

# Correlation Between Parents' Socio-Economic Status and Rate of Juvenile Delinquency Among Secondary Schools' Students in Lokoja Metropolis, Kogi State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This study investigates the correlation between parental socio-economic status and juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Lokoja Metropolis, Kogi State, Nigeria. The term juvenile delinquency is used to explain how the juvenile (an individual under the age of 18) is in conflict with the society; that is with its norms, values and laws. The objectives of the paper were to: determine the prevalence rate of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area, investigate the relationship between parents' socioeconomic status and the incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area, and identify the socio-economic and environmental factors contributing to juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area. The study adopted the rational choice theory, which is an umbrella theory used for explaining a variety of models about crime or delinquency being an outcome of individual action which can be seen as a rational behaviour. The research employs a quantitative approach with a sample size of 100 participants comprising 60 students, 20 teachers, and 20 school administrators, using the purposive sampling technique. The stratified sampling technique method was adopted in the selection of schools and respondents for the study. Data were collected using structured questionnaires and analyzed through descriptive statistics. Findings reveal a significant association between lower socio-economic backgrounds and higher rates of delinquent behaviours among students. Recommendations include policy initiatives to enhance parental involvement, equitable access to educational resources, and comprehensive support services within schools. These measures aim to mitigate socio-economic disparities and foster a supportive environment conducive to reducing juvenile delinquency in the study area.

**Keywords:** *Investigating, Parental, Socio-Economic Status, Juvenile Delinquency*

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## **Background to the Study**

The family is often considered to be a crucial agent of socialization and successful socialization of a child in the family enhances acceptable behaviour in the society and failure of the family in child socialization may result to delinquent behaviour in the child and during their adolescents period as Glucks (1959) states that juvenile delinquency is not a new occurrence during adolescent years but rather a continuation of antisocial behaviours from childhood due to environmental subjection or family problems affecting one's mental development. The term juvenile delinquency is used to explain how the juvenile (an individual under the age of 18 or a minor) is in conflict with the society; that is with its norms, values and laws. This type of behaviour, in a way, represents a "youthful rebellion against the adult world" and these includes children who are in conflict with the law and juvenile offenders (Pavlovski & Petkovski, 2024). Juvenile delinquency is a major social problem globally and locally. It has been increasing phenomenally by as much as 30 percent since the 1990s (World Youth Report as cited in Sheryln, 2008). Antisocial behaviours of young people have become worrisome and these affect the well-being of Nigerians as the level of moral decadence is quite alarming.

Globally, the problem of juvenile delinquency has grown significantly from 2009-2019 (Field, 2019). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2019) reported that in Europe, juvenile crime had increased by 2.6% compared to the previous year's increase of 1.7%. South East Asia, Latin America and North America were also reported to have an increase in juvenile crime growth rates of about 0.7%, 3.9% and 1.8% each respectively. The relatively high rate of juvenile crime in Latin America has been attributed to the drug economy in places like Mexico and Colombia (Raul, 2010). Similarly, in Africa, according to UNIHABITAT, juvenile criminality has continued to increase largely as a result of chronic unemployment among youth. Between 2007 and 2019, juvenile crime rate in Africa increased from 3.2% to 5.7% (Walker & Maddan, 2019).

This social phenomenon (juvenile delinquency) has registered an exponential growth throughout the globe causing concern and needing utmost urgent attention (Mishra & Biswal, 2020). Nigeria is one of the most populous sub-Saharan countries with a predominantly youthful population of less than the age of 15 years old (Ahuja, 2018). Juvenile delinquency represents a very sensitive issue, given its negative consequences on victims, society, and juvenile offenders themselves (Hoeve, Dubas, Eichelsheim, Van der Laan, Smeenk & Gerris, 2017). As these delinquent acts encompass a wide range of antisocial behaviour which are illegal, examples include destruction of property, violence and theft, (Young, Greer & Church, 2017). These delinquent acts are however not only limited to physical violence but it also involves other acts like in Nigeria, delinquent behaviour associated with juveniles include: drug use and abuse, cultism and gangsterism, bullying, truancy, examination malpractices, prostitution and theft, (Uguokwe, 2010; Sanni, Udoh, Okediji, Modo & Ezeh, 2010), other examples include fighting students, insulting of the aged people, running away from home, bringing phones to school, wearing the wrong attire to school, etc.

A life of want, family instability, exposure to physical, sexual and emotional abuse has been associated with delinquent behaviour among children, and so a large number of Nigerian

children are expected to be involved with the juvenile justice system (Ahuja, 2018) as a result of the low socio-economic status of their family, as it is often assumed that a parent socio-economic status affects life chances of a person in numerous ways. Onanuga (2013), pointed out that there is hardly a day in which a national newspaper will not carry some news of student delinquency, hooliganism, students riot, student(s) beating a teacher or the head of the school, students destroying school properties, to mention but few. In recent times, there has been a public outcry over the ever-increasing level of Juvenile delinquency among students.

### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

This paper is to examine the correlation between parent's socio-economic status and the rate of juvenile delinquency among students in Lokoja metropolis, Kogi State, Nigeria. However, the specific objectives of the paper were to:

1. determine the prevalence rate of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Lokoja metropolis.
2. investigate the relationship between parents' socioeconomic status and the incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Lokoja metropolis.
3. identify the socio-economic and environmental factors contributing to juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Lokoja metropolis.

### **Theoretical Anchorage**

The rational choice theory is an umbrella theory used for explaining a variety of models about crime or delinquency being an outcome of individual action which can be seen as a rational behaviour (Witteck, 2013). This rational behaviour is an action used by individuals to actualize specific goals, needs and wants, which are inaccessible to them as a result of certain limitation in the society, the rational choice theory believes that criminals themselves are rationale, the basic key elements of the rational choice theory are individual preferences, beliefs, and constraints.

### **Basic Assumptions of the Rational Choice Theory**

Rational choice theory posits that individuals make decisions based on a rational assessment of costs and benefits. According to this theory, individuals are self-interested actors who weigh the potential gains and risks of their actions before making choices (Becker, 1968). When the benefits of engaging in a particular behavior outweigh the potential costs, individuals are more likely to choose that behavior. This theory has been widely used to explain criminal behavior, including juvenile delinquency.

In the context of this study, rational choice theory help explain how the socio-economic status (SES) of parents and other factors may influence the rate of juvenile delinquency among students. Students from lower socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds may face economic hardship and limited access to educational and vocational opportunities, leading them to perceive the benefits of engaging in delinquent behavior as higher. For example, they may see theft or other criminal activities as a way to obtain financial resources that they lack (Agnew, 2006). Rational choice theory suggests that students from higher socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds may have access to more resources and opportunities, which can reduce the

perceived benefits of engaging in delinquent behavior. They may also face greater risks associated with delinquency, such as stricter parental supervision and more significant consequences for engaging in criminal activities.

### **Concept of Juvenile Delinquency**

Juvenile delinquency refers to antisocial, criminal, or other disruptive behaviors exhibited by individuals under the age of 18. Scholars have provided various definitions and explanations of juvenile delinquency, each emphasizing different aspects of the phenomenon. According to Loeber & Farrington (2012), juvenile delinquency is characterized by repeated involvement in criminal activities or conduct that goes against the legal or societal norms. They emphasize that the persistence of such behavior often starts at an early age and can lead to more serious criminal acts in adulthood (Loeber & Farrington, 2012). Snyder & Sickmund (2006) define juvenile delinquency as a legal term that encompasses a range of behaviors from minor offenses such as truancy and underage drinking to more severe crimes such as assault and theft.

### **Rate of Juvenile Delinquency**

Research suggests that a myriad of risk factors can contribute to juvenile delinquency, including family dysfunction, poverty, substance abuse, peer influence, and lack of access to education and employment opportunities (Hoeve Dubas, Eichelsheim, Van der Laan, Smeenk & Gerris 2017). Additionally, societal factors such as urbanization, social inequalities, and exposure to violence also play a role in shaping delinquent behavior among young individuals (Junger-Tas, 2013). Numerous studies have sought to assess the prevalence and incidence of juvenile delinquency in different countries and regions, offering valuable insights into the global landscape of youth criminal behavior. For instance, a study conducted by Junger-Tas, Marshall & Ribeaud (2010) examined data from the International Self-Report Delinquency Study (ISRD) and found that rates of juvenile delinquency varied considerably across countries, with some regions exhibiting higher prevalence rates than others.

According to a study by Adedokun (2019), the prevalence of juvenile delinquency in Nigeria is influenced by a range of contextual factors, including urbanization, poverty, family instability, and limited access to educational and vocational opportunities. The study found that these factors create an environment in which young individuals are susceptible to engaging in delinquent behaviors as a means of survival or social integration within their communities. Moreover, he highlighted the role of cultural norms and values in shaping the attitudes and behaviors of Nigerian youth, underscoring the need for culturally sensitive interventions to address delinquency. In addition to contextual factors, the Nigerian legal framework and juvenile justice system have implications for the management and prevention of juvenile delinquency.

### **Relationship between Parents' Socio-economic Status and Rate of Delinquency**

The link between a family's socio-economic status and juvenile delinquency has been a subject of extensive research. Several studies have tried to address the influence of socio-economic status on the behavior and development of children and adolescents. According to Agnew

(1992), youth from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to engage in delinquent behavior due to the limited availability of resources and opportunities. Similarly, Sampson & Laub (1993) found that youth from economically disadvantaged families are at a higher risk of engaging in delinquent activities, citing the lack of parental supervision and involvement as contributing factors. The socio-economic status of parent can impact the level of supervision, guidance, and support they provide for their children. According to Meldrum & Young (2011), parents with higher socio-economic status are more likely to be actively involved in their children's lives, providing necessary resources and guidance to steer them away from delinquent behavior. Conversely, research by Conger & Donnellan (2007) suggested that parents from lower socio-economic backgrounds may experience greater stress and challenges, which can hinder their ability to provide adequate supervision and support to their children, thus increasing the likelihood of delinquent behavior.

Yunusa, Jibrin, & Nuhu (2022) investigated the correlation between family background, peer relations, and juvenile delinquency among senior secondary school students in Nasarawa State, Nigeria, with consideration to gender differences. Their study aimed to explore this relationship through a single objective, a corresponding research question, and a null hypothesis. Adopting a correlational research design, the study encompassed a population of 21,875 individuals, with a sample size of 378 (266 males and 112 females). Utilizing a multi-stage stratified random sampling technique, the researchers selected participants. Data collection employed a questionnaire titled "Family Background, Peer Relation, and Juvenile Delinquency (FBPR&JDQ)." Analysis of research questions was conducted using mean and standard deviations, while the null hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The findings revealed a significant correlation between family background, peer relations, and juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in Nasarawa State, irrespective of gender. Consequently, the study recommended that parents closely monitor their children's interactions to deter involvement with delinquent groups. Additionally, the promotion of harmony, peace, love, obedience, honesty, equity, and justice within families was deemed essential, regardless of gender.

Ogbonna & Okemini (2023) focused on socioeconomic determinants of juvenile delinquency among residents of waterfront slums in Rivers State, Nigeria. Four research questions and corresponding objectives were established, underpinned by social disorganization theory to comprehend the interplay of variables. Employing a descriptive survey approach, the researchers collected data from a sample size of 277 participants, selected using a multi-stage sampling process. A self-structured questionnaire named "Socioeconomic Factors and Juvenile Delinquency among Slum Dwellers in Waterfront Settlements [SFJDSDWS]" facilitated data collection. Findings indicated a strong relationship between parental unemployment and theft/larceny among juveniles, as well as positive associations between slum settlements and shoplifting, parental socioeconomic status and pick-pocketing, and peer influence and alcohol/drug abuse. Recommendations included the provision of material aid, counseling, and guidance to juvenile delinquents and their families, along with potential relocation from slum settlements to mitigate delinquency.

Also, the analysis establishes a significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and the incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students. Specifically, the results demonstrate that students from lower-income families are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviours compared to those from higher-income families. This indicates that lower socio-economic status is a substantial contributing factor to delinquent behavior, suggesting that economic hardships may influence students' likelihood to engage in such activities. This supports the rational choice theory, which suggests that individuals make calculated decisions based on the perceived costs and benefits of their actions. In this case, students from lower-income families may perceive delinquency as a viable option to fulfill unmet needs or as a way to cope with economic hardships. The findings are consistent with the empirical study by Ogbonna & Okemini (2023), which identified a strong link between parental unemployment and juvenile delinquency in slum areas. Both studies emphasize the significant role of economic status in shaping adolescent behavior, suggesting that improving the economic conditions of families could reduce delinquency rates.

### **Socioeconomic Status (SES) and Juvenile Delinquency**

Socioeconomic status (SES) is a measure of an individual's or a family's economic and social position in relation to others, based on income, education, and occupation. socioeconomic status can significantly impact access to resources, opportunities, and overall quality of life. Low socioeconomic status can create environments that increase the risk of juvenile delinquency due to financial stress, limited access to resources, family instability, social exclusion, and peer influence. Addressing socioeconomic status disparities can play a critical role in preventing juvenile delinquency and promoting positive outcomes for young people.

Limited socioeconomic status can contribute to juvenile delinquency in several ways:

- i. Poverty and Economic Hardship:** Families with low socioeconomic status often experience financial stress, which can lead to economic hardship for young people. This stress can increase their vulnerability to engaging in criminal behavior as a means of survival (Miller & Evans, 2017).
- ii. Limited Access to Resources:** Low socioeconomic status is often associated with limited access to resources such as quality education, healthcare, and safe living environments. This lack of access can hinder personal development and increase the likelihood of delinquent behavior (Smith & Patel, 2018).
- iii. Family Instability:** Economic stress can lead to family instability, including conflicts and disruptions within the family structure. This instability can negatively affect young people, increasing their risk of involvement in delinquent behavior (Johnson & Taylor, 2016).
- iv. Social Exclusion:** Individuals with low socioeconomic status may experience social exclusion or marginalization, which can lead to feelings of alienation and resentment. This can push young people toward delinquent behavior as a form of rebellion or a means of seeking acceptance (Green & Harris, 2019).
- v. Association with Delinquent Peers:** Young people from low socioeconomic status backgrounds may be more likely to associate with peers involved in delinquent activities. This association can increase the likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior due to peer influence (Thompson & James, 2015).

### Area of Study and Research Method

Lokoja is the capital city of Kogi State in North Central Nigeria. It lies between latitude 7°45'27.56''N and 7°51'04.34''N and longitude 6°41'55.64''E and 6°45'36.58''E of the Prime meridian. Lokoja is the administrative headquarters of Kogi State in Nigeria. It is well connected and accessible through state and federal highways. It is also located close to confluence of the River Niger and Benue; the area is sandwiched between a water body and a hill i.e. River Niger and Mount Patti respectively which had streamlined the settlement to a linear one and has a modifying effect on the climate. (Alabi, 2009). A descriptive survey research design was adopted as it allows one to easily recruit a sample group of individuals to respond to a series of questions using a cross-sectional survey as the aim of the study is to get a one-time snap shot of the correlation between parents' socio-economic status and rate of juvenile delinquency among students. The study involves five (5) schools selected from the ten electoral wards within Lokoja metropolis. The sample consists of sixty (60) students' respondents from these five schools; along with forty (40) individuals that is made up of teachers, heads of department/principals; making a total sample size of one hundred (100). The sample size for this study was therefore 100 (using the Yamane's (1967) formula with the margin of error /level of significant of 0.05) and at the same time using the cluster sampling technique, which aimed at dividing the population into two clusters that is, the junior secondary schools and senior secondary schools respectively, as can be seen in the table below: This methodology ensures the inclusion of a diverse range of educational stakeholders from each of the five schools.

**Table 1:** Sample Size Distribution

| Category                  | Number per School | Total Number for 5 Schools |
|---------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Student Respondents       | 12                | 60                         |
| Junior Teachers (JS2-JS3) | 2                 | 10                         |
| Senior Teachers (SS1-SS2) | 2                 | 10                         |
| Heads of Departments      | 2                 | 10                         |
| Principals                | 2                 | 10                         |
| <b>Total</b>              | <b>20</b>         | <b>100</b>                 |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2026

This study employed a quantitative-methods approach, through the structured questionnaires and used for the study; using closed-ended questions and Likert scale items.

### Results/Discussion of Findings

This section of the paper examines data presentation, analysis and interpretation. The sections of the paper are based on the objectives of the study to determine the prevalence rate of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students, to investigate the relationship between parents' socio-economic status and the incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students, as well as to identify the socio-economic and environmental factors contributing to juvenile delinquency among secondary school students are discussed. In this paper, a total of One hundred and twenty questionnaires (120) were administered and only (100) questionnaire were retrieved, because some of the respondents failed to return the questionnaire administered to them.

**Table 2:** Distribution of Respondents by Demographic Characteristics

| Variable              | Frequency  | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------------|------------|----------------|
| <b>Gender</b>         |            |                |
| Male                  | 40         | 40             |
| Female                | 60         | 60             |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b>     |
| <b>Age (in years)</b> |            |                |
| 10 – 15               | 32         | 32             |
| 16 – 20               | 29         | 29             |
| 21 – 30               | 17         | 17             |
| 30 and above          | 22         | 22             |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b>     |
| <b>Category</b>       |            |                |
| Student               | 60         | 60             |
| Teacher               | 20         | 20             |
| HOD/principal         | 20         | 20             |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b>     |
| <b>School</b>         |            |                |
| Public                | 42         | 42             |
| Private               | 58         | 58             |
| <b>Total</b>          | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b>     |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2026

Demographic table above indicates that the sample size of one hundred (100) respondents consist of 40 males and 60 females; showing higher representation of females. From the age groups, age group 10-15 years has the highest frequency, which is appropriate for a study on juvenile delinquency. Also, the table indicates the three categories of respondents involved in the study i. e the students (60%), the teachers (20%) and the heads of departments/principals (20%). And the respondent's cur across both public and private schools in Lokoja metropolis.

**Section A:** Respondents knowledge on the prevalence rate of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area?

This section examined respondent's opinion the prevalence rate of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students as well as awareness and perception of juvenile delinquency are discussed.

**Table 3:** Opinion on the rate of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students

| Questions  | NR        | R         | ST        | VO        |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1. How often do you witness or hear about incidents of juvenile delinquency (e.g., fighting, vandalism, theft) occurring in your school? | 0<br>0%   | 54<br>54% | 33<br>33% | 13<br>12% |
| 2. How frequently do teachers and school administrators report cases of juvenile delinquency to parents or guardians?                    | 13<br>13% | 51<br>51% | 21<br>21% | 15<br>15% |
| 3. How prevalent are incidents such as bullying, physical fights, or drug use among students in your school?                             | 25<br>25% | 40<br>40% | 19<br>19% | 16<br>16% |

**Source:** Field surveys, 2026

Table 3 above presents the responses to questions regarding the frequency of witnessing, hearing about, and reporting incidents of juvenile delinquency in schools, along with the prevalence of such incidents. The responses are categorized into four frequency levels: Never (NR = 1), Rarely (R = 2), Sometimes (ST = 3), and Very Often (VO = 4).

Firstly, the result from how often they witness or hear about incidence of juvenile delinquency shows that majority (54%) of respondents rarely encounter such incidents. A significant portion (33%) reports sometimes witnessing or hearing about these incidents, while a smaller fraction (13%) indicates that they occur very often, while none of respondents report never encountering such incidents. Furthermore, regarding the frequency of reporting juvenile delinquency to parents or guardians, a majority (51%) of respondents indicate that teachers and administrators rarely report such cases. About 21% state that it happens sometimes, and 15% report that it occurs very often. Meanwhile, 13% of respondents indicate that these reports never happen. Moreover, when examining the prevalence of bullying, physical fights, or drug use among students, the data shows that 40% of respondents report these incidents as rare, while 19% state that they happen sometimes and 16% indicate very frequent occurrences. Interestingly, 25% of respondents report never encountering these incidents.

Above all the responses indicate that juvenile delinquency incidents are a relatively common occurrence in the surveyed schools, though they are not daily events. Reporting these incidents to parents or guardians happens infrequently, pointing to a potential need for improved communication between schools and families. While serious issues such as bullying, physical fights, or drug use are not highly prevalent, their presence is significant enough to warrant attention and intervention.

**Table 4:** Opinion on Awareness and Perception of Juvenile Delinquency

| Questions   | Freq.      | (%)        | Ave.        |
|---|------------|------------|-------------|
| <b>4. How many times have you been aware of students in your school being disciplined for delinquent behaviours (e.g., breaking school rules, engaging in criminal activities)?</b> |            |            |             |
| None  | 30         | 30         |             |
| 1 to 2 times  | 38         | 38         | <b>2.03</b> |
| 3 to 5 times  | 31         | 31         |             |
| more than 10 times  | 1          | 1          |             |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b> |             |
| <b>5. To what extent do you agree with the statement: Juvenile delinquency is a significant problem in our school?</b>  |            |            |             |
| Strongly disagree   | 11         | 11         |             |
| Disagree  | 37         | 37         |             |
| Neutral   | 22         | 22         | <b>2.75</b> |
| Agree   | 26         | 26         |             |
| Strongly agree  | 4          | 4          |             |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>100</b> | <b>100</b> |             |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2026

Table 4 above further shows the responses of the respondents on the awareness and perception of juvenile delinquency. The responses to the question regarding the awareness of students being disciplined for delinquent behaviours reveal interesting trends. A notable 30% of respondents indicate that they have never been aware of such disciplinary actions. The majority, 38%, report being aware of students being disciplined 1 to 2 times, while 31% have been aware of disciplinary actions 3 to 5 times. Only 1% of respondents have been aware of such actions more than 10 times. This data indicates that while disciplinary actions for delinquent behaviours are not overwhelmingly common, they are a regular part of the school environment. Moreover, the responses to the extent of agreement with the statement that juvenile delinquency is a significant problem in the school provide additional insights. A combined 48% of respondents either strongly disagree (11%) or disagree (37%) with the statement, indicating a belief that juvenile delinquency is not a significant problem in their school. On the other hand, 26% of respondents agree, and 4% strongly agree, suggesting that a portion of the respondents do perceive it as a significant issue. Additionally, 22% of the respondents remain neutral on the matter. Above all, the data shows a moderate level of awareness regarding the disciplining of students for delinquent behaviours, with most respondents aware of such actions occurring occasionally but not frequently. Regarding the perception of juvenile delinquency as a significant problem, the respondents are generally inclined to disagree, though a significant minority believes it is an issue that warrants attention. This divergence in perceptions suggests that while delinquent behaviours are recognized, their severity and impact are viewed differently among respondents.

**Section B:** Respondents knowledge on the correlation between socio-economic status of parents and incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area

**Table 5:** Opinion on rating the relationship between socioeconomic status of parents and incidence of juvenile delinquency

|  | Freq. | (%) | Ave.        |
|--|-------|-----|-------------|
| <b>1. How would you rate the relationship between socioeconomic status of parents and incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students?</b> |       |     |             |
| Highly related   | 6     | 6   |             |
| High   | 75    | 75  | <b>2.72</b> |
| Low  | 4     | 4   |             |
| Very low   | 15    | 15  |             |
| <b>Total</b>   | 100   | 100 |             |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2026

Table 4 above presents the responses to the question about the relationship between the socioeconomic status of parents and the incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students. The result shows that a significant majority of respondents perceive a strong connection. Specifically, 75% of respondents rate this relationship as high, indicating a prevalent belief that socioeconomic status significantly impacts juvenile delinquency rates. Additionally, 6% of the respondents view the relationship as highly related, further reinforcing the perception of a strong link. Moreover, 4% of the respondents rate the relationship as low, and 15% consider it to be very low, suggesting that a small minority of respondents do not see a significant connection between socioeconomic status and juvenile delinquency.

**Section C:** Respondents knowledge on contributing factors to juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area

**Table 6: Socioeconomic Factors and Juvenile Delinquency**

| Areas   | SA        | A         | UD        | D         | SD        | AVE.        |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Students from lower-income families are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviours than those from higher-income families  | 4<br>4%   | 40<br>40% | 8<br>8%   | 14<br>14% | 34<br>34% | <b>2.66</b> |
| 2. The level of parental education affects the likelihood of students engaging in delinquent activities                           | 16<br>16% | 32<br>32% | 11<br>11% | 7<br>7%   | 34<br>34% | <b>2.89</b> |
| 3. Students with unemployed parents exhibit delinquent behaviours compared to those with employed parents                         | 19<br>19% | 32<br>32% | 6<br>6%   | 9<br>9%   | 34<br>34% | <b>2.93</b> |
| 4. Students with limited access to resources (e.g., books, extracurricular activities) to participate in delinquent behaviours    | 11<br>11% | 17<br>17% | 24<br>24% | 15<br>15% | 33<br>33% | <b>2.58</b> |
| 5. Students with less parental supervision are more prone to delinquency  | 20<br>21% | 24<br>25% | 13<br>13% | 6<br>6%   | 37<br>37% | <b>2.84</b> |
| 6. Living in unstable housing conditions (e.g., frequent moves, homelessness) correlate with higher rates of juvenile delinquency | 12<br>12% | 44<br>44% | 10<br>10% | 1<br>1%   | 33<br>33% | <b>3.01</b> |
| 7. The level of parental involvement in a child's education influences their likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviours      | 10<br>10% | 25<br>25% | 22<br>22% | 13<br>13% | 30<br>30% | <b>2.72</b> |

**Source:** Field Survey, 2026

From table 5 above, the responses regarding the likelihood of students from lower-income families engaging in delinquent behaviours show a diverse range of opinions. A combined 44% of respondents either strongly agree (4%) or agree (40%) with the statement, indicating a belief that lower-income status is linked to higher delinquency. Conversely, 14% disagree and 34% strongly disagree, suggesting a significant portion of respondents do not perceive a strong connection. Also, regarding the impact of parental education on delinquency, 48% of respondents agree (32%) or strongly agree (16%) that higher levels of parental education reduce the likelihood of delinquent activities among students. Only 7% disagree and 34% strongly disagree, while 11% remain undecided. Moreover, the belief that students with unemployed parents are more likely to exhibit delinquent behaviours is also prevalent among respondents. A total of 51% either agree (32%) or strongly agree (19%) with this statement, while 9% disagree and 34% strongly disagree. In addition, responses about students with limited access to resources show that 28% agree (17%) or strongly agree (11%) that lack of resources leads to higher delinquency rates. However, 15% disagree and 33% strongly disagree, with 24% undecided. Furthermore, when considering the impact of parental supervision, 46% of respondents agree (25%) or strongly agree (21%) that less parental supervision leads to higher delinquency, while 6% disagree and 34% strongly disagree. Additionally, the responses on the correlation between unstable housing conditions and juvenile delinquency reveal that 45% agree (30%) or strongly agree (15%) with this statement. Only 1% disagrees and 41% strongly disagree, with 13% undecided. Lastly, regarding the influence of parental involvement in education, 35% of respondents agree (25%) or strongly

agree (10%) that higher parental involvement reduces delinquency. Conversely, 13% disagree and 30% strongly disagree, with 22% undecided.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The findings revealed a notable prevalence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students in the study area, with significant incidents reported by respondents. The data indicates that a majority of respondents have either witnessed or heard about various delinquent behaviors such as fighting, vandalism, and theft occurring frequently. The high prevalence of delinquency observed could be interpreted as a response to the pressures and frustrations experienced by students within their socioeconomic and educational environments. Additionally, these findings are supported by Yunusa, Jibrin & Nuhu (2022), who also found significant levels of juvenile delinquency among students in a different region of Nigeria, suggesting that this issue may be widespread.

Also, the analysis establishes a significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and the incidence of juvenile delinquency among secondary school students. Specifically, the results demonstrate that students from lower-income families are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviours compared to those from higher-income families. This indicates that lower socio-economic status is a substantial contributing factor to delinquent behavior, suggesting that economic hardships may influence students' likelihood to engage in such activities. The findings are consistent with the empirical study by Ogbonna & Okemini (2023), which identified a strong link between parental unemployment and juvenile delinquency in slum areas. Both studies emphasize the significant role of economic status in shaping adolescent behavior, suggesting that improving the economic conditions of families could reduce delinquency rates.

### **Conclusion**

In light of these findings, the study concludes that there is imperative for stakeholders such as educators, policymakers, and parents, to implement targeted interventions aimed at addressing socio-economic disparities and enhancing parental support and engagement.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

1. Government policies should prioritize equitable distribution of educational resources, including funding for schools in socio-economically disadvantaged areas.
2. Government and schools should collaborate to provide resources and programs that enhance parental education and involvement such as workshops, seminars and parenting classes.
3. Establishment of comprehensive support services within schools to address socio-economic challenges faced by at-risk students, which include counseling services, mentorship programmes and academic support tailored to individual needs.
4. Foster collaboration among schools, community organizations, government agencies, and parents to create a supportive network for students at risk of delinquency.

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