:** Parents should critically evaluate their behavior and seek assistance where necessary, as their conduct significantly impacts their children. Stakeholders need to provide education on effective parenting and the display of positive behaviors. In many cases, parents exhibit excessive control over their children's lives. Establishing a public agency, governed by federal or state authorities, focused on parenting, child rights protection, and social welfare could ensure proper checks, balances, and, if needed, enforcement or prosecution of cases of parental negligence.
- **Psychological Evaluation and Support in Schools:** Delinquency often stems from distorted thinking patterns that might go unnoticed. School counselors and psychologists should regularly assess students' psychological well-being, identifying potential delinquent tendencies and offering appropriate interventions and support.
- These recommendations aim to address the multifaceted issues contributing to delinquency among young individuals, including regulation of media content, promoting effective parenting, and providing mental health support in educational settings.

Limitations of the Study

Scope Constraints: The study was limited in scope due to time constraints and the researcher's capacity. The research involved a limited number of participants, with a sample size of 300 students. This restricted approach was chosen to manage costs and complexities associated with a larger population study.

Suggestions for Further Study

- **Expanded Geographical Study:** Future research should expand its scope beyond the current study area to include multiple cities and states in the country. This broader approach will enhance the generalizability of the findings to a larger population. Utilizing larger sample sizes will ensure a more accurate representation of the populace.
- **Exploration of Additional Variables:** Researchers should delve into other variables that potentially contribute to delinquent behaviors, expanding the investigation to consider a more comprehensive range of factors influencing such behaviors.
- **Experimental Desensitization Research:** Conducting experimental studies aimed at desensitizing delinquent behaviors could provide valuable insights and potential strategies for addressing and reducing delinquent tendencies.

Conclusion

Ensuring the mental well-being of young individuals is crucial for both personal and societal development. It's imperative to recognize the pivotal role of behavior change facilitators in guiding and altering negative behaviors among young people. The prevalence of harmful media content and deficiencies in parenting have detrimental effects on the mental health and behavior of the youth. Undoubtedly, delinquent behaviors often pave the way for future criminal conduct in adulthood. Hence, a concerted effort from everyone is necessary to implement effective measures for fostering healthier personalities and a more positive society overall.

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