

FAMILY STRUCTURE AND PARENTING STYLES ON ADULT CRIME

by

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ABSTRACT

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There has been an abundance of literature on how parenting styles and household structure might impact delinquency, but there has been limited research on its effects on adult criminal behavior. Studies have suggested parenting styles and family structure only matters during adolescence but has ignored the fact that parenting is dynamic and family structure plays apart in future criminal behavior through parenting. The study aims to address how family structure may influence parenting styles and how parenting styles might influence adult crime through using logistic regression models. Findings show family structure is statistically significant to parenting styles. Parenting styles are more significant to adolescent delinquency than adult crime because having an authoritarian mother in any family structure predicted adult violent, drug, and property crime. This study provides a basis for future research to the needs and challenges faced by families, as well as the effectiveness of different policy interventions when looking at adult crime, delinquency, and parenting practices.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

(LCC) Life Course Criminology

(SES) Socioeconomic Status

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There is an abundance of literature on how parenting styles and household structure during early adolescence impacts delinquency (Hoeve et al., 2008; Schroder & Mowen, 2012) but few studies have investigated the long-term impacts household structure and parenting styles have on adult criminal behavior. Social bond theory, developed by Travis Hirschi, states individuals who have weak social bonds to society will have an increased likelihood of engaging in delinquency because they are less committed to prosocial norms or rules. One element of his social bond theory that has been empirically supported in relation to adolescent delinquency is parental attachment (Hoeve et al., 2008; Johnson et al., 2010; Schroder & Mowen, 2012). If the adolescent has a weak attachment to their parents, parental control may be reduced because the child doesn't care about the opinions or expectations of their parents. Hirschi's theory only focused on delinquency during adolescence, but failed to examine its influence on other time periods. However, later criminologists such as Laub and Sampson (1993), extended Hirschi's social bond theory by stating bonds or behaviors can change over time, not just during adolescence. Laub and Sampson (1993) have focused on transition points such as marriage, employment, and parenthood, but little attention has been given to how family structure and parenting styles can influence adult criminality.

Laub and Sampson's (1993) theory states that family structure can influence changes in bonds or behaviors over an individual's life course. They suggest different family structures can influence the level of parental attachment and control, which may influence future behaviors or criminal behaviors throughout an individual's lifetime. Family structure is very complex and there are many types of structures that adolescents live in such as married biological parents, single parents, and married stepparents. The household in which adolescents grow up in and the

way the parents raise their children may influence their well-being and future behaviors over time. Recent literature suggests adolescents growing up in married biological parents' households engage in less delinquency and adult crime than single parent households or stepparent households (Boccio & Beaver, 2017; Bosick & Fomby, 2018). Family structure plays a role in delinquent and criminal behavior through parenting behaviors such as parental attachment and control (Demuth and Brown, 2004).

Furthermore, parenting behaviors such as attachment and control have been explanations for juvenile delinquency but less attention has been given on the long-term impact they may have on adult crime. Research has found that poor parenting practices such as low attachment, harsh discipline, and low control have been predictors of delinquency, but also adult crime (Johnson et al., 2010; Laub & Sampson, 1993; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Theorists such as Maccoby and Martin (1983) combined parental attachment and control into four parenting styles such as authoritative, authoritarian, permissive, and uninvolved to explain delinquency and criminal behavior. Out of these four parenting styles, authoritative parenting has shown positive outcomes and less engagement in delinquency or criminal behavior (Johnson et al., 2010; Schroder et al., 2010; Simmons & Sutton, 2021).

This current study starts by exploring the theoretical frameworks of social bond theory and life course criminology to address the following research question: Do parenting styles and household structure during early adolescence impact adult criminality? This study uses data from the National Longitudinal Study of Youth 1997 to examine the differences in parenting styles by household structure and their relationship to adult criminality. This research contributes to the literature by examining how these factors influence criminality in adulthood.

1.1 Social bond theory

Criminologists have researched theories to explain the types of individuals engaging in breaking the law. While most theories have their strengths, some have been criticized. Criminologists are primarily concerned with why individuals engage in crime and delinquency. Hirschi (1969) rephrased this question by asking why people refrain from crime and delinquency. He created Social bond theory, which examines the connection between Social bonds and crime (Hirschi, 1969). Hirschi (1969) argues that controls must be placed on humanity to prevent engaging in crime and delinquency. He states “A person is free to commit criminal acts because his bonds to the conventional order have somehow been broken” (Hirschi, 1969, p.3). These natural tendencies to commit crime can be controlled if an individual has strong social bonds to prosocial individuals or institutions.

Hirschi (1969) argues that an individual’s social bond to society comes from prosocial relationships, values, and institutions. Prosocial relationships or bonds within society reduces their engagement in crime or delinquency. Delinquency or crime occurs when an individual’s bond to society is weakened or nonexistent. The weaker the person’s individual bond to society, the weaker their commitment to prosocial, law-abiding norms or rules.

1.2 Parental Attachment

Hirschi’s first social bond element is attachment. Attachment describes the closeness or ties to others such as family, friends, romantic partners, or institutions. The two major attachments in which adolescents show their prosocial relationships or institutions are parents and school. Adolescents who have high attachment to parents will have prosocial relationships and less delinquency because they are sensitive to the opinions and expectations of those who are personally important (Hoeve et al., 2012). However, Hirschi quotes “If the child does not care or think about the reaction of his parents, their control over him is seriously reduced ” (p.108, 1969

Hirschi). This emphasizes how attachment can affect parental control because of the weak attachment to the child. Adolescents who have a strong attachment to their parents will allow them to guide or control them into making prosocial choices and follow societal norms.

According to Hirschi (1969), the parent-adolescent attachment is established through the child caring about their parents' reactions, the ability to identify or desire to be like their parents, parent-adolescent communication, and parental control. When an adolescent has a weak social bond to their parents, they are less invested in their parents' opinions and search for a stronger relationship outside of their parents. They may search for social bonds elsewhere, which could lead them to bonding with antisocial peers. However, if adolescents are adequately controlled by their parents, their likelihood of engaging in crime and delinquency will decrease.

1.3 Parental Attachment's Impact on Parental Control

When adolescents are closely attached to their parents, they care about their opinions and expectations so that they wouldn't want to disappoint them. As a result, parents can exercise parental control over their children. Parental control is defined as how much the parents supervise their children, rules they enforce to control their behavior, and decisions or knowledge about adolescent peer groups or whereabouts (Hirschi, 1969). According to Hirschi (1969), effective parenting practices, such as attachment and control are a crucial factor to reduce adolescent's motivation to engage in crime and delinquency. Parental control helps adolescents understand the costs and consequences of their actions by showing positive attachment and controlling the behavior through rules, supervision, or punishment. However, excessive parental control during adolescence can hinder identity development and autonomy (Kobak et al., 2017). Over the life course, parental control decreases as adolescents mature and age (Steinberg, 2001).

Without a healthy balance of parental control, criminal behavior can persist into adulthood, and criminal behavior is a problem in adulthood (Reynolds & Ou, 2010).

Wright and Cullen (2001) examined how parental attachment and control affected adolescent delinquency using the National Longitudinal Study of Youth in 1979. Parental attachment was measured by asking adolescents how close they felt to their parents and parental control was measured by asking the amount of supervision, rules parents set in place, and knowledge about adolescents' peer group. They found that parental attachment and control had interaction effects. They found that parental attachment is significantly and positively related to parental control over the adolescent. Parents who are close to the adolescent can exercise a great amount of parental control, which in turn reduces delinquency. Similarly, Johnsen et al. (2010) using a different data set, found similar results that suggest parental attachment influences parental control and the relationship between these two variables can be a predictor of adolescent delinquency.

1.4 Family Structure's Impact on Parental Attachment and Control

Studies have shown that adolescents growing up in two parent-household have less engagement in delinquency and adult crime than single or stepparent households because they have strong parental attachment and control (Boccio & Beaver, 2017; TenEcky et al., 2021). Married two parent families have higher attachment, supervision, and control over adolescents. This is because both cooperate together in raising the child, spending time with the child, and enforcing social norms or rules within the household. Hirschi (1969) suggests the quality of attachment is better obtained when there are two parents present within the household. Adolescents in two parent families have a healthier balance of attachment and parental control because there is no family disruption such as separation, divorce, or death (Kroese et al., 2021).

As mentioned previously in the theoretical section of social bond theory, Hirschi (1969) argues the strength of the attachment the adolescent has to their parents is an important predictor of delinquency and crime. Single-parent families may produce more delinquent children than married or cohabiting parents because of the difficulty of making up for the absent parent (Kroese et al., 2021). Due to not having another parent, attachment is very difficult to obtain because the single parent must simultaneously fill both roles and fulfill basic needs for survival (Kroese et al., 2021). The weaker attachment between the parent and adolescent creates opportunities for the adolescent to engage in delinquency or crime due to less parental control over the adolescent's behavior.

Married step-parent households may have difficulty maintaining balance of parental attachment and control over the adolescent (Cavanagh & Fomby, 2019). According to Boccio and Beaver (2017), there may be a couple of reasons why stepparents have difficulty establishing attachment and control of the adolescent. One reason is that biological parents may invest more time into the stepparent and less time invested into the adolescent, leading to low attachment and control. They may also have difficulty establishing a balance of attachment and control because the stepparent may also undermine the authority of the biological parent in regards to parental attachment and control, which can impair the emotional connection between the adolescent and the stepparent.

1.5 Theoretical Critiques of Hirschi Theory

Hirschi's social control theory has gained empirical support over the years and has been used to explain adolescent delinquency and adult crime (Ganem & Agnew, 2007; Johnson et al., 2010). However, there have been many critiques of and recommendations for his social bond theory. One critique of social bond theory is that his theory is static, meaning that it doesn't

examine changes in bonds or behaviors over time (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Social bond theory also doesn't examine how social structural factors, such as family structure or socioeconomic status, can influence bonds or behaviors over time. Because of his theory limitations, Sampson and Laub (1993) builds upon Hirschi's theory by accounting for studying how changes in bonds or behaviors vary over time, and how social structural factors can influence bonds or behaviors over time.

1.6 Life Course Criminology Perspective

Social bond theory is also linked to an adolescent's crime trajectory in adulthood, also known as Life Course Criminology (LCC). According to the LCC, delinquency and the transition to adulthood can influence the trajectory of adult criminality. Trajectories are long term patterns of pathways or development throughout an individual's life. Transitions are defined as short-term events within the trajectory that is marked by gradual change in someone's role or social status (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Transitions and trajectories are related events that reflect meaningful turning points and changes in an individual's life course (Sampson & Laub, 1993). Like social bonds, these transitions and trajectories can influence delinquency and adult criminality.

Sampson and Laub (1993) further extend this theory by creating age-grade theory to explain how social bonds impact adolescent delinquency and adult crime. Unlike social bond theory, they expand Hirschi's theory by looking at how the nature and strength of the bonds across the life course varies as a person develops and criminal behavior trajectories throughout an individual's development. For example, parental attachment and control is very important for adolescents' emotional development and social development. However, the strength of the bond, parental attachment, and control can vary over time during this period because adolescence is the

transition between childhood and adulthood where adolescents are seeking independence and autonomy from their parents' control. Adolescents are less likely to depend on their parents for help, turning to their peers for guidance, emotional support, while developing their own opinions, beliefs, and views.

Due to the shift from family to peers, this can affect the bond between the parent and adolescent. Parents who don't develop strong attachments by spending time with and responding to the needs of their child risk being unable to communicate or enforce prosocial norms (Laub & Sampson, 1993). Once they reach adulthood, they formulate and adopt their own independent norms, values and beliefs. Parental control is important during adolescence to reduce and control behaviors that go against societal norms or values, and because parental control decreases as adolescents transition into adulthood (Laub & Sampson, 1993). However, if the parent is too controlling during adolescence, the adolescent may feel as if the parent is denying their right to autonomy and weaken the attachment bond, making the individual less committed to prosocial norms and beliefs. Due to parents hindering identity exploration and formation development during adolescence by overcontrolling them, they are less likely to commit to forming prosocial ties and seek prosocial institutions to guide them when they turn adults.

Other theorists, such as Macoby and Martin (1983) combined attachment and control into four parenting styles: authoritarian, authoritative, neglectful, and permissive. All four parenting styles characterize the level of parental control and attachment. These parenting styles can impact a child's development, including emotionally and socially. Adolescents raised with a healthy balance of parental control and attachment can establish healthy prosocial bonds with others and society. For example, authoritative parenting has positive outcomes on adolescent development going into adulthood, like less delinquency and crime, because they exert high

control and attachment by addressing their child's needs while enforcing prosocial behavior (Maccoby & Martin, 1993). They grant adolescent autonomy because the parent is encouraging about how they feel and gives rationale/reason behind punishment.

Authoritarian parenting is characterized by low attachment and high parental control that diminishes a child's negotiations' and limits their autonomy (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). This can lead to or increase delinquency among children due to the failure in addressing the child's antisocial behaviors and shortcomings. This parenting style can produce delinquency and crime because parents fail to explain why there are enforcing punishments that reinforce prosocial rules and behaviors.

Neglectful parenting has low control and attachment (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Parents show no interest in the child or no responsibility to fulfill their parental obligations. Adolescents have more freedom over their decisions and parents do not enforce rules, discipline, or express emotional support or a nurturing environment. The adolescents grow up with less emotional control, inability to cope through life events, and difficulty maintaining relationships with families, friends and acquaintances (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2018). This parenting style produces high delinquency and adult crime because parents do not establish a bond and teach these adolescents of prosocial norms or values. They also fail to correct antisocial behavior, such as delinquency and crime because of less parental control.

Permissive parenting is characterized by low control and strong attachment (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). These parents are very nurturing, but do not enforce rules or responsibilities on their children. They do not correct their child's misbehaviors or shortcomings because they don't have expectations for their child. Parents view the child as "equal" status to a parental role versus seeing them as a child (Kuppens & Ceulemans, 2018). They respect their child's wishes and

needs but lack discipline and structure in enforcing rules. These children can grow up to be impulsive and demanding with low self-control and self-regulation (Sanvictores & Mendez, 2021). This parenting style can produce delinquency and crime because the parents allow these behaviors to occur.

Sampson and Laub's (1993) theory was based on a detailed analysis of Glueck and Glueck study called *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency* (1956). Through the analysis of Glueck's data of adolescent delinquents and non-delinquents, they explored whether parental attachment and control was related to juvenile delinquency and adult crime. They found that parental attachment and control had an influence on juvenile offending. Juvenile offending predicates adult crime indirectly through weak attachment to parents and control during adolescence. These results suggest that weak attachment and control during adolescence can explain the continuity of criminal behavior in adolescence and adulthood.

Their age-graded theory of crime implies that social structural factors, such as family structure and socioeconomic status, can produce weak social bonds that contribute to delinquency and crime (Laub & Sampson, 1993). Social structures are defined as embedded, institutionalized relationships between people living in a group, such as family. These social structures and relationships can impact the individual's behavior, experiences and attitudes. For example, children raised in two parent households have stronger attachment and control because they have two parents supervising, monitoring and teaching them. This is particularly true of children raised in married two parent households. Single parent households generally have lower attachment and control because they have to make up for the absence of another parent while balancing responsibilities and providing resources for survival (Chavda & Nisarga, 2023).

Moreover, SES can impact parental attachment and control. Low SES households are more likely to have low attachment and high parental control due to parental stress stemming from poverty and economic difficulties (Kalil & Ryan, 2020). When parents are frustrated because they are unable to provide economically for their children due to having less social capital, they may treat their children harshly, have less attachment, and are less engaged in the adolescent's development or activities (Kalil & Ryan, 2020). Low SES and poverty may cause negative emotions in parents such as stress, physical, and mental health well-being, which can result in decreased attachment, harsher discipline, and less parent-adolescent interactions. Households that are not low SES families may have high attachment and control because they are more time invested into their child and have economic resources to promote healthy adolescent social development.

Therefore, Laub and Sampson (1993) predict that these structural factors, such as SES and family structure within the household, impact social bonding and then influence delinquency or crime. They argue that low SES families attachment and control may be low because the parents busy work schedule lowers their ability to attach to and bond with their child. Specifically, the child does not receive the control, attachment and supervision to avoid anti-social behaviors. This can result in low attachment and control increasing delinquency and crime.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Parental Attachment on Delinquency and Adult Crime

Previous research has supported how attachment to parents and parental control affect adult crime. In a meta-analysis, Hoeve et al. (2012) stated poor attachment to parents was associated with less parental control, which contributed to more adult crime than adolescents with high parental attachment. Along the same lines, using the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study, Johnson et al. (2010) found that low parental attachment was a significant predictor of adult crime than high parental attachment. More researchers found similar results with attachment and crime (Brook et al., 2011; Schroeder et al., 2009; Simmons & Sutton, 2021).

2.2 Parental Control on Delinquency and Adult Crime

Prior literature has shown mixed results with respect to parental control on adolescent delinquency and crime. When categorizing parental control as a parenting style of disciplinary practices, there was no relationship between adolescents' parental control, adolescent delinquency, and criminal behavior in adulthood (Glueck and Glueck, 1950). However, Laub and Sampson (1993) reanalyzed Glueck and Glueck's (1950) data and found that lack of parental supervision and inconsistent disciplinary practices during adolescence resulted in criminal behaviors in adulthood. Other researchers (Harris-McKoy & Cui, 2012; Petras et al., 2004) support this finding by stating low parental control during adolescence leads to more criminal behavior and arrest.

Some researchers state high parental control during adolescence may increase criminal behavior in adulthood. Brauer (2016) suggests that high parental control during adolescence increases adult criminality due to parent's over controlling behaviors. These over controlling behaviors may make the adolescent rebellious due to the parents limiting their autonomy and

freedom to make their own decisions. Scholte (1999) and Johnson et al. (2010) support this finding that parental control can lead to criminal behavior. However, they both argue this anti-social behavior is actually due to the controlling parent being abusive and overly strict.

2.3 Family Structure and Attachment

The research has generally found that family structure can influence parental attachment. Demuth and Brown (2004) suggest that married two-parent households have higher levels of parental attachment than other family types such as single-parent, married stepparents, or other nontraditional family types. Following the same trend using the Toledo Adolescent Relationship Study data, Johnson et al. (2010) suggest that married two-parent households had positive adolescent-parent attachment. Baker and Verrocchio (2013) found that two-parent married households have higher parental attachment than single, divorced, or married stepparent families.

Researchers have investigated how parental attachment differs in married biological step parent households. When studying parental attachment among stepparents, single and married two-parent families, stepparent families had low parental attachment (Parent et al., 2014). However, when studying parental attachment between stepparents and married two-parent families in raising adolescent children, stepparents showed more attachment than married two-parent families (Hoffmann, 2023). When analyzing whether family structure and parental attachment influences antisocial behaviors, adolescents who resided in stepparent households had lower levels of attachment than biological two-parent households (Boccio & Beaver, 2017).

Conversely, single-parent households have been linked to parental attachment. For example, Idrees et al. (2021) compared single-parent and married two-parent households. They found that single-parent households are less attached to their children, less attentive to their

needs, and communicate less to their children. Another study by Chavda and Nisarga (2023) supports these findings, suggesting single-parents don't have the time to build bonds because they are trying to support the household and play the role of the other parent. Since single-parents may invest less emotional support into their adolescents, the adolescent may seek outside emotional support due to insufficient parental bonding. Last, two other studies found that single-parent households can reduce parental attachment while increasing parental conflict with the child (Kroese et al., 2021; Laursen, 2005)

However, some research has found that family structure is not related to parental attachment. When analyzing a sample of 146 adolescents in a longitudinal study from Canada, adolescent attachment and family structure were insignificant (Lecompte et al., 2023). When examining parent-adolescent attachment across predictors, such as income, family structure, and parental education, family structure was unrelated to attachment (Rawatlal. et al., 2015). When analyzing parental attachment in a sample of adolescents, parental attachment was not related to two-parent married, single, or stepparent family structures (Phythian et al., 2008).

2.4 Family Structure and Control

Previous research has also shown mixed results on how family structure impacts parental control. Several studies found that married two-parent households have higher parental control than single-parent or stepparent family structures (Hoeve et al., 2012; Fransson et al., 2017; Olsson & Fritzell, 2017; Schroeder et al., 2010). Along those same lines, using Add Health data, parental control was higher in two-parent households and resulted in less adolescent delinquency and adult crime than other family types such as single or married step parent households (Boccio & Beaver, 2017; Bosick & Fomby, 2018; Denmuth & Brown, 2004; Harris-McKoy & Cui, 2012). One researcher states there was no relationship between family structure and parental

control (Shek et al., 2015). These findings suggest that with respect to family structure, it is unclear whether parental control will be affected.

2.5 Family Structure and Crime

Previous research has linked family structure to adult crime rates. Glueck and Glueck (1950) found a relationship between family structure and adult crime, suggesting adolescents raised in divorced families and other family structure types besides married two-parent households have higher adult crime rates. These findings have been supported by research in later decades that also linked family structure to crime rates (Mednick et al., 1990; Hoeve et al., 2012; Knox, 2020; Petts, 2009). For example, Petts (2009) found this and suggested adolescents growing up in married two-parent households had less adult crime than single or married stepparent families because they had more control and attachment. More recent research has also found that children raised in single-parent and married step parent households had higher adult crime rates than those raised in married, two-parent households (Boccio & Beaver, 2017; Bosick & Paula, 2018).

However, not all subsequent research has supported these findings. For example, Laub and Sampson (1993) reanalyzed Glueck's study and found family structure was not significant to later adult crime, only parental attachment and control. Therefore, it is unclear whether family structure during adolescence influences adult criminal behavior in adulthood.

2.6 SES on Attachment and Control

Previous research illustrates how SES impacts parenting styles, including parental attachment and control. Compared to higher SES households, low SES households may use harsher punishments for their adolescents and have less emotional support than higher SES households (Ali et al., 2023; Anderson et al., 2023). Low SES households may have a higher

experience of frequent family conflict and less financial support. An explanation for these is that low SES households might have to deal with the economic pressures of paying for essential things, foods, or services for the household and other stressful life events that can cause parental stress and decrease the quality of parent-adolescent attachment (Kalil & Ryan, 2020). Studies suggest low SES households might have an authoritarian parenting style (Idrees et al., 2021; Luo et al., 2019). Several studies suggested that economic and parental stress can cause low parental attachment and control (Cao et al., 2021; Vreeland et al., 2019).

2.7 SES and Adult Crime

Studies have found SES linked low childhood SES to increased adult criminality. (Mednick et al., 1990; Savolainen et al., 2018). Studies have found that SES can influence adult crime by impacting parenting styles. suggesting some parents living with low SES may have a harsher parenting style due to the financial pressures and other competing life responsibilities (Anderson et al., 2023; Mednick et al., 1990; Savolainen et al., 2018). This may weaken the bond and cause the adolescent to not engage in prosocial behaviors or institutions, increasing the likelihood of delinquency and crime. According to literature, some higher SES households have more financial resources and spend time with their adolescents, showing a positive attachment to their child, promoting adolescent emotional development, and effectively reinforcing prosocial behaviors (Bian & Wu, 2021; Savolainen et al., 2018).

Previous research has explored how adolescent SES impacts adult crime. Using the Finland Birth Cohort study following adolescents to early adulthood, socioeconomic status was measured as parents' education and income (Savolainen et al., 2018). Increased adolescent socioeconomic status decreased adult crime. Along the same lines, using the Pennsylvania Lehigh Longitudinal Study, low adolescent SES increased adult crime (Dennison & Demuth,

2017). More researchers support this finding (Mednick et al., 1990; Anderson et al., 2023), suggesting low SES households spend less time investing in their adolescent well-being and promoting prosocial behaviors due to financial pressures and other life stressors.

Conversely, there is evidence suggesting that low adolescent SES is not linked to higher adult crime. One study using Add Health data reported that adolescents coming from high socioeconomic backgrounds were more involved in adult crimes and involved in the criminal justice system than low SES households (Dennison & Demuth, 2017). Using the same data set, Kuhl et al. (2016) reported that adolescents coming from high socioeconomic backgrounds had higher adult crime rates than adolescents in low SES households. These results show that socioeconomic status during adolescence can impact future adult offending.

2.8 Other Influences on Adult Crime

There are other influences on adult criminality that need to be controlled. Race, age, delinquent peers, gender, and juvenile delinquency should be controlled. Race should be controlled because there are differences in crime by racial groups. Specifically, decades of research suggest that Blacks and Hispanics are overrepresented in the criminal justice system (Harris-McKoy & Cui, 2012; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Moreover, Schroder and Mowen (2012) found that race was one of the strongest predictors of offending in Blacks and Hispanics. Those are just some examples, they illustrate the need to control for race because it can predict adult involvement in crime.

Delinquent peers not only have a strong influence on juvenile delinquency (Laub & Sampson, 1993), but adult offending as well (Copp et al., 2019). Peers are important during adolescence as adolescents shift their time away from their parents to their peers. Delinquent peers influence adolescent delinquency and crime by normalizing antisocial acts that lead to

criminal behavior (Copp et al., 2019). Peers may show support toward the individual committing the deviant act, making law-breaking an approvable and acceptable behavior. Even though research is richly developed on delinquent peers' impact on adolescent delinquency, few studies suggest peers can influence adult crime as well (Copp et al., 2019; Walters, 2018). Therefore, delinquent peers will be included as a control variable because it has been linked to juvenile and adult crime.

Delinquency will be used as a control variable because some types can predict adult offending (McCord, 1991; Laub & Sampson, 1993). This is because adolescents who develop poor social bonds or receive poor parenting in adolescence may engage in continued delinquent activities and may persist their offending into adulthood. Adolescent delinquency may interrupt future adult social bonds and can cause less contact with prosocial individuals or institutions.

There are also differences in crime by gender. Previous studies suggest males engage in more delinquency and crime than females (Hoeve et al., 2012; Huschek & Blokland, 2016). Research suggests some males engage in more delinquency than females because they have more aggression, risk taking, resistance to punishment, and experience less guilt toward their behaviors or acts than females (Hoeve et al., 2012; Johnson et al., 2010). In previous studies, some females have better control over their emotions, less sensation-seeking and aggression, and less risk taking toward their behaviors than males when studying delinquency and crime (Hoeve et al., 2012; Huschek & Blokland, 2016).

2.9 The Present Study

There are three major limitations of prior research on whether social bond theory impacts life-course criminality (Climent-Galarza et al., 2022; Johnson et al., 2010; Schroder & Mowen, 2012). First, family structure was often the control variable when studying whether parenting

styles impact adult crime. Second, these studies typically fail to examine if parenting styles mediate family structure in relationship to adult crime. Third, the literature has neglected the potential relationship between family structure and adult crime. Parental attachment or control wasn't measured when studying family structure in relationship to adult crime (Bosick & Fomby, 2018; Mednick et al., 1990). This study will address these limitations by exploring how family structure during adolescence impacts parenting styles and adult crime.

2.10 Hypotheses

According to social bond theory, because both parents are present and the adolescent is strongly attached, adolescents residing in married two-parent homes are more likely to receive authoritative or authoritarian parenting and less likely to receive permissive or neglectful parenting (Vafaeenejad et al., 2020). Adolescents in married families have authoritative or authoritarian parenting because there are two parents in the households who are committed to each other, look to spend time with the adolescent, and may look to enhance adolescent development. Stepparent families will be defined as an individual married to a biological parent of one or more children, but is not the biological parent of those children (Manning, 2015). Stepparent families have the same structure as married two-parent households, but since there is a lack of commitment in the relationship and not a defined parental role teaching the adolescent prosocial behaviors and building a bond between the adolescent, attachment and control may be low (Manning, 2015). Therefore, stepparent families are more likely to be permissive or neglectful and less likely to be authoritarian and authoritative (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2010). Also, family roles may not be clearly defined within stepfamilies and can cause confusion when establishing a bond or when exerting discipline (Jensen, 2020). This may cause the stepparent to be less involved in discipline or attachment toward the adolescent.

Single mom households have been linked to authoritarian and neglectful parenting because they may have fewer attachments to their child(ren) (Yaffe, 2017). This is because some single mothers must carry the burden of caring for the household, providing proper parenting practices for their child, and compensating as the provider and disciplinarian for the father's role. This may cause stress, making the mother use inconsistent discipline practices, harsh parenting, and less attachment to their child. While the mother is trying to compensate for the father's role, she forgets her role as a mother, which is loving and nurturing (Yaffe, 2017). Single fathers are similar in household structure but are more likely to have a permissive style because they want to compensate for the mother's role of being a nurturer and spending more time with the adolescent instead of enforcing discipline (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2010). The hypotheses for the present study are diagrammed below in Figure 1.

When studying the relationship between parenting styles and adult crime, adolescents growing up with authoritative parenting will be less likely to engage in adult crime (Simmons & Sutton, 2021). The reasoning behind this is because authoritative parenting encourages adolescent autonomy and independence, consistent discipline, and provides a supportive and nurturing relationship built upon mutual trust and respect. With this parenting style, adolescents feel understood, valued, and supported, reducing the likelihood of engaging in crime and delinquency. The parents teach the child prosocial norms and values, which helps the adolescent internalize these strong prosocial norms and values (Johnson et al., 2010; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Adolescents who grew up with authoritarian parenting will be more likely to engage in adult criminality (S.A. Johnson, 2016; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Adolescents growing up with authoritarian parenting may experience resentment, anger, or rebellion due to their parents' punitive and strict parenting (Simmons & Sutton, 2021). As a result, they may get involved in

deviant behavior as a form of rebellion against parental authority. This parenting style doesn't appropriately reinforce prosocial norms because the adolescents may conform to their parents rules out of fear of punishment rather than understanding prosocial norms (Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Adolescents raised with neglectful parenting are more likely to engage in adult crime. This is because parents do not build a strong bond toward their child and do not properly provide supervision or control toward their children (S.A. Johnson, 2016). Children experiencing neglectful parenting may feel their parents don't care about them and are less invested in their children emotionally, making them experience feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness (Simmons & Sutton, 2021). They may internalize these negative feelings about themselves and may increase their chances of engaging in criminal behavior as means of coping with these negative feelings (Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Without proper parental control or supervision, adolescents are more likely to engage in risky or criminal behavior. The low level of parental control in neglectful parenting leaves adolescents with no boundaries or consequences for their behavior. Finally, permissive parenting is defined as high attachment and low parental control (Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Permissive parents fail to establish clear boundaries or rules for their children's behaviors because they view their children as their equal instead of establishing parental authority over the adolescent. Parents would rather exercise having a high attachment to their child than enforce rules or disciplines over their child's behavior, which may make the child not learn the responsibility of their actions, take less accountability for their actions, or understand the consequences of their behaviors. This may lead to lack of respect to parental authority or societal norms, increasing the likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior as an adult.

In regards to socioeconomic status, parenting styles, and adult crime, high SES may be more inclined to have an authoritative parenting style due to having more resources such as financial, education and social support networks (Savolainen et al., 2018). These parents are more likely to invest in their adolescent development due to access to resources and they are more confident in providing a nurturing environment with a healthy balance of attachment and control (Savolainen et al., 2018). Adolescents growing up in high SES households may experience an authoritative parenting style, which decreases the likelihood of delinquency and adult crime. On the other hand, adolescents growing up in low socioeconomic status households may experience a permissive, authoritarian, or neglectful parenting style than authoritative. Low SES may experience permissive (high attachment and low control) or neglectful (low attachment and low control) parenting style because of economic stress and prioritizing basic needs for survival over enforcing rules or boundaries for their adolescents misbehavior. This may lead to a lack of guidance and direction for their children. Adolescents growing up in low SES households may experience authoritarian parenting due to parents' response to financial pressures and other competing life responsibilities (Savolainen et al., 2018). Authoritarian parents may enforce strict rules or punishment due to the influence of these financial stressors and other competing life responsibilities. This harsh parenting may lead to the child to be rebellious, angry, and rebellious against parental authority. Adolescents raised in low SES households who experience authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parenting are more likely to engage in adult crime (Savolainen et al., 2018).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN

The data set used for this study is the Nationally Longitudinal Study of Youth (NLSY97), which is funded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). In this survey, 8,934 youth were interviewed during 1997 when they were ages 12-17 years old. The data has been collected from 1997-2021 and consists of 20 rounds of data collection. Round one of the data collection consists of a cross-sectional sample of representative respondents of people living in the United States and an oversample of Black and Hispanics adolescents. Round 6 is a follow-up with adolescents when they are around the ages of 18-24 years old. Throughout this analysis, only round 1 (N=8934) and round 6 (N=7754) were used to examine how family style impacts parenting styles and adult crime. For the outcome variables, parenting styles were measured in wave 1 of 1997 and adult crime was measured in round 6 of 2003. The information gathered in all the rounds of NLSY97 were employment, education, household composition, family processes, marriage, parental income, adolescent income, delinquency, and crime. The NLSY97 gathers information on the self-reported data of the parents and the adolescent, but for the purposes of this study, information is gathered from the adolescent respondent. The NLSY97 survey is sponsored and directed by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and managed by the Center for Human Resource Research (CHRR) at The Ohio State University. Interviews are conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago.

3.1 Independent Variables

Family structure is crucial for adolescent development regarding parental attachment and control. Family structure is measured in round 1 asking the adolescent's relationship to their parents or parent figure in the household of the survey date. Family structure was originally measured as both biological parents, biological mother and stepfather, biological father and

stepmother, biological mother only, biological father only, adoptive parent(s), foster parent(s), grandparents, other relatives, and anything else. Since this study focused on the mother and father, the categories of adoptive parent(s), foster parent(s), grandparents, other relatives, and anything else were excluded from the analysis. These categories were also excluded from the analysis because the NLSY97 did not provide information on the parenting styles or a way to identify the parenting styles of the mother or father across the other household structure. The new categories from the original measured variables were married biological parents, single mother, single father, married biological mother with stepfather, and married biological father with stepmother. Each category was dummy coded as 0 or 1 based on the family's structure. For example, if family structure was married with biological parents, a value of 1 would be assigned to this variable and 0 would be assigned to the other 5 categories. This would be applied to the other family structures as well.

Parenting styles are crucial for adolescent development and help adolescents establish prosocial bonds with others and society. Consistent with prior literature studies (Murphy et al., 2012; Schroeder & Mowen, 2012; Tapia et al., 2018), parenting styles consist of attachment and control of the father and mother (Maccoby & Martin, 1983). Attachment is defined as the emotional support the parents provide their children. Parental control refers to the control parents place on their children's behavior. Parental attachment and control are combined together to create four parenting styles according to Maccoby and Martin (1983). Parenting style was assessed by asking the adolescent the parenting style of their residential father and mother. The variable was originally coded as 1=Uninvolved, 2=Permissive, 3=Authoritarian, and 4=Authoritative for the mother and father. For the analysis, these variables were coded as 1=father uses parenting style and 0=Father doesn't use this parenting style. For mother, this was

coded the same as 1=Mother uses this parenting style and 0=Mother doesn't use this parenting style. Socioeconomic status was reported by the amount the parents made within the last year during round 1. Parents were asked their gross household income in the past year.

3.2 The Dependent Variable

Adult criminal behavior is the dependent variable. The variable, adult crime, was measured in round 6 when adolescents were between the ages of 18-24. There is no universal definition of adulthood, but prior literature has examined adult criminality around the ages of 19-22 years old because criminal behavior peaks around late adolescence and young adulthood (Harris-McKoy, 2012; Johnson et al., 2010; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). For the analysis, the sample was restricted to include the ages of adolescents when they turn 19-22 years. Adult crime was measured using a self-report questionnaire completed by the adolescents when they entered adulthood about their criminal behaviors. Adult crime was measured into three different types of crime: property, violent, and drug crime. These were measured the same way for adolescent delinquency as well. Property crime refers to offenses that involve theft or damages to property. They were asked since the date of the last interview have they ever: purposely damaged or destroyed property that did not belong to you, stolen something from a store or something that did not belong to you worth less than 50 dollars, stolen something from a store, person, house, or something that did not belong to you worth 50 dollars including stealing a car, committed other property crimes such as fencing, receiving, possessing, or selling stolen property, cheated someone by selling them something that was worthless or worth much less than what you said it was, take something from the store without paying for it, and did you snatch someone's purse, wallet, or pick someone's pocket. Violent crimes are defined as crimes that involve force to get something, attacking with intent to injure or kill. Respondents were asked since the date of the

last interview, have you: attacked someone with the idea of seriously hurting them or have had a situation end up in a serious fight or assault of some kind, did you use a weapon to steal something, and use a weapon to steal something greater than 50 dollars. Drug crimes are defined as drug selling. Respondents were asked since the date of their last interview, did you: sell marijuana or hashish, that is pot, grass, or hash, sell or help to sell hard drugs such as heroin, cocaine, LSD or other drugs? Respondents responded yes or no to these items. For each crime variable under the different types of crime, these were coded into a dummy variable. For example, if the respondent responded yes to committing a property crime, they were coded as 1=committed a property crime and 0=not committed a property crime. If respondents responded yes to committing a violent crime, they were coded as 1=committed a violent crime and 0=not committed a violent crime. If respondents responded yes to committing a drug crime, they were coded as 1=committed a drug crime and 0=not committed a drug crime. The offense categories are not mutually exclusive. This means an offender can be drug offender and a violent offender, or a violent offender and a property offender.

3.3 Control Variables

The control variables for this study are delinquent peers, race, adolescent delinquency, and gender. Race/Ethnicity was originally recorded as 1=Black, 2=Hispanic, 3=White, and 4=Mixed. The *minority* variable was created to assign individuals a 1 if they were Black, Hispanic, and Mixed and 0 if they were assigned to the White category. Gender was coded as 1=Female and 2=Male in round 1. This variable was recorded into a dummy variable as 1=male and 0=female. Adolescent delinquency was measured the same way as the adult criminal behavior variable when looking at property, violent, and drug crime, except it was measured during early adolescence for respondents between the ages of 13-16 years old in the sample.

Adolescents responded yes or no to these items. These were into a dummy variable for wave 1, using the categories as follows: 1=committed crime type, 0=not committed crime type. Peer delinquency was defined as the percentage of adolescent friends involved in criminal activities. The adolescents were asked “How many of your friends belong to a gang that does illegal activities?” This was measured as 1=Almost none (10%), 2=about 25%, 3= about half (50%), 4=about 75%, and 5=almost all (more than 90%). For any percentage of friends involved in illegal activities greater than zero, this assigned a value of 1. For any percentage of friends involved in no illegal activity, this is assigned a value of 0.

3.4 Data Analysis Plan

The data file consists of survey items about adolescent demographics characteristics such as parental SES, household structure, delinquent behaviors, peer influences, and perception of their parenting style in the adolescent’s life. The data set for this analysis will use two waves of round 1 and round 6 to examine the relationship between family structure, parenting styles, and adult crime. The potential covariates for the analysis are delinquent peers, race, adolescent delinquency, and gender. Age was not included as a control variable because there was a small range (13-16 years old). This study uses binary logistic regression in Rstudio to test each hypothesis since the dependent variables are dichotomous. Separate analyses were conducted for violent, drug, and property crime. The cases with missing information were excluded from the analysis.

The first model and second model tests to see if there are differences in parenting styles of the mother and father by family structure. Each family type was entered except the married biological parents, which was the reference category. Literature has stated married biological parents may have authoritative parenting because the bond toward their child creates a sense of

responsibility in parenting and is emotionally invested into their wellbeing. Research states that children raised in married biological households may engage in less delinquency and adult crime (Boccio & Beaver, 2017; Bosick & Fomby, 2018). The third and fourth model tests to see whether there are differences in delinquency and crime by the parenting styles of the mother and father when accounting for the control variables such as delinquent peers, gender, adolescent delinquency, and race. The reference category for parenting styles is authoritative parenting because research has found that authoritative parenting reduces delinquency, adult crime, and shown positive outcomes in adulthood (Hoeve et al., 2012; Simmons & Sutton, 2021).

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1. The mean age of the adolescent respondents are 14.59 and the average adult age was 20.31. For gender, a little half over the sample is male (50.68%) and a little under a half were female (49.31%). The majority of the sample is white (52.62%), nearly a quarter of the sample were black (25.02%), 21.48% were hispanic, and 0.8% were mixed. The average household income was 41,709.51 dollars. For adolescent delinquency, 3.1% of adolescents committed drug crimes, 44.63% committed property crime, and 30.54% committed a violent crime.

For the independent variables and dependent variables, 51.76% of adolescent lived inside a married biological family, 11.60% lived in a biological mother and stepfather household, 2.5% lived in a biological father and stepmother household, 30.31% lived in a single mother household, and 3.7% lived in a single father household. For parenting styles, 9.7% of adolescents have neglectful fathers, 20.2% had permissive fathers, 15.02% had authoritarian fathers, and 27.85% had authoritative fathers. For the mother parenting styles, 34.15% of adolescents had permissive mothers, 9.9% of adolescents had neglectful mothers, 12.22% of adolescents had authoritarian mothers, and 39.99% of adolescents had authoritative mothers. For the dependent variables for adult criminal behavior, 4.7% of adolescents when they entered adulthood committed drug crimes, 7.8% committed property crime, and 5.5% committed violent crime.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics n=5,370

Variable	Frequency	Mean	SD	Range	n
Violent Crime	5.51	---	0.23	---	296
Property Crime	44.63	---	0.27	---	1,271
Drug Crime	2.79	---	0.17	---	254
Adolescent Violent Crime	30.54	---	0.46	---	1640
Adolescent Drug Crime	3.10	---	0.17	---	167
Adolescent Property Crime	0.44	---	0.50	---	2,397
Married biological parents	51.8	---	---	---	2,780
Mother-Stepfather	11.6	---	---	---	623
Father-Stepmother	2.5	---	---	---	138
Single Mother	30.32	---	---	---	1,628
Single Father	3.7	---	---	---	201
Neglectful Father	9.7	---	---	---	521
Permissive Father	20.2	---	---	---	1,085
Authoritarian Father	15.02	---	---	---	807
Authoritative Father	10.0	---	---	---	1,496
Neglectful Mother	9.9	---	---	---	536
Permissive Mother	34.15	---	---	---	1,834
Authoritarian Mother	12.22	---	---	---	656
Authoritative Mother	39.96	---	---	---	2,146
Age (Round 1)	---	14.59	1.05	13-16	---
Age (Round 6)	---	20.32	1.05	19-22	---
Males	14.59	---	---	---	2,722
Females	49.31	---	---	---	2,648
White	52.62	---	---	---	2,826
Black	25.02	---	---	---	1,344
Hispanic	21.48	---	---	---	1,154
Mixed	0.8	---	---	---	46
Socioeconomic Status	41,709.51	---	41,705.74	0-41,709.54	---

4.2 Family Structure and Parenting Styles of the Mother

The first model from Table 2 illustrates the relationship between the family structure and mother's parenting style. Table 2 shows columns, which represent family structure and the rows that represent parenting styles of the mother. Table 2 also shows some significant associations between family structure and parenting styles of the mother. Results show the odds adolescents living with their biological mother and a stepfather family structure are 18% less likely to have an authoritative mother than those raised in a married biological family. The odds that an adolescent will have an authoritarian mother is 1.55 times greater when living with a biological mother and stepfather family than in a married biological family. The odds of having a permissive mother are 19% less likely in a biological mother and stepfather family structure compared to a married biological family. Finally, the odds that an adolescent will have a neglectful mother is 1.53 times greater in a biological mother and stepfather family structure than in a married two parent biological family.

Furthermore, the odds of adolescents having an authoritative mother are 17% less likely in a single mother family compared to a married biological family. The odds that an adolescent will have an authoritarian mother is 1.55 times greater in single mother households than in a married biological family. The odds that an adolescent living in a single mother household will have a permissive mother is 9% less than the odds than a married two parent biological family. Finally, the odds that an adolescent will have a neglectful mother is 1.41 times greater in a single mother family than in a married two parent biological family.

Compared to married biological households, adolescents living in a biological father and stepmother family reduce the odds of having an authoritative mother by 42%. The odds of having an authoritarian mother in a biological father and stepmother family are 3.50 times higher

compared to a married biological family. Living in a biological mother and stepfather family reduces the odds of having a permissive mother by .49 compared to married biological families. Adolescents living in a single father household reduces the odds of having an authoritative mother by .88 in comparison to a married two parent biological family. The odds of having an authoritarian mother are 80% less likely in a single father household in comparison to a married two parent biological family. Adolescents living in a single father household reduces the odds of having a permissive mother by 82% compared to two parent biological families. Finally, there is no difference in association between parenting styles of the mother and SES. The R^2 Tjur's of Table 2 are relatively near 0, which indicates that the variations in family structure does not predict differences in parenting styles in the mother.

Table 2. Logistic Regression of Family Structure and Parenting Styles of the Mother (n=4525)								
<i>Predictors</i>	<u>Authoritative Mother</u>		<u>Authoritarian Mother</u>		<u>Permissive Mother</u>		<u>Neglectful Mother</u>	
	<u><i>Odds Ratios</i></u>	<i>p</i>	<u><i>Odds Ratios</i></u>	<i>p</i>	<u><i>Odds Ratios</i></u>	<i>p</i>	<u><i>Odds Ratios</i></u>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	0.73	<0.001	0.13	<0.001	0.54	<0.001	0.11	<0.001
Mother-stepfather	0.82	0.043	1.55	0.002	0.81	0.042	1.53	0.004
Father-Stepmother	0.58	0.008	3.50	<0.001	0.51	0.002	1.39	0.259
Single Mother	0.83	0.012	1.30	0.018	0.91	0.235	1.41	0.003
Single Father	0.12	<0.001	0.20	0.002	0.18	<0.001	0.56	0.097
SES	1.00	0.312	1.00	0.029	1.00	0.026	1.00	0.032
R^2 Tjur	0.020		0.015		0.015		0.006	

4.3 Family Structure and Parenting Styles of the Father

The second model from Table 3 illustrates the relationship between the family structure and Father's parenting style. The columns represent the Father's parenting style and the rows represent family structure. Results show that adolescents living in a biological mother and stepfather family have 56% less odds of having an authoritative father compared to a married biological family. The odds that an adolescent will have an authoritarian father is 1.53 times greater in a biological mother and stepfather family compared to a married biological family. The odds of adolescents having a permissive father are 48% less likely to live in a biological mother and stepfather family compared to a married biological family. Finally, the odds that an adolescent will have a neglectful father is 1.83 times greater in a biological mother and stepfather family compared to a married two parent biological family.

Furthermore, the odds of having an authoritative father are 91% less likely in a single mother family in comparison to a married biological family. Living in a single mother household reduced the odds of having an authoritarian father by .19. The odds that an adolescent living in a single mother household will have a permissive father is 86% less than the odds of a married two parent biological family. Finally, living in a single mother household reduced the odds of having an uninvolved father by .68. Socioeconomic status was included in table three and compared against the father's parenting style. Specifically, for every one thousand dollar increase or one thousand dollar decrease, the odds of having an authoritative or uninvolved father remain the same.

Table 3. Logistic Regression of Family Structure on Father's Parenting Style (n=4525)

	<u>Authoritative</u> <u>Father</u>		<u>Authoritarian</u> <u>Father</u>		<u>Permissive</u> <u>Father</u>		<u>Neglectful</u> <u>Father</u>	
<u>Predictors</u>	<u>Odds</u> <u>Ratios</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>Odds</u> <u>Ratios</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>Odds</u> <u>Ratios</u>	<u>p</u>	<u>Odds</u> <u>Ratios</u>	<u>p</u>
(Intercept)	0.60	<0.001	0.24	<0.001	0.38	<0.001	0.15	<0.001
Mother- stepfather	0.44	<0.001	1.53	<0.001	0.52	<0.001	1.83	<0.001
Father- stepmother	0.09	<0.001	0.19	<0.001	0.14	<0.001	0.32	<0.001
Single Mother	0.84	0.356	1.28	0.270	0.85	0.435	0.90	0.735
Single Father	0.72	0.050	0.98	0.908	1.24	0.217	1.19	0.453
SES	1.00	0.001	1.00	0.463	1.00	0.576	1.00	0.011
R ² Tjur	0.122		0.043		0.067		0.024	

4.4 Parenting Styles and Adult Crime

The third model from Table 4 illustrates the relationship between the parenting styles of the parents on adult crime. The odds that adolescents will commit a violent crime when they're an adult is 1.49 times greater with an authoritarian mother compared to having an authoritative mother when adding the control variables into the model. Adolescents living with a neglectful mother increase the odds by 30% of committing a drug crime compared to authoritative mothers. When accounting for the control variables, the father's parenting styles were not statistically significant in relationship to adult crime types. Only authoritarian mothers were significant predictors of violent adult crime. However, in terms of socioeconomic status, for every one-

thousand-dollar increase or one-thousand-dollar decrease, the odds of engaging in violent crime remain the same.

When analyzing the control variables in Table 4, the odds that a male will commit a violent crime are nearly three times higher compared to females. The odds a male will commit a property crime as an adult are 100% higher compared to a female. The odds that a male will commit a drug crime as an adult are 2.75 times higher compared to females. Being a minority reduces the odds of committing a drug crime as an adult by .62 compared to non minority groups. The odds of committing an adult property crime are 1.50 times higher for adolescents who have violent crime history compared to the individuals without a violent crime history.

Moreover, the odds that an adolescent will commit a violent crime in adulthood are nearly 2.03 times higher for adolescents with a property crime history compared to adolescents without a property crime history. Having a property crime history during adolescence increases the odds of engaging in adult property crime by 44% compared to adolescents who have no property crime history. The odds an adolescent with a history of property crime history will commit a drug crime in their adulthood is 197% higher compared to adolescents with no property crime history.

Additionally, the odds that an adolescent will commit a violent crime in adulthood are nearly 1.70 times higher for adolescents with a drug crime history compared to adolescents without a drug crime history. An adolescent with a drug crime history increases the odds of engaging in adult property crime by 62% compared to adolescents who have no property crime history. Finally, the odds of committing drug crime during adulthood are 2.22 times higher for adolescents with a drug crime history compared to adolescents without a drug crime history. Being associated with delinquent peers during adolescence increases the odds of committing

violent crime as an adult by 11%. Even though the model has low R^2 's values, the model is best at predicting adult drug crime.

<i>Predictors</i>	Adult Violent Crime		Adult Property Crime		Adult Drug crime	
	<i>Odds Ratios</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Odds Ratios</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Odds Ratios</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	0.02	<0.001	0.04	<0.001	0.01	<0.001
Authoritarian Mother	1.49	0.037	1.03	0.852	1.37	0.138
Permissive Mother	0.81	0.206	0.77	0.063	0.89	0.504
Neglectful Mother	1.10	0.662	1.33	0.114	1.32	0.226
Authoritarian Father	1.26	0.211	1.01	0.949	1.34	.130
Permissive Father	1.18	0.379	0.83	0.245	0.97	0.895
Neglectful Father	0.74	0.234	0.74	0.144	0.94	0.806
SES	1.00	0.005	1.00	0.604	1.00	0.145
Male	2.97	<.001	2.00	<.001	2.75	<.001
Minority	1.27	0.111	1.03	0.847	0.62	0.013
Adolescent Violent crime	1.07	0.689	1.50	0.013	1.29	0.183
Adolescent Property crime	2.03	<.001	1.44	0.028	2.97	<0.001
Adolescent Drug Crime	1.70	0.048	1.62	0.046	2.22	0.001
Delinquent Peers	1.11	0.044	1.01	0.855	1.11	0.066
R^2 Tjur	0.037		0.026		0.048	

4.5 Parenting Styles and Adolescent Delinquency

Since parenting styles could not explain adult criminal behavior and none of the findings supported these hypotheses except for authoritarian parenting, this analysis was run to see if parenting styles during adolescence had more of an effect on adolescent delinquency. Even though this analysis was not part of the research question or hypotheses, the researcher wanted to test if these hypotheses were applicable to criminal behavior in adolescence during round 1 versus round 6, where adolescents are in adulthood. Table 5 shows the results for whether mothers' and fathers' parenting styles are related to different types of adolescent delinquency. The rows show the parenting styles of the mother and father. The columns show the different types of adolescent delinquency, such as violent, property, and drug crime. The low R^2 Tjur's in Table 5 indicates additional factors beyond parenting styles might need to be considered to better understand and predict adolescent delinquency. Even though the R^2 s are low, the model best predicts adolescent property crime when discussing the parenting styles of the mother and father in relation to the adolescent delinquency.

Parenting styles of the mother were studied in relationship to adolescent delinquency in Table 5. The reference category was authoritative parenting. The odds of engaging in adolescent violent crime is 1.62 times higher when having an authoritarian mother compared to having an authoritative mother. When adding the controls to the model, the odds of engaging in violent crime during adolescence with an authoritarian mother 1.64 times higher. Having an authoritarian mother increases the odds of engaging in adolescent property crime by 76% compared to having an authoritative mother. When adding the controls to the model, the odds of engaging in property crime increases by 82% when having an authoritarian mother compared to having an authoritative mother.

Finally, the odds of engaging in drug crime during adolescence with an authoritarian mother is 2.09 times higher compared to having an authoritative mother. The odds of engaging in drug crime increases by 98% compared to having an authoritative mother.

Living with a permissive mother increases the odds of committing an adolescent violent crime by 16% compared to having an authoritative mother. The odds of committing a drug crime in adolescents are 2.09 times higher when having a permissive mother compared to an authoritative mother. The odds of committing a drug crime are 2.14 times higher when having a permissive mother compared to an authoritative mother. Additionally, living with a permissive mother increases the odds of committing a drug crime by 88% compared to an authoritative mother.

Compared to authoritative mothers, the odds of committing an adolescent violent crime are nearly two times higher for uninvolved mothers. When adding the controls in the model, the odds of committing an adolescent violent crime are 88% higher compared to authoritative mothers. The odds of committing an adolescent property crime are nearly 97% higher for neglectful mothers and 93% higher when adding the control variables in comparison to authoritative mothers. Living with a neglectful mother increases the odds by 3.39 times higher and 2.51 times higher when adding the control variables in comparison to authoritative mothers. The low R^2 Tjur's in Table 5 indicates additional factors beyond parenting styles might need to be considered to better understand and predict adolescent delinquency. Even though the R^2 s are low, the model best predicts adolescent property crime when discussing the parenting styles of the mother and father in relation to the adolescent delinquency.

Some researchers state high parental control during adolescence may increase criminal behavior in adulthood. Brauer (2016) suggests that high parental control during adolescence increases adult criminality due to parent's over controlling behaviors. These over controlling behaviors may make the adolescent rebellious due to the parents limiting their autonomy and freedom to make their own decisions. Scholte (1999) and Johnson et al. (2010) support this finding that parental control can lead to criminal behavior. However, they both argue this anti-social behavior is actually due to the controlling parent being abusive and overly strict.

Table 5. Logistic Regression Model of Parenting Styles and Adolescent Delinquency						
<i>Predictors</i>	Adolescent violent crime (n=4441)		Adolescent property crime (n=4441)		Adolescent drug crime (n=4441)	
	<i>Odds Ratios</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Odds Ratios</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Odds Ratios</i>	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	0.09	<0.001	0.15	<0.001	0.00	<0.001
Authoritarian Mother	1.64	<0.001	1.82	<0.001	1.98	0.016
Permissive Mother	1.11	0.210	1.10	0.229	1.88	0.005
Neglectful Mother	1.88	<0.001	1.93	<0.001	2.51	0.001
Authoritarian Father	1.42	<0.001	1.35	0.001	0.92	0.743
Permissive Father	0.81	0.026	0.79	0.010	0.63	0.091
Neglectful Father	1.24	0.064	1.37	0.005	1.36	0.235
SES	1.00	0.260	1.00	0.891	1.00	0.840
Male	1.78	<0.001	2.33	<0.001	1.81	0.001
Minority	0.63	<0.001	0.91	0.222	0.39	<0.001
Peers illegal	1.59	<0.001	1.59	<0.001	2.51	<0.001
R ² Tjur	0.109		0.127		0.082	

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

One of the main goals of this thesis was to determine if adolescents living in different family structures predicted variations in parenting styles when using a logistic regression model and if parenting styles predicted adolescent delinquency and adult crimes such as property, violent, and drug crimes. The researcher also examined if adult crime and parenting styles varied based on socioeconomic status. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Youth (n=5370), the researcher found there were some significant differences in family structures and parenting styles. There were also more significant differences in authoritarian parenting in relation to drug and violent crime. When looking at adolescent property and violent delinquency, there were more significant differences when looking at authoritarian and permissive parenting of both the mother and father.

Recent literature suggests that stepparent families are more likely to have permissive or neglectful parenting style than authoritarian or authoritative (Nicholson et al., 2002; Jensen, 2018). The results of this study partially support this hypothesis because in the study, the biological mother in the stepfather family and the stepmother in the biological father family were most likely to have an authoritarian and neglectful parenting style. Results also showed that stepfathers in the household were more likely to have authoritarian and neglectful parenting. There are a couple reasons for these results. One potential explanation for why biological parents in stepparent families might adopt an authoritarian style is to establish control and reinforce authority as the primary disciplinarian in the household, and to protect the adolescent-child bond by minimizing the stepparents influence of being the decision-maker and caregiver within the family (Nicholson et al., 2002; Jensen, 2020). Biological parents might also have a neglectful parenting style within stepparent families because they may focus on building the relationship

with the stepparent and neglect their parenting responsibilities to raise the adolescent. One study supports this finding and also suggest that biological parents focused on the partner relationship more than parent-adolescent relationship because both parents may have different parenting styles that might conflict with each other, which can make the biological parent disengaged in their parenting practices and the inability to enforce control or attachment (Nicholson et al., 2002). Stepparents may adopt an authoritarian style of parenting in order to establish their parental authority or bond with the adolescent. Literature has also stated stepparents may adopt this authoritarian parenting to establish dominance if they're uncertain in their parental role or have a lack of parenting experience, since they may not have biological children of their own (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2010; Jensen, 2020). Stepparents may also have neglectful parenting if they perceive themselves as outsiders toward their children, especially if the adolescent is rejecting the stepparent or showing hostility towards the stepparent. This may make it difficult for the stepparent to enforce control or build a healthy bond with the adolescent.

Recent literature suggests adolescents raised in single mother households would have authoritarian or neglectful parenting than permissive or authoritative (Idrees et al., 2021; Yaffe, 2017). Literature also stated single father families would most likely to have permissive or neglectful parenting style than authoritative and authoritarian (Bronte-Tinkew et al., 2010). The results support both of these hypotheses. One potential reason for these parenting styles across these particular household structures is that single mothers have to simultaneously be the disciplinarian and be the primary caregiver within the household (Demuth & Brown, 2004; Yaffe, 2017). Research suggests that this may cause parental stress, which can lead to inconsistent parenting practices (Demuth & Brown, 2004). Other research has claimed that having supportive social networks like other family or friends can mitigate the authoritarian or

negative parenting practices (Schrag & Schmidt-Tieszen, 2014). Single mothers may have a neglectful parenting style due to balancing life responsibilities and being overwhelmed with the responsibilities of parenting, financial stress, and lack of social support or parental support (Demuth & Brown, 2004; Yaffe, 2017). Recent literature states for neglectful parenting of single mothers, parenting fatigue is a strong predictor of neglectful parenting because single mothers can become overwhelmed and may lack the energy or motivation to meet the adolescent's needs appropriately (Roskam & Mikolajczak, 2023). Single fathers may have permissive parenting because they look to establish a strong parental bond over enforcing strict parenting. The single father looks to fill in the other absent parent role as nurturing and emotional supportive because enforcing harsh discipline may cause tension or resentment within the relationship, weakening the bond (Wood et al., 2019).

When looking at the relationship between SES and parenting styles, most literature states adolescents living in high SES households may have authoritative parenting and low SES may have authoritarian, neglectful, or permissive parenting (Ali et al., 2023; Anderson et al., 2022; Idrees et al., 2021; Luo et al., 2019). The findings for this study did not support this, suggesting SES was not statistically associated with parenting styles. In other words, regardless of the household income level, SES does not predict variations within parenting styles. There might be a couple explanations for this. Parents' parenting styles may be influenced by the goals and priorities for their children, which may not be directly or indirectly influenced by SES (Lin et al., 2023). Parenting styles may be influenced by cultural norms, family dynamics, and many other factors instead of SES. In a meta-analysis by Pinquart (2017), which studied multiple studies on parenting styles during adolescence and SES, SES showed to have a weak to no association with parenting style. While SES may influence parenting styles, the meta-analysis highlighted that

SES effect on parenting styles is less pronounced than other factors such as attachment, control, and parental beliefs in prosocial norms. This may also explain why SES was not a significant predictor of all adult crime types within the model. Research states SES has a little effect or association throughout childhood or adolescence on adult crime, but may become weaker over time throughout the lifecourse since adolescents are entering adulthood and may be exposed to different social and environmental influences (Schroeder et al., 2009).

5.1 Parenting Styles and Adult Crime

Research has suggested authoritative parenting reduces the odds of adulthood crime, while permissive parenting, authoritarian, and neglectful parenting increase the odds of adult crime (Hoeve et al., 2012; Johnson et al. 2010; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). The hypothesis of this study looked at each parenting style as predictors of adult crime, which is partially supported because having an authoritarian mother was statistically significant with adult violent crime. The other parenting styles during adolescence were not statistically significant in relationship to adult crime. These findings are not consistent with prior literature (Scholte, 1999; Simmons & Sutton, 2021) and very interesting within literature. Previous literature only looked at parenting style as just one variable of both the parents, not distinguishing the difference between the parental gender (Johnson et al., 2012; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). To the current knowledge of the researcher, there are limited findings of studying maternal and paternal parenting styles in relationship to adult crime (Hoeve et al., 2011 & 2012). A possible explanation to why authoritarian mothers may increase adult crime is because adolescents may view their mothers as emotionally supportive, but when the mother enforces strict rules and becomes emotionally unavailable toward the adolescents' needs, this may result in engaging in criminal behavior. Also, there is limited evidence on specifying different types of adult crime in a statistical model

because most studies have looked at adult criminality as a single measure (Harris-McKoy & Cui, 2012; Hoeve et al., 2012; Schroeder et al., 2009; Simmons & Sutton, 2021;). These prior studies summed these adult crime types using an index score.

Moreover, there may be other predictors overshadowing the influence of parenting styles on adult crime such as emotional states, peer influence, and prior criminal history. Simmons and Sutton (2021) found that anger predicted adult crime due to experiencing harsh parenting such as physical punishment and led the adolescent to be rebellious. Anger was also due to having a neglectful parenting style due to the parents not supporting their emotional needs and the adolescent feeling emotionally neglected, which led to seeking deviant peers and engaging in adult criminal behavior. Previous literature also states that peer influence are important during adolescence years (Harris-McKoy & Cui, 2012; Simmons & Sutton, 2021), but recent literature states delinquent peers impact is more prevalent in adulthood due to the adolescent's parents not having an influence on their decision-making (Copp et al., 2019). Parental influence and control in adolescence slowly decreases, but never diminishes (Copp et al., 2019; Johnson et al., 2010). When adolescents reach adulthood, they adopt their own beliefs, values, and their own peer networks without guidance from their parents. This is supported by previous literature and states deviant peers may mitigate the effects of parenting in adolescence on adult crime (Copp et al., 2019; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). The model in this study shows that prior adolescent criminal history can be a predictor of adult criminal behavior, which is supported by literature (Harris-McKoy & Cui, 2012; Laub & Sampson, 1993; Simmons & Sutton, 2021). Adolescents who engage in persistent offending during adolescence may be more likely to engage in their criminal behavior in adulthood due to the development of established patterns of criminal behavior,

attitudes, and social relationships during adolescence, unless there is a turning point to alter the criminal behavior trajectory (Laub & Sampson, 1993).

5.2 Parenting Styles and the Adolescent Delinquency Model

Even though this study did not include hypotheses on parenting styles and adolescent delinquency, a logistic regression model was created to study this relationship. This model was included because the prior model when studying parenting styles and adult crime, none of the parenting styles during adolescence were statistically significant in relationship to adult crime. The model was created to see if parenting styles played a role during the adolescent time period in round 1 on adolescent delinquency. The model of parenting styles and adolescent delinquency showed several significant relationships. Having an authoritarian mother predicted adolescent violent, property, and drug crime, whereas having an authoritarian father only predicted adolescent violent and property crime. Having a permissive mother only predicted drug crime, whereas having a permissive father predicted only adolescent violent and property crime. Having a neglectful mother only predicted violent crime, but having a neglectful father predicted violent, property, and drug crime. When looking at literature on parenting styles and adolescent delinquency, these findings are consistent with prior literature (Hoeve et al., 2012; Schroder et al., 2009).

5.3 Possible Explanations

One possible explanation for parenting styles not predicting adult crime is that parents may still have an influence on behavior during adolescence because the adolescents are still under their control and under their supervision, even though parental influence slowly decreases as adolescents age (Nader & Robinson, 2023). Even though adolescents spend more time with peers than their parents, parenting styles are more salient during this time period as adolescents

explore peer relationships, autonomy-seeking behaviors, and identity development. When adolescents reach adulthood, there is little or no impact of parental influence on adulthood behaviors or criminality. This is because adolescents no longer have to subject themselves to their parents' approval and can establish their own worldviews, belief system, careers, employment, and peer relationships without the guidance of their parents (Nader & Robinson, 2023). Another possible explanation for why parenting styles would possibly not explain adult criminal behavior in the model is because there is a 6 year difference between the adolescent delinquency measurement and adult crime. One possible way to eliminate this limitation is measuring crime during early adolescence, where delinquency tends to peak during adolescence according to Laub and Sampson's age-crime curve (Laub & Sampson, 1993). When adolescents transition to adulthood, they are exposed to a wider range of economic, environmental, and social factors that might influence their behavior or criminal activities (Nader & Robinson, 2023). Parenting styles might have an influence on future behavior, but it is very little when the adolescent reaches adulthood and exposed to these factors (Nader & Robinson, 2023).

5.4 Family Structure, Parenting Styles, and Crime

There are some important connections to make when studying looking at family structure, parenting styles, and adult crime. Looking at stepparent and single family structures, both the stepmother and single mother household structures lead to authoritarian parenting, which in turn influences adult violent crime. There was more evidence of family structure and parenting styles on adolescent delinquency than adult crime. Neglectful parenting by the single mother and stepmother lead to adolescent violent crime, drug crime, and property crime. Adolescents living in a stepfather and single father family adopted an authoritarian or permissive

parenting style, which leads to adolescent property and violent crime. Based on these current findings, these alternate household structures may have some impact on crime and delinquency.

5.5 Findings Applicable to Life Course Theory

The findings of this study somewhat support life course criminology when looking at family structure and parenting styles. Laub and Sampson (1993) state having a large family size or having a non-traditional family structure other than married biological families might affect attachment and control over the adolescent. They state stepparents may have trouble establishing a strong parental bond and control over the adolescent due to not knowing their parental role in the relationship, which may make the stepparent less involved in parental control or attachment. This would make the stepparent adopt a neglectful parenting style and be less likely to be permissive, authoritarian, or authoritative. The findings partially support the hypothesis because the stepmother and stepfather in both Table 1 and 2 both had neglectful parenting, but also authoritarian parenting. Literature has explored why these stepparents may have authoritarian parenting style, suggesting that strict rules or enforcing punishment can help establish their parental authority or bond with the adolescent (Nicholson et al., 2002). Another reason is that stepparents might not have parenting experience due maybe not having a biological child of their own, and also to minimize the biological parents influence on the child's decision-making. When looking at parenting styles of single mother and single father, the results support the hypothesis.

Laub and Sampson (1993) suggest that turning points within an individual's life can redirect or alter their trajectories of criminal behavior beyond adolescence and beyond. They emphasize the importance of parenting, such as attachment and control, during childhood and adolescence may become a predictive factor of persistent offending unless there is a turning point in the individual's life course that can redirect or alter their criminal behavior. They

emphasized that parenting in adolescence may influence adult criminality, which was examined in this study. Sampson and Laub (1993) stated that authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parenting can predict adolescent delinquency and adult crime, which the results of this supported in relationship to adolescent delinquency, but not adult crime. When examining family structure and SES on parenting styles, they stated that nuclear families, such as married biological parents, would have better parenting practices and predict better behavioral outcomes in adolescents and when they reach adulthood. They stated that having a non-traditional family structure outside of married biological families would introduce permissive, neglectful, or authoritarian parenting. In other words, the other family structures might not have a healthy balance of attachment and control than married biological parents. When addressing SES status on parenting styles and delinquency, Sampson and Laub (1993) stated SES can influence parenting styles because higher SES parents have resources and opportunities to provide for their children, are emotionally invested in their children, and have time to monitor their children's activities. Lower SES parents might have a neglectful, authoritarian, or permissive parenting style due to financial constraints and limited access to resources (Sampson & Laub, 1993). These limitations can cause parental stress and make the parent not fully engage in effective parental practices that enforce prosocial norms or behaviors. When relating SES to adolescent delinquency and adult crime, Sampson and Laub (1993) stated adolescents coming from low SES households may increase the likelihood of delinquency and future criminal behavior, while adolescents from high SES households decreased the likelihood of delinquency and criminal behavior. The results of the statistical models within this thesis show SES was not a predictor of adolescent delinquency, parenting styles, or adult crime. The results do not support the hypothesis that SES influences parenting styles or crime as expected under life course criminology.

5.6 Limitations

There were several limitations regarding this study. First, the marital status for adoptive parents, grandparents, and other relatives was not provided in round 1 nor subsequent rounds, so these were excluded from the analysis. Another reason these other household structures were excluded from the analysis was because there was a limited number of cases for these variables. The NLSY97 data did not provide information on how to track these other household structures over time during adolescence, especially if the residential parent moved outside the household. Future research should incorporate how other different family structures may differ in parenting styles in relationship to adolescent delinquency or criminal behavior. For example, cohabiting family structure was not measured and no items within the data were provided to measure this variable. Second, the data does not contain information on how to track marital status or changes within marital status over time since there are a number of valid cases only in round 1. The NLSY97 data only contains information on how to track the relationship of the parent to the adolescent and not tracking the relationship or marital status of the other adult household figures within the household. In other words, there was no way to measure if there were family structure instabilities or changes within household structure over time.

Moreover, changes in marital status and family structure are important components of life course criminology (Laub & Sampson, 1993). Laub and Sampson (1993) state family structure instability such as separation, parental death, or remarriage during the adolescent time period may influence criminal behavior. Laub and Sampson (1993) state family structure instability can disrupt the attachment bond because adolescents may struggle to cope with the loss of a parent or detachment from their biological parent. This may cause emotional distress in the adolescent and cause problems toward their well-being and may contribute to delinquent behavior and possibly

criminal behavior. Measuring family structure instability and seeing how this could affect parental attachment over time would help explain how bonds to parents can change over time, and its effect on future criminal behavior. This makes it impossible to study how life events such as family structure instability, can impact delinquency or criminal behavior. Prior literature has stated parental separation, death, or remarriage, can affect the parental bond and have been strong predictors of delinquency or adult crime (Bosick & Fomby, 2018; Mednick et al., 1990).

Another limitation is concerning the measurement of delinquent and adult criminal behavior within the analysis. When studying criminal behavior in a longitudinal analysis, it is beneficial to use measures asking the respondent of the severity and the frequency of how they engage into that crime offense type. The binary variables, yes or no, variables only indicate whether an individual has engaged in criminal activity or not, without considering the variations in the seriousness or frequency of the acts. By incorporating severity and frequency measures, the researcher can capture the nuances and variations in criminal behavior over time.

Longitudinal analysis aims to understand the patterns and trajectories of criminal behavior, so measuring severity and frequency allows for a more comprehensive examination of these trajectories. The NLSY97 data only contained binary variables of whether the respondent committed the crime offense type, but didn't contain measures on the severity and frequency of the crime offense. With the independent variables, parenting styles was measured by the perception of the adolescent. This may not be a valid measurement because children may not have the cognitive or emotional state to assess their parents' behavior. Children might not have a full understanding of what constitutes different parenting styles.

5.7 Policy Implications

This study shows family structure may be significant predictors of parenting style. The variations in parenting style can have an impact on adolescent delinquency. Findings in this study showed parenting styles were not significant to adult criminal behavior. Future policies should be made on adopting better parenting practices to minimize adolescent delinquency. Implementing and funding parenting support and education programs can help parents, regardless of family structure, develop effective parenting skills and strategies. These programs can provide guidance on nurturing positive relationships, setting boundaries, communication, discipline, and promoting prosocial behavior. There should also be early efforts in addressing risk factors associated with adolescent delinquency, which could possibly deter adult crime. Policy should be created around parental education and awareness on the long-term effects of parenting during adolescence and how parenting might possibly influence adult outcomes. One way parental education may be helpful would be by providing information and resources to parents about the importance of positive parenting, setting appropriate boundaries, and fostering positive attachment can empower them to create nurturing and supportive environments for their children. When discussing family structure and parenting styles, policies should recognize and support diverse family structures to overcome challenges in parenting practices, including single-parent families, blended families, stepparent families, and other household structures. Policies related to parenting and family structure should be informed by research and evaluation. Governments and organizations should invest in research to understand the needs and challenges faced by families, as well as the effectiveness of different policy interventions. Investing in family support services can help address underlying issues that may contribute to delinquent and criminal behavior.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The main two purposes of this study was to examine how family structure during adolescence might impact parenting styles, and if parenting styles during adolescence influenced adult crime. The reason for examining these research questions was driven by life-course criminology by Laub and Sampson (1993), suggesting that parenting practices and family structure during adolescence may change social bonds over time. Laub and Sampson (1993) also looked at how different family structures or family structure instability over an individual's life course can impact attachment and control, suggesting married two parent biological families have more of an authoritative parenting style and engage in less delinquency or crime. On the other hand, they suggest step-parent families would have a more neglectful parenting style and single parent families would have an authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parenting style. The results of this study supported the hypothesis of single parent families, suggesting they would more likely adopt an authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parenting style than authoritative parenting. However, the study partially supported stepparent families because the study found stepparents are more likely to adopt an authoritarian and neglectful parenting style than just having a neglectful parenting style. Future research should incorporate understanding the needs and challenges faced by families, as well as the effectiveness of different policy interventions.

As mentioned previously and throughout this thesis, Laub and Sampson (1993) suggest parenting practices such as attachment and control may be an important predictor of persistent offending in adolescence and in adulthood. They suggested authoritarian, permissive, and neglectful parenting increased the likelihood of criminal behavior than authoritative parenting. The results of this study did not support that parenting styles during adolescence was a predictor of adult crime offense types, but fully supported how other parenting styles predicted different

types of adolescent crime. Although this study had no significant results regarding parental parenting styles on adult crime, this doesn't rule out the possibility that parenting during adolescence is important because parents shape and strengthen children's values, skills, and morals that will exist throughout their lifetime.

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