Youth Gun Culture in Caribbean Countries: Gender and Age Differences

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Literature Review: Caribbean Youth and Gun Culture
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
Introduction

- Role as Consultant
- Context of Work
  - Jamaica
  - Saint Lucia
  - St. Kitts
  - Antigua and Barbuda
  - Trinidad & Tobago
Research Questions

• Do youth in Caribbean countries have different perceptions of gun culture by their gender and age?

• How do different aspects of youth gun culture correlate with other risk and protective factors at family and school levels?
Literature Review

- Gender and age - Predictors of victimization (Dixon et al., 2006)
  - Younger people more prone to victimization
    - Young men, specifically; also more likely to be committer
  - Bullying is a significant risk for youth, especially if in a social minority group
  - Risk of experiencing violent crime drops with age
Literature Review, cont’d. (2)

- *Individual* risk factors of violence in Caribbean & Latin America include:
  - Age, education, family, income, youth, male, gun ownership, etc. (Imbusch et al., 2011)
  - Caribbean youth (<21 y/o) commit unequally more crime (Pantin, 1996)
  - These factors “explain the correlates and causes of violent crime” (Imbusch, Misse, & Carrion, 2011)
  - In Caribbean use of guns in crime linked with drug-trafficking (UNODC & World Bank, 2007)

- *Family /Community* risk factors include:
  - High unemployment & residential mobility, poverty
  - Closeness to drug trade,
  - Inadequate or loose school policies,
  - Gender inequality {customs supporting male dominance and general violence}
  - Weak criminal justice system, access to weapons (Imbusch et al., 2011)
Youth crime and violence seeing constant growth in the Caribbean (Parra-Torrado, 2014; UNODC & World Bank, 2007)

Guns and youth violence also are a surmounting issue (UNODC & World Bank, 2007)

Economic costs of youth crime in certain Caribbean countries estimates between 3-4% of GDP (Parra-Torrado, 2014)
Methods: Sample

- 512 youth in five CARICOM member states:
  - Jamaica (n = 179, 34.9%)
  - Antigua and Barbuda (n = 110, 21.5%)
  - Trinidad and Tobago (n = 50, 9.8%)
  - Saint Lucia (n = 47, 9.2%)
  - St. Kitts (n = 26, 5.1%)
Methods: Data Collection

- Initial surveys were pilot-tested in Jamaica and revised for the final use in five CARICOM states
- The final paper-based surveys were administered to study participants during the summer of 2014
- The surveys included 51 items assessing:
  - Youth’s violent behaviors developed by OJJDP
  - Risk and protective factors at individual, family, and school levels (e.g., PSSB instrument)
Methods: Measures

- Youth gun culture
  - Community norms against gun carrying measured by one item on a five-point scale: *Felt adults in your community would think it is wrong to take a weapon/gun to school*
  - Easy access to guns measured by one item on a five-point scale: *Felt it would be easy to get guns*
  - Peer involvement in gun carrying measured by one item on a five-point scale: *I have close friends who have carried a gun to school*
- Youth demographics
  - **Gender**: Males = 1; Females = 2
  - **Age groups**: 11-13 age = 1; 14-16 age = 2; 17-19 age = 3
Methods: Measures

- Family risk and protective factors
  - The family history of violence and crimes measured by three five-point items (e.g., I lived with someone who was a problem drinker or abused drugs)
  - Family cohesion measured by six five-point items (e.g., I feel that my family loves me)

- School risk and protective factors
  - Exposure/witness to gang activity measured by four five-point items (e.g., I am able to list 5 or more incidents of gang activity in my school)
  - Being bullied measured by two five-point items (e.g., I am made fun of for failing in school)
  - Unsafe school environments measured by four five-point items (e.g., I am afraid of being a victim of a fight or other forms of violence in my school)
  - School bonding measured by twelve five-point items reflecting four constructs: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief
# Participants’ Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11-13</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age</td>
<td>38.5%</td>
<td>61.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>29.6%</td>
<td>25.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-16</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
<td>63.8%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age</td>
<td>65.2%</td>
<td>34.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>243</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within age</td>
<td>48.0%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% within gender</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Perceived Causes of School Violence

- Gang members' moving to school/community: 86, 27%
- Easy access to drugs and guns: 47, 15%
- Lack of positive activities: 42, 13%
- Family problems: 28, 9%
- Need to feel love and belonging: 28, 9%
- Problems in school/Boredom: 27, 9%
- Other: 19, 6%
- Un-caring teachers: 16, 5%
- Power, protection, and money: 11, 3%
- Poverty: 13, 4%

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Community Norms against Weapon/Gun Carrying: Gender and Age Differences

For Gender:
- Male: 3.47
- Female: 3.39
- t = .476, p = .634

For Age:
- 11-13: 3.47
- 14-16: 3.47
- 17-19: 3.00
- F = 1.494, p = .226
Easy Access to Guns: Gender and Age Differences

- For males: \( t = 4.176, p < .001 \)
- For females: \( t = 1.54 \)

- For age groups:
  - \( F = 8.061, p < .001 \)
  - Post hoc Tukey's HSD: 11-13, 14-16 < 17-19
Peer Involvement in Gun Carrying: Gender and Age Differences

Male
Female

1.38 1.25

11-13 14-16 17-19

1.27 1.29 1.58

$t = 1.394, p = .164$

$F = 2.062, p = .128$
Peer Involvement in Gun Carrying: Interaction of Gender and Age

F = 3.589, p < .05
## Correlations between Youth Gun Culture and Risk/Protective Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Community norms against gun carrying</th>
<th>Easy access to guns</th>
<th>Peer involvement in gun carrying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family history of</td>
<td>-0.042</td>
<td>0.278***</td>
<td>0.296***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>violence/crime</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family cohesion</td>
<td>0.201**</td>
<td>-0.100*</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School factors</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure/witness to</td>
<td>-0.069</td>
<td>0.188***</td>
<td>0.160**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gang activity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being bullied</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>0.076</td>
<td>0.155**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsafe school</td>
<td>-0.117*</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>0.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School bonding</td>
<td>0.196***</td>
<td>0.108*</td>
<td>0.068</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. The numbers indicate Pearson correlation coefficients.

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001
Discussion

- Solutions to a societal issue must involve *gender analysis* – founded on fact, not expectations (Schalkwyk, 2000)
- Much of outcomes today begin early in school
- More specific research is needed
- Some limitations in sample size and 1\textsuperscript{st} of its kind study
References


References


Thank you and Q & A