

Effects of Parental Warmth and Hostility on the Romantic relationships of Juvenile Offenders

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Abstract

There continues to be a high rate of juvenile delinquency within the United States (Youth Justice, 2021). Unfortunately, this acts a pipeline to incarceration for many of these individuals and creates a cycle of abuse that is difficult to break. Previous studies have examined the relationship between upbringing and its relation to juvenile delinquency but not many studies have examined the effects of parental warmth and hostility on the romantic relationships of these individuals. In order to address this gap in the literature and through the lens of social learning theory, the current study aims to examine the effects of the parental warmth and hostility on the quality of romantic relationship among male and female juvenile offenders. The current study utilized secondary data analysis examined at baseline and after 48 months from the 2000 Pathways to Desistance study. A multiple linear regression analyses was performed to examine the relationship between parental hostility or warmth and juvenile offender's romantic relationships. Overall, the current study found significance in one area. Specifically, there a significant negative association between the quality of romantic relationships in females who experienced parental hostility from their father. Unexpectedly, the results did not show a significant relationship between parental warmth and hostility with males or parental warmth from the mother and females. However, these results still highlight the importance of parental interactions and relationships with their children and how this can negatively affect overall outcomes in the future. Awareness of these outcomes can allow and guide social workers to better work juveniles and their parents.

Introduction

Significance of Study

- In the United States, there is an estimated 2.1 million juveniles placed under arrest with an average of 1.7 million cases annually (flemming and Nurius, 2020).
- In 2019, nearly 700,000 children were arrested in the United states with an estimate of a child or teen arrested every 45 seconds (Youth Justice, 2021).
- When parents exert hostility and high amounts of control, there was a higher chance of the child becoming a victim of emotional abuse from their partners (Beyarslan and Uzer, 2020).

Purpose of Research

This study aims to examine (1) The effect parental warmth and hostility on the romantic relationships of juvenile offenders and, (2) The gender differences in the effect parental hostility or warmth on romantic relationships.

Research Questions

- Do parental warmth and hostility have a connection to the future romantic relationships of juvenile offenders?
- Are there any gender differences when examining the effects of parental warmth and hostility on romantic relationships.

Research Hypotheses

1. Parental hostility will be negatively associated with the quality of future romantic relationships.
2. Parental warmth will be positively associated with the quality of future romantic relationships.
3. Gender will play a role with females experiencing more negative outcomes in their romantic relationships.

Literature Review

Parental Warmth

- Studies that parental warmth has a negative association with juvenile delinquency, antisocial behavior, and poor relationship outcomes.

Parent Hostility

- Parental warmth has been shown to be positively associated with juvenile delinquency and fathers play a significant role when it comes to their sons and Mothers with their daughter.

Theoretical Framework

Social Learn theory: The theory states individuals learn and develop their behaviors through the use of observation, imitation and cognitive processing. In particular, juveniles learn and develop maladaptive behaviors and thought process through the experiences they have and observe through their parents or primary caregivers (Hutchinson, 2013).

Research Gaps

- Existing research mainly focuses on non-juvenile offers and their overall develop or in specific areas such as schools.
- Other studies examine the various cycles of abuse people go through that can lead them into incarceration but not much research is shown on how parental warmth or hostility plays a role.
- This study aims to start closing the gap by examining the relationship between parents or primary caregivers and the role it has on the quality of future romantic relationships in juvenile offenders.

Methods

Reseach Design and Data Collection Procedures

- A secondary analysis on the data from the Pathways to Desistance study.
- The Pathways to Desistance study was a 10-year-long longitudinal study that examined serious juvenile offenders and their transition into adulthood and out of the incarceration system. This study followed its participants over the course of their lifespan starting as young as 14 years-old. Data was collected through in person computer-assisted interviews.
- The Current study is a longitudinal study utilizing the data from the baseline and from the 48 month follow up interviews.

Sample and Sampling Method

- Juvenile offenders aged between 14 to 17 years and convicted of a serious offense.
- The current study included a subsample of adults who completed both the baseline interview and the 48 month follow up ($N = 764$, 56.4% of the original sample). The sample consisted of both males ($n = 620$) and females ($n = 144$).

Measures

Parental Warmth and Hostility

- Parental Warmth was indicated if participants reported highly on questions such a “how often does your [parent] let you know she really cares about?” There were two versions of parental warmth questionnaire with one version focusing on the father and the other on the mother. Higher scores meant higher levels of parental warmth. (42 items, Paternal Warmth Alpha = .95, Maternal Warmth = .92)
- Parental Hostility was indicated if participants reported highly on “How often does your [parent] throw things at you?” There were two versions of parental hostility questionnaire with one version focusing on the father and the other on the mother. Higher scores meant higher levels of parental Hostility. (42 items, Paternal Warmth Alpha = .88, Maternal Warmth = .85)

Quality of Romantic relationships

- Romantic Relationship – Quality of Relationship (7 items, Alpha = .78)

Results

Analysis of Romantic Relationship - Females

- A multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify the relationship between the quality of romantic relationship in female juvenile offenders and parental warmth or hostility.
- The parental hostility from the father variable **was significantly negatively associated** with the quality of relationship when it came to females.

Analysis of Romantic Relationship - Males

- A multiple regression analysis was utilized to identify the relationship between the quality of romantic relationship in male juvenile offenders and parental warmth or hostility.
- The parental warmth or hostility from both mother and father did not reveal a significant relationship. However, there was near significance when examining the parental warmth from the father variable.

Table 3.

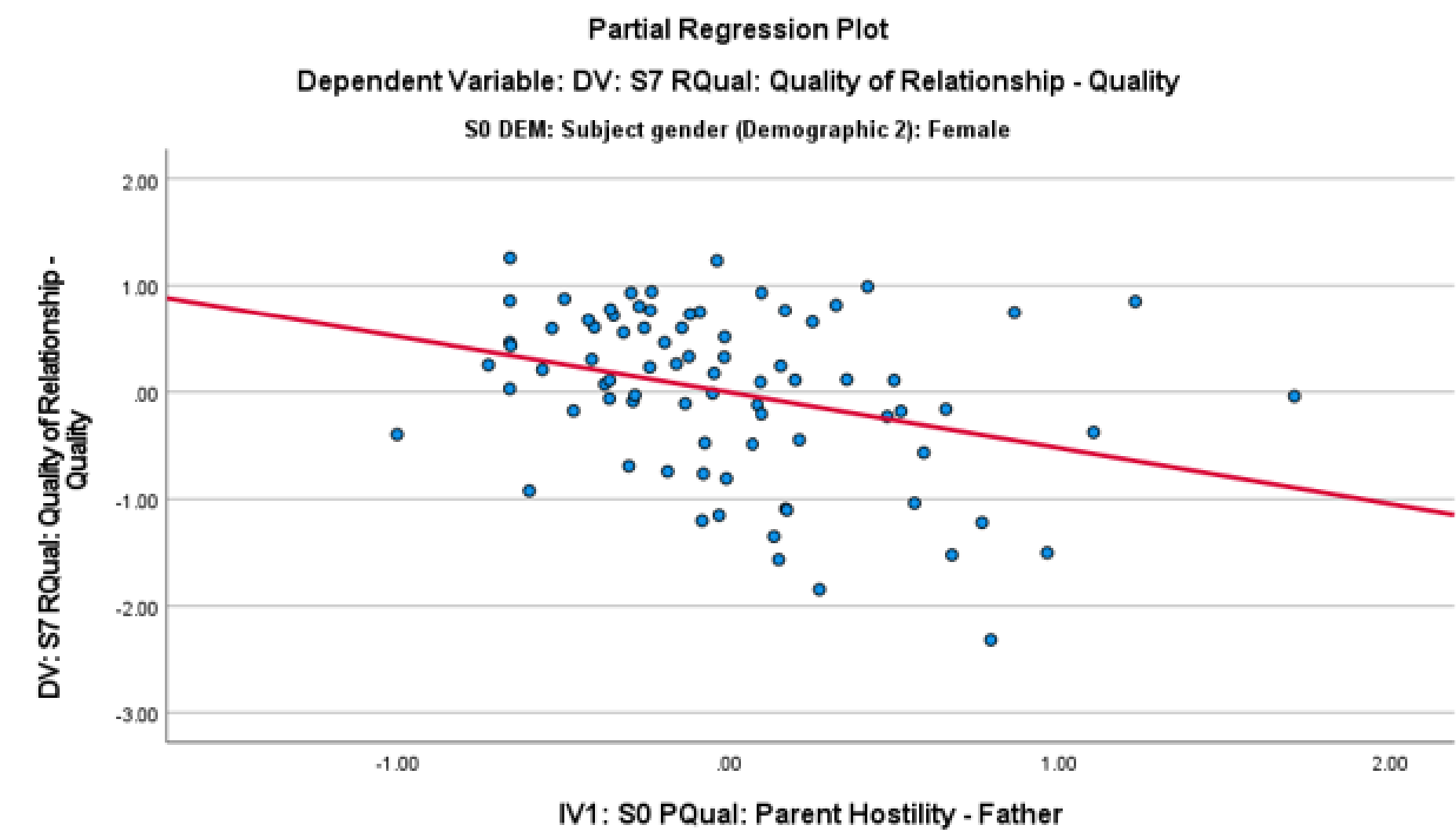
Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analyses Predicting Quality of Romantic Relationship and

Parental Hostility.

Variable	<i>ANOVA</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Quality of Romantic Relationship - Female	<i>F</i> (5,74) = 2.592, <i>p</i> = .032	.15					
Constant			4.15	1.47		2.82	.006
Parent hostility – Father			-.522	.176	-.365	-2.97	.004
Parent hostility – mother			.029	.213	.021	.136	.893
Parent Warmth – Father			-.10	.10	-.12	-.99	.326
Parent Warmth - Mother			.14	.14	.16	1.04	.302
Quality of Romantic Relationship – Male	<i>F</i> (5, 368) = 1.683, <i>p</i> = .138	.022					
Constant			4.53	.50		9.14	<.001
Parent hostility – Father			.02	.07	.02	.34	.74
Parent hostility – mother			-.06	.09	-.04	-.67	.50
Parent Warmth – Father			.07	.04	.11	1.76	.08
Parent Warmth – Mother			.01	.05	.01	.16	.87

Figure 2

Partial Regression Plot Predicting Quality of Romantic Relationship among Female Juvenile Offenders.



Conclusion

Interpretation of Findings

- The significant negative relationship between the quality of romantic relationships and females experiencing parental hostility from their fathers is consistent with previous findings. (Walters, 2021)
- However, the results between the quality of romantic relationship and males experiencing parental warmth or hostility are not consistent with previous findings (Yun and Cui, 2019).
- Consistent is with the hypothesis parental hostility was negatively associated with the quality of romantic relationships, although only in females Lippold et. al (2018).
- Possible explanations for these gender differences could be due to participants self-reporting retrospectively as females were generally shown to be more attentive to specific behaviors compared to men Parade et al. (2012)
- The near or lack of significance in males could be due to the idea that males take after the male primary caregiver (Walters, 2021)

Strengths and Limitations

- Strengths include: The large sample size and the low amount of attrition from the participants.
- Limitations include: There was an unbalanced distribution between males and females for the study. Additionally, out of the 1,354 participants that took part in the study, only 764 were examined. Only the baseline and 48 month follow up were used as compared to adding other follow up interviews.

Implications for Research and Practice

- Potential clinical implications may include integration or exploration of parental upbringing and current relationship quality into practice when working with juvenile offenders.
- Results indicate the importance of taking gender into consideration and how different methods of care may be utilized in practiced or examined within research to better help the population.
- Future research should further explore the different racial and ethnic groups and examine any differences and disparities among these groups.

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