

***Parental Factors and Deviant Behaviour Tendencies of Secondary School Students in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria***

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**Abstract**

*This study examined Parental factors and deviant behaviour tendencies of secondary school students in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Two hypotheses were formulated to direct the study and tested at .05 level of significance. Stratified random sampling technique was used to sample 592 Senior Secondary School II (SS II) students. The instrument used for the study was a 41-item, modified 4-point Likert scale type questionnaire titled "Parental Factors and Deviant Behaviour Tendencies Questionnaire (PFDBTQ)." The Cronbach coefficient alpha of .86 was obtained as the reliability estimate of the PFDBTQ, while that of sub-variables ranged from .71 to .88. One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Independent t-test were used to test the hypotheses. The results showed that parenting styles significantly influence students' deviant behaviours in terms of examination malpractice, indiscipline, truancy and stealing. It was recommended that Students should face similar punishment irrespective of their class, sex, age or social background, for deviant conducts in school.*

**Keywords:** parental, factors, deviant, behaviour, school

**Introduction**

Parents are the bedrock of attitude and value formation, both positively and negatively. The child first learns his social roles through imitation of the parents, and later through internalized patterns and principles of behaviour in the older siblings. In the family, the child is expected to learn appropriate behaviour pattern, values, attitudes, and norms from the parents so that he/she can function well in the society. Some of the students in Calabar Education Zone also have the tendency of exhibiting deviant behaviours which include examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy, stealing, lateness to school, loitering during school hours and absenteeism. These behaviour tendencies have been of great concern to principals, teachers, school counsellors, and other stakeholders of the school system. Some measures have been taken by school principals by ways of expulsion, teachers also have flogged and punished some of these deviant students, school counsellors have held counselling sessions with such students in their various schools; yet, deviant behaviour in schools still persists. The

effect of deviant behaviour in the various schools cannot be overemphasized, as it interrupts learning.

Inability of parents to provide the basic needs of their children may result in making students exhibit deviant behaviour tendency. The religious background of students may also lead to a student having deviant behaviour. Parent's educational background may also have influence on student's deviant's behaviour. This is because some parents may have little or no knowledge about the educational activity of their children since they can barely read and write. Parents have an enormous influence on their children's behaviour because they are their first teacher. What the students learn from their parent in their first 18 years of their lives will impact on their children for the rest of their lives.

According to Milevsky (2008), parenting is a complicated occupation that requires many different skills that work in concert to influence a child's behaviour. He categorizes parenting styles into four, including authoritarian, authoritative, permissive and laissez-faire. According to him, authoritarian parents are highly controlling; they do not expect their children to express disagreement with their decision and rules, but do expect them to obey without explanation. He also sees authoritative parents as being warm; they communicate well with their children, and are both demanding and responsive. Parents of this parenting style are able to stay in authority and expect maturity from their children. They respect their children's opinions and also maintain their own positions. This parenting style permits children enough freedom of expression so that they develop a sense of independence but know the boundaries of rules and obey. In permissive parenting style, parents do not offer much discipline. They tend to be lenient and may only step in when there is a serious problem. Children who grow up with permissive parents tend to struggle academically. They exhibit more behavioural problems as they will likely not appreciate authority and rules. They often have low self-esteem (Olafsson, 2001). In laissez-faire parenting style, parents tend to be neglectful. They often do not meet their children's basic needs and may expect children to raise themselves. When parents are uninvolved, students tend to lack self-esteem and they perform poorly, academically. They also exhibit frequent behaviour problems and rank low in happiness (Plotnik, 2010). Parenting styles influence the acquisition of deviant behaviour among children between the age of 8-18 years (Mwandoto, 2006).

Ali (2012) investigated the impact of family background on the academic achievement of Junior Secondary school Students in Abua Odua Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria; the study revealed that parenting styles of parents and home conveniences influenced academic achievements of students. On their part, Fawole and Awomisi (2010) also revealed in their study that authoritarian parenting style is

the most dominant style of parenting in Nigeria. It is commonly argued that most students who exemplify deviant behaviour are likely to have come from poor parenting background, and some are either products of polygamous homes or broken homes (Malayi, 2013).

Intact parenting refers to a complete home or two parents home where the upbringing of the children is carried out by both father and mother (Agu, 2005). Intact homes have both parents living in the same house and are expected to share responsibilities, love and care. Each parent in the home is designated and each person works to satisfy his or her role for the functionality of the family. Denga and Denga (2007) and Mead (2010) maintained that the intact family is technically the ideal type of family because of the stable emotional climate existing among parents and children. In a study of children and family dissolution, Goode (2013) found out that children parented in happy and intact families were more likely to grow happily, well-disciplined and psychologically healthier than children from single parent's homes.

Single parenting refers to a method in which the task of children's upbringing is handled by one person (Denga & Denga, 2007). Saxton (2007) views single parenting as a family where one parent to a child may be absent temporarily or permanently. According to Uwe and Obot (2000), single parenting is a complete deviation from the traditional norm of the jointly bearing and bringing up of children. Coukline (2005) further revealed that, in single parent families, children suffer some psychological and social problems which affect their academic performance. Similarly, Okunniyi (2004) asserted that children who suffer maternal and paternal deprivation may experience academic, problems including truancy in the school. This is because the child may lack some essential needs like school fees, books etc.

Agu (2005), in his study, admits that life in a single parent family can be very stressful for both the child and parent. Such families are faced with the challenges of diminished financial resources, assumptions of new roles and responsibilities, emergence of new patterns in intra-familial interactions and re-organization of routines and schedules. Kimani (2014) revealed that, there was a strong correlation between mother and a child having come from an intact family. For single parent family parenthood, there was a strong correlation between street life, sex and defilement offences. Children brought up in a step-parent home had a strong inclination towards substance abuse but the correlation was greater for stealing and refusing school. He concluded that single parenthood families were the most significant for all offences in the study except murder.

### **Research questions**

The following research questions were formulated for this study:

1. To what extent does parenting style influence students' deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy and stealing?
2. How do students of single parent homes differ from those of intact parent home in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy and stealing?

### **Statement of hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated as a guide to this study:

1. Parenting styles do not significantly influence students' deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy and stealing.
2. Students from single parent home are not significantly different from students in intact homes in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, and truancy and stealing.

### **Methodology**

Ex-post facto research design was adopted in this study. The use of Ex-post facto research design is justified since the study looked at sub-variables of the independent variables which can be said to be already interacting with the dependent variables, as such the influence of the sub-variables on the dependent variables have already occurred and there was no attempt at manipulation. The study was conducted in Cross River State. The population of this study comprised of all Senior Secondary II students in 81 public secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria in the 2015/2016 academic year. At the time of this research, the population stood at 5,918 SS II students (State Secondary Education Board, Calabar, 2016). The sampling technique adopted in the study was stratified random sampling technique. To do this, the Education Zone was stratified based on the seven Local Government Areas. For even spread of the sample in each local government, 10 percent of public schools was randomly drawn for the study, this amounted to a total of 11 sampled schools. From the total of 5,918 SS II students in the secondary schools of the study area, a sample of 592 (10 percent) of students was drawn for the study.

An instrument titled, "Parental Factors and Deviant Behaviour Tendencies Questionnaire" (PFDBTQ) was used for data collection. The instrument consists of sections "A to E". Section "A" elicited demographic information such as sex, age, and highest parent educational level. Sections B to E were made up of 41 items which were designed to collect information from the students with regards to their parenting styles, needs satisfaction, religious background and deviant behaviour tendencies. Section B had nine items, while eight items each were generated for sections C and D. The response options for section B were Strongly Agree (4 points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point). For section C, it included Very Satisfied (4 points), Satisfied (3 points), Dissatisfied (2 points), and Very Dissatisfied (1 point). Section D had Very Frequent (4 points), Frequent (3 points), Sometimes (2

points) and Never (1 point). Section E of the instrument was made up of items number 26 to 41, which were designed to measure deviant behaviour tendencies with response options including Very Often (4 points), Often (3 points), Sometimes (2 points), and Never (1 point). The magnitude of the points were reversed when the statement is negative. Thus, the instrument was made up of four point scale. The administration process yielded 100% result. The obtained data were analyzed using t-test and the One-Way ANOVA.

### **Presentation of Results**

**Ho1:** Parenting styles do not significantly influence students' deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy and stealing.

**Table 1:** Group Mean and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Parenting Styles on Students' Deviant Behaviour Tendencies

<b>Deviant Behaviour</b>	<b>Parenting styles</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
Examination Malpractice	Autocratic	150	9.00	1.97
	Democratic	154	9.71	2.89
	Laissez-faire	288	8.07	2.64
	Total	595	8.73	2.64
Disrespect	Autocratic	150	10.91	2.75
	Democratic	154	13.28	2.26
	Laissez-faire	288	10.46	3.38
	Total	595	11.30	3.43
Truancy	Autocratic	150	12.26	2.54
	Democratic	154	12.66	2.96
	Laissez-faire	288	11.35	3.33
	Total	595	11.92	3.09
Stealing	Autocratic	150	12.90	2.54
	Democratic	154	11.24	3.09
	Laissez-faire	288	11.81	3.20
	Total	595	11.94	3.07
Overall Deviant Behaviour	Autocratic	150	45.07	5.44
	Democratic	154	46.89	6.29
	Laissez-faire	288	41.69	7.88
	Total	595	43.89	7.28

**Table 2:** Result of the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of the influence of parenting styles on students deviant behaviour tendencies (N=592)

Deviant behaviour	source of Variation	SS	Df	MS	F-ratio	P-level
Examination malpractice	Between groups	280.990	2	140.495	21.595*	.000
	Within groups	3843.233	589	6.536		
	Total	4124.233	591			
Disrespect	Between groups	825.989	2	412.995	39.750*	.000
	Within groups	6109.19	589	10.39		
	Total	6935.178	591			
Truancy	Between groups	195.637	2	97.818	10.518*	.000
	Within groups	5468.465	589	9.300		
	Total	5664.102	591			
Stealing	Between groups	218.020	2	109.010	11.966*	.000
	Within groups	5356.663	589	9.110		
	Total	5574.684	591			
Overall deviant behaviour	Between groups	2980.750	2	1490.375	30.955*	.000
	Within groups	28310.319	589	48.147		
	Total	31291.069	591			

\*p<.05, Critical Value F<sub>2,589</sub>=2.99.

Table 1 showed the mean and standard deviation of the variables in the hypothesis, while table 2 showed the actual ANOVA results. The results revealed calculated F-ratios for Examination malpractice (21.59), disrespect (39.75), Truancy (10.51), Stealing (11.96) and overall deviant behaviours (30.95) respectively were all found to be greater than the critical F-ratio of 2.99. With these results, the null hypothesis was

rejected at .05 level of significance with 2 and 589 degrees of freedom. This implies that parenting styles have significant influence on each of the four dimensions of students' deviant behaviour tendencies as well as in the overall deviant behaviour tendencies. The direction of this influence was examined through using the Bonferroni post Hoc test analysis. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 3.

The post Hoc result, as presented in table 3, using the significant two-tail and the mean difference significant at .05 revealed that in the aspect of examination malpractice, there was a significant difference between all the categories of parenting styles. Between autocratic, democratic parenting styles (.706\*, .000\*), laissez-faire and autocratic parenting styles (.927\*, .000\*) and laissez-faire and democratic parenting styles (1.633\*, .000\*). In the aspect of disrespect, the post Hoc results revealed significant difference between autocratic and democratic parenting styles (2.374\*, .000\*), laissez-faire and democratic parenting styles (2.819\*, .000\*). There was no significant difference between autocratic and laissez-faire parenting styles. For truancy, the post Hoc result showed significant difference between laissez-faire and autocratic parenting styles (.913\*, .000\*) and significance between laissez-faire and democratic parenting styles (1.313\*, .000\*) which is in the relationship between democratic and laissez-faire parenting styles, laissez-faire and autocratic parenting styles respectively. For stealing, there was a significant difference between democratic and autocratic parenting styles (1.658\*, .000\*), and significance between laissez-faire and autocratic parenting styles (1.094\*, .000\*) which is the same relationship between autocratic and laissez-faire parenting styles and autocratic and democratic parenting styles respectively. Finally, in the aspect of overall deviant behaviours, the post Hoc result revealed a significant difference between laissez-faire and autocratic parenting styles (3.379\*, .000\*) and significant difference between autocratic, laissez-faire and democratic parenting styles (5.201\*, .000\*), which is the same relationship between autocratic and laissez-faire parenting styles and democratic and laissez-faire parenting styles respectively.

**Table 3:** Bonferroni post hoc test of the influence of parenting styles on students' deviant behaviour tendencies

Variables	Parenting style (1)	Parenting style (2)	I-J	Std. Error	P-level
Examination malpractice	Autocratic	Democratic	-706*	.294	.000
		Laissez-faire	.927*	.257	.000
	Democratic	Autocratic	.706	.294	.000
		Laissez-faire	1.633*	.256	.000
Disrespect	Autocratic	Democratic	-927	.257	.000
		Democratic	-1.633*	.256	.000
		Laissez-faire	-2.374*	.370	.000
	Democratic	Laissez-faire	.445	.325	.000
		Autocratic	.2.374*	.370	.000
		Laissez-faire	2.819*	.322	.000
Truancy	Autocratic	Democratic	-445	.325	.000
		Democratic	-2.819*	.322	.000
		Laissez-faire	-400	.350	.000
	Democratic	Laissez-faire	.913*	.307	.000
		Autocratic	.400	.350	.000
		Laissez-faire	1.313*	.305	.000
Stealing	Autocratic	Democratic	-913*	.307	.000
		Democratic	-1.313*	.347	.000
		Laissez-faire	1.658*	.302	.000
	Democratic	Laissez-faire	.1.094*	.304	.000
		Autocratic	.1.658*	.302	.000
		Laissez-faire	-564	.797	.000
Overall deviant behaviour	Autocratic	Democratic	1.094*	.699	.000
		Democratic	.564	.797	.000
		Laissez-faire	-1.822	.699	.000
	Democratic	Laissez-faire	3.379*	.797	.000
		Autocratic	1.822	.694	.000
		Laissez-faire	5.201*	.669	.000
		Autocratic	.694	.669	.000
		Democratic	-3.379*	.669	.000
		Democratic	1.50		.000



**Ho2:** Students from single parent home are not significantly different from students in intact homes in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, and truancy and stealing.

**Table 4:** Independent t-test analysis of the difference between students from a single parent home and students from an intact home in terms of deviant behaviour tendencies

<b>Deviant behaviour</b>	<b>Type of home</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>t</b>	<b>P-level</b>
Examination malpractice	Intact home	328	7.77	1.75	170.27*	.000
	Single home	264	9.95	3.07		
Disrespect	Intact home	328	9.45	3.33	171.99*	.000
	Single home	264	13.60	1.74		
Truancy	Intact home	328	10.86	3.22	65.99*	.000
	Single home	264	13.23	2.31		
Stealing	Intact home	328	12.73	2.70	24.31*	.000
	Single home	264	10.96	3.22		
Overall deviant behaviour	Intact home	328	40.82	6.72	22.92*	.000
	Single home	264	47.74	6.01		

\*p<05, df = 590, Critical t = 1.96, N = 592

The analysis of result presented in table 4 pointed out that the calculated t-values for Examination malpractice (170.27), disrespect (172.99), Truancy (65.99), Stealing (24.31) and overall deviant behaviour tendencies (22.92) were all found to be greater than the critical t-value of 1.96. With these results, the null hypothesis was rejected at .05 level of significance and 590 degree of freedom. This implies that students of a single parent home are significantly different from students who grow up under an intact home in each of the four dimensions of students' school deviant behaviours as well as in the overall deviant behaviour tendencies. But specifically, students from intact home exhibited moderate deviant behaviour while students from single parents home exhibited high level of deviant behaviour.

### **Discussion of findings**

The result of hypothesis one as presented in table 2 revealed that parenting styles have a significant influence on students deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy, stealing and overall deviant behaviour tendencies. Particularly, the findings pointed out that students from laissez-faire homes

have a high level of deviant behaviour tendencies, followed by those students from autocratic homes, while students from democratic homes showed a low level of deviant behaviours. This implies that, where there is increase in interaction between parents and children at home, students are more likely to increase in their good behaviour. This could be explained by the fact that students from democratic family are aware of the need of being positive in their thoughts because their parents provide them with all their needs, whereas for laissez-faire and autocratic homes, the opposite is the case, which results in deviant behaviours. This finding is in line with the findings of Milevsky (2008) who stated that parenting is a complicated occupation that requires many different skills that work in concert to influence a child's behaviour. It also agrees with Agu (2005) who revealed that parenting styles of students and home convenience have a significant influence on students' deviant behaviours.

The result of hypothesis two as indicated in table 4 revealed that students of a single parent home are significantly different from students who grow up under an intact home in their deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy, stealing and overall deviant behaviours. This finding therefore pointed out that there exists a significant difference between students from a single parent home and students from an intact home.

From these findings, it could be explained that most often students who have single parents lack adequate parenting care since the single parent could not do the job that intact parents could do. As such, most of these students have high freedom of indulging in a lot of unpleasant activities than students from intact homes. Hence, these students also quickly get in contact with bad companies who might introduce them into various types of deviant behaviours in the school environment. Finally, in single parenting homes, the absence of one of the parents also exposes the children to inadequate guidance. Such children roam the streets and indulge in deviant acts like examination malpractice, truancy and stealing.

These findings are in agreement with the findings of Uranta (2014) who stated that children from single parents home were significantly different from children who grow up under an intact home in terms of drug abuse, telling lies, stealing and sexual offences. According to Uranta (2014), this was attributed to the fact that neither of the parents in broken homes wants to take responsibility for the children's needs. The findings also agree with that of Irozuru and Eno (2015) who stated that single parenting family significantly influence students' aggressive behaviours in schools. According to them, this was attributed to the fact that most of these children in a single parent homes have a high freedom of movement than children in intact homes, as such this children quickly get in contact with bad friends who introduce them into being aggressive and stubborn.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that parenting styles significantly influence students' deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy and stealing. Also children who grow up under intact homes are significantly different from children who grow up under a single parent home in their deviant behaviour tendencies in terms of examination malpractice, disrespect, truancy and stealing.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Parents should be encouraged by the School Counsellor to make provision for their children's needs at home or amicably appeal to them, where every effort to meet up their demands fail.
2. Parents should be encouraged by the school authority to initiate religious activities in the home, rather than limiting to only religious place of worship.
3. Students, irrespective of their class, sex, age and social background should be given the same level of punishment if found guilty on the ground of deviant conducts in school.

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