

**BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS AS CORRELATE TO FEMALE ADOLESCENT TENDENCIES  
TOWARD SINGLE PARENTHOOD IN ANAMBRA STATE**

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**ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated the behavioural problems as correlate to female adolescent tendencies toward single parenthood in Anambra state. Two hypotheses were formulated at .05 level of significance. The study is a co relational survey as it seeks to assess the relationship between two variables, namely female adolescent with behavioural problem and tendency to single parenthood among adolescents. The study was carried out in Anambra state. The population of the study consisted of 10,041 senior students of the 60 government owned secondary schools in Awka Education Zone, Anambra State, Nigeria. The sample of the study comprised 1000 students. Simple random sampling technique was employed in selecting 20 schools, 4 from each of the five LGAs of the Awka Education Zone. The instruments for the study were two structured questionnaires namely, namely Female Adolescent with Behavioural Problem (FABP) and Tendency to Single Parenthood among Adolescents (TSPAA) was developed by the researchers. The instrument have a reliability of .87 for Female Adolescent with Behavioural Problem (FABP) and .78 for Tendency to Single Parenthood among Adolescents (TSPAA). The questionnaires were distributed to the sampled female students and were collected back by the researcher with the help of five research assistants. This was done in two weeks. The product moment correlation coefficient was used to test the two null hypotheses. Results of the studies showed that; There is no significant in the relationship between the urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood. Recommendations was made that a good way of reducing behaviour problems among female students should be to ensure that the students have a healthy home environment that encourages the development of good social skills.*

**Keyword,** Adolescent, Single parenthood, Behavioural problem

### **Background to the Study**

As adolescents develop and struggle to institute their own uniqueness, they sometimes follow the natural propensity to oppose parents' authority and test boundaries. However, adolescent disobedience may become habitually ruthless and put him or her at risk of escalating out of control. There have been numerous explanations as to the causes of behavioural problem among female adolescents, what sustains it and who commits it. Behavioural problem such as deviance act can be contention of eccentricity and identity, causing revolt against group norms (Stoolmiller, 2015). Several researches conducted on factors that lead to Behavioural problems among female adolescents by Okorodudu and Okorodudu (2003); Eke (2004) emphasize that adolescence is a period of stress and storm. Eke (2004) also observed that the period is characterized by rebelliousness. This is caused by non conducive environment that is, home environment of the female adolescent is not suitable for her to live in and her needs are not properly cater for, and these could be the antecedent of her behavioural problems.

Many factors have been listed as the causes of behavioural problems among female adolescents such as; environmental factors, social factors, physical factors, psychological factors, peer influence, drug abuse and the family factor (Okorodudu 2003). Cynthia (2013) believes that the organic or hereditary make up of individuals can prompt female adolescents' engagement in delinquent activities such as pre marital sex, promiscuity, this act could make her become a single parent. Studies have shown that parental child rearing practices (such as permissive attitudes, nonchalant attitude, when parent show no care for their female children needs), has been found to increase female adolescents tendency of becoming a single parent (Lehay, 2014). Behaviour problem increases most dramatically during early adolescent and may remains relatively stable across high school years (Farrington, 2014). After this period, behavioural problem may turn down as youth enter late adolescence and early adulthood. Female adolescents with behavioural problem are likely to experience early pregnancy making them single mothers, poor adjustment in multiple domains such as in homes, schools, and community activities and hence, many female adolescent with behaviour problems lack proper guidance and direction in their lives (Ojo, 2013). Due to this condition, these adolescents are subjected to multiple risk factors. For example in 2013, over 4 million American adolescent lived in severely distressed homes or neighbourhoods that contributed to them becoming promiscuous, experimenting with sex at an early and suffering the consequence of become a teenage mother (Robert, 2014).

More so, Boroffice (2014) argue that factors such as organic, social, perception of self, predisposition, viewpoint, sagacity of his/her future are some of the factors that prompt adolescents to unhealthy behaviour, that engaging in sexual activities. Psychological apprehension and emotional turbulence at home may drive the adolescents away from their domicile or from school and have the potential of exposing them to negative associations. Female adolescent behaviour problems have received immense interests and led to the postulation of different theories as to the origin and the contributing factors.

Certain argument relating to the causes of female adolescents behaviours problem have been raised. Such questions as whether behaviour problem could be a case of bad genetic material? Is it a case of maladaptive socialization stemmed from parental ineptness? Is it possible that it is as a result of very high socioeconomic status? What are the real determinants of this antisocial expression? What are its antecedents and how do we understand and correct a social disorder, so that adolescence can be more socially balanced for the future? It can also be seen as an early caution sign of inequality in a society (Barcena, 2013). Adolescent girls experience a lot of demands to have sex, to look sexy and to be conventional to pigeonhole of what the opposite sex sees as attractive (Rudd, 2013). Studies, in the light of Chau-Kuang (2015) has shown that educational level is a risk factor in adolescent pregnancy and increase their likelihood of becoming a single parent. The odds of adolescent pregnancy decreased as educational status increased (Ayele, 2013). Thus implying that educational attainment is negatively associated with behaviour problem that lead to adolescent single parenthood. The large size of the incoming youth cohorts are likely to result in increases in the absolute number of teenage births, even if adolescent birth rates remain constant (Marteletto & Dondero, 2013). Differentials in the levels of teenage pregnancy were observed across residence type, with higher pregnancy rate in the rural areas (Ayele, 2013). The 2008 SADHS reported almost double the fertility rate among teenagers in rural settings than among those in urban settings (Panday et al, 2009). Indeed, the odds of teenage pregnancy is higher in the rural areas than the urban areas (Ayele, 2013).

Consequently, adolescent tendency to single parenthood due to behavioural problems is more pronounced in rural areas, where girls are married young and pressured to start having children immediately (Population Reference Bureau, 2013). Adolescent pregnancy rate is not only high in developing countries it is also high in developed economies like the United Kingdom (Smith & Mills, 2014). In 2013, there were 19 million births to mothers aged 15–19 years, representing 15% of all births worldwide (World Health Organization, 2015). Almost 95% of these births occur in developing countries. In reality half of all the births occur in just seven countries, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Brazil and the United States of America (World Health Organization, 2015).

Large numbers of adolescent mothers as single parenthoods are a cause for social concern in many countries because of the adverse impact of adolescent childbearing on the education and health of teen mothers and their children (Karra and Lee, 2012). According to UNICEF (2013), early marriage inevitably denies female adolescents of the education they need for their personal development. Adolescent motherhood under certain situations is acceptable while in others it is regarded as being a clog in the wheel of progress especially for the female teenager. The same may not be said about male teenagers who impregnates a female teenager, thus indicating a gender bias in the consequences of adolescent pregnancy. In many parts of the world parents compel female adolescent with behaviour problem into early marriage in hopes that they will be free from their problem, there will be financial and social benefits to the family (UNICEF, 2015). There is a school of thought that sees adolescent pregnancy as a form of deviance on the part of the pregnant teenager (Breheny & Stephens, 2010; Cherrington & Breheny, 2013; Luker, 2011). Another school of thought justifies the need to examine and understand the issues relating to adolescent pregnancy due to the likelihood of not just the pregnant adolescent becoming economically disadvantaged, but can lead to a vicious cycle of adolescent pregnancy for her child in the future (Wilson & Huntington, 2015).

Adolescent pregnancy tendency is higher in economically poor households (Ayele, 2013; Lee, 2011). adolescents from the poorest households are more likely to become pregnant or give birth than those from the wealthiest households. According to the Population Reference Bureau (2013), in Zimbabwe, Senegal, Colombia, and Peru, more than one-quarter of teens ages 15 to 19 from the poorest 20 percent of households have begun childbearing. It is also reported that in Peru, the rate of early childbearing is nearly six times greater among those from the poorest households compared to the wealthiest. (Population Reference bureau, 2013). Low-income women are particularly likely to become pregnant as adolescents and to experience unintended pregnancy ( Marcen & Bellido, 2013). Adolescent pregnancy and single motherhood has remained a major health and social concern in Nigeria because of its in alliance with likely higher maternal morbidity and mortality as well as child morbidity and mortality (National Population Commission and ICF Macro 2009).

Adolescent mother is exposed to immense physiological risks. The adolescent pregnancy rate is an undeniably powerful indicator of the overall well-being in a population. The investigation of adolescent pregnancy tendency provides an opportunity for developing preventive strategies to improve population health (Chau-Kuang, 2013). Adolescent pregnancy is often both a cause and a consequence of social exclusion (Babafemi & Adeleke, 2012). The fact that adolescents continue to be pregnant implies that there is the need to examine the underlying factors that may be responsible for such behaviours problems (Rudd, et al., 2013). It is against this backdrop that the researchers is determined to investigate behavioural problems as correlate to female adolescent tendencies toward single parenthood in Anambra state.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Engagement of adolescent in behavioural problems such as the intake of drugs, alcohol to mention a few contributes a lot to adolescent pregnancy. A adolescent who is intoxicated with hard drugs may become vitamins of pregnancy thereby making her a single parenthood. Nigeria adolescent mothers suffer severe complications during delivery that result in higher morbidity and mortality both to themselves and their children, there are lot of criminal abortion been committed by teenagers due to their involvement in early sexual experimentation which leads to unwanted pregnancy. Single adolescent parenthood is currently increasing rapidly at a pace of about 90% than was the case ten years ago. This means the population is multiplying as days goes by. Based on the assertion of the problem of this study above, the is interested in the behavioural problems as correlate to female adolescent tendencies toward single parenthood in Anambra state.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to investigate behavioural problems as correlate to female adolescent tendencies toward single parenthood in Anambra state. Specifically the study seek to determine the :

1. Behavioural problem among female adolescent in Anambra state.
2. Female adolescent tendencies to single parenthood in Anambra state.
3. Relationship between behavioural problems and tendencies to single parenthood among adolescents in Anambra state.

### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant.

1. There is no significant in the relationship between the female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.
2. There is no significant in the relationship between the urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.

### **Method**

The study is a co relational survey as it seeks to assess the relationship between two variables, namely female adolescent with behavioural problem and tendency to single parenthood among adolescents. The study was carried out in Anambra state.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population of the study consisted of 10,041 senior students of the 60 government owned secondary schools in Awka Education Zone, Anambra State, Nigeria. The sample of the study comprised 1000 students. Simple random sampling technique was employed in selecting 20 schools, 4 from each of the five LGAs of the Awka Education Zone. Then a disproportionate stratified random sampling technique was further employed in selecting 50 senior students from each of the already chosen twenty schools. This yielded a total of 1000 students which served as the sample.

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

The instruments for the study were two structured questionnaires namely, namely Female Adolescent with Behavioural Problem (FABP) and Tendency to Single Parenthood among Adolescents (TSPAA). The FABP was used to assess behaviour problem common among female adolescent. This was developed by the researchers. The FABP was 15 items questionnaire designed to obtain information on the behaviour problems. The students were requested to respond to questions based on their behavioural problems. The TSPAA also had 15 items which seek to ascertain the students' tendency to Single Parenthood (based on the following levels: low tendency, moderate tendency, high tendency and very high tendency). Both FABP and TSPAA had 4 point response options which range from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree with weighted values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

### **Validation of Instrument**

The structured questionnaires were given to two experts in the fields of Guidance and Counselling from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. They checked the items of the instrument to ensure they were relevant, clear and capable of eliciting the required responses. Their corrections were effected before using the instruments. The instrument have a reliability of .87 for Female Adolescent with Behavioural Problem (FABP) and .78 for Tendency to Single Parenthood among Adolescents (TSPAA).

### **Method of Data Collection**

The questionnaires were distributed to the sampled female students and were collected back by the researcher with the help of five research assistants. This was done in two weeks.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

All the collected data were scored and analysed. The product moment correlation coefficient was used to test the two null hypotheses

### **Result**

#### **Hypotheses 1**

There is no significant relationship between the female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.

**Table 1: Pearson Correlation for testing hypothesis 1**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	DF	r-cal.	r-cri.	SIGN	Decision
Behavioural problem	1000	13.126	67.93	998	0.035	0.16	0.325	Do not Reject
Tend. to single parenthood	1000	43057	54.92					

Table 1 shows no significant relationship between female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood. The correlation index of 0.035 was not significant since r-calculated is lesser than r-critical and  $P > 0.05$ . Therefore we do not reject the null hypothesis. Thus, there is no significant relationship between the female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.

**Hypotheses 2**

There is no significant in the relationship between the urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.

To test hypothesis 2, the Significant value was compared to 0.05, following the decision rule already stated.

**Table 2: Summary of Regression Analysis on Relationship among urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.**

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.036 <sup>a</sup>	.001	-.001	17.193	.001	.506	2	993	.603

a. Predictors: (Constant), Urban adolescent , rural adolescent

Table 2 show f- value of 0.506 which was not significant at 0.05 level of significance  $F = 0.506, P > 0.05$ . We do not reject the null hypothesis. The Conclusion is that there is no significant relationship among the urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood.

**Discussion**

The study revealed that there is no significant relationship between the female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood. The findings is in disagreement with Boroffice (2014) that behavioural problems such as organic, social, perception of self, predisposition, viewpoint, sagacity of his/her future are some of the factors that prompt adolescents to unhealthy behaviour, that engaging in sexual activities. Psychological apprehension and emotional turbulence at home may drive the adolescents away from their domicile or from school and have the potential of exposing them to negative associations. Results from this findings disprove Cynthia (2013), who believed that believes that the organic or hereditary make up of individuals can prompt female adolescents’ engagement in delinquent activities such as pre marital sex, promiscuity, this act could make her become a single parent. Studies have shown that parental child rearing practices (such as permissive attitudes, nonchalant attitude, when parent show no care for their female children needs), has been found to increase female adolescents tendency of becoming a single parent (Lehay, 2014)

The second findings from this study pointed out that there is no significant relationship among the urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood. This findings is parallel Ayele, (2013) who argue that , the odds of teenage pregnancy is higher in the rural areas than the urban areas (Ayele, 2013). Also the findings is in contrast with The 2008 SADHS reported almost double the fertility rate among teenagers in rural settings than among those in urban settings (Panday et al, 2009). Consequently, adolescent tendency to single parenthood due to behavioural problems is more pronounced in rural areas, where girls are married young and pressured to start having children immediately (Population Reference Bureau, 2013). The findings of the study is in support of Smith and Mills (2014), that Adolescent pregnancy rate is not only high in developing countries it is also high in developed economies like the United Kingdom. In 2013, there were 19 million births to mothers aged 15–19 years,

representing 15% of all births worldwide (World Health Organization, 2015). Almost 95% of these births occur in developing countries. In reality half of all the births occur in just seven countries, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Brazil and the United States of America (World Health Organization, 2015).

### **Conclusion**

The study discovered that there is no significant relationship between the female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood. Also there is no significant relationship among the urban and rural female adolescent with behavioural problem and their tendency to single parenthood. In other word the geographical location of the adolescent girl is not correlate of a behavioural problem and tendency to single parenthood. Even adolescent girl in most developed part of the world end up becoming single parenthood from the finding of this study.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings of the study the following recommendations are made.

1. A good way of reducing behaviour problems among female students should be to ensure that the students have a healthy home environment that encourages the development of good social skills.
2. There is a need to develop programmes that will empower teenagers to cope with the challenges that they face during their pregnancy. Developers of such intervention programmes will need to involve the teenagers themselves if such interventions are to be effective.

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