

A CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDENT'S PERCEPTION ON THE INFLUENCES OF
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

BY

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DEDICATION

To my family and friends who have stood by my side and supported me throughout all of the trials and tribulations I have gone through this year. It was your love and encouragement that motivated me to never give up on myself and to continue striving for greatness. I want to especially thank my parents for shaping me into the woman I am today because without their love and support, none of this would have been possible. You have taught me so much, like the true meaning of strength, and I will continue to use the strength you have instilled in me every day. I could never thank you enough for everything you do for me. I love you more than you could ever know.

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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The factors that put adolescents at risk of becoming juvenile delinquents never cease. However, the frequency of those factors could affect their ability to progress in the programs provided by probation departments. In this study, undergraduate Criminal Justice majors from California Baptist University were surveyed regarding their perceptions of the frequency of a list of risk factors in a juvenile delinquent's life and their perception on how these factors affect a juvenile's ability to progress in probation programs. The risk factors that were tested include: negative interactions with parents, violence in the home, living in a violent neighborhood, low socioeconomic status, mental illness, poor academic performance, and low IQ.

It was hypothesized that the more frequent a risk factor was present in a juvenile's life, the more it would hinder their progress in probation programs. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between the perceptions of frequency and progress. The results showed a statistically significant main effect in the correlation between the perceptions that an increased frequency of poor academic performance hinders a juvenile delinquent's ability to progress in a probation program. Two Independent Samples T-tests were conducted to assess for any gender differences. Significantly more male participants than female participants perceived poor academic performance and low socioeconomic status were experienced at a higher frequency. This study was conducted in hopes of aiding in the adjustment of probation programs to better help a juvenile be rehabilitated, developing an educational expansion for undergraduate Criminal Justice students on the problems faced by those who are effected by the future workforce, and supporting the further research on this topic.

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Chapter 1

THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

The risk factors that influence adolescents to commit crimes have remained present after participating in a rehabilitation program. The best way to help juvenile offenders and keep the community safe was by understanding what aspects of their lives or individual behaviors influenced them to the point of committing a crime. The purpose of this research was to understand the perceptions of undergraduate Criminal Justice students on how the frequency of these risk factors influenced adolescents during their progression in a program with probation services. Helping rehabilitate juvenile offenders can increase public safety and decrease future adult offending. The perceptions of Criminal Justice students were used to access for their knowledge and opinion on juvenile offending because they are the future workforce that will be working with this population.

Problem Statement

After following adolescents through a probation program, it was evident that certain risk factors, that have been known to influence delinquent behavior, were present when they entered the program, remained throughout and upon completion. These risk factors and their frequency in an adolescent's life

influenced the type and amount of criminal activity they became involved with.

Purpose of the Study

This research focused on the environmental and behavioral factors and characteristics that influence an adolescent's likelihood of committing a crime. A cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data on a Criminal Justice student's perception of a juvenile's ability to progress through probation programs and the frequency at which they experienced certain risk factors. The major factors measured were parental interactions with the adolescent, violence in the home, violence in the neighborhood, socioeconomic status, academic performance, IQ, and mental illness. This study provided information that can aid policy formation as well as educational and probation program structure. It was hypothesized that perceptions associated with increased frequencies of negative interactions such as violence in the home and neighborhood, mental illness, poor academic achievement, and low IQ were associated with perceptions that a juvenile would not be able to successfully progress through the probation program.

Objectives of the Study

This research aimed to determine if the perceived frequency of risk factors concerning to juvenile delinquency affects the

perception of a juvenile's ability to progress in a program provided by probation.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between negative interactions with parents and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 1: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase in negative interactions with parents correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between violence in the home and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 2: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase of violence in the home correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between living in a violent neighborhood and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 3: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase of living in a violent neighborhood correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Research Question 4: What is the relationship between socioeconomic status and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 4: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase in low socioeconomic status correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Research Question 5: What is the relationship between mental illness and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 5: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase in mental illness correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Research Question 6: What is the relationship between academic performance and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 6: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase in poor academic performance correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Research Question 7: What is the relationship between IQ and a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Hypothesis 7: It was hypothesized that a perceived increase in low IQ correlated with a perceived decrease in progress.

Delimitations

This study focused on the risk factors of juvenile delinquency, including negative interactions with parents, violence in the home, living in a violent neighborhood, low socioeconomic status, mental illness, poor academic performance, and low IQ. The participants were asked for their perception on

the frequency a risk factor was experienced and the perceived effect it had on a juvenile's ability to progress in a program provided by probation. All participants selected for the study had interest in the field of criminal justice and were in the process of pursuing a Bachelor's degree in that field.

Participants were selected from classrooms at California Baptist University. All graduate students, undergraduates not pursuing a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, and students from other universities were excluded because of the study's objective to obtain information regarding the knowledge of the specified participants. The study aimed to observe any relationship between the perceived frequency of a risk factor and its perceived effect on a juvenile's progress.

Assumptions

This study acknowledged the chance of other factors impacting perception. It was assumed that the participants completed the surveys with their honest opinion. There has not been research conducted on this particular topic of perceived frequency and effect. Research has been conducted on varying risk factors of delinquency and their effect on the juvenile, but very little has explored how the frequency of a risk factor affects the rehabilitation process. It was assumed that the research used to support this study was accurate and reliable.

The study accepted that findings could only be generalized to those within the selected population.

Definition of Key Terms

Authoritarian. A parenting style described as a combination of high parental control with low parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Authoritative. A parenting style described as a combination of high parental control and high parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Childhood Neglect. Neglect involves the refusal to provide adequate food, clothing, or medical care to children (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Community Violence. Community violence encompasses violence such as serious fights, gunshots, and stabbings either experienced or witnessed outside of the home (Chen, Voisin, & Jacobson, 2016).

Emotional Abuse. Emotional abuse involves the emotional pain someone feels due to ridicule, rejection, and humiliation (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Felony Crime. A felony crime was the most serious offense, punishable by a sentence to a state institution but many juveniles with a sustained felony allegation were sentenced to formal probation (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007).

Juvenile Delinquency. "A term traditionally used by the judicial system to describe criminal offenders who have not yet reached a specified age, typically 18, allowing for their prosecution and punishment as adults" (Harmening & Gamez, 2016, p. 426).

Maltreatment. Maltreatment includes the varying forms of abuse that can happen alone or in combination of one another including, physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and sexual abuse (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Misdemeanor Crime. A misdemeanor crime was a less serious offense for which the offender may be sentenced to probation, county incarceration, a fine, or some combination of the three (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007).

Permissive. A parenting style described as a combination of low parental control with high parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Physical Abuse. Physical abuse involves assault that leads to injury (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Probation. "Probation departments have the immediate responsibility for conducting investigations of court referrals and supervising those youth who have been officially adjudicated by the juvenile courts" (Garabedian, 2005, p. 286).

Risk Factors. "Psychosocial factors that contribute to an adolescent's propensity or temptation to engage in deviant behavior" (Harmening & Gamez, 2016, p. 207).

Social Strain Theory. Strain theory focused on the influence of negative life experiences on antisocial and criminal behavior (Higgins, Piquero, & Piquero, 2011). The three main types of potential strain include failure to achieve a positive goal, presence of a negative stimulus, and removal of a positive stimulus.

Status Offenses. A status offense was a noncriminal act that was considered a law violation solely due to the adolescent's status as a minor (Development Services Group Inc., 2015).

Uninvolved. A parenting style described as both low parental control and low parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Juvenile delinquency has been a concern of society but many were relieved with the recent decline in adolescent arrests for violent crimes. Although the decline was a great discovery, the factors that influenced those adolescents to commit crimes were still present. The next step, now that it is declining, remains to uncover these factors and distinguish ways to alleviate their influence on adolescents. The best way to help juvenile offenders and keep the community safe includes understanding what aspects of their life or individual behaviors influenced them to commit a crime. The purpose of this paper was to distinguish how the perceived frequency of these risk factors influenced the perceptions of their progression into criminal activity.

Risk Factors Contributing to Juvenile Delinquency

The Role of a Parent and Parenting Styles

Family was the first basic structure and support system that an adolescent experienced, so the role of parent and family was extremely important in the development and discipline of an adolescent. Adolescents learned a lot by watching their parents as they observed their parents' behaviors and imitated them (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). Parenting skills that promote good

communication within families were found to reduce an adolescent's behavior problems and make the parent feel more confident in their ability to be a good parent (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). When a parent is confident in their parenting skills, they were better at monitoring the adolescent and promoting positive behaviors and activities. Good communication helped keep both parents unified in discipline and expectations, which helped the adolescent understand accountability, communication skills, and the difference between positive and negative behaviors.

Authoritarian. This type of parenting style has been described as a combination of high parental control with low parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). These parents were seen to establish the rules and expected them to be followed without discussion. Authoritarian parents wanted to instill hard work, respect, and obedience in the adolescent and were seen to be inconsiderate of the adolescent's wants and needs. Adolescents with authoritarian parents were more frequently described as unhappy, overly aggressive, and to have low self-esteem (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Permissive. This type of parenting style was described as a combination of low parental control with high parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). These types of parents were seen to punish the adolescent infrequently and accept their

behaviors whether they were good or bad. Adolescents with permissive parents were described as being more impulsive and having little self-control (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Uninvolved. This type of parenting style was described as both low parental control and low parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). These parents were seen to provide the bare minimum for the adolescent's basic physical and emotional needs. They spent as little time with the adolescent as possible and avoid emotional attachment. Adolescents with uninvolved parents were seen to do poorly in school and were more often described as aggressive (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Authoritative. This type of parenting style was described as a combination of high parental control and high parental involvement (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014). These parents explained the rules to the adolescent and encouraged discussion with them. Adolescents with authoritative parents were discovered to have higher grades and be described as responsible, self-reliant, and friendly (Kail & Cavanaugh, 2014).

Parental Involvement. Monitoring, control, and attachment are three types of parental involvement. The variations of how these are used affect an adolescent's social and behavioral development. When parents monitored the adolescent's activities and peer association, they distinguished the influence the peers had on the adolescent and limited their contact with the

negative peers (Tilton-Weaver, Burk, Kerr, & Stattin, 2013). Parental monitoring allowed the parent to protect the adolescent from negative influences without being intrusive. Poor and inconsistent parental monitoring was associated with increased bullying involvement for both the bully and the victim of bullying (Low & Espelage, 2014). A lack of parental supervision provides the adolescent with opportunities to engage in delinquent behaviors or fall victim to another adolescent's delinquent behaviors (Evans & Burton, 2013). Parental monitoring buffered the influence of community violence exposure and diminished the adolescent's involvement with deviant behavior and deviant peers (Low & Espelage, 2014). In high-risk environments, increased parental monitoring was more accepted by the adolescent as a protection method and decreased the adolescent's likelihood of engaging in delinquent activity, yet, higher levels of parental control in the same environment were associated with increased delinquent activity (Rekker, Keijsers, Branje, Koot, & Meeus, 2017). The variations in the effect on parental monitoring and control were due to the differences in the parent's actions. Parental monitoring was an open communication to obtain information about the adolescent's activities and interactions with others but parental control was restrictions in the adolescent's activities and possible unnecessary discipline for debating those restrictions, which

can be seen as harsh parenting. Harsh parenting was critical to the development of delinquency and it was found that inconsistent discipline and a lack of positive reinforcement for boys' prosocial activities created increased aggressive behaviors (Becker & McCloskey, 2002). Higher levels of parental attachment helped adolescents stay away from delinquent behaviors and deviant peers because the parent and adolescent maintained an open communication where the adolescent was more willing to disclose their activities and interactions with others to their parents. Low levels of parental attachment were associated with the use of violence among juvenile delinquents (Herrenkohl, Huang, Tajima, & Whitney, 2003). Adolescents with low parental attachment searched for someone else to fulfill the parental relationship and either fall victim to a crime or become the criminals.

Family Life

Adolescents were the most easily influenced members of society and by researching the factors that had the most influence on their criminality, society was able to adjust and prevent the progression of criminal activity. Adverse childhood experiences, such as maltreatment and witnessing criminal behaviors, were part of the major influences in how an adolescent grew up and progressed in criminal activity (Fox, Perez, Cass, Baglivio, & Epps, 2015).

Physical Abuse. Physical abuse against an adolescent and witnessing violence in the home were seen as the most common factors among violent juvenile offenders (Shumaker & Prinz, 2000). Researchers found that a history of physical abuse was linked to violent offending (Asscher, Van der Put, & Stams, 2015). A history of physical abuse was found to be a predictor of violent behavior in female juvenile offenders (Asscher et al., 2015). Gore-Felton et al. (2001) found increased rates of physical abuse suffered by adolescents in juvenile correctional facilities when compared to adolescents in the general population. One study found that abuse predicted interaction with antisocial peers, which lead to more violent attitudes and delinquency (Herrenkohl, Huang, Tajima, & Whitney, 2003). Another study found that there was a strong and significant correlation between physical abuse and suicidal ideation (Boonman et al., 2016). It was seen that experiencing this type of violence developed a high chance of an adolescent to respond to situations with violence. If the use of violence was so present during the adolescent's upbringing, the use of violence was accepted and normalized.

Emotional Abuse. Emotional neglect was explained as a lack of emotional support and connection with the parents and parental withdrawal that creates low self-esteem and a lack of confidence in the adolescent (Evans and Burton, 2013). A high

frequency of emotional abuse was found to increase the amount of negative emotions in an adolescent, especially in regards to the expression of anger (Evans & Burton, 2013). One study found moderate correlations between emotional abuse and depressed anxious problems and between emotional neglect and suicidal ideation (Boonmann et al., 2016). There is a plethora of research regarding abuse as a general term and other forms of maltreatment, but an inconsequential amount specifically focused on emotional abuse.

Childhood Neglect. Neglect and poor parental supervision were seen to affect the adolescent's possibility of turning into a delinquent because the parents became unaware of the adolescent's actions (Holmes, Slaughter, & Kashani, 2001). Without supervision or active involvement in an adolescent's activities, it was easy for the adolescent to make bad decisions and not be punished for their poor choices. During the developmental stages, high-stress situations like abuse and neglect promoted impulsive, high-risk, and antisocial behaviors (Ireland & Smith, 2009). Boys who experienced neglect were four times more likely to offend than juveniles who were not neglected (Asscher, Van der Put, & Stams, 2015). Evans and Burton (2003), found that adolescents who suffered from both abuse and neglect were more likely to be arrested for property crimes as a delinquent than others. Neglect was discovered to

have the greatest impact on an adolescent in regards to committing property crimes, status offenses, violent crimes, and general delinquency (Evans & Burton, 2013).

Sexual Abuse. Experiencing sexual abuse in adolescence produced a heightened risk for a variety of negative psychosocial outcomes, including poor emotional health, poor physical health, psychological distress, disrupted interpersonal relationships, academic difficulties, and delinquency (Chaplo, Kerig, Modrowski, & Bennett, 2016). Gore-Felton et al. (2001) found that sexual abuse was correlated with behavioral problems and increased the likelihood of committing delinquent acts. Behaviorally, sexually abused adolescents met the criteria for full or partial Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder more often than non-sexually abused adolescents from a sample collected in a juvenile detention center (Chaplo et al., 2016). Significant, strong correlations between sexual abuse and anger problems, suicidal ideation, and thought disturbance were found in a sample of 88 juvenile offenders (Boonmann et al., 2016). Researchers found that female victims of sexual abuse were five times more likely to repeat offend than non-abused counterparts (Conrad, Shams, Rizzo, Placella, & Brown, 2014). In a study by Evans and Burton (2013), it was discovered that sexual abuse was a significant predictor of the frequency of delinquency, especially nonviolent crime. However, in another study, history

of sexual abuse was linked to juvenile sexual offending (Asscher, Van der Put, & Stams, 2015). Boonmann et al. (2016) found that juvenile offenders with a history of sexual abuse were more likely to commit sex offenses than those who did not.

Maltreatment. In one study, maltreatment during adolescence was found to be a significant predictor of criminal and violent behaviors in juveniles (Smith, Park, Ireland, Elwyn, & Thornberry, 2013). An adolescent who experienced any form of abuse was more likely to be arrested than adolescents who were not abused (Conrad et al., 2014). Adolescents who had experienced maltreatment were seen to lack an ability to recognize and respond to risk and preceded to externalize aggression with violence (Asscher, Van der Put, & Stams, 2015). According to Fox et al. (2015), the more adverse childhood experiences in an adolescent's life, the more likely they would become a violent juvenile offender. A history of abuse, no matter what kind, was found to be a predictor of violence in male juvenile offenders (Asscher, Van der Put, & Stams, 2015). Childhood and adolescent maltreatment increased the likelihood of an adolescent committing a delinquent act (Evans & Burton, 2013). Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang, and Zhang (2014) found that participants in the delinquent group were more likely to be in foster care and to have had Child Protective Services intervene when compared to the control group. Adolescent victims of

maltreatment were found to be more sensitive to rejection and interpret environmental signals negatively (Asscher, Van der Put, & Stams, 2015). Experiencing child abuse was connected to substance abuse, depression, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicidal ideation, and anxiety (Boonmann et al., 2016). Maltreatment was linked to many negative effects on an adolescent including delinquent behaviors. The violence and different forms of abuse experienced created dissociation within the family, which could increase the chance of reoffending and continued association with negative peers.

Domestic Violence in the Home. Exposure to familial violence was linked to cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physiological effects in adolescents (Kaufman et al., 2011). An adolescent who was exposed to violence in the home was seen to have increased difficulty in forming relationships with peers and parents (Kaufman et al., 2011). By witnessing violence at a young age, the adolescent was conditioned to that type of violence as the norm. When exposed to violence, an adolescent was more likely to become aggressive, antisocial, and present other externalizing and internalizing behavioral problems (Kaufman et al., 2011; Zinzow et al., 2009). An adolescent's exposure to severe parental violence was significantly related to the adolescent committing violent crimes in early adulthood (Ireland & Smith, 2009). Zinzow et al. (2009) also found a

significant correlation between witnessing parental violence and delinquency. Another study found that witnessing marital violence was a significant predictor of overall offending in adolescents (Herrera & McCloskey, 2001). Opposed to the majority of research, one study found that marital violence was not a predictor of adolescent delinquency (Becker & McCloskey, 2002).

Community Life

In addition to the impact the parents had on the adolescent's criminal activity, the type of community the juvenile grew up in also had an impact. Community violence encompasses violence such as serious fights, gunshots, and stabbings either experienced or witnessed outside of the home (Chen, Voisin, & Jacobson, 2016). Serious juvenile offenders, when compared to other adolescents, were found to have more frequent exposure to community violence (Baskin-Sommers et al., 2016). Community violence exposure was strongly related to the externalization of problems via juvenile delinquency and antisocial and aggressive behaviors (Chen, Voisin, & Jacobson, 2016). In one study, exposure to violence in the community accounted for variance in psychopathy scores beyond the variance accounted for exposure to violence in the home (Schraft, Kosson, & McBride, 2013). With violence in the community and violence in the home, the only type of communication the adolescent was

learning focused on the use of violence. Victimization and witnessing violence within the community were linked to the development of maladaptive emotion regulation and disruptive behavior problems (Schraft, Kosson, & McBride, 2013). The experience of being a victim within a community was found to contribute to the antisocial features of psychopathy (Schraft, Kosson, & McBride, 2013). Child maltreatment and antisocial behaviors in adverse environments were found linked to the development of externalizing disorders like Intermittent Explosive Disorder and Conduct Disorder (Schraft, Kosson, & McBride, 2013). Risk-taking adolescent males from low risk neighborhoods used more adaptive outlets for their sensation-seeking tendencies like high impact sports as opposed to those in higher risk neighborhoods who turned to criminal activity (Trentacosta, Hyde, Shaw, & Cheong, 2009). Being surrounded by violence in multiple areas of life, it was hard for the adolescents to escape without involvement in it themselves. A combination of an interest in risk-taking activities and living in a relatively dangerous neighborhood developed more serious antisocial behaviors in adolescent males (Trentacosta, et al., 2009).

Low socioeconomic inner-city areas had an increased risk of exposure to delinquent peers and weak social bonds to family and friends due to weak social institutions and increased

opportunities for offending (Connolly, Lewis, & Boisvert, 2017). Violent neighborhoods tended to have more vacant homes because people wanted to leave the violence to keep their families safe. Low socioeconomic parents were found to be more controlling over delinquent adolescents who respond to coercive parenting with negative behaviors (Rekker, Keijsers, Branje, Koot, & Meeus, 2017). In a study by Mennis et al. (2011), the percentage of vacant housing and the percentage of people receiving public assistance in a community showed a high correlation with the delinquency rate. The vacant houses gave the adolescents of that community the opportunity to cause mischief without getting caught. The types of communities that had the most vacant homes were impoverished ones. Economic hardship heightened parent-child conflict including increased stress, hostility, aggression, and exposure to antisocial peers (Low, Sinclair, & Shortt, 2012). It was found that delinquency was more concentrated in impoverished neighborhoods (Mennis et al., 2011). Impoverished communities were seen to have less collective efficacy and supervision, leaving the adolescents to get into trouble with the law and become delinquents. Communities characterized as low socioeconomic status were seen to have more juvenile delinquents, disadvantaged school systems, criminal gangs, and opportunities to experiment with drugs, alcohol, and criminal activity (Connolly, Lewis, & Boisvert,

2017). The correlation between impoverished neighborhoods and delinquency was explained by the high-stress environment and possibility of more frequent adverse childhood experiences (Fox et al., 2015).

Academic Performance

The education of a juvenile delinquent was important to research because it was where they were able to escape from the violence and high-stress situations at home. Students who perform poorly in school and who feel alienated from school were more likely to engage in delinquency (Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011). Maltreated adolescents had lower educational attainment and lower school commitment (Smith et al., 2013). Adolescents who had suffered neglect, either in combination with other forms of maltreatment or alone, was found to obtain the lowest levels of academic achievement (Evans & Burton, 2013). Failure at school led to increased frustration and in turn increased delinquency (Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011). Juvenile delinquents were found to disengage from school when they became more involved in crime and other delinquent behaviors (Sander, Patall, Amoscato, Fisher, & Funk, 2012). Adolescents diagnosed with a learning disability were associated with a higher probability of committing their first offense before the age of 14 and committing more serious offenses (Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Zhang, 2014). When disengagement and school failure

resulted in specialized classroom placement, they intensified the likelihood of associating with deviant peers and delinquent behaviors (Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011). The classification of special education and the diagnosis of a learning disability were associated with an increased likelihood of committing a second offense (Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Zhang, 2014). Adolescents with learning, emotional, and behavioral disabilities were more likely than others to have experienced school failure, family mobility, and parental incarceration (Barrett et al., 2014).

The Role of IQ

A lowered IQ and language skills during preschool were found to be highly predictive of future delinquency (Holmes et al., 2001). According to Kennedy, Burnett, and Edmonds (2011), the relationship between IQ and delinquency began with low IQ that lead to poor school performance and resulted in delinquency. One study found a statistically significant difference in the IQ scores of violent juvenile delinquents when compared to the general population (Lopez-Leon & Rosner, 2010). Low IQ scores and underachieving academically was seen to predict the delinquency of an adolescent. When comparing violent juveniles to nonviolent juveniles, violent juveniles were seen to have more educational difficulties and lower perceptual and full IQ scores (Lopez-Leon & Rosner, 2010). It

was found that 35% of juvenile offenders were in special education classes compared to the national rate of 8% of the general population in the United States (Sander et al., 2012). Reading percentile and language skills were found to be significantly lower for violent juveniles than other delinquents (Kennedy et al., 2011). Juvenile offenders evaluated after committing a violent crime had significant intellectual deficits compared to the general population within the same age group (Lopez-Leon & Rosner, 2010). Lower educational attainment was linked to higher rates of delinquency and recidivism for juvenile offenders (Sanders et al., 2012). It was discovered that school based prevention and early intervention programs helped improve both behavioral and academic outcomes (Sander et al., 2012). These programs helped teach adolescents better ways to learn and cope with negative environments so they did not feel as overwhelmed and frustrated with their situations.

Mental Illness

Many juvenile delinquents were found to have behavior problems like aggression, impulsivity, and defiance all of which can be linked to conduct disorder. Elements reflecting mental health conditions can be found in assessments of risk, including the Structured Assessment of Violent Risk of Youth, the Level of Service Inventory-Revised, and the Hare Psychopathy Checklist Youth Version (Desai, Falzer, Chapman, & Borum, 2012). When

aggression presented itself during or before the preschool years, it was highly predictive of delinquency and antisocial acts (Holmes et al., 2001). Some research showed that a history of aggressive conduct disorder explains more serious and violent offending (Baskin-Sommers et al., 2016). According to Kennedy et al. (2011), juveniles with more aggressive behaviors were found to commit more serious and dangerous crimes. Aggression and impulsivity lead to more negative reactions to problematic situations resulting in fights. Antisocial behavior and criminal behavior were highly interrelated in a study by Henggeler and Sheidow (2012). The most serious and violent juvenile offenders were found to display antisocial behaviors like those connected to conduct disorder (Ireland & Smith, 2009). Defiance towards family and other authority figures like teachers were present in adolescents with conduct disorder. Many adolescents with conduct disorder were found to have lower academic achievements and lower IQs than the general population (Holmes et al., 2001). Underachievement in academics created aggressive feelings and antisocial behaviors during their schooling. Frequent adverse environmental factors like a violent household and poor community life were more pronounced for juvenile delinquents with conduct disorder (Baskin-Sommers et al., 2016). An adolescent's family experience was seen as one of the most influential factors contributing to juvenile

delinquency in adolescents with conduct disorder (Holmes et al., 2001). A lack of structure in the home and in the community aided the impulsive nature of an adolescent with conduct disorder. Criminal activity was the best way for the adolescent to get attention while relieving aggression and satisfying their impulsivity. Adverse childhood experiences within the family dynamic along with violence in the community were discovered to contribute to antisocial behaviors in adolescents (Ireland & Smith, 2009). Juvenile delinquents with conduct disorder were found to lack verbal skills, have an impulsive and aggressive temperament, and come from environmental adversity (Kennedy et al., 2011). A lack of verbal skills and lower IQ explained why an adolescent with conduct disorder turned to delinquency in order to communicate and cope with their environment.

Theoretical Perspectives on Juvenile Delinquency

Labeling Theory

Labeling theory suggested that the use of negative labels influence delinquent behavior in adolescence (Kavish, Mullins, & Soto, 2016). Bartusch and Matsueda (1996), found that negative parental labels significantly increased the adolescent's reflected appraisals of themselves as a rule violator and distressed. The label of distressed meant the adolescent was often upset and had a lot of personal problems and the label of rule violator meant the adolescent had frequently been in

trouble and broke the rules (Bartusch & Matsueda, 1996). Others found that the process of being arrested and prosecuted was likely to lead to the development of informal labels or negative self-labeling (Kavish, Mullins, & Soto, 2016). Formal labeling from police interventions appears to be more important than parental appraisals (Kavish, Mullins, & Soto, 2016). In fact, formal labeling was found to cause the strongest significant effect on delinquency, but also affected non-criminal outcomes, like problems with education, employment, and financial stability (Kavish, Mullins, & Soto, 2016). Bartusch and Matsueda (1996) found that parental appraisals and reflected appraisals as rule violators both significantly increased the likelihood of delinquency.

Reflected appraisals from peers and significant others were found to be most relevant to criminal and drug using behaviors (Kavish, Mullins, & Soto, 2016). Adolescents, who saw themselves as criminals, were more likely to engage in delinquency than those who see themselves as conformers (Bartusch & Matsueda, 1996). Parents had a direct affect on an individual's self-concept and self-esteem because of the negative labels used (Kavish, Mullins, & Soto, 2016). All in all, negative labels were seen to negatively influence adolescence in multiple aspects of their life, not just criminal delinquency. Labeling had a strong effect on the adolescent's

actions as well as their self-image, self-concept, and self-esteem.

Social Strain Theory

Strain theory focused on the influence of negative life experiences on antisocial and criminal behavior (Higgins, Piquero, & Piquero, 2011). Three potential forms of strain include failure to achieve positively valued goals, presentation of a noxious stimulus, and removal of a positively valued stimulus. Failure to achieve positively valued goals, like poor academic performance, created stress and other negative feelings for the adolescent. The presentation of noxious stimulus was described as the negative experiences or interactions with others, like abuse, bullying, or witnessing violence and the removal of a positively valued stimulus was the elimination of something or someone positive in the adolescent's life, like confiscating their favorite game or discontinuing their contact with a positive role model. Strain was produced by situations including parental rejection, child abuse, victimization, experiences of discrimination, and peer rejection (Higgins, Piquero, & Piquero, 2011). Adolescents who report more stressful life events, lower peer expectations, poor parental attachment, less parental supervision, or involvement in fewer school activities were more likely to be involved in delinquent activities (Nino, Ignatow, & Cai, 2017).

Hoffmann (2002) found that deprived communities were more likely to be populated by strained individuals and suffered from more blocked opportunity structures, which led to adaptations like crime, delinquency, and other deviant behavior. These communities had a tendency to create an atmosphere conducive to anger and frustration (Hoffmann, 2002). Individuals that were part of a social underclass and lack social and problem solving skills were more likely to interpret their situation and relationships as negative which resulted in delinquent and criminal activity (Higgins, Piquero, & Piquero, 2011). Experiencing violent victimization was found to lead to violence or isolation (Nino, Ignatow, & Cai, 2017). Adolescents who reported violent victimization were two times more likely to experience violent delinquency (Nino, Ignatow, & Cai, 2017). By experiencing more stressful life events, adolescents were more likely to get involved in delinquent behavior and associate with peers who were delinquent (Hoffmann, 2002).

Strain that was experienced as a result of negative relationships or other conditions led to anger, frustration, and an increased risk of delinquent and criminal behavior (Nino, Ignatow, & Cai, 2017). Adolescents with decreased social and problem-solving skills were more likely to experience negative relationships, misperceive the relationships as half-hearted, and react with crime (Higgins, Piquero, & Piquero, 2011).

However, it was found that the extent to which the adolescent experienced negative relationships increased the likelihood of the adolescent reacting with criminal activity (Higgins et al., 2011). Adolescents who were socially isolated were found to experience unstable careers, delayed life transitions, peer rejection, victimization, and school refusal (Nino et al., 2017). Adolescents experiencing strain also had an increased chance of experiencing feelings of low self worth, depression, loneliness, and suicidal ideation (Nino et al., 2017). High levels of peer rejection were related to high chances of delinquency among male adolescents (Higgins et al., 2011). Adolescents that attempted to integrate into a social network but were unsuccessful lead to violent delinquency as a way to alleviate the frustration and anger brought on by the social rejection (Nino et al., 2017). A longitudinal study by Buhs and Ladd (2001) showed that peer rejection predicted antisocial behaviors at school including school avoidance, negative school attitudes, and poor achievement.

For some adolescents that experience strain, crime and deviance can be used to escape the strain via drug use, retaliate against the strain via violence, or generate revenue to overcome the strain via property crime (Higgins et al., 2011). It was found that situations that oppose delinquent behavior like peer reinforcement of prosocial activities,

absence of stress, solid attachment to parents, and sufficient parental supervision were found to diminish the likelihood of delinquent behavior (Hoffmann, 2002).

Juvenile Interactions with the Criminal Justice System

The Juvenile Justice System

The Juvenile Justice System consists of three main components that interacted with the juvenile and their family throughout the various stages of the adolescent's criminality. These components include the police, probation, and the court. When a crime was committed, the police were the first to respond, then probation proceeded with the investigation and provided the court with a recommendation regarding the sentencing of the juvenile offender, and the court provided the ultimate decision on the case and sentencing (Garabedian, 2005). The prehearing report, developed by the probation officer, presented a variety of sociocultural and behavioral factors that possibly influenced the juvenile's delinquent behavior (Gross, 2005). These factors included the adolescent's attitude toward the offense, family background, previous delinquency problems, information about the current offense, officer's perception of the adolescent during the interview process, educational history, psychological test data, psychiatric examination data, and information on the adolescent's interests, activities, and religion (Gross, 2005). At the end of the report, the probation

officer determined a recommendation for the adolescent regarding the outcome of the case. The judge, however, ultimately has absolute discretionary decision-making power in juvenile cases (Gross, 2005). The court was given this decision-making power because they were designed to be more concerned with the juvenile offender than the offense (Cromwell, Killinger, Sarri, & Soloman, 1997). In the end, the court decided between one of four options for the case, probation, institutionalization, psychiatric examination, and discharge (Gross, 2005).

Types of Offenses

Crimes were classified by the seriousness of the offense (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007). Many types of crimes in California were charged as either a felony or a misdemeanor, known as a wobbler, or as either a misdemeanor or an infraction. An infraction was the least serious offense and generally was punishable by a fine, informal probation, or a community-based diversion program. Juveniles had the possibility of being charged with a felony, misdemeanor, infraction, or status offense and were punished by incarceration, formal probation, informal probation, or a community-based diversion program (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007).

Status Offenses. A status offense was defined as a noncriminal act that was considered a law violation only because of the adolescent's status as a minor (Development Services

Group Inc., 2015). Typical status offenses included truancy, running away from home, violating curfew, the underage use or possession of alcohol and tobacco, and general ungovernability. Truancy was defined as the habitual, unexcused absences from school that went beyond the amount of absences allowed by state law. An ungovernable youth was described as a minor whose disobedience was so frequent or severe that the family needed to seek legal assistance because the adolescent was acting beyond the control of parental authority. The definition of status offenses as delinquent behavior was important because the crime classification impacted the type of treatment available to the adolescent. Status offenders were most likely placed on probation and received community-based program services. Status-offending behavior was considered a sign of underlying personal, familial, community, and systemic issues, similar to the risk factors that underlie general offending (Development Services Group Inc., 2015). Status offenders on probation were seen to have more deviant behaviors as opposed to criminal acts so interactions with them should look differently than interactions with criminal offending delinquents. These adolescents needed better discipline and structure as opposed to rehabilitation.

Misdemeanor Crimes. A misdemeanor crime was defined as a less serious offense for which the offender may be sentenced to

probation, county incarceration, a fine, or some combination of the three (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007). Misdemeanors represented the majority of offenses and generally included crimes such as assault and battery, petty theft, and public drunkenness (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007). Adolescents that committed misdemeanors were placed on probation because their crimes were less serious. They needed rehabilitation through probation services so they do not progress further in criminal activity by committing more serious crimes or reoffending in general.

Felony Crimes. A felony crime was defined as the most serious offense, punishable by a sentence to a state institution but many juveniles with a sustained felony allegation were sentenced to formal probation (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007). Felonies generally include violent crimes, sex offenses, and many types of drug and property crimes. Some of these offenses included murder, rape, robbery, burglary of a residence, and assault with the intent to commit robbery (Brown, Cabral, & Steenhausen, 2007). Adolescents that committed felonies had a higher probability of receiving prison time or detention because their rehabilitation process is more severe. The seriousness of their crimes made them distinct from other juvenile offenders and created a higher need for them to be rehabilitated.

Incarceration of Juveniles in Camps and Detention Centers

Incarceration was considered to be a last resort where no other reasonable alternative was available (Cromwell, Killinger, Sarri, & Soloman, 1977). The types of adolescents that were most commonly recommended for incarceration were those who had personality and behavioral problems and uninvolved or uncooperative parents (Cohn, 2005). Incarceration was used when the juvenile had no parent, guardian, custodian, or other person able to provide supervision and care for him or her and to assure his or her presence at subsequent judicial hearings (Cromwell, Killinger, Sarri, & Soloman, 1977). Adolescents had to be evaluated before sentencing them with incarceration because the adolescent needs to react well to a group setting mixed with high levels of control (Cohn, 2005). Incarceration revolved around a structured schedule that included school hours, meal times, hygiene times, exercise times, and free time (Jesness, 2005). Incarcerated juvenile offenders were under constant supervision by probation correctional officers to enforce the structure, deter any negative behaviors, and control any problematic situations (Jesness, 2005). Incarceration's structure and control was a last resort option because it seems harder for an adolescent to develop and be rehabilitated in that type of environment. This type of sentence was recommended when the adolescent had no family to participate in probation

services and when the adolescent continued to reoffend while on probation.

Supervised Probation

Probation was defined as an individual treatment setting built on the relationship between the probation officer, the adolescent, and the adolescent's family (Cohn, 2005). Probation departments had the immediate responsibility of conducting investigations of court referrals and supervising adolescents officially adjudicated by the court (Garabedian, 2005). The types of adolescents that were most commonly recommended for probation were those with no personality difficulties and who were cooperative and had parents who were cooperative with probation during their preliminary investigation (Cohn, 2005). Poor parental monitoring along with feelings of anger and fear influenced the adolescent's likelihood of receiving a subsequent Probation violation (Paik, 2017). If parents felt supported by the system, they were more likely to increase their monitoring of the adolescent to discourage future anti-social behaviors (Paik, 2017). It appeared that probation was successful as a treatment device in comparison to other methods of supervision (Scarpitti & Stephenson, 2005). Other than supervision, probation provided a variety of programs to fit the adolescent's individual needs like anger management classes, drug and alcohol classes, gang intervention, mental health treatment, sex

offender classes, and others. Probation also works in collaboration with social workers, the department of behavioral health, the court, and other wraparound services to provide the best possible support system to help rehabilitate the adolescent.

Recidivism

Probationers who completed their treatment had lower rates of recidivism than those who complete other types of programs, even when compared based on background and delinquency factors (Scarpitti & Stephenson, 2005). Juvenile offenders that failed treatment programs and probation had the highest rates of recidivism (Scarpitti & Stephenson, 2005). Certain experienced risk factors increased an adolescent's likelihood of recidivating. Factors including being a victim of maltreatment, diagnosis of a mental health disorder, and having a learning disability, were all found to significantly increase the likelihood of a juvenile committing a second offense (Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang, & Zhang, 2014).

Summary

Extensive research regarding what environmental, emotional, and psychological factors influence an adolescent into committing a crime exists. However, little has been revealed about how the frequency of risk factors affects an adolescent's ability to be rehabilitated by probation services. Each risk

factor has been associated with its own adverse effects on the life of an adolescent and the role of probation was to supervise and provide them with the services needed to reverse the negative effects of those factors. These services provided by probation involved the family, the adolescent, and other organizations like the Department of Behavioral Health. The collaboration of a variety of organizations ensured the juvenile had the best chances of being rehabilitated as long as they followed their terms and conditions and actively participated in their treatment. Learning about risk factors is important in the development and application of programs and the effect the programs have on the adolescent. The present study assessed a Criminal Justice student's perceptions on the frequency and effect of various risk factors on the rehabilitation process. The students needed knowledge of the factors and their effect on rehabilitation and recidivism so they can prepare to work with this population and understand the best ways to rehabilitate them.

Chapter 3

METHOD

Participants

A total of 180 young adult participants were recruited through a sample of convenience. All participants were undergraduate criminal justice students at a Christian University. Participants ranged in age between 18 and 26 years ($M=20.09$, $SD=1.53$). A total of 46% were males ($n=83$) and 54% were females ($n=97$). The ethnicity of the participants included a total of 32.2% White/Caucasian ($n=58$), 48.9% Hispanic/Latino ($n=88$), 8.9% African American/Black ($n=16$), 5.6% Asian/Pacific Islander ($n=10$), and 4.4% other ($n=8$). The current academic year in the bachelor's degree program included the following: a total of 14.4% were in their first year of college ($n=26$), 28.3% second year ($n=51$), 38.3% third year ($n=69$), 16.7% fourth year ($n=30$), 1.1% fifth year ($n=2$), and 1.1% other ($n=2$). The marital status of the participants included a total of 3.3% married ($n=6$), 1.1% divorced ($n=2$), 94.4% single, never married ($n=170$), and 1.1% living with another ($n=2$). Participant religious affiliation were as follows: A total of 86.7% were Christian ($n=156$), 1.1% Eastern religions ($n=2$), 2.2% Agnostic/Atheist ($n=4$), 4.4% no religious affiliation ($n=8$), and

5.6% other (n=10). A total of 70.6% (n=127) of participants had experience working with minors and 29.4% (n=53) did not have any experience. A total of 92.2% (n=166) had no experience working with juvenile delinquency and 7.8% (n=14) reported having some experience.

Design

This study used a cross-sectional survey design.

Instrument

The brief survey instrument (Appendix A) developed for this study examined perceptions among young adults of the impact of risk factors influencing adolescent's ability to progress through the probation program. The survey included a total of eight demographic items regarding participant age, gender, ethnicity, current year in the Bachelor's degree program, marital status, religious affiliation, experience with minors, and experience working with juvenile delinquency minors. The survey consisted of seven items examining participants' perceptions of the extent to which negative interactions with parents, violence in the home, low socioeconomic status, violent neighborhood, mental illness diagnosis, and poor academic performance impact an adolescent's progress through the probation program. All survey items were measured on a 5-point

Likert-scale ranging from extremely infrequent to extremely frequent or extremely hinders to extremely helps.

Procedure

Institutional Review Board approval was obtained prior to data collection. All participation was voluntary. Data was collected at a Christian university with undergraduate students. Instructor approval was sought prior to data collection in the classrooms. Upon approval of Criminal Justice professors at the university, an arranged time was made by the professor and researcher to ask students to participate in the study. Each participant was handed an informed consent form (Appendix B) to sign and return to the researcher prior to completing the survey. A Bill of Rights form (Appendix C), resource information for the CBU Counseling Center (Appendix D), and the survey (Appendix A) were provided to each participant. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete. The consent form was kept separately from the survey data.

Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (IBM SPSS 24) statistical program was used to analyze the data. All data was screened for univariate, and bivariate outliers. Two independent Samples T-test were conducted to examine gender differences and perceptions of the frequency of juvenile

delinquents coming from low SES backgrounds and low academic performance. A total of seven Pearson Product-Moment correlations were conducted to assess the relationship between the variables being studied.

Chapter 4

RESULTS**Results**

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between perceptions of the frequency to which juvenile delinquents had poor academic performance and the extent to which poor academic performance affected the juvenile's progress in the probation program. It was hypothesized that as perceptions of frequency increased, perceptions that poor academic performance would affect a juvenile's progress in the probation program would decrease. The results showed a small, indirect but significant relationship between the variables, $r_{(178)} = -.162, p = .03$.

An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to examine gender differences on the perceptions of the frequency that juvenile delinquents come from a low socioeconomic background. It was hypothesized that males would perceive that juvenile delinquents were more likely to come from a low socioeconomic background in comparison to female their counterparts. There was a significant difference $t_{(178)} = 2.41, p = .02$ between males and females on their perceptions of the frequency that juvenile delinquents come from a low socioeconomic background. Males had

higher mean scores ($M=4.05$) in comparison to their female counterparts ($M=3.76$).

An Independent Samples T-Test was conducted to examine gender differences on the perceptions of the frequency that a juvenile delinquent had poor academic performance. It was hypothesized that males would perceive that juvenile delinquents were more likely to have poor academic performance in comparison to their female counterparts. There was a significant difference $t_{(178)} = 2.59, p = .01$ between males and females on their perceptions of the frequency that juvenile delinquents would have poor academic performance. Males had higher mean scores ($M=4.19$) in comparison to their female counterparts ($M=3.87$).

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the perceptions of the frequency of negative interactions with parents and the affect negative interactions with parents had on a juvenile's progress in probation. It was hypothesized that the more frequent a juvenile experienced negative interactions with parents the more it hindered their progress in a probation program. The results were not significant.

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between perceptions of the frequency to which juvenile delinquents experience violence in the home and the extent to which the violence in the home affects the

juvenile's progress in the probation program. It was hypothesized that the more frequent a juvenile experienced violence in the home the more it hindered their progress in a probation program. The results were not significant.

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the perceptions of the frequency to which juvenile delinquents come from low socioeconomic backgrounds and the extent to which coming from a low socioeconomic background affects the juvenile's progress in the probation program. It was hypothesized that the more frequent a juvenile came from a low socioeconomic background the more it hindered their progress in a probation program. The results were not significant.

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the perceptions of the frequency to which juvenile delinquents came from a violent neighborhood and the extent to which violent neighborhoods affect a juvenile's progress in the probation program. It was hypothesized that the more frequent a juvenile came from a violent neighborhood the more it hindered their progress in a probation program. The results were not significant.

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the perceptions of the frequency to which juvenile delinquents were diagnosed with a

mental illness and the extent to which a mental illness affected a juvenile's progress in a probation program. It was hypothesized that the more frequent a juvenile was diagnosed with a mental illness the more it hindered their progress in a probation program. The results were not significant.

A Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was conducted to examine the relationship between the perceptions of the frequency to which juvenile delinquents had low IQ scores and the extent to which low IQ scores affected a juvenile's progress in a probation program. It was hypothesized that the more frequent a juvenile obtained a low IQ score the more it hindered their progress in a probation program. The results were not significant.

Summary

The results showed a small, indirect but significant correlation between a perceived increase in poor academic performance and a perceived decrease in a juvenile's ability to progress in a probation program. The results also indicated gender differences regarding the perceived frequency of low socioeconomic status and poor academic performance. Male participants indicated an increased frequency in both variables compared to females.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION

The future generation that will be working with criminal populations like juvenile delinquents, need a basic understanding of the risk factors that influence their lives every day. Undergraduate students, who chose to pursue a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice, did so to gain knowledge about the various organizations that make up our criminal justice system and the populations they affect. The best way to help the populations affected by the criminal justice system is by learning about the factors that put those individuals at risk and how to alleviate those influences.

Past research explained the variety of risk factors that influence an adolescent into deviant behaviors and criminal activity. It was hypothesized that the as the perceived frequency of a risk factor increased, the perceived success in rehabilitation decreased. This means that the more an adolescent experienced a risk factor, the less likely they were able to be successful in a rehabilitation program through probation. The perceptions of the participants was expressed the importance of obtaining knowledge of these factors to alleviate the strength of their influence on the rehabilitation process.

Conclusions

The results showed a small, indirect but significant relationship between perceived higher frequency of poor academic performance and the inability to be successful in a probation program. Previous research showed that juvenile delinquents disengaged from school as they progressed in criminal activities and delinquent behaviors (Sander, Patall, Amoscato, Fisher, & Funk, 2012). Poor academic performance highlights the needs of special assistance in schools for adolescents on probation. Problems like a learning disability can cause the adolescent to perform poorly in school. It was discovered that adolescents with a diagnosis of a learning disability were associated with a higher probability of committing their first offense before the age of 14, committing more serious crimes, and committing a second offense (Barrett et al., 2014). Many adolescents on probation need an individualized education plan in order to get the proper assistance to try to alleviate their problems at school, both behaviorally and academically. This study found that males perceived a higher frequency of poor academic performance than females. The difference in perceived frequency showed that males could have more understanding about poor academic performance and using aggression to release frustration than females. For adolescents, the inability to perform well

academically caused frustration, which may have led to the release of this frustration through criminal activity.

Males perceived a higher frequency of a low socioeconomic background than females. The variations in the perceptions of the participants can be explained by a variety of factors including, personal experience, secondary experience, and an increased knowledge of the risk factor. Impoverished communities were characterized to encompass disadvantaged school systems, gangs, and increased opportunities for criminal activity (Connolly, Lewis, & Boisvert, 2017). When an adolescent is developing in a disadvantaged neighborhood, they were provided with more access to negative role models like gang members or other criminals and less access to positive opportunities like sports, work, and education. Low socioeconomic status was a factor that affects all aspects of an adolescent's life because it is characterized with increased stress and decreased opportunities for positive activities and positive interactions with others.

Recommendations

The results from the present study can be explained by a lack of knowledge of the participants regarding juvenile delinquency and probation. Unfortunately, not much time was dedicated to learning about juvenile delinquency, the risk factors of delinquency, probation, and juvenile probation in a

Bachelor's program for criminal justice. A lack of learning was also seen in the probation department. The officers attended a variety of trainings, however the only one specifically tailored to discuss juvenile offenders is a juvenile law update, which covered any changes in the laws that affect juveniles. All other trainings were presented as general topics that do not explain the different effects on juvenile offenders.

Psychologists. Assisting juvenile delinquents on probation involved a collaboration of risk assessment, psycho-education, and counseling for both families and individuals. Specialized programs like anger management, gang intervention, and mental health court were some of the many options that juveniles participated in while on probation with a main focus of family strengthening and reunification. The goals of probation were to keep the juveniles out of trouble and refer them to the best possible resources that the Department of Behavioral Health, Wraparound services, and the Department of Children and Family Services can provide.

Juvenile Delinquents on Probation. As the previous research showed, juveniles faced a multitude of factors that influenced them daily and had negative effects on their lives, like promoting criminal activity. In order to truly help rehabilitate these adolescents and aide in the prevention of further criminal acts, these factors needed to be understood by

those who are responsible for helping them. An adolescent involved in criminal activity can only progress in a life without crime if the factors that influenced them are addressed and alleviated. The adolescent needed to be taught how to cope with these negative factors and how to interact properly with families, peers, and other figures of authority.

Limitations

The present study acknowledged a variety of possible limitations that could have impacted the current results. The study only used undergraduate students from a private, Christian university pursuing a Bachelor's of Science in Criminal Justice. Anyone who did not identify as a criminal justice major was excluded along with graduate students and students from other universities. Collecting data from a sample of young adult students from a Christian university displayed a high chance that these students had never witnessed or experienced the types of risk factors being assessed. Religiously, their perceptions on the affect a risk factor has on the juvenile's progress in probation could be skewed as well due to the want to rehabilitate as opposed to punish. The researcher developed the instrument used in this study and did not test for survey validation and reliability. If time, money, and resources were not restricted, the researcher would have surveyed the parents of juvenile offenders and the offenders themselves regarding the

actual frequency a risk factor was experienced and their perception of the effect the risk factor had on their ability to be successful in probation programs.

Self-Report and Interpretation. The results came from answers provided that were assumed to be honest perceptions of the participants' views regarding the variables measured. It was assumed that the participants had an educational or experience based understanding of the variables that were assessed. In hopes to alleviate any misunderstandings, the participants were given instructions to read all of the questions carefully and answer truthfully.

Future Research

Further research of this topic should examine juvenile delinquency in another light by collecting data from probation, the programs that work with the adolescent, parents of the adolescent, or the adolescent themselves. Previous research determined the major risk factors of an adolescent becoming a delinquent but almost none have been done regarding how the frequency of those factors influence the adolescent's ability to be rehabilitated. The focus of the adolescent should be to terminate his or her delinquent behaviors so he or she can become a well-rounded and helpful adult. Through rehabilitation, the adolescent learns new skills and ways to interact with others and properly handle situations that could

potentially have adverse affects. With a family reunification focus, it helps the adolescent feel supported in their efforts to be a better person and reinforces the positive behavior. It also helps educate the parents on better ways to communicate and discipline the adolescent, which creates accountability.

Rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents should be a main focus of research to test the availability, success, and overall helpfulness to both the adolescent and the family.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

THE INFLUENCES OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY SURVEY

The Influences of Juvenile Delinquency Survey

Demographics:

What is your age? _____

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Please specify your ethnicity:

- White/Caucasian
- Hispanic/Latino
- African American/Black
- Asian/Pacific Islander
- American Indian/Alaskan Native
- Other

What year are you into your bachelor's degree?

- First year
- Second year
- Third year
- Fourth year
- Fifth year
- Other

What is your current marital status?

- Married
- Divorced
- Single, never married
- Living with another
- Separated
- Widowed

What is your religious affiliation?

- Christian
- Eastern religions (i.e. Buddhism, Hinduism, etc.)
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Agnostic/Atheist
- No religious affiliation
- Other

Do you have any experience working with minors?

- Yes
- No

Do you have any experience working with juvenile delinquency minors?

- Yes
- No

On a scale of 1-5, answer the following questions.

1. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent experiences negative interactions with parents?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

2. To what extent do you think these negative interactions affect a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

3. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent experiences violence in the home?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

4. To what extent do you think violence in the home affects a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

5. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent comes from a low socioeconomic background?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

6. To what extent do you think a low socioeconomic background affects a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

7. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent comes from a violent neighborhood?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

8. To what extent do you think a violent neighborhood affects a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

9. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent is diagnosed with a mental illness?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

10. To what extent do you think mental illness affects a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

11. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent has poor academic performance?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

12. To what extent do you think poor academic performance affects a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

13. How frequently do you think a juvenile delinquent obtains a low IQ score?

Extremely infrequently	Somewhat infrequently	Neutral	Somewhat frequently	Extremely frequently
1	2	3	4	5

14. To what extent do you think a low IQ affects a juvenile's progress in a probation program?

Extremely hinders	Somewhat hinders	Neutral	Somewhat helps	Extremely helps
1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B
BILL OF RIGHTS

BILL OF RIGHTS for RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

All persons asked to participate as a subject in a research project, before deciding whether or not to participate, have the right to:

1. Be informed about the nature and purpose of the research.
2. Be given an explanation of the procedures used in the research and, if appropriate, any drug or medical device utilized.
3. Be given a description of any attendant discomforts and risks reasonably expected from or during the research.
4. Be given an explanation of any benefits to subjects potentially resulting from research, if applicable.
5. Be given a disclosure of any appropriate alternative procedures, drugs, or devices that might be advantageous to subjects, and the potential related risks and benefits.
6. Be informed about medical or psychological treatment, if any, available to the subject if complications arise during or after the research.
7. Be given an opportunity to ask any questions concerning the research purposes and procedures.
8. Be told that consent to participate in the research may be withdrawn at any time and subjects may discontinue participation in the research without prejudice.
9. Be given a copy of any signed and dated written consent form related to the research.
10. Be given the opportunity to decide to consent or not consent to participate in the research without any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress, coercion or undue influence on the decision.

APPENDIX C

RESOURCE INFORMATION FOR CBU COUNSELING CENTER

CBU Counseling Center

Address: 3626 Monroe Street, Riverside, CA 92504,

Phone Number: (951) 689-1120

Hours of Operation: Monday-Thursday 8 a.m.-7 p.m. and Friday 8 a.m.-5 p.m.