

## Effects of Teenager Self-Esteem on Delinquency

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**Abstract.** The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of teenagers' self-esteem on their delinquency. A survey was conducted from April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 to June, 2013 on normal students. SPSS Win 18.0 program was used for data analysis. The effects that teenagers' self-esteem had on delinquency were meaningful [1]. The results of this research is expected to be used as basic data for prevention policies of teenage abuse and delinquency

**Key words:** Teenager, self-esteem, delinquency

### 1 Introduction

The family system in the modern era has shifted to a nuclear family, and the family support system has declined while increasing delinquent behavior due to increases in parental employment. As a result of these issues in family support systems, lack of teenage self-esteem and delinquent activities are increasing. According to family child abuse data released by the National Statistics Office [2], the number of abuse cases increased from 9,148 cases in 2011 to 9,938 in 2012. Therefore, this study was attempted to prevent the decrease in teenage self-esteem from leading to social crimes.

### 2 Theoretical background

#### 2.1 Necessity of Study

As an industrial society shifts into the information age, followed by rapid economic development, the problems with the family support system is leading to the decrease in teenagers' self-esteem [3]. Especially among them, social delinquent problems are being raised due to the decrease in the self-esteem of abused teenagers. When looking at previous studies on the issue, they were mostly research on the relationship between self-concept and life effects the self-concept had on delinquency, and predictors. However, there is inadequate previous research on the relationship between abused teenagers' self-esteem healing and delinquency improvement.

Therefore, there is a need for research to improve previous problems. Accordingly, the purpose of this research is to prevent teenage abuse and delinquency and to understand the effects that teenage self-esteem has on delinquency improvement.

## **2.2 Emerging Issues**

First, how is self-esteem following the socio-demographic characteristics?  
Second, how is delinquency following the socio-demographic characteristics?  
Third, what are the effects self-esteem has on delinquency?

## **3 Study methods**

### **3.1 Subjects**

A survey was conducted on subjects admitted to a facility located in E city, Gyeonggi-do. The purpose and method of the survey were thoroughly explained to subjects before it was conducted. Each questionnaire in the survey was to be completed with self-administered answers.

### **3.2 Study Tool**

#### **3.2.1 Youth self-concept scale**

For the measurement index of teenager self-concept criterion, 10 questionnaires based on the criterion Coopersmith developed. The answers were broken into "Not At All" (1 point), "Not really" (2 points), "Average" (3 points), "Yes" (4 points), "Very Much So" (5 points). Reliability coefficient is Cronbach's  $\alpha$  .817. For teenager self-concept, the questionnaires Oh Jeon-young adapted and Park Nan-suk and Oh Kyung-ja reinforced based on the self-concept criterion Coopersmith (1981) [4] developed was used (Oh Jeon-young 1981, Park Nan-suk, Oh Kyung-ja 1992).

#### **3.2.2 Delinquency measure of youth**

For the teenage delinquency criterion measurement index, 10 questionnaires based on the CTS (Conflict Tactics Scale) produced by Straus(1979) was used. The answers were divided into "Not At All" (1 point), "Occasionally" (2 points), "Sometimes" (3 points), "Often" (4 points), "Very Often" (5 points). The reliability coefficient is Cronbach's  $\alpha$  .891. For teenage delinquency, the questionnaire on CTS (Conflict Tactics Scale) violence criterion by Straus (1979) [5] reinforced by Yeon Jin-young and Jang Sa-kyung was used as research tool (Yeon Jin-young 1992, Jang Sa-kyung 2008)[5-6].

### **3.3 Study Methods**

#### **3.3.1 Data Analysis**

The detailed empirical analysis of this study is as follows. Frequency analysis was conducted to investigate socio-demographic characteristics. In order to investigate the difference between teenage self-esteem and delinquency, a t-test and one-way ANOVA were performed. In addition, Scheffe's multiple-range test was conducted to verify a significant difference at  $p < .05$ . A correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the effects of self-esteem on teenager delinquency. The empirical analysis of this study has been verified at a significance level of 5%. SPSS Win 18.0 was used for statistical analysis.

## **4 Results of analysis**

### **4.1 Reliability analysis of the survey tools**

In this study, Cronbach's  $\alpha$  was used as a confidence coefficient to investigate the stability, consistency, and potential prediction on each item collected through the survey.

### **4.2 What are the socio-demographic characteristics of subjects?**

Considering the socio-demographic characteristics of subjects, 34.4% were male and 65.6% were female. Regarding family structure, families with siblings (brother(s) or sister(s)) made up the largest portion and a father or sibling acting as the abuser in the family accounted for the largest portions.

### **4.3 What are the socio-demographic self-esteem on teenagers?**

The difference in self-esteem following a teenager's gender and school grades was significant, difference following age and religion showed no significance.

### **4.4 What is the extent of a teenager's self-concept's effects on delinquency?**

In order to understand the effects self-concept has on teenage delinquency, simple regression investigation was conducted. Results showed no significance.

**Table 1.** Effects self-concept has on juvenile delinquency

Division	Dependent variables : Juvenile delinquency					
	B	Standard Error	$\beta$	t	p	VIF
(Constant)	1.096	.195		5.624***	.000	
Self-concept	.084	.063	.107	1.336	.184	1.000

$R^2 = .011$  ,  $adj R^2 = .005$ ,  $F = 1.785$

\*\*\*  $p < .001$

## 5 Discussion and Conclusion

In this study, the effect of self-esteem on teenage delinquency was analyzed. The results of this study are as follows:

First, gender difference of self-concept was associated more with female rather than male subjects. Higher self-esteem means that they accept and respect themselves as valuable human beings [7, 8]. Therefore, there is a need to raise teenagers' self-esteem in order for them to lead a valuable life. The difference in delinquency following age and religion was meaningful.

Secondly, the highest delinquency was found in those aged between 16 and 17 years, whereas the lowest stress was found in those aged 11 years or younger. The higher the stress level of abused teenagers, the more they deal with issues emotionally instead of issue-oriented approach and it showed that when using issue-oriented approach, self-esteem raised [9]. Consequently, there needs to be problem handling education programs in related organizations of the local communities in order for the abused teenagers to take issue-oriented approach [3]. Also there is a need to prevent delinquency and crime through treatments that heal self-esteem for delinquent juveniles.

The results of this research are expected to become basic data of prevention policies for teenage abuse and delinquency.

Based on these a fore mentioned results, the following research is to be proposed from this study.

First, self-esteem was shown to be higher in female students than male students. Therefore, male students' self-esteem must be raised through meditation counseling program.

Second, teenage delinquency was shown to be most serious in the 17 years old age

group. Therefore, in order to prevent delinquency, the government needs to create an environment for the teens to grow healthily by invigorating parental abuse prevention education.

In the future, underprivileged teenagers with low self-esteem must have their self-efficacy raised through human rights education.

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