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Journal of Guidance and Counseling



Journal homepage: <http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/journal/>

Influence of Family Types on Adolescent Psycho-Social Problem Behaviours Among High School Students in Oriade Local Government Area, Osun State, Nigeria.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of family types on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviours among high school adolescents in Oriade, Osun state, Nigeria. Study adopted the descriptive survey design. The population of the study consisted of high school adolescents from intact, single and step families. The study adopted the simple random technique to select ten secondary schools in Oriade. In each of these schools, thirty (30) adolescents (10 from each family type) were selected using stratified sampling technique, totalling three hundred respondents. Data collected were analysed using inferential statistics of t-test and regression analyses. Findings showed: no significant difference across family type in adolescent sexual abuse behaviour ($F = 1.963$, $p > 0.05$); no significant difference in adolescent cyber addiction behaviour across family type ($F = 1.166$, $p > 0.05$); significant gender difference in the influence of family type on adolescent problem behaviour of sexual abuse ($t = 2.593$, $p < 0.05$); and no significant age differences in the influence of family type on adolescent problem behaviour of cyber addiction ($F = 0.404$, $p > 0.05$).

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Submitted/Received 18 09 2024

First Revised 30 09 2024

Accepted 12 10 2024

First Available Online 31 10 2024

Publication Date 31 10 2024

Keyword:

Family types,

Psycho-social problem behaviour,

Adolescents.

1. INTRODUCTION

Family, as conceived by [Okeke \(2009\)](#) is the first environment of a child, and an important context for the development of a child's behaviour. [Okeke \(2009\)](#), believed that the initial experience that would mould or impact a child's behaviour, values, aspirations, emotions, interest and attitudes are offered by the parents who are significant stakeholders in a family. Likewise, [Osborne, Berger and Magnuson \(2012\)](#), conceived that it is within a family system that a child is provided with the first parental figure, typically a biological parent(s), who takes on the responsibility of teaching him important values, beliefs, distinguishing behaviours that are socially acceptable and those that are not.

The family as the foundation of human society and the strongest socialising force of life that teaches children to delay gratification and respect the right of others, adds credence to [Amato \(2009\)](#)'s assertion that family environment is a factor that may increase the chances of a child participating in any risky behaviour at adolescence, as parents play an important role in how their adolescents are raised and how they behave later on in life. Amato perceived that children who are bred in distinct family types, experience familial rejection or inadequate supervision, usually imbibe anti-social violent behaviours and/or psychological problems associated with considerable social conflicts of abuses and anxiety. The concept of family type can thus be used to describe the way a family unit is knitted, which could be either monogamous/intact, polygamous, divorced/separated, single, or step families.

Study by [Bista, Thapa, Sapkota, Singh and Pokharel \(2016\)](#), revealed that adolescents living with single-parents had a greater risk of experiencing psycho-social problems than those living with both parents, and that those whose single-parents have stressful financial conditions may be more susceptible to poor rearing practices, which may further lead to psycho-social problems of cyber addiction or sexual abuse. Findings of [Lonczak, Fernandez, Austin, Marlatt, and Donovan \(2007\)](#), on assessing family composition and adolescent psycho-social problem among American Indian/Alaska natives between ages 13 and 19, revealed that adolescents who are from both biological-parent families were at a decreased risk of psycho-social problem compared with those in single-parent families and step-families, while those from single-families were more than twice likely to internalise compared to children from two-parent families.

These psychologically associated encounters faced by children especially adolescents in these families, create challenges in different areas of their personal and social functioning. It is worthy to note that [Stanley Hall \(1904, cited in Justice, 2024\)](#), had described the stage of adolescence, ranging between 10 to 19 years, as a period of storm, stress and turmoil which infer that adolescence is associated with a crucial period of life that demands significant adjustment to physical, environmental and social changes, such that if adequate care and attention is not given at this transition, the adolescent becomes prone to developing various psycho-social problems with long standing impacts. [World Health Organization \(2017\)](#), described adolescence as one of the critical transitions in human lifespan that occurs after childhood and before adulthood, which is characterised by a tremendous pace in growth and change that is second only to that of infancy.

According to [Friedrich, Rafraele Mendez, and Mihalas \(2010\)](#), adolescence indicates critical times for developing good mental health, enjoying a positive quality of life free of symptoms of psychopathology, functioning well at home, in school and communities, in spite of vulnerabilities to psycho-social dysfunction which is a threat in their overall development

especially in the absence of strong support system. This stage is usually defined by social issues of: independence, identity, sexuality, relationship formation and mental health problems like mood disorders, addiction, thought disorders, sexual exposure behaviour, illicit sexual engagement which may involve the use of force, drugs, alcohol and charm (Adogu, et al. 2014).

Sexual abuse refers to sexual exposure behaviours devoid of the victims' ability and capacity to make an informed choice that an adolescent may experience, involving intrusive pressure, threat or sexual aggressive practice either with contemporaries, with younger or older individuals (Adogu, et al. 2014). Like addiction to drugs and alcohol, the internet offers adolescents a way of escape from painful feelings or troubling situations, as they sacrifice needed hours of sleep to online activities, and withdraw from family and friends to escape into a comfortable world they have created for themselves. Cyber addiction (CA) among adolescents has become a global health problem that affects their physical health, psycho-social development, academic performance and family relationships as it is a condition where cognitive and psychological functioning are adversely affected due to excessive internet use. CA was described by Young (2009), as situations of staying on the internet for longer than planned, experiencing withdrawal symptoms when deprived of internet usage, unsuccessful personal attempt to control or stop using the internet, which may result in gradual deterioration of the school, family and social life of an individual. Thus, adolescents who lack rewarding or nurturing relationships, or who suffer from poor social and coping skills are at greater risk of developing inappropriate or excessive online habits because they feel alienated, and may turn to unknown strangers in online chat rooms looking for the attention, involvement and missed companionship (Ni, Yan, Chen, & Liu, 2009).

Adolescents suffer from several key transitional periods activities like moving from early elementary to middle school, from high school and college to the University, which present new challenges and symptoms of dysfunction may occur or reflect the under-controlled, externalised problems of conduct disorders, educational difficulties, substance abuse, internalised emotions, addiction and depression. Therefore this paper investigated the variation in family types as a predictor of adolescents' sexual abuse and cyber addiction behaviours.

The following hypotheses were tested:

H01: There will be no significant family type (intact, single-parent and step families) difference in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse among High school students in Oriade local government area, Osun State.

H02: There will be no significant family type difference in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school students in Oriade local government area, Osun State.

H03: There is no significant gender difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse among High school students in Oriade local government area, Osun State.

H04: There is no significant age difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school students in Oriade local government area, Osun State.

2. METHODS

2.1. Research Design

The research adopted the descriptive survey design.

2.2. Population of the Study

The population consisted of high school adolescents from intact, single and step-families.

2.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study adopted the convenience, simple random and stratified sampling techniques. Oriade area was selected due to convenience of proximity. Ten (10) senior secondary schools were randomly selected. From the 10 schools, thirty (30) adolescents (10 from each of the family types targeted in this study) were identified, using the stratified sampling technique. In all, three hundred (300) respondents (100 from each family type) constituted the study sample.

2.4. Research Instrument

The study made use of a developed instrument titled; Family types and Adolescents Problem Psycho-social Behaviour Questionnaire (FTAP²BQ). The FTAP²BQ is made up of three sections. Section A sought to know the demographic data of the respondents; Section B was an eleven (11) itemed scale on Cyber Addiction; while Section C contained thirteen (13) items measuring Sexual Abuse, with both sections B and C formatted on a four point scale of responses ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD=1) to Strongly Agree (SA=4).

2.5. Validity of Instrument

A copy of the questionnaire was given to two experts in the field of psychology and test and measurement for necessary input to ensure its face and content validity.

2.6. Reliability of Instrument

To establish the internal consistency and suitability of the instrument for the study, a test-retest process was conducted on the instrument over a period of two weeks. Copies of the instrument were administered on 30 adolescents (10 from each family type) who were not part of the study sample and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to establish the reliability coefficient of the instrument at 0.76.

2.7. Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers and assistants obtained permission from the principals and class teachers of the selected schools in Oriade, while the consent of the respondents was sought before administering the instruments. The exercise which lasted for a period of two weeks required the immediate completion of the instruments and retrieval.

2.8. Methods of Data Analysis

Data collected were analysed using ANOVA and t-test.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Hypothesis One

There will be no significant family type difference in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse among High school students in Oriade Local Government.

Table 1. Summary of One-Way ANOVA result of family type difference in High school adolescents psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse

Family types	Mean Response	F-value	Sig
Intact family	2.18		
Single parent family	2.23	1.963*	0.142
Stepparent family	2.47		

*Not significant at 5% alpha level; Table F-value = 3.03; df = 2/297

Using the One-Way Analysis of Variance, result in table 1 showed no significant difference across family type in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse ($F = 1.963$, $p > 0.05$). Responses identified adolescents in stepparent and single-parent families to display high psychological problem of sexual abuse, while sexual abuse is lowest among adolescents from intact families.

3.2. Research Hypothesis Two

There will be no significant family type difference in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school students in Oriade Local Government.

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA showing family type difference in High school adolescents psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction

Family types	Mean Response	F-value	Sig.
Intact family	2.87		
Single parent family	3.03	1.166*	0.313
Stepparent family	3.06		

*Not significant at 5% alpha level; Table F-value = 3.03; $df = 2/297$

Using the One-Way Analysis of Variance, the result obtained in Table 2 revealed no significant family type difference in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school students in Oriade Local Government ($F = 1.166$, $p > 0.05$). This showed that adolescents irrespective of their family types showed addiction to cyber space addiction, although the mean values indicated adolescents from step-parent families as most addicted.

3.3 Research Hypothesis Three

There is no significant gender difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse among High school students in Oriade Local Government

Table 3: Independent T-Test result of gender difference in the influence of family type on High school adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse

Gender	N	Mean	Std Dev.	t-value	Sig.
Male	136	2.47	1.12	2.593*	0.010
Female	164	2.15	1.10		

*Significant at 5% alpha level; $DF = 298$; Tabulated t-value = 1.968

The Independent t-test statistical analysis in Table 3 showed significant gender difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse among High school students in Oriade Local Government ($t = 2.593$, $p < 0.05$). This implied that the sexual abuse behaviour differed between male and female adolescents.

3.4 Research Hypothesis Four

There is no significant age difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school students in Oriade Local Government.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA result on age difference in the influence of family type on High school adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction

Family types	Mean Response	F-value	Sig
12 - 15yrs	2.93		
16 - 19yrs	3.03	0.404*	0.665
20yrs and above	3.09		

*Not significant at 5% alpha level; Table F-value = 3.03; df = 2/297

The result as obtained in Table 4 using One-Way Analysis of Variance revealed no significant age difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school students in Oriade Local Government (F = 0.404, $p > 0.05$). The mean values showed that adolescents from age 20 and above are most addicted to cyber space.

3.5 Discussion of Findings

The ANOVA result on hypothesis one showed no significant difference across family type in adolescents' problem behaviour of sexual abuse. This means that adolescents from the three family types experience similar psycho-social problem of sexual abuse. This showed that the stability of a family may not necessarily debar adolescents from being exposed or involved in sexual abuse in Oriade area. This result was consistent with [Ngom, Magadi, and Owuor, \(2003\)](#), who reported that irrespective of whether it is a low, middle or high-income country, adolescents raised in single parent and step-parent households have an increased probability of both early sexual debut and pregnancy. However, result contradicted [Breivik, Olweus, and Endresen \(2009\)](#), who found that adolescents in married, biological two-parent families are less likely to engage in adolescents' antisocial behaviour, unprotected sex and early sexual initiation compared to adolescents from single-parent, specifically single-mother families.

The ANOVA result in hypothesis two revealed no significant family type difference in adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction among High school adolescents. This confirmed that cyber addiction is not a function of family types but rather, a common psycho-social problem among adolescents, although it is noted to be highest in single-parent and step-parent families. This result aligned with the findings of [Hoffmann \(2006\)](#), that children from single-parent families manifest an increased risk for internalising and externalising problems of delinquent behaviours and they display comparatively low academic functioning and self-esteem.

Result on hypothesis three confirmed significant gender difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse, hence, the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternative hypothesis was accepted. The mean value indicated that the male adolescents have higher tendencies of engaging in acts of sexual abuse than females. This is expected because male and female adolescents are not exposed to the same nurturing conditions. Another possible explanation could be that male adolescents with financially stable background usually explore sexual gestures from female counterparts, whereas the cultural environment will frown at females who attempt to do same.

This result corroborated [Muhammad, Tohid, Omar, Mohd. Amin, and Shamsuddin \(2017\)](#), whose study on gender differences in sexual intention confirmed that sexual intention is

higher among male children compared to females, as males enjoy less parental monitoring, more autonomy on sexual issues from parents than females. Likewise, National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2017), aligned with Muhammed et al., by contributing that prevalence of conduct disorders, which are also affiliated with psycho-social problem behaviours are more common in boys than girls.

Analysis of hypothesis four revealed no significant age difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of cyber addiction. This implied that cyber addiction is a common psycho-social problem among adolescents across different age categories and is not a function of age. This agreed with the submission of World Health Organization (2017), that adolescence irrespective of the age group is burdened by several psycho-social problems. Rose and Barlow (2023), confirmed that being relatively young is associated with more negative psycho social outcomes, but that many of these outcomes are likely to be the result of multiple influences, but not limited to the effects of relative age. Contrary to the above findings however, Miao, et al. (2024), found statistically significant differences in internet addition in terms of age and family type.

The findings from the study reveal significant relationships between depression, low self-esteem, and spousal abuse among working-class women in Lagos metropolis. These results are consistent with empirical evidence from previous studies, which have extensively documented the psychological impact of spousal abuse on women.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The study clearly showed that psycho-social problems existed in all types of families, although the extent to which it existed differed. There was no significant family type difference in adolescent psycho-social problems of sexual abuses and cyber addiction. Findings revealed that adolescents from step-parent families displayed psycho-social problem behaviours most. Result further showed significant gender difference in the influence of family type on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviour of sexual abuse but indicated that cyber addiction is not significant with age, and that this addiction increases as adolescents increase in age, hence, the rate of cyber addiction is higher among older adolescents.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

- 4.1. Parents should try to keep their marriages to enable them cater for their children. This will go a long way in reducing exposure to sexual abuse and cyber addiction among their adolescents.
- 4.2. Parents should monitor the activities of their adolescents and limit the time spent in surfing the internet, rather, they should emphasise and reward reading, while disciplining children who do otherwise.
- 4.3. Parents in all family types should ensure high quality physical presence with their adolescents as this may predict positive emotional balance.
- 4.4. Parents should provide for their adolescents in order to reduce their vulnerability, and tendencies to engage in sexually abusive behaviours.
- 4.5. Adolescents should know how to say NO to sexually related activities and make conscious efforts to minimise the time spent on internet surfing.

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