



Research Article

Causes, Consequences and Remedies of Juvenile Delinquency in the Context of Sub-Saharan Africa: A Study of 70 Juvenile Delinquents in the Eritrean Capital, Asmara

Dr. Yemane Desta (PhD)

Department of Public Administration, College of Business and Social Sciences, University of Asmara, P.O.BOX 1220, Asmara, Eritrea

Email: yemane008@gmail.com **Telephone Number:** 291-7645753

This research work was designed to examine nature of juvenile offences committed by juveniles, causes of juvenile delinquency, consequences of juvenile delinquency and remedies for juvenile delinquency in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa with specific reference to Eritrea. Left unchecked, juvenile delinquents on the streets engage in petty theft, take alcohol or drugs, rape women, rob people at night involve themselves in criminal gangs and threaten the public at night. To shed light on the problem of juvenile delinquency in the Sub-Saharan region data was collected through primary and secondary sources. A sample size of 70 juvenile delinquents was selected from among 112 juvenile delinquents in remand at the Asmara Juvenile Rehabilitation Center in the Eritrean capital. The study was carried out through coded self-administered questionnaires administered to a sample of 70 juvenile delinquents. The survey evidence indicates that the majority of the juvenile respondents come either from families constructed by unmarried couples or separated or divorced parents where largely the father is missing in the home or dead. The findings also indicate that children born out of wedlock, families led by single mothers, lack of fatherly role models, poor parental-child relationships and negative peer group influence as dominant causes of juvenile infractions. The implication is that broken and stressed families are highly likely to be the breeding grounds for juvenile delinquency. The survey evidence indicates that stealing, truancy or absenteeism from school, rowdy or unruly behavior at school, free-riding in public transportation, damaging the book of fellow students and beating other young persons are the most common forms of juvenile offenses. It is therefore, recommended that parents and guardians should exercise proper parental supervision and give adequate care to transmit positive societal values to children. In addition, the government, the police, prosecution and courts, non-government organizations, parents, teachers, religious leaders, education administrators and other stakeholders should develop a child justice system that strives to prevent children from entering deeper into the criminal justice process.

Keywords: *Asmara, children, crime, Eritrea, juvenile delinquency, Sub-Saharan Africa, youth*

INTRODUCTION

It is a generally accepted belief that the well-being of society depends on parents' ability to socialize well-adjusted, responsible and educated young people to succeed the older generation. (Zenzile, 2008) Naughtiness among children is a universal phenomenon; however, when naughtiness develops into such a behavior, which is against the norms and laws of the society, it comes in the category of delinquency. (Child

Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN), 2017) Juvenile delinquency is one of the most serious problems that need to be addressed both in developed and developing countries. (Ehiemua, 2014). Delinquency is a symptom of a social malaise. It indicates that something has gone wrong with the society and its organization. (Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN), 2017) Delinquency largely implies that the behavior is in

contradiction with the value demands of the dominant culture within which a given juvenile lives.

Juvenile delinquency has now become one of the important social issues which every nation tries to bring under control amidst the glaring evidence that, if the right nurturance is not given to the young offenders, they may graduate to become criminals. (Boakye, 2012) Juvenile delinquency is the root for more organized and sophisticated crimes that costs society and government heavily for addressing it. (Wondimu, 2014) Adolescent (juvenile) age offenses are acts of delinquencies or crimes that will harm individual, community and society at large and hence the urgency and importance of resolving this social problem. (Bimal, 2013). Juvenile delinquency includes all forms of criminal behaviors among young people where the perpetrators and the victims are children or young persons. (Konate, 2007).

A child is known as a delinquent when he/she commits a mistake which is against the law and which is not accepted by the society. Thus a "juvenile" or "child" means a person who has not completed eighteenth years of age and violates the law and commits an offence under the legal age of maturity. Generally, a delinquent child is a juvenile who has violated the law of the country and if the action is committed by an adult, could result in criminal prosecution. (Wondimu, 2014) According to Adeboye (2015) cited Ajah and Ugwuoke (2018) juvenile delinquency is defined as the resistant antisocial, illegal or criminal behavior by children or adolescents to the level that it cannot be controlled or corrected by the parents, endangers others in the community and becomes the concern of law enforcement agency. Juveniles are thought to still have the potential of being rehabilitated and this is apparently why the juvenile system provides lesser punishment for them. (Marimuthu, 2014)

Children who for various reasons—including parental alcoholism, poverty, breakdown of the family, overcrowding, abusive conditions in the home, the growing HIV/AIDS scourge, or the death of parents during armed conflicts—are orphans or unaccompanied and are without the means of subsistence, housing and other basic necessities are at greatest risk of falling into juvenile delinquency. Juveniles who are living in difficult circumstances are at higher risk of committing delinquency often. Among these difficult circumstances, poverty, breakdown of the family, abusive situations in the home, orphans or family with shortage in fulfilling basic needs like shelter and food and overcrowding family are the causes for juveniles to fall in to delinquency.

The anti-social behaviors often associated with the juvenile delinquents include vices as vandalism, drug abuse, weapon carrying, alcohol abuse, rape, examination malpractices, school violence, bullying, cultism, truancy, school drop-outs, to mention among others.

(Adegoke, 2015). Examples of the problem include lying, truancy, sexual licentiousness, teenage pregnancy, bad-mouthing others, cheating, lack of respect, involvement in fights, vandalism, substance abuse, arson, rape, bullying, aggression, theft, violence and gangsterism. (Ntshangase, 2015) Such acts are specifically forbidden by law or may be lawfully interpreted as constituting delinquency or as requiring some form of official action.

According (Vedder, 1963) and Mennel (1973) cited in (Zenzile, 2008) children have always misbehaved; Yet, the notion of juvenile delinquency was unheard of until the eighteenth century, when organized state responses to adolescent crime and deviance first took shape. Delinquent behavior may be seen as an adaptation by youths who have become alienated from the family, and are thrust into a marginal social position for which the urban community lacks the institutions and agencies to channel the youngsters' needs and energies into conventional outlets. (Cole and Adelino, 2014) Criminal offending peaks in the teenage years and declines in the early 20s, so youth will inevitably be the focus of crime control. (Jannetta, and Cameron, 2017) Left unchecked the problem of juvenile delinquency would produce adult criminals graduating from adolescent criminals.

For many young people today, traditional patterns guiding the relationships and transitions between family, school and work are being challenged. Social relations that ensure a smooth process of socialization are collapsing; lifestyle trajectories are becoming more varied and less predictable. The restructuring of the labor market, the extension of the maturity gap (the period of dependence of young adults on the family) and, arguably, the more limited opportunities to become an independent adult are all changes influencing relationships with family and friends, educational opportunities and choices, labor market participation, leisure activities and lifestyles. (World Youth Report, 2003) In the case of developing world including Sub-Saharan Africa countries rapid population growth, the unavailability of housing and support services, poverty, unemployment and underemployment among youth, the decline in the authority of local communities, overcrowding in poor urban areas, the disintegration of the family, and ineffective educational systems are some of the pressures young people must deal with. (World Youth Report, 2003)

NATURE OF JUVENILE DELIQUENCY

In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa juvenile delinquency has become a threat to the urban centers and families; with major characteristics of theft, arson, drug trafficking, addiction to commit crimes which altogether have constituted a threat to the general public. (Paul, 2010) The increasing rate of children and young person's getting involved in criminal activities in Sub-Saharan Africa countries poses a great threat to the peace, security and

harmony of the society as children originally known for involvement in minor offences ranging from stealing some pieces of meat from the cooking pot to robbing their peers and playmates of their foods or toys graduated from such minor offences to more serious crimes, such as rape, girl-child prostitution, drug trafficking, armed robbery, arson and vandalism, child-soldiering, suicide bombing and other acts of terrorism (Onyemachi, 2010 cited in Ajah and Ugwuoke, 2018)

Masitsa (2008) cited (Ntshangase, 2015) provides a taxonomy of adolescent misconduct in schools gleaned from the media and other research findings. The list includes the following:

- Truancy;
- Substance abuse;
- Carrying of weapons to school;
- Aggression and violence;
- Theft;
- Bullying;
- Challenging the teachers' authority;
- Inappropriate sexual conduct;
- Breaking of school rules with impunity; and
- Rape.

According to Jannetta and Cameron (2017) the urgency and importance of youth welfare and the need to address the social problem of juvenile delinquency in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa is underlined as follows:

The future prosperity of the Sub-Saharan Africa states depends in large part on the productivity and well-being of young people. Crime, victimization, and justice system responses greatly affect the life prospects of the most vulnerable youth in the restricting their access to ladders of opportunity. In too many Sub-Saharan Africa cities, racial and economic segregation separate vulnerable and low-income people from opportunity and expose them to high levels of toxic stress and crime. Concentrated poverty and disparities in health, employment, and education create conditions that contribute to both victimization and offending.

While developed countries are involved in actions intended at preventing juvenile crime, the effect of these types of actions are not strong and enough. Little is done by most of Sub-Saharan Africa with regard to studying and addressing the societal problem of juvenile delinquency and international programs are evidently inadequate. (Wondimu, 2014) The problem is explained as not challenging enough in relation to the other economic or social difficulties people confront. (Blair *et al.*, 2003) However, the need for governments, especially Sub-Saharan Africa countries including the Government of South Africa to recognize the urgency of attending to the needs of the child in conflict with the law is reflected in President Mandela's statement made in 1998 that states:

Governments as a matter of urgency must attend to the tragic and complex question of children and juveniles in detention and prison. The basic principle from which we (government leaders) shall proceed from now onwards is that we must rescue our children and ensure that the criminal justice system must be the last resort in the case of juvenile offenders. (South African Law Commission document, 1998 cited in Vermooten, 2005).

Youth nowadays, regardless of gender, social origin or country of residence, are subject to individual risks but are also being presented with new individual opportunities—some beneficial and some potentially harmful. Quite often, advantage is being taken of illegal opportunities as young people commit various offences, become addicted to drugs, and use violence against their peers. The majority of studies and programs dealing with juvenile delinquency focus on youth as offenders. However, adolescents are also victims of criminal or delinquent acts. The continuous threat of victimization is having a serious impact on the socialization of young men and on their internalization of the norms and values of the larger society. (World Youth Report, 2003) The need for effective rehabilitation and reintegration of juvenile offenders as good citizens in society calls for juvenile justice administration. (Ajah and Ugwuoke, 2018) Juvenile Justice Administration is described as a system of justice which is applicable to juveniles all over the world and which is different from the justice system applicable to adults. (Ijaiya, 2009 cited in Ajah and Ugwuoke, 2018)

Hence, the juvenile justice system need to be guided by a philosophy of concern, care and reformation. Young offenders are deemed to be immature and should not be treated as adult offenders. On the contrary, juvenile delinquents should be considered 'misguided' and therefore rescued or subjected to treatment, or reformation and rehabilitation programmes within correctional institutions. (Alemika and Chukwuma, 2001).

Types of juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency, or offending, can be separated into three categories:

- **Delinquency:** crimes committed by minors, which are dealt with by the juvenile courts and justice system.
- **Criminal behavior:** crimes dealt with by the criminal justice system. Behaviors such as violence and use of drugs or trafficking are regarded as criminal at any age. (Kariuki-Githinji, 2020)
- **Status offenses:** offenses that are only classified as such because one is a minor, such as *truancy*, also dealt with by the juvenile courts. The term status offence can be defined as behavior that is unlawful for children, even

though the same behavior would be legal for adults. (Zenzile, 2008) What transforms the conduct into public offence is the age of the actor. According Kratcoski & Kratcoski (1982) cited in Zenzile (2008) the most common status offences are truancy, running away from home, purchase or drinking of alcoholic beverages or various sexual and drug abuse acts. A wide range of non-criminal behaviors by adolescents are grouped as status offences including truancy, underage consumption of alcohol and tobacco. (Kariuki-Githinji, 2020)

According Moffitt (2006) there are two different types of offenders that emerge in adolescence. One is the repeat offender, referred to as the life-course-persistent offender, who begins offending or showing antisocial/aggressive behavior in adolescence (or even childhood) and continues into adulthood; and the age specific offender, referred to as the adolescence-limited offender, for whom juvenile offending or delinquency begins and ends during their period of adolescence. Because most teenagers tend to show some form of antisocial, justice or delinquent behavior during adolescence, it is important to account for these behaviors in childhood in order to determine whether they will be life-course-persistent offenders or adolescence-limited offenders.—Although adolescence-limited offenders tend to drop all criminal activity once they enter adulthood and show less pathology than life-course-persistent offenders, they still show more mental health, substance abuse, and finance problems, both in adolescence and adulthood, than those who were never delinquent. (Moffitt 2006).

According to Bartol and Bartol (2009) high- risk adolescents often experience multiple difficulties. They live in economically stressed families and communities; more often than not they have histories of being victims of physical and sexual abuse, typically have education and vocational deficits, and are prone to becoming involved in alcohol and other drug abuse. The problem of juvenile delinquency is becoming more complicated and universal, and crime prevention programs are either unequipped to deal with the present realities or do not exist. Many developing countries have done little or nothing to deal with these problems, and international programs are obviously insufficient. Developed countries are engaged in activities aimed at juvenile crime prevention, but the overall effect of these programs is rather weak because the mechanisms in place are often inadequate to address the existing situation. (Bartol and Bartol, 2009)

The procedures followed in the juvenile justice system differ greatly from those followed for adult offenders. Each country has specific programs or systems that deal with juvenile offenders. Juvenile offenders come into police contact in number of ways. Some are caught committing a crime and arrested, others are referred to police by parents or school officials. Once the police have become involved,

they may choose to deal with a juvenile offender in several ways. The police can:

1. Issue a warning and release of the minor
2. Detain the minor and notify the parents to pick him up
3. Refer the case to juvenile court
4. Arrest the minor and refer the case to juvenile court

If the case goes to court, the minor and the parents meet with a juvenile court intake officer. The intake officer can handle the case informally, referring the juvenile to a probation officer, he can dismiss the case, or he can file formal charges. When deciding whether to file charges, officers often consider:

- the offense
- the offender's age
- the offender's previous record
- the offender's educational or social history
- the ability of the parents to control the offender's behavior or seek help

If dealt with informally, the minor reports to a probation officer, and is given advice and ordered to perform community service, pay fines, attend treatment, or enter probation. If charges are filed in juvenile court, the minor is arraigned, at which time his charges are read before a judge.

The judge then decides whether to detain or release the juvenile until the hearing takes place. After appearing in court, three things are possible:

1. **Plea Agreement** – the minor may enter a plea agreement with the court. This often requires the juvenile to comply with certain conditions, such as attending counseling, obeying a curfew, or paying restitution.
2. **Diversion** – the judge may divert the case, which means he retains control over the matter until the juvenile successfully completes treatment programs or performs community services. If the juvenile fails to comply, formal charges may be reinstated.
3. **Adjudicatory Hearing** – the judge may decide to have an adjudicatory hearing, which is a trial in a juvenile case. While both sides argue the case and present evidence, a juvenile trial takes place in front of a judge, not a jury. If, at the end of the hearing, the judge decides the juvenile is delinquent, he may order punishments such as probation, community service, or even detention in a juvenile center.

PURPOSE OF STUDY

This research upon which this article is based was undertaken to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the main drivers of juvenile delinquency in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa with reference to Eritrea

2. To determine the various factors that lead to juvenile delinquency on the part of children house in the Asmara Rehabilitation Center for underage offenders.
3. To identify the most common and different delinquent actions committed by in remand in the Eritrean capital, Asmara.
4. To contribute to educational research on the social problem of juvenile delinquency as a way of aiding better social problem diagnosis and policy development.
5. To make evidence-based recommendations for intervention and correction mechanisms for addressing the problem of juvenile delinquency in the context of Eritrea.
6. To generate the knowledge local to the Eritrean context which will be useful to individuals, governmental and non-governmental institutions championing the welfare of children.
7. To use the survey results for debate among researchers, social workers, religious leaders, politicians, policymakers, national/international partners as well as for raising public awareness.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the nature and extent of juvenile delinquency trends among adolescents in Eritrea?
2. What are the root causes of juvenile delinquency specifically in Eritrea and generally in the Sub-Saharan region?
3. What are the types and frequencies of the offences committed by juveniles in Eritrea?
4. What are the specific strategies that need to be designed/implemented for addressing the problem of juvenile delinquency in Eritrea?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Conducting survey research aimed at gauging the perceptions of Juvenile delinquents regarding offense and infractions committed by under-age children in a country is important, not only to contribute to understanding underage crime, but to reveal valuable insights to guide strategies and policy frameworks to mitigate the social problem juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is considered as the gateway to crime. Many studies have proved that a large percentage of criminals has their roots of crime in childhood suggesting that prevention of juvenile delinquency is an important field for preventing adult criminality. (Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN), 2017) With an increased understanding of the young offenders' perspective, stakeholders in the community can incorporate them in proactive steps which will addressing the problem rather than waiting for children to be involved in crime before any action is taken. (Hunte, 2006)

Therefore, the primary purpose of the study was to examine the perceptions of juvenile delinquents in

detention regarding the nature, causes and remedies of underage crime in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa with specific reference to Eritrea. From the theoretical perspective the study's significance is two-fold: first, it makes a timely contribution to the knowledge we have about juvenile delinquency and the ways of addressing this social problem Sub-Saharan Africa with view of drawing valuable lessons for the newly independent African country of Eritrea. Second, the study provides an important perspective from Eritrea that can be used in a cross-country study of juvenile delinquency that would be undertaken in the near future. From the practical perspective the study's significance rests on its contribution to efforts aimed at designing and implementing the relevant public policies in the Eritrea public for tackling the problem of juvenile delinquency in the country. Our knowledge about corruption in Eritrea so far has been largely anecdotal. This empirical study of juvenile delinquency in Eritrea offers fresh evidence for proposing concrete policies that can be taken by Eritrean policy-makers.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study are centered on two grounds. First, the study focused on the examination of juvenile delinquency cases in the Eritrea capital, Asmara. Therefore, the findings would not be generalizable to other parts of the country. The implication is that there is strong need for including big-sized cities and towns in the rest of Eritrea in order to get a full picture of juvenile delinquency as urgent and important social problem in the country. In the future replicating similar studies in other sizable Eritrea cities and towns would be useful in for understanding the state of juvenile delinquency in Eritrea.

Second, this study was based data gathered by administering a closed type of questionnaire on juvenile delinquents living in the Asmara Center for the Rehabilitation of Juvenile Delinquents. Thus, additional questionnaires and focus group interviews need to be administered to school administrators, teachers, government officials in charge of children and women, juvenile court judges, senior police officials, Non-government organizations concerned with child and youth welfare, and youth associations in the country to enable us see the problem of juvenile delinquency in Eritrea from different angles.

CAUSES OF JUVENILE DELIQUENCY

The root causes of crime or juvenile delinquency are many and diverse. There are three different levels by which a better understanding about a juvenile delinquency can be made, such as individual level, micro-social level, and macro-social level. (Sahmey, 2013). At the individual level it focuses on the personality traits, intelligence, routine activities of adolescents, and characteristics of individual either innate or learned. At micro-social level, delinquency is a micro aspect and criminologists stressed

on the relationship ties, associations with the delinquent friends and the social process by which an individual becomes the kind of people who commit delinquent acts, especially the delinquent peer group influence at this level. In the macro-social level, the societal characteristics such as social class, social cohesiveness and social disorganization of neighborhood is used to explain delinquency. (Sahmey, 2013). In the case of Sub-Saharan Africa delinquency tends to be attributed primarily to hunger, poverty, malnutrition and unemployment, which are linked to the marginalization of juveniles in the already severely disadvantaged segments of society. (World Youth Report, 2003)

To holistically combat juvenile delinquency demands an enquiry into its causal underpinnings and this has led researchers to identify risk factors which increase the likelihood of children to engage in delinquent behaviors. (Boakye, 2012) Some of these risk factors include poor socioeconomic background, parental absence, emotional strain, negative peer influence, and negative community elements. (Boakye, 2012) Juveniles who are living in difficult circumstances are at higher risk of committing delinquency often. Among these difficult circumstances, poverty, breakdown of the family, abusive situations in the home, orphans or family with shortage in fulfilling basic needs like shelter and food, parental alcoholism and overcrowding family are the causes for juveniles to fall in to delinquency. (Rolf and David, 2013)

The main drivers of juvenile delinquency include:

Economic and Social Factors

Juvenile delinquency is driven by the negative consequences of social and economic development, in particular economic crises, political instability and the weakening of major institutions (including the state, system of public education and public assistance, and the family). According to Martin (2005) cited in Paul (2006) poor and under-class people have got more chances of producing delinquents than middle-class and upper-class people. This group is commonly found in urban-centers with chronic cycle of poverty that does not please juveniles. Because of poverty, juveniles lack opportunities to go to school and parental attention. (Martin 2005 cited in Paul 2006) Poor housing, disorientation of family life, unemployment, rapid population growth, and special labor needs of some enterprises also are conducive to crime and delinquency. (Nanjala, 2008)

Weatherburn and Lind (1997) observed that the reasons for delinquency in urban and rural areas are the social and economic disadvantages are the root causes which lead to an increasing rate in the offences such as theft, robbery and rape committed by juvenile delinquents. In Africa, hunger, poverty, malnutrition and unemployment are the major attributes of delinquency. (Wondimu, 2014). These problems are the results of the marginalization of

juveniles in the already severely disadvantaged segments of society Socio-economic instability is often linked to persistent unemployment and low incomes among the young, which can increase the likelihood of their involvement in criminal activity. (World Youth Report, 2003)

Cultural Factor

Delinquent behavior often occurs in social settings in which the norms for acceptable behavior have broken down. Under such circumstances many of the common rules that deter people from committing socially unacceptable acts may lose their relevance for some members of society. They respond to the traumatizing and destructive changes in the social reality by engaging in rebellious, deviant or even criminal activities. An example of such a setting would be the modernization of traditional societies and the accompanying changes wrought by the application of new technologies; shifts of this magnitude affect the types and organization of labor activity, social characteristics, lifestyles and living arrangements, and these changes, in turn, affect authority structures, forms of obedience, and modes of political participation—even going so far as to influence perceptions of reality.

In both developed and developing countries, consumer standards created by the media are considerably beyond the capacity of most families to achieve. (World Youth Report, 2003) Nevertheless, these ideals become a virtual reality for many young people, some of whom will go to great lengths to maintain a lifestyle they cannot afford. Because not all population groups have access to the necessary resources, including education, professional training, satisfactory employment and income, health services, and adequate housing, there are those who are unable to achieve their goals by legal means. The contradiction between idealized and socially approved goals and the sometimes limited real-life opportunities to achieve them legally creates a sense of frustration in many young people. A criminal career becomes one form of addressing this contradiction. According to Piccinini *et al.*, (2014) one of the reasons for delinquent behavior is therefore an excessive focus on proposed goals (achieving success) coupled with insufficient means to achieve them. The likelihood of deviant acts occurring in this context depends in many respects not only on the unavailability of legal opportunities but also on the level of access to illegal opportunities. Some juveniles, cognizant of the limitations imposed by legal behavior, come under the influence of adult criminals. Many young people retreat into the confines of their own groups and resort to drug use for psychological or emotional escape. The use of alcohol and illegal drugs by juveniles is one cause of delinquency, as they are often compelled to commit crimes (usually theft) to obtain the cash needed to support their substance use. (World Youth Report, 2003)

Urbanization

Geographical analysis suggests that countries with more urbanized populations have higher registered crime rates than do those with strong rural lifestyles and communities. (Nwachukwui, 2018). This may be attributable to the differences in social control and social cohesion. Rural groupings rely mainly on family and community control as a means of dealing with antisocial behavior and exhibit markedly lower crime rates. Urban industrialized societies tend to resort to formal legal and judicial measures, an impersonal approach that appears to be linked to higher crime rates. Cultural and institutional differences are such that responses to the same offence may vary widely from one country to another.

Urbanization provides an environment that is feasible for the commission of offences. By geographical analysis countries with higher urban population tend to have higher crime rates than those with stronger rural lifestyles and community. (World Youth Report, 2003) According to United Nations, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (2000) many of the urban poor live in slum and squatter settlements with overcrowded, unhealthy housing and a lack of basic services. It is here that the majority of urban youth and children live and it has been a serious source of the street and orphaned children, but above all delinquents. (United Nations, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, 2000) Industrialization accompanied by population redistribution, dissipation of traditional forms of social control, social mobility and technological changes, and improved mass communication are some of the factors of development which tend to increase opportunities for deviant behavior. (Kierkus, and Baer, 2002).

The disparity that exists between urban and rural areas is the result of difference in social cohesion and control. In rural setting the emphasis is on family and community control as basis of dealing with juvenile infraction unlike in urban setting where there is heavy reliance on formal legal and impersonal approach to crime and juvenile infraction. (Nwachukwui, 2018). The ongoing process of urbanization in developing countries is contributing to juvenile involvement in criminal behavior. The basic features of the urban environment foster the development of new forms of social behavior deriving mainly from the weakening of primary social relations and control, increasing reliance on the media at the expense of informal communication, and the tendency towards anonymity. These patterns are generated by the higher population density, degree of heterogeneity, and numbers of people found in urban contexts. (World Youth Report, 2003) In rural setting the emphasis is on family and community control as basis of dealing with juvenile infraction unlike in urban setting where there is heavy reliance on formal legal and impersonal approach to crime and juvenile infraction. (Nwachukwui, 2018).

Family

Studies show that children who receive adequate parental supervision are less likely to engage in criminal activities. The well-knit family is always the foundation of an adequate social organization. When the family shows sign of disintegration, it results into the genesis of large number of delinquent juveniles. (Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN), 2017) A significant number of juvenile delinquents come from dysfunctional families with no proper role-models, no guidance. (Marimuthu, 2014) Many researchers have pointed out that parents are the key socialization agents for their children and so the adolescents' problem behaviors tend to be founded in the family. (Kariuki-Githinji, 2020) In addition numerous studies claimed to have found correlations between juvenile delinquency and various familial variables, such as inadequate parental supervision or control, 'poor' parenting styles, parental separation ('broken' homes), lack of parental discipline, parental conflict, family size and parental attachment. (Cole and Adelino, 2014)

Dysfunctional family settings—characterized by conflict, inadequate parental control, weak internal linkages and integration, and premature autonomy—are closely associated with juvenile delinquency. Children in disadvantaged families that have few opportunities for legitimate employment and face a higher risk of social exclusion are overrepresented among offenders. Numerous scholars and practitioners in the field of juvenile delinquency claim family structure is a major factor in the causation of juvenile delinquency worked on the assumption that, if the family background (especially the general atmosphere of the home and the attitude of the other members of the family) is congenial for proper development of a child, it is likely that the child will grow up to be law abiding. (Adegoke, 2015).

Family involvement is a key element in the deterrence of juvenile delinquency as evidenced by numerous studies suggesting that children from a traditional household are less likely to be involved in school problems than those individuals from a non-traditional home. (Nanjala, 2008) For instance, adolescents from single-parent families are more to behavioral problems because they are inclined to a lack of economic security and sufficient time with parents (Blanchette and Brown, 2006 cited in Marimuthu, 2014). Adolescents from single-parent families are more susceptible to acts of juvenile delinquency than adolescents from two-parent families (Anderson & Stavrou, 2001 cited in Marimuthu, 2014). It is a generally accepted belief that the well-being of society depends on parents' ability to socialize well-adjusted, responsible and educated young people to succeed the older generation. (Zenzile, 2008) According to secor (2014) cited in (Ehiemua, 2014) the parenting styles that may contribute to the likelihood of children becoming juvenile delinquents are:

1. **Authoritarian Parenting** – characterized by the use of harsh disciplinary methods, and refusal to justify disciplinary actions, other than by saying “because I said so.” is focused on tight control and is demanding to children. these parents’ feature shared with uninvolved parents is low levels of response to children’s needs. Parents of this type make strict rules for their children and set standards of behavior but never care about the input from their children. They also tend to resort to punishment including corporal punishment
2. **Permissive Parenting** – characterized by lack of consequences for bad behavior, permissive parenting can be broken down into two subcategories:
 - a. **Neglectful parenting** - which is a lack of monitoring a child’s activities can be considered as uninvolved parenting style that poses few requirements to their children, so that maintaining and exercising control would not be uncomfortable for adults. As a result, children in such families get little emotional support. Parents of this kind usually care little about monitoring their children. (Ehiemua, 2014).
 - b. **Indulgent parenting** - which is the enablement of bad behavior. These styles of parenting show that juvenile delinquency is the problem not only of the young as offenders but also as adolescents being the victims of poor parenting styles and practices. (Ehiemua, 2014) For example educational neglect on the part of parents involves allowing the child to be chronically truant and inattentive to educational needs. Parental neglect mostly affects children from broken homes, single- parent and born- out- of wedlock (Klien, 1997 cited in Nwachukwui, 2018).

Migration

David *et al.*, (2004) point out that immigrants often exist in the margins of society and the economy and have little chance of success in the framework of the existing legal order, they often seek comfort in their own environment and culture. Differences in norms and values and the varying degrees of acceptability of some acts in different ethnic subcultures result in cultural conflicts, which are one of the main sources of criminal behavior. Native urban populations tend to perceive immigrants as obvious deviants. (World Youth Report, 2003) There are also important reasons to believe that migrants should be engaged in crime to a greater degree than the natives and the hosting communities. (Wondimu, 2014) For example, as migrants come across acculturation and assimilation problems that most natives do not, and

migrants tend to organize themselves in disorganized neighborhoods where structural features often linked with crime, such as extensive poverty, ethnic heterogeneity, and dominance of young males. (Ramiro, 2000 cited in Wondimu, 2014)

When diverse segments like distinctive beliefs, traditions, values, norms, and behavioral expectations created in urban population as a result of migration, it is self-evident that the culture conflict is unavoidable as each group judged its own standards as correct and normal and those of other groups as deviant and delinquent. (Eamonn *et al.*, 2009). Given that migrants most of the times found in the margins of society and the economy, that bring them to the narrow and blocked situation to succeed through the existing legal order, they found themselves a comfort zone that fits with their own environment and culture. (Wondimu, 2014) Differences in norms and values and the varying degrees of satisfactoriness of some acts in different ethnic subcultures result in cultural conflicts, which are one of the main sources of criminal behavior. (David *et al.*, 2004 cited Wondimu, 2014)

Chen and Zhong, (2013) argue state that immigrant youth who have not yet acculturated to the youth subculture of the host society are more law-abiding due to protections from their traditional traits like being more realistic, stronger ties with family/schools, less access to delinquent friends, and higher level of collective efficacy in homogeneous neighborhoods. Given that migrants most of the times found in the margins of society and the economy, that bring them to the narrow and blocked situation to succeed through the existing legal order, they found themselves a comfort zone that fits with their own environment and culture.

The Media

Television and movies have popularized the “cult of heroes”, which promotes justice through the physical elimination of enemies. (World Youth Report, 2003) Many researchers have concluded that young people who watch violence tend to behave more aggressively or violently, particularly when provoked. This is mainly characteristic of 8- to 12-year-old boys, who are more vulnerable to such influences. Media bring an individual to violence in three ways. First, movies that demonstrate violent acts excite spectators, and the aggressive energy can then be transferred to everyday life, pushing an individual to engage in physical activity on the streets. This type of influence is temporary, lasting from several hours to several days. Second, television can portray ordinary daily violence committed by parents or peers (the imposition of penalties for failing to study or for violations of certain rules or norms of conduct). It is impossible to find television shows that do not portray such patterns of violence, because viewer approval of this type of programming has ensured its perpetuation. As a result, children are continually exposed to the use of violence in different situations—and the number of violent acts on television appears to be increasing. Third, violence

depicted in the media is unreal and has a surrealistic quality; wounds bleed less, and the real pain and agony resulting from violent actions are very rarely shown, so the consequences of violent behavior often seem negligible. Over time, television causes a shift in the system of human values and indirectly leads children to view violence as a desirable and even courageous way of reestablishing justice. (World Youth Report, 2003) In addition, the application of new technology and the media have created consumption pattern which is beyond the capacity of most families with resultant negative influence on the youth. (Nwachukwui, 2018)

Peer influence

Youth policies seldom reflect an understanding of the role of the peer group as an institution of socialization. Peers Association – usually resulting from leaving adolescents unsupervised, encouraging a child to engage in bad behaviors when acting with his peer group. Membership in a delinquent gang, like membership in any other natural grouping, can be part of the process of becoming an adult. Through such primary associations, an individual acquires a sense of safety and security, develops knowledge of social interaction, and can demonstrate such qualities as loyalty or leadership. In “adult” society, factors such as social status, private welfare, race and ethnicity are of great value; however, all members of adolescent groups are essentially in an equal position and have similar opportunities for advancement in the hierarchical structure. (Chen and Zhong, 2013)

In these groups well-being depends wholly on personal qualities such as strength, will and discipline. Quite often delinquent groups can counterbalance or compensate for the imperfections of family and school. A number of studies have shown that juvenile gang members consider their group a family. For adolescents constantly facing violence, belonging to a gang can provide protection within the neighborhood. In some areas those who are not involved in gangs continually face the threat of assault, oppression, harassment or extortion on the street or at school. (World Youth Report, 2003)

A rigorous investigation by Church *et al.* (2009) based on Delbert Elliott’s longitudinal National Youths Study (NYS) observed how family cohesion, family stressors, youth’s perceived importance of non-familial relationships, youth’s perceived self-image, and their association with delinquent peers affected delinquency. Following a path analysis, the study revealed that, out of the three family variables (family cohesion, family stressors and importance of non-familial relation), only family stressor had a direct effect on the youth’s delinquency. (Church *et al.*, 2009) Besides the family stressor variable, males were reported to have a higher chance of engaging in delinquency or associating with delinquent peers as compared to female. Moreover, females were found to be resistant to delinquent peers or

delinquency due strong positive image which they possess, unlike male that lack it. In the end deviant peer association is assumed to be the best predictor of juvenile delinquency. (Boakye, 2012)

According to the Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN) (2017) children enter juvenile delinquency as follows:

While living in the streets they need to establish affiliation with certain groups or people. Independent life in the street is quite impossible for existence. Living in the street alone will invite a lot of problems from other groups of street children or other people. To avoid these situations, children like to belong to a group in the street. While establishing and maintaining these affiliations, they are compelled to be part of certain delinquent behaviors if they are to retain their membership. The pressure from the friends and other street children has been one of the important factors in their involvement in these activities. Similarly, because of the company of people involved in these activities the children also learnt these behaviors and make it their habit.

Recognizing that the nature of juvenile delinquency is markedly different from adult crimes, governments in Sub-Saharan Africa need to introduce a degree of specialization in child justice practices that encourages government agencies as well as non-governmental organizations to implement a distinct and unique system of criminal justice that treats children differently, in a manner appropriate to age and maturity of under-age offenders. The Beijing Rules state that, where possible, appropriate diversion should take place. (Olowu, 2002) This entails that juveniles should be diverted rather than put through formal trials. Its aim is the referral of children away from the criminal justice system and their reintegration into society. (Olowu, 2002)

CONSEQUENCES OF JUVENILE DELIQUENCY

Juvenile infraction is a contemporary social problem in African society that adversely affects the norms and ethical value of societies with potential of making life uncomfortable and dangerous for all citizens. (Dambazua, 2007) Not only does the problem juvenile delinquency affect the victims of the crime; it also affects the juvenile delinquent’s family, future, and society as a whole. (Estevez and Nicholas, 2011)

Effects on the Victims

The most obvious people affected by juvenile delinquency are the victims. Whether the crime involves theft, vandalism, or violence, the victim always suffers loss. The

victim may incur expenses related to lost wages, health care, or psychological care in addition to the cost of replacing damaged or destroyed items.

Effects on the Juvenile Delinquent

The juvenile who commits a crime also suffers effects that he or she is probably unable to predict. He or she may lose his or her freedom while being incarcerated or placed on probation. The high levels of involvement of young people with the criminal justice can have lasting negative consequences for their development because acquiring a criminal record as a teenager depresses lifetime family incomes, effects of labeling youth as “criminals;” interruption of connections to school, family, and work; and surveillance through probation supervision. (Jannetta and Cameron, 2017)

The juvenile may lose ground academically as well. Although placement in residential detention centers for juveniles may be appropriate consequences for the adolescent's criminal actions, it also puts him or her in relationships with other delinquents, who may be more sophisticated or influential. This makes recidivism likely and, in many countries, when a juvenile older than 14 becomes a repeat offender, he or she can be tried and sentenced as an adult. The delinquency may even have future consequences on the adolescent's college and career choices. (World Youth Report, 2003) While delinquency is a common characteristic of the period and process of becoming an adult, it is very important to note that juveniles often create stable criminal groups with a corresponding subculture and start to engage in the activities of adult criminal groups, in effect choosing delinquent careers. (Venkatesh, 1997).

Effects on the Families

The upheaval and trauma of having a family member who is a juvenile delinquent can create instability for the other relatives. According to Jannetta and Cameron (2017) the negative impacts of overly punitive and broad policies are intergenerational, with children of incarcerated parents more likely to drop out of school, develop learning disabilities, have disciplinary problems in school, and suffer from a number of physical and behavioral health issues, such as asthma, high cholesterol, and depression. Incarceration is negatively associated with employment, wages, and income, with these impacts disproportionately borne by young marginalized sections of society.

Not only does the family have to cope with the needs of the child who is in trouble, but they may also have to raise large amounts of money to pay for lawyers. In addition, the family has to face the ethical issues of responsibility to the victims of the child's crime. Families must usually attend group counseling sessions, which can be disruptive and

costly during the time when the child is in detention or on probation.

Effects on the Community

There is a correlation between juvenile delinquency and drug use, gang involvement, alcohol abuse, and sexual behavior. All of these issues challenge communities by making neighborhoods unsafe and costing large amounts of public money to be spent on law enforcement and school safety.

Effects on Society

Young people who commit serious crimes before they are 18 years old challenge the future for everyone involved. They may be acting out to protest perceived abuses that have been perpetrated against them. They may believe that there is no future for them outside of a life of crime. They may be expressing anger or frustration directed against another person or group or looking for approval from a gang. Whatever the motive, juvenile delinquency affects too many American individuals, families, and communities. It is a serious problem that challenges the efforts of government agencies, politicians, educators, faith communities, and nonprofit organizations alike. (World Youth Report, 2003)

RESEARCH METHODS

The study used survey research as data collecting strategy. The instrument used in collecting data for this study was questionnaire method where close-ended questions were asked in a questionnaire that was self-administered by the respondents. A questionnaire was administered to the sample of 70 respondents (part of juvenile delinquents in detention in a rehabilitation center for underage law-breakers) selected from the total population of 112 delinquents in the holding center in Asmara, Eritrea. The questionnaire was not administered to the 42 juvenile delinquents who were part of the study for valid reasons including some juvenile delinquents were not physically present during the research visits, some of them were unwilling to fill the questionnaire and some were physical or mentally sick. The Youth Rehabilitation Center in Asmara has been established to provide safe custody to children whose cases are still pending in court and offer representation of the subjects in court. Regarding the quantitative method of data collection techniques, questionnaires were administered to collect data from juvenile delinquents found in the Center a closed type of questionnaire is the mostly used type of questionnaire and the data collected through this technique are unsophisticated and frank given the simple questions asked. Accordingly, close ended type of questions was administered to these juveniles.

The term "questionnaire" refers to a list of questions to be answered by a survey respondent. The term is restricted to a self-administered instrument as opposed to an interview. (Sekeran, 1992) Questionnaires are thus forms containing questions to be answered by the respondent himself/herself. For the purpose of this study existing questionnaires was adapted and utilized to resonate with the objectives of this study. According to Sekeran (1992) the questionnaire method is regarded as an efficient data collection mechanism when the researcher knows exactly what is required and how to measure the variable of interest.

The researcher took a great deal of time and effort to ensure the proper administration of the questionnaire by handing the questionnaire to each respondent and collecting it personally. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, each subject was represented by a coded

The population under consideration was the 112 juvenile delinquents detained at Asmara Rehabilitation Center for underage offenders. The Asmara Rehabilitation Center for underage offenders is established to provide safe custody to children whose cases are still pending in court and offer representation of the subjects in court. The author collaborates with Eritrean Police in research and training as an advisor and instructor, and therefore was able to secure permission to visit the Asmara Rehabilitation Center for underage offenders. With the permission of the Center administrators and willing to participate by the juvenile delinquents, the author personally administered the questionnaire in face-to-face meeting with each juvenile. Accordingly, care was taken to ensure that respondents, in this case the 70 juvenile delinquents, believed to contribute to the understanding of the nature, causes, consequences of juvenile delinquency in Sub-Saharan Africa in general and in Eritrea in particular are included in the sample.

A sample is a subset or proportion of the total population (Bailey 1982 cited in Zenzile, 2008) Social research is characterized by probability and non-probability sampling techniques. Probability sampling concerns itself with representativeness based on known sampling estimates, in other words, characteristics of the sampling units to be included in the social survey. The present study is, however, based on non-probability sampling procedures and more specifically, purposive (judgmental) sampling, blended with convenience sampling undertones. Purposive sampling technique was being used to ensure a well-balanced group of respondents based on nature of the research aims. This technique is advantageous, because it allows the researcher to use his/her skills and prior knowledge to select respondents. (Zenzile, 2008)

number, with no references to name or position and each questionnaire was collected in a sealed envelope. Thus, nobody can identify or make connection between the identity of the subject and his/her responses. The researcher personally distributed and collected the questionnaire to ensure secure transport.

The questionnaire consists of four sections covering the following areas:

1. Demographic data (age, sex, and education)
2. A descriptive analysis of the family situation that may sometimes propel a child into deviant behavior
3. Information pertaining to parental control and discipline.
4. Identification of a self-reported juvenile crime index that could act as an antipode to juvenile delinquency.

By making a detailed analysis from the primary data collected coupled with methodical review of previous empirical research work, this article identified the nature, causes, consequence and remedies for juvenile delinquency. The author has made a rigorous review of previous works done in the area of juvenile delinquency in Sub-Saharan Africa including Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal, South Africa, and Uganda. The review also encompassed the North Africa country of Morocco. Not limited to Africa, the research article also reviewed research done in the topic in USA, Australia, Netherlands, china, India, Nepal, Brazil as well as Trinidad and Tobago. The unit of analysis is the individual delinquent under detention, more specifically, a total of 70 respondents that participated in the administration of the questionnaire survey.

The study was conducted in accordance with the code of ethics in which the ethical requirements relate to scientific validity, welfare of the participants, and respect for the dignity of participants. Moreover, the ethical norms for this study is designed to respect human dignity, respect freedom and self-determination of the participants, obtained informed consent, debriefing participants about the research, and keep the confidentiality of participants.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Respondents characteristics

The following table shows the characteristics of the 70 juvenile delinquents that participated in the study. Respondents are between the age of 10 - 17 and their educational attainment are between 1- 9 and cover both sex male and female. The detailed information is presented below.

Table 1: Respondents characteristics (N = 70)

No	Statement	Category	Percentage %
1.	Gender	Male	72
		Female	28
2.	Age	10-13	48
		14-17	52
		18 above	-
3.	Educational attainment	1-6	51
		7-8	33.
		9-11	16

Source: Data collected from the field

In terms of gender the majority of the sampled respondents are males indicating that male delinquent are overrepresented in the population of juvenile delinquents detained at Asmara rehabilitation center for underage offenders (total of 112) as opposed to female delinquents. Compared to the male offender's female offenders represent lesser numbers in committing infractions given that the various preventive situations, societal norms regarding the honor and responsibilities of women, deter females from committing crime as frequently and widely their male counter parts in the society.

According to Nanjala (2008) males were more likely to be referred to the program for violations of the law, to have

been arrested, and to have engaged in aggressive offenses and selling drugs. In contrast females were more likely to be referred due to status crimes (Nanjala, 2008). This observation made after this research work is supported by factual evidence supplied by police records throughout Sub-Saharan Africa including Eritrea. In terms of age both groups meaning the (10-13 years old) age group and the (14-17 years old) group are almost equally represented in the sampled respondents. The majority of the respondents (79%) are either in elementary or junior high school indicating that the majority of the respondents are lagging behind in school achievements.

Table 2: Survey results on marital status of respondent of parents

No	Explanation	Percentage %
1.	Married	20
2.	Never Married	30
3.	Mother deceased	10
4.	Father deceased	10
5.	Both parents deceased	10
6.	Divorced or Separate	20
7.	If other	-

Source: Data collected from the field

A striking finding is majority of the households the respondents come from are either one-parent or no parent present indicating the lack of the traditional two-parent family. The death of either of the parents confronting 30% of the respondents suggesting that death in the family has affected the delinquents. In addition, 20 % of the respondents indicate that they come from divorced or separated parents. The results show that parental supervision has been lacking for majority the respondents contributing to the adolescents entering into the life of

crime at young age. Family involvement is a key element in the deterrence of juvenile delinquency. (Kierkus, and Baer, 2002). Several studies on the subject on support the view that adolescents without family supervision are more likely to be engaged in criminal acts. (Kierkus, and Baer, 2002). It is reported that those children from a traditional household are less likely to be involved in school problems than those individuals from a non-traditional home.

Table 3: Survey results on parents or those guard at home

No	Categories	Percentage %
1.	Mother	58.6
2.	Father	6.2
3.	Grandmother	8.6
4.	Grandfather	-
5.	Step-mother	10
6.	Step-father	-
7.	Sister	7.1
8.	Brother	-
9.	Uncle/Aunt	15.7
10.	Neighbors	-
11.	Nobody	-

Source: Data collected from the field

The majority of the households (58.6%) from which the sampled juvenile delinquents come from have female guardians or mother-led families. In these families the father is either absent or dead suggesting that the brunt of raising children is left to the mother. In traditional African societies, Eritrea is no exception, there is a prevailing view that women alone are incapable of properly raising and disciplining their children being weak and without authority. (Konate, 2007). According to (Hunte, 2006) the delinquents who lack emotional and physical bonding to their father figures in their family is likely to make them go out to search for one. The new father figures they saw in their neighborhoods happened to be their peers who served as a surrogate family and predominantly noted for bandits and drug dealers.

According to Corsaro and Johannesen, (2007) it is essential that as children are allowed to interact with environment in to demonstrate and reinforce their creative power they also receive the requisite guidance and direction to be conditioned to good modes of conduct so as to refrain from destructive ways of life. As such the presence of moral father figures would be ideal for the nurture and growth of children, especially the boys in the family. Hence, the role of fathers as role models to boys cannot be underestimated. Moreover, more than 50% of the respondents come from a single parent household indicating the heavy burden of raising children for the

single parents and accompanying weak parental supervision.

The percentage of families raised by male parent only (either father or grandfather) is very small. Only 6.2% of the sampled juvenile delinquents come from families having the father as guardian. A single parent cannot especially the mother alone cannot be expected to win bread for the family and taking care of children’s activities and behaviors at the same time. According to Comanor and Phillips (2002) fathers play a critical role in the rearing of boys at a tender age and having a step-father also increases the delinquency among the children rather than having a step-mother. The nature of mother-led families is that the mothers are the only bread winners busy working to feed their children. Hence there is no body present to closely supervise the activities of the children opens door wide open for the children to engage in illegal or immoral activities.

A very significant observation is that 30% of the sampled juvenile delinquents are born outside of wedlock indicating the erosion of the traditional family constructed after a community approved marriage. Another striking observation is that 25% of the respondents come from families where the husband and wife are either separated or divorce indicating that troubled families of household characterized by conflict and stress are contributing to the problem of juvenile delinquency.

Table 4: Survey results on whether the delinquent’s mother and father currently employed?

Currently employed	Categories	Mother %	Father %
	Yes		67.1
No		17.1	14.3
Not applicable / died		15.8	45.7

Source: Data collected from the field

A significant observation is that more mothers (67.1%) are employed than fathers (40%) suggesting that the task of putting food on the table is that by mother. On the other hand, on the unemployed side both fathers and mothers are almost equally jobless. In the traditional Eritrean family, the father is the breadwinner of the family while the

mother is the home maker. However, the survey evidence indicates that mothers are doing both the housekeeping and the breadwinning. The implication is that children would not get proper parents supervision regarding school activities as well as home activities.

Table 5: Survey results on number of children (siblings) living with the delinquent

No	Categories	Percentage (%)
1.	Only one brother or sister	24.3
2.	Two	7.1
3.	Three/four	48.6
4.	Five /six	8.6
5.	Seven /eight	-
6.	More than 8	-
7.	I am the only one	11.4

Source: Data collected from the field

The greater percentage of the families (48.6%) from which the respondents come from containing 3 to 4 siblings suggesting that the delinquents are coming from medium sized families. A single parent family with bigger number of children would make parental supervision of

children very difficult indeed opening the doors for the emergence of juvenile delinquency. Another significant observation is almost a quarter of the juvenile delinquents (24.3 %) are the only child in the family.

Table 6: Survey results on the one the delinquent places trust more from family

No	Categories	Percentage (%)
1.	Mother	35.7
2.	Father	2.9
3.	Gr/Mother	2.9
4.	Gr/Father	1.4
5.	Step/Mother	8.6
6.	Step/father	2.9
7.	Uncle	8.6
8.	Aunt	5.7
9.	Brother	1.4
10.	Sister	5.7
11.	Both parents	24.3
12.	Neighbors	-

Source: Data collected from the field

A very remarkable observation is the mothers are more trusted than fathers according to the sampled delinquents with 45.7 of the respondents trusting their mother while only 2.9% of the respondents putting trust on their fathers. Moreover, an overwhelming percentage of the respondents indicated their trust on female family

members (74.6%) rather than male family members (11.2%). It is natural for the children to put more trust in the female guardians of the family because it is clear for everybody to see that the female members of the family that are busy keeping the family afloat.

Table 7: Survey results on attendance of religious services by juveniles

Categories	Percentage (%)
Always	8.6
Sometimes	47.1

Often	14.3
Rarely	17.1
Never	12.9
Not applicable	-

Source: Data collected from the field

Only a small percentage (14.3%) of the respondents indicated that they regularly attend churches or mosques suggesting low level of religiosity. The majority of the respondents (77%) either do not attend churches or mosques or rarely do so. The survey evidence suggests that low religiosity and increase in juvenile Delinquency go hand in hand. This has implication for the moral development of the children. Chadwick and Top (1993)

found out that, religiosity had a strong negatively relationship with delinquency and this was attributed to the internalization of moral doctrines and practices among adolescents keeping them away from delinquency. Numerous studies have shown that religiosity and juvenile delinquency are found to be negative related supportive religious environment deters juvenile delinquency in significant ways.

Table 8: Survey results on praise from mother or father

Categories	Mother %	Father %
Always	1.4	8.6
Sometimes	20	45.4
Often	5.7	5.7
Never	54.3	30
Not applicable	18.6	14.3

Source: Data collected from the field

The majority of the respondents (54.3%) indicated they do not receive any praise at all from their mother or fathers. Only a very small percentage of the respondents (7.1%) received praise regularly. This development has serious

implications for the well-being and happiness of the children feel underappreciated and undervalued by their parents.

Table 9: Survey results on guardians punishing delinquent in any of the following

Statements	Always %	Sometime %	Often %	Never %	Not Applicable
Hit with stick/other kind	80	14.3	5.7		
Verbally warned	81.4	17.1	1.4		
Grounded	80	20	-		
Refused permission	87.1	10	2.9		

Source: Data collected from the field

Corporal punishment is heavily used as indicated by the overwhelming majority of the respondents (85.7). At the same the majority of the respondents (82. %) indicate they suffered insults from parents; while 80% of respondents were grounded or confined to whom for a fixed period of time and 89. % of the respondents were

refused permission to visit friends after school. The above observations strongly suggest the frequent use of penalties by parents on their children suggesting that juveniles are forced into exhibiting resistant behavior or worse leaving the home

Table 10: Survey results on delinquent's objecting to discipline from parents/ guardians

Categories	Percentage (%)
Never	1.4
One or two	17.1
Three or four	44.3
Five or six	37.1
Not applicable	-

Source: Data collected from the field

The overwhelming majority of respondents (81.4%) objected repeatedly to the punishments handed down by their parents suggesting stiff resistance to parental control. The imposition of heavy punishment by parents on their children coupled by the frequent stiff objections of the children to those punishment is indicative of the conflict and stress experience by the families. The implication is that parent's choice of the use of penalties and force is

meeting stiff resistance leading to social distancing between parents and children. With the minimal praise and other incentives provided to children the likelihood that children would rebel and leave the home to join the ranks of street children become ever-present. Street gangs would be glad to fill the gap created between parents and their children allowing negative peer influences to flourish.

Table 11: Survey results on juvenile delinquency activities committed

No	Activities	Never	Once	2/3times	4/5 times
1	Have deliberately broken a window of a building	75.7	20	2.9	1.4
2	Driven a motor vehicle without valid driver's license	82.9	11.4	2.9	2.9
3	Taken someone else's property worth less than 100 Nakfa	24.3	41.4	32.9	1.4
4	Secretly watched a video or film reserved for adults only	72.9	17.1	8.6	1.4
5	Intentionally thrown a stone at someone's house/vehicle	64.3	22.9	11.4	1.4
6	Damaged a public telephone	90	5.7	4.3	-
7	Illegally taken someone's mobile without his/her consent	85.7	8.6	4.3	1.4
8	Destroyed property belonging to my school	61.4	21.4	17.1	-
9	Damaged or defaced another pupil's school books	37.1	35.7	24.3	2.9
10	Avoided paying for a trip with a taxi or bus by	28.6	12.9	35.7	22.9
11	Spread bad stories about another pupil(s) at school	40	12.9	32.9	14.3
12	Disobeyed my parents/step parents or guardian/s	57.1	5.7	22.9	14.3
13	Made marks or wrote mean things on school desks	44.3	18.6	24.3	12.9
14	Disobeyed my teacher or other school official	60	10	21.4	8.6
15	Pinched something small (e.g. worth less than 20 Nakfa)	11.4	1.4	41.4	45.7
16	Smoked cigarette at school or elsewhere	81.4	10	5.7	2.9
17	Drank beer, wine or hard liquor while with friends	75.7	21.4	1.4	1.4
18	Scratched motorcar at school	77.1	12.9	7.1	2.9
19	Inhaled benzene, petrol or other to get a 'kick'	75.7	20	4.3	-
20	Bought liquor without parents or guardians permission	84.3	14.3	1.4	-
21	Beating some young guy/s at school	37.1	50	11.4	1.4
22	Have been loud, rowdy or unruly at school or public place	17.1	14.3	47.1	21.4
23	Stayed away from school without a valid reason	15.7	14.3	17.1	52.9

Source: Data collected from the field

Table 12: Survey results on most commonly committed juvenile delinquency activities

No	Juvenile Delinquency Activities	% of Respondents
1	Pinched something small (e.g. worth less than 20 Nakfa)	88.6
2	Stayed away from school without a valid reason	84.3
3	Have been loud, rowdy or unruly at school or public place	82.1
4	Taken someone else's property worth less than 100 Nakfa	77.7
5	Avoided paying for a trip with a taxi or bus by "sneaking in"	70.1
6	Damaged or defaced another pupil's school books	62.9
7	Beating some young guy/s at school	62.9
8	Spread bad stories about another pupil(s) at school	60
9	Made marks or wrote mean things on school desks	56.7

Source: Data collected from the field

The most common type of delinquent behavior among the juvenile delinquents is pinched something small or petty theft (88.6), staying away from school or absenteeism (84.3%), misbehavior at school (82.1%) and stealing money (77.7%). Two out of the four most commonly committed juvenile offence involve stealing or theft. The conventional wisdom suggests that when juveniles leave home and start living in the streets they need money to meet basic needs as well as harmful habits such as drinking alcohol, smoking cigarettes and using drugs that they might entertain. Absenteeism from school is the second most committed juvenile offence while showing disorderly and rowdy behavior while attending school is ranked third place. Unlike young non-offenders' young offenders are more likely to have experiences such as estrangements from their family, defiance and evasion of parental or adult control, alienation from school. (Nwachukwui, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The principal aim of the research was to examine the nature, extent, causes, consequences and remedies of juvenile delinquency in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa with specific reference to Eritrea. This research presented data and analysis on 70 juvenile delinquents in custody at the Asmara juvenile rehabilitation center regarding their parents' marital status, guardians at home, parental employment, religiosity of children, punishment imposed by parents on children, praise of children by parents, objection of children to disciplinary measure take by parents and juvenile offences most commonly committed by the respondents.

The study findings indicate the majority of juvenile delinquents surveyed came from broken families where they come from unmarried couple or live with a single parent or the mother. The majority of the families the juvenile delinquents come from are headed by single mothers working and raising children by themselves at the same time. This has resulted in very weak parental supervision of children and subsequent increase in juvenile delinquency. Obviously in such conditions the children especially the boys grow without the presence of a role model or the father. The net result is children especially boys are likely to turn to the wrong role models in the shape of neighborhood bullies or gang leaders.

The findings of the research also suggest a link between low religiosity on the part of juvenile delinquents and high propensity to commit criminal offenses as the overwhelming majority of the respondents indicated they rarely attend religious services or prayer if at all. The findings suggest that parents impose frequent and heavy penalties on unruly children while minimum praise is bestowed by parents on children for good behavior. The research evidence points that stealing, truancy or

absenteeism from school and rowdy or unruly behavior at school are the most common forms of juvenile offenses. Petty offences by adolescents are a far more common type of violation of the criminal law. These include small-scale theft, staying away from school, misbehaving at school, physical fighting in school, damaging school property other students' books and free-riding on public transportation.

It is therefore, recommended that parents and guardians should exercise proper parental supervision and give adequate care to transmit positive societal values to children. In addition, the government, the police, prosecution and courts, Non-government organizations, parents, teachers, education administrators and other stakeholders should develop a child justice system that strives to prevent children from entering deeper into the criminal justice process while holding them accountable for their actions by means of diversion programs.

It is essential that in the context of Eritrea that the Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare, the Ministry of Education and religious institutions collaborate on conducting extensive and rigorous research work in the topic of juvenile delinquency and supporting youth before they engage in anti-social behavior.

It should be underlined that key ingredients of for tackling the social problem of juvenile delinquency in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa and in Eritrea specifically should incorporate the following recommendations:

1. Government at all levels need to build adequate number of youth rehabilitation centers complete with modern physical structures of the buildings with separate rooms for different types of criminal activities and age groups. The more youth rehabilitations centers are built at local and regional levels, the lesser would be the caseload and overcrowding in the capitals of each Sub-Saharan African country.
2. The Ministry of Justice should consider introducing a child justice system that strived to prevent children from entering deeper into the criminal justice process while holding them accountable for their actions by means of diversion programs. Diversion is the removal of juvenile delinquents from any stages of the formal criminal justice system. It is a form of disposition in the criminal justice system that replaces the "normal" criminal process with accepted community-based interventions that may be formal or informal. (Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN), 2017) These diversion options are based on restorative justice principles that focus on reconciliation and restitution, rather than on retribution and punishment. (Vermooten,

2005) Offenders are encouraged to understand the harm they have caused. The emphasis is on compensation for the victim by the offender with the object of reintegrating into society both the victim and the offender as productive members of safe communities.

3. The training magistrates police, prisons and probation officers in juvenile justice essential as these stakeholders are at the forefront of the welfare of the children who are in trouble with societal norms and the written laws of the land.
4. The governments at national, state and local levels should not only provide free basic education but also take practical steps to ensure that the education they give is truly and completely free, qualitative, and necessarily compulsory.
5. It is instructive for school to administrators should step-up efforts to curb every form of truancy and loitering in and around their respective schools so that students may be disciplined to stay put in schools and pay attention to their lessons. School-age children who are out of school should be encouraged to seek the free education provided by the government to discourage idleness among the youth. (Nanjala, 2008).
6. In addition to regular school curricula, the students should be given expose to other activities such as music, sports where most boy students enjoy and regular brainstorming activities such as quiz and debate contests for intelligent students.
7. Parents and guardians should not neglect their responsibility to provide for members of their family irrespective of whether they are related by blood or by adoption. (Nwachukwui, 2018).
8. The family as an agent of socialization should be educated on the psychological effect of broken homes on juvenile's behavior. (Zenzile, 2008) Educational programs on the topic of juvenile delinquency and its adverse consequences should be disseminated using all the available media outlets to raise awareness about the issue on the part of families, schools and communities

Finally, any hope of addressing the causes of juvenile delinquency successfully requires multi-faceted strategies to be implemented by neighborhoods, communities and the government at local, state and national levels. There is no one single answer that can be imposed from above. Any solution to juvenile crime must involve all sectors of society: individuals, families, schools, churches, community groups, governments and businesses. Suffice to say that any public policy designed to address the serious social problem of juvenile delinquency should be tailored to fit the country-specific

needs while the scope of effort involved should be as broad as all of society.

REFERENCES

- Adegoke, Niyi. (2015). Factors Responsible for Juvenile Delinquency in Nigeria: A Case Study of Selected Primary Schools in Ikorodu, Lagos State, Nigeria. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*. 5(5): 78-84
- Ajah, Benjamin & Ugwuoke, Cyril. (2018). Juvenile Justice Administration and Child Prisoners in Nigeria. *International Journal of Criminal Justice Sciences*. 13(2): 438–446.
- Alemika, E. E. O., & Chukwuma, I. C. (2001). *Juvenile Justice Administration in Nigeria: Philosophy and Practice*. Centre for Law Enforcement Education Lagos, Nigeria.
- Bimal, K. N., (2013). Juvenile Delinquency: Its Magnitude and Impact at Gondar Town in Ethiopia. 2(9).
- Boakye, Augustine. (2012). *Juvenile Delinquency in Ghana: A Qualitative Study of the Lived Experiences of Young Offenders in Accra*. Institute of Psychology, Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim. Unpublished Master's Thesis. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/52110948.pdf> Accessed August 15, 2020
- Camenor and Phillips. (2002). The Impact of Income and Family Structure on Delinquency. *Journal of Applied Economics*. 5(2): 209-232
- Chadwick, B. A., and Top, B. L. (1993). Religiosity and Delinquency Among LDS Adolescents. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 3(2): 51- 67.
- Chen, Xi & Zhong, Hua. (2013). Delinquency and crime among immigrant youth: An integrative review of theoretical explanations. *Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong*.
- Child Workers in Nepal Concerned Center (CWIN). (2017) *A Study on Trend of Juvenile Delinquency in the Kathmandu Valley: Special reference to school-going children and street children*. Ministry Youth and Sports, Kathmandu, Nepal.
- Corsaro, A. W., & Johannesen, O. B. (2007). The Creation of New Cultures in Peer Interaction. In J. Valsiner & A. Rosa (Eds), *the Cambridge Handbook of Sociocultural Psychology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.444- 459.
- Cole Bankole and Chipaca Adelino (2014). Juvenile delinquency in Angola. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 14 (1): 61-76.
- David, H., Karl, S., Beate, E., Amanda, E. (2004). The Effect of juvenile justice system processing on subsequent delinquent and criminal behavior: A cross-national study. *University of Colorado & University of Bremen*.
- Eamonn, C., Pam, C., Maggy, L., Ken, P. & Nigel, S. (2009). *Criminology*. New York: Routledge.
- Ehiemua, Solomon. (2014). *Juvenile Delinquency: A Comparative Study Between Child Rearing Practices in*

- Developed and Developing Countries. *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences*. (2) (4): 2056-5429
- Estevez, E., & Nicholas, E. (2011). Assessing the links among adolescent and offending, antisocial behavior, victimization, drug use and gender. *Journal of Clinical Health Psychology*. 5(3):24-37.
- Hunte, M. (2006). A Qualitative study of Delinquency and Achievement among Low Income Youth in Trinidad. A Paper presented at SALISES 7th Annual Conference. University of West Indies, Cave Hill, Barbados.
- Jannetta, Jesse and Okeke, Cameron. (2017). Strategies for Reducing Criminal and Juvenile Justice Involvement. The Urban Institute. 2100 M Street NW Washington, DC 20037. www.urban.org
- Kariuki-Githinji, Scolastica. (2020). Delinquency in Urban Kenya Secondary Schools: Implications for Parenting. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*. 15(6): 2454-6186.
- Kierkus, C.A., & Baer, D. (2002). A social control explanation of the relationship between family structures and delinquent behavior. *Canadian Journal of Criminology*. 4(4):425-459.
- Marimuthu, Bonita. (2014). A Quantitative Analysis of Juvenile Delinquency Trends among school going adolescents in a select sample of Secondary Schools in Chatsworth, Durbanll. Department of Criminology and Forensic Studies, University of Kwa Zulu-Natal. Unpublished Master's Thesis in Criminology. <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/34ac/a994024ccc68f17f18f3e04dbe101548b7e9.pdf> Accessed August 21, 2020.
- Moffitt (2006). Life course persistent versus adolescent limited antisocial behavior. In Cicchetti, D.; Cohen, D. *Developmental Psychopathy* (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Nanjala, Sitatilenah. (2008). Analysis of the Factors Leading to Juvenile Delinquency: The Case of Muranga Children's Remand Home, Nairobi, Kenya. Project Planning and Management of the University of Nairobi. Unpublished Master's Thesis. http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/6346/Nanjala_Analysis%20Of%20The%20Factors%20Leading%20To%20Juvenile%20Delinquency%20The%20Case%20Of%20Murang%E2%80%99A%20Children%E2%80%99S%20Remand%20Home..pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y Accessed September 2, 2020.
- Ntshangase, Margaret. (2015). A Study of Juvenile Delinquency amongst Adolescents in Secondary Schools in Gauteng. University of South Africa. Unpublished Master's Thesis. <http://uir.unisa.ac.za/handle/10500/20230> Accessed September 5, 2020
- Nwachukwui, Ugbomah. (2018). Juvenile Infraction in Selected Secondary Schools in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. Department of Sociology College of Management and social Science Novena University, Nigeria. 11(3B): 529-544.
- Paul, Mugerwa. (2010) Challenges of Rehabilitating Juvenile Delinquents in Uganda: A case Study of Kampiringisa National Rehabilitation Center and Naguru Remand Home. Peace and Conflict Studies, Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, Makerere University, Uganda. Unpublished Master's Thesis http://www.mak.ac.ug/documents/Makfiles/theses/Mugerwa_Paul.pdf Accessed August 20, 2020
- Piccinini, C. A., Alvarenga, P., & Marin, A.H. (2014). Child-Rearing Practices of Brazilian Mothers and Fathers: Predictors and Impact on Child Development. *European Journal of Research in Social Sciences* 2 (4): 205-224
- Rolf, David, and David, P. (2013). From Juvenile Delinquency to Young Adult Offending. USA: NCJRS.
- Sahmey, Kavita. (2013). A Study on Factors Underlying Juvenile Delinquency and Positive Youth Development Programs. Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology, India. Unpublished Master's Degree Thesis. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/A-Study-on-Factors-Underlying-Juvenile-Delinquency-Sahmey/dc1092ed53dc565c8ab4943a762dbb4d236a2885> Accessed September 10, 2020.
- Sekeran, U. (1992). *Research methods for business: a skill-building approach*. (2nd Ed). New York: John Wiley and Sons Inc.
- South African Law Commission document "What do you think about young people in trouble with the law? (1998) 1-7.
- United Nations, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (2000). Urban Management Programme, "Street children and gangs in African cities: guidelines for local authorities"
- Venkatesh, S. (1997). The social organization of street gang activity in an urban ghetto. *American Journal of Sociology*. 103(1): 82-111.
- Vermooten Antoinette. (2005). Juvenile Sentence and Intervention Options in South Africa. Faculty of Law, Department of Social Work, University of Kwazulu-Natal. Unpublished Master's Thesis. https://researchspace.ukzn.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10413/5622/Vermooten_Antoinette_2005.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y Accessed July 23, 2020.
- Violaine, V. (2011). Risk profiles of youth in pre-trial detention: A comparative study of Moroccan and Dutch male adolescents in the Netherlands. Ridderprint BV te Ridderkerk.
- Weatherburn D. and Lind B. (1997). *Social and Economic Stress, Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency*. New South Wales, Bureau of Crime statistics and Research, Attorney General's Department, Australia.

- Wondimu, Betelehem. (2014). Comparative Study of Juvenile Delinquency between Addis Ababa and Out of Addis Ababa Raised Juveniles in Addis Ababa. Department of Social Work, School of Social Work, Addis Ababa University. PhD Dissertation. <http://etd.aau.edu.et/bitstream/handle/123456789/1437/Betelehem%20Wondimu.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> Accessed July 27, 2020.
- World youth report (2003). Juvenile Delinquency.
- Zenzile, Enoch. (2008). Juvenile delinquency among secondary school pupils in the Mthatha District of Education, South Africa: A Self-Report Survey. Department of Criminal Justice, University of Zululand, South Africa.

Accepted 9 November 2020

Citation: Yemane D. (PhD) (2021). Causes, Consequences and Remedies of Juvenile Delinquency in the Context of Sub-Saharan Africa: A Study of 70 Juvenile Delinquents in the Eritrean Capital, Asmara. *International Journal of Public Administration and Policy Research*, 5(2): 091-110.



Copyright: © 2021: Yemane D. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are cited