

Predicting Emotional and Behavior Functioning of African American Boys: The Impact of Absentee Father's from the Home

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What Is The Behavioral And Emotional Impact Of Absent Fatherhood On African American Boys?



One out of three children in America live in homes without their biological fathers

BACKGROUND

Hypothesis: Father Involvement is a significant predictor of juvenile delinquency in African American boys.

Father Absenteeism is associated with problems in externalizing and internalizing behaviors	Simmons et al, 2018
The effects of father involvement may be moderated by other contextual factors	Kim & Glasgow, 2018
Boys are more likely to develop externalizing behaviors due to lack of father presence	Slaughter & Nagoshi, 2020

METHODOLOGY

Methodology

Archival data from the psychological assessments of 371 African American boys awaiting trial in Washington DC from 2007 to 2011 was obtained by trained graduate and undergraduate students.

Demographic Data

Severity of Crime:

Minor crimes (i.e., truancy; vandalism) = 28 (7.5%)
Moderate crimes (i.e., burglary) = 164 (44.2%)
Serious crime (i.e., assault, rape) = 173 (46.6%)



Behavioral Problems prior to age 12:

No = 116 (31.3%)
Yes = 145 (39.1%)
Missing = 110 (29.6%) information was not found in the report



Deceased Parent:

No = 136 (36.7%)
Yes = 33 (8.9%)
Missing = 202 (54.4%)



History of Fighting:

No = 69 (18.6%)
Yes = 224 (60.4%)
Missing = 78 (21.0%)



History of Truancy:

No = 71 (19.1%)
Yes = 238 (64.2%)
Missing = 62 (16.7%)



Measures

Millon Adolescent Clinical Inventory (MACI) data was collected on 31 subscales of measuring psychological functioning; future analysis will use the Unruly, Childhood Abuse, Social Insensitivity, and Juvenile Predisposition subscales.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics

Father Involved:
No = 184 (49.6%)
Yes = 151 (40.7%)
Missing = 36 (9.7%)



Relative in Jail:

No one = 20 (5.4%)
Mother = 35 (9.4%)
Father = 92 (24.8%)
Step-Parent = 3 (0.8%)
Sibling = 19 (5.1%)
Missing = 202 (54.4%)

Household Structure:

Disorganized = 77 (21%)
Organized = 267 (72%)
Missing = 27 (7.2%)

CHI-SQUARE

Father Involvement x Household Composition
 $\chi^2 (7) = 25.938$,
 $p < .001$

Father Involvement x Utero Difficulties
 $\chi^2 (1) = 7.079$,
 $p = .008$

Father Involvement x History of Fighting
 $\chi^2 (4) = 5.190$,
 $p = .023$

INTERPRETATION

When the father was involved, youth were more likely to come from two-parent home

When the father was involved, there was less chance of utero problems

When the father was involved, there was a reduced chance of history of fighting



DISCUSSION

The results of this study show the following:

- African American boys who have an involved father, are more likely to live with both parents, which is a protective factor against delinquent behavior.
- It was less probable that there would be prenatal difficulties when the father was involved
- Participants who had a father presence were less likely to have a history of fighting

STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS

- Using archival data made this study less time consuming.
- Homogeneity of this sample contributes to internal validity and generalizability.
- The large amount of missing data could affect the significance of the results.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This study is part of a larger research project that will feature an in-depth regression analysis of the interaction between father involvement, relatives in jail, and household structure as a predictor of juvenile delinquency in African American boys.

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