Full Length Research Paper

Environmental violence, family upbringing and peer influence as correlates of destructive tendencies in adolescents

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Received 15 December, 2014; Accepted 11 May, 2015

This study examined environmental violence, family upbringing; peer group influence as correlates of destructive tendencies among adolescents. Three research questions and three null hypotheses guided the study. Empirical literatures were reviewed. The study is a survey and adopted expo facto design. The sample size of 400 respondents was randomly selected from diploma students of the Institute of Education, Delta State University, Abraka. The research instrument used for this study is titled Environmental violence, family upbringing, peer group influence and destructive tendencies among adolescents inventory. The instrument has face and content validity. The reliability indices for the sub instrument are environmental violence r = .89 family upbringing, r =.90, peer group influence .r.86 = and destructive tendencies .96. Regression statistical tool was used to analyze the data. The findings of this study showed that environmental violence, family upbringing is significantly related to destructive tendencies among adolescents while peer group pressure does not encourage it. It was recommended that parents should create time to be with their children and monitor their behaviours.

Key words: Environmental violence, family upbringing, peer influence, destructive tendencies, adolescents.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years adolescents have been arrested for serious crimes which include drugs, rape, armed robbery and kidnapping (Okorodudu, 2010). Eke (2004) classified crimes carried out by adolescents into two groups known as the status and criminal offences, which she pointed out are two types of delinquent behaviors in adolescents. She went further to give examples of the two groups mentioned above and stated that status offences include crimes such as truancy or eloping from one’s home, while criminal examples are indiscriminate use of drugs rape, armed robbery and kidnapping.

Destructive tendencies amongst adolescents have become rampant, in addition, irrational behavior among adolescents started as far back as two millennia ago (Okorodudu, 2010). Before now, it was associated with crimes such as shoplifting and petty theft (Okorodudu, 2010).

Wright (2006) stated that “adolescent violent behavior is a public and social health problem of national concern which has immediate and long-term physical, psychological and social consequences”. Bergman and Magnusson (1997), Kokko and Pulkkinen (2000) argued

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that aggression in adolescents is as a result of their poor academic performance. They tend to be frustrated with how they performed in school and turn to violence for their solution because most of the time they admit it makes them feel better because they tend to take out their frustration on someone else or something else. However Okorodudu (2010) argues that violence in adolescents is an outcome of their family background or how they were brought up. She suggests that an adolescent that stays in an environment that lacks parental love and care would definitely be willing to participate in violent acts.

There are so many other factors associated with the delinquent behaviors in adolescents. This article investigates environmental violence, peer influence and family upbringing as factors that would lead to the positive or negative behaviors of adolescents in our society. Adolescence period is the development from childhood to adulthood and is accompanied by several changes, amongst which includes emotional and physical changes (Peterson and Taylor, 1980; Simmons and Blyth, 1987). During this period, parents often realize that the influence of peers on their child’s behavior might increase and this may be due to the fact that the child might no longer see his/her parent as a role model in some particular areas of his/her life and may turn to peers for advice (Cogner and Rueter, 1996; Jessor and Jessor, 1997).

Violence tendency is reported to be composed of violence related feelings, thoughts and behaviors of individuals. It is defined as harmful actions directed at people in many areas such as psychological, emotional, sexual, economic, physical and social (Haskan, 2012). Bac and Ozben (2011), in their study, reported that when examining studies related to violence, adolescence is thought to be the most important of the periods, thereby posing a risk of the emergence of violent behaviors. It is stated that as adolescents consider themselves unimportant, their tendency to violence increases. In another study, it was reported that 75% of young people have either been exposed to or witnessed violence in school, media and home environments in this period and this tends to induce violent tendencies and violence as a way of solving their problems (Ayan, 2007; Korkut-Owen, 2008; Miller and Pedro, 2006).

Furthermore, violence has been viewed in two dimensions: a behavioral dimension that implies the use of hostile conduct with the intention of causing damage, and an intentional dimension which is used as a means to achieve someone’s own interest (Anderson and Bushman, 2002).

Environmental violence is a complex phenomenon which is very difficult to understand because it produces and reinforces certain harms. It deals with issues related to emotions, attitudes and beliefs shared by a group of individuals, which determines their negative perception of other individuals. It results when this attitude ends up destroying other individual’s ability to appreciate others as they are (Vila, 2003).

Drug abuse is one of the destructive tendencies of adolescents. “Attributing drug abuse to environmental influences such as socio-economic factors has an intuitive appeal” (Howard, 1993; Webster, 1985). It has been suggested that living in a destitute neighborhood is a risk factor for problems associated with adolescent behaviors including drug abuse (Dryfoos, 1990). However, Jeynes (2011) argues that participating actively in youth activities or church programs improves ethical awareness and responsibility in adolescents and increases contact opportunities with others holding similar values and beliefs thereby providing a network of trust, cooperation and support that will discourage the adolescent from violent behaviors (Jeynes, 2011). It also reduces the tendencies of adolescents in indulging in activities that can cause harm. This is because adolescents who devote more time to religious and spiritual activities will have little or no time to be involved in any form of violence. In addition, "through this religious affiliation friendships develop that are conducive to health enhancing behavior rather than health compromising ones" (Litchfield et al., 1997). Eke (2004) opined that school location may be a contributing factor to destructive tendency of adolescents since environment influences the behavior of adolescents. It implies that students from urban schools would behave differently from students in rural schools. Another environmental factor that can be linked to environmental violence is media. Studies have shown that “exposure to violent media increases aggression (Anderson and Bushman, 2002; Bushman and Anderson, 2001).

In another study by Anderson and Dill (2000), it was found that any negative effects from playing video games, watching violent movies is always very overwhelming for adolescents and can lead to irrational behaviors (Uhlmann and Swansonson, 2004). In addition, “trait aggression, teacher-reported, self-reported and peer-reported aggressive behavior correlates with exposure to violent television shows and video games” (Anderson and Dill, 2000; Uhlmann and Swanson, 2004; Singer and Singer, 1983). Similarly, Anderson and Dill (2000) averred that repeated exposure to violent media is responsible for aggressive thoughts and actions thus increasing the likelihood that the individual would behave in an unlikely manner especially when frustrated or provoked.

Family is defined as the process by which people acquire values, beliefs, norms and forms of behavior considered appropriate in the society in which they belong (Musitu and Cava, 2002). Therefore studies have addressed parental influence on the acquisition and development of behavior, values and beliefs. Some characteristics of the family system seem to be associated in a great extent to the development of behavioral problems in children. This is evident when the family
socialization process is altered by factors such as an erratic discipline, frequent conflicts or lack of parental support.

Studies by Lambert and Cashwell (2003) revealed that a negative family environment characterized by negative or poor communication with parents has negative effect on the development of behavioral problems in the adolescent period. In the same vein studies by Crawford-Brown (1999) and Cummings et al. (2003) opined that the presence of family conflict and strategies used by parents to resolve such conflicts also plays a vital role with behavioral problems in children.

The influence of family upbringing on adolescent behavior has been the object of increasing analysis in recent years (McLean, 2003). Positive relationships within the family, parental discipline style, support and supervision tend to be linked in a negative way to adolescent deviant behavior (Fergusson and Horwood, 1999; Patterson, 1982; Dishion and Bank, 1984). Sankey and Huon (1999) argued that families where parents and their children are not in good terms or where parents cannot handle their children, is as a result of the fact that these parents were not good role models and engaged in discipline strategies that were ineffective. Similarly, Barnes and Farrell (1992) supported the above statement by stating that adolescent misbehavior is as a result of little or no parental support. Parents who are harsh and inconsistent in discipline might provoke the adolescent’s probability, to engage in unruly behaviors (Conger and Rueter, 1996; Heimer, 1997). Dysfunctional homes due to either separation or death of a parent or both parents may predispose adolescents to indulge in activities that are considered illegal or inappropriate (Boroffice, 2003). Consequently, the neglected adolescent would gradually become a rapist, cultist, ritualist, drug addict, among other antisocial behaviors (Okpako, 2004) while an adolescent well brought up will remain a source of joy and happiness to the family. However, Adaif and Ivis (1996), Demo and Acock (1996) stated that the overall relationship between a child and his parent, the perception the child has of the parent such as how loving, caring and attentive the parent might be are factors that might lead to good adolescent behaviors or improved adolescent behavior.

Another very important factor responsible for children’s psychosocial and behavioral adjustment is parenting style. According to Baumrind (1991), parenting styles are categorized under three forms: the authoritarian, authoritative or democratic and permissive or laissez-faire or un-involving or self-indulgence. The authoritarian parenting styles constitutes of parents who are harsh, strict and demand their children live by their rules and regulations (Mg and Groh, 2006). While, flexibility is the characteristic of authoritative parents. They always respond to their child’s need and although flexible, they still find a way of enforcing reasonable standard of conducts. The laissez-faire parent tends to impose few restriction and regulations thereby giving their children the opportunity to live their life’s the way they deem fit. Studies have shown that adolescents from authoritarian homes do not usually present behavioral problems (Weiss and Schwarz, 1996; Miller et al., 1993) although when discipline and punishment are too rigid, the probability of the adolescent engaging in anti-social behaviors becomes higher (Gerard and Buehler, 1999; Loeb et al., 2000). On the other hand, children with un-involved parents tend to have behavior problems. Similarly some researchers pointed out that children from indulgent homes are more likely to be involved in behavioural problems (Weiss and Schwarz, 1996). Others however remark that these children show behavioral adjustment as good as those from authoritative homes (Nusitu and Garcia, 2004). It can be explained that the specific culture where the studies were carried out could be responsible.

Another study (Mccord, 1999) established the fact that family history has been studied in relation to violent behavior of children. It was observed that this is an association through the modeling effect the parents pass on their behavior to the children, and in some cases the older siblings unto the younger ones. The fact that an older sibling shows some violent behaviors is considered a risk factor for the future misbehavior of the younger one (Slomkowski et al., 2001).

Ang and Groh (2006) reported that the parenting style that has a negative outcome as regards to behavior is the authoritarian parenting style while the authoritative parenting style is the opposite of this as it seems to have a more positive effect on the behavior of adolescents. According to Utti (2006), although the authoritative style has a negative effect on adolescents, the permissive parenting style is more prone to irrational behaviors in adolescents. Spooner (1999) agrees with this as she describes “family as the most influential factor in raising an adolescent”. In other words, the influence of family on adolescent behavior is of utmost importance because it deals with factors about family communication, management, and parental role modelling (Hawkins et al., 1985; Merikangas et al., 1998). These family factors include ineffective parental family management techniques such as indiscipline (Patterson et al., 1992), communication patterns such as criticism or passing blame (Hawkins et al., 1985), lack of communication and affection with children and little or no bonding with the family (Brook et al., 1990).

In conclusion therefore, adolescents who have experienced traumatizing life events such as neglect, sexual, physical and emotional abuse as a result of being brought up with the permissive parenting style or in an environment with a single parent have the tendency of being associated with criminal, suicidal or self-destructive behaviors (Dansky et al., 1994; Hussey, 1996).

As children enter adolescence, their social interactions undergo some form of transformation which is responsible
for difference in their interpersonal relationships. The relationship becomes more stable, but the most significant change is the consolidation of peer groups. Peer relationships then, are powerful gender socializing agent during a crucial period of life; the adolescent learns norms, behaviors, and attitudes regarding friendship not only from adults but from boys and girls of the same age.

It has been observed that one factor associated with impulsive in behavioral problems in adolescence is social acceptance by peers. Bierman et al. (1993), in their study discovered that high rate of violence is shown in adolescents rejected by their peers. However, other studies suggest that not all adolescents rejected by their peers are violent and not all violent adolescents are rejected by their peers (Graham and Juvonen, 2002). Peer pressure during adolescent stage therefore plays a large part in the individuals’ life and somehow replaces the family as the center of the adolescent leisure and social activities” (Mclean, 2003).

Because adolescence is a time most children begin to distance themselves from their parents and other siblings (Coleman, 1961), peers tend to have greater influence on them than their siblings or parents particularly if family relationships are weak (Conger and Rueter, 1996). On the other hand, it would seem that situations where both parents are workaholics or the adolescent is living with a single parent, the amount of time they spend in the company of their friends might be greater than ever. Even though parents might have an influence on the peer selection of their children to the extent that the association with peers is voluntarily chosen by the child, adolescents are actively involved in forming their friendship groups. Hence Thomberry (1994) stated that only “deviant adolescents will seek out deviant peers”. However, it is usually the case that adolescents who are likely prone to problematic behavior always tend to associate themselves with peers who think or act like them and this association tends to encourage and reinforce problematic behavior (Kandel, 1978, Snyder and Huntley, 1990). Therefore, the influence of peers tends to increase as the influence of family decreases.

Research indicates that children who are involved in antisocial peers earlier in life later on get involved with deviant peers (Dishion et al., 1991). However, strong relationship with family can alternate peer influences (Elliott et al., 1982) “because parental norms and behaviors are bound to influence adolescent’s attitudes and consequent attraction to a particular peer group” (Dielman et al., 1990). In conclusion, destructive tendencies of adolescents refer to a wide range of behaviors from socially unacceptable acts to violent and destructive illegal behaviors (Dryfoos, 1990). This article therefore tends to investigate the influence of family upbringing, environmental violence and peer on destructive tendencies of adolescents in Delta State University, Abraka.

The incidence of violence, armed robbery, kidnapping, drug abuse, terrorism and rape has become alarming. The adolescence period being a period of storm and stress, conflict with parents has to be handled with care (Egbule and Ugoji, 2000). Observation has shown that many parents spend little or no time with their children. Some travel to distant places for business and other engagement leaving the children at the mercy of nannies and guardians. Such children lack parental care and attention and may take solace in their peers since peer pressure is a force that gravitates friends together most times for evil or negative tendencies. The desire to belong and fear of rejection have led many into evil or immoral acts sometimes against their will.

The influence of home environment on the development of children is not in any way doubtful (Omede and Ochuba, 2000). Children live or die, thrive or wither due to the decision of their parents (Gushec, 2004). It is from the parent the child learns values, beliefs and other forms of behavior acceptable to the community. But the question is “How many parents model good moral character”? “How many of them give good attention to their children?” Because these adolescents live in a community, they become influenced by what goes on in the community, either directly or indirectly. The problem of the study put in an interrogative form is “what is the relationship between environmental violence, family upbringing, and peer influence on destructive tendencies of adolescents. In order to guide the study, the following research questions/hypotheses were raised.

Research questions
1. What is the relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies of adolescents.
2. Is there any relationship between peer influence and destructive tendencies of adolescents?
3. Is there any relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies of adolescents?

Hypotheses
1. There is no significant relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies of adolescence violence.
2. There is no significant relationship between environmental violence and destructive tendencies of adolescents.
3. There is no significant relationship between peer influence and destructive tendencies of adolescents.

Purpose of study
The general purpose of this study is to establish the relationship between environmental violence, family
upbringing and peer influence on destructive tendencies of adolescents when taken together and also to establish the relationship between each of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

Significance of study

This study would be beneficial to parents, adolescents, and non-governmental agencies. This study through its findings would create the necessary awareness among parents on the influence of environmental violence on destructive tendencies of adolescents. It will throw more light on the relevance of parents monitoring/ supervision on the present and future wellbeing of adolescents.

It will equip the adolescents with some dangers involved in delinquent acts thereby putting them on the path of caution. The findings would be useful to the government especially the Ministry of Health and Education who in collaboration with the non-governmental agencies would package effective and result oriented interventions on adolescents (their characteristics, interests, values).

Lastly it will contribute positively to the expansion of knowledge in the area of delinquent acts of the adolescents and serve as a reference tool for future researchers in the field.

METHODOLOGY

Design

The study adopted the descriptive design which is correlational in nature because it examined the relationship between environmental violence, family upbringing, peer influence and destructive tendencies in adolescents. Descriptive survey is the appropriate design for this study because it generally involves the collection of data from a defined population while describing the variables being studied. The target population for the study was 2000 Diploma students in the Institute of Education, Delta State University, Abraka, Nigeria for 2013/14 session. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select the sample size of 400 respondents. The respondents were stratified into different groups on the basis of gender and course of study.

Instruments

The instrument titled environmental violence, family upbringing, peer influence as correlates of destructive tendencies of adolescents was used (EVFUPIACDT) to gather data. The questionnaire comprised two (2) sections.

The first section solicited information on the biodata of the respondents like gender, age and the second Section was made up of three sub sections which solicited information on environmental violence, peer influence, family upbringing and destructive tendencies among adolescents.

Environmental violence

The instrument was also used to measure some environmental prone situations which activates destructive tendencies among the respondents such as; communal clashes, conflicts, political bigotry, religious intolerance, robbery, kidnapping and marginalization.

Peer influence

The effects of peer influence identified include; belonging to a cult group, use of slangs, getting involved in sexual immorality and use of drugs, while destructive tendencies involve; breaking institutionalized laws, extortion of money, truancy, bullying, substance abuse and engaging in aggressive behaviors.

Family upbringing

This includes effect of dysfunctional homes typified by divorce, intra parental or inters parental conflicts, homes that lack normal parental love and care, neglect by parents, lack of adequate supervision of children and faulty communication among family members.

The scoring was based on the four point scale of measurement of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The options were weighted in the four point scale format of SA=4, A=3, D=2 and SD=1.

The instrument has face and content validity. The reliability of the instrument was tested using cronbach alpha for estimating its internal consistency. This yielded a coefficient alpha of .96 > 0.05 level of significance. For environmental violence scale alpha yielded .90 < 0.05 family upbringing scale alpha yielded .90 < 0.05, peer group influence scale alpha yielded .86 < 0.05 and destructive tendencies had .96 , p < 0.05 level of significance. The instrument was therefore considered to have good reliability measures. However, gender and age were treated as bio-data; therefore did not go through the process of validation. Gender which is indicative of sex was weighted thus; Male= 0, Female= 1

METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected were analyzed using regression analysis.

RESULTS

Research Question 1

What is the relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies among adolescents?

Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies among adolescents.

The data gathered for answering the research question 1 and testing hypothesis 1 were processed using descriptive statistics and simple regression analysis. The results of the data analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that there was a positive linear relationship between destructive tendencies and family upbringing (r=0.28; p=0.00). The F value (F (1,398) =34.44; P=0.00) shows that the regression model is also significant. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative holds true. This implies that family upbringing influences the destructive tendencies of the
Table 1. Regression analysis on the relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>r²</th>
<th>Adj r²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>p</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>34.44</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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Coefficients in equation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>26.03</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family upbringing</td>
<td>.143</td>
<td>.282</td>
<td>5.87</td>
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Table 2. Regression analysis on the relationship between environmental violence and destructive tendencies.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>N</th>
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<th>r²</th>
<th>Adj r²</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>df</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>400</td>
<td>.208</td>
<td>.043</td>
<td>0.041</td>
<td>18.00</td>
<td>1,398</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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Coefficients in equation

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<th>B</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>22.79</td>
<td>29.91</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>.152</td>
<td>-.208</td>
<td>-4.243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents. The adjusted r² value of 0.08 shows that 8% of variance in destructive tendencies of the respondents was explained by their family upbringing. The Beta value of 0.282; P=0.00 shows that family upbringing is a positive predictor of destructive tendencies. The Beta value of 0.143 shows that a unit change in family upbringing of respondents will result in 0.143 units increase in the destructive tendencies of the respondents.

The constant t value (26.03); P=0.00 shows that there are other potent variables that should be included in this study.

Research question 2

What is the relationship between environmental violence and destructive tendencies of adolescents?

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between environmental violence and destructive tendencies of adolescents.

Table 2 shows that there was a significant positive linear relationship between environmental violence and destructive tendencies (r=.208; p=0.00). The F value (F(1,398) =18.00); P=0.00) shows that the regression model is also significant. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected and the alternative is upheld. This implies that environmental violence influences destructive tendencies of the respondents. The adjusted r² value of 0.041 shows that 4.1% of variance in destructive tendencies of the respondents was explained by environmental violence. The Beta value of -.208; p=0.00 shows that environmental violence is a negative predictor of destructive tendencies. The B value of 0.15 shows that a unit change in environmental violence of respondents will result in 0.152 unit increase in the destructive tendencies of the respondents. The constant t value (22.79); p=0.00 shows that there are other potent variables that are not in this study.

Research question 3

What is the relationship between peer group pressure and destructive tendencies of adolescents?

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between peer group pressure and destructive tendencies of adolescents.

Table 3 shows that there was no significant relationship between peer pressure and destructive tendencies (r=.036; p=.475). The F value (F(1,398)=.512; p=.475) shows that the regression model is not significant. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This implies that peer pressure does not influence destructive tendencies of the respondents. The adjusted r² value of 0.001 shows that 1% of variance in destructive tendencies of the respondents.
Table 3. Regression Analysis on the relationship between peer influence and destructive tendencies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>r²</th>
<th>Adj r²</th>
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<tr>
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<td>.512</td>
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<td>.475</td>
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Coefficients in equation

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<tr>
<th>B</th>
<th>Beta</th>
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<th>p</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
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<td>28.03</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer influence</td>
<td>.021</td>
<td>.036</td>
<td>-.715</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

The first finding indicates that there is a significant relationship between family upbringing and destructive tendencies of adolescents. The plausible reason for this finding is that the family is the first and major socializing agent of any individual; therefore if parents are bad role models, or the home a dysfunctional family, and permissive parenting styles adopted, it will predispose the adolescent to engage in inappropriate behavior which could be harmful to the environment. The finding agrees with Danskey et al. (1994) and Hussey (1996) who opined in their study that adolescents who experience traumatic life events such as neglect, abuse, permissive parenting style have the tendency of being associated with criminal, suicidal, or destructive behaviors.

It is therefore not surprising that researchers indicate that the family environment is an important variable in the development of destructive tendencies. Gorman-Smith and Tolman (1998) in their study reported that parental conflict and parental aggressiveness are predictors of violent tendencies in adolescents. Furthermore they discovered that adolescents are more likely to resort to violence if there is violence within the relationships shared in their family. Similarly, Flannery et al. (1999) reported that adolescents without parental supervision are more likely to engage in delinquent acts. It therefore appears that there is a relationship between family arrangements and destructive behaviors in children.

The second finding revealed a significant relationship between environmental violence and adolescent destructive tendencies. The reason for this finding is that environmental violence is a complex phenomenon that produces and reinforces certain harms to individuals in that vicinity. The phenomenon influences the emotions, attitudes and beliefs of the victims which crystallizes into aggressive thoughts and actions thus increasing the likelihood of the individual behaving in an unlikely manner especially when frustrated or provoked.

Furthermore, the environment of this study is garnished with violent activities which include communal clashes, political bigotry, kidnapping, bullying, substance abuse, extortion of money, truancy, and armed robbery. These factors in turn activate negative emotions which crystallizes into destructive tendencies that affect everyone in the environment negatively especially the adolescents. This finding agrees with Anderson and Dill (2000), Anderson and Bushman (2000); who observed that exposure to environmental violence increases aggressive behaviours on the victims.

The third finding of this study showed no significant relationship between peer influence and adolescent destructive tendencies. The respondents in the study attested that their peers do not influence their destructive tendencies. This further explains that the environment where the study was conducted is also filled with violent activities; therefore the students no longer need any external influence since the negative activities have become part of their practice. This finding is at variance with the findings of Ebenuwa-Okoh and Onoyase (2014) whose finding revealed that friends of adolescents have stronghold on their lives because of the search for autonomy and role identity. Similarly, Steinberg and Monaham (2007) in their study reported peer influence as a primary contextual factor contributing to adolescent heightened tendency to make risky decisions. This is evident in crime statistics which indicated that adolescents typically commit delinquent acts in peer groups, and that one of the strongest predictors of delinquent behavior in adolescents in affiliation with delinquent peers (Zimring, 1998). No wonder family behaviors particularly parental monitoring and discipline seem to influence association with delinquent peers.

Conclusion

This study established that family upbringing and environmental violence aids destructive tendencies among adolescents. However, the study further established that peer group did not influence the destructive tendencies among adolescents. Therefore to reduce delinquency among children, parents should, as a matter of necessity,
to inculcate right values in the children early enough so that it becomes the way of life, before peer age.

**Implications for counselling practice**

This study has practical and clinical implications for family and child rearing practices. Parents should create adequate time to interact effectively with the children, so that they can monitor and assess their challenges. Adequate love, warmth, care among other positive caring affections should be provided by parents for effective parenting communication and establishment of mutual and cordial relationship between parents and adolescents. This is paramount for good and positive interpersonal relationship between adolescents and parents. Parents should be good models.

**Conflict of Interests**

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

**REFERENCES**


