Working Mothers and Child Rearing Practice as a Factor to Juvenile Delinquency among Primary School Pupils in Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

This study investigated work status of mothers as a factor of child delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria. The study determined the differences of mothers work status and the nature of delinquencies associated with children of working and non-working group of mothers. The populations of the study were all mothers of delinquent pupils in primary schools in Borno State and their delinquent children. Data was collected from eight hundred mothers of work and non working status and the teachers of their delinquent children for the study. Stratified and purposive sampling was used to select the sample. Two types of self-made instrument: 55 items questionnaire and 26 items child delinquent rating scale with Alfa reliability index of 0.89 and 0.93 were used to collect data for the study. Data generated were analyzed by the use of descriptive statistic (simple percentage, mean and standard deviation) and standard step-wise multiple regression at alpha level of p< 0.05. Result indicated that there were differences in work status of mothers of delinquent pupils and nature of delinquency associated with children of mothers within work status groups. It is also observed that there is significant relationship between work status of a child rearing mothers and juvenile delinquency. It is recommended that strategies for reality counselling approach should be used for both working and non-working mothers on how to help their delinquent children. Government should also come up with concrete policy on how to care for children and working mothers by enforcing the policy of day care programme in places of work to solve numerous problems associated with where working mothers keep their children while working. This will also improve and enhance mother-child bonding.
Introduction:

In all cultures and societies, parents ideally provide and support the system that allows children to grow up into healthy and responsible citizens (shaw, 2004). The parents are the first educators and models of their children. This means that the child's ability to function well in school and in the society depends largely on the parents' ability to provide the type of home nurturing ideal for the child as well as the required environment at the initial stage in life. Child-rearing as a human endeavor has it origin in all cultures and has undergone changes with development. According to Arms, (2004) child-rearing in heterogeneous society, is determined by the group of people involved in it, and how they see and value the child based on their religious belief, cultural and economic situation. In Africa, child-rearing used to be a communal responsibility even though the mother is the primary care giver. The responsibility of raising the child rests on mothers and fathers and supported by all the members of the community for holistic development of each child until the child becomes a matured independent adult (Mkhize, 1999).

Hillam (2000) observed that mothers in every society carry out the greater part of the responsibility of child-rearing. In the early stage of development, the child depends completely on the mother for food, security, comfort and other needs. Risman, (2004) also observed that children raised in families with attentive and loving feminist mothers have less delinquent behaviour. Similarly, Shaw, (2004) stated that "relationship between mother and child is very important in all cultures". Wilson, (1987) in considering personality development theory by Erickson emphasized the importance of this relationship as the basic foundation for child personality development. Currently, there are problems in this area of human endeavor. Many people migrate due to work, men are usually absent from their homes and families, and mothers for socio-economic reasons have entered full-time work outside their homes. This means that the role expected of mothers in childrearing will be affected especially when the mother is involved in full time job that will take her away from the child for some hours of the day.

Globally, the change in child rearing practice has created some problems in families. Hillam (2000) sees the situation as one of the significant problems in the society. Mothers taken to full-time jobs create a need in the home. Developing children whose mothers traditionally looked after them are either left to cater for themselves or looked after by some other care-givers. Arms (2004) stated that child-rearing practices at the turn of the millennium is high-risk as children experience isolation, parental deprivation and are moved from one caregiver to another to allow their parents have time to themselves. In some of the child rearing practices, care-givers are found to be inadequate in rendering their services thereby necessitating a change of practice. This is not healthy for a developing child. When there is a change in rearing practice, the problem of unstable bonding is experienced by the child. This creates a problem of care-giver -child attachment. Willemson and Willemson (2000) stated that children need stability and security and are harmed when they lose their on-going relationship with their care-givers especially the biological mothers. They further stated that children that experience unstable child-rearing practice develop mistrust and encounter a lot of behavioral problems that turn out to be genuine delinquency in later life.

Global shift in value where mothers place interest in the world of work at the expense of child-rearing has created a big problem in child rearing. Children are reared by strangers, and babies today stay about ten (10) hours away from their parents and are treated as accessories that could be handled by anybody. As a result of this change in values, society is saddled with tyrannical children, unhappy households, and society that neither nourishes nor enjoys its youth (Shaw, 2004). This observation by Shaw is common with all societies.

Working mothers refer to mothers economically engaged in civil or public service. Child-rearing attitudes of working mothers change as children
continue to arrive into the family. Grose, (2004) stated that mothers at birth of their first children are novice, anxious and ambitious, but as more children continue to arrive into the family they become gradually more relaxed about their aspiration for the child. Their attitudes to the children undergo changes as their attention and degree of care and love is shifted to the younger ones. In case of working mothers, the attention is further shared between work and child care. Children are adversely affected by these changes; this could lead to delinquency (Arms 2004, Howes 2006)

Wilson (1987) stated that mother is the channel via which family temperament in terms of emotional responses and expectations are conveyed to the child. Her relationship with the child is the key to the social world. The mother is the first while "others" follow in the child's awareness. Through her the child makes the first step in developing recognition of his own self-identity. The mother-child relationship therefore could be the basis for all subsequent personality development. Mother-child relationship is quite often affected by the mothers; personality and many other factors like mothers involvement in schedule outside her home.

In situation where the mothers have to go to work and substitute helps are to be found, the bonding relationship or attachment will be affected and this could become too much for the already deprived child. The children simply become maternally deprived. They could suffer in stimulating environment, inadequate diet, and inadequate sense of security. Children from such families are most likely abused as they are neglected. Alutu, (2000) in a study on nurse working mothers, teachers and bankers found that children of professional nurses have much time with their mothers and therefore have less problems compared to children of teachers and bankers. Is this study true of working mothers compared non working mothers in Borno state, Nigeria.

**Statement of Problem:**

Child rearing practice in Borno State seems to be affected today due to many changes in the society. Good number of infants find themselves in care of commercial caregiver because their mothers have joined work force to sustain the economics of the family. By so doing, the traditional practice of child rearing where mothers give consistent care, love, security and training with degree of sameness, consistency and continuity seems to have disappeared. Thus unacceptable behaviours commonly known as juvenile delinquency is now be deviling our children of primary schools in Borno State, Nigeria. Could this be a result of child rearing mothers leaving their children to commercial care givers as they join the world of work? The study is designed to determine whether child rearing mothers work status could be a factor for child delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria.

**Objectives of the Study:**

The objectives of this study are to determine:

1. The types of child rearing practices working and non working mothers use to supplement mother’s childcare in Borno State, Nigeria.
2. The Difference in child rearing practice of working and non-working mothers in Borno State, Nigeria.
3. The nature of delinquency among children of working and non-working mothers in Borno State, Nigeria.

**Research Questions:**

The following research questions were answered in the course of the study.

1. What are the types of child rearing practices working and non-working mothers use in rearing their children in Borno State, Nigeria?
2. Is there any difference in child rearing practices among to mothers in Borno State, Nigeria due to mothers work status?
3. What are the differences in nature of juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils of working and non-working mothers in primary schools of Borno state, Nigeria?

**Null Hypothesis:** child rearing practices and work status of mother have no significant relationship with
juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria.

Methodology:
Survey method is used to determine whether work status of mothers of delinquent pupils in Borno State primary schools has relationship with pupils’ delinquent behaviour. This method was used because the study is behaviour related and questionnaire and rating scale were therefore used to collect data. Jen, (2002) noted that survey is suitable for behaviour related studies that deal with relationship between two or more variables.

The target population for the study consisted of the mothers and the teachers of the delinquent children of six to eleven (6-11) years in public primary schools in Borno State, Nigeria. A total of 940 delinquent pupils were identified and assessed by their teachers. The mothers of these delinquents automatically become the second sample. At the end of the field work, questionnaire filled by eight hundred (800) mothers were paired with the delinquency rating scale filled by the teachers of the delinquent children were found to be useful for the study.

Two sets of researcher made instruments (55 questionnaire items for mothers and 26 items child delinquency rating scale for teachers) were presented with Alpha reliability of .89 and .93 respectively were used to collect data. Percentage, mean and standard deviation were computed to answer the three research questions raised in the study and standard and step-wise and multiple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis at alpha level of P< 0.05.

Data Analysis, Finding and Discussion:
Three research questions and one null hypothesis were answered and tested respectively. When obtained mean is more than half of the total responses to the item under each child rearing practice, the practice is good. When the standard deviation is less than one or exactly one, the deviation among the group is not much. When it is above one, then the deviation is much. When the mean in areas of delinquency is above average, it means that the delinquency is high. When the F-ratio is higher than the F-critical value, the statistical relationship is positive.

Research Question 1:
What are the types of child care rearing practices working and non-working mothers use in rearing their children in Borno State, Nigeria?

Table 1:1 frequency and percentage distribution of types of child rearing practices used by working and non working mothers in rearing children in Borno State, Nigeria.

| Child rearing practices | NW M | W M | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------|------|-----|-----------|------------|
| Day care                | 0    | 83  | 83        | 10.4%      |
| Mix care                | 50   | 106 | 156       | 19.5%      |
| Mother care             | 130  | 05  | 135       | 16.9%      |
| Nanny care              | 4    | 292 | 296       | 37.0%      |
| Neighbourhood care      | 0    | 94  | 94        | 11.8%      |
| Sibling/relative care   | 10   | 26  | 36        | 4.5%       |
| Total                   | 194  | 606 | 800       | 100.0%     |

Key:
WM = Working mothers
NWM = Non-working mothers

Table 1 presents frequency distribution and percentages of the types of child rearing practice used by working and non-working mothers in Borno State to supplement their child rearing practices. Observation from the table one above shows that both the non-working and working mothers use all types of child rearing practices with exception of Day care practices that is used by working mothers only.

Research Question 2: Is there any difference in child rearing practices among mothers in Borno State, Nigeria due to mothers’ work status?
**Research Question 3:** what are the differences in the nature of juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils of working and non working mothers in Borno State, Nigeria?

**Table 2:** means and standard deviations of child-rearing practices of mothers and juvenile delinquency of primary school pupils due to work status of mothers in Borno State, Nigeria.

| Child – rearing practices       | Delinquency Types               |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|                                 | Delinquency I (6 items)         |
|                                 | Delinquency II (13 items)       |
|                                 | Delinquency III (7 items)       |
| Work Stat                       |                                |
| Feeding (8 items)               |                                |
| Cleaning (9 items)              |                                |
| Teaching/ Training (5 items)    |                                |
| Security (9 items)              |                                |
| Love & Com (9 items)            |                                |
| Discipline (8 items)            |                                |
| Mother’s choice (7 items)       |                                |
| Total                           |                                |
| X                               |                                |
| N                               |                                |
| SD                              |                                |
| Working mothers                |                                |
| X                               |                                |
| N                               |                                |
| SD                              |                                |
| Non-working mothers            |                                |
| X                               |                                |
| N                               |                                |
| SD                              |                                |

Key:

- Delinquency I = Academic related delinquent behaviors.
- Delinquency II = Personal – Social related delinquent behaviors.
- Delinquency III = Physical related delinquent behavior.

They also have mean and standard deviation of 4.13 1.4 ± 7.36 ± 2.43 and 3.52 ± 82 in academic, personal social and physical related delinquency respectively. Non-working mothers have means and standard deviations of 6.0 1 ± 2 12, 7.12 ± 2.80, 3.68 ±1.58, 6.68 ± 2.76,6.68 ± 2.76 and 6.00 ± 2.38 in feeding, cleaning, and training, security, love and communication and discipline respectively. They
also have mean and standard deviation of 3.17 ± 1.33, 7.66 ± 2.05 and 3.05 ± .65 in academic, personal social and physical related delinquency.

The Table also shows that both working and non-working mothers have good practice average, but non-working mothers have better child rearing practice and their children have less academic and physical related delinquency. Working mothers have worse child rearing practice and their children have higher academic and physical related delinquency.

**Null Hypothesis:** Child rearing practices and work status of mothers have no significant relationship with juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Step-wise Multiple Regression ANOVA table on Relationship between work status of child rearing mothers and juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State.**

| Model | Sum of Squares | DF | Means Square | F       | Sig |
|-------|----------------|----|--------------|---------|-----|
| Regression | 1170.449 | 2 | 585.225 | 14.354 | .000 |
| Residual | 32493.231 | 79 | 40.769 | | |
| Total | 33663.680 | 79 | | | |

R = .864; R² = .626  
F = (3797 = 3.00, P<0.05  
Predictors = Work Status and child rearing practices  
Dependent variable: Juvenile delinquency

**Table 3** is a forward step-wise multiple regression ANOVA table on work status and child rearing practice and Juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State. Result in the table shows that independent variables entered into the equation work status of the mother and child rearing practices yields a multiple R = .864 showing the contribution of work status and child rearing practice of the mother on juvenile delinquency. The R² = .626 indicated 63% of variance observed in juvenile delinquency among pupils was accounted for by working mothers and child rearing practices.

Further analysis shows the relationship between child-rearing practices and work status of mothers and juvenile delinquency. The F – ratio of 7.538 which is more than the F-critical value of 3.00 shows there is positive statistical relationship between child rearing practices and work status of mothers and juvenile delinquency. A change in standard deviation in child rearing practices and work status of mothers amounts to change in standard deviation of juvenile delinquency. This appears to be a substantial contribution in the relationship between child rearing practices and work status of mothers and juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria.

The null hypothesis, “child rearing practices and work status of mothers have no significant relationship with juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State” is therefore rejected.

Exploring the excluded variables, the R-value of work status = 2.109 and the significance decision level of .035 show that work status of child rearing mothers is a strong predictor of juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria.

**Summary of Finding:**

Analysis of result revealed the following findings:

Working and non-working mothers practice mix care, Nanny Care, mother care, neighborhood care and sibling/relation care to supplement their child rearing practices, but only working mother’s use day care practices.

Non-working mothers have better child rearing practices and their children have less academic and physical related delinquencies.

Work status of child rearing mothers has strong predicting strength on juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State, Nigeria.

**Discussion:**

The research question one is to determine the type of child rearing practices used by working mothers and...
non-working mothers in Borno State. The study shows that apart from day care which is used by working mothers only; all others are used by both working and non-working mothers. Differences exist between child rearing practices and delinquency among working and non-working mother’s children in the State. It was observed from the study that both working and non-working mothers have good (above average) practice, but non-working mothers have better child rearing practices and their children have less delinquency that are academic and physically related. This finding confirmed the global observation that most children today no longer enjoy full care given by biological mothers. As observed by Nwachukwu (1998) Mallum (200)) and Shaw (2004), children these days are found in a network of relationship of mothers and other care givers as most of their biological mothers have taken to paid jobs outside their homes.

Bulks of mothers in Borno (606) are involved in work and other engagement outside their homes. This pose a great danger to the behavioural development of our children because there seems to be no steady relationship established between the child and the mother, neither with the child and the supplement care giver. When a child is shuttled between mother and other care-givers, it could mean that steady relationship and sameness of care is not achieved. It could equally mean that problem of mother child bonding relationship does exists much among the working mothers and their children. As observed in the theory of personality development, such children develop mistrust, lack of autonomy, initiative, independence and problem of social adjustment which will consequently lead to juvenile delinquency (Erikson 1968, Burgess, Marshall, Rabin & Fox 2003).

These findings could be of interest to teachers, counsellors and social workers that deal with children either in school setting or in society. Children that experienced poor feeding, training/teaching, poor security, love and communication and poor discipline at the initial stage of life, and has varieties of care givers, will likely develop delinquent behaviour in and out of school environment. History of child's rearing practice could therefore be a term of reference for child’s delinquent behaviour and this will help teachers, counsellors and social workers in dealing with delinquent children. With regards to this finding, counsellors in school settings could plan strategies of helping mothers and also pupils that are already affected.

Finding of this study in respect of null hypothesis shows that work status of child rearing mothers with other variable like child rearing are predictor of juvenile delinquency among primary school pupils in Borno State. This means that there is statistical relationship between work status of mothers and child rearing practices and juvenile delinquency. The R square - .626 means that 63% of the variance was as a result of work status of mothers and child rearing practices. 606 that is 75.5% of the sample for this study were working mothers. Mothers that work will not have enough time to take adequate care of their developing children. They had to use supplement care. As stated by Shaw, (2004) nobody can wear the shoes of the mother in caring for biological children. The results of this study therefore support the findings of Philips, (2002) among American children that have working parents. The study stated that those children that have full time working parents have greater behavioral problem compared to those of part-time or not working parents. Other studies by Mallum (2002), Apeoon and Lawrence (2006) and Howes (2006) also confirmed that working parents have no absolute supervision and warm home environment for their developing children.

**Conclusion:**

Findings from the study show that various child rearing practices are used by working and non-working mothers in Borno State. There are differences of practices among mothers which results to different types of delinquency among pupils. Work status of child rearing mother also is a strong predictor of child delinquency that are physically and personal socially related in nature.

**Recommendation:**
Working mother need to examine their choice of child care supplement so as to reduce the types of delinquency common among their developing children. Government should strengthen the policy of creating day-care in work places so that working mothers could have maximum bonding with their children to reduce effects of non-mother/child bonding dues to the nature of work.

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