

YOUTH ON THE MARGINS:

PREVALENCE AND PROFILE OF STREET INVOLVED YOUTH AMONG
JUVENILES INCARCERATED IN BOTSWANA

MAY 2014



Findings from this study suggest that education, tailored to the needs of these youth, is one of the primary interventions for preventing crimes



Stepping Stones International (SSI) is a non-governmental, non-profit organization that works with orphaned and vulnerable youth (aged 12-25). SSI uses a holistic approach to nurture the mental, physical and social well-being of youth to create realizable opportunities for them to become self-sufficient

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PREFACE




Youth crime in Botswana is a growing social and development problem. The lack of research into the extent of youth crimes among street involved youth in Botswana, and reasons that drive youth into crimes motivated the need for exploratory research. The goal was to identify areas needed to prevent street involved youth from crimes and areas for further research on issues and problems related to the social policy within the context of national development.

Crime research among youth in Botswana offers government department, donor organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) important information to design evidenced-informed interventions that are sustainable and relevant. This is the first exploratory study on youth crime in Botswana, which offers program planners with information likely to prevent future crimes among street involved youth. The study also provides program managers with critical information for developing rehabilitation interventions aimed at preventing recidivism among imprisoned youth. It also highlights areas that need further research to unearth crime causal factors among Botswana youth.

Results from this study suggest that crimes among young people in Botswana are not attributable to a single cause, but rather from multiple conditions. The conditions include macro-level structural as well as individual-based conditions. Preventing future crimes among young people (particularly street involved youth) needs sector-wide response involving several stakeholders.

It is my sincere hope that government, donor community, non-government organizations, and civil societies will use this information to reexamine their programmatic approaches for interventions targeting street involved children and youth. It is important to remember that linear and unfocused youth programs for street involved children and youth will do little to address the root causes of crime among Botswana youth.

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Managing Director and Founder
Stepping Stones International



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This project and undertaking would not have been possible without the support and financing of UNICEF.

SSI is privileged to be involved in this effort and hopes that this will be the start of a meaningful effort to address the needs of and provide a second chance for street involved children and youth in Botswana.

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 **BCC**

Botswana Council of Churches

FBI

Federal Bureau of Investigation

MoESD

Ministry of Education and Skills Development

MRC

Moshupa Rehabilitation Center

NCADD

United States National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence

SSI

Stepping Stones International

SPSS

Statistical Package for Social Sciences

UCR

Uniform Crime Reports (of the Federal Bureau of Investigation)

UN

United Nations

UNICEF

United Nations Children's' Fund

Youth related crimes are growing social and development problems and a primary cause of concern among Batswana. Studies from other countries suggest that street-involved children and youth are the primary perpetrators of youth related crimes. The study of incarcerated youth at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center examined the prevalence of street involved youth in Botswana; examined factors that predict committing violent crimes and investigated factors which predict street-involvement among incarcerated youth. The study was a cross-sectional involving 111 youth imprisoned at MRC. The study population comprised young men aged 16 to 32 years, conveniently selected out of a total of 180 incarcerated youth.

Results show that four in every ten incarcerated youth are street involved youth at MRC. The street involved youth had been on the streets for 2.6 years before being jailed. The mean age at the time of arrest for street involved youth was 19.2 years. They had been on the streets most of the day time but had homes to go to at night. They were on the streets either to “hang out” or for economic reasons, and most of these youths had dropped out of school.

Use of drugs to get high and dropping out from school had a significant positive prediction of violent crimes among incarcerated population. Youth who had used illicit drugs to get high were four times more likely to commit violent crimes than youth who had never used illicit drugs, $OR_{adjusted} = 4.20$, 95% CI: 1.23, 14.32, $p < 0.05$. The study also found that youth who dropped out from school were three times more likely to commit violent crimes than youth who did not drop out, $OR_{adjusted} = 3.56$, 95% CI: 1.27, 9.94, $p < 0.05$.

Results also indicate that street involved youth were more highly predisposed to psychopathologic symptoms and social vulnerabilities than non-street involved youth. Street involved youth were four times more likely to report drinking an alcoholic beverage; $OR_{adjusted} = 4.20$, 95% CI: 1.23, 14.32, $p < 0.05$ than non-street incarcerated youth. They were three times more likely to report being always sick, $OR_{adjusted} = 3.08$, 95% CI: 1.35, 7.10, $p < 0.01$. They were also more likely to have been head of households, i.e., had lived without guidance or support from responsible caregivers than non-street involved youth, $OR_{adjusted} = 1.85$, 95% CI: 1.08, 3.18, $p < 0.01$.

In addition, street-involved youth were three times more likely to go to bed hungry than non-street involved youth, $OR_{adjusted} = 3.45$, 95% CI: 1.37, 8.69, $p < 0.01$. The study also found that street involved youth were more likely to contemplate committing suicide than non-street involved youth in this population, $OR_{adjusted} = 1.86$, 95% CI: 1.10, 3.11, $p < 0.01$; and were more than two times likely to report being bored more of the time than non-street involved youth, $OR_{adjusted} = 2.58$, 95% CI: 1.37, 4.88, $p < 0.01$.

Furthermore, street involved youth were 58% less likely to be optimistic about the future, $OR_{adjusted} = 0.42$, 95% CI: 0.23, 0.77, $p < 0.01$. However, they were 56% less likely to report loneliness compared with non-street involved youth, $OR_{adjusted} = 0.44$, 95% CI: 0.24, 0.81, $p < 0.01$.

Summary characteristics of street involved youth among incarcerated population at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center

- Street involved youth are comparatively less likely to be the primary perpetrators of youth related crimes in Botswana compared with non-street involved youth. Only four in ten (36%) of incarcerated youth are street involved.
- They are younger than other youth currently imprisoned at MRC. On average, they are more likely to have been arrested when they were 19.2 years old.
- They have a significant number of friends, hence are unlikely to be lonely.
- They are more likely to have been arrested because of violent crimes (assault, armed robbery, rape and murder than property crimes). They are prone to committing assault and rape.
- They report a high frequency of delinquent and antisocial behavior (underage alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, and drug use).
- They are more likely to have been involved in fights and more than once being in trouble with the police or city authorities
- Street involved youth are highly susceptible to psychopathology symptoms (boredom, less optimistic about the future and high suicidal ideation).
- They are more likely have experienced food insecurity, always felt sick, and lacked a responsible adult to provide care and support.

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Crime is as old as the origin of the human race, which has persisted unabated to the modern times. Tappan (1960) defines crime as behavior that violates the legal code; an intentional act or omission that violates criminal law committed without defense or justification. Crime is sanctioned for punishment as a felony or a misdemeanor (Tappan, 1960, p.10). Tappan's definition emphasizes six main principles for an act to be a crime:

- It must be an intentional or omitted of legal duty
- The act must be voluntary and committed when the actor has control over his actions.
- The act must be intentional whether the intent is general or specific. A person may not have the specific intent to shoot another person and kill him, but he is expected to know that his action might result in injury or death of others. The act should be a violation of a criminal law
- The act must be committed without defense or justification. Thus, if the act is proved to be in self-defense or to have been committed in insanity, it will not be considered a crime, and
- The act must be sanctioned by the state as a felony or a misdemeanor.

While this definition varies from one country to another, criminologists agree that crime breaches the social, moral, and norms of societies, which attract disapproval and punishment (Ekeji, 2004). In Botswana, the Penal Code (Cap 08: 01) of 1964 defines what constitutes a crime (Dow, 2000). This study is based on a population of youth who were serving jail time after violating laws according to the Botswana Penal Code (Cap 08:01).

For analysis purposes, the types of crimes in this study follow the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) classification. UCR classifies crime into two categories, violent, and property crimes. Violent crime entails murder, rape, armed robbery, and assault while property crime includes burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft. UCR classifies robbery as both violent and property crime. According to UCR, the hierarchy of crime from highest to lowest is murder, rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated assault, simple assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft or petty theft.

GLOBAL MAGNITUDE OF THE CRIME

Estimates suggest that more than 8.8 million people are imprisoned annually in the world. About 90% of the global prison population is male. In countries with high prison population rates, one out of 80 males is in jail. Most prisoners in these countries are young males aged from 20 to 30 years (Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011). According to Guerino et al. (2011), inmates are likely to be uneducated, and one in seven dropped out of school.

United States of America (USA) has one of the highest rates of imprisoned population in the world (Map 1). About 700 Americans are incarcerated per 100,000 residents yearly, equivalent to 1.6 million Americans in prisoner each year (Tsai and Scommegna, 2012). Imprisonment rates are significantly higher among African Americans and Latinos than other segments of the population. In 2010, the rate of incarcerated African-Americans was 3,074 per 100,000 residents compared to 1,258 per 100,000 among Latinos, and 459 per 100,000 whites (Guerino et al., 2011).

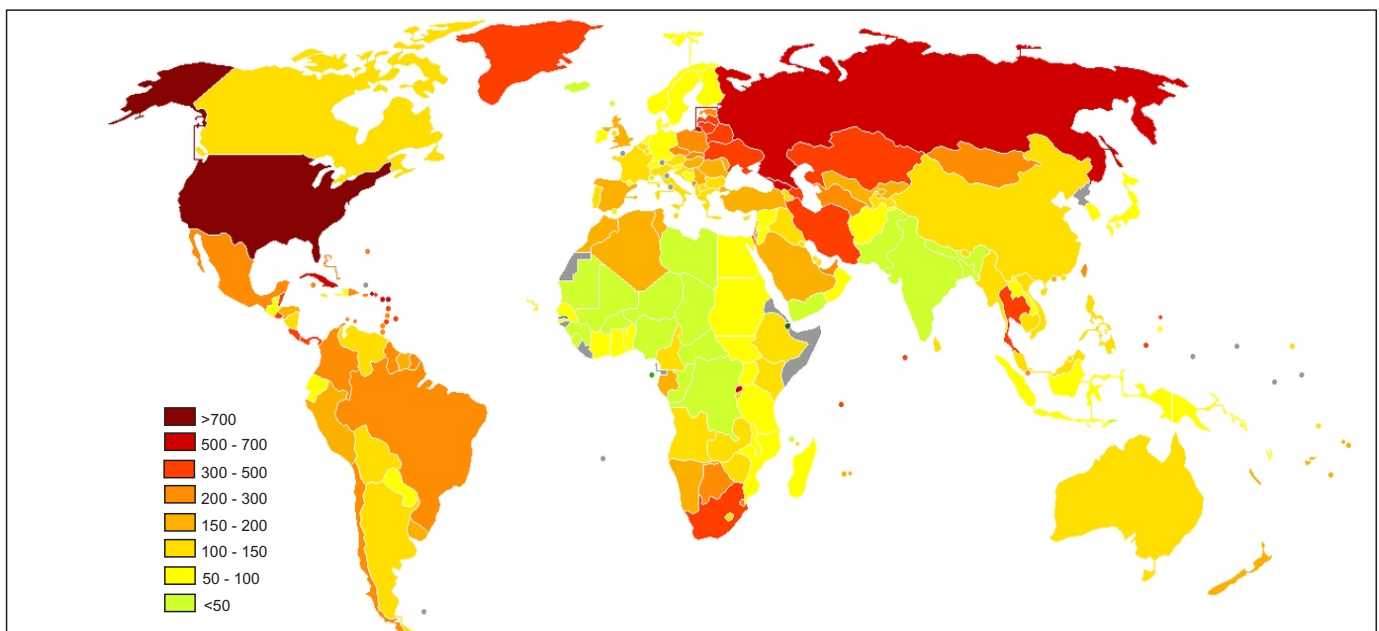


Figure 1: Spatial distribution of incarcerated population in the world

Source: *World Prison Brief: International Center for Prison Studies, June 2014*

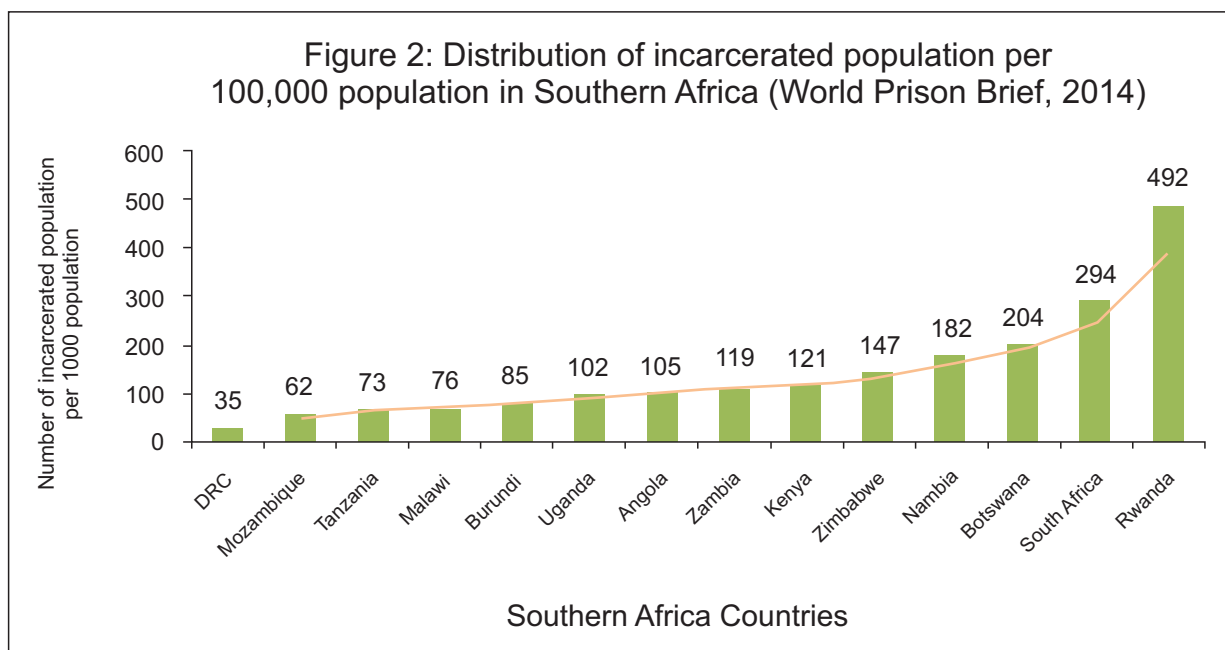
¹UCR is the crime reporting body of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a United States Government Security Agency.

The findings suggest education is one of the primary program interventions needed to keep youth (including street involved youth) out of jail. The results emphasize the need for programs focusing on reducing future crimes among youth. Key strategies are to structure school classes that are motivational and participatory and focus on literacy as their reading abilities are low. However, access to education alone is not going to prevent criminal behaviors among youth, rather such programs need to integrate antisocial and delinquent behavior modification interventions. In addition, effective youth programs must address structural problems at family, community, and societal levels. Furthermore, programs that focus on street involved youth must integrate psychopathology, social and health interventions to address common vulnerabilities in personal development.

CRIME: REGIONAL MAGNITUDE

In Africa, Rwanda, South Africa, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Botswana, Gabon, and Namibia have above 150 incarcerated population per 100,000 (Figure 1). Rwanda, South Africa, Botswana, and Namibia have the highest imprisoned population in Southern Africa (Figure 2). In 2010, the South African Department of Correction Services reported having over 57,000 young people incarcerated (109.6 per 100,000). Clark (2012) noted that 35.4% of the South African prison population is under the age of 25 years. Most young offenders in South African prisons commit violent crimes such as assault, armed robbery, rape, and murder. In this region, young people are both victims and perpetrators of violent crimes (Burton, 2007).

In Southern Africa, the nature and incidence of crime depend on socio-economic conditions and changes in society. According to Nsereko (2001), crime is high in densely populated urban areas, particularly in slums because of high unemployment rate, poor housing, and lack social support facilities. The need to survive drives youth into criminal activities. Nsereko (2001) urges that lack of close family ties to control social and moral behaviors in urban areas mediate criminal activities among young people in the region. In addition, the rural-urban migration attracts young people who lack job skills to the streets, to join criminal gangs and indulge in substance abuse (Nsereko, 2001).



In Botswana, youth crime is a growing social and development problem. Crime is the third cause of concern among Batswana. It is the first concern in medium-high cost areas in Gaborone, and the seventh in low cost areas of Gaborone (Chanda, 1999). The Moshupa Rehabilitation Center (MRC) estimates that about 150 to 180 young males are incarcerated every month (1,800 to 2,160 each year); suggesting an annual crime rate of 88.3 to 110.9 per 100,000 population. Motlogelwa (2013) noted that young Batswana were involved in 2,960 acts of crime in 2012 in Kanye; highlighting the growing magnitude of crimes in the country. Motlogelwa's observations suggest that most criminal acts do not necessarily result in incarceration and the magnitude of youth related crimes in Botswana is higher than the suggested crime rate.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Literature from other countries suggests that street-involved children and youth are the primary perpetrators of youth related crimes. Baron (2004) urges that street-involved children and youth are often abused, neglected, and victimized both at home and on the street. In addition to abuse, neglect, and victimization at home and on the street, street involved youth suffer economic hardships which prevent them from attaining economic goals in a legal way. As a result, they indulge in crimes for survival (Baron, 2004). Baron (2008) further urges that street involved youth who acknowledge deviant values and associate with deviant peers are more likely to commit crimes. According to Baron (2008), age, gender, unemployment, and poverty predicted violent crimes among street involved youth.



As the population of street-involved youth increases in Botswana, there is a need to investigate whether street-involvedness predicted criminal behaviors among incarcerated population. The study also sought to examine the types of crimes street involved youth commit. Currently, little is known about the prevalence of street-involved youth in Botswana prisons and the types of crimes they commit. No studies have examined the predictors of crimes among youth in Botswana or investigated factors that describe incarceration and street-involvedness.

This study was part of the street involved youth survey that Stepping Stones International (SSI), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, UNICEF and Botswana Council of Churches undertook in Gaborone and suburban areas. The street-involved youth survey was extended to the Moshupa incarcerated population to determine whether street-involvedness influenced the incidence of crime and incarceration.

CRIMINAL TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENT TRAJECTORIES AMONG YOUTH

Research suggests that criminal trends among youth are similar around the world. One quarter of all youth, particularly males have committed at least one crime act. Of these youths, 12% are chronic offenders and commit over 80% of all youth related crimes (Becroft, 2009; Moffit, 1993). Results from two decades of cohort studies in New Zealand, Canada, Europe, and the USA suggest that crime has two developmental trajectories. The development trajectories associated with crime include life course persistent offending and adolescent onset offending (Becroft, 2009; Jones, 2008; Dahlerg & Potter, 2001; National Center for Injury and Prevention and Control [NCIPC], 2001).

Life course persistent offending comprises of children who commit crimes early in life mostly before puberty (NCIPC, 2001). Life course persistent offenders exhibit severe behavior

problems as early as two years. They often come from dysfunctional families and exhibit cognitive deficiencies. These characteristics are pronounced in poor families with poor child supervision and poor parenting. They are often exposed to violence or traumatic events and weak family bonds (Moffit, 1993). Life course offenders are aggressive, oppositional, and lack guilt, remorse, or victim empathy. They are egocentric and seek immediate gratification. When left unsupervised and without corrective interventions, delinquent behaviors and criminal acts continue over life span (Moffit, 1993). According to Becroft (2008), 86% of life-course offenders are male, and 80% are likely to drop out from school. In addition, 75% of life course offenders are likely to abuse drugs and alcohol and are likely to report psychological or psychiatric problems (Becroft, 2008; NCIPC, 2001).

The adolescent onset offending comprises of 88% of all youth. In this group, youth upbringing is not markedly disordered. Youth in this group do not exhibit severe behavior problem at childhood; rather they develop behavioral problems after puberty (Moffit, 1993). Causes of delinquent behaviors are due to social factors such as anti-social peers, poor parenting, and exposure to illicit substances (drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes). Unlike the life course persistent offenders, this group experiences a normal range of emotions; they are remorseful and willing to change (Moffit, 1993). Their offending pattern declines in severity after 26 years of age. Understanding when and under what circumstances violent behavior occurs assist program planners to craft interventions that target those critical points in development.

THE THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF CRIMES

Theories of crimes emerge from multiple academic perspectives including economics, criminology, sociology, geography, psychology, biology, and demography. Consequently, multiple theoretical perspectives elucidate the causes and effects of crime (Iqbal and Jalili, 2010; Thornberry & Christenson, 1984). The study examines some of the prominent theories and propositions related to youth crimes. The theoretical discourse includes the theory of economics of crime, the general strain theory, the social control theory, the low self-control theory, and social disorganization theory (Iqbal and Jalili, 2010; Ekeji, 2004; Good, Pirog-Good, & Sickles, 1986; Baron, 2008; Baron 2006).

Theory of the Economics

The theory of the economics of crime holds that young people will commit crimes if the expected criminal benefits are more than the cost of punishment. The criminal faces both benefits and costs from criminal activities. The cost relates to the probability of being caught and the punishment one faces when caught (Iqbal and Jalil, 2010; p.742). Iqbal & Jalil (2010) stated that macroeconomic factors, such as unemployment, increase the incidence of crime. In a study of young offenders, Gunns (2004) found significant association between economic development (urbanization), income inequality and crime. In another study, Good, Pirog-Good, and Sickles (1996) found that the decrease in the expected returns from employment increases the probability of crime. Good et al. (1996) found that young people become criminals because their benefits and costs are different from those of other youth because of poverty (p. 220). In a study of Aborigines, Weatherburn, Snowball, and Hunter (2008) found the history of incarceration was associated with economic stress, welfare dependence, and unemployment. Weatherburn et al. (2008) also found that alcohol abuse, illicit drug use, and school drop-out predicted incarceration in this population (p.317-318).


General Strain Theory (GST)

The general strain theory (GST) posits that crime is a result of structural strain induced in individuals within a society. The theory states that young people indulge in criminal activities when legitimate activities to attain success are closed due to structural limitations (Thornberry & Christenson, 1984). Robert Agnew, one of the architects of GST, states that loss of stimuli, goal blocking and failure to achieve positively valued goals (Baron, 2004, p. 458) are the root causes of crime. As a result, strain leads to anger, frustration, and another affective status that creates a pressure to commit a crime. The choice of delinquency versus non-delinquency is influenced by conditioning factors such as deviant attitude, deviant peers, and external attributes (Baron, 2004).

Theory of Low Self-Control

Low self-control is one of the better known theories of crime. The theory holds that children develop levels of self-control between seven to ten years that remain stable the rest of their lives (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). According to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), criminal behaviors originate from the interaction of self-control and the opportunity to engage in acts that promise

²Mmaabo Setshwaelo personal communication with the Prison Warden at Moshupa Rehabilitation Centre for Boys, February 2014.



immediate pleasures. Individuals with low self-control are attracted to criminal behavior because crime is simple, does not require skills, and brings immediate satisfaction. Immediate satisfaction in a criminal's mind includes money without work, sex without courtship, revenge without delay (Desmond, Bruce, and Stacer, 2012).

Youth with low self-control cannot delay indulgence because they focus on the present. As a result, they act impulsively, without much thought on results of their actions. These youth focus on themselves rather than others and are insensitive to other people (Goode, 2009). According to Gottfredson and Hirschi, low self-control is a result of poor and ineffective parenting, common where there is a weak attachment between parents and children and in families where parents fail to recognize and correct their children's delinquent behaviors.

In a study of young people in the USA, Desmond et al. (2012) examined the direct effects of self-control and the interaction effect of adolescent smoking, drinking, and marijuana use. The researchers found that substance use, smoking, drinking, and marijuana use were significantly related to low self-control. Low self-control and easy access to illicit drug use, alcohol consumption, and cigarette smoking among adolescents were associated. The study also found that the more adolescents' friends indulge in delinquent behaviors, the more likely low self-control individuals will copy delinquent behaviors. Desmond et al. (2012) also found evidence that self-control depends on the opportunities that are available for adolescents. When a criminal opportunity arises young people with low self-control are more likely to engage in crime than young people with high self-control.

Social Control Theory

In social control theory, Hirschi postulates that human beings are inherently pleasure-seeking; as such delinquency is intrinsic to the human nature. Hirschi formulated social control theory through the lens of conformity. He described conformity as a result of socialization; characterized by attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief (Wiatrowski, Griswold, & Roberts, 1981, p. 525). Hirschi urged that the stronger the four principles are, the less likely an individual committed crimes. (Hirschi, 1969). Hirschi defined attachment as the affective ties which a young person forms to significant others (Wiatrowski et al., 1981, p. 525). The ties are developed in the family environment when parents act as role models through teaching children what is and is not acceptable behavior. Youth who lack attachment are free from moral restraints and therefore at risk of committing a crime (Hirschi, 1969). Commitment relates to the ambition to reach high-status; through education (Wiatrowski et al., 1981, p. 525). Hirschi (1969) urged that youth with well-defined goals are less likely to engage in crime than their uncommitted counterparts.

Social Disorganization Theory

The social disorganization theory (SDT) holds that crime is not inherent in individuals but rather is a result of failing structures in the society, communities, and neighborhoods (Hulk, 2011). The theory re-emerged as one of the major theoretical perspectives to explain violent crime (Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls, 1997), delinquency (Sampson and Groves, 1989), and social disorder (Sampson and Raudenbush, 1999). The theory suggests that the ability of neighborhoods to combat crime and delinquency originates from social cohesion that fosters social control (Sampson et al., 1997).

Empirical evidence suggests that neighborhoods with high residential instability and low socioeconomic status experience more crime than other neighborhoods. Communities in these neighborhoods lack the ability to organize and control crime and delinquent behaviors because of weak structures (Steenbeek and Hipp, 2011). In another study, Shubik and Kendall (2007) found poor school structures as a result of failed policy caused a high frequency of truancy and school drop-outs. Studies show that truancy and school dropouts lead to future juvenile delinquency, adult crimes, unemployment, and substance abuse (McCray, 2006; Reid, 2005).

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to collect information from incarcerated street-involved youth which would be used to develop interventions to deter street-involved youth from crimes and engage them in educational programs. The study used the Botswana street-involved youth definition (See Street-involved Youth Report).

OBJECTIVES

The study had three primary objectives:

- 1) To estimate the prevalence of street involved children and youth among incarcerated juvenile population at Moshupa Rehabilitation Prison
- 2) To examine factors that predict the probability of committing violent crimes (assault, armed robbery, rape, and murder) among incarcerated youth at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center, and
- 3) To investigate factors which predict street-involvement among incarceration youth at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center

RESEARCH DESIGN

This was an observational study which used a cross-sectional survey design. The sample composed of 111 youth imprisoned at MRC. Cross-sectional surveys collect a snapshot of information at a specific point in time (Bartlett, 2005; Kelly, Clark, Brown, and Sitzia, 2003).

STUDY POPULATION AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUES

The study population was comprised of young men aged 16 to 33 years, conveniently selected out of a total of 180 incarcerated youth. Data were collected in December 2013. Each of the respondents had committed a crime and found guilty of a criminal offense under the Botswana criminal laws.

DATA MANAGEMENT

Instrumentation and Data Collection

SSI developed the draft instrument based study objectives. Study members from SSI, MoESD, UNICEF, and BCC reviewed and modified the draft instrument. The instrument was translated into Setswana. Data were collected through face-to-face interviews.

Data Preparation

Data were entered and processed in Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 for Windows. In preparation for analysis, data were cleaned and edited. The primary data preparation procedures included ensuring that skip patterns were observed and followed, and appropriate codes were entered. Cross-tabulations, frequencies, and graphical manipulations were the primary tools to clean data.

Data Analysis Framework

Data analysis included descriptive and inferential analytical approaches. Descriptive analysis analyzed the total sample without disaggregating street from non-street involved youth. The analysis included percentages, medians, mean (standard deviations), and ratios. The expected outcomes included identification of street-involved youth from incarcerated sample population. The descriptive analysis also involved identification of characteristics of incarcerated youth in Botswana.

The inferential analysis involved analyzing data to predict the probability of committing **violent crimes** with the **dependable variable** coded as 1= violent crimes and 0= property crimes. Serious crime included murder, rape, armed robbery, and assault while property crimes include vandalism, petty theft, and drug dealing.

Inferential statistics also predicted street-involvement with the dependent variable coded as 1= street-involved youth, 0= non-street-involved youth. The predictor variables (independent variables) included demographic characteristics, education status, family history, behavioral problems and exposure to psychosocial vulnerabilities.

SURVEY ETHICAL REVIEW APPROVAL AND PERMISSION

Prisoners are a disadvantaged and vulnerable population. To ensure that their dignity and autonomy were observed, the study sought ethical clearance from the MoESD Institutional Review Board (IRB). Following ethical clearance, permission was sought from the Department of Prisons and the Warden of MRC.

STUDY LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The theoretical premises of crime among youth are borrowed from the western studies due to a dearth of African oriented theories. To remedy this limitation, African studies on crime must use the theoretical perspectives outlined above to study crime.

This study is a cross-sectional study. The design is prone to poor response rates and missing data (Kelly et al., 2003). In this study, the major problem was a high proportion of missing data and the small sample size. Missing data introduce bias which renders the results unreliable and invalid if not controlled. It is also practically impossible to run predictive regression modeling with data that has many missing values.

Carpenter and Kenward (2013) identify complete case analysis and multiple imputations to address the problem of missing data. Variables with missing data by design (due to skip patterns) and those with missing data <50% were analyzed.

SAMPLE COMPOSITION

The survey planned to interview at least 120 (100%) youth prisoners. Of the planned sample, 92.5% (n = 111) consented and took part in the study. The respondents included youth across Botswana (Table 1). The results consist of aggregated data drawn from 111 respondents interviewed at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center (MRC). MRC is the only prison for male juveniles in Botswana.

Table 1 presents the composition and distribution of respondents by administrative districts. Data indicate that eight in ten of the respondents were residents of Kweneng East, Central, Gaborone, South East, Southern, and Lobatse districts. Kweneng East, South East and Southern are suburban areas of Gaborone, the capital of Botswana.

Table 1:		
Composition and distribution of sample population by administrative (n=111)		
Administrative Districts	Number	(%)
Kweneng East	24	(21.6)
Central	23	(20.7)
Gaborone	20	(18.1)
South East	10	(9.0)
Southern	10	(9.0)
Lobatse	7	(6.3)
Kgatleng	4	(3.6)
Francistown	3	(2.7)
Other villages	3	(2.7)
Foreign (South Africans (2) + Zimbabweans(1)	3	(2.7)
North West	2	(1.8)
North East	1	(0.9)
Jwaneng	1	(0.9)

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

The descriptive analysis presents aggregated data of the entire incarcerated sample population. The sample consisted male in mates aged from 16 to 33 years (range = 17 years). Most of the respondents (68.5%) were in the 20-24 year old age group. The mean age was 21 years. Nine of every ten respondents had a national identification number (Table 2).

Table 2:		
Demographic characteristics of the respondent population (n=111)		
Exploratory variables	Number	(%)
Sex (n = 111)		
Male	111	(100.0)
Female	-	-
Age groups (n = 111)		
16-19 years	30	(27.0)
20-24 years	76	(68.5)
25+ years	5	(4.5)
Mean Age (in Years)	20.98	(SD:2.6)
Range (Maximum – Minimum age in years)	17	(16-33)
Country of citizenship (n=111)		
Batswana	107	(96.4)
Foreigners	4	(3.6)
Do you have an identification number (n = 91)		
Omang	83	(91.2)
Birth certificate	5	(5.5)
Passport	3	(3.3)

Sixty percent of the respondents were arrested in relocation residential areas rather than their original villages (Table 3). Respondents had lived in the location areas for a mean of 12 years (Mean time = 11.8 years) at the time of the arrest. Of the respondents who reported having relocated before being arrested (n = 67), 58% had followed their parents, relatives or friends while 42% had relocated to seek employment (Table 3).

Table 3:		
History of movement from home village/district before arrest (n=111)		
Exploratory Variables	Number	%
Did you move from another place before being arrested (n = 111)		
Yes	67	(60.4)
No	44	(39.6)
Length of stay in the village/town before being arrested	11.4	(SD:8.9)
Reasons for moving from your original home (n =67)		
Looking for employment	28	(41.8)
Accompanied parents/friends	39	(58.2)

Family Relationships and Family size

Respondents were asked a series of questions related to family size, personal relationships with siblings and parents/caregivers, parenthood, and sleeping arrangements. Tables 4 and 5 summarize the results. Half of the respondents (50.0%) had both biological parents at the time of the interview while the remaining half had either one or both parents deceased. Seven in every ten of the respondents reported having had close relationships with both their parents/caregivers and their siblings before arrest (Table 4). Sixty eight percent of the respondents had a strong relationship with their caregivers or parents. Similarly, 69% of the respondents reported having had close relationships with their siblings. In both cases, two of every ten of the respondents expressed poor or distant relationships with caregivers/parents and siblings, respectively (Table 4). On average, imprisoned youth were from large households composed of 2.4 sisters and 2.6 brothers. The mean total number of siblings was 5 ($M_{\text{number of siblings}} = 5.4$).

Table 4:		
Family situation, size and relationships		
Exploratory Variables	Number	%
Are your biological parents alive (n = 102)		
Yes, both mother and father are alive	51	(50.0)
No, father died	26	(25.5)
No, mother died	7	(6.9)
Both parents deceased	18	(17.6)
Relationship with parents/caregivers (n = 86)		
Poor	13	(27.0)
Strong	73	(68.5)
Do you have any siblings (n = 111)		
Yes	99	(89.2)
No	12	(10.8)
Family size		
Number of sisters	2.4	(SD:1.4)
Number of brothers	2.6	(SD:1.6)
Total number of siblings	5.4	(SD:2.5)
Relationship with siblings (n=88)		
Distant	19	(21.6)
Close	69	(78.4)

The study found that 49% of the respondents were staying with their parents/caregivers at the time of arrest while 20.6% were staying in their places, 17.7% were sharing accommodation with friends, and 12.7% were living on the streets (Table 5). Twenty percent of the respondents had moved three months before being arrested. Among those who reported having moved, six in ten moved at least once (Table 5).

Table 5:

Family situation, size, and relationships

Exploratory Variables	Number	%
Who were you staying with before being arrested (n = 105)		
At parents/caregivers home	50	(49.0)
My own place	26	(20.6)
Shared place	7	(17.6)
On the streets	18	(12.7)
Did you change homes three months before being arrested? (n = 109)		
Yes	22	(20.2)
No	87	(79.5)
If yes, how many times did you move (n= 22)		
Once	13	(59.1)
Twice or more	9	(40.9)

Educational Status

Ninety-four percent of the incarcerated youth had attended some level of education. Respondents who never attended school (6%) cited two main reasons for never attending school:

- Their parents could not afford
- They were afraid of bullying.

Six in every ten of the respondents who reported having attended school dropped out before completing that level of education. The rate of school dropout was high during primary and junior secondary school years. The results suggest that proficiency of reading and writing was 13.7% higher in Setswana than in English among the respondents (who attended school) (Table 6).

Of the school dropouts (n=69), 93% expressed the desire to re-enter education if given a chance. Asked to state the type of learning they would prefer, 54.6% opted for informal education while the remainder preferred formal education (Table 6). The motivation to go back to school included the need for better jobs (62.5%) and need to earn better salaries at work (37.5%).

When asked to describe any concerns they had about going back to school, 8% of the respondents did not think they would get financial support while the most (92%) did not have any concerns (Table 6).

Table 6:

Respondents educational status			
		Number	(%)
Ever attended school? (n = 111)			
Yes		104	(93.7)
No	7 (6.3)		
If no, why did you not attend school? (n = 7)			
Parents could not afford		4	(57.1)
Other reasons (e.g. was bullied)		3	(42.9)
Read and write Setswana (n = 78)			
Yes		62	(79.5)
No		16	(20.5)
Read and write English (n = 76)			
Yes		50	(65.8)
No		26	(34.2)
Did you complete or drop out of school (n = 99)			
Completed grade level		35	(36.1)
Dropped out before completing grade level		69	(63.9)
If you had an opportunity to complete education, would you take the opportunity (n = 69)			
Yes		64	(92.8)
No		5	(7.8)
Type of learning you would prefer (n = 64)			
Formal		29	(45.3)
Brigades		24	(37.5)
Worked based or night school		11	(17.2)
Benefits of going back to school (n = 64)			
Better jobs		40	(62.5)
Personal status		24	(37.5)
What would be your main concern about going back to school (n = 64)			
Don't have concerns		59	(92.2)
I would have no final support		5	(7.8)

Prevalence of Street-Involved Youth among Incarcerated Population

The study found that 36% (n = 40) of the incarcerated youth fit the profile street involvedness. The study found that 37.5% of the respondents (who fit the street-involved profile) had been on the streets every day while the remainder was on the street either most of the days (10.0%) or some of the days (52.5%) before being arrested. The mean length of time spent on the street before the arrest was 2.6 years (Table 7).

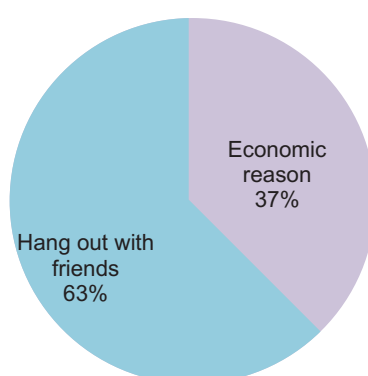
When asked to recount the safety and security of being on the streets, 62.5% felt life on the streets was dangerous while 22.5% thought the streets were safe (Table 7).

Table 7:**Prevalence of street involved young people currently in prison (n = 40)**

	Number	(%)
Status of street involvedness		
Street involved	40	(36)
Non-street involved	71	(64)
Frequency of being on the streets in a week		
Every day	14	(37.5)
Most of the days	4	(10.0)
Some of the days	21	(52.5)
Length of time spent on the streets		
All day (Morning to evening)	13	(32.5)
Part of the day (at least 5 hours)	27	(67.5)
Mean length of time (in Years)	2.6	(SD:2.44)
Perceived sense of safety being on the street		
Safe	9	(22.5)
Neither	6	(15)
Dangerous	25	(62.5)

Respondents who fit the street-involved status were asked to describe the main reason for being on the streets. Six in every ten of the respondents were on the street to “hang out” with friends while the remainder was on the streets for economic reasons (Figure 1). The economic reasons included running a business, looking for employment, and begging.

Figure 3: Primary reasons for being on the streets prior to incarceration (n=40)



Perceived Protection and Safety while on the Streets

The study examined the behaviors and attitude of the respondents who identified themselves as a street involved youth in the survey population. The study found that all the 40 respondents who reported having been on the streets had been in trouble with the police or other government authorities. Nine of every ten respondents had been in trouble with the authorities two or more times. In addition, 47.5% of the street-involved youth had been in a fight prior to being arrested. When asked to describe whether they felt being unnecessarily harassed, 67.5% perceived that they were unnecessarily harassed for being a street-involved youth. Among respondents who felt being unnecessarily harassed (n = 27), most (51.9%) felt the public were the primary culprits for harassment followed by the police and city authorities (Table 8).

Table 8:

Behaviors street involved young people before incarceration (N=40)		
Exploratory variables	Number	%
Frequency of being in trouble with Police/Authorities		
Once	3	(7.5)
2 to 3 times	28	(70.0)
More than three times	9	(22.5)
Reports for being in a fight		
Yes	19	(47.5)
No	21	(52.5)
Did you feel unnecessarily harassed on the streets?		
Yes	27	(67.5)
No	13	(32.5)
Who usually harassed you? (n = 27)		
The general public	14	(51.9)
The police	8	(29.6)
City Council and other Government authorities	5	(18.5)

Self-Reported Types of Crimes

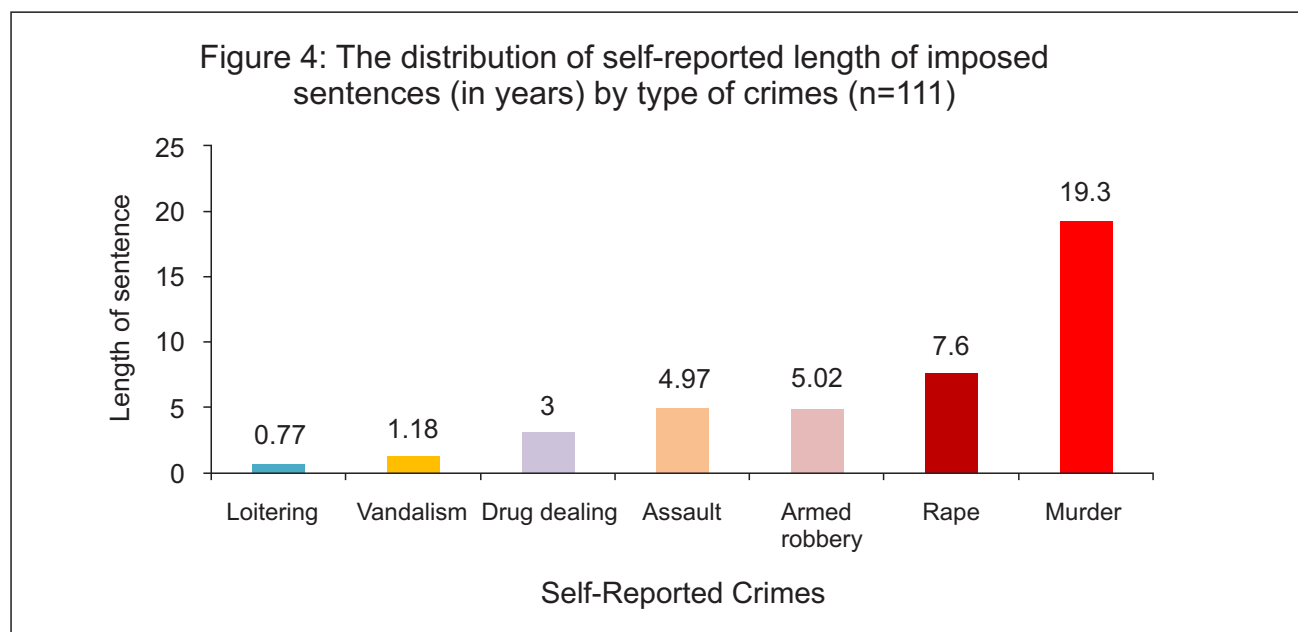
The study asked all respondents to describe the type of crimes they committed and length of sentence they were serving. It also inquired about the skills the respondents were receiving and the skills they preferred to pursue. The study categorized the types of crimes committed by two groups; property crimes inclusive of vandalism and illicit drug dealing; and violent crimes inclusive of armed robbery, assault, rape, and murder. Assault and armed robbery accounted for 65.7% of violent crimes among the respondents while the remainder is involved rape and murder. In addition, the study found that two of every ten respondents had either committed rape or murder. The study found that 12.6% of the respondents had been arrested for loitering, vandalism, and illicit drug dealing (Table 9).

Table 9:

Situation of crimes committed among young Batswana incarcerated at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center		
Exploratory variable	Number	%
Level of crimes (n = 111)		
Property crimes	14	(12.6)
Violent crimes	97	(87.4)
Types of crimes (n = 111)		
Illicit drug dealing	2	(1.8)
Vandalism	5	(4.5)
Loitering	7	(6.3)
Assault	35	(31.5)
Armed robbery	38	(34.2)
Rape	16	(14.4)
Murder	8	(7.2)
Mean length of sentence (in Yrs.)		
Property crime (Loitering, vandalism and drug dealing)	1.24	(SD: 0.90)
Violent crimes (assault, armed robbery, rape, and murder)	6.59	(SD:4.96)
Skills prisoners currently receiving (n = 102)		
Nothing	51	50
Literacy and numeracy	5	4.8
Construction industry knowledge	10	9.8
Agricultural skills	17	16.7
Landscaping	2	2.0
Art and design	15	14.7
Business management	2	2.0
Skills prisoners would want to receive (n=104)		
Nothing	3	2.9
Literacy and numeracy	16	15.4
Construction industry knowledge	33	31.7
Agricultural skills	13	12.5
Landscaping	3	2.9
Art and design	20	19.2
Business management	16	15.4

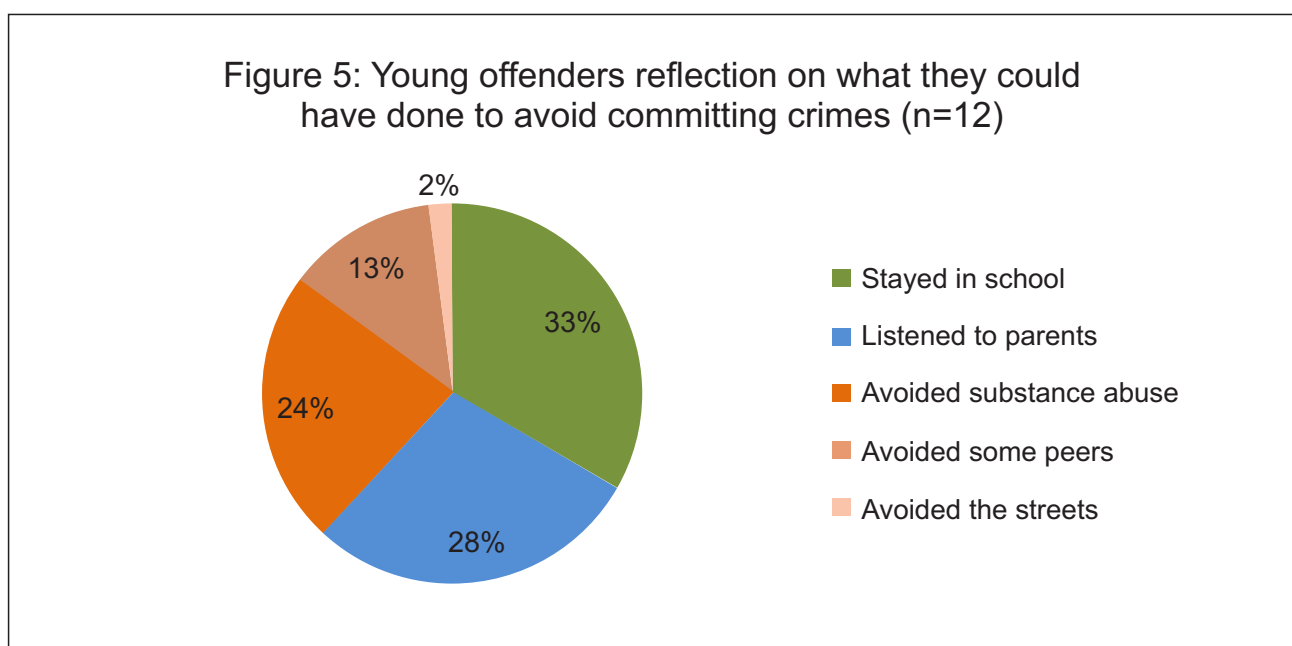
Data show crimes such as loitering, vandalism (breaking public property and burglary) and illicit drug dealing attracted sentences ranging from a mean of 0.8 years to 3 years (Figure 2). Violent crimes reported in this population included assault, armed robbery, rape, and murder. The study showed that very serious crimes attracted sentences that ranged from five years to nineteen years (Figure 2).

About eighty-seven percent of the crimes were violent. Among the street involved youth, 94.7% reported being involved in violent crimes. Among non-street involved youth, 82.4% were involved in violent crimes.



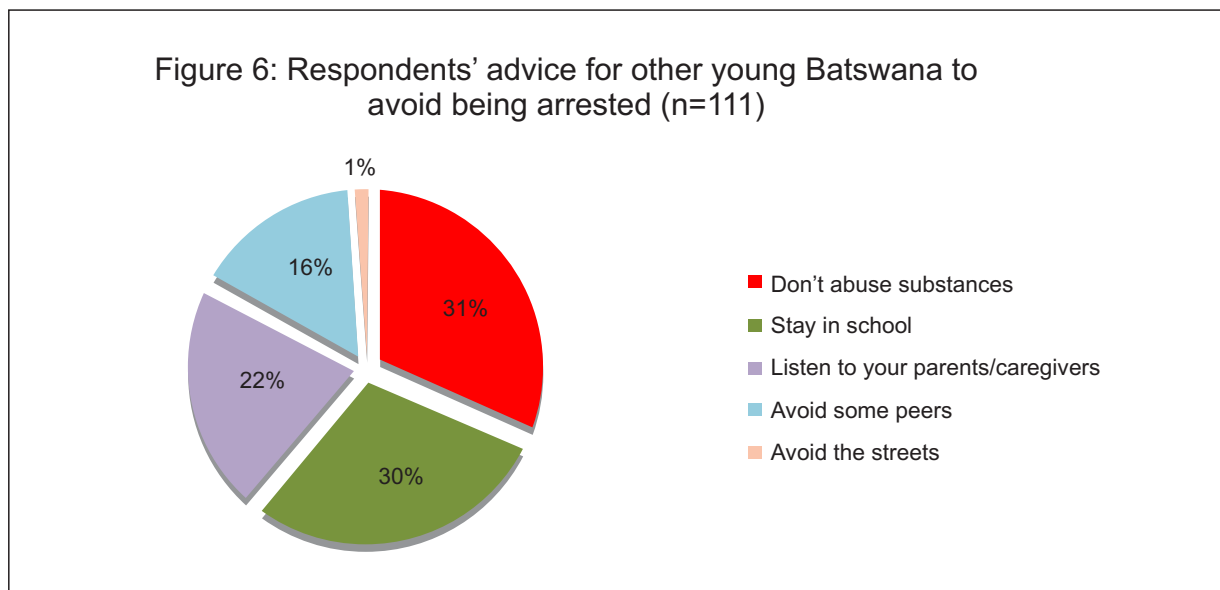
The study found that half of the respondents were not receiving any skills in prison. About 17% of the respondents reported receiving agricultural skills and 15% reported receiving art and design skills. Asked to describe what they would want to learn the major skills included construction industry skills, art and design, business management, and literacy and numeracy.

The study asked the respondents to reflect back in time on their lives and report on what they thought they could have done to avoid being arrested. Respondents believed that if they had stayed in school, listened to advice from their parents or caregivers, avoided substance abuse and avoided associating themselves with some of the peers; they could have avoided committing crimes.





When respondents were asked to offer advice to other young Batswana to avoid a prison sentence, they stated that young Batswana should avoid substance abuse, stay in school, listen to parental/caregiver guidance and advice, and choose peers carefully (Figure 4).



Respondents were asked to describe the kind of 'dream' jobs they wished to have after serving their prison sentence. Results suggest that six of the respondents dreamed of working in either construction industry or managing their business ventures. In addition, results indicate that three in every ten of the respondents wanted white collar jobs or to join security services including armed forces or police services. One in ten of the respondents dreams of becoming drivers or mechanics.

Exposure to Self-Report Risk Behaviors

The study found that 82% of the respondents reported having consumed alcohol. Seven in ten respondents who reported consuming alcohol started at 16 years of age or above. The study found that 57.3% of the respondents had taken alcoholic beverages every day or one to three times per week (Table 10). Results indicate that 60.4% of the used illicit substances (Table 10). The most frequently used illicit substance among respondents was marijuana. Results found that eight in every nine of the drug users took the substance either every day or once to three times every week (Table 10). The study also found that about 60% of the respondents smoked cigarettes. About 70% of the smokers started smoking when they were 16 years and above. Seven of the cigarette smokers took at least five or more cigarettes per day (Table 10).

Table 10:

Distribution of the self-report social, behavioral factors among respondents

Exploratory variables	Number	(%)
Do you drink alcohol? (n=111)		
Yes	91	(82.0)
No	20	(18.0)
At what age did you start drinking alcohol? (n=91)		
≤ 15 years	27	(29.7)
≥ 16 years	64	(70.3)
How often did you drink alcohol in a week? (n=89)		
Everyday	29	(32.6)
One -three times a week	22	(24.7)
Occasionally	38	(42.7)
Ever used drugs to get high (N=67)		
Yes	67	(60.4)
No	44	(39.6)
Type of drugs used (N = 67)		
Marijuana	56	(83.6)
Glue	7	(10.4)
Mandrax/Cocaine	4	(6.0)
How often did you use drugs in a week (n=67)		
Everyday	40	(59.7)
One-Three a week	15	(22.4)
Occasionally	12	(17.9)
Ever smoked cigarettes? (n=111)		
Yes	77	(69.4)
No	34	(30.6)
At what age did you start smoking cigarettes? (n=56)		
≤ 15 years	25	(32.9)
≥ 16 years	51	(67.1)
Average number of cigarettes in a day (n=56)		
1-4 cigarettes per day	20	(26.0)
≥ 5 or more per day	57	(74.0)

Self-Reported Sexual Behaviors

The study found that nine in every ten of the respondents interviewed in this study have had sexual intercourse. The trend of sexual experience varied with age. As age increased, the percent of respondents reporting sexual intercourse increased as well (See figure 6).

The study found that 7.1% of the respondents initiated sexual intercourse at an early age (≤ 12 years). Two in every ten respondents in this population had sex when they were 13-15 years of age. Comparatively, three in every ten respondents in this study population had first sexual intercourse much younger than the average national sexual debut among Botswana youth (Table 11).

Data suggest that almost half of the respondents, who reported having had sexual intercourse, were involved with partners in the same age group. Two of every ten respondents had forced first sexual encounter, i.e., they raped their partners or were raped. The study also suggests that one in every ten respondents had exchanged sex for money or clothes with the individuals they had sex with (Table 11).

Table 11.

Distribution of self-reported exposure to HIV sexual risk factors among the respondents

Exploratory variables	Number	(%)
Ever had sex? (n=111)		
Yes	99	(89.2)
No	12	(10.8)
What was the age of your first sexual intercourse (n=99)		
12 years or younger	7	(7.1)
13-15 years	18	(18.2)
16 years	74	(74.7)
Age of sexual partner (n=95)		
Same age	46	(48.4)
Five years younger	32	(33.7)
Five years older	17	(17.9)
Circumstances/nature of the first sexual encounter (n=99)		
Consensual	79	(79.8)
Forced (Rape)	20	(20.2)
Was the first sexual encounter in exchange for gift/favor? (n=97)		
Yes	14	(14.4)
No	83	(85.6)
If sex was in exchange for a gift, what was the gift (n=12)		
Money	9	(75.0)
Clothes	3	(25.0)

Exposure to Psychological and Social Risks

Respondents were asked to rate themselves on a five scale Likert scale (Table 12) composed of 18 statements that measure psychological and social vulnerabilities (Reference). The study applied mode and median to describe and measure self-rating for the psychological and social status of incarcerated study population before being arrested and charged with committing crimes. Descriptive data on psychosocial exposure to vulnerabilities suggest most of the imprisoned youth interviewed in this survey had experienced psychological distress characterized by feeling hopelessness, sadness, and boredom. Respondents agreed to have felt sad most of the times, hopeless and being bored most of the times. At the descriptive level of analysis results indicate no psychological distress associated with suicidal thoughts and depression because of loneliness. In addition, the descriptive analysis did not find evidence of any social vulnerability characterized by food insecurity, health concerns, and safety and protection at home (Table 12).

Table 12

Descriptive analysis of psychosocial measurement scale based mode and median score

Psychosocial measurement statements	Mode Score	Median Score
I am always sick	1	2
I used to be head of my household	1	2
I always used to be lonely	2	2
I used to eat three meals a day	5	4
I used to have enough food to eat	4	4
I used to go to bed hungry	1	2
I had people I could talk to when I had a personal problem	4	4
I used to have a safe place to sleep every night	4	4
I felt safe where I slept	4	4
I used to worry about my health	1	2
I was as happy as other people	4	4
I did not think life was worth living for.	1	2
Sometime I felt strong about taking my life	1	2
I used to feel sad most of the times	4	3
I used to feel hopeless sometimes	4	3
I used to feel bored most of the times	4	4
I used to feel safe at home	5	4
I had faith things would turn out alright	5	5

Note: Psychosocial measurement scale on a 5-level Likert Scale in which 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree 3 = neither, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

The study performed exploratory factor analysis on an ordinal psychological and social measurement scale of vulnerability. Exploratory factor analysis is a multivariable statistical technique that extracts underlying factors. The study also applied exploratory factor analysis to assess the construct validity of psychosocial scale and develop a parsimonious set of psychosocial variables (Field, 2009). The measurement scale had 18 self-rated measurement statements. Of the 18 psychosocial measurement items, 11 items extracted into five underlying constructs which were labelled into two levels of psychological distress (boredom, hopelessness, and sadness) and suicidal ideation. The social vulnerabilities were extracted into three constructs including safety and protection, food security, and health concerns (Table 13).

Table 13:

Summary of exploratory factor analysis results for rotated and extracted components for the psychosocial vulnerability scale (N=111)

Rotated and extracted component matrix					
	Psychological Distress	Security & Protection	Food Security	Health Concerns	Suicide Ideation
I felt sad most of the times	.756				
I felt hopeless sometimes	.728				
I felt bored most of the times	.689				
I used to have a safe place to sleep every night		.896			
I felt safe where I slept		.882			
I used to eat at least three meals a day			.625		
I used to have enough food to eat			.550		
I used to worry about my health				.802	
I am always sick				.756	
I sometimes felt strong about taking my life					.849
I did not think life was worth living					.827
Eigenvalue	2.38	2.30	2.17	2.16	1.70
% of variance	14.00	13.50	12.73	12.71	10.01
Cronbach alpha test	0.72	0.89	0.71	0.74	0.72

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

INFERENTIAL DATA ANALYSIS

The study applied regression modeling to identify predictors of violent crimes (dependent variable coded as 1= violent crimes, 0 = property crimes) and street-involvedness (dependent variable coded as 0 = non-street involved, 1= street-involved). Because dependent variables were binary; the study used binary multivariable logistic regression modeling.

The study performed several models using variables from demographic characteristics, family situation and size, education status, street-involvedness, crimes, and psychosocial measurement scale (Tables 2 to 12). Three models had statistical power and met the Hosmer and Lemeshow Goodness-of-fit adequacy test. In this study, the p-value of ≤ 0.05 and 95% confidence interval (which did not include zero or 1) was the determinant threshold for statistical significance.

PREDICTING VIOLENT CRIME

Objective 2 of the study was to identify predictors of violent crimes among incarcerated youth interviewed at MRC. This information was necessary to inform interventions aimed at reducing future crimes among youth in general, and street-involved youth in particular. Results predicting violent crimes are presented in Table 14 (model 1).

The use of drugs to get high and to drop out from school had a significant positive prediction of violent crimes in this population, before and after controlling for confounding factors. Youth who used illicit drugs to get high were four times more likely to commit violent crimes than youth who had never used illicit drugs, $OR_{adjusted} = 4.20$, 95% CI: 1.23, 14.32, $p < 0.05$. The study also found that respondents who dropped out from school were more than three times likely to commit violent crimes than respondents who did not drop out, $OR_{adjusted} = 3.56$, 95% CI: 1.27, 9.94, $p < 0.05$.

In addition, the study found a significant negative association between cigarette smoking and psychopathology symptoms characterized by suicidal ideation and violent crimes. Cigarette smokers were 78% less likely to commit violent crimes than non-smokers, $OR_{adjusted} = 0.22$, 95% CI: 0.06, 0.82, $p < 0.001$. Cigarette smoking and contemplating suicides were common among incarcerated street involved youth.

Table 14 (Model 1):

Binary logistic model of crude and adjusted predictors of violent crimes among incarcerated youth (n=111)

Predictor variable	Number (%) Odds Ratios	Crude 95% CI			Adjusted Odds Ratios 95% CI		
Age distribution							
16-19	30(27.0)	1.92	0.41	8.95	0.36	0.10	1.23
20-24	76(68.5)	0.81	0.19	3.47	1.52	0.05	43.19
25+	5(4.5)	-		-	-		-
Reasons for relocating from original village/town							
Following parents/relatives+	39(58.2)	-		-	-		-
Employment	28(41.8)	1.24	0.56	2.74	1.45	0.57	3.69
Educational status							
Completed grade+	36(36.1) -	-		-	-		-
Dropped out from grade	65 (63.9)	2.30	1.20	4.42***	3.56	1.27	9.94*
Used drugs to get high?							
No+	44 (39.6)	-		-	-		-
Yes	67 (60.4)	4.66	2.38	9.54***	4.20	1.23	14.32*
Cigarette smoking habits							
No+	34(30.6) -	-		-	-		-
Yes	77 (69.4)	1.07	0.55	2.05	0.22	0.06	0.82***
Psychological distress: suicidal thoughts							
Mean score	0.90	0.34	0.19	0.63***	0.21	0.08	0.53***
+Reference Group							
*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001							
Hosmer & Lemeshow Goodness-of-fit Test for the multivariable model, $\chi^2(7) = 9.80, p = 0.20$							
Cox & Snell = 0.26, Nagelkerke = 0.35							
Multivariate Model, $\chi^2(7) = 31.65, p = 0.001$							

PREDICTING STREET-INVOLVEDNESS IN THE SAMPLE POPULATION

Objective 3 of the study examined characteristics that differentiated street involved from non-street involved youth among incarcerated youth at MRC. The results are presented in model 2. The study ran another regression model using psychosocial measurement scale based on variables in Table 13, following exploratory factor analysis and Cronbach alpha test.

The results indicate that street involved youth in this sample were more at risk of antisocial behaviors and psychosocial vulnerabilities than non-street involved youth. Street involved youth were four times more likely to report drinking alcoholic beverages, OR *adjusted* = 4.20, 95% CI: 1.23, 14.32, $p < 0.05$ than non-street incarcerated youth.

Results also show that street-involved youth were more likely to show marked exposure to psychosocial vulnerabilities than non-street youth. Street involved youth were also three times more likely to report being always sick, OR *adjusted* = 3.08, 95% CI: 1.35, 7.10, $p < 0.01$. Street-involved youth were more likely to have been head of households, i.e., had lived without guidance or support from responsible caregivers than non-street involved youth, OR *adjusted* = 1.85, 95% CI: 1.08, 3.18, $p < 0.01$. In addition, street-involved youth were three times more likely to go to bed hungry than non-street involved youth, OR *adjusted* = 3.45, 95% CI: 1.37, 8.69, $p < 0.01$.

The study also found that street involved youth were more likely to contemplate committing suicide than non-street involved youth in this population, OR *adjusted* = 1.86, 95% CI: 1.10, 3.11, $p < 0.01$, and were more than two times more likely to report being bored most of the times than non-street involved youth, OR *adjusted* = 2.58, 95% CI: 1.37, 4.88, $p < 0.01$. Furthermore, street involved youth were also 58% less likely to be optimistic about the future OR *adjusted* = 0.42, 95% CI: 0.23, 0.77, $p < 0.01$. Furthermore, they were 56% less likely to report loneliness compared with non-street involved youth, OR *adjusted* = 0.44, 95% CI: 0.24, 0.81, $p < 0.01$.

Table 15 (Model 2):

Binary logistic model showing crude and adjusted predictors of street-involvedness among incarcerated youth at Moshupa Rehabilitation Center (n =111)

Predictor variable		Crude Odds Ratios		95% CI	Adjusted Odds Ratios		95% CI
Age (Mean in Years)	20.5	0.90	0.76	1.07	1.07	0.75	1.54
Total number of siblings (Mean in Years)	4.81	0.87	0.70	1.08	0.76	0.57	0.99
Educational status (%)							
Completed grade+	35 (33.7)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Dropped out from grade	69 (66.3)	2.30	1.20	4.42***	0.26	0.06	1.15
Ever had alcoholic beverages? (%)							
No+	20 (18.0)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yes	91 (82.0)	4.66	2.38	9.54***	4.20	1.23	14.32*
Ever had sex? (%)							
No+	12 (10.8)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Yes	99 (89.2)	1.07	0.55	2.05	0.22	0.06	0.82***
Psychosocial vulnerabilities (mode)							
I was always sick	1	1.18	0.88	1.58	3.08	1.35	7.10**
I used to be head of my household	1	1.04	0.78	1.40	1.85	1.08	3.18**
I used to be lonely	2	0.87	0.64	1.20	0.44	0.24	0.81**
I used to go to bed hungry	1	1.34	0.93	1.92	3.45	1.37	8.69**
I used to have a safe place to sleep every night	4	1.02	0.74	1.42	1.87	0.94	3.71
I used to feel very strong to take my life	1	1.30	1.00	1.70*	1.86	1.10	3.11*
I used to feel bored	4	1.20	0.90	1.59	2.58	1.37	4.88**
I had faith that things would turn out alright	5	0.80	0.56	1.13	0.42	0.23	0.77**
+ Reference Group							
*p<0.05 **p<0.01 ***p<0.001							
Hosmer & Lemeshow Goodness-of-fit Test for the multivariable model, $\chi^2(8) = 8.70, p = 0.37$							
Cox& Snell = 0.43, Nagelkerke =0.57							
Multivariate Model, $\chi^2(14) = 57.49, p = 0.001$							

Further multivariate logistic modelling of predicting street involvedness using rotated and extracted psychosocial vulnerability scale variables (Table 13) confirmed the analysis of the findings of model 2. The evidence further suggested that street involved youth were 21% more likely to be younger than non-street-involved youth, OR adjusted= 0.79, 95% CI: 0.65, 0.96, p<0.05.

Data from this study guides program planners to develop interventions for averting future criminal activities among street involved children and youth in Botswana. Data from this study is also critical for developing program interventions that would prevent re-offending among incarcerated youth upon their release.

PREVALENCE OF STREET INVOLVED YOUTH IN INCARCERATED POPULATION

While youth related crimes are on the rise in Botswana, the majority of street involved children and youth are not involved in criminal activities. Results from this study indicate that 36% of incarcerated youth at MRC were street involved while 64% were non-street involved youth. These findings are consistent with a previous study by Campbell and Ntsabane (1997). Campbell and Ntsabane (1997) found that 75% of street involved children and youth were clean from criminal activities. However, the current prevalence of crime among street involved youth has increased by 44% in one and half decades after Campbell and Ntsabane's study in 1997. The current findings are different from results from other countries. In studies of street involved children and youth in Canada, Baron (2004) found that this group constituted the primary perpetrators of youth related crimes because of economic hardship and victimization experienced. In this study, non-street involved youth constituted the primary perpetrators of youth related crimes. Among street involved youth, the mean age at the time of arrest was 19.2 years. This group had been on the streets most of the day time but had homes to go to at night. They were on the streets either to "hang out" or for economic reasons, and most of these youths had dropped out of school. Street involved youth among incarcerated population was highly predisposed to psychopathology symptoms and social vulnerabilities. The profile of street involved youth among incarcerated population at MRC is consistent with the contextual definition of street involved children and youth in Botswana based on the UNICEF typology of youth "on the streets." Jamu et al. (2014) characterized Botswana street involved children and youth as mostly boys aged 19 years and below, who spent most of the day time on the streets begging, looking for employment, vending, and "hanging out" with friends. Most of these young people were school dropouts. Comparatively, however, street involved youth were largely convicted for violent crimes (94.7%) compared to non-street youth (82.4%). Assault and rape were the main violent crimes associated with street involved youth in addition to armed robbery and murder. On average, the street involved youth had long conviction sentence terms (Mean sentence = 6.2 years) compared with the general population of inmates (Mean sentence = 5.9 years). The differences were not significant but highlight the violent nature of crimes among youth in Botswana.

THE PREDICTORS OF VIOLENT CRIMES AMONG BATSWANA YOUTH

Exposure to Illicit Drugs

The study results indicate that the use of illicit drugs (marijuana, cocaine, and madrax) was five times more likely to predict violent crimes (assault, armed robbery, rape, and murder) among incarcerated youth in Botswana. The study failed to find a strong association between respondents' family characteristics (sibling-sibling relationship, youth-caregiver relationships, single parenthood, and family size) and violent crimes. In Botswana, the use of illicit drugs among Botswana youth is a known social problem. In a national behavioral study of in-school youth (12 to 18 year olds), MoESD found that 14.9% had smoked marijuana, 5.6% had used cocaine, 3.7% had used ecstasy, and 5.7% had used sextasy. In a study of Ghanaian juvenile delinquents, Boakye (2013) found that crimes among youth were linked to antisocial behaviors such as drug use. In a compendium of literature in the USA, NCADD found that use of illicit drugs had empirical evidence for violent crimes including murder, rape, assault and robbery; consistent with the current findings.

Dropping Out from School

Results indicate that dropping out from school predicted violent crimes among imprisoned youth at MRC. The current findings are consistent with studies from other countries. The USA Law Enforcement report (2008) indicated that most American high school dropouts were 3½ times more likely to commit a crime than high school graduates. The report also showed that 70% of all USA inmates dropped out from secondary school. According to Hulk (2009), school dropouts have easy access to illicit drugs, alcohol consumptions, cigarette smoking substances which mediate criminal behaviors. Hulk (2009) also suggested that school dropouts are more likely to be unemployed and poor; factors which have the reciprocal effect of violent crimes (Hulk, 2009). In a 62 country study, United Nations and World Bank (UN & World Bank, 2009) found evidence that urbanization, poverty, high population of youth, drug trafficking, and low education predicted violent crimes in developing countries. Longitudinal studies on youth crimes offer several causal factors. Findings in longitudinal studies suggest that most youth crimes are committed by a small proportion of youth whose criminal activities are set early in life. Moffit (1993) found that youth from poor families characterized by poor parenting and lack of parental supervision where major causes of crimes are. Moffit (1993) also found that children and youth exposed to traumatic events early in life are more likely to commit crimes later in life. Often, these children are aggressive, oppositional, and lack victim empathy. When left unsupervised and without corrective interventions, delinquent behaviors and criminal acts continue over life span (Moffit, 1993). Hosser et al. (2007) observed that children who experience parental violence early in life at high frequency are more likely to commit violent crimes later in life.

Studies also show that the majority of youth offenders develop criminal behaviors during adolescence. Youth upbringing is not markedly disordered, and this group does not exhibit severe behavior problem at childhood. Rather they develop behavioral problems after puberty largely due to delinquent and anti-social behaviors such as exposure to illicit substances (drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes). Unlike the life course persistent offenders, this group experience the normal range of emotions, they are remorseful and willing to change (Moffit, 1993).

³Gannet News Services. (2008). Report: High school dropouts fuels violent crimes. Retrieved @ <http://www.azcentral.com/news/articles/2008/08/20/20080820hs-dropouts0820-ON.html#ixzz3Fv5KWR9C>

CHARACTERISTICS OF STREET INVOLVED YOUTH AMONG INCARCERATED YOUTH

Street involved youth among the incarcerated population in Botswana has marked psychopathology, social, health and conduct behaviors. Street involved inmates had more pronounced psychopathological symptoms, significant social vulnerabilities, and delinquent behavioral problems than non-street involved inmates. They had a higher probability of reporting suicidal ideation, of being bored all the time, and of being less optimistic about the future. This group had a high rate of alcohol consumption than non-street youth.

These findings are similar to results from non-incarcerated street children and youth conducted in greater Gaborone (See Jamu et al., 2014). These findings are also consistent with data from other parts of the world. In a study of street involved youth in Canada, McCay, Langley, Beanlands, Copper, Mudachi, Harris et al. (2010), found that the social environments and activities of youth lead to delinquent behaviors and psychopathological symptoms. In a study of street involved youth in South Africa, Le Roux and Smith (1988) observed that the longer street involved youth stayed on the streets, the higher the likelihood of developing psychopathological symptoms. In other studies, street involved youth were characterized as having low-self-esteem, apathy, and fatalistic attitudes (Mufune, 2001). Campbell and Ntsabane (1997) found significant differences in delinquent behavioral patterns between street involved children and youth and non-street involved children and youth in Botswana. Street involved children and youth had a high frequency of using illicit drugs, consuming alcohol, and smoking a cigarette than non-street involved children and youth.

Results also indicate that incarcerated street involved youth were comparatively younger than other incarcerated youth. They were twice more likely to have lived without a responsible adult, showed a high likelihood of being always sick, and had experienced food insecurity more than other incarcerated youth. Power and Hunter (2001) found that street involved youth often comes from families where parental support is lacking, i.e. street involved children and youth come from families where there is no consistent presence of a responsible adult to supervise and care for them.

In a compendium of literature on street involved children and youth, Boivin, Roy, Haley, and du Fort (2005) observed that street involved youth are exposed to multiple factors that detrimentally affect their health. Boivin et al. (2005) found that exposure to underage illicit drug use, cigarette smoking, alcohol consumption, and poor diet and limited access to health services made street youth more susceptible to poor health than non-street youth. Table 17 summarizes characteristics that differentiate street involved from non-street involved youth among incarcerated youth in this study.

STUDY IMPLICATIONS

Program Implications

Findings from this study suggest that programs aimed at preventing future crimes among street involved children and youth, in general, must focus on reducing school truancy and dropout rates. In addition, youth programs should concentrate on preventing antisocial and delinquent behaviors that mediate criminal activities among youth such as substance abuse.


Education plays a central role in preventing delinquent and criminal behaviors among street involved children and youth in general. Education is also an important prevention strategy for taking children and youth off the streets. However, education programs that address street involved children and youth need to address psychosocial vulnerabilities that are markedly high in this population. In Botswana, underage drug use, alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, poor diet, and hygiene are the common challenges among street involved children and youth. Findings from this study call for an extension of street involved programs to incarcerated youths to reduce the likelihood of repeat offenses soon after being released from jail.

Studies on youth point to one emerging conclusion: school, community, and family connectedness play important roles in reducing criminal activities, delinquent and antisocial behaviors among youth (Cunningham et al., 2008). Research shows that having a parent who cares, plays significant protective effects support programs offered through schools provide information and guidance to families to strengthen their bonds (Blum, 2006). Blum (2002) found that creating connectedness require high academic rigor and expectations, supportive learning environment, positive adult-student relationships, and physical and emotional safety. According to Blum (2004), youth who feel connected to their school describe themselves as:

- Having a sense of belonging and being part of a school
- Perceiving that teacher are supportive and caring
- Having good friends within the school
- Engaged in their current and future academic progress
- Believing that discipline is fair and effective
- Taking part in extracurricular activities.

Guerra and Bradshaw (2008) identified five competencies that youth need to avert criminal behaviors:

- A positive sense of self
- Self-control
- Decision-making skills
- A moral system of belief
- Pro-social connectedness



Guerra and Bradshaw (2008) found that these competencies explain students' success and encourage positive youth behaviors connected to a wider social environment. Research also shows that peers influence young people significantly. Programs that allow them to create a positive social network will promote connection and independence as they develop their identities. Positive peer interventions counter the pressure for taking part in delinquent behaviors and crimes (Cunningham et al., 2008).

Research Implications

There is a paucity of youth research in Botswana. Available research studies are exploratory in nature, mostly composed of small sample sizes, and based on convenient sampling methods. While these studies provide important information for planning and designing youth programs, the results cannot be generalized. Results from these studies lack a strong platform to instigate national discourse on youth related issues such as street involvedness and crimes. Rigorous studies drawn from the representative national sample with theoretical underpinnings are required to unearth why some Botswana youth are prone to criminal behaviors. Such studies would be critical for informing national youth agenda and government wide strategic approach to address youth related crimes.

Crime among young Batswana is a growing social and development problem. Findings from this study suggest that education, tailored to the needs of these youth, is one of the primary interventions for preventing crimes. However, access to education alone is not going address antisocial and delinquent behaviors that mediate crime. Given the youth's tendency to substance abuse and mental health issues, it is necessary to have highly participatory learning, mixed with physical and life skills (moral guidance, decision making, goal setting) to engage the youth. Effective youth programs must take into consideration addressing structural problems at family, community, and society levels. In addition, street involved youth programs must integrate interventions that address psychopathology symptoms, social and health vulnerabilities which are common in this population. Promoting education needs among street involved children and youth require setting programs that develop youth's family, peer, and community connectedness. Connectedness to youth's structural systems has protective effects from dropping out from school, truancy, antisocial and delinquent behaviors those eventually mediate crimes.

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