

Statistical Analysis of Deviance among Children in Makurdi Metropolis

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Abstract

This study sampled a total of four hundred and three individuals from designated households in Makurdi metropolis, Benue State. The study respondents responded to a self-report survey which gathered information on three deviant acts: alcoholism, smoking and dropping out of school. Criteria for deviant acts were defined, and each of the three acts was analyzed against the criteria of the type of family. Propensities toward deviance were identified against three normative dimensions – single parent (mother), single parent (father), both parents. The most prevalent deviance among children from single parents is children dropping out of school while that of children from two parents is alcoholism. It is the conclusion of this study that home background and family type has a correlation with deviant behavior. Based on this, there is need for youth employment, government intervention and awareness education on parental responsibility.

Keywords: Households, deviance, drooping out of school, smoking and alcoholism

1.0 Introduction

Deviance is behaving contrary to acceptable norms and expectation of a society. Deviant behavior is common with young children and adolescent especially in their formative years when character is formed and reformed to suit the expectation of the family and the community. Every society has specific behavioral standards and ways in which people are supposed to act; sometimes these are the paradigms for predictable behavior in the society.

Deviance is a departure of certain types of behavior from the norms of a particular society at a particular time and place. In Nigeria, deviance is described as a violation of culturally acceptable norms and or a failure to conform to set rules and ways of doing something that is traditionally prescribed.

According to Santrock [10], many parents and teachers often wonder about the rebelliousness

(truancy, anti-social behavior, disrespect for constituted authority, sexual harassment,

rape, arson, destruction, adolescents delinquency) that are portrayed by children and adolescent.

A behavior considered as deviant in one society may be seen as non-deviant in another society. For example, the traditional African social custom appreciates chastity, modest dressing, good morals, decent behavior, and respect for elders, hard work and integrity and frowns at premarital and extra marital sexual relationship. It also prohibits marriage between same sex such as homosexuality and consanguine sexual relationship. The Nigerian society frowns at alternative marriage styles and parenthood, for example, single parenthood and cohabitation. In some other societies, these unacceptable behaviors are acceptable. That is why; deviance is relative to time and place.

Studies conducted by Mallum [9] and Kembe [7] shows that the home background plays an important role in the child's personality development. The home is often critical to the type of behavior displayed in

the society. The traditional family as reported by Shindi [11] is made up of family members who would normally contribute to the upbringing of the child. The extended family system provided a wide range of stimulating interactions that positively nurture the child, particularly in the psychosocial terms.

In the absence of parental support provided by both parents and the social support network provided by the extended family, there are bound to be problems in child rearing and upbringing. According to Karst [6], a Single parent is a parent who cares for children without the assistance of the other parent in the home. Child birth and child rearing is a task that involves the responsibility of both parents.

The number of one parent families has increased substantially. According to the United States Census Bureau [9], about 20 million children live in household which are single-headed. In the 1970s, divorce was a common reason for single parenting, and during this period the number of families headed by one parent increased rapidly. The number peaked in the 1980s and the declined slightly in the 1990s. By 1996, 31 percent of children lived in single parent families.

Apart from divorce, single teenage parenting is also reported among adolescent. This occurs as a result of teenage unwanted pregnancy leading to school dropout and other health consequences [4]. Furthermore, it has been proved that single headed families are not economically stable. Children from economic dependent homes are likely prey to social vices like stealing and school truancy. Indeed, the incidences of child abuse (street hawking, house maid, bus conductors, mine, factory worker, child prostitution) are as a result of poverty. Poverty has also forced some parents to abandon their primary responsibility of child care and nurturance. This in turn has resulted in all kinds of delinquent behavior such as compulsive television viewing, drug addiction, cultism and alcoholism.

Farrington [3] reports that 90% of adolescent boys and girls in intact families were within the normal range on behavioral problems. 10% had serious problems that we would generally require some type of professional help. The percentages for divorced families' were 74% of the boys and 66% of the girls in the normal range and 26% of the boys and 34% of the girls were in the problematic range.

It should be noted that reasons for single parenthood can be as a result of death of spouse. Spousal death of either the mother or the father can result in child rearing by only one parent. Normally, the family suffers set back especially if it is the bread winner of the family. Deviance behavior can result from the psychosocial loss of the loved one. So, there may be levels of deviance depending on the causal- effect relationship.

Recently, research in social science has attracted attention on the effects of mass media on violent and aggressive behavior. According to Anderson, Berkowitz, Donnerstein, Huesman, Johnson, Linz, Malamuth and Wartella [1] provided converging evidence linking frequent exposure to violent media in childhood with aggression later in life, including physical assault, alcoholism and other forms of abusive behavior.

2.0 Statement of the Problem

Deviance has been reported variously as behavior that is contrary to acceptable cultural norms of a society. In Benue state recently, there is a ban on the consumption of illicit gin especially by the youths. The reason for the ban on drinking is not far from the deviant behavior that is exhibited by the youths as seen in hooliganism, illicit sexual activities, rape and other forms of abusive and anti-social behavior.

It is also a deviant behavior to see teenage girls who are supposed to be in school to be engaged in pregnancy and child rearing. Teenage pregnancy is often the reason for school dropout among adolescent girls [10], [4] . 40% of teenage mothers drop out of

school to rear their children as single parents. Single parenting places the burden and responsibility of intact families only on one parent. This raises doubts on the psycho social behavior of these children. Society is not oblivious of the fact that home background affects the behavior of children, [9],[1]. It is in view of this discourse, that this study intends to look at the deviant behavior exhibited by children from single parenthood and see whether there is a relationship between these behavior and those of children from intact families.

Methods

The research work was carried out in Makurdi, the capital of Benue State. A structured questionnaire was developed and given to our targeted respondents. A survey was sent to a randomly selected 500 Households. Of the 500 Households, 403 returned the questionnaire (81%). Analyses for this study include descriptive statistics and non parametric methods and the level of significance was set at 0.05.

Results and Discussions

What are the different family status in Makurdi Metropolis?

Table 1. Percentage response on types of Family status in Makurdi

Family status	Responses	
	(f)	(%)
Single parent(mother)	220	54.6
Single parent (father)	102	25.3
Two parents(mother and father)	81	20.1
Total	403	100

Result from Table 1 shows that majority of families in Makurdi metropolis are composed of single parents who are women (55%), other types of family status include

single parents made up of men(25%) and two parents(20%).

What are the prevalent deviances in Makurdi Metropolis

Table 2. Prevalence of deviance in Makurdi Metropolis

Deviances	Responses	
	(f)	(%)
Alcoholics	100	24.8
Smoking	68	16.9
Dropping out of School/runaway	65	16.1
Teen parents	43	10.7
Cultism	55	13.6
Political thuggery	52	12.9
Robbery(petty robbery, armed robbery and house breaking)	18	4.5
Commit Suicide	2	0.5
Total	403	100

The result in Table 2 shows that 24.8% indicated that the most prevalent deviance amongst children in Makurdi town is alcohol. This is closely followed by smoking which is represented by 16.9%. Dropping out of school and run away from home is another deviance that is on the rise representing 16.1%. Cultism is also an emerging problem on the list of deviance in Makurdi town representing 13.6%.

Cumulative Deviance of Children from Single Parents

Figure 1 depicts the cumulative sums of deviances in children from single parents. A plot of these cumulative deviances is presented in figure 1 below. It shows that the number of drop outs from school was highest followed by those taking alcohol.

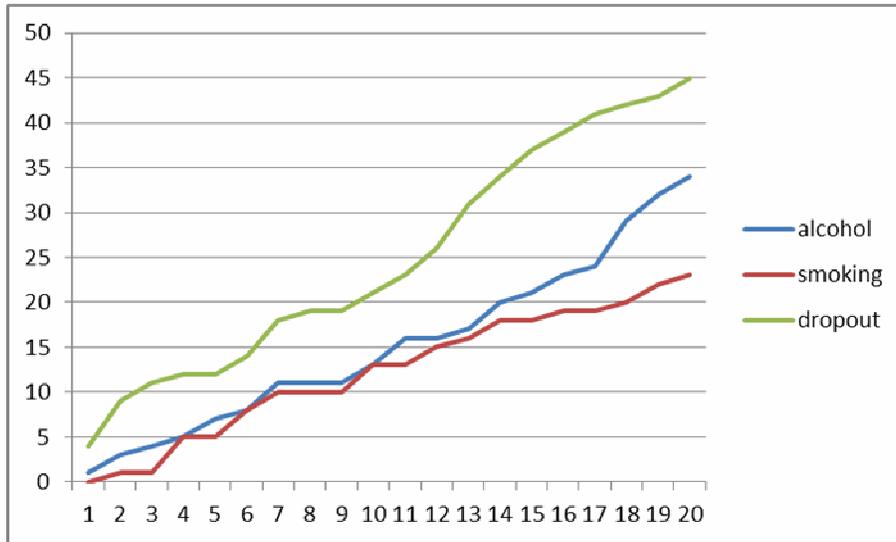


Figure1. Cumulative sums of the three components of deviance in children of single parents.

Cumulative Deviances of Children from Two Parent Families

Figure 2 depicts the cumulative sums of deviances in children from two parents. A plot of these cumulative deviances presented

in the figure below shows that the number engaged in alcohol was highest and this is closely followed by the number of smokers and those dropping out of school the least.

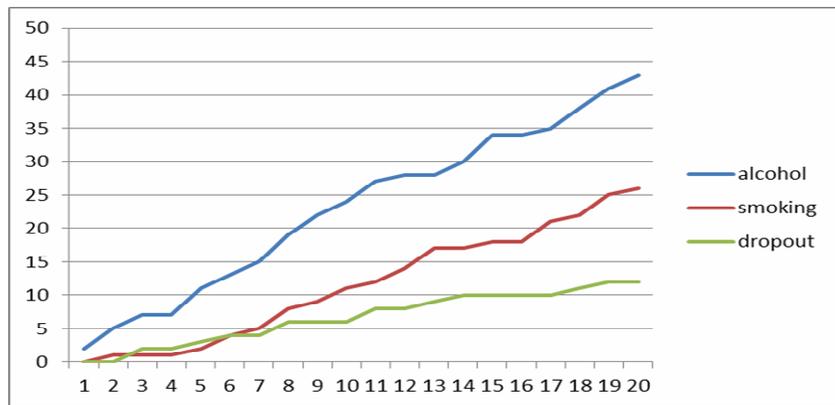


Figure 2. Cumulative sums of the three components of deviance in children of two parents.

Comparison of deviance of children from single parents with those from two parents

Figure 3 depicts cumulative deviance from children brought up from single

parents compared with those brought from two parents. It clearly shows that the highest deviance is exhibited by children from single parents than children from two parents.

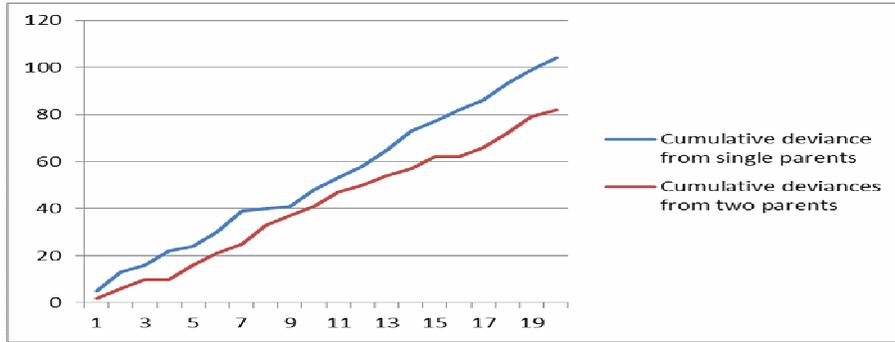


Figure 3. Cumulative deviances from two types of family background

Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant difference between family status and deviant behavior

of children. The Chi- Square (χ^2) statistics was used in the test of independence.

Table 3. The relationship between the family type and the observed defiant behavior of children.

Parent status	Alcoholics	Smokers	School dropouts
Single Parent(Mother)	20	19	18
Single Parent(Father)	48	70	68
Parents(Mother and Father)	54	76	20
Total	122	165	116

The null hypothesis: $H_0: p_{ij} = p_i \cdot p_j$
 $i=1,2,\dots,I; j=1,2,\dots,J$

Alternate Hypothesis: $H_a: p_{ij} \neq p_i \cdot p_j$

Test Statistic;

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^I \sum_{j=1}^J \frac{(n_{ij} - \hat{e}_{ij})^2}{\hat{e}_{ij}}$$

Where p_{ij} = the proportion of individuals in the population who belong in category I of factor 1 and category j of factor 2

p_i = P (a randomly selected individual falls in both category i of factor 1 and category j of factor 2)

$p_i = \sum_j p_{ij}$ = P(a randomly selected individual falls in category i of factor 1)

$p_j = \sum_i p_{ij}$ = P(a randomly selected individual falls in category j of factor 2)

$$\hat{e}_{ij} = \frac{(i^{th} \text{ row total})(j^{th} \text{ column total})}{n}$$

Rejection region: $\chi^2 \geq \chi_{\alpha, (I-1)(J-1)}^2$

Thus $\chi^2 = 21.3$ But $\chi_{0.05, 4}^2 = 9.487$

Since $\chi^2 = 21.3 > \chi_{0.05, 4}^2 = 9.487$,

We therefore reject hypothesis of independence. We conclude that the status of parents of children does give information about the deviant behaviour of children. In particular Children who are alcoholics appear more likely to come from a single parent that is a mother.

Discussions

Results from analysis show that there are more single parents who are mothers in Makurdi metropolis. The vulnerability of women to poverty and the imbalances in education and employment coupled with the responsibility of housekeeping and child rearing affects the family. Recently single-headed families have become rampant either

from the male-headed or female-headed households, leaving the burden of housekeeping and child-rearing a challenge. There have been various reasons given for the types of family status, ranging from divorce, death of spouse, lifestyle and other social circumstances including out of wedlock births.

According to Kandel [5], Social scientists have found that children growing up in single-parent families are disadvantaged in other ways when compared to a two parent families. Many of these problems are directly related to the poor economic condition of single-parent families, not just to parenting style. These children are at risk for the following: lower levels of educational achievement likely from irregular school attendance

- i. likely to drop out of school resulting from unmet needs
- ii. likely to become teen parents and face other social hazards of teenage pregnancy
- iii. likely to become thugs and be involved in “boko haram”
- iv. frequently abuse drugs and alcohol
- v. high-risk sexual behavior
- vi. likely to engage in cultism
- vii. likely to commit suicide

According to Kembe (2005), a child is an ambassador of a home, thus whatever behavior the child exhibits both in the school and in the larger society is a direct function of how the child was brought up with some few exceptions though.

Conger and Mussen [2] stated that children behave differently according to their home type. Home background plays a significant and critical role in the overall personality output of individuals. Children life adjustment is influenced from the home background, for example, children who have lived in deprived and or abusive environment are most likely to exhibit negative societal behaviours.

Also, children from two-parent structured homes are less likely to be engaged in deviances like dropping out of school,

smoking, alcoholism compared to the children who are from unconventional homes.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The overall result of this study suggests that children from single parents homes, on average, are more engaged in deviances than children in two parent families. The common forms of deviant behaviors are school dropout, alcoholism and smoking. This has implication for later life adjustments. It is the conclusion of this study that home background and family type has a correlation with deviant behavior. Based on this, there is need for youth employment, government intervention and parental responsibility.

In the light of the foregoing findings of this research, the following recommendations are made.

Youth development

Youth unemployment resulting from lack of appropriate skills for work will continue to constitute a problem unless skill centres and programmes are developed to engage youths and impart skills especially for immediate small scale business. This recommendation, if implemented, will also improve the economic base of most homes.

Government intervention

Government can place policies and laws that will prosecute certain repeated cases of youth deviant behavior such as housebreaking, cultism, smoking of illicit drugs and alcoholism. The present law in the Benue State prohibiting the sale and drinking of alcohol in social events should be enforced and not made a mockery of.

Parental Responsibility

Parents are responsible for the upkeep of their families and to ensure that children grow up into acceptable personalities for the society. Quality family time, discipline and positive parenting style have implication for controlling deviant behavior.

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APPENDIX A

Cumulative sums of the three components of deviance in children of single parents.

S/N	alcoholics	Cm	smokers	Cm	school dropouts	Cm
1	1	1	0	0	4	4
2	2	3	1	1	5	9
3	1	4	0	1	2	11
4	1	5	4	5	1	12
5	2	7	0	5	0	12
6	1	8	3	8	2	14
7	3	11	2	10	4	18
8	0	11	0	10	1	19
9	0	11	0	10	1	19
10	2	13	3	13	2	21
11	3	16	0	13	2	23
12	0	16	2	15	3	26
13	1	17	1	16	5	31
14	3	20	2	18	3	34
15	1	21	0	18	3	37
16	2	23	1	19	2	39
17	2	24	0	19	2	41
18	5	29	1	20	1	42
19	3	32	2	22	1	43
20	2	34	1	23	2	45

Appendix B

Cumulative sums of the three components of deviance in children of two parent families

S/N	Alcoholics	C	Smokers	C	School dropouts	C
1	2	2	0	0	0	0
2	3	5	1	1	0	0
3	2	7	0	1	2	2
4	0	7	0	1	0	2
5	4	11	1	2	1	3
6	2	13	2	4	1	4
7	2	15	1	5	1	4
8	4	19	3	8	1	6
9	3	22	1	9	0	6
10	2	24	2	11	0	6
11	3	27	1	12	2	8
12	1	28	2	14	0	8
13	0	28	3	17	1	9
14	2	30	0	17	1	10
15	4	34	1	18	0	10
16	0	34	0	18	0	10
17	1	35	3	21	0	10
18	3	38	1	22	1	11
19	3	41	3	25	1	12
20	2	43	1	26	0	12

Appendix C

Cumulative deviances from children brought up from single parents compared with those brought from two parents

S/No	Cumulative deviance from single parents	Cumulative deviances from two parents
1	5	2
2	13	6
3	16	10
4	22	10
5	24	16
6	30	21
7	39	25
8	40	33
9	41	37
10	48	41
11	53	47
12	58	50
13	65	54
14	73	57
15	77	62
16	82	62
17	86	66
18	93	72
19	99	79
20	104	82