

## ABSTRACT

### A SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF DEVIANCE AMONG MALE ADOLESCENTS IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

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This study examines youth deviance among male adolescents 13-15 years of age in secondary schools and juvenile institutions in Trinidad and Tobago. A sample of 317 youths from three schools is randomly drawn (School A, n=121, School B, n=120 and School C, n=76). Adopting a social psychological approach to analyse this phenomenon, measures used are socio-economic class (SES), parenting type, school type, and academic achievement were used as independent variables, with civic attitudes, external locus of control, classroom disruption and involvement in deviance (self report) generally used as dependent measures.

As independent variables, the terms "deviance" and "delinquency" are used interchangeably since our interest in this study includes, but is not confined to, delinquency as legally defined. And as such we examine psychological dispositions, various forms of school misconduct, incivilities and mild to severe forms of delinquent or deviant acts by youths.

Schools A and B (mainstream secondary schools) were found to have severe levels of deviance, that is, 10%, with School C (a juvenile institution) having 20% of severe deviance. Overall, ten percent (10%) of the sample were found to have committed severe acts of deviance (for example, fighting with a weapon), 11.5% were found to have committed moderate acts of deviance (for example, petty theft) and 15% of the sample were found to have committed mild acts of deviance (for example, skipping school).

Of the forty-nine (49) hypotheses put forward, twenty-four (24) were supported by the results (using Pearson's  $r$  and confirmed by further ANOVA tests). Overall, academic achievement, civic attitudes and school type were found to be significantly correlated to youths' involvement or propensity for deviance. SES, parenting type and external locus of control showed no significant correlation to youths' involvement or propensity for deviance. As a foundation study, this research identifies some major correlates of male youth deviance in schools and opens the way for further work.