

# Child Delinquency and Pupils' Academic Performance in Fumesua Municipal Assembly Primary School in the Ejisu-Juaben Municipality, Ashanti Region, Ghana

Samuel Tieku Gyansah <sup>1\*</sup> Rejoice Soku <sup>2</sup> Gabriel Esilfie <sup>3</sup>

1 College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, Private Mail Bag, Cape Coast, Ghana.

2. c/o Fumesua M/A Primary School, Ejisu- Juaben, Via Kumasi, Ghana.

3. College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, Private Mail Bag, Cape Coast, Ghana.

\*stiekugyansah@yahoo.com

## ABSTRACT

This research was conducted purposely to examine child delinquency on pupils' academic performance. Fumesua Municipal Assembly (M/A) primary school was used as the case study for the research. The specific objectives of the study are to find out the factors that contribute to child delinquent behavior, identify, if delinquent behavior influence the child academic performance and to find out the remedies that will help solve the problem. There was review of related literature in order to put the study into perspective. The study selected a sample size of 49 respondents comprising 40 students and 9 teachers who were interviewed, in order to obtain primary data. Secondary data was also gathered from books, journals and the internet. Purposive sampling was the sampling technique used for selecting the pupils. The collected data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Service Solution (SPSS). From the findings of the study, it was realized that, the causes of child delinquency are as a result of financial problem, bad friends, and poor academic performance and for fun. Also from the findings, it was realized that the remedies to child delinquency are punishment, guidance and counseling, proper monitoring of pupils by parents and reporting of children to their teachers when they misbehave. It was recommended that, parents should monitor their children movement and be mindful of the kind of people they walked with. Also it was recommended that children should not be given enough idle time and again classrooms should not be overcrowded.

**Key words:** Child delinquency, academic performance, first cycle

## 1.0. INTRODUCTION

Biologically, a child is generally a human between the stages of birth and puberty. However, the legal definition of a child generally refers to a minor, otherwise known as a person younger than the age of a majority. According to the United Nations Convention on the rights of a child, a child is a human being below the ages of eighteen(18) years unless under the law applicable to the child.

Delinquency is basically a legal concept defined in different ways among people or scholars. It is defined as a state of being delinquent or behavior that is not in accordance with accepted social standards or with the constitution of Ghana. In a society, a delinquent behavior refers to any act punishable by death, imprisonment or a fine. Delinquent behavior includes stealing, sexual offence, destruction of state property (vandalism) and smoking of marijuana, drug pilfering and others.

Child delinquency is a growing phenomenon and many people do not know what to do about it quite yet. The rising incidence of child delinquency in many countries may be caused by certain socio-economic problems often associated with development. From the word "child delinquency", child means young people while delinquency means young offenders that are guilty of minor crimes or misdeeds.

The Bartol & Bartol (2011) textbook explains that the psychological definition of delinquency is a child's engagement in extreme anti-social behavior. Children are supposed to be a sign of innocence and loyalty, yet they are killing other children and they are even killing their own parents.

Many psychologists struggle with the continuous nature versus nurture debate when it comes to delinquency in children. Some think is biological, suggesting that the children were born with it and that they inherited some type of illness from their parents. Others think that these delinquents are simply a product of their environment and that they act out and kill people due to social pressures, abuse, and neglect they have faced in their lives.

Obviously, something is going on if more and more children are committing delinquent crimes. A researcher therefore has to find out the root cause of the problem, what provoke a child to become delinquent and what makes the child drift down so easily towards this lifestyle? The study explores the effects of child delinquency on pupil's academic performance at Fumesua M/A Primary School in the Ejisu-Juaben municipality. Children are more likely to be delinquent, if there is little structure provided for them in their families. Although there are several influential variables, family functioning and parenting are very crucial to the upbringing of a child and could lead to the delinquent behavior if the family is not functioning properly.

Children who are rejected by their parents, or who grow up in homes with considerable conflict, are at a greater risk of becoming delinquent. Children who live in the home with only one parent or in which marital relationship have been disrupted by divorce or separation are more likely to display a range of behavioral problems including delinquency, than children who have two parent families. (Thomberly et al, 1999).

In recent times, the problem of delinquency has reached its peak in the first cycle schools, in the Ejisu – Juaben Municipality. All schools cannot be dealt with at the same time therefore; there is the need to select a particular school from the area to be used for the study. The assistant researcher teaches in the school and it was found convenient to use the school as a case study.

### **1.1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

In Ghana, Bosiakoh and Andoh (2010) have emphasized an upward surge of juvenile delinquency which many well-meaning Ghanaians admit as alarming. According to the Department of Social Welfare annual performance report, 276 juvenile delinquency cases were handled in the year 2007. The Ghana prison service annual report in 2010 also indicated an average daily lock-up of 115 juvenile offenders. With an increased understanding of the delinquent children's perspective, stakeholders in the community can incorporate them in proactive steps which will be addressing the problem rather than waiting for children to be involved in crime before any action is taken.

Some efforts have been made by teachers to curb this problem of child delinquency but to no avail. It seems to have become the order of the day and the number of delinquents increases with each coming generation.

Quite often, school boys break into school offices and staff common rooms, with the intention of stealing textbooks, examination scripts and exercise books. Most of the times, these boys or children get caught, when luck elude them. These behaviors of children affect most of them in their academic performance. Therefore this research seeks to find out; the circumstances that normally get them involved in delinquent behaviors for lessons to be deduced, whether they affect their academic performance and the possible remedies to it?

### **1.2. PURPOSE OF STUDY**

The general purpose of the study is to examine child delinquency on pupils' academic performance.

The specific purposes of the study are to:

- a) Find out the factors that contribute to child delinquent behavior.
- b) Identify, if delinquent behavior influence the child academic performance.
- c) Find out the remedies that will help solve the problem.

### **1.3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. What are the factors that contribute to child delinquent behavior?
2. To what extent does delinquent behavior influence child academic performance?
3. What are the remedies that will help solve the problem?

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

In any human society where accepted modes of conduct are laid, deviance is inevitable (Abotchie, 2008; 1997). Deviance and crime is and has always been a threat to the serenity and tranquility enjoyed by members of a community (Adams & Evans, 1996). Beside the gradual moral degeneration which can befall perpetrators when they are embittered with deviance and crime, there arise huge custody, health and economic cost to be borne by a nation fraught with the issue of crime (Simões, Matos & Batista-Foguet, 2008). For this reason, juvenile delinquency has now become one of the important social issues which every nation try to bring under control amidst the glaring evidence that, if the right nurturance is not given to the young offenders, they may graduate to become criminals (Hess & Drowns, 2010; Kuanliang, Sorensen & Cunningham, 2008; Austin, Johnson & Gregoriou, 2000; Johnson, 1999).

In recent years, child delinquency has become a major global problem. The rising incidence of child delinquency in many countries may be caused by certain socio-economic problems often associated with development. These include; poverty, rapid population growth, unemployment, urbanization, inadequate shelter and housing and breakdown of family unit. This research is to find out the causes of child delinquency, to identify if it affects pupils academic performance and to find out remedies to such a problem.

### **2.1. CHILD DELINQUENCY**

Child delinquency is also known as teenage crime. It is like any crime that human beings commit but these crimes differ because they are committed by young people. Before coming of age, boys and girls have less understanding of the world. Parents, friends and teachers are all responsible along with the children who commit a crime. This is why courts do not punish the children like they punish the adults when they commit a crime. There are separate juvenile courts and the purpose of juvenile punishment is to help the child understand the importance of staying away from crimes. There are various theories of child delinquency and various researchers have reported different reasons of delinquency. Most of the delinquent children belong to low social, economic and psychological background.

Child delinquency, also known as juvenile offending, or youth crime, is participation in illegal behavior by minors (juvenile) younger than the statutory age of majority. Most legal systems prescribe specific procedures for dealing with juveniles, such as juvenile detention centers, and courts. A child delinquent is a person who is typically under the age of eighteen (18) and commits an act that otherwise would have been charged as a crime if they were adults.

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

### **2.2 DELINQUENCY AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE**

Delinquency is a form of anti-social behavior whereby although it does not necessarily refer to illegal behavior, most of the time delinquent behavior does not conform to social norms and values. Under this topic I shall be assessing if there is a possible relationship between a delinquent child/juvenile and school performance. Elam, Rose and Gallup (1993) claim that students at school may be seen as both perpetrators as well as victims of school misconduct. This in return will or may affect life at school for students and teachers alike. It is stated that public schools tend to face more problems related to school delinquency rather than independent schools and church schools as declared by "The 25th Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public School" (Elam, Rose & Gallup, 1993). From this study, it is evident that the lack of discipline in public schools is one of the biggest problems being faced along with fighting, violence and gangs.

Griffith (1999) made studies based on primary school children and found a correlation between the school environments such as school classrooms and the students and said that classrooms had a considerable effect on students' behaviors. Other factors that according to Griffith affect directly the school life of students are the level

of pushing done by the teachers to make the students strive for academic achievement (termed by Griffith as “instrumental support”) and also Student-teacher as well as student-student relationships (which are termed as “expressive/emotional support”).

However, the above are not the only factors that affect school delinquency and school performance. There are other predictor variables that are the different personal background characteristics of each and every student. One of these variables is the family size which is said to be a factor affecting the student’s delinquency (Myers, Milne, Baker, and Ginsburg 1987). It is considered that parents having a large family, say 4 children or more, they would probably have less time to attend for meetings at school with teachers, less time to check their children’s homework, to respond to school discipline actions taken towards their children as well as less money to buy educational material. Additionally, parents having a large family have less chance to supervise their children especially when they leave their household setting, thus, delinquency is expected to build up progressively as the child grows older (Myers et. al., 1987).

Another variable related to the above is the family structure whereby several studies show that single-parent families and step-parent families have a significant effect on the child’s delinquent behavior (Chilton and Markle, 1972). It is argued that because of the economic and financial burden the single-parent comes across (which is usually shared between the mother and the father), the single-parent has to work a full time job to cope with the expenses, as well as the psychological and physical responsibilities that a family brings about. Thus, as a result, this leaves little time for the parent to attend to the child’s needs and attention (Astone and McLanahan, 1991). Burgess (1979) further adds that due to the lack of economic and psychological support that the single-parent goes through, he believes that single-mothers have an unhealthy relationship with their children and less time to discipline them. Hirschi (1969) claims that those stepfathers who do not feel obliged to attend meetings at school of their stepchildren, and to control them, they will eventually result in a neglected feeling in the students’ lives which in return will lead to lack of respect towards adults as well as teachers and school administrators. Lastly, the level of the mother’s education. It happens that parents who have a good standard of education encourage their children to further their school development while such parents tend to keep closely monitoring their children’s school development and achievements and expect their children to be productive in the work carried out at school (Cohen 1955; Eckert 1989). On the other hand, parents with a low standard of educational level may feel uncomfortable in interacting with teachers and school officials while expectations and aspirations for the future career of their children is very limited (Myers et. al., 1987). Feldman and Saletsky (1986), claim that difference in treatment by the teachers may affect considerably the involvement of delinquency especially at school, obviously resulting in poor school performance.

### **2.3. FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO CHILD DELINQUENCY**

It has long been a problem why some children steal and others do not, why some play truant, or why some set fires and damage property. Theories have been advanced from time to time to explain these things, but only in the last ten or fifteen years have extensive scientific investigation been carried out on these problems. Officers of the juvenile courts, child welfare associations, educational bodies, and mental hygiene clinics have been instrumental in bringing together a vast amount of data concerning child delinquency, from which certain general conclusions may be drawn. Delinquency itself is socially inadequate adjustment on the part of the individual to difficult situations. The factors which go to make up these difficult situations, together with the mental and physical conditions which influence an individual's capacity to adjust, constitute the causes of delinquency. Each juvenile offense is the outcome of a complexity of causes, some of whose origins date back years before the committal of the offense and others whose origins are more obviously and immediately connected with the act of delinquency. It has been shown that a different set of causes is involved in each individual case. It is impossible therefore to state the group of causes which will invariably result in any particular offense. The factors which operate to turn a child's behavior in one direction rather than another may be very incomprehensible, many as yet are beyond the detection of expert sociologists, psychologists, physiologists and others. It often appears that quite different offenses are the results of the same group of causes, but further investigation shows that still other factors are present in each case which determines the type of delinquency. For example, a poverty-stricken, unhappy home and irregular earnings in the evening may lead one boy to play truant from school in order to earn more money, may cause another to steal, or may result in another's joining a street gang and gambling. More intensive investigation in each case would bring to light the specific factors responsible for these differences.

In spite of the great complexity and diversity of the causes of delinquency, cases are found to have many factors in common. The different combinations of these factors are largely responsible for the differences in offenses. It should be possible, therefore, to draw up a list of conditioning factors from a study of a large number of cases

which would cover most of the possibilities, and from which could be isolated any group or combination of factors applicable to a particular case. Such a list should prove to be a diagnostic aid for all workers in the field of child delinquency.

The following outline comprises the factors which have been found to operate in some thousands of cases studied and reported on by various authorities. These factors are classed under six general headings: Physical factors, mental factors, Home conditions, School conditions, Neighborhood conditions, and Occupational conditions. The first two groups include all factors dependent upon the bodily and mental condition of the delinquent. These are the product of both heredity and environment. The other four groups consist of environmental factors: unfavorable conditions in the home and the family of the child, unfavorable conditions in the school environment, the neighborhood, and occupational environments.

### **2.3.1. PHYSICAL FACTORS**

The bodily condition of a child may affect his behavior in one or more of three ways. First, it may be the direct cause of delinquent behavior. Secondly, it may form a handicap to the child's achievement or favorable relationship with other children and adults, as in the case of malnutrition and defects. Delinquency may result as an attempt on the part of the child to compensate for these disabilities. Thirdly, bodily conditions such as certain developmental aberrations and physical exuberance may supply a superfluity of energy which finds outlet in delinquency. The various physical conditions of the child which may thus determine delinquency are outlined in the following paragraphs.

#### **2.3.1.1. *Speech Defects.***

Such defects as stammering, stuttering, lisping and lolling may be due to:

- a. Congenital defect of the organ of speech or its neural connections.
- b. Diseases of the organ of speech or its neural connections.
- c. Lack of early training and negligence.
- d. Adult admiration of appealing speech (baby talk) during early childhood.

In addition to setting the child at a disadvantage in competition with others and possibly making him a target for childish ridicule, speech defects block one of the most essential means of self-expression and social expression for the individual. A child with defective speech may become introverted and seclusive, partly through shame and partly through inertia to overcome the handicap. He may on the other hand become cynical and foster a grudge or a "get-even complex," with consequent anti-social results.

#### **2.3.1.2 Deformities.**

These may be of the limbs or trunk, and can be the result of accidents before, during, or after birth, the result of heredity, or of disease. Whether obvious to others or not a deformity may cause its possessor to feel inferior and ashamed, and he may turn to delinquency in flight from the horrible (to him) reality and in endeavor to compensate for the defect. A particular form of deformity which may cause this result is a noticeable strabismus (squint).

### **2.3.2. MENTAL FACTORS**

Mental factors, like physical factors, may determine delinquent behavior in one or more of three ways: (1) Delinquency may be the direct response to, or expression of, a particular mental state, for example, obsessive imagery. (2) Delinquency may be the expression of certain impulses or left uncontrolled or stimulated by a special mental condition; or it may be a symbolic representation of such impulses. (3) Delinquency may be an attempt at adjustment or compensation for certain mental peculiarities. Following is an outline of the mental factors which contribute to delinquent behavior:

#### **2.3.2.1. *Superior Intelligence.***

A superior child often needs to make no effort to do what little is demanded of him either at home or at school, consequently he has insufficient outlet for his energies and abilities. As a result he may get into mischief, such as trying house-breaking for adventure; he may become impudent and incorrigible; or he may become the leader of a gang and lead less clever children into trouble.

### **2.3.2.2. Obsessive Imagery and Imagination.**

A person, whose mind is continually haunted by sounds, voices, or visions of people doing things, is usually suffering from a psychosis or psychoneurosis. The disorder is advanced or mild, according to the frequency and intensity of the obsessive experience. Such obsessions may prompt the person to delinquent action as if upon impulse. Peculiar conduct perhaps of a delinquent nature may be commanded by a voice, or may be carried out in imitation of a vision. Obsessive imagery may also "drive the person distracted," to use a slang expression, and cause him to commit a crime by way of defense, in attempt to get away from, or put an end to, the haunting ideas or images. These obsessions may force themselves upon the person while he is occupied, or they may occur during idle moments in the form of daydream, and may eventually lead to delinquent action. Vivid imagination in childhood before the individual has learned to distinguish between fantasy and reality may cause him to tell fantastic stories and make false accusations. Children with such imagination are often branded by adults as "terrible liars".

### **2.3.3. HOME CONDITIONS**

Home conditions can only be indirect causes of delinquency. They react upon the child's mind and body altering his mental and physical conditions which in their turn determine his behavior. The conditions in the home and the family relationships which influence more particularly the mental life of the child are perhaps even more important as causes of delinquency than factors which affect mostly the physical condition of the child. Following are some of the home conditions which may contribute to delinquency:

#### **2.3.3.1. Poverty and Unemployment.**

Upon these causes alone depend many others, such as ill-health, overcrowding, neglect, ill-tempered parents, and so forth. Cyril Burt (1925) says, "55 per cent of young delinquents in London come from homes that are below the poverty line." Thefts of all kinds result from the primal urge for food, clothing, and shelter, and from the jealous desire for some of life's luxuries. Unemployment causes a similar condition of affairs. Statistics in the large cities show that during severe winters and depressions in trade, robberies, "hold-ups," and thefts increase in number.

#### **2.3.3.2. Broken Homes**

Healy (1916), Leeper (1925), and Lorenzo (1923) have pointed out that this condition may be considered as a very important factor in delinquency. Healy reports 45 to 52 per cent, Lorenz 59 per cent, and Leeper 79 per cent of cases of delinquency where "Home disrupted during the childhood of the individual" occurs in the case-histories. Data from the Boys' Farm, Shawbridge, showed that 60 per cent of the young delinquents came from broken homes. A home may be broken because:

- a. One or both parents are dead. The majority of cases seem to fall into this group. Healy found that about 62 per cent of the delinquents coming from broken homes had lost either father or mother or both. Data from Shawbridge showed that one or both parents were dead in 72 per cent of the cases from broken homes, the father dead in 50 per cent and the mother dead in 22 per cent.
- b. The parents are separated or divorced. This group would include cases of desertion. Healy found that desertion by a parent occurred in 16 per cent of the cases from broken homes. Under any of the above circumstances the child may be without the necessary example, discipline or affection which should go to further his complete personal and moral development. According to whether the treatment of the child is too lax or unnecessarily harsh, the child may develop delinquent habits of the nature of uncontrolled impulses or of the compensatory type. From a study of the Shawbridge data it would seem that the absence of the father from the home is a more frequent factor in delinquency than the absence of the mother.

### **2.3.4. SCHOOL CONDITIONS**

School conditions, like the home conditions, may be considered as indirect causes of delinquency, although in either may be found the chief source of the trouble. It is the effect which these conditions have upon the particular child's mind and body which actually causes delinquent behavior. Conditions in school which contribute to delinquency are as follows:

#### **2.3.4.1. Inadequate- School Building and Equipment.**

These may be primary causes of unhealthy bodies and general incorrigibility in school children. Overcrowded, badly ventilated classrooms, perhaps also poorly heated and lighted, make discipline as well as good health among the pupils virtually impossible. Insufficient staff and non-provision of necessary books and apparatus often means that the children's time is only partly occupied and even then probably in a very dull way from the

child's point of view. The forced or the stolen idleness gives them plenty of opportunity to plan and to carry out deeds of mischief.

#### **2.3.4.2. Poor Attendance Laws and Lax Enforcement.**

Attendance laws which include many exemptions from attendance give ample opportunity to the rebellious child, the dissatisfied child, or the adventurous child to play truant and avoid immediate consequences. He can always find some plausible excuse for being away from school. In the same way, lax enforcement of attendance laws makes it easy for a child to "play hookey." Truancy is a delinquency in itself but it often furnishes opportunity for offenses of a much more serious nature.

#### **2.3.5. NEIGHBORHOOD CONDITIONS**

Neighborhood conditions may determine a child's behavior just as home and school conditions may do, through their effect upon the child's mental attitude and physical condition. Among the contributing factors to delinquency which have their origin in neighborhood conditions may be mentioned in the following:

##### **2.3.5.1. Congested Neighborhood and Slums.**

Congested neighborhoods and slums may cause delinquency for the same reason that overcrowded homes and schoolrooms may do. Slums may include additional causative factors such as bad sanitation, damp, dark and badly ventilated houses, proximity of smoky, smelling factories and noisy machinery, and the close contact with undesirable neighbors, perhaps immoral and delinquent. Children are not so likely to get into bad mischief while they are alone, but when they get together in gangs as they do in congested neighborhoods, they become fortified by mutual support and are ready to dare anything. The influence of a gang is further explained below.

The increased suggestibility of an individual in a group of people is one of the most striking features of "mob psychology." Further, if the group be banded together for any set purpose the individual members become more suggestible to thoughts or actions bearing any connection with the aim of the group. For instance, if a gang be formed for the purpose of playing practical jokes any mischievous suggestion from one of the number will be quickly taken up by the others and eventually serious delinquencies may be committed.

##### **2.3.5.2. Proximity of Luxury and Wealth.**

Children whose parents are comparatively poor and who live near to a wealthier district may develop attitudes of discontent or longings for the luxuries of the others, so much so that they commit crimes to get even with the others or to satisfy their material cravings. If their companions are children of more affluent parents the poorer children may steal in order to be of equal standing with their little friends.

#### **2.3.6. OCCUPATIONAL CONDITIONS**

The environment of the child who is engaged in some wage earning occupation offers a further source for external causes of delinquency. Some of the occupational conditions which may contribute to delinquency are:

##### **2.3.6.1. Irregular Occupation.**

Irregular and seasonal occupations and those which do not offer steady wages place the young worker in the difficult situation of having too much alternating with too little money. The child who makes considerable sums of money and has ample pocket-money at one season and who is entirely without at another may be tempted to steal during the "off" periods. He may resort to stealing to keep up appearances and reputation among his companions, or to satisfy a taste or greed for luxuries developed during the periods of affluence. Spare time resulting from irregular occupation may be a factor in delinquency and is considered below. A youth may have spare time because his work only fills a small part of the day. He may be constantly drifting from one job to another unable to find a suitable occupation, each change meaning time out of work, or he may be engaged in a seasonal occupation which affords weeks of spare time. During these idle hours he may indulge in some form of delinquency for his own amusement and satisfaction, or he may join a gang and be drawn into criminal pursuits.

##### **2.3.6.2. Truancy**

Truancy from work or school provides ample opportunity and spare time for delinquency. It usually happens during the part of the day when desirable companions are not available for play or other purposes. The truant then must either spend his time in solitude or in the company of other young or older delinquents. He may fall into further delinquency in either case. Healy, Abbott, Wallace and others have given statistical evidence that truancy is a factor in over half of the cases of juvenile offense.

## 2.4. CONCLUSIONS

Factors contributing to delinquency are thus to be found not only in the mental and physical make-up of the individual, but also in his present and past environments. Unwholesome influences and difficult situations encountered in early childhood are probably as important causal factors of delinquency as are present conditions. They may even be more important.

## 3.0 METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

In this study, I will employ a qualitative research approach. My motivation to use a qualitative research approach is the possibility of developing a deeper probe or thick description of the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency (Kvale, 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). That is, I want to go beyond the practice of getting participants to just select or tick factors that make them commit an offence, as it is usually the case in quantitative studies. Rather than just connecting my respondents to select factors on a questionnaire, the qualitative approach is estimated to help me gain much insight into the life world of my participants.

### 3.2 POPULATION AND SAMPLE

Fumesua M/A Primary School is among the six schools situated in the town. It is the second oldest primary school in the town next to St Mary Anglican primary and Junior High School. Fumesua M/A primary school was formerly called Local Authority (L/A) Primary school and was later changed to District Assembly (D/A) primary and presently called Municipal Assembly (M/A) primary school. The school was established in 1952 and quite close to a lorry station. It is a nine classroom block with an office and a store room, including two classrooms for kindergarten (K.G) pupils making eleven classrooms.

The school has quite a large number of pupils. The total enrollment for the school is about 451 pupils, with 232 being girls and the remaining 219 pupils being boys. The table below gives the breakdown of the total population according to their class.

*Table 3.0*

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>BS 1</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>BS 2</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>BS 3</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>BS 4A</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>BS 4B</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>BS 5A</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>BS 5B</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>BS 6A</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>53</b>
<b>BS 6B</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>541</b>

### Source: Field Survey 2014

The school can boast of hardworking, punctual and God fearing staff members that the children can emulate. Members of staff are twelve in number, made up of ten female and two male.

The target population for this study will be the teachers and delinquent pupils. A sample size of 49 will be selected. Out of the 49 respondents, 40 respondents will be delinquent pupils and the remaining 9 respondents will be teachers of the school. A purposive sampling technique will be used to select the delinquent pupils. With the sampling of the delinquent pupils, the teachers will help in the selection since they know the attitude of some of the pupil in their class.

### 3.3 INSTRUMENT

The main instrument used in this study include was an interview guide. . The bases for the use of interview guide find expression in its flexibility in inducing and incorporating unexpected significant information as well as answers for prepared interview questions (Willig, 2008).



### 3.4 PROCEDURE FOR DATA COLLECTION

Permission was sought from the headmistress of the school to interview the pupils and teachers of the school and also explain to her the purpose of the study. The teachers and delinquent pupils were briefed on the study. A purposive sample technique was used in selecting the pupils.

### 4.0 DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The research was conducted at the Fumesua M/A primary school. A total number of forty nine (49) respondents out of which forty (40) respondents were students and the remaining nine (9) were teachers of the school, were used for the study. The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Service Solution (S.P.S.S).

#### BACKGROUND OF RESPONDENTS

##### 4.1.1 Age Range

*Table 4.0 Age Range*

<b>Age range(yrs)</b>	<b>Students</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>6-8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17.5</b>
<b>9-11</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>12-14</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>45.0</b>
<b>15-17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey 2014

From the data collected from the field, the student population interviewed comprised people within the age limits of 6 to 17years. The highest age category is the 12-14years category representing 45.0%. The second highest category is the 9-11 years category representing 35.0%, followed by 6-8 years (17.5%) and 15-17 years representing 2.5% of the students. This statistics clearly stated in table 4.0 shows that the majority of students that are delinquent fall within the ages of 12-14 years, therefore much attention and care should be given to students in such category by both parents and teachers.

##### 4.1.2 Class

*Table 4.1 Class of respondents*

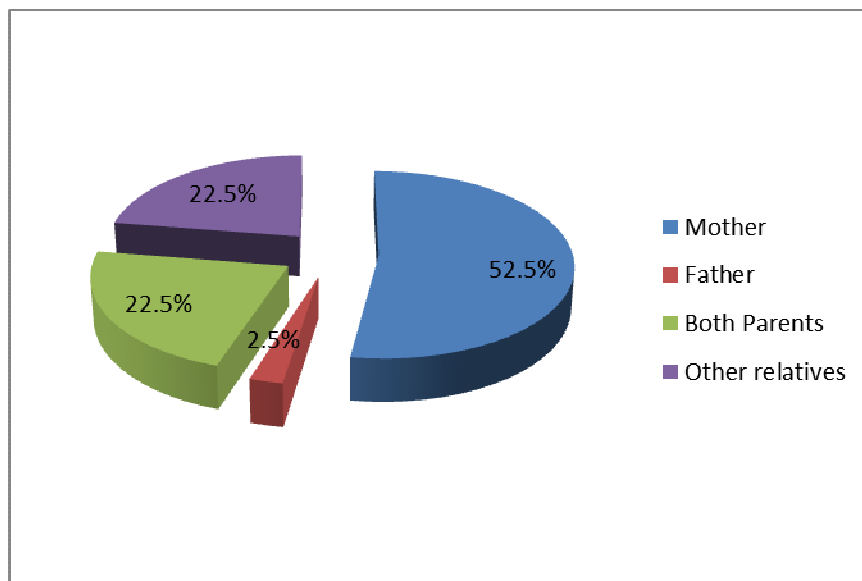
<b>Class</b>	<b>Students</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>Lower primary</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25.0</b>
<b>Upper primary</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>75.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey 2014

From the field survey as shown in table 4.1, out of the forty students interviewed, thirty of them representing 75.0% are in upper primary whiles the remaining ten representing 25.0% are in lower primary. It shows clearly that majority of the delinquent students are in the upper primary. It is therefore necessary for parents and school authority to pay much attention to students in such category.

## 4.2 FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CHILD DELINQUENCY

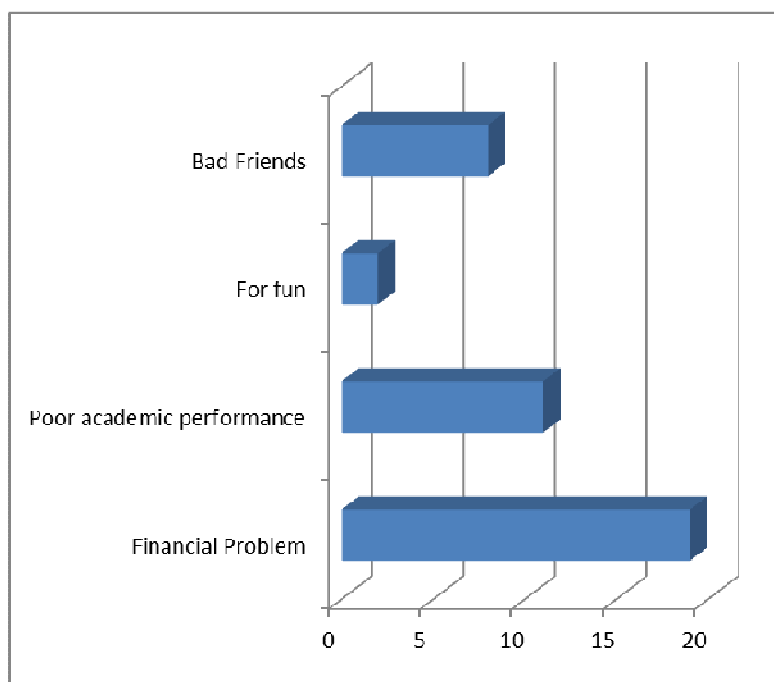
*Figure 4.0 Whom Students Live with*



**Source: Field Survey 2014**

From figure 4.0, it clearly shows the kind of people the students interviewed live with. Some of the students live with their mothers, others with their fathers, both parents and some with other relatives. According to figure 4.0 above twenty-one of them representing 52.5% live with only their mothers, while those living with only father and both parents are nine each in number representing 22.5%, with only one person representing 2.5% living with only father. This clearly shows that majority of the delinquent students live with only mother. This can therefore be deduced that single parenting is also a contributing factor to child delinquency.

*Figure 4.1 Causes of Delinquent Behavior*



**Source: Field Survey 2014**

Figure 4.1 clearly shows some of the reasons why the students behave delinquently. Based on the response of the students 19 of them said financial problem is the cause of their delinquent behavior, followed by 11 students who attributed it to poor academic performance. 8 of the students also said is out of bad friends that they behave that way, with only 2 students attributing the cause of delinquent behavior to fun making. Therefore some of the contributing factors to child delinquency outlined by the students are single parenting, financial problem, and poor academic performance, for fun and also as a result of bad friends.

### 4.3 DOES CHILD DELINQUENCY INFLUENCE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE?

*Table 4.2 Position in Class*

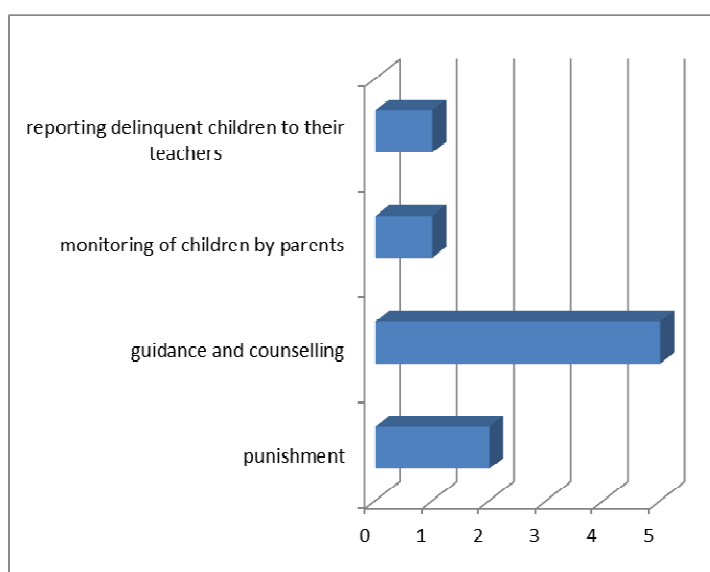
<b>Category</b>	<b>Students</b>	
	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>1-15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>14</b>	<b>35.0</b>
<b>16-30<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>17</b>	<b>42.5</b>
<b>31-45<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>9</b>	<b>22.5</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey 2014

Table 4.2 clearly shows the position of each student in class. The positions in class were divided into three categories, with 1-15<sup>th</sup> position in the first category and 16-30<sup>th</sup> positions in the second category while the 31-45<sup>th</sup> position also in third category. According to the students interviewed fourteen of them representing 35.0% belong to the first category, with nine students representing 22.5% falling into the third category while seventeen of them representing 42.5% which is the highest belonging to the second category. This therefore shows that majority of the delinquent students do not perform well in class. It can therefore be deduced that delinquency influence academic performance of students.

### 4.4 REMEDIES TO DELINQUENT BEHAVIOUR

*Figure 4.2 Remedies to Delinquent Behavior*



Source: Field Survey 2014

Figure 4.2 clearly shows some of the remedies to delinquent behavior suggested by the teachers. According to the teachers interviewed, two of them representing 22.2% suggested punishment as a remedy to delinquent behavior, while five of them representing 55.6% being the highest also recommended guidance and counseling as a therapy to child delinquency, with one person each representing 11.1% suggesting monitoring of children and reporting delinquent children to teachers as a remedy.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

Child delinquency, also known as juvenile offending, or youth crime, is participation in illegal behavior by minors (juvenile) younger than the statutory age of majority. Most legal systems prescribe specific procedures for dealing with juveniles, such as juvenile detention centers, and courts. A child delinquent is a person who is typically under the age of eighteen (18) and commits an act that otherwise would have been charged as a crime if they were adults.

Factors contributing to delinquency are thus to be found not only in the mental and physical make-up of the individual, but also in his present and past environments. Unwholesome influences and difficult situations encountered in early childhood are probably as important causal factors of delinquency as are present conditions. They may even be more important. Therefore parents and teachers should be very keen in monitoring children right from the very small age.

A nation's future to a great extent depends on the human resource base of the nation. As part of the base is all citizens in the nation, so a nation that does not pay attention to the proper overall growth of its citizens stand a great chance to lose out in the development race. Ghana, being a developing country has put some measures in place to ensure that children of school going age are in school and are being offered the sort of education the nation requires for its development. What must be ensured is the proper implementation and supervision of programmes.

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATION

Naturally parents and teachers cannot be solely responsible for the prevention of child delinquency. The police, local and higher authority, electronic and printed media and other social organizations all have a role to play.

Parents should monitor the kind of people or companion that their children walked with or the group they join in order to ascertain the purpose of the group whether good or bad so as to advise them accordingly.

Again, the researcher also recommends that classrooms should not be crowded. Overcrowding makes discipline as well as good health among the pupil virtually impossible. Teachers are also able to monitor the activities of the pupil when the class is not crowded.

Moreover, children also should not be given enough idle time. When they get enough play time it gives them the opportunity to plan and to carry out deeds of mischief. They should be engaged in school with exercises and at home with homework and other household chores.

The laws of attendance and other rules and regulations in the school should not be relaxed. The necessary sanctions should be applied without favor to any pupil who violates the attendance laws. When such laws are relaxed it makes the adventurous child to play truant.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Teachers, parents and school pupils in Fumesua, the place of study, should be acknowledged for the role they played in this work, though unknowing to a lot of them. The informal conversations with these categories of people counted much. Specifically, the teachers and pupils who formed a vital component of this study are commended for the role played.

## REFERENCES

- Abbott, E., and Breckenridge, S. P.: Truancy in Chicago Schools. Chicago University Press, 1917.
- Abotchie, C. (1997). Social Control in Traditional Southern Eweland of Ghana: Relevance for Modern Crime Prevention. Accra: Ghana University Press.
- Abotchie, C. (2008). Social Structure of Modern Ghana. Accra; Hans Publication
- Adams, M. S. & Evans, T. D. (1996). Teachers Disapproval, Delinquent Peers and Self-Reported Delinquency: A Longitudinal Test of Labeling Theory. *The Urban Review*, 28(3):199-211.

- Astone N. & McLanahan S., (1991). "Family Structure, Parental Practices and High School Completion." *American Sociological Review*. 56 : 309-20.
- Augustine, O. B. (2012). *Juvenile Delinquency in Ghana: A Qualitative Study of the Lived Experiences of Young Offenders in Accra* (Master's thesis, Norwegian University of Science and Technology).
- Austin, J., Johnson, K. D., & Gregoriou, M. (2000). *Juveniles in adult prisons and jails: A National Assessment*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance. Retrieved on 25th October, 2011 from <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/bja/182503.pdf>.
- Bartol C. R., and Bartol A. M. (2011). *Criminal behavior: A psychological approach*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson.
- Bosiakoh, T. A & Andoh, P. K. (2010). *Differential Association Theory and Juvenile*
- Bridges, J. W., and Bridges, K. M. B.: *A Psychological Study of Juvenile Delinquency by Group Methods*. *Genetic Psychological Mo.*, 1926, Vol. I, No. 5.
- Bridges, J. W.: *Psychoanalysis, a Contribution to the New Psychology*. *Public Health Journal*, 1923.
- Bridges, K. M. B., Factors contributing to Juvenile Delinquency. *Journal of Criminal law and Criminology*, 531 (1926-1927).
- Burgess R., (1979). "Family Violence: Implications from Evolutionary Biology." Pp. 91-101 in *Understanding Crime*, edited by Travis Hirschi. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Burt, C., East, W. N., Shrubsall, F. C., and Stoddart, W. H. B.: *Delinquency and Mental Defect*. Symposium in *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 1923, 3:153-193.
- Burt, C.: *The Causal Factors of Juvenile Crime*. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, 1923, 3:1-33.
- Burt, C.: *The Young Delinquent*. University of London Press, 1925.
- "Cause and solution of Juvenile Delinquency". retrieved from <http://readingcraze.com/index.php/2014-6-1>
- "Child". Retrieved from <http://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/child.2014-5-31>.
- "Convention on the Rights of the Child" The Policy Press, Office of the United Nation High Commission for Human Rights.
- Chilton R. & Markle G. (1972). "Family Disruption, Delinquent Conduct, and the Effect of Subclassification." *American Sociological Review*. 37 : 93-99.
- Cohen A. (1955). *Delinquent Boys*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.
- Delinquency in Ghana's capital city - Accra: The case of Ghana Borstal Institute*.
- Department of Social welfare (2007). *Annual Performance Report*.
- Eckert P. (1989). *Jocks and Burnouts: Social Categories and Identity in High School*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Elam S., Rose L., & Gallup A., (1993). "Twenty-Fifth Annual Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitude Toward Education." *Phi Delta Kappan*. 75 : 137-57.
- Feldman R., & Saletsky R., (1986). "Nonverbal Communication in Interracial Teacher Student Interaction." Pp. 115-31 in *The Social Psychology of Education: Current Research and Theory*, edited by Robert Feldman. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ghana Prison Service (2010). *Annual report*. Accra: Unique Xpressions
- Griffith J., 1999. School climate as "social order" and "social action": A multi-level analysis of public elementary school student perceptions. *Social Psychology of Education* 2: 339-369.
- Healy, Wm., and Bronner, A. F. *Youthful Offenders: a Comparative Study of Two Groups, Each of 1000 Young Recidivists*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 1916, 22:1.
- Healy, Wm., and Bronner, A. F.: *Delinquents and Criminals; Their Making and Unmaking*. Macmillan, 1926.
- Healy, Wm.: *The Practical Value of Scientific Study of Juvenile Delinquents*. U. S. Children's Bureau Pub. No. 96.
- Hess, K. M. & Drowns, R. W. (2010). *Juvenile Justice*. 5th ed. Wardsworth: Cengage
- Hirschi T., 1969. *Causes of Delinquency*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- History of Forensic Psychology: Child Delinquency. Retrieved from <http://forensicpsychology.umwblogs.org/child-psychology/>. 2014-5-31.
- International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 2(9): 198-205.
- Johnson, D. (1999). *Rehabilitating Criminals Before They Grow Up*. *World Future Society*, 33(10): 11-13.
- Kuanliang, A., Sorensen, J.R., & Cunningham, M.D. (2008). *Juvenile Inmates in an Adult*
- Leeper, R. D.: *A Study of Juvenile Delinquency in Thirty Counties in Idaho*. *Jour. of Crim. Law and Criminology*, 1925, 16:388-436.
- Lorenz, W. F.: *Delinquency and the Ex-soldier*. *Mental Hygiene*, 1923, 7:472-484.

- Moffitt (2006). "Life course persistent versus adolescent limited antisocial behavior". In Cicchetti, D.; Cohen, D. Developmental psychopathy (2nd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Myers D., Milne A., Baker K., & Ginsburg A., (1987). "Student Discipline and High School Performance." *Sociology of Education*. 60 : 18-33.
- Prison System: Rates of Disciplinary Misconduct and Violence. *Criminal Justice and Behaviour*, 35(9):1186-1201. Retrieved on 20th November, 2010 from <http://cjb.sagepub.com/content/35/9/1186.full.pdf+html>.
- Siegal, L. J.; Welsh, B. (2011). *Juvenile Delinquency: The Core* (4th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/cengage Learning.
- Simões, C., Matos, M. G., & Batista-Foguet, J. M., (2008). Juvenile Delinquency: Analysis of Risk and Protective Factors Using Quantitative and Qualitative methods. *Cognition, Brain, Behavior. An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 7(4):389-408.
- Steingberg, L. (2008). *Adolescence* (8th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Wallace, D.: The Problem of the Quasi-delinquent in the School. *Mental Hygiene*, 1924, 8:115-165.

## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 'A'**

#### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS**

1. Please, what is your name?
2. What class do you teach?
3. How long have you been teaching in the school?
4. What sort of punishment do you use when a student goes wrong?
5. What sort of problem do delinquent pupils pose to you in school?
6. Do you know the parents of your pupils?
7. How do you get to know them?
8. Is your classroom overcrowded?
9. What do you think are some of the remedies to delinquent behaviors in school?

### **APPENDIX 'B'**

#### **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR DELINQUENT PUPILS**

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What class are you?
4. Where do you live?
5. Whom are you living with?
6. Why do you do the delinquent things that you do?
7. What do you do after or when not in school?
8. When do you normally go to bed?
9. What was your position in class last term?
10. What do you want to be in future?
11. What work does the person(s) you are living with do?
12. Where does the person(s) work?
13. What is the educational background of the person(s) you are living with?
14. At what time do the person(s) leave for work and also return home from work?
15. Who takes care of you when your parents are not around?
16. How many siblings are you in the family?

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

### CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

**Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page:** <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

### MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Academic conference: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/>

### IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

