

## Family Structure and Deviant Behavior among Adolescents in Obio-Akpo Local Government Area of Rivers State

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the interplay of family structure and deviant behavior among adolescents respectively in Obio-Akpo local government area of Rivers State. The study was guided by four research questions and four objectives. The study adopted theoretical triangulation by synthesizing three theories; social cognitive theory, attachment theory, and the theory of moral absolutism. The study adopted descriptive (survey) research design. The population of the study was 284,294 which is the entire population of Obio/Akpor local government area retrieved from National Population Commission, (2006). The sample size of this study is 400 respondents in the four randomly selected communities as Elelenwo 100, Rumuola 100, Rumuokoro 100 and Rumuodumanye 100. Taro Yamane (1967) method of sample size determination was used. Systematic sampling technique was used in reaching out to the respondents. Data was collected through primary and secondary sources. The primary data was analyzed with simple percentage form of data analysis. Findings from the study showed amongst others that indeed family structures like single parenting; step family amongst others can influence deviant behavior among adolescents amongst others.*

**Keywords:** *Family, Structure, Deviant, Behavior, Adolescents Obio-Akpo, Social Cognitive Theory, Attachment Theory, Theory of Moral Absolutism.*

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### **Introduction**

Every individual belongs to a family which is seen as the primary institution of socialization. Family has been defined differently by different scholars. According to Olayinka and Omoegun (2001), the term "family" originated from the Latin word that could have been converted into "domestic community". A family community is a group of individuals who generally share a

shared home and food source. According to Murdoch (1965), in Amadi (2013), the family comprised an economic and reproductive culture distinguished by shared residence. It comprises all gender individuals, at least two who have socially-approved intercourse with each other and one more children who have been owned or adopted by an adult who is sexually cohabiting. In the view of Hofferth and Sandberg (2001), family represent a social group comprising of “the married couple, their offspring and immediate kith and kin- brothers and sisters of the bridegroom and their parents, relatives, in-laws and any other dependents”. According to Mezieobi and Opara (2007), family is considered majorly as “a socially approved small group made up of the husband, wife or wives and their offspring or children”.

Gone are the days when nuclear families (mom, dad and one or more kids) are considered the norm in the society both in the United States, United Kingdom and even Africa. These days, different family types are not only common but also much more accepted than they were in the past. It's not uncommon to be raised by a single mother or be part of a mixed family. It seems more uncommon to live in a household where both parents are happily married, unfortunately, although many of those families do still exist. What's even more interesting is that each different family structure (there are six main family as posited by Klein, (2014): nuclear; single parent; extended; childless family; step family and grandparent family) has a unique family dynamic. Family structure has changed dramatically over the last 50 years. The *Leave it to Beaver* family is no longer the standard and several variations on family have been created (Klein, 2014).

Family structure is a term that describes the members of a household who are linked by marriage or bloodline and is typically used in reference to at least one child residing in the home under the age of 18 (Uwaifo, 2008). Today these structures are identified as two-parent, one-parent, and “living with neither parent” (e.g., adoptive families, grandparent families or other relatives, foster care families, institutionalized children). However, since the mid-1940s other changes in family life have resulted in more complicated designations of family structure, including blended families, single-parent plus partner families (cohabiting couples, both opposite sex and same sex), multigenerational families, and binuclear families). These entries outline the various common definitions of different family structures, identify changes in family structure over time, and discuss their increasing complexity.

Many contemporary societies world over are faced with the problem of adolescent who deviate from the social norms. This could be in terms of general behavior or even in the way they relate to environment and other surrounding issues around them (Dienye & Oyet, 2011). Examples of deviant behavior include: vandalism, disobedience, drug abuse, truancy among others. In schools effort by the teachers to help stops such deviant behaviour among students has been in vain. This has therefore raised a lot of concern among the teachers and all other stakeholders since in such a situation, little learning could be going on. The link between family structure and adolescents' social problem and experience has been the basics for this study.

## Statement of the problem

The maintenance of appropriate behaviour among adolescent children in order to produce responsible leaders is the responsibility of families and schools with the introduction of western education in Nigeria. Subjects like social studies and civiceducation emerged in the bid to achieve this goal. However, school age children's behaviour in Nigeria and particularly communities of Obio-Akpor LGA today is questionable because of obvious attitudinal flaws manifested. The reason for these flaws has been partly adduced by several studies to the family structure of the child.

In developing countries of the world including Nigeria, almost 2.3 million juvenile are arrested annually. Over one billion dollars per year is required to maintain the juvenile justice system (Ekwik, 2021). Quoting from police intelligence report in 2020, it has been shown that in Niger Delta states (Rivers State inclusive) adolescents under 18 years of age account for 16% of arrest for violent crimes, and 34% of property crime arrests (Police Intelligence Report, 2020). The relationship between juveniles and violent crime varied considerably overtime. For instance, in 2000 and 2019, arrests for violent crimes committed by juveniles increased to 47%, while violent crime arrests for adults only increased to 19%. (Newswatch, 2020).

Dryfoos, (1990); Resnick, (1997) assert that there is substantial evidence that families play an important role in influencing this behavior. A number of researchers have begun to explore precisely what families do to protect their children from potential risk factors (Garbarino, 2017). Correspondingly, notice has not been taken not to underscore the fact that the adolescent period is a period of transition from childhood to adulthood. It is a period of puberty which involves the development of primary and secondary sex characteristics. As a result, adolescent growth and development involves a lot of experimentation behaviours.

According to Fomby, and Cherlin (2007) on the topic 'family instability and child wellbeing in America' asserts that children of divorced homes constitute 89 percent (%) of children that are into drugs crime and other forms of deviant behaviours. Ugwu and Stanley (2017) investigated family dynamics as determinants of delinquent behaviours among inschool adolescents in Asari-Toru Local Government Area of Rivers State. Their findings were that parent socio-economic status has influence on students' delinquent behaviours. While on the other hand, family size was found not to have any significant influence on delinquency. Based on the findings, it was recommended that parents, guardians, classroom teachers, guidance counselors and other individuals involved should help raise children/wards in a ways that promotes the collective interest of the society.

Studies indicated that juvenile delinquents are more likely than non-delinquents to suffer problems in adulthood such as unemployment, alcoholism, and involvement in various crimes due to the "I don't care" attitude of both parents, and government. For instance, in school adolescents that take to delinquent behaviours spend their time on activities outside school

work, and this may be responsible for their poor academic performance in school. In addition, they suffer from low self-esteem when they realize they have gone astray. They may also display temper tantrums, poor self-control and deviance prone behaviours, when they suffer from frustrations. Based on these chronological issues presented, however, the crux of the study is geared towards finding out the relationship between family structure and deviant behaviours among adolescent in Obio/Akpor LGA, of Rivers State. From the above other works focused their study on different areas, but none focused attention on the relationship between family structure and deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. To complement this position the work seeks to answer the following:

- i. What are the common family structures that have affected deviant behavior among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
- ii. To what extent have these family structures influenced deviant behaviour among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
- iii. What could be the short and long term effect of this deviant behaviour occasioned by family structure on sustainable development in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?
- iv. How can deviant behavior among adolescent influenced by family structure be mitigated in Obio-Akpo Local Government Area?

The broad aim of the study was to examine the relationship between family structure and adolescent deviant behavior in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. The specific objectives are to:

- i. To investigate the common family structure that has affected deviant behavior among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
- ii. To examine the extent by which family structures influence deviant behavior among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
- iii. To investigate the short and long term effect of deviant behaviour occasioned by family structure on sustainable development in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area.
- iv. To find out how adolescent deviant behavior influenced by family structure can be mitigated.

## **Literature Review**

Family Structure: The family has been universally perceived as a small but powerful unit and the oldest institution in the history of human existence that helps in the character formation of the child and moulding of the behaviour of the individual in the society. This is because family is the fundamental and basic social unit for human development and also the primary agent for the

socialization of children. According to Macionis (2007) family is a social institution found in all societies that unite people in cooperative groups to care for one another including children.

**Deviant Behaviours:** Deviant behavior has been widely studied by many researchers (Shoemaker, 1996). It has been defined as any behavior that the majority of a given group finds unacceptable or that evokes a collective negative response (Tittle, 1995). Deviance has been identified through both formal and informal means. The formal labeling of deviance has been called crime. Formal measures of criminal behavior for adults in the United States come from the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (Reid, 1997). The Uniform Crime Report is based on crimes reported to law enforcement agencies. The National Crime Victimization Survey measures individuals reporting their own crime victimization, regardless of whether or not it was reported to law enforcement officials. An additional and less formal way to gain information about criminal behavior has been to survey people about their own criminal activity (Tittle, 1995). Researchers have developed self-report measures of deviance to explore deviant acts that may never have been revealed. Much self-reported crime indicates that a large percentage of deviant acts go unreported. As a result, some researchers think that self-report measures of criminal activity may provide additional information about criminal behavior (Reid, 1997). In this study, both official and self-report measures of criminal behavior were used to identify deviant behavior.

Adewunmi and Amosun (2016) employed two modes of active learning strategies as treatment packages, determined the moderating effect of family structure on school age children's achievement in and attitude to leadership value concepts in social studies and civic education in Delta State, Nigeria. The study adopted the pre-test- post-test, control group quasi-experimental design. Junior secondary students in Deltastate made up the population of the study. Multi-stage and simple random sampling techniques were employed in arriving at the sample. A total of two hundred and sixty five students made up the study sample. Students' Achievement in Leadership Values Test ( $r=0.90$ ) and Students' Attitude to Leadership Values Scale ( $r=0.78$ ) were used as instruments for data collection. Data were analysed using Analysis of Covariance, Estimated Marginal Mean and Scheffé Pair-wise Comparism. The findings of the study showed that though family structure has a significant effect on students' achievement in leadership value concepts in social studies and civic education, it is not so for students' attitude. Based on this finding, it was recommended that classroom teachers should take into consideration home background factors in the teaching – learning process and consciously guide the learners into healthy communication and relationships among themselves and the teacher.

Roberts (2002) employed two hundred and seven incarcerated respondents and 217 college students responded to three survey instruments, the Family Rituals Questionnaire, the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory, and a Family Information Inventory to investigate the problem of family ritual and deviant behavior among adolescent students. Findings indicated that the college students reported experiencing more meaningful family rituals than the incarcerated respondents. Results indicate that the two groups differed significantly on all of the major variables. However, meaningful family rituals had little association with self-esteem, and self-

esteem had no relationship with deviant behavior. Meaningful family rituals did account for some variation in participation in conforming activities with family members inside and outside the home and for participation in extracurricular activities. However, the variables that were most significant for explaining deviant behavior were the risk factors of age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, neighborhood crime, and parent's deviance. Future research should explore the role of risk factors in explaining deviant behavior and study the role of meaningful family rituals and the role they might play in creating a qualitative difference in family life.

Aye et al. (2019) examined family leadership styles as determinants of deviant behaviours among primary school pupils in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlational research design. A total of 821 pupils were drawn as the sample for the study. A questionnaire was used as an instrument for the study. The major findings of the study revealed that primary school pupils exhibited 12 out of 15 types of deviant behaviours such as indulging in exam malpractice, not devoted to studies, Bullying weaker pupils, fighting among pupils, lateness to school, and keeping bad friends among others as identified. It also showed that the authoritarian family leadership style had a significant relationship with primary school pupils' deviant behaviour. Again it was discovered that the authoritative family leadership style also called assertive, democratic or balance family leadership style had a significant relationship with pupils' deviant behaviours negatively. Moreover, permissive family leadership style had also a significant relationship with primary school pupils' deviant behaviours. The result also indicated that neglectful family leadership style had a significant relationship with primary school pupils' deviant behaviours. Furthermore, the result showed that family size had a significant influence on deviant behaviours exhibited by primary school pupils in Enugu state.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Three common theoretical threads are apparent in the literature regarding family structure: social cognitive theory, attachment theory, and the theory of moral absolutism. Each of these theoretical frameworks provides conceptual underpinnings for the literature on family structure.

**Social Cognitive Theory:** The research on family structure is grounded in Bandura's (2002) social cognitive theory because the theory contends that human development is influenced, in part, by environmental agents. Family structure is an environmental agent that impacts human development and therefore student achievement. Social cognitive theory is the view of psychologists who emphasize behavior, environment, and cognition as the key factors in development. Family structure is an environmental factor that affects the development of adolescents and, in turn, impacts student achievement and academic performance. Children in intact families tend to have greater academic achievement and educational attainment and are less likely to exhibit behavioral problems in school. Their parents tend to be more involved in their school activities and to have higher expectations for them. Compared to children living in intact families, peers living in single mother families, single-mother families with cohabiting partners, and married families with stepfathers were more likely to have ever been suspended or expelled from school; more likely to have engaged in delinquent activities in the past twelve months; more likely to have problems

getting along with their teachers, doing homework, and paying attention in school; and more likely to have lower grade point averages.

**Attachment Theory:** Attachment theory was first conceptualized by John Bowlby and later refined by Mary Ainsworth. The theory contends that a strong emotional bond with at least one primary caregiver is crucial for healthy child development. Attention is given in much of the literature to the child's mother as the primary caregiver (Cavanagh & Huston, 2008). Attachment theory offers insights into the depressed academic achievement of students from some subgroups of nontraditional families. Further, it is consistent with Pong's (1998) platform that students from single-parent households in which the mother is present can still experience competitive academic achievement. The emotional closeness of a family also has the ability to affect how well a child can succeed academically within their educational careers. The presence of a father within the household was associated with greater academic achievement, as well as greater self-esteem and friendship stability. Overall, it would appear that the presence and involvement of a father is associated with positive outcomes for their children.

**Theory of Moral Absolutism:** The final framework for this study is the theory of moral absolutism. This theory maintains that there are morally correct and incorrect actions (Hawley, 2008). Moral absolutism suggests that the morally correct way to raise a child is through traditional family structure that is comprised by two biological parents (or adoptive parents from birth), one male and one female, cohabitating in a marital relationship. Moral absolutism coincides with the Biblical ideal of family and extends attachment theory to suggest that two parents are better than one. This theory also offers insights into the academic achievement of students based on family structure. The family lays the psychological, moral, and spiritual foundation in the overall development of the child. Structurally, family/homes is either broken or intact. A broken home in this context is one that is not structurally intact, as a result of divorce, separation, death of one of parent and illegitimacy. Psychological home conditions arise mainly from illegitimacy of children, the label of adopted child, broken homes, divorce and parental deprivation. Such abnormal conditions of the home, are likely to have a detrimental effect on school performance of the child he asserts.

In synthesizing these theories, it is indeed true that human environment influences the behaviour of man as asserted by social cognitive theory. On the basis of this theory, deviant among adolescent are as a result of the family environment they found themselves. Going further, a child who did not enjoy an attachment with his mother as the first caregiver may suffer some kind of depression, tension, and uncertainty from the foster home/caregiver that could lead such a child to be deviant. We conclude the theoretical synthesis by agreeing with moral ablution theory that the morally acceptable means of child upbringing is the traditional form inclusive of two biological parents. Even though a child who was raised by is biological parents can be deviant, but the level of deviant will to a large extent not as much like a child that was raised from foster homes. The environment a child finds himself influences his actions to a large extent, the bond a child shares with his biological mother helps in curbing the excesses of a child and traditional means of bringing up a child by the biological parents is the best and morally acceptable method of child care. If these theories are applied in the care of a child,

deviant behaviour will be reduced to a large extent in Obio-Akpo local government area.

## Methodology

This research study used a descriptive (survey) research design. This design involves gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data. Descriptive studies portray the variables by answering who, what, and how questions (Babbie, 2002).

The study area Obio/Akpor local government area is the largest in Rivers State and the second centre of business activities in the state (Chikagbum & Brown, 2020). It is one of the core areas and is located on the Eastern part of the State and lies approximately between 4° 48' and 6° 57'. It is bounded by Ikwerre and Etche local government areas in the North, Oyigbo and Eleme local government areas in the East, Port Harcourt in the South and Emohua at the West. Its topography is relatively flat with about 3.3m above sea level, with a landmass of about 260k.

The population of this study is 284,294 which is the entire population of Obio/Akpor local government area retrieved from National Population Commission, (2006). The sample size of this study was 400 which were determined with the use of Taro Yamane from our population size. The calculation formula for Taro Yamane is presented below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where

n = Sample size required

N = Number of population under study

e = allowed error (%)

From the above formula, we calculated our sample size as thus,

$$n = \frac{284,294}{1 + 284,294 \times (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{284,294}{1 + 284,294 \times 0.0025}$$

$$1 + 284,294 \times 0.0025$$

$$n = \frac{284,294}{284,295 \times 0.0025}$$

$$284,295 \times 0.0025$$

$$n = \frac{284,294}{711}$$

$$711$$

$$n = 400$$

The local government was first stratified into two kingdoms (Obio and Akpor). Then, two communities were randomly selected from each kingdom. In Obio kingdom, Choba and Alakahia were randomly selected, while in Akpor kingdom, Rumuokoro and Rumuola were randomly selected. The systematic sampling technique was used to distribute the 400 questionnaire to the four communities, 100 respondents from each community respectively with five households interval. The retrieved primary data was analyzed using simple percentage.

Formula for analyzing simple percentage is:

$$\% = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Where f = frequency of respondent's response

N = Total Number of response of the sample

100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item contained in questions.

## Presentation and Analysis of Data

This study made use of structured questionnaire to elicit primary data that is analyzed in this chapter. The data was collected from administering the four hundred (400) set of questionnaire to the four purposively selected communities as –Choba100, Alakahia 100, Rumuokoro 100 and Rumuola 100. The questionnaire was divided into two parts which are, section ‘A’ representing the personal profile of the respondent, and section ‘B’ representing the questions.

**Table 4.1: Distribution and retrieved of questionnaire**

S/N	No. sent out	No. retrieved	%
Questionnaire	400	392	98%

Source: Survey Data, 2022

The above table shows that a total of four hundred (400) structured questionnaire were sent to the respondents, out of which three hundred and ninety two (392) copies which represents 98% of the study population was retrieved. The rest Eight (8) copies which represent 2% of the study population could not be retrieved by the researcher due to unforeseen circumstances.

**Table 4.2: Gender disposition of respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Male	178	45.4	45.4	45.4
Female	214	54.6	54.6	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Survey Data, 2022.

The above table 4.2 shows that 45.4% of the respondents are males while 54.6% of the respondents are females; the indicated that more females were randomly selected.

**Table 4.3: Age distribution of respondents**

Age Bracket	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
18-30	123	31.4	31.4	31.4
30-40	118	30.1	30.1	61.5
40-50	80	20.4	20.4	82.2
50 and above	71	18.1	18.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>392</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Survey Data, 2022.

The above table 4.3 shows the age distribution of respondents. From the table, it is discovered that 31.4% of respondent is between the age ranges of 18-30 years; 30.1% is between the age ranges of 30-40; 20.4% is between the age ranges of 40-50 years and 18.1% is of from 50 years and above.

**Table 4.4: Marital status of respondents**

Status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percent
Single	67	17.09	17.09	17.09
Married	133	33.93	33.93	51.02
Single parents	62	15.82	15.82	66.86
Foster parents	55	14.03	14.03	80.87
Married before (Divorced, widow or widower)	75	19.13	19.13	100.00
Total	392	100.00	100.00	

Source: Survey Data, 2022.

The above table 4.4 shows the marital status of the respondents. It is discovered that 17.09% of the respondents are single; 33.93% are married; 15.82% are single parents; 14.03% are foster parents while 19.13% are married before.

**Table 4.5: Educational qualification of respondents**

Educational status	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage	Cumulative percentage
Primary school Certificate	210	45.5	45.5	45.5
Secondary school Certificate	130	35.0	35.6	80.5
Tertiary education	60	19.5	19.5	100.00
Total	392	100.00	100.00	

Source: Survey Data, 2022.

From the above table 4.5, it shows the educational performance of the respondents. It is discovered from the survey that; 45.5% of respondents have primary school certificate; 35.6% have secondary school certificate; and 19.5% have gone to the level of tertiary education.

**Research Question 1:** What are the common family structures that have affected deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 4.6 shows the common family structures that have affected deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

S/N	Item	SA	%of SA	A	% of A	D	%of D	SD	%of SD	Total	Total %	Remark
1	Nuclear family	10	2.6%	40	10.2%	263	67.09%	80	20.4%	392	100%	Dis-greed
2	Single parent	92	23.5%	250	63.8%	36	9.2%	14	3.5%	392	100%	Agreed
3	Extended family	94	23.9%	236	60.2%	45	11.5%	17	4.4%	392	100%	Agreed
4	Childless family	98	25%	116	29.6%	90	22.9%	88	22.5%	392	100%	Agreed
5	Step family	166	42.3%	88	22.4%	65	16.5%	73	18.6%	392	100%	Strongly agreed
6	Grand parent family	99	25.2%	155	39.5%	46	21.9%	52	13.4%	392	100%	Agreed
7	Foster family	102	26.1%	240	61.2%	85	8.9%	15	3.8%	392	100%	Agreed
	Total											Agreed

Source: Survey Data 2022.

**Research question 2:** To what extent have these family structures influenced deviant behaviour among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 4.7 shows the extent family structures influenced deviant behaviour among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

S/N	Item	SA	%of SA	A	% of A	D	%of D	SD	%of SD	Total	Total %	Remark
8	Lack of monitoring	98	25%	247	63.1%	27	6.8%	20	5.1%	392	100%	Agreed
9	Aggressive attitude	96	24.5%	249	63.5%	22	5.6%	25	6.4%	392	100%	Agreed
10	Lack of affection	95	24.2%	250	65.8%	18	4.6%	29	7.4%	392	100%	Agreed

11	Poverty	235	59.9 %	110	28.2 %	28	7.1%	19	4.8%	392	100%	Strongly agreed
12	Low level of exposure	105	26.8 %	220	56.2 %	47	11.9%	20	5.1%	392	100%	Agreed
13	Nature of job	205	52.3 %	120	30.6 %	40	10.2%	27	6.9%	392	100%	Strongly Agreed
14	Domestic violence	216	55.1 %	109	27.8 %	37	9.9%	30	7.6%	392	100%	Strongly agreed
15	Lack of good advice	100	25.5 %	225	57.4 %	50	12.7%	17	4.4%	392	100%	Agreed
16	Lack of good training	98	25%	240	61.2 %	32	8.2%	22	5.6%	392	100%	Agreed
17	Show of love and affection	302	77.1 %	40	10.2 %	30	7.6%	20	5.1%	392	100%	Dis-agreed
	Total											Agreed

Source: Survey Data 2022.

**Research question 3:** What could be the short and long term effect of this deviant behaviour occasioned by family structure on sustainable development in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area?

Table 4.8 shows the short and long term effect of this deviant behaviour occasioned by family structure on sustainable development in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area, Rivers State.

S/N	Item	SA	% of SA	A	% of A	D	% of D	SD	% of SD	Total	Total %	Remark
18	Destruction of public infrastructure	90	22.9 %	255	65.1 %	24	6.2%	23	5.8%	392	100%	Agreed
19	Poor maintenance of public infrastructure	112	28.5 %	218	56.6 %	42	10.7%	20	5.1%	392	100%	Agreed
20	Bad leadership	95	24.4 %	200	51.1 %	57	14.5%	40	10.2%	392	100%	Agreed
21	Corruption	250	63.7 %	98	25%	24	6.2%	20	5.1%	392	100%	Strongly Agreed
22	Insecurity	240	53.4 %	112	44.1 %	6	1.5%	11	2.1%	392	100%	Strongly agreed

23	Backwardness in development	155	39.5 %	216	55.1 %	13	3.3%	8	2.1%	392	100%	Agreed
24	Progressive development	96	24.5 %	37	9.4%	249	63.5%	10	2.6%	392	100%	Dis-agreed
	Total											Agreed

Source: Survey Data 2022.

**Research question 4:** How can deviant behavior among adolescent influenced by family structure be mitigated in Obio-Akpo Local Government Area?

Table 4.9 shows mitigations to adolescent deviant behavior influenced by family structure in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State.

S/N	Item	SA	% of SA	A	% of A	D	% of D	SD	% of SD	Total	Total %	Remark
25	Proper home training	80	22.7 %	265	65.3 %	14	5.2%	31	6.1%	392	100%	Agreed
26	Nuclear family structure	102	28.3 %	228	56.8 %	32	10.5%	30	5.3%	392	100%	Agreed
27	Awareness programs	95	24.4 %	200	51.1 %	57	14.5%	40	10.2%	392	100%	Agreed
28	Poverty alleviation programs	250	63.7 %	98	25%	24	6.2%	20	5.1%	392	100%	strongly agreed
29	Educational scholarships	130	40.4 %	222	54.3 %	6	1.5%	4	1%	392	100%	Agreed
30	Show of love and affection	155	39.5 %	216	55.1 %	13	3.3%	8	2.1%	392	100%	Agreed
31	Proper disciplinary measures	96	24.5 %	249	63.5 %	37	9.4%	10	2.6%	392	100%	Agreed
	Total											Agreed

Source: Survey Data 2022.

### Discussion of Findings

Firstly, from table 4.6 above, which investigated research question one: the family structure that could affect deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. It was discovered that 67.9% which constitute the highest percentage of the total sample size of the respondents disagreed to the assertion that nuclear family affects deviant behavior among

adolescents. A greater percentage of 63.8% agreed to the question that single parenting affect deviant among adolescents. Again, it was discovered that extended family also affect deviant behavior among adolescents as 60.2% of our respondents agreed to this question. A total of 29.6% also agreed to the question that childless family affect deviant among adolescent. It was again discovered that a total of 42.3% strongly agreed that step family affect deviant behavior among adolescents. It was discovered that 39.5% which constitute the highest percentage from our respondents agreed that grand parent family affect deviant behavior among adolescents. Similarly, it was seen from our survey that 61.2% of the respondents agreed that foster family also affect deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. This is in line with study carried out by Price and Kunz (2003) who found that children from divorced homes (broken homes), foster parents, single parent etc have higher rate of deviant behaviour like general delinquency, theft and crime against persons among other offences. In support of the above observation Conanor and Philip (2002) concluded that the most important factor that led children to deviant activities is the absence of a father in the home. This implies that deviant behaviour is prevalent among children living with either parents or particularly those who live in homes without father.

Secondly, from table 4.6 above which investigated research question two that solicits the extent family structures influenced deviant behaviour among adolescent in Obio-Akpor Local Government Area. It was discovered from our analysis that lack of monitoring can influence deviant behavior. This was discovered as 63.1% of the respondents agreed to this assertion. Another extent to which family structures influence deviant behavior among adolescents as discovered from our analysis is aggressive attitude on the part of the guardian. A total of 63.5% of our respondents agreed to this assertion that aggressive attitude influences deviant behavior among adolescents. Also, it was discovered that lack of affection towards adolescents by members of a particular family structure also influences deviant behavior among adolescents. This conclusion from drawn the 65.8% of respondents that agreed to this assertion. Similarly, it was discovered that poverty in family structures where adolescents preside can actually influence deviant behavior among adolescents. A total of 59.9% strongly agreed to this assertion from our analysis. Again, it was discovered that low level of exposure among family members in a particular family structure influence deviant behavior among adolescents to a large extent. This conclusion was drawn from the analysis of our respondents where 56.2% agreed to this assertion. It was discovered that the nature of job done by members of a particular family structure to an extent influence deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area. This analysis was discovered as 52.3% of our sample size strongly agreed to this assertion. Another factor that was discovered which could to an extent influence deviant behavior among adolescents is ‘domestic violence’. Adolescents who experience a lot of domestic violence in the particular family structure they reside. This conclusion is in relation to 55.1% of our respondents who strongly agreed to this assertion. Again, 57.4% of respondents agreed that lack of good advice from guardian to adolescents in most family structure could to a large extent influence deviant behavior among adolescents. It was also discovered that lack of good training could to a large extent influence deviant behavior among adolescents. This conclusion was drawn from the opinions from our respondents where 61.2% agreed to this assertion. It was also discovered from our analysis that

shows of love and affection to adolescents by members of a particular family structure doesn't influence deviant behavior among adolescents. This was drawn from the 5.1% of respondents who disagreed to this assertion. This is in line with Ekwok (2020) who investigated the influence of family background and deviant behaviour among secondary school students in Calabar Education Zone of in Cross River State, Nigeria. The results show that there is significant influence on family structure and deviant behaviour among secondary school students. The outcome of result on the variables of the study conducted by Ekwok (2020) shows that there is influence of family structure in terms of broken or intact ondeviant behaviour among secondary school students. Also, these findings are in line with Taylor (2018) who adopted the mixed-methods study which involved using an Internet questionnaire to measure influential factors of parenting (i.e. stress, satisfaction, involvement) and the qualitative questions explored foster parents' experiences with behaviors and which parenting strategies have been helpful and non-helpful. Results of this study indicated that aggression, tantrums, violence, self-harm, and defiance were the most commonly reported challenging behaviors. Helpful discipline strategies included time-in, earning or removing privileges, and implementing clear communication; and non-helpful discipline included corporal punishment, time-out, and yelling.

Thirdly, From the above table 4.7 which investigated the short and long term effect of deviant behaviour occasioned by family structure on sustainable development in Obio-Akpo local government area in Rivers State, it was discovered that there is a 'destruction of public infrastructure' in the local government area due to deviant behavior; this was supported by 65.1% of our respondents. It was again discovered that 56.6% of the total respondents agreed that deviant behavior among adolescents has a long term effect on infrastructure as it contributes to 'poor maintenance of public infrastructure'. Our findings also reveal that bad leadership will be a long term effect of deviant behavior among adolescents as 51.1% agreed that these adolescents exhibiting deviant behavior will grow to become adult someday and probably occupy a leadership position, from all indications, they will not make good leaders and as such will affect development. Corruption was also discovered as long term effect of deviant behavior among adolescents as 63.7% strongly agreed to this assertion. This could result from the already corrupt mindset these adolescents who portray deviant possess. Also, it was discovered from our field work that one long/short effect of deviant among adolescents is 'insecurity'. This was discovered from the 53.4% respondents who strongly agreed to this assertion. Another long term effect of deviant behavior among adolescents on development is 'backwardness in development'. A total of 55.1% of our respondents agreed that backwardness deviant bahviour among adolescents will cause backwardness in development. It was also discovered that there will be no progressive development in Obio-Akpo local government if the deviant behavior among adolescents persist. This was discovered as 63.5% of our respondents disagreed to the assertion that progressive development is achievable in the midst of deviant behavior among adolescents. This is also in line with Aye, (2019) who examined family leadership styles as determinants of deviantbehaviours among primary school pupils in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study showed that that the authoritarian family leadership style had a significant relationship with primary school pupils' deviant behaviour. Again it was discovered that the authoritative family leadership style also called assertive, democratic or balance family leadership style had a significant relationship with pupils'

deviant behaviours negatively. Moreover, permissive family leadership style had also a significant relationship with primary school pupils' deviant behaviours. The result also indicated that neglectful family leadership style had a significant relationship with primary school pupils' deviant behaviours. These attributes of leadership styles in families are most times copied by adolescents who in turn exhibit same when they grow up and become leaders. This then affect level of development.

And lastly, from table 4.8 above, from our analysis using the respondents percentage on research question four, which investigated the mitigations to the deviant behavior among adolescents as influenced by family structure, it was discovered that 65.3% of the sample population agreed that 'proper home training' is a solution to reduce the level of deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area. Again, it was discovered that 'nuclear family structure' is a mitigating factor in handling deviant behavior among adolescents as 56.8% respondents agree to this assertion. It was also discovered that 51.1% of the total respondents agreed to the assertion that 'awareness programs' is a mitigating factor on deviance behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area. It was discovered that 63.7% of the population which is the highest percentage strongly agreed that 'Poverty alleviation programs' can help to mitigate deviance behavior amongst adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. Similarly, it was discovered that 'Educational scholarships' can also mitigate deviant behavior among adolescents as 55.1% of the population agreed to that accretion. It was discovered that 'Show of love and affection' on the children under one's care is also a mitigating factor that can address deviant behavior among youths as 55.1% of the respondents agreed to this assertion. It was also discovered that 'Proper disciplinary measures' is mitigation to deviant behavior among adolescents. This was retrieved as 63.5% of the entire respondents agreed to this assertion. These findings are in line with a study carried out by Adewunmi and Amosun (2016) who employed two modes of active learning strategies as treatment packages, determined the moderating effect of family structure on school age children's' achievement in and attitude to leadership value concepts in social studies and civic education in Delta State, Nigeria. The findings of the study showed that though family structure has a significant effect on students' achievement in leadership value concepts in social studies and civic education, it is not so for students' attitude. This is to imply that, leadership skills of adolescents lie on parenting. We are aware that if good leaders are raised, sustainable development is achieved and infrastructures can be protected.

## **Conclusion**

Following the results and analysis from our survey study, it was discovered that extended family structure, foster family structure, single parent family structure, extended family structure is prevalent in Obio-Akpo local government area. It was also discovered from our findings that these existing family structures to a large extent influence deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area of Rivers State. The ways these family structures influence deviant behavior among adolescents are of diverse in nature. From our findings, it was discovered that family structures that possess these attributes: lack of love, lack of exposure, low, poverty, lack of good advice, low level of monitoring etc can influence or contribute to deviant behavior among

adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. Similarly, it was discovered from the analysis that deviant behavior among adolescent would have a short term and long term on sustainable development in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. This implies that deviant behavior among adolescents would lead to corruption, bad leadership, and infrastructural maintenance problems etc. if the excesses of deviant behavior is not curtailed it will of course have a negative impact on the future of the local Obio-Akpo local government, on Rivers State and Nigeria at large. Lastly, it was discovered from our analysis that there are several mitigating factors to the phenomenon of deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area. These mitigating factors include amongst others: proper home training, nuclear family, poverty alleviation programs, awareness programs etc. with these, deviant behavior among adolescents will be mitigated.

This study has critically investigated the interplay of family structure and deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area, Rivers State. The outcome of the study investigations shows that there is indeed a relationship between family structure and deviant behavior among adolescents. The revelations from the study showed that deviant behavior among adolescents in Obio-Akpo local government area is highly influenced by the pattern of family structure such an adolescent come from; this implies that faulty family structure is responsible for deviant behavior among adolescents. This study concluded by making the following recommendations.

### **Recommendations**

The study recommends the following:

- The upbringing of a child should be done by both parents (father and mother). This means nuclear family structure should be the ideal form of family structure to raise children. This can be achieved if couples plan their lives very well before making babies so as to give them the best they could offer.
- Members of a family structure responsible for the upbringing of a child should avoid certain behaviors such as; hatred, domestic violence, bullying, etc. because these actions influence deviant behavior on adolescents.
- In order to avoid the short term and long term effects of deviant behavior on sustainable development, the phenomenon of deviant behavior among adolescents be properly tackled. This can be done by everyone taking responsibility of raising trust worthy children and living a trust worthy life.
- In order to help mitigate the menace of deviant behavior among adolescents, there should awareness programs on the need to bring up a child. This can be done by government, individuals and organizations.

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