

# Family Type and Juvenile Crime in Yenagoa Metropolis, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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**Abstract:** This study sets out to examine the problem of family structure and juvenile crime in Nigeria using Yenagoa Local Government Area as a case study. In order to achieve this objective, two hypotheses were tested. The main goals of this study were to determine if there are variations in delinquency between cohabitating family and other family types, and to examine the extent to which parental social control measures account for the variation in delinquency by family structure in Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. The study relied on both primary and secondary sources of data collection and the simple percentage and chi-square statistical methods were applied in the data analysis process. The findings showed that delinquency rates are higher among youth from cohabitating families when compared to youth from two-biological-parent families. This difference, however, is explained in terms of parental social control factors. In view of the above findings, the study suggested that more attention should be given by parents to the activities of their children as this will go a long way to curtail the incidence of juvenile delinquency in the society.

**Keywords:** Family, Type, Juvenile, Crime, Yenagoa.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Juvenile crime is one major problem confronting many young people all over the globe. The participation of kids and teenagers in severe crimes is a universal concern, and youthful wrongdoing is escalating day after day. Juvenile crime has been cited as a significant predicament and is an outstanding reality of modern world. Even though the problem of youthful crime is not a problem of modern world, the intensity of the problem cannot be compared to the past.

The problem has become a frightening predicament that has transmitted from juvenile crime to a violent crime which has put the country to a security risk and all types of calamity. The persistent increase in the rate of juvenile crimes in Nigeria and the abysmal failure by the government to curb this problem have constituted a serious barrier to the country's economic development since many "young ones who epitomize the nation's future" are enmeshed in moral decadence (Ugwuoke, 2010). Juvenile crime is then seen as a serious obstacle to social, and economic development and an important risk to national security.

According to UNHABITAT 2009 global survey of youth crime in cities, in Europe, youth crime had escalated by twenty-six percent as opposed to the previous year's increase of 1.7 percent. Furthermore, the report further added that South East Asia has 0.7 percent, Latin America 0.9 percent and North America 1.8%. The somewhat soaring rate of youthful crime in Latin America has been accredited to the drug businesses in places like Mexico and Colombia (Raul, 2010). In Africa, juvenile criminality has continued to increase largely as a result of chronic unemployment among youth and family type according to the report. Between 2007 and 2009, juvenile crime increased from 3.2% to 5.7%. Such increase has also been linked to family type and the social changes and complexities that accompany these processes. (UN, 2008).

It is essential to note that at present, there is considerable empirical research on juvenile delinquency in Nigeria but none seems to discuss it from the lens of family type especially as it affects Yenagoa Local Government Area of Bayelsa State. Our study hopes to fill this empirical gap by providing key investigation into the connection between family type and youth crime in Yenagoa local government area, Bayelsa state.

## OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The set out to examine as a general objective the connection between family type and juvenile crime. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To x-ray the probable causes of juvenile crime amongst youths in Yenagoa Metropolis
2. To establish the velocity of antisocial behavior among youths living with their biological parents in the study area.
3. To find out if children living with non-biological parents involve more in delinquency than those living with their biological parents and other family types in Yenagoa metropolis.
4. To find out possible ways of reducing delinquency amongst children in Yenagoa metropolis.

## Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided this study:

1. That delinquency is more prevalent among children from cohabitating families than children living with both biological parents.
2. That social control of children by parents and youth delinquency is related.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### Family Structure and Delinquency

Many scholars have carried out research to look at the association between family type and youth crime and a number of such studies have revealed that youth from cohabitating families are more at risk to become delinquent as oppose to those from stable families. For instance, Juby and Farrington (2001), in a longitudinal survey of 411 males living in South London found that delinquency rates were higher among 75 boys who were living in non- intact homes compared to boys living in intact families. Also, Price and Kunz (2003) carried out a meta-analysis concerning 72 studies that concerned divorce and juvenile crime and found out that children from divorced homes have higher rates of delinquency compared to children from intact homes, with the exception of alcohol use. A number of studies have questioned the connecting, disagreeing that there may be an inherited characteristic frequent among youth from divorced families that amplify the menace of delinquency Guang Guo, Michael E. Roettger and Tianji Cai Burt, Barnes, McGue, & Lacono (2009) on their part examined if parental break up or genes that are innate are the cause of children wrong doing. From their study of 610 adoptive and biological families, they found that it is the incident of parental divorce, and not inherited genes, that drives the connection between divorce and adolescent wrongdoing. Their study reveals that juvenile crime is not genetic, but it can be linked to parental divorce. While scholars like Free, 1991; Rankin, 1983, have established that children raised in traditional, two-parent families experience a lower risk of delinquency than children from alternative family types, the perceptive of whether this outcome is worldwide remains deficient (Kierkus & Hewitt, 2009). For instance, Kierkus and Hewitt (2009), using a national sample of adolescents between the ages of 12 to 17, examined whether the link between nontraditional family structure and delinquency varies according to six distinct circumstances: gender, race, age, family size, and place of residence. They found that gender, race, and place of residence do not condition the relationship between family structure and delinquency. However, they did report, that age and family size impacted the relationship between family structure and crime and delinquency and that older adolescents especially and those from larger families were at a higher risk for participating in juvenile delinquency. Many researches on family structure and delinquency focused on simplified measures of family structure that may mischaracterize the relationship between family structure and delinquency. Rankin (1983),in an interviewed in 1967 and 1972 for example in examined the relationship between broken homes and delinquency among two samples of U.S. children and found that when family context is operationalized as a simple dichotomy (broken verses intact homes), broken homes are more strongly connected with “family” offenses such as running away and truancy than with other types of more serious juvenile misconduct. He added that studies that suggest broken homes are not an important causal factor are misleading because of their inadequate operational definitions of both family context and delinquency.

Recent research has looked specifically at how cohabitation is related to delinquency. In general, studies find children who live in cohabitating households are much more likely to participate in juvenile delinquency compared to those in two-biological-parent households. For example, Apel and Kaukinen (2008) in their study on the relationships between family structure and antisocial behavior that focused on parental cohabitation and blended households using the National

Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 and found considerable heterogeneity in the risk of antisocial and delinquent behavior among groups of youth who reside in what are traditionally dichotomized as intact and nonintact families. Apel and Kaukinen especially found that youth in “intact” families differ in important ways depending on whether the two biological parents are married or cohabitating and on whether they have children from a previous relationship. If the two biological parents are married, the child is less likely to engage in criminal activity. If the biological parents are only cohabitating, youth are more likely to engage in antisocial behavior. Also, they found that youth who reside with a single biological parent who cohabits with a non biological partner exhibit an unusually high rate of antisocial behavior, especially if the custodial parent is the biological father. Equally, Manning and Lamb (2003) examined the well-being and delinquency of adolescents in cohabitating stepparent families using national data from Add Health. Their study revealed that teens living with cohabitating stepparents often fare worse than teens living with two-biological parents in terms of well-being and delinquency. Teenagers living with single unmarried mothers were especially found to be similar to teens living with cohabitating stepparents in terms of levels of well-being and delinquency. Dunifon and Kowaleski-Jones (2002) in line with Manning and Lamb (2003) also found that children who live in single-parent or cohabitating families show higher signs of delinquency than those who live in intact and non-cohabitating families.

Comanor and Phillips (2002), in their study using data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to determine if nontraditional family structure, particularly caused by divorce, affected delinquency and concluded that the single most important factor affecting delinquency is the presence of a father in the home (Comanor & Phillips, 2002). This research supports other studies looking at broken homes but suggests that children from single-mother households may be at particular risk. Demuth and Brown (2004) using data from Add Health extended prior research that has investigated the effects of growing up in a two-parent versus single-mother family by examining adolescent delinquency in single-father families too. This method helped the researchers to identify whether the effect is predominantly a function of parental absence (i.e., one versus two parents) or parental gender (i.e., single mother versus single father) (Demuth & Brown, 2004). The results indicated that adolescents in single-parent families were significantly more delinquent than their counterparts residing with two biological, married parents (Demuth & Brown, 2004). They also, however, found a difference in single mother and single father families. Children from single father families showed higher signs of delinquency than those adolescents from single mother families. Adolescents from single parent families do show higher signs of juvenile delinquency overall, compared to children from intact families.

### **Family Processes and Delinquency**

The issue of family structure and youth crime best be captured by the work of Travis Hirschi in his theory of social control. Hirschi, in his theory maintains that increased social bonds reduce the likelihood of involving in crime and delinquency. Particularly, Hirschi (1969) specifies four elements of the social bond: attachment, explaining the extent that a person has friendly ties with others; commitment, representing the fear of committing a crime or engaging in any wrongdoing; involvement, described as meaning involving in conforming behaviour to make one too engaged to commit crime; and belief, described as impressions or opinions that are highly dependent upon social reinforcement. Hirschi's (1969) version of social control theory contends that individuals conform because they have strong affective attachments to parents, stakes in conformity, involvement in conventional activities, and belief in social norms. Equally, those youth who have weak attachments, low stakes in conformity, little involvement in conventional activities, and poor attitudes regarding societal norms are more likely to participate in delinquent behavior. Travis Hirschi argued that the attachment between parent and child is vital and the vigor of this relationship is the most important factor in determining delinquent behavior. This means that it is the quality, and not the quantity, of bonds that determines delinquency (Leiber et al., 2009). Children who experience a divorce or are otherwise in nontraditional families may not be as close to their parents as children in two-biological-parent families. Hence, they may experience weakened bonds with their parents and others, consequently increasing the likelihood that they will engage in crime and delinquency (Matsueda & Heimer, 1987). Hirschi suggested that inadequate families fail to provide the attachments that could leverage children into socialized life-styles (Hirschi, 1969). Children brought up in a broken home may have a hard time socially and this may cause the child to turn to deviant acts. Therefore, parental attachment is a key factor in explaining crime and delinquency among adolescents. Grove and Crutchfield (1982) examined the effect of various “family variables” on the etiology of juvenile delinquency focusing on self-reports by parents on their child's behavior using variables such as: family structure, poor parental characteristics, household characteristics, and parent-child relationships. Of these variables, parental attachment was found to be the strongest predictor of delinquency. Also, research using nationally representative data has found that maternal attachment was an especially important predictor of non serious and serious delinquency irrespective of family

structure, economic factors, and race and ethnicity (Leiber et al., 2009). While children from single parent homes can certainly have strong attachments with the custodial parent, some research has suggested that having a second parent in the household is still important in reducing delinquency. Rankin and Kern (1994) for instance, found that children who are strongly attached to both parents have a lower probability of self-reported delinquency than children who are strongly attached to only one parent. In addition, even children living in single-parent homes who are strongly attached to the custodial parent generally have a greater probability of committing delinquent acts than children living in intact homes who are strongly attached to both parents (Rankin & Kern, 1994). In line with parental attachment or closeness, social bonds with parents have also been measured with terms such as parental monitoring, supervision, and involvement. Among the factors, parental monitoring and supervision have received much support in the literature (Hoeve et al., 2009; Keijsers, Branje, VanderValk, & Meeus, 2010; Pettit, Laird, Dodge, Bates, & Cirss, 2001).

Hoeve et al. (2009) for example examined family type and juvenile delinquency and concluded that that connection between family type and delinquency were due to parental monitoring, psychological control, and negative aspects of support (Hoeve et al., 2009).

Some studies like Keijsers et al., (2010), have shown that with respect to parental involvement, more time spent with parents leads to less participation in crime and delinquency (Keijsers et al., 2010). The more leisure time that an adolescent spends with parents, the less likely the adolescent is to deviate. If an adolescent spends more time away from parents, he or she is more likely to disclose information from authority figures and keep things from his or her parents (Keijsers et al., 2010). Eitle (2005) in his study had found that the quantity of parenting may provide additional protection against adolescent substance use beyond quality of parenting factors. In other words, the more frequent adolescents are supervised, the less likely they are to engage in crime and delinquency. Delinquency may also be impacted by parenting practices over the long term. In a study by Petts (2009) to examine whether family influences individual-level delinquency trajectories from early adolescence through young adulthood using a life-course approach. Findings suggested that residing with two parents deters youths from becoming delinquent and that supportive parenting practices reduce their likelihood of becoming involved in delinquent behavior early in adolescence (Petts, 2009). As shown by the study, parenting may have long-term effects on crime and deviance and parenting practices impact delinquency across different ages. Some studies also suggested that the gender of a child is related to delinquency. Gove and Crutchfield (1982), considering the gender of the child found that the variables that predict male delinquency were different from those that predict female delinquency. The findings shows that the characteristics of the parents' marriage, such as if the parents get along with each other or not, play an important role for boys, while misbehavior of girls is more strongly predicted by variables measuring parent-child interaction and parental control. From the study, females were more likely to engage in crime and delinquency if they did not have a lot of interaction with their parents and if their parents did not control and monitor what they are doing. Here, the deciding factor for female delinquency is was, therefore, the parent's family management and techniques (supervision and discipline) (Loeber & Dishion, 1983).

Delinquency may also be impacted by the gender of the parent, particularly maternal relationships with children. Maternal relationships in particular appear to be important with regards to crime and delinquency. McCord (1991) found that children who are brought up in families where they are closely supervised and have interaction are less likely to turn into criminals as adults. Practicing good parenting and closely supervising an adolescent can influence the adolescent not to participate in crime throughout adulthood, also (Petts, 2009). Practicing good parenting and close supervision monitoring, involvement, and attachment seem to be particularly vital in the case of an adolescent participating in crime and delinquency (McCord, 1991).

### **The Relationship Between Family Structure, Family Processes, and Delinquency**

Studies have shown that two-biological-parent families have higher levels of parental monitoring, supervision, involvement, and attachment when compared to other family types. Ekpo, (1996), in his research carried out to determine if household structures differ in conflicts between mothers and adolescents and found that adolescents reported more total disagreements with single mothers and mothers of blended households than with mothers from two-biological-parent families (Ekpo, 1996).). He suggested that this might be the case because single-parent families restrict the number of people in the household available to discipline, monitor, or supervise the adolescent. Two-biological-parent families provide more support, involvement, and monitoring for an adolescent. Fisher, Leve, O'Leary, and Leve (2003) in their study conducted to determine the levels of parental monitoring among three different categories: two-biological parent families, stepmother families, and stepfather families and found that two biological-parent families exhibit higher signs of

parental monitoring when compared to the other family types and that children's behavior is better in two-biological-parent families. Given the importance of parenting practices to predicting delinquency, these factors may account for the relationship between family structure and delinquency. Demuth and Brown (2004) in their study found that adolescents in single parent households are more delinquent than youth in married households, but that these differences are reduced once various family processes such as monitoring and closeness are accounted for. This means that if parenting practices lead to increased levels of social control, an adolescent is less likely to engage in crime and delinquent acts. Dunifon and Kowaleski-Jones (2002) in contrast, found that there was no evidence to indicate that parenting practices mediated the links between family structure and children's outcomes. An important explanation for this conflicting results could be due to the different sample in each study. Demuth and Brown (2004) collected data from children who had mothers of all ages and their sample was nationally representative. On the other hand, Dunifon and Kowaleski-Jones (2002) collected data from children who were born when their mothers were between the ages of 14 and 21 and their sample was regional, Job (2008).

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study used primary data collected with the aid of questionnaire. With the Cochran statistics, a total of 200 respondents were sampled. Furthermore, non probability sampling techniques (purposive) was used to select respondents that fell within the age bracket of 8-18 years respectively. Data for the study were analyzed with descriptive statistics like simple percentage, mean and standard deviation. Also, bar-charts and pie-chart were used to give a pictorial description of phenomena. Inferential statistics like Chi-square and T-test were used for testing the study hypotheses with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0.

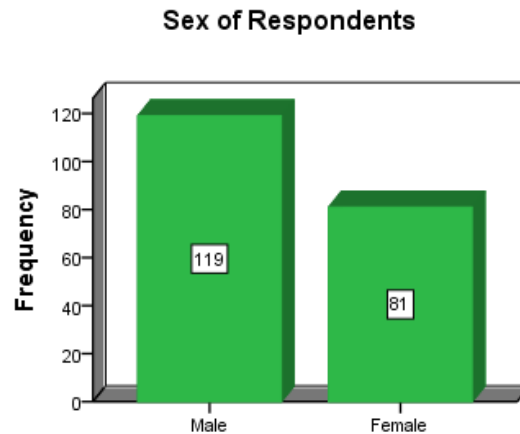
### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

**Table 4.1: Distribution of sex, age, academic qualification, community, religious status and family structure of respondents**

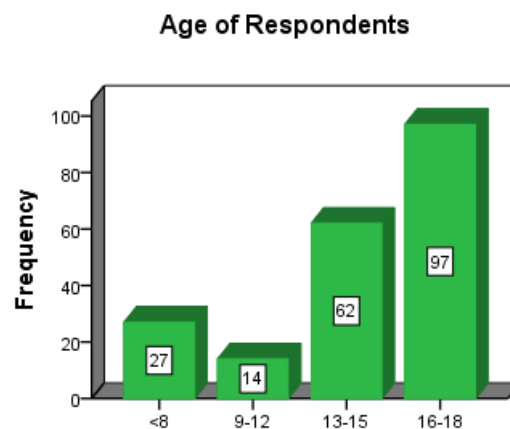
Variable	Frequency (n=200)	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	119	59.5
Female	81	40.5
<b>Age</b>		
≤8	27	13.5
9-12	14	7.0
13-15	62	31.0
16-18	97	48.5
<b>Academic Qualification</b>		
No formal education	21	10.5
Primary	28	14.0
Secondary	94	47.0
Tertiary	57	28.5
<b>Community</b>		
Akenfa	39	19.5
Edepie	68	34.0
Okaka	20	10.0
Onopa	5	2.5
Etegwe	68	34.0
<b>Religious Status</b>		
Christianity	195	97.5
Islam	4	2.0
African Traditional Religion	1	0.5
<b>Family Structure</b>		
Single parenting	55	27.5
Cohabitation	95	47.5
Divorce	11	5.5
Polygamy	4	2.0
Monogamy	14	7.0
Separated	17	8.5
Others	4	2.0

#### 4.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

According to table 4.1, the first variable shows that majority of 119(59.5%) of respondents are male while 81(40.5%) are female as thus:

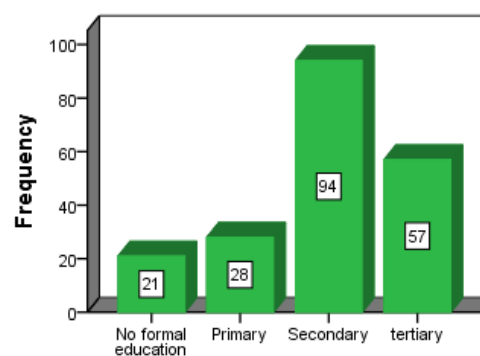


The next variable shows that majority of 97(48.5%) respondents fell within the age bracket of 16-18 years, followed by 62(31.0%) for 13-15years, 27(13.5%) for  $\leq 8$  years, 14(7.0%) for 9-12 years as shown below:



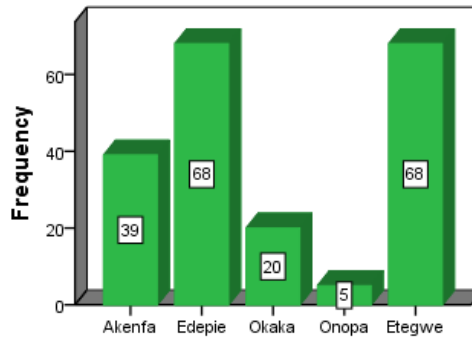
Furthermore, the next variable in table 4.1 reveals that majority of 94(47.0) respondents attend secondary school. On the contrary, a least score of 21(10.5%) was reported for respondents with no formal education as shown below:

#### Academic Qualification of Respondents



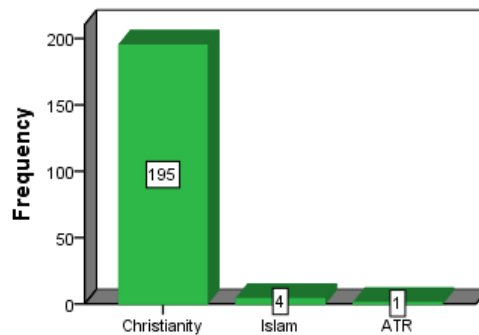
According to table 4.1, majority of 68(34.0%) respondents resides in Edepie and Etegwé community simultaneously. While 39(19.5%) resides at Akenfa community, followed by 20(10.0%) for Okaka, 5(2.5%) for Onopa community respectively.

**Community of Respondents**



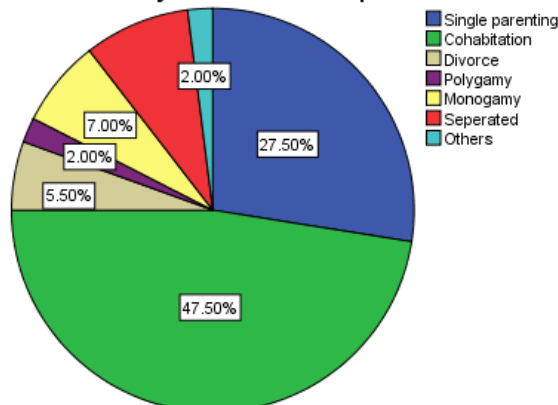
Also, the next variable in table 4.1 shows that majority of 195(97.5%) respondents are Christians, followed by 4(2.0%) for Islam, 1(0.5%) for African Traditional Worshipers as follows:

**Religious Status of Respondents**



The last variable in table 4.1 shows that majority of 95(47.5%) respondents are from homes where parent cohabit, followed by 55(27.5%) for children from single parent homes, 17(8.5%) for children from separated homes, 14(7.0%) for children from monogamous families, 11(5.5%) for children from divorced homes while 4(2.0%) of children are from polygamous homes as thus:

**Family Structure of Respondents**



**Table 4.2: Prevalence of Delinquency among Children in Yenagoa Metropolis**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Parents are finding it difficult to control their children	200	1.00	5.00	4.1	2.0
Children are frequently abusing drugs nowadays	200	1.00	5.00	4.3	2.1
There is high rate of crime among children	200	1.00	5.00	4.3	2.1
Most children are now acting rudely	200	1.00	5.00	4.4	2.1
Valid N (listwise)	200				

**4.2: Prevalence of Delinquency among Children in Yenagoa Metropolis**

Table 4.2 investigated the prevalence of delinquency among children. It shows a mean score of 4.1 with a standard deviation of 2.0. This indicates that parents are finding it difficult to control their children. The study tried to discover if children are frequently abusing drugs. An affirmative mean score of 4.3 with a standard deviation of 2.1 was reported. Also, a mean score of 4.3 with a standard deviation of 2.1 shows high rate of crime committed by children. In the same vein, a mean score of 4.4 measuring a standard deviation of 2.1 reveals that children are now acting rudely in the research locale.

**Table 4.3: Causes of Disrupt Family Structure**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Death of parent disrupt family structure	200	1.00	5.00	3.2	1.8
Divorce/separation of parent disrupt family structure	200	1.00	5.00	3.6	1.9
Dissertation/abandonment disrupt family structure	200	1.00	5.00	4.0	2.0
Prolonged absence of parent disrupt family structure	200	1.00	5.00	4.1	2.0
Valid N (listwise)	200				

**4.3: Causes of Disruptive Family Structure**

Table 4.3 above investigated the causes of disruptive family structure. Analysis shows a mean score of 3.2 with a standard deviation of 1.8. This indicates that death of parents disrupt family structure. Also, a mean score of 3.6 with a standard deviation of 1.9 clearly reveals that divorce/ separation leads to disrupt family structure. Again, a mean score of 4.0 with a standard deviation of 2.0 affirmed that dissertation/ abandonment disrupt family structure. Further probing shows a mean score of 4.1 with a standard deviation 2.0. This shows that prolonged absence of parents disrupt family structure.

**Table 4.4: Single Family Structure and Delinquency**

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Single parent are closely related to delinquency among children	200	1.00	5.00	3.4	1.8
Single parenting disrupt family structure	200	1.00	5.00	3.7	1.9
Children with single parents are emotionally unstable in school	200	1.00	5.00	3.9	1.9
Delinquent behaviour is common among children that lack parental control	200	1.00	5.00	3.9	1.9
Valid N (listwise)	200				

**4.4: Single Family Structure and Delinquency**

The table (4.4) above, shows that single parent is associated with delinquency among children. A mean score 3.4 with a standard deviation of 1.8 affirmed this assertion. Also, a mean score of 3.7 reflecting a standard deviation of 1.9 shows



that single parenting style disrupts family structure. Furthermore, a mean score of 3.9 with a standard deviation of 1.9 affirmed that children with single parent are emotionally unstable in school. Finally, a mean score of 3.9 with a standard deviation of 1.9 indicates that delinquent behaviour is common among children that lack parental control in the research locale.

**Table 4.5: Polygamous Family Structure and Juvenile Delinquency**

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Delinquent attitude is common among family with increasing number of children	200	1.00	5.00	3.7	1.9
Polygamous families find it difficult to monitor their children	200	1.00	5.00	3.8	1.9
Children from polygamous homes experience lower social control	200	1.00	5.00	3.8	1.9
It is difficult to supervise increasing number of children at once.	200	1.00	5.00	4.1	2.0
Valid N (listwise)	200				

#### 4.5: Polygamous Family Structure and Juvenile Delinquency among Children

According to table 4.5 above, a mean score of 3.7 with a standard deviation of 1.9 was reported for respondents who affirmed that delinquent attitude is common among family with increasing number of children. Similarly, a mean score of 3.8 with a standard deviation of 1.9 affirmed that polygamous families find it difficult to monitor their children. On the basis of social control, a mean score of 3.8 with a standard deviation of 1.9 shows that children from polygamous homes experience lower social control. Lastly, a mean score of 4.1 with a standard deviation of 2.0, shows that it is difficult to supervise increasing number of children at once.

**Table 4.6: Effect of Family Structure on Juvenile Delinquency in Yenagoa Metropolis**

Descriptive Statistics	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Are your parents currently cohabiting	200	1.00	2.00	1.3	1.1
Children with low parental control are more likely to commit crime compared to those with high parental supervision	200	1.00	5.00	3.6	1.9
Children from divorce families are more likely to experience delinquency compared to those from unbroken homes	200	1.00	5.00	4.3	2.0
Families where parents are always fighting expose children to delinquent attitude	200	1.00	5.00	4.7	2.2
Valid N (listwise)	200				

#### 4.6: Effect of Family Structure on Juvenile Delinquency in Yenagoa Metropolis

The last study objective as indicated in table 4.6 shows the effect of family structure on delinquency among children. Specifically, a mean score of 1.3 with a standard deviation of 1.1 was reported for respondents with cohabiting parents. Also, a mean score of 3.6 with a standard deviation of 1.9 shows that children with low parental control are more likely to commit crime compared those with high parental supervision. In the same vein, a mean score of 4.3 with a standard deviation of 2.0 shows that children from divorce homes are more like to experience delinquency compared to those from unbroken homes. Finally, a mean score of 4.7 with a standard deviation of 2.2 affirmed that families where parents are always fighting expose children to delinquent attitude.

#### 4.7: Hypotheses Testing

**H01: Youths from cohabiting families do not exhibit higher signs of delinquency compared to those from other family types**

	Cohabitation Delinquency			Total			df	$\chi^2$ (p-value)
	Verylow	Low	Moderate	High	Veryhigh			
Yes	6(3.0)	8(4.0)	20(10.0)	47(23.5)	55(27.5)	136(68.0)	4	64.1(*0.000)
No	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	64(32.0)	64(32.0)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>6(3.0)</b>	<b>8(4.0)</b>	<b>20(10.0)</b>	<b>47(23.5)</b>	<b>119(59.5)</b>	<b>200(100.0)</b>		

\* is  $p \leq 0.05$

Source: SPSS OUTPUT (2020).

The above table shows that cohabiting family exhibit higher signs of delinquency compared to those from others family types ( $\chi^2(4) = 64.1$ ;  $p = 0.000$ ).

**H02: There is no difference between juvenile delinquency, family structure and social control**

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 0.05					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Juvenile Delinquency	59.730	199	.000	4.27500	4.1339	4.4161
Family Structure	20.857	199	.000	2.42000	2.1912	2.6488
Social Control	37.896	199	.000	3.50000	3.3179	3.6821

Source: SPSS OUTPUT (2020).

The table above shows the **t Test** result derived from investigating the difference between juvenile delinquency, family structure and social control. As such, the result vividly revealed a calculated t value for juvenile delinquency **t=59.730**, **p<0.000** and mean difference of **x=4.27500**. While for family structure, the table above revealed a t value of **t=20.857**, **p<0.000** and a mean difference of **2.42000**. On the basis of social control, the table shows t value of **t=37.896**, **p<0.000** and a mean difference of **3.50000**. Considering the fact that the point of significance is less than 0.05, we shall reject the null hypothesis and affirm that there is a significant difference between juvenile delinquency, family structure and social control.

## 5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The major aim of this study was to evaluate if there is any connection between family types and delinquency. To do this, the study examine adolescents from cohabitating families in Yenagoa Local Government Area, Bayelsa State and adolescents in other family types in the same city to see if there is any difference among youth involvement in juvenile crimes between the different family types. The study, in addition also examined if social control factors such as parental monitoring, parental supervision, parental involvement, and parental attachment account for any differences in juvenile delinquency by family structure in Yenagoa Local Government Area. Using data from the field, the study found that there is a significant difference in youth delinquency between adolescents from cohabitating families and children from two-biological-parent families. It was adduced from the study that youth from cohabitating families are more likely to participate in delinquency compared to youth from two-biological-parent families. The reason for this result is not that delinquency is due to cohabitation as such but because youth from such families lack parental love and discipline. This difference, however, disappeared once parental social control factors were incorporated into the model.

Significance link was also found for the second proposition, that differences between cohabitation and other family types would be explained by social control factors. While there was very little inconsistency in delinquency between cohabitating families and other family types to begin with, what little difference that was observed in nonviolent delinquency was explained by the social control factors. Past research emphasizing the use of similar parenting factors to explain family structure difference in delinquency found contradictory outcomes. Laursen (2005), for instance, found an

important variation between two-biological-parent families compared to other family types such as single-mother and blended families. This study, however, found considerable link between family types and delinquency. The study reveals that rates of delinquency are lower in two-biological parent families as opposed to other family types when incorporating the social control variables into the consideration.

The social control models suggest that whatever the difference is in delinquency between two-biological-parent families and cohabitating families, the family structure is only important in so much as it is related to the dimensions of parenting. This means that cohabitating families that could monitor the activities of their children with some level of emotional attachment are no worse off in terms of risk of delinquency than any other family type. Hence, it can be concluded that as long as families' exhibit signs of parental monitoring, involvement, and attachment, family structure is insignificant in checkmating the activities of children.

The study thereby suggests that parent should monitor the activities of their children to curb their excesses toward delinquent behavior.

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