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CLINICAL PROFILE OF A JUVENILE DELINQUENT

by
Arjan Graybill

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the
Master of Arts Degree
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at
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ABSTRACT

Arjan Graybill

Clinical Profile of the Juvenile Delinquent

1999

Dr. J. Klanderman

Seminar in School Psychology

This study attempted to explore the relationship that a juvenile delinquent has with three major influences: school, peers, and family. It was hypothesized that juvenile delinquents possess a poor relationship with these influences. Subjects were administered a survey which assesses the relationship with school, peers and family. 19 inmates in a juvenile detention center were administered the survey. There were 15 subjects in the control group who were administered the survey as well. Results from independent t-scores reveal a significant difference in the relationship with school, peers, and family for the two groups. Juvenile delinquents were found to have a poor relationship with these major influences.

MINI-ABSTRACT

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Clinical Profile of the Juvenile Delinquent

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This study attempted to explore the relationship a juvenile delinquent has with three main influences: school, peers, and family. It is hypothesized that juvenile delinquents possess a poor relationship with these influences. Results indicate that juvenile delinquents do not feel a connection and have a poor relationship with their school, peers, and family.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Need

Juvenile delinquency is fairly widespread among adolescents. It crosses all types of religious, cultural, and socioeconomic barriers. Juvenile delinquency is no longer a problem restricted to the poor or to the children of disreputable families. It is now a problem that affects even the most affluent communities.

The statistics on the prevalence of juvenile delinquency overwhelmingly calls for the adoption of further research. Recent empirical findings from criminological research claim that the incidence rate for juvenile delinquent acts are on the incline, especially in suburban areas. Criminal behavior remains modest during childhood. However, more and more youngsters exhibit precursor characteristics towards criminal behavior. The prevalence of actual criminal behavior remains a problem for the ages ten through fourteen. Furthermore, criminal activity is rapidly increasing in late adolescence.

Juvenile delinquency is a problem that potentially affects every facet in our society. More research must be conducted to understand the difficult and often obscure personality traits of the juvenile delinquent. An intensive understanding of the juvenile delinquents',

needs, motives, fears, and overall profile will facilitate the development of effective prevention strategies and intervention programs. Common traits exist in juvenile delinquents which must be assessed and understood in order identify risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency. The school is just one institution that must devote resources to the evaluation of the possible personality traits which are associated with delinquency. These traits will facilitate the identification of adolescents who are at risk for delinquent behavior.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to develop a clinical profile of the juvenile delinquent. Juvenile delinquents may possess certain personality characteristics distinguishing them from non-delinquents. The primary goal of this research is to ascertain whether the juvenile delinquents feels a connection towards their school, parents, and peers. Discovering whether the delinquent feels a connection towards these institutions will yield important personality characteristics. The study will key into these characteristics for the purpose of developing a clinical profile of the juvenile delinquent.

Hypothesis

Juvenile delinquents have a unique clinical profile in which they feel disenfranchised towards their social involvement's. These social involvement's will be defined as their school, peers, and parents. Through deductive reasoning, one may infer that 1) juvenile delinquents do not feel a connection with their school. Furthermore, they don't value school or feel that what they learn in school will help them later on in life. 2) Juvenile delinquents also do not feel a connection with their peers. They do not consider their relationship with their peers to be pertinent because they feel that their peers truly don't care for them. 3) Juvenile delinquents do not feel a connection with their parents. They generally feel that their parents are not interested or involved in their life.

Theory

Criminologists and adolescent psychologists use the theory of social learning to explain juvenile delinquency. The social learning theory examines the roles that parents, school, and peers play in the development of delinquency. The probability of delinquency is increased if adolescents do not learn rules of appropriate conduct from their parent, peers and school.(Jang and Smith 1997)

The juvenile delinquent's primary opportunities for social involvement will be with their peers, at school, and with their parents. The child tends to invest time and

effort into environments that provide the greatest benefits and result in the most minimal costs. School will be a punitive experience with little chance for academic success and involvement for children who don't feel a connection towards this institution. Juvenile delinquents generally tend to convey this lack of connection.(Cussom 1983)

Just as school success alludes the child who doesn't feel connected, so does success with peers. Research does show that young delinquents find friends who have similar characteristics to their own. However, juvenile delinquents generally tend to feel that their peers don't truly care for them or know them as a person. In addition, juvenile delinquents tend to feel a lack of emotional support from their peers. This belief bolsters a lack of connection that juvenile delinquent feels with their peers.(Jang and Smith 1997)

Juvenile delinquents usually come from families that do not provide sufficient emotional and financial support. Their parents generally do not take an active role in their life. They may have continually been reinforced to feel insecure in their relationship with their parents. All of these factors contribute to juvenile delinquents not feeling a connection towards their parents.(Jang and Smith 1997)

Definitions

A connection will be defined as the feeling of a bond or the feeling that someone or something is important and essential in one's life. This connection will result in a positive manifestation for the individual.

A juvenile will be defined as a status in our society somewhere between child and adult, usually between the ages of 12-18 years old.

Juvenile delinquency will be defined as actions that are illegal for juveniles, that place the juvenile in a delinquent role, and resulting in society regarding the juvenile as a delinquent.

Assumptions

1. The sample selected is a representative sample for juvenile delinquents.
2. Since the study uses a self-report questionnaire, there is an assumption that the participants are telling the truth and reporting information that is accurate.

Limitations

1. The survey being used has never been tested for reliability and validity. It must therefore be assumed that the survey tests what it claims to measure and that what it measures is consistent.

Overview

Juvenile delinquency is a major concern for society, therefore, there has been a substantial amount of research done on this subject. More specifically, there has been a

tremendous amount of research done in terms of the legal and criminal implications juvenile delinquency yields. There has also been research conducted on developing a clinical profile of the juvenile delinquent, but to a lesser extent. Research on this topic will be reviewed in chapter two. The research in chapter two will focus on the clinical and personality traits of the juvenile delinquent in relation to their school, peers, and parents.

Chapter three will include the design of the study in which the sample, operational measures, testable hypothesis, design, analysis will be described.

The results of the research are analyzed thoroughly in chapter four. Implications for further research are also discussed in this chapter .

Chapter II

Review of Research

Introduction

There have been many studies which try to develop a clinical profile of the juvenile delinquent. This chapter will focus on studies dealing with three factors which are pertinent in the identification of certain clinical traits that exist in juvenile delinquents. Specifically, the three factors which examined are family relations, school relations, and peer relations.

Poor family relations do increase the probability of delinquency. Research demonstrates that weak parenting skills, child-parent conflicts, family transitions, and overall poor family functioning has a negative effect on adolescents and may foster delinquent tendencies.

Delinquents usually have a negative affiliation with school as an institution. This condition usually results in low self-esteem which has a negative impact on academic achievement and the development of social skills. As a result of this poor relationship with school, delinquents tend to lack motivation to achieve, have poor attendance, and usually experience alienation from school in general.

Juveniles who are aggressive and have a tendency for delinquency usually experience rejection from conventional peer groups. This rejection leads delinquents to form friendships with other delinquents. Over time, identities are formed within the group. It becomes extremely difficult to change delinquent behavior if this group has a long duration.

Family Relations

Research emphasizes the importance of the family as a social institution that regulates the development of the child or adolescent's delinquent behavior across time. There has been a recent increase of interest in the explanations of delinquency which acknowledge importance of family influences on the delinquent. (Gottfredson and Hirchi 1990) Current research also stresses the intricate nature of the relationship between family life and delinquent behavior. A strong impact of parenting of the delinquency has been proposed by a number of theoretical perspectives and further supported by a large collection of empirical work. Leading researchers in the fields of criminology and adolescent psychology have used the theories of social learning to emphasize the impact of parenting on delinquent behavior. (Jang and Smith 1997) The theory of social learning focuses on family roles as the primary source for rules of conduct. Without these rules, the delinquent's bond to society is weakened and the probability of delinquency increases. (Jang and Smith 1997) Affective ties between the parent and the adolescent are essential in motivating children to control themselves through their need to avoid

disapproval and punishment from their parents.(Patterson 1982) Patterson's coercion theory, derived from the social learning perspective, identifies the affects of a poor parent-child relationship. This model claims that poor parenting skills tend to reinforce delinquent behavior. Weak parenting skills in this model are defined as poor management practices such as lack of supervision and consistency of discipline.(Patterson, Reid, and Dishion 1992)

Theorists have argued that the family plays an essential role in shaping child and adolescents development. This argument was supported by Danile Shek(1997)in a major research study entitled, "Family environment and adolescent psychological well-being." Results from this research show that adolescent's perceptions of parenting styles, conflict with parent, and overall family functioning were significantly related to the adolescent's the adolescent's psychological well-being and potential for delinquency. The results suggest that the family factors important in developing delinquent behavior. This study followed up a previous study in which the results showed that parenting styles with the characteristics of acceptance, positive regard, love, encouragement, and reasoning tend to induce positive social development in children and adolescents and inhibit delinquent behavior.(Yang 1989)

Shek used the Paternal and Maternal Styling Scales to asses adolescent's perceptions of parenting styles. These scales reported high internal reliability, test-retest reliability, and concurrent validity. Perceived family functioning was measured by the Self-Report Instrument. The Father and Mother Conflict Scale was used to measure

conflict between the child and parent. The results were based on the responses of 365 secondary school students.(Shek 1997)

The results for the most part show that measures of family environment were associated with indicators of problem behavior. The data demonstrated that adolescents with negative perceptions of parenting styles, family functioning, and parent-adolescent conflict exhibited more delinquent behavior than students with positive perceptions. These finding suggest that a more positive perception of overall family functioning is related to better adolescent adjustment and fewer incidences of delinquency. The finding are consistent with previous studies on this subject.(Shek 1997)

Social work has long recognized the impact of environment on individual and family functioning. It has also documented how disadvantage experienced in a variety of life contexts affects adolescent delinquency. Social workers have explained delinquency by stressing the role of the family in an ecological context.(Stern and Smith 1995) In addition, the social control theory is used to parental rejection, involvement, and supervision and their effect on delinquency.(Barber and Rollins 1990)

Parental control has been found to be a necessary deterrent of delinquency.(Stern and Smith 1995) Research has demonstrated that supervision and effective discipline decrease the chance of delinquent behavior. Additional research found that a parent's awareness of child's activities, peers, and whereabouts also decreases the likelihood of delinquency.(Barber and Rollins 1990)

Family transition also plays an essential role in the development of children and adolescents. In situations where parents divorce, adolescents must cope relationship

changes and family rules and lifestyles. Cross-sectional studies have suggested that children of divorce are at risk for psychological maladjustment and delinquency. (Amato and Keith 1991) Furthermore, many juvenile courts report that 30 to 60 percent of juvenile delinquents come from families who have experienced a divorce. (Caldwell 1981) Some studies have found that about twice as many delinquents as nondelinquents come from divorced homes. (Bynun and Thompson 1989)

A study done on middle class children between the ages of 9 and 13 who had experienced divorce found that they were more likely report delinquent behavior in the last 24 hours. Wadsworth (1990) found that people whose parents divorced when they were children often reported delinquent acts. Coughlin and Vuchinich (1996) surveyed 196 adolescent males and discovered that being in a divorced family at age 10 doubled the risk of being arrested at age 14.

A longitudinal study titled “The Impact of Family Transition on the Development of Delinquency in Adolescent Boys” was conducted by Linda Panani (1998) to examine the impact of divorce on the development of delinquency in boys from low-income neighborhoods. This study specifically focused on the developmental patterns through adolescence. The boys were grouped according to the age at which the divorce occurred. This facilitated the understanding of the developmental factors in delinquency. The findings suggested that boys who experienced divorce between the ages of 12 and 15 were more likely to engage in delinquent acts than their peers who were from intact families. More specifically, the boys from divorced families engaged in more activities involving physical violence. Boys between the ages of 12 and 14 perceived their relationship with

their parents as unsupportive. They also reported being unsupervised. A major finding was that boys from divorced homes reported difficulty in sharing their thoughts and feelings with their parents.(Pagani 1998)

There have been a number of studies which document the association between family stress and juvenile delinquency.(Conger 1992) A major research study done by Stern and Smith (1995) explored this association by surveying 1,000 adolescents at high risk for serious delinquency. The results in general implicate the family as the most important developmental factor in the development of delinquency patterns. More specifically, the findings suggest that life distress in the family often results in adolescents developing delinquency tendencies. This distress disrupts parenting and affects child behaviors. When parents are under distress, parental involvement and supervision decline. Children and adolescents find it difficult to express their thoughts and feelings to their parents. Many adolescents become at risk for delinquency.(Stern and Smith 1995)

School Relations

The social institution of the school has become central to the lives of adolescents ever since the advent of mandatory education and child labor laws.(Platt 1997) The social organization of school has the potential for a positive impact on the development of children. Children who experience repeated success in school usually continue to do so in adolescents.(Thornberry 1997)

In contrast, youths who have failed in the classroom or in extracurricular activities are more likely to view themselves negatively from the perspectives of teachers and the school in general. This poor performance can have devastating effects for self-esteem.(Thornberry 1997)

Many researchers have explored the idea of the relationship between self-esteem in the context of school and delinquency. Kaplan and Robinson (1983) found that those who had low self-esteem at the start of the school year reported more delinquent acts during that year than those who had high self-esteem. Further research suggests that delinquent behavior served a defensive function in which adolescents try to raise their self-image.(Ross 1995)

Under these conditions, one can expect poor commitment to student obligations, a lack of motivation to perform academically, poor attendance, and general alienation from school.(Menard and Morris 1984) In addition, teachers are likely to view these youths in a negative light. Schafer and Polk (1976) pointed out that educators often perceive a correlation between educational difficulties and problem behavior. They often define students as “Stupid” and “Bad” This exaggerates the alienation and leads to delinquent behavior.(Thornberry 1997)

Bynum and Thompson (1989) claim that the outcome of this labeling process can be seen in studies of academic tracking in schools. Students assigned to college tracks perform better, are more socially adjusted, and have a minimal tendencies towards delinquency. Conversely, students assigned to lower tracks are viewed more negatively by teachers, do not have high ambitions, have negative self-images and have higher incidences

of delinquency. These youths are also more likely to drop out and select peer groups that encourage law violation.(Oaks 1985)

Research has also explored how grades are related to delinquency. Paetsch and Bertrand (1997) conducted a major research study on this question. This research examined the relationships between self-reported delinquency and academic achievement in junior and senior high school students. The results indicated that students reporting a 90%-100% grade average were more likely to report no delinquency than low or moderate levels of delinquency. Students with poor grades were much more likely to report a moderate or high level of delinquency. In addition, the more time students spent on homework, the less likely they were to report delinquency. For instance, of the students reporting five hours per week on homework, 56 % of them reported no delinquency. Conversely, of students who reported doing no homework, 65% of them reported moderate levels of delinquency.(Paetsch and Bertrand 1997)

Paetsch and Bertrand (1997) also found that skipping classes is often related to delinquency. The results indicated that 61% of students who reported skipping class also reported high levels of delinquency. Students who skip class are three times as likely to report moderate/high levels of delinquency. This particular research study concludes that skipping class is the most common behavior of delinquents in the school setting.

Patricia Jenkins (1997) conducted a comprehensive research study to assess the overall school social bond and its manifestations on delinquency. The study hypothesizes that the school social bond is important in explaining delinquency. The study examines four components of the school social bond-school commitment, attachment to school,

school involvement and belief in school rules. Jenkins asserts that it is necessary to examine the combined effects of the four elements of the school social bond on delinquency.

The sample consisted of 754 students ranging from 11 to 15 years old. Data was collected by an anonymous questionnaire. The results indicate that the most frequently reported school crimes are hitting another student and damaging school property, respectively. Only 6% of the students reported using drugs. Talking in class and copying someone's homework were the most common forms of school misconduct. Being late for class and school were the most commonly reported types of school nonattendance.

The evidence collected in this study confirms the importance of bonding adolescents to school as an important step in reducing delinquency. The data collected reflects how the school social bond plays important roles in predicting delinquency. The results also indicate that certain elements of the school social bond have more impact on delinquency. For instance, school involvement was found to be the weakest factor. School commitment was found to be the most important element in explaining delinquency. Regardless of which element was most important, it is important to realize that the whole school social bond is essential in understanding factors that lead to delinquency.(Jenkins 1997)

Peer Relations

It is hypothesized that aggressive adolescent behaviors are linked to a main reaction from the social environment. (Hawkins and Lishner 1987) The main outcome is the rejection by members of the normal peer group. Adolescents who exhibit aggressive behavior and a lack of social skills become easily rejected by peers. (Bender and Losel 1996) This problem behavior also impedes social learning. A study conducted by Dodge indicated that classroom observations of aggressive children show that they spend less time in interacting with peers than nondeviant peers do. Rejected children are also deficient in a number of social-cognitive skills, including peer group entry, response to provocation, perception of peer norms, and interpretation of prosocial interactions. (Dodge 1986)

There have been many studies that have demonstrated that juvenile delinquents experience peer rejection and a lack of social support. For instance, a study done by Dishion (1991) effectively demonstrated how juvenile delinquents experience peer rejection. Dishion hypothesized that juvenile delinquency is highly correlated with rejection from peers. Data in this study was gathered by interviewing 206 adolescents in their homes. There were two approaches used to measure peer relations. The Sociometric Classification System was used which was developed by Coie (1982). In addition, categories divided into peer relationships, social preference, and social impact were used to make up 3 dimensional scores. Both approaches yielded the same results.

Children who are aggressive and have a tendency towards delinquency are more likely to experience systematic rejection by traditional peer groups. Less delinquent children are more likely to be accepted by traditional peer groups. Constant peer rejection will also facilitate delinquency.

Peer interactions become crucial contexts for children's interpretations of their world. These interactions result in peer culture that are pertinent for the development of social skills which are necessary to participate in society.(Thornberry 1997) The selection of peer groups becomes essential, especially in middle to late childhood.(Patterson 1989) Consequently, rejected individuals from conventional peer groups become highly likely to associate with other delinquents. They are less likely to consider the perspectives of traditional peer groups and are more likely to take the role of the delinquent peer group in criminal situations.(Matsueda and Heimer 1987)

There has been a long line of research that shows rejected youths being attracted deviant peer groups.(Thornberry 1997) Cusson (1981) uses the term, "Birds of a feather flock together" to reinforce the idea that juvenile delinquents seek the company of delinquents like themselves. There is a very strong correlation between delinquent friends and delinquency.(Bender and Losel 1996) In a classic study, Belson (1975) demonstrated that when adolescents who commit thefts are questioned, they are convinced that their deviant peers incited them to steal. Further research suggests that when recidivist delinquents stop committing crime, breaking off relations with delinquent friends is an important factor.(West 1977)

The presence of delinquent friends also increases the chance that the crime will be exciting, safe and successful. More specifically, peer groups are integrated by excitement derived from rule violation. Social status in delinquent peer groups is gained through displaying “Toughness” and “Coolness.”(Thornberry 1997)

The longer the duration in a delinquent group, the harder it is to change problematic behavior. The identities formed in the group become stable over time. Delinquents become motivated to maintain stable self-images and to seek further interaction with other delinquent youths.(Heiner and Matsueda 1994) Furthermore, transitions to more traditional peer groups becomes almost impossible. This suggests that youths who have developed strong delinquent roles will continue to do so, unless some major event occurs to alter this behavior.(Thornberry 1997)

Summary

The literature reviewed has emphasized that juvenile delinquents have displayed poor relationships with their family. Family influences have a profound impact on the development of delinquency. Research has focused on family transitions, parent management skills, parenting styles, and overall family functioning to explain the role of poor family relationships on delinquency.

Research has also demonstrated that juvenile delinquents often experience a negative relationship with school. This negative relationship usually results in delinquents experiencing a low self-esteem and an increased tendency for delinquency. This poor

relationship also consists of poor attendance, lack of motivation to achieve academically, and a general isolation from school.

Peer rejection from normal peer groups is another characteristic of delinquency according to research. This peer rejection leads to more incidents of delinquency. Finally, it leads to the formation of delinquent groups.

Chapter III

Procedure and Design of Study

Sample

The study was conducted by the researcher using an experimental group and a control group. The subjects in the experimental group were residents of a juvenile delinquency home in northern New Jersey. The center houses youths between the ages of 12-18 who have been charged with committing a delinquent act and are awaiting court action. The subjects in the control group are members of a the Boy Scouts of America in southern New Jersey. The subjects have no known history of delinquency. The subjects in the control group are between the ages of 12 and 17 .

The sample was composed of 19 subjects from the juvenile detention center and 15 subjects from the Boy Scouts of America.

Description of the Instrument

The juvenile delinquents' connection with their school, family, and peers were measured with a survey which was developed by the researcher under the supervision of the Bergen County Division of Family Guidance (a copy of the survey is included in the appendix). It should be noted that the survey was never normed, nor was it tested for reliability or validity. The measure is composed of 27 questions which are divided into three clusters. The three clusters purport to assess the relationship the subject has between his/her school, family, and peers. The first cluster measures the relationship with school, the second measures the relationship with peers, and the third cluster measures the relationship with family. The measure was organized into a Likert scale ranging from negative two through positive two for the first question only. The remaining questions range from negative one through positive one. Negative numbers indicated a poor relationship. Conversely, positive numbers indicated a positive relationship.

Research Design and Procedure

The researcher obtained approval from the detention center and the Boy Scouts of America before assessing the subjects. The surveys were administered to the subject and control separately. The members of each of the two groups were administered survey at the same time. The researcher was present for any potential questions. The directions were given orally and the subjects were told that the questionnaire was a set of

questions designed to ascertain their relationships with their school, family, and peers. The subjects were told to circle the best answer that indicated the way they felt. The subjects were also told that there were no right or wrong answers. If the subjects did not understand a word, they were to simply raise their hand and the researcher would help clarify the misunderstanding.

Analysis

An Independent T-Test was used to assess the results of the surveys. A statistical analysis was conducted from the results from the Likert scale.

Summary

In Chapter 3, the sample, research design, procedure, and instrument were discussed. This chapter is an important prelude for Chapter 4. In essence, Chapter 4 is the most important part of this entire study. It will discuss the statistical results and any significance.

Chapter IV

Analysis of Data

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to develop a clinical profile of the juvenile delinquent. Juvenile delinquents possess certain personality characteristics that distinguish them from non-delinquents.

Hypothesis

Hypothesis 1

1a) H1 Null hypothesis: No difference will be found between the sample group (juvenile delinquents) and the control group for measures of school connection.

1b) H0 Alternative hypothesis: The sample group (juvenile delinquents) measures less of a connection to school than the control group.

Hypothesis 2

2a) H1 Null hypothesis: No difference will be found between the sample group (juvenile delinquents) and the control group for measures of peer relationships.

2b) H0 Alternative hypothesis: The sample group (juvenile delinquents) measures less of a connection to peers than the control group.

3a) H1 Null hypothesis: No difference will be found between the sample group (juvenile delinquents) and the control group for measures of parental relationship.

3b) H0 Alternative hypothesis: The sample group (juvenile delinquents) measures less of a connection to parents than the control group.

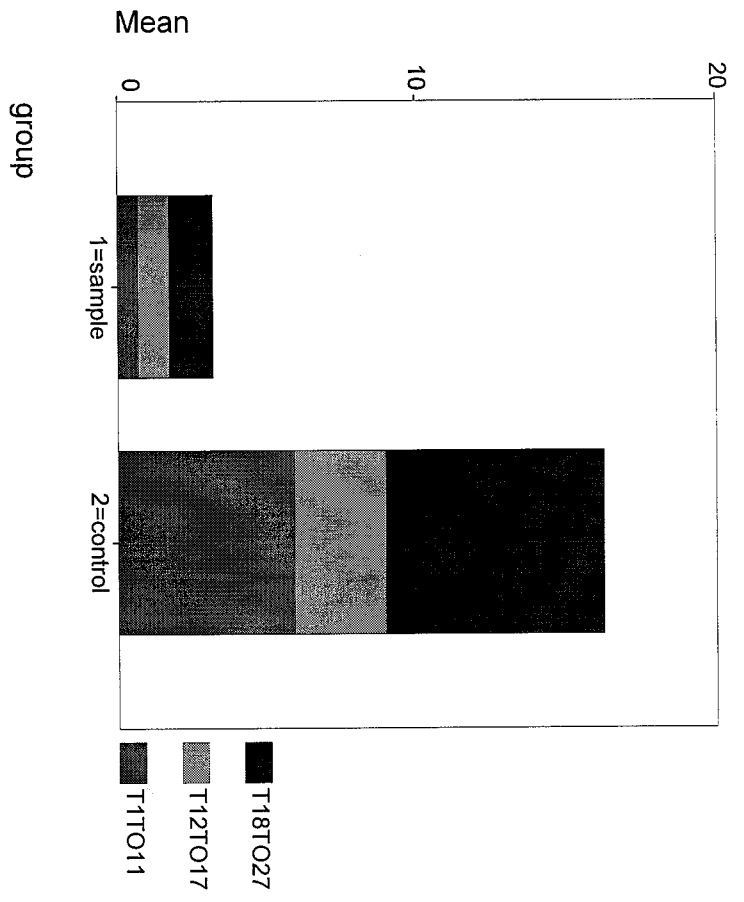
Subjects in the sample and control group were administered the same survey. Scores were calculated via a Likert scale. A lower score would suggest less of a connection. Conversely, a higher score would suggest a stronger connection.

The calculated mean scores were significantly lower for the sample group. The control group overwhelmingly scored higher than the sample group. Group statistics including the mean, standard deviation and the standard error are presented in table 4.1. The sample group's total mean score was much lower than the control means. The lower scores suggest a decreased connection to the three hypothesis's as a whole.

The 27 questions from the survey were also divided into 3 sets of questions which correspond to the three hypothesizes. Questions 1-11 assess school connection. Questions 12-17 assess peer connection. Questions 18-27 assess parental connection. The results are also presented in table 4.1.

Graph 4.2 demonstrates how the questionnaire was divided into three parts reflecting the three hypothesis's. Graph 4.2 clearly shows that the sample group scored consistently lower in each question bracket. Again, this reflects a lower connection.

Graph 4.1



T-Test

Group Statistics

	group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Total	1=sample	19	3.2105	8.6318	1.9803
	2=control	15	16.2667	5.5609	1.4358
T1TO11	1=sample	19	.6842	3.7867	.8687
	2=control	15	5.9333	4.0965	1.0577
T12TO17	1=sample	19	1.0526	2.2967	.5269
	2=control	15	3.0667	1.7915	.4626
T18TO27	1=sample	19	1.4737	5.1464	1.1807
	2=control	15	7.2667	2.1865	.5646

Table 4.2

Graph 4.3 compares the total mean score with each question group. This graph shows that the total mean scores for each question group are lower than the control group scores.

An independent samples for the equality of means t-test was used for the statistical analysis. The results are presented in table 4.4. From the analysis of the t- test scores it would seem appropriate to conclude that there is a significant difference in the scores from the sample group and the control group. The significance was at a .000 level. More importantly, t- test scores were calculated for questions 1-11- measuring school connection, 12-17-measuring peer connection, and 18-27-measuring parental connection. These t-scores are also presented in table 4.4.

T- test scores for school connection (questions 1-11) show a significant difference of .001. The sample group (juvenile delinquents) shows less of a connection towards school than the control group.

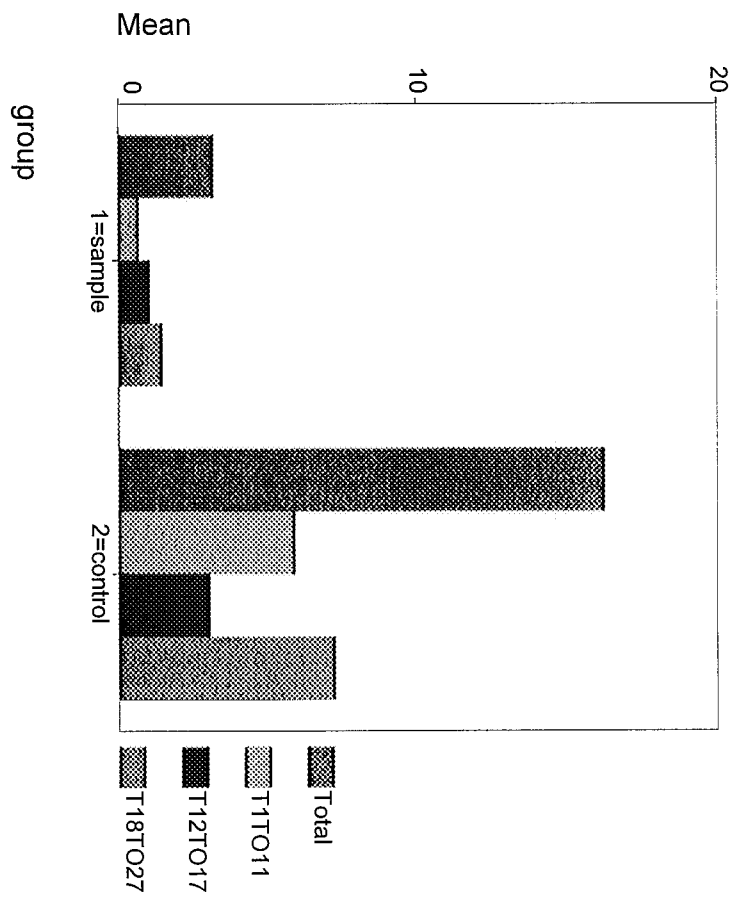
T-scores for peer connection (questions 12-17) show a significant difference of .009. The sample group exhibits less of a connection towards peers than the control group.

T-scores for parental connection (questions 18-27) demonstrate a significant difference of .000. The sample group exhibits less of a connection towards their parents than the control group.

Independent Samples Test

		t-test for Equality of Means						
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95.5% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
							Lower	Upper
Total	Equal variances assumed	-5.077	32	.000	-13.0561	2.5718	-18.4218	-7.6905
	Equal variances not assumed	-5.338	30.915	.000	-13.0561	2.4460	-18.1668	-7.9455
T1TO11	Equal variances assumed	-3.872	32	.001	-5.2491	1.3558	-8.0777	-2.4205
	Equal variances not assumed	-3.835	28.997	.001	-5.2491	1.3687	-8.1169	-2.3814
T12TO17	Equal variances assumed	-2.789	32	.009	-2.0140	.7221	-3.5207	-.5074
	Equal variances not assumed	-2.873	31.999	.007	-2.0140	.7011	-3.4769	-.5512
T18TO27	Equal variances assumed	-4.069	32	.000	-5.7930	1.4237	-8.7633	-2.8227
	Equal variances not assumed	-4.427	25.461	.000	-5.7930	1.3087	-8.5522	-3.0337

Graph 4.4



Chapter V

Summary and Conclusions

Summary

This study attempted to develop a profile of a juvenile delinquent. It was hypothesized that juvenile delinquents do not have a positive connection with their school, peers, and family.

In chapter two research supports the social control theory. A majority of the research states that individuals who do not have strong bonds to society's institutions will deviate and behave unconventionally. These individuals will have a strong tendency for developing juvenile delinquent behaviors.

In chapter three information on the experimental design was presented. A survey was adopted and used from the Bergen County Division of Family Guidance. It measures the subjects' relationship with their school, peers, and family. The sample was administered to a total of 34 subjects. The sample group was composed of 19 inmates from a juvenile delinquent detention center. The survey was also administered to 15 subjects in the control group.

The results of the design were discussed in chapter four. The statistical analysis was computed with an independent samples for the equality of means t-test. The results reflected significant t-test scores. The mean scores were significantly lower in the sample group. Thus, reflecting the sample group demonstrating less of a connection with their school, peers, and family.

Conclusions

The results discussed in chapter four are consistent with the research presented in chapter two. The findings lent support to the theory that juvenile delinquents do not feel a connection with three main influences in their lives. The three main influences are their school, peers, and family. Independent t-scores demonstrated a significant in the sample group and the control group for each influence.

Discussion

This study supported previous research by asserting that juvenile delinquents have a poor connection with their school, peers, and family. It is not yet determined whether this poor connection is a cause of delinquency or manifestation. However, the goal of this

research and previous research was to establish a personality characteristic of a juvenile delinquent.

As a result of this study, I have come to the conclusion that law enforcement is not the only institution that has an obligation in dealing with juvenile delinquents effectively. Schools must take a proactive attitude in identifying early characteristics of juvenile delinquency. Research discussed in chapter two states that signs of delinquency start in early adolescence and even late childhood. Schools are in a unique position to recognize and treat delinquent youths. It is imperative that schools take the initiative to train teachers and student personnel workers in identifying early signs of juvenile delinquency and. They must also be trained in how to manage and work effectively with these children in order to provide a supportive educational setting which will promote a rewarding school experience.

Implications for Future Research

1) Repeat the study with a survey that has been tested for reliability and stability. The survey used in this study was not tested for either one. Therefore, it is not correct to claim that the survey actually assesses the relationship with school, peers, and family.

2) Administer the survey to subjects individually. Since questions arose when administering the survey, it would be beneficial to give personalized attention to each subject.

3) All the results from this study were based on male subjects. More research in female juvenile delinquency is needed.

4) Future researchers may want to examine whether these relationship patterns are a cause of delinquency or a result.

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Appendix

Division Of Family Guidance

1. Do you like school?
-2 strongly dislike -1 dislike 0 no opinion 1 like 2 strongly like

2. Do you think that your teachers care about you?
-1 none 0 some 1 many

3. Do you like your teachers?
-1 none 0 some 1 many

4. Do you cut classes?
-1 always 0 sometimes 1 never

5. What types of grades do you usually get?
-1 D's & F's 0 B's & C's 1 A's & B's

6. Do you think what you learn in school will help you later on in life?
-1 not at all 0 somewhat 1 a lot

7. Do you have friends at school?
-1 none 0 some 1 a lot

8. Have you ever taken drugs or alcohol before arriving to school or during school?
-1 always 0 sometimes 1 never

9. How do your parents feel about alcohol?
-1 it's unimportant 0 don't know 1 it's important

10. Have you ever vandalized school property?
-1 more than one occasion 0 one time 1 never

11. What kind of plans will school help you develop?
-1 no plans 0 vague plans 1 clear plans

12. How well do your friends know the real you?
-1 not at all 0 sought of 1 very well

13. Can you talk about important things with your friends?
-1 never 0 sometimes 1 always
14. How many of your friends ask you to do things you prefer not to?
-1 all 0 some/few 1 none
15. Do you trust your friends?
-1 not at all 0 a little 1 a lot
16. Do your friends care about you?
-1 not at all 0 a little 1 a lot
17. Would you say that you are accepted for who you are by your friends?
-1 not at all 0 a little 1 a lot
18. Do you fight with your parents verbally?
-1 always 0 sometimes 1 never
19. Do you fight with your parents physically?
-1 always 0 sometimes 1 never
20. How much time do you spend with your parents each day?
-1 less than an hour 0 1hr- 2hr 1 more than 2hr
21. Do you think your parents are good parents?
-1 bad parents 0 no opinion 1 good parents
22. Do you talk to your parents about important things?
-1 never 0 sometimes 1 often
23. Would you like too more often?
-1 no 1 yes
24. Do your parents know who the "real you" is?
-1 not at all 0 unsure 1 yes
25. Do you respect your parents?

-1 not at all 0 unsure 1 yes

26. Do your parents respect you?

-1 not at all 0 unsure 1 yes

27. Do your parents do things to make you sad?

-1 often 0 sometimes 1 never