THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE K D PRONENESS SCALE IN THE
IDENTIFICATION AND DETECTION OF
JUVENILE DELINQUENCY

THESIS

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By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of Problem

The present investigation was focused on the problem of identification and detection of juvenile delinquency. The purpose of the study was to determine if juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft differ significantly from non-delinquents of a church group. The two delinquent groups were examined to determine if a significant difference existed.

Significance of the Problem

Juvenile delinquency is an old problem. It has come to have high priority rating among the social problems requiring special consultation and prompt action. Juvenile delinquency results from failures to satisfy the basic needs of children and youth.

Within the present century there has been a marked change in attitudes toward juvenile delinquency. This change in attitude has been caused by the study of the nature and causes of delinquency and by the recognition that it is a social problem that requires individual study, diagnosis, and treatment.
In recent years, the United States has shown a marked increase in the number of juveniles who are arraigned for serious crimes. In 1962 more than half a million youths were wards of the court, and more than 1,750,000 were arrested by the police. High delinquency costs must be supported chiefly by taxpayers. The U. S. Senate (6) estimates that 200 million dollars would be required annually to control delinquency. The value of property stolen by juveniles is estimated at 115 million dollars. This does not include property lost through acts of vandalism. Fine (3, p. 205) reports that it costs approximately $4,000 per year to keep one youngster in a state reformatory. The above facts are more significant when predictions of population increase are considered. It is estimated that by 1970 there will be 40 million from the age of ten to nineteen. By 1980 there will be 47 million young people.

Delinquency patterns in other countries are similar to those of the United States. The Department of Economics (1) reports that in nineteen European countries special institutions provide long-term care of juveniles. Many countries report that street-corner gangs have become conspicuous and are the cause of mass riots. In Sweden, motorcycle gangs have caused riots in cities where motorcycle races were scheduled. Mindendorff's report (5) to the United Nations in 1960 indicates that among nineteen countries the
most frequent delinquent behavior involved automobile theft for temporary use. Such theft has increased in the United States and other countries correspondingly to the increased usage of automobiles since World War II. Other common offenses in these countries and the United States are other types of stealing and vandalism. Sex delinquency is a frequent offense among girls.

Shulman (5, p. 7) pointed out that reports of serious misconduct of youths have come from areas hitherto relatively free from social breakdown, such as in rural areas and small towns and in middle-class groups of urban society. High delinquency rates in certain outlying areas are due to social deterioration of the areas. McCord (4, p. 301) reports that the rapid pace of changes in values, family mobility, unprecedented prosperity have a tremendous impact on family living and children.

Juvenile delinquency is a community problem. No single agency working alone can prevent or control delinquency. Not even the powerful police force can succeed as a single controlling agency. It can be done only by combined efforts of all citizens and all community agencies and services.

Fine (3) reports that the New York State Youth Commission subsidizes local communities up to 50 per cent of the costs of certain youth programs. This includes recreation and youth service projects such as local coordinating
councils. Through co-operative planning and the pooling of ideas and resources, ways are usually found to meet the most urgent needs.

Ellingston infers that in society's efforts to control unacceptable behavior it has been "...hacking at the branches rather than at the roots of delinquency" (2, p. 4). This statement implies the need of many facts regarding delinquency. In addition, society needs an effective method for controlling unacceptable behavior.

In summary, it seems there is a need for an effective delinquency-prevention program. This program should be based on early identification, detection, referral, and treatment of children who are surrounded by factors inimical to their wholesome development.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1. There will be a significant difference between mean scores made on the total Scale score of the K D Proneness Scale by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway and auto theft and a non-delinquent church group.

Hypothesis 2. There will be no significant difference between mean scores made on the total Scale score of the K D Proneness Scale by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway and auto theft.
Basic Assumptions and Limitations

The design of an investigation proposes certain basic assumptions and limitations.

1. It was assumed that all subjects answered the questions to the best of their ability.

2. It was assumed that all subjects had the ability to read and understand each question.

3. The number of subjects used in this study will limit any generalizations that might be made.

Definition of Terms

Delinquent. This term refers to those subjects that have been referred to the Dallas County Juvenile Detention Home for runaway or auto theft.

Non-Delinquent. This term denotes those subjects that have no prior juvenile record and they attend church regularly.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER II

RELATED RESEARCH

The need to identify potential delinquents at an early stage of development has created interest in the possibility of constructing predictive devices which will select those subjects vulnerable to delinquency before adolescence is reached. A scale that contains five social factors was developed by Glueck and Glueck for the early detection of future delinquents. The Glueck Social Prediction Scale is composed of five family relationships, each of which was found to differentiate markedly between the correctional school and the non-delinquent control group. The social factors of the Glueck Scale are as follows:

1. Discipline of boy by father
2. Supervision of boy by mother
3. Affection of father for son
4. Affection of mother for boy
5. Cohesiveness of family (7, p. 261)

The Glueck study of 500 pairs of children matched according to background and characteristics revealed that the principal characteristics that differentiate the delinquent from his control are as follows:

1. Physically, in being essentially mesomorphic in constitution, (i.e., solid, closely knit, muscular); temperamentally, in being restless, energetic, impulsive, extroverted, aggressive, and often sadistic.
2. In attitude they are hostile, defiant, resentful, suspicious, stubborn, unconventional, and nonsubmissive to authority.

3. Socioculturally, in having been reared to a far greater extent than the non-delinquents in homes of little understanding, affection, stability, or moral fiber, by parents usually unfit to be effective guides and protectors or desirable symbols for emulation; and under conditions unfavorable to the building of a well-balanced and socially adequate character and conscience (superego) (7, p. 261).

The differential subcategories of the five areas concerning interpersonal family relations encompassed in the Glueck Social Prediction Table are quite sharply defined. These areas of family life may give a social worker specific targets toward which to direct therapy or a delinquent prevention program. One of the encouraging features of the applied Scale is that the worker knows that if two of the five highly divisive factors in family life were eliminated and if the new constructive influences persist, the probabilities of delinquency are substantially reduced. For example, if the efforts of the worker were to change the father's pattern of typical discipline from "overstrict" or "erratic" to "firm" but "kindly," and if the mother's supervision were changed from "unsuitable" to "suitable," then the resultant delinquency score would be reduced. Glueck states, "The factors of family life are interrelated and any breach on the front of these five crucial factors should be helpful in weakening the other divisive influences at play on a youngster" (8, p. 45).
There is a great need for more knowledge of the patterns of personality that lead to maladjustment of the juvenile. Hathaway and Monachesi state, "It is most desirable that we develop instruments permitting simple routine testing, yielding objective scores, and having sufficient reliability and validity so that wide scale, low-cost estimates of the likelihood and type of trouble for each child would be practical." (9, p. 5)

The MMPI has been used to study the personalities of delinquents. The problem of analyzing and predicting delinquency is not one of testing for abnormal characteristics, which might be symptoms of delinquency. Hathaway and Monachesi (9, p. 7) indicate that to some extent personality characteristics that predispose the individual to delinquency are normal in young people. For example, an excess of the general characteristics in a certain youth could require unusual control to prevent the occurrence of antisocial acts. One could safely predict that persons prone to delinquency would be the most likely to show undesirable behavior, provided they had abundant energy.

Hathaway and Monachesi maintain that delinquency, as seen from individual case to individual case, "...manifests multiple personality patterns and such recognized deviations are isolated among the juvenile offenders." (9, p. 9)
Caditz (4) investigated the effect of a training school on delinquent boys to see if their scores on the MMPI would be similar to non-delinquent boys. The training-school boys made noticeable improvement in many areas during their institutional experience, but the non-delinquent boys made similar changes. The delinquent boys from an unbroken family scored higher on the Pd scale, which predicts antisocial behavior, than did delinquents from broken families.

Hathaway and Monachesi (9, p. 53) administered the MMPI to 1,958 unselected ninth-grade boys in Minneapolis. Their profiles were checked at two and four-year intervals with reference to delinquency proneness. The data indicated that boys with rebellious, excitable, or schizoid traits (MMPI Scales 4, 8, 9) are most prone to delinquency. Similar results were found by Caditz (4) when he investigated the effect of training school on delinquent boys.

Delinquent behavior does not develop overnight. The misbehaving child usually displays many symptoms of potential patterns of undesirable behavior before adolescence is reached. Balogh (2) investigated two groups of high school boys that were considered to be of high morale but who had no record of delinquency. These two groups were administered the K D Proneness Scale along with a group of boys considered to be delinquent. The results indicated differences between the groups.
Dinitz, Reckless, and Kay (5) investigated a high delinquency area to determine if the potential delinquent had adverse self concepts as measured by the California Psychological Inventory. Their study supported the thesis that an inappropriate self concept is an important component in delinquency.

It is difficult to understand that the human personality is not born a finished product. In a study of the influence of delinquency areas on delinquent behavior, Ellingston (6, p. 25) implied far the greater part of personality is influenced by the people and things with which the individual is in constant interaction. The personality is constantly changing by the interaction of elements of the environment. Knowledge, beliefs, and moral values are influenced by important others. These are carried forward by the interaction of other minds.

In studies with socially successful and socially unsuccessful children Bonney (3) found that the interpersonal relationships of children revealed that the most popular child was characterized by socially overt behavior. Inter-personal relationships form that part of the functional concept of the total personality as an integrated functional unit that yields valuable information, for studying the individual in his life situation.
The basic psychological needs that the family and the rest of society must satisfy are the same for all human beings. Ellingston (6, p. 33) implies that the sciences have defined the most important psychological needs as the need for emotional security and the need for adequacy. Security refers to the inner certainty of belonging and of being loved and wanted.

Alexander (1) used the Rorschach Test, environmental studies, and the psychiatric interview to study delinquency. Alexander's findings indicate that the mental health of delinquent boys does not compare with that of the non-delinquent. His study implied that the delinquent group expressed their conflicts by acting out, whereas the non-delinquent expressed their attitudes in activities that were socially harmless.

If the home, school, and community fail to satisfy the irresistible need of the child to belong and to be wanted they may drive him to look for satisfaction in the street gang or wherever the child can find it. Ellington (6, p. 35) concludes that to maintain the right to belong in a gang the child will adopt whatever code of behavior the gang prescribe regardless of how much it conflicts with society's standards.

In summary, many studies have been conducted to find the causes of delinquency, but few have been concerned with
specific offenses by juvenile delinquents. If data were available on specific offenses in relation to age, sex, and family background, possible delinquency prevention programs directed toward recidivism should be effective.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Subjects

Delinquent subjects included in this study were selected from referrals of the Dallas County Juvenile Detention Home, Dallas, Texas, during the months from August, 1963 through May, 1964. The referrals were selected on basis of age, sex, race, and offense. The delinquent boys ranged in age from fourteen to sixteen years. Their first delinquent offenses were runaway or auto theft. Each delinquent group contained thirty-five boys. All subjects were residents of Dallas County.

The non-delinquent subjects included in this study were selected groups of boys ranging in age from fourteen to sixteen years, who attended Sunday school classes on a regular basis in two large churches in Dallas, Texas. Juvenile Department records and Dallas Police Department records indicated that these subjects did not have a record of delinquency at the time of this investigation. Members of the two churches exceeded 11,000 in population. Their socio-economic status represented upper-lower and lower-middle socio-economic levels.
Instrument

All subjects were administered the K D Proneness Scale to determine if the Scale would differentiate between two groups of delinquent boys versus a non-delinquent group. The test was taken by the subjects individually and not as a group.

The K D Proneness Scale is an instrument designed to identify potential delinquents. The items in the K D Proneness Scale were derived from those areas in which significant differences between delinquents and non-delinquents exist. Using these items as focal points, Kvaraceus constructed the Scale.

The K D Proneness Scale contains 75 four-choice items that are scored on a plus and minus scale. A plus score was assigned to those items that indicate proneness to delinquency, whereas a minus score was assigned to items that indicate non-delinquency. Since only those items which differentiate between delinquency and non-delinquency are scored, the total scores discriminate between the two groups. The test score which is based on a total Scale score, represents the difference between the plus and minus scores.

High positive scores indicate attitudes and opinions that closely resemble those of delinquents. High negative scores indicate responses typical of non-delinquents. In
the KDProneness Scale Manual of Directions, Kvaraceus (2) presents data from investigations that indicate the Scale discriminates the delinquent from the non-delinquent. In a study of two groups of airmen, of which 68 were confined in the prison of an Air Force Base and 123 of which were never convicted by civil or military courts, the Scale revealed a significant difference between the two groups. It was concluded that the KDProneness Scale does identify potential delinquents by their total Scale scores.

Procedures for Treating Data

The data relative to the two hypotheses were treated statistically by the analysis of variance technique to determine if there were significant differences among the groups. In addition, two other methods for analyzing the data were used. Fisher's t, as illustrated by Edwards (1), was employed to compare the mean scores of the three groups, and a detailed examination of the responses to each scale item was conducted for further refinement of the data.
CHAPTER BIBLIOGRAPHY


CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data relative to the two hypotheses stated in Chapter I were treated statistically by the analysis of variance technique to determine if there were significant differences among groups. Since the analysis of variance revealed there were significant differences among the groups, the \( t \) technique was used to determine the location of the difference. An evaluation of item response of the Scale was conducted to determine if more specific differences existed.

The following hypotheses as stated in Chapter I were investigated:

Hypothesis I. There will be significant differences between mean scores made on the total Scale score of the \textit{K D Proneness Scale} by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft and a non-delinquent church group.

Hypothesis II. There will be no significant differences between mean scores made on the total Scale score of the \textit{K D Proneness Scale} by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway and auto theft.
Statistical Data

The data in Table I indicate there were significant differences among the groups at the 1 per cent level of significance.

TABLE I

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE OF THE K D PRONENESS SCALE FOR THE TWO DELINQUENT GROUPS AND A GROUP OF NON-DELINQUENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
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<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td>3140.24</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1570.12</td>
<td>19.389*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td>8259.96</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>80.9804</td>
<td>......</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>11400.20</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>...........</td>
<td>......</td>
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</table>

*Significant at the 1 per cent level of confidence.

Table II indicates that a significant difference existed at either the 5 per cent or 1 per cent level of confidence on the K D Proneness Scale scores between two delinquent groups and a non-delinquent group.

The data in Table II indicate there were significant differences between the delinquent and non-delinquent groups but there were no differences between the two delinquent groups. As indicated in Table II significant differences between the church group and the delinquent group were at the 1 per cent level of significance. Table II reveals
no significant differences between the delinquent groups at the 5 per cent level of significance.

TABLE II
NUMBER OF SUBJECTS, MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION, t, AND LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE FISHER t TEST FOR COMPARISON OF GROUP MEANS OF TWO DELINQUENT GROUPS VERSUS A GROUP OF NON-DELINQUENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>K D Proneness Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Runaway</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Auto Theft</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Church</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Significant t value: (.05) ≥ 2.032
(.01) ≥ 2.728

In summary, the problem of this study was to determine if juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft differ significantly from a non-delinquent church group as measured by the K D Proneness Scale. The two delinquent group means were examined to determine if a significant difference existed. The data offer support for Hypothesis I since significant differences did occur between mean scores on the K D Proneness Scale among juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft and a non-delinquent church group that had no record of delinquency.
Hypothesis II was also supported since there were no significant differences between mean scores made on the KP D Proneness Scale by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft.

In order to examine more specific differences among the groups an examination of the items on each question of the Scale was conducted. The responses revealed the following information:

1. High positive scores were made by 80 per cent of the juvenile delinquent group on the question relating to choice of occupation. On this question only 20 per cent of the church group responded in the same manner.

2. Members of the two delinquent groups expressed in 80 per cent of their responses that they considered finding a job after graduating was most important; whereas 50 per cent of the church group considered going to college more important than working immediately after completing high school.

3. Members of the delinquent groups placed the blame on friends as their reason for them getting into trouble in 60 per cent of their responses. The choices made by 80 per cent of the church group placed the blame on friends.

4. The responses made by 70 per cent of the runaway delinquent group and 37 per cent of the auto-theft group were that the most popular boy never gets into mischief.
The response of 68 per cent of the church group were identical to that made by delinquents.

5. The responses of 85 per cent of the church group, as compared to 70 per cent of the two delinquent groups, were that going to college was necessary for success.

6. Responses indicated delinquency proneness among the church group concerning the occupation that they preferred least. The responses of 75 per cent of the church group as compared with only 45 per cent of the two delinquent groups indicated the least wanted occupation as that of crooner.

7. Members of the delinquent runaway group responded that they worried about their family all the time in 65 per cent of their answers. The members of the auto theft and church groups indicated they were concerned about their family some of the time in 10 per cent of their answers.

The two groups showed similarity of responses on two delinquent and nine non-delinquent questions.

1. The three groups made similar responses to particular games they liked best. Members of all three groups chose the game of checkers, which is considered a delinquent response. The auto theft group chose this response 90 per cent of the time whereas the other delinquent group chose this response in 75 per cent of their responses. The church group selected this response in 80 per cent of their reactions.
2. School was considered necessary for success by the three groups as indicated by 95 per cent of their responses.

3. Responses of 90 per cent of all three groups were that students who attend school regularly make the best marks.

4. Members of all three groups chose going to a movie once a week 95 per cent of the time.

5. Responses of the members of all groups agreed over 90 per cent of the time that being successful meant having respect of others.

6. Members of the three groups agreed in 85 per cent of their reactions that cheating in school is done by a few bad persons.

7. Responses of the members of all groups agreed 87 per cent of the time that the best teachers were the ones that are fairly hard.

8. Members of the three groups agreed in 80 per cent of their answers that most teachers know what they are talking about on subject matter.

9. Members of all groups chose blue as their favorite color in 90 per cent of their responses.

10. All groups were in agreement that school was doing them some good. This response was given in 80 per cent of the answers by the members of each group.
11. Members of all groups responded that they were looking forward to leaving home sometime in 90 per cent of their answers.

Discussion

Differences existed among the responses of church group and delinquent groups on items that were related to school, occupational choice, work habits, and family relationship. Many delinquents indicated that they preferred to work rather than to attend school. Most of the responses of the church group implied they considered a professional occupation important. Members of the delinquent group preferred athletics rather than science or writing as future employment. An interesting difference was noted between the groups in that the delinquents who had runaway worried about their family all the time, but the members of the church group and the auto theft group were concerned about their family only some of the time.

Similarities that were observed between the church group and delinquent groups were in their choices of favorite color and games. Checkers was considered to be the favorite game among the groups and blue was the favorite color. All groups indicated by their responses that attending school regularly and going to a movie once a week were most important. Although many studies reveal that juveniles do not like school, the members of the delinquent group in
this study were in agreement that teachers usually know what they are talking about.

The individual Scale scores of several delinquents identified them with the non-delinquent population. A number of members of the church group chose several items considered to be delinquent responses, but the total Scale score of only one subject was identified as a potential delinquent. Even though Kvaraceus proposes that only the total score be used in differentiating between the delinquent and non-delinquent adjustment, the evaluation of the Scale items revealed delinquents differ considerably from non-delinquents in such areas as family relationship, school, and selection of occupation, but are quite similar in choice of color, favorite games, and attitudes toward authority.
CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine if juvenile delinquents whose first offense was runaway or auto theft differ significantly, as a group, from a non-delinquent group that attend church, as measured by the mean scores on the K D Proneness Scale. The hypotheses investigated were:

1) There will be a significant difference between mean scores made on the total Scale score of the K D Proneness Scale by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft and a non-delinquent church group.

2) There will be no significant difference between mean scores made on the total Scale score of the K D Proneness Scale by juvenile delinquents whose first offenses were runaway or auto theft. This investigation revealed a significant difference between the two delinquent groups and the church group, but it revealed no significant difference between the two delinquent groups.

An evaluation of the Scale confirms other research studies on delinquency. This data revealed delinquents differ significantly from non-delinquents in such areas as school, companionship, selection of occupation, and family
relationship. This is not to imply that every delinquent differs from every non-delinquent in these areas. The evaluation of items showed evidence of considerable overlapping between groups on many of the variables studied.

Several of the Scale scores of delinquents indicated that they identified with the non-delinquent population. As a group these subjects were considered delinquents. Their non-delinquent Scale score may have resulted because they were "first offenders." Scale scores of the church group indicated that all but one identified with the non-delinquent population.

The reliability of the Scale has been established through various studies, but research concerning the use of the Scale in predicting a specific offense is limited. Many juveniles are apprehended by the police, but are never referred to the authorities. It would be interesting to know how these juveniles would score on the Scale when compared to those that are caught in their first delinquent act.

An area of research that would benefit society in its efforts to prevent delinquency and to prescribe treatment might include studies of delinquent personality patterns as related to proneness to commit types of specific offenses.

Recidivism among delinquents has caused many investigators to be concerned about their behavior. Many recidivist
commit the same offense individually and sometimes as members of gangs. Research is needed to determine the relationship of age to the commission of the first offense and to determine the importance of peer influence upon the commission of second offenses.

Since there are similar items chosen by all groups, possible re-evaluation and revision of the test items may be necessary to obtain scores that would distinguish more specifically between delinquents and non-delinquents. In its present form, the K D Proneness Scale is considered to be a valuable test for use in spot checking and identifying juveniles who may be unsusceptible to the development of delinquent behavior.
### APPENDIX

#### RAW DATA FOR K D PRONENESS SCALE

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