

Influences of Counselling and Guidance Efficacy and Personality on Delinquent behaviors among Secondary School Adolescents in Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract

Human life completes its journey through various developmental stages and one of the most crucial stages is adolescent. Adolescence is the stage between childhood and adulthood. This stage of life comes with lots of behavioural experimentation and challenges. These challenges predispose the adolescents to involvement in delinquency which not only affects the adolescent's academics and psychosocial wellbeing but also to the larger society. The menace of delinquencies is on the increase especially in this part of the world and therefore there is need for serious attention. As a result of this, the objectives of this study are therefore; to highlight and explore the influence of counselling and guidance efficacy and personality on delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria. Specifically, the study will determine if guidance and counselling and personality will significantly influence delinquencies among adolescents. The target population is adolescents aged between 12 and 18 years which comprise of 1500 students in senior secondary two and senior secondary three located in the study area. The study will adopt cross-sectional survey research design methodology. Data analysis will involve mean and standard deviation and 3-way statistic of variation and F-test statistics will be used to test the hypotheses of the study.

Keywords: *guidance and counselling, personality type, gender delinquency and adolescents.*

Introduction

In an organized society, there are people who do not abide by the laws of the land. Their behaviour invariably constitutes a threat to the citizenry and indeed the society. They are labelled criminals if they are adults and delinquents if they are youths and adolescents (Encyclopaedia of Science, 2001) in Mason (2005). Adolescence is the life stage that bridges childhood and adulthood. In general, it represents the second decade of life. At this stage, adolescents began to move from the family group being their major social system, to become part of a peer group which offers a greater attraction that will eventually lead to the young person standing alone as an adult. Many also experience substantial changes in their social lives, reasoning abilities and views of themselves (Bernstein, Penner, Clarke-Stewart & Roy 2006).

According to Yemi, Olude, Makinde, Yusuf & Ojerinde (2003) there are many developmental changes visible during adolescent stage among the boys and it includes: increased sweating due to increased body metabolism, presence of facial hair (beard) auxiliary hair (at arm-pit) and pubic hair, penis and scrotum enlarge in size, chest widens due to growth of bones, voice cracks or deepens due to enlargement of the larynx or voice box, presence of acne or body pimples on the face, chest and back and production of mature sperm cells in seminal discharge. For the girls, it includes: hip region expands due to growth of the bones of the pelvic girdle, enlarged breasts, ovulation and menstruation, growth of hair in the arm-pit and the pubic area, presence of acne and pimples on the face and probably the back, reproductive organs (the ovaries and uterus) develop and vagina increase in size.

Consequently, adolescents, often face a number of physiological and psychological challenges and dilemmas that demands significant adjustment to the physical and social changes. When adolescences are facing changes in their lives in the biological, cognitive, psychological, social, moral and spiritual sense, they could find this time daunting. Boroffice (2004) believes that factors such as biological, social, view of self, attitudes, beliefs, sense of his future etc, are some of the factors that predispose adolescents to unhealthy behaviours. It therefore not surprising that adolescent could have a decreased tolerance for change; hence it becomes increasingly more difficult for them to modulate their behaviours

which are sometimes displayed by inappropriate mood swings and angry outbursts which sometimes lead to delinquency.

According to Mason (2005) delinquency is defined as the behaviour consequent upon the failure of personal and social control to produce behaviour in conformity with the norms of the social system to which legal penalties are attached. Juvenile delinquency is a legal term for behaviour of adolescents and youths that deviates from the normal. Delinquents break the norms and values of the society whereas non-delinquents conform to the societal norms and values. Juvenile delinquent behavior refers to the behavior committed by someone below eighteen years old where it violates the criminal law (Houston & Barton, 2005). These delinquent behaviors can range from less severe behaviors such as abuse of the school rules, absenteeism, school truancy, cigarette smoking, and vandalism to more severe crime such as stealing, robbery, substance abuse, rape, and weapon possession.

Furthermore, Onyechi & Okere (2007) in their research identified the following as deviant behaviours exhibited frequently and persistently: aggression, pilfering, lies, truancy, tardiness, irresponsibility, cheating, immorality, alcoholism, use of drugs, cultism, examination malpractice etc. Adolescence is the stage of stress and storm that comes with many ambiguities in life and if left unchecked these coercive behaviour patterns will persist and escalate in severity over time thereby becoming a problem not only to the adolescent during transition period but also to the society at large. With all these problems resulting from adolescent activities, it becomes necessary that factors that could predict and control such behaviours be explored. Such factors include guidance and counselling and personality type.

Guidance and Counselling is a learning process in which a counsellor helps an individual or individuals learn, understand themselves and their environment and be in a position to choose the right type of behaviours that will help them develop, grow, progress, ascend, mature and step up, educationally, vocationally and psychosocially (Egbo, 2013). Personality traits are conceptualized as dimensions of individual differences in tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings, and actions across events, developmental periods and contexts (McCrea & Costa, 2003). Type A personality portrays certain characteristics such as: Ambitiousness, aggressiveness, business-like, controlling, highly competitive, impatient, and time conscious while Type B individuals are generally patient, relaxed, easy going, lack overriding sense of urgency at times. The type B individual is less driven and relatively free of such pressures. Type B individuals do not rush but can afford to wait in lines and are not always running to meet deadlines. They are more introverted and score less on aggression (Ugwu 2013).

One of the most consistent and strong findings in criminology is that females commit much less crime and juvenile delinquency than males. This gender gap in law-violation is found using data on arrests, convictions, self-reported crime, and victims' reports about offenders. It also appears to exist across nations and over time (Meares 2001). Therefore, from the description given so far, the researcher is motivated to fill the gap in literature as it explores the influences of guidance and counselling efficacy and personality on delinquent behaviors among secondary school adolescents in Eastern Nigeria.

Statement of problem

The adolescent period is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a period of puberty which involves the development of primary and secondary sex characteristics. As a result, adolescent growth and development involve a lot of experimentation behaviours. The fear of delinquent behaviour among adolescents is a constant concern for millions of people all over the world. Recently, there has been significant increase in delinquent behaviour among adolescents in developing countries (Levine, 2007). The attitudes of majority of adolescents nowadays do not seem to indicate that they have parents and if at all they have there appear to be no sign that they are taught at all because majority of these adolescents engages in all manner of deviant behaviour.

Delinquent behaviour commonly manifested by youths includes shouting, arson, kicking, fighting, and use of knife or axe among others. This ugly development has adversely affected not only adolescents and their overall well-being but also the society at large. In developing countries of the world including Nigeria, almost 2.3 million juveniles are arrested annually (Jerry & Rosemary 2015). According to a prison officer who wished to be anonymous said that many adolescence are waiting for

trial for year in the prisons. Many have died. Some were innocent ones who were picked in their gangs and had nobody to speak for them.

All these behaviours showcase our adolescents as thugs and miscreants etc. The question that comes to mind is that if this ugly trend continues unabated what is going to be the future of this great country? The society and the school environment seem no longer safe and conducive for day to day activities, teaching and learning processes because many youths engage in cultism, destruction of school and public properties, cheating in examinations, alcoholism, drug abuse and addiction, sexual offences, stealing, truancy, rudeness, fighting with others, bullying, verbal abuse, and defiance of constituted authorities. Therefore, the cases of delinquent behaviour among adolescence in Nigeria unless addressed adequately will have a long lasting negative psychological and behavioural effect on the adolescents. Therefore, it is on this platform that the present paper was undertaken to explore and highlight the influence of counselling and guidance efficacy and personality on delinquent behaviour among secondary school adolescents in Eastern Nigeria.

Research questions

Will guidance and counselling significantly influence delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria?

Will personality type significantly influence delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria?

Will gender significantly influence delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria?

Will there be significant interaction influence of the variables on delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Guidance and Counselling would significantly influence delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

There would be significant influence of personality type on delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

There would be significant gender differences in delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

There will be significant interaction influence of the variables on delinquent behaviour among adolescents.

Conceptual and theoretical explanation

Guidance and counselling

The meaning of guidance could be derived from its root word “guide”, which means to direct, pilot, manage, or steer. In actual fact, counsellors are generally seen as persons who direct, pilot or steer clients to assess their adjustments in the areas of their persona-socio, career and educational endeavours. Shertzer & Stones (1976) define guidance as a process of helping an individual to understand himself and his world. While counselling has been defined by Durojaiye (1999) as involving the development of interaction through the relationship between a trained therapist (counsellor) and a troubled person (client or counselee) in a perceived temporary state of indecision, confusion, malfunction, habit disorder, distress or despair. School counselling according to Idowu (1990) is a process of planned intervention within a school system by which the total development of students are stimulated in areas relating to their personal, social, career, emotional and academic concerns.

Personality

Personality is that dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person who uniquely influences his or her cognitions, emotions, motivations, and behaviours in various situations. Personality is the unique and variable patterns of human behaviours, focusing on sensing, thinking, and feelings. The personality of the individual is the settled framework of references within which a person addresses the current situation and decides how to behave (Tobia, Barnabas, Solomon, James and Ngozi2013).

Theoretical explanation

The General Strain Theory of Delinquency.

The general strain theory is associated with the work of Robert Merton (1938). He believes that there are institutionalized paths to success in society. His theory holds that crime is caused by the difficulty those in poverty have, in achieving socially valued goals by legitimate means (Barbaree & Marshall, 2008). Brown (1998) stated that those with poor education attainment, who have difficulty achieving wealth and status by securing well paid employment, are more likely to use criminal means to obtain these goals. According to this theory also, adolescents act in a delinquent manner because they experience strain, e.g. when they believe they have been mistreated by family members, teachers, peers, or others. The theory proposes that adolescents are pressed into delinquency by negative emotional reactions that result from being situated in these aversive circumstances from which they cannot escape. This frustrates the adolescent and may lead to desperate avoidance or anger- based delinquency (Agnew, 1991, 2004). This theory is distinguished from other theories of delinquency by its argument that individuals are pressed into delinquency by the strain they experience. The General Strain theory is relevant to this paper in that, it views failure to achieve valued goals as a stressor that can predispose adolescents into delinquent behaviour.

Research design

The design for the study is the cross-sectional survey research. This is considered the most suitable design for the study. Information would be collected from the respondents using survey instruments - questionnaire.

Population of the study

The study population comprises of all the senior secondary II students and senior secondary III students in Enugu state, Anambra state and Ebonyi state. The study population comprises of 340777 students from the three state (Enugu state, Anambra state and Ebonyi state Secondary Education Management Board, 2016).

Sample and sampling technique

A sample of 500 students was drawn from each State in the study area making a total of 1500 students that were used for the study. This sample was randomly drawn from a population of 340777 students. This sample size represented about 5% of the entire population as recommended by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) for a large population. That is, one thousand five hundred (1500) students from Enugu state, Anambra state and Ebonyi state participated in the study. Purposive sampling technique was used in order to select schools with large population of students. Eighty-three (83) students were randomly selected in five school zone and eighty-five (85) in one school zone making a total of five hundred (500). This process was carried out in Enugu State and Anambra State respectively that has six school zones. While a hundred and fifty (150) were randomly selected in four school zones making it a total of five hundred (five) in Ebonyi State. Student's class size used for the study includes: Students of senior secondary school II (SS2) and senior secondary school III (SS3). The participants' age ranges were between 10 – 17 years.

Validity of the instrument

To ensure the validity of the instrument, the initial draft of the instrument was subjected to trial test on a representative sample of 150 students from Government Secondary School in Enugu State.

Reliability of the Instrument

To determine reliability of the instrument, Cronbach Alpha Statistical analysis was used to determine the internal consistency coefficient of the instrument. Result of the data analysis gave Alpha coefficient value of .91. This shows that the instrument is highly reliable to be used for the study.

Method of data analysis

The data was analysed using mean, standard deviation. The 3-way Anova and F- test was used to test the hypotheses.

Results and discussion

Table1. Summary table of means and standard deviation on influence of guidance and counselling, personality types and gender on delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria.

Dependent variable: delinquent behaviour					
Guidance and Counselling	Personality Types	Gender	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Effective G&C	Type A	Male	86.2970	28.96189	101
		Female	85.0155	23.28928	129
		Total	85.5783	25.88167	230
	Type B	Male	63.4615	17.80279	39
		Female	63.9394	11.03670	33
		Total	63.6806	14.98622	72
	Total	Male	79.9357	28.20715	140
		Female	80.7222	22.97670	162
		Total	80.3576	25.49428	302
Ineffective G&C	Type A	Male	95.6582	15.80762	512
		Female	94.5896	15.19620	441
		Total	95.1637	15.52872	953
	Type B	Male	73.6500	28.40508	40
		Female	75.9130	17.10904	23
		Total	74.4762	24.75093	63
	Total	Male	94.0634	17.92942	552
		Female	93.6638	15.80603	464
		Total	93.8809	16.98561	1016
Total	Type A	Male	94.1158	18.91505	613
		Female	92.4228	17.79502	570
		Total	93.3001	18.39564	1183
	Type B	Male	68.6203	24.16838	79
		Female	68.8571	14.94283	56
		Total	68.7185	20.77658	135
	Total	Male	91.2052	21.18114	692
		Female	90.3147	18.79485	626
		Total	90.7822	20.08052	1318

From table 1 above, the mean scores' table showed that adolescents who agreed that guidance and counselling is effective obtained a total mean of ($X = 80.35$) while those who said guidance and counselling is ineffective obtained a total mean of ($X = 93.88$). In the same vein, adolescents with type A personality obtained a total mean of ($X = 93.30$) while those with type B obtained a total mean of ($X = 68.72$). Furthermore, male adolescents obtained a total mean of ($X = 91.21$) while female adolescents obtained a total mean of ($X = 90.32$).

Meanwhile, male adolescents with type A personality who said that guidance and counselling is ineffective obtained the highest grouped mean of ($X = 95.66$) followed by female adolescents with type A personality who said that guidance and counselling is ineffective of ($X = 94.59$), male adolescents with type A personality who said that guidance and counselling is effective of ($X = 86.29$) and female adolescents with type A personality who said that guidance and counselling is effective of ($X = 85.02$). Furthermore, female adolescents with type B personality who said that guidance and counselling is ineffective of ($X = 75.91$), male adolescents with type B personality who said that guidance and counselling is ineffective of ($X = 73.65$), followed by female adolescents with type B personality who said that guidance and counselling is effective of ($X = 63.94$) and male adolescents with type B personality who said that guidance and counselling is effective obtaining the lowest group mean of ($X = 63.46$). Thus, a mean above the norm (58.4) indicates that the adolescent is engaging in delinquent behaviour while a mean below the norm indicates absence of delinquent behaviour. Therefore,

adolescents irrespective of their personality type, perception of guidance and counselling and gender are candidates of delinquent behaviour.

Table 2. Summary table of 3-way ANOVA F-test on influence of guidance and counselling, personality type and gender on adolescents' delinquent behaviour in Eastern Nigeria.

Dependent variable: delinquent behaviour						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
Corrected Model	94601.052a	7	13514.436	40.563	.000	
Intercept	2786907.472	1	2786907.472	8364.883	.000	
Guidance and Counselling	11545.038	1	11545.038	34.652	.000	
Personality Types	48918.233	1	48918.233	146.828	.000	
Gender	1.044	1	1.044	.003	.955	
Guidance and Counselling * Personality Types	71.176	1	71.176	.214	.644	
Guidance and Counselling * Gender	27.289	1	27.289	.082	.775	
Personality Types * Gender	177.167	1	177.167	.532	.466	
Guidance and Counselling * Personality Types * Gender	16.898	1	16.898	.051	.822	
Error	436449.453	1310	333.168			
Total	11393237.000	1318				
Corrected Total	531050.505	1317				

a. R Squared = .178 (Adjusted R Squared = .174)

b. Computed using alpha = .05

A 2x2x2 ANOVA with self-rated Guidance and counselling effectiveness scale (effectiveness and ineffectiveness), personality types (type A and type B) and gender (male and female) as between subject factors revealed that: the main influence of guidance and counselling yielded an F ratio of $F(1,1310) = 34.65$, $p = .001$, indicating that guidance and counselling significantly influenced adolescents' engagement in delinquent behaviours with those who said that guidance and counselling is ineffective having ($M = 93.88$, $SD = 16.99$) significantly greater than those who said that guidance and counselling is effective of ($M = 80.72$, $SD = 25.49$).

Also, the main influence of personality types yielded an F ratio of $F(1, 1310) = 146.83$, $p = .001$, indicating that personality types significantly influenced adolescents' delinquent behaviours with adolescents of type A personality having ($M = 93.30$, $SD = 18.40$) significantly higher than those with type B personality ($M = 68.72$, $SD = 20.78$).

In the same vein, the main influence of gender yielded an F ratio of $F(1, 1310) = .003$, $p = .96$, indicating that gender did not significantly influenced adolescents' delinquent behaviours with male adolescents having ($M = 91.21$, $SD = 21.18$) not remarkably greater than female adolescents with ($M = 90.31$, $SD = 18.79$).

Summary of findings

The study examined the influence of guidance and counselling and personality on delinquent behaviour among adolescents in Eastern Nigeria. The findings of this study showed that the first hypothesis which stated that, " guidance and counselling would significantly influence delinquent behaviour among adolescents" was confirmed. This indicates that guidance and counselling as a factor influences adolescent delinquent behaviour. The finds therefore agrees with the finding of Davis, Sindabi & Chepchieng (2015) whose finding shows that guidance and counselling services in secondary schools had significant impact on the level of social and emotional adjustments. The finding is also in line with the findings of Kenneth, Beatrice and Peter (2014) which reveals that there was positive

correlation between effective guidance and counselling services and promotion of positive adolescent self-concept.

Furthermore, the second hypothesis which stated that, "there will be significant influence of personality type on delinquent behaviour among adolescents" was confirmed. The result of this study indicates that delinquency behaviour is influenced following the manifestation of Type A personality which is significantly higher than those with type B personality. This finding is in line with Ugwu (2013) whose finding agrees that personality type A are significant predictors of adolescents' delinquency behaviour among secondary school student. The study also correspond with (Pears, Capaldi & Owen, 2007) who found that genes contribute to the propensity for adolescent to commit delinquent acts, but suggested that positive personality characteristics can moderate the effects of heredity. The findings though compliments with the previous studies (Bush, Mullis & Mullis, 2007) who found that innate personality traits, has influence on personality development and delinquency. The result of the study is also consistent with (Button, Coley, Rhee, Hewitt, Young & Stallings, 2007) that there were genetic dispositions by adolescents that contributed to delinquency.

However, the third hypothesis which stated that, "there will be significant gender differences in delinquent behaviour among adolescents" was disconfirmed. This is because the study indicates that gender did not significantly influenced adolescents' delinquent behaviours with male adolescents not remarkably greater than female adolescents. The findings have the same opinion with Ikwuji (2005) who found that there was no gender difference between adolescent male and female in their moral judgments in conflict situations. The above outcomes were in contrast with the findings of Roya (2015) whose study indicated that there was a positive significant correlation between age and gender of respondents and antisocial behavior. Furthermore, there was a difference in adolescent's antisocial behavior between male and female. Results also indicated that the male is more likely to show antisocial behavior than female.

Conclusion

As a matter of fact, the study has gratified most of the relevant issues raised in the research hypothesis, statement of problem as well as the study objectives. It is very 'limpid' from the review that guidance and counselling, personality type and gender are important concept that influences adolescent behavior and from the findings of the study majority of the students reported that guidance and counselling are not effective which leaves a lots of question on how effective guidance and counselling has it been in this part of the world. As a result of that, guidance and counselling should be giving maximum priority and attention in our secondary schools as it could serve as a panacea to adolescent's delinquent behavior. However, counsellors should also know that type A adolescents who are characterized as impatient, excessive time conscious, insecure about their status, highly competitive, hostile and aggressive should be giving adequate time during counselling hours so as to help these adolescents maintain a healthy relationship with other adolescents which could also serve as a tool in addressing delinquent behavior among adolescents in secondary schools.

Recommendations

Base on the findings of the study, the following recommendation were made:

Although Government has employed counsellors in schools, counselling and guidance should be given adequate support so that counsellors can effectively carry out their function and duties successfully.

Counselling units should be at a private place in schools where teachers and students will not see what is happening in counselling room.

Confidentiality should be high to enhance trust.

Counsellors should not be giving another job in schools so that they can give full attention to the clients.

Guidance and counsellors and parents should adopt pragmatic steps in using counselling in dealing with delinquent adolescents to encourage them develop good personality traits.

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