Abstract

The variables of negative peer influence and low parental involvement affecting anger in teenaged minority males leading to violent behavior were investigated. The study is quantitative causal/comparative and concentrated on youths who have been adjudicated delinquents and are currently incarcerated in a Youth Detention Center in Laurel, Maryland. The subjects are also concurrently enrolled in the educational component termed “academy” of the detention center. The detention center is under the auspices of the public school system in Washington, DC. Students enrolled in this program are all residents of the District of Columbia and have been convicted of acts of violence that are severe enough to warrant detention. All students enrolled in the program range in age from 14-18 and are in grades 8-12 at the center. By means of compiled demographic data, a homogeneous comparison group of nonadjudicated students enrolled in the regular high school program in the District of Columbia Public Schools was used. Anger measurement and relationship scales were administered to determine levels of anger, parental involvement and levels of peer influence. MANOVA statistics were used to determine if there was a difference between levels of parental involvement, levels of peer pressure, and levels of anger, which resulted in acts of violence. Correlation statistics determined the relationship within groups, and frequency scales determined the level of anger and the direction of relationships. Results indicated that there was a difference between anger in the two groups, but there was no difference in peer influence and parental involvement in violent adolescent minority males. There were significant relationships in the violent group between anger, peer influence, and parental involvement and significant relationships between parental involvement, peer influence, and anger control in the comparison group.