

Psycho-social Factors on Delinquent Behavior among Junior High School Students: Basis for an Intervention Program

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Abstract - This study aimed to determine the psycho-social factors on delinquent behaviors among Junior High School students from selected schools in Ago, La Union. This descriptive-correlational research employed total enumeration and used frequency counts, percentages, average weighted mean, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to analyze the data gathered using standardized tests and constructed questionnaires on factors of delinquent behaviors and extent of delinquency. Findings show that: a) most respondents were male adolescents, middle-born, have low family income and have fairly satisfactory academic performance; b) respondents have moderately low self-esteem and moderate level of emotional intelligence; c) they have good family relations, a poor relations to their teachers, and have very good relations with peers; also, d) they have moderately intense delinquencies with prevalence 4 to 5 times per week and had a duration of 1 year; further, e) male and younger respondents with lower family income tend to have greater chance of committing delinquencies; while, f) respondents with low self-esteem and empathy would likely lead to delinquent behaviors; lastly, g) weak school relations and their being peer-centered widen the chance of more engagement in delinquencies.

Keywords: *Delinquent Behavior, Intervention Program, Psycho-social Factors*

INTRODUCTION

Situation Analysis

The search on how to explain behavioral problems and the ways to prevent such has become a matter of national urgency, as the incidence of serious forms of behaviors continues to rise over the decade.

Review of literature from criminology, psychology, and education show that there exist key factors from the child's social life which are greatly associated with antisocial or delinquent behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 1994).

Delinquency is foremost a legal term; a juvenile delinquent or children in conflict with the law (CICL) defined as a person who at the time of the commission of an offense is over 9 but under 18 years of age (P.O. 603 or Child and Youth Welfare Code). However, much of the research that has considered the causes of delinquency make use of psychological and sociological frameworks. On the other hand, in

the psychological literature, "delinquency" has been used interchangeably with "antisocial behavior" and refers to a continuum of behaviors which transgresses social norms in ways that could result in serious disciplinary (e.g., school suspension) or adjudicatory (i.e., legal conviction) consequences.

A large body of writings by both behavioral scientists and creative writers have focused on the question as to what causes juvenile delinquency. Though numerous theories have been proposed, to-date, no single theory explains the causes of delinquent behavior to everyone's satisfaction. However, experts agree that a complex relationship of many factors give rise to this anti-social behavior.

This study then is conceptualized to explore, explain and describe delinquent behaviors through the psychological and social factors. This provides also an organizational framework for understanding the key causes of delinquent behaviors along such contexts, the

complexity of their interacting components, and the need to view behaviors from a more holistic and comprehensive framework. In this study, the emotional intelligence, self-esteem, family relations, teacher relations and peer relations are involved to describe and measure how these variables constitute to manifesting delinquency among the students with delinquent behaviors.

Framework of the Study

Generally the causal theories are grouped as physiological, psychological or sociological. In the same manner, Sue et. al. (2010) proposed a multipath model of abnormalities which describes how four major dimensions – biological, psychological, social and socio-cultural – contribute to the development of behavioral disorders and abnormalities. In connection to this, the causal factors of juvenile delinquency can be broadly classified into two categories - (1) Individualistic causes and (2) Social or Environmental causes through which this study was framed. The social, psychological or environmental causes can be further sub-divided into two sub-headings- (a) Causes pertaining to family, and (b) Causes pertaining to social environment such as peer groups and school environment. This blends with the study of Block (1993) stating that delinquency is usually the result of psycho-social factors such as social rejection, alienation, psychological support provided by delinquent gang, parental discipline, etc.

Emotional Intelligence. Emotional intelligence is about having the ability to understand and manage the emotions of yourself and also those around people and use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. According to Goleman (1995), emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and regulate emotions in our own selves and in others for motivating oneself and for managing a relationship. He added that emotional intelligence can influence the life goals individuals choose to pursue when they adapt to change and emotional regulation strategies individuals use to manage relationships and

facilitate performance. Thus, good level of emotional intelligence is very important for growing adolescents in order to avoid them from involving in behavioral problems. In relation to this study, there are five components that are important in developing a stable emotion namely: social skill, empathy, managing emotions, motivating oneself and self-awareness. This theory was used in this study for the purpose of knowing if the respondents' level of emotional intelligence is a possible factor in the development of delinquency among the students.

Self-Esteem Theory. Self-esteem is classified into two categories: a) esteem for oneself such as dignity, achievement, mastery and independence; and b) the desire for reputation or respect from others (e.g. status, prestige). The theory also postulated that adolescents tend to choose behaviors that will increase their self-esteem. Thus, adolescents will choose involvement in pro-social or delinquent behavior depending upon their level of self-esteem. This theory is used then as another point of reference in determining the extent of influence of self-esteem in the development of delinquency among the respondents.

Psychodynamic Theory. Sigmund Freud's psychodynamic theory of personality as cited in Schwartz (1976) emphasizes the study of the psychological forces that may determine delinquent behavior in one or more of three ways: (1) Delinquency may be the direct response to, or expression of, a particular mental state, for example, obsessive imagery. (2) Delinquency may be the expression of certain impulses or emotions left uncontrolled or stimulated by a special mental condition; or it may be a symbolic representation of such impulses. (3) Delinquency may be an attempt at adjustment or compensation for certain mental peculiarities. For these reasons, this theory is used to further explain the nature of delinquency in a deeper and holistic psychological understanding.

Attachment Theory. In John Bowlby's Attachment theory as cited in Heine (2008), he proposes that the chances of survival are

improved by way of a child's strong attachment to their caregiver. He added that a need for secure attachments for children and caregivers especially parents is a clear need as well as in stable, nurturing relationships to give support in positive trait growth. In this theory laid the major foundation of this study which emphasize the vital roles parents and family members play in the development of healthy personality. Hence, family relations is taken as one of the major variables in this study to determine the extent of influence attachment to family has in the respondents' commitment of delinquent behaviors.

Social Learning Theory. The social learning theory of Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviors, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others. Bandura (1997) states: "Learning would be exceedingly laborious, not to mention hazardous, if people had to rely solely on the effects of their own actions to inform them what to do. Social learning theory explains human behavior in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral, and environmental influences. Moreover, social learning theory has been applied extensively to the understanding of aggression, delinquency and other psychological and behavioral problems (Bandura, 1997). In this study the family, school and peer relations are being looked into to determine if the respondents' delinquent behaviors are possibly modelled from the kind of relations they have among these social groups.

Group Socialization Theory. According to Judith Rich Harris's Theory of Group Socialization, children and adolescents are shaped more by their peers than their parents (Harris, 1995). She added that peers can encourage both pro-social behavior, which peaks at 11-12 years and anti-social behavior, which peaks at 14-16 years. Adolescents are less likely to feel depressed or anxious if the peer group provides emotional support (Baurmeister & Leary, 1995). However, association of youths with other delinquents, drug-addicts, criminals and maladjusted children results in deviant or

delinquent behavior in children. Because, if individuals associate mostly with delinquents or criminals, or mal-adjusted individuals, chances are that they will become involved in delinquent activities (Battin et al., 2000). In this study, this theory is used as a major framework in describing the kind of relations the respondents have to their peer groups (re: peer relations).

Anomie Theory. The factors available in the social environment which induce children to exhibit deviant or delinquent behavior, can be: a) separation of youths, that is, marginal status of adolescents in society which results in a feeling of isolation and a feeling of not being a part of the community or society. This separation also results in peer group's considerable influence on the youths, and this influence extends to alcohol and drug use, as well as other anti-social activities. Moreover, extensive separation of youths from adults and lack of positive peer support may also result in isolation from the mainstream of interaction, then the reaction to this situation would be some sort of deviant behavior. The technical terminology for this phenomenon is "anomie" - a feeling of isolation (Emile Durkheim's Anomie Theory, 1951). In addition to environmental causes of delinquent behaviors, the discrepancy between the social or cultural goals that the individual learn to aspire in their environment and the institutionalized means available for achieving those goals, may result in strain or frustration in the minds of the youths. This strain or frustration can produce behavior that is deviant, anti-social or contrary to the norms of the society. This theory is used to determine the extent of influence social conditions have for the respondents' commitment to delinquency.

Intervention Program

Early education and family support programs provide a range of emotional, informational, instrumental, and/or educational support to families with infants, preschool-age children, elementary and secondary-age children.

Early education programs are usually center based, and their core service is usually to provide an educational curriculum to groups of students, but they can also provide services as varied as basic preventive health care, informational support regarding parenting and child development, and emotional support. On the other hand, family support programs can help parents in their roles as parents or educators of their children, or support the parents' own educational or occupational goals.

Based on the literature regarding risk factors for delinquency, it is those combination programs that address multiple risk factors and that blend aspects of both family support and early childhood education which are most promising in the prevention of chronic delinquency leading to one's achievement of his fullest potential.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aimed to determine the psycho-social factors on delinquent behaviors among Junior High School students. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the respondents as to:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. gender;
 - 1.3. grade level;
 - 1.4. sibling position;
 - 1.5. monthly family income; and
 - 1.6. academic performance?
2. What is the level of influence on the respondents' delinquent behaviors along:
 - 2.1. psychological factors
 - 2.1.1. emotional intelligence;
 - 2.1.1.1. social skill
 - 2.1.1.2. empathy
 - 2.1.1.3. motivating oneself
 - 2.1.1.4. managing emotions
 - 2.1.1.5. self-awareness
 - 2.1.2. self-esteem;
 - 2.2. social factors
 - 2.2.1. family relations;
 - 2.2.2. teacher relations;

2.2.3. peer relations?

3. What is the extent of the delinquent behaviors as to:
 - 3.1. frequency;
 - 3.2. intensity; and
 - 3.3. duration?
4. Is there a significant relationships between and among the variables along:
 - 4.1. demographic characteristics and extent of delinquent behaviors;
 - 4.2. psychological factors and extent of delinquent behaviors; and
 - 4.3. social factors and extent of delinquent behaviors?
5. What intervention program will be proposed on the basis of the findings of the study?

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study employed the descriptive-correlation research design. In descriptive-correlational design, the process goes beyond mere data gathering and tabulation. It involves the elements, interpretation or significance of what is described, usually with the aid of statistical method (Galuba, 2005). Furthermore, the method is designed to determine the extent to which the different variables are related to each other. In this study, this descriptive method was used to describe and analyze the respondents' demographic characteristics (Orlanda-Ventayen & Ventayen, 2017), and psychological and social factors of students with delinquent behaviors with the aid of statistical procedures, analysis and interpretation. While correlational design was used to explain the relationships of the variables involved in the study.

Total enumeration was used in this study with a total of 85 students with delinquent behaviors who were enrolled during the school year 2018-2019 from two selected secondary schools in Agoo, La Union. The grades 9 and 10 (junior high school) students were chosen as respondents since these were the grade levels of students where delinquency and anti-social behaviors are most common (American Psychiatric Association, 1994; Harris' Group

Socialization Theory, 2004).The researcher determined the number of respondents based on the records of the guidance designates in the chosen public junior high schools.

This study made use of non-standardized and standardized instruments to gather the needed data.

The non-standardized instrument was the constructed questionnaire which included the respondents' demographic characteristics, social factors as well as the extent of delinquent behaviors committed. These instruments were content validated by experts in the field of testing, academe and guidance and counseling. Their comments, suggestions and corrections were all incorporated in the instruments. Moreover, the computed validity of the instrument was 3.67 which means that the organization, clarity and relevance of the questionnaire were very satisfactory met, sufficient enough to measure what the instrument purports to measure. The non-standardized instrument such as the social factors questionnaire was given to the respondents to assess and describe the kind of relationship they have to their family, peers and teachers. While the questionnaires on the academic performance and extent of delinquent behavior were given to their advisers and guidance counselors to determine the academic performance of the respondents for the last three (3) grading quarters and their extent of committal to delinquent behaviors as to frequency, intensity and duration.

On the other hand, standardized instruments used to determine the psychological factors of the respondents were the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire and the Sorensen Self-Esteem Test. The Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire contained fifty items and categorized into five sub-scales namely: Self-Awareness, Managing Emotions, Motivating Oneself, Empathy, and Social Skill. It has a reliability coefficient of .81. While the Sorensen Self-esteem test has a reliability coefficient of 0.76. This means that the test questionnaires were highly consistent in measuring the objectives of this study. Moreover, as to the

validity of the tests, the EIQ and SST scales have been correlated to the scales of other tests and have high validity. In addition, the instruments were widely accepted and used by educators, counselors and researchers because of its effectiveness enough to exhibit sufficient data on students' problems.

Moreover, the standardized tests like the emotional intelligence questionnaire and self-esteem were given to the respondents to describe the psychological factors and determine if these factors constitute to their committal to delinquency.

Prior to data gathering, the researcher constructed survey-questionnaires intended to know the demographic characteristics of respondents, their social factors and their extent of delinquent behaviors. After which, the questionnaires were content validated by experts in the field of testing and counseling to ensure the accuracy of the instruments, and were pilot tested to selected junior high school students.

However, only the demographic characteristics questionnaire; social factors and the standardized instruments were able to utilize in the pilot testing due to the shortage of time and the difficulty finding appropriate participants who have the same characteristics as the target participants. Results of the pilot testing were subjected to inter-item consistency and obtained a reliability coefficient of .73 for their social factors moderately enough to provide consistent results.

After securing the validity and reliability of the instruments, permission to conduct the study was secured from concerned authorities prior to the actual data gathering. Pertinent data and information was personally gathered and retrieved by the researcher with the help of networks of colleagues and friends.

To analyze and interpret the respondents' demographic profile, frequency counts and percentage distribution were the statistical tools used. While the respondents' social factors (parents, peers and teachers) were analyzed and interpreted using the weighted mean and overall mean/average weighted mean which were reflected below.

Scale	Descriptive Rating
1.00 – 1.79	Never (Very Poor Relations)
1.80 – 2.59	Rarely (Poor Relations)
2.60 – 3.39	Moderate (Good Relations)
3.40 – 4.19	Often (Very Good Relations)
4.20 – 5.00	Always (Excellent Relations)

For the respondents’ academic performance along three quarters, general average was applied. This kind of interpretation is in accordance with the Department of Education (DepEd). See reference scales below.

Scale	Descriptive Rating
Below 75.00	Did Not Meet Expectation
75.00 – 79.99	Fairly Satisfactory
80.00 – 84.99	Satisfactory
85.00 – 89.99	Very Satisfactory
90.00 – 100.00	Outstanding

While for the extent of delinquent behaviors of the respondents; weighted mean and average weighted mean were used to analyze the data collected as to frequency, intensity and duration (see reference below).

Mean Scales on the Extent of Delinquency among the Respondents

MEAN SCALE	FREQUENCY	INTENSITY	DURATION
4.20 – 5.00	Always (8 and above times per week)	Very Highly intense	4 years and above
3.40 – 4.19	Often (6-7 times per week)	Highly intense	3 years
2.60 – 3.39	Moderate (4-5 times per week)	Moderately intense	2 years
1.80 – 2.59	Sometimes (2-3 times per week)	Mildly intense	1 year
1.00 – 1.79	Rarely (0-1 per week)	Not intense	Less than a year

On the other hand, for the respondents’ psychological factors, standardized tests were used. For the extent of Emotional Intelligence of the respondents, weighted mean was used (see scales below for reference).

Mean scales	Descriptive Rating
4.20 – 5.00	Very High
3.40 – 4.19	High

2.60 – 3.39	Moderate
1.80 – 2.59	Low
1.00 – 1.79	Very Low

While for self-esteem test of the respondents, percentage distribution and average weighted mean were used (see scoring and descriptive equivalent below):

Raw Scores and descriptive rating for Sorensen’s Self-Esteem Test

Score	Descriptive Rating
0 – 4	Fairly Good Self-Esteem
5 – 10	Mild Low Self-Esteem
11 – 18	Moderately Low Self-Esteem
19 – 50	Severely Low Self-Esteem

It reflects above the raw scores for the self-esteem and its corresponding descriptive rating. Raw scores 0 to 4 corresponds to fairly good self-esteem, mild low self-esteem for raw scores 5 to 10, whereas, raw scores 11 to 18 has a corresponding interpretation of moderately low self-esteem, lastly, severely low self-esteem for scores 19 to 50. These kinds of analysis and interpretation of the results on emotional intelligence and self-esteem tests were in accordance with the norms of the instruments.

Finally, for the analysis and interpretation of significant relationships between the extent of delinquency vis a vis: a) respondents’ demographic profile, b) psychological factors, and c) social factors; Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics

The Demographic Characteristics of the respondents are described as follows: roughly seventy-two per cent (72%) of the respondents belonged to age range 14 to 16 years old; seventy-four per cent (74%) of the respondents were males; sixty-one per cent (61%) of them were in their grade 10 level; forty-eight per cent (48%) were in the middle born category; roughly fifty-nine per cent (59%) have an estimated

monthly family income of Php10,000 and below; and the respondents obtained an overall general average of 79.87 along the three grading quarters.

Level of influence on the respondents' delinquent behaviors

The respondents have moderate level of emotional intelligence obtaining an overall mean of 3.00 along the 5 dimensions of Emotional Intelligence. Specifically, the respondents' social skills obtained a mean rating of 3.99; the respondents have very low empathy level with a mean of 1.62; motivating oneself, managing emotions and self-awareness of the respondents were of moderate level with mean ratings of 3.39, 3.23 and 2.78 respectively. On one hand, majority of the respondents have moderately low level of self-esteem (42.4%) while roughly thirteen percent (12.9%) have severely low self-esteem.

On one hand, the respondents and their family have a moderate and good type of relationships with an overall mean of 2.64. Specifically, the respondents have very poor relations with their teachers with an overall mean of 2.30; while the respondents often have very good relations with their peers with an overall mean of 3.87; and lastly, the respondents' overall description of their social factors/relations was moderately good with an overall mean of 2.94.

Extent of Delinquent Behavior

The extent of delinquent behaviors committed by the respondents were rated moderate as to frequency with prevalence 4 to 5 times per week (2.87), were moderately intense with an over-all mean of 2.71 while having a duration of 1 year with an over-all mean of 2.22.

Significant Relationships among the Variables

Respondents' age was inversely correlated with the frequency of their commission to delinquent behaviors (-.448); likewise, respondents' gender and the severity of delinquency was significantly related (.467); on

the other hand, the respondents' estimated monthly family income and the intensity of their delinquent behaviors was inversely correlated (-.420); while, there is no significant relationship found between their academic performance and their extent of delinquent behaviors.

More so, the respondents' emotional intelligence as to empathy and their frequency of commission to delinquent behaviors was inversely correlated (-.600); and the respondents' self-esteem and their extent of commission to delinquent behaviors as to intensity and duration was inversely correlated (-.499).

Lastly, the respondents' family relations and the extent of their delinquency was not significantly related; likewise, the respondents' teacher relations and the intensity of delinquent behaviors was inversely related (-.437); while the respondents' peer relations was directly correlated with their frequency of commission to delinquent behaviors.

Intervention Program

On the basis of the results, an intervention is proposed focusing on enhancing the emotional intelligence and self-esteem of the respondents, improving parent-teacher-student relations, improvement of academic performance, and addressing the low income of the respondents' family.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher arrived at the following conclusions:

Most of the respondents were in their mid-adolescence. Most of the student-delinquents were males and belonged to the middle-born category with below the poverty estimated monthly family income and fairly satisfactory in their academic performance.

The respondents have moderate capacity to understand the moods and temperaments of others so as with themselves. While most student-delinquents have low self-esteem and evaluate themselves as having moderately less worth, so as with low self-confidence and self-respect. On one hand, the respondents' overall

social factors along family, teacher and peer relations were rated having good relations with them. Thus, have moderately good interpersonal skills in general.

The extent of frequency and intensity of manifesting delinquent behaviors among the respondents are becoming serious over the period of 1 year.

Younger respondents tend to have higher chance of committing delinquent behaviors as to frequency rate than older ones of their kind. Whereas, male respondents tend to have greater chance of developing intense delinquencies. Likewise, respondents with lower socio-economic status could possibly tend to have intense cases of delinquent behaviors and may last depending on their socio-economic status. While, the academic performance of the respondents in school is not threatened by their extent of delinquent behaviors.

Moreover, the less empathic the respondents are the higher the possibility of manifesting delinquent behaviors. Furthermore, the lower the self-esteem of the respondents the more intense their chance of manifesting delinquent behaviors which in turn may lengthen the duration of involvement to such behaviors.

Lastly, the weaker the relationships established in school among the respondents, the greater the chance of manifesting a more intense delinquent behaviors. While, their high engagement and involvement to their peers made them so vulnerable to manifesting delinquent behaviors.

Delinquency among students may imply that cases of delinquency has become a matter of not only school-home concern but also a national concern and are considered serious and requires immediate intervention.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were forwarded:

The guidance counselors may do individual or group counseling based on the demographic characteristics of the respondents to better understand the possible causes of their delinquent behavior as well as to understand the nature of their dealings and outlook to their environment.

A training on personality enhancement may be conducted by the Guidance Counselors, especially, to the students with delinquent cases for them to become better individuals and citizens of the society.

School administrators in collaboration with authorities should come up with early education and family support programs concerning the respondents together with their family to improve their relationship as well as their self-esteem by helping parents widen their understanding with regards to their familial roles and become effective parents and educators to their children with the hope to reconcile the differences in their familial relationship.

The school administrators with the PTA may include in their plan, activities that would sustain strong familial involvement and relations of the parents and teachers to their children vis-à-vis students.

A seminar on Problems and Delinquent Behaviors' Management may be conducted by the Guidance Counselors, especially, to the students with delinquent cases for them to become better individuals and citizens of the society.

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