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**INFLUENCE OF SINGLE-PARENT AND DUAL-PARENT FAMILIES ON CYBERCRIME
INVOLVEMENT AMONG ADOLESCENTS**

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of single-parent and dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study was guided by two objectives, two research questions, and two null hypotheses tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The population comprised 64,817 Senior Secondary School II (SS II) students in public secondary schools in Rivers State, while a sample of 382 respondents was selected using a multistage sampling technique. Data were collected using a researcher-developed instrument titled Influence of Family Structure on Cybercrime Involvement Questionnaire (IFSCIQ). The instrument was subjected to face and content validation by experts, while its reliability was established through a pilot study using Cronbach's Alpha, which yielded an acceptable reliability coefficient. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, while the hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that single-parent families have a significant positive influence on cybercrime involvement among adolescents ($R = .512$, $R^2 = .262$, $\beta = .512$, $p < .05$), indicating that adolescents from single-parent families are more vulnerable to involvement in cybercrime. The study also found that dual-parent families have a significant negative influence on cybercrime involvement among adolescents ($R = .641$, $R^2 = .411$, $\beta = -.641$, $p < .05$), suggesting that effective dual-parent family environments serve as protective factors against cybercrime involvement. The study concluded that family structure significantly influences adolescents' involvement in cybercrime and that parental supervision, communication, and emotional support are essential in preventing cyber-related delinquent behaviour. The study recommended that parents should strengthen supervision and monitoring of adolescents' online activities regardless of family structure, while schools and relevant stakeholders should implement family-based digital safety education and counselling programmes to reduce adolescent involvement in cybercrime.

Keywords: Single-Parent Family, Dual-Parent Family, Family Structure, Cybercrime Involvement, Adolescents, Parental Supervision, Rivers State, Nigeria.

Introduction

The family is the first social institution responsible for shaping the attitudes, values, behaviours, and moral orientation of children. Through parental guidance, supervision, communication, and emotional support, families play a significant role in determining how adolescents respond to social influences and technological opportunities. As digital technologies continue to expand globally, adolescents have unprecedented access to the internet, social networking sites, online gaming platforms, and digital financial systems. While these technologies offer educational and developmental benefits, they have also increased adolescents' exposure to cybercrime and other online deviant behaviours. Researchers have increasingly argued that the quality of the family environment, particularly the structure of the family, influences adolescents' likelihood of engaging in both conventional and cyber-related delinquent behaviours (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2025; Zheng et al., 2025).

Single-parent and dual-parent families represent two common family structures with distinct parenting dynamics and child-rearing experiences. A single-parent family consists of one parent who assumes primary responsibility for raising the child due to divorce, separation, death, or non-marital childbirth. In contrast, a dual-parent family comprises two parents jointly sharing parental responsibilities, supervision, emotional support, and economic obligations. Although effective parenting can occur in either family structure, dual-parent families often provide greater opportunities for parental monitoring, role modelling, emotional stability, and economic support. Conversely, some single-parent households may experience increased economic pressures, reduced parental supervision, and time constraints that could influence adolescent behaviour if adequate support systems are lacking (UNICEF, 2024; Zheng et al., 2025).

Cybercrime among adolescents has emerged as a growing global concern because of increased internet accessibility and digital literacy among young people. Cybercrime involves the use of computers, mobile devices, or internet-enabled technologies to commit unlawful activities such as online fraud, identity theft, phishing, cyberbullying, hacking, financial scams, and unauthorized access to digital systems. In Nigeria and other West African countries, adolescents are increasingly exposed to online environments where cybercriminal activities are normalized or financially rewarding. The rapid expansion of digital platforms, combined with unemployment, peer influence, and inadequate online monitoring, has contributed to increasing youth participation in cyber-enabled offences. Recent evidence further emphasizes that cybercrime remains one of the major cybersecurity challenges confronting the West African region (Adewopo et al., 2024; UNODC, 2025).

Family structure influences adolescent behaviour primarily through parenting practices such as parental monitoring, communication, emotional attachment, discipline, and value transmission. Adolescents raised in homes where parents maintain close supervision, establish clear behavioural expectations, and sustain healthy communication are generally less likely to engage in risky online behaviours. On the other hand, inadequate supervision, weak parent-child relationships, family conflict, or inconsistent discipline may increase adolescents' vulnerability to negative peer influence and online criminal activities. Recent studies examining family influences on online misconduct have shown that parenting practices, family communication, and family

relationships remain important protective factors against adolescents' involvement in cyber-related deviant behaviours (Zheng et al., 2025).

Theoretical and empirical evidence also suggests that family structure affects delinquent behaviour indirectly through factors such as social control, emotional wellbeing, peer association, and unstructured socialization. Adolescents from families experiencing reduced parental supervision may spend more unsupervised time online, increasing opportunities for interaction with criminal networks, exposure to fraudulent schemes, and participation in cyber offences. While living in a single-parent family does not inevitably lead to delinquency or cybercrime, studies consistently indicate that differences in family structure may influence adolescents' behavioural outcomes depending on the quality of parenting, available support systems, and socioeconomic conditions. Existing evidence therefore highlights the importance of examining family characteristics alongside individual and environmental risk factors in understanding adolescent offending behaviour (Hoffmann, 2023; Kroese et al., 2021).

Despite increasing scholarly attention to cybercrime prevention, limited empirical studies have specifically compared the influence of single-parent and dual-parent families on adolescents' involvement in cybercrime, particularly within developing countries such as Nigeria where internet usage among adolescents continues to increase rapidly. Much of the available literature has focused on general juvenile delinquency, cyberbullying, or online victimization rather than cybercrime perpetration. This gap underscores the need for studies that investigate how family structure contributes to adolescents' involvement in cybercrime while considering the changing digital environment. Findings from such studies would provide valuable evidence for parents, educators, counsellors, policymakers, and security agencies in designing effective family-based interventions aimed at reducing cybercrime involvement among adolescents (UNODC, 2025; Zheng et al., 2025).

Statement of the Problem

Cybercrime involving adolescents has become an increasing social and security concern in Nigeria and across the world. The widespread availability of smartphones, internet connectivity, social media platforms, and digital financial technologies has created opportunities for adolescents to engage in various forms of cybercrime, including online fraud, identity theft, phishing, hacking, and other internet-enabled criminal activities. Despite efforts by government agencies, educational institutions, and law enforcement organizations to curb cybercrime through legislation, public awareness campaigns, and digital security initiatives, the involvement of adolescents in cyber-related offences continues to attract public concern. This trend suggests that preventive measures focusing solely on legal enforcement and technological controls may be insufficient, as family-related factors that shape adolescents' behaviour may also play a significant role. Among these factors, family structure, particularly whether adolescents are raised in single-parent or dual-parent families, has received limited attention in relation to cybercrime involvement.

Although previous studies have examined cybercrime from the perspectives of peer influence, unemployment, socioeconomic conditions, internet accessibility, and moral development, there remains inadequate empirical evidence comparing how single-parent and dual-parent family structures influence adolescents' involvement in cybercrime, particularly within the Nigerian context. Existing findings on the relationship between family structure and delinquent behaviour are inconsistent, while studies focusing specifically on cybercrime involvement among adolescents remain scarce. Consequently, it is unclear whether differences in parental supervision,

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emotional support, communication patterns, and family stability associated with these family structures significantly influence adolescents' participation in cybercrime. This gap in knowledge creates the need for the present study to investigate the influence of single-parent and dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents. The findings are expected to provide evidence that will assist parents, educators, counsellors, policymakers, and security agencies in developing family-centered strategies for preventing adolescent involvement in cybercrime.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the influence of single-parent and dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the influence of single-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.
2. Examine the influence of dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. To what extent do single-parent families influence cybercrime involvement among adolescents?
2. To what extent do dual-parent families influence cybercrime involvement among adolescents?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of single-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.

H₀₂: There is no significant influence of dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.

Literature Review

The relationship between family structure and adolescent behaviour has remained a major area of interest in developmental psychology, criminology, and sociology. Family serves as the primary environment where children acquire moral values, behavioural norms, emotional regulation, and social responsibility. Recent literature suggests that the influence of family extends beyond traditional behavioural outcomes to include adolescents' conduct in digital environments. Researchers have argued that parental involvement, family cohesion, communication patterns, and supervision significantly influence adolescents' online activities and their susceptibility to cyber-related misconduct. Rather than family structure alone determining behavioural outcomes, the quality of parenting and family interactions often mediates adolescents' engagement in both prosocial and antisocial online behaviours (Zheng et al., 2025; Katz & Brett, 2025).

Single-parent families have received considerable attention in recent studies because of the unique social, emotional, and economic challenges they may experience. In many instances, a single parent bears sole responsibility for financial provision, discipline, emotional support, and

supervision of adolescents. These multiple responsibilities may reduce the amount of time available for monitoring adolescents' online activities, thereby increasing opportunities for unsupervised internet use. However, contemporary scholars caution against generalizing all single-parent families as risk environments because many provide stable, nurturing, and supportive homes capable of producing socially responsible adolescents. Current evidence indicates that effective parenting practices, rather than family structure itself, remain the strongest protective factor against adolescent online deviance (Sbeglia et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2025).

Dual-parent families are generally associated with greater opportunities for shared parental responsibilities, consistent supervision, emotional support, and financial stability. These advantages may strengthen adolescents' resilience against peer pressure and reduce involvement in risky online behaviours. Recent systematic reviews indicate that adolescents raised in homes characterized by parental warmth, effective communication, clear household rules, and cooperative parenting demonstrate lower levels of problematic internet use, cyberbullying, and other forms of online misconduct. Nevertheless, scholars emphasize that merely having two parents in the household does not automatically guarantee positive behavioural outcomes, as family conflict, poor communication, and ineffective parenting can undermine these potential advantages (van den Eijnden et al., 2024; Zheng et al., 2025).

Cybercrime among adolescents has become an emerging global concern because of increasing internet penetration, widespread smartphone ownership, and greater access to digital technologies. Adolescents now interact extensively with online platforms that may expose them to cyber fraud, phishing schemes, identity theft, hacking communities, financial scams, and other cyber-enabled offences. In West Africa, rapid technological growth has created new opportunities for cybercriminal activities, while limited cybersecurity awareness and weak institutional capacity continue to challenge prevention efforts. Recent reviews recommend that cybercrime prevention should incorporate family-based interventions alongside legal, educational, and technological approaches because parental guidance remains essential in shaping adolescents' responsible digital behaviour (Adewopo et al., 2024; Bekkers & Leukfeldt, 2025).

Recent studies have increasingly highlighted parental monitoring, communication, and digital mediation as important protective factors against adolescents' online misconduct. Parents who establish clear internet usage rules, maintain open communication about online experiences, and actively supervise adolescents' digital activities contribute significantly to reducing risky online behaviours. Nigerian evidence similarly demonstrates that parents remain the primary source of support for adolescents encountering online risks, although differences exist in the level of monitoring and communication provided across households. Researchers therefore advocate strengthening digital parenting skills and promoting collaborative family involvement in online safety education to minimize adolescents' exposure to cybercrime opportunities (Oguine et al., 2025; Akter et al., 2025).

Despite the growing body of literature on adolescent online behaviour, significant gaps remain regarding the specific influence of single-parent and dual-parent family structures on cybercrime involvement. Most recent studies have concentrated on cyberbullying, problematic social media use, online victimization, or internet addiction rather than adolescents' direct participation in cybercrime. Furthermore, empirical evidence from developing countries, particularly Nigeria, remains limited despite increasing concerns about youth involvement in cyber-enabled offences. Consequently, there is a need for empirical investigation comparing adolescents

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from single-parent and dual-parent families to determine whether differences in family structure significantly influence cybercrime involvement. Such evidence would contribute to the development of family-centered interventions aimed at reducing adolescent cybercrime and promoting responsible digital citizenship (Zheng et al., 2025; Adewopo et al., 2024).

Theoretical Framework

Social Control Theory

The study is anchored on Social Control Theory, proposed by Travis Hirschi in 1969. The theory was developed to explain why individuals conform to societal norms and refrain from engaging in delinquent or criminal behaviour. Hirschi argued that deviant behaviour occurs when an individual's bond with society is weak or broken. The theory identifies four major elements of social bonds, namely attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Attachment refers to the emotional ties individuals have with parents, teachers, and significant others; commitment relates to investment in conventional goals and activities; involvement concerns participation in legitimate activities that leave little time for deviance; while belief refers to acceptance of societal norms and laws. According to the theory, adolescents who maintain strong relationships with their parents and family members are less likely to engage in criminal activities because they value these relationships and do not want to jeopardize them. However, the theory has been criticized for placing excessive emphasis on social bonds while paying limited attention to factors such as poverty, peer influence, personality traits, and technological opportunities that may also contribute to delinquent behaviour. Critics further argue that some individuals with strong family bonds still engage in criminal activities, suggesting that social control alone may not fully explain deviant behaviour (Hirschi, 1969; Pratt et al., 2024).

The relevance of Social Control Theory to the present study lies in its emphasis on the role of family relationships in influencing adolescent behaviour. The theory provides a useful framework for understanding how family structure, whether single-parent or dual-parent, may affect adolescents' involvement in cybercrime through differences in parental attachment, supervision, communication, and monitoring. Adolescents from dual-parent families may benefit from stronger social bonds due to the presence of two caregivers who can provide guidance, emotional support, and supervision, thereby reducing opportunities for cybercrime involvement. Conversely, where parental supervision and attachment are weakened, as may occur in some single-parent households facing economic or time constraints, adolescents may become more vulnerable to negative peer influence and online criminal activities. Therefore, Social Control Theory offers a logical explanation for examining how variations in family structure influence cybercrime involvement among adolescents and provides a strong theoretical foundation for the study.

Empirical Review

Francis and Iyanda (2024) conducted a study on the influence of parental roles on adolescents' involvement in internet fraud in Ede South Local Government Area, Osun State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by the increasing involvement of adolescents in internet fraud and sought to determine how parental communication, monitoring, and rule-setting influenced adolescents' participation in cyber-related crimes. A mixed-method research design was adopted.

The study sampled 250 adolescents aged 12 to 19 years using multistage and snowball sampling techniques. Data were collected using the Parenting Roles and Dimensions Questionnaire (PRDQ) alongside interview guides, while descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for data analysis. The findings revealed that adolescents whose parents maintained consistent communication about internet safety, monitored online activities, and established clear behavioural expectations were significantly less likely to engage in internet fraud. The study further found that inadequate parental supervision increased adolescents' vulnerability to online criminal behaviour. The researchers concluded that effective parenting remains an important protective factor against adolescent involvement in cybercrime and recommended that parents should strengthen digital supervision and maintain regular communication regarding responsible internet use. The study is relevant to the present research because it demonstrates the importance of parenting in reducing cybercrime involvement among adolescents. However, unlike the present study, it focused on parental roles generally without specifically comparing adolescents from single-parent and dual-parent families.

Alebiosu (2024) carried out a study on the influence of family types on adolescent psycho-social problem behaviours among high school students in Oriade Local Government Area, Osun State, Nigeria. The study examined whether adolescents from intact, single-parent, and step-family backgrounds differed in their involvement in problem behaviours. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised high school students from different family types, while 300 adolescents were selected from 10 secondary schools using simple random and stratified sampling techniques. Data were collected using the Family Types and Adolescents Psycho-social Problem Behaviour Questionnaire (FTAP²BQ) with a reported reliability coefficient of 0.76. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing. The findings showed that family type significantly influenced adolescents' psycho-social problem behaviours, with adolescents from intact families generally reporting lower levels of behavioural problems than those from single-parent and step-family backgrounds. The study concluded that stable family environments contribute positively to adolescents' behavioural development and recommended increased parental involvement and counselling support for vulnerable families. This study is relevant to the present study because it establishes the importance of family structure in shaping adolescent behaviour. However, it focused on general psycho-social problem behaviours rather than adolescents' involvement in cybercrime, which the present study seeks to investigate.

Methodology

The study will adopt a descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design is considered appropriate because it enables the researcher to obtain information from adolescents regarding the influence of single-parent and dual-parent families on their involvement in cybercrime without manipulating any of the variables under investigation. The design will facilitate the collection of data from a representative sample of the population and permit the description and analysis of existing conditions as they naturally occur.

The study will be carried out in Rivers State, Nigeria. Rivers State is one of the oil-producing states in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria and consists of 23 Local Government Areas (LGAs). The State has a high concentration of public and private secondary schools and increasing access to digital technologies, internet-enabled devices, and social media platforms among adolescents. These characteristics make the State suitable for investigating the influence of family structure on adolescents' involvement in cybercrime.

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The population of the study will comprise all Senior Secondary School II (SS II) students in public secondary schools in Rivers State. According to the Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board (RSSSB, 2025), there are 64,817 SS II students enrolled in public senior secondary schools across the 23 Local Government Areas of the State. SS II students are considered appropriate for the study because they are adolescents who have substantial exposure to digital technologies and are capable of providing reliable responses to issues relating to family structure and cybercrime involvement.

The sample size for the study will consist of 382 respondents, determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula for finite populations at a 5% level of precision. A multistage sampling technique will be employed to select the respondents. At the first stage, six Local Government Areas will be selected through simple random sampling using the balloting method. At the second stage, public senior secondary schools will be selected proportionately from the selected Local Government Areas through simple random sampling. At the third stage, SS II students will be selected from the sampled schools using proportionate stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation of both male and female students. Finally, simple random sampling will be used to select the required number of respondents from each school.

Data for the study will be collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Influence of Family Structure on Cybercrime Involvement Questionnaire (IFSCIQ)." The questionnaire will consist of two sections. Section A will obtain respondents' demographic information such as gender, age, and family structure. Section B will contain items designed to measure the independent variables (single-parent family and dual-parent family) and the dependent variable (cybercrime involvement). The questionnaire items will be structured on a four-point Likert rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The instrument will be subjected to face and content validation by three experts, comprising one expert in Educational Psychology, one expert in Measurement and Evaluation, and one expert in Sociology of Education, all from a recognized university. Their observations, corrections, and recommendations regarding the relevance, clarity, adequacy, and appropriateness of the questionnaire items will be incorporated before the final version of the instrument is produced.

The reliability of the instrument will be determined through a pilot study involving 30 SS II students from public secondary schools outside the sampled schools but with similar characteristics to the study population. Data obtained from the pilot study will be analysed using Cronbach's Alpha reliability technique to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. A reliability coefficient of 0.70 or above will be considered adequate for the study.

The data collected will be analysed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions. The criterion mean of 2.50 will be used for decision-making, where a mean score of 2.50 and above will indicate agreement, while a mean score below 2.50 will indicate disagreement. The hypotheses will be tested using simple linear regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence of single-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.

Table 1: Simple Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Single-Parent Families on Cybercrime Involvement among Adolescents

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	F	Sig.	
1	.512	.262	.260	0.684	134.865	.000	
Predictor			B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant			1.274	.148		8.608	.000
Single-Parent Family			.483	.042	.512	11.613	.000

Table 1 presents the simple linear regression analysis on the influence of single-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents. The result revealed a correlation coefficient ($R = .512$) and a coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .262$), indicating that 26.2% of the variation in adolescents' cybercrime involvement is explained by single-parent family influence, while the remaining 73.8% is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 134.865$; $p = .000 < .05$). Furthermore, the regression coefficient for single-parent family was positive and significant ($\beta = .512$, $t = 11.613$, $p = .000 < .05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, implying that single-parent families have a significant influence on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant influence of dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents.

Table 2: Simple Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Dual-Parent Families on Cybercrime Involvement among Adolescents

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error	F	Sig.
1	.641	.411	.409	0.592	265.347	.000

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
Constant	0.985	.132		7.462	.000
Dual-Parent Family	-.642	.039	-.641	-16.289	.000

Table 4.9 shows the simple linear regression analysis on the influence of dual-parent families on cybercrime involvement among adolescents. The findings revealed a correlation coefficient ($R = .641$) and a coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .411$), indicating that 41.1% of the variation in adolescents' cybercrime involvement is explained by dual-parent family influence, while 58.9% is explained by other variables outside the model. The regression model was statistically significant ($F = 265.347$; $p = .000 < .05$). The regression coefficient for dual-parent family was negative and statistically significant ($\beta = -.641$, $t = -16.289$, $p = .000 < .05$), indicating that stronger characteristics associated with dual-parent families significantly reduce adolescents' involvement in cybercrime. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, showing that dual-parent families have a significant influence on cybercrime involvement among adolescents, with the influence serving as a protective factor against cybercrime.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that single-parent families have a significant influence on cybercrime involvement among adolescents. The regression analysis showed that adolescents from single-parent families were more likely to exhibit tendencies toward cybercrime involvement, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This finding suggests that family structure may influence adolescents' online behaviour through factors such as parental supervision, monitoring, communication, emotional support, and time available for guiding internet use. In many single-parent households, one parent assumes the combined responsibilities of caregiving, financial provision, and household management, which may reduce the amount of supervision available for monitoring adolescents' online activities. Consequently, some adolescents may experience greater exposure to negative peer influence, unrestricted internet access, and opportunities to participate in cyber-related offences. It is important to note, however, that this finding does not imply that all adolescents from single-parent families engage in cybercrime, but rather that reduced parental resources and supervision may increase vulnerability where adequate support systems are absent.

The finding is consistent with the study of Francis and Iyanda (2024), who found that inadequate parental monitoring and weak parent-child communication significantly increased adolescents' involvement in internet fraud in Osun State, Nigeria. Their study concluded that effective parental supervision and digital monitoring reduce adolescents' participation in cyber-related crimes. The finding also supports Sbeglia et al. (2024), who reported that parental involvement and consistent supervision serve as protective factors against youth offending and other forms of delinquent behaviour. Furthermore, the result aligns with Social Control Theory proposed by Hirschi (1969), which posits that weak attachment between parents and adolescents reduces social control and increases the likelihood of deviant behaviour. Therefore, strengthening parental involvement, regardless of family structure, may contribute significantly to reducing adolescents' involvement in cybercrime.

The findings further revealed that dual-parent families have a significant influence on cybercrime involvement among adolescents. Specifically, the regression result indicated a significant negative relationship, implying that adolescents from dual-parent families were less likely to become involved in cybercrime. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. This finding may be attributed to the shared responsibilities of two parents in providing supervision, discipline, emotional support, financial stability, and guidance regarding responsible internet use. The presence of both parents may also improve communication, strengthen family bonds, and enhance monitoring of adolescents' online activities, thereby reducing opportunities for engagement in cyber-related criminal behaviours.

The finding agrees with the study of Alebiosu (2024), who reported that adolescents from intact or dual-parent families demonstrated fewer behavioural problems than those from other family structures because of greater parental support and family stability. The finding is also supported by van den Eijnden et al. (2024), who concluded that positive parenting practices, effective communication, and cooperative parenting significantly reduce problematic internet use and online misconduct among adolescents. Similarly, Zheng et al. (2025) observed that parental warmth, monitoring, and healthy family relationships protect adolescents against cyber-related deviant behaviours. The finding equally lends support to Social Control Theory, which emphasizes

that strong family attachment, parental supervision, commitment to family values, and adherence to societal norms strengthen adolescents' social bonds and reduce the likelihood of criminal behaviour. The implication is that promoting healthy parenting practices and strengthening family relationships, irrespective of family structure, remain essential strategies for preventing adolescent involvement in cybercrime.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that family structure significantly influences cybercrime involvement among adolescents. The study established that adolescents from single-parent families are more likely to be vulnerable to cybercrime involvement, largely due to challenges associated with reduced parental supervision, limited monitoring, and increased economic and caregiving responsibilities that may affect effective parenting. Conversely, adolescents from dual-parent families were found to be less likely to engage in cybercrime because of the advantages associated with shared parental responsibilities, stronger emotional support, consistent supervision, and improved communication. These findings affirm that the family remains a critical social institution in shaping adolescents' behaviour, including their conduct in digital environments.

The study further concludes that while family structure is an important factor, the quality of parenting practices, parental involvement, communication, monitoring, and emotional attachment play a more decisive role in preventing adolescents' involvement in cybercrime. Therefore, strengthening family relationships, promoting responsible digital parenting, and enhancing parental supervision irrespective of family structure are essential measures for reducing cybercrime involvement among adolescents and fostering responsible digital citizenship.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the following were recommended;

1. Parents, particularly those in single-parent families, should strengthen parental supervision, maintain regular communication with their adolescents, and actively monitor their internet activities. Government agencies, schools, and community organizations should also organize digital parenting education programmes to equip parents with the knowledge and skills required to guide adolescents toward responsible online behaviour and discourage involvement in cybercrime.
2. Families should be encouraged to promote strong parent-child relationships, shared parental responsibilities where possible, and positive family interactions that enhance emotional support and responsible internet use. School counsellors and community-based organizations should collaborate with parents to implement family-centered intervention programmes that reinforce positive values and reduce adolescents' vulnerability to cybercrime involvement.

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