

# The Impact of Family Structure on the Nature and Type of Delinquent Behaviours among Secondary School Adolescents in Kumo Metropolis, Gombe State

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**Abstract:-** The study investigated the effects of family structure on delinquent behaviours and its health consequences among secondary school adolescents in Kumo metropolis, Gombe State. Juvenile delinquency is becoming a problem bedeviling many societies of the world. The objectives of the study is to examine the effects of family structure on juvenile delinquency, identify the causes of juvenile behaviours among adolescents, identify the health consequences of these behaviours and proffer possible solutions. Using cluster and simple random sampling techniques, a sample of three hundred and two (302) adolescents respondents was drawn from four private and public secondary schools (Government day secondary School Akkoyel, Government day Secondary School Pilot, The Classic Academy, and HajiyaNai'la Science Secondary School) in Kumo metropolis. The findings revealed that; the extended family is the major family type practiced in Kumo Metropolis and it was the leading avenue to juvenile delinquency. Poverty was found to be the possible cause of juvenile offending in Kumo metropolis and the most committed delinquent acts were violent crimes. This study recommended that Governmental, non-governmental organizations, and elites should establish job opportunities and small-scale industries to help alleviate poverty, law should be enforced, and parents should monitor and try to meet the demands of their children such as food, clothing, shelter, and education.

**Keywords:-** Family, Family structure, Extended family, Nuclear family, Juvenile, Delinquency, Behaviour.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Nearly every society since the dawn of history has looked at juvenile delinquencies and their negative impact on adolescents' health behaviors as a serious problem, and our society is not an exception. The trend in the study of this problem has moved gradually from the focus on the physical and psychological components of the individual to the influence of the social structure on an individual. Sociologists however claim that deviant behavior, as well as normal behavior, is a product of the social environment. The social environment which produces this behavior might be primary such as the family and peer group or secondary such as the society. Some studies have tended to focus on the family while others have focused on society for the explanation of juvenile delinquency and its effect on adolescents' health.

Scholars who claimed that family structure is a major factor in the causation of juvenile delinquency worked on the assumption that, if the family background (especially the general atmosphere of the home and the attitude of the other members of the family) is congenial for the proper development of a child, the child will likely grow up to be law-abiding. On the other hand, scholars who claimed that extra family conditions are crucial in the explanation of delinquent behavior worked on the assumption that participation in the creation and maintenance of delinquent subculture is an important factor in the causation of juvenile delinquency. (olufunmilayo, 1973).

Although the issue of juvenile delinquency is an age-long problem, it seems that the juvenile delinquency of the past cannot be compared with that of the present era. The anti-social behaviors often associated with juvenile delinquents, such vices as vandalism, drug abuse, weapon carrying, alcohol abuse, rape, examination malpractices, school violence, bullying, cultism, truancy, and school drop-outs, to mention but a few. Unless something is done to roll back the wave of juvenile delinquency, the prospect of a better, safer, and more prosperous crime-free society emerging in Nigeria will remain elusive. ( Kudirat et, al 2010).

The extent and dimension of this social problem is not investigated with regards to Kumo metropolis. Consequently, this study sought to find out the Impact of family structure on juvenile delinquency and its health consequences among Secondary Schools adolescents in Kumo, Akko L.G.A, Gombe State Nigeria. The objective of the study is to:

- To identify and describe the major family structures and types of crimes that juveniles get involved in Kumo town,
- To examine the causes and contributions of each type of family structure to juvenile delinquency in Kumo town,
- To identify the health consequences of juvenile delinquent behaviors on the health status of the child involved and proffers possible solutions.

The theory of anchor to this study is the social control theory which attempts to explain why people do *not* deviate. Travis Hirschi argued that young people are more likely to conform if their bond to societal institutions such as family is strong. This bond has four parts: attachment to parents and community, involvement in conventional activities of the community (for example, sports leagues and festivals), commitment to educational and occupational success, and

belief in such things as the legitimacy and morality of the norms, values, and laws of the society.

In this sense, the secondary school adolescents of Kumo metropolis are more likely to deviate and violate the state law if their bond to their parents is weak and that deviation from the law may in one way or the other affect their health status, also they are more likely to conform to the societal norms if the bond is strong (For instance, children that are not attached to their parents usually do not get enough socialization and training on the rules and regulations of the society which eventually leads them to engage in delinquent acts like smoking marijuana, sexual offenses, and many other aberrant acts that affect their physical, social, and mental wellbeing.

## II. METHODOLOY

This research work was conducted within Kumo town in Akko Local government area, Gombe State. Akko Local Government is located on the A345 highway at 40 km approx south of Gombe. Kumo is a national center for commercial activities, having numerous markets, such as Tike (a livestock market), Tashargwari (a vegetable market), Tudunhatsi (a grain market), and the Babbarkasuwa (the main market). Kumo is a cosmopolitan area, consisting of various peace-loving religious people, and also many varied languages, including Fulani, Hausa, Tangale, Waja, Tera, Jonjo, Jukun, Kamu, Kanuri, and numerous others. The people are predominantly farmers and traders. The 2006 census shows that the population of Kumo dwellers is

35,712 (Buhari 2019). According to the Kumo inspectorate office (2022), there are sixteen private and four public secondary schools in the Kumo metropolis.

From the total number of secondary schools in Kumo metropolis, two (2) private and two public secondary schools were selected for the study using purposive sampling technique where 2 public and 2 private schools with the highest population was selected. The selected schools include Government day secondary school Akkoyel (GDSS AKKOYEL), Government day secondary school Pilot (GDSS PILOT), and the classic academy Kumo (TCAK), as well as HajjiyaNa'ilatu science secondary school (HNSSS).

Therefore, the total population of the schools selected is one thousand and thirty-two (1032) students. From this population, three hundred and two (302) was the sample size for the study using a sample size calculator with a margin of error of five percent and a ninety-five percent confidence level. In the first stage, cluster sampling methods were used to divide the population into clusters. (GDSS AKKOYEL, GDSS PILOT, TCAK, HNSSS). The reason for selecting these four schools is because of their population size. In the second stage: - Simple random sampling was adopted to select the one hundred and thirty-two (132) respondents from GDSS AKKOYEL, one twenty-one (121) respondents from GDSS PILOT, twenty-three (23) respondents from TCAK, twenty-six (26) respondents from HNSSS. Gender equity was considered in the selection process.

## III. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Data Of The Respondents

<b>GENDER</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Male	154	51.3
Female	146	48.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>AGE</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
11- 14	0	0
15 – 18	256	85.3
19 and above	44	14.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Christianity	112	37.3
Islam	188	62.7
Traditional	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>MARITAL STATUS</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
Single	294	98.0
Married	6	2.0
Divorced	0	0
Separated	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>CLASS LEVEL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>
SS1	115	38.3
SS2	105	35.0
SS3	80	26.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>SCHOOL</b>	<b>FREQUENCY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGES</b>

Government Day Secondary School Akkoyel	132	44.0
Government Day Secondary School Pilot	120	40.0
The Classic Academy	22	7.3
HajiyaNa'ila Science Secondary School	26	8.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Work, 2022

Although the gender disparity is not much in terms of school enrolment and attendance, the data shows that there exists a low level of girl-child school enrolment and attendance compared to the boy-child. The data on religion shows there are more Muslims than Christians in the Kumo metropolis. The data shows that there are more secondary school adolescents 15-18 years of age (85.3%) than in other age categories. Majority of the students are single (98.0%) in the study than in other marital statuses. This portrayed the composition of the metropolis. There are more SS1 students

(38.3%) than other levels. This is because the group has more students in the Schools and can help immensely in giving an account of happenings. There are more students from Government Day Secondary school (44.0) which is a public school than any other secondary school. This depicts the nature of admission to the schools. Because the majority of the parents in Kumo metropolis cannot afford to enroll their children in private schools due to their low level of income and the expensive nature of private schools in the area.

**IV. TYPE OF FAMILY STRUCTURES AND THE TYPE OF CRIMES JUVENILES GET INVOLVED IN**

Table 2: Type of family structures practice in Kumo metropolis?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Nuclear Family	79	26.3
Extended	111	37.0
Single Parent family	42	14.0
All of the above	68	22.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3: Which of these types of the family do you belong to?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Nuclear Family	99	33.0
Extended	146	48.7
Single Parent family	55	18.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4: Who do you reside with?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Parent	101	33.7
Grandparent	66	22.0
Relatives	48	16.0
Peers	15	5.0
All of the above	70	23.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 5: In your opinion, does juvenile delinquency exist among secondary school adolescents in the Kumo metropolis?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Yes	292	97.3
No	8	2.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 6: Which types of crime do juveniles get involved in Kumo metropolis?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Drugs and alcohol crime	48	16.0
Theft	41	13.7
Sexual offences	52	17.0
Smoking of marijuana	51	17.0
Assault	33	11.0
Violent crimes	58	19.3
Illegal purchase	17	5.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 7: Which of these activities do you get involved in?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Drugs and alcohol crimes	28	9.3
Theft	15	5.0
Sexual offenses	27	9.0
Smoking of marijuana	40	13.3
Assault	21	7.0
Violent crimes	50	16.7
Illegal purchases	20	6.7
None of these	99	33.0
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 8: Why do you think teenagers engage in juvenile delinquency?

RESPONSESE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Peers pressure	102	34.0
Lack of parental love and affection	73	24.3
Dysfunctional	86	28.7
Siblings influence	39	13.0
TOTAL	300	100%

Source: Field Work, 2022.

The findings indicated that extended family structure is the major type of family practiced in Kumo metropolis at (37.0%). The data also proves the number of respondents who belong to the extended family is higher (48.7%) than those belonging to the nuclear and single-parent families in Kumo. Also, the number of respondents who reside with their parents is higher (33.7%), while those who reside with their peers constitute the least. This exhibited that the extended family structure is widely practiced in Kumo metropolis. The data also shows clearly that the majority of secondary school adolescents believe that juvenile delinquency exists in Kumo metropolis (97.3%). The data

revealed that there are more juveniles involved in violent crimes (19.3%) than any other kind of crime. Also, the data proves that the majority of secondary school adolescents personally do not involve in any of the aforementioned delinquent acts (33.0%), while those involved in illegal purchases constitute the least (7.0%). The data reveals that the majority of the adolescents think teenagers engage in juvenile delinquency as a result of peer pressure (34.0%) while sibling influence constitutes the least (13.0%). Therefore, the implication of the data shows that the majority of adolescents involve in juvenile delinquency.

**V. THE IMPACTOF EACH FAMILY STRUCTURE TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY**

Table 9: Which of the following family structure is the leading avenue to juvenile delinquency?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Nuclear family	50	16.7
Extended family	140	47.0
Single parent family	110	36.3
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 10: Which of the following juvenile delinquencies are mostly found in nuclear families?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Theft	45	15.0
Drugs abuse	51	17.0
Smoking	70	23.3
Assault	42	14.0
Teenage pregnancy	26	8.7
Sexual offenses	31	10.3
Violent crimes	35	11.7
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 11: Which of the following juvenile delinquencies are mostly found in extended families?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Theft	31	10.3
Smoking	37	12.3
Drugs abuse	52	17.3
Assault	44	14.7
Teenage pregnancy	14	4.7

Sexual offenses	59	19.7
Violent crimes	63	21.0
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 12: Which of these delinquent behaviours are mostly found in single-parent families?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Theft	46	15.3
Smoking	53	17.7
Drugs abuse	48	16.0
Assault	19	6.3
Teenage pregnancy	57	19.0
Sexual offenses	72	24.0
Violent crimes	5	1.7
TOTAL	300	100%

Source: Field Work, 2022

The above distribution revealed clearly that extended family structure is the leading avenue to juvenile delinquency (47.0%). Other family structures include the nuclear and single-parent family structures. The data also portrays clearly that juvenile smoking is a delinquent act that is mostly found in nuclear families (23.3%). This is because of the availability of resources in their households since the population is small in number, while violent crimes are the delinquent acts that are mostly found in extended families (21.0%) which is the major family

structure practiced in Kumo metropolis. The data proves that sexual offenses are delinquent acts that are mostly found in single-parent families (24.0%). This may be linked to the amount of space and privacy the type of setting provides. Thus, the data under this table showed high level of hunger and poverty that exist in the extended family structures in Kumo metropolis. This triggers starvation and frustration among family members and therefore led them into violence and other crimes.

## VI. THE CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN EACH FAMILY STRUCTURE

Table 13: What do you think is the most possible/frequent cause of juvenile delinquency in Kumo metropolis?

RESPONSESES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Poverty	80	26.7
Parent neglect	54	18.0
Poor guidance & counselling	43	14.3
Peers pressure	63	21.0
Poor education	60	20.0
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 14: What causes juvenile delinquency among adolescents in the nuclear family structure?

RESPONSESES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Poverty	92	30.7
Family size	40	13.3
Poor parental supervision	62	20.7
Marital discord	31	10.3
All of the above	50	16.7
None of the above	25	8.3
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 15: What causes juvenile delinquency among adolescents in an extended family structure?

RESPONSESES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Poverty	86	28.7
Poor parental supervision	47	15.7
Family size	63	21.0
Marital discord	49	16.3
Educational background of parent	55	18.3
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 16: What causes juvenile delinquency among adolescents in single-parent family structure?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Poverty	65	21.7
Poor parental supervision	74	24.7
Poor parental monitoring	60	20.0
Family size	51	17.3
All of the above	49	16.3
TOTAL	300	100%

Source: Field Work, 2022

The above data depicts clearly that poverty is the most possible and frequent cause of juvenile delinquency in Kumo metropolis (26.7%). The data proves that poverty is the major cause of juvenile delinquency in the nuclear family structure (30.7%). So also the data portrays clearly that poverty is what causes juvenile delinquency in an extended family structure (28.7%). The data proves that

poor parental supervision is what causes juvenile delinquency in a single-parent family structure (24.7%). Thus, poverty is the leading cause of juvenile delinquency in Kumo metropolis because the poor parent cannot meet the needs of their family and this eventually leads to juvenile delinquency.

### VII. HEALTH CONSEQUENCES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY ON THE HEALTH STATUS OF THE CHILD INVOLVED

Table 17: The health implications of juvenile delinquency manifest in adulthood. Examples are lung cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, chronic bronchitis, traumatic fistulae, and physical injury.

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Yes	206	68.7
No	94	31.3
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 18: Sexual violence on the girl child results in teenage pregnancy, death from suicide, and other reproductive health problems.

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Yes	221	73.7
No	79	26.3
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 19: Do you involve in sexual activity?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Yes	25	8.3
No	275	91.7
TOTAL	300	100%

Source: Field Work, 2022.

The above data indicated that secondary school adolescents are aware of the manifestation of health implications of juvenile delinquency in adulthood (68.7%). The data proves that secondary school adolescents are of the view that "Yes" sexual violence against the girl child results in teenage pregnancy, death from suicide, and other

reproductive health problems with (73.7%). The data proved that majority of the secondary school adolescents do not engage in sexual activity (91.7%). Thus, the data shows that Kumo adolescents are aware of the health implications of juvenile delinquency and the appearance of its negative impact on adulthood.

### VIII. POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS TO JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

Table 20: What do you think is the best method to overcome the challenge of juvenile delinquency?

RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Juvenile detention	85	28.3
Therapy/counselling	57	19.0
School programs	40	13.3
Boot camp	23	7.7
Offering a reward for conformity	45	15.0
Parental monitoring	50	16.7
TOTAL	300	100%

Source: Field Work, 2022

above depicts clearly that the best method to overcome the challenges of juvenile delinquency is to detain the perpetrator (28.3%). Guidance and counselling is second to detention with regards to possible solutions to the problem of juvenile delinquency.

### IX. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that the majority of the respondents demonstrated that extended family structure is the major type of family structure practice in Kumo metropolis. Also, the study revealed that the majority of the respondents belong to the extended family structure. The study also revealed that the majority of the respondents held the view that juvenile delinquency exists in Kumo metropolis and juveniles are also involved in violent crimes. Based on the findings it is clear that the majority of the respondents revealed that an extended family is a leading avenue to juvenile delinquency. The study revealed that juvenile smoking is mostly found in nuclear families because of availability of resources in such families their children tend to utilize to buy such smokes. The study disclosed that violent crimes are mostly committed by adolescents from extended families because of the competition over scarce resources that exists between the members of such family structures which results in both internal and external conflict. Also, the study revealed that sexual offenses are mostly found in single-parent families. This may be connected to the level of privacy such living arrangement provides. The study revealed that poverty is the leading cause of juvenile delinquency. The study also revealed that poor parental supervision is what causes juvenile delinquency in single-parent families due to inadequate supervision precipitated by the couple not living together. The study also revealed that the majority of the respondents are aware of the health implications of juvenile delinquency manifesting in adulthood. Examples are lung cancer, sexually transmitted diseases, chronic bronchitis, traumatic fistulae, and physical injury. The study disclosed that the majority of the respondents were of the view that sexual violence against the girl child results in teenage pregnancy, death from suicide, and other reproductive health problems. The study revealed that the majority of the respondents are not sexually active.

### X. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study submit that State law should detain any juvenile found guilty of committing a delinquent act, because juvenile detention reform and rehabilitate the behavior of the child involved in any form of delinquency. It also isolates the perpetrator from other members of society so that he or she could not spread his or her deviant behavior to others. This clearly shows that juvenile detention could stop the perpetrators from committing the same act. It could also serve as deterrence to other juveniles that commit juvenile delinquency to continue. Lastly, juvenile detention could serve as deterrence to any juvenile that has a desire to involve in any delinquent act (observation 2022).

### XI. CONCLUSION

In Conclusion, the study submits that children from poor families are at the greatest risk of becoming delinquents. This condition predisposes children in this kind of family setting to delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is also fostered by inadequate parental monitoring and supervision. Children who are inadequately supervised and poorly socialized, and whose parent/guardian does not monitor their movements and activities are more likely to be delinquent. Furthermore, adequate parental supervision and monitoring breed positive interaction between the parent/guardian and the children which are essential for a healthy child upbringing. It, therefore, becomes imperative that parents/guardians should create adequate time for the supervision of their children. Also, familial conflicts have a positive relationship with juvenile delinquency. This means that children who experience conflicts in the forms of fights, quarrels, and violence are prone to a delinquent lifestyle. From the foregoing, it is important to note that there is a need for the family to rise to the performance of its primary roles of positive child socialization and to create a healthy social environment to insulate the children from delinquency. View of the integral role the family plays in the socialization and moral grooming of the children.

### XII. RECOMMENDATIONS

The study suggests the following recommendations:

- Since poverty appears to be the primary cause of juvenile delinquency, the government at all levels should step up efforts to improve the economy, as a matter of urgency. This can be done by stemming the tide of unemployment, improving the remuneration of workers, improving infrastructure, creating job opportunities, and empowering the masses in various conceivable ways. This would go a long way to raise the socioeconomic condition of most families thus reducing the poverty rate in the country at large.
- The government at all levels should not only provide free basic education but also take practical steps to ensure that the education they give is truly and completely free, qualitative, and necessarily compulsory. Legislating and effecting punitive measures on education stakeholders that default will enhance success in this direction.
- It is instructive for school administrators to step-up efforts to curb every form of truancy, loitering in and around their respective schools, and any form of deviation so that students may be disciplined to stay put in school and pay attention to their lessons.
- Parents and guardians should not neglect their responsibility to provide for members of their family irrespective of whether they are related by blood or by adoption.
- The family as an agent of socialization should be educated on the psychological effect of a lack of supervision on juvenile behavior.
- The role of juvenile justice institutions should be extended and strengthened to monitor juvenile behaviors in schools.

- Governments should formulate and implement policies that will consolidate the integrity of the family. This is because of the integral role the family plays in the socialization and moral grooming of the children.
- Governments, social workers, and counselors should assist families in need of resolution of conditions of instability and social disruptions in their families.
- Alternative institutions such as daycare centers and special schools should be considered for children of unstable families where other efforts to help them have failed.
- Governments, counselors, and concerned agencies should develop 10. programs aimed at sensitizing parents and caregivers on parent roles and obligations, child care and development, and ways of building a healthy family environment.
- Parents and caregivers should endeavor to make out sufficient time to spend with their children to monitor and supervise their activities, especially what they watch on television and their internet use.
- Government and elites should provide skill acquisition centers where adolescents will be learning different skills in society.
- Business capital should be contributed by the government and those with high socioeconomic status to the trainees at the end of the training so that they will be able to practice the skills they acquired and earn profit. This would go a long way to provide income to most of the adolescents which will eventually make them stand on their feet thus curtailing the delinquency rate in the country.

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