## Effect of Family Structure, Family Size, Family Income and Prosocial Behaviour of Secondary School Students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria

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*Abstract*

*This study aimed at investigating family structure, family size, family income on prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District, Nigeria. Two research questions and three research hypotheses guided the study. The ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study consisted of all the 2,270 Senior Secondary School Two (SSII) students from the 89 public secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District. A sample of 340 students was selected for the study. The sampling procedure that was employed for the study was multistage sampling procedure. A questionnaire entitled "Family Structure, family Size, Family Income and Prosocial Behaviour Questionnaire (FSFSFIPBQ)" was used for data collation for the study. The instrument was validated by three experts, two in Psychological Foundations of Eduaction and one in Social Studies and Citizenship Department, Faculty of education, University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The reliability coefficient of the instrument was established at 0.86. Mean statistical tool was used to answer the research questions while One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that there was a significant difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family structure, family size and parent's income level. It was recommended among others that Akwa Ibom State Government should organize regular seminar and workshop that would encourage intact family and discourages broken homes as this will help to foster prosocial behaviour in students.*

**Keywords:** Family size, Structure, Income, Prosocial, Behaviour.

### Introduction

The family is the first society that the child encounters and gets his first social relationship. The family is the foundation upon which most aspects of a child's life rests and it determines the behaviour of a child either negative or positive. Robinson (2009), states that socialization in the family is the starting point for influencing prosocial behaviour. Family's attitudes and cooperation could impact on children development of prosocial behaviour.

Prosocial behaviour is seen as a form of positive behaviour that benefits others. It explores why some people feel a sense of personal responsibility and engage in helping and

supporting others. Eisenberg (2015), prosocial behaviour is voluntary behaviour intended to benefit another. This include behaviours such as helping, sharing or providing comfort to another. Prosocial behaviour is relevant to both the quality of close interpersonal relationship and interactions among students without close ties. This implies that students often assist others in need or distress without requesting anything in return. Family structure, size and income of students could determine or influences their prosocial behaviour in school.

Family structure implies a family that is either intact or broken. It has been argued that children raised under single parenthood easily engage in deviant act, as compared to those raised by intact parent (Li *et al*, 2008). A broken home in the context of this study is a one that has split or separated for various reason such as divorce or abandonment of partner that may lead to children been raised by single parent or relative. Billings (2012) stated that children from single parent homes are more delinquent because they are denied security, protection and love that should come from corporate parents and this may affect their prosocial behaviour as well as academic performance. In the same vein, Stone (2012) states that children from single parents are more likely to show, to a large extent, the effect of under nourishment, illness, insufficient rest as well as negative attitude towards others.

Family size in the context of this study refers to the total number of children in a child's family in addition to the child himself. Muola (2010) asserted that children from small family size are not likely to engage in deviant behaviour since they are not many in the family, hence they have close affinity with their parents who observe and caution them whenever they go astray, whereas, majority of children from large families do not enjoy close relationship with their parent and as a result most of them seek help from peers who may in most cases lead them astray. Munsell (2012) observed from his study that as families get larger, parents cannot give their children the same amount of individual attention. A small family is likely to provide more intimate relationship including relationship of the child with members of the family than large family size (Akpabio, 2013). Ella *et al.* (2015) observed that family size may contribute positively or negatively to student's social behaviour; for Millimet and Wang (2011), the quantity and quality of feeding in the family depend on the size of such family.  Millimet and Wang added that parents should minimize the number of children in order to have a quality living and good social behaviour traits. The attention the parents give to a large number of children is never the same as when they are very few, and in case of helping children with their homework/school work or inculcating in them prosocial behaviour elements, it becomes cumbersome and ineffective.

Family Income is one of the factors that influences prosocial behaviour of the students in school.  The responsibility of training a child always lies predominantly in the hand of the parents. Parents have different styles of child rearing, various ways of disciplining their children and different ways of reacting to their children. Moszhgan and Mohamm (2011) stated that the income of parents does not only affect the prosocial behaviour and academic

performance of students, but it may also create difficultness for children from low income background to compete well with their counterparts from high income background under the same academic environment. Across all families, parents face major challenges when it comes to providing optimal care and education for their children. Parents with economically and socially well-off, support students learning and make children learn well by creating conducive home environment that provide learning varieties (Thomas, 2011). Khaliq (2016) stated that there is a moderate positive relationship between parent's income and the prosocial behaviour of their children. In the same vein, Salani and Alawode (2016) confirmed that students from low income homes have greater academic stress and behaviour problem than those from high income homes. According to Ogunshola and Adewale (2012), income of parents does not only affect the prosocial and academic performance of students, but it also makes it impossible for children from low income background to compete well with their counterparts from high income background in school.

**Statement of the Problem**

Since the inception of human on the planet earth, the importance of family cannot be overstressed since it is seen as the first point of contact of a child. It is assumed that some students are facing neglect and challenges due to parents inability to provide the necessities of life either due to family structure, large family size as well as insufficient fund to assist, help and support them in all facet of life. Moreso, the inability of some students to get support from their parents might prompt them to shift from acceptable and desirable behaviour (prosocial social behaviour) to unacceptable and undesirable behaviour in the society. This undesirable behaviour of some students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District which conflict with the moral values of the society prompted the researcher to raise question such as; could family structure, family size and family income elicit the prosocial behaviour in students? In search of answer to the above question, this study is therefore, poised to investigate family structure, family size and family income on prosocial behaviour of secondary school two students in Akwa Ibom in North East Senatorial District.

**Research Question**

i.     How does prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District differ based on their family structure?

ii.    What is the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family size?

iii.   To what extent does prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District differ based on their parents' income level?

**Research Hypotheses**

i.     There is no significant difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family structure.

ii.    There is no significant difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family size.

iii.   There is no significant difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parents' income level.

**Methodology**

This study adopted ex-post factor research design. The study is conducted in pubic secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District. The total population of the study consist 2,270 students. It comprised all SS2 students in public secondary school under study during 2022/2023 academic section. The sample size of 340 which is ten percent of the entire population was use for the study. A multi stage sampling procedure was used to gets a fair representation of the population. The instrument for the study was self-designed questionnaire entitled "Family Structure, Family Size, Family Income and Prosocial Behaviour Questionnaire (FSFSFIPBQ)". It was made up of twenty (20) items. The items were scored using a four-point rating scale. The instrument was validated by three experts. Two in psychological foundations of Education and one in Social Studies and Citizenship Education, Faculty of Education, University of Uyo. The instrument was pretested on a sample of 30 students who were not part of the main study. Test- retest reliability method was used to determine the reliability co-efficient of the instrument which stood at 0.86. The students were reached during lesson hours and with the help of one research assistants. A total of 340 copies of questionnaire were administered and completely retrieved with none missing. Mean was use to answer research questions. While One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test all the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance.

**Results**

**Research Question 1:** What is the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family structure?

**Table 1:** **Mean Scores on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family structure      N = 340**

| Family Structure | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| None of the parents | 16 | 12.25 | 3.99 |
| Mother only | 98 | 12.05 | 4.03 |
| Father only | 58 | 12.37 | 3.35 |
| Both parents | 168 | 12.41 | 3.80 |

*Source: Field data (2020)*

The analysis of research question 1 is presented in Table 1. Data in Table 1 revealed the summary of the mean score on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on family structure. Students who lived with none of their parents scored 12.25; those who lived with mother only scored 12.05, while those who lived with father only scored 12.37 and those who lived with both parents scored 12.41 respectively. This indicates that there is a difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on family structure. The results mean that students that lived with both parents exhibited high prosocial behaviour more than others

**Research Question 2:** What is the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family size?

**Table 2: Mean Scores on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family size          N= 340**

| Family Size | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1-3 (small) | 179 | 12.27 | 3.77 |
| 4-6 (medium) | 120 | 12.30 | 3.76 |
| 7 and Above (large) | 41 | 12.26 | 3.99 |

*Source: Field data (2020)*

The analysis of the research question 2 is presented in Table 2. Data in Table 2 revealed the summary of the mean score on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family size. Students whose number of members was 1-3 (small) scored 12.27, those whose number of members was 4-6 (medium) scored 12.30 and those whose number of members was 7 and above (large) scored 12.26 respectively. The Mean scores of students indicates that there is a difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on family size. The difference in prosocial behaviour based on family size shows that students from family size (1-3) (medium) exhibited high prosocial behaviour than others.

**Research Question 3:** What difference exists in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parent's income level?

**Table 3: Mean Scores on prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their parent's income level    N = 340**

| Parent's Income Level | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Landed Property | 95 | 11.73 | 4.09 |
| Concrete House | 40 | 12.85 | 3.43 |
| Car | 80 | 12.38 | 3.69 |
| Bicycle/Motorcycle | 20 | 12.70 | 3.15 |
| None | 105 | 12.41 | 3.84 |

*Source: Field data (2020)*

The analysis of the above research question 3 is presented in Table 3. Data in Table 3 revealed the summary of the mean score on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their parent's income level. The mean score of prosocial behaviour of students whose parents have landed property was 11.73. The mean score of prosocial behaviour of students whose parents have concrete house was 12.85. The mean score of prosocial behaviour of students whose parents have car was 12.38. The mean score of prosocial behaviour of students whose parents have bicycle/motorcycle was 12.70. The mean score of prosocial behaviour of students whose parents do not have none was 12.41. The difference in prosocial behaviour based on parents' level of income shows those students whose parents have bicycle/motorcycle exhibited high prosocial behaviour than others. This indicates that there is a difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parent's income level.

**Research Hypotheses**
**Research Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on family structure.

**Table 4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family structure    N = 340**

| Sources of Variation | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | F-crit | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 11508.44 | 3 | 3836.15 | 65.31 | 2.65 | |
| Within Groups | 19736.49 | 336 | 58.74 | | | S |
| Total | 31244.93 | 339 | | | | |

*S = Significant, p<.05, df = 3 and 339    F-critical = 2.65    Source: Field data (2020)*

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the above research hypothesis is presented in Table 4. Table 4. shows the result of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family structure. The result reveals that the F-calculated value (65.31) is greater than F-critical value (2.65) at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District and their family structure is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on family structure.

**Table 5: Post Hoc test for significant difference of secondary school students based on their family structure**

| (I) family structure | (J) family structure | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| None of the parents | Mother only | .19898 | 1.02579 | .846 | -1.8188 | 2.2168 |
| | father only | -.16379 | 1.07429 | .879 | -2.2770 | 1.9494 |
| | both parents | -.11905 | .99535 | .905 | -2.0769 | 1.8388 |
| Mother only | None of the parents | -.19898 | 1.02579 | .846 | -2.2168 | 1.8188 |
| | father only | -.36277 | .63025 | .565 | -1.6025 | .8770 |
| | both parents | -.31803 | .48356 | .511 | -1.2692 | .6332 |
| father only | None of the parents | .16379 | 1.07429 | .879 | -1.9494 | 2.2770 |
| | Mother only | .36277 | .63025 | .565 | -.8770 | 1.6025 |
| | both parents | .04475 | .57938 | .938 | -1.0949 | 1.1844 |
| both parents | None of the parents | .11905 | .99535 | .905 | -1.8388 | 2.0769 |
| | Mother only | 1.31803 | .48356 | .011 | -.6332 | 1.2692 |
| | father only | -.04475 | .57938 | .938 | -1.1844 | 1.0949 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.     Source: Field data (2020)

In Table 5 the summary of Post Hoc test for direction of significance on the difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family structure. The result shows that students who lived with both parents scored the highest mean difference (1.31803) and had significant value (.011) less than .05, hence, differed significantly from others.

**Research Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family sizes.

**Table 6: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family size**

|  |  |  |  |  |  | N = 340 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sources of Variation** | **Sum of Squares** | **Df** | **Mean Square** | **F** | **Sig.** | **Decision** |
| Between Groups | 11281.40 | 2 | 5640.72 | 95.22 | .3.04 |  |
| Within Groups | 19963.52 | 337 | 59.24 |  |  | S |
| Total | 31244.93 | 339 |  |  |  |  |

S = Significant, df = 2 and 337    F-critical = 3.04

Source: Field data (2020)

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the research hypothesis presented in Table 6. shows the result of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their family size. The result reveals that the F-calculated value (95.22) is greater than F-critical value (3.04) at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District and their family size is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on family size.

In Table 7, the summary of Post Hoc test for direction of significance on the difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their family size

**Table 7: Post Hoc test for significant difference of secondary school students based on their family size**

| (I) family size | (J) family size | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| 1-3(small) | 4-6(medium) | -.02626 | .46057 | .955 | -.9322 | .8797 |
|  | 7 and Above (large) | .01884 | .60342 | .975 | -1.1681 | 1.2058 |
| 4-6(medium) | 1-3(small) | .02626 | .46057 | .955 | -.8797 | .9322 |
|  | 7 and Above (large) | 1.04510 | .64402 | .044 | -1.2217 | 1.3119 |
| 7 and Above (large) | 1-3(small) | -.01884 | .60342 | .975 | -1.2058 | 1.1681 |
|  | 4-6(medium) | -.04510 | .64402 | .944 | -1.3119 | 1.2217 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level. Source Field data (2020)*

. The result shows that students whose family size was 4 -6 (medium) scored the highest mean difference (1.04510) and had significant value (.044) less than .05, hence, differed significantly from others.

**Research Hypothesis 3:** There is no significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parent's income level.

**Table 8: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their parents' income level.** *N 340*

| Sources of Variation | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | Fcal | F-crit | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Between Groups | 16257.62 | 4 | 4064.41 | 90.85 | .2.41 | |
| Within Groups | 14987.31 | 335 | 44.74 | | | S |
| Total | 31244.93 | 339 | | | | |

*S = Significant, df = 4 and 335    F-critical = 2.41 Source: Field data (2020)*

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of the above research hypothesis is presented in Table 8. Table 8 shows the result of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students based on their parent's income level. The result reveals that the F-calculated value (90.85) is greater than F-critical value (2.41) at .05 level of significance. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parent's income level is rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference in the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parent's income level.

**Table 9: Post Hoc test for significant difference of secondary school students based on their parents' occupation type**

| (I) income | (J) income | Mean Difference (I-J) | Std. Error | Sig. | 95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Landed Property | Concrete House | -1.12368 | .71512 | .117 | -2.5304 | .2830 |
| | Car | -.64868 | .57573 | .261 | -1.7812 | .4838 |
| | Bicycle/Motorcycle | -.97368 | .93342 | .298 | -2.8098 | .8624 |
| | None | -.68321 | .53724 | .204 | -1.7400 | .3736 |
| Concrete House | Landed Property | .68321 | .71512 | .117 | -.2830 | 2.5304 |
| | Car | .47500 | .73472 | .518 | -.9702 | 1.9202 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Bicycle/Motorcycle | .15000 | 1.03905 | .885 | -1.8939 | 2.1939 |
| | None | .44048 | .70496 | .533 | -.9462 | 1.8272 |
| Car | Landed Property | .64868 | .57573 | .261 | -.4838 | 1.7812 |
| | Concrete House | -.47500 | .73472 | .518 | -1.9202 | .9702 |
| | Bicycle/Motorcycle | -.32500 | .94852 | .732 | -2.1908 | 1.5408 |
| | None | -.03452 | .56306 | .951 | -1.1421 | 1.0730 |
| Bicycle/Motorcycle | Landed Property | .97368 | .93342 | .298 | -.8624 | 2.8098 |
| | Concrete House | -.15000 | 1.03905 | .885 | -2.1939 | 1.8939 |
| | Car | .32500 | .94852 | .732 | -1.5408 | 2.1908 |
| | None | .29048 | .92566 | .754 | -1.5304 | 2.1113 |
| None | Landed Property | 1.12368 | .53724 | .042 | -.3736 | 1.7400 |
| | Concrete House | -.44048 | .70496 | .533 | -1.8272 | .9462 |
| | Car | .03452 | .56306 | .951 | -1.0730 | 1.1421 |
| | Bicycle/Motorcycle | -.29048 | .92566 | .754 | -2.1113 | 1.5304 |

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.
Source: Field data (2020)

In Table 9, the summary of Post Hoc test for direction of significance on the difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District based on their parent's income level. The result shows that students whose parents have bicycle/motor scored the highest mean difference (1.12368) and had significant value (.042) less than .05, hence, differed significantly from others.

**Conclusion**

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there was a significant difference between the prosocial behaviour of secondary school students in Akwa Ibom North East Senatorial District and their difference in the prosocial behaviour existed because students who have assistance from their parents or family members are mostly the ones encouraged to also assist their siblings.

## Recommendations

1.  The income of parents determines to a large extent the level of assistance children could get. Parents as a matter of importance should diversify their sources of income so that they can be able to assist and provide the needs of their children.

2.  Akwa Ibom State Government should organize regular seminar that would encourage intact family and discourages broken homes.

3.  Parent should minimize the numbers of children so as to be able to provide adequate support and assistance to their children.

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