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Psychosocial determinants of delinquency among in-school adolescents in Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Delinquency among in-school adolescents is a persistent issue with significant implications for individuals, families, and society. Adolescence is a critical period marked by profound physical, emotional, and psychological transformations, where individuals navigate the challenging terrain of identity formation, peer relationships, and 'societal expectations. Amid this developmental backdrop, the emergence of delinquent behaviours can have far-reaching consequences for both the adolescents themselves and the communities they are part of. Therefore, this research investigates the predictive influence of personality traits, emotional intelligence, attachment style and family conflict on delinquency among in-school adolescents in Akinyele local government area, Oyo State. The study employed a descriptive research design of correlational type. Multi-stage sampling technique was used. 6 schools were selected at the initial stage and from the selected 6 schools 50 students were selected making a total of 300 that served as participants for this study. The instrument used for this study was standardized questionnaire with six sections. Section A elicit demographic information of respondents followed by delinquency scale, Big five personality scale, trait emotional intelligence, Attachment style and family conflict scale. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and multiple regression. The result of the study showed that some of the predictor variables; e.g.: family conflict (r = 0.450), openness (r = -0.298), emotional intelligence (r = 0.192), attachment style (r = 0.200), extraversion (r = -0.261), and conscientiousness (r = -0.139) have statistically significant correlation with delinquency. On the other hand, the variables of agreeableness (r = 0.094) and neuroticism (r = 0.061), did not show significant relationships with delinquency. Multiple regression analysis revealed that personality traits, emotional intelligence, attachment style, and family conflict jointly accounted for 31.7% of the variance in delinquency among in-school adolescents (R^2 = 0.317, p < .05). Among the predictors, family conflict emerged as the strongest positive contributor, while openness to experience, extraversion, and conscientiousness showed significant negative associations with delinquency. The study calls for collaboration among school counsellors, educators, parents, and policymakers. Coordinated efforts can lead to comprehensive, multi-faceted interventions that address the various factors contributing to delinquency. The study also recommends that longitudinal designs should be employed to capture the understanding of delinquency and its predictors over time. This would enhance the current understanding of causal relationships and contribute to the identification of critical intervention points.

Keywords: Adolescents Delinquency, Personality Traits, Emotional Intelligence, Attachment Styles and Family Conflicts

Introduction

Delinquency among adolescents is a significant social issue that has attracted considerable attention from researchers and policymakers. Adolescence is a critical period marked by profound physical, emotional, and psychological transformations, where individuals navigate the challenging terrain of identity formation, peer relationships, and societal expectations. Amid this developmental backdrop, the emergence of delinquent behaviours can have far-reaching consequences for both the adolescents themselves and the communities they are part of. In recent years, researchers have explored various individual and contextual factors that may predict delinquent behaviour in adolescents.

Delinquent behaviour or delinquency is basically a legal concept. It is defined differently in different times and places.

What may be regarded as delinquent behaviour therefore, remains an issue of controversy from one society to another and from time to time (Okafor, 2020). Delinquency among in-school adolescents carries significant social, psychological, and economic implications that extend far beyond the immediate context. Delinquency represents a deviation from societal norms and legal standards, which can strain the fabric of communities and undermine the potential of young individuals (Agnew, 2011). It often marks the beginning of a trajectory that, if left unchecked, may lead to a life entrenched in criminality and antisocial behaviour. Delinquent behaviours, if unaddressed, can escalate into chronic criminality and repeated incarceration, as shown in studies highlighting the challenges of rehabilitating recidivists in Nigerian correctional facilities (Fehintola et al., 2020). Delving into the intricacies of

delinquency among in-school adolescents is not merely an academic pursuit; it is a societal imperative (Malekoff, 2015). Adolescents involved in delinquent activities are more likely to experience academic difficulties, substance abuse, mental health problems, and a higher likelihood of criminal involvement in adulthood (Guo, Yang, Deveaux, Dinaj-Koci, Schieber, Herbert, & Wang, 2023); Gauthier-Duchesne, Hébert, Blais, & Wekerle, 2023; Barrett, Katsiyannis, Zhang & Kingree, 2015). The challenges of adolescence are aggravated by the myriad of contemporary issues that today's in-school adolescents face. Rapid technological advancements, easy access to information, shifting cultural norms, and evolving family structures all contribute to an environment in which adolescents must navigate unprecedented terrain (Swist, Collin, McCormack, & Third, 2015). These factors, while providing opportunities for growth and learning, can also contribute to the development of delinquent behaviours. Furthermore, according to Frazer, Fite, Stone (2018) the consequences of delinquency are not limited to individual adolescents; they ripple through families, schools, and communities, eroding trust, compromising safety, and straining resources.

Delinquency among adolescents may be influenced by several factors with its root in psychosocial factors including demographic factors. Therefore, this study aims to examine the predictive influence of personality traits, emotional intelligence and attachment style and family conflict on delinquency among in-school adolescents in Akinyele local government area, Oyo State.

The first independent variable, personality traits, are intrinsic differences that remain stable throughout most of our life Specht, Egloff, & Schmukle, 2011. They are the constant aspects of our individuality. Personalities are distinctive; each individual behaves according to certain distinctive pattern through a variety of situations. Humans are finely tuned to observe these behaviour patterns of acquaintances and to notice behaviour difference among people. In general, personality is a comprehensive and abstract construct that refers to long-lasting and important characteristics within an individual; one that continues to exert a strong influence on behaviour (Ewen, 2014). Aspects of personality may be observable or unobservable, and conscious or unconscious.

After several generations of psychologists' efforts, the Big Five personality has become the main classification of personality structure (De Raad & Mlacic, 2015). It includes five dimensions. Neuroticism describes an individual's ability to withstand stress. Extroversion reflects the external tendencies of the individual nervous system. Openness reflects the openness and creativity of individuals to experience. Agreeableness reflects the individual's interpersonal orientation in social life. Conscientiousness reflects self-restraint and motivation and a sense of responsibility for achievement. The relationship between Big Five personality traits and delinquency among adolescents has been studied by several researchers. A study by Sumithra & Komalavalli (2022) found that delinquent adolescents had lower scores on agreeableness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability compared to normal adolescents. Another

study found that low conscientiousness served as a risk factor, increasing vulnerability to perceived delinquent behaviour of friends, while high conscientiousness served as a protective factor, increasing resilience to perceived delinquent behaviour of friends (Slagt et al. 2015). A cross-sectional study found that Machiavellianism and psychopathy were associated with lower levels of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness/intellect, and higher levels of emotional instability, and also emerged as significant and unique correlates of symptoms of aggression and delinquency (Muris, Meesters, & Timmermans, 2013). These findings suggest that certain personality traits may be associated with delinquency among adolescents, but more research is needed to fully understand the relationship between personality traits and delinquency.

Another independent variable considered is emotional intelligence; a construct which encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, and manage one's own emotions as well as recognize and respond to the emotions of others (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso 2008). Individuals with high emotional intelligence have been found to exhibit better self-control, empathy, and problem-solving skills, which are all factors that can reduce the likelihood of engaging in delinquency (Montoya-Castilla, de Jesús Cardona-Isaza, & Jiménez 2021). Emotional intelligence (EI) is an important factor in adolescent development and has a significant role in developmental stages (Furqani, 2020). Adolescents who have high emotional intelligence tend to have good social interaction, a good self-concept, and enhanced academic abilities. On the other hand, adolescents who have low emotional intelligence tend to behave poorly, commit deviations and violations to themselves, such as frustration, conflicting irregularities, and exacerbating mental health. Therefore, emotional intelligence that teenagers possess can develop their social relationships, reduce their stress and frustration, increase their understanding of other people's emotions, and prevent or reduce the behaviour of delinquency (Furqani, 2020).

Several studies have investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and delinquent behaviour among adolescents. One study found that adolescents with better emotional intelligence had lower levels of delinquency (Chong, Lee, Roslan, & Baba 2015). The study also revealed a negative linear relationship between EI and delinquent behaviour, implying that adolescents with better EI had lower levels of delinquency. Another study by Coelho (2012) highlighted the value of prevention programs that emphasize altering maladaptive behaviour before the behaviour becomes problematic. Emotional intelligence plays a significant role in adolescent development and can impact delinquent behaviour. Adolescents with higher emotional intelligence tend to have better social relationships, reduced stress and frustration, and a decreased likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviour. By understanding the relationship between personality traits, emotional intelligence, and delinquency, this study aims to shed light on the psychological factors that contribute to delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents.

Attachment style, derived from attachment theory (Bowlby, 1979; Bretherton, 2013) is another crucial factor to consider in understanding delinquency among in-school adolescents. Attachment theory posits that the quality of attachment bonds formed in early childhood influences individuals' socioemotional development and their ability to form healthy relationships (Bretherton, 2013). Insecure attachment styles, such as anxious and avoidant attachment, have been associated with higher levels of delinquency in adolescents (Doyle & Markiewicz 2005). Adolescents with insecure attachment styles may struggle with emotional regulation, have difficulties in forming trusting relationships, and may seek validation and support through delinquent behaviours.

A few studies have investigated the relationship between attachment style and delinquent behaviours among adolescents. For example, a study by Yılmaz & Traş (2019) found a positive correlation between delinquent behaviours of adolescents and preoccupied style, which is a sub-dimension of attachment styles. By examining attachment style in relation to delinquency, this study aims to explore the role of early interpersonal relationships in the development of delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents.

Furthermore, family conflict has been identified as a significant predictor of delinquency. High levels of conflict within the family environment can disrupt adolescents' development and increase their likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviour (Petts, 2009). Family conflict can create an unstable and stressful environment for adolescents, leading to feelings of anger, frustration, and a lack of support. Additionally, exposure to frequent conflicts may weaken the emotional bonds between family members, making it more likely for adolescents to seek validation and support from other sources, potentially leading to delinquent behaviours (Kinsfogel & Grych 2004). It is important to note that the impact of family conflict on delinquency may be mediated or moderated by other factors, such as attachment style and emotional intelligence.

Statement of Problem
Delinquency among in-school adolescents is a pressing issue with far-reaching implications for individuals, families, society, and the world at large. The gravity of this problem lies in its disruptive impact on the lives of adolescents, the well-being of families, the stability of communities, and the allocation of societal resources. Despite extensive research on delinquency, there remains a significant gap in understanding the complex relationship between various factors that contribute to delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents.

The consequences of delinquency on adolescents are profound. Engaging in delinquent behaviors hinders their personal and psychological development, impeding their ability to mature into responsible and productive adults. This disruption in the natural progression of adolescent development can have long-lasting effects on their future prospects and well-being. Families also bear the brunt of delinquency. It strains relationships, disrupts domestic tranquility, and imposes emotional and financial burdens on parents or caregivers. The impact on family bonds and dynamics needs to be thoroughly examined to understand the extent to which delinquency affects the overall functioning and cohesion of families.

On a broader scale, delinquency has detrimental effects on society. Communities grappling with high rates of delinquency often experience increased crime rates, reduced safety, and compromised social cohesion. This undermines community development efforts and exacerbates existing disparities, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage. The consequences of delinquency extend beyond local communities and have implications for the world at large. The economic burdens associated with delinquency, such as the costs of law enforcement and judicial proceedings, are shouldered by society. The strain on social services, mental health systems, and educational institutions has widespread consequences, affecting the allocation of resources and the provision of services for the broader population.

Addressing the problem of delinquency among in-school adolescents requires a comprehensive understanding of the underlying causes and risk factors. While previous research has shed light on some aspects, there remains a significant gap in knowledge regarding the specific factors that contribute to delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents in the Akinyele Local Government Area. This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the underlying determinants of delinquency in this unique context.

Objectives of the Study
To examine the combined influence of personality traits, emotional intelligence, attachment style, and family conflict on delinquency among in-school adolescents in Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State.
To evaluate the relationship between these psychosocial factors and provide valuable insights into the underlying mechanisms that contribute to delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents, ultimately leading to the development of effective prevention and intervention strategies

Theoretical Framework
Over time, theory formulation has been identified as a sound basis for understanding human existence and nature by determining the relationship between concepts and explaining their relationship. In addition, theories in a scientific study provide a common scientific base for a particular field such as the social sciences. Theory clarifies the nature of a phenomenon, in this case, juvenile delinquency, by describing and explaining its nature. This section describes the theories that underpin juvenile delinquency.

Theory of crime
The theory of crime, often associated with criminology and sociology, serve as a valuable theoretical framework for this study. This framework provides a comprehensive understanding of the underlying mechanisms and social factors that contribute to criminal or delinquent behaviours. The theory of crime emphasizes that criminal or delinquent

behaviours are not solely the result of individual characteristics but are deeply embedded in the social context. Haynie et al., (2006) explains that Hirschi based his work on Emile Durkheim's notion of social integration. In collaboration with Gottfredson (1990), Hirschi's original theory was replaced by A General Theory of Crime which emphasises self-control as a buffer against crime (Welch, 1998). The thrust of A General Theory of Crime is the significance of social bonds, which help to restrain individuals from engaging in delinquent acts. The assumption is that delinquency occurs if one's social bonds are weak or broken.

Strong social ties are protective factors against antisocial behaviour in adolescents, according to research. According to Welch (1998), adolescents are much less likely to engage in antisocial behaviour when they have meaningful attachments to significant others, show a commitment to socially acceptable activities, actively pursue conventional interests, and uphold societal norms and values. Empirical research looking at certain risk variables supports this viewpoint. According to Ford (2005), alcohol misuse is a particularly harmful factor that weakens the social ties necessary for normal development, and Elliot (2009) emphasises how the lack of mattering—the belief that one's presence and deeds are important to others—also weakens these vital ties.

The General Theory of Crime places more emphasis on social conformity and familial integration as the main barriers to criminal behaviour, moving the emphasis from personal characteristics to environmental factors. According to this theoretical paradigm, delinquent behaviour patterns are significantly shaped by peer interactions as well as family dynamics (Burfeind & Bartusch, 2011: 70). In support of this argument, Vitz (n.d.) suggests that paternal absence, which can be caused by a number of modern family disruptions such as divorce, cohabitation, and non-marital births, essentially erodes the structural integrity of the family and produces circumstances that encourage delinquent behaviour.

Within this theoretical framework, certain assumptions have been contested by modern researchers. The assumption that father presence is necessary for optimal family functioning is contested by Haynie (2006), who contends that such viewpoints ignore the dynamic growth of contemporary family configurations and structures. Hirschi's social bond theory's detractors also question the theory's analytical reach, arguing that it ignores the larger social and environmental elements that really support and promote deviant behaviour in favour of concentrating only on explaining conformity and refraining from wrongdoing. Researchers continue to use social bond theory as a useful analytical tool for comprehending the intricate dynamics behind patterns of juvenile delinquency, despite these theoretical objections and continuing scholarly discussions.

Ecological Theories

Ecological theories suggest that complex interactions between genetic predispositions and environmental risk factors lead to delinquent behaviour, placing a high value on environmental effects in shaping individual behavioural outcomes. According to these theoretical frameworks, human development takes place within a number of interrelated environmental systems that have differing degrees of impact over an individual's behaviour. A person's immediate social surroundings, such as their family, school, and peer groups, are included in their microsystem. The dynamic link between the home and school contexts is one example of how the mesosystem reflects the connections and relationships that exist between various microsystems. Environmental circumstances that have an indirect effect on people through secondary linkages are part of the exosystem. For example, parental working conditions might have an impact on family relations. The larger cultural values, belief systems, and social standards that pervade all other environmental layers are finally included in the macrosystem.

According to Breetzke (2008), ecological viewpoints essentially study the interaction between people and their surroundings, tracing these theoretical underpinnings back to Shaw and McKay's (1942) groundbreaking work in mapping delinquent incidents across urban landscapes. Deteriorating physical conditions brought on by fast urbanisation were seen by these early academics as important risk factors influencing patterns of criminal behaviour. According to their geographical study, criminal activity takes place in certain geographic locations, indicating that environmental factors may be carefully examined to understand human behaviour.

Empirical data showing the interplay between genetic and environmental variables is used in contemporary research to support the ecological approach. According to a systematic analysis by Azeredo, Moreira, Figueiredo, and Barbosa (2019), the most thorough explanation for the differences in delinquent behaviour among young individuals is the intricate interaction between genetic predispositions and environmental factors. Their investigation found that biological vulnerabilities, scholastic challenges, parental psychopathology, and insufficient parent-child connections are environmental risk factors that promote teenage vulnerability to delinquent participation.

Researchers continue to use geographic analysis as a key component of ecological theory, looking at how particular residential areas serve as either protective contexts that deter antisocial behaviour or criminogenic settings that encourage delinquency. According to Hassett-Walker (2010), a number of community-level characteristics, such as poor socioeconomic position, ethnic heterogeneity within neighbourhoods, and high rates of residential mobility, function as antecedents to delinquent actions. Ecological theories shed light on the complex interactions that shape teenage delinquent behaviour patterns between environmental factors and genetic predispositions. A thorough comprehension of these theoretical frameworks offers important insights for creating preventative plans and intervention programs that successfully target several environmental levels at once.

Labelling Theory

Labelling Theory, a prominent theory in criminology and sociology, as it offers valuable insights into the study of delinquency among adolescents. This theory posits that societal reactions to individuals, specifically the Labelling of individuals as deviant or delinquent, can profoundly influence their subsequent behaviour and self-identity (Wellford, 1975). The fundamental premise of Labelling Theory is that the process of Labelling can lead individuals who have been labelled as delinquent to engage in further delinquent behaviour, effectively creating a self-fulfilling prophecy (Krohn & Lopes, 2015).

Labelling Theory distinguishes between two key concepts: primary and secondary deviance. Primary refers to the early act of rule-breaking or delinquency. On the other hand, secondary occurs when individuals, in response to societal reactions, adopt a deviant identity and engage in persistent delinquent behaviour (Triplett & Upton, 2015). In the context of this dissertation, primary deviance may encompass various factors such as personality traits, emotional intelligence, attachment style, and family conflict that contribute to initial delinquent acts. The subsequent focus is on understanding how labelling processes and societal reactions, emanating from diverse sources such as peers, teachers, parents, and society at large, influence whether primary deviance escalates into secondary deviance, leading to a pattern of sustained delinquent behaviour.

An important aspect of Labelling Theory is the notion of stigmatization (Weinstein, 1983). When individuals are labelled as deviant or delinquent, they often experience societal stigmatization (Schultz, 2014). This stigma can become a self-fulfilling prophecy, where individuals internalize the deviant label and conform to societal expectations, perpetuating a cycle of delinquency. Within the context of this study, it is essential to explore how adolescents who are labelled as delinquent, whether due to their actual delinquent acts or perceived deviance, may experience increased pressure to conform to this label. This examination should encompass their psychological responses, self-identity adjustments, and subsequent attitudes and behaviours, thus shedding light on the potential mechanisms underlying the cycle of delinquency.

An important aspect of this literature review involves a study into how labelling processes operate within distinct contexts pertinent to the study, including family, school, and peer groups. It is vital to explore whether adolescents labelled as delinquent by different social entities, such as their families, teachers, or peers, exhibit an increased likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviours. Further, it is appropriate to examine how factors such as emotional intelligence and attachment style may either moderate or mediate the impact of labelling processes. For instance, adolescents with higher emotional intelligence might display greater resilience in coping with the stigma associated with a delinquent label or may be more adept at countering the adverse consequences of negative societal reactions.

Methodology

The study used a correlational descriptive research approach. The study's sample size is 300 in-school adolescents who were chosen from six secondary schools in the Akinyele local government using a multi-stage selection process. The population is made up of adolescents enrolled in school in the Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State.

This multi-phase strategy had many discrete phases, each of which used a unique sampling technique to narrow down the pool of potential participants. To choose a subset of schools from the target region, the Random Sampling approach was used. Six secondary schools were selected at random from the 24 in the Akinyele local government region. Purposive sampling was used to choose certain classes within the selected schools, and this random selection process was carried out to guarantee impartial representation of the local schools. Only the senior secondary school courses (SS1, SS2, and SS3) were the subject of attention. Three distinct class levels—SS1, SS2, and SS3—were chosen using convenience sampling. Lastly, within the selected class levels, individual participants were picked using the Random Sampling approach. Fifty pupils were picked at random from each of the designated schools. To guarantee a fair selection of pupils in each class, this procedure was performed in each of the six schools.

Validated tools were used in the research to collect data from the participants. Six (6) sub-sections made up the questionnaire, each of which was intended to gather data on the factors being examined. Sociodemographic information, the Delinquency Scale, the Big Five Inventory-10 (BFI-10), the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF), the Attachment Style Questionnaire (ASQ), and the Family Conflict Scale (FCS) are the tools used in this research.

Multiple regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) are the data analysis techniques used in this research. Simple percentages were used in the demographic portion of the study, while Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression were used to examine the predictive effects of the independent variables (personality traits, emotional intelligence, attachment style, and family conflict) on the dependent variable (delinquency). The significance threshold for all analyses was set at 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: Are there significant relationships among the independent variables' personality traits i.e. (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience), emotional intelligence, attachment style and family conflict to the dependent variable (delinquency)?

Table 1: Summary of Test of significant Correlations among Independent Variables on Delinquency of the Respondents

Variables	X	SD	Delinquency (r)	Sig. P	Remark
Delinquency	31.55	14.32	1.000		
Openness	11.21	2.81	-0.298**	0.000	S
Conscientiousness	9.94	2.63	-0.139*	0.016	S
Extraversion	11.77	3.93	-0.261**	0.000	S
Agreeableness	9.74	2.67	0.094	0.103	NS
Neuroticism	9.89	2.99	0.061	0.290	NS
Emotional intelligence	65.62	23.72	0.192**	0.001	S
Attachment Style	30.86	13.04	0.200**	0.001	S
Family conflict	56.24	22.60	0.450**	0.000	S

NB: ** Significant at P<0.01   * Significant at P<0.05

Table 1 provides a summary of the test of significant correlations among the independent variables (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, neuroticism, emotional intelligence, attachment style, and family conflict) and the dependent variable (delinquency) for the respondents. The table presents information on the means, standard deviations (SD), correlation coefficients (r), significance levels (Sig. P), and remarks.

The results indicate that there are significant relationships between certain independent variables and the dependent variable (delinquency). The magnitudes of these relationships, in descending order, are as follows: family conflict (r = 0.450, P < 0.01), openness (r = -0.298, P < 0.01), emotional intelligence (r = 0.192, P < 0.01), attachment style (r = 0.200, P < 0.01), extraversion (r = -0.261, P < 0.01), and conscientiousness (r = -0.139, P < 0.05). These correlations suggest that these independent variables have statistically significant associations with delinquency. On the other hand, the variables of agreeableness (r = 0.094, P > 0.05), neuroticism (r = 0.061, P > 0.05) did not show significant relationships with delinquency. This implies that these variables do not have a statistically significant impact on delinquency based on the current analysis.

Research Question 2: What is the joint contribution of the independent variables (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience), emotional intelligence, attachment style and family conflict) to the dependent variable (delinquency)?

TABLE 2: Summary of Regression Analysis of the Combined Prediction of Dependent Variable (Delinquency) by the eight Independent Variables (Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Openness To Experience), Emotional Intelligence, Attachment Style And Family Conflict)

R	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
0.581	0.338	0.317	11.79366

Analysis of Variance

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Regression	20236.819	7	2248.535	16.166	0.000*
Residual	39640.788	285	139.090		
Total	59877.607	294			

*Significant at p<0.05

All eight independent factors' predictions for the dependent variables are shown in Table 2. In other words, there was a positive correlation between the eight predictor factors and the delinquency of teenagers enrolled in school. Additionally, the table displays a multiple R square of 0.317 and a coefficient of multiple correlations (R) of 0.338. This indicates that, when combined, the eight predictor factors account for 31.7% of the variation in the delinquency. The F-ratio at the degrees of freedom (df = 7, 285) was used to evaluate the significance of the prediction or the composite contribution at p<0.05.

Additionally, the table demonstrates that the regression's analysis of variance produced an F-ratio of 16.166, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This suggests that the independent factors' combined contribution to the dependent variable was substantial and that the remaining variation may have been explained by variables not included in this model.

Research Question 3: What is the relative contribution of the independent variables (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness to experience, emotional intelligence, attachment style and family conflict) to the dependent variable (delinquency)?

Table 3: Relative Contribution of the Independent Variables to the Dependent Variable (Test of Significance of the Regression Coefficients)

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	26.858	6.411		4.189	.000
Openness To Experience	-1.352	.283	-.263	-4.770	.000
Conscientiousness	-.247	.294	-.046	-.838	.403
Extraversion	-.484	.187	-.133	-2.587	.010
Agreeableness	.965	.286	.181	3.371	.001
Neuroticism	.350	.275	.074	1.275	.203
Emotional Intelligence	-.009	.038	-.015	-.228	.820
Attachment Style	.051	.063	.047	.817	.415
Family Conflict	.284	.033	.451	8.504	.000

The beta weights of the eight independent variables' relative contributions to the dependent variable are shown in Table 3. The openness, conscientiousness, and extraversion partial correlation coefficients. There is a negative correlation between emotional intelligence and student delinquency, suggesting that these factors are negatively reinforced to decide criminality. Additionally, there is a positive association between student delinquency and the partial correlation coefficients of agreeableness, neuroticism, attachment style, and family conflict. The standardised regression coefficients are used to ascertain the relative contributions of the independent factors to the explanation of the dependent variable, indicating that delinquency is truly driven by positive reinforcement of this variable. Additionally, the table displays the t-values, p-values, standardised coefficients (beta values), and unstandardised coefficients for the predictors used to forecast the dependent variable. Put in the highest predicted order: Beta = 0.451, t-value = 8.504, p-value < 0.001; Openness to Experience: -0.263, t-value = -4.770, p-value < 0.001; Agreeableness: 0.181, t-value = 3.371, p-value = 0.001; Extraversion: Beta = -0.133, t-value = -2.587, p-value = 0.010; Neuroticism: Beta = 0.074, t-value = 1.275, p-value = 0.203; Conscientiousness: Beta = -0.046, t-value = -0.838, p-value = 0.403; Emotional Intelligence: Beta = -0.015, t-value = -0.228, p-value = 0.820. Family conflict has the greatest prediction, followed by agreeableness, extraversion, and openness to experience. These values reflect how significant and strong the predictors are in connection to the dependent variable.

Discussion of Findings

The first research question examined the magnitude and direction of relationship that exist between the independent variables' and the dependent variable. Understanding the relationship these predictor variables have on the criterion variable is very important for unravelling the factors contributing to delinquency among the respondents. The strongest relationship is observed with family conflict. This implies that there is a correlation between increasing delinquency and higher levels of family conflict. The possible reasons as mentioned by (Aazami, Valek, Ponce, & Zare, 2023) could include a lack of family support, strained relationships, or exposure to adverse family environments. The observed

correlations align with some existing literature. For instance, the positive relationship between family conflict and delinquency is consistent with findings by (Kapetanovic, & Skoog, 2021; Voisin, Kim, Bassett, & Marotta, 2020; Bonner et al. 2020). Also, the findings of the study shows delinquency correlates negatively with openness, this implies, that higher openness is associated with lower delinquency. This aligns with research suggesting that individuals who are open to new experiences may engage in fewer delinquent behaviours (Tharshini et al., 2021).

Additionally, the result shows that there is a positive correlation between delinquency and emotional intelligence. This means that higher emotional intelligence is linked to increased delinquency. This might be explained by emotionally intelligent individuals being more adept at navigating and concealing delinquent behaviours. This result is consistent with the findings by Cardona-Isaza, Jiménez, & Montoya-Castilla (2022). The positive correlation with attachment style suggests that certain attachment styles may contribute to delinquency. Insecure attachment, for instance, has been linked to behavioral problems in adolescents (Flykt et al. 2021; Pace, Di Folco, & Guerriero, 2018). The result also indicate delinquency has a negative correlation with extraversion which implies that higher extraversion is associated with lower delinquency. This is consistent with previous studies that found introverted individuals to engage less in externalizing behaviors associated with delinquency (Sandu & Salceanu, 2020; Tremblay, 2017). Then, negative correlation with conscientiousness suggests that higher conscientiousness is linked to lower delinquency. This may be possible because conscientious individuals tend to be more self-disciplined, which could reduce their likelihood of engaging in delinquent acts. Previous studies (e.g; Walters, 2018; Ljubin-Golub, Vrselja, & Pandžić, 2017) confirmed this pattern of relationship.

However, the findings of this study showed agreeableness and neuroticism does not possess statistically significant relationships with delinquency. Which implies that agreeableness and neuroticism might not be prominent factors influencing delinquency specifically among the participants of this study. While some studies (e.g; Rajeevan,

Jain & Parihar, 2022; Kulig, Cullen, Wilcox & Chouhy, 2019) support these relationships, others present conflicting evidence (Dullas, Yncierto, Labiano, & Marcelo, 2021). This difference emphasises the need for more population-specific studies. The results from research question one highlight the factors influencing delinquency among in-school adolescents.

The second research question examined the joint contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable (delinquency). The findings of the study revealed that 31.7% of the variance in delinquency is accounted for by the combination of all eight predictor variables. This means that, taken together, these variables explain a significant portion of the variation in delinquent behaviours among in-school adolescents. The study revealed that all the eight independent variables correlated positively with the dependent variable. The positive correlations signify that as the values of the predictor variables increase, delinquency tends to increase as well among the participants. The statistically significant joint contribution of the independent variables to the prediction of delinquency emphasises the relevance of considering multiple factors at the same time when investigating a prevalent variable as delinquency among adolescents.

The findings align with prior research which suggests delinquency to be influenced by multiple factors. Studies exploring the predictive power of various variables, such as personality traits, emotional intelligence, and family conflict, have consistently highlighted the need for a comprehensive understanding of delinquency among adolescents (Aazami, Valek, Ponce, & Zare, 2023, Voisin, Kim, Bassett, & Marotta, 2020, Sandu & Salceanu, 2020, Walters, 2018). However, the study acknowledges that other variables not included in the model may contribute to the remaining variance on the factors influencing delinquency adolescents.

The third research question examined the relative contribution of the independent variables to the dependent variable (delinquency). The findings of the study revealed that Emotional intelligence has negative relationship with delinquency of students which implies that the delinquency of students is actually determined by negative reinforcement of these variables. This implies that higher levels of openness, conscientiousness, extraversion and emotional intelligence are associated with lower delinquency. The negative reinforcement suggests that these variables act as protective factors against delinquent behaviours. These findings align with prior research on the contributions of personality traits, family conflict, and emotional intelligence to delinquency (Cardona-Isaza, Jiménez, & Montoya-Castilla, 2022; Kapetanovic, & Skoog, 2021; Voisin, Kim, Bassett, & Marotta, 2020). The dominance of family conflict in predicting delinquency echoes the well-established connection between family environment and delinquent behaviours (Boccio & Beaver, 2019).

Also, the partial correlation coefficients of agreeableness, neuroticism, attachment style and family conflict have positive relationship with the delinquency of students. This suggests that higher levels of agreeableness, neuroticism, insecure attachment, and family conflict are associated with increased delinquency. The positive reinforcement implies

that these factors contribute to the occurrence of delinquent behaviours among students. This model offers a detailed understanding of the relative contributions of various factors to delinquency among students. It emphasises the significance of family dynamics while acknowledging the unique role of personality traits and emotional factors in predicting delinquent behaviours. These findings are crucial for developing targeted interventions that address specific risk and protective factors identified in this study.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the psychosocial determinants of delinquency among in-school adolescents in Akinyele Local Government Area, Oyo State, focusing on personality traits, emotional intelligence, attachment styles, and family conflict. The findings revealed that family conflict had the strongest and most significant positive relationship with delinquency, indicating that adolescents exposed to high levels of family conflict are more prone to engaging in delinquent behaviours. Other significant predictors included openness to experience, extraversion, and conscientiousness, all showing negative relationships with delinquency, suggesting they serve as protective factors. On the other hand, agreeableness, neuroticism, and attachment style exhibited weaker or non-significant contributions. Collectively, the psychosocial variables accounted for 31.7% of the variance in delinquency, confirming the importance of these factors in understanding adolescent misconduct.

In light of these findings, several practical recommendations are proposed. First, there is a need for family-based interventions aimed at reducing conflict within the home. Counseling services and parenting programs should be provided to help families build healthier communication patterns and emotional bonds. Second, school counseling programs should be strengthened to promote emotional intelligence, foster secure attachment styles, and support personality development in students. Third, policymakers, educators, and mental health practitioners should collaborate to design and implement comprehensive intervention strategies that address the multifaceted nature of adolescent delinquency. Fourth, future studies should adopt longitudinal research designs to better understand how delinquency develops over time and to identify critical periods for effective intervention. Finally, community-based initiatives involving religious leaders, youth mentors, and civil society organizations should be encouraged to provide adolescents with positive role models, structured activities, and safe spaces that discourage engagement in delinquent behaviours.

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