

**THE PROCLIVITY OF JUVENILE CRIME IN FATHERLESS HOMES:
AN URBAN PERSPECTIVE**

An Applied Doctoral Project submitted

by

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December 2021

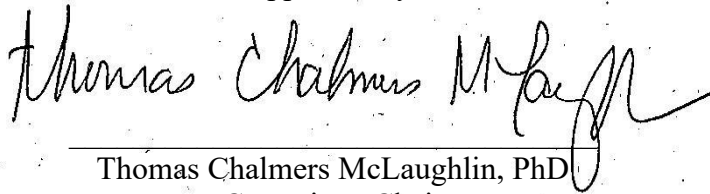
to

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA GLOBAL CAMPUS

Upon this recommendation of the Faculty and the approval of the Board of Trustees, this Applied Doctoral Project is hereby accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract

The proclivity of criminal intent among juvenile offenders in fatherless homes is a current issue in the United States. The concern of juveniles raised in fatherless homes is directly related to this at-risk population being more prone to committing criminal acts. However, there is limited research on juveniles in fatherless homes committing violent offenses. The purpose of this project was to conduct a qualitative systematic literature review to answer the following research questions: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders? and What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherless juvenile offenders? Project findings showed a relationship between fatherless homes and criminal intent in juvenile offenders. The findings indicated that children in fatherless homes are more likely to commit crimes and have cognitive, socioemotional, and attachment issues. The project outcomes may help other researchers, community leaders, and educators to revise and adopt new programs for juveniles in fatherless homes. The findings may also help to inform further research on the proclivity of crime among juveniles in fatherless homes.

Key words: fatherlessness, fatherless home, criminality, juvenile delinquency, at-risk youth

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This and the work put forth was the culmination of dedication: professionally, scholastically, and personally. As such, I would like to thank the support of my family. First, to my parents, my father, Flory Sr., and my mother, Carol. They have always pushed me and my siblings to being the best we possibly can be, as cliché as this sounds. They have pushed us to achieve all the pursuits not always taken or given to many. This journey was not easy and was tumultuous at best, but with their support and push, we have achieved this goal through this program and beyond. I love you both more than words could express on this piece of paper.

Secondly, I would like to thank my younger brothers and sister, Adam, Jonathan, and Arianna. As you all know, schooling and professional success is not always the easiest goal to obtain given the plethora of daily responsibilities and routine, however this is success story for us all given the difficulty we had growing up until now. Although we did not always see eye to eye on everything, you certainly helped me more than you will ever know in finishing this program, project and beyond. I will always be there, much like you were for me, in your successes, goals and failures. Dad would be so proud of you all!

Thirdly, I would like to thank Frank, Angie, Lucas, and Lucy Costa for all that you have done for me over the years. You have saved my life in so many ways and you have been an invaluable part of my life, whether you see it or not. I have come so far and will continue to push through these stages in my life. You gave me the ambition and strength I needed to move on when others would have left me stranded in a dark room. I am truly grateful for you and look forward to years of friendship with you!

Fourth, I would like to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Thomas McLaughlin. You were instrumental in this project, the completion of this program and providing guidance in getting my facts straight with the guidelines of succeeding in this process. Your experience, guidance, and perspective were critical in that I was able to think beyond the scope of research, literature implementation, and classical research to conclude this process. Furthermore, the researchers and methodologists that helped me alongside my chair were fundamental in gathering and executing data in a concise fashion as per the guidelines for research and data transcendence.

Fifth and almost unsung heroes in this journey are the members of my committee and the methodological readers who provided input and guidance for the processes in research and the ability to put these principles on paper. Dr. Jazzar and the members of my committee spent time and patience in this effort, and I am grateful for it. This also includes the members of the University of Arizona institutional review board, Dr. Charles Holmes, and Dr. Clifford Blizard. They in turn helped this project abundantly, as I am a better researcher and writer for it.

I would also like to thank the University of Arizona in allowing me to complete this program of study as well as the various staff members I have interacted over the years to help me with many elements of completing the program. This goes for staff in the library and research department, the IT department, and the ones who get little credit for allowing the students to move forward day in and out. I would like to thank the professionals who help create a pathway for success for students from all walks of life find education no matter where their classroom exists or where they find the time to earn critical education and terminal education.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

There are an estimated 70,100,000 fathers in the United States, yet a third of U.S. children grow up without biological fathers in their lives (Roberts et al., 2014). Fathers being absent from homes may have deleterious effects on adolescents' psychosocial development (McLanahan et al., 2013). These children are more likely to live in poverty, drop out of school, and engage in risky behaviors (Coakley, 2013). Family structure in the United States has changed dramatically over the last century, as have juvenile offense patterns (Yogman & Garfield, 2016). The families in which children grow up can impact their physical well-being (Singh & Kiran, 2012). Children living in fatherless households are at greater risk for adverse outcomes, involving delinquency (Wilson-Ali et al., 2019).

Children from fatherless homes are more likely to have risk factors for criminology, including living in poverty, dropping out of school, and entering the juvenile justice system, and are more likely to be incarcerated later in life (Roberts et al., 2014). In addition, these children may not receive proper guidance, experience a positive mother–father relationship, or receive familial support. They are at higher risk for substance abuse, low academic performance, socioeconomic challenges, and psychosocial development issues (Roberts et al., 2014). Some fathers do not have relationships with their children because the children's mothers limit the fathers' opportunities to engage with their children (Celińska et al., 2013; McLanahan et al., 2013; Roberts et al., 2014; Wilson-Ali et al., 2019). If fathers do not have positive examples of successful parenting, they often continue the cycle of lack of parental involvement or absenteeism (Roberts et al., 2014).

Identifying factors for criminology, including living in poverty, dropping out of school, and entering the juvenile justice system reinforces the need for guidance and a

positive male role model at home (Celińska et al., 2013). Child development stages play a key role in how children go from one facet to another in their lives. Child developmental psychology contributes to the paradox of nature versus nurture in future success or failure in the prospects of criminality. Informational analysis suggests a direct relationship between delinquency, fatherlessness, and child development (Jiang et al., 2016). The present applied doctoral project (ADP) was conducted to bridge the gap in the literature on criminality among juvenile offenders in fatherless homes and identify possible revisions or recommendations for new programs for children with absentee fathers.

General Statement

Children, juveniles, and young adults raised in fatherless homes are more prone to committing criminal acts (Hunt, 2010). According to the National Institute of Justice (2014), the prevalence of juvenile offending tends to increase from late childhood, peaks in the teenage years (15 to 19 years of age) and then declines in the early 20s. Hunt (2010) discussed juvenile proclivity toward criminality and traits passed on either side of the proverbial moral coin of good, bad, or otherwise. Celińska et al. (2013) studied tendencies toward criminal recidivism and the innate background, upbringing, and guidance in a child's life and presented the results of a study on the effectiveness of functional family therapy, an intervention using various models to address and prevent possible juvenile delinquency.

Developmental psychology dictates the stages children go through in which they learn from those around them. Nature versus nurture is a strong indicator of how children grow up to be adults (Wilson-Ali et al., 2019). Findings from Coakley (2013) help bring awareness to the growing problem of fatherlessness in America. Most experts believe that fathers play a key role in children's physical, relational, and psychological development

(Weaver, 2012). Wells et al. (2016) further stressed the importance of mentoring and intervention programs for adolescent development.

Justification Statement

Developmental institutions help children become productive members of society through learning life skills and other guidance. Families, community advocates, and government leaders have focused on creating programs to give parents guidance in raising their children (Platt et al., 2015). Developmental psychology focuses on issues related to a child's life that can potentially help mitigate concerns related to fatherlessness and guidance for children to learn to become productive members of society. Children raised in fatherless homes are more prone to crime (Weaver, 2012). Purtell et al. (2013) indicated that childhood adversity is associated with adult criminality. Focusing on early life experiences and treatment interventions is necessary for reducing criminal recidivism (Purtell et al., 2013). Children in fatherless homes and their connection to crime is a public issue that needs further research. Existing research has shown the systemic nature of this issue (Weaver, 2012).

In this ADP, the researcher focused on how fatherlessness can harm youth development. Developmental psychology theories can assist the understanding of this urban society concern (Alvarenga & Piccinini, 2009). Effective approaches to aid the development of children in fatherless homes are limited. Further research is needed in the area of developmental psychology to push the narrative of how fatherlessness is an issue in urban areas (K. A. Fox et al., 2013). The spiraling effects of fatherlessness are related to growing crime rates, societal decay, and moral depravity now and for generations to come (Chenail et al., 2012).

There is a crisis among children in the United States who do not have fathers in the home. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2020), 18,300,000 children, or 1 in 4, live without a father (National Fatherhood Initiative, n.d.). The lack of proper development as a result of poor guidance can impair a child's ability to learn. A child's ability to learn may include understanding basic life skills.

The present project's outcomes may increase the awareness of issues in children of absentee fathers and may suggest approaches for creating programs for children with behavioral issues as a result of being in absentee father homes. Creating community programs might reduce the number of children committing crimes and improve their school performance scores. Identifying this information can reinforce the need for guidance and a positive male role model at home (Celińska et al., 2013). For example, a single parent can learn to communicate a child's need to develop and build a strong family dynamic. Effective communication and strong family dynamics can lead to success and positive approaches for mitigating youth's possible inclinations toward crime and negative repercussions in the criminal justice system. Wells et al. (2016) noted that communication and direct guidance improves children's performance and results in positive behaviors that can lead to these children becoming productive members of society.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this ADP was to evaluate how fatherlessness influences criminal behavior among juvenile offenders. The researcher used an integrated approach to conduct a qualitative systematic literature review of research published from within a ten-year timeline. The primary objective was to determine if crimes committed by juvenile offenders relate to these children being in fatherless homes. Many of the factors associated with juvenile

offenders increase in crime include family structure, exposure to crime, and poverty. Data from 20 primary sources were extracted, analyzed, and synthesized. The inclusion criteria were the following: geographic location, article timeframe, and articles written in English. The project outcomes might help to inform comprehensive approaches and best practices for working with juvenile offenders. Lack of family structure and instability are significant components of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes (Bosick & Fomby, 2018). The present project's findings may increase awareness of the impact of absentee fathers on juvenile offenders. Two research questions (RQs) were addressed:

RQ1: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

RQ2: What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders?

Issues of criminal intent in children and young adults raised in fatherless homes were identified in this project. Also studied were juvenile crime in absentee father homes and professionals' perspectives on juvenile criminality. The project goal was to add to the existing body of knowledge on criminal justice, psychology, and behaviors that could explain criminal proclivity in children, especially children from broken homes. Research may also depict specific areas where criminal justice and behavior work in tandem to help juvenile offenders find future success (Platt et al., 2015). This research may potentially reveal the best course of action for professional leaders. Professional leaders may include criminal justice professionals, educators, and mentors for juveniles in fatherless homes. Weaver (2012) suggested that humanistic development can promote leadership and lifestyle skills.

The research questions identified for this ADP served to give purposeful answers in this project and create an informed account of successful methods for current and future

professionals. Youth development focuses on their upbringing and the frameworks by which they grow, develop, and learn. This project's findings may assist with understanding the importance of how children develop, how they are reared, and how they act. The researcher explored the inclination to commit crimes based on who raises children at home during the fundamental ages in which children learn the world around them. Single-parenting skills, children committing crimes, and the various stages of childhood development were examined.

Importance of the Project

It is essential to understand the perceptions of juvenile offenders from fatherless homes so that best practices, policies, and procedures can be revised or adopted to decrease crime. The researcher specifically examined the impact of the father relationship among juvenile offenders from fatherless homes. Evaluating policies concerning juvenile offenders in fatherless homes may potentially prevent other juveniles from committing violent crimes. For example, there might be less violence if fathers and mothers work to coparent rather than leaving one parent to raise the children.

The project was a unique approach in that it reflected a review of existing literature to bridge the gap in knowledge on the impact of fatherless homes among juvenile offenders and on developmental issues. Developmental psychology is the scientific approach in which the explanation of growth, change, and consistency is understood as a person goes through life stages, including biological, social, emotional, and cognitive processes (Wilson-Ali et al., 2019). Interviewing people affected by fatherlessness can show how not having a father played out in their lives and how it plays out on a broad scale from a psychological perspective. Interviewing experts in the child development and institutional fields who work

with children and criminal cases can result in obtaining data with compelling facts (Weaver, 2012). This direct approach of psychological intervention contributes to the practice of childhood discipline. Children who have absentee fathers may have issues with staying on the right path. Studies have shown that children without a father in the home may commit crimes and may not be successful as children with both parents in the home (Chenail et al., 2012).

The current literature largely focuses on helping children through governmental programs but lacks information on the effects of fatherlessness. Additional research is needed to analyze how society deals with fatherlessness from a child development perspective. Understanding the concept of fatherlessness in the home may help to inform psychological interventions, therapy, and societal programs that can potentially reduce juvenile delinquency now and in future generations. Positive male role models associated with these programs may have a positive impact on juvenile criminality. These role models can help these children learn rather than resort to criminal activity (Weaver, 2012). A goal in the present project was to identify specific interventions or techniques that are the most effective for helping children grow up to be successful. Such efforts can play a significant role in how children develop into productive adults (Wilson-Ali et al., 2009). The models outlined in this ADP may help to positively shape an individual's perception of life.

Research Questions

The purpose of this ADP was to gain a better understanding of the criminal intent of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. The literature review reflected that fatherlessness affects adolescents in various ways. According to the literature, fatherlessness contributes to issues in the areas of cognitive development, socioemotional development, attachment, and

behavior and increases juvenile criminal acts. The first research question focused on the results of criminality among juvenile offenders. The literature review revealed interventions that could help support juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. These interventions include mentoring programs, parental involvement training, and implementing programs that could possibly help juvenile offenders in the future. The second research question focused on identifying factors leading to criminal activity among fatherlessness juvenile offenders. The research questions were:

RQ1: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

RQ2: What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders?

Conceptual Framework

Family structure places some responsibility on parents as they are the primary source to children from the initial stages of development. Although different factors that impact the progress of child's character, the family plays a central role in youth development (Mwangangi, 2019). Parents expect to provide protection, warmth, and guidance during their children's upbringing (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). Consequently, the absence of a father has been identified as a cause of juvenile delinquency. The conceptual framework in this project reflects various developmental psychology theories. Developmental psychology focuses on how thinking, feeling, and behavior change throughout a person's life. The foundation of this project was to examine juvenile offender's perceptions in fatherless homes and revise existing policies and implement new procedures to prevent juveniles from reoffending. To better understand the developmental psychology theories relevant to this project's focus, The researcher analyzed articles on how fatherless homes impact juvenile

offenders and potentially cause developmental issues. The researcher next discuss two specific areas reflected in developmental psychology theories that are most relevant to the present project: cognitive development and socioemotional development.

Cognitive Development

One important aspect of developmental psychology is cognitive development. The concept of cognitive development is the way or how people learn. Cognitive skills development is a concept that involves the maturing of a variety of abilities such as perception, learning, memory, understanding, reasoning, judgment, awareness, intuition, and language (Rollè et al., 2019). Cognitive deficits reduce youth's ability to successfully negotiate traditional and occupational pathways (Lansing et al., 2015). Parents can play a crucial role in stimulating and supporting children's cognitive development (Lansing et al., 2015). In the present project, lack of father interaction was found to contribute to issues in cognitive development and academic achievement.

Cognitive-behavioral approaches employ a shared framework for teaching skills for regulating emotions and negative thoughts and for problem-solving. This approach has the most evidence of effectiveness for reducing adolescent aggression and preventing juvenile delinquency (Walker et al., 2019). Cognitive-behavioral therapy reduces recidivism in both juveniles and adults (Chalder & Deary, 2010). It is effective with adolescents, adult offenders, substance-abusing and violent offenders, probationers, prisoners, and parolees.

Socioemotional Development

People undergo many emotional, cognitive, social, intellectual, and physical changes throughout life (Mwangangi, 2019). It is these changes that developmental psychologists study (Malik & Marwaha, 2021). Child development specialists across multiple disciplines

acknowledge the significance of positive social and emotional development and adolescent well-being (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). Social learning theory explores the models that people imitate and suggests that people learn through watching and modeling behaviors after authority figures and other influential individuals in their lives.

In recent years, social disorganization researchers have measured crime using Akers's social learning theory (K. A. Fox et al., 2013). Akers's social learning theory is one of the predominant theories of criminal behavior. Socioemotional development covers two concepts of development (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016; Malik & Marwaha, 2021). They are as follows: self or temperament and relationship to others or attachment.

Temperament

Temperament influences the child's behavior and interaction with others (Darling-Churchill, 2016). Emotions may inspire adolescent developmental pathways and predict future psychopathology. For example, Abulizi et al. (2017) found that emotional temperament in infancy predicted youth's overall behavior scores in emotional difficulties, conduct issues, and symptoms of hyperactivity/inactivity at 5.5 years of age. Criminologists suggest self-regulation and negative emotions as the most salient features for understanding the emergence and maintenance of antisocial and violent behavior (DeLisi et al., 2018). Family structure plays a vital role in shaping children by providing security and support for developing skills and values (Abulizi et al., 2017; Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016; Malik & Marwaha, 2021; Mwangangi, 2019).

Attachment

Attachment theory has influenced research, policy, and practice over the years by offering a framework for understanding risk and protective factors in early childhood

(Wilson-Ali et al., 2019). There are four stages of attachment development that children will encounter in the first 3 years of life, with the fourth occurring toward the end of the third year of life or the beginning of the fourth year (Adam et al., 2018). These stages are preattachment, attachment in the making, clear-cut attachment, and goal-corrected partnership (Ainsworth et al., 2014). Attachment is the socioemotional development that begins with parental bonding to the child (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). This bonding allows mothers to respond to the children's needs in a timely fashion and comfort their newborns. The consistent availability of the parent results in developing trust and confidence in infant during the first year of life (Abulizi et al., 2017; Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016; Malik & Marwaha, 2021).

Overview of the Project Approach

A qualitative systematic literature review approach, following guidance in Cozby and Bates (2012), was applied to 20 articles on perceptions of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. The researcher evaluated key facets, substitutes, and expectations in children in fatherless homes and their proclivity to criminal intent. The research reviewed reflected the existing knowledge base in the area of interest in this project, reflecting guidance in Gummerson (2014) on service research methodology. The information analyzed may help other researchers better understand the issues and corollary concerns related to children in fatherless homes and their predisposition toward criminal intent. The data obtained could help others work through and mitigate this societal concern.

This project had no human subjects. The literature review comprised scholarly research articles, peer-reviewed articles, and books. The 20 studies that met the inclusion criteria reflected research on the factors influencing juvenile offenders in fatherless homes.

The criteria for research documents included children in fatherless homes and those related to the criminal justice system. The review consisted of research published in previous studies on children of absentee fathers and who have committed criminal acts. The articles reflected research on children from fatherless homes and who had criminal records. The inclusion criteria focused on the settings, the population in the review, geographical location, timeframe, and studies written in English only. The studies did not reflect the population of interest, and studies that did not pertain to juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. Studies that reflected the exclusion criteria were not reviewed.

The researcher collected, synthesized, and analyzed all data for this project. The articles obtained were color coded. The researcher used ink and paper and quick field notes. The researcher also used a spreadsheet to document the data.

Definition of Terms

At-risk youth: This term describes children less likely to successfully transition into adulthood. Success can be defined as academic success, job readiness, the ability to be financially independent, and stability. It can also refer to the ability to grow and become a positive member of society by avoiding a perpetual life of criminal acts and crime (Platt et al., 2015).

Broken home: Broken homes are those that result from poor family connections and support or homes with limited family dynamics (McCollister et al., 2009).

Criminal justice system: This is the system of law enforcement that is directly involved in apprehending, prosecuting, defending, sentencing, and punishing those who are suspected or convicted of criminal offenses (Gibson & Cavadino, 2008).

Criminality: Criminality is acts or behavior that are contrary to or forbidden by criminal law (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a).

Development: According to the American Psychological Association (2018), development is the transformation from infant to adulthood.

Federal poverty level: The federal poverty level is a measure of income used by the U.S. government to determine who is eligible for subsidies, programs, and benefits. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation updates the poverty guidelines each January (Mangunson, 2013).

Family therapy: Family therapy is a type of psychological counseling used to help family members improve communication and resolve internal conflicts. Family therapy is usually provided by a psychologist, clinical social worker, or licensed therapist. This therapeutic approach can help mitigate and understand family issues over time, thus working through problems in the past, the present, and into the future (Mayo, 2019).

Fatherlessness: Fatherlessness is the state of having no father in a child or offspring's life because he is dead or absent from the home (Weaver, 2012).

Jail: Jails are places of confinement for persons held in lawful custody; specifically, places under the jurisdiction of a local government to confine persons awaiting trial or those convicted of minor crimes (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-b).

Juvenile: As defined by law, juveniles are under 18 years of age (Platt et al., 2015).

Juvenile justice: Juvenile justice is the area of criminal law applicable to persons not old enough to be held responsible for criminal acts. In most states, the age for criminal culpability is set at 18 years. Juvenile law is mainly governed by state law, and most states have juvenile codes (Olafson et al., 2016).

Prison: Prison is a state of confinement or captivity. It can also be stated as a place of confinement especially for lawbreakers specifically, an institution under state jurisdiction for the confinement of persons convicted of serious crimes (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-c).

School-to-prison pipeline: The school-to-prison pipeline is a societal concept reflecting a national trend of children and youth being funneled through and out of public schools and directly into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Many of these children and youth have learning disabilities and/or mental deficiencies well as a history of poverty, abuse, or neglect. These school-age children would benefit from additional intervention techniques, such as education and counseling services. Instead, these children are isolated, punished, and pushed out of the school system (Topor et al., 2010).

Sentencing: A criminal sentence refers to the formal legal consequences associated with a conviction. Types of sentences include probation, fines, short-term incarceration, and suspended sentences (Cornell Law School, n.d.).

Urban culture: Urban culture is the diverse culture of large towns and/or cities. The defining theme for this region is the presence of many different people in a very limited amount of space. Many of these people are also commonly strangers to one another (R. G. Fox, 2021).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

There were several assumptions in this project. The first assumption was that there is a direct relationship between children raised in fatherless homes and children being more prone to committing acts of crime and societal deviance. Although there were no human participants in the present project, many participants in the studies reviewed reported on the experiences and burdens of seeing children raised in fatherless homes based on their scope of

work. All of the participants in previous studies were assumed to have answered questions concisely and honestly. Another assumption in the research population is that all the participants from previous studies would have the same experience when dealing with the at-risk youth population. The research participants in prior studies must have been directly linked to the at-risk youth population through the scope of their work and routines. These individuals included teachers, social workers, and criminal justice professionals.

A limitation in this project was the lack of guidance seen in social institutions to address the problem of juvenile offenders being more prone to crime in fatherless homes. These institutions and programs are using ineffective means to help these juvenile offenders find future success. Next, the project could not quantify and assess the professional perception for those related to a juvenile offender or at-risk youth population. Another inherent project limitation was the research was unable to measure the professional thought processes during the professional's interaction with those in the juvenile offender and at-risk youth field. The data obtained from these professionals were hard to connect and understand based on the variables of difference among these participants (i.e., demographic, profession, and personal perceptions). Furthermore, the researcher did not evaluate the long-term scope based on the scope of my research.

Another limitation to note reflects the reporting tools available to researchers and law enforcement. *Crime in the United States* is an annual compilation of data on crime in the United States (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). This report reflects reported crime data. However, political agendas and unreported crimes can skew these data. Some crimes and issues drive a different narrative of crime and criminal acts. Many crimes, such as petty theft,

go unreported as the individuals involved believe that doing so is a waste of time as the police may or may not find the stolen goods or catch the criminals.

There were also limitations related to data acquisition. The sample size limited the focus to criminal acts. What constitutes juvenile crime and or delinquency varies regionally. Local, state, and federal laws vary as they pertain to juvenile crime and/or data manipulation. Variations in population size limited my ability to obtain information through the body of literature. As previously stated, the uniform crime report program data reporting can be skewed. The uniform crime report program reflects local, state, and federal law enforcement criminal reporting. Many crimes and issues may not be reported, thus skewing crime data for juvenile and at-risk offenders. Definitions of crimes in the juvenile justice system also vary.

A plethora of factors can impact adolescent behaviors. A father that is not present within the home can contribute to specific behaviors. However, many other factors can potentially contribute to behaviors in adolescents. Contributing factors may include self-confidence, personality, and relationships with other family members such as their mothers and siblings. Exploring parenting practices used in rearing adolescents was beyond the scope of this project. Secondly, examining nontraditional family environments, such as residing with grandparents or stepparents was a project delimitation. Previous studies have shown that adolescents living without fathers are more likely to commit crimes. Next, only research on adolescents was reviewed for this project. Using school-age children limited the project scope by not including college students or graduates. Additionally, time constraints limited this project. The number of recent articles on the topic provided little insights into lived experiences of adolescents.

Summary

The purpose of this ADP was to evaluate how fatherlessness is perceived to influence criminal behavior among juvenile offenders. Criminality in adolescents and low socioeconomic populations is a public concern from childhood to adulthood (Hunt, 2010). Risk factors show that children raised in fatherless homes are at higher risk of committing criminal acts (Topor et al., 2010). Fathers play a significant role in child development (Weaver, 2012). The problem is that children, especially the at-risk youth population, must be raised with a positive male role model to find success through adulthood.

The conceptual framework that guided the project reflected cognitive, social, emotional, temperament, and attachment theories. A select number of articles was used to set aside biases from preconceived assumptions, responses, perceptions, and lived experiences of absentee fathers. The lived experiences of adolescents in fatherless homes were unrepresented in the literature. Therefore, findings from this project addressed the gap in qualitative research on this population.

The primary research method used for this project was a qualitative systematic literature review that reflected guidance in Hennink et al. (2011). This method is used to evaluate research related to identified topics of interest (Cozby & Bates, 2012), which in the present project were key facets and expectations related to the broad topic of children in fatherless homes and their proclivity to criminal intent. This project reflected accumulated learning resources from previously concluded academic programs by understanding the essentials of psychology, behavior, and research methodology (Gummerson, 2014). The information obtained and analyzed in this ADP may assist other researchers in understanding the issues and effects related to children in fatherless homes and their tendency toward

criminal intent. However, further research is needed to better understand the impact of fatherlessness on adolescents.

There were no human subjects in this project. The literature review consisted of peer-reviewed journal articles and other scholarly sources. The articles included for this research project included articles from ProQuest, Sage, Google Scholars, and Criminal Review Journals. The studies included criteria for research documents involving children in fatherless homes and those related to the criminal justice system.

The remaining chapters in this ADP are as follows: Chapter II is a detailed review of existing literature relevant to this specific research topic. Chapter III is a description of the methodology used to conduct this project. Finally, Chapter IV is a discussion and analysis of the data collection results. The researcher also offer recommendations for practice and further research based on these results to address the real-world problem of juvenile criminality in fatherless homes.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Data reported by the Pew Research Center in 2019 showed that almost 25% of children in the United States under 18 years of age lived with one parent and no other adults (Kramer, 2019). The purpose of this applied doctoral project (ADP) was to examine the relationship between fatherlessness in the home and a juvenile's inclination toward crime through conducting a systematic review of the literature. The literature reviewed in Chapter II provides an in-depth overview on the project topic. It encompasses a detailed perspective on instances in which juveniles become prone to criminal activity based on their upbringing in fatherless homes. This review shows gaps in the research, key concepts, variables in this topic, and the connection of psychological principles in juvenile criminality. The researcher also examined the assessment tools in the qualitative research to review the facts behind this societal problem beyond the scope of current and relevant literary designs.

Chapter II reflects the body of current literature in looking at relationships between specific variables in this project. This literature review is a discussion of recent studies in which the relationship between juvenile criminality and their upbringing, namely not having a father in the home, was studied. An absentee father can be a key factor in youth moving toward criminal interaction versus having a successful path toward adulthood. The literature reviewed helped to explain the relationships between the internal and external support systems in juveniles' lives that can make or break their criminality interaction.

Chapter II references current literature as it related to this project. Many of the parallels in the search vernacular relate to other principles and concepts seen in juveniles housed in nonnuclear family structures, namely fatherless homes. Two research questions (RQ) were addressed in this project:

RQ1: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

RQ2: What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders?

Search Strategy

A detailed and comprehensive search for material reflecting relevant sources includes many components. The review for the present project included recent articles, scholarly books, and peer-reviewed journals. Articles in a 10-year (2010–2020) timeframe were reviewed. Using the University of Arizona Global Campus library, the researcher searched the following databases for literature to review in this project: ProQuest, ProQuest Central, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, SAGE Research Methods, SAGE Journals Online, Google Scholar, and EBSCOhost. The purpose was to ascertain critical literature and work from 2010 to 2020 to find relevant data points and models pointing toward causality in this project.

The following search terms were used to conduct the literature search: fatherlessness, juvenile justice, juvenile crime, criminal statistics, home life versus crime, crime and juvenile crime correlation, justice resources, school juvenile resources, at-risk youth, juvenile crime mitigation, effects of fatherlessness, fatherless home, criminal trends over time, youth generational changes, Uniform Crime Reports, UCR, nature versus nurture, child development, child psychology, societal upbringing, school resource officers, guidance counselors, raising children, and moral, legal, and ethical behaviors. The categories used to organize the literary search results included the following: juvenile justice and criminality, juvenile justice, family structure and criminality, juvenile support, juvenile therapy models, school resources for at-risk youth, the impact of fatherless homes, fatherlessness, criminality

and the fatherless home, relationships with upbringing and crime, crime dropout rates, parent's criminal impact, family poverty level, medical and mental disorders, and developmental psychology issues.

The Role of Fathers

Fathers are traditionally ascribed the role of protector and breadwinner (Roberts et al., 2014). In child welfare, the concept of father involvement is further identified as contributions such as visitation, financial, or nonfinancial support of their children (Coakley, 2013). Research has shown that father involvement increases the strength of the family (Jones & Mosher, 2013; Yogman & Garfield, 2016). However, societal changes such as nonmarital births, divorce, cohabitation, incarceration, and death have led to fathers being absent from the home. In today's society, fathers are often viewed negatively for nurturing and providing emotional support because these roles are delegated to mothers (Roberts et al., 2014). Those who assume the role of a father may not have a biological connection to the children in question (Coakley, 2013). Some fathers do not have a relationship with their children because the children's mothers limit opportunities to engage with their children, and the fathers struggle with their own beliefs for relationships with their children (Roberts et al., 2014).

In addition to societal changes and relational challenges with fathers, many studies have identified risk factors for problematic behavior in adolescents such as low socioeconomic status and substance abuse, alcohol, and sex. Father involvement with their children in infancy predicted better socioemotional behavior at age 3 years (McMunn et al., 2017).

Studies have indicated that when fathers are more involved, child development-related issues are fewer (Abulizi et al., 2017; Akesson et al., 2012; Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016; DeLisi et al., 2018). Unfortunately, a decrease in male involvement in the home has led to a rise in juvenile offenders (Bosick & Fomby, 2018).

Effects of Fatherlessness in Juvenile Offenders

There is a father absence crisis in the United States (Hunt, 2010). The growing number of fatherless children in the United States poses severe problems in education (Sanchez, 2017). Divorce and parental separation are harmful to children, families, society, and the economy (Anderson, 2014). Anderson (2014) reported that nearly 25,000,000 children have an absentee father. These children are 3 times more likely to end up in jail by the time they reach 30 years of age than children in traditional family homes (Anderson, 2014). Father departure later in childhood is associated with increased delinquency in juveniles but not with more depressive symptoms (Markowitz & Ryan, 2016).

Criminality is the concept of behavior contrary to or forbidden by criminal law (Criminality, 2016). Fatherlessness is the state of having no father in a youth's life due to death or absence from the home (Weaver, 2012). Young men who grow up in fatherless homes are twice as likely to end up in jail as those who come from traditional two-parent families (DeLisi et al., 2018; McLanahan et al., 2013). Parental separation is an aspect of children's physical well-being. The number of children affected by fatherlessness has led researchers to suggest there are many possible outcomes in a child's life. (Radl et al., 2017).

Many studies have indicated that juvenile offenders commit crimes because of poverty. Violence is a significant problem among youth without fathers living in the home (Anderson, 2014). Minority youth living in inner-city neighborhoods are at increased risk of

exposure to violence (Seal et al., 2014). African American children who reside with their mothers in single-parent homes are seen as being at risk for developmental and social problems such as low academic achievement and becoming juvenile offenders (Leath, 2017). A father's involvement also influences the health and development of his children (Yogman & Garfield, 2016). The number of fatherless children among African Americans suggests that these children are more likely to experience or engage in risk-related behaviors such as petty crime, sexual assault, and dropping out of school (Timpe & Lunkenheimer, 2015).

Cognitive Benefits of Father's Involvement

The cognitive benefits of a father's involvement start in infancy and continue to adulthood (Lansing et al., 2015). Children with both parents in the home have higher academic performance than those who live in single-parent homes (Anderson, 2014). Adolescents are negatively affected by fatherlessness homes, and lack of a positive male role model may be detrimental to the cognitive development of both males and females. The more opportunities children have to interact with their biological fathers, the less likely they are to commit crimes (Weaver, 2012).

Early childhood parent-child interactions may be responsible for the development of criminological thought. Current literature indicates that parenting styles can be related to extreme delinquency in males, and permissive parents are related to delinquent behaviors in females (Pellerone et al., 2016). The prevalence rate of youth with mental disorders in the juvenile justice system is consistently higher than adolescents in the general population (Underwood & Washington, 2016). Walker et al. (2019) indicated that cognitive behavioral therapy reduces recidivism in both juveniles and adults. Juvenile justice policies are based on

society's perceptions and understanding of adolescents and their development (Underwood & Washington, 2016).

Socioemotional Development

Research has shown that socially and disadvantaged individuals are more likely be unmarried parents (Bosick & Fomby, 2018). Family structure experiences and transitions vary according to the family contexts into which children are born (Bosick & Fomby, 2018; Bzostek & Berger, 2017). Bzostek and Berger (2017) compared experiences of children raised in various family structures. The project focused on the differences in the socioemotional development among children born in single-parent homes compared to family structure experiences. The project outcomes showed little evidence associated with socioemotional trajectories differing for children with various family structure experiences (Bzostek & Berger, 2017).

Adolescence is a sensitive period for social development (Zarrabi, 2020). Socioemotional impacts on males and females who reside in fatherless homes vary. A father's involvement may work to strengthen family life (McMunn et al., 2015). Children and families have different strengths, weaknesses, personalities, temperaments, and varying degrees of social, emotional, and economic resources (Anderson, 2014). Developmental timetables may vary in teenagers. Anderson (2014) found that children with divorced parents scored lower on measures of academic achievement, self-concept, psychological adjustment, and social relations (Anderson, 2014). Social learning theory suggests that increased interaction with fathers provides children opportunities to learn social skills and provides emotional and physical support (McMunn et al., 2015).

Criminality and Fatherlessness Correlation

Children reared in fatherless homes are more likely to commit crimes. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (Weaver, 2012), fatherless sons are at a dramatically greater risk of criminality, fathering children as teenagers, subpar educational performance, suicide, mental illness, and drug and alcohol abuse. Daughters of single parents without fathers involved are 53% more likely to marry as teenagers, 711% more likely to have children as teenagers, 164% more likely to have a premarital birth, and 92% more likely to get divorced themselves (Sotomayor, 2019). In 2012, Illinois was home to four of the top 10 cities with the highest percentage of single-mother-led households (Sotomayor, 2019).

Criminology and Societal Implications

Society has changed throughout time and will continue to do so as humanity marches forward. The concept of inception is implanting an idea in the mind of others. As such, perspectives change on crimes, the people committing them, and the people who become victims of these acts. Another aspect in the present project was evaluating criminality based on offenders and their backgrounds. The researcher used a criminology model to identify connections between criminal elements and examine trends for short- and long-term predictions based on project results, findings, and topical concerns. According to Bornmann (2012), the societal impact of research has been postulated in many studies rather than demonstrated.

Juvenile Criminal Relationships

Criminal justice has gone through many facets of societal change and integration, necessitated to work with the fast-paced and everchanging society. These changes resulted in the birth of juvenile justice and the juvenile criminal justice system. The juvenile system

works through issues related to juvenile criminality. This system has a fundamental design reflecting the belief that through psychological methodology, crime and punishment early on can mitigate the effects of risk factors in juveniles' lives (Mwangangi, 2019).

As defined by law, juveniles have not reached their 18th birthday (Platt et al., 2015). Although the law is specific in what constitutes juvenile offenders, many other variables are used to understand the demographic of juvenile offenders and ways to mitigate their problematic endeavors. Legal system integration and models created the combination of juvenile justice, criminal justice, and therapeutic intervention techniques (Wells et al., 2016). The model of juvenile justice encapsulates various facets of society, including institutions, programs, practices, scholastics, home life, and the legal constructs in the system.

The school-to-prison pipeline refers to societal policies and practices that push children and youth out of public schools into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. These children may have learning disabilities, mental deficiencies, and a history of poverty, abuse, or neglect. They would likely benefit from additional interventions such as education and counseling services. Instead, these children are isolated, punished, and pushed out of the school system (Topor et al., 2010). Furthermore, there are principles at odds in society in that schools allow children to pass through the system without the tools they need to succeed. Additionally, school systems implement disciplinary policies and practices that increase the likelihood that adolescents may violate criminal law.

Parental guidance is a cornerstone for growth development in adolescents and success. The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) has identified several root issues that could impede parental guidance and options in school systems, including the ability to transfer within the system for better academic success, which is part of the No

Child Left Behind Act. Pearson-Reis (2012) examined parents' knowledge, perceptions, and experiences with the school transfer option and found that the reasons offered for low transfer rates were tight timeframes for identifying schools, notifying parents, and not having enough staff available for getting information to parents. After districts administer state tests in the spring, these tests must be scored and returned to the school district. The school district must assess and verify the data before identifying the schools required to offer choice. This process takes time. School districts must distribute letters to parents before transfer options (Pearson-Reis, 2012). There are other components seen within parental guidance and scholastics within the United States Accountability office.

Parents and guardians often encounter obstacles when trying to decide what could be the best course of action for their child and implement that course (Haskins & Sawhill, 2016). Single parents in urban areas may have difficulty understanding and adhering to school district policies. Parents in urban areas may not have adequate resources to be proficient in helping their children in school. Parents or guardians may not receive the information needed to make informed and critical decisions in their youth's education or overall future. Parents must understand why the government standards are in place and how these interventions address areas for improvement.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) indicated that a change in the educational services offered can potentially contribute to student transfers. Many parents may not be accustomed to choosing school curricula and may not understand the need to look for educational resources. School administrators and leaders must also be aware of parental needs and perceptions to work with the need to change. Pearson-Reis (2012) indicated that quality school programs enhance the reputation of the school and lead to excellence.

Furthermore, some parents lack knowledge of adolescent needs. This is especially true if specific school districts do not share this information with parents in a concise and timely fashion (GAO, 2004). Businesses or organizations that provide these special scholastic services and resources may work toward future success. Sanctions such as restorative interventions and school discipline have no proven record of success (Anyon et al., 2016).

Accountability systems in this complex paradigm must involve those most directly affected by criminality related to fatherlessness. These include those closest to the classroom, namely students and their families. As such, primary accountability, focus, and mechanisms must be direct and localized initiatives. These processes must involve educators, parents, students, and the local community. These societal pillars must use participatory processes, namely, school councils, annual reports, and meetings to review quantitative school progress (Anyon et al., 2016). Based on the law, all assessments must be made valid and reliable. Measures of student academic achievement may include abstract thinking, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The skill assessments must create individual, student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports. Skill assessments will allow parents, teachers, and principals to understand and address specific student needs and requirements (Anyon et al., 2016).

Criminal intent in juveniles with absentee fathers is an issue that needs further investigation. There are valuable lessons that experts can explore related to youth academic success and development. According to Ennett et al. (2011), government intervention has worked for and against the success of juveniles. Governments must fulfill their responsibilities to provide a series of adequate and equitable resources for children and their corresponding parents or guardians. An alternative yet dynamic approach encourages parents

and the community to be core participants in keeping local schools accountable rather than excluding them through incomprehensible statistical procedures dictated by remote bureaucrats.

The issues and policies that concern juvenile delinquency based on the family modality vary from region to region, from state to state, and legally. Juvenile justice is the area of criminal law applicable to persons not old enough to be held responsible for criminal acts. In most states, the age for criminal culpability is 18 years. Juvenile law governs by state law, and most states have enacted a juvenile code (Mwangangi, 2019). According to Hughes-Shaw (2020), youth violence has become a national public health emergency. Hughes-Shaw noted that youth ages 10–25 years commit almost 50% of crimes. Kofler-Westergren et al. (2012) stated that 21% of all 16-year-olds arrested have already been arrested by 12 years of age.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program includes data on criminal acts collected annually that reflect specific demographics and variables (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). Data are compiled from local, state, and federal agencies. Using these data, the Office of Justice Programs found that juvenile arrest rates for serious crimes such as murder have been consistent from 2012 through 2018. The data also showed that rates for robbery and aggravated assault reached a new low in 2018 (Mwangangi, 2019). Juvenile arrest rates nationally for property crimes have also declined in recent years. By 2018, juvenile arrest rates for crimes such larceny theft, burglary, and arson were at their lowest levels since 1980. However, it is significant to note that arrest rates for motor vehicle crimes such as grand theft auto increased annually since 2013. Violent crime arrest rates for older juveniles 15–17 years of age was lower than the rates for younger adults

ages 18–24 years (Mwangangi, 2019). Male and female juvenile arrest rates have declined since 2011; however, the systemic decline has been more significant for male offenders than their female counterparts across many varying offenses. Juvenile arrest rates involving violent crimes such as murder and robbery tend to be much higher for Black than for White youth (Mwangangi, 2019). Conversely, arrest rates for liquor law violations were higher for American Indian and White youth than Black youth.

Porter and King (2015) examined the association between various school-age children and parental incarceration. Many of the children voiced anger and confusion over the loss and resultant family dynamics in the household. Porter and King also noted a sharp decline in the physical, emotional, and mental disposition of these children. Turanovic et al. (2012) interviewed 100 juvenile caregivers of children with an incarcerated parental figure. In paternal incarceration cases, 67% of adolescent mentors described a negative in the family dynamic and adolescent well-being. This research has shown a significant and positive association for those juveniles of incarcerated fathers. Within this research, there was a 43% to 46% higher rates of juvenile criminal interactions than the expected juvenile delinquency rate (Turanovic et al. (2012). With very few working exceptions, the research shows that the coefficients for control models and variables also align with consistent prior work on juvenile delinquency (Porter & King, 2012).

Lucas et al. (2020) conducted a 3-year study of a family care center to examine strategies and outcomes for both children and juvenile offenders. The focus on a father's inherent masculinity emerged during this study. Lucas et al. recruited participants through their direct membership in a father's group; a voluntary community group designed to support and promote men's parenting and well-being. Lucas et al. (2020) worked within

various groups to focus on juvenile delinquency and understand the root causes of at-risk youth being prone to criminal actions. (Lucas et al, 2020).

The group sessions Lucas et al. (2020) observed involved a combination of structured and unstructured group-based discussions. There was input from practitioners and activities to enhance parenting skills and support well-being. The group-based sessions included both traditionally masculine and feminine activities. Members discussed societal problems, crime, and mental health. The sessions also included leadership outings, go-karting, and self-care activities as well as more feminine activities such as facials and making bath bombs (Lucas et al., 2020).

All the men in this study had experienced mental health difficulties (Lucas et al., 2020). Their health issues dominated and negatively impacted their lives. Group components focused on self-worth, confidence, and availability as parents. The men described their engagement with the entire group in terms of feeling safe. They stated that it allowed them to be frank about their concerns, anxieties, and worries about being fathers. The participants were familiar with the environment, which allowed them to relax and be themselves. The men supported one another to develop self-respect and confidence in their parenting. Having dedicated time for discussion, socializing, and reflecting was highly valued as was the practical support and advice they received from staff and other fathers. The study done by Lucas has shown the general disposition and criminal intent for fatherlessness and how it adversely relates to juvenile delinquency (Lucas et al., 2020).

A study by Weber (2020) illustrated the connections between fathers and their impact on their children's upbringing. Weber explored the disconnected paradigm of an at-risk group and noted it being challenging to access. With this concept in mind, Weber used convenience

sampling to recruit the study sample from professionals directly related to this group of fathers and juvenile offenders, including teachers, principals, various community members, and the fathers themselves. There were 26 participants, all males ages 16–21 years. Nineteen were 16–19 years of age (Weber, 2020). Each expected a child or had fathered a child, or children, in their teenage years. Six of the participants lived with their children and the mother at the time of their interviews. None were single parents. Most respondents considered the mothers as the primary caregivers; however, all of the participants identified as fathers. They openly claimed to parent their child or children (Weber, 2020).

Media depictions of fatherlessness, juvenile criminality, and society are skewed representation. Lawson (2012) discussed sensationalized media stories that link criminal behavior to dysfunctional families. However, the media do not address the extent to which Black families use cultural and community capital to nurture children (Lawson, 2012). The media also do not discuss the nature and structure of Black families' arrangements chosen to meet the needs of their family members or the economic conditions that facilitate or limit parental ability to care for children at different points in time Akesson et al. (2012) investigated the impact of family structure on adolescent outcomes. They found that growing up in a single-parent family was associated with a higher risk for substance abuse, adjustment problems, emotional problems, and juvenile delinquent behavior.

Legal policies and sanctions once intended to force school improvement will do the opposite despite students' academic success (Fine, 2018). Legal sanctions can shuffle inadequate resources around the system and lead to conflicts in parent–teacher relationships. The practice of legal initiatives and legislation potentially diverts critical funding and policies designed to help all children and their families succeed to helping the relatively few whose

parents want and can obtain transfers and tutoring. Businesses or organizations that provide these special services and resources may follow suit. The sanctions have no proven record of success in the school intervention system (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

Accountability and intervention systems must involve those most directly affected and closest to the classroom, namely students and their families (Anyon, 2016). These include direct interventions and tracking of at-risk youth data and personal input. As such, primary accountability, focus, and mechanisms must reflect a direct and localized initiative. These processes must involve educators, parents, students, and the local community. These societal pillars must use participatory processes, namely, school councils, annual reports, and meetings to review quantitative school progress (Darling-Hammond, 2004). Based on the law, all assessments must be valid and reliable. Measures of student academic achievement may include abstract thinking, critical thinking, and problem-solving. The skill assessments must create individual, student interpretive, descriptive, and diagnostic reports. The skill assessments will allow parents, teachers, and principals to understand and address specific student needs and requirements (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

Crime, Punishment, and Developmental Phases

Culture, crime, punishment, and psychology have played a delicate balance for success within the fields of science, criminal justice, and the medical community. As such, researchers have focused on labeling and understanding crime. One aspect in the present project is the concept of nature versus nurture and psychological development in a child through adulthood. The model of developmental psychology has been used to understand many facets of society and the push to give birth to the issues for juvenile delinquency and similar related concerns. This idea is no different in the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Fatherlessness has given rise to systemic issues in society, such as psychological problems and developmental complications within the at-risk youth population.

Markowitz and Ryan (2016) indicated that a father's departure later in childhood increases the chance of juvenile delinquency. Addressing juvenile delinquency concerns can mitigate the potential for criminal activity in adolescence and adulthood. Pastushenia (2011) discussed the state of crime determination theory, which is used to discover the conditions and causes of crime and noted that experts have examined various criminal factors in today's interconnected society. Criminogenic factors may include economic, political, legal, informational, demographic, ethnic, cultural, employment, material well-being, social welfare, people's level of education, and their legal conscience (Pastushenia, 2011). Pastushenia presented theoretical and methodological rules that might help to reduce crime or change how crime determination is defined and addressed.

Effects of Crime on Families

Weaver (2012) stated that the question of what came first, the chicken or the egg? has never made more sense in studying the direct relationship between family and criminality. Previous researchers have examined criminal justice systems and individuals prone to committing a crime or acts based on their home life or development through interactions with the world around them. Markowitz and Ryan (2016) and Young et al. (2017) found that children from fatherless homes are more likely to have children out of wedlock, are less likely to marry, and more likely to be divorced themselves as adults. They are less likely to pursue higher education and more likely to be incarcerated. Other consequences of absentee fatherhood include juvenile delinquency, alcohol and substance abuse, sexual assault, and involvement in school violence (Young et al., 2017).

Trends and Juvenile Criminal Implications

Current societal trends have improved technologically, culturally, and globally. In short, children are the future and shape the world from one generation to the next. They are the future adults and leaders, paving the way for generations to come. Yet studies have shown juvenile delinquency in fatherless homes continuing despite policy changes. Recent studies have given credence to whether juveniles are the blowback concerns of criminality and upbringing.

Cohen (2013) stated that young boys living without fathers are more likely to be the cause of male juvenile violent crimes. Cohen examined arrest data of boys ages 10–14 years and found that arrests for male juveniles declined about 40% from 1980 to 2010 while arrests among father-absent boys increased almost 50%. Cohen concluded that generational trends play a significant role in juveniles being more prone to committing acts of crime.

Cohen (2013) presented a graph that illustrated two specific data points. One axis showed the percentage of boys ages 10–14 years; the other axis showed juvenile males arrested for violent crimes. According to Cohen, the graph is skewed and does not illustrate the definition of violent crimes. These data points are instead hyper focused on small sampling and an even smaller sampling related to violent arrests (Cohen, 2013).

Many juveniles dealing with fatherlessness commit nonviolent crimes (K. A. Fox et al., 2013). A key caveat seen through this research project looks at the variables that start from children in fatherless homes and how they can build toward lives inherently geared toward a life of crime and criminal activity. In the United States and worldwide, the number of children growing up in homes without their fathers in their lives has reached concerning levels. As such, there is significant research suggesting that children raised in households

lacking a father or male role model are more prone to experience psychosocial problems. The prevalence of crime among adolescents with psychosocial underpinnings was 18.4% in a recent national survey in the United States (Taskiran et al., 2017). According to Markowitz and Ryan (2016), psychosocial development issues occur in children in fatherless homes more than in children with a father in their homes or in their lives. Issues related to fatherlessness homes extended into adolescence and adulthood and include increased risk of substance use, mental depression, higher suicide rates, poor school performance, and more direct contact with the criminal justice system (Markowitz & Ryan, 2016; Taskiran et al., 2017).

There has been much conjecture regarding the rates of crime drop, the relationship between crime and race, and how different family modalities work both for and against a child's criminal intent. Agnew (2018) found that minority juveniles are more likely to commit offenses than Whites. Many would debate race as a root cause of this problem. Others would argue that the degradation of moral fabric is an overall implication and rudimentary cause of juvenile delinquency and being prone to committing acts of crime.

Statistics show that criminal intent and degradation in children's lives can result from the lack of a father figure. Parent involvement predicts declines in behavioral problems and social determinants (El Nokali et al., 2010). According to the U.S. Department of Health, 63% of youth suicides are children from fatherless homes; 5 times the national average. Ninety percent of homeless runaway children are from fatherless homes; 32 times the national average (Sotomayor, 2019). Beyond the scope of these numbers, there are issues associated with family and societal structure. These issues have caused a ripple effect on the perspectives of fatherless homes in America.

Family structures and makeup have changed to a new systemic norm (Bzostek & Berger, 2017). This includes parental figures working, not being home as much and even children being raised by other members of their family. Federal agencies have used their resources to look at other problems that have concerns regarding families and morality on a national level. These include juvenile delinquency, fatherliness and issues related to scholastic success for at-risk youth. Eighty-five percent of children who display mental behavior disorders come from fatherless homes. It is important to note that this is also 20 times the national percentage overall (Sotomayor, 2019). Many children and young adults who have fathers in their homes obtain academic success from grade school to college and beyond. Seventy-one percent of all high-school dropouts come from fatherless homes, 9 times the national average. When looking at single statistics, the results could be challenging at best to thwart, and understand how to effect change concerning juvenile offenders. When coupling the many components of growing into adulthood, the data reflect overwhelming systemic problems for juveniles in fatherless homes on a global scale (Sotomayor, 2019).

Family structure plays a key role in how children develop (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). Children rely on basic needs such as clothing, shelter, and food, with their family providing their primary sense of physical security (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016, Malik & Marwaha, 2021; Mwangangi, 2019). Children from fatherless homes are more likely to be unemployed, drop out of school, have lower psychological well-being, and engage in sexual violence than children from two-parent families (Mwangangi, 2019). Furthermore, adolescents in urban areas are less likely to experience physical neglect than children in rural areas (Sickmund & Puzanchera, 2014).

Adult Criminal Implications Over Time

Crime onset is critical in the careers of criminal offenders (van Koppen, 2018). According to van Koppen (2018), crime onset is when individuals show discontinuity in their behaviors for the initial time and become offenders. However, there is limited research on how criminal careers develop into adulthood. From an interactional perspective, various factors play a significant role in the onset of adolescence to adulthood. Neuropsychological deficits, poor parenting, and being in a fatherless home are some factors in juvenile offending (Morsy & Rothstein, 2016; van Koppen, 2018).

As people grow and develop, they go from one stage of life to the next. Children grow from infants to youth and then to adulthood, passing through years of wisdom, learned traits, and genetics. They pass along learned experiences to the next generation. Adults dealing with and experiencing a life of crime, drugs, and other related discourse will inevitably pass this on to their children and family members, which can result in criminality in juveniles. D'Onofrio et al. (2013) noted that children require positive role models to decrease crime rates in this group. The American dream comes to mind when addressing issues of juvenile delinquency. The concept of the American dream includes being a productive member of society, financially stable, and successful. According to Jiang et al. (2016), many juveniles live in impoverished homes without a father. A fatherless home potentially perpetuates the same principles and lifestyles for these youth and in future generations. Jiang et al. indicated that this is the circle or revolving door of crime, low income, and poor livelihood. Research indicates that socioeconomic position affects the life course of development, relationships, economic, and educational achievements (Conger et al., 2010; Jiang et al., 2016).

Jiang et al. (2016) presented data on children and the numbers behind poverty, also related to household dynamics and fatherlessness. In 2014, children under 18 years of age represented 23% of the American population (Jiang et al., 2016). However, they comprised 32% of all people in poverty. More children live in families with total incomes that fall just above the poverty threshold. Nationally, 44% of teens live in low-income families. Approximately 1 in 5 children, or 21%, live in low-income families. The circumstances for these children do not happen by chance (Jiang et al., 2016). Some factors associated with economic insecurity include the following: parental education, employment, race, and ethnicity (Jiang et al., 2015).

Roberts et al. (2014) and Timpe and Lunkenheimer (2015) echoed that proper guidance and parental involvement potentially improve children's psychological development and physical well-being. Timpe and Lunkenheimer indicated that children with absentee fathers experience lower financial earnings in early adulthood than children living with both parents. Having a natural mentor alone did not substantially impact annual earnings as adults; however, youth without fathers but with male mentors earned significantly more (Timpe & Lunkenheimer, 2015). The effects of having a male mentor were more pronounced among African American youth (Timpe & Lunkenheimer, 2015).

Timpe and Lunkenheimer (2015) suggested that positive male mentors play a role in economic outcomes for youth in our society, which vary by sociodemographic factors. Markowitz and Ryan (2016) echoed these concepts in their examination of absentee fathers and the possible impact on adolescent depression and delinquency. Purtell and McLoyd (2013) suggested that positive relationships between male mentors and children can improve academic performance. Purtell and McLoyd found that fatherless adolescents with a male

role model or mentor also had higher earnings in adulthood than fatherless youth who had a female role model, mentor, or no mentor at all.

In a systematic review of the literature on the effects of being raised in a single-parent family on adolescent criminal behavior, Kroese et al. (2021) concluded that growing up in these families is associated with a greater risk of these youth being involved in crime. According to Kroese et al., limited resources for fatherless children may lead to criminal behavior. Freeks (2019) found that 80% of rapists with anger problems in a South African province came from fatherless homes, 14 times the national average.

In the 2019 movie *A Fatherless America*, Sotomayor (2019) covered issues and presented statistics related to juvenile inclination toward crime and the numbers in which crimes happen. According to Sotomayor, a child residing in a fatherless home is more likely to commit criminal acts than a child living with both parents. About 1 in 5 children under age 18 years in the United States live with a single mother (Sotomayor, 2019). Children coming from and or living in a fatherless home are often 6 times more likely to live in poverty, commit criminal acts, are more likely drop out of school, and are 20 times more likely to be incarcerated. It must also be noted that 70% of all divorces nationwide are dissolved or ended by the woman and two thousand men commit suicide annually from legal matters within children and family courts. These issues stem from divorce and child alienation from their fathers (Sotomayor, 2019). Sotomayor suggested that social problems related to absentee fathers may be the most critical social issue today.

The family modality understands the context between family relationships and interaction. Family relationships play a significant role in shaping an individual's physical, mental, and psychological well-being (Thomas et al., 2017). A challenge for parenting

adolescents is the need to continually adapt parenting practices to children's motivations and capabilities (Kobak et al., 2017). Positive parent personality characteristics are associated with positive youth development (Schofield et al., 2012). In contrast, hostile parenting behaviors prohibit social development and contribute to risk factors for behavioral problems (Schofield et al., 2012). Genetic family markers look toward how parents act and how their children will respond based on the family modality (Markowitz & Ryan, 2016). Many argue that family makeup is significant in how youth develop. Oden (2014) examined this theory using a generational perspective on family trends. One must wonder where this process ends and begins through this model of family makeup leading to behavior issues in juvenile offenders (Oden, 2014).

The American Psychiatric Association (2013) researched the casual effects of fatherless homes. The article looked at the concept through the passage of anxiety, which is a specific trait within the family line (McLanahan et al., 2013). The American Psychiatric Association defined anxiety as a nervous disorder characterized by a state of excessive uneasiness and apprehension, typically with compulsive behavior or panic attacks. Pougnet et al. (2011) noted that children in fatherless homes are more likely to display behavioral issues such as anxiety, social withdrawal, and depression. These conditions, much like other learned traits, are passed down from parents to their children. These traits are often seen over longer periods of time through generational or long-term conditions. Additionally, many of these conditions or traits are passed from peers, family members or society. They are short terms conditions that can be mitigated through various intervention techniques.

Reaven et al. (2015) examined genetics and parental leadership, noting that children inherit traits from their parents. Many issues, both for and against the human condition, are

passed along family lines. Reaven et al. examined models and methods of parental anxiety in youth treatment outcomes. They also evaluated youth with autism spectrum disorder, ages 7 to 18 years. Each child's parents completed the State-Trait Anxiety Inventory for pre- and posttreatment analysis. Contrary to previous research findings, there was no connection between parental anxiety and youth anxiety at the stated baseline or after treatment. However, pre- and posttreatment parental trait anxiety significantly decreased for these parents. These project findings were consistent with previous research, thus suggesting an inherent youth–parent connection (Reaven et al., 2015).

According to de Souza and Veríssimo (2015), children in single-parent homes or who experienced other forms of parental separation showed a persistent decrease in life satisfaction into old age when controlling for childhood socioeconomic status. It is essential to understand environmental conditions that are favorable to their juvenile development (de Souza & Veríssimo, 2015).

Contributing Factors to Juvenile Delinquency

Kofler-Westergren et al. (2010) investigated risk factors for juvenile delinquency in family structure, personality, and diagnostic variables in 75 juveniles. Sixty-six percent of the study had experienced father deprivation, 20% had never lived with their fathers, and 25% had alcoholic fathers. Kofler-Westergren et al. found that the most negative effects were in the youth who grew up without fathers and also had negative relationships with their mothers. When comparing nonviolent and violent offender youth, those who were violent offenders also showed higher frequencies of substance abuse (Kofler-Westergren et al., 2010).

Youth incarceration is a public health issue that exposes inequalities on multiple levels (Amani et al., 2018). According to Weinberg (2010) and Kofler-Westergren (2010), adolescents enter the justice system during peak adolescence. They have usually experienced abandonment, substance abuse, a dysfunctional home environment, or inconsistent parenting practices. Studies have shown children receiving more supervision are less likely to commit offenses (Amani et al., 2018).

Recidivism in Juvenile Criminality Through Adulthood

A key focus in criminal justice, especially in the U.S. juvenile justice system, is on mitigating acts of crime and the prospects of teaching positivity in people's lives. In juvenile justice, the goal is mitigate criminality so that children can grow up to be become productive members of society as adults. Several therapeutic models guide these mitigation efforts. Children are young and have the promise for a long life to come in society and in communities (Kofler-Westergren et al, 2010).

A good parent relationship is a significant component in buffering the risk of recidivism at the family level (Akesson et al., 2012). A primary goal of preventing recidivism is keeping youth on a path of success versus constant criminal justice intervention. Family-based programs are the most potentially effective tools in reducing recidivism (Amani et al., 2018). Recidivism is high; failure to remain out of the criminal justice system is more common in juveniles. Incarceration exposes adolescents to increased violence, increases risks of being reincarcerated, limited educational and employment opportunities, poor health outcomes, and disparities (Amani et al., 2018). Studies on offending during the transition from adolescence to adulthood have resulted in three broad conclusions: (a) most juvenile offenders eventually cease their offending either during or soon after the transition to

adulthood, (b) short- and medium-term recidivism rates of juvenile offenders are high and comparable to rates estimated for other samples of serious offenders in existing research, and (c) most adults who engage in criminal activity, as measured by official records such as arrest and conviction, also have histories of juvenile criminal involvement (Brame et al., 2018). An important concept for juvenile offenders versus adult offenders is the intervention techniques within the education system. When conducting schoolwork, namely at the collegiate level, students can choose a career path best suited to help them follow their dreams or passions. In elementary school, children are given a proverbial “one size fits all” program with little or no deviation. This system doesn’t necessary deal with a career path but rather higher education preparation. High school level students can choose and understand trades and college-level learning in many instances. This project may potentially create movements of the criminal justice system, thus getting children of all ages primed for their chosen career paths.

Currently, there is little support for single-parent mothers dealing with children prone to juvenile delinquency. In the Police Athletic League, departments and agencies set goals to organize and create critical community policing programs. Bartollas and Miller (2014) examined the juvenile justice system to combat and create effective adolescent programs and criminal justice ideals. The New York City Police Department Police Athletic League’s mission is to help support the goals of criminal justice, youth mitigation, and promote juvenile success in communities. The primary objective for mitigating the juvenile proclivity toward crime with fatherless children is to create policies, parenting programs and utilize mentors to reduce juvenile crimes (Fine, 2018). The Athletic League Program connects at-risk juveniles with members of the police community to create guidance and educational success for youth members. The goal is to promote educational guidance with professionals

in the urban community and other options available to our nation's youth beyond criminal activity and degradation.

Summary

The values of traditional families have been diluted, and this dilution has increased in nontraditional families (Kobak et al., 2017). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 1 in 4 children live without a father in the home. Most Americans agree that fathers in the homes play a vital role in their children's life (Skaggs & Sun, 2017). A close relationship with both parents is necessary for children's physical and mental well-being as well as overall development (Akesson et al., 2012). During adolescence, youth receive conflicting messages from family and peers. Peers often encourage participation in risky activities. Adolescents without a father are more likely to be subjected to peer pressure.

Fatherless homes are considered sources of child poverty and neglect, resulting in low academic performance, teen pregnancy, and behavioral issues, all factors that can lead to juvenile delinquency (Bosick & Fomby, 2018). Fatherless homes often result in juveniles committing violent crimes. The increase in crime rates of juvenile offenders suggests that youth in urban areas need positive role models (Bosick & Fomby, 2018).

The research discussed in Chapter II reflected findings from previous studies, including systematic literature reviews, on the essentials of criminality and developmental, social, and emotional behaviors of juvenile offenders. The information obtained, synthesized, and analyzed in this project may help other researchers in understanding the issues related to children in fatherless homes and these children's criminal intents. This analysis was conducted to fill a gap in the extant literature. As R. G. Fox (2021), noted, such research

could help to mitigate urban issues of societal concern. The research could prove to work through and mitigate the possible societal concern.

The father's absence is the highest contributing factor to juvenile delinquency. Father absenteeism leads to developmental issues; social, emotional, and behavioral issues; and poverty (Bosick & Fomby, 2018; Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016; Kofler-Westergren et al., 2010; Lansing et al., 2015; McLanahan et al., 2013). Research suggests that juvenile offenders who reside in socially and economically disadvantaged urban settings are at risk for developmental, socioemotional, and temperament issues (Abulizi et al., 2017). McLanahan et al. (2013) indicated that father absence has a negative impact on children's socioemotional development, especially with expressing behaviors. Father involvement in the first year of life is associated with positive socioemotional indicators (Ainsworth et al., 2017). Various studies have confirmed a direct, positive, and relatively strong association between parental involvement and adolescent cognitive skills development (Rollè et al., 2019).

Bzostek and Berger (2017) used data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing study to examine associations of family structure and socioemotional development during the first 9 years of life. The study outcomes suggested little evidence to support that family structure experiences are associated with socioemotional development. However, there was an association between family instability and poorer social development in children born to unmarried parents. Furthermore, this association reflected the influence of parental breakup, which suggests that socioemotional trajectories differ for children with various family structure experiences.

Several implications of fatherlessness for child development have been addressed in research, including the father's role, father involvement, and the effects of fatherlessness in

the homes. All have been identified as contributing factors to poverty, poor academic achievement, developmental issues, and juvenile delinquency. Many males and females who reside in fatherless homes will be more prone to commit crimes and reoffend.

CHAPTER III: PROJECT APPROACH

In this chapter, the researcher detail the processes and procedures used to conduct this applied doctoral project. The project focus was on identifying best practices and interventions for juveniles in fatherless homes who have committed crimes through a qualitative systematic literature review of literature. The studies reviewed identified the proclivity of crimes among juveniles in fatherless homes in urban areas, types of crimes committed by adolescents in fatherless homes, the success rates of juveniles in absentee father homes, mitigation techniques for the juvenile justice system, and genetics in family history to answer the overarching research questions. This chapter outlines the research methods used to conduct this project, the project approach, the research questions, the research process, ethical considerations, data collection methods, the data analysis approach, and project validity. The answers to the research questions (RQs) formulated for this project may help to revise or adopt new policies and procedures for juveniles in fatherless homes.

Previous research has shown that adolescents from fatherless homes are more likely to engage in crime and delinquency (Anderson, 2014). Recent research focusing on family structure and developmental psychology has shown similar results that adolescents in two-biological parent families are less likely to commit criminal acts associated with others (DeLisi et al., 2018; Kofler-Westergren et al., 2010; Lansing et al., 2015; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016). The study focus was on investigating the possible relationship between family structure, specifically fatherless homes, and juvenile offending. The study outcomes suggested that youth from fatherless homes commit more crimes than adolescents from two-parent homes.

Previous research has shown that increased parental social control is related to decrease levels of crime and delinquency among juvenile offenders and higher levels socioemotional control in youth from two parent-families (Abulizi et al., 2017; Ainsworth et al., 2014; Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). Therefore, it is likely that any variations in family structure may result in differences in social control and a greater possibility for juvenile involvement in crime and delinquency. Furthermore, differences in parental involvement, supervision, monitoring, and attachment in family structure may contribute to juvenile delinquency.

Project Approach

The research method used for this ADP was a qualitative systematic literature review, following guidance in Cozby and Bates (2012) and Hennink et al. (2011). The main focus was on evaluating key facets related to the broad topic of children in fatherless homes and their proclivity to criminal intent. The review consisted of 20 sources on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes and those related to the criminal justice system. The literature reviewed included articles from the following databases: SAGE Journals, ProQuest Journals, Google Scholarly Articles, EBSCOhost, Criminal Law and Review, PsycINFO, Advanced American University, and eBook Central. The inclusion criteria reflected the included information for demographics, geographical locations, and exposure of interest to the project topic. Studies that did not meet these criteria were not included in the review. The exclusion criteria also included studies published prior to 2010, those that did not reflect a relevant population and/or sample, and those that did not pertain to juvenile offenders from fatherless homes.

The review was limited to research on children in the fatherless households and youth who have committed acts of crime and were more prone to criminal activity. The researcher

originally evaluated 35 articles on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes and developmental psychological issues of juvenile offenders. Many of these studies focused on juvenile offenders, parents, and probation officers' perceptions of juvenile offenders from fatherless homes. This process included the following: determining concise RQs, reviewing the literature, examining ethical concerns, and reviewing project instrumentation, data collection, data analysis, and validity. There were no human subjects in the present project all findings reflect research subjects in previous studies.

The researcher followed guidance from Gummerson (2014) on service research methodology, specifically on how to evaluate critical elements in previously conducted research, to conduct this literature review. The information obtained reflected the broad topic of children in fatherless homes and analysis on their proclivity to criminal intent. The researcher evaluated causes, concerns, and variables within the concept of children's proclivity toward criminal intent derived from a fatherless home. The researcher began with the goal of determining if there was a relationship between a child's proclivity toward criminal intent and being in a fatherless home. The findings may help further the understanding of the issues and results related to children in fatherless homes and their propensity toward criminal intent. The findings may also help to fuel efforts to work through and mitigate societal concerns reflecting the key topics of interest in this project.

The researcher obtained data from the research articles and case studies and then deconstructed and analyzed them. The analysis approach included color coding data from the articles. The researcher used pen, ink, and paper, quick field notes, and Microsoft Excel to document themes. The researcher secured all data gathered in a locked, fire-proof safe, where they will be retained for 5 years and then destroyed.

Research Questions

Two RQs were formulated to guide this project:

RQ1: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

RQ2: What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders?

These questions were consistent with the methodology selected for this project.

Ethical Concerns

Ethics are of paramount concern when studying and utilizing any research model or design. As such, they were a primary concern in the present project. There are concise and compelling models for ensuring ethics during the course of research. This concept is especially true when looking at the paradox of human studies and interaction (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Prior to conducting this project, the researcher obtained training on human subjects research and information privacy and security from the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative. The purpose of research ethics and compliance training is to ensure protection, proper data utilization and ethical study design. Obtaining this training and certification ensures a high standard in study ethics, including the protection of research participants.

There is inherent bias in all research. Data should not and cannot be skewed based on such biases. As such, it is critically important to follow strict research guidelines. The researcher followed published University of Arizona Global Campus guidelines on keeping accurate data and protecting those who may otherwise be adversely affected by this specific research.

There were no human participants in this ADP. As such, no personal information was collected that could be used to identify participants. Only current research and existing data were used in this project. There were no risks involved. The data gathered from the existing research reflected and supporting ongoing research in the fields of juvenile justice, juvenile delinquency, developmental psychology, and family structures. The sources reflected a plethora of academic resources to define the problem, look at the questions at hand, and summarize the complex causes for such an issue. These resources created a barometer for mitigating causes of juvenile delinquency now and in the future.

Data Collection

The primary research method used for this project design was a qualitative systematic review. Qualitative systematic literature reviews are reviews of formulated questions that involve systematic and specific methods to identify, select, and critically appraise relevant research (Bates & Cozby, 2012). Such reviews reflect the accumulated findings from previously conducted research.

No actual human subjects participated in the project. The literature review consisted of scholarly research articles and peer-reviewed journal articles. The review primarily focused on studies conducting in the past 5 to 10 years. The key word phrases used to search for literature to review included the following: children in fatherless homes,

The inclusion criteria included the following:

- Types of studies: Qualitative journal articles and qualitative case studies were the primary studies for statistical analysis. Single case studies were analyzed independently from qualitative studies. Exploratory research and single-group

case studies were examined and assisted with explanations for mentoring and treatment interventions.

- Types of participants: Male and female adolescents.

The exclusion criteria were as follows:

- Studies that included college students.
- Articles published before 2000.
- Articles that could not answer the specific RQs in the present project.
- Articles in languages other than English.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of systematically utilizing and applying statistical and or analytical techniques. This process cleans, analyzes, interprets, and visualizes data to discover valuable insights in a research project (Batrinca & Treleaven, 2015). In the present project, data analysis was conducted on research including studies from criminal reviews and prior studies on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. Also included were articles from federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in which data related to criminal activity and that of the family dichotomy could be qualitatively analyzed.

The researcher followed a project research analysis plan when sifting through the various components of the data. The researcher used specific data points in this project to look at actual crime data and trends as encapsulated through governmental agencies. These data reflected information on the variables of fatherlessness and criminal data. This includes ages of criminals, family makeup, and various criminal actions. Law enforcement agencies, namely the Federal Bureau of Investigation, compile data based on these crime-related variables for criminal actions and actor dichotomy. These variables reflect regional crime

trends, which are then broken down in the data. The variables and components in the data can potentially develop criminal trends in adult and juvenile offender reporting (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.).

The data points examined in this project reflected fatherless homes and crime data in various inner-city regions, some including the Bronx, New York. The researcher evaluated offender initiation in the stages of a specific person's life. In short, regional crime data from local and large-scale policing agencies help to understand crime. Data points help an agency with the goal of community policing. They also look toward quelling issues related to community policing and targeting action for police agencies and the justice system overall (Harkin, 2018). Criminal justice interventions, connectivity, and police in today's society are perspectives in evaluating the project's topic. Jones and Mosher (2013) noted the demographics of fatherless juvenile offenders and stated that the police's ability to connect to those in need is vital in addressing the issues. The data obtained were used a roadmap to create a qualitative systematic literature project design. For this project, creating an analysis plan was an important tool that helped to ensure that all the data were efficiently collected.

Data were examined for themes and patterns while noting similarities and differences. Data extracted were based on relevance. The extracted data consisted of groups beyond childhood success, mitigation techniques, developmental stages, and academic success.

Adjei (2019) identified discursive psychology as recognizing the social and relational nature of human life and stated that analyzing the discourses of research participants interrelates with the material and social world. As such, discursive analysis recognizes the importance of the human condition's social and relational nature. Empirical data on this scope of this research design is information based on observation or experience.

Adjei (2019) further stated there is no existing independent material and that of the social world. Within his work, Adjei has developed an understanding of discursive analysis of social and psychological phenomena as a culturally contextualized activity in which discursive researchers analyze and interpret participants' discourses in the light of the cultural context. This concept runs in conjunction with the research for the present project in which data points in empirical designs and research studies for juveniles and their proclivity toward crime in a fatherless home were analyzed.

Validity

Validity for the present project reflects the findings and the conclusions in the studies that were reviewed. Validity also reflects my actions as the researcher, the project approach, the research questions, the data collection process, data analysis, the research design, and project outcomes and the conclusions. My goal was to conduct research reflecting adequate connectivity between elements of the topics of interest and create a valid project through bias mitigation and using ethical methodology. This methodology is especially effective when trying to find answers to quell real-world concerns (Buntins et al., 2017).

Summary

Chapter III was a discussion of the methodology used to conduct this ADP. The literature reviewed encompassed key facets and expectations related to the broad topic of children within fatherless homes and their proclivity to criminal intent. The literature the researcher reviewed reflected the accumulated knowledge from existing research. Findings from this project may help other researchers in understanding juvenile offender issues, children in fatherless homes, and their inclination toward criminal intent. This understanding could spur efforts to work through and mitigate these societal concerns (K. A. Fox et al.,

2017). In Chapter IV, the researcher presents an analysis of the findings from the systematic literature review along with recommendations for practice and future research. The chapter ends with a summary.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS, EVALUATION OF FINDINGS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of Chapter IV is to present the findings related to the criminal intent of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. The researcher used a qualitative systematic literature review approach to understand fatherlessness among juvenile offenders and to answer the research questions. After collecting 35 articles and analyzing 20, the researcher found common themes associated with fatherlessness and juvenile offenders that helped to answer the present project's research questions (RQs):

RQ1: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

RQ2: What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders?

The common theme identified in answer to RQ1 was that there are substantially more physical and psychological problems in youth in fatherless homes compared to youth raised in two-parent homes. The results supported the idea that a negative developmental trajectory may result for juveniles in fatherless homes.

The common factors identified to answer RQ2 included lack of parental involvement, family structure, attachment issues, and socioeconomic status. Various demographic variables can also result in increased risk factors for juvenile delinquency. The results supported the premise that lack of parental involvement, family structure, attachment issues, and socioeconomic status can affect juvenile delinquency and parenting.

This research topic reflects the paradox of nature versus nurture: Do people learn how to act or what to become based on what they see and experience around them, or is there a direct roadmap of life through chemical and genetic disposition? This research topic is the idea behind children and young adults either following the same path as their parents or not,

both for better or worse. Children going through various stages of development learn how to act from their parents and, in many instances, seek the approval of their fathers. General disposition is especially true among young men and boys, given gender roles and expectations. Children without this critical component in their life may be prone to crime, drugs, and gangs, thus perpetuating a life of crime and beyond.

In this chapter, the researcher discuss the significance of the project findings. These findings reflect research published in scholarly journals and scholastically structured documentaries. Other sources were specific datasets obtained from criminal reports and facilities. The researcher scanned a plethora of academic resources to define the problem and look for answers to the RQs. The researcher then summarized the findings in the research the researcher reviewed. The findings helped to create suggestions for mitigating the problems that fueled the present project, now and in the future.

Sample

The sample for this project was 20 articles that focused on fatherless homes among juvenile offenders, policies, procedures, and intervention training for those at-risk. The researcher started with 30 sources that focused on absent fathers, juvenile offenders, and interventions (20 sources) and developmental psychology, socioemotional development, temperament, and attachment issues (10 sources). The inclusion criteria consisted of geographic location, population, and research questions. Articles evaluated in the project were all peer-reviewed journal articles reflecting qualitative and quantitative methodology. Articles were read and reread on several occasions to ensure validity and accuracy. Publications dating to 2010 were reviewed. The exclusion of some articles was to ensure that all reviewed articles were current. The project contained articles written in English only.

Evidence of Validity

Data were evaluated and reevaluated for errors and accuracy. To better understand the criminal intent of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes, the researcher reexamined the data several times. It is difficult to validate qualitative research; the researcher relied on measures of validity stated in the articles.

Findings

The findings from the systematic literature review approach showcased results associated with the criminal intent of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. While each project varied on findings suggesting why juvenile offenders from fatherless homes are more likely to commit crimes, the project outcomes did not reflect a variety of factors that are a potential cause for fatherlessness. The project findings included several fatherless factors that lead to criminality among juvenile offenders. These factors aligned with previous research on fatherless homes of juvenile offenders. Most of the authors of the articles the researcher reviewed felt that fatherless homes contribute to poverty, poor academic performance, developmental issues, and juvenile incarceration.

Conducting the systematic literature review for this ADP provided insights into several categories related to the criminal intent of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. They included the following: criminality among juvenile offenders in fatherless homes, fatherlessness factors influencing criminal intent among juvenile offenders, interventions, and existing and adopting new policies and procedures to reduce crimes among adolescent offenders in fatherless homes. Interventions in these studies varied significantly. They included training professionals in the juvenile system, revising and adopting parenting

classes, and training interventions in the school system. The alignment of the themes reflected three categories to assist in answering the research questions, discussed next.

Impact of Criminality on Juvenile Offenders

There were no actual physical participants in the present project as such, the following perspectives reflect those of participants in the research reviewed for this project. Many of these perspectives directly relate to the effects of fatherless homes on the criminality of juvenile offenders. The people in the research reviewed for the present project knew individuals who were affected by not having fathers in their homes. Markowitz and Ryan (2016) examined father absence and adolescent depression and delinquency. They used data from the young adult survey in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth to address questions comparing sibling behaviors from age at father departure, depressive symptoms, and delinquent behavior. The analytic sample was limited to all youth with at least one young adult survey interview between 1988 and 2008 and data on age at father departure from the home. The project was further limited to young adults with valid data on depressive symptoms and delinquency. The findings indicated that father departure late in childhood was associated with increased juvenile offending but not with depressive symptoms. These findings helped to answer the first RQ in the present project: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

Markowitz and Ryan (2016) also found that father departure in early childhood was not associated with problematic behavior in adolescence. The project y results suggested that parental monitoring rather than disrupted socialization or emotional distress may account for links between having a nonresident father and adolescent delinquency. project findings also suggested that the connection between father absence and adolescence may differ by gender

in that males and females have different types of behavior problems. Bosick and Fomby's (2018) findings suggesting that family plays a significant role in understanding youth offending echo Markowitz and Ryan's (2016) findings. Bosick and Fomby's findings suggested that children living in single-parent homes face a higher prevalence of adolescent delinquency and that early family instability may influence juvenile offending. Additionally, economic stress may overwhelm the effects of repeated family structure change on behavior.

Bzostek and Berger (2017) used data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing project to examine associations of family structure and socioemotional development during the first 9 years in children's lives. Analyses conducted for this project reflected a hierarchical linear modeling approach to minimize bias due to social selection. The findings showed little evidence that subsequent family structure experiences were associated with socioemotional development. Additionally, the project findings suggested little evidence that socioemotional trajectories vary for children with various family structure experiences succeeding to their parents' breakup (Bzostek & Berger, 2017).

Fatherlessness Factors That Influence Criminality Among Juvenile Offenders

A key finding in the present project indicated that the structural sources of criminality among juvenile offenders are related to family structure. The researcher found that father absence has a significant and negative influence on both males and females. Female and male violent offending is higher in homes where fathers are absent. Findings in several articles suggested poverty, attachment issues, criminal justice involvement, gang involvement, and mental health issues as factors leading to criminal involvement among fatherless juveniles. Kofler-Westergren et al. (2010), Akesson et al. (2012), and Hughes-Shaw (2020) noted that children in father-absent homes are 4 times more likely to be poor, drop out of school and

suffer from health and emotional problems. The project supported the findings on the factors that influence children among juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. This illustrates their inherent proclivity to criminality based on the factors related to fatherlessness.

Interventions to Reduce Criminality of Fatherless Juvenile Offenders

RQ2 asked what factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders? The findings suggested several interventions in reducing criminality among juvenile offenders. One finding in Anyon et al. (2016), indicated that men in fatherless homes are less likely to be married. Juveniles raised in fatherless homes may continue this cycle (Anyon et al., 2016; Bosick & Fomby, 2018). Fathers, like mothers, are pillars in child development. The presence of fathers strengthens the community's ability to avoid violence. Therefore, having more married men may help to reduce crime among juveniles in fatherless homes.

An important intervention for reducing criminality among juvenile offenders in fatherless homes is parenting courses and programs that help teach parents and/or caregivers proper methods for raising children. These include training, information, and guidance to understand children's needs and concerns as they grow up (Radl et al., 2017). Several studies have indicated that parenting classes reduce the number of juvenile crimes in that parents are given guidance and information on how to raise at-risk youth, including potential juvenile offenders. Studies have shown that having men attend parenting courses reduced the number of crimes committed by juvenile offenders. School programs for both parents and juvenile offenders resulted in a major decline in committing acts of crime or violence toward others among youth (Walker et al., 2019). There is an 80% decrease in juvenile criminal acts for

youths in households in which parents are actively involved in youth school programs, parental courses, and training (Topor et al., 2010).

Hunt (2010) and Sotomayor (2016) noted that the best practices for dealing with juvenile offenders prone to crime in the fatherless paradox are to create awareness in communities and on a national stage. Fatherless is undoubtedly a growing problem based on conventional research. However, programs for fatherless adolescents can be revised or new programs or social interventions for potential at-risk juvenile offenders can be adopted. The studies reviewed for this ADP showed that fatherlessness is a growing concern in urban environments. McLanahan et al. (2013) stated that fatherlessness has more of an impact on juveniles during certain stages life and suggested rigorous, hands-on, and direct approaches to mitigate this problem. The higher the rates of fatherless and single parenthood, the higher the rates of juvenile delinquency and criminality (Hughes-Shaw, 2020).

Haskins and Sawhill (2016) noted that many researchers have attempted to understand, examine, and learn about single parenthood's effects on children. The challenge has been to separate the effects of children raised in single-parent households from other factors. The factors associated with being a single parent are being less educated, younger, or from a seemingly disadvantaged background. These factors also relate geographically, such as in a neighborhood or an inner city. In short, Haskins and Sawhill stated the disadvantages that lead to single parenthood and stated that deficits in in child development might be wrongly attributed to family structure.

Research conducted by Cosentino et al. (2014) noted the need for awareness in those who counsel and help juvenile delinquent and at-risk youth. This awareness is vital given the family makeup for many of these youth and the challenges they face as a result of family

structure issues. Cosentino et al. noted it is crucial for professionals, counselors, and personnel related to adolescents to be aware of biases in the topic and myths about the father's influence. Cosentino et al. stated that it is inherently clear that a father being an integral part of his children's lives is essential for children's individual, academic, and social development.

Evaluation of the Findings

Evaluation of the literature reviewed for this project showed varied interpretations of the results, patterns, themes, and subthemes in this literature. However, several common themes emerged from this evaluation, including the following: poverty, poor academic achievement, socioemotional development, and parental incarceration. The purpose of this project was to evaluate criminality among juvenile offenders in absent father homes. It was difficult to measure the level of success in the present project due to gaps in the literature. Therefore, gaining insights into the overall project approach was not achievable. However, with the emergence of themes in this ADP, the researcher was able to answer the research questions, restated again here for the reader's convenience:

RQ1: Why does fatherlessness result in criminality among juvenile offenders?

RQ2: What factors have been identified as leading to criminality among fatherlessness juvenile offenders?

Family Structure

Many professionals, community leaders, and parents believe family structure is vital in a child's development. Anderson (2014) stated that children living with their married, biological parents have better physical, emotional, and academic well-being. The effects of fatherless homes may lead to weakening the family structure, reduce household incomes,

increase crime rates and substance abuse, increase risks for school suspensions, and increase emotional and mental health risks (Anderson, 2014). Bzostek and Berger (2017) and Bosick and Fomby (2018) echoed Anderson, suggesting that criminal persistence is a direct route from early disadvantages that would include family instability to later criminal behavior. These findings support lack of family structure contributing to criminality in juvenile offenders.

Bzostek and Berger (2017) used data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing project to examine associations of family structure and socioemotional development during the first 9 years of children's lives. The findings showed little evidence that family structure experiences were associated with socioemotional development. Additionally, project findings suggested little evidence that socioemotional trajectories vary for children with various family structure experiences as a result of parental separation. Bosick and Fomby (2018) evaluated youth and young adults ages 18–26 years who may or may not have had contact with the criminal justice system. These researchers concluded that exposure to parental relationship instability was associated with child and adolescent behaviors and delinquency.

Poor Academic Achievement

Many scholars, community leaders, parents, and professionals believe that not having a family in home can decrease academic performance. Findings in a few studies reviewed for the present ADP indicated how single-parent households may influence children's educational achievement (Brame et al., 2018; Conger et al., 2010). A common theme was that students with higher self-control and parental involvement tended to have better grades in school than their counterparts with lower self-control (Brame et al., 2018; Conger et al., 2010). The articles examined indicated that academic performance has a significant inverse

association with the likelihood of police arrest, the advent of low self-control and juvenile delinquency (Brame et al., 2018; Conger et al., 2010; Purtell & McLoyd, 2013). These studies suggested that children have better educational outcomes with fathers living in the homes. Other findings were that children who are nurtured and lived with their fathers have higher IQs and higher levels of academic readiness (Brame et al., 2018; Conger et al., 2010, Kroese et al., 2020). Additionally, socioeconomic status leads to higher academic performance in early childhood education. This factor has also become an indication of overall success rather than being considered a cause of it.

Socioemotional Development

Kroese et al. (2020) noted that growing up in a single-parent home affects adolescent emotional well-being, cognitive development, and academic performance. To answer RQ2, the researcher explored Applebaum et al. (2015), Cheung and Heine (2015), and Sabetello and Appelbaum (2018). These researchers conducted focus groups, surveys, and interviews in which semi-structured interview guides were used to ask participants questions concerning the following: experiences with families in the juvenile system, perceptions of what justice-involved adolescents and their families want and need in family-based interventions, and what they feel concerning potential barriers in accessing treatment for mental health concerns.

The emerging themes consisted of families lacking resources and access to mental health services, which can deal with family needs through therapy and cognitive awareness. The findings demonstrated that cognitive, socioemotional development, attachment, and temperament issues influence criminal behavior among juvenile offenders in fatherless homes (Applebaum et al., 2018; Cheung & Heine, 2015; Kroese et al., 2021; Sabetello &

Appelbaum, 2018). The countervailing relationships within these various factors for juvenile delinquency predict sentencing for juvenile offenders and this at-risk population (Cheung & Heine, 2015). However, Cheung and Heine (2015) found no differences in sentencing or verdicts.

Across focus groups, those interviewed conversed about the mental health needs of the parents and that their needs are more complicated because of the stigma associated with mental health illness. One participant in the study by Amani et al. (2018) stated,

Yeah, I like with a lot of the parents that I work with, they have a lot of stigmas regarding mental health period. It is almost like you must spend lots of time providing psychoeducation regarding mental health treatment. And, when you meet with the parents, you realize the parents need treatment themselves. (p. 9)

Another participant in Amani et al. stated

I hear a lot. I have been asking for help. I have been asking my probation officer for help; he is not getting it.—I think some clients have had this experience where they need help too. And they want to be in family therapy. But it's just we're not finding the right kind of places out there. (p. 9)

Limitations

All research has limitations; the present project is no exception. The overall size and scope of this project was a problem due to gaps in the literature. There were significant limitations in regional and national designs that created different definitions of what constitutes juvenile crime and or delinquency. Local, state, and federal policies vary, leading to potential problems in the juvenile justice system or data manipulation. Populations in the studies varied, limiting the ability to obtain information, which was evident throughout the

literature reviewed for the present project. Many crimes and other issues may not be reported, thus skewing crime data for juvenile and at-risk offenders. Definitions for crimes in the juvenile justice system also vary.

Recommendations

The purpose of this qualitative systematic literature review approach was to gain insights related to the criminal intent of juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. Based on the research findings, the researcher developed the following recommendations to aid future researchers regarding crimes caused by adolescents and those conducting family structure-related studies. Since there have been severe spikes in crime in major U.S. cities, the need for addressing these concerns has never been greater. Inner cities have put many resources in school systems (Mangunson, 2013). They have connected the juvenile justice system and child services departments to academic organizations. These organizations and governmental institutions have become a connected tapestry to help communicate concerns and deal with at-risk populations.

Many organizations have also connected police agencies and created secondary programs that allow juvenile offenders, adults, and parents to work together to create a potential for change and engaging these fragile populations. Teachers and police have special training and programs to foster understanding these juveniles and their needs. Therefore, instituting parenting programs to assist with parenting skills is needed to decrease juvenile delinquency. There are training programs in place. The researcher recommends adding to them single-parent focus groups, infant and early childhood programs, after-school programs, training interventions in the criminal justice system, and community programs (Applebaum et al., 2015).

Single-parents focus groups are groups that allow single parents to express parenting skills with other single parents. These groups focus on interventions on how to become an effective parent. Learning from others can potentially reduce crime rates in adolescents. The groups may create early childhood parenting programs, adolescent family programs, and family strengthening/prevention models. The Office of Juvenile Delinquency Prevention conducted a project to find the methods for strengthening the family's ability to prevent delinquency in adolescents or risk factors in children (Sullivan et al., 2019). Prevention programs such as delinquency in adolescents can pave the way for future programs (Sullivan et al., 2019). Next, recommending early infancy and early childhood parenting programs can potentially benefit expectant and new mothers. Identifying at-risk mothers may potentially benefit programs in ensuring children are safe and providing a conducive environment. Providing resources such as local, state, and federal programs can assist parents in selecting the program that benefits their needs. Community partners such as churches, community activist leaders, and schools can refer single parents to these programs.

Third, training intervention programs for police are necessary. Police are valuable in the community. However, police brutality is currently an issue in the United States. Training officers to use proper techniques and procedures can prevent juveniles from potentially becoming reoffenders. Officer training can potentially assist officers and adolescents by implementing policies and procedures for addressing juvenile delinquency, being positive role models, mentoring, and helping this group in making the right choices in the future. Furthermore, further investigation regarding the effects of adolescent behavior may potentially enhance what is known about the relationship between crime and youth living in fatherless homes (Celińska et al., 2013). An adolescent's behavior may be an indicator of

how the child will act. Researchers may choose to focus on these behaviors and how they affect adolescent emotional and developmental growth. Therefore, future studies could be the beginning of possible solutions to crime in urban communities.

New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, and other similar cities all have interconnected programs for dealing with juvenile offenders. These groups have provided insights on mitigating justice system intervention through leadership programs and parental guidance mentorships. Communication is a subtle nuance and necessity for designing these programs and policies for future success. Communication and understanding also helps open the door for looking at the trends and changes over time and may help to address system changes and how policies work effectively in bureaucracy (Walker et al., 2019).

Lastly, the present project was conducted to understand the perceptions of citizens, administrators, and professionals on the criminal intent of children in fatherless homes. These individuals could potentially provide perceptions of what fatherlessness does to society and how it could perpetuate juvenile delinquency. Professionals related to juvenile justice, teachers, and parents often notice things that family members do not. Professionals often presume that there is no relationship between at-risk youth and the juvenile justice system. The data collected can help provide information on family units and the system overall. The data can help to initiate programs, policies, and intervention techniques. This understanding should include using policies and procedures through informational guidance. There should be plans to help deal with generational issues in the interconnected system overall and emergency mitigation for at-risk youth (Coakley, 2013).

Human interaction is the cornerstone of who and what humanity is. As such, the principles of development have been used to project the concept of human interactions

through the formation of psychology, philosophy, and beyond. The stages of child development have been a significant foundation for human interactions and can be measured through the sands of time to mitigate humanistic problems (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). Children living in single-parent homes need more nurturing to reduce criminality. This concept can help foster, grow, and maintain civility from childhood through adulthood.

This research project has shown the importance of a father at home and the key components for child developmental psychology. This includes the importance for these concepts within raising children and the stages of development. Communication is critical in that children will be more open to outside perspectives. Those raising children can understand what a child is going through and find a successful way to mitigate concerns (Darling-Churchill & Lippman, 2016). Furthermore, understanding these issues can help design solutions to fatherlessness. Additionally, this project can help lead to working with others in their immediate circle of friends, family, and external influences. Further research is needed on this topic to improve programs and reduce juvenile delinquency crimes.

Since there have been severe spikes in crime and societal degradation in New York City, Chicago, and Los Angeles, the concept of fatherlessness has never been more important thus inner cities and others have placed many resources in school systems to combat this concern. They have connected the juvenile justice system and departments of child services in that of academic organizations. These organizations and governmental institutions have become a connected tapestry to help communicate concerns and deal with at-risk populations. Many have also connected police agencies and created secondary programs that allow juvenile offenders, adults, and parents to work together to create a potential for change and engagement for these fragile populations. Professionals in many organizations, such as

teachers and police, have special training and programs to understand these juveniles and their needs (Mangunson, 2013). Therefore, instituting parenting programs to assist with parenting skills may help to decrease juvenile delinquency.

There are several recommendations for future studies. Although there are training programs currently in place, the researcher recommend single-parent focus groups, infancy, and early childhood programs, after-school programs, training interventions in the criminal justice system, and community programs. Single-parenting focus groups are groups that allow single parents to express parenting skills with other single parents. The groups focus on how to become an effective parent. Learning from others can potentially reduce crime rates in adolescents. The groups may create early childhood parenting programs, adolescent family programs, and family strengthening/prevention models. Prevention programs that focus on delinquency in adolescents can pave the way for future programs (Akesson et al., 2012)

Next, recommending early infancy and early childhood parenting programs can potentially benefit expectant and new mothers. Identifying at-risk mothers may potentially benefit programs in ensuring children are safe and providing a safe environment. Providing resources such as local, state, and federal programs can assist parents in selecting the programs that benefit their needs (Akesson et al., 2012) Community partners such as churches, community activist leaders, and schools can assist in referring single parents to these programs.

Training intervention programs for police are also. Police are valuable in today's communities. However, police brutality is currently an issue in the United States. Training officers to use proper techniques and procedures may result in juveniles not becoming reoffenders. Officer training can potentially benefit officers and juveniles by officers

following policies and procedures, being positive role models, mentoring juveniles, and assisting juveniles in making the right choices in the future (Harkin, 2018).

Furthermore, further investigation regarding the effects of adolescent behavior, as they relate to criminal activity, may potentially enhance the knowledge of the relationship between crime and adolescents in fatherless homes. An adolescent's behavior may be an indicator regarding how the child will act. Researchers may choose to focus on these behaviors and how they affect an adolescent emotional and developmental growth (McMunn et al., 2017). Therefore, future studies could be the beginning of possible solutions to crime in urban communities.

Summary

This focus of this qualitative systematic literature review was on causes, concerns, and variables in the concept of children's proclivity toward criminal intent deriving from a fatherless home. The current project began with the goal of discovering if there was a relationship between a child's proclivity toward criminal intent and a fatherless home. Based on the research findings, the researcher developed some implications to aid future researchers regarding crimes caused by adolescents and family structure-related studies.

Fathers play significant roles in their children's lives. A single-parent mother may work long hours to provide for her children. The result of a mother working long hours can be juvenile delinquency. A father figure in the home can reduce recidivism and guide juveniles in the right direction. Fatherless homes may result in poverty and the children developing cognitive, socioemotional, temperament, and attachment issues. Furthermore, reducing fatherless homes research has shown to provide parent focus groups to reduce fatherless homes.

My overall purpose in this ADP was to examine the relationship between juvenile offenders in fatherless homes and their criminal intent. The researcher evaluated articles on the perceptions of professionals, administrators, and citizens on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes and their willingness to commit crimes. According to Bosick and Fomby (2020), children in fatherless homes are more likely to commit crimes. Fathers play significant roles in children's lives. Single-parent mothers may work long hours to provide for their children. Adolescents without fathers in the home may develop cognitive, socioemotional, temperament, and attachment issues.

These fatherlessness factors may result in children committing criminal acts, substance abuse, and poor academic performance. According to the National Center for Fathering (n.d.), more than 20,000,000 children live in a home without the physical presence of a father. There are millions more who have fathers who are physically present. However, they are emotionally absent. If this concept were a disease, fatherlessness would be an epidemic (National Center for Fathering, n.d.).

Children growing up and going through various stages of development learn how to act from their parents. In many instances, children seek the approval of their fathers. Especially young men and boys, thus without this critical component in their life these youth may be prone to crime, drugs, and gang involvement, thus perpetuating a life of crime and beyond.

The findings in this project answered the research questions formulated for it. There were no physical participants in this project. Data were analyzed, synthesized, and extracted from peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly journal articles. Other sources were data obtained from criminal reports on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. The studies were

analyzed, synthesized, and printed out to prevent errors. Findings from this project may assist other researchers in closing the gap in the literature on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes. With effective research comes the design for methods tasks with solving real-world problems. The results from this project may also assist community leaders in revising or adopting new policies on juvenile offenders in fatherless homes.

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