

AN ASSESSMENT ON THE FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE COMMISSION OF CRIMES AMONG SELECTED MALE CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

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Abstract

The assessment of the influence in the commission of crime among the selected male children in conflict with the law in National Training School for Boys in Tanay, Rizal was done in response to the increasing growth of population of the youth offenders. Children in conflict with the law are minors within the age bracket of 16 to 18 years old who had committed against the law. Thirty male children in conflict with the law were the respondents in order to determine whether the commission of crime differs based on the age and highest educational attainment. But this study focused on determining the level of influence of the factors that were identified through gathered literature, namely family relationship, peer influence, economic status, and external environment influence. This also determined whether the level of influence of the four factors varied based on the demographic profile. The results show that all the factors except external environment influence, which resulted to not at all influential, is slightly influential in commission of crime. The study also showed that there is no significant relationship in terms of the age and highest educational attainment.

Keywords: *crime, children, conflict with the law, youth, influence.*

INTRODUCTION

Children in conflict with the law or juvenile delinquents are children who basically abide the law and deviate the society, who also are at the stage of adolescence. The most crucial stage of development is adolescence. This is the stage wherein adolescents undergo transition from childhood to adulthood.

According to the United Nation Children's Foundation (UNICEF), there had been more than 50,000 young Filipino arrested and imprisoned since the year 1998. Most of the offenses committed are robbery, theft, solvent abuse, and worse, murder. According to the Department of Social and Welfare Development (DSWD), children with the age of 15 – 17 have the most number of offenses committed amounting to 46.96%, followed by 18 years old and above (19.05%) and 10 – 14 years old (9.17%) and lastly children with the age of 5 to 9 (0.64%). They said that poverty is the major reason why minors are committing crime. Family and community also have greater effect on youth's behavior. Also, many minors are influenced by peers (Noli De Castro, "What Future Awaits the Youth Offenders").

Although the latest basic data of DSWD (2010) show that children in conflict with the law had deflated by region from 2,631 in the year 2009 to 1,207, it cannot be claimed as an improvement because there are still some places that have an increase rate of juvenile crimes, namely the National Capital Region, Ilocos, CALABARZON, and Eastern Visayas (Noli De Castro, "What Future Awaits the Youth Offenders").

The reason why they conducted the study were the following: first, it was very alarming that the age of the children who committed a crime was getting lower and they were more aggressive. Second, the researchers would like to know which of the factors greatly influence the commission of crime among male children in conflict with the law.

The researchers grouped the possible factors that greatly influenced the behavior of the male children in conflict with the law and it included, peer influence, family relationship, economic status, and the environment.

Research Framework

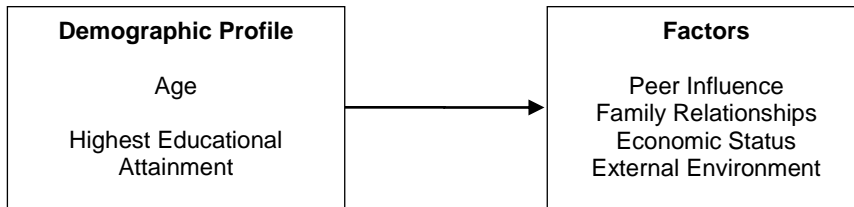


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

This study focused on assessing the factors influencing children in conflict with the law in commission of crime among the children of National Training School for Boys (NSTB) which included peer influence, family relationship, economic status, and the environment. The factors varied depending on the demographic profile of the respondents which included their age, and their highest educational attainment.

Objectives of the Study

This study determined which of the factors greatly influence the commission of crime among male children in conflict with the law at National Training School for Boys.

Specifically, this study sought to achieve the following:

1. to determine the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. age; and,
 - 1.2. highest educational attainment

2. to determine the level of influence in the commission of crime of the respondents in terms of:

- 2.1. family relationship;
 - 2.2. peer influence;
 - 2.3. economic status; and,
 - 2.4. external environment influence
3. to determine if there a significant difference in the level of influence of each factor when grouped according to:
- 3.1. age; and,
 - 3.2. highest educational attainment

METHOD

Descriptive research was utilized so as to identify the factors that influence children to commit deviant act or crime. This study used one of the descriptive research designs which was the descriptive-survey in order to assess the factors instigating the children in conflict with the law to commit such act. A constructed 75-item survey-questionnaire was utilized as test instrument that have undergone pilot testing, item-analysis, reliability and validity. Thirty (30) out of 53 boys within the researchers specified bracket which was 15 to 18 years old served as the respondents of the study. They were chosen using the probability sampling.

Furthermore, the study was conducted at the National Training School for Boys, Tanay, Rizal because of the accessibility and availability of the respondents.

Frequency distribution tables and percentage count, weighted means and analysis of variance were used in treating the statistical data resulting from the respondent's answers in the constructed test instrument.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Below are the results of the gathered data:

Demographic Profile

1. Age

The highest population of boys in NTSB were those in the age of 17. Meanwhile, the least population was those in the age of 16.

In this study, the age bracket was based on the given bracket of the DSWD in the description of the children In conflict with the law and the availability of the respondents in the NSTB.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents in terms of age

Age	F	%
18	11	36.67
17	16	53.33
16	3	10.00
Total	30	100

2. Highest Educational Attainment

The highest numbers of respondents are 7 who reached the highest educational attainment of grade 8, and only one out of the total population reached grade 11.

Table 2. Distribution of respondents in terms of highest educational attainment

Highest Educational Level (Grade School Level)	F	%
4	4	13.33
5	4	13.33
6	6	20.00
7	6	20.00
8	7	23.33
9	2	6.67
11	1	3.33
Total	30	100

Level of influence in the commission of crime

Table 3 shows the distribution of responses and mean score per item for family relationships. Lack of family time got the highest mean score of 2.07 with the equivalent of *slightly influential* in commission of crime while following the parents' footsteps in committing crime got the lowest mean score of 1.20 with the equivalent of *not at all influential*.

The overall weighted mean is 1.70 with a verbal interpretation of *slightly influential* implies that the family relationship has minimal influence in the commission of crime. Thus, the lack of parenting skills does not mean bringing up a juvenile as being a neglected child is the becoming of a youth offender. It may lead a child to commit a crime but is the least of the factors that could influence a child.

Table 3. Distribution of responses and mean score per item for family relationships

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Intrepretation
8. My parents do not have time for me, that's why I'm doing this crime.	2.07	Disagree	Slightly Influential
20. I don't have a family or relatives, that guides me in our home that's why I am involve in this crime.	1.93	Disagree	Slightly Influential
4. I don't have a good relationship with my parents and relatives.	1.90	Disagree	Slightly Influential
9. My mother has no time for me, that's why I'm doing this crime.	1.90	Disagree	Slightly Influential
10. My father has no time for me, that's why I'm doing this crime.	1.90	Disagree	Slightly Influential
5. My relationship with my parents and my relatives is not good, that's why I'm doing wrong things.	1.87	Disagree	Slightly Influential
7. My relationship with my father and my relatives is not good, that's why I'm doing wrong things.	1.86	Disagree	Slightly Influential
3. I don't have a father that's why no one prohibits me to do a crime.	1.83	Disagree	Slightly Influential
1. I only have a single parent that's why no one prohibits me to do a crime.	1.73	Disagree	Slightly Influential
2. I don't have a mother that's why no one prohibits me to do a crime.	1.73	Disagree	Slightly Influential
6. My relationship with my mother and my relatives is not good, that's why I'm doing wrong things.	1.73	Disagree	Slightly Influential
15. My mother are too strict, that's why I am involve with this crime.	1.70	Disagree	Slightly Influential
17. I am free and my parents doesn't even care me, that's why no one controls me to this crime.	1.70	Disagree	Slightly Influential
14. My parents are too strict, that's why I am involve with this crime.	1.60	Disagree	Slightly Influential
19. I am free and my father doesn't even care me, that's why no one controls me to this crime.	1.60	Disagree	Slightly Influential
16. My father is too strict, that's why I am involve with this crime.	1.53	Disagree	Slightly Influential

(table continues)

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Intrepretation
18. I am free and my mother doesn't even care me, that's why no one controls me to this crime.	1.47	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
13. My father has also an experience in doing crimes, that's why no one guides me.	1.43	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
12. My mother has also an experience in doing crimes, that's why no one guides me.	1.30	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
11. My parents has also an experience in doing crimes, that's why no one guides me.	1.20	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
Overall Weighted Mean	1.70	Disagree	Slightly Influential

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents per item under the peer influence. Enjoying committing crimes along with their friends ranked as the highest mean score of 2.17 with the equivalent in verbal interpretation of *slightly influential* in commission of crime. This denotes that the respondents disagreed that committing crime with their circle of friends influenced them. Whilst being unaware of joining a syndicate had the lowest mean score of 1.13 with the equivalent of verbal interpretation of *not at all influential* in commission of crime. This signifies that being recruited without the knowledge does not encourage the child to commit crime.

The overall weighted mean resulted to 1.78 with a verbal interpretation of *slightly influential*. This means that the influence of a peer or being with a gang does not affect the child in committing a crime. This also means that there is only a minimal influence because part of them wanted to do it not for the reason of being influenced by the peer.

Table 4. Distribution of responses and mean score per items in terms of peer influence

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation
21. I am happy if I am with my friends in doing crime.	2.17	Disagree	Slightly Influential
24. For the sake of friendship, I am doing the things that my friend did.	2.13	Disagree	Slightly Influential
23. I am doing crimes if I am with my friends, because I feel safe with them.	2.10	Disagree	Slightly Influential
38. I am contented while doing this crime.	2.10	Disagree	Slightly Influential
22. To gain a friend, I am doing a things that is against with the law.	2.03	Disagree	Slightly Influential
26. I rather choose to do a crime with a group.	2.00	Disagree	Slightly Influential
33. I am happy with the gang.	2.00	Disagree	Slightly Influential
25. I have a big trust with my friends, that they will do their part too in performing with our crime.	1.97	Disagree	Slightly Influential
37. We are doing crimes as a past time.	1.97	Disagree	Slightly Influential
34. I am doing this crime to defend my friend.	1.90	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
35. I am doing this crime as reciprocity for my friend.	1.77	Disagree	Slightly Influential
36. I am doing this crime because I was pressured by my friends.	1.70	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
28. I have no choice that's why I stayed too long at the syndicate.	1.57	Disagree	Slightly Influential
27. I become a member of syndicate that performs crime.	1.43	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential

(Table continues)

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation
32. I have friends who is a member of a syndicate, that's why I am influenced to join.	1.40	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
29. I was forced to do this crime, because of the syndicate.	1.37	Disagree	Slightly Influential
30. I was forced to join on a syndicate.	1.30	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
31. My friends recruits me in this organization, but I am not aware that this is a syndicate.	1.13	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
Overall Weighted Mean	1.78	Disagree	Slightly Influential

Meanwhile, as shown in Table 5 the highest mean score is 2.00 which is doing crimes to fulfill their addiction, such as drugs with a corresponding verbal interpretation of *slightly influential* in commission on crimes. The respondents disagreed that their addiction influenced them to commit crimes. While the lowest mean score was doing crimes because of the lack of financial support with the mean score of 1.30 with a corresponding of verbal interpretation of *slightly influential* on commission on crimes. The respondents strongly disagreed that lack of financial drove them in committing the crime.

A total of 1.62 with a verbal interpretation of *slightly influential* is the overall weighted mean of the economic status which explains that the said factor has a little influence to committing a crime. Again, this states that economic status is not the major factor that could influence a child in committing a crime.

Table 5. Distribution of responses and mean score per items in terms of economic status

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation
44. I am doing this to fill my addiction, for example drugs.	2.00	Disagree	Slightly Influential
48. I did this crime because I have no choice.	1.97	Disagree	Slightly Influential
52. I did the crime because I saw that crime hold the things that I really wanted to have.	1.90	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
40. I did this crime because I want a new dress.	1.87	Disagree	Slightly Influential
49. I did a crime to experience being rich.	1.80	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
53. I was tempted to do crime.	1.80	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
43. The reason why I committed this crime because I envy my friends of having a new and latest gadgets.	1.77	Disagree	Slightly Influential
47. I did the crime to boast with my friends.	1.67	Disagree	Slightly Influential
55. I have the guts to do this crime because we are rich.	1.63	Disagree	Slightly Influential
46. To have money for the medicine, I committed a crime.	1.53	Disagree	Slightly Influential
54. I only got nonsense stuffs.	1.53	Disagree	Slightly Influential
45. I am doing this kind of crime because, I don't have a money to spend for my food.	1.40	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
51. I only did this crime to have a money to pay our debts.	1.40	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
41. I was involved in this crime, because I have no money for my school.	1.37	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
50. I only did this crime to buy school stuffs.	1.33	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
45. I am doing this crime because we don't have a money for our foods.	1.30	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
42. I only did this crime because my parents financial support is not enough.	1.27	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
Overall Weighted Mean	1.62	Disagree	Slightly Influential

The result below shows the distribution table for environmental influence. Having to witness a crime on their place got the highest mean score of 2.77 with the corresponding verbal interpretation of *moderately influential* on commission of crimes. This says that witnessing a crime emerged as an influence in committing crime.

On the other hand, committing crimes for the reason of being the only indigent family in their place and being unemployed got the lowest mean score of

1.23 with a verbal interpretation of *not at all influential* in commission of crimes. They strongly disagreed that being unemployed and being surrounded by the middle-class and rich families pushed them to committing crime.

Table 6. Distribution of the responses and mean score per items of external environment influence

Items	Weighted Mean	Verbal Description	Verbal Interpretation
75. I already witnessed a crime in our place.	2.77	Agree	Moderately Influential
73. My place is known for many crimes.	2.20	Disagree	Slightly Influential
71. Many of the kids in our place that has the same age with me influenced me to do a crime.	2.03	Disagree	Slightly Influential
57. I did the crime because our place lacks security.	1.90	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
69. I am always involved in trouble at our school.	1.87	Disagree	Slightly Influential
62. I only did the crime to get the attention of others.	1.77	Disagree	Slightly Influential
74. We have many neighborhood who is also committing a crime.	1.73	Disagree	Slightly Influential
56. I did this crime because everyone in our place does.	1.70	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
58. I only did this crime for revenge.	1.67	Disagree	Slightly Influential
59. I only did the crime to avoid being the victim.	1.67	Disagree	Slightly Influential
63. I only did the crime for fame.	1.67	Disagree	Slightly Influential
65. I did this crime because no one catch us.	1.67	Disagree	Slightly Influential
72. The place that I am living is quiet that's why It is very easy to do a crime.	1.67	Disagree	Slightly Influential
60. I only did crime to bully the other people.	1.60	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
61. I committed crime because I am not good at school.	1.50	Disagree	Slightly Influential
68. I just follow the trend of my friends and classmates and neighbors in committing this crime.	1.50	Disagree	Slightly Influential
64. I committed crime to scare my victim.	1.47	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
66. I committed this crime because I don't have any options.	1.30	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
67. I did this crime because my family is the poor at our place.	1.23	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
70. I don't have a choice, because I don't have a job.	1.23	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential
Overall Weighted Mean	1.71	Strongly Disagree	Not at all Influential

This table shows that the factors are *not significant* when grouped by age in committing crime. This states that the age has no effect in the commission of crime of the youth.

Table 7. Test for significant difference for age

Factors Influencing Commission of Crime	Computed Level of Significance	Decision
Family Relationship	0.060	Not significant.
Peer	0.704	Not significant.
Economic Status	0.198	Not significant.
External Environmental Influence	0.696	Not significant.

The table below shows that highest educational attainment is *not significant* in influencing the commission of crimes of the male children in conflict with the law. This implies that highest educational attainment has no relation to committing of crime.

Table 8. Test for significant difference for highest educational attainment

Factors Influencing Commission of Crime	Computed Level of Significance	Decision
Family Relationship	0.468	Not significant.
Peer	0.294	Not significant.
Economic Status	0.486	Not significant.
External Environmental Influence	0.471	Not significant.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusions

The researchers came up with these conclusion based on the results:

1. The highest distribution of respondents in terms of age is in the bracket of 17 years old while in terms of highest educational attainment, the highest frequency goes to Grade 8.
2. The level of influence in commission of crime of the respondents in terms of family relationship, peer influence and economic status is slightly influential whereas the results in external environment influence is not at all influential in commission of crimes. This denotes that the first three factors have greater effect in influencing the respondents in committing a crime rather than their external environment, although witnessing a crime which is a factor of external environment got the moderately influence that means it has effect to influence the respondents.
3. There is no significant difference in the level of influence of family relationship, peer influence, economic status, and external environment influence in terms of age as well as in their highest educational attainment. This is because the age and the highest educational attainment are not broad enough.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations are formulated:

1. The researchers recommend the parents, not only of the youth offenders, but also other children to allot enough family time and to supervise and check upon their own children from time to time.
2. The researchers recommend the institution to host a seminar or awareness regarding the factors in increasing population of children in conflict with the law and incorporate solutions on how to alleviate the certain problem.
3. The researchers recommend the institution to conduct counseling or intervention to some children who seen a crime that happened to their place.
4. The researchers of this study recommend the future researchers to explore other factors, such as gender difference, the place they are living before entering the institution, the length of the period they were committing crime, and the types of the crime committed, that might affect an individual of commissioning a crime.

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