VIOLENT JUVENILE CRIME: A CORRELATION

STUDY BETWEEN AT-RISK FACTORS

ASSOCIATEDWITH JUVENILE CRIME

AND 1996 VIOLENT JUVENILE CRIME

ARREST RATES IN OKLAHOMA
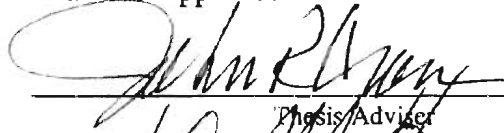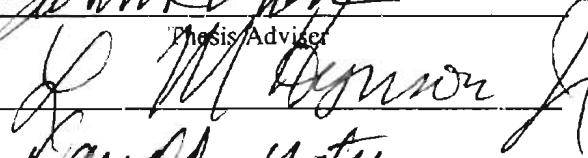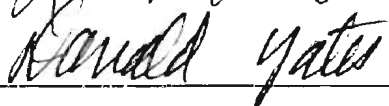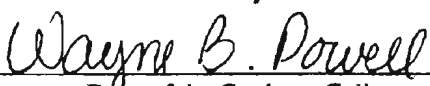
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Violent Teen crime rates continue to increase throughout the United States.

Politicians and law enforcement officers worry, and for good reasons. They worry

because, while they recognize this increase of violence, they often do not understand the

underlying causes. Considering their concerns about this understanding is what

motivated this researcher to undertake this study. The explanations provided here,

however, take into account the social undercurrents that others, particularly policy

makers, overlook for a variety of reasons.

While this research has political overtones for it isolates sociological ctiologies

for these disturbing juvenile patterns, it is an academic study. It is one, however, without

any external funding. This research focused on the most recent, secondary available data.

This data contains both rates of violent juvenile crime and certain risk factors often

associated with juvenile crime. The availability of these data allowed the researcher to

make some original contribution to the literature in two ways. That unique contribution

emerged as the researcher analyzed the sociological factors relevant to juvenile crime

rates. In addition, the research was theory-driven, it is one thing to have data for this type

of analysis, it is quite another to have an adequate interpretation.

In this introduction the author presents basic statistics on both violent crimes in

general and Oklahoma violent crime patterns in particular. As mentioned above, the

reader finds a discussion of interpretations and explanations about these patterns. After a

brief introduction, the author states the purpose of this particular study, narrowing it to a

specific theory and corollary concepts and variables. Throughout the thesis the

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researcher gives the rationale for research decisions, as well as the primary study objectives as seen through a developmental model.

Next, the thesis provides the research objectives for this study. The research is based on research objectives, rather than hypotheses for several reasons. Hypotheses testing suggest a formal study where the theories and methods of research are more widely accepted. In this particular study the researcher wanted to focus on certain critical issues. A total of seven research objectives were used. After presenting the objectives, this paper then elaborates upon these in separate sub-sections. As with any research there are limitations, especially when the primary quantitative data that were collected were for other purposes. After discussing the limitations of this study, definitions of terms and the theory used throughout the study will be explained. So why is this study timely and relevant? Statistics helps us to understand the importance of this study.

In 1992 nearly 2.3 million juveniles, under the age of 18, were arrested for a variety of criminal activities in the United States. Of this number, 129,600 of the arrests were for violent crimes (Snyder & Sickmund, 1995). Violent crime has become a serious problem for society. The fact that more and more violent crimes are being committed by juveniles is disheartening. There is, however, one anomaly to these patterns. And that is this: for most juveniles, crime and delinquency lessens as age increases. By the age of eighteen, most juveniles have stopped participating in delinquent acts. For others, however, the delinquent acts become progressively worse and more frequently violent.

Fortunately for researchers in the field, an abundance of work is available on juvenile delinquency. A major topic of concern among many authors and researchers concerns identifying risk factors present in a child's life which could place him or her at

risk for developing delinquent behaviors. When attempting to identify risk factors, many researchers look for data related to biological or environmental conditions of the children. There are a number of organizations, social agencies, and government agencies that monitor the well-being of children on the national and state levels. They collect the data but don't conduct academic research. Moreover, their studies have no theory or explanation. Together though, someone like this researcher and the agency staff can collaborate on studies.

At the state level, one group monitoring the well-being of Oklahoma children is the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy (OICA). Their annual publication shows a number of risk factors believed to place a child "at-risk" for certain problems including delinquent activity. Among the indicators included in The Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy's 1998 Kids Count Fact Book are: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child death rates, teenage pregnancy and high school drop-out rates. The Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) monitors the rate of juvenile crime in Oklahoma and publishes its findings in the annual Uniform Crime Report (UCR). The OSBI maintains data for all 77 counties in Oklahoma regarding juvenile crime arrests rates. The information provided by the OSBI assists agencies in identifying social markers such as: ethnic, gender, and age categories where criminal activity is most prevalent. Working in conjunction with these two agencies is the Oklahoma Department of Commerce (ODOC). The ODOC requests information from a number of agencies around Oklahoma and, once the data is received, the agency compiles a raw data file to be used by other agencies including the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy.

Many times the data retrieved by these agencies are used to determine how to facilitate prevention and intervention programs to combat the increasing rates of crime. A number of sociological theories address the issue of violence and delinquency. Perhaps one of the most popular theories dealing with delinquency and crime is the theory of social control. The recognition of this theory was due primarily to the ideas and beliefs of Travis Hirschi. In his assumptions about the nature of violence in humans, Hirsch suggested that all human beings are capable of violence and animal impulses. However, Hirschi expressed that it was the bonds to society by individuals which keeps him or her from becoming deviant. Conforming to the rules and norms of society allows an individual to form social bonds and to be sensitive to the needs of others. The weaker the bonds the less an individual empathizes with societal norms. The next chapter presents the issues of juvenile violent crime. This chapter includes a discussion of the theory of social control and the ideas of Hirschi as well as other authors contributions to Control Theory. This discussion also allows the readers to better understand the relationship juvenile violent crime maintains with social at-risk indicators.

Purpose Of This Study

This thesis addresses issues of violent juvenile crime and the at-risk factors identified by local agencies, in an attempt to establish a relationship between the two. The main objective of this study is quite specific. It is not to find causes of juvenile violent crime arrests. The primary objective is to identify a connection between at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrests. To accomplish this connection the researcher focuses on county data.

Some of the strongest debates on juvenile crimes center around the socioeconomic conditions of the child. The degree to which conditions such as child poverty, unemployment, poverty level income, and the number of families who receive Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), have an affect on children are unknown. Perhaps what's more important is determining the critical age when prevention and intervention techniques and programs may provide the greatest benefit for children in areas where the socioeconomic conditions and the at-risk factors identified are the worse. With this in mind, the primary objective of this study is to examine the issue of violent juvenile crime arrests rates using data provided by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy and the Oklahoma State Bureau Of Investigation. The OICA identifies six at-risk indicators: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teenage births and high school drop-out rates, which when experienced by children, jeopardizes their well-being. This research will examine the amount of correlation between violent juvenile crime arrest rates, and the at-risk factors identified, not to establish causation, but in an attempt to identify a relationship between violent juvenile crime arrest rates and the at-risk factors identified by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy. In addition, this study seeks to identify a critical period in a child's development when at-risk prevention techniques and programs may provide the greatest degree of deterrence from future criminal activity. This study will not only focus on the economic conditions of the counties in Oklahoma, but also the at-risk factors identified by the OICA.

Following the lead of several researchers in the field (Wilson & Hernstein, 1985; Moffitt, 1993), the author decided to analyze the data and at-risk factors within the

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framework of a Developmental Model. The stages of development within the model include: Infant, Child and Teen. The six indicators identified by the OICA: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teen births and high school drop-outs will be categorically placed within the three stages. Included within the Infant Stage will be the at-risk indicators; low birth-weight infants and infant mortality. The Child Stage will include the risk factors, child abuse and neglect and child deaths. The last stage, The Teen Stage, will include teen birth rates and high-school drop out rates. Each at-risk factor was placed within a stage based solely on the researcher's concept of highest probability of successful intervention and prevention. For example, The Child Stage includes low-birth weight infants and infant mortality because it is the researchers belief that early intervention and prevention techniques designed solely to lower the incidents of these two risk factors would primarily benefit prenatal births to infants up to one year of age. A theoretical model using the Theory of Social Control will be applied to the study in an attempt to accurately understand the relationship between violent juvenile crime arrest rates and the at-risk indicators identified in the study.

Research Objectives

The seven primary objectives of this research were to:

1.) Evaluate the at-risk factors, (low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teenage births and high school drop-out rates) identified by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy and determine the extent, if any, of the relationship between the at-risk factors and juvenile violent crime arrest rates in Oklahoma.

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2.) Place the at-risk indicators into a development model, then determine if the stages of development, Infant, Child and Teen Stages, show a correlation with juvenile violent crime arrest rates. This will facilitate the establishment of a critical time period for prevention and intervention programs.

3.) Control for the median child poverty level of each county, evaluate the at-risk factors individually and within the context of the development model to determine if a correlation exist between the at-risk factors identified and violent juvenile crime arrest rates.

4.) Control for the median poverty level of income for each county, evaluate the at-risk factors individually, and within the development model to determine if a correlation exists between the at-risk factors identified and the rate of violent juvenile crime arrests.

5.) Control for the median unemployment rate for Oklahoma, evaluate and determine if a correlation exists between the at-risk factors identified and violent juvenile crime arrest rates, both individually and within the development model.

6.) Control for the median number of families receiving Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) in each county, to determine if a correlation exists between the at-risk factors identified and rates of violent juvenile crime arrests, both individually and within the development model.

7.) Analyze and evaluate to determine if the contents of 18 journal diaries of incarcerated youth, arrested for violent crimes, are relevant to the at-risk factors identified by the OICA.

Primary Objective One

The purpose of primary objective one is to establish a relationship between the six at-risk indicators (low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teen births and high school drop-out rates), and violent juvenile crime arrests rates, using data from the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy and the Oklahoma State Bureau Of Investigation. In order to fulfill the objective of determining if juvenile crime arrest rates are affected by the at-risk indicators identified by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy it is necessary to address each of the six at-risk indicators separately.

Primary Objective Two

Next, each of the indicators: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teenage births and high school drop-out rates will be categorized under one of three stages, Infant, Child and Teen, within a Development Model. The Infant Stage will include infant mortality and low birth-weight infants. Child abuse and neglect and child death rates will be placed within the Child Stage. The Teen Stage will include the indicators, teenage births and high school drop-out rates. The rate of violent juvenile crime arrests will be analyzed according to the development stages to determine if a correlation exists between the stages and arrest rates. The purpose of this objective is to identify a time period in the lives of children that are critical for the prevention and intervention programs to deter future criminal activity.

Primary Objective Three

The third objective is similar to the previous two with the exception of a control factor being added. Each county in Oklahoma has been categorized by the Oklahoma

Institute For Child Advocacy based on the county's economic condition. The label given to each county includes either the categories wealthier, wealthiest, middle, poorer and poorest. There are a number of factors used by the OICA to determine the economic status of the counties including: child poverty rates, unemployment rates, poverty level income, and the rates of families receiving state assistance, referred to as Aid To Families With Dependent Children. Data from the indicators are combined and a cumulative score is used to categorize each of the counties as wealthier, wealthiest, middle, poorer and poorest.

In research objective three, the median rate of child poverty will be used as a control variable, while using a correlation method of analysis to determine the relationship between violent juvenile crime arrest rates and each of the six at-risk indicators. After determining the median rate of child poverty for the State Of Oklahoma, the data will be used to determine if counties with lower or higher rates of child poverty have increased problems with violent juvenile crime arrest rates.

Primary Objective Four

The primary focus of this research objective is to control for the rate of families living at or below the poverty level in Oklahoma. The rate of families living at or below the poverty level within each county of Oklahoma will be evaluated and the median rate of families living at or below the national poverty level will be used to determine the existence and the extent of the relationship between violent juvenile crime arrest rates and the six at-risk indicators identified by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy. After performing a correlation on each of the six at-risk indicators and violent juvenile

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crime arrest rates, a correlation will be conducted on the indicators within the context of the development model.

Primary Objective Five

The primary purpose of objective five is to determine if county unemployment rates have an effect on the correlation between the at-risk factors identified by the OICA and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. The median rate of unemployment for the State Of Oklahoma will be determined and controlled while performing a correlation analysis on the at-risk indicators and violent juvenile arrest rates. The at-risk indicators will be analyzed at both the individual level and within the context of the development model.

Primary Objective Six

The purpose of research objective six is similar to that of the previous three objectives but differs in one aspect. The median number of families in the State Of Oklahoma who are receiving Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) will be analyzed and controlled while a correlation is conducted on the at-risk indicators identified by the OICA and the rate of violent juvenile arrests. The correlation will be conducted on the at-risk indicators individually and within the context of the development model.

Primary Objective Seven

The final objective of this research is to conduct an analysis on 18 autobiographical journals of juvenile males incarcerated in a maximum security juvenile facility for committing a violent juvenile offense. The contents of the journals will be analyzed to determine if any of the at-risk indicators listed by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy can be found in the writings of the incarcerated juveniles. The journals

were collected by the researcher in the summer of 1996. The students were informed

that the journals would be collected at the end of a two month period. They were

instructed to write anything in the journals and that the journals would not be used

against them in their treatment.

Limitations Of The Research

As with many research studies such as this, there will be some limitations. First,

it is important that the issue of ecological fallacy be addressed in this study. A

correlation research analysis will be conducted in this thesis, therefore it is necessary to

stipulate that a correlation between two variables based on grouped data should not be

used to draw conclusions about individuals. For example, if violent crime arrest rates are

high in areas where there is also a higher number of teen pregnancy, you would be

committing an ecological fallacy if you concluded that pregnant teens are more likely to

commit violent crimes. Thus, it is necessary to remember that correlation does not mean

causation.

Another limitation is that the data for the study are from secondary sources that

were collected by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy. Much of the data

compiled and used in the Kids Count Fact Book is not within the same year for each

indicator. For example, while one indicator may represent rates for fiscal year 1996,

another might be collected from 1993-1995. However, in those instances where multiple

years are calculated the total reported number of incidents are divided by the number of

years and the average for the total years reported are analyzed. The child population data

used in this research comes for the 1980 U.S. Bureau of the Census and then estimated to

arrive at the current child population for each county.

With these limitations in mind, what this researcher seeks to provide is a link between earlier research and current published research on at-risk factors associated with juvenile violent crime. This research does not seek to identify causes of violent juvenile crimes, however it is the purpose of this thesis to explore relationships between the at-risk factors identified by the OICA and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. Furthermore, this researcher hopes to identify through the use of a development model, a critical period in child development when intervention and prevention techniques would be most beneficial for reducing future criminal involvement by juveniles.

DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Criminal Offense

The term criminal offense is used when an act, whether committed by a child or an adult is contrary to criminal law. Violent crime is identified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation as murder, non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault. These crimes are listed in the Uniform Crime Report as index crimes. There are eight index crimes four of those are the violent crimes previously mentioned while the other four are referred to as property crimes including: burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson.

Uniform Crime Reports

These reports are compiled and published by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The reports provide annual estimates of crime in the United States, based upon arrest rates. These reports provide data gathered from law enforcement agencies from around the country, which have jurisdiction over about 96 percent of the population.

At-Risk Factors

For the purpose of this paper the at-risk factors used are those indicators which have been previously identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and The Annie E. Casey Foundation as interfering with the well-being of children. While the publications of these two reports do not mention the at-risk factors identified as, contributing to the rates of violent juvenile crime, it is this researcher's belief that they are important factors which must be addressed in order to fully understand the growth of violent juvenile crime arrest rates. The at-risk factors included in this research are: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child death rates, teen pregnancy rates, and high school drop-out rates.

Delinquency

Delinquency typically occurs when young persons beneath the age of adulthood develop the deviant values, customs, and standards of groups of juveniles whom then share, and transmit the deviant behavior. They generally are isolated from the larger culture and have turned to their delinquent peers for a solution. In Oklahoma, a person under the age of 16 can be tried as an adult for serious violent juvenile offenses. On these occasions the juvenile is transferred to an adult criminal court and the rights of the juvenile are waived. Juveniles in Oklahoma, who are under the age of 16, if found guilty of violent juvenile crimes, can be tried as adults but sentenced to either adult prisons or juvenile facilities for treatment.

Summary

In summary, this chapter has introduced the reader to the current problems associated with violent juvenile crime. Many researchers have attempted to find

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etiologies for the growing rate of violent juvenile crime arrest rates throughout the United States. This research looks at just a few of those at-risk indicators, identified by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy, and seeks not to identify them as causes of violent crime but as factors associated with violent crime arrest rates. The at-risk indicators identified are placed within a Development Model in an attempt to establish a time period necessary for intervention and prevention. Using the Social Control Theory, this research seeks to explain how a relationship between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrests exist.

The next chapter will be a literature review about the at-risk factors associated with juvenile crime in the United States. Furthermore, the chapter will focus on the theoretical model of social control in an attempt to facilitate the reader in understanding the etiologies of violent juvenile crime and how violent crime relates to the at-risk factors identified by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL BASIS

<u>Family Risk Factors</u>

Many researchers have attempted to identify factors that have the potential to place a child at-risk for delinquent behavior. For instance, risk factors such as the emergence of gangs, the peer enforced importance of fitting in, and the shift in parent-child relationships, have all been explained as variables in the trend of juvenile crime. Thus, on all levels, societal, familial, and individual elements exist that could play a part in the increase of delinquent and criminal acts being committed by juveniles under the age of eighteen.

There are a number of societal risk factors identified that are believed to increase the probability of delinquent behavior among juveniles. Socioeconomic factors, especially poverty, have long been viewed by some theorists as contributing to the overall crime rate (Angennent & Anton de Man, 1997). According to these authors, conditions of poverty and unemployment can lead to low levels of achievement and hopelessness among juveniles. A study conducted by Smith and Krohn, (1995) recognized that families who are economically disadvantaged face particular challenges for parenting. The authors reported that, "(economic) hardship may create tensions in the family that reduce the level of family attachment, or create distractions and tensions that prevent parents from monitoring their children effectively or being involved with their activities" (1995:71). Therefore, according to Smith and Krohn, severe economic conditions may sometimes lead to child abuse or neglect when frustrations are elevated. In a look at the economic environment of abused children, Kruttschnitt and Dornfeld (1993: 312) found

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that, "although poverty persistence was significantly related to recurrent abuse, almost all of this effect appeared to be explained by factors associated with the stress of economic deprivation". Economic conditions as a cause of delinquency finds its roots in the social disorganization perspective. In 1929. Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay studied the effects of social disorganization on juvenile crime rates. They discovered that delinquency occurred in uneven spatial distribution and the highest rates of delinquency occurred in urban areas closest to the expanding central business district and the greater the distance from the area, the less rates of delinquency occurred, such as in sub-urban and rural areas. Poverty stricken districts, sometimes referred to as slum districts, represented the area with the highest crime rates of delinquency. Also, there was an increased degree of instability found in these areas including a high percentage of South Eastern European immigrants, or non-whites. In addition to this findings Shaw and McKay found an increased number of foreign born individuals, as well as a low percentage of home ownership, low income, high unemployment rates, and an increased number of people receiving assistance from the government. Shaw and McKay implicated within the context of their work that social disorganization in the community is a condition for delinquency; a juvenile's surroundings can contribute to whether he or she is involved in delinquent acts. However, it was Shaw and McKay's belief that these factors lead to less supervision and less social control of juveniles by their parents, and this could lead to higher delinquency rates for the juveniles.

Rankin and Wells (1986), suggests that the family is the single most important determinant of delinquent behavior. Early literature suggests that juvenile delinquents came from families that were incomplete, or in other words, single parent families.

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Today, single parent families still receive a great amount of criticism from social agencies as a causative factor in juvenile delinquency. Among the critics, Angenent and De Man (1997), suggest that because single parent families typically have a limited income the parents focus is on survival instead of the children. Therefore, due to the lack of proper monitoring of the children, the effects of single parent families are not positive. Angenent and De Man (1997:87) further state that, "Because the family plays such an important role in the personality development of children, negative consequences are virtually predictable when less than optimal family conditions prevail".

Family instability and poor parenting practices have been studied to determine the degree to which they affect children. Rankin and Wells (1986) suggest that children whose families have been disrupted by divorce, separation, or death display a greater degree of maladaptive attitudes and behaviors. Broken homes, caused by divorce, separation, or death, are more strongly felt by juveniles of higher socioeconomic status. This is due primarily to the degree of stability felt within the family prior to the disruption. Children from low-economic conditions have a greater tendency to be accustomed or acclimated to impoverished conditions, hence a more unstable environment. When divorce occurs it is seen as more acceptable in their environmental conditions, whereas, divorce, separation, or death in families of high socioeconomic status is less likely to be seen as acceptable by the standards of the family's social circles. Poverty would therefore out weigh the effects of divorce when dealing with delinquency as suggested by Chilton and Markle (1975).

The bond or attachment a child has to parents or the harmony within the family is an important factor for creating a healthy environment for children. According to

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Angenent and de Man (1997:88), "Families who are in harmony get along better like each other more, and focus more on cohesiveness than families experiencing disharmony". Furthermore, families who experience disharmony do not care much about each other or get along well in family situations. The attitudes of parents in a disharmonious family towards parenting practices may be cold and uncaring and many times the children are neglected. Angenent and de Man further believe that the lack of parenting can cause disharmony in the family. Teenage mothers are especially at-risk for lacking the proper parenting skills needed to provide a warm, caring, and harmonious environment for their newborn children.

School And Peer Influences

The relationship and bond that a child has with his or her school and peers may be a predictor of delinquent behavior. Cernovich and Giordano (1992), argue that the stress within the boundaries of school may exacerbate aggression in juveniles. Cohen (1955) and Merton (1938), suggested that school experiences and school failure, particularly among the lower socioeconomic class is an important indicator of delinquency. However, according to Braithwaite (1981), and Siegal & Senna (1988), school failure is predictive of delinquency for children of all socioeconomic classes; middle and upper status as well as lower status children. Other research links delinquency to dropping out of school. According to Bowditch (1993), there are a series of factors which could lead to a child dropping out of school. Children from families with low socioeconomic status show more truancy and are absent more, have a greater incidence of school disciplinary problems, are overage in grade, and are failing classes than more often than children from families with higher socioeconomic status.

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Influence from peers can become greater in the later adolescent years causing additional strain on the family unit. At some point in the lives of most children, the bonds to the family are loosened while the bonds with peers strengthen. At this time parents no longer have the same influence on their children as they once did. The child no longer views the ideas of the parents as more important than the ideas of his or her peers. Bonding socially becomes extremely important for the child. Hirschi theorized that delinquent acts result when an individual's bond to society is weak or broken (Nye, 1958; Reckless, 1961). He believed that social bonding involved both inner and outer dimensions. How one acts is a person's inner dimension. A person acts the way society expects him or her to act and therefore, they conform to fit that image. On the other hand, the outer dimension, according to Hirschi, involves attachment, belief, commitment and involvement. These bonds, suggested by Hirschi, refer to the degree to which a person has ties to others (Empey and Stafford, 1991).

Adolescents have a fundamental need to survive within their peer groups. A teenager does not want to look out of place in the eyes of his or her peers, therefore, the need to conform overwhelms the adolescent's life. They will imitate their peers in order to fit into the group. Many juveniles will do anything to fit in even if it involves acts of delinquency. Delinquent children generally have delinquent friends. According to Angenent and de Man (1996), groups of juveniles with similar beliefs will come together and rely mainly on the decisions of the group, instead of turning to their parents for advice. Their behavior may seem risky and the rules are often forgotten and many times broken when limits are exceeded. It is at this point in the juvenile's life, according to the authors, that criminal behavior is typically manifested. In addition, juveniles with strong

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positive thoughts toward delinquency will be pulled toward the group of youngsters already practicing delinquent behavior.

Merton (1938) suggested that when jobs are unavailable and a person cannot obtain employment it creates a strain for the individual. This become problematic for the juvenile who has dropped out of school and is unemployed. A large portion of unemployed juveniles are from ethnic minority groups (Grotenhuis & Meijers, 1994). The authors suggest that a specific category of juveniles unemployed are at risk of becoming part of an underclass of socially, culturally, and economically marginalized people. Unemployment restricts opportunities and resources and when an individual cannot handle the situation he may turn to crime (Ploeg, 1991). Individuals began believing that life is unfair and a sense of hopelessness takes over.

Other Risk Factors

Regarding factors associated with social issues are a number of additional areas of concern. Teenage pregnancy remains a problem for societies. Nationally, the teen birth rate has increased over the past ten years. However, a steady decline in teen pregnancy rates has been recorded over the past few years. Still, according to a study done by the Tulsa World in 1998, nearly 1 million teenage girls become pregnant each year and it is estimated that more than 200,000 abortions are performed each year on girls. Many states do not report abortion rates, therefore, it is difficult to know exactly how many pregnancies are terminated each year by teenage girls ("Teen Pregnancy," 1998). As seen in Table 1, teen pregnancy rates have dropped in some age groups while remaining steady in others, with an exception found in fourteen year-old females. That age group has shown a steady increase in teen pregnancy since 1993.

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Table 1. Births to Teens By Age and Year

Age	Year			
Year	1993	1994	1995	Total
11	0	1	1	2
12	3	2	2	7
13	31	27	22	80
14	109	120	133	362
15	380	372	377	1129
16	818	923	867	2608
17	1546	1528	1519	4593
Total	2887	2973	2921	8781

Source: Oklahoma State Department
Of Commerce

According to the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF), children born to teenage mothers are at-risk from the beginning of their life. The AECF (1998: 20), annual report on teen pregnancy states that the children born to the teen mothers "have relatively low probability of obtaining the emotional and financial resources they need to develop into independent, productive, and well-adjusted adults". Further complicating this problem is the number of infants born annually with medical challenges. Each year statistics are provided by government agencies on the rates of low birth-weight infants and the rate for infant mortality. The Annie E. Casey Foundation reports that nationally the number of babies born with low birth-weight is increasing, while infant mortality is improving overall on a national level. However, low birth-weight infant and infant mortality occur usually in areas of low socioeconomic conditions where proper nutrition and medical care is often unavailable or is not sought by a pregnant mother until late in the pregnancy. Himmelstein and Woolhandler (1994) report that there continues to be a growing disparity in the infant mortality rates between black and white babies. The gap according to the authors, has widened substantially over the past 20 years. Another concern

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reported by Himmelstein and Woolhandler is the disparity between rates of infant mortality in the United States and the rates of six other industrialized countries. The United States in 1993 had an infant mortality rate of 9.1 percent, the highest of the six countries. Italy and Australia had the second highest rate with 8.2 percent. Other countries included, France with 7.2 percent, Germany's 7.1 percent, Canada with 6.8 percent and Japan with a low 4.6 percent, nearly half the rate of the United States. This disparity, especially among racial groups within the United States is disheartening considering the fact that poor and minority children are typically over represented in both crime arrest rates and in victimization rates. According to Shah and Roth (1974), this is an indication that children born at low birth-weights run a greater risk of mental retardation and other biological impairments than do other children. Living in conditions of poverty, women who are uneducated and lack the knowledge available, may receive inadequate nourishment and prenatal care while pregnant. The lack of prenatal care, in turn, leads to children being born undernourished and unhealthy. Many times the children are born premature and fail to thrive in their environment. With the crucial period of growth and maturation within the first few months of life, their brain cells are not fully developed and problems will occur for the child. Unfortunately, many of these children will die before their first birthday, adding to the rate of infant mortality.

In November 1993, The Oklahoma Department of Health (ODH) published it's findings from a longitudinal study on unintended pregnancies in Oklahoma from 1988 to 1995. The responses of 11,750 mothers to questions relating to unintended pregnancy was recorded and analyzed by the ODH. They found that women with unintended pregnancies are at an increased risk of giving birth to a low birth-weight baby and

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experiencing medical complications that are costly. Furthermore, the ODH shows that in 1992, Medicaid costs for prenatal care, delivery, newborn care and newborn intensive care resulting from mistimed and unwanted pregnancies totaled 68.9 million dollars. The ODH data also indicate that unmarried teens are nearly twice as likely to have an unintended pregnancy as an adult. Women with unwanted pregnancies were most likely to have low birth-weight babies. ODH data also shows that 21 percent of women who have unwanted pregnancies reported either being in a physical fight or being physically hurt by their husband or partner during the 12 months before delivery.

Unintended and unwanted pregnancies can lead to an increase in child abuse and neglect according to a report by the Oklahoma Department of Health. Reports by the ODH indicate that a child from a family with two unwanted pregnancies is 2.8 times more likely to be abused by a parent, than a child from a family where the pregnancies were planned. The chance of abuse increased to 4.6 times in families where three unplanned pregnancies have occurred (Zuravin, 1991). Widom (1995), reported that 26 percent of individuals who were abused as children are later arrested as juveniles as compared to 16.8 percent who were not abused. The percentage increases to 28.6 percent for adults arrested as compared to 21 percent who were not abused.

Theoretical Foundation

There are a number of theories regarding aggression in humans. Some believe that aggression is instinct while others believe that it is not instinct, but learned behavior. The nature versus nurture debate has existed for many years and whether aggression is environmentally stimulated or biological is still a heated topic among many researchers. English psychiatrist, Anthony Storr (1968) when discussing human aggression

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characterized humans as the cruelest and most ruthless species that ever existed.

According to his work, Storr argues that humans are the only species that habitually

destroy members of their own species. Sigmund Freud, another well-known early

psychiatrist, believed that humans were born violent. He suggests that humans are out for

self -satisfaction and aggression is a normal instinctive trait. Bender and Leone

(1983:36), state that according to Freud's ideas:

> Men are not gentle creatures who want to be loved, and who at the most
> can defend themselves if they are attacked; they are, on the contrary,
> creatures among whose instinctual endowments is to be reckoned a
> powerful share of aggressiveness.

It was also suggested by Freud that our fellow human-beings are not only potential

helpers and sexual objects, but they are people who tempts us to satisfy our

aggressiveness. Anthropologist, Ashley Montagu, argues, that human behavior is

influenced by the environment and culture and not something we are simply born with.

He states, that "No human being has ever been born with aggressive or hostile impulses"

(Bender & Leone, 1983: 31). Montagu believes that, while the existence of potentialities

for aggression and hostility are present, it is the added stimulation and social organization

that patterns our behavior. Whether human aggression is psychological or sociological in

nature remains a topic of debate, however, if aggression and violence is viewed in the

context of both disciplines, a better and more comprehensive understanding of the

relationship exist.

The problem of social disorganization was addressed by Travis Hirschi (1969), in

his Control Theory approach. According to Hirschi's theory there remains a constant

strain in society and that social controls operate to prevent violations of the norm and

more specifically crime (Pfohl, 1994). The focus is on social bonds that tie individuals

to the conventional norms, people, and activities of society. When an actor weighs the

consequences of committing a criminal act, such as isolation from family or peers, or

incarceration, that person chooses whether or not to engage in the criminal activity

(Empey & Stafford, 1991). According to Hirshi's theory delinquent acts are a result of

weak or broken ties to conventional society (Pfohl, 1994). From a similar point of view,

Howard Becker (1963:26), in describing how a person becomes deviant, explains, "there

is no reason to assume that only those who finally commit a deviant act actually have the

impulse to do so...people are much more deviant than they appear". In other words, we

all have deviant tendencies, however, whether or not we act on those tendencies is

dependant on what we have to lose personally. Once deviance becomes a way of life for

the individual, it becomes his identity. The deviant identification becomes the controlling

factor. It becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy for the individual (Gove, 1975).

Hirschi uses both inner and out dimensions to describe social bonding (Pfoh,

1994). More specifically, he identifies four types of control in describing outer

dimensions of social bonding including, attachment, commitment, involvement, and

belief. Attachment refers to the emotional and psychological ties one has with others,

particularly those persons who conform to societal norms. Usually if a person has a

strong attachment to others who conform to societal norms they will be less likely to

deviate from the norm. This usually refers to the relationship one has with a parent,

school, or peer(s). Commitment, simplistically speaking, refers to how much a person

has to lose when committing a deviant act. The amount of investment the individual has

in conventional goals, attitudes and behaviors determines the amount they have to lose

when they deviate from the norm. The more a person has to lose the less likely they are to break the rules governing normative actions. Involvement refers to the amount of time an individual invests in conforming to the norms of society. If a person remains busy on a daily basis engaging in activities such as work, household chores, homework, etc., little time is left for committing acts of deviance. Belief is the acceptance of society's laws. This typically is achieved when someone is taught to respect the laws and has the ability to morally constrain from deviant acts.

Hischi's analysis of social control according to Pfohl (1994:207), "represents a social-psychological consideration of forces which control or constrain persons to stay within the straight and narrow boundaries of the established normative order". Furthermore, when change disrupts our social bonding, our internalized beliefs and external attachments, commitments, and involvement can become weakened. Strong ties to conventional institutions will inhibit an individual's desire to commit an act of deviance.

In testing his own theory, Hirschi found that, regardless of race, age, or education, most individuals rated the seriousness of violent crimes equally. Furthermore, he found that most people favored harsh punishments for the offenders who commit crimes that hurt other people (Blumstein and Cohen, 1980; Empey and Stafford, 1991; Chilton and DeAmicis, 1975; Hamilton and Rytina, 1980; Rossi, Simpson, and Miller, 1985; Rossi, Bose, and Berk, 1974; Warr, Meier, and Erickson, 1983; Wellford, 1975; Wolfgang, Figlio, and Sellin, 1985).

Several years later Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), expanded on the earlier work of Hirschi's Theory of Social Control. Self-control was identified as the primary cause of

crime in their work. Gottfredson and Hirschi stipulate that people who obey the law and abide by the rules of society have greater self-control than those individuals who break the laws and rules of society. In addition, they believe that self-control is a direct result of the parenting techniques (e.g., supervision) used when raising children. For this reason, class differences resulting in different parenting techniques would explain the variation in self-control exhibited by juveniles.

A number of researchers have attempted to explain factors associated with juvenile delinquency with Hirschi's theory of Social Control. Brezina (1998:93), found in his study on adolescent maltreatment, that social control theory logically explained certain factors associated with delinquency, "maltreatment produces delinquency because it creates the conditions that free individuals to become involved in deviance". Maltreatment erodes social control and creates an environment for deviant learning. According to the research, "Hirschi's control perspective has provided the perfect vehicle for recognition, acceptance, and explanation" (Brezina, 1998:78).

In a study testing whether the perceived risk of arrest would relate to delinquency among a sample of inner-city youth, Foglia (1997:438), found that, "the threat of legal sanctions did not deter these inner-city youths, but they were influenced by the behavior of their friends, their own sense of right and wrong, and their parents (and perhaps other adults in their lives)". This would lend credibility to Hirshi's theory that attachment to individuals has an influence on whether or not a person commits a deviant act. Along with the findings of Foglia was the importance of parental roles concerning the impact of punishment. When parents punish illegal behaviors, young people understand that these behaviors are unacceptable and will refrain from committing acts of deviance. Also

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important was that peers and other respected adults conform to norms and refrain from breaking the law. Along these some lines, Fraser (1996:3), suggests that "Family environment perhaps more than any other setting in the social ecology of childhood, conditions, processes, and experiences, in the family shape the behavior of the children". He goes a step further and suggests that children are trained within their home environment to act aggressive toward others, and to display hostility to authority figures. Failing to set limits, the use of harsh punishment, and lack of proper supervisory skills adds to the idea of aggression reinforcement in the home.

With all this in mind, Hirschi's notion of attachment to the family is of great importance. Indeed if the child is raised within a family structure where aggression and violence is a norm, then it is probable that the child will conform to those norms and act in an aggressive, violent manner. On the other hand, if the child is raised in an environment conforming to the conventional norms of society the child is more likely to be well adjusted and morally secure. Attachment to other conventional persons institutions and beliefs only strengthen the likelihood that the child will commit to those same beliefs and attitudes and become involved in the conventional norms of his or her environment.

While Hirschi's Theory of Social Control has been used as a way of explaining causes of delinquency, especially among juveniles, it may also be utilized to address the etiologies of certain at-risk factors including those indicators addressed in this thesis. The degree of bond between a child and a parent may perhaps help to explain higher rates of infant mortality, teenage pregnancy, child abuse and neglect, and high school drop out rates.

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Summary

This chapter has focused on some of the available literature concerning the at-risk factors associated with violent juvenile crimes. Perhaps, one of the most important factors identified, within the context of the Social Control theory, is the attachment to the family. Research presented in this paper indicates that children raised in families experiencing difficulties in the structure of their family may have difficulties establishing a healthy set of values. In other words, learning the difference between what's right and what's wrong, according to societal norms, is taught by association. Children need to form attachments to their families, friends, and schools, and learn to obey the conventional norms of the society. The bond that an individual has with his family, peers and school, according to research may affect the individual's ability to conform to the norms of society. Juvenile's who form bonds with delinquent peers and low levels of attachment to school and family, are at a greater risk for developing delinquent behaviors and activities.

Travis Hirschi developed a theory of Social Control which suggests that a child has a greater chance of being well-adjusted if he or she develops attachments to the conventional norms, ideas, and beliefs (Empey and Stafford, 1991). Furthermore, the level of commitment the child has to the conventional norms, and the amount of involvement in normal activities is an important factor in the development of the child. The basic notion is, when a person has more to lose by committing an act of deviance they will conform to the norms of society instead of risk losing those attachments to their family and friends.

The following chapter will discuss the data sets used in this research and explain the method of analysis used to conduct this thesis. The data collected and used for this research come from secondary sources which will be explained in greater detail in Chapter Three.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Overview

The data utilized for this research are from secondary sources. The data for the

at-risk indicators are taken from The Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy's (OICA)

annual publication, Oklahoma Kids Count Factbook '98. In addition, statistics related to

violent juvenile crime arrest rates will come from published reports by the Oklahoma

State Bureau of Investigation in the annual Uniform Crime Report. Finally, a content

analysis will be conducted on 18 autobiographical journals by male violent juvenile

offenders incarcerated in a maximum security facility. Using both qualitative and

quantitative data, the author preceded to integrate a triangulation method of analysis.

The triangulation method suggests that researchers utilize more than one source of

information. For example in this particular study, the researcher used secondary data for

the quantitative computation and journals (inside accounts) of juvenile offenders for the

qualitative portion. These journals also contain some biographical information about the

socialization process itself. Thus the triangulation method gives us a more complete

picture of the developmental process. In fact, it can be argued that qualitative and

quantitative methods are now viewed by many researchers as the, most effective

approach. This is especially true when looking at such issues as family functionality,

marital issues, grudges, criminal patterns, and the development model of this and other

such studies. In this case methodological triangulation broadens the perspective. It does

this by combing the quantitative life patterns found in certain risk factors behavior with

the qualitative interpretations of daily life patterns collected with the qualitative methods.

The quantitative data are presented first, followed by the qualitative data and journals. Thus the multi method approach only enriches such studies. They do this by increasing our understanding of the underlying causes of increased juvenile violent crime rates.

Data Sets

In the 1998 Oklahoma Kids Count Fact book, the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy lists a number of at-risk indicators. These at risk indicators identified by the OICA Fact book include, economic distress, low birth-weight babies, infant mortality, births to teens, child abuse and neglect, child death, and high school drop-out rates. Each of the 77 counties in Oklahoma are categorized by the OICA as one of five economic labels, they include: poorer, poorest, middle, wealthier, and wealthiest. The placement by OICA, of the counties into one of these categories is based on a depravation index given to each of the counties. The conditions that determine the depravation index of a county include: the number of children in the county living in poverty, the number of families living at or below the poverty level, the number of families relying on Aid To Families With Dependent Children for their basic needs, and the unemployment rate of the county. Based on the results of each of these indicators the counties are labeled with an economic status. This research will focus on the separate finding of each of these indicators and not combine them for classification purposes. Each of the at-risk indicators: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teen births, and high school drop-out rates will be independent variables while violent juvenile crime arrests rates are the dependent variable. The economic conditions previously mentioned will be utilized as control variables. The unit of analysis in this study is the individual counties in Oklahoma.

Due to the complexity of economic distress and how it is calculated from a number of factors, each of the conditions will be separated and each economic condition within the structure analyzed individually. The remaining six at-risk indicators will initially be analyzed separate to establish their relationship with the rate of violent juvenile crime arrests in Oklahoma. Next, the six factors will be divided into three Child Developmental Stages and each stage will list two indicators. Stage One: Birth: will consist of low birth-weight infants, and infant mortality; Stage Two: Early Childhood: will include child abuse and neglect and child death; Stage Three: Teen Years: will include teen birth rates and high school drop-out rates.

Data Collection

The data presented in Chapter 5, The Findings, is extracted from secondary sources and is a primary source of the data. To facilitate comprehension of the statistical data, the methods used by OICA to gather and calculate their data will be provided **precisely** as they are listed in their publications.

OICA Risk Factors Methodology

Each indicator offers first the definition of the term and then the method used to collect the data.

Economic Distress: a generalized term depicting a poor economic climate in a community. **Deprivation Index** is a measure developed by ranking Child Poverty Rates, Percent of Children receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), level of Per Capita Personal Income and Unemployment Rates. Each Oklahoma county is ranked on each factor. The four individual county rankings are combined into a "Deprivation Index" in which the lower the number, the wealthier the county. **Economic Cluster**

(more commonly referred to as Quintile Divisions) result from each county being ranked according to its Deprivation Index and grouped into one of five clusters composed of approximately twenty percent of the state's population.

Cluster 1 (Wealthiest) includes those counties with a Deprivation Index between 21 and 85.

Cluster 2 (Wealthier) includes those counties with a Deprivation Index between 104 and 118.

Cluster 3 (Middle) includes those counties with a Deprivation Index between 122 and 130.

Cluster 4 (Poorer) includes those counties with a Deprivation Index between 133 and 179.

Cluster 5 (Poorest) includes those counties with a Deprivation Index between 181 and 293.

Low Birth Weight Infants are live births weighing under 5.5 pounds (2,500 grams). The data is reported by place of mother's residence, not place of birth. Births count both the total resident live births and the low-weight births and compare two five-year periods (1983 through 1987 and 1991 through 1995). Resulting rates create average annual percentages for each five-year period. Race is reported as White, Black and American Indian. Other races are included in numbers and calculations for White. Beginning in 1989, the "race of child" was redefined to reflect the mother's race. State totals may vary from the total of all the counties since state totals may include births for which the county of residence was unknown. Level of Prenatal Care addresses the timing

and amount of medical care and monitoring an expectant mother receives. Levels of care include: *adequate* (the recommended level of care beginning in the first trimester with ten or more visits), *intermediate* (care beginning in the first trimester with four through nine visits or care beginning in the second trimester with four or more visits), *early* (care beginning in the first trimester), *late* (care beginning the third trimester with one or more visits), *little* (care beginning in the first or second trimester with one through three visits), and *no care*. Rates are calculated as percentages of all live births. Births count both the total resident live births and the level of care for the five-year period from 1991 through 1995. Resulting rates create an average annual percentage.

Infant Mortality is death occurring to an infant under 1 year of age. The data is reported by place of mother's residence, not place of birth or death. Rates are calculated per 1,000 live births. The data counts the total resident live births and the deaths for two five-year periods (1983 through 1987 and 1991 through 1995). Resulting rates create average annual percentages for each five-year period. Race is reported as White, Black and American Indian. Other races are included in number and calculations for White. Beginning in 1989, the "race of child" was redefined to reflect the mother's race. State totals may vary from the total of all the counties since state totals may include births for which the county of residence was unknown.

Births To Teens are live births which occur to mothers age 15 through 17. The data is reported by place of mother's residence, not place of birth. Births count the total resident live births to mothers in this age group for two three-year periods (1981 through 1983 and 1993 through 1995). Rates are displayed as births per 1,000 females between ages 15 through 17. Base female teen population data is from the 1980 Census. Current

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population for the state is estimated by the Oklahoma Department of Commerce for 1994 and adjusted by the Oklahoma State Department of Health to arrive at a 1994 estimate of females between the ages of 15 through 17 for the state and each county. Resulting rates create average annual rates for each three-year period. Race is reported as White, Black and American Indian. Other races are included in numbers and calculations for White. Beginning in 1989 the "race of child" was redefined to reflect the mother's race. State totals may vary from the total of all the counties since state totals may include births for which the county of residence was unknown.

Child Abuse and Neglect means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's health or welfare. Abuse includes sexual abuse, sexual exploitation or non-accidental physical or mental injury. Sexual Abuse includes rape, incest and lewd or indecent acts or proposals by a person responsible for the child's welfare. Sexual Exploitation includes a person responsible for the child's welfare allowing or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution or pornography or engaging in child pornography. Neglect means failing to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter or medical care. Data includes reports of suspected abuse or neglect for which there were formal investigations and, of those, the number for which abuse or neglect was confirmed. The data compares child abuse and neglect confirmations for two one-year periods (Fiscal Year 1985 and Fiscal Year 1996). Rates are displayed as confirmations per 1,000 children (under age 18). Base child population data for the state and counties is the midpoint between the 1980 and 1990 Census populations. Current child population data for the state and counties is estimated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for 1994.

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Child Deaths are the number of deaths of children from ages 1 through 14. Teen Deaths are the number of deaths of youth from age 15 through 19. The data is reported by place of residence, not place of death. The data counts deaths from all causes. The data compares the death rates for two five-year periods (1978 through 1982 and 1991 through 1995). Resulting rates create average annual rates for each five year period for each age group. Rates are displayed as deaths per 100,000 children from ages 1 through 14 and deaths per 100,000 teens from ages 15 through 19. Base child population data for the state and counties is the 1980 Census population. Current child population data for the state and counties is estimated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for 1994 and adjusted by the State Data Center to arrive at a 1994 estimate of the number of children from the ages of 1 through 14. Current teen population data for the state is estimated by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for 1994 and adjusted by the State Data Center to arrive at a 1994 estimate of the number of teens from the ages of 15 through 19. State totals my vary from the total of all the counties since state totals may include deaths for which the county of residence was unknown. Cause of Death measures the percent of deaths that are caused by diseases, accidents and violence. By definition, deaths by violence include murder, suicide and deaths that occur during legal interventions. Race is reported as White, Black and American Indian. Other races are included in numbers and calculations for White.

High School Drop-Outs count youths of any age who quit school without graduating. The data presents the drop-out rates for the 1995-96 school year. Rates are displayed as the percent of drop-outs under age 19 among all students in grades nine through twelve. School officials in Oklahoma are required to notify the State Department

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of Education of the name, address, race and age of any pupil dropping out of school. Race is reported as White, Black, Indian, Asian and Hispanic. There is no provision for reporting other races. Hispanic children, for the purposes of this data, are counted as a race, rather than an ethnic group preventing precise racial comparisons between this data and other date in Kids Count.

Arrest Rates

Each year the Oklahoma State Bureau Of Investigation collects data from all 77 counties in Oklahoma on the number of individuals arrested for committing a multitude of crimes. Along with collecting the data on arrest rates for adult offenders, the OSBI collects data on the number of juveniles arrested for committing offenses. In addition, the rate of violent juvenile crime arrests are identified and categorized along with the total crime index. Serious violent crimes, according to the OSBI definition includes: murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and felonious assault. The data for violent juvenile crime arrest rates will be drawn directly from the 1996 Uniform Crime Report, published annually by the Oklahoma State Bureau Of Investigation. For the purpose of this study the arrest rates for each county are calculated to a ratio per 100,000 arrests.

Journals

In 1996, while incarcerated at a maximum security juvenile facility, 18 adolescent males between the ages of 14 to 17 were asked to keep a journal, autobiographical in content, detailing events of their past, present, and future experiences as they believe them to be. They were instructed to write anything they wanted to discuss in the journals and that the journals would be collected at the end of an eight week time period. The juveniles were incarcerated for committing violent crimes and each male was working on

a phase level treatment program in order to be discharged from the facility. The data

from these journals are considered to be archive data due to the amount of time lapsed

since they were collected. Anonymity for the juveniles has been carefully analyzed and

all identifying markers have been removed from the journals to protect the confidentiality

of the incarcerated youths.

Method Of Analysis

Initially, a correlation analysis will be performed on the six independent variables:

low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teenage

births, and high school drop-out rates, and the dependent variable, violent juvenile crime

arrest rates. All 77 counties in Oklahoma will be used in this analysis and each of the at-

risk variables will be analyzed to determine if there is a correlation between violent

juvenile crime arrest rates and each of the six at-risk factors.

Following the initial correlation analysis, a second analysis will be performed

using the at-risk indicators in the context of a Child Development Model. Each of the at-

risk indicators will be categorized according to the age at which they affect childhood

development and placed within three stages: Infant, Child and Teen Stages. The Infant

Stage will carry the risk factors, low birth-weight infants and infant mortality. The Child

Stage will consist of the at-risk factors, child abuse and neglect and child death rates.

Teenage births and high school drop-out rates will be combined and placed in the Teen

Stage. The correlation analysis will be repeated to determine the existence of a

relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

The Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy uses four economic indicators to

determine the total economic status of each of the 77 counties in Oklahoma. Those

indicators used include: the number of children living in poverty, the number of families living at or below the poverty level of income, unemployment rates, and the number of families relying on state funded Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC). The OICA uses a rating scale to determine or calculate a total index number for each county based on the prevalence of each of the economic indicators. Each county is ranked based on a cumulative score and labeled as either: wealthier, wealthiest, middle, poorer and poorest by the OICA. For the purpose of this study, each of the economic factors will be controlled to determine the relationship between the at-risk independent variables and the dependent variable, violent juvenile crime arrest rates. The data will them be analyzed using the at-risk factors in the development model.

THE FINDINGS

The results of the research presented in this chapter will be described in content, however interpretations will follow in Chapter 5. Two datasets are presented. The two datasets used for this research are: The Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy's 1998 Kids Count Factbook, and the journals of 18 incarcerated male adolescents who were serving sentences due to violent juvenile crime arrests and convictions.

The journal findings will be presented without comparisons of significance, because the journals were of an unstructured nature and each provides a qualitative glimpse at various social issues encountered by juveniles who have been arrested for violent crimes and who are incarcerated as a result of those crimes. A triangulation method of analysis is used to look at, not only the statistical comparison of the data found in the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy's 1998 Kids Count Factbook, but to make additional use of the journals for a more precise understanding of the human element with relation to incarcerated juvenile violent offenders.

Overview Of The Two Datasets

As mentioned in the previous chapters, The Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy publishes annually a fact filled book on the well-being of Oklahoma children. The book describes a number of at-risk factors which, when experienced by a child, may contribute to future social problems for the child. The at-risk factors or indicators listed by the OICA and addressed in this research project include: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child abuse and neglect, child deaths, teenage pregnancy, and high school drop-out rates. The Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy takes each of the

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indicators previously mentioned and provides a county comparison of the number of incidents for each indicator. For example, the number of infants born at or below five and a half pounds in each county is presented by the OICA and then calculations are performed to determine the county or counties with the highest and lowest rates of low birth-weight infants in Oklahoma. Each county is rated by the OICA, based upon the calculations from the indicators and from additional economic factors such as unemployment rates. The rating scale used by the OICA includes counties that are either determined to be wealthiest, wealthier, middle, poorer, or poorest. In addition to unemployment rates, the number of children receiving Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC), the number of children living in poverty, and the number of families living at or below the poverty level, are used in the calculations by the OICA. This research analyzes each of the indicators listed by the OICA individually and then places them within the context of a development model in an attempt to establish a critical period of time in early childhood development when intervention and prevention programs may be most beneficial.

The journals collected from the incarcerated youth and analyzed for this research are archival data collected in 1996 from a juvenile detention center in Oklahoma. The participating juveniles were incarcerated for a variety of violent crimes and were participating in a program focused on rehabilitation. The journals were collected over a period of two months and each of the juveniles was informed that the journals would be collected by the instructor and kept as files for probable research use at a later date. The researcher asked the juveniles to start a journal writing anything they wanted to express.

Moreover, the journal would not be used against any of the juveniles in their rehabilitation process.

Data Findings From The OICA

Initially, the researcher sought to establish a relationship between the six at-risk indicators identified by the OICA and violent juvenile crime rates. This was necessary only to recognize that a relationship does exist between the at-risk indicators and the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes. Table 2 shows the correlation for each of the six indicators. Using Spearman's rho correlation statistics the researcher found the following correlation. The low birth-weight indicator showed a correlation of .152 with violent crime arrest rates for juveniles. With infant mortality, a correlation of .361 was obtained, and .342 with the child death at-risk factor and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. A correlation of .392 was indicated on the child abuse and neglect indicator, and a .400 was found between teenage pregnancy and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. The final at-risk indicator, high school drop-out rates, had a correlation of .382 with violent juvenile crime arrest rates. These findings can be seen in the results shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix
Violent Crime Ratio and At-Risk Indicators in All Counties in Oklahoma

Indicator	Violence		
	N	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Low Birth Weight	77	0.152	0.186
Infant Mortality	77	.361**	0.001
Child Death	77	.392**	0.000
Child Abuse	77	.342**	0.002
Teen Birth	77	.400**	0.000
H.S. Drop-Out	77	.382**	0.001

Source: Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and Oklahoma Uniform Crime Report
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

The basic unit of analysis in the research is the counties in Oklahoma. In addition to establishing an initial correlation between each of the indicators and the arrest rates of violent juvenile offenders, the researcher needed to test the data to determine, if a relationship between each of the indicators and violent juvenile crime arrest rates existed for all of the counties in Oklahoma. If not, did a correlation exist in only the counties that had high rates of poverty, high unemployment rates, and families relying on aid from government agencies to provide their basic necessities? In an attempt to answer the previous question, the researcher determined the median rate for each of the factors involved in labeling a county in Oklahoma as wealthiest, wealthier, middle, poorer, and poorest by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy. The factors included, the number of children living in poverty in Oklahoma, the number of families living at or below the poverty level, the number of families relying on Aid To Families With Dependent Children to provide the minimal standard of living, and the unemployment rates of each county. Using the median rate for each indicator the researcher again tested the correlation between each of the at-risk factors identified by the OICA and the number of juveniles arrested for violent juvenile crimes. Table 3 shows the results of the correlation between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates when controlling for those counties where the median number of children living in poverty, and when the median number of families living at or below the poverty level is under or over the median rate.

The median level of child poverty in Oklahoma was calculated from the data obtained by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. According to the calculations, the median number of children living at or below poverty in the State Of Oklahoma was

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determined to be 1,543 children in 1996. Once this was established, using Spearman's rho test of significance each of the six indicators were analyzed to determine if a relationship existed with the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes when controlling for the counties under and over the established median rate of children living in poverty.

Table 3 provides the correlation results found between those counties with rates of child poverty under and over the median rate previously established. A correlation of .048 was found between low birth-weight infants and violent juvenile crime arrest rates in those counties falling under the median calculated rate of children living in poverty. Among the counties with numbers over the median rate, a correlation of .189 was indicated for low birth-weight infants and the number of arrests for violent juvenile criminal acts.

A correlation of .206 was indicated between infant mortality and violent juvenile crime arrest rates for counties under the median, and a correlation of .338 for the counties over the median number of children living in poverty in Oklahoma Counties. Between child deaths and violent juvenile crime arrest rates a correlation of .114 was calculated for the counties under the median child poverty level and .311 for the counties over the median child poverty level. A correlation of .202 was indicated between child abuse and neglect and violent crime juvenile arrest rates in those counties under the median rate of child poverty and a .463 for the counties over the median level. Between teen birth rates and violent juvenile crime arrest rates a correlation of .359 was calculated in those counties under the median level of child poverty, and .269 for the counties over the median level. A correlation of .381 was obtained between high school drop-out rates and

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violent crime arrest rates in the counties under the median child poverty level, and .168 for the counties over the median.

In addition to child poverty rates, Table 3 shows the findings for the test of significance between the at-risk indicators and the rate of violent juvenile arrests when controlling for the median number of families living at or below the poverty level. In 1996, according to census data, the poverty level of income for a family of four was $16,036 nationally. When looking at the correlation between counties with income above or below the poverty level and the at-risk indicators associated with violent juvenile crime arrest rates, the results indicated that the counties with income above the poverty level had a higher correlation between the indicators and violent crime arrests than those counties with income below the poverty level. The data was also analyzed using the median level of per capita income in Oklahoma, which was $15,335 in 1996. The results between the two groups of income echoed the same findings. As indicated by the results, a similar relationship exists between the at-risk indicators and violent juvenile crime arrest rates when controlling for this factor as was found with the previous child poverty economic factor.

Table 4 provides similar data using the economic factors Aid to Families With Dependent Children and Oklahoma Unemployment Rate. The number of families relying on Aid To Families With Dependent Children for their basic needs is one of the indicators used by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy to determine the economic status of the counties in Oklahoma. The results to determine the median number of families in Oklahoma receiving AFDC in 1996 indicated that the median rate was 444 families per county in Oklahoma on AFDC. Using the median level of data, the results

indicate that counties with families receiving AFDC over the median level of 444

resulted in a higher correlation in the at-risk categories of low birth-weight infants, infant

mortality, child abuse and neglect and child death rates than those counties with a lower

number of families relying on AFDC. In the at-risk categories of teen birth and high

school drop-out rates the correlation was higher for those counties with a lower number

of families receiving AFDC.

Table 3. Correlation Matrix
Violent Crime Ratio and At Risk Factors For Oklahoma Counties Under and
Over the Median Child Poverty Level

Indicator				Violence	
	Child Poverty			Poverty Income	
	N	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2Tailed)	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2Tailed)
Low Birth Weight					
Under	39	0.048	0.772	0.203	0.888
Over	38	0.189	0.257	0.255	0.123
Infant Mortality					
Under	39	0.206	0.203	-0.033	0.840
Over	38	.338*	0.038	.680**	0.000
Child Death					
Under	39	0.202	0.217	0.017	0.919
Over	38	.463**	0.003	.682**	0.000
Child Abuse					
Under	39	0.144	0.490	0.043	0.793
Over	38	0.311	0.311	.599**	0.000
Teen Pregnancy					
Under	39	.359*	0.025	0.161	0.329
Over	38	0.269	0.102	.614**	0.000
H.S. Drop-Out					
Under	39	.381*	0.017	0.158	0.337
Over	38	0.168	0.314	.560**	0.000

Source: Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and Oklahoma Uniform Crime Report
*Correlation is significant at the .05 level
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

As the data indicates, the correlation between the counties whose number of families receiving AFDC fell under the median established rate was .040 between the at-risk indicator low birth-weight and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. For those counties with rates over median the correlation was .166 between the at-risk indicator and violent crime arrest rates. Similar results can be seen from all the correlation data obtained from the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates when controlling for the number of families in Oklahoma Counties receiving Aid To Families With Dependent Children.

The median unemployment rate in Oklahoma, according to the data provided by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy was 4.9 percent in 1996. When looking at the correlation between the at-risk indicators and violent juvenile crime arrest rates while controlling for county unemployment rates, the findings indicate a higher correlation among those counties with unemployment rates over the median rates. Using the Spearman's rho method, a correlation was obtained between each of the at- risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates when controlling for the median unemployment rate. A correlation of .084 was indicated between low birth-weight and juvenile violent crime arrest rates for those counties in Oklahoma that fell under the median rate of unemployment and .188 for the counties over the median rate of unemployment. A correlation of .371 was calculated between child abuse and neglect and violent juvenile arrest rates for the counties in Oklahoma under the median rate of unemployment and a .458 correlation for the counties over the median rate. Between the at-risk factor teen pregnancy and violent juvenile crime arrest rates, a correlation of .375 was indicated among the counties under the median rate of teen births and violent juvenile crime arrest rates and .472 for the counties over the median rate. Similar results can be found

between the high school drop out rates and violent juvenile crime arrest rates when controlling for the number of individuals unemployed. A .423 was indicated for the counties over the median rate and a .375 for counties under the median rate of unemployment.

With the preliminary results concluded, the next step is to test the actual research questions initially stated in Chapter One. Using the six at-risk indicators previously mentioned, the researcher wanted to test a possible correlation between combined risk factors within the context of a developmental model. Using three categories; Infant, Child and Teen, the main objective was to determine that when the six indicators were placed under the age category that corresponded with the at-risk age of each indicator, a correlation existed between the three stages and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. By doing this, the researcher hoped to gain knowledge concerning a critical time period in child development where prevention and intervention for the at-risk factors identified by the OICA may be most beneficial.

In the Infant Stage, two at-risk factors were placed, low birth-weight infants and infant mortality. These indicators were determined by the researcher to be most threatening to infants from 0 to 1 year of age. Next, the indicators, child abuse and neglect and child death rates, was placed in the Child stage. Again, the researcher believed that these two at-risk indicators presented the most threat to children from 1 to 14 years of age. Finally, the indicators, teenage pregnancy and high school drop-out rates were placed under the category of Teen development. The at-risk age group for this stage is teenagers between 15 and 17 years of age. No established method was used by the researcher to determine which at-risk indicators to place in the three stages of

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Table 4. Correlation Matrix
Violent Crime Ratio and At-Risk Factors in Counties Under and Over the Median Rate of Aid to Families With Dependent Children and Median Unemployment Rates

Indicator	Violence				
	AFDC			**Unemployment**	
	N	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Low Birth					
Under	39	0.040	0.810	0.084	0.612
Over	38	0.166	0.319	0.188	0.259
Infant Mortality					
Under	39	0.182	0.268	.362*	0.024
Over	38	.314*	0.036	.364*	0.025
Child Death					
Under	39	0.096	0.561	0.278	0.087
Over	38	0.317	0.053	.425**	0.008
Child Abuse					
Under	39	0.180	0.273	.371*	0.020
Over	38	.475**	0.003	.458**	0.004
Teen Birth					
Under	39	.336*	0.036	.375*	0.019
Over	38	0.286	0.081	.472**	0.003
H.S. Drop-Out					
Under	39	.354*	0.027	.375*	0.019
Over	38	0.180	0.279	.423**	0.008

Source: Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and Oklahoma Uniform Crime Report
*Correlation is significant at the .05 level
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level

development. Following along the same lines as the age categories published in the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy it was determined that the at-risk indicators would present the most threat to children in the specific stages of development.

Table 5 shows the results of the test conducted on the three stages of development. As Table 5 shows, a .069 was indicated in the Infant Stage for the counties under the median level of child poverty. For the counties with rates over the median level of child poverty a correlation of .386 was indicated. The results of the findings in the Child Stage indicate a correlation of .199 for the counties with a child poverty rate under the median rate of 1,543 and a .473 for the counties over the median level. In the Teen Stage a correlation of .186 was indicated for the counties under the median and a .587 for the counties over the median rate of child poverty in Oklahoma.

Table 4 also includes the results of the findings for the stages of development and violent juvenile crime arrest rates when controlling for the median level of poverty income. As previously mentioned, the median level of poverty income in Oklahoma was determined to be $15,336 for a family of four in 1996. Based on this data, in the Infant Stage, the results indicate a .016 for the counties who have under the median number of families living at or below the poverty level, and a .610 for the counties over the median number of families living at or below poverty. In the Child Stage a correlation of .023 was indicated in the counties under the median poverty level in Oklahoma, and a .690 for the counties where the number of families living at or below the poverty level is over the median established rate. In the Teen Stage a correlation of .186 was indicated among the

counties with the median level of poverty under and .587 for the counties with income

over the median level of income in Oklahoma.

Table 5. Correlation Matrix
Violent Crime Ratio and Infant, Child and Teen Development Stages
Counties Under and Over Median Level of Child Poverty and Median Poverty Income

Stages	Violence			
	Child Poverty		Poverty Income	
	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Infant				
Under	0.069	0.676	0.016	0.925
Over	.386*	0.017	.610**	0.000
Child				
Under	0.199	0.224	0.023	0.888
Over	.473**	0.003	.690**	0.000
Teen				
Under	.408**	0.010	0.186	0.258
Over	0.179	0.281	.587**	0.000

Source: Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and Oklahoma Uniform Crime Report
*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Table 6 shows the results of the at-risk indicators and violent juvenile crime when

controlling for the number of families on AFDC and county unemployment rates.

Previously it was determined that the median rate of families in Oklahoma receiving Aid

to Families with Dependent Children was 444 families per county. As the results

indicate, in the Infant Stage, a .038 was obtained using data for the counties with the

number of families receiving AFDC under the median rate. A correlation of .380 was

indicated in the counties over the median rate. In the Child Stage, a correlation of .177

was indicated among the counties with rates of AFDC recipients under the median rate

and .485 for the counties over the median rate. In the Teen Stage, a correlation of .380

was indicated for the counties under the median rate of families receiving AFDC, and a

.188 in the counties with rates over the median. This is in contrast to the findings in the

Infant and Child Stages where a stronger correlation exists for the counties over the

median rate.

In the final economic control variable, the unemployment rate of each county was

a determining factor when labeling the counties in Oklahoma as wealthiest, wealthier,

middle, poorer or poorest by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy. The overall

median rate of unemployment among the 77 counties in Oklahoma was calculated to be

4.9 percent.

Table 6. Correlation Matrix
Violent Crime Ratio and Development Stage
Counties Under and Over the Median Rate of Families Receiving AFDC
And Median Rates of Unemployment in Oklahoma

Stages	Violence				
	AFDC Familes			Unemployment Rates	
	Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)		Corr. Coeff.	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Infant					
Under	0.038	0.818		0.239	0.143
Over	.380*	0.019		.400*	0.013
Child					
Under	0.177	0.280		.376*	0.018
Over	.485**	0.002		.466**	0.003
Teen					
Under	.380*	0.017		.384*	0.016
Over	0.188	0.258		.421**	0.008

Source: Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and Oklahoma Uniform Crime Report
*Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed).
**Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6 indicates the results of the correlation between the Infant Stage and violent juvenile crime arrest rates to be .239 in the counties with lower than median rates of unemployment and a .400 in the counties with higher than median rates of unemployment. In the Child Stage, a correlation of .376 was indicated between violent juvenile crime arrest rates in the counties under the median rate, and .466 in the counties over the median rate of unemployment in Oklahoma. In the Teen Stage, a correlation of .384 was indicated in the counties with lower that median rates of unemployment and .421 in the counties over the median rate of unemployment.

The final factor the researcher wanted to address in this research was the journals kept by 18 incarcerated male juveniles in the State Of Oklahoma. By analyzing the journals the researcher hoped to gather evidence supporting the framework of Social Control Theory as it applies to juvenile crime.

Journal Findings

Each of the juveniles were assigned a number from 1-18. All the juveniles except for two, #17 and #18 kept daily writings in their journals. Juveniles # 17 and #18 chose not to participate in the journal writing assignment. When analyzing the journals content, indications of societal risk factors were of concern to the researcher. A link between the at-risk indicators identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and the journal writings of the incarcerated youth was indicated among several of the juveniles writing entries.

Several of the juveniles started the journal with a brief explanation of what their interest were, how they came to be incarcerated and indicated what they would like to do when they are released. The writing has been transcribed from the journals in the exact

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form including the grammatical errors and punctuation. The following are some of the journal entries.

Juvenile 2

My interest are playing football and basketball and collecting baseball and basketball cards. I have been locked up for most of my life. When I get out I want to go back to school and see my girl again and also my family. I am 15 years old.

Juvenile 3

I am orginally from California, I am in here for a shooting with intent to kill and accessing to murder. I have been here 17 months. I try to marinate and make time pass by but it's just a long day every day. My plans for when I get out are to go pay my respects to my homeboys resting in peace.

Juvenile 4

I like to play soccer, draw, write poems, box and keep in shape by workin out. I'm in here for shootin up this guy. He pulled out his gun first but unluckily for him I can think and move faster. I dedicated my life to God and (my gang) when I was 13. I'm gonna move out on my on whin I get out and get a job. I plan on goin to some kind of art school when I get out. I'm a bad boy but I'm real religious. I don't care when somebody cusses but I get pissed when someone says God's name in vain.

Juvenile 5

I'm in the 9th grade and I'm 15 years old. Before I got locked up, I didn't do much except get into trouble. I have 2 brothers and a sister. My brother is locked up with me right now. When I get out, I plan to get my brothers out of trouble and keep them out of trouble. I am still thinking if I am going to go back to school or not.

Juvenile 6

I'm 15 years of age and currently I'm in here for first-degree murder. But I wish to live a positive and fulfilling life free from the strain of my crime. I just hope the seriousness of my crime doesn't hold me back here. I plan to finish high school and go to college. I plan to major in computer programming and technology and a minor in business. I want to try and start my own business but if it doesn't work then I could apply my skills elsewhere.

Juvenile 7

I am 2 weeks from 16 years of age and I'm in here for a couple burglurys and car thefts and a shooting and my plans are when I get out is to go to job corps and probably join the marines.

Juvenile 8

What on my mind? Is getting high but first I wont to get out of here get me another friend get my own house and move back where I'm from. And wen I get there go back to my hood chill with some of my home boys back selling dope mack a millon dollor have kid's and died.

Juvenile 9

I am sixteen years old. What I like to play baseball and football and drive cars and I like to talk all the time and what I don't like is being locket up and I don't like staying away from my mom and sister and I don't like it when a boy bak talks women and when I get out I am going to go to work and get me a woman and have kids.

Juvenile 12

I'm 14 years old, my hobbies are getting high and stealing, what kind of music I listen to is heavy and death metal, and when I've get older I want loyer so I can argue with the judge. I've have a major drug addiction I've been in all kinds of hate groups most of my family is in prison I've been getting arrested sence I've was 10 or 11 one of those two I'm a punk I've got some tattoos I hate the country cause theres a lot of hecks who ride horse I wanna sleep in a real bed cause I hate sleeping on a matt.

Juvenile 13

Hily and by. (This is Hello and Bye, the 13 year-old young man is iliterate and only wrote this and one other entry in his journal over the course of two months).

Juvenile 15

I am 16 years old and I am in here for 9 counts of robbery and I live with my mother and my sisters. When I get out and going to get a job woking on cars and help my family in give they whet every they need.

Juvenile 16

I am 15 years old, I'm in the ninth grade. I've lived in six different states.

I like to play basketball and baseball. I would like to finish school and

become a welder or a carpenter.

Several of the incarcerated males spoke of having a child on the outside that they

looked forward to seeing. Keeping in mind that the oldest of these juveniles was 17 years

and the youngest was 13 years, the following represents the content of the journal

writings relating to the children of the incarcerated juveniles.

Juvenile 1

When I was on the outside I am sounde like I lived a ruffe life and all. But

I had responbilty's to take care of my x gril frined had a 3 year old baby

gril. I take care of that little gril like if I was the dad of it and I never had

a kid in my life.

Juvenile 2

Some times I just feel like going off on some body. You know I have had

a real problem with me being locked up because I have a little boy on the

outside thats why I was so mad. He is 3 years old. Me and his mom are

not talking at the time.

Juvenile 5

I had to leave my girlfriend and my baby behind when I came back to the

states. It makes me angry knowing I have a kid out there and I'll never get

to see him/her. She was pregnant when I left and I got a letter from her

telling me she was 7 months along but she didn't tell me if it was a boy or a girl.

I really wish I could see my child, but I probably never will.

Juvenile 11

Let me tell you about my little baby girl she a year old. She look just like

her mom. But her mom can't take care of her because her mom got mad an

therenten to put her out if she had the baby so I have to take care of her by

selling drugs to keep her looking nice and to help my mom because she

helps me take care of my baby girl.

Two of the male juveniles spoke of their responsibility as a parent. Juvenile 2

talks about seeing his son dressed up like a soldier. The term soldier is used in many

gangs to describe it's members. Juvenile 11 talks about selling drugs so his girlfriend

doesn't have to, so they can help his mother who is supporting the girlfriend and the

baby.

Juvenile 2

Well my son is my number one priority. I can just picture him now

wairing a little pair of tan dickies with a pair of tan dickie boots and a red

and white fila jersey with his little fro picked out with a pick in his fro

looking like a little soldior.

Juvenile 11

I know that comitting crimes is not the way to go but I was only selling

drugs because I was 14 and was not old enouf to get a job can you imagine

a girl on a street cornore looking like a male gang member selling drugs

But my mom trys to set a positive example for her win I come home I

would fell guilty Because she had a negitive role moadle as a parent But I going to mak sure that she has a positive parents to look up to as she grows up to be a grown woman.

A number of the incarcerated juveniles wrote about their family structure and the dysfunction within the structure. While only juvenile 6 spoke openly about being abused as a child, a number of others made reference to experiencing a hard life. Juvenile 5 discusses his relationship with his siblings. His brother was raised by his grandmother as his uncle for a number of years and due to this structure there continued to be a large amount of conflict between his mother and his grandmother. A number of journal entries will be provided by juvenile 6 due to the detailed written statements concerning his childhood abuse. Although he does not state that he was sexually abused by his mother he makes statements regarding factors sometimes associated with childhood sexual abuse. For example, he writes that his mother teaches him a lot about what women want sexually from a man and she let him watch his step-father's pornographic movies. He goes on to write that he hates his mother, that he stoped loving her and that he fears her horribly.

Juvenile 3

I grew up very hard. I have had a very hard life. When I was 4 years old I saw my gradfather die, he fell on me. My mom and dad were in prison until I was 10 years old. Shit, I was done already a man. I grew up in gangs, I have had so many friends die. I hate the sight of my eniemies. I sold drugs all my life, I was taught by my brothers. I got popped and with

30,000 dollars worth of crack. I don't smoke crack I just sell it. I smoke bud all day though.

Juvenile 5

All I can remember about my life is all of the bad things that have happened to me in my life. All I can remember of my family life is a lot of fights and yelling. I usually tried to stay away from home as much as I could. Me and my brother was always together, so when we couldn't find anything to do, we got into trouble. I couldn't find anyone that I could give a damn about. Tomorrow is family day, but I'm still not sure if my family is going to come up or not. Today I feel really mad and upset because I just found out yesterday that my sister got raped by her teacher at school and that is why I haven't heard from her. This is the third time this has happened to her and I am really pissed off about all of this and I am trying to get out of here, so I can go and be with her. I'm pissed off real bad because I thought that my brother was going to get certified for assaulting staff. My hand still hurts from hittimg my wall so much. I hope my brother doesn't get certified because if he does I don't know what I would do. I haven't had him as my brother for very long and I intend to make sure that we stay together. When I say I haven't had him as a brother for very long, I mean that when we were growing up, we did not know we were brothers. We thought we were uncle and nephew. I thought he was my uncle because my mom and grandma told us so. I just found out 3 years ago that he was by brother. I told him about a year and

a half ago. The reason why my mom doesn't like my brother much is because she blames him for my getting into trouble and my getting locked up. She doesn't want to believe that I got myself locked up and that everything that I was doing was what I wanted to do, she would rather believe that my brother got me into trouble because then she doesn't have to deal with the fact that I'm not a little saint like she thinks. My grandma is the same way towards me. She doesn't want to believe that she messed up when she chose to raise my brother. She would rather believe that I am the cause of all my brothers problems and that I am the bad one, not him. The truth is, we're both bad and the reason for that is they, my mom and grandma, were so busy trying to prove to each other that they could be a better mother than the other.

Juvenile 6

I lived with my grandmother before she had her stroke when I was about 1. After that I was left in my mother's care and I guess that she got tired of me because she sent me to live with my father. One time I wanted to play at the park one night and I tried to run across the street to it. Well, when I tried to sprint across I fell and almost got ran over. My dad picked me up and I got beat pretty bad by him after that. This is when I first remember getting beaten. I have some good memories though. I remember when me and my step dad used to go out in the desert and shot BB guns at stuff. That's the only time that I really remember us doing fun stuff. The rest is all abusive. I used to be restricted to my room for days

at a time without food and I used to get beaten from time to time by my father.
The worst memory I have was on a Christmas. I had woken up early and I
was looking around for my presents to see what I got. I found them in the
closet and I opened them up and I later hid them underneath a recliner.
When my father and his girlfriend woke up they found them and I ended
up getting beaten for it and they said I wasn't going to have a Christmas. I
hadn't eaten in a couple days and I got sick when I did eat. When I turned
6, I guess my father got tired of me because he put me on a plane by
myself and sent me back to live with my mom. I don't remember being
abused at first but I remember that I had a lot of work to do. When I got
caught stealing 5 dollars (by my mom), she got a piece of wire cable and
beat me with it. It was about this time that I started learning how to
disassociate. When I was 7 ½ we moved across the street from my step-
dad's parents. It was there that I learned my parents did drugs. They used
to smoke marijuana with their friends a lot of the time and they did it
around me a lot also. My parents also use to drink a lot, from beer to hard
liquor. I even saw them do cocaine before. The abuse seemed to get
worse because my mother was drunk more often. I was getting older and I
was getting bigger and the level of abuse was increasing. It was more than
just physical abuse. My mother used to lecture me for hours and
brainwash me into feeling I was nothing. The mental abuse was the worst
part because it wouldn't go away. I remember being beaten and just
screaming for her to stop and she would just keep on. I was helpless in

my own mind because she had warped it that way. I would lay in bed at night crying because I couldn't understand why she treated me like she did. When I was eleven I stopped loving my mother because a mother wouldn't treat her son in such an unloving way. I had a nervous breakdown when I was 12 and I started hitting her. I began really hating her and I feared her horribly. One thing my mother started doing was talking to me about sex. She started when I turned 13 and she would talk to me about sex from a woman's point of view, like telling me how a woman wanted to feel, what she liked, what to say, all that stuff. She gave me a bang of books about different parts of sex and she let me watch my step-dad's porno movies.

Juvenile 7

I got a lot on my mind about things Ive been through in the past and what and were Im at now but it ain't nice either but thats me!! I can't hide from my past because Ive seen some crazy stuff and done some crazy stuff also but I don't try to let it get to my head like some do but mines will always be their!!!

Juvenile 9

I am giving thanks that I am alive and that I got a family. My sister is 19 teen years old and I got a 2 year old brother and my dad is in prison and he has been for nine years know.

Juvenile 10

My family is doing well and they are all in good health except my dad he is an alcholic and the alchole is killing his organs one by one and piece by piece. When I get out of here, I'm sure it will be different if I can stay away from drugs but it makes me feel so good to be all high and stuff, I just like a quick different feeling to cover up all the hurt and bad thoughts and feelings. Maybe it just causes more bad feelings but at the time I feel good so I may not ever change.

Juvenile 12

My family is coming to family day my uncle got out of prison my uncle and my dad is going to not get drunk, I happy cause I get to see my lil brother I been really messing up this week because it has to deal with my dad and uncle tell me to go back to be a skinhead.

Juvenile 14

My grandpap died when I was 3 year old. And my boss that I was real close died on christmas eve and I thought it was my fault I love hime real much and I got depressed and want to die to. I cried everyday I thought about him because he treated me like a son and he loved me and he tried to teach me to be a man. But I was hard head and did not want to listen to a ward he said. So I am doing this program for him and myself and my family. When I get out I am going to his grave and remember the good time we had and try do the thing he told me to make him proud of me.

A couple of the juveniles made reference to their gangs as their family and they felt reluctant to leave the ties of their gang to return to their traditional families once they return to society.

Juvenile 4

My set (gang) is one of the few things I got in life. Nobody understands gangs unless they've really been there. My set taught me how to do everything. I know how to take care of myself in a good and bad way. I can get everthing I want, but not in here. I'll always be a gang member. My real homies did too much for me to quit. I grew up with my friends since I was nine years old.

Juvenile 8

I been doing a lot of thinking about the way I been living I realize that it is a dead end. But I have so many friend and faimly in on my set some time I fell like ther is nother to look forward to but my gang. But I no that my mother love me very much so I be thing to live to gang along but and try to be a positive roll moddy for my nieces nephews so that what I'm going to do get me another girl friend and try to be positive and live right and try to right me a book.

These journal entries represent a portion of the social issues addressed by the incarcerated male juveniles. Their writing are indicative of their age and their views of the world is somewhat distorted due to their childhood experiences. Although somewhat

of carefree answer, in one of his last journal entries, juvenile 4 provides some insight into the ideology of some of the incarcerated juveniles.

Juvenile 4

I'm goona have fun while I'm here. I hope I can just find a bag with a million dollars in it. I'm to lazy to do anything right now. I'm just having fun while I'm still young. Fuck school right now. It's too easy to get my GED in here. I'm just kickin it right now.

Summary

This chapter has focused on the findings of two separate datasets. In the initial pages of Chapter 4 the results of the findings regarding the correlation between the at-risk factors identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and violent juvenile crime arrest rates were presented. The findings provide data that will be discussed in the following Chapter 5. Additionally, the second dataset, the journals, were analyzed and the qualitative data presented in this chapter, with discussion following in the next chapter. A method of triangulation, using both quantitative and qualitative data, facilitated the evaluation of at the risk factors associated with violent juvenile crime and The Child Development Model for use in providing crucial time periods for intervention.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDTIONS

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This research originated as a study to determine if a relationship exists between

the at-risk factors identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy, and violent

juvenile crime arrest rates in Oklahoma. The data on the at-risk factors is gathered by the

OICA and other agencies in Oklahoma and used to predict risk factors associated with the

well-being of Oklahoma children. The findings are published annually in the Oklahoma

Kids Count FactBook. In addition, OICA labels each of the counties in Oklahoma based

on the economic conditions in the county. Data identifying the top 10 counties in

Oklahoma with the highest rates of incidence for each at-risk indicator and hence, at

greatest risk for children are published in the annual fact book.

The at-risk factors identified by the OICA and utilized in this research study

include: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child death rates, child abuse and

neglect, teenage pregnancy, and high school drop-out rates. The data related to OICA's

findings are used to make certain assumptions regarding the socioeconomic condition of

all 77 counties in Oklahoma. Each county is labeled as one of five economic categories

based on the accumulated data regarding their socioeconomic conditions. The economic

status given to each county by the OICA include: wealthiest, wealthier, middle, poorer

and poorest. In addition to the at-risk factors used to determine the status of the children

in each county, other socioeconomic indicators are used by the OICA to make certain

distinctions. The other factors include, the number of children living in poverty, the

number of families living at or below poverty level, the number of families receiving Aid

to Families with Dependent Children, and the unemployment rate for the county. This researcher attempted to determine if a relationship exists between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates in Oklahoma when controlling for each of the socioeconomic factors used by the OICA. The method of analysis for the research is Spearman's rho correlation using the median rate of incidence for Oklahoma in regards to each at-risk factors. The median rate was used instead of the mean rate to avoid skewed findings as a result of the high number of incidence in larger counties such as Oklahoma and Tulsa. The data for the violent juvenile crime arrest rates are from the 1996 Oklahoma Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report.

Using the findings from the correlation data, the at-risk factors are next placed into a development model to determine if a critical time period exists for early detection necessary for prevention and intervention strategies and techniques for controlling delinquent behavior. The three stages within the Development Model included, Infant, Child and Teen Stages. Within the Infant Stage are the at-risk indicators; low birth-weight infants, and infant mortality. The Child Stage includes the at-risk indicators, child abuse and neglect and child deaths. The Teen Stage includes the two remaining at-risk factors, teen birth rates and high school drop-out rates. To further facilitate this study, journals of violent juvenile offenders incarcerated in a rehabilitation center were analyzed for contents related to the at-risk indicators.

Research Objectives

The procedures carried out in the process of this research were in accordance with the goals established as research objectives for this project, including the establishment of a critical time period in a child's life when the facilitation of intervention and/or

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prevention would be most beneficial to the child. With specific relevance to this thesis, this study was carried out in order to fulfill seven research objectives, as introduced in Chapter One. The seven primary research objectives are:

1). Evaluate the at-risk factors, identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and determine if there is a relationship between those factors and juvenile violent crime arrest rates. The at-risk factors used in this study include: low birth-weight infants, infant mortality, child deaths, child abuse and neglect, teenage pregnancy and high school drop-out rates.

2). After placing the at-risk factors into a development model, determine if the stages of development, Infant, Child and Teen, show a correlation with violent juvenile crime arrest rates. This objective will assist in facilitating a time period beneficial to prevention of and intervention for delinquent behavior.

3). After controlling for the median child poverty level of each county, evaluate the at-risk factors individually and within the development model to determine if a correlation exists between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates.

4). After controlling for the median level of income for the State of Oklahoma, evaluate the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates to determine if a relationship exists between them.

5). After controlling for the median number of families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children in each county, evaluate and determine if a correlation exists between the at-risk factors identified and violent juvenile crime arrest rates in Oklahoma.

6). After controlling for the median unemployment rate in Oklahoma, evaluate and determine if a relationship exists between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates.

7). After careful analysis, determine if the contents of 18 journals collected from juvenile males incarcerated for violent crimes, are relevant to the at-risk factors identified by the OICA.

Primary Objective One

The primary purpose of objective one was to establish a relationship between the at-risk factors identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. It is important at this point, to remind again, that it was not the researcher's intent to establish a causation for violent juvenile crime arrests. Instead, the purpose of this study was to examine the at-risk factors identified by the Oklahoma Institute for Child Advocacy and to suggest that they are risk factors associated with violent crime and therefore contribute to the number of juveniles arrested for violent crimes.

Each of the at-risk indicators identified by the OICA, showed a significant degree of correlation to violent juvenile crime arrest rates, with the exception of the low birth weight infant. However, these results were anticipated due to the environmental conditions often associated with areas where the at-risk conditions are most frequently found. The smallest correlation (.152) found within this research objective was between low birth weight infants and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. Since no other data was available from OICA regarding the conditions surrounding the birth of the low birth-weight infants it is impossible to make assumptions regarding the low correlation.

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However, an increasing number of medical facilities are available to assist and encourage mothers of low socioeconomic status to receive adequate obstetric care during a pregnancy. This is consistent with the literature suggesting that early prenatal care may lessen the likelihood of delivering a low birth-weight infant and decreasing the rate of infant mortality.

Primary Objective Two

The second objective was to place each of the six indicators in a development model. After each stage, Infant, Child and Teen received two at-risk factors associated with the age of occurrence, another test was done to determine if a relationship exists between the stages of development and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. The purpose of this objective was to attempt to establish a time in a child's development when a critical period exists for prevention of and intervention for the at-risk factors identified by the OICA, thus lowering the child's chances of being arrested for a violent juvenile crime.

Based on the development model, the findings indicate that all three stages, Infant, Child and Teen showed a significant relationship between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. Again, without the presence of any control variables, the findings were anticipated by this researcher. The findings echoed those found in the first primary objective. A relationship exists between each of the stages and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. What this may suggest is that all children, regardless of their age, would benefit from early prevention and intervention strategies. However, once control variables are introduced into the relationship it was anticipated that some changes

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would occur in the relationship between the stages of development and violent juvenile arrest rates.

Primary Objective Three

The goal of the third primary objective was to evaluate and determine if a relationship exist between the at-risk indicators and juvenile violent crime arrest rates once the median rate of child poverty was controlled for at the county level. Based on the data provided by the OICA, the median number of children living in poverty in the State of Oklahoma was 1543 per county in 1996. This research addressed the at-risk factors both individually and within a child development model.

The data results indicate that a strong correlation exist between child abuse and neglect (.463**), child death rates (.311) and violent juvenile crime arrest rates, in counties where the number of children living in poverty was above the median level of 1543. This adds credit to the report by the Tulsa World, which showed data received from the Oklahoma Medical Examiners office. The report indicated that in 1997, out of 21 children killed as a result of child abuse in Tulsa, the majority of the killers were parents. Out of 16,427 child abuse cases in 1997 in Oklahoma, nearly 65 percent of the abusers were mothers or fathers of the children.

A correlation of .338* was found between infant mortality and juvenile violent crime arrest rates, while a correlation of .189 was indicated between low birth-weight infants and violent juvenile crime arrests. Again, the stronger correlation existed among counties with above median child poverty rates.

The at-risk factors associated with teenage behavior showed opposite results. There was a higher correlation found among those counties with lower numbers of child

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poverty. A correlation of .381* was found between high school drop-out rates and violent juvenile crime arrests.

Along these same lines were the results of the correlation between each of the stages within the child development model and rates of juvenile violent arrests. Both the Infant and Child Stages showed a correlation (.386* and .473* respectively) between the at-risk indicators and juvenile violent crime arrest rates in counties where child poverty was above the median 1543 level. The Teen Stage showed a correlation of .408** between the at-risk indicators and violent juvenile crime arrest rates among counties with lower numbers of children in poverty, compared to .179 in counties above the median level of child poverty. These findings suggest that those counties with higher rates of children living in poverty may benefit from introducing intervention methods as early as prenatal to families who are at-risk for experiencing one of the indicators within the Infant or Child Stage. In the counties where lower rates of child poverty are reported the primary intervention focus should be directed toward the teenage population, since this population shows the greatest vulnerability for at-risk behavior within the context of this study.

Primary Objective Four

In 1996, the family income poverty level was set at $16,036, based on national standards. The median income for residents of the State Of Oklahoma was $15,335 for the same time period. Based on this data, the primary purpose of this research objective was to determine if a correlation exist between the at-risk factors identified and juvenile violent crime arrest rates, once the median poverty level was controlled for within the counties. The data presented is both individual and grouped within the Child

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Development Model. A number of attempts have been made to relate the economic conditions (i.e. the poverty level) of a particular community to the level of violent crime found within that community. Furthermore, it has been suggested that families who rely on Aid to Families with Dependent Children are at a greater risk of experiencing juvenile delinquency within their families.

According to the finding of this study, the counties with incomes higher than the median level of income are at a greater risk than those counties with incomes less than the median for having an increased relationship between the at-risk factors identified and violent juvenile arrest rates. This would make sense if attention is paid to the issues of urban and rural communities and crime rates. Those counties with incomes greater than the median income level tend to fall within the category of urban, while those counties with income less than the median are categorized as rural. Greater degrees of deviance and crime occur within the boundaries of urban areas. The greatest individual correlation (.680**) found in this primary objective occurred between infant mortality and violent juvenile crime arrest rates in counties where the income was above the median. The finding would suggest that greater numbers of children die before their first birthday in larger communities. An assumption could be provided which suggest that these findings are due to urban social problems. Increased exposure of children to childhood and other diseases, greater chance of accidents, and a greater chance of becoming victims of homicide. The results of the findings on the Child Development Model are parallel to the individual findings. Although closely linked, children in the Child Stage, are at a slightly greater risk than the other two categories, in counties with incomes greater than the median poverty level of income. Again, what this would suggest is a greater number of

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child abuse and neglect cases and a greater number of child deaths in the counties with income above the poverty level, than in counties with income below the poverty level.

Primary Objective Five

The primary objective of this research question was to determine if county unemployment rates caused the relationship between the at-risk factors identified and violent juvenile crime arrest rates to deviate from those found in primary objective one. The median rate of unemployment in the State Of Oklahoma in 1996 was 4.9 percent. The findings indicate that when county unemployment rates are controlled, a correlation relationship between the six at-risk indicators and violent juvenile crime arrest rates increased in those counties with unemployment rates over the median level of 4.9 percent.

The findings would be consistent to research literature which suggest that increased crime rates correlate with higher unemployment rates. Higher unemployment rates are typically found in rural counties where job availability is scarce. One problem could be the lack of employment opportunities for teenagers. Currently employers cannot hire teenagers for employment until they are sixteen years of age. This can be a problem for both parents and teens. It is difficult for parents to explain and teach the concept of money management and responsibility to teenagers when they are not allowed to work and therefore, unable to learn to save and think responsibly about money issues. In a society where materialism is thriving and a pair of sneakers can cost as much as $200, parents are pressured to provide the items necessary for their child to "fit in" among their peers.

Primary Objective Six

The number of families receiving Aid To Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) are used , along with other findings, by the Oklahoma Institute For Child Advocacy to determine the economic category of each county in Oklahoma. The median rate of AFDC for Oklahoma is 444 families per county receiving aid. The finding of this research indicate that counties with higher rates of families receiving AFDC have a higher correlation between the at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. Using the Developmental Model, the findings indicate that a relationship exist between the at risk indicators and violent juvenile crime arrest rates in the Child and Infant Stages. In the Teen Stage, the correlation reversed and the counties with lower rates of Aid To Families With Dependent Children recorded a higher correlation between teen birth rates, high school drop-out rates and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. A large portion of families relying on AFDC are headed by single mothers. A great deal of criticism has generally been associated with single parent families and especially the families that rely on AFDC. The findings indicated here may suggest that further studies need to be conducted on the population of single mothers relying on AFDC for their families basic needs.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It is important to remember when addressing factors associated with violent juvenile crime that attention be given to a number of issues. First it is necessary to address social problems such as infant mortality, teenage pregnancy, high school drop-out rates, etc., to obtain a clear picture of the social conditions associated with childhood. While not directly causing juvenile violent crime, at-risk factors associated with child

well-being enhance the studies of criminal activity among juveniles. This is especially true when looking at factors associated with the economic conditions of a particular county. While most of the counties reported as a top ten problem county in association with each of the at-risk indicators in the Oklahoma Kids Count Fact Book were rural counties, the majority of the reported cases occurred in the larger urban areas such as Tulsa and Oklahoma City. However, these counties are not reported as counties in the top ten counties with extreme problems. This is primarily due to the ratio between each of the indicators and the population of the county. Unfortunately, what happens is the analysis for the counties becomes somewhat skewed. To reduce the occurrence of the at-risk factors it is necessary to address the counties with the highest incidence rate for each factor. For example, if a small community reports 3 or 4 child abuse cases, and due to its population it is reported as a top ten county with a child abuse problem than our attention is removed from the thousand or so cases reported in the larger urban areas. Addressing the larger more extreme cases may perhaps reduce the occurrence in the larger communities and filter over into the smaller more rural areas.

After analyzing the county data presented in this research and addressing the economic issues, several distinctions or perhaps assumptions can be made concerning the data findings. First while socioeconomic conditions are often identified by researchers as a factor involved in the increasing rates of juvenile crime, it is not representative of the whole picture. What may be true for one county is not necessarily certain for the next. It would not be appropriate to generalize that all low socioeconomic counties will experience increased rates of juvenile violent crime simply based on the economic conditions of that area. Nor, would it be appropriate to suggest that all families relying

on Aid to Families with Dependent Children harbor juvenile delinquents. Each county's problems must be addressed individually and a plan of prevention or intervention designed based on individual county information.

The six at-risk factors listed in this research were used not as causes of juvenile violent crime but rather as indicators of a much broader picture. The findings indicate through the developmental model that a critical time for prevention and intervention methods begins prior to conception. Mothers need to be informed of the importance of proper nutrition and medical care during the duration of their pregnancy. Early intervention may perhaps lead to fewer reported cases of infant mortality and low birth-weight babies. The education comes from learning and that can best be handled within the school setting.

Furthermore, school education concerning the issues of proper parenting techniques and critical decision making skills are a must in order for child abuse and neglect and child death rates to decrease. Aggressive management skills, conflict resolution skills and many other anger management techniques should be addressed in the public schools in an attempt to educate kids on the values of communication instead of violence.

Teenagers learn best through experience. As Travis Hirschi suggested, bonds with family, peers and schools are necessary so that children know a sense of belonging to the community and to the human race in general. Good healthy relationships with others is the key to reducing the number of at-risk factors and violent juvenile crime arrest rates. As mentioned by most of the incarcerated juveniles, family bonds were lacking for many of them and for others the bond was dysfunctional at best. For example, juvenile number

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three, had both parents incarcerated for a number of years. This young man formed a bond to an uncle who taught him all about street crimes. Furthermore, many of the juveniles, with the exception of a few, were school drop-outs. Most all had broke the bond from school prior to being incarcerated. The peer bonds they formed were with other delinquent juveniles and thus enhanced the likelihood of their participation in delinquent or criminal activities.

The journal articles assisted in providing a glimpse into the life of a violent juvenile offender. What was distinct from all of the journals is a lack of family harmony and bonding. While the juveniles often felt strong loyalty to their family, they were sometimes confused about the extent of their responsibilities to their families. One example of this was found with juvenile number twelve who struggled with the idea of returning to the "skinheads" because his father and uncle wanted him to return to that way of life. While poor parenting or lack of bonding among family members can be viewed as a contributing factor to violent juvenile crime, it cannot be the only contributing factor.

This research was a limited study. Further studies need to be conducted to ensure that proper intervention and prevention strategies are being used on the treatment of violent juvenile offenders. Data shows that the recidivism rate of violent juvenile offenders is high and that most juveniles will make a transition from juvenile rehabilitation to adult prisons. While the prevention of juvenile violence is often targeted to middle and high school children, this research indicates that early intervention is necessary.

The data used for this research proved to be difficult. While the Oklahoma

Institute For Child Advocacy provides a county by county look at the well-being of

Oklahoma children, the data can be misleading at best. The publication seems to target

small rural communities and label them based on economic factors. Looking at the

broader picture, it can be seen that larger urban areas have the greatest incidence of

juvenile violent crime, however the county's are typically labeled by the OICA as

wealthier or wealthiest. This can be misleading when addressing socioeconomic

conditions of violent juvenile offenders.

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APPENDIX

.

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

DATE: 10-28-98   **IRB #: AS-99-016**

**Proposal Title: VIOLENT JUVENILE CRIME: A CORRELATION STUDY
BETWEEN AT RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH JUVENILE CRIME AND
1996 VIOLENT JUVENILE ARREST RATES IN OKLAHOMA**

Principal Investigator(s): John Cross, Donna Barlow

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature: Date: October 28, 1998

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance
cc: Donna Barlow

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted.
Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval. Approved
projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full
Institutional Review Board.

VITA

Donna Barlow

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Master of Science

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