A comparative study of the self-esteem of adjudicated adolescent male drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders

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ABSTRACT
SOCIAL WORK
Sherrod, Russia Rolette  B. A. Talladega College, 1989
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ADJUDICATED, BLACK MALE DRUG
TRAFFICKERS AND ASSAULT AND BATTERY OFFENDERS.
Advisor:  Professor Naomi Ward
Thesis Dated:  May, 1991

The overall objective of this study is to identify common characteristics of drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders to better understand and explore factors associated with their problems. To attain this objective, the following areas on the two groups were addressed: (a) family structure, (b) education, (c) peer association, (d) personal areas of their lives, and (e) self-esteem. A comparative research design was used in the study. Questionnaires were given to adolescent, adjudicated, black male residents in the Atlanta Youth Development Center, located in the Atlanta Metropolitan area. A population of 110 males from ages ten to seventeen were being housed at the time of the study. Of this population the sample study consisted of 50, 25 drug traffickers (Group I) and 25 assault and battery offenders (Group II).

The hypotheses were as follows: (1) There is no
statistical, significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measure of education. (2) There is no statistical significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measures of family support. (3) There is no statistical, significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measures of peer relations. (4) There is no statistical, significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measures of self-esteem.

The study was an attempt to provide a clear understanding and common characteristics of adjudicated drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders' family status, peer groups and personal areas in relation to their self-esteem. The findings of the study revealed that both of the groups had low self-esteem; however, the assault and battery offenders had higher self-esteem than that of the drug traffickers.
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE SELF-ESTEEM OF ADJUDICATED
ADOLESCENT MALE DRUG TRAFFICKERS
AND ASSAULT AND BATTERY OFFENDERS

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER IN SOCIAL WORK

BY
RUSSIA ROLETTE SHERROD

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

ATLANTA, GEORGIA
MAY 1991
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Finally, I dedicate this research to my brother, Kenyatta Sherrod. Thanks for being that special person in my life to keep me going everyday. God bless you, and I love you.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

He is wearing $90 Fila sneakers and a $200 nanny goat coat, the sheep skin jacket so prized on the streets of Detroit that youngsters have killed for it. There is a gold chain around his neck and a .357 Colt Python in this pocket. He is a 15-year old and he can barely read, but he can earn $300 a day as a runner for a Westside crack house and smoke it away almost as fast.

He is a loser, a failure - impulsive, remorseless, emotionally dead - and one night, he is going to go out and cross paths with a kid very much like himself....

The insults will escalate, the guns will appear and when it is over someone will lie injured or dead. Later, when police question the survivor, the cause of the argument will seem fleeting and trivial: He was looking at me. He owe me money. He was messin' with my brother. He always callin' me bighead. And Detroit explosive combination of angry kids, guns and crack will have claimed another (Stanton, 1987).

This is a scenario from Detroit, but is repeated a
thousand times across the country.

It is estimated that society spends billions of dollars in efforts to arrest, prosecute, correct and rehabilitate juvenile delinquents (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1989). Exploring contributing information, some adequate answers need to be found in relation to young people turning to crime. If there were programs to detect and help to resolve problems of juveniles that likely lead to drug trafficking and assault and battery, the number of delinquents might be smaller. The object of this discourse is to identify the family structure, peer relations and personal areas of juveniles in relation to their self-esteem.

The problems of juveniles that have emerged throughout the country have been noted by governmental sources. In the process of passing the Juvenile Justice and Delinquent Prevention Act of 1974, the United States Congress found that juveniles accounted for serious crimes in the United States (Hawkins and Zimring, 1981). These authors suggested that there had been a great number of adolescents who had been caught up in the state of mental fog and the numbers were not getting any smaller.

Statistical findings are evident on this
widespread problem among juveniles and young adults. For example, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention found that although the size of the juvenile population was decreasing, the number of juveniles confined in public juvenile facilities increased 10 percent between 1983 and 1987 (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1989).

Black males are highly represented in the increasing numbers. Documentation of the numbers were shown in a nationally representative sample of 2,621 juveniles and young adults who were surveyed by the United States Department of Justice (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1989). These juveniles and adults were in 50 long-term, state operated juvenile institutions located in 26 states. It was found that 93 percent of the juveniles were male. An estimated 53 percent of the youth were white, 41 percent were Black, 6 percent were American Indians, Asians or Alaskans and 19 percent were Hispanics. A substantial number of these youth had lower levels of education and were from single-parent families. Only 42 percent of the youth had completed more than 8 years of school and 52 percent reported that two or more family members had served time in jail (Bureau of Justice Statistics,
The report further indicated that three-fourths of the surveyed juveniles drank alcohol prior to their offense and almost 82 percent had used drugs at some time in the past. The most frequently used drugs were marijuana, cocaine and amphetamines. One-third began using drugs between the ages of 12 and 13 and one-fourth between the ages of 14 and 15. Fifty percent of them were under the influence of some kind of drug when they were arrested.

Bureau of Justice Statistics (1989), also indicated the following facts among children held in public juvenile facilities: 53,503 juveniles were being held for delinquent offenses; 89 percent were between the ages of 14 and 17; and more than half were composed of Blacks and Hispanics. The number of white youth decreased between 1985 and 1987, while the number of Black and Hispanic youth increased 15 and 20 percent. There were 4,161 of the juveniles mentioned above who were held for alcohol-drug related offenses and 34 percent were charged with distribution. However, assault and battery was the most common violent crime among the juveniles. Of this group, 25 percent had current violent offenses only, and almost
16 percent had prior and current violent offenses.

There is a great need to ascertain factors that are contributing to problems of the increasing numbers of juveniles like those mentioned above. One could look at some of the factors found for the purpose of providing information which might be useful in helping juveniles with such problems.

The researcher had a tremendous curiosity surrounding the self-esteem of the adjudicated drug trafficker and assault and batter offender. The researcher also has a growing interest in how they feel about themselves during and after the crimes and finding out if how they perceive themselves might be related to their committing offenses.

Statement of the Problem

A report of December 13, 1979, indicated that the prison population was 314,083 and more than half the population was Black. This included juveniles in detention and the Black population disportion continues (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1989).

Given the over-representation of ethnic minorities in custody for drug offenses as well as assault and battery offenses, the researcher's major concern is the young, black, adjudicated, male.
It has also been stated in March, 1986, that 51 percent of violent crimes in America were committed by Black youths and one out of every six Blacks will be arrested by the time they reach age 19 (Hall, 1986).

This makes one wonder what is happening in the lives of black youth. Many are in centers for youth offenders. In one center in the state of Georgia, the drug traffickers population is 100 percent Black, adolescent males, and the assault and battery offenders' population is majority black as well (Atlanta Youth Development Center, 1991).

Increasingly the author, a social work intern at a youth development center, has observed the explosive aggression of youth offenders entering the justice system. Contemporary juveniles are more willing to kill and commit serious crimes than juveniles of 30 and 40 years ago (Lundman, 1984). These youngsters seem to continue to represent contempt for authority and disrespect for others. One possible explanation for these actions could be related to the self-esteem of these adolescents.

Self-esteem is considered the key to how a person feels about himself or herself, and the way a person feels about himself or herself shows within an
individual's actions. The author finds self-esteem as a necessity to better understand juvenile delinquents. It is of great importance for more and more researchers to investigate further into this idea of self-esteem.

Purpose/Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the self-esteem of drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders. The main objective is to find out common characteristics to better understand and explore factors associated with their problems.

Research in this area focused on the adolescent within the family, educational setting, as well as personal areas of their lives.

Clinical social workers who provide services for these adolescents might benefit from being more knowledgeable about obstacles that many of them face as well as how the adolescents feel about themselves.

Knowledgeable social workers have made unlimited, creative attempts at intervention with these juvenile offenders.
CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study focused on the need for examining the self-esteem of drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders. To this end the author has studied literature which analyzes the factors which compose self-esteem of youth. The review of literature covers the following areas: Theory and conceptualization; Self-Esteem and Performance in School; Black Youth and Self-Esteem; Related Studies: Significance of Review of the Literature; Conceptual/Theoretical Framework: Definition of Terms; and Statement of Hypothesis.

Theory and Conceptualization

The psychological construct of self is a well-researched concept from western theoretical approaches, which are challenged as limited when used as a conceptual framework for understanding self-concept among Blacks (Nobles, 1973). According to Gecas and Schwable (1986) among the approaches that are questioned are three theoretical models that have served as an analytical framework for discussion of the issue of Black self concept. They were the "generalized other" (Mead, 1934), the "looking glass self" (Cooley, 1956), and the "internalized prototype"
(Erickson, 1968) that had been proposed for structuring self-esteem among children (Ziaka, 1972).

Further, Gecas and Schwable (1986), indicated James, Cooley, Mead and others have emphasized the self as a social product, emerging out of symbolic interaction and the prerequisite, cognitive capacity for role-looking, which enables "us to see ourselves as (we imagine) others see us." This idea, first popularized by Cooley's (1902) discussion of the "looking glass self", is currently expressed in terms of "reflected appraisals," (Rosenberg, 1979). In the family the reflected appraisals of parents seem to be particularly significant for children's self-conceptions.

Coopersmith (1981) supported the theory of the above as well. He felt that children were not born with concern of being good or bad, smart or stupid, lovable or unlovable. They developed these ideas and formed self-images based on the way they were treated by significant people in their lives, such as parents, teachers and peers. He also believed that negative or positive attitudes and values by which a person viewed the self-images and evaluations or judgements he or she
made about it formed the person's self-esteem.

According to Wynn, et al. (1974), the theoretical positions noted earlier advocated the importance of society's views of an individual's reference group in the multi-faceted and multi-determined formulating the process of the individual's self-concept. In other words, it was assumed that Blacks develop self-images that are peculiar to their historical and contemporary conditions in American society (McAdoo and McAdoo, 1985).

McAdoo and McAdoo (1985), further believed it had been best postulated by Wynn and colleagues (1974) that "there is a unique blend of biological, psychological, and sociological conditions which combine to form the Black self-concept. In relation to this view, some researches have expanded in perspectives of self-concept of Blacks (McAdoo, 1985; Mussen, et.al., 1984; Pierce, 1975; and Powell, 1973).

Just as there have been changes in perspectives regarding self-concepts of Blacks, ideas and laws about juveniles in the justice system have undergone different views.

Despite all of the literature and history of youth offenders since the code of Hammurabi (2270 B.C.),
which discussed runaways and children who disowned their parents, to the first separate institutions for youth offenders, the juvenile justice system was in trouble (Cox and Conrad, 1978). The delinquent child ceased to be a criminal and had the status of a child in need of care, protection and discipline directed toward rehabilitation. Faust and Branting point out that finally during the period between 1899 and 1967, called the Era of Socialized Juvenile Justice in the United States, the blindfold was taken off of justice. The total picture of the child's past experiences and existing circumstances were weighed against projected outcomes of alternatives and choices of intervention (Cox and Conrad, 1978).

In understanding the significance of self-esteem and self-concept within an individual's life, the above statement is very useful. The theories have shown how the child develops the self-esteem he or she may have. The type of self-esteem an individual has determines the person's actions and/or the way he or she looks at himself or herself. These things may need to be exposed when working with juvenile offenders, as stated in Cox and Conrad (1978) by the Juvenile Justice System.
Self-Esteem and Performance in School

Self-esteem has always occupied a central position in the study of children and adolescents (Oyefeso and Zacheaus, 1989).

According to Coopersmith (1981), Rogers and Dymond (1954), believed that individuals with low self-esteem had difficulty in receiving or giving love, and they tend to feel isolated and alone (Coopersmith, 1967) and were likely to feel guilty, ashamed or depressed and derogated their capabilities and achievements (Coopersmith, 1967).

Studies have indicated that children with high self-esteem perform better in school than children with lower self-esteem (Coopersmith, 1981). It has also been stated that children who feel better about their abilities to perform and do well actually perform better in school (Coopersmith, 1981).

According to Coopersmith (1981), many studies have been conducted by Brookover, Thomas and Patterson, and they have indicated that children with high self-esteem perform better in school than children with lower levels of self-esteem. They also found that children who feel better about their abilities to perform and who expect to do well actually have positive behaviors
Black students in predominantly white schools have lower self-esteem than Blacks in segregated school settings who enjoy much higher levels of self-esteem than Blacks in integrated settings (Epps, 1978; St. John, 1975; Stephan, 1978; and Wylie, 1979). Cooley (1902) helped to find a reasonable answer as to why the above statement may be true or valid. He argued that self-concepts are found as reflections of the responses and evaluations of others in the environment. There is also a view that builds on Cooley's view. As stated by McAdoo and McAdoo (1985), Rosenberg (1977) maintained that compared to Blacks in segregated settings, a minority child in a majority setting will be more likely exposed to negative communications about himself or herself as a group member (racial teasing) and his or her group in general (his or her group's status in the majority world). Blacks in integrated settings will, therefore, experience lower levels of self-esteem because of this "dissonant communication environment."

Academic performance represents one of the most important areas in which students make status comparisons. As a result of this, McAdoo and McAdoo (1985) observed Rosenberg's (1977) view on the academic
performance of Blacks generally being below that of whites. This does not create a problem for Blacks in segregated schools because it is impossible for wide racial discrepancies in academic performance to exist in these institutions. However, when Blacks in white-dominated schools compare their academic performance with that of their white classmates, their relatively low academic standing will result in a loss of self-esteem (McAdoo and McAdoo, 1985).

Bean and Clemes (1981) believed that a healthy adult must witness models of high levels of self-esteem. At every stage of life, self-esteem determines how we act; how we learn; how we love; how we hate; how we work and how we play; it is a sense of connectedness.

Bean and Clemes (1981) also agreed that in order to insure self-esteem in children they must know the following:

1. Children must know what is real in society and must be allowed to communicate their uniqueness, protest and test himself or herself and his or her influence.

2. Children must accept certain rules of discipline and be responsible.
3. Children must feel a sense of closeness or connectedness to family.

4. Children must not be sheltered so much that they do not know the problems of the world at an early age.

5. Children must be taught values and make decisions on goals themselves.

According to Gecas and Schwable (1986), Bachman (1970), in a national sample of high school boys, found high self-esteem to be associated with "good" family relations which were characterized by affection between family members, common activities and inclusion of children in family decision-making.

Similar to Bachman, Coopersmith's (1967) dealings with younger children (fifth and sixth grades) found three general conditions to be associated with high self-esteem in the child: (a) parental acceptance of the child; (b) clearly defined and enforced limits on the child's behavior and (c) respect and latitude for individual action within the defined limits.

In the above literature, the findings were very clear. The author feels strongly about how self-esteem is built and the relationship it may have on adolescents within the school setting. However, the
adolescent may have some of the same obstacles that may attack their self-esteem, but there are many other difficult areas of life they must endure. The American Council on Education (1989) researched Black adolescents and found that many issues evolve around their lives. The issues were of personal attributes and attitudes, race, class and ecologies of varying social and physical environments. They believed that within the vortex of these realities, Black adolescents live and develop perceptions of the possibilities of their here and now and future adulthoods (Jones, 1989).

According to Jones (1989), Douvan and Adelson (1966) and Fine (1980) believed peers and friends became more influential during adolescence than at previous stages and function as powerful agents of socialization. Further in Jones (1989), Fine (1981) and Mannarino (1978) believed peers served as a baseline for social comparison and thus were able to either strengthen or weaken the developing self-concept. All of these things contribute to the adolescent's self-esteem (Jones, 1989).

Black Youth and Self-Esteem

According to Hall (1986), Hare (1986) believed the youth peer group provided Black youth with alternative
outlets for achievement through demonstration of competence, through the streets, athletic activities and social activities; it offered little hope of long-term legitimate success. This carried real dangers of drafting young people into the self-destructive worlds of drugs, crime and sexual promiscuity. He said the rising crime, drugs and out-of-wedlock pregnancy rate among African-American youth may not be seen as a consequence of interplay of negative schooling programs by incompetent outsiders, a decline in parental control and a rise in independence of peer culture which offer positive strokes and ego enhancements to a vulnerable population.

Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin opined that one of the basic conditions fostering delinquency in America is the inaccessibility of legitimate opportunities in comparison to illegitimate opportunities. Black youth were reported to have been told by parents, teachers, and others that intelligence, self-denial and prudence will result ultimately in social honor, a good job and various material gifts. To the extent that racial prejudice exists in communities, however, Blacks found that rewards of society were denied them no matter how carefully one prepares himself for a successful career.
The full weight of this crushes in on a juvenile and he drifts away into a pattern of deviance (Cavan, et. al., 1969).

Further, McAdoo and McAdoo (1985) stated that Kardiner and Oversey (1951), Pettigrew (1954) and Rainwater (1968) discussed that "Blacks have been discriminated against, rejected by society, and exposed to systematic institutionalized racism. It has been proposed that Blacks internalize society's negative view of their ethnic group, and as a Black person is simultaneously a member of the ethnic group rejected, he or she rejects himself or herself. This descriptive reasoning was based on observations of experimental studies that used mostly Black children and adolescents of low socio-economic families as subjects."

The elementary school years are perhaps the most critical in development of Black males. Many Black social scientists, education and community activists maintained that the interaction between young, Black males and the educational system could determine their destiny (Hall, 1986).

Further, Hall presents Kunjufa's views on Black youth and their development of self-esteem. Jawanza Kunjufa believed if young, black males do not receive
constant reinforcement and nurturing at this point, they will evolve into adults who are socially and politically impotent. Hall (1986) also stated that streetlife is a convenient, obvious and deadly alternative. He believed by the time a young, Black male reached his early teens, he understood that one prerequisite to manhood was economic. Unless socialized to the contrary, he believed there were far too many young, Black males who entertained negative options for obtaining a sense of self.

However, according to Hall (1986), Dr. Lyles (1986) responded to the above statement by stating: "Many of us who do not have a sense of hope will cite all the negatives that will get us into deeper holes. In such cases, there isn't a sense of diplomacy or knowing how to use the strengths that we have to get what we want."

In the book, Black, Leland Hall, former Chief of Health, Planning and Development in Washington, D.C., Commission of Public Health, noted that to be born Black and male in America is a double jeopardy. He believed the combination of gender and ethnicity, in Leland's estimation, constitutes a threat to those who control this society - to white males in particular.
Consequently, the pressures Black males face throughout their lives are unyielding. To be a Black man of accomplishment in America demands an exacting price. The cost of failure is even higher (Hall, 1986).

Related Studies

The literature as well as society perhaps have given the author reason to be very concerned about the young, Black male's self-esteem. It has been stated that the way one feels about his or herself and what he or she is taught to feel determines his or her self-esteem.

Cavan and Ferdinand (1975) believe a multi-disciplinary approach was required for a full understanding of delinquency in American society. They agreed that the psycho-social profile was relevant when they state: "It is hoped that the old characteristic debates between psychological and sociological criminologist regarding the appropriate viewpoint for the study of crime or delinquency are at an end so that strengths and weaknesses can be systematically appraised."

Self-esteem has always occupied a central position in the study of children and adolescents. It has been defined as a "personal judgement of worthiness that is
expressed in the attitudes the individual holds towards himself," (Coopersmith, 1967).

One of the four things Joan Costella (1980), in Wynn, et al. (1988), believed was that adolescents and adults must acquire the capacity to give and to accept care in turn in order to function in society. This ability, she states, "is central to a person's sense of self-worth and a prerequisite for nurturing children, sustaining the aged or attending to the needs of friends. Absence of the capacity to sustain caring relationships jeopardizes an adult's ability to respect the rights of others and to live productively and peacefully among them."

Coleman (1974) in Hall (1986) felt that beyond the resources of families and schools, adolescents were frequently left to socializing influence of peers, the media, and for some, to an increasingly age-segregated workplace. Rather than seeing adolescents on the paths to responsible adulthood, each of these forces may increase self-involvement (Coleman, 1974), undermine education (Coleman, 1963), and foster cynicism about the rewards of work (Greenberger and Steinberg, 1986).

The developmental environment experienced by adolescents affect their sense of identity and their
effective development. In developing a sense of belonging and group identity, children and adolescents are greatly influenced by their participation in peer groups (Coleman, 1974; Jonava, 1983; and Kelley, 1977).

According to Jones (1989), Nobles (1980) revealed that Black people in rural areas share a sense of collective unity for accomplishing life tasks and meeting life challenges. He believed this was embedded in the African heritage of Black people. He also felt that self-concept formation was strongly influenced by this kinship notion.

Further, Jones (1989) stated that Mbiti (1970) believed the self-concept of rural, Black youth appeared to develop around traditional African philosophy of self: "I am because we are; and because we are, therefore, I am." He added that adolescent self-perception was an extended view of self-in-relation-to-others.

Significance of the Review of Literature

In the various lines of thought in this review of literature, we have examined self-esteem as it relates within the school system; black youth and studies that have been used to explore self-esteem.

The literature has revealed much useful
information around the way in which self-esteem is built and understanding the severity of self-esteem within adolescents.

According to the literature, self-esteem plays an important role in determining how an individual reacts to society, to love, to hate, and to everyday living.

Due to theoretical positions and research findings, one may conclude that self-esteem is a major determining factor for adolescents maturing within this influential and demanding society.

Conceptual/Theoretical Framework

In view of Coopersmith's description of self-esteem involving components in the youth's environment, the author elects systems theory as a guiding theoretical framework.

The youth, as a subsystem, is vowed as an individual psycho-social system. The youth relates to other systems such as the parental subsystem, sibling subsystems and the family as a whole as a system. (Minuchin, 1974) Other systems in the environment are: peer groups; school systems; church; and neighbors. These subsystems house teachers, friends, principals, relatives and anyone else that comes in contact with the youth.
All of these systems impact on the individual youth's life.

Definitions of Terms

Self-esteem refers to the evaluation a person makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself or herself. It is a judgement of worthiness that is expressed by the attitudes he or she holds toward self. It is also a subjective experience conveyed to others by verbal reports and other overt expressive behavior (Coopersmith, 1981).

Adjudicated Drug Traffickers are adolescent males at the Atlanta Youth Development Center who have been tried through the court system and found guilty for selling illegal drugs (Atlanta Youth Development Center, 1991).

Adjudicated Assault and Battery Offenders are adolescent males who have been tried through the court system and found guilty of assault and battery charges (Atlanta Youth Development Center, 1991).

Atlanta Youth Development Center is a treatment institution center located in Fulton County in Atlanta, Georgia. The center is for young males ranging from ages ten (10) to seventeen (17) years of age. It is operated by the Georgia Department of Human Resources,
Division of Youth Services. These programs help to facilitate their re-entry into their communities and/or families (Atlanta Youth Development Center, 1991).

**Battery** is unlawful beating of or use of force on a person (Webster, 1974).

**Assault** is an unlawful attempt or offer to do hurt to another (Webster, 1974).

**Assault and Battery** is a legal term that involves a physical threat and act (World Book Encyclopedia, 1987).

**Adolescent** is a teen who is thirteen (13) years old to seventeen (17) years old and growing toward adulthood (World Book Encyclopedia, 1987).

**Black** is an ethnic group whose ancestors are of African descent. The group is currently in the United States and are sometimes referred to as African Americans (World Book Encyclopedia, 1987).

**Statement of Hypotheses**

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no statistical significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measure of education.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no statistical significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers
and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measures of family support.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is no statistical significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measures of peer relationships.

**Hypothesis 4:** There is no statistical significant difference in the mean scores between drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders with reference to their measures of self-esteem.
CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This section briefly discusses the research design; research site and setting; research sampling; research data collection procedures; and the analysis of the data collected.

Research Design

A comparative design was used in this study. This design was used to compare two or more groups so that if any difference were found between the groups it could be generalized out of the total population of the groups of people.

Site and Setting

This study was conducted in Atlanta, Georgia, a southeastern city in the United States. The Atlanta Youth Development Center was used to study the self-esteem of adjudicated male drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders.

The Atlanta Youth Development Center is one of the residential treatment establishments operated by the Department of Human Resources, Youth Services Division. The residents are nine to sixteen-year old males who have been sent there through the court systems from various parts of Georgia.
The areas of treatment include academics, social services, recreation, religion, and volunteer services for approximately 110 residents housed within the Center.

Sampling

Stratified sampling was used to obtain a sample for the study. It is primarily used to ensure that different groups of a population are adequately represented in the sample; so that the level of accuracy in estimating parameters is increased.

The sample for this study was selected from the resident population at the Atlanta Youth Development Center during the month of February.

The names of the adolescents charged with drug trafficking and assault and battery were first compiled from the files within the Center. Secondly, twenty-five names of drug traffickers and twenty-five names of assault and battery offenders were selected respectively. Due to the fact that one of the respondents did not fill out the entire questionnaire, the sample was shortened to forty-nine.

Data Collection Procedures

The Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventories scale was administered to the drug traffickers group and the
assault and battery group. It is a fifty-eight item scale designed to measure attitudes toward self in social, academic, family and person areas of experience. Fifty items are surrounded around the four constructs mentioned above. The eight items constitute a lie scale and it measures the client's defensiveness or test wiseness (Coopersmith, 1989).

The Self-Esteem Inventory (SEI) was developed in conjunction with an extension study of children's self-esteem. The major basis for the study was the belief that self-esteem is associated with the personal satisfaction and effective functioning. There had been few studies done on self-esteem, so the need for a reliable, valid measure of self-esteem was established - the SEI (Coopersmith, 1981).

There was also a demographic questionnaire issued to the groups. It consisted of four questions concerning age, education, family support and the number of people in the household.

The questionnaires were coded; all questionnaires with the number one on the top of the page were issued to drug traffickers. The questionnaires with the number two on the top of the page were issued to assault and battery offenders.
The actual distribution of the questionnaires were done on a Thursday at 1:30 p.m. The two groups were called to the Canteen and Group Two waited in the Canteen while Group One completed the questionnaires in the conference room of the administration building. After Group One completed the questionnaires, Group Two completed the questionnaires in the conference room while the Youth Development workers escorted Group One back to the school building and to their scheduled classes.

The questionnaire was explained in detail before it was administered, and upon completion, it was collected. It took each participant 10 to 15 minutes to complete both of the questionnaires.

Data Analysis

The T-test was used to determine whether or not there is a significant difference in the mean scores of the drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders. In addition, descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used.
CHAPTER FOUR
PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The findings of this study are presented as follows: (a) Demographics and (b) Self-Esteem.

Demographics

The demographic findings are presented according to Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders as follows: (a) Age; (b) Education; (c) Family Support; and (d) Number in the household.

Age - The respondents' ages in Group I and Group II ranged from 6 to 15 as stated in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Age of Respondents by Offenses in Frequency and Percentage (N=49).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Drug Traffickers Group I</th>
<th>Assault and Battery Offenders Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-15</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 shows that from age 6-10 there were none (or 0.0%) in Group I, while there was one (or 4.0%) in Group II. In the age range of 10-12 there were none
(or 0.0%) in either groups. From age 12-15, Group I consisted of 25 (or 100.0%), while Group II consisted of 23 (or 96.0%). The typical respondent was from age 12-15.

**Education** - The education of the respondents ranged from 6th grade to 10th grade, and none of the above, as shown in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Education Levels of Respondents by Grades, Frequency and Percentage (N=49).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Drug Traffickers Group I</th>
<th>Assault and Battery Offenders Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None of the Above</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Rounded to the nearest point.

Table 2 shows that in the 6th grade there were none (or 0.0%) in Group I, while there were two (or 8.3%) in Group II. In the 7th grade level, there were 2 (or 8.0%) in Group I, while there were 3 (or 12.5%) in Group II. In the 8th grade there were 5 (or 20.0%) in Group I, while there were 5 (or 20.8%) in Group II.
In the 9th grade there were 5 or (20.0%) in Group I, while there were 5 (or 20.8%) in Group II. In the 10th grade there were 6 (or 24.0%) in Group I, while there were 5 (or 20.8%) in Group II. There were 7 (or 28.0%) respondents who answered none of the above in Group I and in Group II there were 4 (or 16.8%) who answered none of the above. The typical respondent was in the tenth grade.

**Family support** - The family support in the questionnaire was designed to determine with whom the respondents lived. The responses consisted of father and mother, mother only, father only, or other, as shown in Table 3 below.

**Table 3.** Family support of Respondents by Group in Frequency and Percentage (N=49).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Support</th>
<th>Drug Traffickers Group I</th>
<th>Assault and Battery Offenders Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother &amp; Father</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother Only</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father Only</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Rounded to the nearest point.*
Table 3 shows that Group I had 7 (or 28.0%) respondents who lived with a mother and a father, while in Group II, 9 (or 37.5%) respondents lived with a mother and a father. Group I had 14 (or 56.0%) respondents living with a mother only, and in Group II there were 11 or (45.8%) living with a mother only. In Group I there was one (or 4.0%) respondent living with his father only, while in Group II there were none (or 0.0%). In Group I 3 (or 12.0%) respondents answered other, while in Group II there were 4 (or 16.7%) who answered other. The typical respondent lived with his mother only.

**Number in the Household** - The number of people in the respondents' household in Group I and Group II ranged from 1 to 4 and more than 5 as in Table 4 below.  

**Table 4.** Number of People in the Household of the Respondents in Frequency and Percentage (N=49).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number in Household</th>
<th>Drug Traffickers Group I</th>
<th>Assault and Battery Offenders Group II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Rounded to the nearest point.
Table 4 shows that in Group I there were none (or 0.0%) respondents who had one person in the household, while there were none (or 0.0%) in Group II. In Group I there were one (or 4.0%) respondents who had two people in the household, while Group II had one (or 4.2%). In Group I, there were 9 (or 36.0%) respondents who had three persons in the household, while Group II had 5 (or 20.8%). In Group I there were 10 (or 40.0%) who had four in the household, while Group II had 10 (or 41.7%) as well. Group I had 5 (or 20.0%) respondents who answered more than five, while Group II had 8 (or 33.3%). The typical respondent lived where there were four person in the household.

Summary of Demographics

The demographic findings revealed that the typical respondents ranged from 12 to 15 years of age. For the educational level, the majority of Group I - Drug Traffickers responded to "none of the above", however, the most frequently reported grade level for Group I - Drug Traffickers was the tenth grade. The most frequent educational level of Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders ranged from grades 8 through 10.

The majority of the family support consisted of the mother only in both Group I - Drug Traffickers and
Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders.
The majority of the respondents were living with 4 people in the household.

Self-Esteem

The findings of the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory Scale are presented by the Mean Score: Standard Deviation; Degrees of Freedom; T-Test; and the Significant Level of the two groups, Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders.

Findings on self-esteem are presented as follows: (a) educational levels; (b) family support; (c) peer relations; and (d) overall self-esteem.

The levels of self-esteem are also presented in graph form, with High Self-Esteem scores being 76 and above; Moderate Self-Esteem scores being 65-75; and Low Self-Esteem scores being 64 and below.

Educational Level - Hypothesis 1: There is no statistical significant difference between Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders with reference to their measure of education. The findings are presented below in Table 5.
Table 5. T-test Analysis of the Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders within educational levels. (Education Level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Significant Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP I</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>1.434</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.453*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP II</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P< 0.453
*There is no significant difference.

Table 5 shows that the mean score of Group I is 4.66, while Group II has a mean score of 5.00. The Standard Deviation of Group I is 1.434, while Group II has a Standard Deviation of 2.000. The Degrees of Freedom of the two groups was 47. The t-test score was 0.76 and the level of significance was 0.453, which means there is no significant difference. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was accepted.

Family Support - Hypothesis 2: There is no statistical significant difference between Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders with reference to other measures of family support. The findings are presented below in Table 6.
Table 6. T-test Analysis of the Self-Esteem of Drug Traffickers and Assault and Battery Offenders within the Family. (Family Support).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Significant Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP I</td>
<td>5.208</td>
<td>1.503</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>0.86*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP II</td>
<td>5.125</td>
<td>2.091</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P< 0.86
* There is no significant difference.

Table 6 shows that the mean score for Group I is 5.208, while Group II has a mean score of 5.125. The Standard Deviation of Group I is 1.503, while Group II has a Standard Deviation of 2.091. The Degrees of Freedom of the two groups was 47. The T-test score was -0.17 and the level of significance was 0.86, which means there is no significant difference. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was accepted.

Peer Relationships - Hypothesis 3: There was no statistical significant difference between Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders with reference to their peer relationships. The findings are represented below in Table 7.
Table 7. T-test Analysis of the Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders within Peer Relations. (Peer Relationships).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Significant Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP I</td>
<td>5.583</td>
<td>1.612</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>-0.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP II</td>
<td>6.416</td>
<td>1.472</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P < 0.02
* Significant - There is no significant difference.

Table 7 shows that the mean score of Group I is 5.583, while Group II has a mean score of 6.416. The Standard Deviation of Group I is 1.612, while Group II has a Standard Deviation of 1.472. The Degrees of Freedom of the two groups was 47. The T-test score was 2.46 and the level of significance was 0.02, which means there is a significant difference. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was rejected.

Self-Esteem - Hypothesis 4: There is no statistical significant difference between Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders with reference to their measures of self-esteem.
Table 8. T-test Analysis of the Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers and Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Significant Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GROUP I</td>
<td>65.16</td>
<td>12.12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.02*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP II</td>
<td>68.12</td>
<td>14.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P< 0.02
* Significant - There is a significant difference.

Table 8 shows that the mean score for Group I is 65.16, while Group II has a mean score of 68.12. The Standard Deviation of Group I is 12.12, while Group II has a Standard Deviation of 14.66. The Degrees of Freedom of the two groups was 47. The T-test score was 2.4 and the level of significance was 0.02, which simply means there is a significant difference. Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was rejected.

Further, presentation of the findings on the levels of self-esteem are indicated in the following graphs.
Figure 1. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers, within the Educational Setting.

Figure 1 represents levels of self-esteem among Drug Traffickers with the educational setting. It indicates that 3 respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0-2. There were 15 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 3-5. There were 7 respondents who had high self-esteem, scoring 6-8. The typical respondent had moderate self-esteem.

Figure 2. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group II - Assault and Battery, within the Educational Setting.
Figure 2 represents levels of self-esteem among Assaults and Battery Offenders within the educational setting. It indicates that 3 respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0-2. There were 10 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 3-5. There were 11 respondents who had high levels of self-esteem, scoring 6-8. The typical respondent had high self-esteem.

Figure 3. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers in Relation to Family Support.

Figure 3 represent levels of self-esteem among Drug Traffickers in relation to family support. It indicates that none of the respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0-2. There were 13 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 3-5. There were 12 respondents who had high self-esteem, scoring 6-8. The typical respondent had moderate self-esteem.
Figure 4. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group II - Assault and Battery, in Relation to Family Support.

Figure 4 represents levels of self-esteem among assault and battery offenders in relation to the family support system. It indicates that 3 respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0-2. There were 9 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 3-5, and 12 respondents had high self-esteem, scoring 6-8. The typical respondent had high self-esteem.

Figure 5. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers, within Peer Relations.
Figure 5 represents levels of self-esteem among Drug Traffickers within peer relations. It indicates that 0 respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0-2 below. There were 10 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 3-5. There were 15 respondents who had high self-esteem, scoring 6-8. The typical respondent had high self-esteem.

Figure 6. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group II - Assault and Battery, within Peer Relationships.

Figure 6 represents levels of self-esteem among assault and battery offenders within peer relations. It indicates that none of the respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0-2. There were 7 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 3-5. There were 17 respondents who had high self-esteem, scoring 6-8. The typical respondent had high self-esteem.
Figure 7. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers.

15 -
12 - +++++
12 - +++++
9 - +++++
9 - +++++
6 - +++++
6 - +++++
3 - +++++
3 - +++++
0 - -

0 - 64 65 - 75 76 & Above
Low Moderate High

Figure 7 represents levels of self-esteem among drug traffickers. It indicates that 13 respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0 to 64. There were 6 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 65 to 75, and there were 6 respondents who had high self-esteem, scoring 76 and above. The typical respondent had low self-esteem.

Figure 8. Levels of Self-Esteem of Group II, Assault and Battery Offenders.

15 -
12 - +++++
12 - +++++
9 - +++++
9 - +++++
6 - +++++
6 - +++++
3 - +++++
3 - +++++
0 - -

0 - 64 65 - 75 76 & Above
Low Moderate High
Figure 8 represents levels of self-esteem among assault and battery offenders. It indicates that 10 respondents had low self-esteem, scoring 0 to 64. There were 3 respondents who had moderate self-esteem, scoring 65 to 75, and there were 11 respondents who had high self-esteem, scoring 76 and above. The typical respondent had high self-esteem.

Summary of the Self-Esteem

The self-esteem findings revealed that the self-esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers in relation to educational levels had no significant difference from Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders. However, the typical respondent of Group I - Drug Traffickers had a moderate level of self-esteem in relation to their educational levels, while the majority of Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders is higher (0.02) than the self-esteem of drug traffickers.

The support of the family in relation to the self-esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers had no significant difference from Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders. However, the typical respondent of Group I - Drug Traffickers had a moderate level of self-esteem in relation to the family support, while the typical respondent in Group II - Assault and Battery
Offenders had high self-esteem.

The self-esteem of Group I - Drug Traffickers in relation to peer relationships were lower than that of Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders. The majority of Group I - Drug Traffickers had high self-esteem within peer relations, while Group II - Assault and Battery Offenders also had a majority of high self-esteem respondents.

The self-esteem of assault and battery offenders is higher than the self-esteem of drug traffickers.
CHAPTER FIVE
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The summary of this study discusses the findings; limitations; and research directions for future researchers.

Interpretation of Findings

The demographics revealed that while the respondents in both groups, tended to be age 12-15, the typical respondent of Drug Traffickers, Group I, responded that none of the grades from 6-10 applied to them. This might suggest that there were educational problems with the Drug Traffickers in that their ages seemed to be in range of youth who ordinarily would be in one of the grade levels cited in his study. It is highly unlikely that the Drug Traffickers had completed these grade levels. One might infer several factors such as, school dropout as an explanation. However, this would require further investigation. On the other hand, the Assault and Battery, Group II, respondents of the same age range, 12-15, reported being in grade levels 6-10. This could suggest that their group was more on the grade levels that is ordinarily found in the general population of youth in this age category.

In the variable of family support, the majority of
the respondents in both groups lived with their mothers only. This finding is similar to that of the Juvenile Justice System's study. The father figure seemed to be the most absent figure in the home of the juvenile delinquent adolescents surveyed. However, this findings can not be interpreted to mean that the respondents did not have contact with their fathers.

In the variable the number of people within the household, the majority of the respondents in both groups lived with four people in the household. There was also a large number of respondents in both of the groups who indicated they lived with more than five. This may suggest that since there was no father figure, these adolescents could have tried to assume these roles for their siblings or the household. However one could explore in depth, the adolescents, family system for role models, and relationships.

The Self-Esteem scores in relation to peers, revealed that both groups have low self-esteem. However, the Assault and Battery Offenders, had higher self-esteem that the drug Traffickers. Fine (1981) and Mannarino (1978), stated peers serve as a baseline for social comparison and are able to either strengthen or weaken developing self-concepts of adolescents. This
may be one of the possible contributing factors for the drug Trafficker's low self-esteem within their area. One may assume the Drug Traffickers are followers, because they are mostly known as runners for the big man, as adolescents, as Stanton (1987) had point out. It seems that the name of the game is to make more money than the next man; they learn from the streets and from their peers not to trust each other. This may soon become overwhelming for the Drug Traffickers' growing minds. However, the Assault and Battery Offenders, may have grown up around "hanging with the wrong crowd." Dr. Lyles, as stated in the literature supports this ideology when he stated, "many of us who do not have a sense of hope will get us into deeper holes: There isn't a sense of diplomacy or knowing how to use the strengths that we have to get what we want." Initially, these adolescents, possibly go out on the streets with little hope of succeeding in the right way. They may have no other options than to commit assault and battery or sale drugs.

The overall self-esteem scores, revealed, that all of the respondents had a low level of self-esteem, however the Drug Traffickers' self-esteem was lower than the self-esteem of Assault and Battery Offenders.
One may suggest that the Drug Traffickers may be repressing their feeling because they fear being incarcerated. The Assault and Battery Offenders, for some reason, are violently acting out. It appears as if they are not holding anything within themselves.

Limitations of the Study

While the sample of this study represented all of the population of Drug Traffickers and over 75 percent of the Assault and Batter Offenders at the Atlanta Youth Development Center, the findings are limited in terms of generalizing to the population of all youth who are Drug Traffickers and Assault and Battery Offenders.

The geographical location suggests some limitations in that the sample population did not reside in other states. The findings apply to the population of youth from difference parts of the State of Georgia, who are residents at the Atlanta Youth Development Center.

While the racial makeup of this group was all Black youth, the findings especially the one related to the one living with their mothers only is similar to other findings. This has some limitation in terms of this sample being representative of all Black youth.
Because of cultural differences, one could not easily suggest that the findings of this study of Black youth could be applied to youth or other ethnic backgroups who may also be Drug Traffickers and Assault and Battery Offenders. However, it could serve as a base for other ethnic groups.

Research Directions

This study could be replicated using a more representative sample of the population from different geographical locations in the United States. Such a study could focus on youth in similar institutions throughout the United States.

Based on the findings of this study it would be important to conduct research investigation of the family system, utilizing variables related to relationships, role models, values and support systems. For instance, one could examine the impact of the absence of the biological father on the adolescent's development of self-concept and self-esteem. In instances where the biological father is consistently present, there could be a comparative study of adolescents in groups with adolescents who have consistent male role models other than the biological fathers.
Another area of research could focus on the development and evaluation on a model program for prevention. One such demonstration and research program could include the involvement of the family systems.
CHAPTER SIX
IMPLICATION OF SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

This study revealed several common characteristics of adolescent drug traffickers and assault and battery offender, that have implications for social work practice and research. Among the characteristics were (a) family relations, (b) educationally below grade level, and (c) difference in peer relationships of drug traffickers than that of the peer relationships of assault and battery offenders, while assault and battery offenders tended to have a slightly higher level of self-esteem.

In the area of family relations there are three implications for social work practice. First, where father figures are absent from the homes of Black, adolescent males, practice could focus on the identification and assessment of the emotional ties that the adolescents may have with their fathers and the nature of the periodic contacts that may exist. Such approach in practice might enable social workers to better understand the impact of the father-son relationship upon the adolescents self-esteem. Also data from assessment could add to existing knowledge.

A second implication regarding family relations is
that when biological fathers are absent, practice could focus on the assessment of substitute father figures who might be a part of the adolescents' family system. Particular attention could be given to the roles that the substitute fathers play in the development of the adolescents self-esteem. This might then give a different focus for different types of intervention with Black adolescent males who experience drug related and aggressive type problems. This too could add to practice knowledge.

Any type of intervention undertaken should be evaluated so that the findings might be utilized for further social work practice.

A third implication is when Black, adolescent males are living with their mothers only as a primary support system, social work practice could be more attuned to the dual role of parenting that the mother might carry out. Such attention could suggest that the social worker must have a wholistic understanding of different family structures and needed support systems in the Black community. This implies that the social worker's knowledge base must encompass an understanding of the varied family structures and functions that exist in Black communities.
Such a wholistic understanding and point of view might provide clues to how to assist in mobilizing various social systems for improving the enhancement of the self-esteem of Black adolescent males. In fact if this approach was more widely used in practice, it might serve to prevent a majority of Black adolescent male involvement in drug related activities and negatively aggressive behaviors.

Finally, in the area of family relations, a more comprehensive approach to the social work treatment of drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders could be established. This approach could examine the adolescent's entire family, to determine the dysfunctional subsystems and strengths within the family. Understanding how family systems impact upon the adolescent's styles of living and their self-esteem is crucial in the treatment process. Another aspect of this comprehensive program could extend beyond the individual adolescents and their families to linking them with community groups and coalitions. Its' focus could be to prevent the widespread use of drugs which seem to be a deterrent to high self-esteem among drug traffickers.

A similar approach could be used for assault and
battery offenders in linking them and their families with community resources and coalitions in order to rechannel their energies into positive behaviors.

The area of peer relations has implications for social work practice. The finding that the drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders tended to have high self-esteem within peer relations — even though the latter was slightly higher than the former, social work practice could develop specialized programs to focus on the practice relationships among peers. This could possibly assist them in focusing on more positive values and behaviors which could increase their self-esteem.

Finally, the comparative study of self-esteem of both groups, revealed that the drug trafficker's self-esteem was slightly lower than that of the assault and battery offenders. However, the overall finding of self-esteem was that both groups had low levels of self-esteem. The implications of this finding could be related to the drug traffickers feelings regarding popularity among peers, based on material possessions of money. Social workers must find a creative approach to intervene in a social phenomena that is widely destructive. Here again, that intervention must
include other systems within society other than the adolescent and family. A strategic advocacy stance could be developed and utilized at the community, state and national levels. This could be designed to penetrate the systematic forces that seem to produce and stimulate a market for the use of drugs. Among that market is the Black adolescent male, drug trafficker who has low levels of self-esteem, even though adolescents might think that the results of drug trafficking will increase their popularity.

Advocacy approaches, on a national level could be developed to assist assault and battery offenders level that might assist Black, male adolescents in resolving conflict other than through violent behaviors such as, assault and battery. Such programs and services might enhance their self-esteem.

In conclusion, it is important for social workers to focus on all systems that impact upon the adolescent's development and behavior.
REFERENCES


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McAdoo, H. P. & McAdoo, J. L. (Eds.). (1985). *Black...


APPENDICES
APPENDIX A

James P. Brawley Drive, SW
Atlanta, Georgia 30314
February 1, 1991

Mrs. Doris Richardson
Atlanta Youth Development Center
4225 BakersFerry Road, SW
Atlanta, GA 30331

Dear Mrs. Richardson:

I am a second year graduate student at Clark Atlanta University, School of Social Work.

I am presently conducting a research for my thesis. My interest is on the self-esteem of the adjudicated male drug traffickers and assault and battery offenders, at the Atlanta Youth Development Center.

This letter is to confirm my discussion with you requesting the use of files within the center. Your response confirming your agreement will be appreciated.

The privacy of the clients will be respected and no identifying information will be used in the study. Information from the research will be available in the Robert W. Woodruff Library. I hope these findings will add information on the problem of drug trafficking and assault and battery.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

Russia Sherrod

cc Professor Naomi T. Ward, Thesis Supervisor
Dr. Amos Ajo, Director of Research
Mrs. Anne Strand, Director of A.Y.D.C
APPENDIX B

School Form

COOPERSMITH INVENTORY*

Stanley Coopersmith, Ph.D.
University of California at Davis

Directions:

On the next pages, you will find a list of statements about feelings. If a statement describes how you usually feel, put an X in the column "Like Me." If the statement does not describe how you usually feel, put an X in the column "Unlike Me." There are no right or wrong answers.

*Consulting Psychologists Press, Inc.
577 College Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Like</th>
<th>Unlike</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Me</td>
<td>Me</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Things usually don't bother me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>I find it very hard to talk in front of the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>There are lots of things about myself I'd change if I could.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>I can make up my mind without too much trouble.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>I'm a lot of fun to be with.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>I get upset easily at home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>It takes me a long time to get used to anything new.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>I'm popular with kids my own age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>My parents usually consider my feelings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>I give in very easily.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>My parents expect too much of me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>It's pretty tough to be me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Things are all mixed up in my life.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Kids usually follow my ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>I have a low opinion of myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>There are many times when I'd like to leave home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>I often feel upset in school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>I'm not as nice looking as most people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>If I have something to say, I usually say it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>My parents understand me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Most people are better liked than I am.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>I usually feel as if my parents are pushing me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>I often get discouraged at school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>I often wish I were someone else.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>I can't be depended on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>I never worry about anything.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>I'm pretty sure of myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>I'm easy to like.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>My parents and I have a lot of fun together.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>I spend a lot of time daydreaming.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
31. I wish I were younger.
32. I always do the right thing.
33. I'm proud of my school work.
34. Someone always has to tell me what to do.
35. I'm often sorry for the things I do.
36. I'm never happy.
37. I'm doing the best work that I can.
38. I can usually take care of myself.
39. I'm pretty happy.
40. I would rather play with children younger than I am.
41. I like everyone I know.
42. I like to be called on in class.
43. I understand myself.
44. No one pays much attention to me at home.
45. I never get scolded.
46. I'm not doing as well in school as I'd like to.
47. I can make up my mind and stick to it.
48. I really don't like being a boy/girl.
49. I don't like to be with other people.
50. I'm never shy.
51. I often feel ashamed of myself.
52. Kids pick on me very often.
53. I always tell the truth.
54. My teachers make me feel I'm not good enough.
55. I don't care what happens to me.
56. I'm a failure.
57. I get upset easily when I'm scolded.
58. I always know what to say to people.