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PREVALENCE OF AND STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING DELINQUENCY AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ILORIN KWARA STATE NIGERIA.

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abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine the prevalence and strategies for managing delinquency among secondary school students in Ilorin Kwara state Nigeria. The sample for the study was made up of 200 students and 150 teachers drawn from ten secondary schools which spread across the three Local Government Areas in Ilorin making 350 respondents for the study. The main instrument used in collecting data for this study was questionnaire, while five research questions were asked and five research hypotheses formulated. The hypotheses were tested using t-test statistical techniques at 0.05 level of significance. The findings reveal that peer influence is a factor responsible for delinquent acts among secondary schools students in Ilorin metropolis. Such as bullying, rioting, stealing and sexual abuses. The study also revealed that delinquent acts have negative impact on students due to students unrest at all time, truancy and examination malpractice as negative impact on students academic performances. Therefore, the appropriate punishment must be given to the students who are really involved in the delinquent acts by the schools authority as well as the state government. The paper recommend that teacher should be exemplary in words and deeds while the government fund educational enterprise properly.

Introduction

Around the world, human being always strive to reduce indiscipline and improve peoples' conformity to the rules and regulations of the society, yet violation of rules still occur. The school environment is one part of the society that is not independent of what happens in the larger society (Daramola, 1994); It is a known fact that series became of crimes witnessed in the larger society today manifest themselves even in the school environment. In Nigeria for example, there are reports of students engaging in examination malpractices, raping of fellow students, truancy and organized student destructive behaviours like riot, arson and theft (Adobayero, 2004). However, many of the crimes students commit cannot be precisely classified as crime but rather, they are technically referred to as delinquency which itself is the violation of law by a juvenile. It includes those acts which do not conform to societal norms and which are committed mostly by adolescents. The term juvenile acts has also come to include anything that adolescent engages in that is contrary to customs, values and norms of the society, regardless of whether the action is legal or illegal (Deborah, 2003).

The issue of delinquency is one which most members of the general public are interested in. One needs not to search far for indications that in literature, authorities have a number of firm opinions about delinquency, including beliefs about its causes and views about its consequences. Most of these popular attitudes and beliefs are straight forward instances of folk wisdom. They imply that the causes of delinquency are easily discernable to any reasonable man and that delinquency can be curbed by one panacea or another. Like a good deal of folk wisdom, opinions

about delinquency are in most instances varied and can assist in furthering research efforts like the one that will be carried out in this study. Gibbons (1999), Polk and Scalife, (1972) West (1982), argue that, popular belief and comments in the electronic and print media on youthful crime have been increasing at an alarming rate. West (1982), argues further that, more youngsters are being received into social welfare homes and detention centres as a result of their involvement in juvenile crime.

Gibbons (1999), postulates that juvenile delinquents constitute a social problem about which something must be done. According to him, these children must be converted into normal non-delinquent individuals by some rehabilitation techniques. Though the total number of delinquents is far greater than it was revealed in court statistical and police records but it is inadequate to discuss statistical facts without finding solutions to what the statistics pointed to.

Gibbons (1999), observed that there is an abundance of evidence of misbehaviour among youths. The situation therefore, is that a large number of youths at all social levels and in all kinds of communities engage in acts of misconduct and law breaking which may remain hidden or undetected. Also, Power and Mossis (1972), found an even higher prevalence of juvenile delinquency in "their" study. This is the reason why Wolfgang (1974), and Wolfgang, Figlio and Selhin (1977), estimated that among males born in Philadelphia in 1945 a half would have an offence record by the age 35.

Sociologists have come to agree that delinquent acts constitute a social problem about which something must be done. West (1982), agrees in one way or the other that delinquent acts have been on increase all over the world. Dada (1993), observes that the world today is where delinquency is assuming an unprecedented and alarming increase, and the material challenges of life has forced many parents to shelve their responsibilities to their offsprings.

Nearly every language has a word or phrase which is always negative to describe and stereotype teenagers and adolescents who violate the law of the land. In Nigeria, for example, such words or phrases like "Janduku Omo" (Yoruba), "Dan-hiska" (Hausa) and "Nwata na-eme isike" (Ibo) Egi fe (Nupe) are just few of the tribal references that are often used to describe youths whose actions and behaviour are at variance with the norms of the society. Gibbons (1999), pointed out that, although the United States of America has the highest delinquency rates of the nations of the world, juvenile misconduct has increased markedly in many other nations since World War II. He further argues that, large number of youths engage in delinquent acts in the nation. In Gibbons view, court statistics, police records and social brothel departments confirm series of delinquent acts common in the society. This study established that youth's engages in delinquent acts such as sexual abuse, drug addiction as cultism which negatively affect their academic achievements.

In Nigeria, many concerned citizens have written on the subject of discourse which has eaten very deep into the fabrics of our nation. Principals, Ministry of Education and successive Governments in seminars and workshops have noted this and evolved various schemes aimed at correcting deviant acts in Nigeria and in the institutions throughout the country.

Statement of the Problem

Conklin (2007) claim that juvenile delinquency is often referred to as acts or offences of under aged people who violate the law and thereby cannot be tried in conventional court. Most of the crimes committed by these categories of people are not clearly different from crimes committed by their adults (Conklin, 2007). For example, the adult kills, steals, rapes, destroy properties, so the youths also kills, steals, rapes, destroy properties and express gross disobedience of the state laws.

Unlike in the past when youths were described as relatively peaceful and the societies also were described as crime free, today, youths are increasingly getting engaged in even complex crimes (Agbonna 2008). This increase is becoming a source of worry to the society as the crimes manifest in school environment where students are expected to learn good virtues that can aid their countries development. Agbonna (2008), for example opines that secondary school students are gradually taking after students of higher institutions in the pattern of crime they get involved in. Agbonna further observe that some crimes like riot, arson, and rape that were common in higher institutions are now common among secondary school students. As a prelude to this for example, Olugbile (2006), reported that six (6) secondary school students in Lagos State were caught rapping an 18 year old SS III female student within the school premises. Agbonna (2008), in another study revealed that many of the secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis are lured to negative sexual acts in schools because of peer pressure.

However, while there are abundant of researches showing increase in students' crime and researchers emphasizing the cause and consequences of many of these delinquent acts, there is no enough research that actually investigates whether such delinquent acts are prevalent particularly in secondary schools within Ilorin metropolis. Also there is no known research that finds out whether there are control mechanisms put in place to check the increase in the referred delinquent acts in Ilorin metropolis

This unavailability of known researches in this area of study creates research gap, part of which this study wants to fill. Thus, this study is aimed at investigating the particular delinquent acts that are prevalent in secondary schools within the metropolis and to find out whether there are even means through which the acts are planned to be checked or controlled in public and private secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this is to investigate the prevalence and management of delinquency among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis. Specifically, it seeks:

1. To find out the different types of delinquent acts as experienced by both the secondary school teachers and the students in Ilorin metropolis.
2. To find out the prevalence of delinquent acts as experienced by secondary school teachers and students in Ilorin metropolis.
3. To find out the strategies adopted in managing delinquent acts as experienced by secondary school students and teachers in Ilorin metropolis.

Research Questions

1. What are the common delinquent acts among secondary school students in Ilorin metropolis?
2. What are the available delinquent act management strategies in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis?
3. Is there any difference in teachers and students experience on the prevalence of delinquent acts in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis?

Research Hypotheses

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference in secondary school teachers' and students' experience on the different types of delinquent acts in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference in secondary school teachers' and students' experience on the availability of delinquent acts management strategies in secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis.
- Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the availability of delinquent acts management strategies available in public and private secondary schools in Ilorin metropolis

Literature Review

Sensible discussion of delinquency according to West (1982), is confused by two opposing stereotypes. West (1982) opines that the first portray stereotype delinquents as perfectly normal through his self report studies which show that nearly everyone is at least an occasional law breaker. It is a natural human choice to disregard the law on occasions when the chance for quick personal gain with slight risk of detection presents itself. While the second picture delinquents as different from the rest of their age group, a special category of persons lacking in restraint, primitive in their sense of right and wrong and unable or unwilling to conform to reasonable rules. They are seen as maladjusted individuals, who by virtue of their damaged personalities (one, perhaps to hereditary flows, perhaps to deprived upbringing) fail to learn civilized standard of behaviour and are liable to persistent trouble with the law. The first stereotype may be caused by opportunity, temptation and social tradition of one's peer group in his view.

In Sutherland's (1999), submission, the fact that adolescents do not always behave in conformity with the ways adults would prefer them to behave causes problem. The popular term which has become fashionable in describing this problem is juvenile delinquency. He argues further that, there are certain traits or characteristics which distinguish deviants from the rest of the people. They may be martially deficient, peer-shaped, slack-jawed, epileptic, psychotic, poor, orphaned, or have any one or combination of personality, family, or social traits. The factors therefore suggested may be socio-logical, psychological, psychiatric, biological, physical or economic.

Akinboye (1987), argues that delinquency is not just naughty or mischievous behaviour as many people think. It is seen as a behaviour pattern that break certain rules or laws, enacted by constituted authorities. In modern Africa, Akinboye (1987), argues further that, delinquency is seen in the behaviour of youngsters as they break parental rules, teacher's authorities and societal laws. While Dada (1993), describe delinquent behaviours as offences committed by young people and all those deviant acts which would be regarded as criminal and treated as such if committed by adults.

Delinquent acts have been adjudged to range from the violation of disciplinary measures of parents to truancy, stealing, assault, robbery and other socially undesirable acts, to mob, disobedience and violence, student unrest, student protests, vandalism, running away from home, drug addiction and a host of other related offences (Akinboye, 1987, Dada 1993 and West 1970).

Methodology

This study is a survey of what teachers and students of private and public secondary schools in Ilorin perceived on the prevalence and strategies of managing delinquency in secondary schools. Jimoh (1995), define a survey as a research approach that involves sampling a large number of respondents from which data are drawn to infer the opinion or information about the entire population. Verman and Beard (1981), explain that survey method has the advantage of being an effective way of collecting data from a large number of sources and that it is relatively inexpensive and not time consuming.

Population, Sample and Sampling Techniques

The population for this study is all secondary school staff and students in Ilorin, Kwara State. However, the target population was students and staff of one hundred and fifty three (153) private and public secondary schools located within Ilorin metropolis. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting ten secondary schools (5 public and 5 private secondary schools), which was spread across the local government in Ilorin Metropolis.

From these ten (10) schools, random sampling technique was used in sampling fifteen (15) respondents that were teachers from each of the ten (10). Making teachers sample to be one hundred and fifty (150). On the other hand, simple random sampling was used to sample twenty (20) students from senior classes of each of the ten randomly sampled schools. Thus, the researcher sample two hundred (200) students (20 students x 10 schools) from SS I to SS III classes. In all, 350 sample participated in the study.

Instrumentation

The collection of data was carried out with the use of questionnaire. This is inconsonance with Daramola (1991), opinion who noted that questionnaire is the series of relevant questions which are normally used to elicit information from respondents who are drawn from the target population of a given study.

The questionnaire was titled as *Prevalence and Strategies of Managing Delinquency Questionnaire (PMDQ)*. The questionnaire has three sections: A, B, and C.

Section 'A' elicits the respondents' biographical data such as school, sex, age, marital status. Section 'B' elicits teachers' and students' perception on the prevalence of delinquent acts among students while section 'C' elicits responses on the availability of delinquency control mechanism (management) in secondary schools.

The section B of the instrument was structured with option ranging from Frequent (F), Fairly Frequent (FF) and Non Frequent (NF). Since at the first level of analysis, the sample respondents was analyzed using a descriptive statistic (percentage) the items was scored rather, frequency of a respondent's opinion on each item was analyzed item by item.

At the other level of analysis, the responses was scored following F = 2, FF = 1 and NF = 0. Responses to items in Section C was also first to analyzed using percentage to answer the research questions 1 and 2.

The validity of the instrument was done using content and face validity approach i.e. the instrument was given to two lecturers in Social Sciences Education Department (SSE), University of Ilorin for correction.

The reliability of the instrument was determined using the test-re-test technique.

Procedure for Data Collection

The researchers approached the Ministry of Education to seek permission for access into various secondary schools located within the metropolis. After this, the researchers went round the selected schools in person to administer the questionnaire. Research assistance were used where and when necessary. However, the researchers to put all machinery in place to avoid loss or non-response to items on the questionnaire. This was achieved through the use of teachers in the school as research assistants.

Data Analysis Technique

The data obtained through the use of questionnaire were collated on the statistical coding sheets. Simple percentage was used to describe personal characteristics of the respondents (teachers and students) and answers to research questions 1 and 2.

Research questions 3, 4 and 5 have corresponding hypothesis and were tested with the use of t-test statistical technique. Therefore, all the hypotheses postulated were tested with the use of t-test statistical technique at 0.05 level of significant.

Results

Table 1: Analysis Showing the Common Delinquent Acts Among Secondary School Students as Identified by Teachers and Students.

Delinquent Acts	Frequent	Teachers		Frequent	Students	
		Fairly Frequent	Non Frequent		Fairly Frequent	Non Frequent
Students often fight one another in the school	32(21.3%)	70(46.7%)	48(32.0%)	84(42.0%)	70(35.0%)	46(23.0%)
Students engage in sexual abuse	60(40.0%)	42(29.3%)	46(30.7%)	68(34.0%)	70(35.0%)	62(31.0%)
Students engage in stealing	50(33.3%)	60(40.0%)	40(26.7%)	63(32.0%)	64(32.0%)	72(36.0%)
Students take to drugs	24(16.0%)	56(37.5%)	70(46.7%)	60(30.0%)	46(23.0%)	94(47.0%)
Students insult school authority	28(18.7%)	74(49.3%)	48(32.0%)	60(30.0%)	60(30.0%)	80(40.0%)
Students engage in truancy	28(18.7%)	56(37.3%)	66(44.0%)	64(32.0%)	66(33.0%)	80(40.0%)
Students cheating during examinations	76(50.7%)	48(32.0%)	26(17.3%)	26(17.3%)	70(35.0%)	52(26.0%)
Students getting drunk at all time	4(2.7%)	48(32.0%)	98(65.3%)	48(24.0%)	64(32.0%)	88(44.0%)
Students setting fire on people's belongings	14(9.3%)	56(37.3%)	80(53.3%)	44(22.0%)	48(24.0%)	108(54.0%)
Students coming to school anytime they feel like	46(30.7%)	86(57.3%)	18(12.0%)	70(35.0%)	64(32.0%)	66(33.0%)

Table 1: shows that out of 150 teachers that reacted to item 1 section B of the questionnaire which states that students often fight one another in the school, 32(21.3%) picked frequent (f), 70 (46.7%) picked fairly frequent (ff), while the rest 48 (23.0%) (NF), picked not frequent in the same vain, out of 200 students, 84 (42.0%) picked frequent 70 (35.0) picked fairly frequent, while the rest 46 (23.0%) picked not frequent.

Teachers' reaction to item 2 (students engaging in sexual abuse) table show that 60 (40.0%) picked frequent, 44 (29.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 46 (30.7%) ticked not frequent. On the other hand the reaction of students to the same item shows states that 68 (34.0%) picked frequent 70 (35.0%) picked fairly frequent while 62 (31.0%) ticked not frequent.

Reaction of teachers to item 3 (students engage in stealing) show that 50 (33.3%) picked frequent, 60 (40.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 40 (26.7%) picked not frequent. Students reaction to the same item shows that 64 (32.0%) picked frequent, 64 (32.0%) picked fairly frequent while 72 (36.0%) picked not frequent.

Reaction of teachers to item 9 (students involves in taking drugs) shows that 24 (16.0%) picked frequent, 56 (37.3%) picked fairly frequent, while 70 (46.7%) picked not frequent. On the other hand, students' reaction to the same item shows that 60 (30.0%) picked frequent, 46 (23.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 94 (40.0%) picked not frequent.

Reaction of teachers to item 5 (students insulting school authority) shows that 28 (18.7%) picked frequent, 74 (49.3%) picked fairly frequent, while 48 (32.0%) picked not frequent. In the same vain, students reacted to the same item and this shows that 64 (32.0%) picked frequent, 66 (33.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 70 (35.0%) picked not frequent.

The teachers' reaction to item 6 (students engage in truancy) shows that 28 (18.7%) picked frequent, 55 (37.3%) picked fairly frequent, while 66 (44.0%) picked not frequent. In the reaction of students to the same item which shows that 64 (32.0%) picked frequent, 66 (33.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 70 (35.0%) picked not frequent.

The responses of the respondents (teachers) to item 7 (students cheating during examination), 76 (50.7%) picked frequent, 48 (32.0%) picked fairly frequent while 26 (17.3%)

picked not frequent. The reaction of students to the same item shows that 78 (39.0%) picked frequent, 70 (35.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 52 (26.0%) picked not frequent.

The reaction of teachers to items 8 (students getting drunk at all time) shows that 4 (2.7%) picked frequent, 48 (32.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 98 (65.3%) picked not frequent. It was clearly stated that students reacted to the same item which show that 48 (24.0%) picked frequent, 64 (32.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 88 (44.0%) picked not frequent.

The reaction of teachers reactions to item 9 (students setting fire on peoples belonging) show that 14 (9.3%) picked frequent, 56 (37.3%) picked fairly frequent, while 80 (53.3%) picked not frequent. Students reacted to the same item which show that 44 (22.0%) picked frequent, 48 (24.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 108 (54.0%) picked not frequent, 48 (24.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 108 (54.0%) picked not frequent. The reaction of teachers to item 15 (students coming to school any time the feel like) show that 46 (30.7%) picked frequent, 86 (57.3%) picked fairly frequent, while 18 (12.0%) picked not frequent. Students reacted to the same item which show that 70 (35.0%) picked frequent, 64 (32.0%) picked fairly frequent, while 66 (33.0%) picked not frequent.

Analysis showing the available delinquency management strategies in secondary schools

Table 2: Management of Delinquent Acts

Management Strategy	Available	Not Available	Available	Not Available
Presence of security agents	54(36.0%)	96(46.7%)	166(83.0%)	34(17.0%)
Constitution of students disciplinary committee	60(40.0%)	90(60.0%)	66(33.0%)	134(67.0%)
Anti-delinquency sensitization forum	74(49.3%)	76(50.7%)	86(43.0%)	114(57.0%)
Allocation of teachers to duties (teachers on duty)	108(72.0%)	42(28.0%)	136(68.0%)	64(32.0%)
Guidance and counseling unit	112(74.7%)	38(25.3%)	144(72.0%)	56(28.0%)
School fence	94(62.7%)	56(37.3%)	128(64.0%)	72(36.0%)
Use of corporal punishment	104(69.3%)	46(30.7%)	132(66.0%)	68(34.0%)
Suspension of recalcitrant students	94(62.7%)	56(37.3%)	124(62.0%)	76(38.0%)
Appeal through P.T.A	124(82.7%)	26(17.3%)	140(70.0%)	60(30.0%)
Using teacher as role model	110(73.3%)	40(26.7%)	126(63.0%)	74(37.0%)

Table 4: shows that out of 150 teachers and 200 students that responded to item 16 (presence of security agents) in the schools, 54 (36.0%) teachers and 166 (83.0%) students picked available while 96 (64.0%) teachers and 34 (17.0%) students picked not available.

Responses of the respondents (teachers and students) to item 17 (the presence of students disciplinary committee in the schools) shows that 60 (40.0%) and 66 (33.0%) picked available, while 90 (60.0%) teachers and 134 (67.0%) students picked not available respectively.

The reaction of teachers and students of items 18 (anti delinquency sensitization forum) shows that 74 (49.3%) and 86 (43.0%) picked available, while 76 (50.7%) and 114 (57.1%) ticked not available.

Reactions of both teachers and students to item 19 (allocation of teachers to duties) shows that 108 (72.0%) and 136 (68.0%) picked available, while 42 (28.0%) and 64(32.0%) picked not available.

Teachers and students reacted to item 20 (guidance and counseling unit) in the schools which shows that 122 (74.7%) and 144 (72.0%) picked available, while 38 (25.3%) and 56 (28.0%) picked not available.

The reactions of teachers and students to item 21 (school fence) shows that 94 (62.7%) and 128 (63.0%) picked available, while 56 (37.3%) and 72 (36.0%) ticked not available.

Responses of the respondents (teachers and students to item 22 (use of corporal punishment) shows that 104 (69.3%) and 132 (66.0%) picked available while 56 (37.3%) and 76 (38.0%) picked not available.

The responses of the respondents teachers and students to item 24 (appeal through P.T.A) show that 124 (62.7%) and 140 (70.0%) picked available, while 26 (17.3%) and 60 (30.0%) picked not available. The reaction of both teachers and students to item 25 (using teachers as role model) shows that 110 (73.3%) and 126 (63.0%) picked available, while 40 (26.7%) and 74 (37.0%) picked not available.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses 1 to 5 postulated were tested with the use of t- test statistical technique, 0.05 level of significance.

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in secondary school teachers' and students' perception on the different types of delinquent acts in secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis.

Table 3: t-test Analysis Showing the Perception of Teachers and Students on the Different Types of Delinquent Acts in Secondary Schools

Variables	No	Means	Std	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value	Remark
Teachers	150	18.8133	6.4853	348	.889	1.960	H ₀₁ accepted
Students	200	19.5100	7.7854				

Table 3: shows that the calculated t-value is .889 while the critical t-value is 1.960 with 348 degree of freedom at 0.05 Level of significant. Since the calculated t-value is less than the critical t-value, the hypothesis which stated that, there is no significant difference in perception of teachers and students on the different types of delinquent acts among secondary school students' in Ilorin metropolis is therefore accepted.

Ho₂: There is no significant difference in the perception of teachers and students on the availability of delinquency management strategies in secondary schools.

Table 4: t-test Analysis Showing the Perception of Teachers and Students on the Management Strategies to Delinquent Acts in Secondary Schools

Variables	No	Means	Std	Df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value	Remark
Teachers	150	16.2267	3.9274	348	.889	1.960	Ho ₂ accepted
Students	200	16.2400	4.0552				

Table 4: shows that the calculated t-value is 0.031, while the critical t-value is 1.960 with 348 degree of freedom and at 0.05 level of significant. Since the calculated t-value is less the critical t-value, therefore, the hypothesis which stated that, there is no significant difference between the perception of teachers and students on the management strategies available to delinquent acts among management strategies available to delinquent acts among secondary school students in Ilorin Metropolis is accepted.

Ho₃: There is no significant difference in the availability of delinquency management strategies in public and private secondary schools.

Table 5: t-test Analysis Showing the Availability of Delinquent Acts Management Strategies in Public and Private Secondary Schools

Variables	No	Means	Std	df	Calculated t-value	Critical t-value	Remark
Public schools	76	18.9324	6.4505	148	.231	1.960	Ho ₃ accepted
Private schools	74	18.6892	6.5625				

Table 5: shows that the calculated t-value is .231, while the critical t-value is 1.960 with 148 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Since the calculated t-value is less than critical t-value therefore, the hypothesis which stated that, there is no significant difference in the availability of delinquent management strategies in public and private secondary schools is accepted.

Conclusion

The nature and types of delinquent acts are stealing, raping, examination malpractice, sexual abuse, truancy, fighting and smoking. These are the common factors responsible for the destruction of lives and properties in the society. The peer influence is a factor responsible, to the greater extent, for delinquent acts among secondary school students in Kwara state.

Recommendations

To reduce the rate of juvenile delinquency among our youths, focus should placed on the home, society, school and religious body which are the first agent of socialization of a child. Parents should provide their children with both psychological and material needs. By so doing, children will not likely be involved in acts of delinquency. Consequently, parents need to exhibit good behaviours to serve as role model for their children to emulate.

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