



Family Types And Social Adjustment Of Youths In Obio-Akpor Local Government Area

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the influence of family types on the social adjustment of youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. The study chose three home types which were single, monogamous and polygamous home types. The study was guided by three research questions and their corresponding null hypotheses. Expost-facto research design was adopted with a sample size of 200 youths drawn from the LGA. A researcher-developed instrument titled Family Type and *Social Adjustment Inventory* (FTSAI) was used for data collection which was validated by experts. Reliability analysis showed that the instrument had a coefficient of 0.71. Mean and standard deviation were used for answering the research questions, while independent samples t-test were used for testing the null hypothesis. Results revealed that female youths were more socially adjusted than male youths from single, monogamous and polygamous homes. On the basis of the results, appropriate recommendations were made.

Keywords: Family type, youths, social adjustment

INTRODUCTION

Youths are among the greatest assets that nation can have. Not only are they legitimately regarded as future leaders, they are potentially and actually the greatest investment for a country's development. Young women and men are, in particular, recognized as a vital resource whose future prospects are inextricably tied to that of their country. They are the valued possession of any nation or region. Without them there can be no future. They are the center of reconstruction and development. They serve as a good measure of the extent to which a country can reproduce as well as sustain itself. The extent of their vitality, responsible conduct, and roles in society is positively correlated with the development of their country. For the first time in history, the number of people in the world aged 12 - 24 is the largest ever. According to the latest report by the United Nations in 2017, there are over 1.8 billion individual within this age bracket and suggested that with current dynamics, is only bound to increase. (United Nations, 2017).

According to the National Population Commission, 2018, the population of Nigeria is over 180 million, with about one-third of her population being between the ages brackets of 10 to 30 years. The Nigerian National Youth policy (2009:2), defines youth as comprising all young persons between the ages 18 and 35 years who are citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The immense size of this unique population makes it imperative to understand, consider, integrate and protect their interest in the nation's development.

The genesis of individual development starts with the coming together of two individuals of opposite sex, who through sexual intercourse gives birth to a child and this starts a family. From this humble beginning, everyone on earth starts as an infant, then a child and subsequently a youth and an adult. The family a child comes from holds immense impact on the later development and behaviour. The family structure, or

as would be used in the current study home type has a critical influence on an individual adjustment both emotionally, socially, academically (Adenike, 2013).

The organization of the family has direct effect on the children. The first social relationship of children is familial, where children acquire their first experiences of being treated as persons in their own right. Children receive care for their dependency and attention for their sociability. The kind of care and attention children receive during their early years of life affect their handling of important issues, such as trust vs. distrust and autonomy vs. shame according to Erikson Theory. This ability equips children for establishing later ties with people outside the family. Newborns are unaware that they are separate and distinct persons. However, as time goes by, they become aware that they are separate from their mothers and that there are other members of the household. Children learn that others have interests, wishes, and ways of their own. Children growing up in a household shared with other siblings learn that they have to share the resources of the household. Children learn the ways in which their cooperation is sought and welcomed and the ways in which they may compete for what they want (Elkin & Handel, 2008). According to The Family Pediatrics Report (2003), when the family environment enables their needs to be met, children generally turn out well, both socially and psychologically, and their parents are satisfied with their lives and marriages. Throughout the children's dependent years, families provide them with food, clothing, and shelter, a safe and clean environment, adequate supervision, and access to necessary health care and education. In a family, children also receive support, come to feel loved, valued, and competent. Children are provided with companionship and learn to believe in a shared set of values. Families, especially parents, play a fundamental role in forming the values of children. The ability to cope with and adjust to life problems and demands is based upon the psychological foundations of early family experiences (Goldsmith, 2000).

The period of youth is one in which individual spend more time outside the family with others either in school, workplace, religious center etc. and the ability to handle social relationship is called social adjustment. The concept of social adjustment has been used differently both in terminology and operationalization. Some scholars have used it interchangeably with social integration (Flower, 2006) or social competence (Ginsburg, 2007).

According to Jain (2009) social adjustment refers to the effort made by an individual to cope with the standard, values, needs, norms of a society in order to be accepted. It involves conforming to societal direct and indirect demands so that one can fit as best as one can to societal expectations. Plato stated that 'man is a social animal', as such we live in a society where we form opinion about others and others hold opinion about us. We try to adjust accordingly to the norms of the society so that we can leave harmoniously with them. As defined by Gerdes and Mallinckrodt (2010), social adjustment is the process by which students become integrated into the campus community, build support networks, and negotiate the new freedoms afforded by adult life. According to Obinna (2015) social adjustment is the attainment of balance in social relationship aided by the appropriate application of social skill. From the foregoing social adjustment would be operationalized as the totality of effort made by an individual in order for individual to integrate and display the expected standard of behaviour in any society he finds himself. The society as stated above could be school, family, church, mosque, market and any other place where social interactions and relationships can be established or maintained.

As stated above, the family structure or home type may exerts significant influence on the social attitude and behaviour of a child. This, as well as indices on the subsequent social adjustment of a youth, who may have grown and left the house from direct parental influence. Several studies (Family Pediatrics Report, 2003) have investigated how parental or home types have impacted on different aspects of an individual development such as academic, social, moral, emotional etc. The home types that have been studied include, single parent home type, monogamous home type and polygamous home type. Single parent home type is the type whereby only one parent is available due to divorce or death. Monogamous family type is the one whereby both parents are available, taking parts in the care and upbringing of the child. Finally, polygamous home type involves the presence of at least one man and more than one woman. The Family Pediatrics Report (2003) pointed out that children of single parents are at greater risk of emotional and behavior problems, which include depression and poor school performance. Such

children tend to have more social difficulties and more problematic relationship with one or both parents. The effects of divorce may continue to be evident into adulthood and can create future marital instability (Fagan, 2012).

As can be seen above social adjustment is a research after the heart of scholars. But it has been observed that majority of the research carried out have been on how home factors affect the academic achievement of students (Adenike, 2013, Adebulu, 2004). It is for this gap in the research literature that the current study aims at finding out the impact of home type on the social adjustment of youth. Specifically this investigation will be carried out in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State, because to the best of this researcher's knowledge, no previous studies have been carried out aimed at finding the impact of home type on the social adjustment of youths in the area.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, it has been observed that Obio-Akpor Local Government Area has been plagued with various communal and group strife that have resulted in the death of both indigenes and non-indigenes. These crises have made Oil Servicing firms and other industries leave the area as the atmosphere is not conducive enough for optimal operation. This no doubt has further exacerbated the already worse economic situation as most individuals who were employed by these companies have been dropped. Also these crises contribute to the suspension of educational and other learning facilities; thereby contributing negatively to the already deplorable standard of education in the area.

One truth that is obvious from the above grim situation is that the crises experienced in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area although instigated by politicians and others fighting for chieftaincy position is usually executed by youths in the areas. Youths are called upon to carry weapons such as gun, machetes, knives, axes etc. The loss in human life and property is inestimable.

While not neglecting other factors, it is not out of place to state that family structure or home type could be a potential factor predisposing some individuals towards violence. Depending on the home type formation, some youths may have a penchant for violence, which is an indication of poor social adjustment. Poor social adjustment is a factor on why some of the youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area are called upon to be willing tools in the destruction of property and causing of mayhem. It is for this reason that the current study aims at investigating social adjustment of youths and how it is influenced by the family types of youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Aim and Objectives Of The Study

The aim of the study is to investigate how family types influence social adjustment of youth. In specific terms, this study aims at:

1. Finding the influence of single home type on the social adjustment of male and female youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
2. Finding the influence of monogamous home type on the social adjustment of male and female youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
3. Finding out the influence of polygamous home type on the social adjustment of male and female youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the current study

1. To what extent does single home type influences the social adjustment of youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
2. What is the impact of monogamous home type on the social adjustment of youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
3. What is the impact of polygamous home type on the social adjustment of youths in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Hypotheses

The under listed null hypotheses would be tested at 0.05 level of statistical significance

1. There is no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from single home type in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

2. There is no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from monogamous home type in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
3. There is no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from polygamous home type in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.

METHODOLOGY

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey design. The present study is a descriptive survey because the researcher collected data from a large sample of youths from Obio/Akpor Local Government Area on their social adjustment as it is influenced by home type of the respondents.

The population of the study comprises of the youths in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area from all the various villages and clans. Youths were chosen for this study among other population (children and elderly people) because they are in their most active stage of their life, and as such engage in more social relations with others. The sample used for this study comprises of 200 youths drawn from all the communities in the Local Government Area. The sample was drawn using accidental sampling technique, a non-probability sampling technique.

The instrument for Data Collection is a fifteen-item researcher-developed instrument titled Family Type and *Social Adjustment Inventory* (FTSAI) aimed at eliciting the response from youths on their social adjustment. The instrument is divided into two major sections: A and B. Section A of the instrument provide spaces for respondents to indicate their gender, age, home type as well as other demographic information on marital status and religion. With the exception of family type, the above mentioned demographic information would not be utilized for this current study, but might be useful in future research that is why they are included.

Section B of the instrument is the major fifteen-items that seek to assess the level of social adjustment of respondents. This instrument is constructed on a four-point likert scale. Respondents are expected to respond to the items according to the perceive regularity in which they exhibit the action represented by each item. The item scoring of the items shall be done as follows for positive items: Regularly= 4 points, Sometimes= 3 points, Rarely- 2 points, Never= 1 point. Some of the items would also be reversely scored for negative items: Regularly = 1, Sometimes = 2, Rarely =3, Never= 4

To ensure the face and validity of the instrument, copies of the instrument were given to the research supervisor as well as two experts in testing and measurement in the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling in the Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. Their suggestions, corrections and modification were integrated into the final version of the instrument.

In order to verify the reliability of the instrument the test re-test technique was utilized. The instrument was administered to twenty youths from the area that were not to be included in the final sample, and after an interval of two weeks, it was be re-administered again. The score from the two administrations were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. A correlation coefficient of 0.70 was obtained which indicated that the instrument possess suitable reliability for its use.

Accidental method was adopted in the administration of this instrument. That is to say that the instrument was administered at locations where youths can be readily found in the Local Government Area such. The research questions were answered using Mean and Standard Deviation, while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of statistical significance using independent sample t-test.

RESULTS

Table 1 Social Adjustment of male and female youths from single home type

Single home type	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p	Result	Decision
Male	8	37.52	3.61	17	0.47	0.64	Not Significant	Accept HO ₁
Female	11	38.41	4.32					

From the data presented in table 1 above, there is a difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from single home types, with males having a lesser value of social adjustment (mean=37.52,

SD=3.61) and female youths having mean value of 38.41 and SD of 4.32. Analysis of the hypothesis yielded a t-value of 0.47 at 17 degrees of freedom with a corresponding p-value of 0.64. Since the p-value was which was lesser than the chosen alpha of the study, it therefore indicate that there is no significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from single home types. Therefore the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 2: Social adjustments of youths from monogamous home according to gender

Monogamous home type	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p	Result	Decision
Male	51	47.36	5.01	114	3.12	0.002	Significant	Reject HO ₂
Female	65	50.06	4.38					

From the data presented in table 2 above, there is a difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from monogamous home types, with males having a lesser value of social adjustment (mean=47.36, SD=5.01) and female youths having mean value of 50.06 and SD of 4.38. Analysis of the hypothesis yielded a t-value of 3.12 at 114 degrees of freedom with a corresponding p-value of 0.002. Since the p-value was which was lesser than the chosen alpha of the study, it therefore indicate that there is a significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from monogamous home types. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 4.3 Polygamous home type and social adjustment of male and female youths

Monogamous home type	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p	Result	Decision
Male	31	40.30	4.40	61	3.17	0.002	Significant	Reject HO ₃
Female	32	43.61	3.86					

According to the result presented in table 3 above, there is a difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from single home types, with males having a lesser value of social adjustment (mean=40.30, SD=4.40) and female youths having mean value of 43.61 and SD of 3.86. Analysis of the hypothesis yielded a t-value of 3.17 at 61 degrees of freedom with a corresponding p-value of 0.002. Since the p-value was which was lesser than the chosen alpha of the study, it therefore indicate that there is a significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from polygamous home types. Therefore the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result obtained revealed that there is a difference in the social adjustment of male youths from single-parent home. Further analysis revealed that there is no statistically significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from single home types in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. This difference in social adjustment based on gender is not surprising because females in Obio/Akpor Local Government are expected to be socially conservative than males and this might be a factor inhibiting some socially undesirable behaviour. On a general note the youths from single parenting home had a low rating socially. The result of the current study is in line with those obtained by Blekesaune (2009, when he studied the emotional and social behaviour of youths from single parents home. He observed that males had more externalizing social problem like aggression, truancy etc., while female had more internalizing problems like anxiety etc.

The result obtained indicated that female youths from monogamous homes had a higher level of social adjustment than their male counterparts. Further analysis revealed that there is a statistically significant difference in the social adjustment of male and female youths from monogamous home type in Obio/Akpor Local Government Area of Rivers State. This result is surprising to this researcher because when both parents are available to meet the child's need and provide needed support. Therefore both male and female youths should have similar social adjustments as far as they are from monogamous homes.

This result is in line with those of Woodroff (2001) who found out those students from two-parent, monogamous homes are better adjusted with peers and teachers than those from single parents home. Analysis revealed that although differences exist in the social adjustment of youths, this difference is also statistically significant. This means that female youths from polygamous homes had a higher mean than their males counterparts. This shows that female youths from polygamous homes are more properly adjusted than the males from polygamous homes. But further analysis revealed that this difference is statistically significant, and therefore not due to chance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the result obtained from this study, the following recommendation are made

1. Parents should consider the effect on the child especially when they want to make decision on marital dispute, as the absence of one or both parent is a factor influencing the child behaviour
2. Traditional rulers should consider how marital dissolution affects the child and make sure that emphasis is placed on moral and social skill development especially in places like Obio/Akpor Local Government Area, where the traditional institution is still respected
3. Religious leader should emphasize the need for monogamous marital union (one man, one wife). This is based on the result that monogamous union is the best of socially adjusted youths.
4. Governmental agencies and Non-Governmental Agencies (NGOs) such as Ministry of Youth Development should carry out awareness campaigns to highlight the dangers of violence and other socially undesirable behaviour.

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