



# Risk Factors Posed By Waterfront Shanty Settlements on juvenile Delinquents In Rivers State, Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of the research was to investigate “Risk Factors Posed by Waterfront Shanty Settlements on Juvenile Delinquents in Rivers State, Nigeria”. 3 study questions and 3 objectives were selected. Consequently, “Agnew’s General Strain Theory” was exploited to comprehend and relate the variables. The qualitative research design adopted for this research is “Case Study” with a sample size of 10 participants. The multi-staged sampling approach (criterion sampling & snowball sampling techniques) was adopted. Using an in-depth interview data was gathered from the field, compiled and analyzed through “inductive thematic analysis”. Findings indicated that the major crimes or delinquent acts committed in the waterfront shanty settlements are alcohol/drug abuse; shoplifting; stealing/theft; vandalism; pickpocketing; assault and prostitution. The findings also show that factors that make juveniles commit delinquent acts (crimes) in the shanty settlement include: poverty; lack of basic amenities; unemployment; single-parenthood; peer influence; low household income; substance abuse; household violence and absence of schooling. The initiatives taken by shanty dwellers towards the remedy of juvenile delinquency were: build schools; provide basic amenities; provide jobs; provide good housing; eradicate poverty through feeding scheme and relocate shanties to better housing neighborhood. It was recommended among others that juveniles from low-income homes are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour, thus efforts

to improve their living conditions should focus on families especially from the shanty settlements. Also, there is need for change in the way the law is applied through juvenile courts, thus, emphasizing restorative justice because most juvenile offenders are themselves victims of the system; hence, juveniles who have committed crimes should face trial in a special juvenile court where their rights can be fully protected.

**Keywords:** *Risk Factors, Juvenile Delinquency, Shanty, Waterfront Shanty Settlement.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

A plethora of questions arise for the metropolis of the twenty-first century, challenges comparable to waterfront shanty settlements. Over time, waterfronts have come to mean different things in different parts of the world, but scholars (Giovinazzo, & Giovinazzi, 2008; Giovinazzi, & Moretti, 2010) agree that they are important parts of many cities and play a big role in the social, political, and economic life of the places where they are found and developed (Hussein, 2014). Today, it's not news that a lot of city residents live in poor shanty or slum areas but what might be news, though, is how many of these city residents live in shanties along the waterfronts of cities, especially in developing countries like Nigeria.

Shanty settlements are also known as squatter settlements, slums, inappropriate housing, informal settlements, and/or unplanned communities. UN-Habitat (2016) defines shanty towns as "illegal or unauthorized settlements



characterized by substandard housing made of plastic sheets, corrugated metal, or cardboard boxes". Burra (2005) drew comparisons between squatter groups and slums, noting that both are characterized by squalor and less expensive housing due to the usage of flimsy materials. A slum is a collection of dilapidated houses constructed from abandoned materials such as wood and corrugated iron sheets (Armistead & Kumar, 2000). According to UN-Habitat (2016), slums are characterized by the absence of infrastructure such as paved streets, sewage systems, and other contemporary amenities.

The term "risk factor" refers to "those features, variables, or dangers that, if present for a given individual, make it more likely that this individual, as opposed to someone selected at random from the general population, will acquire a condition" (Mrazek & Haggerty, 1994:127). A higher likelihood of future criminal behaviour is indicated by the presence of a risk factor, as noted by Kazdin, et. al., (1997). Several studies (Hawkins et al., 1998; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998) in the field of juvenile justice have established a causal relationship between risk variables and delinquency. The following is expanded upon in Youth Violence: A Report of the Surgeon General (2001):

"Understanding the developmental timing of risk and protective factors is crucial for designing effective interventions to reduce violent behaviour. This kind of work is more likely to succeed if it is tailored to the specific developmental level of the young person receiving it. What works well with kids might not work so well with teenagers, and vice versa. Furthermore, intervention programmes that aim to reduce the recurrence of violence may focus on distinct risk and protective factors than those aimed at in violence prevention".

According to research by Herrenkohl, et. al., (2000), a ten-year-old who is exposed to six or more risk variables is ten times more likely to conduct a violent act by the time he or she is eighteen than a ten-year-old who is exposed to only one risk factor. Just as it's crucial for people working to customize preventative programmes to specific factors to know the age range or developmental period during which a youth is exposed to a risk factor, so too is knowing the age range or developmental period during which exposure occurred.

According to the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI, 2021), the worldwide multidimensional poverty index (MPI) estimates that 17.5 percent of Nigerians are poor, with 32.8 percent living in extreme poverty. This was clear since Nigeria suffered a terrible economic

slump and depression between 2016 and 2017 in which during this period, the crime rate grew dramatically, not to mention the criminal acts of adolescents (OPHI, 2021). According to a report published by Amnesty International in October 2011, many of the 200,000 people living in shantytowns along the waterfront in Rivers State, southern Nigeria, would be left homeless and without means to support themselves if they were forcibly evicted from their homes without proper consultation, notice, compensation, or alternative housing. The apparent economic stressor tends to drive juveniles, particularly those from the shanties, to participate in many sorts of deviant and criminal activity in order to survive.

According to Shaw & McKay (1942), a community's economic health is one of the most important factors in explaining the range of crime rates. Particularly, low-income neighbourhoods don't have the means to mount a coordinated defense of their interests. This view was summed up by Kornhauser (1978: 78-79) as follows:

There is a dearth of funding and expertise in underprivileged communities' institutions. There is a lack of resources and knowledge across all levels of society, from the individual to the nation. Additionally, the slum's less resourceful populace does not produce the intermediary structures seen in richer and more educated neighbourhoods. Community-wide connections would be shaky at best and impossible to develop in the absence of intermediate structures.

Shaw & McKay (1942) discovered persistent inverse correlations between numerous measures of neighbourhood socioeconomic status and criminal activity. However, this research try to examine the various challenges juveniles face in the waterfront shanties and how it advances their delinquent careers. While it is true that crime rates tend to be greater in poorer neighbourhoods, several studies conducted in the 1950s and 1960s indicated that this correlation is illusory and no longer holds if additional neighbourhood variables are considered (e.g., Bordua, 1961; Lander, 1954; Polk, 1967). It has been argued that the level of anomie or integration in a community, rather than its economic condition, is reflected in its delinquency rate (see, for example, Lander, 1954). On the other hand, other scholars have claimed that economic hardship is a significant predictor of youth violence even when controlling for other factors (Baron, 2004; Bellair, Roscigno & McNulty, 2003; Eisler & Schissel, 2004).

Numerous studies such as: In their study "Parents, Neighbors, and Youth Crime,"



Dáz&Patacchini (2020) looked at the relationships between adults in the community and juvenile delinquency. Galster, et. al. (2016) "Adolescent Neighborhood Context and Young Adult Economic Outcomes for Low-Income African Americans and Latinos"; Livingston, et.al. (2014) on "Criminal Neighborhoods: Does the Density of Prior Offenders in an Area Encourage others to Commit Crime?" used a natural experimental allocation of social housing in Copenhagen to investigate the influence of neighbours on the criminal behaviour of adolescents (ages 14-29); This research uses ten years' worth of crime statistics for Glasgow; Ludwig & Katz (2004) on "Neighborhood Effects on Crime for Female and Male Youth: Evidence from a Randomized Housing Voucher Experiment" investigated the hypothesis that higher concentrations of repeat offenders in a given area are associated with an increase in the likelihood that residents will also repeat their criminal behavior; Jeffrey, Kling & Liebman (2004) paper "Experimental Analysis of Neighborhood Effects on Youth" is one such example. They investigate how leaving high-poverty neighbourhoods affects the lives of teenagers, who are assumed to be particularly vulnerable to the negative consequences of living there; Damm&Dustmann (2014) investigate "Does Growing Up in a High Crime Neighborhood Affect Youth Criminal Behavior?" by looking at the consequences of leaving high-poverty communities on the outcomes of teenage youth, who are frequently considered as most at risk from the negative effects of such neighbourhoods. Using a unique natural experiment, which occurred between 1986 and 1998 when refugee immigrants to Denmark were assigned to neighbourhoods quasi-randomly, this research examines the impact of early exposure to local crime on eventual criminal behaviour of juveniles. Thus, leaving a gap on how shanty neighborhoods induce delinquent behaviour among juveniles. It is therefore, the aim of this inquiry to enquire on the risk factors posed by waterfront shanty settlements on juvenile delinquents in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### STUDY OBJECTIVES

- i. identify the prevalent types of delinquent acts among juveniles in waterfront shanty settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria;
- ii. determine challenges that induce urban poor juveniles into certain delinquent crimes in waterfront slum settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria;
- iii. examine the initiatives taken by shanty dwellers towards the remedy of juvenile

delinquency in waterfront shanty settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What are the prevalent types of delinquent acts among juveniles in waterfront shanty settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- ii. What are the challenges that induce urban poor juveniles into certain delinquent crimes in waterfront shanty settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria?
- iii. What are the initiatives taken by shanty dwellers towards the remedy of juvenile delinquency in waterfront shanty settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria?

### Agnew's General Strain Theory

General strain theory was developed by Robert Agnew in 1985. Agnew also recognized that Robert King Merton did initially put forward the strain theory which was criticized to be limited in terms of variety of possible sources of strain and tension in the society especially when it involves youths.

Merton (1963), stated that innovation occurs when society insist on socially desirable and approved goals but do not offer sufficient means to attain the set conventional goals through a legitimate path. Eventually, sure members of society who find themselves in such position of financial strain and wish to attain economic success will resort to crime to be able to attain socially acceptable goals. Agnew actually supports this assumption but he also believes that in dealing with youths, there are various other factors to be considered that can propel criminal and deviant behaviours. General strain theory was structured partially to address the criticisms brought forward against previous versions of strain theory.

"General strain theory states that people engage in crime because they experience certain strains or stressors". - (Robert Agnew, 2001).

Agnew (2006) argues that the most recent iteration of strain theory, the general strain theory, offers a fresh perspective on criminal behaviour. General strain theory is the only major theory of crime and delinquency that emphasizes the significance of negative emotions in the aetiology of offending, in contrast to control and learning theories.

General strain theory posits that when people are under a lot of pressure, they are more likely to feel unpleasant emotions like anger, frustration, depression, and despair, which can then



lead to pressures for corrective action, one of which is delinquency (Brezina, 2017).

Agnew (2001) expanded the definition of strain which included conditions of events that are disliked by individuals. Agnew's definition and types of strain did encompassed the types of strains that can most likely lead to crime and delinquency, Agnew also stated that strain refers to events and condition that are disliked by individuals, strains fall into the three general categories. Agnew's three major type of strains:

- The lack of ability to attain positively valued goals.
- Threat to remove or the act of removing positively valued stimuli.
- The presentation of a threat to one with negatively or noxious valued stimuli.

According to Agnew (2001) juvenile delinquents may turn to crime as a means to cope with stress (e.g., Engaging in theft or cyber fraud to gain needed money). Here, crime may serve as a means of exacting vengeance on the sources of strain, as well as a means of reducing the impact of negative emotion emitted by strains (e.g., abusing illicit these strains and can lead to a range of notable negative emotions such as depression, anger, and frustration, and when this occurs among juveniles, it frequently reduces social control, leading to juvenile delinquency). This is because parents, teachers, employers, and other significant persons may reject such aberrant behavior and impose harsh consequences on them; such sanctions may be perceived as negative treatment, leading to criminality as a result. Strains, according to Agnew (2001), can promote the formation of pro-crime attitudes. Juveniles who are repeatedly abused by others, for example, may come to believe that violence is an acceptable response to the

punishments they get. Strains, according to Agnew & Brezina (1997), enhance the chance of individuals joining criminal organizations, which they see as a solution to strains. Juvenile delinquents, for example, join gangs in order to fulfill their economic and social ambitions.

From this theoretical standpoint, it behaves on us to understand that many juveniles engage in crime as a result of trying to achieve societal goals by cutting corners and improvising their own avenues and means to the stipulated goals. Juveniles compare themselves to their peers who seem to be doing a lot better, or when youths believe that they are not being treated fairly by a parent or a significant other such perceptions many results in several negative and criminal activities (Siegel & Welsh, 2008). This research work is hinged on the general strain theory. Research indicates that these strains increase the likelihood of crime among juvenile delinquents thereby bring about recidivism. Such research supports that central proposition of general strain theory and is the main reason general strain theory is one of the leading theories of crime (Agnew, 2001, 2012; Kubrin et al. 2009).

## II. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative research design adopted for this research is "Case Study" because all the nominated participants share a unifying factor and have a direct and indirect connection to the research questions and variables being studied. The study area covered selected waterfront shantytown settlements (Njemanze; Bundu-Ama; Abonnema Wharf; Elechi Beach; Cemetery waterside and Nanka) in Rivers State, Nigeria with a combined population of 90,982 (Amnesty International, 2010).

**Table 1:** Population Distribution of Selected Waterfront Shanty Settlements in Rivers State, Nigeria

S/N	Selected Slum Settlements	Population	Sample Size
1	Bundu-Ama waterfront settlement	28,460	2
2	Elechi Beach waterfront settlement	14,070	2
3	Njemanze waterfront settlement	17,150	2
4	Cemetery waterfront settlement	12,000	2
5	Nanka waterfront settlement	9,200	1
6	Abonnema Wharf waterfront settlement	10,102	1
	<b>Total =</b>	<b>90,982</b>	<b>10</b>

**Source:** Compiled by the researcher, (2022).

The sample size espoused for the study is 10 participants, gotten via the multi-staged sampling approach (criterion sampling & snowball sampling techniques). In using the criterion sampling, the

nominated participants had to meet-up the inclusive criteria, while snow ball sampling technique was utilized to aid the administering of the interview for data collection in the respective shanty settlements.



Here, the assistance of a gatekeeper was sort after the shanty.  
due to the rogue topography and hostile nature of

**Figure 1: Inclusive and Exclusive Criteria**



**Source:** *Researcher, 2022*

Here, the snowball sampling strategystailed a gatekeeper provided access or knowledge about theparticipants, assist in identifying respondents who meet the criterions which assisted in starting the snowball process.An interactive and deep in-depth interview was administered to aid data collection, this relied in dialogue questions within a predetermined thematic context. Due to the low educational background of the participants (Slum juveniles), Nigerian Pidgin English (NPE) was used in dialogue during the interview. The N.P.E. data was later transcribed before extracting the thematic codes.The interview

sessions were guided with various open-ended questions which were formed with the aim of extracting the participant’s delinquent history.The interview’s goal was to build delinquent experiences that would be couched in Shaw and Mckay’s social disorganisation theory (1942). The questions were developed by the researcher to elicit the participant’s delinquent behaviours, causes, experiences, and events until data saturation was reached.Data gathered in the field for this exploration was compiledand analyzed through “inductive thematic analysis”.

### III. RESULTS

**Table 2: Responses to Interview Question One**(As a juvenile what is/are the major crimes or delinquent acts you have committed in the shanty settlement?Interview Responses):

S/N	PARTICIPANTS	INTERVIEW EXTRACT IN NPE
1	<i>Participant One</i>	“I steal sometimes so I can eat. I also use to fight others because they want to collect my things from me or some boys want to touch me.”
2	<i>Participant Two</i>	“Me I use to fight a lot oh!... then sometimes if person wey no sabi the area come we go pick his/her pocket, but if we no feet, we collect their bag. Sometime me and my friends dey use dagger so e go easy.”
3	<i>Participant Three</i>	“When am hungry I sometimes pretend to buy things in different shops but I go carry waitin I feet hide then I go commot for the shop. But na mainly food I dey take.”
4	<i>Participant Four</i>	“Things no easy for my house so I steal and I dey also do hookup (prostitution) for the fishermen weydey our area. E no easy sha!”
5	<i>Participant Five</i>	“I know say I young but I dey steal as money no dey to buy food. My papa done run leave my mother and my mother naashawo. I dey scatter things for people shop if dey no give me something to chop but I pray say them no go catch me beat one day oh!”



6	Participant Six	"I dey street runs and I dey smoke benson (cigarette) and egbo (indian herm). I dey also drink small sha! But not much. I dey steal from some men weydey petronise me somethings because things hard and I must survive."
7	Participant Seven	"Me I dey survive by pushing drugs for my oga. I dey also take drugs to give me mind oo! cus e no easy to do am. I dey steal sometimes and sometimes weydey use gun but we dey go another area so nobody go sabi us."
8	Participant Eight	"I went to school up to JSS 1 but as my papa wey be fisherman die for water, no more money to continue school and my mother only sells akara so the money she make is for only feeding of the house and buying some important things. I have three brothers and one sister so the money is not enough so I have to enter street (prostitution). Am also into cleaning of people houses so I thief from them especially when they are rich."
9	Participant Nine	"As money no dey, man must chop so I and my friend dey block people for road but no be for waterside. We have to thief to survive. We dey use knife sometime but we no like to attached anybody. We dey fight well well for here oh! Because some of the boys weydey cult wan dey control us but we no gre and me I no wan join cult. I dey smoke and drink, that one na normal thing."
10	Participant Ten	"I no dey go school because my mama no feet pay school fees. I no dey drink but I dey smoke cigarette. I dey run commotot house wen my mama vex me. I no sabi my papa. I dey do runs sometimes."

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

**Table 3: Responses to Interview Question Two**(What are the factors that make you committee crimes in the shanty settlement?Interview Responses):

S/N	PARTICIPANTS	INTERVIEW EXTRACT IN NPE
1	Participant One	"My parents no get money and nobody even relatives want help us."
2	Participant Two	"For area my friends introduced me into stealing and my father use to beat my mother when he is high on drugs"
3	Participant Three	"I no feet go school so my friend show me road for waitin I dey do."
4	Participant Four	"It's Obvious na, no money na! And I know get any other business to survive."
5	Participant Five	"No money for school and food no dey so I dey follow my friends for the area because sometimes them they help me."
6	Participant Six	"I start to smoke so to continue I have to do runs to buy am. You know money no dey. Hope you go find me something oh!."
7	Participant Seven	"I run commot for house as my mama discover what I dey do. I dey my friend place no. My parent live in a batcher wither my sister and there is not enough. Most time we eat once a day."
8	Participant Eight	"No money for school fees and I need money for food and to buy things I need."
9	Participant Nine	"There is no money and we no get anything for house, in short since my uncle die and we come relocate, nobody want to help us. So my new neighbor introduce me to drugs. Since I no fet go school makes I hustle and survive."
10	Participant Ten	"Food no dey because we poor so anytime I smoke e go give me motivation to hustle, sometime I know even sabi what I do until my head don calm down. My friends dey motivate me die. Na dem be my real family."

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

**Table 4: Responses to Interview Question Three**(What initiatives should be taken by shanty dwellers towards the remedy of juvenile delinquency?Interview Responses):

S/N	PARTICIPANTS	INTERVIEW EXTRACT IN NPE
1	Participant One	"Let them build school for us and make it free cus we no feet afford school"
2	Participant Two	"Make them give us work"
3	Participant Three	"Let them tell our parents to get sense cus some people mama and papa no get



		sense.”
4	Participant Four	“We need good house and toilet. No toilet for here oh!. Na inside water we dey sheet”
5	Participant Five	“Make them provide important things wey we need for this place. See as everywhere dey smell. Poverty dey here oh!”
6	Participant Six	“Life no sweet for here so make Government come help us”
7	Participant Seven	“Life hard for here oh! If money no dey to chop food, eno get wetindey feet do.”
8	Participant Eight	“Hmm Government should help create housing scheme to relocate people in the slums and provide jobs or opportunity to earn a living to live a good life.”
9	Participant Nine	“Let then help us so I and my friends can change our life style.”
10	Participant Ten	“Make them give us good hustle so we no go dey steal again.”

Source: Field Survey, 2022.

### Reviewing and Defining Emerging Common Themes: -

This study was able to flush out a collective set of themes that were common among ten participants’ juvenile delinquent experiences. The common themes are:

**Theme One (1):** Major crimes or delinquent acts committed in the shanty settlement:

- ✓ Alcohol/Drug Abuse
- ✓ Shoplifting
- ✓ Stealing/Theft
- ✓ Vandalism
- ✓ Pickpocketing
- ✓ Assault
- ✓ Prostitution

Selected interview responses (evidence) to validate the standpoint (codes):

“I steal sometimes so I can eat. I also use to fight others because they want to collect my things from me or some boys want to touch me.”

“Me I use to fight a lot oh!... then sometimes if person wey no sabi the area come we go pick his/her pocket, but if we no feet, we collect their bag. Sometime me and my friends dey use dagger so e go easy.”

“When am hungry I sometimes pretend to buy things in different shops but I go carry waitin I feet hide then I go commot for the shop. But na mainly food I dey take.”

“Things no easy for my house so I steal and I dey also do hookup (prostitution) for the fishermen weydey our area. E no easy sha!”

“I dey street runs and I dey smoke benson (cigarette) and egbo (indian herm). I dey also drink small sha! But not much. I dey steal from some men weydey petronise me somethings because things hard and I must survive.”

“Me I dey survive by pushing drugs for my oga. I dey also take drugs to give me mind oo! cus e no easy to do am. I dey steal sometimes and sometimes

weydey use gun but we dey go another area so nobody go sabi us.”

“As money no dey, man must chop so I and my friend dey block people for road but no be for waterside. We have to thief to survive. We dey use knife sometime but we no like to attached anybody. We dey fight well well for here oh! Because some of the boys weydey cult wan dey control us but we no gre and me I no wan join cult. I dey smoke and drink, that one na normal thing.”

**Theme Two (2):** Factors that make juveniles commit delinquent acts (crimes) in the shanty settlement:

- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Lack of basic amenities
- ✓ Unemployment
- ✓ Single-parenthood
- ✓ Peer Influence
- ✓ Low Household Income
- ✓ Substance Abuse
- ✓ Household Violence
- ✓ Absence of Schooling

Selected interview responses (evidence) to validate the standpoint (codes):

“For area my friends introduced me into stealing and my father use to beat my mother when he is high on drugs”

“No money for school and food no dey so I dey follow my friends for the area because sometimes them they help me.”

“I start to smoke so to continue I have to do run to buy am. You know money no dey. Hope you go find me something oh!”

“I run commot for house as my mama discover what I dey do. I dey my friend place no. My parent live in a batcher wither my sister and there is not enough. Most time we eat once a day.”

“No money for school fees and I need money for food and to buy things I need.”



*“There is no money and we no get anything for house, in short since my uncle die and we come relocate, nobody want to help us. So my new neighbor introduce me to drugs. Since I no fit go school makes I hustle and survive.”*

*“Food no dey because we poor so anytime I smoke e go give me motivation to hustle, sometime I know even sabi what I do until my head don calm down. My friends dey motivate me die. Na dem be my real family.”*

**Theme Three (3):** Initiatives taken by shanty dwellers towards the remedy of juvenile delinquency. From the interview responses, the ten of the participants Suggested initiatives in which shanty dwellers can use as remedies against juvenile delinquency:

- ✓ Build schools
- ✓ Provide basic amenities
- ✓ Provide jobs
- ✓ Provide good housing
- ✓ Eradicate poverty
- ✓ Feeding scheme
- ✓ Relocate shanties to better hosing neighborhood

Selected interview responses (evidence) to validate the standpoint (codes):

*“Let them build school for us and make it free cus we no feet afford school”*

*“Make them give us work”*

*“We need good house and toilet. No toilet for here oh!. Na inside water we dey sheet”*

*“Make them provide important things wey we need for this place. See as everywhere dey smell. Poverty dey here oh!”*

*“Hmm Government should help create housing scheme to relocate people in the slums and provide jobs or opportunity to earn a living to live a good life.”*

#### IV. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

##### The prevalent types of delinquent acts among juveniles in shanty settlements

Stealing/looting, pickpocketing, theft/larceny, shoplifting, drug dealing/abuse, and assault were recognized as the most common types of delinquent activities among youths in shanty settlements. However, stealing/looting was the most common, while vandalism was the least common. Drug misuse is a serious crime among many Juveniles in shanty communities which is a real concern to generation next. Rivers State is one of the worst devastated counties in the country. Here, incidences of drug injection are a norm. When combined with drug trafficking, the number of drug addicts is constantly on the rise. Among the most

commonly abused substances include heroin, cocaine, and codeine.

Pickpockets and juvenile thieves commit snatch and run crimes on the streets, near crowds, in homes, offices, and hotel rooms, particularly in Port Harcourt. They break into offices and force employees to open safes, from which they steal and flee. Jewelry and other valuables are stolen from unsuspecting members of the public. Others impersonate police officers in order to steal from unsuspecting tourists.

This finding corresponds to Livingston, Galster, Kearns, and Bannister's (2014) findings on "Criminal Neighborhoods: Does the Density of Prior Offenders in an Area Encourage Others to Commit Crime?" The study sought to investigate common activities among young people. According to them, the most common juvenile crimes are theft/larceny, drug abuse offences, disorderly conduct, and simple assault or battery, among others.

##### The factors that induce urban poor juveniles into certain delinquent crimes in shanty settlements

According to the research, factors that influenced juveniles to commit certain delinquent crimes included poverty, parent unemployment, poor moral upbringing, low household income, lack of schooling, peer substance abuse and social vices, violence at home, peer influence, single-parenthood, and a lack of basic amenities.

Nonetheless, parental unemployment was the most powerful inducer, while household violence was the least powerful inducer. Poor educational standards are major motivators for urban poor juveniles to commit delinquent crimes in shanty settlements. Data from the study show a strong correlation between undereducated children and juvenile crime. Failure in school is a significant predictor of future criminal behaviour from an early age. When children have poor academic performance, poor attendance, are expelled, or drop out of school, their chances of committing crime increase. Juveniles who leave school early are less likely to develop social skills learned in school, such as meeting deadlines, following instructions, and dealing constructively with their peers. A child who does not receive a proper education will eventually learn that he or she is at a disadvantage in the workforce, and in order to satisfy their ego, they will engage in criminal activities.

Existing research indicates a strong link between living in a bad environment and engaging in criminal behaviour as a result of peer pressure (McCord, Widom, & Crowell, 2000). Childhood psychological trauma is a set of psychological,



behavioural, and mental characteristics that influence juvenile delinquency. Several individual characteristics have been linked to delinquency. According to Tremblay & LeMarquand (2001:141), aggression appears to be the best social behaviour characteristic for predicting delinquent behaviour before the age of 13.

The findings are consistent with Dáz&Patacchini's (2020) findings on "Parents, Neighbors, and Youth Crime." Within the study's introduction, factors such as unemployment rates, high school dropout rates, poverty, and juvenile delinquency case rates are mentioned. This finding is also consistent with Ludwig & Katz's (2004) findings on "Neighborhood Effects on Crime for Female and Male Youth: Evidence from a Randomized Housing Voucher Experiment." Juvenile delinquency is mostly associated with psychological, behavioural, and mental characteristics, poor family structure (lack of strong moral guidance), negative peer influences, and substance abuse, among other things.

Mambende et al. (2016) obtained similar results in their study "Factors Influencing Youth Juvenile Delinquency at Blue Hills Children's Prison Rehabilitation Centre in Gweru, Zimbabwe: An Exploratory Study." The research looked into the factors that influence youth juvenile delinquency at the Blue Hills Children's Prison Rehabilitation Centre in Gweru, which is one of Zimbabwe's penal institutions for young male and female offenders aged 11 to 17 years. Purposive sampling was used to identify and recruit eight male and one female participants. Personal interviews were used to acquire data. The data collected was analyzed using a thematic method. According to the findings, lack of parental attachment, broken homes, an authoritative parenting style, and poverty all had an impact on juvenile delinquency. It was concluded that the family and home environment have a significant impact on a child's development and, as a result, on the development of a delinquent predisposition.

#### **The initiatives taken by shanty dwellers towards the remedy of juvenile delinquency**

According to the result of this research, the most promising initiatives taken against juvenile delinquent crimes were to encourage students to attend school, inform law enforcement, provide good housing, build schools, provide basic amenities, provide jobs, eradicate poverty, implement a feeding programme, and relocate shantys to better-serving neighbourhoods.

This finding is consistent with Damm&Dustmann's (2014) findings in their study "Does Growing Up in a High Crime Neighborhood Affect Youth Criminal Behavior?" Education, recreation activities, community involvement of juveniles, Parent-Child Interaction Training Program, Prevention Programs within the Juvenile Justice System, and Functional Family Therapy (FFT) are some of the intervention tactics to be employed in dealing with juvenile delinquency.

#### **Theoretical Discussion**

The research on "Risk Factors Posed by Waterfront Shanty Settlements on Juvenile Delinquents in Rivers State, Nigeria" is a corollary of the theoretical truth within "Agnew's General Strain Theory." Discussions will be made here on how the development of Agnew's General Strain Theory illustrates similarities in the aspects of the participants' delinquency and their neighborhoods.

A contemporary reformation of the strain concept was done by Robert Agnew (1992, 2008, & 2012) in his general strain theory (GST). Agnew in the GST tried to view why juveniles experience certain strain or stressor and how they are motivated into committing criminal acts. Agnew identified various sources of strains which were summarized into: the lack of ability to achieve positively valued goals, threat to remove or the act of removing positively value stimuli and the presentation of a threat to one with negatively or noxious value stimuli. Each of these sources of strain was present in each participant's delinquent history. However, the impact of each strain had a varied affect on each participant thereby showing the uniqueness of their past experiences.

The three strains or stressors highlighted in the GST practically have an enormous influence on the participants delinquent history. The initial source of strain "the lack of ability to achieve positively value goals", their parents are unable to meet his educational requirements, financial needs and general welfare. Here, there is a dysfunction in his aspiration and desired goals. Thus in order to obtain many participants engaged in stealing, theft and internet Fraud to meet his expectations and achievement. The second was, "threat to remove or act of removing positively valued stimuli", participants feel a sense of not belonging to their family and society thus, show this displayed a rebellious and aggressive attitude. The third which is "the presentation of a threat to one with negatively or noxious valued stimuli", Here, participants were faced with a life of neglect and



abuse and had difficulty in relating properly with their peers from rich neighborhood.

A significant number of identified themes closely associates with the sources of strain illustrated by Agnew in the GST. However, not all juveniles who encounter strains or related stressor resort to delinquency. Some juveniles are able to marshal their behavioral and emotional assets to be able to cope with the frustration and anger motivated by strain. As described by Agnew in the GST, the participants in this study developed a negative affective state, meaning that the frequency and intensity of their strenuous experience had a great impact that result in repeated delinquency. Agnew's GST has been able to explain how risk factors is a leading motivate and induce delinquency among juveniles in shanty settlements.

## V. CONCLUSION

Today, Nigeria's population has grown as a result of terrible poverty and economic suffrage; the number of juveniles who reoffend is also on the rise. These recidivists are attempting to manage in this period of increased poverty, and engaging in repeated delinquent behaviours appears to be a viable option, which must be avoided. Past government Nigerian initiatives and policies aimed at poverty reduction and crime control have had numerous flaws. The distinctiveness of juvenile crime has not received much attention. Finally, this research endeavour is an attempt to serve justice by linking poverty and frequent juvenile crime to the discovery of long-term remedies to this social problem. According to the findings of this study, young recidivists are more frequently confronted with a lack of legitimate options to thrive, and are instead presented with illegitimate routes and endeavours to commit crime. As a result, several tensions in a typical Nigerian teenage life are frequently bent towards deviant actions. As a result, not only should there be intervention measures, but also preventive and proactive approaches to reduce stressors that are critical in the eradication of recidivism among juvenile delinquents and adolescent who have not yet encountered the criminal justice system.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Deterring youth from ever having to interact with the criminal justice system or pursuing a life of crime is the ultimate goal of delinquency prevention programmes. The annual cost to investigate, apprehend, prosecute, incarcerate, and treat juvenile offenders in Nigeria's correctional facilities is estimated at billions of naira. That's why

it makes sense for governments to put their money on preventative measures; not only may they save lives, but they could also end up saving money. In this discussion, we'll look at both preventative and corrective measures and make recommendations for both. The goal of the preventative strategies is to steer youth away from delinquent behaviour and away from contact with the justice system, while the goal of the interventive strategies is to steer repeat offenders away from the criminal justice system and slow the rate of recidivism. The researcher proposes the following:

### ✓ Preventive Approaches:

- I. Government and non-government organizations should begin working with juveniles and their families as soon as possible to provide counselling and appropriate advice. However, this is the most effective and widely accepted strategy for avoiding recidivism among juvenile offenders.
- II. Schools and other educational facilities should incorporate counselling, enough instruction, and even psychotherapy into their curricula and programmes for the behavioural modification of youth exhibiting early symptoms of violence and criminality.
- III. Juveniles need help from their parents and other adults in their lives; thus, the responsibility of parents and caregivers to ensure that the juveniles have opportunities for meaningful parent-child connections through leisure activities and parent education.
- IV. The elimination of low self-esteem, fear, anxiety, and an inferiority complex have all been linked to juvenile delinquency hence, a crucial preventative step, thus, these juveniles need the kind of emotional and psychological reinforcement that helps them feel like they truly belong somewhere; without it, they may struggle to find their place in the world.
- V. Juveniles from low-income homes are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour, thus efforts to improve their living conditions should focus on families especially from the shanty settlements.

### ✓ Interventive Approaches:

- I. There needs to be a change in the way the law is applied. Juvenile courts should emphasize restorative justice because most juvenile offenders are themselves victims of the system; thus, juveniles who have committed crimes should face trial in a special juvenile court where their rights can be fully protected.
- II. Community-based intervention programmes should be employed to aid retaining



juvenile offenders out of trouble and out of prison, thus, it's important to encourage locals to get involved.

III. It's important to emphasize parental love and care to reduce the irritation and emotions of abandonment that might lead to repeat offences. In this case, moderate participation from peers is to be expected.

IV. Materialist intervention must be mandated via technical and vocational education and training. Programs designed to teach useful skills to formerly incarcerated youth can help them find gainful employment and give them something productive to do with their time.

All those suggested tactics point to the verity that a multifaceted approach is an ultimate solution to predominant delinquent risk factors in the waterfront shanties in Nigeria especially in Rivers State. In 2000, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration, which included a Road Map outlining the Millennium Development Goals and Targets for addressing issues such as poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, gender inequality, and slum conditions thus, this roadmap should be holistically applied.

#### SUGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study concentrates on the risk factors posed by waterfront shanty settlements on juvenile delinquents, as a result, this research may not be exhaustive, and the following ideas for more studies might be pursued:

- ❖ Single parenthood and juvenile delinquency in urban metropolis
- ❖ COVID-19 pandemic and child crimes in homes
- ❖ Spatial characteristics and recidivism of juvenile delinquents, thus, identifying which risk factor may cause delinquency amongst a minority group at precise phases of their development hence, aiding planned target and efforts in a more cost-effective and efficient manner.
- ❖ Peer rejection and juvenile delinquency among pupils
- ❖ Future enquiry ought to survey the level of associations, persist over time and if predictive of imminent delinquency.

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